

LIFE

The percussion of feet striking the ground — quick, insistent, then suddenly restrained before the next surge — carries the atmosphere of the plateau into the theater. In final rehearsals, dancers in Tibetan costumes and specially made tap shoes carry speed, force and changes of mood across the stage.

These rhythms will anchor *Tashi Shabdro*, a title meaning “auspicious dance”, when it makes its Beijing debut on Saturday and Sunday. Its premiere coincides with this year’s Serfs’ Emancipation Day in the Xizang autonomous region.

Billed as one of China’s first full-length Tibetan tap dance dramas, the production is built around Lhaze Doishy, a folk dance from Xizang listed as national intangible cultural heritage. It also incorporates elements from other traditional Tibetan dance forms, such as Dingri Lhoshey, Lhokha Gorshey and Nagchu Sheychen.

Huang Doudou, the work’s artistic director and vice-chair of the China Dancers Association, describes the production as the first step toward expanding the art into a sustained theatrical narrative.

“With its long history and distinct artistic features, Tibetan tap dance in many forms has long been popular in daily life and on stage,” he says.

“But expecting it to convey a complete story throughout an entire performance is a different challenge, particularly on the plateau.”

The challenges were both artistic and physical.

The production took about three years to complete and passed through three successive choreographic teams. High-altitude conditions posed a constant obstacle. Huang recalls experts watching rehearsals and holding discussions “with oxygen tanks on their backs”, while the cast struggled with the physical demands of sustaining long performances.

The creative leap was equally demanding. Performers from inland regions and Xizang were asked to transform a form often associated with celebration into a vehicle for complex emotion.

Tsedrob, a young actor in the cast, says that the shift was the hardest part.

“People often see Tibetan tap dance as festive,” he says.

“But it can also carry sorrow and anger. The real difficulty is finding a way for the footwork to express a character’s inner life.”

Tsedrob, excited about the coming premiere, adds that he hopes the audience will see Tibetan tap dance as it truly is, both in style and in spirit.

At the heart of the production lies a fundamental shift — from viewing dance as a stand-alone performance to embracing it as a narrative language. The creative team says the work tries to preserve the cultural roots of traditional Tibetan tap dance, while pushing choreography, staging and



Plateau taps its way onto the stage

A new theater production uses Tibetan dance to tell a story, pushing tradition into a bold, creative form, **Guo Yanqi** reports.



Tashi Shabdro, one of China’s first Tibetan tap dance dramas, will make its Beijing premiere on Saturday and Sunday.

dramatic expression further. The result is an attempt to give the old folk art new life on the contemporary stage.

Director Wei Dong says the idea initially seemed almost impossible: selecting one highly recognizable style from Xizang’s many regional dance traditions and transforming it into a full-length drama. The team built the structure around a precise rhythm, “a small climax every three minutes and a bigger one every five”, while ensuring the movement vocabulary remained grounded in Tibetan forms.

To keep the sound of that vocabulary alive, the team also experimented with live stage sound, using specially designed tap shoes, so that audiences could hear the dancers’ footwork more clearly and directly. The aim was to keep the creation recognizably Tibetan even as it moved to a more contemporary theatrical form, Wei adds.

The story spans two generations. It follows an aid doctor, his daughter and a Tibetan family whose lives remain intertwined across time through sacrifice, memory and inheritance. According to Liu Shizhong, deputy head of the publicity authorities of Xizang, the work seeks to tell a Chinese story of unity, dedication and inheritance through dance.

For Hu Yuting, one of the lead performers, emotional connections are carried not only through movement but also through symbolic objects on stage. She points to symbols such as the *drangyen*, a traditional Tibetan lute, saying they help her internalize the characters’ connections and express the deep emotional ties between Han and Tibetan ethnic groups.

Beyond the narrative lies another layer involving cultural collaboration between Xizang and Beijing. *Tashi Shabdro* is guided by the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles and co-produced by regional publicity authorities, the China Dancers Association, a Xizang-based cultural investment group, and a Beijing aid program office.

For its makers, the Beijing premiere is not the finish line. Huang says the work will continue to evolve after opening, drawing on expert advice, audience responses and online feedback.

