



SOUNDINGS: east asia monthly

a newsletter for undergraduates

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WEATHERHEAD EAST ASIAN INSTITUTE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

NOW ON DISPLAY AT THE NOGUCHI AND MOMA: OTHER SPACES (IN BETWEEN)

by Jon Kief, CC'07

Tucked away in a semi-industrial section of Long Island City, Queens, the Noguchi Museum is dedicated to the work of influential Japanese American sculptor, landscape architect, and interior designer Isamu Noguchi (1904-88). The collection is wide-ranging and varied, including a number of architectural and design models as well as a central courtyard garden, but it focuses primarily on Noguchi's sculptures. The most striking of these pieces are wrought out of deeply textured, earthy stone, and they have a monumental weight, a heaviness of presence and groundedness. The museum itself is housed in a former factory building whose conversion Noguchi personally planned and oversaw, and it occupies land that sits adjacent to the site of his former workshop.

The museum's current special exhibition allows us to engage Noguchi's work and legacy from an additional angle. Entitled *Shin Banraisha: A Cultural Memory*, the exhibition includes photographs as well as architectural drawings and models that document the construction and eventual dismantling of a meeting hall interior and outdoor garden designed by Noguchi in 1951 on the campus of Tokyo's Keio University. At the time, the project was of broad cultural significance. Its syncretic coordination of cross-cultural influences attempted to shape a new era of post-war openness and internationalism; its dedication to Noguchi's father, a prominent Japanese poet and professor who both abandoned his family and increasingly embraced wartime ideology, attempted to initiate a coming to terms with the past. In 2003, however, the University demolished the building containing *Shin Banraisha* in order to make room for new construction.

The exhibition is then concerned not only with design or with Noguchi's art as socio-cultural practice, but also with a broader question of space and presence—or in this case, space and absence. If the art museum's paradigmatic refrain is one of *habeas corpus*—we

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The Noguchi Room, Shin Banraisha

Photo by Chuji Hirayama, Courtesy of the Noguchi Museum

have the body, the original art object, the piece itself—our attention here is nevertheless directed away from presence, towards absence, towards memory as that which arises out of loss. After all, the "Noguchi Room," as students at Keio called it, is doubly displaced; not only was it always *there* (Tokyo) rather than *here* (Noguchi's workshop and museum), but it is now no longer even *there* at all, occasioning its arrival *here* as retrospective exhibition. Like all of Noguchi's architectural designs, *Shin Banraisha* existed in/as another space, but it now takes on a new form as a space that has become present in its memorialized absence; it is now an *other-space*—or at least, a space essentially *in-between*.

This is not, however, merely a question of memory and loss. In fact, a very similar problematic emerges in the Museum of Modern Art's new exhibition, *OMA in Beijing: China Central Television Headquarters* by Rem Koolhaas and Ole Scheeren, which examines the design and construction of a huge new television and media complex in Beijing. Designed by the Office of Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in 2002, the complex

OTHER SPACES (CON'T)

will house China Central Television's (CCTV) new administrative offices and production studios, a public use-oriented Television Cultural Center (TVCC), and a media park. It is scheduled to be completed in time for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, a remarkable feat for a group of structures of this magnitude.

But it is the complex's architectural design that is the main attraction; its coordination of private-production and public-consumption space and its bold juxtaposition of an off-kilter angularity and an unhinged fluidity assure it a spot in architectural history. In fact, MoMA's exhibition already initiates this movement, situating the new Beijing complex within the broader context of the development of modern architecture by including a number of plans and designs from the museum's permanent collection.

It is nevertheless hard to overlook the fact that this new building is one that is still in progress, one that does not yet exist. Like Noguchi's room at Keio University, but from an opposite direction, the OMA complex in Beijing is a doubly absent and other space; not only is it *there* rather than *here*, but it is also not even *there* at all. If the Noguchi exhibition points towards absence in the form of the *no-longer*, the *has-been*, MoMA's exhibition performs a similar function on the modality of the *not-yet*, the *will-be*.

