

CHICAGO REVIEW

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Edward Dorn *An Interview*

Billy Collins *Apologizing to the Bees*

Jack Butler *Noble Rot*

Susan Firer *Building the House of Crazy*

Gabriel Spera *Antonio in Tijuca*

Nance Van Winckel *Our House Was Full without Us*

PERIODICAL READING ROOM

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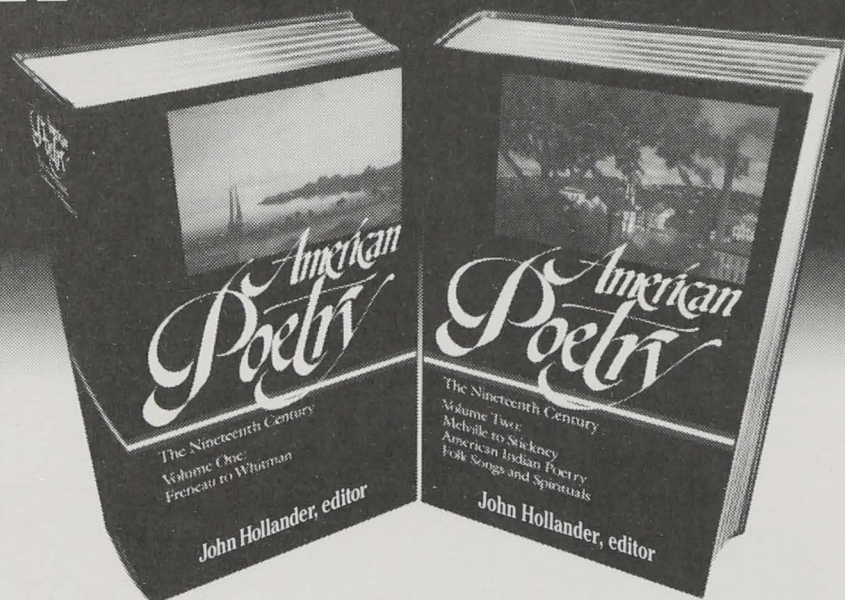
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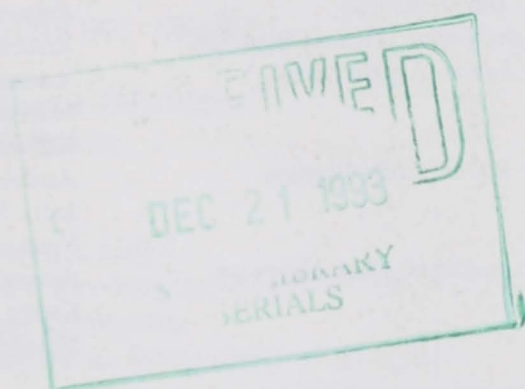


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John Wright

Introduction: North Pacific Rim Culture(s) Approaching the Millennium

A couple of years ago, I began to get interested in the ways the different indigenous peoples of the Pacific Rim have traditionally shared certain cultural characteristics while maintaining their own distinct cultures and economies. Although the anthropological evidence for this has existed for some time, and although I've been interested in the literatures of Asia and the West Coast of North America for a good while, it only recently became apparent to me that a similar phenomenon has been intensifying in contemporary literary production around the Rim.

This has been happening at the same moment the Pacific Rim region has emerged as an economic force transcending the separate national identities feeding into it. Indeed, popular references to the Pacific Rim lately seem all too often to refer exclusively to the Tokyo-Los Angeles (or, most recently, the Beijing-Tokyo-Los Angeles) economic nexus. Yet while a certain level of economic exchange is always necessary to engender a living multiculturalism, the expanding capitalist global economy—of which the Pacific Rim is a crucial sector—clearly threatens a kind of monocultural reductionism along with its oppressive economic imbalances. Within the tight network of transnational capitalism, the more dollars and yen exchanged, the more McDonalds, it seems. Thus, I've found myself becoming interested in writings not only expressing the multicultural diversities and surprising unities of contemporary life around the Rim, but also assuming a

