



SOUNDINGS: east asia monthly

a newsletter for undergraduates

VOLUME II, NUMBER 2: OCTOBER 2007

WEATHERHEAD EAST ASIAN INSTITUTE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

CHINATOWN 101: THREE STUDENTS REVIEW CHINATOWN'S SHOPPING, FOOD, AND MUSEUM

Shopping Spree in Chinatown By Rachele Meyer, CC '09

If you are looking for a way spend some time away from Columbia, take a trip to Chinatown! Just hop on the 1 train to 42nd Street and then take the N,Q,R,W to Canal Street.

Begin your trip with some shopping. Make your way to "Little Chinatown" at the corner of Canal and Lafayette Street. This compact outdoor market is comprised of many individual stores selling everything from jewelry, bags, sunglasses and scarves, to little green turtles in plastic aquariums. It is impossible not to be amazed at the variety of products on sale. Also, "Little Chinatown" offers all of the things that you would be able to find around Chinatown in one place, which is perfect for people who are not to keen on shopping but like to look around.

After spending some time refining your bargaining skills, make your way over to the intersection of Mott Street and Canal Street. When you wander along here, you will find a variety of authentic snacks and refreshments bound to make your day. Head over to the "Taipan Bakery" if you are in the mood for buns with different fillings or the "Egg Custard King Café" for some delicious egg custard snacks, which are very popular in Hong Kong. As far as drinks are concerned, go to "Ten Ren's Tea Time" for the best bubble tea in the city. It is the most authentic and the most delicious bubble tea you will ever taste. Order a large one, you won't regret it!

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'Tasty' and 'Excellent' Chinatown By Wei Wei Hsing, CC '08

The charm of Chinatown is all in the cheap, quick eats. The square mile or so of space between East Broadway and Church might contain the highest density of restaurants in the city, but not all of them are worth wrestling the crowds of tourists and solicitors on Canal. For example, Joe's Shanghai has never quite satisfied my senses, but the 5-for-\$1 dumplings at Tasty Dumpling on Mulberry are completely inoffensive comfort food. Sitting at "Tasty-D's" this past weekend, I watched a steady stream of customers ranging from pre-teens to police officers contemplate the deceptively simple menu. After a snack of five large chive & pork dumplings, I was set to go. Granted, Tasty-D was better a year ago, when their fried dumplings were crispier and more flavorful, but a hungry college student can't complain about \$1 dumplings. Tasty Dumpling also has quite a few vegetarian options and a small selection of cold dishes. Just be prepared to eat your dumplings in the nearby park; seating inside is limited to two tables and a window bar.

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Photo: Rachele Meyer, CC '09

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Once you are well rested, spend the remainder of your time in Chinatown exploring the real deal. While still on Mott Street and Canal Street, take a look at the wide selection of teas that can be purchased in “Ten Ren’s Tea and Ginseng.” I highly recommend “gen mai cha” which is roasted rice and green tea. They also sell oolong, rose black and king’s tea, to name just a few. Then, cross the street and take a look at the collection of red lanterns and Chinese New Year decorations that are available at “Good Field Trading.” If you are interested to know what food markets look like in China, make your way over to Grand Street and Elizabeth Street. There you will discover a wide range of meats, nuts and dry food. Step inside “Dynasty Super Market” for some Chinese produce shopping. I highly recommend trying the biscuit egg rolls they sell. If you want to discover the most authentic Chinese meat market in Manhattan, take a look at the “Deluxe Food Market.” Inside, you will find every type of meat you can think of, as well as prepared foods such as dumplings, and desserts such as Hong Kong style egg cake. Be prepared to practice your Chinese language skills!

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Nestled ten minutes from Tasty-D in the labyrinth of streets comprising the relatively subdued east Chinatown, the Taiwanese “Excellent Pork Chop House” on Doyers is all locals, all authentic, and easy on the pocketbook. Though the name is ostensibly trite, it gets the point across – the pork chops are excellent in their flavor and tenderness. This is simple, straightforward food, nothing that will blow your taste buds away, but satisfying in the way home-cooked meals bring effortless pleasure. Excellent’s wait staff is equally content to bring you fast and friendly service. The menu is split into side dishes for sharing, rice and noodle entrees, rice cakes, and shaved ice dessert. All entrees are \$4-\$6.50 each, although side dishes can also cost up to \$6. Shaved ice dessert is only \$3.45 a bowl.

