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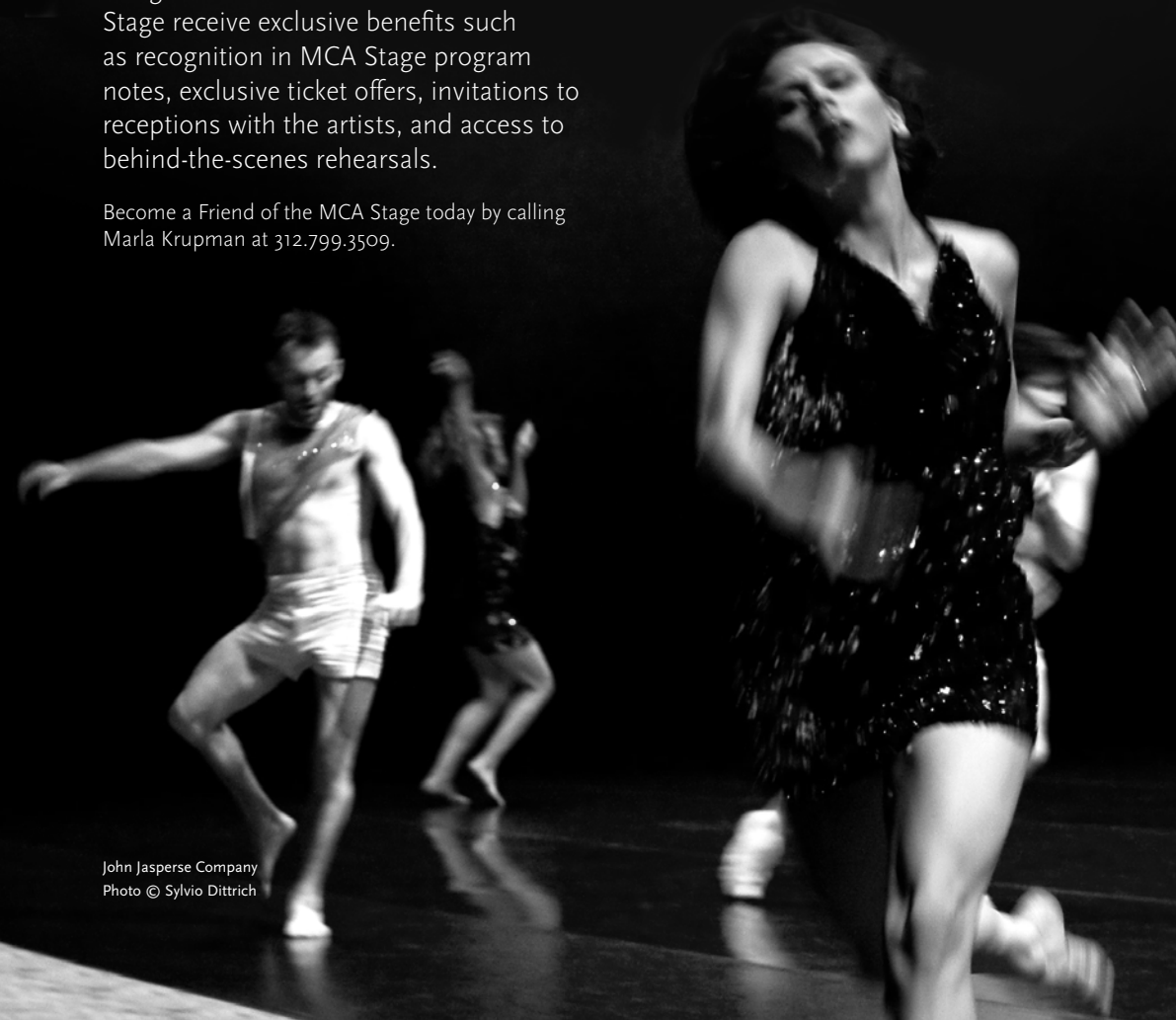
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John Jasperse Company
Photo © Sylvio Dittrich

Akram Khan Company
bahok

Friday–Sunday,
February 26–28, 2010



Museum of
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Art
CHICAGO
mcachicago.org