Fred Wah

from Season's Greetings from the Diamond Grill

Born in Medicine Hat in 1912 and when he was four he and a nine-year-old sister were sent to China. His older brother was supposed to go, not him. But on the day the train left Swift Current this older brother was nowhere to be found, so my grampa grabbed my father. My father and his sister lived there for nineteen years before returning to Canada. My grandfather, Kwan Chung keong, came to Canada in 1892 and returned to his small village near Canton (Hoiping?) in 1900 and stayed long enough to marry a girl from his village and father two daughters and a son. One of those daughters eventually immigrated to San Francisco and we tracked her down but her family didn't want to have anything to do with us because they thought we were after money. When my grandfather returned to Canada around 1904 he had to leave his family behind because the "head tax" had just been raised to \$500 (two years' Canadian wages). I guess he realized he'd never be able to get his family over here so, against the grain for Chinamen, he soon married a white woman (Scots-Irish from Trafalgar, Ontario), the cashier in his cafe. In 1916 he sent two of his seven kids back to China to sort of help out his Chinese family. Thus my father, Kwan Foo lee, and his oldest sister, Kwan An wa, spent the next eighteen years being raised alongside two half-sisters and a half brother. My grandfather was a gambler and, much to my grandmother's anger and outrage, he kept gambling away the kids' return boat passage. My father's family in China were small landholders and his so-called Chinese mother sold some of the land to get my father back to Canada because she was worried about him getting into opium. His sister didn't get back until

a year later, 1935, and then only because my grandfather arranged a marriage for her with a Chinaman in Moose Jaw.

Silence and anger going.

Silence and anger coming home.

* * *

These straits and islands of the blood are recognized as those very shores and lands we encounter in our earthly migrations. Places become buttons of feeling and color. Pudeur, a sudden heat or blush, reflects the memory of such a cartography. Whole worlds can be genetically traced. I know, for example, the coagulation of Victoria on Hong Kong Island and Victoria on Vancouver Island have become for my family planetary junctures of deep emotion. Both British Victorias, these new-world cities must have seemed to my ancestors two ends of the same rope. But many of the Chinamen, when they got to North American Victoria, were locked up in the "Detention Hospital," a pigpen of iron screens and doors used for interrogation and the collection of head taxes. My father told me that some of the immigrants inked or scratched poems on the walls that testified to their sorrow and anguish at being held there.

Detained on this island
at the gates of Gold Mountain
brings to my throat a hundred feelings.

My heart is filled with a sadness
and anger I don't understand.

Day after day
how can I vent my hatred
but through these lines?

The fog horns in the distance
only deepen my sadness.

That is how biology recapitulates geography; place becomes an island in the blood.

Gary H. Holthaus

from Scenes from Skirmishes on the Bilingual Front

Scene 10.

January, 1972. At the school district office in Dillingham late this afternoon, I find Jim Bishop on the phone to someone at the Alaska State-Operated School System in Anchorage, and he is steamed, shouting into the phone about supplies that he had been promised long ago, and they haven't arrived, and what was the matter with you bureaucrats back there? Don't you have any idea what it means to live in the bush? You ever lived in the bush?!

S.O.S., as the agency was known, was the school district set up by the state to run all the schools that lay outside any local government. In 1972 that was a lot of schools, since the state was only fifteen years old, and much of its organizing remained to be done. S.O.S. took care of supplies, logistics, and materials; hired all personnel; and sent out "experts" to run workshops and provide in-service training or supervision for teachers and principals in their remote village schools. Since few of those experts had ever lived in the bush, they were not very useful, not very well thought of, and occasionally resented because they made larger salaries than bush teachers and often knew less about bush Alaska.

Bishop, whom I had met before when he was first learning to fly, turned to me. He was slender, muscular, articulate, blond, ebullient, passionate, opinionated, and still angry. "So what are you doing here?" he asked as he slammed down the phone and stood up. "Ah . . . well," I said, knowing I was in for it, "I'm here for a bilingual workshop tomorrow." "Bilingual!" Jim shouted, coming unglued again. Naturally

