

# NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



#4, January — April, 1982 18 pr

## PAINTING WITH A NEW BRUSH: ART IN POST-MAO CHINA

229-3049

Michael Sullivan, Christensen Professor of Oriental Art at Stanford University, is a leading authority on the art of China. He will speak on new Chinese art on January 16 at Reed College. This article is excerpted from a China Council briefing packet.

cialist principles set down by Mao Zedong in his "Yanan Talks on Art and Literature" (1942). While acknowledging the value of China's artistic heritage, he stressed the overriding importance of political criteria. Artists and historians fell into line. Life in the People's Republic of China had to be idealized, a kind of art that came to be called "revolutionary romanticism".

Protest art in Beijing. Paintings of nudes. The emergence of "art for art's sake". These are among the reports coming out of China since the "gang of four" fell from power in October, 1976.

The Cultural Revolution's first phase lasted from 1966 to 1969, but the campaign against any form of art not approved by the extremists dominated by Jiang Qing (Mao's wife and one of the "gang of four") continued with increasing intensity up to their downfall in October, 1976. Many artists looked to Premier Zhou Enlai for protection. By 1975 he was very ill, and on January 8, 1976 he died. Artists felt their last refuge was gone, and now the control of the "gang" was complete. Cultural oppression continued unabated until the fall of the "gang of four" when the news of the arrest of Jiang Qing was greeted with joy. At once the clouds began to lift, and cultural life started to recover.

Such developments are being interpreted as a significant shift in the government's attitude toward art, and on a larger scale, as a liberalization of culture. All this suggests that the rigid cultural policies formed under Mao have been relaxed, if not repudiated. If so, is the new liberal climate for the arts likely to endure, or will it be followed by another swing back to tighter political control? To understand the lingering uncertainty in the minds of artists today, we need only glance over the history of art in China since 1949.

The guidelines for art after 1949 were those uncompromising so-

Artists today in the big cities are restless, hungry for new



styles and foreign contacts which they are establishing partly through their counterparts in Hong Kong, and partly through an intense interest in the less avant-garde trends in contemporary Japanese art. It is too soon to see whether this will eventually lead to Chinese art becoming part of the international movement in modern art, but this is not impossible if present trends continue.

This hunger for new ideas, stopping short of abstraction and other contemporary Western movements, has produced a great variety of styles. Artists are seeking inspiration in ancient art and are delving into art books that survived the Cultural Revolution or have since been imported from abroad. At the same time, the growing sophistication of the city dweller is widening once more the enormous gap between the educated and the peasants that Mao tried so hard to close.

Such a gap is already leading toward the establishment of a new cultural elite--perhaps essential for the highest achievement, but disastrous for the advance of revolutionary ideals. There is always the danger of a backlash against elitist culture on the part of less privileged urban workers, although the peasants, already far behind, are unlikely to know enough to care very much. This danger, and the

ever-present fear that the Party line may shift again, must make all but the boldest artists extremely cautious. Nevertheless, although a return to the intoxicating sense of freedom that followed the fall of the "gang of four" is unlikely, the climate for the arts appears to be healthier today than at any time since the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

Michael Sullivan  
edited by Jeffrey Barlow

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## SPECIAL EVENTS

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### "IMAGES OF CHINA: LECTURES ON ART AND CULTURE"

Reed College  
Vollum College Center Auditorium

No Admission Charge

Made possible by a grant from the Oregon Committee for the Humanities

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### "THE GREAT EMPEROR OF QIN: FORE-RUNNER OF CHINESE CULTURE"

Jeffrey Barlow, Associate Professor of History, Lewis & Clark College

Sunday, January 10, 3:00 PM

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China's first emperor, Qin Shi Huang Di, whose tomb site has revealed thousands of life-size terracotta militia and horses, not only built the Great Wall and burned books written by his ideological enemies, but was responsible for the birth of the Chinese nation. Dr. Barlow, whose talk will include slides of the archaeological excavations, will describe the First Emperor's indelible impact on Chinese culture, politics and economy. He will also discuss the reactions of Confucians and contemporary Chinese leaders to the Qin Emperor.

