From the Chair

As the colorful leaves of autumn fall, the geese head south and the days grow shorter and colder, it is a pleasure to once again be writing to you as chair of the Department of Asian and Asian American Studies. This year, we are pleased to announce the addition of two new faculty members to our growing ranks: John Cheng, as assistant professor of Asian American studies, and Kayo Yoshida, as Japanese language lecturer. We also welcomed six new students into our MA program (Jianxin Chang, Huanxin Hou, Yue Jiao, Jing Lu, Na Min, Xuefei Rui) and our first combined BA-MA program student (Chong Zhang). This brings the total number of students currently enrolled in our graduate/graduate track programs up to 10. Our faculty continue to engage vigorously and creatively in teaching, research, public presentation and publication. We are especially proud of Zu-yan Chen, who received the University Award for Excellence in International Education. As detailed in this newsletter, moreover, DAAAS hosted the New York Conference on Asian Studies this fall and the various organizations with which we are affiliated have continued to be remarkably active and productive. In closing, I wish you all the very best not only in what remains of 2013, but also in the new year to come.

DAAAS Hosts 2013 Annual NYCAS Conference

On September 27–28, more than 155 individuals and volunteers took part in the 2013 New York Conference on Asian Studies held at the Holiday Inn Arena and Convention Center in Binghamton, N.Y. Conference participants came from as far away as Tokyo, Hong Kong and England. The conference featured 28 different panels and roundtables on a variety of topics ranging from culture, economics, politics and religion to technological changes, Korean history and medicine. The conference was preceded by a workshop on the China Historical Geographic Information Systems (CHGIS) and the China Biographical Database led by Professor Peter Bol and Dr. Shih-pei Chen of Harvard. Bol also was the keynote speaker for the conference and he gave a talk titled “East Asian Studies in a Digital World” that addressed the manner in which methodologies of communication, teaching and research are changing in response to new technologies.

NYCAS participants were invited to attend a reception at the University Art Museum and view the Ruby Wang exhibit as well as enjoy Binghamton’s Confucius Institute of Chinese Opera performance, “Amazing China,” which featured Beijing Opera, Chinese vocal and instrumental music and acrobatics performed by Binghamton and National Academy of Chinese Theater Arts faculty and guest artists.
Kayo Yoshida, lecturer of Japanese, comes to Binghamton from the University of Massachusetts, Boston, where she taught Japanese 101-302. Ms. Yoshida received her MA from Purdue University in Japanese and her BA from the University of Iowa in linguistics. She is currently teaching JPN 101 and JPN 203.

John Cheng has been appointed assistant professor of Asian American studies beginning fall 2013. He received his PhD and MA from UC Berkeley in history and his BA from Harvard. Cheng recently published Astounding Wonder: Imagine Science and Science Fiction in Interwar America (2012), University of Pennsylvania Press. He is currently teaching AAAS 280A: Introduction to Asian American History and AAAS 380C: Asians, Race and Law.

Shuang Liang graduated from Sun Yat-sen University before being admitted to the first DAAAS MA cohort in fall 2012. As a second-year graduate student in the field of Chinese studies, Liang has taken a variety of courses focusing on social-historical development, critical issues of contemporary China, East Asian women, human rights and gender. Her research extensively employs historical and sociological methodologies on internal migration in contemporary China, specifically the migrant merchants and workers in the Guangdong jade industry, and attempts to explore the strategies these migrants use to survive in an adopted society and detect migrant-group agency.

Jun Wang received her BA at Heilongjiang International University with a major in teaching Chinese as a second language. Wang’s focus at Binghamton is on Chinese linguistics and pedagogy and her thesis will address how to improve Chinese teaching. She taught a section of CHIN 102: Elementary Chinese II in spring 2013 and is currently teaching a section of CHIN 101: Elementary Chinese I.

Ian Weitz received his bachelor’s degree from SUNY New Palz in Asian studies with a minor in international relations. At Binghamton he gained a passion for Asian American studies and, more specifically, studying queer sexuality within diverse Asian diasporic communities. His master’s thesis will revolve around the uses of social media by three Asian and Pacific Islander (API) LGBTQ advocacy organizations (GAPIMNY, SALGA and Q-Wave) as a form of social activism and community outreach to address issues of racism and homophobia that API LGBTQ communities face. The purpose of the project is to learn more about the contemporary issues API LGBTQ people encounter as well as the methodologies API LGBTQ advocacy organizations employ to tackle these issues.

