

Asian Studies at Carolina

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Curriculum in Asian Studies

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A Message from the Chair



This year has been an extraordinary one for both the Curriculum in Asian Studies and for Asian Studies in general. The faculty continues to expand, as the Curriculum welcomed two new members to its faculty, Professor Sahar Amer in Arabic Language and Literature, and Professor Allison Busch-Pandit in Hindi/Urdu Language and Literature. In addition, Professor Jennifer Smith, a specialist in Japanese phonology, joined the Department of Linguistics. The enthusiastic and effective advice and support of the College of Arts and Sciences helped gain for Asian Studies a generous donation from alumnus Alston Gardner and a large award from the Freeman Foundation's Undergraduate Initiative in Asian Studies. These funds will make possible an array of new programs, including an intensive summer program in Beijing, an "Asian Immersion" program in Singapore, a summer program in Japan on alternate years, the establishment of majors in both Chinese and Japanese, and the offering of a field research seminar in Asia every year. In addition, funds are available to create a new Center for Asian Studies and to expand the range of offerings in East and Southeast Asian Studies. The receipt of this support represents both a vote of confidence in Asian Studies on campus and a major step toward developing a program of the very highest quality.

Amid these exciting developments, I must note another transition, the retirement of Professor Lawrence Kessler. Having joined the faculty in 1966, as only the second Asian specialist on campus, Larry has provided crucial leadership in building Asian Studies at Carolina. Much of our success now rests on the foundations of the pioneering efforts of him and others. During the past year, he played a central role in drafting the proposal for the Freeman Foundation, and he has worked very hard in editing this newsletter. We have much appreciated his commitment, sage advice, and creativity.

Faculty teaching courses related to Asia now number approximately three dozen, and during the past year they organized a variety of events for the campus and surrounding community. Many of them centered on the arts: a concert of South Asian music, an Indonesian *gamelan* concert, a new class in calligraphy, a Persian Film Festival, a student-organized exhibition of Japanese woodblock prints about *geisha*, a demonstration of Japanese flower-arranging (*ikebana*), and a presentation about *haiku*. An all-day interdisciplinary conference, "Women's Voices in the Franco-Arabic World," complete with consultations on henna decorating, attracted many undergraduate participants.

Students' accomplishments were impressive. Six students in Asian Studies or International Studies wrote honors theses on Asian topics. SUSHI, a group interested in Japanese Studies, was particularly active in organizing events. *(continued on next page)*

Two Major Gifts Strengthen Asian Studies at UNC

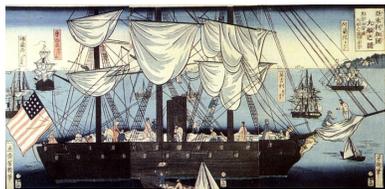
This past year, two major gifts were made to UNC that will dramatically enhance the development of Asian Studies on campus. In November 2001, **Alston Gardner**, a 1977 Carolina graduate, pledged a \$10 million gift to increase opportunities for students and faculty to immerse themselves in global studies on campus and overseas, through scholarships, a lecture series and research funds in international studies. In December, the **Freeman Foundation** of Vermont announced a gift of \$2 million that will strengthen undergraduate offerings in areas related to East Asia and increase study abroad opportunities for undergraduates in East Asia. *(continued on back page)*

New Study Abroad Opportunities in Asia

With the support of gifts from Alston Gardner and the Freeman Foundation, three new programs in Asia are being organized.

Beijing: An Asian Studies/Honors summer study program will start in 2002. The program, located at the Beijing Institute of Education, will provide a unique opportunity to learn about Chinese society, to study the Chinese language intensively, and to take advantage of the many cultural and historical riches available in China's capital. A faculty member from UNC will serve as the resident director and lead a research seminar. In addition, some of China's most eminent social scientists from the prestigious Chinese Academy of Social Sciences will offer courses on important aspects of Chinese society. Academic work will be supplemented by weekend excursions to areas outside of Beijing.

Kyoto: A five-week summer program in Japan, offered jointly by Asian Studies and Women's Studies will start in 2003. It will examine themes of trans-nationalism and women in Asia, with special attention to labor issues. The program will involve a number of visits to field sites as well as classroom instruction.



Singapore: Beginning in 2003, twenty-five students will travel each summer with a Carolina faculty member to Singapore for a six-week immersion program in Southeast Asian history and culture. In addition to the UNC faculty director's course, students will choose courses from among the full offerings of the National University of Singapore. All courses are taught in English, but students can opt to take a course in Malay, the national language, and are encouraged to do so. In Spring 2003, two First-Year Seminars will be offered for students wishing to go on the program.

Students also have the option of participating in already established programs in China, India, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Nepal, Thailand, and Vietnam.

(continued from front page) Several students gained acceptance into the JET (Japanese Exchange Teachers) program, and for the third consecutive year a Carolina student received a prestigious Luce Scholarship to support an internship in Asia.