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"MODERN CHINA THROUGH THE ARTIST'S EYES"

Michael Sullivan, Professor of Oriental Art, Stanford University

Saturday, January 16, 3:00 PM

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Dr. Sullivan is a world authority on modern and traditional Chinese art. His books include The Arts of China, Chinese Art in the Twentieth Century, and The Three Perfections: Chinese Painting, Poetry, and Calligraphy. Since Mao's death in 1976, Chinese artists have explored a great variety of subject matter and styles, as well as giving broader play to individuality and putting less emphasis on social/political goals. Yet the traditional Chinese aesthetic still influences contemporary art. Dr. Sullivan, an art historian trained at Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard Universities, will present a slide-lecture on how the modern Chinese artist portrays China differently from the modern Western artist, such as photographer Eve Arnold.

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"THE HERITAGE OF CHINA'S ETHNIC MINORITIES"

Linda Walton, Assistant Professor of History, Portland State University

Sunday, January 17, 3:00 PM

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The 56 ethnic minority groups that make up only 6% of Chinese society have made important contributions to China's civilization. Dr. Walton will present the story of Han Chinese relations with nomadic peoples to the north and west, the Tang dynasty absorption of the tribal peoples to the south, the formation of nomadic nations which culminated in the conquest of China by the Mongols, and finally the Manchus who led China's last dynasty and became more Chinese than the Chinese. Furthermore, modern China has approached its ethnically di-

verse population in new ways that have relevance to other societies.

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## HUMAN RESOURCES

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KWAN HSU

Kwan Hsu is a retired biophysicist from Portland State University though she still maintains an office on campus. She is a member of the Chinese Scientists and Engineers, the U. S. - China People's Friendship Association (USCPFA), and the Northwest China Council. In fact, of late Kwan Hsu has been very actively working with the USCPFA and recent Chinese visitors and students in the United States. She has taken it upon herself to act as a contact and resource for students and professors from the People's Republic of China who are living in the Portland area. Being a native of China and having come to the U. S. as a student in 1947, she knows firsthand the problems facing Chinese when they first come here to study. Remembering very well her own efforts in adjusting to the American diet, Kwan said many Chinese students simply cannot digest dairy products that are common fare for Americans.

Kwan Hsu was born and lived in Guangxi province until she was about four years old. At that time her mother died so she followed her father on his travels through Southeast Asia. She says that she learned to speak several dialects and languages and consequently would serve as interpreter for her father.

Later her father re-married, and the family, with two new sons, eventually resettled in Shanghai. Her father became involved in the confusing politics of China during the war of liberation. By this time, Kwan had completed many years in parochial and Baptist schools, and graduated from a Baptist college. Her father helped



the Guangxi Army (a radical faction of the Guomindang (KMT)) and then left for Hong Kong. After her father's death, she took a provincial exam, scoring highest in the competition for the American Association of University Women's scholarship that brought her to the U. S. in 1947.

In 1973, Kwan made her first return trip to China and reacquainted herself with her brothers. She has returned twice more. These trips have helped her to reconstruct her family tree, completing her mother's side and continuing work on her father's side.

Kwan Hsu has enthusiastically accepted the six new college professors from Guilin into her fold (see story this issue) and is their community contact person, most fortunate for these gentlemen as she is from their home province and speaks their dialect. Kwan Hsu reflects in her face and her life the story of China's recent past. There is pride mixed with sorrow for the great strides China has made toward modernization, but at immense sacrifice from all Chinese. Kwan's care and concern for her compatriots arriving in America is evidenced by the community's acceptance of her role as "Grandmother away from home".

Christine Richardson-Barlow

## NEWEST NUMBERS IN OREGON — CHINESE TRADE

1980 OREGON - WORLD TRADE

| COUNTRY                | OREGON EXPORTS  | OREGON IMPORTS  | TOTAL           |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Japan                  | \$1,667,324,618 | \$1,504,970,322 | \$3,172,294,940 |
| Taiwan                 | 128,545,198     | 122,257,274     | 250,802,472     |
| People's Rep. of China | 153,293,567     | 7,848,421       | 161,141,988     |
| Hong Kong              | 23,731,774      | 39,951,336      | 61,683,110      |
| Singapore              | 32,007,971      | 4,980,525       | 36,988,496      |
| CHINESE CULTURAL AREA  | 337,578,510     | 173,037,556     | 510,616,066     |
| OREGON'S TOTAL TRADE   | \$3,761,435,267 | \$2,623,875,529 | \$6,385,310,796 |

Taiwan (#5), the People's Republic of China (#8), and Hong Kong (#13) were among Oregon's twenty most important trade partners in

1980. The People's Republic of China (PRC) didn't even appear on the 1979 top twenty list; in fact, to get to #8 in 1980, it had to increase its 1979 trade more than ten times.

