

Director's Statement

When we began *UNBROKEN*, our guiding questions were simple: What is the everyday life of a Shen Yun artist behind the glamour? And what does it take to defend your dreams when adversity rises, and when everything you love is at stake?

UNBROKEN

Shen Yun Performing Arts is often associated with spectacle: sweeping choreography, vibrant costumes, and grand stages. But we were drawn to what happens beyond the curtain. What does discipline look like at dawn?

What does resilience look like in a family reading headlines, navigating threats and controversy, while their children continue to rehearse as artists in a company that has become both a global sensation and a target of a repressive regime?

We centered much of the film around one American family living through extraordinary circumstances. Through them, and through the dancers themselves, we tried to observe rather than declare. To listen closely. To let the human story lead.

During filming, one artist told us, "Art is a reflection of yourself." That line stayed with me. Because when the noise in society grows louder, when doubt, scrutiny, and outside forces intensify, what remains is the inner life of the artist. Their work becomes inseparable from who they are.

As we spent more time with these performers, what moved us most was not the controversy, but the depth of commitment behind the craft. The early mornings. The injuries. The loving phone calls with home. The choice to continue. We began to see that inner strength, that is hidden from public sight, was the throughline.

Having grown up in China and later building my life in the United States, I am aware of how fragile creative freedom can feel. But in making this film, I was less interested in conclusions than in questions: What does it take to live and create in the face of adversity? What does art look like in defiance, not in anger, but in steadfast resilience?

UNBROKEN became an exploration of identity and expression, of how belief shapes movement, and how artists carry conviction into every gesture.

Sometimes the most powerful act is not confrontation. It is the decision to remain whole.

~ Director, Fiona Young