

The AACCP Newsletter

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Asian American Curriculum Project, Inc.

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AACP's January 2007 Poetry Selection

About the Following Poem and the Golden Gate Poetry Club

By Leonard D. Chan

Last fall when I was conducting an interview with historian Judy Yung, I asked Prof. Yung about some of the sources for her book *San Francisco Chinatown*. She directed me to several interesting websites including an immense archive created by the Berkeley Digital Library sponsored by the UC Berkeley Library and Sun Microsystems, Inc.

At this site, I made a serendipitous discovery of a book published in 1924 by an organization called the *Golden Gate Poetry Club*. The Berkeley Digital Library had scanned the entire book and placed it on their website.

This book caught my attention because it was written by early twentieth century Chinese immigrants that, to this day, are not often viewed as being educated or even literate. Chinese American historians are knowledgeable of the hidden literary talents of early Chinese immigrants. Historian Marlon Hom even wrote a book called *Songs of Gold Mountain*, which contains translated Chinese American poems written even earlier than the Golden

Gate Poetry Club's volume. Prof. Hom describes how San Francisco Chinatown was actually teeming with lots of poetry clubs, newspapers, and bookstores. During the early 20th century, Chinatown had at least two daily newspapers, ten bookstores, and even a poetry club with over 150 members. So the book I had found on the Berkeley Digital Library site was just one piece of evidence left behind from this era.

The Golden Gate Poetry Club's book was in Chinese, but fortunately for me, its prologue had been translated into English. The part that intrigued me the most states, "The club will collect manuscripts and compile a book. The sole purpose of doing so is to leave something refined for the Chinese American." The term "Chinese American" is a fairly new term and perhaps this part of the translation was slightly off, but their intent was unmistakably. They wrote it for all of us and they wanted us to forever know of their thoughts, feelings, and existence.

Thanks to the help of our volunteers Jone and Austin Djang, at least one of the poems will live on for English readers.

Long may the Golden Gate Poetry Club live!

To Celebrate Spring at Golden Gate

A Poem by Huang Zi Cai (also spelled Wong Sun Choy)
Translated by Jone Djang with help from Austin Djang
Golden Gate Poetry Club Collection of Poetry p10-11

Flying flower petals follow the sweet-smelling earth,
The feeling of late spring overwhelms me as I visit the Golden Gate,
Canaries sing a sad song outside the pavilion while a flute is played inside,
Visions of roadside willows remind me of a person in my dreams.

A song at the Golden Gate is accompanied by a *plucker*¹ playing three times,
Inviting the moon to have drinks in the golden valley,
I moan an endless sorrow, knowing that I must part some day,
Minds of heartache are where-ever *cuckoo birds*² weep aloud.

One might sigh at how time passes by while being a guest,
At the ending of spring, one will always treasure the time that has passed by.
The fantasy of *Perilla*³ Fairies has disappeared with the flowing water,
*Du Mu's*⁴ passing has been embodied by the sadness of falling flowers.

At the end of the golden tread song, one cherishes the fading makeup on a woman's face.

The *Pi Pa's*⁵ song cries a river on the blue gown.
These memorable scenes will be viewed again next year,
When the time is right, young flower buds will sprout again.

1 plucker: an ancient Chinese stringed musical instrument

2 cuckoo bird: this bird is often related to sadness in Chinese poetry

3 Perilla: A type of plant

4 Du Mu: A famous ancient Chinese poet (A.D. 803-852)

5 Pi Pa: an ancient Chinese stringed musical instrument (similar to the banjo)

(Continued on page 3)

Give Us Your Feedback

Please feel free to send us your reviews, comments, and book suggestions. You can contact us at - aacpinc@asianamericanbooks.com

Editor's Message

Hello Everyone,

Happy New Year!

Up Coming Events

Here are some events that AACP will soon be attending. Invite us to your events.

