

Asian American Ballet Project Dances to a Beat of Its Own

By Yuchen Hong

Elizabeth Mochizuki, the Asian American Ballet Project's artistic director, distinctly remembers what was going through her mind during the group's first time on stage.

"I remember being like, 'Oh my gosh, it's really happening. It's just us. We're doing ballet,'" Mochizuki told the Sampan of the all-Asian-American performance. "It was something I've never seen before. I just wanted to bring people together to create this idea, share our stories and our experiences."

Prior to the debut, Mochizuki said, she felt isolated as a dancer, because of the lack of Asian Americans in dance. Asian American directors were nowhere to be found and she knew of only a few choreographers and some dancers. "So my idea was to bring a group of people together to create (a) community."

The group's show, "Intersections," which comes to the Boston Center for the Arts later this month, now aims to bridge cultural divides by offering a mixed bill of four uniquely Asian-American ballets. Under the broad banner of "Asian American," the ballet project uses the dance as a medium to express authentic stories and transform how audiences see Asian Americans in performance.

And, the dance company be-

THE RIGHT MOVES: The Asian American Ballet Project. Courtesy photo.



lieves, when all-Asian American artists come together, the labels behind identity suddenly disappear.

"Depending solely on your physical identity to be seen as valid, is, frankly, exhausting," said Zoe Mueller, one of the choreographers behind "Intersections." "I think this compa-

ny here is already kind of a refuge in the sense of like, we are all Asian American here, therefore we can be seen as multidimensional."

The show's four pieces are:

La Bayadere: a Desi Retelling is a reimagining of the 1877 ballet, centering on India and reinterpret-

ing the traditional piece with modern language of classic ballet. "It was set in India, but it was done by a French choreographer who was in Russia. So it's really like an imperialist colonialist perspective on Indians, and it's sort of stereotyped. We are trying

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Chinatown Nonprofit Celebrates 57 Years at Its 'Gala of Dreams'

By Sampan Staff

The Asian American Civic Association (AACA), publisher of the Sampan newspaper, celebrated its 57th anniversary with an annual gala on June 14 at the University of Massachusetts Club in Boston. This year's theme was the "Gala of Dreams."

Among the many highlights of the night, Gov. Maura Healey was presented with the Dream Maker Award in recognition of her dedication to making Massachusetts a place of equity, opportunity, and inclusion.

For nearly six decades, AACA has been working with immigrant communities across the commonwealth, providing essential services such as job training, employment support, English as a second language education, counseling, and access to vital public benefit pro-

grams. It serves over 6,000 people from a multitude of countries.

Mary Chin CEO noted Gov. Healey's commitment to "making Massachusetts a place of equity, opportunity, and inclusion."

"Your efforts, dating back to your tenure as Attorney General, have made Massachusetts more affordable, competitive, and equitable. We are most grateful for your support of immigrant rights and access to resources. Your advocacy for the Work and Family Mobility Act granted immigrants access to driver's licenses. Your Immigrant Assistance Services Initiative provided crucial support for human services, ESL, and job training. Additionally, we appreciate your proactive approach to facing the challenges posed by the migrant crisis, and your coordination with state and federal

agencies to foster a supportive environment for newcomers."

Governor Healey stated, "The Gala of Dreams is a time to celebrate the plethora of achievements by clients of the AACA team, and to recognize both the transformative impact of their programs and the generosity of donors to the organization. It is a time to celebrate the many achievements of AACA and its clients and to recognize the transformative impact of their programs and the generosity of their donors. AACA's programs, including its new Center for Global Citizens and the new Voyagers Young Adult Center, provide specialized services to help immigrants integrate into the greater Boston workforce and economy."

Marcony Almeida-Barros, Deputy Chief of Staff, represented Gov.

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SPECIAL GUEST OPINION

Rev. Dr. William Alberts Sacrificed Career, Reputation for Gay Rights

By Eva Alberts and Amy Warren

When celebrating Pride Month, we recall the major milestones, such as the June 25, 2015 decision that made gay marriage legal. But perhaps lesser known are the hard-fought struggles that led to that moment in history. One such monumental struggle began on April 7, 1973 at the Old West United Methodist Church, in Boston's West End, when Rev. Dr. William E. Alberts performed the marriage of Bob Jones and Harry Freeman.

The marriage was a well publicized event, covered by the *Boston Globe* and attended by over 200 people from the Church and the larger community. Before everyone, Bob and Harry gave this Prayer of Confession that expresses not only their own struggles in an anti-gay Christian denomination, but the struggles of many others in our society:

I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat.

I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink.

I was naked and you left me exposed.

I was in prison and you didn't care.

I was old and you denied me my dignity.

I was young and you feared me.

I cried for learning and you fed me rules.

I was a woman and you denied me my power.

I was a man and you denied me my tenderness.

I was a lover and you shamed me for my love.

I was a dream and you left me for another day.

Bob and Harry's marriage triggered a response within the Methodist Ministry that led to Dr. Alberts' forcible retirement and defamation of character. The United Methodist Bishop and the Conference Board of Ministry voted to put Dr. Alberts on disability leave for mental illness, specifically "paranoia of the self-destructive type."

When Dr. Alberts responded with evaluations from two psychiatrists and one psychologist, all of whom stated unequivocally that there was no evidence of mental illness nor any reason why he would be unfit to serve as a pastor, the Bishop and Board disregarded these evaluations. Instead, they came up with eight "reasons" why Dr. Alberts should be removed, "reasons" that related to the very kind of inclusive, activist ministry for which Dr. Alberts was known.

