

In joy or sadness, flowers are our constant friends.

— Kozuko Okakura



photo by Frank Chenjun Feng

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AAJ: Asian American Journal is an outlet for Asian and Asian American voices and a vehicle to disseminate information in order to promote activism in the community and awareness of Asian American issues.

Ever since AAJ was founded in 1994, it has been through many changes. Numerous editors have influenced this change with their own unique styles. Now, as editor for the first time, I'm looking forward to changing the identity of AAJ again for the better. While the AAJ has been previously known more for its powerful photos and creative literature, I want to add more variety this year. New sections we've added include culture, entertainment, health. In addition, we will print a monthly issue to increase awareness within the Stony Brook community. This year, we will aim to provide material that everyone can relate to and talk about. Thank you for helping us grow the last 17 years and we hope the new AAJ will bring a brighter future.

- Oliver Hao Li

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Photo pages throughout by Frank Chenjun Feng,
Hui Liu and Brian Loo

Chengdu

The Capital of Western China

PHOTO ESSAY BY OLIVER HAO LI



Chengdu is the largest city in western China with a population of 1.4 million people. It is the capital of Sichuan and was the capital of the Shu Kingdom in the Three Kingdoms period. Since Chengdu is located in the flatlands of the Sichuan basin, the city rarely suffers from severe weather conditions. In its surrounding rural areas,

good harvests are guaranteed, giving it the nickname "Heavenly Kingdom." Chengdu is one of most diverse international places in China. It is expanding at an impressive rate each year. People from all over the world are moving to Chengdu, making it China's most popular city for foreign immigrants.



PLAYING MAHJONG ON THE WEEKEND

Mahjong is one of the most important forms of entertainment in Chengdu. Back in the 90's, the Chinese government prohibited any form of gambling. People were not allowed to play Mahjong, even without money involved. However, Chengdu is the only exception. Even today, people love to play Mahjong. It is a Chinese saying that when

you hear Mahjong from the airplane, you are arriving in Chengdu. In Chengdu, small stakes gambling is unofficially allowed. During the weekend, Chengdu people all gather to play Mahjong and drink tea.

The environment of Chengdu is very pleasant and brings the people of Chengdu succulent ingredients for its cuisine. With a guaranteed harvest, residents have focused on how to cook better and how to enjoy better food.

Sichuan cuisine is the most popular among all types of Chinese food. Since Chinese culture is spreading over the world, people in the U.S. are becoming more familiar with several Sichuan foods such as Mapo tofu and hotpot.





The green teas grown in Chengdu are unique and many different kinds are produced in the surrounding area. In ancient times, Chengdu sold tea to Tibet in return for Yak meat and horses, making Chengdu the starting point of the Southern Silk Road. Today, Chengdu people still drink huge amounts of tea when other cities have switched to coffee. To those in Chengdu, drinking tea is synonymous with chatting with friends, entertaining, and relaxing.

Chengdu is also known as the capital of beautiful girls. The skin of a typical Chengdu female is normally lighter and finer than most Chinese due to low UV sunlight exposure. Traditionally, most of them knew how to cook Sichuan food and rarely went out, even to play Mahjong, so Chengdu gained the reputation as the place to come to look for a wife. However, Chengdu girls are now more educated and often go to work in other provinces.

Due to its geographic complexity, Chengdu has many natural attractions. Many of these places are not only for visitors to see but are also good places for locals to frequent.



QINGCHENG MOUNTAIN

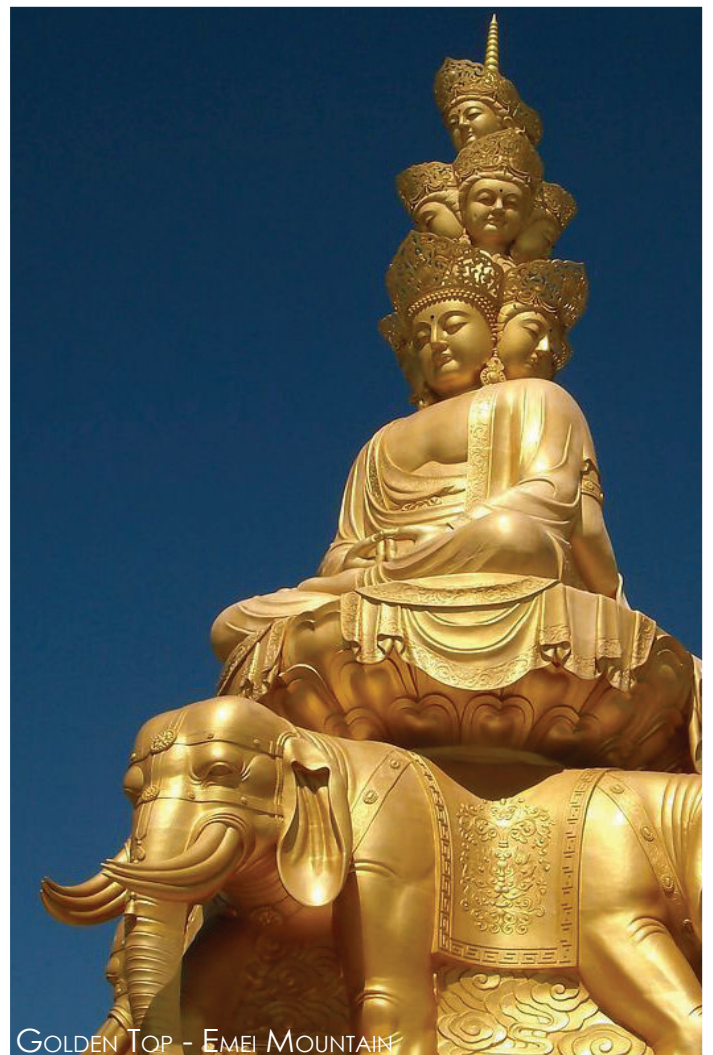
Qingcheng Mountain is considered the most peaceful mountain in China. As the birthplace of Taoism it is the most integral Taoist center. Only an hour's drive from downtown Chengdu, it is an important tourist spot to explore Taoist culture since Taoism is disappearing from Chinese life. On the mountain you can smell the incense that people burn to worship their religion.

