
Revelasians

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Letter From the Editor

Hello and thank you for picking up this latest issue of Revelasians. For those of you who have never had the pleasure of reading Revelasians before, prepare yourself for an wonderful collection of writing, art, and recollections from your peers.

For those returning, this issue carries on many of the features laid out before, though now with a handy dandy darkened sections making the Writing, Visual Arts, and Special Events sections visible from the side. The cover this issue attempts to fuse South Asian and East Asian motifs of ceremonial henna art and eastern style dragons.

This is my first time being the editor of Revelasians, and while I stumbled over articles and images with these ridiculously large shoes, I can sincerely say I have learned so much more than I ever thought I could in so short a time.

Thank you to the contributors and supporters of Revelasians. Happy New Year!

Austin Lan
Editor and Designer, Revelasians

about the Asian American Cultural Center

Established in 1981, the Asian American Cultural Center explores the social and political experience of Asians and Asian Americans in the United States. The Center and its affiliated student organizations are committed to the intellectual, cultural, social and political development of the Asian American student community at Yale.

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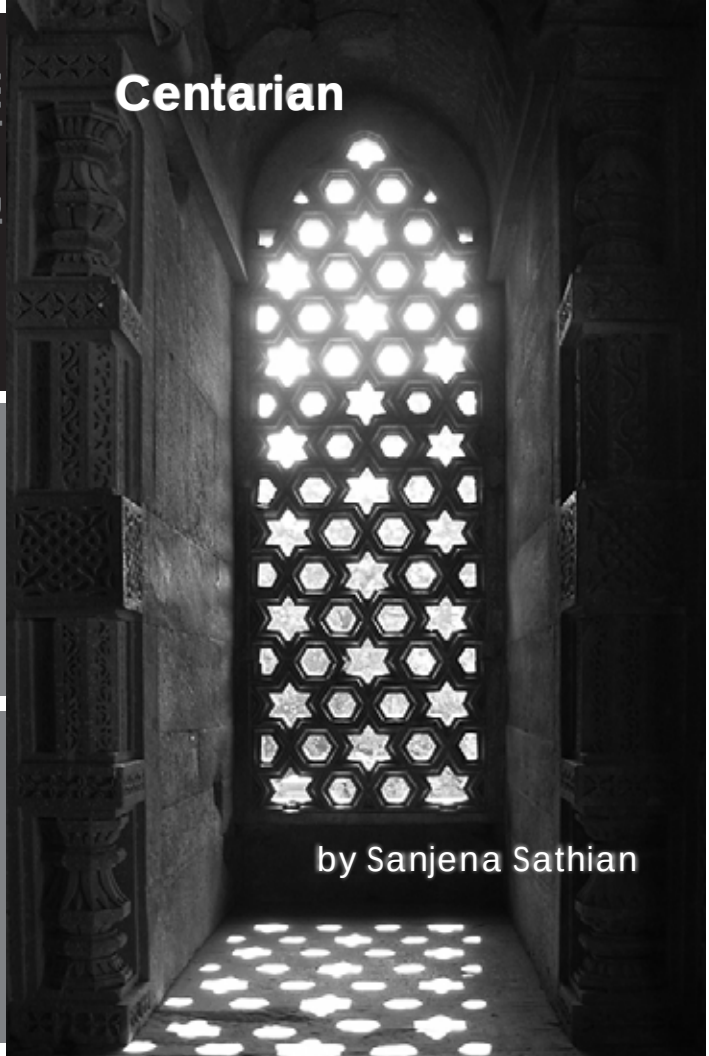


The first time I remember walking into the house, it had not begun to wilt. Its columns sloped regally upwards, far beyond my own gaze, and the red tiled roof burned madly beneath the unrelenting Kerala sun. I gaped around at everything—the high ceilings, the door into the courtyard that was always kept open, letting the tiniest bit of light dance across the dark wood floor, the cow in the back that squeezed out horribly fresh milk in the mornings. From my little girl's perspective, the house seemed a grand castle for the two obligatory days my father ensured we stayed there.

I must have been four or five; either way, I was small enough that the woman of the house, all shriveled and sunken, seemed enormous. When I stared in awe up at her, the first thing I noticed about my great-grandmother was her eyes. Their glance scattered across my face from behind her thick glasses like her pupils were probing from behind her clouded cataracts; she seemed confused at who this small child was but delighted nonetheless simply to take in my appearance. Her hair had pushed beyond gray to a golden blonde, and she wore it pulled back into a sleek bun. She smiled down toothily at me, showing a set of ill-fitted false teeth that poked out of her mouth at jaunty angles. When she suddenly spoke, it was to ask me to sing her a sloka, a Sanskrit

prayer I had learned recently from my mother. I sang, and she hummed along fiercely, clamping her false teeth together.

When I played dress-up back home, my father's stethoscope tossed around my neck, I could see a young doctor at twenty-five, or with a doll on my hip even a mother at forty, but I couldn't imagine my skin curdling, my hair turning sun-kissed, or my enormous dark brown eyes fading and going misty. I'd hum absently, my back teeth rubbing awkwardly against each other as I tried to clench my jaw just as she had. When my molars met each other as I hummed, I found a deep buzzing sound filled my ears – a sound no one else could hear but that I held in my own mind like a conch permanently soldered to my earlobe, drowning out the rest of the world as I thought of the tiny village with the tiny old woman.

"I found a deep buzzing sound filled my ears... drowning out the rest of the world..."

But as I grew past games of pretend, I thought of her only occasionally. She was ancient, relegated to the background of history. There were visits every so often, when my parents would sweep my brother and me into the dusty South Indian village. We'd stay in the crumbling house, sleep on hard, flat beds, catch splinters in our feet from the wood floors, and I'd sing slokas to her when she asked me. I'd watch her routine when I woke up jet-lagged early in the morning: at four she'd take a bath, dumping buckets of frigid water on her head, then softly creep to her prayer room to sing bhajjans for an hour. I'd sit on the swing in the living room—it was really just a thin plank of wood hanging from the ceiling—and listen to her voice wrap easily around Sanskrit words I was barely learning to pronounce. After prayers, she'd read in the living room, her eyes latched intensely onto the yellowed pages of her book. Later in the morning, as the house became busier with servants and cleaners, I'd feel my stomach turn with the heady odor of frying dosas and vadais for breakfast and the day's fresh milk boiling on the stove.

My parents told us to talk to her, to ask her to recount stories of her youth, to tell us about the village when it was vibrant and bustling. I didn't. Instead I watched her in the mornings, watched her slip through the grooves of a well-known routine, watched her sing and read and eat, and I just watched and watched and watched, waiting for when she'd turn to probe my face, to wait for the instant she remembered the familiar shape of

instant she remembered the familiar shape of my face, when she'd ask me to sing to her.

One visit when I was about eight, my father took me up one of the house's rickety wooden staircases into a musty room to show me his family tree. He pulled out a series of shadowy black and white photos. The earliest photos of my great-grandmother, though fuzzy, were clear enough for me to stare into her just-married thirteen-year-old eyes. Her sari was neatly pleated, her hair pulled back so tightly it seemed to raise her eyebrows for her. I focused my eyes on her, moved my head about to see if her eyes would follow the path my head traced. My father was talking, talking, talking about her, about the books she translated, about his dull childhood trips to the house, about her husband and children long dead.

"I wondered when she had started to crinkle."

She grimaced back at me stonily from her frozen perch in the past, her eyes hard and dark, and her skin taut across her bony face—and I wondered when she had started to crinkle.

