

# canadianstage

A RISING STAR OF CONTEMPORARY DANCE MAKES HIS  
NORTH AMERICAN DEBUT

## MINORITIES

Concept and Choreography – Yang Zhen

A Red Virgo Production from Beijing Presented by Canadian Stage

Berkeley Street Theatre – October 17-27

After wowing audiences in Beijing, Taipei, Munich, and Amsterdam, wonder-kid choreographer, Yang Zhen, makes his North American debut with *Minorities* at Canadian Stage, October 17-27. A provocative dance, theatre, and visual spectacle, *Minorities* is an astounding examination of Chinese youth culture, conformity, censorship, and cultural erasure.

Yang burst on to the dance scene when he was still earning his degree at Minzu University of China. A young and passionate artist, his work daringly reflects on the relationship between the state, society, and the individual and bravely questions the political and social issues in his home country.

*Minorities* is the third installment of the Revolution Game Trilogy. The first, *Just Go Forward*, was created in 2014 and dealt with the situation of women in contemporary Chinese society when the “One-Child Policy” was ended allowing women to have two children. The second, created in 2015, was *In the Field of Hope*, which focused on the hopes and ambitions of young people living in Mainland China.

In *Minorities*, Yang highlights the social circumstances of a new generation of ethnic minorities in China. With an all-female cast featuring dancers and performers from the Tibetan region, Inner Mongolia, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and Macao, as well as a Korean-Chinese dancer and an opera singer from Hunan Province, Yang explores the constant conflict between social prejudice and their own consciousness – how one can express themselves and relate to the world in which they live – *Minorities* examines how minority identities in China fit, or don’t fit, in the narrative of a harmonious One China.

“Yang Zhen is a gifted choreographer who is fearless in his pursuit of truth and bold in his artistic expression,” says Canadian Stage Artistic Director Brendan Healy. “A celebration of freedom, *Minorities* is a slice of Chinese youth culture that is original, irreverent and inspiring. We are thrilled to have the work of this rebellious prodigy at Canadian Stage.”

BRENDAN HEALY, Artistic Director      MONICA ESTEVES, Executive Director  
ALEXANDRA BAILLIE & TONY BAYLIS, Board Co Chairs

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Combining folk and contemporary dance, theatre, animation, a heart-pounding rock score interspersed with folkloric music, documentary material from Yang's extensive travel experiences, and the performer's memories, *Minorities* is an atmospheric yet playful work of theatre.

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**To receive further information or to request an interview, please contact  
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## ABOUT YANG ZHEN

Yang Zhen obtained his bachelor's degree in Choreography at Minzu University of China in Beijing. As an independent choreographer he has presented his productions at prestigious festivals in China and abroad, including at Julidans in Amsterdam, the Taipei Arts Festival in Taiwan, The Beijing Dance Festival, the Guangdong Dance Festival and at China Dance Forward 2014 in Hong Kong. In Germany, he has presented his work 2015, 2017 and 2019 a Festival DANCE in Munich. In May 2017, *Minorities* had its world premiere in Munich, followed by a tour to Heilbronn, Gießen, Münster and a year later to Freiburg-im-Breisgau. In May 2019, Yang premiered a new theatre/dance, *Delta*, about the Pearl River Delta and the three cities Guangzhou, Macao and Hong Kong in Munich at the DANCE2019 Festival. In September 2019, Yang Zhen premiered his latest dance piece *Destination*, a work about gender and different perspectives from the Eastern and Western world, with 4 dancers including Yang Zhen himself, in Germany.

## ABOUT CANADIAN STAGE

Canadian Stage is one of the country's leading not-for-profit contemporary performing arts organizations. Led by Artistic Director, Brendan Healy, and Executive Director, Monica Esteves, the company produces, presents, commissions, and collaborates with multiple partners on cross-disciplinary work with a focus on performance styles that integrate theatre, dance, film, visual arts and more. Sharing innovative and vibrant performance work from Canada and around the world, it stages performances at three Toronto venues: The Bluma Appel Theatre at the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts; the Berkeley Street Theatre; and the High Park Amphitheatre.