People from Chengdu sometimes come just to enjoy their weekends with tea at Qingcheng Mountain. The green trees and the beautiful scenery refresh the brain and keep people's minds healthy.

GOLDEN TOP - MOUNT EMEI



Different from Qingcheng Mountain, Emei Mountain is the fourth most important mountain in Buddhism. The 9300-foot mountain contains the first Buddhist temple ever built in China and is called "the most beautiful mountain." On the mountain, there are many scarce plants. Monkey mobs ask for food and rob you if they get nothing. The mountain is divided into two parts by clouds: the upper section and the lower section. When it rains, the upper section hears the thunder but only the lower part gets the rain. Many photographers go to the top of the mountain to take photos of the sunrise.



GOLDEN TOP - EMEI MOUNTAIN



Jiuzhaigou Valley is one of the most popular natural attractions in China. It is a six-hour drive from Chengdu; however, the newly opened airport is just a 15-minute flight away from Chengdu. The Jiuzhaigou Valley is famous for its unique landscape and its plethora of ponds. The water is so clear you can see anything through it. Some fish that live in the ponds are also transparent. Both the fishes and waters are slightly poisonous, which might explain how they have survived up until now. The peak season of Jiuzhaigou is fall when visitors and photographers all over the world come to Jiuzhaigou. There are also wild pandas that come to the valley occasionally.



Many people come to Chengdu just to take a look at the pandas. The newly opened Chengdu Panda Breeding Research Center is just six miles from downtown Chengdu.

Chengdu used to be the capital city of the Shu Kingdom during the Three Kingdoms period. As such, Chengdu has many historical and cultural attractions.



ANLAN BRIDGE - DUJIANGYAN



LESHAN BUDDHA

Leshan is a one-hour drive from Chengdu and 20 minutes from Emei. It is famous for having the largest carved stone Buddha in the world. The Leshan Buddha is 234 feet high and was finished in 803 A.D. It took 90 years to carve. The Buddha is facing the junction of three major rivers and was built on the belief that it would calm the river's turbulent waters.

Dujiangyan is a huge irrigation project that was built in 256 B.C. to ensure that Chengdu's agriculture would thrive. In the past, Chengdu was mostly flatland with disastrous floods, while other parts had no water. Even after 2000 years, it is still functional and is still used to prevent floods as well as to generate electricity. During the 2008 magnitude 8 earthquake, Dujiangyan was damaged but miraculously survived with only a non-threatening crack at its famous Fish Mouth.

DUJIANGYAN



OWS : Occupy Wall Street

by Wilson Jiang Photos by Oliver Hao Li



The Global Day of Action, October 15th, had protestors in over 350 cities joining together to fight for a more just economic world order. They are against social and economic inequality, high unemployment, corporate greed, corruption and the undue influence of corporations on government. OWS includes demonstrations initiated by Canadian activist group Adbusters. It began on 09/17/11 in Zuccotti Park in NYC's financial district. Their slogan, we are the 99%, refers to the disparity of wealth between the rich and the rest of the population. Oliver Hao Li, an international student at SBU, went to photograph his first American protest. See all of his photos at www.aasquared.org/gallery/OccupyWallStGlobalDayProtestOct2011.



NYC Global Day of Action flier listing times and locations of protests - Liberty Square, Washington Square at NYU, and Times Square. Photo on opposite page depicts a typical US student dilemma - why were banks bailed out when students have \$1 trillion in outstanding loans, more than the mortgage bubble, with little hope of paying them off.

Corporate mass media tried to portray the protestors as disorganized deadbeats. They really come from all walks of life, many are well educated, and they run an efficient set-up. At the Liberty Square Info Desk were even maps of the layout - kitchens, tech stations, bathrooms & General Assembly.



The command center updated the general public through a blog on the OWS website, Twitter, Facebook and other social media sources. OWS protestors created their own 24/7 live streaming broadcast, LiveStream, that was watched by millions worldwide over the internet.

FEATURES



A Japanese reporter in the mix of the protests. While some people are protesting, others like her are spreading the news about them. Coverage of the protests by foreign news outlets has been plentiful while coverage by the corporate owned media in the US has been kept to a minimum.

The protesters being corralled into marching on the sidewalks instead of the streets while being watched by the New York Police Department (NYPD). In this photo the protesters are heading to Washington Square from Liberty Square (Zuccotti Park).

This teacher was pro-education and anti-war. Her poster said it didn't make sense to spend trillions killing children in other countries instead of spending that money to educate American children. When classes ended that day, many high school students and teachers joined the protest.

A man dressed in business clothes is another example of the wide support OWS has. Given his purple tie, he may be from SEIU - Service Employees International Union, one of the many unions supporting OWS against corporate union busters.



Code Pink is a pacifist anti-war women's organization that promotes peace and social justice through direct action. It includes women of all ages and even has a Granny Brigade. It runs an info table at OWS.

A well-groomed Caucasian male in his mid-thirties with his daughter supporting the movement, dispelling the corporate media's depiction of the protesters as "hippie weed smoking communists".



Hao Li was at first afraid to talk to the police, thinking they would be like police in China, but after he saw another photographer engaged in friendly banter with one he did. He was surprised to find that while police officers are often painted in a negative light, and some are bad, most are friendly and support OWS since they are part of the 99%.

A quote by Mahatma Gandhi, a leader in the movement for India's independence in 1947. His philosophy of non-violent protest has been highly influential in OWS. Every individual must be responsible for creating positive change to make a better world.





Every drop in the ocean counts.
- Yoko Ono

photo by Hui Iiu

Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished

– Lao-Tzu



The Kiwis at SBU by Adam Sue

We met with two exchange students from the University of Auckland in New Zealand. Here in Stony Brook for just one semester, I had the chance to sit down with them and talk about their experiences so far in the United States.

With your accent, where are you from?