Dr. Alberts' ministry challenged the Methodist hierarchy — a hierarchy that was actively denying the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual,



IN LOVING MEMORY: Rev. Dr. William E. Alberts. Courtesy Photo.

transgender and queer persons and beyond. Even before Bob and Harry's marriage, Dr. Alberts was working to address racism within the ranks of the Methodist church, helping to investigate racist acts by the very Methodist leadership who later labeled him mentally ill and had him removed from the Methodist Church, based on "reasons." Had they been "charges" instead of "reasons," Dr. Alberts would have been given a formal Church trial. Instead, he was forcibly retired from the Methodist ministry through a single vote.

In the same year as Bob and Harry's marriage, Dr. Alberts held a press conference announcing he would be filing a lawsuit against leadership within the Methodist Church — a lawsuit that would span 13 years. During those years, Dr. Alberts struggled to find employment to help support his family and to enable the lawsuit to move ahead. Being labeled "mentally ill" and contending with headlines such as "Cleric deemed unfit to serve, paranoid, self-destructive," Dr. Alberts faced monumental challenge. At one of the press conferences, a reporter asked the Methodist Bishop, "What do you mean he's paranoid?" The Bishop replied, "He thinks everyone is out to get him." To which the reporter queried, "Now, if everyone were out to get him, it wouldn't be paranoia, right?" There was no reply. And if one puts themselves in harm's way (the definition of self-destructive) because they believe it is the right and just thing to do, is it not an act of courage, and not of self-destruction?

The job search was long and painful and filled with rejections. Dr. Alberts was forced to file for bankruptcy and relied on welfare assistance. He was then hired by the board of a particular social agency, only to arrive on his first day and discover that the employees opposed that he was hired. They refused to work with him because of what they had read about

him in the papers, and so he resigned. He worked in a court program for juveniles for close to a year, until the judge realized that Dr. Alberts was the same man who had appeared before him several times in the past after being arrested for non-violent acts of civil disobedience. The judge declared, "I don't want anyone with such disrespect for authority working in my court," and he had Dr. Alberts removed. Finally, five years after his forced retirement, he was unanimously accepted by the congregation of The Community Church of Boston to become their minister.

All the while, the lawsuit proceeded, but at an excruciatingly slow pace. Eight years after the lawsuit had been filed, and a few days before they were to go to trial, the attorneys for the Methodist leadership presented a motion for the defendants — the Methodist leadership — to be dismissed from the lawsuit, using the First Amendment's "separation of church and state" clause to argue that the state had no right to interfere in the business of the church. They relied on Paragraph 331 of the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, which states that ministers "offer themselves without reserve to be appointed and to serve as their superiors in office may direct." The Superior Court Justice agreed with them and not only dismissed the lawsuit, but also granted their motion to suppress all the evidence that had been obtained from The United Methodist Church. The Superior Court Justice then took eight months to put her ruling into writing before Dr. Alberts could appeal it to the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, where it was unanimously overturned. The long-awaited trial could finally go forward.

In 1986, however, 13 years after Bob and Harry's marriage, the Methodist Church agreed to settle the case to avoid a trial. The United Methodist Church's governing body recently

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lifted the ban on LGBTQIA+ clergy and on pastors performing same-sex unions. They also removed the language that stated that homosexuality was "incompatible with Christian teaching." Bob and Harry's Prayer of Confession alluded to a number of liberation struggles that are all inter-related and whose origins rest in our failure to see one another's full humanity. Justice moves very slowly and only when we all come together and demand that no one's "dream" be "left ... for another day."

Eva Alberts is the widow of Dr. Alberts. She joyfully participated in the events of April 7, 1973 and shared in the 45 years of Dr. Alberts' ministry that followed. She is the proud mother of Dr. Amy Warren. Warren is an applied developmental scientist and practitioner. Her expertise centers on human relationships, especially within the family system and to nature and spirit. Warren has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals, handbooks, advanced textbooks, and white papers, as well as outreach publications, encyclopedias, and online newsletters. She is co-author of "Visualizing the lifespan" (Wiley, 2015) and co-editor of "Thriving and Spirituality Among Youth" (Wiley, 2012) and "Current Directions in Developmental Psychology" (Prentice Hall, 2004). She holds a Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Clark University and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in child development from Tufts University.

Asian Dance Project Talks to Sampan

Continued from Page 1

to mix the classical ballet and Indian classical dance and see how we can keep this ballet alive for the future," said Mochizuki of the work.

Lon Po Po: Little Red Riding Hood is a story ballet. Based on the ancient Chinese story, characters like girls and the wolf come to life for fun, especially for the kids in the audience.

Reclamation is a multidisciplinary work, featuring original spoken word cut by artist Kathy Eow, live music played on the *ajeeng*, a Korean string instrument, and dance to explore one trans-racial adoptee's journey reclaiming family legacy.

On the Way is a story of pilgrimage and meditations on home, set to heart-pounding original music by Zhanat Baidaralin from Kazakhstan.

Mueller, as one of the choreographers of "Reclamation," said the work resonates deeply with her. "I get to be more than just an Asian adoptee, or Chinese American, or any physically presenting features that people associate me with. I'm more than that in this space," said Mueller.