Still, the Chinese cultural area (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore) makes up only 8% of Oregon's total world trade. Japan is the unchallenged number one trade partner, with about one-half of Oregon's total two-way world trade. In place #2 is South Korea, #3 is Australia, #4 West Germany, #6 is Bangladesh (almost totally in Oregon exports) and #7 is the Philippines.

Taiwan's trade with Oregon has increased since 1979 and is about \$100,000,000 greater than Oregon - PRC trade. PRC trade is greatly imbalanced in our favor--exports (such as wheat, logs, and peppermint) are about twenty times imports (such items as baskets, cotton products, and titanium).

This information is from Iola Bliss, First Interstate Bank, and applies to the Oregon Customs District (including the Oregon ports of Portland, Astoria, Newport, and Coos Bay, and the Washington ports of Vancouver, Longview, and Kalama).

An area of major significance for Oregon imports to the PRC is wheat. China bought about 9 million metric tons of wheat from the U. S. in 1980. Already, China is a major importer of certain varieties of American wheat, among them the soft red wheat grown in the Midwest.

To promote the sale of soft white wheat, a major Northwest product, the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, U. S. Wheat Associates (an export market agency for American wheat farmers) and China's Ministry of Light Industry sponsored the construction of a demonstration bakery in Beijing. The bakery will sell baked loaves of bread.



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## CHINA COUNCIL NEWS

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### SPRING LECTURE CIRCUIT ON ART AND CULTURE

The success of a \$7,500 grant proposal to the Oregon Committee for the Humanities makes possible a China Council lecture circuit to eight cities in Oregon and Washington. Such organizations as the Bend Chamber of Commerce, Southern Oregon State College (Ashland), and the Willamette Valley Council for the Social Studies (at their second annual global studies conference) will sponsor public lectures by twelve Northwest China scholars on such topics as "Mass Media in China" (given by Deanna Robinson, Assistant Professor of Telecommunications at the University of Oregon) and "The Experience of Being a China Scholar Studying China--In China" (with Joseph Esherick who recently returned from a year of research at Shandong University where he was studying the Boxer Rebellion). The Portland China Council office is arranging all the lectures and will assist sponsors with publicity.

### MANCHURIAN PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

An historically significant collection of photographs of Manchuria during the Russo-Japanese War was assembled by the U. S. Consul to Manchuria from 1902--1905, Henry Miller, a native Oregonian, and is to be made into a traveling exhibition for regional and possibly national distribution. The photographs, now in the care of the University of Oregon, will be selected and researched by a group of Northwest China Council scholars, led by Karen Gernant of Fort Wright College, Toppenish, Washington. The pictures cover a wide range of subjects--the war (from the Japanese, Russian, and Western perspectives); the town of Newchuang (Yingkou) where Miller was stationed; Chinese life (coolies, storytellers, beggars, industrial-

ists, stiltwalkers); American life in Manchuria (from the Consulate to the tennis court); the Red Beards (bandits) who dominated much of the region; and Mukden (Shenyang), the Manchu's imperial city. The Northwest China Council is seeking funds to develop the exhibition and will begin work on the project in February, 1982. Those with a special interest or expertise in the Manchurian area of the early 20th century are encouraged to contact the China Council office.

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### OREGON TEACHERS IN CHINA

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At least three professors from Oregon schools will be working and studying in China during 1982.

Michael Fish, professor of Chinese literature at the University of Oregon, is in Xian, Shanxi Province. Michael and his wife, Marianne Burris, have been teaching English at the Medical College since September.

Steve Kosokoff, professor of speech communication at Portland State University, is also teaching English--at the Inner Mongolia Teacher's College in Huhehote. Steve has been in China since October and will return home in February.