Notes on Contributors

Sesshu Foster is author of *Angry Days*; co-editor of *Invocation L.A.: Urban Multicultural Poetry*; and co-translator of Juan Felipe Herrera's *Akrilica*. **Karen Tei Yamashita** is a Japanese-American writer from Los Angeles. Her novel, *Through the Arc of the Rain Forest*, won an American Book Award. Since coming to the US in 1964, **Ko Won** has received graduate degrees from Iowa and NYU. A poet and essayist in Korean and English, he has recently published *Some Other Time*. **Sharon Doubiago** is a native Los Angeleno and part-time Oregonian. She has published collections of fiction and poetry, including *South America Mi Hija*, a nominee for the National Book Award. Native American poet **Paula Gunn Allen** teaches at UC-Los Angeles. Her most recent collection of poetry is *Skins and Bones*. **Luis J. Rodriguez** is publisher of Tia Chucha Press in Chicago and author of two books of poetry. A portion of his memoir of gang life in East L.A. was published in *Chicago Review* 38:4. **Wanda Coleman** edited a special issue of *High Performance*, "The Verdict and the Violence." The Los Angeles-based poet's most recent book is *Hand Dance*. **Hisaye Yamamoto**'s most recent story is "Florentine Gardens," appearing in *Asian America*. **W. P. Osborn**'s fiction has appeared in *ACM*, *Gettysburg Review*, and *Western Humanities Review*. **Sylvia A. Watanabe** co-edited *Home to Stay: Stories by Asian-American Women*. Her story "Talking to the Dead" won an O. Henry Award. **N. V. M. Gonzalez** holds positions at California State-Hayward and the University of the Philippines. His latest collection is *The Bread of Salt and Other Stories*. **Jean Molesky-Poz** teaches at UC-Berkeley. She has published articles on immigrant and refugee issues as well as on pedagogy, and is at work on a novel. **Larry McCaffery** has recently guest edited an issue of *The Review of Contemporary Fiction* on postmodernism. His interview with Vizenor will appear in *The Tragic Distance: Interviews with Innovative American Fiction Writers*. **Tom Marshall**'s trickster approaches to writing have appeared in *Pacific Review* and *American Book Review*. He is completing a Ph.D. at UC-Santa Cruz. **Gerald Vizenor** is an enrolled member of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe and teaches at UC-Berkeley. **Leslie Scalapino** recently published *Crowd and Not Evening or Light. Defoe*, which includes the text in this issue, will be out this fall. Aside from periodic forays into the wilds of Chicago, **John Wright** has made his home in northwest Washington since 1979. A doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago, he is writing a dissertation on postwar avant-garde poetry. **Norman Fischer**'s current book-length manuscript, *Success*, from which the poem here is taken, is looking for a good publisher. **Gary Snyder**, a winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry, has lived in Japan and, for the past two decades, on a mountain farmstead in the foothills of the Sierras. His most recent collection is *No Nature: New and Selected Poems*. **Lawson Fusao Inada**'s latest book of poetry is *Legends from Camp*. He teaches English at Southern Oregon State. **Elizabeth Woody** is Warm Springs, Wasco, Yakima/Navajo Indian and a resident of Portland, Oregon. Her second collection of poems, *The Luminaries of the Humble*, is due out this year. Since his death in late August, **William Stafford** has been honored by issues of the *Georgia* and *Northwest Reviews* dedicated to his memory. His most recent collection is *An Oregon Message*. **Shawn Wong** teaches at the University of Washington. He