Hannah: I was born in India. I moved to New Zealand when I was five so I can't remember much about India, but I went back this year, and a lot has changed. It's quite cool. The area that I was from was really really rural, and when I went back, there was a huge shopping mall down the road. We have a shopping mall that's right down the road now!

Claire: I was actually born in New Zealand, but I went to China when I was two and I came back when I was five, so I went to kindergarten there. So I still identify myself as a New Zealander, but I would call myself a kiwi Asian.



"Your toilets flush the opposite way!"

Why Stony Brook and what are the differences between SBU and your home university?

Hannah: New York. Why would you not want to come to New York? I want to come back for grad school and stuff, so New York would probably be ideal because all the schools are around here. You have a lot of opportunities in undergrad that we don't really get in New Zealand. So, like in terms of internships and the extracurricular stuff you do on campus, you have so many opportunities so you guys can each do something. Internships in New Zealand are ridiculously hard to find. You usually get an internship as your first job out of college which is really crap pay. In terms of extracurricular activity, they're still there, but it's really competitive. Not everyone gets to be involved in substantial extracurricular activity that'll help them in their careers after uni (college).

Claire: I looked at the journalism course here and it seemed really quite interesting. A lot of the universities didn't offer exchange programs in journalism. They did theater and film and TV, but not really journalism, and that's what I wanted to come here for because we didn't have it in New Zealand at my home university. I actually thought Stony Brook was in the city when I first applied. Because it said New York and I didn't actually know New York was a state, I just thought it was a city, so it was a little bit of a surprise.

Hannah Bathula

Major: Public Health

Hobbies: Sleeping, being social, eating

Did you experience much of a culture shock when you came to the U.S.?

Claire: To be honest, before I left, I didn't think there would be much of a culture shock, because between English speaking countries I didn't think there would be a major difference.

As soon as I came here, it was different. You guys are a lot more expressive about what you're feeling. People have fights or whatever in the middle of the road, and it was kind of a new thing for me.

Hannah: The biggest thing that scared the heck out of me when I got off the plane was to find that your TOILETS flush the OPPOSITE way! Yours go anticlockwise and ours go clockwise. Gravity, who woulda thought!

I was in class in my first or second week here and we had to fill in a Scantron sheet. I came from New Zealand with basically every essential piece of stationery – pencils, pens, highlighters, everything, but I forgot one essential piece of stationery. I made a mistake on the Scantron sheet and I had to correct that mistake, so I turned to the guy next to me, who was luckily a gentleman, and I asked him if I could borrow his rubber. Everyone around the vicinity heard me and turned around. I thought it was because of my accent because people always ask me “are you from England? Are you from Australia?” so I thought I'd maybe say it again. This time, however, I made the motion of rubbing something out on my paper, so he understood me. He said, “You mean like an eraser? You call those rubbers where you're from?” and everyone started laughing and they told me what it meant. So I have not used that term again.

PHOTOS BY ADAM SUE

Claire Yu

Major: Journalism

Hobbies: Singing, playing guitar, shopping!



“I didn't actually know New York was a state.”

Favorite spot in SBU?

Hannah:

The atrium in the Humanities building!
It's beautiful.

Claire:

The drumming room at the TAC
for music practice!

Favorite place in NYC?

Claire:

Favorite part of New York ... The Brooklyn Bridge because of the view and the quietness and peacefulness despite being in the center of the city. The traffic sound just seems to blend into the background.

Times Square because of the sheer amount of people, yellow taxis (we don't have those in New Zealand), the loudness, the feeling of liveliness and the fact that it never sleeps.

Club Spotlight: China Blue

by Brian Loo

Chinese, spontaneous and fun. However you want to say it, these three words described the atmosphere at ChinaBlue's latest weekly radio show. It is the ONLY Chinese radio show on WUSB 90.1FM and is broadcasts in Cantonese and Mandarin every Sunday from 7-8PM from the 2nd floor of the Union. It aims to promote Chinese cultural awareness throughout the Stony Brook campus and both Nassau and Suffolk counties. So how was this show?

Well to start, ChinaBlue's ex-President Thomas Su and DJ Team Leader Yongshen Yu met up in the Union Lounge to coordinate the night, thirty minutes before the show. They were soon joined by Steven Ip, Eric Cheang, Zi Hao He, and Mark Yam, who were all planning to speak live on the show. As 7:00PM approached, ChinaBlue's crew headed into the WUSB Radio Station, located on the 2nd floor of the Union, to prepare. Thomas, a senior majoring in Business, immediately headed for the DJ booth, where he prepared the night's music and calibrated the equipment while DJ Yongshen, a 4th year electrical engineering major, headed to the conference room with the others. There he gave them a quick overview of the night's topics when suddenly, they were joined by Helen Chen and Shirley Yung, two freshmen who volunteered to speak on air at the last minute.

The show began sharply at 7:00PM, as soon as the microphone checks were completed. Yongshen began by speaking about ChinaBlue and brought in the two new speakers. After the two girls briefly introduced themselves, the group began to share what each of them had done for Halloween. Yongshen spoke about his experience at a

haunted house and engaged the other speakers in a conversation on their feelings about them. From here to the end of this segment, the show was improvisational sharing of interesting stories and feelings and everyone was having fun being a part of it. Then Thomas played a Chinese pop song for a break before the show moved on to what they called the knowledge segment. Yongshen brought up the Cantonese proverbs that are heard and used every day, but many Cantonese people don't really know where they come from or the background stories behind them. That led into a discussion of Cantonese slang words and how they are made or used by young people in the Hong Kong and Guangdong area.

The night began to come to a close. Another song was played as Yongshen reminded listeners of upcoming events such as Asian Night, hosted by the Asian Student Alliance. As the group went off-air, they had successfully completed the show and even the new freshmen felt a part of the ChinaBlue "family".

Listeners who are interested in tuning in but don't have a radio can go to www.wusb.fm and click "Tune In" on the top right to stream it live. ChinaBlue also hosts weekly general body meetings every Tuesday in SAC 302 at 7PM. Anyone who speaks Mandarin or Cantonese and is interested in speaking on the show can stop by the GBM or contact ChinaBlue at ChinaBlueSBU@gmail.com.