Date/Time	Event	Location
Jan. 13 1pm	3rd Annual Poetry In San Mateo Day A Beginning of the Year Poetry Celebration With Poet Genny Lim	529 E. 3rd Ave. San Mateo, CA
Jan. 31 3:30pm	Children's Author Cynthia Chin-Lee will read <i>A is for Asia</i>	College Terrace Lib. 2300 Wellesley Ave. Palo Alto, CA
Feb. 3 10:30 am.	Children's Author Cynthia Chin-Lee will read <i>Almond Cookies and Dragon Well Tea</i>	Berkeley Cen. Lib. Berkeley, CA
Feb. 18 5:30pm	The 27th Annual San Jose Day of Remembrance 2007 In Good Conscience	Betsuin Bud. Church 640 N 5th St. San Jose, CA
Feb. 24-25	Reading the World IX	USF 2350 Turk Blvd. San Francisco, CA
Mar. 2-4	California Council for the Social Studies Conference	Marriott Oakland City Center Oakland, CA
Mar. 4 11am-5:30pm	Chinese New Year's Celebration	Stockton Civic Aud. 525 N. Center St. Stockton, CA
Mar. 24-25	127th Bok Kai Festival, Parade, and Bomb Day	3rd & D St. Marysville, CA
Mar. 24-25 10am-5pm	The Chinese American Museum of N. CA Grand Opening Lectures and discussion with Profs. Gordon Chang, Ling-chi Wang, Judy Yung, Gregory Mark and others	232 1st St. Marysville, CA
Other Event of Interest that AACP May Not Attend		
Jan. 20 2pm	If They Came For Me Today: The Japanese American Internment Project Reception and Exhibit	SF Main Lib. San Francisco, CA
Feb. 8 7:30pm	Author Willian Poy Lee introduces his new book <i>The Eighth Promise: An American Son's Tribute to His Toisanese Mother</i>	Kepler's Books Menlo Park, CA
Feb. 10- Mar. 4	Chinese New Year Celebration Events in SF	Chinatown San Francisco, CA
Feb. 18 10am-6pm	Vietnamese Spring Festival & Parade Parade 11am-1pm Parkside Hall	180 Park Ave. San Jose, CA
Mar. 3 5:30pm	Chinese New Year Parade	San Francisco, CA

First of all, a few announcements –

If you are reading this on or before the morning of Saturday January 13th and are in driving distance of San Mateo, please come to our 3rd Annual Poetry in San Mateo Day. We have author, poet, and performer Genny Lim scheduled to make an appearance. Plus we will have a discussion about the Golden Gate Poetry Club and read from their book in a public setting for perhaps the first time in over 82 years. All poets and poetry enthusiast are also invited to share your poetry and favorite poems.

Authors Cynthia Chin-Lee and William Poy Lee are having readings and signings. See our schedule for details about the time and place for their appearances.

SF-based nonprofit arts organizations Galería de la Raza, Kearny Street Workshop, and Intersection for the Arts are seeking applications for the *4th Intergenerational Writers Lab 2007* literary program for emerging writers. The program consists of over 27 hours of workshop sessions to help budding writers become more proficient and to allow them networking opportunities and exposure that could further their careers in writing. The application deadline is January 19, 2007, so hurry.

The Chinese American Museum of Northern California in Marysville is having a grand opening on March 24th and 25th. Our February newsletter will contain more details about this exciting event.

Thank you Judy Yung, Genny Lim, Marisa Louie, Florence, Hongo, and William Greene for your help with research on the Golden Gate Poetry Club.

Thank you very much Garrett Hongo, Jone and Austin Djang, Philip Chin, and Sophie Wong for your contributions to this newsletter. It couldn't be done without you.

Leonard Chan
Executive Editor

Poems by AACP

Our Annual AACP staffs' Attempt at Writing Haiku and Tanka

Haiku and Tanka

by Philip Chin

Someday

*Quietly ends the year
Winter night alone my love
Someday happy Spring*

Together Again

*Shy smile in my mind
Gracefully turning to me
Many many miles away
Together again smiling
Next year's Happy New Year Day!*