The winter of my first year in college we returned to a new house. The old mansion's wood had rotted, the courtyard had been drooping for years, the sloping maroon roof-tiles bore holes that let in the rain and the unforgiving sun. Everyone gathered around to tour the new house, to admire the groomed flowerbeds and the bright red roof and to say how glad they were they'd taken down that old wreck of a house. I wandered across the cold red floors that felt soft on my feet and into the kitchen, where the windows let the thick smell of cooking dosas drift outside. And when I sat down in the living room on the polished wood swing, across from my great-grandmother, she didn't turn to look at me, didn't ask me to sing her a sloka.

"Great-grandma?" I spoke cautiously.

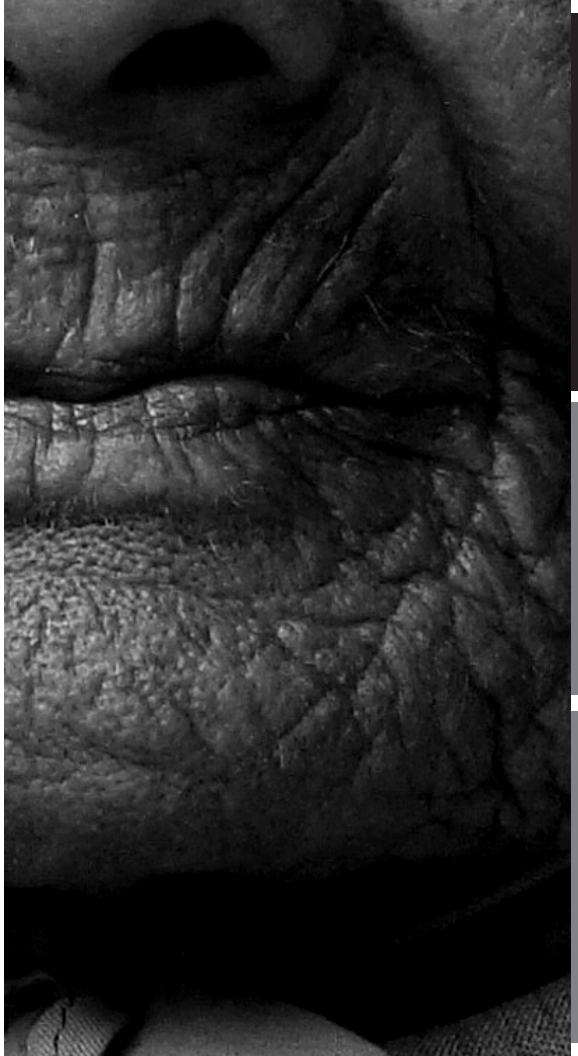
She stared straight ahead, and all I saw behind her thick lenses was the white of her eyes. There was no vague sparkle just at seeing my face, not even a tiny twitch of her neck to turn toward me. Her neck remained turned toward the soap opera playing on the television. I could hear a low humming from her as she sat and stared ahead, and I saw that her mouth was frowning tightly, her jaw clamped shut as she hummed away the world.
Everyone in the house seemed impervious to her gaze. They walked in front of her freely, chatting about how busy the town had been for the temple

festival, and how annoying the neighbor was who came to tea and wouldn't stop talking. When they spoke to her, it was in loud, clear voices, and they leaned their faces so close that their breath seemed to gather on her lenses. They'd ask in coarse Malayalam, "Who's this?" pointing at my father, or his mother, or my brother or me. After a few repetitions of the question she'd pick up her drooping mouth, gather her lips as if stretching them, smile dutifully, and say, "Devi" or "Sathian" or "Sathian's son."

"You're the youngest," my grandmother comforted me, when she failed to identify me. "I think she stopped trying to remember births after a certain point."

I watched my great-grandmother stare straight ahead into the jittery television. She reached for a corner of her loose, unpleated sari, holding it with care between her lumpy fingers. Deliberately, she sniffed loudly and pulled the corner up to wipe her nose.

The morning we left I wandered into the wing of the house that everyone left to my great-grandmother. It was a secluded room, with tall windows looking into the bright new garden and dark wooden bookshelves lining the walls. As I turned into the room, I saw her perched, rod-like, at an ancient table. Her white sari was draped messily across her chest; her sagging skin was mostly exposed and her wispy yellow hair was oiled and dangled carelessly down her back. But it was the first time the whole visit I'd seen her alone, without someone hoisting her out of a chair or helping her from the table to her bed and back. I strained to see—and realized she was holding her prayer book, with slokas written



out in gentle curving Malayalam script. She sat with a regal stiffness, her baggy mouth turned carefully downward in a thoughtful frown. All her forehead's folds seemed deliberate, shaped around the sudden animations of her face as she raised her eyebrows, then furrowed them, then scratched across her thin hairline with knotted fingers. Her jaw-line was set in a harsh expression, and I heard a vague humming seeping through her clamped lips. I stood silently there as she paged through her book . . . she turned one, two, three pages, and I watched her eyes fasten to the looping words one by one, her bony finger following across the frail paper. I could hear the pages crease slowly, as her careful hands pushed through the worn book; the whisper of the pages mingled with her hums, and I leaned against the doorframe, my gaze fixed on the back of her tiny head.

"She does this sometimes," my grandmother said behind me. "But if you look closely every once in a while you'll see she has it upside down."

We waved goodbye from the jeep one last time, our faces pressed to the window so we wouldn't miss one blown kiss or shouted command to come again, for longer next time. As we drove away my mother commented on how bright the new garden was. My father said something about how breezy the new place was. I clenched my teeth together and hummed till the buzzing in my ears drowned them out.

Holidays

by Jack Li

I was born in Chengde, a small, tourist city in Northwest China. Our family immigrated to the United States when I was around eight years old. Though I don't have many memories of Chengde (having spend much of time as an infant), one thing that stuck in my mind was the holidays. Every Spring Festival the entire family would gather at my grandparent's two bedroom flat to watch the 春节联欢晚会, an all-night TV festival broadcasted nationwide by CCTV to celebrate the coming of the Spring Festival. I remember every seat in the house would be stuffed with aunty this or uncle that, chatting merrily while sipping on green tea and cracking sunflower seeds. The air would be filled with the delicious aroma of a massive meal awaiting us; the heavy smell of garlic and vinegar would cover up the smell from the occasional cigarette smoker. With so many people in the room and the kitchen fired up, the room would be warm and I would always struggle to stay awake. I always fought hard to stay awake because at midnight comes

the most delicious treat: dumplings. It was a tradition to eat dumplings at midnight during the Spring Festival for good luck.

After we came to America we tried to bring our traditions with us. Mom, dad, and I bought moon cakes for Mid-Autumn Festival, made riceballs for Duanwu, gave each other red envelopes during the Lunar New Year, and even made dumplings for the Spring Festival. But since those are Chinese holidays, my parents often had to work and eventually we gave up. My parents, however, did have the American holidays off. We gave out candy during Halloween, attempted (unsuccessfully) to cook turkeys, and gathered for Christmas dinner. I can tell, however, that the efforts were half-hearted; because we did not grow up around these holidays, they did not feel like our own. The holidays that were our own, we could not find time to celebrate. Eventually, we stopped celebrating holidays all together.

But this is not a sad story. My family created our own celebrations-dad getting his green card, buying our first new car, our new house, and college acceptances-those are the experiences we share, and those are the things that bound us together. During certain days of the year we'd remember driving our first car or moving into our first house, we would remember the experiences we shared, and the joy of sharing those experiences with each other. And those, for us, were the real holidays.

the End of the World

anonymous

You asked me
when the world is burning up
burning down
who is the last person
I want to be with?
And no,
I haven't been thinking
about silly things like that,
but now that you ask
I suppose I'd like to be with you,
watching the burning black bits
of earth
flutter past
the rich red world,
arguing with you
about whether or not there is a god,
and feeling the way
I think your fingers would feel
fit snugly in the gaps
between mine.