Finally, I want to thank friends and alumni of Asian Studies for your support. I have had occasion to talk with several of you over the past twelve months and have found your fond memories of Chapel Hill encouraging, and even inspiring. Believe me, your financial contributions help our faculty and students in so many ways to perform at their best.

--W. Miles Fletcher

New Asian Studies Faculty Appointed

Although **Sahar Amer** (Asian Studies/International Studies) has been at UNC since 1994, teaching in Romance Languages, this past year she joined the Curriculum in Asian Studies, where she teaches in the Arabic program. She graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1986 with a BA and MA in French Literature, then got a second MA in developmental psychology from Boston University (1988) and worked for one year as a psychology intern at Roxbury Community Health Center. She entered the graduate program in French at Yale University and received her PhD in medieval French literature in 1994. Her research interests are in medieval French literature and more specifically the literary and cultural encounters between the Western world and the Arab world in the Middle Ages. She has also published and taught courses on orientalism and the western discourses on Arabs throughout the centuries. Her interests include cooking and baking and, when she feels particularly brave, white water rafting.

Allison Busch (Asian Studies) graduated from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver in 1992 with a B.A. in South Asian Languages (concentration in Sanskrit and Hindi). In 1994 she entered the department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago (Ph.D. expected 2002). Her thesis is in the area of medieval Hindi literature, with a focus on courtly literature and historiography. Her broader research interests are in pre-modern Indian literature and intellectual history. Prior to coming to UNC, she taught part-time at the University of Chicago, University of Wisconsin at Madison and at Loyola University (Chicago). As hobbies, she is deeply interested in Indian music, and has studied Kathak, North India's classical dance art.

Jennifer Smith (Linguistics) graduated from Cornell University in 1993 with a BA in linguistics and Asian Studies (with a Japan area concentration). After spending three semesters as a research student in linguistics at Kyushu University in Fukuoka, Japan, she entered the graduate program in linguistics at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst (PhD 2002). She taught for one year at the University of California, Santa Cruz, before coming to UNC in 2001. Her research interests include Japanese linguistics, especially phonology, and also the phonology of Chinese languages and Korean. Informally, she is also very interested in Japanese music, having once taken *shakuhachi* lessons and also dabbled a little bit in learning to play the *koto*.

Curriculum Faculty News

Sahar Amer served this year as chair of Medieval Studies at UNC and as a Faculty Partner in the newly established Carolina Scholars Program. She will be on leave next year as a Fellow at the Institute of Arts and Humanities at UNC-CH. Her article "Lesbian Sex and the Military: From the Medieval Arabic Tradition to French Literature" appeared in an edited volume, *Same-Sex Love and Desire Among Women in the Middle Ages*. She gave four invited lectures: "The Current State of Scholarship in Europe and the US on Multicultural Approaches to Medieval Studies" at Helwan University in Cairo; "Cross-Dressing in the Middle Ages" at Virginia Tech University; "A response to Michèle Longino's Orientalism in French Classical Drama" at Duke University; and "Orientalism" at the Duke/UNC Robertson Scholars Program. She received several grants: an IBM Instructional Technology grant to implement the use of technology in her Arabic 102 class; an Office of Intellectual Life grant and support from other university sources for the conference she co-organized on "Women's Voices in the Franco-Arabic World" in April; and grants from UCIS and CES to conduct research in Paris and Egypt this summer on "Occidentalism and Orientalism" and on the status of Muslim Women in France today. In the spring, she was invited to serve on the selection committee of Mellon Fellowships for Dissertation Research in Original Sources (sponsored by CLIR). She serves the executive boards of the Southeast Medieval Association and of the Marie de France International Society, and is also a member of the editorial boards of *Medieval Perspectives* and *Le Cygne: Bulletin de La Société Internationale Marie de France*.

Jan Bardsley organized a panel on Japanese women in the 1950s for the Association for Asian Studies annual meeting in Washington, DC in April. She is currently working on a book that views discourse on women, democracy and desire in Japan through the lens of fashion magazines of the 1950s. This summer she travels to Japan to screen the documentary film she helped produce, *Women in Japan: Memories of the Past, Dreams for the Future* (see article on page 6) to women groups and at universities in Kyoto and Tokyo. The film will debut at UNC in Fall 2002 as part of a lecture series, "Sexuality, Gender and Nation in Japan."

Allison Busch chaired a panel on Hindi/Urdu literature and gave a paper, "An Area of Critical Disjunction: Revisiting the Medieval Hindi Literary Categories of *Bhakti* and *Riti*," at the annual meeting of South Asianists in Madison last October. She gave a number of presentations on South Asian topics to faculty colloquia, student groups, and secondary school teachers.