Jeffrey Barlow, professor of history at Lewis & Clark college, arrives in Guilin, Guangxi Autonomous Region in mid-February. He and his wife, Christine Richardson-Barlow, are directing the Lewis & Clark program at the Guangxi Teacher's College until August 15.

All of these Oregonians would be glad to hear from friends back home and can be written to at their colleges. Also, given one or two weeks notice, they could arrange special tours for visiting Northwest groups traveling in China. The price of such arrangements could well prove to be a request to bring in needed books or rare, exotic foods like peanut butter.



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## CHINA RESOURCES

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### JAPAN - U. S. - CHINA

Shinzen is a television magazine show, produced by a Portland-based non-profit organization, which explores the North America-Japan relationship. In early 1982, the show will feature two segments on the Japan - U. S. - China triangle, which will be on KPTV (Channel 12, Portland, Sunday, 9:30 PM) and KOMO-TV (Seattle, Saturdays). The segments include interviews with Chinese Consul General Hu Dingyi and China scholars Harry Harding and Chalmers Johnson. In the future, Shinzen will present more shows on U. S. - China issues. For further information, call Doug Rake, producer, 503-774-8686.

### U. S. - CHINA TRADE: THE ROOTS

Dean Archibald of the Oregon Historical Society announces that many artifacts from the early era of American-Chinese commerce (1792-1860) are now available to show to interested persons, as well as on limited public exhibition. The artifacts include brass-studded, painted leather chests; trade beads; and fabrics. Some will be exhibited at the Astoria Maritime Museum (the Columbia River being a key to Oregon's early success in trade with China). The Oregon Historical Society is also seeking volunteers with a serious interest in researching the artifacts; knowledge of antiques is helpful, but not necessary. Those interested should contact Mr. Archibald at 222-1741.

### CHINA TRADE FILM ON LOAN

"Adventures in the China Trade", a 27½ minute film produced by the U. S. Dept. of Commerce, explores China's economic priorities and the challenge this presents to American business. You may borrow this film from the International

Trade Administration of the Commerce Dept., Portland office, 221-3001.

### CHINESE MODERNIZATION STUDY

Lynn Feintech, Bank of America China trade analyst, has published an Overseas Development Council (ODC) study, "China's Modernization Strategy and the United States", available from the ODC, 1717 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D. C. 20036 for \$3.00. Feintech, who was a May, 1981 China Council speaker, says China hopes to "telescope decades of progress into a few years" but given China's fragile political consensus, her "recent pattern of innovation alternating with retrenchment is likely to continue".

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## GUILIN-PORTLAND EXCHANGE

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Six Chinese Professors of English from Guangxi Teacher's College in Guilin arrived in Portland in late November. The six, the largest group of Chinese professors studying in one group in the United States, are part of an exchange program between their college and Lewis & Clark College. The six will be joined by a seventh Chinese professor, a scientist, in January. The group will study in their fields at Lewis & Clark for two years.

For its part of the exchange, in February Lewis & Clark will send 27 students, accompanied by history professor Jeffrey Barlow and Christine Richardson-Barlow, to Guilin for six months. The Lewis & Clark students will continue studying Chinese language, an effort in which they have been engaged for three terms, and begin studying Chinese history and culture in classes conducted by the staff at Guangxi Teacher's College.