As a returning intern, Mueller said she truly values being part of this project. "I'm prioritizing the significance of the process, remaining sensitive to whose voices are being rep-

IN STEP: Elizabeth Mochizuki. Courtesy photo.



resented, who's creating this work, who's producing this, who's literally directing the whole project. Even behind the scenes, I think it's really im-

portant who gets to say what is seen on stage, as opposed to being dictated by whiteness."

After debuting with a show titled

"Beginnings" at the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center last year, it was easier for Mochizuki to assemble an all-Asian American crew this year. She had conceived the idea of the Asian American Ballet Project long before.

Identity has been a significant reality in the careers of Asian Americans in ballet. "Other companies might hire an Asian-American choreographer, very rarely, but sometimes. Then the dancers, they're still working with white dancers, mostly. So I think it's really important that we're telling our stories, and we're the bodies," said Mochizuki. "Here you don't have to think about that, it's exhausting being in a company and second guessing myself, 'Am I getting cast because I'm Asian?'"

"If we can do ballet, then sky's the limit," said Mochizuki. "We want to share more of our stories and get people thinking about what they've seen of Asian bodies on stage before and how it can be different, especially with an Asian American company."

The performance runs June 29 and 30 at the Calderwood Pavilion at the Boston Center for the Arts. Tickets for "Intersections" can be purchased by phone 617-933-8600, or at www.bostontheatrescene.com/shows-and-events/intersections/.

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Bus Fire ‘Traumatic,’ Says Chinatown Principal

A school bus carrying around 40 students and six faculty members from the Josiah Quincy Upper School in Chinatown on a field trip went up in flames on June 17 around 3 p.m. while traveling through Dorchester, sending several students to the hospital.

“It was a traumatic experience for all of them,” Richard Chang, principal of the Josiah Quincy School, told the Sampan after the fire.

The bus was in the breakdown lane heading northbound on the Southeast Expressway near Savin Hill on I-93

at the time of the fire. A state trooper driving nearby noticed smoke coming from the bus and informed the driver to pull over. Due to traffic delays, the fire truck arrived 30 minutes later. The field trip was coordinated by Hale Education and the bus was contracted through Tony’s Transportation Inc.

“Three students were taken to Children’s Hospital and one to Tufts Medical Center for observation,” said Chang, adding that they were all released the same evening. No further injuries were reported. -DongDong Yang

BCNC Set for Quincy Family Fair

The Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center will hold its Family Fun Fair, a free event open to the public on June 22, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Joseph W. Koch Field at 200 Newbury Ave. in Quincy.

Marking its 10th anniversary of working with families on the South Shore, the BCNC’s fair will include games and entertainment for children and families. The afternoon event will include arts and crafts, a bouncy house, petting zoo, face painting, games and prizes, balloon animals, cultural performances, and the main event: a watermelon eating contest. Around a 1,000

people are expected to attend the event, according to BCNC.

In case of rain, the fair will be held inside the North Quincy High School at 316 Hancock St. in North Quincy.

Over the past decade, BCNC has been working with Quincy’s Asian and immigrant populations, which each make up about a third of the city. It offers youth leadership skills programs, English instruction, and mental health support services and parenting workshops. The agency was founded over a half century ago, when it was mostly focused on Boston-area residents, with a location in Chinatown.


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2 Charlesgate West

JULY
01
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

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Meeting ID: 161 722 2542

Project Proponent: Scape Charlesgate LLC
Project Description: This is a joint virtual IAG and Public Meeting for the proposed 2 Charlesgate West project in Fenway. This meeting, originally scheduled for Thursday, June 27, has been rescheduled for Monday, July 1. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the Draft Project Impact Report (DPR) and its potential impacts. The meeting will include a presentation followed by questions and comments from the public. Please request interpreting services no later than 5 days before the meeting date.

Se encuentra disponible el servicio gratuito de interpretación de la información brindada en estas reuniones. Si necesita servicios de traducción, contáctese con scott.greenhalgh@boston.gov (617-918-4271). La reunión está programada para el 7/1/2024. Por favor, solicite los servicios de interpretación a más tardar 5 días antes de la fecha de la reunión.

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'Yellow Face': A Play Ahead of Its Time

By Harmony Witte

"Yellow Face," which is now performing at Boston's Lyric Stage Theater on Clarendon Street, was written some 17 years ago. But in many ways, it's just now fully enjoying the spotlight. The play, by award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang, will mark its Broadway premiere starring Daniel Dae Kim this fall and an Audible version is currently available.

"Issues that are at the center of it, issues like representation and appropriation and whitewashing and casting, they were still relatively obscure issues in 2007," Hwang told the Sampan recently. "That is, they weren't really as much part of the mainstream discussion."

Fast forward to today, he said, and these issues "have become part of the mainstream discussion."

Hwang is best known for his play, "M. Butterfly" and is prolific in theater, musicals, opera, and television. The semi-autobiographical "Yellow Face" spans a period in an alternate version of the 1990s, when the narrator DHH, who is a playwright, tells a lie about the race of an actor that he cast in his new production, and this lie then gets repeated dozens of times by different people as if it were the truth. DHH is committed to getting justice and equity for Asians in the theater world, and the lie threatens to unravel that work.

"In a way, the play is funnier (today in 2024), because audiences are more familiar now with what does it mean for DHH to accidentally cast the white guy as an Asian and now is trying to cover it up? That was a more esoteric idea in 2007 than it is now," said Hwang.

As he spoke with Sampan, Hwang discussed his plans to see the Boston production during its run and his feelings about watching his own work.