Photo by Hugo Glendinning

Akram Khan Company

bahok

Choreographed by Akram Khan

Music by Nitin Sawhney

Dancers

Eulalia Ayguade Farro

Young-Jin Kim

Andrej Petrovic

Saju

Shanell Winlock

Cheng-Fang Wu

Set-Byeol Lim

Sung-Hoon Kim

Chinese music advisor:

Gisele Edwards

Additional music: *My Friend of
Angel Tribe* by Mari Boine

Lighting designer: Fabiana
Piccioli

Set conception: Fabiana Piccioli,
Sander Loonen, and
Akram Khan

Costume stylist: Daydream
Nation

Dramaturge: Guy Cools

Producer: Farooq Chaudhry

Associate producer: Bia Oliveira

Tour manager: Christina Paul

Rehearsal director: Shanell
Winlock

Technical coordinator: Richard
Fagan

Technician: Peter Swikker

Exclusive North American tour
direction: 2Luck Concepts,
2Luck.com

Running time: 75 minutes, no intermission

Coproduced by Sadler's Wells
Theatre, London; the British Council;
the Liverpool Culture Company
with Merseyside Dance Initiative;
DanceXchange, Birmingham, UK;
Théâtre de la Ville, Paris; Tanzhaus NRW
Düsseldorf, Germany; National Arts
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www.akramkhancompany.net

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Artists Up Close

The MCA's popular series provides insight into the creative process through events that bring you closer to the artists.

First Night

Friday, February 26

Audience members are invited to stay for a conversation with with members of the Akram Khan Company following the performance.

Workshop

**Saturday, February 27,
11 am–1 pm**

Akram Khan Company dancer Shanell Winlock leads advanced students and professionals in learning the repertory from *bahok*. Khan's distinctive contemporary dance style draws on principles of Kathak (classical Indian dance), such as gestural detailing, rhythmic patterns, precision of line and focus, and its storytelling tradition. Exploring themes of home and cultural identity within contemporary society, the movement material in *bahok* is inspired by Kathak as well as the dancers' individual styles.

About the work

bahok premiered in Beijing in January 2008 and was originally a collaboration with the National Ballet of China, the first of its kind between a contemporary dance company in the United Kingdom and a state-funded national company in China. Featuring an original score by Akram Khan's longtime collaborator Nitin Sawhney, the 2010 tour of *bahok* brings together a new company of dancers from China, Spain, Slovakia, India, South Korea, Taiwan, and South Africa. Khan explains the concept of *bahok* as regarding people's coming together at one of our global transit zones where they try to communicate in order to exchange their stories and their memories of home.

"The dancers are the writers of the show. They are the ones who bring the source material. We search for the little stories that they bring with them and exploring these short stories of each individual, we find a bigger story. That's what fascinates me—to explore these personal stories of these individuals on stage, in order to discover and reveal a more universal one.

"I feel we live in a society that is evolving at great speed, and it is because of this momentum of shifting that we still call it a 'contemporary' society. All traditions were once contemporary; it is just a matter of time when something is regarded as old or part of a tradition. However, I believe that the role of the performing arts is critical to the present contemporary society, primarily because the performing arts are becoming more and more like a mirror, a place to reflect the world we live in.

"I remember once saying to a critic that my work is pure; it does not reflect my personal, political or religious opinions. The bodies that I present on stage are neutral. Yet over the years it has become clearer to me that I was wrong; the body is never neutral, it is not a machine where you can erase information and start again. The day the body comes to life, it forms an opinion. All through childhood we imitate everyone around us, we even absorb information from our surroundings quicker than we would do as adults. So

I now believe that work created in the performing arts, consciously or sub-consciously, strongly reflects the world we live in through the artist's eye.

"I always say the old society lives in a temple, the new one lives in a science-lab, but what excites me is the idea of bringing together these two worlds in order to make a 'new' place."

—Akram Khan, February 2008

"When this adventure began in 2006 with the National Ballet of China, all that existed was the commitment to try something new, an enthusiasm for an idea and the ambition to convert this idea into something that could be beautiful and meaningful.

"Needless to say, there were challenges in bringing together the resources of a large flagship national ballet company with that of a small independent contemporary troupe halfway across the world. There were obvious ones such as language, culture, movement styles, availability but also less obvious ones such as the hope for reinvention, developing new expectations and reflecting inner and outer aspirations. We had to learn a lot of new rules, demand more of ourselves and develop more sophisticated means of cooperation. Our team and that of the National Ballet of China were up to this task, and I'm extremely proud of what we collectively achieved.

