

中印对话  
The 'Chindia'  
भारत-चीन संवाद  
Dialogues

Jas Ahluwalia Amit Chaudhuri Siddhartha Deb Du Yun  
Amitav Ghosh Ha Jin Meena Kandasamy Amitava Kumar  
Dave Liang Andrea Lingenfelter Christopher Lydon Suketu Mehta  
Sharmistha Mohanty Murong Xuecun Ashis Nandy Emily Parker  
Qian Yi Orville Schell Allan Sealy Ginger Shankar Shen Shuang  
Jonathan Spence Su Tong Tan Chung Xu Xiaobin Yu Hua  
Zha Jianying Zhang Le

Part of the

 **ASIAN ARTS**  
+ **IDEAS FORUM**

November 3-6, 2011

# Welcome

Asia Society warmly welcomes you to the inaugural **Asian Arts and Ideas Forum**. This global initiative will convene leading Asian and American writers, thinkers, artists and performers across the Society's network of eleven centers in the U.S. and Asia for engaging and innovative explorations of the most important issues facing an increasingly interdependent and Asia-centric world.

For the inaugural Asian Arts & Ideas Forum, **the 'Chindia' Dialogues** brings to New York a group of writers, artists and performers from China and India to explore the role that literature and the arts have played, and continue to play, in the shared values and interests that link Asia's two most populous nations to one another and to the rest of the world. Cultural ties between these two ancient civilizations have stretched over more than two millennia, but will become vitally important during what is likely to emerge as the 'Asian Century.'

The 'Chindia' Dialogues take place in conjunction with the Asia Society Museum exhibition **Rabindranath Tagore: The Last Harvest** (September 9-December 31, 2011), celebrating the 150th anniversary of the birth of Asia's first Nobel laureate in literature — his extraordinary achievement as a writer, composer and visual artist, and his visionary commitment to Asian cultural dialogue and global citizenship.

The 'Chindia' Dialogues will consist of nine dialogues and conversations, one reading, and two performances over three nights and three days, November 3 – 6. If you cannot attend them all, join us online:

Schedule and Tickets at [AsiaSociety.org/ArtsandIdeas](http://AsiaSociety.org/ArtsandIdeas)

Free webcast at [AsiaSociety.org/Live](http://AsiaSociety.org/Live)

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## Sponsors

*The 'Chindia' Dialogues are co-sponsored by Asia Society's Center for U.S.- China Relations, the Asian American Writers' Workshop, and the India China Institute at the New School University in New York. Major Support provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, Aashish & Denny Devitre, Dr. Indu & Mridul Pathak, The Armand G. Erpf Fund, Ellen Bayard Weedon Foundation, Arthur Loeb Foundation, China Energy Fund Committee, and other generous Asia Society supporters.*



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# Schedule

## Thursday, November 3rd

6:30pm - 8 pm, Lila Acheson Wallace Auditorium

### **Amitav Ghosh in conversation with Jonathan Spence**

One of India's best known writers, **Amitav Ghosh** joins leading China scholar and Sterling Professor of History Emeritus at Yale **Jonathan Spence** to discuss Ghosh's landmark historical novel, *River of Smoke* (2011), Sino-Indian relations during the Opium Wars, and the legacy of capitalism and colonialism for Asia's emerging role in the 21st century. Introduced by **Orville Schell**, Director of Asia Society's Center for U.S.-China Relations.

## Friday, November 4th

12:30pm - 2 pm, Rose Conference Hall

### **Underground & Undercover: Literary Reportage**

Literary reporters bear witness to the effects of modernization – from massive internal migration and the commercialization of culture to the ravages of corruption and environmental degradation – with novelist/essayist **Yu Hua** (*China In Ten Words*, 2011); author and media critic **Zha Jianying** (*Tide Players*, 2011); **Siddhartha Deb**, who survived a stint as a “cybercoolie” at a call center in Mumbai to write *The Beautiful and the Damned* (2011); and China's pioneering cyber novelist-turned-investigative journalist **Murong Xuecun** (best-selling novel, *Leave Me Alone: A Novel of Chengdu*, 2010), who reported on a mafia-style “direct-selling” pyramid scam in Jiangxi that exposed inequities in China's capitalistic development. Moderated by **Orville Schell**, Director of Asia Society's Center for U.S.-China Relations.