Tasty Dumpling
54 Mulberry Street
(212) 349-0700

Excellent Pork Chop House
3 Doyers Street
(212) 791-7007

A Chinese Scrapbook on Mulberry Street By Alana Teman, CC '08

Walking into MoCA’s “Where is Home? Chinese in the Americas” exhibit is like walking into a scrapbook. The one-roomed octagonal space, intended to resemble the inside of a Chinese lantern, is stashed with Chinatown’s most notable odds and ends, ranging from old dry cleaning receipts to an army uniform to a letter between a husband working in America and his wife raising their family in China. While many of these pieces were donated to the museum, a good number were salvaged from dumpsters and forgotten desk drawers. The Museum of Chinese in the Americas itself questions the value of assembling such a hodgepodge of items into an exhibit. Its answer is that each object a person possesses holds some value to that person, and through examining these objects we can come

to a better understanding of who the original possessors were.

The museum’s commitment to the personal experience carries through to its presentation, placing as few items behind glass as possible and maintaining two interactive stations. One station provides maps and historical overviews of locations within Chinatown, and the other offers a headset and ten journals in which is compiled a 9/11 oral history report, organized by the Dr. Sun Yat Sun Middle School 131 Oral History Class. Both stations invite visitors to add their own experiences and thoughts to the collections. Whether in an attempt to make the museum accessible to everyone, or to highlight the Chinese immigrant experience in Latin America, the museum guide and exhibit notices are all printed in Chinese, English, and
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Spanish. The museum constantly downplays its own role as an educator, inviting the public to help direct the content of its collections and challenging visitors to form their own understanding of what “home” means and how it relates to personal and cultural histories.

MoCA is a quiet place to be. In the few hours I spent there one Saturday thumbing through books, staring into the faces captured in old newsprints, and fiddling with the computers, four other visitors arrived and left. There is enough to keep you busy for a couple days if you want to read every oral history entry and check out each spot on the interactive Chinatown map, but most people will probably breeze through in an hour. If you are making a quick tour of it, be sure to see Mrs. Chu Foke’s handmade silk slipper for bound feet.

The museum also sponsors events and programs. A couple definitely worth looking into are Beau Sia’s

performance of “Kill Them All: Destroying Preconceived Notions of the Artist’s Message,” held on November 8th and 9th, and the Chinatown Film Project, which is accepting films up to seven minutes long on the filmmakers’ conceptions of their Chinatowns around the world. You can call 212-619-4785 ext 106 for more information on Beau Sia’s performance and to RSVP, and visit <http://www.youtube.com/user/MOCANYC> to submit a film to the Chinatown Film Project.

MoCA is open Tuesday through Sunday, 12:00 pm to 6:00 pm. It is currently located on the second floor of 70 Mulberry Street, but will be moving to Center Street next year. Owing to preparations for the move, only one exhibit is open to the public. Suggested admission for students is \$1, but if that’s too steep for you, just visit on a Friday, when it is free for everyone.

EAST ASIA RELATED EVENTS IN NYC:

Zhang Huan: Altered States
Through January 20th; T-S 11:00-6:00, Fridays until 9:00

Asia Society Museum, 725 Park Ave
www.asiasociety.org/arts/zhanghuan (admission \$5 with student ID)

Zhang Huan is a popular and controversial artist from China who now lives in New York. He works mostly in photography and performance art.

Godzilla and Japanese Culture
October 23, 6:30 pm

Japan Society, www.japansociety.org for tickets (\$5 with student ID)

Join author William Tsutsui for a lecture on the cultural impact of Godzilla on America, Japan, and the world.

Asian Arts and Culture—A New Vision: Melissa Chiu, Xu Bing, and Yun-Fei Ji

October 24, 6:30-8:30 pm
Asia Society, www.asiasociety.org for tickets (\$10 with student ID)

A discussion of what it means to be an artist and an overseas Chinese, with the Director of the Asia Society Museum and two expatriate Chinese artists.