On an island, in an ocean deep,
There is a fortress, a castle keep.
Behind its walls the hermit sleeps;
He does not smile, it does not weep.

A familiar feeling of down
Arises with the dimming of the sun.
Simple joys are replaced by gloom...
Does it foretell my doom?

I
just want to write
a few words to say how
much you have
impacted my life and
Love
is not strong enough
to describe the acceleration
of my heartbeat
at the sight of
You
and if this is a dream
then allow me this final
sleep
and let me hold your hand
Forever

Nước Mẹ[1]

by Timmy Pham

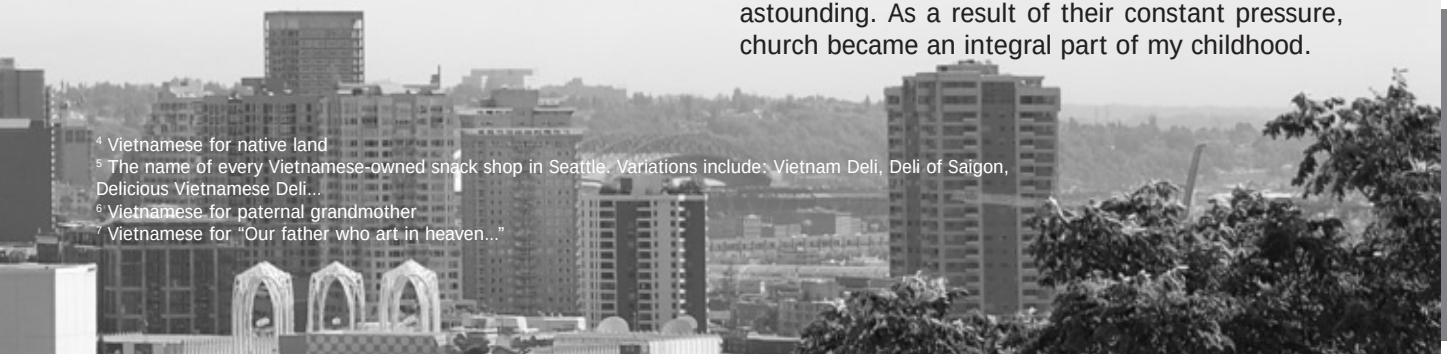
Seattle has developed a reputation as being a growing metropolis. Outfitted with organic flannel and Starbucks coffee in hand, a true Seattlite is often depicted as classy, eco-friendly, and hip. These creatures can be found wandering about their native city, a land where Smart Cars[2] zip through grid of streets in Pac-Man fashion. As appealing as this picturesque Seattle is, it is not the Seattle of my childhood. My Seattle was nothing like the image the people associate with the Space Needle and indie music groups. My Seattle echoed with the sound of discordant chanting of hundreds of elderly ladies, all flapping their paper bulletins to stave off the heat of bodies cramped in a poorly ventilated chapel. My Seattle smelled of sharp Tiger Balm[3] laced with sweat and grease. My Seattle was neither organic nor fashionable. My Seattle was imported.

The Vietnamese Catholic Church of Seattle is a haven for the hundreds of Vietnamese-American families that congregated in the Seattle area after

[1] Literal Vietnamese translation: Mother Waters
[2] Low emission clown cars
[3] A heat rub made in Singapore that can be found in any tradition Chinese medicine store. Considered a panacea by old woman of any Indochinese descent, this balm has a distinctive mint odor

fleeing quê hương[4] . Buzzing with the energy of refugee families, the church is nestled in a maze of streets littered with discarded bottles, cigarette butts, and urine-stained stoops. It is the center of a Vietnamese network, extending out into the sketchy areas of the city with tendrils of noodle shops, nail salons, and Saigon Delis[5]. The church serves as a heart for the Vietnamese community and pumps earnestly in an attempt to concentrate a sense of culture in marrow of its members.

My earliest memory of the church can be accredited to my grandmother. As a devout Catholic, Bà Noi[6] has never been one to shirk from her faith. Anytime is a good time for prayer, be it in the car, in the middle of study break, or three o'clock in the morning when the head exhibits a gravitational pull towards comfy objects. As children, my siblings and I had our assigned positions right next to grandma on the wooden pews of the church. As Vietnamese prayers rolled off our tongues and our heads began to droop, my siblings and I sat amidst the congregation of old women with their grandchildren, slowly absorbing the sounds our of language and our Catholic tradition. The familiar *Lạy Cha chúng con ở trên trời...*[7] cycled infinitely and screwed itself into the depths of our skulls. Over the years wooden pews became bearable and sleeping in church turned into a game. I recall one time I fell asleep while kneeling on the thinly padded kneeling block and awoke to find myself lauded as "Such a holy child" by the neighboring grandmothers. They pulled at my cheeks with their jade-ringed fingers and yellowed nails. The scent of fragrant oils had folded into the wrinkles of their skin over the years, but their eyes reflected a sense of youth. The grandmas were always alert, their hands poised to whip around and smack the dozing children back into consciousness. Their ferocity for all things holy was astounding. As a result of their constant pressure, church became an integral part of my childhood.



[4] Vietnamese for native land
[5] The name of every Vietnamese-owned snack shop in Seattle. Variations include: Vietnam Deli, Deli of Saigon, Delicious Vietnamese Deli...
[6] Vietnamese for paternal grandmother
[7] Vietnamese for "Our father who art in heaven..."

In addition to serving as a religious center, the Vietnamese Catholic Church was also a hub for cultural teachings. In the consortium of rundown buildings, there were a number of Vietnamese organizations that zipped in and out of rooms throughout the weekend. Vietnamese language classes were held every Sunday morning. My siblings and I would do our homework in the car on the half hour trip to Seattle. In our father's 1990 Toyota Corolla that smelled of dust and cheap air freshener, we would hastily copy down our vocabulary on dotted lines, throwing down letters and accents without regard to the meanings. Following Vietnamese custom, we would sneak into class 15 minutes late, looking sheepish as we ducked into the windowless underground rooms hidden underneath the living quarters of Cha Phương[8]. After classes the grandmother descended upon the classrooms and plucked their children from the crowds. My siblings and I would join hands with our grandmother as we crossed the street to the nearby deli to grab snacks before church. With our bellies stuffed of red sticky rice and chilled soymilk, my siblings and I would once again return to our usual spot on the pew next to Bà Noi. I ended up studying Vietnamese for over eight years. I should be fluent, but even though I 'graduated', my final grades were mostly C's and D's.

> "They pulled at my cheeks with their jade-ringed fingers and yellowed nails."