co-edited two anthologies of Asian-American writing, *Aiiieeeee!* and *The Big Aiiieeeee!*, and is completing a second novel, *American Knees*. **Mike O'Connor** was born and raised on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington, was a farmer and woods-worker in the '70s, and was a journalist in China during the '80s. His most recent book is *The Politics of the Heart*. **Duane Niatum** is an enrolled member of the Klallam tribe (Jamestown band) of Washington State and lives in Seattle. His most recent collection of poems is *Drawings of the Song Animals*. **William B. Henkel** divides his time between Moscow, Idaho and Bellingham, Washington, where he edits *Northwest Conservation*, the newsletter of the Greater Ecosystem Alliance. **Sam Hamill's** most recent volume of poetry is *Mandala*. He has been editor at Copper Canyon Press for twenty years. **Ingrid Hill** teaches writing at Western Washington University. She has published a collection of stories, *Dixie Church Interstate Blues*, and is at work on a novel. **Charles Watts** lives in Vancouver, where he works at Simon Fraser University's library. He is an associate editor of *West Coast Line* and publisher of Tantrum Press. **Robert Bringham** lives on Bowen Island, B.C. He has two books of poetry, *The Beauty of the Weapons* and *Pieces of Map, Pieces of Music*. Originally from Hong Kong, **Jam Ismail** divides her time between there and Vancouver. Her work has appeared in *Canadian Literature* and in *Many-Mouthed Birds*, an anthology of writing by Chinese Canadians. **Fred Wah** teaches creative writing at the University of Calgary. His book, *Waiting for Saskatchewan*, won the Governor-General's Award for poetry. **Gary H. Holthaus** directs the Center of the American West at the University of Colorado, and formerly directed bilingual programs for the Alaska State-Operated School System. Tlingit-Native Alaskan poet **Andrew Hope** is president of the Before Columbus Foundation and editor of Raven's Bones Press in Juneau. **Mary TallMountain** is a Native Alaskan of Koyukon-Athabaskan descent who was born on the Yukon River in 1918. A longtime resident of San Francisco, she is the author of two books. **Anna Nelson Harry** (1906-1982) was born into the last Eyak community of Cordova, Alaska, and moved to Yakutat in 1936 after the loss of her people. She and her first husband were the principal sources for what anthropologists have learned about Eyak culture. She lived among the Tlingit in Yakutat for over forty years. **Michael E. Krauss** is a linguist and director of the Alaska Native Language Center at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks. He worked on Eyak extensively during the 1960s, collaborating with all of its remaining speakers and Harry in particular. **Peter Berg** is founding director of the Planet Drum Foundation, an ecological educational organization. He brought us the 1978 landmark *Reinhabiting a Separate Country: A Bioregional Anthology of Northern California*. **Carolyn Lei-Lani Lau** was born and raised in Hawai'i. Her *Wode Shuofa (My Way of Speaking)* won an American Book Award. **Lois-Ann Yamanaka** lives in Kahalu'u, O'ahu, and is originally from Hilo, Hawai'i. Her first collection of poetry, *Saturday Night at the Pahala Theatre*, came out this fall. **Haunani-Kay Trask** is a Native Hawaiian, author of a book of poetry, *Light in the Crevice Never Seen*, and director of the Center for Hawaiian Studies, University of Hawai'i. As the founder and director of the Northern Rim Institute, **Jamil Brownson** teaches at the University of Montana. He is working on a book, *Boreal Landscapes*. **Eihei Dogen** (1200-1253) founded the Soto School of Zen in Japan. **Taigen Dan Leighton**, a Zen priest at Green Gulch Farm in California, is co-translator of *Cultivating the Empty Field: The Silent Illumination of Zen Master Hongzhi*. **Shohaku**

Okumura is head teacher of the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center. His previous publications include *Dogen Zen*. **Minako Oba** was born in Tokyo in 1930, and is a major force in the resurgence of Japanese women's writing. During the '60s, she lived in Sitka, Alaska. **Michiko N. Wilson** teaches Japanese language and culture at the University of Virginia. She was born and raised in Japan, and is the author of *The Marginal World of Oe Kenzaburo*. **Michael K. Wilson** has studied modern Japanese and Chinese literatures and cultures, and is the co-translator of *The Pinch Runner Memorandum* by Oe Kenzaburo. **Eric Selland** has studied Japanese culture in Japan, translated Yoshioka's *Kusudama*, and published his own *Preface*. **Fujiwara Teika** compiled the anthology *One Hundred Poets One Poem Each*, and was a poet and critic. **Fujiwara Tameie** was Teika's son. **Reizei Tamesuke** was the son of Tameie (and the Buddhist nun Abutsu). They were part of the Mikohidari family that figured prominently in the literary politics of the Kamakura period. **Yoshioka Minoru** (1919-1990) was influenced by Japanese modernism and surrealism, and his *Kusudama* in particular has had a major influence on today's young poets. **Shiraishi Kazuko** was born in Vancouver, B.C., and moved with her family to Japan just before World War II. She has published over fifty books, and is renowned as a performer of her poetry, often with jazz accompaniment. **Leith Morton** teaches Japanese at Newcastle University in Australia. His latest collection of poetry is *The Flower Ornament*. **Nanao Sakaki** is a wandering poet, sculptor, environmental activist, and transpacific Shaman who is usually based in Japan. His book in English is *Break the Mirror*. **Hirata Toshiko** was born on Oki Island, Japan, in 1955. Her poetry appears in *The New Poetry of Japan*. **Robert Brady** was born in Albany, New York, and has lived in Japan for over twenty years, where he edits *Kyoto Journal*. **Odagawa Kazuko** was born in 1955 near Kobe, Japan, and holds degrees from Kyoto University and Cornell. She lives and works in Ottawa. **Inagawa Masato** is a poet and critic whose writings explore the relation between poetic discourse and consumer culture. **Fujii Sadakazu** was born in 1942 and lives near Tokyo. Author of many studies of ancient Japanese and Okinawan literature, Fujii tries to use his learning as an entrance into shamanic practices. **Chris Drake** was born in 1947 and teaches and writes in Tokyo. In addition to writing articles on premodern shamanic Japanese and Okinawan literature, he has edited and translated a book by Japanese poet Tamura Ryuichi. **Michael Corr's** work has been published in America, Europe, and East Asia. He hails from Seattle. **Yonaha Mikio** was born in Hirara City, on Miyako Island, Okinawa, in 1939. He has published two books of poems, *The Love of Red Soil* and *What the Wind Says*. **Katsunori Yamazoto** teaches American literature at the University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa. He holds a Ph.D. in English from UC-Davis, and has published several short stories. **Eric Paul Shaffer** has published fiction and two books of poetry, including *RattleSnake Rider*. He teaches at the University of Ryukyus. **Marshall R. Pihl** teaches Korean literature at the University of Hawai'i and is president of the International Korean Literature Association. His new book is *The Korean Singer of Tales*. **Hwang Sunwon** has long been recognized as Korea's master of the short story. Several of his works are available in English, including his novel, *Trees on a Cliff*. **Stephen J. Epstein** teaches Greek, Latin, and Korean literature at Swarthmore College. He has translated several Korean stories, including Pak Wan-so's "The Good Luck Ritual," which won the *Korea Times'* translation prize. **David R. McCann** is an associate professor of Korean literature at Cornell. **Kim Namjo** was born in Taegu,