The question of other space, then, is not necessarily about loss, but also about dynamism and production. Both of these exhibitions show us the movement from

other space to other-space; as such, they guide us towards a better understanding of the conflictedness of identity and the openness of the *in-between*. This would seem to be a fitting memorial to Noguchi's artistic vision, and it would also allow for a meaningful engagement with a dynamic (new) China in production, under construction.

The Noguchi Museum is located at 9-01 33rd Road in Long Island City, Queens, accessible by subway and a special shuttle bus on Sundays; see www.noguchi.org for directions and more information. The special exhibition, *Shin Banraisha: A Cultural Memory*, will be on display until April 1st. The Museum is open Wednesday-Friday, 10am-5pm, and Saturday-Sunday, 11am-6pm. Admission is \$5 for students with current IDs. MoMA is located on W. 53rd Street, between 5th and 6th Avenues. The special exhibition, *OMA in Beijing: China Central Television Headquarters by Rem Koolhaas and Ole Scheeren*, will be on display until February 26th. Admission is free for Columbia students with current IDs. See www.moma.org for info.

SAVE THE DATE!

THIRD ANNUAL CHINA SYMPOSIUM "BECOMING A STAKEHOLDER: CHINA IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS"

FRIDAY, APRIL 20TH, 9:00AM-5:00PM

For more info, please visit:

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/weai/china-symposium-2007.html>

EAST ASIAN STUDIES ALUMNI PROFILE: JENNA CROUCH, BC'06 (AMEC MAJOR)



Jenna graduated from Barnard College in May 2006. As an AMEC major, she concentrated in Chinese and political science. Since graduation, Jenna has been working as a program assistant for the National Committee on United States-China Relations, where she works with program officers to promote stronger Sino-American relations through public education and policy-related programs. Jenna also edits the National Committee's newsletter and various other publications.

While she hopes to one day have a career that allows her to work and travel in China, in July 2007 Jenna will embark on a two year adventure to West Africa and put her French skills to work as a Peace Corps volunteer. Jenna is also currently applying to law school and welcomes any questions regarding the law school or Peace Corps application processes. She can be reached at jennacrouch@gmail.com.

In her free time, Jenna continues her Chinese studies with a tutor and trains for triathlons with the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team in Training.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Weatherhead East Asian Institute Events

Thu, Feb. 8, 12:00-1:30pm

Brown Bag Lecture: "Did Le Corbusier's Dreams Really Come True in Asia? Apartment Complexes and the Making of South Korean Modern Cities"
Valerie Gelezeau, Assistant Professor, Marne-la-Vallee University, France
918 IAB

See www.columbia.edu/cu/weai/events.html for an up-to-date calendar of Institute events.

East Asia Events at Columbia

Thu, Jan. 25, 6:00-7:30pm

Lecture: "Temples and Warriors: Screens of Uji and Sagano by Kano Eitoku"
Matthew McKelway
403 Kent

Thu, Feb. 1, 6:00-7:30pm

Lecture: "Fabricating Self Image Through Music: the Ryukyu Kingdom's Artistic Strategy in Her Relationship with Japan and China"
Naoko Terauchi, Kobe University and Visiting Professor, Columbia University
403 Kent

Thu, Feb. 8, 6:00-7:30pm

Lecture: "落語 RAKU-GO: Traditional Japanese Comic Storytelling"
Katsura Koharudanji, Special Advisor for Cultural Exchange, Agency for Cultural Affairs
403 Kent Hall
* This lecture will be in Japanese.

For more info on any of the three events listed above, see www.donaldkeenecenter.org.