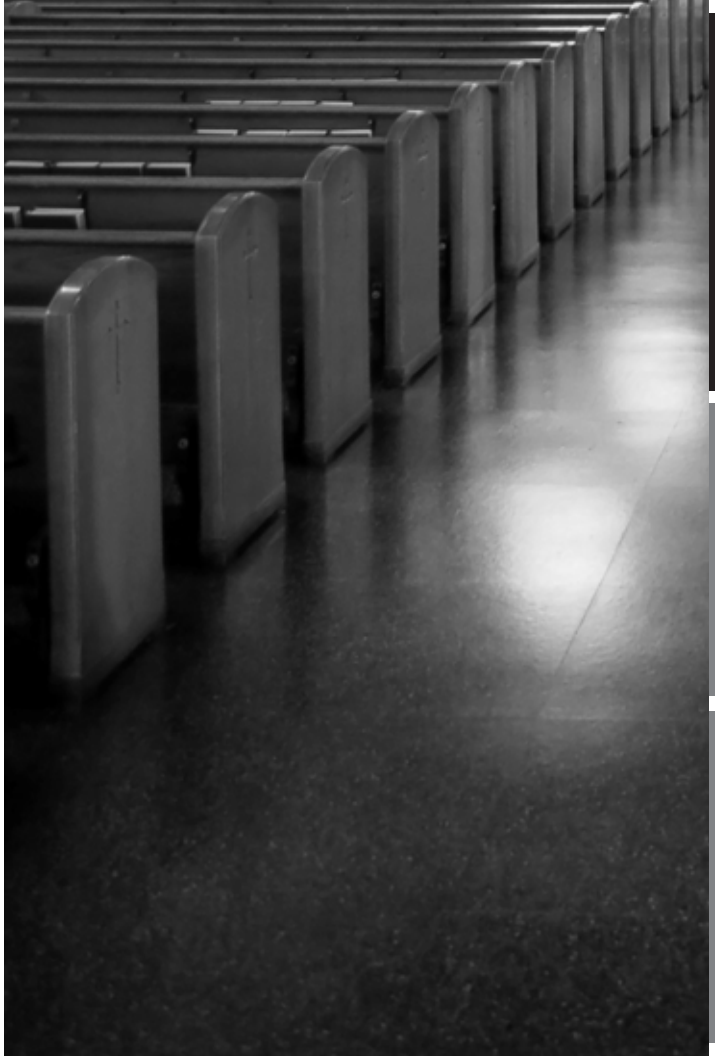
A few years after the initiation of Vietnamese language studying, my grandmother enrolled all my siblings and me into Thiếu Nhi Thánh Thể, a Vietnamese coed version of Boy Scouts that replaces the outdoor and skills focus with God and the bible. While my fellow schoolmates spent Saturday mornings watching cartoons, I jumped into the car in my white button up shirt and colored scarf, and my dad drove us to Church, again, arriving fashionably late. The rest of the day was spent in our separate age groups, designated by the color of scarf. Au Nhi 'scouts' ran around in their bright green scarves, yelping as they traded Pokémon cards and marveled at Gameboys[9]. The older Nghi Si high schoolers flirted and goofed off, their yellow scarves

[8] Father Phuong was one of the two resident priests at the church during my childhood. He is now retired and his living quarters are occupied by the new priest, Cha Minh.

[9] Small electronic contraptions developed by Nintendo to allow children to bring their latest game obsession with them to school, church, and other public places.

glowing in the light of the sun. I was stuck with the blue scarf, the color assigned to the awkward middle schoolers. With our explosive hormones, the Thiếu Nhi group was segmented into a highly complex caste system. Though I never fully figured out the social hierarchy, I am certain that I was in the lower class to begin with. I never wore the right shoes or smirk necessary for the higher social standings. My demeanor was too light and I was too nice to the youth leaders to be considered cool. Apathy won popularity, and if you threw in a side of sass you were automatically on top. I never got to that point. In fact, one of my most vivid memories of Thiếu Nhi involves me lying on the concrete parking lot amidst the grass growing out of the cracks while a popular kid sat on my chest ready to punch me in the face. I fit in so well.

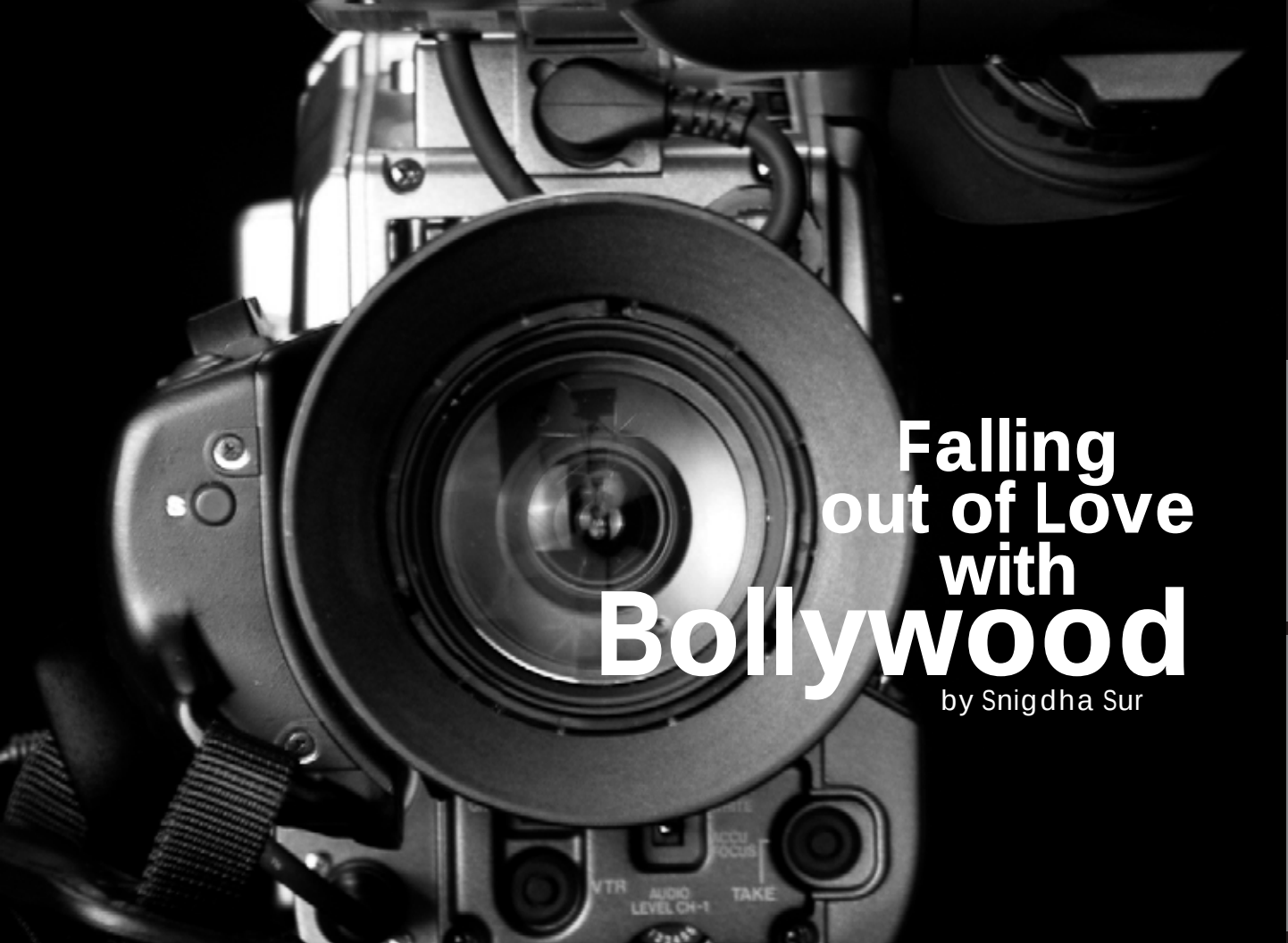
One of Thiếu Nhi Thánh Thể's major events was the fall carnival. A two-day event, this carnival took up the entire church grounds. The parking lot would be cleared and in front of the hastily assembled stage, rows of chairs were filled with the pear-shaped grandmas and their chain-smoking stick husbands. Bodies crammed together as they collectively moved from the tarp-covered food area to the games area and back again. I usually found myself wandering with my sister from one table



of food to the next, using the money my mother gave me earlier in the morning to satiate hunger with steaming kebabs instead of full meals. We were always familiar with the women behind the stoves of steaming noodles, and would try our hardest to slip into the crowd before they made us sit down and eat. My brothers typically spent hours sitting in front a booth that charges 25 cents for a game of Tekken[10]. The tangle of wires and extension cords always traced back to the booth, the trail ending in a wad of middle school boys. The nights of the carnival were filled with the twang of Vietnamese songs, as the stage, which was earlier used for Vietnamese Knowledge Bowl and Spelling Bee, transformed into a performance area for dance groups and musical entertainment.

