



Asian Studies Notes

NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIAN STUDIES PROGRAM OF THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO

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亞細亞學研究

***Walls in China* Conference Makes its Mark**

On October 20-23, some thirty China scholars and artists from China and North America wrestled with issues of special and conceptual walls. The conference was titled "The Roles and Representations of Walls in the Reshaping of Chinese Modernity." Thirty-one presentations were made, many illustrated with works of modern art. Participants and a steady audience from the Buffalo and Ithaca communities were most appreciative of the interdisciplinary nature of the conference content, which ranged through such fields as literature, architecture, art, medicine, history, and communication.

The conference was inspired by the art exhibition, *The Wall*, and took place at the three venues of the exhibition: the Center for the Arts, the Anderson Gallery, and the Albright-Knox Art Gallery. UB Professor Roger

Des Forges was program chair, and the Asian Studies Program managed the logistics, with the help of the Baldy Center, the staffs of the UB Art Galleries and the Albright-Knox, and numerous student volunteers. We express deep thanks to all the sponsors and assistants.

The organizers are now at work on the scholarly publication of papers, beginning with

a complete conference proceedings.



From left to right: Arthur Waldron, U. Penn; Thomas Burkman, UB; Eugene Wang, Harvard U.

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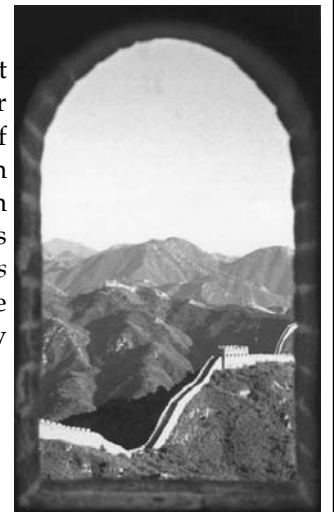
Gallery Tour of The Wall at UB

On Wednesday, November 16, from 12:00 to 1:00, Asia at Noon will take the form of a gallery tour of the art exhibition, *The Wall*, now showing at the UB Art Gallery in the Center for the Arts. **Bingyi Huang**, Assistant Professor of Art History, will lead the tour, which is featured as an International Education Week event.

The Wall is the most ambitious exhibition of contemporary Chinese art to travel outside of China. It is showing at three venues: the UB Art Gallery, the UB Anderson Gallery, and the Albright-Knox Art Gallery through January 29. The chief curator is Gao Minglu, formerly of UB and now at the University of Pittsburgh, assisted by Professor Huang. Sandra Olsen, Director of the UB Art Galleries, has played a crucial role in garnering support for the project. The UB exhibit includes paintings, instal-

lations, and video art.

Prof. Huang is in her first semester at UB. She did her doctoral work in the history of art at Yale University. In 1997, she conducted research for the catalog of the famous exhibition, *Five Thousand Years of Chinese Civilization*, at the Guggenheim Museum in New York.



Chinese Education Mission (CEM) Project

Four grandchildren descended from the Chinese Students of the Chinese Educational Mission gathered at the University Inn on October 18 and 19, 2005. They are Richard V. Lee, MD, Professor of Medicine at UB who organized the meeting and is the grandson of one of the CEM boys, Li Yan Phou, in the second detachment which arrived in the US in 1873; Bruce Chan from Toronto, grandson of a boy in the first detachment; Liang Zanxun from Beijing; and Dana Young from Austin, Texas, both grandsons of boys in the second detachment.

The Chinese Educational Mission, beginning in 1872, sent 120 boys, ages 11-14, in four detachments, to the United States for their education. The project was the concept of Yung Wing, the first Chinese student to graduate from an American University (Yale) in 1854. The boys were to reside in the United States for 15 years learning military, industrial, and civil engineering, as well as the English language and American customs, and then return to China to as-



*Dana Young, Bruce Chan, Susan Lee,
Zanxun Liang, Richard Lee*

sist the Imperial Government in modernizing China. The project was ended by the very conservative government of China in 1881 and the boys were recalled. Two of the boys, however, managed to stay or return to the United States and complete their college education at Yale University.

The story of the Chinese Educational Mission has attracted much public attention in China over the past few years; including a CCTV documentary about the boys and their teachers and a large reunion of descendants held in ZhuHai, PRC, during 2004 to mark the sesquicentennial of Yung Wing's graduation from Yale in 1854.

The scholars who are interested in this particular historical incident participated in the meeting, including Prof. Edward Rhoades from the University of Texas, Austin; Prof. Bernadette Li from St Johns University, New York; and UB Professors Thomas Burkman and Roger Des Forges. The meeting designed a CEM website which will soon go on-line.

The Wall Exhibition In Lockwood Library

"The Wall: Monument, Myth, and Metaphor" exhibition opens in Lockwood Library on October 21.