a city in southeastern Korea, in 1927, and studied in Japan and Korea. She recently retired from teaching at Sungmyong Women's University in Seoul. **Hyun-jae Yee Sallee's** latest book is *The Snowy Road*. She received a translation award from the Korean Culture and Arts Foundation. **Ko Un** has been a Buddhist monk and has served several prison terms as a leader of Korean democracy movements. **Hahm Hyeryon** was born in Kangneung, Kangwondo, and lives in Seoul. A publishing poet since 1951, she saw her collected works published in 1992. **Edward W. Poitras** was born in Massachusetts in 1932 and lived and worked in Korea for over thirty years. Among his translations of modern Korean poets is *Sea of Tomorrow* by Pak Tu-jin. **Chông Hyônjong** was born in 1939 in Seoul. He has published as a journalist and poet. **Shin Taechol** was born in Honsong in 1945. In 1968, he won the new writer's award from *Chosun Ilbo*, a daily newspaper in Seoul. **Je-chun Park** has published several volumes of poetry, including *Rhythm* and *Farther Than Darkness*. He works at the Korean Culture and Arts Foundation. **Chang Soo Ko** is ambassador for International Cultural Cooperation, and has formerly served as South Korean ambassador to Ethiopia and Consul General in Seattle. He won the *Korea Times'* translation award. **Walter Lew** teaches at Brown. His writing has been widely anthologized, and he has co-edited an anthology of Asian American writing. **Wei the Wild** (906-1019) was a retired scholar who lived outside the prefectural town of Shan-Chou, near present-day Sanmenxia, Henan. He farmed on a small scale and exchanged poems with the many people who enjoyed his congenial and irreverent company. **Paul Hansen** is a painter, poet, and translator of Chinese poetry who lives on Fidalgo Island, Washington. **Mark Bender** lived in southwest China during most of the '80s, and is now writing a dissertation at Ohio State on professional storytelling traditions in the Yangzi delta. **Wang Meng**, Minister of Culture for the PRC from 1986-1989, has had a remarkable career as a writer both castigated and embraced by the various ruling factions of the Chinese Communist Party: he was first purged in 1957, then rehabilitated in 1978, and has recently brought a libel suit against a government newspaper that attacked his story "Hard Porridge" as anti-Deng propaganda. **Zhu Hong** is a research fellow at the Institute of Foreign Literature, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, and a visiting professor at Boston University. She has compiled an anthology of Chinese short fiction in translation, *The Serenity of Whiteness*. **Dai Qing** is a research fellow at the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center. She was a reporter for the *Guang Ming Daily* in China, and is an award-winning journalist and essayist. **Michelle Yeh** teaches Chinese at UC-Davis. She is author of *Modern Chinese Poetry: Theory and Practice since 1917* and editor and translator of *Anthology of Modern Chinese Poetry*. **Bei Dao** is the pen name of Zhao Zhenkai, who was born in 1949 in Beijing. During the Beijing Spring, he edited the underground magazine *Jintian* (Today). Exiled in Denmark, he has three volumes available from New Directions. **Bonnie S. McDougall** teaches at the University of Edinburgh, and has been a pioneer in the translation of contemporary Chinese writing. **Chen Maiping** is a Chinese poet living in exile in Oslo, where he works on the revived *Jintian*. **Mang Ke** is the pen name of Jiang Shiwei, who was born in 1951. He co-edited *Jintian* with Bei Dao, having returned to Beijing after years in internal exile in the countryside. **Tony Barnstone** recently published a co-translation of Tang Dynasty Chinese poet Wang Wei, *Laughing Lost in the Mountains*. He has edited an anthology, *Out of the Howling Storm: The New Chinese Poetry*. **Willis Barnstone's**