6 pm - 8 pm, Garden Court

### **Festive Reception**

### **Sponsored by the China Energy Fund Committee (CEFC)**

*Limited capacity - first-come, first-served*

8pm, Lila Acheson Wallace Auditorium

### **Shanghai Restoration Project and Ginger Shankar**

Chinese-American pianist **Dave Liang's** band **Shanghai Restoration Project** remixes electronica, hip hop and traditional Chinese instrumentation, drawing its inspiration from the 1930s jazz clubs of Shanghai. The performance features vocalist **Zhang Le** singing in this distinctive style. Composer, singer and double violinist **Ginger Shankar** will perform a set of traditional and contemporary compositions with tabla player **Jas Ahluwalia**.

## Saturday, November 5th

1 pm - 2 pm, Rose Conference Hall

### Literary Border Crossings: The Writer as Traveler

Speaking from Goa, Indian author and public intellectual **Ashis Nandy** sounds a virtual keynote for the 'Chindia' Dialogues in a conversation with **Christopher Lydon** of Radio Open Source about what India and China can learn from each other, their very different paths out of their revolutionary and colonial pasts, and Asia's first Nobel laureate in literature and global citizen, Rabindranath Tagore. Followed by a conversation between the Chinese scholar **Shen Shuang** and Indian writers **Sharmistha Mohanty** and **Allan Sealy** about their pioneering project in Sino-Indian cultural dialogue, the *Almost Island/Jintian Initiative*.

2:15pm - 3:15pm, Rose Conference Hall

### Cyberwriters & Cybercoolies: China's Changing Literary Space

Cyberwriting has emerged as an exciting phenomenon in China where the Internet is expanding both literary and civic space and enabling a new, independent breed of writers and bloggers to engage more directly with their readers/"followers". Writer **Emily Parker**, leads a discussion with author and media critic **Zha Jianying**, Chinese writer and blogger, **Yu Hua** (*China in Ten Words*, 2011) and cyber-novelist and reporter **Murong Xuecun** (*Leave Me Alone: A Novel of Chengdu*, 2010) on how the Internet is transforming China's literary landscape and upending conventional concepts of writers

3:30pm - 4:30pm, Rose Conference Hall

### Literature of Migration: Where Do the Birds Fly?

Which journey is the longest: the one from the village to the city, or the one from one country to another? And how has migration in China and India, from managerial elites to contract workers and refugees, transformed notions of citizenship, identity, displacement and "home"? Writer **Amitava Kumar** leads readings and a discussion on migrants of all kinds with poet and activist **Meena Kandasamy** (*Ms. Militancy*, 2010), **Suketu Mehta** (*Maximum City*, 2005), and **Su Tong** (*Raise The Red Lantern*, 2004).

4:45pm - 5:45pm, Rose Conference Hall

### Amit Chaudhuri in conversation with Christopher Lydon

**Amit Chaudhuri's** astonishing breadth of creative achievement stretches all the way from his prize-winning fiction and literary criticism to a project in Indo-Western music that emerges from two musical lineages, North Indian classical and Western popular, co-existing within him competitively and uneasily, with unexpected results. In a conversation with Radio Open Source's **Christopher Lydon**, Chaudhuri talks about writing and music, his trip to China, and the challenges of transmitting the poetic and cultural legacy of Rabindranath Tagore.