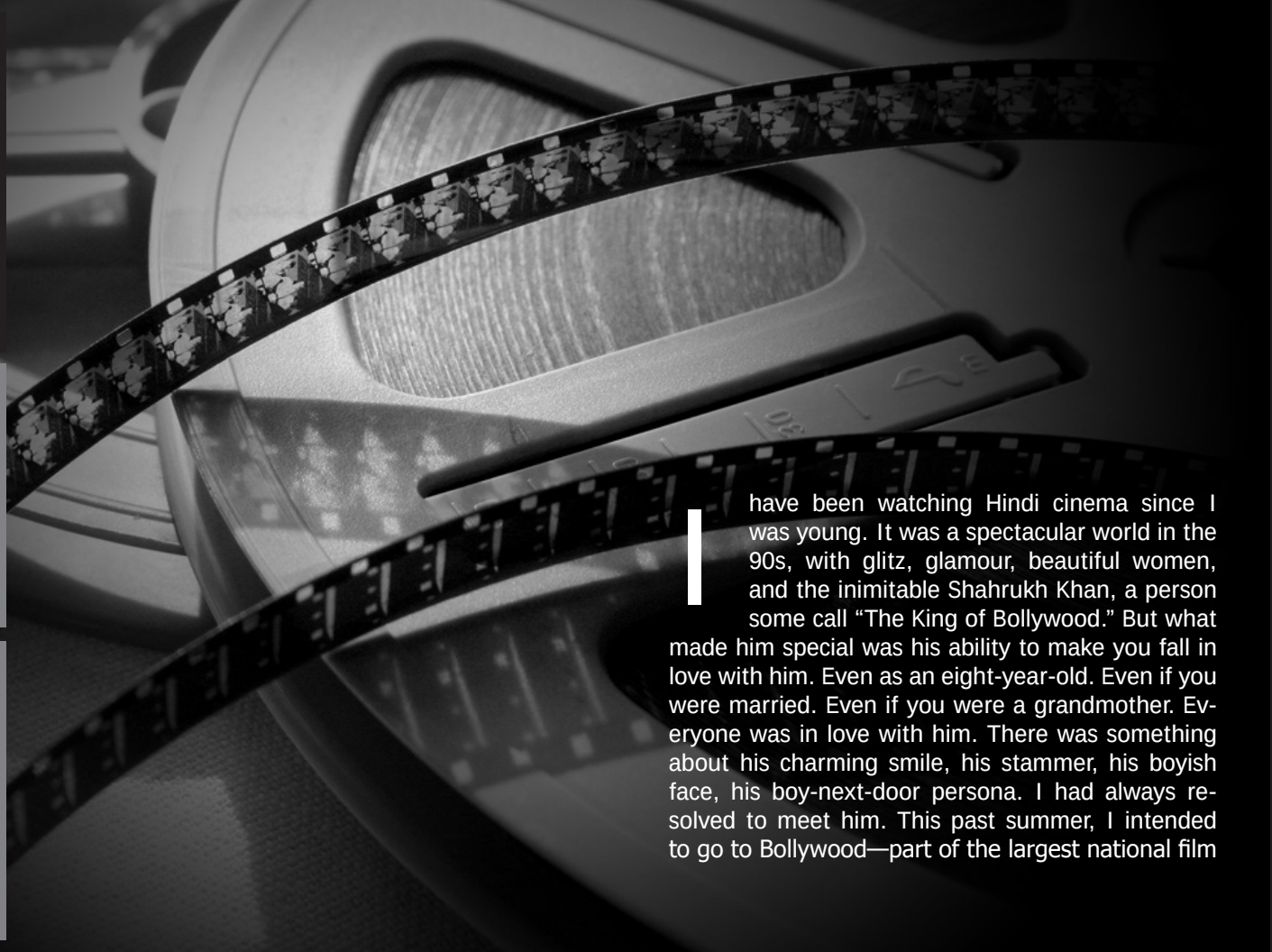
The church was always—and still is— an oasis for the Vietnamese community. For me, it was the place where I spent a lot of my time as a child. Every weekend was marked by the drives back and forth from Seattle. My religious and ethnic foundations are built upon this block of land that serves as church, language center, and youth group headquarters though it only houses a few rickety buildings. I returned to the church the last time I was in Seattle. I sat in the same seats I sat in as a child, the same wooden pews next to the same Bà Noi. Many of the grandmas have passed on, but their younger counterparts have quickly filled in the spaces and empty parts in the chorus of chanters. Their fingers are still laden with jade and their hands still swift as ever. As I sat and looked around, I realized that I could now see over the heads of all the little grandmas. I was nearly twice the size of some. Nonetheless, I still hold Bà Noi's hand when we cross the street.

[10] An action video game in which players select characters to fight one another. Highly popular in realm of Asian male adolescents.



Falling out of Love with Bollywood

by Snigdha Sur



I have been watching Hindi cinema since I was young. It was a spectacular world in the 90s, with glitz, glamour, beautiful women, and the inimitable Shahrukh Khan, a person some call “The King of Bollywood.” But what made him special was his ability to make you fall in love with him. Even as an eight-year-old. Even if you were married. Even if you were a grandmother. Everyone was in love with him. There was something about his charming smile, his stammer, his boyish face, his boy-next-door persona. I had always resolved to meet him. This past summer, I intended to go to Bollywood—part of the largest national film

industry in the world—and do exactly that.

Well, let's rewind. After Slumdog Millionaire swept the Oscars, it seemed like everyone had something to say about Bollywood—Hindi cinema made in Mumbai, India—or their perception of it. For many, Bollywood is about the song and dance, exaggeration, dramatics, and more. This summer, I intended to figure out where the Bollywood most people know or think they know had gone. The Hindi film industry has changed immensely since the late 90s to a form that attempts to satiate the diversified tastes in today's India. It's a place where single-screen theaters with tickets around $2.50 coexist with large multiplexes that charge American prices, encompassing the tastes of the poor to the rich and everything in between.

So as Bollywood was changing its narrative form (for example, most movies now clock 2.5 hours or less instead of the usual 3), I wanted to capture the moment. I worked in a post-2000 production company, Excel Entertainment Pvt Ltd, which has had a large hand in introducing changes in the industry from its very beginning, and interviewed as many people as I could, from all the taxidrivers I've ever met to cinemagoers and industry insiders. I had high hopes and learned, well, a lot. Even some of my own misconceptions were cleared up. I learned that scripts are written in English (even if people speak in Hindi in the film). I learned that I had chosen to come during the worst possible time—the monsoon season—when most films were not shot from start to finish because of overcast skies and the inconvenience of rain. I learned that most people called Mumbai Bombay. And I also learned that my beloved Shahrukh Khan wasn't even in the city I had traveled thousands of miles for—he was in London, just across the Atlantic. I felt duped.