recent work as a translator, poet, and critic includes *The Poetics of Translation: History, Theory, Practice*. **Gu Zhongxing** is the former brother-in-law of poet Mang Ke and a teacher of English in a middle school. **Yang Lian**, one of the original Misty poets, teaches at the University of Auckland. Born in Beijing, he began to write poetry in the countryside during the Cultural Revolution. **Gu Cheng** (1956-1993) spent time in the countryside during the Cultural Revolution, later to emerge in the late 1970s as one of the most powerful poets in China. His poem "A Generation" became the motto of the 1980s, but after the Tiananmen incident he lived in exile on a small New Zealand island. **Yanbing Chen** comes from Shanghai, has studied at Fudan University and Beloit College, and is working on an M.A. in creative writing at Notre Dame. **John Rosenwald** teaches English at Beloit College, edits the *Beloit Poetry Journal*, and is a poet/translator. **Shu Ting** is the pen name of Gong Peiyu, the leading woman poet of China during the 1980s. A southeast Fujian native, she was born in 1952 and labored in the countryside during the Cultural Revolution. **Chou Ping** was born in Changsha City, Hunan Province, in 1957. His poems are anthologized in *Out of the Howling Storm*. He started writing in English in 1983. A Shanghai native, **Zhang Zhen** studied journalism at Fudan University and lived in Beijing during the late 1980s. She studies literature at Iowa and regularly contributes to the revived *Jintian*. **Newton Liu** is program manager of Bridge to Asia, a non-profit organization in the Bay Area. He studied chemistry in China before departing to study rhetoric at UC-Berkeley, where he received a Ph.D. **Tang Yaping**, born in Sichuan in 1962, is a graduate of Sichuan University. She works as an editor at the Guizhou television station in southwestern China. **Zhai Yongming** was born in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, in 1955. She is a graduate of Chengdu Institute, and has been writing since 1981. **Andrea Lingenfelter** is a writer and scholar of Chinese affiliated with the University of Washington. She has traveled throughout China, and has translated several books of poetry and fiction. **Ah Wu** lives in Xi'an. He has organized several poetry conferences and festivals, and publishes frequently in China. **Denis Mair** spent three years in Beijing, where he translated works by Wang Meng and others. He has translated the autobiography of a monk (*In Search of the Dharma*) and of a dissident (*Toward a Democratic China*). **Bei Ling**, or Huang Bei Ling, has been active in the underground poetry scene since the Beijing Spring, and is writing a memoir of those years, *Underground*, while living in Massachusetts. **Xi Chuan** is a translator and graduate in English of Beijing University. He works as an editor for *Globe Magazine* and has a book of poems, *The Chinese Rose*. **Lo Ch'ing**, painter, poet, and cultural critic, teaches English at Taiwan Normal University. **Joseph R. Allen** teaches Chinese literature at Washington University. He has published studies of classical Chinese poetry and popular culture. **Yang Mu** is a poet and teacher of comparative literature at the University of Washington. Born in Taiwan in 1956, **Xia Yu** studied drama at the National Institute of Arts. She has published two volumes of poetry and writes popular songs. Of Mongolian descent, **Xi Murong** was born in Sichuan and grew up in Taiwan, where she teaches painting. Her first book made her the best-selling modern Chinese poet. **Liu K'e-hsiang**, a Native Taiwanese, studied journalism at Chinese Culture University. He is a noted dissident, and works as assistant editor of the *China Times Literary Supplement*. **Walis Jugan** is a member of the Atayal minority, Taiwan's indigenous people. He belongs to the Da'anxibei branch in Taizhong County.