"Collaboration for us is not just a means of artistic possibility but a great opportunity to learn from other cultures and disciplines. It is through this learning that I find the greatest satisfaction. Ironically, you end up both knowing more and less about yourself at the same time, but whatever happens it stops you from remaining static, from relying on familiar information and gives you a constant sense of motion. What could be better than that?"

—Farooq Chaudhry, 2009



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About the artists

Akram Khan

is one of the most acclaimed choreographers of his generation working in Britain today. Born in London into a family of Bangladeshi origin in 1974, he began dancing at the age of seven. He studied with *Kathak* dancer and teacher Sri Pratap Pawar, becoming his disciple. Khan began his stage career at the age of 14 when cast in Peter Brook's legendary production of *Mahabharata*, touring the world between 1987 and 1989 and appearing in a televised version of the play broadcast in 1988. Following later studies in contemporary dance and a period working with Anne Teresa de Keersmaecker's Brussels-based X-Group project, he began presenting solo performances of his work in the 1990s, maintaining his commitment to the classical *Kathak* repertoire as well as modern work. Among his best-known solo pieces are *Polaroid Feet* (2001), *Ronin* (2003) and *Third Catalogue* (2005).

In August 2000 Khan launched his own company, which has provided him with a platform for innovation and an increasingly diverse range of work through collaborations with artists from other disciplines ranging from theater, film, and visual arts, to music and literature. As Choreographer-in-Residence and later Associate Artist at London's Southbank Centre, he presented a recital with Pandit Birju Maharaj and Sri Pratap Pawar, as well as *A God of Small Tales*, a piece for mature women on which he collaborated with writer Hanif Kureishi. He remained an Associate Artist at the Southbank Centre until April 2005, the first nonmusician to be afforded this status, and is currently an Associate Artist at Sadler's Wells Theatre, also in London.

Khan's *In-I*—a collaboration with Oscar-winning actress Juliette Binoche, visual design by Anish Kapoor, and musical composition by Philip Sheppard—premiered in September 2008 at the National Theatre in London and undertook a major international tour. Other major works include *Sacred Monsters* (2006), featuring ballerina Sylvie

Guillem, with additional choreography by Lin Hwai Min, artistic director of Cloud Gate Dance Theatre in Taipei; *Variations* (2006), a collaboration with London Sinfonietta to celebrate the 70th birthday of composer Steve Reich; and *zero degrees* (2005), a collaboration with Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Antony Gormley, and Nitin Sawhney, which was nominated for the 2006 Laurence Olivier Awards (Best New Dance Production) and won the prestigious Helpmann Award in Australia for Best Choreography in a Dance Work in 2007. Khan's earlier company works include *Kaash* (2002), a collaboration with artist Anish Kapoor and composer Nitin Sawhney that was presented by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, in October 2003, and *ma* (2004), with text by Hanif Kureishi, for which Khan received a South Bank Show Award in 2005. He was invited by Kylie Minogue to choreograph a section of her *Showgirl* concert, which opened in Australia in November 2006 and toured to the United Kingdom in January 2007.

Khan has been the recipient of numerous awards including the Jerwood Foundation Choreography Award (2000); Outstanding Newcomer to Dance Award from both the Dance Critics' Circle (2000) and Time Out Live (2000); Best Modern Choreography from the Dance Critics' Circle (2002); the International Movimentos Tanzpreis (2004) for Most Promising Newcomer in Dance; a South Bank Show Award (2005); and the 2005 Critics' Circle National Dance Awards for Outstanding Male or Female Artist (modern). Khan was also nominated for a Nijinsky Award for Best Newcomer (2002). More recently, he was awarded the 2007 Excellence in International Dance Award by the International Theatre Institute, and Best Male Dancer in the prestigious annual Helpmann Awards held in Sydney, Australia in 2007. He has been nominated again for this award for his recent performance in *In-I*. In 2004, Khan received an Honorary Doctorate of Arts from the United Kingdom's De Montfort University

for his contribution to the United Kingdom arts community and was awarded membership in the Order of the British Empire for his services to dance in 2005.