> "It was hot, it was humid, it was what some call dirty, but it was also vibrant and new. "

But all was not lost. I began to realize that this was the first time I was experiencing my parents' country through my own eyes. It was hot, it was humid, it was what some call dirty, but it was also vibrant and new. I felt I was making the city my own, as I got lost in it, both literally and figuratively (I also wished I had activated my iPhone while abroad multiple times). I began to realize that the summer was curing me of my infatuation with Bollywood. As I sat there, sitting in front of Excel (yes, even film production houses use Excel!), figuring out budgets, scheduling, and even filling

out visa application forms for the cast and crew, I realized it wasn't easy, and it wasn't always fun. One scene could take forever to shoot.

Of all the movies that I liked over the summer, none even had a traditional romantic angle (the trouble with Bollywood: it mistakenly teaches young Indian girls that princes exist). Tere Bin Laden was a parody on Osama bin Laden that was smartly done and actually not offensive. Udaan was about a father-son relationship. Oh no, I realized. Bollywood was growing up. And so was I. It really was no longer fantasy; and now, everyone was in on it.

"It really was no longer fantasy; and now, everyone was in on it"

After many interviews, the pattern was clear. People who had formerly gone to theaters often were not going, and waiting for the releases to come out on television. The working class and lower working classes cannot afford multiplex theater prices. In a city where all the taxi drivers know where to drop you off in relation to a theater (my gym was near Eros, St. Xavier's was near Metro movies, etc.), it was disheartening to realize that the taxi drivers—whom I interviewed whenever I got into a cab—did not have time to watch movies anymore.

I spent eight weeks interviewing industry insiders, from sound designers to producers to assistant directors to production house CEOs to line producers to executive producers to directors and even Bipasha Basu, one of the smartest and most beautiful actresses on the scene. Even in her opinion, despite the overt change in storylines and scripts, it seemed that much of the psyche hadn't changed. People were still being typecast. Writers were still being paid peanuts. But it was now a bigger game: stars were being paid absurd amounts, movies are made quickly and often outside of India, multiplexes are popping up all over the place—and sometimes even replacing single-screens—production budgets have increased exponentially, and corporate finance is on the rise. The most intriguing, lasting changes were happening in what I previously thought were boring departments, like sound design—the return of sync (or location) sound, the increased value of silence, reduced (or no) lip-syncing to songs and more.

Now, audio and video were shot at the same time, whereas before, actors would go to sound studios to dub over much of what they had already acted out in front of the camera. This led to exaggeration and over-dramatization. (Also, the lips

didn't always match what actors were saying!) Sync sound had disappeared in Bombay sometime from the 1950s to the late 1990s due to the increased noisiness of bustling Bombay. The first sync sound movie after decades, Lagaan (2001), was nominated for Best Foreign Drama at the Oscars. Now, films also rarely depict diaspora Indian life [NRI stories], predominant in the 90s, and instead focus inwards, on a changing India. Hollywood has also entered the scene. Companies like Walt Disney are hiring those within the industry who know the market, and even own a majority stake in UTV Group, one of the best production houses in the country.

Bombay is a city bursting at its seams, continually growing ever northward. The diversity among the people is enormous. I bumped into fashion designers when I grabbed lunch but I also interacted daily with taxi and auto-rickshaw drivers, whose concerns included getting their children to college. I was driven home by a director's son, bumped into directors at a restaurant I was eating at, and ended up befriending the great-grandson of one of the biggest stars in Indian cinema, Ashok Kumar. South Bombay features colonnades, Gothic architecture, and the infamous Marine Drive—reminiscent of all those boardwalks in cities alongside oceans. Northern Bombay was where the young urban elite lived. And the middle of Bombay had everything in between. I bought old Bollywood posters in Chor Bazaar ("Thieves Market"); the vendor is helping a director make a biopic on director Guru Dutt. He has also helped curate Bollywood art exhibits around the world. Bombay is the city of dreams, where people in India believe they can go to make it big. For me, it was magical every single time.

"Bombay is a city bursting at its seams, continually growing ever northward."

I could not understand what Hindi cinema and its contradictions were without being in its home city. The industry mimics the changing metropolis of Bombay itself—which is striving to be global but still has its Indian elements. The industry today is picturizing stories that speak to a new generation of cinemagoers.

Not meeting Shahrukh Khan this past summer may have been a blessing in disguise, because it allowed me to dig deep, beyond all the superficial things that had attracted me to the cinema in the first place. I still do hope that I get to meet him someday. Maybe next time. See you soon, Bombay.

Lucy Chen

Venice Canal, Oil Paints

Vintage Lolita, Charcoal

Vogue Bride, Oil Paints with frame

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Visual Arts
Lucy Chen

◀ *Yellow Mountains*, Oil Paints

▼*Fall Reflection,* Oil Paints


Lucy Chen '07

Ysabel Ilagan

◂ *Vogue Bride*, Oil Paints with frame

▸ *Night Stand*, Marker

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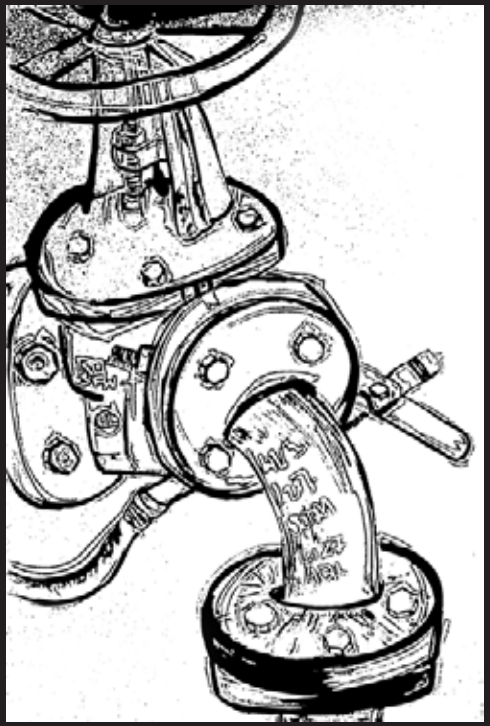
▶ *Koi*, Matte Board and Spray Paint
◀ *In the Corner*, India Ink
▼ *Pipes,* India Ink and Bleach



Jamie Sunwoo

▲ *Culturally Rich*, Pencil on Paper

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Yoonjoo Lee

Lighthouse point, Digital Drawing

Dew, Digital Drawing

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Photographs
Wanwan Lu

1. Embrace, Laos
2. Ice Cream Truck, Cambodia
3. Monk Smoking, Cambodia
4. Play, Laos
5. Guy on Motorbike, Bangkok
6. Alley Way, Bangkok
7. Mr. Durian Head, Singapore
8. Tourists in Royal Palace, Bangkok
9. Cheerleading, Bangkok
10. Shoe, Cambodia
11. Vesak Day, Singapore