8pm, Lila Acheson Wallace Auditorium

### The Amit Chaudhuri Band and Qian Yi with Du Yun's Quartet

**Amit Chaudhuri's** band is not fusion, but a hybrid meeting of his musical worlds, which collide in Hindustani vocals with hints of Derek and the Dominoes. Chaudhuri has not only studied classical Hindustani music, but also focused many of his novels on Indian singers. **Qian Yi** and composer **Du Yun** create an avant-garde soundscape in which Qian Yi and **Li Liqun** retell the story *Slaying of the Tiger General*. After both groups play individual sets, they will be joined in a conversation moderated by Asia Society's **Rachel Cooper**.

## Sunday, November 6th

1 pm - 2:15pm, Rose Conference Hall

### The 'Chindia' Readings

Authors **Ha Jin, Meena Kandasamy, Amitava Kumar, Sharmistha Mohanty, Allan Sealy, Yu Hua, Su Tong,** and **Xu Xiaobin** read from their work. Hosted by **Amitava Kumar**.

2:30pm - 3:30pm, Rose Conference Hall

### Defying the Cartographer: Shared Cultures vs. Nation-States

As China and India emerge from their respective revolutionary and colonial pasts, they feature very different literary landscapes. Yet the global issues both countries contend with – urban development, rural poverty, corruption, wider access to new technologies, etc. – are bringing Chinese and Indian writers closer to a shared fate. **Siddhartha Deb, Zha Jianying, Yu Hua and Amitava Kumar** in conversation about how this common legacy has transformed how they write and the issues they now choose to write about.

3:45pm - 4:45pm, Rose Conference Hall

### Seeing Double:

#### The Persistence of the Past in Contemporary Chinese and Indian Culture

How has the persistence of the past and the immediacy of China's and India's long histories informed the work of contemporary Indian and Chinese authors? What are the social and political implications of the writer's double vision for society? **Andrea Lingenfelter**, scholar and translator of Chinese poetry and fiction, will lead a discussion with 'Chindia' writers **Ha Jin, Su Tong, Xu Xiaobin** and **Meena Kandasamy** as they read from their work and discuss how the writer both assimilates the past and moves beyond it.

5 pm - 6pm, Rose Conference Hall

### Tagore and The Artist as Citizen of the World

In 1927, **Rabindranath Tagore** invited Chinese Buddhist scholar, Tan Yun-shan, to Santiniketan to teach Chinese at Visva Bharati University. Tan's extraordinary subsequent career as a proponent of Pan-Asianism and Sino-Indian cultural dialogue has been sustained by the work of his son and heir, **Tan Chung**, who has labored over half a century on behalf of cultural understanding between Asia's two oldest civilizations. In concluding the 'Chindia' Dialogues, **Tan Chung** talks with broadcaster **Christopher Lydon** and writers **Amit Chaudhuri** and **Sharmistha Mohanty** about Tagore's lifelong engagement with China and his visionary commitment to the universal values of tolerance, diversity and cosmopolitan citizenship.

*"I have done what was possible — I have made friends."*

**Rabindranath Tagore** during his final lecture in China (1924)

# Participants

## Amit Chaudhuri

is the author of five novels, the latest of which is *The Immortals* (2010). Among the many prizes he has won for his fiction are the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and the Indian government's Sahitya Akademi Award. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, and was a judge of the Man Booker International Prize. In 2008, an editorial about him appeared in *The Guardian's* famous 'In Praise of...' series. He is Professor of Contemporary Literature at the University of East Anglia, and is also an influential critic. He is a singer in the North Indian classical tradition, as well as being a composer in experimental music. His second CD in this genre, *Found Music*, was an [allaboutjazz.com](http://allaboutjazz.com) Critic's Choice of 2010. He has been a featured artist on flagship culture programs on UK television and radio.

## Siddhartha Deb

is an Indian author who was born in Meghalaya and grew up in Shillong in northeastern India. He was educated in India and at Columbia University, USA. His first novel, *The Point of Return* (2004), is semi-autobiographical in nature and is set in a fictional hill-station that closely resembles Shillong in India's Northeast. His second novel, *Surface* (2006), also set in Northeast India, is about a disillusioned Sikh journalist. His first non-fiction book, *The Beautiful And The Damned: Life In The New India* was published in September 2011 by Faber and Faber, Inc. He has also contributed to *The Boston Globe*, *The Guardian*, *The Nation*, *The New Statesman*, *Harper's*, *The London Review of Books*, and *The Times Literary Supplement*. He currently teaches at The New School in New York.