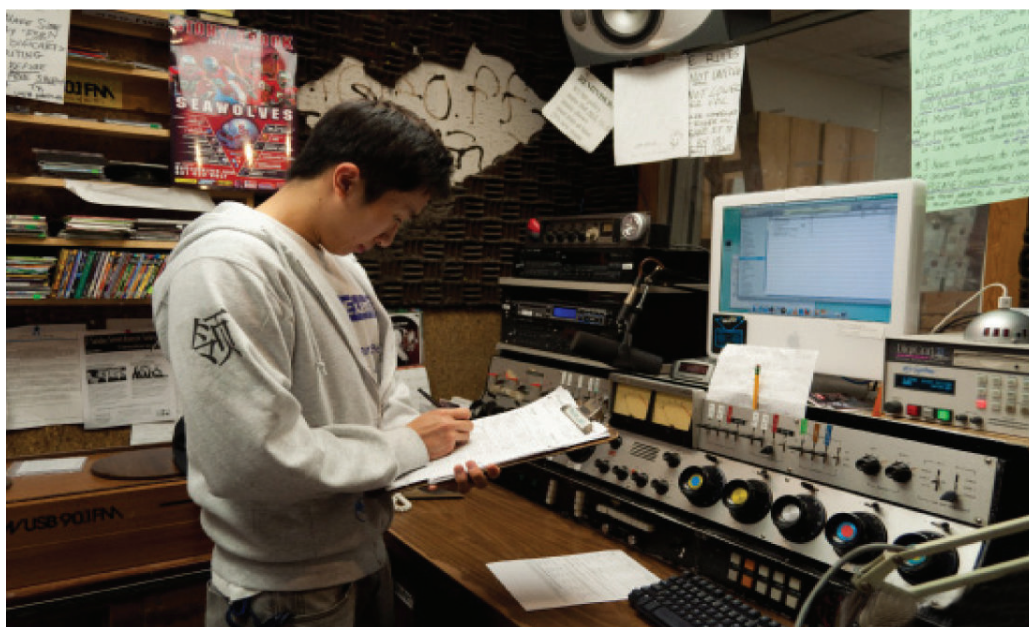


PHOTO BY BRIAN LOO

Seafood and Mercury Poisoning

by Noah Kim



For James Liang, foods like sushi, shrimp stew, and crab cakes have always been a part of his daily diet. However, with new studies showing an increased amount of mercury levels in seafood, Asian delicacy lovers have been taken aback by the bad news.

"It definitely took me by surprise," said Liang, a sophomore at Stony Brook University. "I always thought seafood was supposed to be the ultimate healthy food."

A 2007 study by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene showed an alarming amount of mercury levels for New Yorkers, especially Asians. 25% of all NYC adults and almost 50% of Asians who reside in New York have blood mercury levels over the NY state levels. The study says that this is due to the consumption of fish with high contamination levels. All fish contain methylmercury, but some bigger fish such as swordfish, shark, marlin, king mackerel, and tuna (bluefin, big eye, and yellow fin) have the highest levels.

Dr. Jaymie Meliker, an Assistant Professor of the Graduate Program in Public Health at Stony Brook University, says that "Seafood, in general, is good for us, but with some types of fish having high levels of methyl mercury, it is important for the public health community to

better understand risks and benefits from eating specific fish."

Last year Stony Brook alumnus Richard Gelfond, '82, donated \$1 million to set up the Gelfond Fund for Mercury Research and Outreach after he was hospitalized with mercury poisoning. It is being used by Stony Brook to research "the understanding of environmental cycling and public health effects of mercury".

Shortly after the donation, Stony Brook launched the "Long Island Study of Seafood Consumption", led by Dr. Meliker. Now her new study will analyze the connection between seafood consumption and intake. It will also measure omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids, as well as mercury and selenium in blood samples from participants.

The "Long Island Study of Seafood Consumption" is recruiting new participants via surveys. It will also look into the more serious consequences of dangerous mercury levels such as illnesses and neurotoxins in a developing fetus.

Dr. Meliker says the study will analyze different types of seafood consumption categorically from data detailing study participants' seafood intake.

Stony Brook international student May Hao Wang is a freshman from the Olympic city of Qingdao on the coast of China, famous for its seafood dishes. Her mother eats seafood everyday and she herself eats it very often. While here, she had been going to SAC for tuna sandwiches about three times a week.

Upon learning about the high levels of mercury, her first reaction was "Oh no, I have to call my mother to tell her to stop eating so much of it." When asked what she'll do now that she knows, she said she would keep eating seafood but that she would at least eat it in moderation.

However, even with the scare, graduate student Jasmine Wang says she will not eat less seafood. Instead, she will carefully pick the food she eats.

"Sushi is my life," she said. "I don't eat tuna anymore, but I eat a lot more salmon. And not just in sushi. My favorite dish is steamed wild Alaskan sockeye salmon. Never farmed."

To learn more about the study, check out its website, and fill out the on-line questionnaire to see if you can be part of the study. You just need to be a non-pregnant adult who enjoys eating seafood.

www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/gelfond

Cui Fei : Calligraphy in Tendrils and Thorns

University Art Gallery, Staller Center
An Interview with the Artist by Adam Sue



PHOTOS BY OLIVER HAO LI

Cui: I think it was not that suddenly I knew it. It is a long story. I started to learn art when I was very little. I enjoyed it and that time I realized it but I didn't know I would become an artist. In China education is different. If you want to go to college that kind of training is very rigid. You have to do drawing and painting in order to pass the exam. When I was age 14 my father suggested professional high school. The reason to go was to study to go to art college. At that time there were only two best art colleges in China. He asked me what do you want to do. But that time it was too big a question to answer. It was like do you want to be a doctor, or a teacher. I didn't know. My father said there is an opportunity, do you want to try it? So I tried. I studied pretty hard and it was a difficult exam but fortunately I passed it. At that time I still didn't know I would become an artist. I went to school at age 14 far away from my home and really the first semester I cried all the time. I missed my home. But once I got there I started to be more serious and I started to enjoy art more. So at that point I knew.