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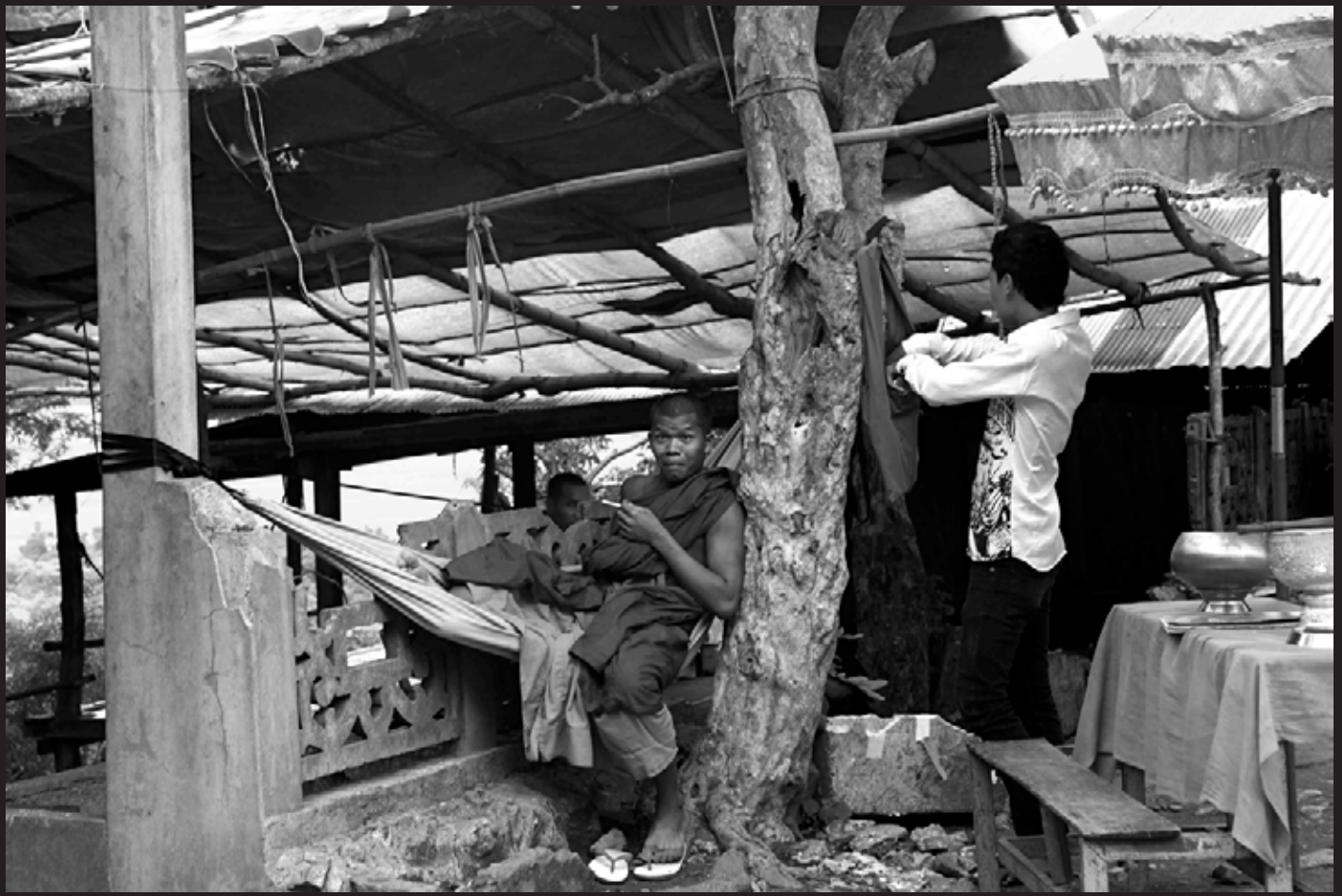
Visual Arts

Wanwan Lu



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CASA's **Noodle Night**

"Oodles of Noodles." That was one of the many names we considered with for CASA Noodle Night 2010. But apparently "Noodle Night" was good enough for the 200 plus guests who showed up.

Noodle Night was one of those events where you chopped, cooked, and stirred for two full days, and then, in the short span of two hours, dished out hundreds of pounds of noodles.

Dozens of taste tests were performed to get the black bean and pork sauce for the zha jiang noodles just right. Forearm strength was put to the test when it came to mixing the sauces in the cold noodles. Tears of dedication were shed for the sake of beautifully cut onions in the lo mein. This test of culinary skills certainly gave me a much deeper appreciation for Chinese cuisine (and for chefs in general). If only there was a way for me to come out of this without the aroma of stir-fry, vinegar, and soy

sauce soaked through my clothes...
Even as the guests streamed in through the door, a group of us continued to replenish empty trays of noodles in the kitchen as Noodle Night quickly transformed itself into a whirlwind of activity. Tray exchanges, scalded fingers...and oodles of noodles.

Then, it was over. After hours of preparation and non-stop cooking during the event itself, the pots and trays were empty and Noodle Night came to a close.

It was only afterwards that the success of Noodle Night sank in. Besides having a huge turnout, Noodle Night was also a success because it gave many CASA families a chance to spend time together. CASA children enjoyed delicious home-cooking for free, and upperclassmen were able to practice their parenting skills. And, as a bonus, the event coincided with the week of the Mid-Autumn Festival, a time for reunions among family and friends.

In the end, Noodle Night was just about bringing a community of CASA families and friends together to enjoy some really kick-ass noodles.

Jessica Su
Communications Chair

Ode to Dumplings

a series of haikus presented by tas board

*photographs: Austin Lan

Crinkling plastic bags
Pregnant with ginger, potatoes,
cabbage, and TAS love

Steel blade slices twice,
Pale potato sheds its skin,
Its white flesh: ravaged

A dash of salt makes
fistfuls of minced cabbage weep
chlorophyll water.

Dumplings, dumplings in a pan,
Tried to grab'em with my hand.
Ouch! They were too hot!

Plop into the pot,
Floating up to perfection,
Delicious dumplings.

Slicing through veggies
The music blasting away
Singing soothes the wrist

I love potatoes.
Diced and wrapped in my dumplings.
Yummy, yummy, yum!

Fingertips on dough
Tracing the circumference
Of uncooked dumplings

Fold the peel in half,
"Hot dog style" is what he said.
But the wrapper's round.

Assembly line--break!
Squeeze, spoon, wet, fold, crease--then,
smile,

Ode to T.A.S. (Tasty. Ass. Sauces)

Warm firey blood
Of tomatoes who perished
Bravely in battle

Oiled sesame,
spiked with garlic, chili, soy;
dumpling ambrosia

Kicking rooster bowl
clinked with eager spoons that spill
puddles of hot gold

Taste the cinnamon?
Black and brown and fine sugar?
Chef's secret is out

Sorry, 3 scoops max
Everyone wants some of that
Hoisin Happiness

Oh milky boba...
You flee too fast into straws!
Leaving only ice.

om nom nom nom nom
nomnom nom nomnom nomnom
om nomnom nom nom

Three! days--chop, fold, cook,
Thousands made, thousands eaten
Two hours, gone... next term!

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South Asian Society
Pakistan Flood Relief

Chaat Night at the AACC was held on October 22 to raise money for Pakistan Flood Relief. Members of the South Asian Society gathered to make the popular street roadside food – and to dance through the AACC kitchen while listening to Bollywood music the whole time! Chaat is a delectable streetside snack, sold by vendors all over cities in India, particularly in North India. The SAS board raised over $300 for Pakistan Flood Relief and could not have been happier to have the membership's and the AACC's support.

Roshni, the most-anticipated SAS event of the year, and is annually the biggest cultural show on campus. This year it was bigger than ever and included a record number of participants. On November 12th, Battell Chapel filled up with an audience eager to see all forms of South Asian dance and song: the classical-fusion dance group, Anjali, opened and the Jashan Bhangra team closed the show. In between the audience saw everything from Hindi a cappella songs to Bollywood and fusion dancing. We can't wait to do it again next year!

Like many SAS events, Chaat Night and Roshni exemplifies what the membership of the South Asian Society love best about our cultural heritage – it brings us together. And that's the goal of our society. From when we were lost freshmen, missing our humid home in Mumbai or South-Asian Americans looking to get in touch with our culture in ways many of had previously never imagined, the South Asian Society has provided us with a home for it.