## Amitav Ghosh

was born in Calcutta and grew up in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. He studied in Delhi, Oxford and Alexandria and is the author of *The Circle of Reason* (2005), *The Shadow Lines* (2005), *In An Antique Land* (2009), *Dancing in Cambodia* (2010), *The Calcutta Chromosome* (2001), *The Glass Palace* (2002), *The Hungry Tide* (2006), and *Sea of Poppies* (2009), and his most recently published, *River of Smoke* (2011), which constitutes the second volume in *The Ibis Trilogy*. *River of Smoke* follows the characters from the *Sea of Poppies* from the expanding poppy fields of Bengal to the ports of China as the opium trade expands through 19th century Asia. *Sea of Poppies* was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, and was awarded the Crossword Book Prize and the IndiaPlaza Golden Quill Award. In 2007, Ghosh was awarded the Padma Shri, one of India's highest honors, by the President of India.

## Ha Jin

An accomplished poet, novelist, short story writer, and professor, Ha Jin is the author of several critically acclaimed works, including *Waiting* (2000), *Under the Red Flag* (1998), *Oceans of Words* (1998), *The Bridegroom* (2001) and most recently, *Nanjing Requiem* (2011). Currently a professor of creative writing at Boston University, Ha Jin came to the US to study English literature at Brandeis University and decided to remain in the country after watching the events in Tiananmen Square on television. He is the recipient of a National Book Award, two PEN/Faulkner Awards, a PEN/Hemingway Award and a Flannery O'Connor Prize. Ha Jin's works explore the timeless themes of brutality, desire, and wasted potential.

**Meena Kandasamy** (@meenakandasamy)

is a poet, writer, activist and translator. Her work maintains a focus on caste annihilation, the Tamil national struggle and feminism. She has performed her poetry at major literary festivals across the world, and has published two collections, *Touch* (2006) and *Ms. Militancy* (2010). She was a writer-in-residence at the University of Iowa's International Writing Program (IWP 2009) and a Charles Wallace Fellow at the University of Kent (2011). She lives in India and is working on her first novel.

**Amitava Kumar** (@amitavakumar)

is Professor of English on the Helen D. Lockwood Chair at Vassar. His most recent book, *A Foreigner Carrying in the Crook of His Arm a Tiny Bomb* (2010), was called "perceptive and soulful" by *The New York Times* and chosen for the Best Non-Fiction Book of the Year Award by the Asian American Writers' Workshop. His earlier books include *Husband of a Fanatic* (2005, a *New York Times* "Editors' Choice") and *Bombay-London-New York* (2002, a *New Statesman* "Book of the Year"). Kumar was the screenwriter-narrator of the prize-winning documentary film, *Pure Chutney* (1999). He has also written for numerous publications, including *The Nation*, *Harper's*, *Vanity Fair*, *Caravan*, and *The Hindu*.

**Andrea Lingenfelter**

is a poet, scholar and translator of diverse works from Chinese to English. Her translations include novels *Farewell My Concubine*, by Lilian Lee (1993), *Candy*, by Mian Mian (2003) and *The Changing Room* (2011), a book-length collection of poems by China's foremost feminist poet, Zhai Yongming. She has also published translations of work by numerous Chinese authors from mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong in anthologies and journals including *Kyoto Journal*, *The Literary Review*, *Hayden's Ferry Review*, *Zoland Poetry*, *Full Tilt*, and *Foreign Policy*. She is the recipient of a 2008 PEN Translation Fund grant for Annie Baobei's novel, *Padma*.