Adam: What is the significance of your choice of medium? Why thorns or copper wire?

While installing her work for an exhibition at the University Art Gallery in Staller, students from SBU AA E-Zine and AAJ: Asian American Journal, had the opportunity to meet Cui Fei for an interview and to see her work - both finished and in progress. They included pieces like those pictured here as well as sand paintings in the process of being made on the floor.

From a distance Cui's art resembles Chinese calligraphy. Up close one realizes it is thorns, tendrils, copper wire, beans, leaves, sand, dried grass and other objects from nature.

Adam Sue, SBU AA E-Zine Editor, asked Cui about herself and her art.

Adam: When did you know that art was your calling in life?



Cui: That choice is after moving to United States. In graduate school my major was business. I started to realize in graduate school we could take a lot of art classes so I was very interested to try something different. In China the training is very intense and focused but here it is actually more challenging and more exciting. The medium for me is something other than painting and also my work is related to nature so I think using the pieces you find in nature is more accurate of what you want.

Adam: You came to NY to pursue your art career. What were some of the challenges you faced?

Cui: I think the challenge everybody has is balancing your time. You have to support your art and in order to do that you have to make a living and at the same time you have to find time for your art. In the beginning there is always a conflict between time and funding to support your art.

Adam: You draw your inspiration from nature. What is the message you want to convey to viewers?

Cui: I always keep Chinese calligraphy with me. And I want to feel that I am really writing something.



CUI FEI WITH UNIVERSITY GALLERY DIRECTOR RHONDA COOPER

Even though Chinese cannot read it everybody can recognize that there is a message there. I just want to call attention to nature. Let's look at it and the reason for it and what is the message we can get. I come from a Chinese background so I have a different way of looking at nature. I think people from the US and other backgrounds respond differently and I'm open to that. But the real idea of nature is abstract. It doesn't belong to somebody. It belongs to everybody. It is kind of universal. So I think the message is also universal.

UAG hours: TU-FR, 12-4, SA, 7-9pm.

www.stallercenter.com/gallery

Cui Fei: www.cuifei.net



An Interview with CEWIT Director Dr. Satya Sharma

Center of Excellence in Wireless and Information Technology

by Paul Huynh and Adam Sue

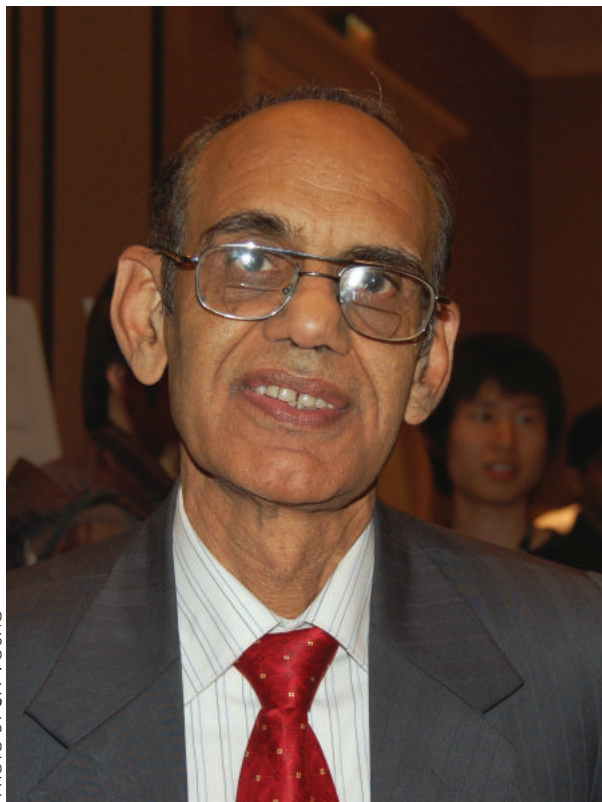


PHOTO BY JA YOUNG

DR. SATYA SHARMA

For Satya Sharma, everything would seem to be a "natural transition" from his years of hard work. While describing his life in India and the US, he maintains an air of calmness and humility despite outstanding achievements.

Sharma's resume would certainly be the envy of many individuals. Just the first few lines are enough: a PhD in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Pennsylvania following a BS from IIT, Indian Institute of Technology, known as India's MIT, and an MBA from Ohio State thrown in for good measure. Below that a long string of achievements add more icing on the cake: leadership positions at Bell Labs, Lucent and Symbol Technologies, one patent and over 70 publications. It tops off with his heading Lucent's team to become the first and still the only US manufacturing company to win the Deming Prize (1974), leading Symbol's team to win the National Medal of Honor (2000), not to mention winning the Shingo Prize not once but twice, for Lucent (1992) and Symbol (2003).

On Nov. 3rd, at the CEWIT 2011 international conference, Sharma gave the keynote speech about

the unparalleled potential of cloud computing, the trend many envision will revolutionize the way software and IT companies conduct business. SBU AA E-Zine's Paul Huynh was there and felt he learned more in that one day than he had in his classes all semester. It was decided to interview Dr. Sharma and below are a just a few

excerpts from that interview. The full interview is at www.aaezine.org.

The University has the honor of having Satya Sharma as Executive Director of CEWIT, its Center of Excellence in Wireless & Information Technology. He believes his mission is to turn technological research into real world applications that will create economic wealth for Stony Brook. Sharma recalled how as a graduate student, Bell Labs was the place every PhD student dreamed of working. His dream now is to make CEWIT that kind of place. When you read how far CEWIT has come, you'll see the dream is well on its way to becoming reality.

For the Asian American community, Dr. Sharma sets an example for future generations. We finished our interview and asked him if there was anything else he would like to say. He did, and went off topic into idealism. We decided to begin with those words rather than end with them since they set the standard for all of us.