The Great Wall of China is an international icon, a symbol with meanings that have changed over the centuries. The exhibit depicts the wall's evolution as an image of power, protection, and a unified national identity. Lockwood's exhibit supports the major retrospective of contemporary Chinese art, "The Wall," appearing at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery and the UB Art Galleries. The Lockwood exhibit and a reception - November 8, 3-5 p.m., Lockwood Library - are free and open to the public.

Nina Asher speaks November 10: Indian American Identities

Dr. Nina Asher, a specialist in the field of education, whose research focuses on the experience of South Asians and other Asian youth in American schools. She is Associate Professor of Education at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. She will speak Thursday, November 10, 12:00-1:00 in 479 Baldy. Her presentation, titled "Indian American Identities: Negotiating Self, Place, and Difference," is sponsored by the Asian American Model Minority Myth graduate group and co-sponsored by Asian Studies.

Drawing on postcolonial and feminist theories, Dr. Asher interrogates the narratives of Indian American youth who are located in "the margins, the center, and spaces in-between."

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Study Abroad Journal

How I could write about my experiences in Japan and do them justice is beyond me? Simply put, I came to Japan as a study abroad student in September 2002 and am now back, living in Osaka, married to a woman I met on the train.

I originally started studying Japanese as a hobby. I grew up mono-lingual, and for a long time wanted to be able to speak at least one other language (I felt I was missing out by only being able to speak English). I was exposed to Japan and Japanese through friends, movies, books and eventually decided to learn to speak it. Romance and Germanic languages, though closely related to English, for some reason never appealed to me. I was attracted to Japanese because of it's having no relation to English. I was also interested in learning what made Japan "Japan." Japan had never been anything more than a footnote in what I learned in school, so learning and reading about it on my own was intriguing, to say the least.

The more I studied Japanese the more interested I became. I knew that in order to be able to speak it well I would start studying it in the classroom and then eventually spend time in Japan. With this goal in mind, I transferred to the University at Buffalo with the intention of studying Japanese and spending an academic year abroad.

I am extremely glad that I did.

UB has four academic year programs available in Japan, but the one that appealed to me was the program offered at Konan University in Kobe. The cornerstone of the Konan program is their home-stay placement. I

knew I would need to physically LIVE with a family in order to improve my Japanese and learn as much as I could.

I have to give the people that set up the home-stay program a lot of credit. They allow students to specify the type of family they want and they do their best to set up students with a family that meets their needs. In my case the placement was perfect!

Because my goal was to improve my Japanese as much as possible, I requested a family that could not speak English. I hoped for a family that was outgoing, who would involve me with their activities and would include me in family discussions. The family I was placed with was really incredible. I never once felt like I was an outsider. My host parents truly made me feel like I was their son, talking to me often, taking me out sight-seeing, even letting me cook with them. There were of course times when something was miscommunicated or I and/or they had made a mistake, but we were always able to work these out with each other. I still communicate with my host family to this day and occasionally stop by their home where my host mother insists on force-feeding me with her outstanding culinary skills.

I've already had a couple of job offers, and a few interviews coming up. For now I play househusband to Minori, keep the apartment clean, and make sure she comes home to a nice dinner. I made Buffalo wings for her a few weeks ago. She loved them.

Joshua Bouchard
Osaka, June 2005



Call for Papers

Paper submissions are invited for a conference on "Asian Migrations" to be held at Binghamton University, Binghamton, NY on Friday March 24 and Saturday March 25, 2006.

Potential topics could include the temporary transnational movements and permanent migration; the roles of state in facilitating and restricting migration; ability of specific markets (e.g., for doctors, coolies, or sex workers) to create migrations; and the role of migration in the transnational flows of religion and popular culture.

Paper and panel proposals should be sent to Professor John Chaffee, at migrate@binghamton.edu no later than

December 1. For details, go to
<http://aaasp.binghamton.edu/events.htm>

Asia at Noon has Spring Semester Openings

Asia at Noon is an informal setting to air research before an interdisciplinary audience of faculty and students. Twenty-minute presentations are followed by discussion. Formal manuscripts are not necessary. Faculty and graduate students are invited to contact the Asian Studies Program, if they have a presentation to propose for the coming spring and fall '06 semesters.

Asian Studies Calendar

November

- Nov. 8, 3:00- 5:00. *The Wall Exhibit and Reception.* Lockwood Library. Free and open to the public.
- Nov. 10, 12:00- 1:00. "Indian American Identities." Dr. **Nina Asher**, Associate Professor of Education at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. Baldy 479. Sponsored by the Asian American Model Minority Myth graduate group, and co-sponsored by Asian Studies.
- Nov. 16, 12:00-1:00. *Asia at Noon.* "Walking Tour of The Wall Exhibition of Modern and Contemporary Chinese Art." **Bingyi Huang**, Assistant Professor of Art History. Art Gallery CFA. (International Education Week. Co-sponsored by UB Art Galleries)



Julia Andrews, OSU; Kuiyi Shen, UCSD

Walls in China Conference Photo Collage



Haun Saussy and Rebecca French, UB



Jonathan Stalling, UB



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