"I tend not to enjoy watching my own work unless it's in previews, and I can still change things. I think I'm used to a rehearsal process where I change a lot of stuff in the text during rehearsal, and then we go into previews, and I usually change a fair amount more. I'm kind of big on rewriting. But as a result, once the show is frozen and I can't make any more changes, it's a little harder for me to watch, because I still notice things that I could change, but I now no longer have the ability to do that."

He added that seeing the artistic choices made by directors is one of the reasons he is a playwright. "I love the collaboration process, and I really enjoy the different kinds of interpretations and varied ways to manifest a story physically that directors are able to bring to the process. Occasionally I see an interpretation that I don't know that I agree with or a lot of times it may not be what I thought of initially, but I usually like it. Occasionally I see something that's different. I'm like, 'I don't really know about that', it's still thrilling to me that somebody and a whole company of creative people, as well as a theater in most cases, decided to put to do the show and that this is another way of looking at it, even if it's not one that I personally would agree with. In some sense, the



AHEAD OF HIS TIME: David Henry Hwang. Courtesy photo.

play becomes its own thing after it goes into the world. If you think of plays as children there's some things that my kid might do that I don't agree with. But they're adults and it's kind of impressive that they can make these choices."

The Lyric Stage theater is an intimate space to host "Yellow Face," which was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in drama in 2008 and won an Obie playwriting award. With three tiers of seats arranged around the three sides of the wooden-floored stage, there is a recess at the far side of the stage which had been made to look like a dressing room with 5 bulb-ringed mirrors and a chair set up at each station. A giant, broken picture frame ringed half the stage, framing the silhouette of a face on the back wall. Sitting near the front of the stage was a small desk with a dated-looking rolling chair draped with a jacket. On the desk sat a typewriter next to an older model phone cradled in its bulky receiver.

Six actors are in this production of "Yellow Face" with four of them portraying a multitude of characters. The four actors playing multiple roles rose to the challenge admirably when the Sampan watched the show this month. Aside from a couple of momentarily forgotten lines that caused the flow of the production to sputter briefly, the scenes flowed smoothly and to great effect. Standout performances included those by Jenny S. Lee as Jane Krakowski, who showed incredible range, and J.B. Barricklo for his moving portrayal of DHH's father, HYH; Jupiter Lê was easy to hate as NWOAOC (Name Withheld on Advice of Counsel) and Mei MacQuarrie was fantastically believable as Leah Anne Cho.

DHH, shone as the playwright who found himself in a difficult position, was the narrator and the heartbeat of the production. Michael Hisamoto played the

role to perfection with excellent physical comedy and perfect comedic timing. His acting range was not limited to comedy, on more than one occasion he cried actual tears and the audience wept along with him because he had done such a thorough job of winning them over to DHH's side. When DHH told his big lie, members of the audience gasped audibly and continued tutting through the rest of the scene, showing how invested they were in DHH as a character thanks to the superb writing and skillful acting. Actress Jenny S. Lee aptly described the production as "an elaborate dance around DHH."

Alexander Holden gave a fantastic performance as Marcus G. Dahlman. His acting was informed by his sense of humor and carried scenes that might have felt a bit stilted in less capable hands. Holden has a distinct voice with a lovely timbre that was meant to be projected on stage.

This production relied on costuming and set design to remind the audience that it was set in the past. A well-placed braided belt, a subtle pair of sensible shoes, the switch from a typewriter on the desk to a clunky laptop--these small details anchored the play in the 1990s without being over the top in the way period pieces set in the '90s sometimes fails. The background actors

doubled as stagehands moving furniture between scenes in a very deliberate and ritualistic way while wearing black robes. Director Ted Hewlett explained during the question and answer period after the play that they are meant to be reminiscent of the garb worn by kuroko (Japanese stagehands) and were a deliberate mix of cultures.

Hewlett, as director, rose to the occasion and proved himself a capable leader with a talent for including realistic physicality and conveying a complex story in an easily comprehended narrative. He used cleverly placed projectors to enhance the set design and trusted his actors to swiftly switch characters, yet still gave space within the play to build an emotional resonance with the audience.

The Lyric Stage production of "Yellow Face" is a wonderful example of how moving and relevant theater can be when the script, the actors, and the direction come together in just the right way.

But it was also poignant. As Hwang further explained about the show's relevance today:

"The other reason that I think 'Yellow Face' has become quite timely is a much sadder one, which is the spike in anti-Asian racism that we have experienced in hate and attacks and everything since the pandemic. It makes audiences aware of the continued prevalence of anti-Asian racism and the degree to which we are regarded as Asian Americans, has always historically been a function of the United States relationship with some root culture Asian country. Whether we talk about Japanese Americans being interned during World War Two, or Vincent Chin getting murdered in the (1980s), because of fears of the rise of Japan, or South Asians and Muslims being targeted for hate after 9/11. We saw this yet again during the pandemic and Covid being referred to as the 'China virus' or 'kung flu' and sparking a series of attacks against Asian Americans. I think it was easier in 2007 for at least non-Asians to kind of indulge the stereotype that Asian Americans aren't affected by racism. And it is much harder for non-Asians to say that now. As a result, some of the issues in the play, particularly those around targeting my father and Wen Ho Lee in the nineties, I think those feel more timely, unfortunately."

Yellow Face runs until June 23 at the Lyric Stage Theater in Boston.