Haikus and Tanka

By Leonard D. Chan

The Promise of Today

*Beautiful cool day
A promising beginning
Peace and love for all*

The Promise of 67

*Forty years
Since summer of love
Still no peace*

Get Up

*A warm bed
Birds and sun beckon
Rise and live*

Share the Journey

*Friends and relatives
Who've shared my freeway of life
Journey some further
Please, take no off ramps this day
Enjoy now with those we love*

Haiku

By Sophie Wong

Lunar Halo

*Night air crisp, sky clear
A ring around the full moon -
A sign of world peace?*

Resources for this Newsletter

Golden Gate Poetry Club

- Golden Gate Poetry Club Collection of Poetry Book
<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/brk4251>
- Prologue to book
<http://sunsite3.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/brk4251@Content?item=47>
- Golden Gate Poetry Club Poem Used in this Newsletter
<http://sunsite3.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/flipomatic/cic/brk4251@Content?item=8>

Poetry Links

General Poetry Link

- Scholastic Inc. Poetry Writing Page for Kids (grades 1-8)
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/poetry/>

Haiku Links

- Haiku for People
<http://www.toyomasu.com/haiku/>
- Jane Reichhold
<http://www.ahapoetry.com/haiku.htm>
- Keiko Imaoka
<http://www.ahapoetry.com/keirule.htm>
- Gerald England
<http://www.nhi.clara.net/gepm002.htm>

Tanka Links

- Jane Reichhold on Tanka
<http://www.ahapoetry.com/tanka.htm>
- American Tanka, Inc.
<http://www.americantanka.com/>
- Richard MacDonald - What Is A Tanka?
<http://home1.pacific.net.sg/~loudon/rick.htm>

The following books are discounted an additional 20% from the listed price for subscribers to our newsletter. The discounts on these books end February 10, 2007.

	<p>Child of War Poems by Genny Lim 2003, 78 pages, Paperback. "Genny Lim is passionate in her grief at the loss of her daughter, passionate in her sorrow and rage for the world, and yet her touch is so skillful and light, her language so tender and fierce and patient, that it reads like a book of prayer. These poems are luminous, simple and full of grace." -Aurora Levins Morales, poet, essayist, community historian and activist, and poetry commentator for Pacifica Radio's <i>Flashpoints</i> on KPFA-Radio in Berkeley. Item #3436, Normally \$10.00 ... for newsletter subscribers \$8.00</p>
	<p>Babaylan An Anthology of Filipina and Filipina American Writers Edit by Nick Carbo and Eileen Tabios 2000, 336 pages, Paperback. Babaylan is a collection of over 60 Filipina and Filipina American writers' works of short stories and poetry. The subject matter range is quite diverse and is sure to pique your interest for many hours. Item #3438, Normally \$16.95 ... for newsletter subscribers \$13.56</p>
	<p>The Book of Perceptions Poems by Truong Tran Photographs by Chung Hoang Chuong 1999, 73 pages, Paperback. <i>The Book of Perceptions</i> is a fascinating book that combines poetry with pictures. Snap shots of life in Vietnam are displayed like frames in a movie while the poetry text flows free form without any punctuation marks. Item #3437, Normally \$20.00 ... for newsletter subscribers \$16.00</p>
	<p>Haiku Asian Arts & Crafts for Creative Kids By Patricia Donegan 2003, 64 pages, hardback. A favorite returns to the AACP newsletter! Patricia Donegan's <i>Haiku</i> book is a great introduction for young and old to the poetry form known as haiku. It explores the seven keys to writing haiku and provides instructions for five haiku projects, including creating haiga, or illustrated haiku. Item #3273, Normally \$12.95 ... for newsletter subscribers \$10.36</p>
	<p>Island Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910-1940 By Him Mark Lai, Genny Lim, and Judy Yung Fifth printing 2002, 174 pages, paperback. Another returning favorite AACP featured book! Island is one of the most compelling books on the subject of the Angel Island immigration and detention center. The book is comprised of poems, both in English and Chinese, left behind on the walls of this facility. Included with these poems are interviews with surviving immigrant detainees and a short history chapter with pictures. Island is a revealing snapshot of the Chinese immigration experience in America during the early 20th century. Item #1264, Normally \$19.95 ... for newsletter subscribers \$15.96</p>

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