Pika Ghosh received a postdoctoral fellowship from the J. Paul Getty Foundation to prepare her dissertation on the brick temples of seventeenth-century Bengal for publication. She had three articles accepted for publication, and chaired a panel on Krishnalila at the annual South Asia Conference at the University of Wisconsin. At UNC, she organized a film festival featuring the works of Bengali filmmaker Sandeep Ray, and a lecture series on the Visual Arts in South Asia sponsored by the Triangle South Asia Consortium, Asian Studies and the Art Department.

Eric Henry presented a paper on the provenance of some chapters in *The Discourses of the States (Guoyu)* at the Association for Asian Studies meeting in Washington, DC in April. His article, "Chinese and Indigenous Influences in Vietnamese Verse Romances of the 19th Century," appeared last December in *Crossroads*, a journal devoted to Southeast Asian Studies. In October, he traveled to Vietnam with the director of the Study Abroad Office to evaluate the Vietnamese language immersion program available to UNC students. In recent years, he has developed a strong interest in an assortment of Vietnamese musical genres referred to as *tân nhạc* or "new music," and is tracing the development of this music from its inception in the late 1930s up to the present. "New music" supposedly refers to music (vocal, mainly) that makes use of western diatonic scales, but some of it is in fact pentatonic.

Ryuko Kubota lectured in May at Keio University on "Shock language experiences in multicultural education," and in October at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville on issues of culture in second language teaching. She also presented papers at the annual conference for the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in November, at the Southeastern Association for Teachers of Japanese in Charleston in March, and at the American Association for Applied Linguistics and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages conferences in Salt Lake City in April. She is a member of the national board of the Association for Teachers of Japanese. While in her hometown of Nagano last summer, she shot scenes for a documentary film, *Women in Japan: Memories of the Past, Dreams for the Future*, in which she is one of the featured subjects (see article on page 6). Locally, she has been very active in promoting the teaching of Japanese in the middle and high schools. She also helped the Chapel Hill-Carrboro school district write a proposal to the U.S. Department of Education, which resulted in a three-year grant (\$525,000) to implement dual language programs at the elementary school level, one being in Mandarin Chinese/English.

Jerome ("Sandy") Seaton entered phased retirement this year, but he remains busy translating and has two new books on the horizon. He published a translation of a Su Shih poem in *Three Rivers Review*, and seven of his translations of the Ch'an (Zen) poet Kuan Hsiu were accepted for publication in three different magazines. He delivered a paper last fall on "Choices in Translation" at the Association of Literary Translators of America (ALTA) national meeting in Raleigh. He has been invited to read from his translations at another ALTA panel next October to celebrate the installation of a new editor at the *Literary Review*, of which he is an advisory editor.



Nadia Yaqub was awarded a grant from the University Research Council and the Vice Chancellor's Junior Faculty Development Award to spend six weeks in Lebanon this summer conducting research on Lebanese oral poetry. Her article on "A Palestinian Groom's Wedding Eve Celebration" was published in *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, Vol. 6, in fall 2001. She presented a paper on "'Lebanon is My Soul': Zajal and the Production of a Lebanese Locality," at the Middle East Studies Association meeting in November, and another on "The Tale of Those Who Did Not Travel: Reading Yahya Tahir `Abdullah's The Neckband and the Bracelet as Sirah" at the American Comparative Literature Association annual meeting in April. Like many of her colleagues in areas relating to Islam and/or the Middle East, she was called upon since September 11 to lecture on Islam to various audiences, including students, faculty and K-12 teachers and administrators. Also in April she introduced and led a discussion of the Algerian documentary "A Female Cabbie in Sidi Bel-Abbes" at the UNC conference on "Women Voices in the Franco-Arabic World."

Gang Yue gave several invited lectures in the U.S. and in China, including one at the National Endowment for the Humanities regional seminar in Nashville on authorities and anti-authorities in Asian traditions, April 2002. He has been invited to join two editorial boards in China, one for the new intellectual journal *Horizons* and another for a new series of novels published by the renowned Writers' Publishing House in Beijing. This summer, he will serve as resident director of our new Asian Studies/Honors Summer Beijing Program (see Study Abroad article on page 2), taking fifteen students for a two-month program of intensive studies and supervising the undergraduate research seminar "Mornings and Evenings in Beijing," which is designed to encourage students to integrate research with their individual interests and daily life experiences in the ancient capital.

Affiliated Faculty News

Carl Ernst (Religious Studies) presented a series of lectures this spring on Islam, including "Teaching the Middle East and Islam," at the North Carolina Social Studies Conference in Greensboro; "Islam in the Eyes of the West: Clash of Civilizations or Dialog?" at the College of Charleston; "Understanding Islam: Religion and Civilization in the Modern World" and "Ethics, Philosophy, and Politics: How are they Islamic?" in the Debating Civilizations lecture series, Center for the Study of Muslim Networks, Duke University; and "Responses to September 11: Religion and Public Policy," at the American Society for the Study of Religion meeting in Cambridge, MA.