Meet the Author: Colin Thubron, *Along the Silk Road—Observations of a Travel Writer*
October 25th, 6:30-9:30 pm
Asia Society, www.asiasociety.org for tickets (\$7 with student ID)

Dressed to Kill: Women’s Fashion and Body Politics in North Korea
October 25, 6:30 pm
Korea Society, www.koreasociety.org for tickets (\$5 with student ID)
Join Suk-Young Kim, Professor of Theater at the University of California at Santa Barbara, for a discussion of women’s fashion, uniforms, politics, and identity in North Korea.

Assessing the Impact of the Second Inter-Korean Summit: Chung-in Moon
October 25, 3:00-5:00 pm
Korea Society, www.koreasociety.org for tickets
Chung-in Moon is the Ambassador for International Security Affairs for the Republic of Korea, and he attended both inter-Korean summits.

From Saigon to SoHo: The Rise of Vietnamese Cuisine
October 29th, 6:30-9:30 pm
Asia Society, www.asiasociety.org for tickets (\$15 with student ID)

EAST ASIA RELATED EVENTS AT COLUMBIA:

Brown Bag Lecture: "Nuclear Logics: Contrasting Paths in East Asia and the Middle East"
Dr. Etel Solingen, Professor of Political Science, University of California at Irvine
October 25, 12:00-1:30 pm
918 IAB

Brown Bag Lecture: "Neoliberal Apartheid? Segregation and Urban Governance in the Philippines"
Michael Pinches, Chair of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of Western Australia
November 15, 12:00-1:30 pm
918 IAB

Announcement for New Undergraduate East Asia Journal and Symposium:

This year, the EALAC department and Weatherhead East Asian Institute will sponsor the first annual publication of the Columbia East Asia Review, as well as a half-day Symposium for Undergraduate Research on East Asia.

The Columbia East Asia Review, an online student journal featuring original research on East Asia from Columbia undergraduates, is looking for new

members to serve on its editorial board. The goal of the journal is to provide a medium for the dissemination and further refinement of undergraduate research through a review process involving undergraduate editors, graduate students, and professorial advisers. Students of all class years and experience levels are welcome to join the editorial board. The time commitment in the first semester is one hour a week while the editing period in the second semester will require a substantial time commitment every week (but it will be well worth it). Those interested in East Asia-related graduate studies are strongly encouraged to apply. Contact Tedde Tsang (tpt2102@columbia.edu) for more information.

We are also looking for more talented and knowledgeable undergrads to help us organize a symposium dedicated to undergraduate research in East Asia. The symposium will be a conference-style presentation of papers with the opportunity for discussion with a student audience. While this semester's obligation will be minimal (an hour a week at most), next semester's will be a few hours every week in the lead-up to the event. Members of the organizational committee will review and edit submissions and plan the details of the symposium day itself. Please email Wei Wei Hsing at fw2101@columbia.edu if you are interested in helping. Juniors/sophomores - this will be a great way to prepare for your senior thesis.

Journal meetings: Each Sunday at 4:30 pm, Lerner Piano Lounge
Next Symposium meeting: Sunday October 21, 3:00 pm, Lerner Piano Lounge

About SOUNDINGS: east asia monthly

Published monthly by the Weatherhead Institute's Undergraduate Council, **SOUNDINGS** aims to help better incorporate undergraduates into the broader East Asian Studies community at Columbia by providing increased access to information about East Asia-related groups, activities, and events. Incorporating academic as well as non-academic news and listings, it seeks to help interested undergraduates further pursue their interest in East Asia, whatever form it may take. **SOUNDINGS** is edited by Caroline Gilliam, CC '08 (cbg2104@columbia.edu).

About the Weatherhead East Asian Institute

Since its establishment in 1949, Columbia University's Weatherhead East Asian Institute has been a major center for research, teaching, and publishing on modern and contemporary Asia. The Institute's mission is to train new generations of Asian experts in the humanities, social sciences, and the professions and to enhance understanding of East Asia in the wider community.