East Asia Events in NYC

Wed, Jan. 17, 6:00-8:00pm

Presentation: "Enough to Say It's Far: Selected Poems of Pak Chaesam"
David McCann, Korea Foundation Professor of Korean Literature, Harvard University
Korea Society (www.koreasociety.org)

Sun, Jan. 21, 2:00-3:15pm

Music: "Kioku: Experimental and Improvisational Asian Folk Music"
Rubin Museum of Art (www.rmanyc.org)

HIGHLIGHTED EVENT

Director Retrospective: *The Outside from the Inside: Films of Kazuo Hara*

Anthology Film Archives (anthologyfilmarchives.org)

Wed, Jan. 31 – Sun, Feb. 4



"Kazuo Hara has been making scandalous films about scandalous people since 1972... He describes his work as 'overstepping the boundaries set by society

in order to approach my subjects in close-up'... Hara's work reveals how life stories are constructed across the border between fiction and reality. Do not miss this rare opportunity to see these remarkable films, none of which are in theatrical distribution in the US." (text and photo: anthologyfilmarchives.org)

Mon, Jan. 22, 7:30

Music: "Sounds of East Asia: Japanese and Taiwanese Traditional Instruments"

Pre-performance lecture at 6:30pm

Japan Society (www.japansociety.org)

Wed, Jan. 24, 7:00pm

Presentation: "The Great Debate 2007: Gehlek Rinpoche & Robert Thurman"

Tibet House (www.tibethouse.org)

Held at the New York Society for Ethical Culture

Thu, Jan. 25, 6:30pm

Film: "King and the Clown" (dir. Jun-ik Lee)

Korean Cultural Service (www.koreanculture.org)

Fri, Jan. 26 – Thu, Feb. 1, 7:00 & 9:00pm; also Sat, Jan.

27 and Sun, Jan. 28, 5:00pm; Wed, Jan. 31, 9:00 only

Film: "China Blue" (dir. Micha X. Peled, NY Premiere)

Anthology Film Archives (anthologyfilmarchives.org)

Tue, Feb. 6, 6:30-8:30pm

Film: "Motherland Afghanistan"

Post-screening discussion with dir. Sedika Mojadidi
Asia Society (www.asiasociety.org)

Wed, Feb. 7 – Sat. Feb. 10, 7:30pm; Sat, Feb. 10, 3:00pm

Performing Arts: "Big Dance Theater: *The Other Here*"

Japan Society (www.japansociety.org)

OPPORTUNITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Courses:

POLS W3422 Globalization and the State in East Asia
Joo-Youn Jung, MW 2:40-3:55, 413 IAB

RELI V3016 Indo-Tibetan Buddhism and Gender
Sarah Jacoby, TR 4:10-5:25, C01 80 Claremont Ave

Academic and Extracurricular:

Participate in The Forum for American/Chinese Exchange at Stanford (FACES), held at Stanford University, April 8-14, 2007, and in China, November 11-17 2007. Applications are due by January 22. See <http://faces.stanford.edu> for more info.

Participate in the 59th Japan-America Student Conference: "Advocating Japan-America Participation in Global Change," July 22 - August 20 in Japan. Applications are available in 407 Kent and are due by February 15. See <http://www.jasc.org> for more info.

HISTORY MATTERS: An Undergraduate Journal of Historical Research, published by Appalachian State University, is seeking submissions for its next issue. The deadline is January 26. See <http://www.historymatters.appstate.edu> for more info.

Study Abroad:

Hong Kong Internship Open House: Columbia Experience Overseas (CEO). Thursday, January 18, 6:00pm. Applications are due by January 22. See <http://www.cce.columbia.edu/students/experiential/ceo.php> for more info.

Year-long language fellowships are available through the Chinese and Taiwanese government. Detailed application information is available in 407 Kent. The application deadline is February 15.

Interested in volunteering in Asia? VIA Programs offers summer as well as one- and two-year programs in China and SE Asia. Applications are due by February 22. See <http://www.viaprograms.org> for more info.

CONTACT INFORMATION

To add your name to the undergraduate mailing list, visit <http://www.columbia.edu/weai> and click on "get on the mailing list," or e-mail us at: weaiundergrads@columbia.edu.

WEAI undergraduate liaisons:

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For information on how to contact East Asia-related student groups on campus at Columbia, visit:

http://www.columbia.edu/cu/weai/undergrad_student_groups_n.html

ABOUT US

About SOUNDINGS: east asia monthly

Published monthly, **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 Jon Kief (CC'07, jk2336@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.
