

SHEU ANNIE

The Art of China

When I was five years old, I began dancing Chinese Cultural Dance. Throughout the ten years that I have been dancing, I have been greatly influenced by the distinct culture and the many traditions that are captured by the Chinese cultural dances. Performing and practicing the varieties of Chinese dances have exposed me to the culture in a very unique way. To me, the dances symbolized the culture, grace, and the beauty of the Chinese. By performing these dances and therefore experiencing the culture firsthand, I am able to explore the dance and the deep meaning that the cultural dances hold. Also, because cultural dances represent tradition, they can be passed down by generation after generation. This gives me the opportunity to share the experiences of the Chinese culture with my family and others who also participate in Chinese Cultural Dance. From this, I am able to learn about the Chinese culture in the most absolute way. I believe that the Chinese culture is shown through their dance, and that their dances reflect the different time periods of China. From performing different dances from the different time periods of China, I can better understand China and its culture as a whole.

In the many different cultural dances of China, different props were used to reflect the style of the dances. Some cultural dances that I have previously performed include the Ribbon Dance, the New Year's Dance, the Mountain Dance (Taiwan), the Farmer's Dance and the Fan Dance. In these dances, many props are used, such as long, beautiful ribbons, traditional farmers' hats, and colorful fans. These props are very important to the dances because it resembles the culture of China and how the Chinese culture was incorporated in their dances. The props too are art in itself. Like the dances, the props

were passed down from generation to generation and are still today used in cultural dances. These props define China's culture and separate it from others.

Having dance Chinese Cultural Dance for the past ten years of my life has made a great impact on me. Not only have I just learned about the great significance of the dances to China's culture, but also, I have actually been able to experience it, which not many people get to do. I believe that the only way to experience China and its amazing culture is to actually take part in something that defines the culture, like dance. I also believe that dancing is a form of art that is capable of capturing the culture and magnificence of China, but it has also led me to an amazing adventure that has helped me experience China and its culture to the fullest.