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IN THE NEWS: Events Around Town

On June 9th, the 45th Boston Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival took place on the Charles River in Cambridge, featuring 68 competing dragon boat teams. The festival offered a range of activities for families and attendees, including cultural performances such as traditional Asian dances, martial arts demonstrations, and live classical Chinese music. Visitors could also

enjoy an arts and crafts section and a variety of food vendors to satisfy their cravings throughout the day. It was a beautiful day to cheer on friends racing dragon boats and to experience rich cultural expressions. This year, the Wolfpack Club Team won the A division gold medal.

Photo by Mingjie Song.



The Boston Chinatown Business Association hosted the 3rd annual Taiwan Night Market at the Boston Chinatown Gate. The evening captured the essence of Taiwan's iconic night markets, bringing Chinatown to life with

a variety of dance, music, games, food stalls, artisan displays, merchandise booths and more.

Picture at right is Boston You & Me Music's J.C. Alula.)

- Photo courtesy of George Huang.



The Boston Knights Chinese Athletic Club celebrated on June 7 their victory in the men's basketball open championship at the 42nd Annual North American Chinese Basketball Association Tour-

nament. In the picture above, from left, are Chris Sellow (poster), Adam Liu, Coach Brent Eng, Eric Sellow, Jimmy Tan, Jonathan Eng, Zi Liu, Jackie Chen, and Tommy Cui. -Photo courtesy Hung Goon.

Director Yang Qiu Explores Humanity With Artistic Eye, Despite China's Long Gaze

By DongDong Yang

Chinese director Yang Qiu presented his first feature film "Some Rain Must Fall" at this year's Tribeca Festival in New York. The film depicts the story of Cai, a mother and housewife who deeply values her family, but whose life loses track and spirals out of control after an unexpected accident.

The film received the Encounters Special Jury Award at the 74th Berlin International Film Festival and premiered at the festival's International Narrative Competition. Yang Qiu, a prominent filmmaker from Changzhou in China's Jiangsu province, graduated from Griffith University and the Victorian College of the Arts. His debut film "The World," released in 2013, gained recognition at various film festivals, including the Korean Asian Short Film Festival, Melbourne International Film Festival, and Odense International Film Festival.

His graduation project "Under the Sun" (2015) premiered at the Cannes Film Festival and screened at over 60 other international film festivals. In 2017, "A Gentle Night" won the Short Film Palme d'Or, making Qiu the first Chinese director to receive this honor. The film also earned the Best International Short Film award at the Toronto International Film Festival. His other well known film "She Runs" (2019) received the Leitz Cine Discovery Prize during Critic's Week at Cannes. Sampan spoke with Qiu about his work.

Sampan: You mentioned in an interview that you shoot all your films in your hometown, Changzhou, China. Is this also the same for "Some Rain Must Fall"? Are the characters speaking in the Changzhou dialect? Is there a reason behind your location choices?
 Yang Qiu : Yes, it's in the same city, Changzhou. In "Some Rain Must Fall", all the conversations between adults are in the local dialect, which is one type of Wu Chinese (Shanghainese is also Wu Chinese). And all the conversations that happen between kids and kids to adults are in Mandarin Chinese.

It is an unfortunate reality in my hometown. Because of my government's movement to promote standard Chinese (Mandarin Chinese), less and less of the younger generation can actually speak the local dialect.

In my generation, we were taught only to speak Mandarin Chinese in school, but fortunately, I could speak the dialect with my parents at home. However, for the generations after me, most of their parents would only speak Mandarin to each other at home, so they would not be able to learn the dialect anymore.

Shooting in my hometown is quite an intuitive choice because all my films are inspired by stories from my own life, my family, or events I have experienced. So, it is natural to shoot in my hometown.

Sampan: "Some Rain Must Fall," like many of your previous well-known



'Some Rain Must Fall'

films such as "A Gentle Night" and "She Runs," appears to be told from a female perspective. Is there a particular reason for this?

Yang Qiu: The quickest answer would be that my films are always about character exploration. It is an opportunity for me to explore the complexity and vulnerability of humanity through these characters. And I just haven't really found a male character that I'm interested in exploring.

Personally, I always had a very intense relationship with my mother while growing up. Difficult and intense. So, making these films about middle-aged housewives is a way for me to understand, explore, and deal with my relationship with my mother: who she is and where she comes from. And, in turn, a way to better understand myself.

Sampan: What inspired you to create "Some Rain Must Fall," and what message do you hope to show your audience with this film?

Yang Qiu: I suppose the inspiration is my desire to understand this character; this ordinary middle-aged, full-time housewife (partially inspired by my mother), as a human being.

Full-time housewives or mothers are the people who are seemingly always around us in our lives but, at the same time, almost invisible. We only see them in the morning and at dinnertime. We never really know what they are doing most of the day. We don't know what struggle they are going through, things they may have encountered and wishes they have given up on. They spent their whole life trying to take care of everybody else but themselves.

Sampan: Your films often feature

semi-covered shots and have an artistic visual style. You mentioned having a background in painting. Can you share your approach or process for designing those frames?

Yang Qiu: I usually try to find inspiration for the overall atmosphere of my films from some of my favorite painters. One American master especially inspired this film, Edward Hopper.

When it comes to the shot design, most of it comes from organic instinct and a long location-scouting process. My cinematographer Constanze Schmitt and I usually would spend a long time on locations, taking many photos with stand-ins, trying to imagine how the scene would play out in the space. Then, we would sit down, go through the photos, and talk about shot lists with the photos.