This is to be the first such large-scale exchange program between Chinese and American colleges.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- January** 1/82 - 3/82
- 1 - 17 \*IN CHINA: PHOTOGRAPHS BY EVE ARNOLD : Continues at Reed College Vollum Center Gallery. Open daily except Mondays, and closed December 24, 25, 31 and January 1. Hours: noon - 5:00 PM. No admission charge. For information, call 777-7591.
- 1 - 31 CHINESE NEW YEARS CELEBRATION, Wing Luke Memorial Museum, Seattle. Exhibition of Northwest Chinese family histories and artifacts. Open Tues. - Fri., 11:00 AM - 4:30 PM; Sat., 12:00 - 4:00 PM. Free.
- 8 \*TAPESTRY, KOAP-TV (Ch. 10, Portland), 10:00 PM. Features the Northwest China Council's slide tape on the Eve Arnold "In China" exhibition.
- 10 \*"THE GREAT EMPEROR OF QIN: FORERUNNER OF CHINESE CULTURE:" A slide-lecture by Jeffrey Barlow, history professor. Reed College, Vollum Center Auditorium, free. 3:00 PM. Sponsored by the Northwest China Council.
- 16 \*"MODERN CHINA THROUGH THE ARTIST'S EYES": Michael Sullivan, Professor of Oriental Art, Stanford University. Reed College Vollum Center Auditorium; free; 3:00 PM.
- 17 \*"THE HERITAGE OF CHINA'S ETHNIC MINORITIES": Linda Walton, history professor, Portland State University. Reed College Vollum Center Auditorium; free; 3:00 PM.
- 19 HOLIDAY TEA FOR VISITING PRC STUDENTS: U.S. - China People's Friendship Association (USCPFA), Campus Ministries, 633 SW Montgomery, 4:00 - 6:00 PM.
- 21 "CHINA: SPORTS AND SPIRIT": Ken Kesey speaks on his recent trip to China with Running World Magazine. Oregon State University, Cultural/Conference Center, Corvallis, 8:00 PM. Free.
- (31) CHINESE NEW YEARS BANQUET: USCPFA sponsored; for information, call Sarah Morgan, 282-1778 after 3:00 PM.

## February

- 6 CHINESE NEW YEARS DINNER DANCE: Sponsored by Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. Lung Fung Restaurant, SE 82nd & Division, Portland. Evening includes special Chinese cuisine, favors, two live bands. 6:30 PM, \$20.00/person. For reservations, call George or Mary Leong, 284-2592 or 231-4711.
- 2/8 - 3/28 \*IN CHINA: PHOTOGRAPHS BY EVE ARNOLD: Exhibition at Museum of History and Industry in Seattle, 2161 E. Hamlin. Will include Saturday afternoon programs for children, such as Chinese folktales, puppetry, etc. Presented with Seattle Branch, Northwest China Council; sponsored by Exxon.
- 9 \*"IMAGES OF CHINA: EVE ARNOLD IN PERSPECTIVE": Robert Kapp, Washington State - China Relations Council. Museum of History and Industry, Seattle, 8:00 PM. Sponsored by the Seattle Branch, Northwest China Council, 206-543-1921.
- 16 \*"LANDSCAPES OF CHINA:" Marwyn Samuels, geography professor, University of British Columbia. Museum of History and Industry, Seattle, 8:00 PM.
- 23 \*"PHOTOGRAPHING IN EAST ASIA": David Current, audio-visual producer, Photo Synthesis. Museum of History and Industry, Seattle, 8:00 PM.
- last week of February YOUXIE (CHINESE ASSOCIATION FOR FRIENDSHIP WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES) IN OREGON: Hosted by USCPFA, Sarah Morgan, 282-1778 after 3:00 PM.

## March

- 2 \*"HILLS AND STEPPES: ETHNIC MINORITIES ON CHINA'S PERIPHERY": Stevan Harrell, anthropology professor, University of Washington. Museum of History and Industry, Seattle, 8:00 PM.
- 7 - 8 "PEOPLES AND CULTURES OF THE WORLD": Teacher workshop sponsored by Willamette Valley Council for the Social Studies. Salishan Lodge, Gleneden Beach, 9:00 AM \* (Sunday) - 3:00 PM (Monday). There will be a public session with a China lecturer sponsored by the Northwest China Council (229-3049). For general information, contact Clifford Cook, Sprague High School, Salem.
- 13 NORTHWEST REGIONAL SEMINAR ON CHINA AND JAPAN: Student Union Building, University of Washington, Seattle. Persons wishing to present papers, suggest panel topics, or obtain further information, call William Crowell, 206-543-1921.

\*China Council sponsored.

Please inform the Northwest China Council well in advance of upcoming China events. Next calendar will list items for April, May and June--deadline is March 1.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This issue was prepared by Christine Richardson-Barlow, Jeffrey Barlow, Leslie Hallock, Jane Larson, and Deborah Sipe.

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Please describe your special interest in China (trade, secondary education, lived in or traveled to China, Chinese descent, etc.)

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