Sharma: The Asian American community as a whole is achievement oriented... In my view it is a cultural thing and this family focus on achievement I think is a

good thing. I'm actually quite hopeful that the future generations of Asian Americans will continue to excel. We have seen that all over and in the process, add tremendously to the total society in this country, to become a part of the fabric of this nation. We have to do whatever we can to improve the quality of life here, as well as to make sure that everybody gets to benefit. So in that sense, I think it behooves all of us that we do our best, and look at the wider picture. We're part of this particular area, but bigger than that, we're part of this nation, and even bigger than that, we're part of the big world community and we must do our share.

Now to the interview's beginning:

AA E-Zine: Why did you choose Mechanical Engineering? What compelled you to enter that field?

Sharma: That was a long time ago. I think in those days mechanical engineering was the "in thing" to do. Computer science didn't exist... basically the idea was that if you could create machines which could build machines, that was basically what mechanical engineering was all about, and that's why most of the brighter students would try to go into that particular field. So that's how I ended up in Mechanical Engineering.

AA E-Zine: Can you tell us something of your incredible life journey starting in India to being Director of CEWIT?

Sharma: I think the important thing in engineering is not even the field you study, but engineering basically prepares you for analytical thinking and systems level thinking... when

you are done with engineering, you can practically go into any field because it prepares you well towards your future. So whether it is electrical or mechanical engineering, computer science or computer engineering, I don't think it matters that much... the mathematical rigor you go through, the analytical thinking it forces upon you, the system level understanding of how the total system works, that's what you learn...

From IIT I came to study here at University of Pennsylvania. I did my PhD there and then I joined Bell Labs, which was the premier research institution in our time, there were only two institutions of that caliber, Bell Labs and IBM, and everyone else was in the lower categories.

I started basically as a research scientist, then management and development, then manufacturing. After a few years at Lucent I came to work for Symbol Technologies, which was recently acquired by Motorola. Symbol and CA were the two companies that were instrumental in getting this center going so I was involved in the creation of this center when I was at Symbol. I helped the University... in terms of defining what its mission ought to be, what kind of work they ought to be doing, how can they interact with companies, so basically when I left Symbol it was a natural place for me to come and continue the work which we started with the University.

AA E-Zine: You are one of the most classical high achieving Asian Americans that we know of. Of all the things you've done, what personal achievement are you proudest of?

Sharma: I think winning the Deming Prize was a momentous achievement. Of course I didn't do it all by myself, a lot of people were involved. It's really a team effort. Deming Prize is unique because this was the first time any manufacturing company in the western hemisphere won. We looked at it in terms of how can we measure our progress... our performance... and at that time we realized that the best performance

measure would be to achieve the Deming Prize. Very, very competitive and it took us a few years to do that. After that is when I came to work for Symbol Technologies. When I ran the engineering division we won the National Medal of Technology with President Clinton. Our team went to the White House to get the award which is also a very big deal because again, and of course I didn't win it for myself, it was the company, but I just happened to be the head of engineering at that time. Only three electronics manufacturing companies had won the National Medal of Technology, it's mostly given to individuals, so we were one of the three electronic companies, Bell Labs was one, IBM was the other, we were the third one. So these are some of the major achievements.

AA E-Zine: CEWIT's growth and prestige has been impressive. What plans do you have for its future?

Sharma: Number one of course is to do world class research. Research is a very challenging thing... no matter how much research you do you always find more frontiers... you learn tremendously so its becomes a very challenging place in that sense, you never get bored from research.

The second thing is basically how do you take that research and convert that into solutions which can be commercialized. Now that is very important because otherwise

the research becomes only for the sake of research. We would like to take the research and commercialize it and in the process of doing that we create economic wealth, economic wealth for Long Island, for New York, for the US, and economic wealth for the world.

The third thing obviously is to create the next generation leaders in information technology and wireless. So that remains our focus.

It is something different for the University because the University in the past did not care about the creation of companies, creation of economic wealth, so that is kind of new. It's a different direction. I believe we can have a significant impact in those three areas.

AA E-Zine: What are some of the technological advances you see in the near future for CEWIT?

Sharma: If you look at the US economy there are certain sectors which really have a great challenge... and to read everything Dr. Sharma said about CEWIT's future in the health care and energy fields, among others, what Alexander Graham Bell would recognize about the telephone system if he came back versus what Thomas Edison would recognize about the electrical grid, and lots more that wouldn't fit here - read or listen to the interview and check out CEWIT.

www.cewit.org

www.aaezine.org

www.youtube.com/aaezine

CEWIT: CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN WIRELESS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
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PHOTO BY JA YOUNG

Occupy Wall Street

by Wilson Jiang

Finding our way to a more humane future demands a new politics, a new set of values, and a renewed sense of the fragile nature of democracy. In part, this means educating a new generation of intellectuals who not only defend higher education as a democratic public sphere, but also frame their own agency as intellectuals willing to connect their research, teaching, knowledge, and service with broader democratic concerns over equality, justice, and an alternative vision of what the university might be and what society could become. Under the present circumstances, it is time to remind ourselves that academe may be one of the few public spheres available that can provide the educational conditions for students, faculty, administrators, and community members to embrace pedagogy as a space of dialogue and unmitigated questioning, imagine different futures, become border-crossers, and embrace a language of critique and possibility that makes visible the urgency of a politics necessary to address important social issues and contribute to the quality of public life and the common good.

- Prof. Henry Giroux, McMaster University



PHOTO BY OLIVER HAO LI

TENTLESS IN LIBERTY SQUARE / ZUCCOTTI PARK, NYC

In the spring of 1987 Stony Brook graduate students set up Tent City on the academic mall to protest the abysmal housing conditions on campus. That summer, the University moved to tear down the tents and forty-six students were arrested. The students took the University to court. Federal Judge Leonard Wexler ruled that the tents were a Constitutionally protected protest, but that students could not sleep in them over night. Did it mean the end of Tent City? Makeshift tents and old furniture stayed on the mall or the Physics Lawn for over a year until the students

themselves took them down when many of their demands were finally met. A year after the arrests two Suffolk County judges upheld the original ruling and dismissed all charges against the students stating they were “engaged in a Constitutionally protected activity, and hence the police action in attempting to terminate that activity cannot be deemed to be administering the law...”