**Christopher Lydon** (@RadioOpenSource)

is the host of Radio Open Source, a podcast-broadcast conversation on arts, ideas and politics from Brown University's Watson Institute. Proto-blogger Dave Winer calls Chris Lydon "the original podcaster" for his in-depth interviews and early adoption of blogging, podcasting, and the myriad extensions of the Internet while he was a fellow at Harvard Law School's Berkman Center for the Internet & Society in 2003. He has been a unconventional voice in print, television and radio for many years: covering city and state politics for the *Boston Globe* and presidential campaigns (McGovern, Humphrey, Reagan, Carter et al.) for the *New York Times*; anchoring "The Ten O'Clock News" at WGBH-TV in Boston, and founding "The Connection" on public radio with producer Mary McGrath. Chris Lydon recently worked with Asia Society on *Another Pakistan*, a co-production and candid series of podcast conversations with "the singers, storytellers, and artists of the Sind and the Punjab."

**Suketu Mehta**

is the New York-based author of *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found* (2005), which won the Kiriyaama Prize and the Hutch Crossword Award, and was a finalist for the 2005 Pulitzer Prize, the Lettre Ulysses Prize, the BBC4 Samuel Johnson Prize, and the Guardian First Book Award. He has won the Whiting Writers Award, the O. Henry Prize, and a New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship for his fiction. Mehta's work has been published in *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *National Geographic*, *Granta*, *Harpers Magazine*, *Time*, and *Condé Nast Traveler*, and has been featured on NPR's 'Fresh Air'. Mehta is Associate Professor of Journalism at New York University. He is currently working on a nonfiction book about immigrants in contemporary New York, for which he was awarded a 2007 Guggenheim fellowship. Mehta was born in Calcutta and raised in Bombay and New York. He is a graduate of New York University and the Iowa Writers' Workshop.

## Sharmistha Mohanty

is a prose writer. She has two works of prose, *Book One* (1995) and *New Life* (2005), and has recently finished her third, called *Sub-continent*. She is also a translator from Bengali, and has recently published *Broken Nest and Other Stories* (2009), a collection of Tagore's fiction. Mohanty is founder and editor of the online literature journal, *Almost Island*. She is also the initiator of the Almost Island Dialogues, an annual international writers meet held in New Delhi. She is on the faculty of the Creative Writing MFA at the City University of Hong Kong. Mohanty has worked in film, as a scriptwriter and creative consultant with some of India's most innovative filmmakers, including Mani Kaul.

## Murong Xuecun

was a lawyer and a senior sales manager for a car company when he started to write on the company bulletin board in 2001 using the pen name Murong Xuecun. In 2002, his best-seller, *Leave Me Alone: A Novel of Chengdu* (2010) originally serialized online, took China by storm and has been translated into English, French and German. Murong Xuecun has given up his day job and now writes full time as an "independent writer" who declines to join the Party-sponsored China Writers' Association. In the past few years, he has been writing literary non-fictional investigative reportage, most notably *The Missing Ingredient*, his prize-winning undercover reporting on mafia-style pyramid scams in Jiangxi. A second novel *Dancing Through Red Dust* (2008), delves into the secretive world of China's legal system, and he is now working on his next novel, *Con men (Pianzi)*.

## Ashis Nandy

is an Indian political psychologist, a social theorist, and a contemporary cultural and political critic. His work covers a variety of topics, including public conscience, mass violence, future studies, and dialogues of civilizations. He was formerly Senior Fellow and Director of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS). He is currently a Senior Honorary Fellow at CSDS, as well as Chairperson at the New Delhi Centre for Environment and Food Security and Distinguished Fellow of the Institute of Post-Colonial Studies, Melbourne. Nandy received the Fukuoka Asian Culture Prize in 2007. In 2008, Nandy was listed as one of *Foreign Policy's* Top 100 Public Intellectuals Poll, published by The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

## Emily Parker (@emilydparker)

is a writer who has most recently served on Secretary of State Clinton's Policy Planning staff at the U.S. Department of State, where she covered innovation, technology, and 21st century statecraft. She was a staff writer and editor at *The Wall Street Journal* and a staff op-ed editor at *The New York Times*. She was previously an International Affairs Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, an Arthur Ross Fellow at Asia Society's Center on U.S.-China Relations and a Global Policy Fellow at Carnegie Moscow Center, where she researched the role of blogging and social media in Russia. From 2004 to 2005, she wrote *The Wall Street Journal* column called "Virtual Possibilities: China and the Internet." She is currently writing a book about the Internet and democracy.