DAAAS Welcomes New Faculty

First DAAAS MA Cohort Nearing Degree Completion

Confucius Institute Of Chinese Opera (CICO) Has A Busy Year

Academic year 2012-13 was highly successful. CICO held performances at nine different venues, including Binghamton University, Portland State University, the University of Oregon, the University of Montana, the University of Missouri in St. Louis and Stony Brook University. These unique and highly professional shows featured Beijing opera, Chinese vocal and instrumental music, and acrobatics. In addition, CICO’s visiting professors were invited to perform Beijing opera and Chinese flute for various events at Binghamton University, Alfred University and SUNY Cortland. More than 4,200 people attended the concerts, and even more shows have been scheduled between November 2013 and February 2014. Along with performances, faculty members from CICO provided lectures, recitals and workshops throughout the year at 17 venues, including Greene Central School (N.Y.); Buffalo; Portland, Ore.; East and West Corning High Schools (N.Y.); Cornell University; and Washington, DC.


David Stahl, associate professor of Asian and American studies, presided over a special panel at the Modern Language Association Convention titled “Trauma Studies and Contemporary East Asian Literature and Film: Trauma, Memory and History” and presented a paper titled “Battlefield Trauma, Nuclear Poisoning and Relational Healing in Imamura Shōhei’s Black Rain” at the 2013 New York Conference on Asian Studies. He also completed drafts of the theoretical introduction to his current book project, “Trauma, Repetition and Recovery in Japanese Literature and Film” and three of the 10 chapters that will comprise the manuscript (two additional chapters have already been published separately). The volume he co-edited with Mark Williams, Imag(in)ing the War in Japan: Representing and Responding to Trauma in Postwar Literature and Film (Brill, 2010) also received a positive review in The Journal of Japanese Studies (39:1, 2013).


Hong Zhang, instructor of Asian and American studies, gave teacher training workshops on “Teaching Chinese through Song” at the Summer Teachers Training Program, University at Buffalo, in July 2013, and the 11th New York International Conference on Teaching Chinese at Seton Hall University in May 2013. She also received an award for Outstanding Contribution in Chinese Language Education from the Chinese Language Teachers Association and the Chinese Language Education and Research Center.
IAAD Outreach Activities

IAAD’s outreach coordinator, Karen Madsen, collaborated on several programs including the exhibition, demonstration and workshop on Chinese calligraphy by Binghamton alumnus Harrison Tu. In cooperation with the University Art Museum, Studio Art Department, CICO and the Cooperative Gallery, the “Arts of Asia in the Classroom” program presented original art-project workshops at local schools and community events. She also recruited undergraduate and graduate students who participated in BU Day at the Mall and worked with children at the Discovery Center museum, co-sponsored a Chinese language class for the community and organized workshops for home-schoolers at the Broome County Public Library. Madsen also developed a Family Guide for the Ruby Wang exhibit through a grant from the Association for Asian Studies.

IAAD and Binghamton University Welcome First University Readiness Program Students

Li Xi (Zoe), Qingyun Gao (Vivian), Kehan Zhu (Judy) and Sigi Zheng (Zara) began their studies at Binghamton University in August 2013. The four students were part of the University Readiness Program (URP) at the Zhenjiang International School (ZIS) in Zhenjiang, China, and the first admitted to Binghamton from that program. The URP is a joint effort among the Institute for Asia and Asian Diasporas (IAAD), Harpur College of Arts and Sciences, the Office of International Programs and ZIS, and is administered by IAAD. ZIS senior 2 and senior 3 high school students are offered Binghamton courses online for credit, which is then applied to their baccalaureate requirements once they are admitted. All four students are living in Delaware Hall in Newing College where Mark Reisinger is the Master and also teaches GEOG 151 as part of the URP. Eight additional students will be applying for admission to the University for fall 2014.