Nitin Sawhney

is a producer, songwriter, DJ, multi-instrumentalist, and orchestral composer of film, videogames, dance, and theater. His eight studio albums have received 17 major national awards, including a Technics Mercury Music Prize nomination and a South Bank Show Award for *Beyond Skin* (Outcaste Records, 1999). His releases on Richard Branson's V2 Records include *Prophesy* (2001), winner of a Music of Black Origin (MOBO) Award and a BBC Radio 3 Music Award; *Philtre* (2005), his second British Broadcasting Company (BBC) Radio 3 Music Award; and his most recent recording *London Undersound*. His Clubland releases include *All Mixed Up*, *FabricLive.15*, and *In the Mind of...* Nitin Sawhney. He is a producer of the 2007 album for Atlantic Records artist Get Cape.Wear Cape.Fly.

Sawhney has composed for more than 40 films and television ads. His music for the United Kingdom's Channel Four's *Second Generation* earned a Ivor Novello Award for Film and TV Composition nomination in 2004. His orchestral scores include Mira Nair's *The Namesake*; Sony Playstation 3's *Heavenly Sword*; and Franz Osten's silent film classic *A Throw of Dice*, premiered by the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican (2006) and subsequently toured internationally by several orchestras. His film scores include Deepa Mehta's *Exclusion*, Henrique Goldman's *The Fifth Beatle*, and Andy Serkins's directorial debut *Dark Blue Rising*. He has been commissioned by Electric Proms (for full orchestra in 2008 and concert score in 2006); the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (2004); the Britten Sinfonia (2001 for *Neural Circuits* featuring the pianist Joanna, and 2004); and BBC Proms (*Urban Prophecies*, 2000). In 2007, BBC Proms fea-

tured a retrospective of Sawhney's orchestral work at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

Established in flamenco guitar and classical/jazz piano performance, Sawhney has toured internationally and appeared with artists such as Sting, Paul McCartney, Sinéad O'Connor, A. R. Rahman, Jeff Beck, Brian Eno, Fink, and Will Young. He has performed with the BBC Concert Orchestra for *Natural World Symphony* and the London Philharmonia Orchestra for *The Namesake*. In 2000, Sawhney produced *Varekai* for Cirque du Soleil, taking his unique sound to an even-wider audience. His first collaboration with the Akram Khan Company was for *Kaash* (2002), which was designed by Anish Kapoor. He received a Bessie Award for Music for Khan's *Zero Degrees*, designed by Antony Gormley and nominated for a Laurence Olivier Award. In 2009, following the premiere of their third collaboration for *bahok*, Sawhney teamed with Khan on *Svapnagata*, a festival of Indian music and dance at London's Sadler's Wells Theatre. Other recent theater work include Simon McBurney's Olivier Award-winning *A Disappearing Number* for Theatre Complicite, the *Mahabharata* adaptation by Olivier Award-winning writer Stephen Clarke, and Jonathan Holmes's *Fallujah*.

Sawhney's commitment to education and community building extends to five Artist in Residences worldwide. Along with Sir George Martin, he was a patron for the British Government's Access-to-Music program and for the Rindance East Film Festival and the British Independent Film Awards. In 2006, Sawhney was awarded an honorary graduate degree from London's South Bank University and in late 2007 was awarded an honorary degree of doctor of music from the University of Kent. In 2008 Sawhney was made a fellow of the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, and in 2009 received three honorary doctorates from the Universities of Sussex, Staffordshire and Roehampton.

Fabiana Piccioli

studied philosophy at University La Sapienza di Roma. She danced professionally from 1999 to 2002 in Rome and Brussels, and worked as technical coordinator and production manager at the Romaeuropa Festival from 2002 to 2004. She joined the Akram Khan Company as technical manager in 2005, and designed lighting for the Company's 2006 production *Variations for Vibes, Pianos, and Strings*, a collaboration with London Sinfonietta.

Guy Cools

trained as a dramaturge and became involved with developments in dance in Flanders (Belgium) in the 1980s, initially as a dance critic and, from 1990 onward, as theatre and dance director of Arts Centre Vooruit in Ghent, Belgium. In that capacity he was responsible for collaborations with a variety of international dance companies. As vice president of the Dance Council, he contributed to the cultural policy for dance of the Flemish community. He has curated dance events in Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, Venice, and Montréal, and is an artistic consultant for Place des Arts, Montréal. He left Vooruit to dedicate himself full time to production dramaturgy with Koen Augustijnen (Les Ballets C de la B), Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Akram Khan, Danièle Desnoyers (Montréal), Lia Haraki (Cyprus), Sara Wookey (Los Angeles), and Anabel Schellekens (Belgium) and to return to his old passions of teaching, writing, giving workshops, lecturing, and publishing in Belgium, Canada, Great Britain, Germany, and Greece. Since 2004, he has lived in Montréal, Canada.