Judith Farquhar (Anthropology) received a three-year International Collaborative Research Grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research to undertake research on self-cultivation (*yang sheng*) and personal health habits in contemporary Beijing in collaboration with Professor Zhang Qicheng of the Cultural Studies Program at the Beijing University of Chinese Medicine. Her ethnography of contemporary Chinese popular culture and medicine, *Appetites: Food And Sex In Post-Socialist China*, was published by Duke University Press this year. Along with James Hevia (History), Gang Yue (Asian Studies), and Raymond Farrow (Development Office), she has begun organizing a multidisciplinary research, exchange, and teaching initiative in association with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, called “Beijing’s Olympiac Decade.”

Gail Henderson (Social Medicine) was one of the instructors in a five-day workshop on Research Ethics held in Beijing in March 2002 at the China CDC (formerly the Academy of Preventive Medicine) National Center for AIDS Prevention and Control. Funded by the NIH, Ford, and the China CDC, participants were AIDS researchers from each of China’s provinces.

James Hevia (History) published two articles: “Rulership and Tibetan Buddhism in Eighteenth Century China: Qing Emperors, Lamas and Audience Rituals” in an edited volume, *Medieval and Early Modern Rituals: Formalized Behavior in the East and West*; and “World Heritage, National Culture and the Restoration of Chengde” in a special issue of the journal *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* entitled *Chinese Popular Culture and the State*. In June 2001, he gave an invited paper on “Looting and its Discontents: Moral Discourse and the Plundering Beijing 1900-1901” at an International Conference marking the 100th Anniversary of the Boxer Uprising, at the School for Oriental and African Studies, London. He served for a second year on the John K. Fairbank Prize Committee of the American Historical Association and will be its



chair next year. He continues as chair of the Curriculum in International and Area Studies, associate editor of *Positions*, a member of the editorial committee of *Culture Studies* and of the advisory committee for the journal *Inner Asia* (Cambridge University).

Norris Johnson (Anthropology) published an article, “Gardens of the Heart,” in *Parabola*. He was Resident Scholar at the Penland (NC) School of Crafts last August and gave several talks on Japanese gardens while there. In January, he lectured on “Religion and Nature in Japan” at the Carolina Environmental Program, and in February he lectured on Japan at the Executive Training Program of UNC’s Kenan-Flagler School of Business.

Lawrence Kessler (History) retired from UNC after thirty-six years of teaching and service. Last October he presented a workshop on “Foundations of Chinese Civilization,” for secondary school teachers participating in the N.C. Teaching Asia Network seminar. In January, he acted as chair and commentator on a panel, “Pieces of the Mosaic: Aspects of the Chinese Experience in the United States,” at the Southeastern Conference of the Association for Asian Studies in Chattanooga. Next fall, he will

again serve as enrichment lecturer for the UNC General Alumni Association tour to China; in conjunction with that trip, he gave a Passport Lecture in April to tour participants and other alumni on “Christian Missions and Modern China.”

Charles Kurzman’s (Sociology) research on Islam placed him somewhat in the public eye after September 11. Along with other colleagues from UNC-CH, he spoke at numerous public events on campus and in the community, appeared on the local public radio station, and wrote an op-ed piece in the *Raleigh News & Observer*. He also published an article on contemporary Islamic debates in Iran for the *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, and an article on democracy’s effect on economic growth for the journal *Studies in Comparative International Development*. He won a small grant from the American Sociological Association and was selected as a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton for 2002-2003.

Allan Life (English) serves as Undergraduate Grant Coordinator at UNC-CH for the North Carolina Center for South Asia Studies, a U.S. Department of Education funded National Resource Center, and a member of the Executive Committee of the Triangle South Asia Consortium. In March, he lectured on “*Scenes and Types of India—with a difference: Picture Postcards by M. V. Dhurandhar,*” at the annual conference of the College Art Association in Chicago; an expanded version of this lecture was published in *Visual Resources: An International Journal of Documentation* (Winter 2001). At the annual conference of the Victorians Institute, held on campus in October, he lectured on “Discreet Despotism: Early Picture Postcards of the British Raj.”

Don Nonini (Anthropology) published a chapter, “Diaspora Chinese in the Asia Pacific: Transnational Practices and Structured Inequalities,” in *Chinese Populations in Contemporary Southeast Asian Societies: Regional Interdependence and International Influence* (Curzon Press, 2002). He edited and wrote the introduction to a special issue, “Thematic Issue: Transnational Labor Migration in the Asia/Pacific/Indian Ocean Region,” of *Critical Asian Studies*, January-March, 2002. He received an Asian Studies Faculty Travel Fellowship to visit Singapore to collect materials for a First-Year Seminar in Spring 2003 and to update research on the Chinese diaspora in Malaysia for a forthcoming book.