For this film, one motif also influenced how we framed the main actress. The film explores different sides and shades of this woman and, through the journey, tries to find out who this woman really is (which is also the journey this woman takes in the film). So we tried to avoid shooting too many frontal shots but always tried to frame her from the side or behind.

Sampan: There are subtle hints of queer love in the film. Is there a particular message you want to convey with this?

Yang Qiu: The hint is what I want to give to the audience, and it's up to the audience to digest it themselves. I think sexuality is an indispensable part of all human beings, even for middle-aged Chinese full-time housewives. But it's only part of a person, one shade of the complex humanity.

Sampan: For those who can't attend

the Tribeca festival this year, is "Some Rain Must Fall" going to be available for a wider audience and along with your other work.

Yang Qiu: Yeah, my producers are working on making the film available to audiences from different regions. But, of course, the process always takes some time for a non-English film. My previous shorts are available on Amazon and Criterion channels.

Sampan: Is there any special memory of making "Some Rain Must Fall" you would like to share? Do you have any upcoming projects or plans?

Yang Qiu: I really enjoy the writing process. It's the part where I have the most freedom and the most fun. The part where I get to explore the unknown, to explore all the shades of gray in humanity, almost without any restraint. It is the part where I get to spend time just daydreaming and waiting for inspiration to be given to me. I'm working on a new feature idea and a few new short film ideas.

Sampan: You've talked about making "art films under the system." How have things changed over the years? What challenges are you facing now, and what risks are involved? How do you overcome them?

Yang Qiu: I think the censorship situation in China is constantly in flux. It's tough to describe the situation in a short answer. I think the biggest difficulty in making a film outside the system is the financing and casting because, obviously, without passing censorship, the film can't be released in the Chinese market. For this film, I suppose I haven't encountered any risks so far because the film isn't overtly politically sensitive, and we tried to do everything under the radar.



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Report: When It Comes to Tapping Into Foreign-Educated Talent, Here's What the State Can Do

By Adam Smith

When it comes to tapping into a large number of educated workers, many of whom are bilingual, Massachusetts appears to be missing out. Big time.

That's a takeaway from a new report on the some 240,000 foreign-educated immigrants in the state – 106,000 of whom hold a bachelor's degree and 134,000 of whom have completed at least some grad school.

Many of these immigrants earn less than their U.S.-educated peers and work in jobs that fail to fully use their skills. Some work in entry-level jobs, despite having advanced degrees. Others are unable to even find full-time work.

Sampan spoke by phone with Ember Skye Kane-lee, research manager of the report, titled "Hiring Skilled Immigrants: Recommendations for Massachusetts," a report prepared by UMass Donahue Institute on behalf of the African Bridge Network.

Sampan: So, if we're talking about nearly a quarter million people here who are potentially not meeting their employment potential, this seems to be a loss for not only the immigrant residents, but also for employers, too, right?

Kane-lee: Massachusetts is currently seeing a high rate of out-migration from the state, particularly among people who are in their late 20s to early 30s, and especially those with a bachelor's degree or higher. ... If we combine this high rate of out-migration with the aging workforce in the state, it's actually creating a workforce shortage.... Particularly healthcare and education are hit very hard... So, employers should really think of tapping into the current talent pool of immigrants. ... that is a very large pool of talent that is under-utilized right now.

Sampan: And it would seem (that at the same time that) many international students who get their educations in Massachusetts, I'm guessing, don't necessarily stay here.... Do you have any insight into that?

Kane-lee: I'm definitely not the expert on this ... but we can infer that given that the largest portion of out-migration is happening among the population in their late 20s to early 30s with a bachelor's degree or higher – that generally is the age that people are finishing up their undergrad or their master's degrees and are looking to establish themselves in their career and start a family, and given the very high housing prices across the state in Massachusetts, that may not always be attainable for these recent grads. So that is a piece of a large puzzle that needs a lot more study.

Sampan: It really seems counter-intuitive, but the report found that those documented immigrants with the most established immigration status – i.e. permanent residents vs. those with temporary work visas – are facing more obstacles than those with temporary statuses. Could you talk about that?

Kane-lee: So, the population that comes into the state as skilled workers with temporary work visas often comes in with pre-established job opportunities, which is how work visas are signed off on. Because they are already coming in with pre-established relationships with very specific employers and specific time frames of how long they are going to be in the U.S. doing work for these employers, the (temporary visa work experience) often goes much smoother because all of the logistics are done on the front end compared to jobs with permanent positions.

Sampan: Then I guess on the flip-side is those workers then have to leave....

Kane-lee: Yes, temporary status is just that ... both the employer and the employee understand that they are only here for a set amount of time.

Sampan: You noted that healthcare and education, which are big industries here, have employment needs.... What are ways to help people who have degrees from foreign schools prove their educations are as valuable as those from U.S. schools?

Kane-lee: Over a third of college-educated immigrants in the United States have had issues of employers not recognizing their foreign work credentials. Immigrants have also had trouble navigating the various state credential standards because employers, industries and even states often differ in what those standards are for credentials. To address that are private credential evaluation services ... to help employers understand (what credentials obtained overseas mean). There are several but one that I will call out is World Education Services....

Sampan: Do you think xenophobia is at play at all here in creating some obstacles for skilled immigrants?