There are no easily accessible photos of SBU's Tent City on the web. The students of 1987 didn't have cell phones and Twitter. This is in stark contrast to today with the thousands of videos, internet posts and Tweets of outrage as the campus police of UC Berkeley and Davis beat, pepper spray, and as in 1987 at SBU, unjustly arrest peaceful protesters.

The UC Berkeley and Davis students are protesting against the privatization of the California system. One of their many links to Occupy Wall Street is the banks profiting from student loans. However, it's not just students protesting in California, it's faculty too. Faculty realize that the academy as they know it is under financial attack by the same forces.

UC Davis English Professor Nathan Brown released a letter to the Chancellor calling for her resignation for not acting truthfully when she claimed she was creating a safe, inviting campus. He was later backed by the UC-Davis Faculty Association. In his letter he described the actions and brutality of the campus police as seen in the pepper spray video that has since gone viral.

“Police used batons to try to push the students apart,” wrote Brown. “Those they could separate they arrested, kneeling on their bodies and pushing their heads into the ground. Those they could not separate, they pepper-sprayed directly in the face, holding those students as they did so. When students covered their eyes with their clothing, police forced open their mouths and pepper-sprayed down their throats. Several of these students were hospitalized. Others are seriously injured. One of them, forty-five minutes after being pepper-sprayed down his throat, was still coughing up blood.”

At UC Berkeley, the former Poet Laureate of the United States, Prof. Robert Hass, was hit multiple times with a baton for simply standing there peacefully with the students. Another colleague was dragged on the ground by her hair. He described the ordeal in the New York Times.

What was the decision on how to react to the eviction and brutality? The Berkeley protesters returned to Sproul Plaza with their tents, this time held up by helium balloons, floating awkwardly but defiantly in the air above them, as Hass wrote, “occupying the air.”

The issue should not be tents or no tents. As Berkeley and “the Berkeley of the East” showed, tents are a symbol in any form they take. Nor should the focal

point of the protests become centered on the brutality of the police and their militarized tactics. It should be on the plight of the common people and their fight for a better chance in life - the macrocosm of SBU students fight for decent housing. It is why the current university protests and OWS are the same. They both are fighting for the equality of all.

Higher tuition hikes mean that by the time students graduate, they are in worse shape than when they were students. Given the already bad job market, no one wants to be in a position where they have a mountain of student loans but are unable to begin to pay them off let alone support themselves.

And what is one of the major causes for the shrinking college budgets forcing increased tuition and larger student loans? According to UMich History Prof. Juan Cole, one is the imprisonment of people for minor crimes like shoplifting. "A year and a half ago," Cole wrote, "then-California Gov. Schwarzenegger complained that California was spending nearly 11 percent of its budget on prisons and only 7.5 percent on the university system. Schwarzenegger noted, "30 years ago, 10 percent of the general fund went to higher education and 3 percent went to prisons."

"The spike in penitentiary spending is artificial and does not reflect crime trends. Since the early 1990's, crime in the state has fallen, whereas the prison population has gone from 25,000 to 175,000. Stiffer penalties have been set even for victimless, nonviolent drug-related crimes. California is also one of those states with a "three strikes and you're out" law, which fills prisons with petty shoplifters while setting more lenient penalties for massive white collar embezzlement."

Just as the white collar Wall St. financiers are not paying for their crimes in destroying the global economy, white collar criminals everywhere get a free "Get out of Jail" card while the imprisonment of blue collar faux criminals helps to destroy the

American educational system. There are many college vs. prison cost comparisons and although some don't tell the complete picture, they all show the absurdity. One year at NJ State Prison in Trenton for \$44,000 vs. one year at Princeton for \$37,000. California spends \$48,214 per prisoner vs. \$7,463 per college student. If California released every prisoner and sent them to college, it would save the state \$7 billion annually.

Prof. David Palumbo-Liu, the Asian American studies scholar at Stanford University and a graduate of Berkeley, after visiting Occupy Exeter in the United Kingdom and then hearing what had happened at his alma mater, wrote "In today's virtual global community, a spreading sense of outrage exists, and each small or large occupation resonates with others. The denial of futures to young people sits side by side with cheating the elderly out of a dignified old age. What is happening at the university protests has the added dimension of outrage against denial of support to institutions that teach us how to think freely, critically, antagonistically even, without direct or indirect censorship, about the root causes of our shared condition."

The arrests do not have to symbolize the end of the movements. We have the attention of the world and every move our government makes against us will be judged by billions of people in other countries. We must continue to push against the influence of those who have the wealth and power to try to limit our chances of success. It's imperative that we continue protesting against the oligarchy and while we do, we have to begin to push for the achievement of solid goals.

Over three hundred Economics professors have signed a statement in support of Occupy Wall St. on a new website - www.econ4.org - 4 the people, 4 the planet, 4 the future.

Michael Moore posted a list of demands that the OWS activists tasked with coming up a vision and goals for the movement believed were the first steps. The easier to implement ones included eradicating tax cuts on the rich and instituting taxes on the wealthiest and corporations, assessing a penalty tax on companies that offshore American jobs, lifting the cap on Social Security so the wealthy pay on all they earn, reinstating Glass-Steagall to separate banks from speculative investments, not letting the bankers off the hook in terms of criminal prosecutions, single payer universal health care, and putting all our resources into alternative energy to reduce carbon emissions.

None of them will happen though, if we, the 99%, don't make them happen. Too much is at stake here and at the end of the day we must succeed.