James Peacock (Anthropology) continued to serve as director of the University Center of International Studies. A revised edition of *The Anthropological Lens* (Cambridge) was published. He also published several essays: “Belief Beheld” in a University of Michigan festschrift to Roy Rapaport that broaches issues in the anthropology of religion; “Action Comparativism” in a Routledge volume that links globalism, the comparative method, and public interest anthropology; and other essays treating the interplay of place and globalism.

Sarah Weiss (Music) presented three invited talks this past year: “Gender, Mode, and Knowledge in Central Java” at the National University of Singapore last May; “*Kothong Nanging Kebak—Empty Yet Full: Some Thoughts on Embodiment in Javanese Performance*” at Cornell University in November; and “The Enigma of Sameness: The Search for Form in *Grimingan* for Old-Style Javanese *Wayang*” at Wesleyan University in April. She led the inaugural performance of *Gamelan Nyai Saraswati* at UNC in January (see article on page 7), and also participated as an invited guest in gamelan performances at Cornell and Wesleyan.

Luce Scholars Program

Kelley Vance, a Morehead Scholar and recent UNC graduate, received a prestigious Luce Scholarship for 2002-2003. She is the twenty-second student nominated by UNC to be awarded this honor since the program began in 1974.

The Luce Scholars program offers a select group of young Americans—only eighteen are chosen annually—an experience in Asia designed both to broaden their professional perspectives and to sharpen their perceptions of Asia, of America, and of themselves. It represents a major effort by the Henry Luce Foundation to provide an awareness of Asia among America's potential future leaders, whose broadened insights could have a significant impact on America's future relations with Asia, and on our own cultural, intellectual, and political development.

The program is unique among American-Asian exchanges in that it is intended for young leaders who have had no extensive prior experience of Asia and who might not otherwise have an opportunity in the normal course of their careers to come to know Asia or their Asian counterparts. Despite its name, the Luce Scholars program is experiential rather than academic in nature. Participants are not formally enrolled in a college or university and they earn no academic credit. Rather, they undertake a ten-month internship of work and study arranged for each Scholar on the basis of his or her specific interest, background, qualifications, and experience.

Ms. Vance will spend the coming year learning about traditional medicinal practices in Taiwan, and then will enroll in UNC's School of Medicine in the fall of 2003 with a Fullerton Medical Scholarship that supports four years of medical school.

Asian Studies Senior Colloquium

For the past few years, the Curriculum in Asian Studies and the Office of Undergraduate Research has sponsored an Asian Studies Senior Colloquium, where we celebrate the achievements of students from various disciplines who have undertaken honors work or special research projects on an Asian subject. For these students, it is an opportunity to synthesize their research and to communicate their findings with faculty and students.

This year, six students made brief reports on their research projects (their advisors are listed in parentheses): **Levin Brown**, International Studies, "Danwei: Life in the Chinese Work Unit" (Gang Yue, Asian Studies); **Katherine Thornton**, International Studies, "Wo Shou Xie Wo Kou: Language Reform in Twentieth Century China" (Wendan Li, Asian Studies); **Katherine Andrews**, International Studies, "Japanese Society During World War II: Attitudes Towards the War" (Miles Fletcher, History); **Justin Biggers**, Asian Studies/Religious Studies, "The Evolution of Japanese History Textbooks: Diversity and Uniformity" (Miles Fletcher, History); **Benjamin Lawson**, Asian Studies/International Studies, "Common Elements of Japanese Post-Occupation Motion Picture Depictions of World War II" (James White, Political Science); **Tin T. Nguyen**, International Studies, "The Dust of Life: The Journey to Understand Vietnamese Street Children and Society's Ambivalent Attitude towards Them" (Melinda Meade, Geography).

Chinese Speech Contest

For a number of years, students in all levels of Chinese language classes at UNC have participated in and won prizes in the annual Chinese speech contest held at Duke University, which the Curriculum in Asian Studies co-sponsors. This year, eight UNC

students participated, and three received prizes: 1st prize in the first-year level and 1st and 3rd prizes in the third-year level.

In addition, our students frequently perform in comic skits written by members of the Chinese staff. This year, four students from 4th semester Chinese performed a ten-minute skit called "Lihun Shouxu" (The Formalities of Divorce), written by **Eric Henry**, that satirizes lawyers who are willing to do and say anything to win fat awards for their clients (and themselves). Professor Henry based the skit on a Vietnamese music video.

This year's skit was the first on a contemporary theme. The previous four skits, whose authors have included Professor **Wendan Li** and several teaching assistants as well as Professor Henry, were all comic versions of traditional Chinese myths and historical legends. The first described Chang E's flight to the moon and her theft of the elixir of immortality; the second portrayed the two old brothers Bo Yi and Shu Qi, who righteously refused to "eat the grain of Zhou" after King Wu of Zhou overthrew the Shang dynasty; the third traced Yu the Great's career as a hydraulic engineer, and the fourth told of Pan Gu's creation of the universe and Nu Wa's creation of humankind.

These skits have been very well received by the audiences at Duke. On several occasions, representatives from the Taiwan cultural center in Atlanta who attended the contest commended UNC's Chinese language program for its presentations.