Farooq Chaudhry

was born in Pakistan. He graduated from the London Contemporary Dance School in 1986. He has danced professionally in a variety of forms in several European countries, notably in Belgium as company member with contemporary dance com-

pany Rosas in the mid 1990s. In 1988, he received an Asian Achievement Award in dance. He retired from dancing in 1999 after which he completed a master of arts degree in arts management from City University in London. As a freelance dance manager he teamed up with Akram Khan in 1999, a year later cofounding the Akram Khan Company. Chaudhry has played a key role in forming innovative business models for Khan's artistic ambitions as well as offering creative support in project development. He is a "project champion" for Arts Council England's Cultural Leadership program and a member of Dance UK's Board. He was recently acknowledged in a new publication by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a list of the world's top 100 cultural actors and entrepreneurs.

Christina Paul

was born in London and grew up in Hong Kong. She studied world theater and visual arts at the United World College of Hong Kong, and won a scholarship to attend the Mountview Theatre School in London in 1999. She holds a master of arts degree in Japanese and Chinese Studies from Oxford University, where she graduated with first class honors in 2006. She trained at the London Contemporary Dance School where she studied *Kathak* with Gauri Tripathi, joining the Akram Khan Company in July 2007 as interpreter and, later, tour manager for *bahok* and *In-I*.

2Luck Concepts

was established in 2001 by John Luckacovic and Eleanor Oldham. Notable production, booking, and management work includes the debut North American tours of George Piper Dances/Ballet Boyz; Akram Khan Company's *Kaash, ma, Sacred Monsters* featuring Akram Khan and Sylvie Guillem, and *In-I* featuring Akram Khan and Juliette Binoche; London's Shakespeare's Globe Original Practice productions of *Twelfth Night* and *Measure for Measure* and the currently touring *Love's*

Labours Lost; the critically acclaimed Stan Won't Dance's *Sinner*; a 12-week 50-city tour in 10 years of Moscow's Helikon Opera; and the first tour of Polish folk group Mazowsze in 10 years (coordinated with a major public television special). New projects include former Globe Artistic Director Mark Rylance's company Phoebeus Cart, continuing his dedication to Original Practice; the return of the Irish physical theater company CoisCeim; Belgian choreographer Sidi Larbi's *Aprocrifu*; and two forthcoming works by Akram Khan, *Gnosis* and *Vertical Road*.

DANCERS

Shanell Winlock

was born in South Africa and received her dance training in Johannesburg. She worked with various South African-based choreographers including Gregory Vuyani Maqoma (vuyani dance and theatre project), Sylvia Glasser (moving into dance, maphatong) and PJ Sabagga (the forgotten angle collaboration), earning various awards including Outstanding Female Performer for the First National Bank Dance Awards for three consecutive years. In 1998 she was awarded a scholarship to join PARTS (Performing Arts Research and Training Studios) under the direction of Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, in Brussels, where she studied for one year. Winlock joined the Akram Khan Company in 2001, and has performed in five productions.

Eulalia Ayguade Farro

is from Barcelona, Spain. She studied at the Institut del Teatre. In 1998, she entered PARTS (Performing Arts Research and Training Studio) in Brussels, run by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker. She joined Publik Eye Company in Denmark in 2001, and in 2003 joined the Akram Khan Company, performing in *Kaash* and later *ma*. She has created and performed original work with Anton Lachky (*Twice Read*, 2005), and worked with Enclave Dance Company, Brussels,

in 2006. She has worked with choreographer Hofesh Shechter in *Uprising*, *In Your Rooms*, and *The Art of Not Looking Back*. *bahok* is Farro's third production with the Akram Khan Company.