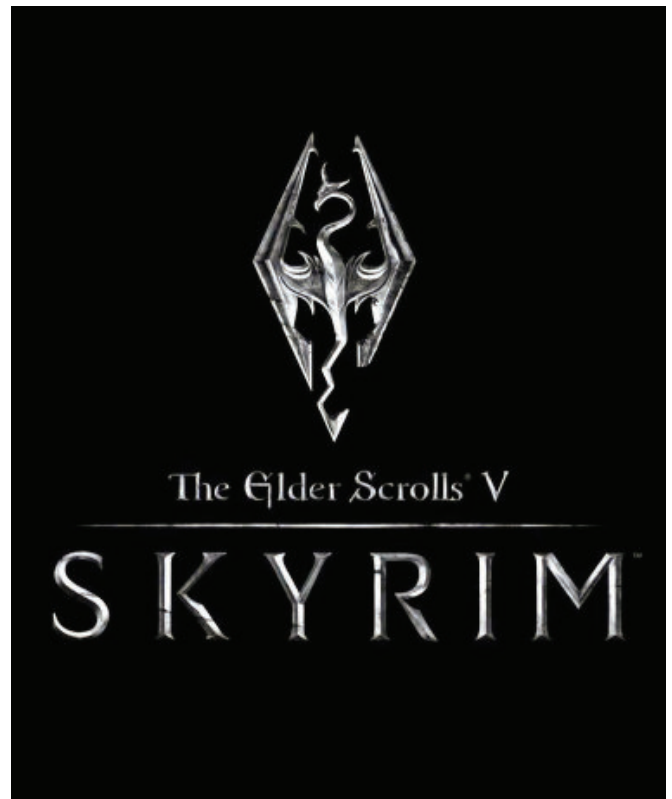
Flickr: Cary Ba

Skyrim: First Impressions

by Wilson Jiang

The highly anticipated Skyrim was released in early November and it reinvented the RPG world. The game mentally distracts you from reality. The story begins with the return of dragons, specifically Alduin the World Eater; whose appearance spells the end of the world as we know it. Simultaneously occurring is a civil war between the Stormcloaks and the Imperials. Don't worry, you will not have to choose which to conquer first, Alduin or winning the civil war, because it is not timed. Explore the game to your heart's desire. During your exploration, you will be meeting obstacles (enemies). You can choose from the three members of your team for combat: mages, who can shoot fire or lightning, or summon minions to fight for you; warriors, who bash stuff with sharp sticks; and thieves, who may choose to fight sneaky and or use bows. Then you have some miscellaneous skills which you can train in, to supplement your combat skills. Going from there, you can get dragon shouts which cost nothing to cast/shout but you have to kill dragons and find words to the shouts and even then they have a cool down.

I did mention that the game's sole purpose is to distract you from reality. How does it do that? Well there are nine cities, multiple towns, and many more places to explore, such as forts, caves and burial sites. From that, there are many side quests as well, an apparent infinite amount of miscellaneous quests to do, and that's not mentioning what's going on around you while you are exploring. That's also not including the dragons you will encounter, which can range from difficult to easy depending on the kind of skills you choose to specialize in. As this is an RPG, there is also a level-up mechanic embedded into the game. Levels in this game are gained by training your skills and upon leveling up you get a point to invest in perks. These perks can give a



variety of effects such as making lock-picking every chest of a certain difficulty easier.

The game is not without problems though. The inventory is a bit of a mess and the skills menu is a pain to navigate. Besides those, there are some game breaking bugs, balance problems and the AI isn't the most phenomenal in the world. Looking past these problems though, this game is simply amazing and it's guaranteed that you'll be immersed into the game world within hours. In other words, get this game.



WILSON JIANG PLAYS SKYRIM

Clara C and New Heights at the Highline with Wanted Ashiqz and Mree

by Adam Sue

PHOTO BY ADAM SUE



CLARA C PERFORMING WITH NEW HEIGHTS

Clara C played a sold-out show on Nov. 12th at the Highline Ballroom in NYC to end her Shakin' Off Silence 2011 tour in the US. The show opened with two local artists, Bollywood fusion dance team Wanted Ashiqz and New Jersey singer-songwriter Mree. Wanted Ashiqz performed a dance medley of various artists, including Beyonce and Michael Jackson, paying tribute to the artists who influenced them, all with their own Bollywood twist. Last month they won Kollaboration NY 6.

Singer-songwriter Mree followed and performed with the confidence and depth of a seasoned artist. Only a senior in high school, her rise in popularity can be attributed to her YouTube videos. Mree skillfully made use of her looping pedal in order to harmonize with herself, layering her vocals making for an almost ambient effect. Her performance was clear and simple, young and fresh, but also very meaningful. Having just released her debut album in October, Mree is an artist to look out for in the future.

Seattle-based rock band New Heights followed and put on an energetic show. Lead singer Travis Graham's effortless vocals soared over a heavy backdrop of electric guitars, bass, and drums to deliver a performance that you couldn't help but at least tap your foot and bob your head to. A highly interactive show, Graham even took to riding on the shoulders of an audience member (me!) through the crowd to get even closer to their fans.

Clara C ended the night, backed by three members of New Heights. In about two years, Clara

Chung has enjoyed a meteoric rise to fame, taking her from recording YouTube covers to winning talent competition Kollaboration 10 and playing sold-out shows all over the US. A talented multi-instrumentalist, Clara happily bounced from guitar to piano to melodica performing both originals and covers with her own creative spin. Her words, performance, and stage manner showed not only her incredible musical talent, but also her quirky sense of humor and her very apparent love for her fans.

The night ended with a meet-and-greet where Clara, New Heights, and Mree took the time to meet each and every fan who lined up, solidifying their presence in their hearts and granting a whole New York audience new Facebook profile pictures with their favorite artists.

The performances were co-sponsored by Kollaboration, a national non-profit organization that promotes positive and accurate perceptions of Asian Americans by providing a platform for young artists to showcase their talents. Kollaboration calls it "Empowerment through Entertainment". It currently produces 15 shows across 13 cities in North America including an annual national talent competition. It involves hundreds of volunteers and performers, tens of thousands of live audience members, and millions of viewers online.

The Stony Brook reps for Kollaboration are Ricky Chan from the CASB Dance Team (Chinese Assoc. at SB) and DaQuan McCray, PR for KSA (Korean Students Assoc.) and PUSO (Philippine United Students Org.) DaQuan can be contacted at daquan.kollabny@gmail.com.



TRAVIS GRAHAM OF NEW HEIGHTS

PHOTO BY ADAM SUE

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