Buddhist Art and Ritual Exhibit

The Ackland Art Museum at UNC in February 2001 opened a two-year exhibit on "Buddhist art and Ritual in Nepal and Tibet." For this installation, the Ackland borrowed twenty paintings, sculptures and other sacred objects from museums with significant collections of Himalayan Art. The exhibit will close in February 2003.

The exhibit conveys the way art functions in a traditional Tantric Buddhist altar, and it suggests the integration of art and ritual that is fundamental to understanding the true meanings of these objects as part of living cultural traditions. As a context-oriented approach to the presentation of art, the exhibit complements the chronological and stylistic display of painting and sculpture in the Ackland's Yager Gallery of Asian Art.

In conjunction with the exhibit, two Tibetan monks from a monastery in Ithaca, New York, constructed a five-and-a-half foot Medicine Buddha sand *mandala* (see illustration to right) in the Yager Gallery during February-March 2001. In June, the monks dismantled the *mandala* and led a procession down Airport Road in Chapel Hill



to Bolin Creek, where they deposited the sand in the stream, a process that symbolizes the transience of life and the ideal of non-attachment to the material world.

First-Year Seminars on Asia

In 1999, UNC inaugurated the innovative First-Year Seminars program, whereby every entering student has the opportunity to enroll in small interdisciplinary seminars offered by distinguished faculty members. Through the program students explore

a range of issues in small groups of not more than twenty each. Since the program's inception, faculty members in the Curriculum of Asian Studies have offered first year seminars.

This year, Professor **Jan Bardsley** offered "Geisha in History, Fiction and Fantasy." The course explored the relationship between gender, beauty and national identity by looking at the Japanese women of the pleasure quarters known as geisha. Besides reading fiction, travel diaries, historical and legal texts about geisha, students in the seminar also participated in workshops that actively involved them in learning such arts as the tea ceremony and ikebana. As part of their course work, students also mounted a public exhibit about geisha at the Ackland Art Museum in Chapel Hill. One of Bardsley's previous seminars, "The American Life of Japanese Women," looked at images of Japanese women in American pop fiction and film.

About her experiences teaching in the First-Year Seminars program, which last year earned her the J. Carlyle Sitterson Freshman Teaching Award, Professor Bardsley said, "These seminars offer a wonderful opportunity for professors to work closely with brand new Carolina students. The program encourages unusual topics, hands-on learning, and student research. I believe this environment introduces students to a love of learning that takes them beyond the syllabus. What is most inspiring is seeing the students engage in designing and executing their own research or creative projects. I leave lots of room for them to experiment, to blend various media, and to explore their topics on their own, with my help and with the help of their peers."

Professor **Shantanu Phukan** offered a seminar in 2002 on "Lovers and Beloveds: East and West." The course provided an overview of literary conventions of both homosexual and heterosexual love in three different cultural landscapes: classical Greece, medieval Persia and India, and modern Europe and North America. Through a variety of readings comprised of both prose and verse, the class explored the ethics of the relationship between the lover and the beloved as defined in each of these cultural contexts. At the end of the semester, the seminar students prepared a panel presentation of these issues for a high school audience. Professor Phukan described the course "liberating" because it "offered him latitude to consider a topic cross-culturally and comparatively."

Film on Japanese Women Produced

Women of Japan: Memories of the Past, Dreams for the Future, a documentary film by Carolina professors **Joanne Hershfield** (Communication Studies) and **Jan Bardsley** (Asian Studies), introduces viewers to six women who are making a difference in Japan and abroad by actively engaging with other cultures. One of the women featured is Professor **Ryuko Kubota** (Asian Studies/Education), who among other things is a specialist in multicultural education. Professor Kubota was filmed for this project in both her native Ueda and at UNC. Other women in the film include a painter, a community organizer, an NGO leader, and foreign laborers living in Japan. The film shows how becoming a global citizen has profoundly affected each woman, influencing her public life, her personal choices, and her sense of identity. The film was shot in sev-



eral locales in Japan in June 2001 and generously supported by grants from the Japan Foundation, the Carolina Arts & Sciences Foundation, and the Curriculum in International and Area Studies. *Women in Japan* will be screened in fall 2002.