Kane-lee: I think that can be the case. What we are seeing in the bodies of research that my team examined is that human resource departments and job applications themselves create additional barriers for skilled immigrants. A lot of the hesitation comes from a knowledge gap particularly on the employer side around the processes involved in hiring and working with populations – there are cultural norms. Hiring departments may not under-

stand that hiring practices are different outside the United States. They could easily favor applications, unknowingly, that have resume formatting, educational background and even work experience that are familiar to U.S. employers. ...

Skilled immigrants may lack knowledge around that process, putting them at a disadvantage during interviews and when their resumes are reviewed. A few examples include differences in body language, such as not making eye contact during interviews, which is very much expected in the U.S.. Also, those coming from (some) cultures, especially in East Asian countries, often have difficulties bragging about their skill set because that is not very common where they are from ...

Sampan: Was there anything about this report's findings that really surprised you, that you weren't expecting?

Kane-lee: From the interviews and focus groups that I conducted with employers who were already hiring and working with skilled immigrants, it was really interesting for me to learn how large the disconnect is sometimes ... between the educational background the entry-level immigrant employees have. One employer I interviewed mentioned that most of the management in charge of hiring, in charge of the general employee population, had no clue that many of their entry level employees had advanced degrees (such as in) engineering ... from other countries and so once they realized that ... they started programs that actually helped them utilize them. I think addressing this gap in employer knowledge is really important.

AACA Celebrates 57 Years of Serving Boston Immigrants

Continued from Page 1

Healey and received the Dream Maker Award, an original calligraphy entitled "Dream" by Peter Ng.

"I had the privilege to work in Governor Healey's office for eight years. As an immigrant myself, I understand the journey that many served by this organization go through. The Governor appreciates the work AACA does and values our immigrant and refugee community. Governor Healey's office will continue to make Massachusetts a diverse, favorable, and vibrant state. I will deliver this award to her first thing in the morning," he said.

AACA was originally established as a Chinese organization and now has evolved to serve a highly diverse population, reflecting the changing demographics of the state. AACA served clients from China, Taiwan, Korea, Mexico, Haiti, Ukraine, Albania, Ethiopia, Ecuador, Columbia, Afghanistan, El Salvador, Venezuela, Brazil, Myan-

mar, Morocco and dozens of other countries in 2023. Several graduates of AACA programs were guest speakers at the Gala.

One former student, Magdalis, spoke of coming to Boston with a master's in accounting but being unable to find a job because of her limited English. After graduating from AACA's Career Advancement for Professionals (CAP) program, she is now working as an Accounting Specialist.

"The CAP program met all my needs and exceeded my expectations. AACA helped me overcome my language barrier and understand the American job market. Today, I have achieved a better quality of life for my daughter and son."

Another, Magis, told the audience, "I left Haiti due to rampant gang violence and dangerous political turmoil. I found AACA's Building Energy Efficient Maintenance Skills (BEEMS) program in 2023 and became a Maintenance Engineer. I used to earn \$17 an



DREAM MAKER: Mary Chin presents the Dream Maker award at the AACA gala to Marcony Almeida-Barros.

hour and now, with AACA's certificate, I am earning \$27 an hour. With AACA's

guidance, I have also started my own business."



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Events Calendar

City of Cambridge Dance Party
 Date: Friday, Jun 28, 6:00-10:00 pm
 Location: Cambridge City Hall in Central Square. 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA
 “Originally conceived in 1996 as part of the City of Cambridge’s 150th anniversary celebration, the Dance Party attracts young and old to join in the festivities.”
www.cambridgema.gov
 • FREE ! Friday Flicks: Outdoor Movie Nights at Boynton Yards
 Date: June 28th- August 09 7-10 pm
 Location: Nights at Boynton Yards, 101 South St, Somerville, MA 02143
 Movie: 7/26: 'Wonka' | 8/9: 'Elemental'

www.eventbrite.com/e/friday-flicks-outdoor-movie-night-at-boynton-yards-free-tickets-880349056727?aff=erelex-pmlt
 • Seaport Smalls
 Date: June 29th, Saturdays, from 10AM-11AM
 Location: indoors at The Paseo at 111 Harbor Way
 “Free children’s programming for ages 0-8 years old, include Jungle Jim with magic & balloons, Little Groove Music, music for kids, Music at The Blissful with Evan Haler, and Whiz Kidz for science & fun. Refreshments will be available for purchase at Blue Bottle Coffee.”

Link <https://www.bostonseaport.xyz/event/seaport-smalls-2/2024-01-06/>
 • The 7th Annual Healing Power: A Celebration of Cancer Survivorship
 Date: Saturday, June 29, 2024, from 10 AM - 2 PM
 Location: Thelma Burns building at 575 Warren Street. Boston, MA 02121.
 “Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center – Initiative to Eliminate Cancer Disparities and the Boston Public Health Commission will be launching Healing Powers: A Celebration of Cancer Survivorship.”
<https://www.bmc.org/events/2024-06-29/healing-power-celebrating-cancer-survivorship>
 • Boston Harborfest Schedule of Events / Highlights
 With hundreds of activities over

Independence Day weekend at Boston’s most iconic historic landmarks, this family-friendly event is one of the country’s largest Fourth of July festivals. Activities include the annual opening ceremony in Downtown Crossing, historical reenactments, arts market, Chowderfest, live musical entertainment, fireworks, and much more
 Link: <https://www.bostonharborfest.com>
 MONDAY, JULY 1, 2024
 Chowderfest Tasting: 2:00- 4:00 PM
 Location: The Steps of Downtown Crossing
 Pre-Fireworks Concert: 6-9:00 PM
 Location: Christopher Columbus Park, 100 Atlantic Ave, Boston, MA
 *Boston Harborfest Fireworks: 9:00- 9:15 PM
 Location: Boston Harbor