## Orville Schell (@orvilleschell)

is the Arthur Ross Director of the Center on U.S.-China Relations at the Asia Society in New York. He is a former professor and Dean at the University of California, Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism. Schell is the author of numerous books and articles on China. He worked for the Ford Foundation in Indonesia, covered the war in Indochina as a journalist, and has traveled widely in China since the mid-70s.



## Allan Sealy

was born in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. After schooling in Lucknow, he attended Delhi University, then studied and worked in the United States, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. Now he lives in Dehra Dun. His eye for place and his evocative descriptions are apparent in all his novels and in his travelogue, *From Yukon to Yucatan* (1994). Sealy's first novel, *The Trotter-Nama: A Chronicle* (1997), is a tale of seven generations of an Anglo-Indian family. His novel, *The Everest Hotel: A Calendar* (1998), gained him an international following after being long-listed for the Booker Prize in 1998. According to Alex Tickell of the University of York, Allan Sealy has introduced "a memorable cast of characters in *The Everest Hotel* [and] his talents are equally evident in the luminous descriptive passages in the text, and in his feel for the lighter brushwork of natural detail, and shades of color and texture." Allan Sealy has won a number of awards for his writing including a Commonwealth Best Book Award in 1989, the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1991 and the Crossword Book Award in 1998.

## Shen Shuang

teaches Comparative Literature and Chinese at Pennsylvania State University, specializing in modern and contemporary Chinese literature, Sinophone literature of the twentieth century, Chinese diaspora literatures and Asian American literature. Some of her publications include *Cosmopolitan Publics: Anglophone Print Culture in Semi-Colonial Shanghai* (Rutgers University Press, 2009) and English and Chinese articles in leading academic journals. Shen Shuang was one of the early Chinese participants and interpreters in the *Almost Island* Initiative, a web journal that together with *Jintian*, a leading journal of Chinese-language literature, has launched the first unofficial Sino-Indian dialogue between independent Chinese and Indian writers since the 1962 Sino-Indian border war.

## Jonathan D. Spence

is a British-born historian and public intellectual specializing in Chinese history. He is a Professor Emeritus of Yale University, where he was Sterling Professor of History from 1993 to 2008. His most famous book is *The Search for Modern China* (2001), which has become one of the standard texts on the last several hundred years of Chinese history. A distinguished historian, prolific author, reviewer, and essayist, he has written numerous books on China, including *The Search for Modern China* (1990), *The Chan's Great Continent: China in Western Minds* (1998), *Mao Zedong* (1999), *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci* (1984), *The Chinese and Their Revolution, 1895-1980* (1981) and *The Death of Woman Wang* (1978). Spence was named a MacArthur Fellow and has received ten honorary degrees and a Guggenheim Fellowship.

## Su Tong

has written seven novels, the latest of which is *Boat to Redemption* (Penguin, 2011). In 2009 he was awarded the Man Asian Literary Prize for this book, earning him both critical acclaim and popular praise from his millions of readers. His prolific and provocative oeuvre – which includes *Rice* (2004), *My Life as Emperor* (2006), a dozen novellas, and more than 120 short stories – has earned him a pre-eminent place at the heart of China's literary scene. His best-known work outside China is the novella *Raise the Red Lantern* (2004), on which the screenplay for the film by the same name was based. Directed by Zhang Yimou and starring Gong Li, the film gained both an Oscar (1991) and a Bafta (1993).

