

# L'UOMO

## VOGUE

### L'UOMO/Music

*From the cello to the trombone to the laptop: Dana Leong's musical versatility has conquered the elite of critics. And after the sold out performance at the Apollo Theater, he's back with bigger and better projects.*

## It's a SIZZLING MELODY chemistry

di Lorenzo Tiezzi

**H**ip hop rhythmic fluidity, jazz improvisation, and technology serving the music rather than selfish virtuosity: this is the musical recipe of Dana Leong, (29 years old), who has mastered several instruments and moves with ease from the cello to the trombone to the laptop with a technique, which is as simple and direct as a riff from a Steve Wonder song. "The sound of his recordings is always remarkably organic: the instruments and grooves blend together like one", explains Leong quietly while working in the recording studio before a series of European concerts. Applauded by top critics for his relaxed approach, which is in no way purist, he has the potential to conquer wide audiences. He obviously knows how to move on stage, and as he distorts the sounds of his cello, he appears every bit as sexy as a guitarist.

Born in the San Francisco bay of Asian descent (his father is Chinese and his mother Japanese), he is the product of a cultural melting pot.

"Black music has not

been a choice for me. I grew up in its midst, and abundant with the sounds of Hip Hop, R&B, Soul, and

"Law and Order" and "The Terminal" by Stephen Spielberg, but his energies are mainly focused on his

be used as part of two sold out performances at Harlem's Apollo Theater, a venue made famous by the



Reggae. I moved to New York because work opportunities are more readily available domestically and internationally such as frequent trips on European tours." Launching a career in the Big Apple was not easy, but his musical versatility afforded him chances to play in the company of celebrities such as P. Diddy, Kayne West, Yoko Ono, Ryuichi Sakamoto or Wynton Marsalis. He has also performed as an actor in

own projects on and off screen. "Life after Dark", a collective multimedia musical project encompasses Leong's interests in new collaborations. "First I picked a drummer, a rapper, a koto player, a keyboardist, tap dancer, and a DJ. Then I created brief documentary interviews on each of them, which I showed to the audience throughout the performance, because music must be told the right way."

These documentaries were then commissioned to

late champion of black music, James Brown.

Leong and his band "Milk and Jade", as true exponents of American multifaceted music, collaborate in "The Rhythm Road", a program that is sponsored by the United States Department of Cultural Affairs.

"We play all over the world and we meet young musicians from the US, to Europe, to Asia, because in order to blossom, talent needs to be cultivated as early as childhood"