Job Corner

Kwong Kow Chinese School, Chinatown
 • After School English Teacher , 20 hrs, Monday through Friday, 3:00pm to 7:00pm
 Familiarity with elementary and middle school instruction in Boston Public Schools, good listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in English
 Please send your resume and cover letter to [hiring@kwongkowschool.org](mailto: hiring@kwongkowschool.org) with the subject line “[Job Title] - Your Name”.
 • After School Classroom Teacher - Bilingual (Chinese/Cantonese/English)
 Working Hours: 20 hours per week, Monday through Friday, 3:00pm to 7:00pm
 Requirements:
 Familiarity with elementary and secondary teaching in Boston Public Schools
 Familiarity with listening, speaking, reading and writing Chinese/Cantonese and English
 Please send your resume and cover letter to [hiring@kwongkowschool.org](mailto: hiring@kwongkowschool.org) with the subject line “[Job Title] - Your Name”
 • Weekend Chinese Class Teacher,
 Working hours:
 Saturday and Sunday, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
 Familiar with Simplified Chinese Pinyin, listening, reading and writing.
 Preferred Qualifications:
 At least one year of teaching experience
 Bachelor’s degree or higher in education or related field
 Ability to teach on Saturdays and Sundays
 Passionate about traditional Chinese culture
 Familiarity with listening, speaking, reading and writing Chinese/Cantonese and English
 Please send your resume and cover letter to [hiring@kwongkowschool.org](mailto: hiring@kwongkowschool.org)
 Battery Wharf Hotel, Boston
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• Position: Line Cook, FT
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 • Position: Steward, FT
 Salary: \$28,55 per hour
www.batterywharfhotel.com
 Boston Medical Center-Boston, MA
 • Position: General Service Associate - 40 Hrs, 11:00PM - 7:30AM, and Rotating Weekends
 Work requires the ability to read, follow oral and written instructions in English at a level acquired through the completion of elementary school
 HS Diploma or completion of GED preferred
 Apply at www.jobs.bmc.org
 Contact: Caroline Cafer, 617-414-7066, [caroline.cafer@bmc.org](mailto: caroline.cafer@bmc.org)
 Tufts Medical Center-Boston, MA
 • Position: Medical Assistant - Malden Family Practice, FT
 Completed Medical Assistant education from an accredited program that was accredited at any time during the student’s enrollment OR Graduated within the 36 months prior to the program becoming accredited.
 Basic Life Support Certification (BLS).
 City of Cambridge
 • Position: Administrative Coordinator, FT
 High School diploma or equivalency required.
 Minimum of 3 years of experience in an administrative role.
 Excellent written and verbal communication skills; and copy-editing skills, with an attention to detail in spelling, grammar, and punctuation
 Salary : \$58,272 - \$81,510 annually
 Apply at Email: [humanresources@cambridgema.gov](mailto: humanresources@cambridgema.gov)
 South Cove Community Health Center
 • Position: Social Service Assistant (FT) – Boston
 Salary: \$22/hr
 Apply at Email: [Careers@scchc.org](mailto: Careers@scchc.org)
 • Position: Social Service Assistant (FT), Malden
 Salary: \$20/hr
 Apply at Email: [Careers@scchc.org](mailto: Careers@scchc.org)

• Position: RN – Pediatrics – Boston Registered nurse, licensed by Massachusetts
 One+ years of nursing in an outpatient environment
 Fluent in English and Cantonese/Mandarin. Vietnamese is a plus.
 Salary: Boston \$95K/Annual
 Apply at Email: [Careers@scchc.org](mailto: Careers@scchc.org)
 Boston Public School
 • Position: Athletic Coach-Girls Soccer
 FT Demonstrated knowledge of the sport and leading/organizing a team
 Certified in CPR, First Aid and AED
 Completion of annual Youth Sports Concussion Training Certification

Successful completion of the MIAA Coaches Education Course
 Contact Info: [Recruitment@BostonPublicSchool.org](mailto: Recruitment@BostonPublicSchool.org)
 ABCD-Boston, MA
 • Position: Program Assistant/Data Specialist
 A Minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent and up to 12 months relevant experience required.
 Demonstrated proficiency in Microsoft Office and Google Workspace.
 Bilingual skills in Spanish, Haitian Creole, or Portuguese preferred.
<https://careers.bostonabcd.org/>

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Public Info Session: July 1, 2024 at 6:00 pm via Zoom
 Go to zoom.com/join or call (646) 558-8656 and enter Meeting ID: 818 9317 7595, Passcode: 088159

Application Deadline: July 29, 2024 at 2:00 pm.
 Completed Applications must be received or postmarked by this date. Applications postmarked by the deadline must be received within five (5) business days.

Lottery: August 12, 2024 at 6:00 pm via Zoom
 Go to zoom.com/join or call (646) 558-8656 and enter Meeting ID: 857 2736 5609, Passcode: 276410

Lottery Information and Applications, or for reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, go to www.sebhousing.com or call (617) 782-6900 (x2) and leave a message, or postal mail SEB Housing, 257 Hillside Ave, Needham MA 02494. Free translation available. Traducción gratuita disponible.



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