The team also hopes to bring the production to more cities in China and eventually to international audiences.

Back in the rehearsal hall, the dancers begin again. The steps return — fast, then slow, then suddenly sharp. An old rhythm is being asked to do something new by telling a story all the way to the end.

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“Tibetan tap dance in many forms has long been popular in daily life and on stage. But expecting it to convey a complete story throughout an entire performance is a different challenge, particularly on the plateau.”

Huang Doudou, artistic director of *Tashi Shabdro* and vice-chair of the China Dancers Association



The production *Tashi Shabdro* preserves the cultural roots of traditional Tibetan tap dance, while pushing choreography, staging and dramatic expression further. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Reality show puts focus on financial literacy

By XING WEN
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“The biggest risk a person can take is to do nothing,” wrote Robert Kiyosaki, author of the best-seller *Rich Dad Poor Dad*.

The recently aired workplace reality show, *Fresh to the Field Finance Season*, now streaming on Mango TV, aims to encourage viewers to take action while navigating the uncertainties of life. Blending education with entertainment, the program promotes the practical use of financial tools to help people manage risks and build stronger safeguards for their future.

The show has assembled a group of celebrities with relevant academic backgrounds. They include Liu Zhang, a rapper who graduated from New York University with a bachelor’s degree in economics and mathematics; Guo Wentao, an entertainer and a graduate of Peking University’s Guanghua School of Management with four years of experience in the financial industry; and Thai pop idol Kornchid Boonsathitpakdee, who holds a degree in business administration.

Together, they serve as risk-control agents in the program’s Life Risk Prevention and Control Center.

Guided by a team of financial experts, they work with clients to identify and assess

potential risks in their lives. Using financial tools, rigorous logical analysis and their market insights, they work together to develop practical strategies to reduce those risks.

“This role requires not only professional expertise but also the ability to communicate effectively with clients,” Guo says.

“We need to accurately understand what they truly need.”

Zhang Quanling, a former host, now an investor and entrepreneur, was invited to serve as a “client representative” on the show.

Most of the center’s clients also work in the entertainment industry, such as actress Ni Hongjie, who supports five elderly family members, and host Li Weijia, who plans to live independently after retirement.

“The biggest takeaway from this show is realizing that the risks we thought were distant are actually universal,” says Zhang.

She notes that issues such as supporting aging parents, protecting against entrepreneurial risks, and making end-of-life decisions are all challenges that ordinary people will eventually face.

“I suggest that while watching the show with an entertaining mindset and listening to other people’s stories, viewers should also take a moment to reflect on their own life plans,” she says.



Zhang Quanling, a former host, now an investor and entrepreneur, serves as a client representative on the show, *Fresh to the Field Finance Season*.

“Make sure you’re prepared for the risks these situations may bring.”

The current finance-themed installment marks the show’s sixth season. Previous seasons have explored professions including civil aviation pilots, traditional Chinese medicine doctors and forensic examiners.

“I believe everyone needs to understand finance, because we deal with finance at every moment of our lives,” says Zhao Wenhai, the show’s producer.

“We hope to deliver that knowledge in a subtle, engaging way.”

In December, the consumer rights and interests mediation center of the National Financial Regulatory Administration released the 2025 Consumer Financial Literacy Survey Report, which collected 255,668 valid samples nationwide.

The report suggests that Chinese consumers need to further learn and develop new

skills to better adapt to an increasingly digital and complex financial environment. While consumers’ financial behavior is generally stable, areas such as the diversified use of financial tools and asset allocation strategies need improvement.

Consumers generally have a solid grasp of basic financial knowledge, but their understanding of more complex concepts, calculations and long-term decision-making remains relatively limited.

Li Chang, a member of the show’s panel of financial experts, emphasizes the importance of financial literacy — the ability to earn, manage and protect wealth.

“There are four major risk quadrants in life: health, accidents, retirement and family responsibilities,” Li says.

“Only by safeguarding our risk baseline can we pursue the life we want, chase our dreams, and seek happiness.”



Fresh to the Field Finance Season features a group of celebrities with relevant academic backgrounds.

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