Friends of Asian Studies

We wish to thank the following individuals who have made gifts to Asian Studies since July 2000:

Daniel Aldrich	Sue-Jin Lee McCoy
Bonnie Bechard	Trenton McDevitt
Aaron Gray	Jennifer Manning
Katsuko Hotelling	C. Smithson Mills
Lawrence Kessler	Barbara Peterson
Insup Lee	Charlotte Purrington
David Liu	Sidney Rittenberg
Eleanor Long-Wilgus	Sharon Rees Waite

Three Asian Film Series Presented

One series, organized by **Shantanu Phukan** (Asian Studies) and **Godfrey Cheshire**, the noted film critic for *The Village Voice* and *The Independent*, presented three of the most celebrated films in Iranian history. Jafar Panahi's *The Mirror* (1998) is about a girl who refuses a role thrust on her and about the society in which she must live. Mohsen Makhmalbaf's *Gabbeh* (1996), the word for an intricate and colorful carpet, becomes a metaphor for an epic love story. Abbas Kiarostami's *Close-Up* (1990), about a man's need for social esteem and recognition, was voted one of the five greatest films of the '90s by an international jury of film programmers. Cheshire was the first U.S. film critic allowed into Iran after the country's 1979 revolution. He opened the series with a discussion of trends in Iranian cinema and also briefly introduced each film and moderated a question and answer session afterwards. Professor Phukan remarked that he hoped the film showings and discussion would "make the community aware of the rich culture and history of Iran."

A second series explored South Asian cinema as a form of cultural production in which women and diasporic auteurs played a major role. The fourteen films ranged in content from the women's question in 19th century Bengal (Satyajit Ray's *Devi*), to the traumatic migrations of the Indian subcontinent's Partition (Deepa Mehta's 1947 *Earth*), to contemporary films set in upper middle-class New Delhi (Mira Nair's *Monsoon Wedding*) and amongst South Asian immigrants in New Jersey (Nisha Ganatra's *Chutney Popcorn*). This series was organized by **Rashmi Varma** (English) in conjunction with her course on "Women Writing South Asia" and another course taught by an undergraduate cultural studies major, **Durba Chattaraj**, "Visual Culture in the South Asian Diaspora" as part of the C-Start (Students Teaching Students) program. Support came from UNC's Office of Distinguished Scholarships and the NC Center for South Asian Studies.

Finally, an all-day Asian Documentary Film Festival organized by **Pika Ghosh** (Art/Asian Studies) featured filmmaker Sandeep Ray's acclaimed documentaries on India and Indonesia, "Leaving Bakul Bagan," "Miyah: The Life of a Javanese Woman," "A Trial in East Kalimantan: The Benoaq Dayak Resistance," and other of his works in progress. Mr. Ray attended the festival to introduce and discuss the films. The film festival was sponsored by the Visual Media Lecture Series of the NC Center for South Asian Studies.

Arabic Program

The Curriculum in Asian Studies offers language instruction in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Hindi-Urdu, Japanese, Persian, Tamil and Vietnamese. In this issue, we highlight the Arabic program. The following Arabic script reads, "Ahlan wa Sahlan" and means "Hello" or "Welcome".

أهلاً وسهلاً

Arabic language and culture have been taught on a part-time basis at Carolina since the late 1950s. In 2000, the College moved Arabic instruction to Asian Studies and hired Professor **Nadia Yaqub** to teach Arabic language and literature. In 2001, Professor **Sahar Amer** moved from the Department of Romance Languages (where she had been teaching medieval French literature since 1994, and Arabic since Fall 1997) to Asian Studies.

Professor Yaqub, a UC-Berkeley graduate, specializes in oral Arabic literature, folklore, modern Arabic literature, and linguistics. She is currently working on a study of Lebanese oral poetry and its role in identity formation. Professor Amer, a graduate of Yale, is a specialist in medieval French literature and in the cross-cultural relations between France and the Arabo-Islamic world in the Middle Ages and throughout the centuries. She is working on her second book, which deals with representations of gender and sexualities in medieval French and Arabic literatures.

Having two full-time instructors of Arabic allows the Curriculum to offer three levels of Arabic language courses each semester on a regular basis, as well as scheduling courses on Arabic culture and literature. The latter will include an introduction to Arab culture, two courses on Arabic literature in translation covering the classical and modern periods, cross-cultural encounters between Europe and the Arabo-Islamic world, and representations of the Arabs in European literatures.

Enrollments in the Arabic program have shown a steady and pronounced increase. Whereas only about 15 students enrolled in Arabic classes in 1967-68, an average of 54 students enrolled per year between 1987 and 1997, and this year about 100 students are enrolled in Arabic language and culture courses. The Curriculum offers an Arabic minor and in the future hopes to develop an interdisciplinary major in Arabic cultural studies, where students will acquire language proficiency and will select from a wide variety of courses on the Arab world and Islam.

Professors Amer and Yaqub have worked together to further develop the Arabic program through extra-curricular activities and through partnerships with their counterparts at Duke University. Activities on the UNC campus included a bimonthly coffee hour (funded by the Johnston Center for Undergraduate Excellence), a book reading by two local novelists with ties to the Arab World, and a conference on "Women Voices in the Franco-Arabic World Today."