Sanjena Sathian

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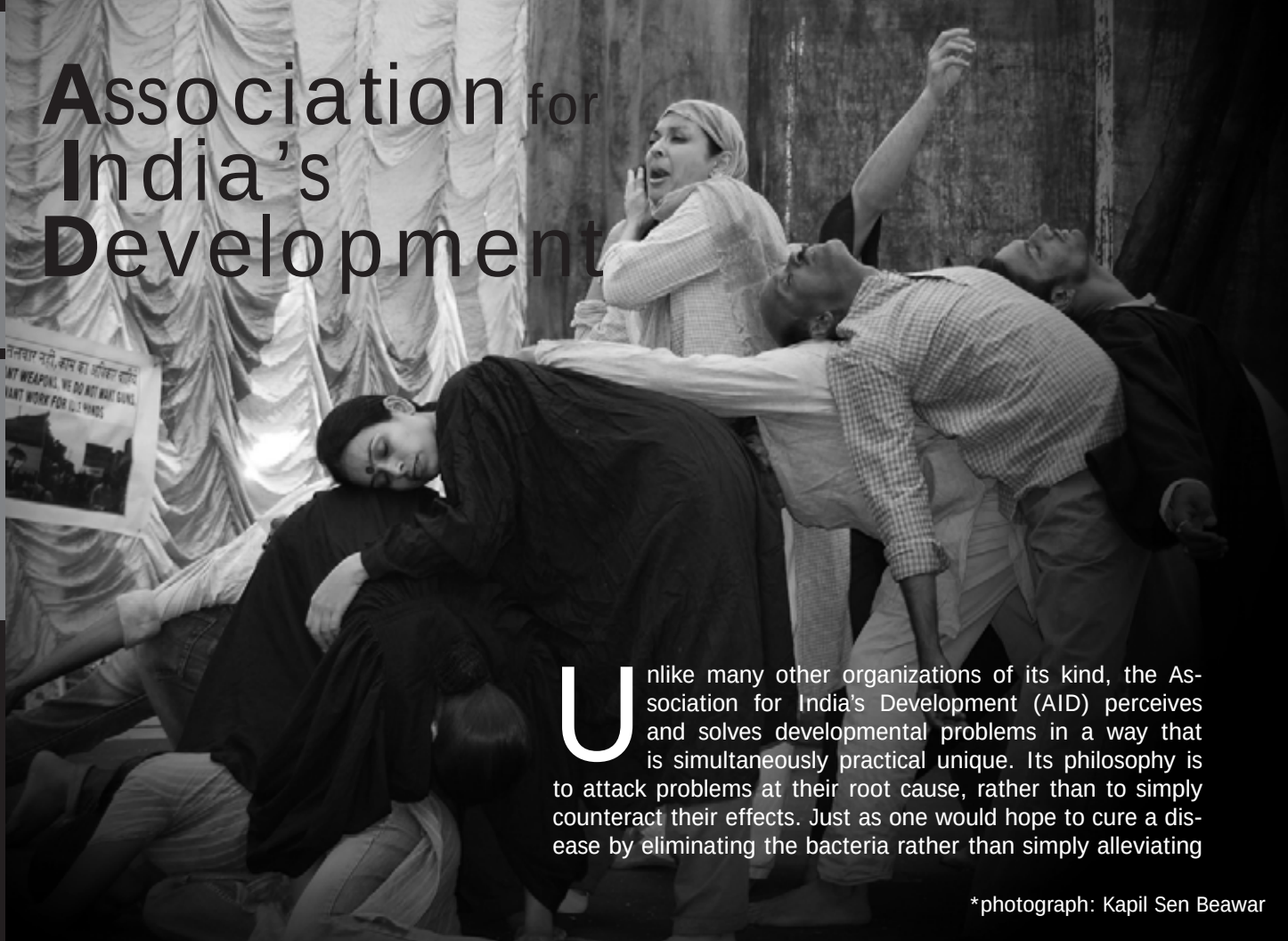
Association for India's Development



Unlike many other organizations of its kind, the Association for India's Development (AID) perceives and solves developmental problems in a way that is simultaneously practical unique. Its philosophy is to attack problems at their root cause, rather than to simply counteract their effects. Just as one would hope to cure a disease by eliminating the bacteria rather than simply alleviating

*photograph: Kapil Sen Beawar

its symptoms, so too does AID hope to improve conditions in India by reforming legislation or decreasing corruption – the underlying causes of the problem – rather than merely making changes in the short-term. The approach AID has adopted is therefore beneficial because it is both effective and sustainable.

AID, which was founded by Ravi Kuchimanchi in 1993, focuses on several aspects of development, including social justice, women's rights, education, employment, health, and agriculture. Yale's AID chapter, in keeping with these themes, has begun work on two projects – the Kakinda Science Education initiative and the Malaria Control Program Phase 2 – that deal with education and health issues in India. Kakinda Science Education partners with Andhra Pradesh NGO People's Education Society to operate schools for rickshaw pullers and domestic workers' children. This project intends to distribute 2000 sets of three books in seven specific villages in Andhra Pradesh, create original science material written in basic Telugu for young children and adults, and involve and train local teachers and college students in educational teaching. The Malaria Control Program partners with the NGO Mandra Lions Cub in Purulia, West Bengal to fund and spread awareness of the disease, as well as to train individuals on the ground to identify and treat individuals with the disease. Both of these diseases – in true AID fashion – aim to treat the underlying causes of the problems they address, creating solutions that are at once feasible and long lasting.

The Yale Chapter of AID is a relatively new presence on campus, and, thus far, we have focused our efforts on fundraising and spreading awareness of the problems we tackle. Last spring, for instance, we hosted a multi-cultural music and dance event we called "Culture for a Cause" to establish our presence on campus and raise money for the two projects to which we are committed. This fall, we attempted an even larger event, as we invited Penn Masala, the world's premier Indian a capella group, to perform on Yale's campus. From the proceeds from ticket sales for this event, we raised nearly $1400. We are encouraged by the progress we have made thus far, but we know that there is much more to be done and are excited for the events we have planned for the future.

For more information on AID, visit www.aidindia.org, or contact the Yale chapter of AID at aid.yale@gmail.com.

Sameera Rahman

ALSEAS
Disaster Relief

Wedged between Central Java and the ancient city of Yogyakarta and standing at 2,968 meters, Indonesia's Mount Merapi has been erupting repeatedly since the sixteenth century. Since the end of October of this year, a series of multiple volcanic eruptions by Mount Merapi has killed hundreds and displaced thousands. To compound the disaster, the eruptions were followed by a 7.7 earthquake and a tsunami, which hit Sumatra on October 24 and killed nearly 500 people. By October 25, some 40,000 people had either evacuated or fled before and after the volcano erupted three times. Although the eruptions have stopped, the volcano continues to spew hot ash and gas up to 3,000 meters high and as far as 60 kilometers and hence aviation operation has not returned to normal business.

*photographs: Adeline Yeo

Though a warning system had been established in Indonesia after the 2004 tsunami, it had failed due to poor maintenance and the strain of responding to several natural disasters within the span of 24 hours.

As part of the coordinated relief effort, members of the Alliance for Southeast Asian Students (ALSEAS) collaborated with the Council on Southeast Asia Studies, the Asian American Cultural Center, and other cultural groups in order to raise funds. After learning about the disasters, ALSEAS worked with JASU (Japanese American Student Union) during their Donburi Rice Bowl Night to collect donations on behalf of international aid organizations, and also set up a drive during 2010 AACC Film Series at the screening of All About Dad, a Vietnamese American work. On the same night, ALSEAS also participated in Malam Indonesia (Indonesian Night) organized by the Indonesian Community in Connecticut, the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia New York, and the Yale Indonesia Forum.

Hong Tran
Cultural Chair

special thanks to Dean Dhall and all contributors

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www.yale.edu/aacc