Young-Jin Kim

was born in Seoul, South Korea. He graduated from the Korea National University of Arts in 2003 with a master of arts degree in dance performance and started the company Laboratory Dance Project (LDP) with his fellow graduates. LDP gave him the opportunity to choreograph and work with renowned choreographers, among them Micha Purucker, Ismael Ivo, and Izotok Kovac. He joined the Akram Khan Company in 2005 for *ma* and in 2006 performed in *Variations for Vibes*, *Pianos*, and *Strings*. In 2007, he worked with choreographer Hofesh Shechter in *Uprising* and *In Your Rooms*. *bahok* is his third production with the Akram Khan Company.

Andrej Petrovic

was born in Bojnice, Slovak Republic. After graduating from the dance conservatory in Banska Bystrica, he joined Studio Tanca Professional Dance Theatre/Zuzana Hájková. He is a cofounder of the dance company Dajv/Marta Poláková. He has collaborated with Editta Braun Company in Salzburg; Fatou Traore, Brussels; and Giorgio Barberio Corsetti/Fatore Kappa Physical Theatre in Rome. He has choreographed for the dance film *The Day* in collaboration with Juraj Korec and directed by Jozef Vlk. He has worked with Jean Abreu Dance Company in London, Jaroslav Vinarsky in Prague, and has been studying at the University of Music and Dramatic Arts in Bratislava, Slovakia. He joined the Akram Khan Company in 2007.

Saju

was born in Kerala, South India and lives in London and Birmingham in the United Kingdom. He graduated with a degree in electronics engineering in



Photo by Liu Yang

Bangalore, before training in contemporary dance and martial art *Kalaripayattu* with Jayachandran at Attakkalari Center for Movement Arts, touring with Imlata Dance Company in *City Maps* and *TransAvatar* to the United Kingdom, India, Germany, and Switzerland from 1998 to 2003. Since moving to London, Saju danced with Shobana Jeyasingh Dance Company and Bedlam Dance Company. Saju danced the lead in Gustav Holst's opera *Savitri* (City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra) and has performed in the West End musical *The Far Pavilions*, Jatinder Verma's *The Merchant of Venice* (Tara Arts), and William Tuckett's *Thief of Baghdad* in the Linbury Studio. His choreography has been commissioned by London's The Place, Royal Opera House, and New Currents, and includes two shortlisted works for The Place Prize. Saju attended the prestigious Vienna DanceWEB summer school in 2006 on scholarship, participated in Kim Brandstrup's Dance:lines choreolab (Royal Opera House, 2006), and won an Arts Council International Fellowship to study in Nairobi in 2007. He has been Associate Artist at UK Foundation for Dance, and at the 2007 Woking Dance Festival. *bahok* is his first production with the Akram Khan Company.

Cheng-Fung Wu

was born in Taiwan and studied ballet at the Imperial Eleven Ballet before being exposed to other styles of training at the Taipei National University of the Arts. She later studied at Purchase College, State University of New York, on a scholarship and graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in 2007.

She has worked with Les Grands Ballet Canadiens de Montréal under Gradimir Pankov, and has participated in several professional dance projects in North America. In 2008, she began her studies at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts for her master of fine arts degree. She has performed works by George Balanchine, Paul Taylor, Nacho Duato, Peter Quanz, Edgar Zendejas, Helen Pickett, Lauri Stallings, Sarah Slippers, Raewyn Hills, John Utans, and Yuri Ng.

Set-Byeol Lim

was born in Seoul, South Korea. She studied at Seoul Art High School and graduated from the Korean National University of Arts in 2009, where she majored in contemporary performance. She won 2nd Prize in the annual Dong-A Dance Competition and has performed extensively with the Korea National University of Arts Dance Company around Korea and the United States. *bahok* is her first production with the Akram Khan Company.

Sung-Hoon Kim

was born in Seoul, South Korea. He graduated from the Korean National University of Art with a master of arts degree in dance performance. Since 2004 he has been a member of the Laboratory Dance Company in Seoul. He teaches extensively and has performed and choreographed for numerous venues and festivals around Korea and internationally. *bahok* is his first production with the Akram Khan Company.

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*Program notes compiled by
Yolanda Cesta Cursach*

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Volunteer for performances

312.397.4072
mcaperformances@hotmail.com

Contact the Performances department

artistsupclose@mcchicago.org

Museum hours

Tuesday: 10 am–8 pm

Wednesday–Sunday: 10 am–5 pm

Closed Mondays, Thanksgiving,
Christmas, and New Year's Day