## Tan Chung

has served as the doyen of Chinese cultural studies in India for nearly half a century, a contribution for which he was recently decorated by the Government of India with one of the highest civilian honors, the 2010 Padman Bhushan. Born in Malaya in 1929 and brought up in China, Tan Chung spent his prime years in India (1955-1999) teaching at The University of Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University and the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts. Tan Chung's father, Tan Yun-shan, was a close friend and associate of Rabindranath Tagore and founding director of the Chinese Studies department at Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan. Professor Tan Chung has published numerous books in English and Chinese, most recently *Tagore and China* (2011), an anthology of critical and historical essays which marks the 150th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore. Tan Chung lives in Chicago where he is an associate of the University of Chicago.

## Xu Xiaobin

is a novelist, essayist and screenwriter who has published more than 40 works of fiction and prose. Xu's most recent novel, *Dunhuang Dream* (Atria, 2011 in English translation) was awarded the National Book Golden Key Award in 1994. She is the recipient of China's first National Women's Literary Creative Writing Award (*Feathered Serpent*, 1998) the first Lu Xun Literature Award (*Pisces*, 1999) and a Writer's Ordos Literary Award (*Flowers of Purgatory*, 2010). Xu's screen adaptation of *Princess De Ling* (2004) became a 30-episode television series for China Central Television (CCTV). Her work, which will be published in an eight-volume anthology in 2011, has been translated into numerous Asian and European languages.

## Yu Hua

was born in Hangzhou in 1960 and made his name in China in the late 1980s with a series of dark and disturbing short stories. Since then he has written four novels, including *To Live* (2003) and *Brothers* (2010), and published several volumes of essays. His work has been translated into more than twenty languages. His most recent book, *China in Ten Words* (2011), will be published this November by Pantheon.

## Zha Jianying

is a writer, television commentator, and China Representative of the India China Institute at The New School. She is the author of two books in English, *China Pop: How Soap Operas, Tabloids, and Bestsellers Are Transforming a Culture* (1996) and *Tide Players: The Movers and Shakers of a Rising China* (2011), and five books in Chinese: three collections of fiction and two non-fiction books, including *Bashi Niandai (The Eighties, 2006)*, an award-winning cultural retrospective of the 1980s in China. The recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, she has published widely in both Chinese and English for a variety of publications, including *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times*, *Dushu* and *Wanxiang*. Born and raised in Beijing, she was educated in China and the United States, receiving degrees from Peking University, University of South Carolina, and Columbia University. She divides her time between Beijing and New York. She has appeared frequently in television talk-shows in China as a commentator on social and cultural topics.

# Translators

## Allan Barr

has translated a collection of short stories by Yu Hua and his debut novel *Cries in the Drizzle* (2007), in addition to Yu Hua's most recent book, *China in Ten Words* (2011). He is Professor of Chinese at Pomona College.

## Martin Merz

took a BA(Hons) in Chinese at Melbourne University and continued language study in Taiwan. He received an MA in applied translation from the Open University of Hong Kong in 2009. Martin translated the modern Peking Opera, *Mulian Rescues His Mother*, which has been performed in Hong Kong and London, and recently the *Christmas Eve* by Li Er for Makedo Publishing. Martin co-translated with Jane Weizhen Pan Wang Gang's novel *English*, published by Penguin in 2009, a seventeenth-century opera by Li Yu, subtitles of the movie *The Piano in a Factory* (2010), *Table d'Hôte* an excerpt of Murong Xuecun's *Most People Died of Greed*, for Asia Literary Review.

## Deborah Sook-Bang

is a doctor of traditional Chinese medicine who was raised in Korea and the United States and lived for six years in Beijing while she completed her medical studies. She has extensive experience as an interpreter and has worked for the PEN World Voices International Literary Festival, the United Nations, various academic conferences, interviews and literary events.

## Joanne Wang

earned a BA in English literature from Fudan University in Shanghai and an MA in history in New York. She works as a freelance translator and interpreter, in addition to running her own literary agency with a strong focus on works by Chinese writers.