Many cooperative programs with Duke have been organized. In one such project, all Arabic language students on the two campuses produced Arabic language videos as an end of term project, corresponded with each other, and finally gathered together for dinner at the end of the semester to watch each other's videos. Also, students from both programs met at UNC for an *iftar* dinner, the breaking of the fast at sundown during Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting. These and other activities have been funded with a grant from the Robertson Collaborative

Fund (set up to facilitate academic collaboration between UNC and Duke). Next year, UNC and Duke hope to offer third-year Arabic collaboratively, with classes on each campus one day a week. Joint offering of advanced courses will maximize our resources and enable faculty on each campus to offer an additional course each year.

Spotlight on Alumnae

Amy Woods Brinkley graduated from Carolina in 1978 with a major in Asian Studies even before the establishment of the Curriculum in Asian Studies, which came in 1979. Like other undergraduates interested in Asia at that time, she crafted together a special program under the aegis of Interdisciplinary Studies.

Brinkley is the descendant of Presbyterian missionaries to China. Her great-grandparents met in China, where she was a doctor and he was a minister, and married there. Their daughter, born in China, also met and married a missionary there. When the Depression hit and war in China drove many missionaries out of the field, Brinkley's ancestors returned to Virginia and North Carolina where she grew up.

After graduation from Carolina, Brinkley joined NCNB (now Bank of America), and spent some time in Hong Kong working in International Banking. She then worked as a commercial banker in Greensboro. In 1993 she became head of marketing for the bank. In 1999 she was promoted to President of Consumer Products, in which capacity she had responsibility for 33,000 employees in various business including credit card, mortgage, consumer finance, insurance, and electronic banking. Most recently Brinkley was named Chief Risk Officer for Bank of America where she oversees global credit, market, and operational risks for the company.

Gamelan Ensemble Housed at UNC

A highlight of the musical scene in Chapel Hill this past year was the arrival of Gamelan Nyai Sartaswati, an ensemble of nearly seventy bronze instruments, after a three-month sea journey from Central Java. The purchase and shipping of the gamelan was accomplished thanks to the generous support of David Pardue, a musician and member of the UNC Board of Trustees, and his wife Becky, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the University Center for International Studies (UCIS).

Sarah Weiss (Music), a specialist in Indonesian music and particularly gamelan, was responsible for locating the ensemble, preparing the instruments for playing, and training a group of local amateurs in their use. Under her direction, the group performed an informal concert for friends and the Board of UCIS in June 2001 and public concerts in December at the Chapel Hill Museum and in January at Hill Hall on campus. For the last performance, the group invited seven professional musicians to join them, including Midiyanto Putra, the former owner of the gamelan.

"Gamel" in Javanese means "to hammer." Most of the instruments in the ensemble are sounded by hammering or hitting,



with the exception of the flute and two stringed instruments—a bowed fiddle and a plucked zither. The drummer and the fiddle player are the leaders of the group, one determining melodic transitions and the other determining rhythmic transitions, but no single person “conducts”—the musicians rely on their understanding of what is “usual” in any piece in order to play together properly.

The music is cyclic, and each cycle is repeated an unplanned number of times. The length of individual cycles range from 30 seconds to 20 minutes, and a single piece may last longer than an hour, rivaling a Mahler or Beethoven Symphony in terms of complexity and duration. Western musicians who hear gamelan often compare it to the experience of listening to several, incredibly good jazz solo players improvising together. People without musical training often focus on the mellifluousness of the sound, the soothing, meditative quality of some of the music.

Two Major Gifts *(continued from front page)*

In pledging his gift, Mr. Gardner, who chairs UNC’s Advisory Board for International and Area Studies, explained, “I had the great fortune of learning about the world first hand. Many UNC students never have that opportunity. This gift is designed to help UNC students shorten their learning curve on international affairs so they can compete more effectively in a global economy. It also aims to help the entire university community think critically about pressing global issues that we face today.”

Gardner, a Durham native, was the founder of On Target Inc. (later acquired by Siebel Systems), a provider of consulting and training services for sales and marketing organizations, and more

recently of Fulcrum Ventures, a venture capital firm that invests in early stage technology and health-care companies.

The Freeman Foundation gift extends over a four-year period, beginning in 2002. It will fund two new positions in Chinese and Japanese language and literature, course development grants, faculty travel support, a distinguished visitors program, academic enrichment programs, two new study abroad programs in Asia, scholarships for students on Asia programs, and the purchase of library materials.

With the Freeman grant and with additional support from the College of Arts and Sciences, UNC will establish a Center for Asian Studies that will become the focal point for the vastly increased Asia-related activity we envision. A search is underway for a full-time Center director who will be responsible for implementing the expanding Asian Studies program in the College and forge links with other schools at the university.

Study abroad activities will be significantly expanded with support for new summer programs in Beijing and Kyoto. In addition, many more UNC undergraduates will have an opportunity to participate in already established programs in Asia with the offering of merit and need-based scholarships.

The Alston Gardner and Freeman Foundation gifts will help UNC build a nationally prominent program in Asian Studies, make an international experience a central part of the undergraduate curriculum and provide the state of North Carolina with a valuable resource for understanding a complex and vital region of the world.

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