## Jane Weizhen Pan

is a translator between Chinese and English. Jane and Martin Merz co-translated Wang Gang's *English*, published by Penguin in 2009, a seventeenth-century opera by Li Yu, subtitles of the movie *The Piano in a Factory* (2010), and *Table d'Hôte*, an excerpt of Murong Xuecun's *Most People Died of Greed*, for Asia Literary Review. Jane recently translated *The Magician of 1919* by Li Er for Makedo Publishing. Her current project is translating a puppet show script adapted from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into Mandarin and Cantonese. Jane has a Masters degree in translation studies from Monash University and taught translation at RMIT University. She is a PhD candidate at the Australian National University researching nonsense literature.

**Nancy Hao Wang**

is a graduate student in Arts Administration Program at New York University. She received her Bachelor Degrees in both Economics and Film & Television Studies from Peking University. As a current intern at Asia Society, Nancy demonstrates a strong interest in international culture exchange. Before joining Asia Society, she worked at Salon De Virtuosi, an NPO organizing concerts in different consulates, and International Concerts, a company presenting international artists. As a co-writer, she authored *Diary of Peking University*, which was published by Shanghai Wenhui Press in 2008.

**Zhang Li**

received his BA in Chinese Literature from Peking University (2006) and MA in Comparative Literature from SOAS, University of London (2007). He is now a PhD student in modern Chinese literature at Columbia and a member of the Institute of Comparative Literature and Society. His research interests include the interaction between science, technology and late imperial/early modern Chinese literature, modern Chinese poetry and colonialism and literature in East Asia.

**Zhong Yurou**

is a PhD candidate in the department of East Asian Languages and Cultures and the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia University. As a translator and interpreter she has worked for conferences, workshops and film festivals across the Pacific in both China and the United States. She is currently completing a dissertation on the transnational making of modern Chinese language reform.

# Reading List

\*not available for sale at Asia Store

- Amit Chaudhuri**      *Clearing A Space: Reflections on India, Literature and Culture* (2008)\*  
*Freedom Song: Three Novels* (2000)  
*The Immortals* (2010)  
*The Vintage Book of Modern Indian Literature* (2004)
- Radha Chakravarty**      *Farewell Song* (2011)
- B Chandra Chatterjee**      *The Forest Woman* (2011)
- Siddhartha Deb**      *An Outline of the Republic* (2006)  
*The Beautiful and the Damned* (2011)
- Amitav Ghosh**      *River of Smoke* (2011)  
*Sea of Poppies* (2009)  
*The Glass Palace* (2002)  
*The Hungry Tide* (2006)  
*The Shadow Lines* (2005)
- Ha Jin**      *A Free Life* (2009)  
*A Good Fall* (2010)  
*Nanjing Requiem* (2011)
- Amitava Kumar**      *A Foreigner Carrying in the Crook of His Arm a Tiny Bomb* (2010)  
*Nobody Does the Right Thing* (2010)
- Julia C. Lin**      *Twentieth-Century Chinese Women's Poetry: An Anthology* (2009)
- Suketu Mehta**      *Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found* (2005)
- Sharmistha Mohanty**      *New Life* (2005)\*
- Murong Xuecun**      *Leave Me Alone: A Novel of Chengdu* (2010)
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- Irwin Allan Sealy**      *Delhi Noir* (2009)  
*The Brainfever Bird* (2003)\*
- Jonathan Spence**      *Chan's Great Continent: China in Western Minds* (1999)  
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- Su Tong**      *Madwoman on the Bridge* (2011)  
*My Life as Emperor* (2006)  
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*The Boat to Redemption* (2011)
- Rabindranath Tagore**      *Boyhood Days* (2011)  
*Gora: An epic saga of India's nationalist awakening, from the eyes of a young man* (2010)  
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- Qingping Wang**      *Push Open the Window: Contemporary Poetry from China* (2011)
- Xu Xiaobin**      *Dunhuang Dream* (2011)  
*Feathered Serpent* (2010)
- Yu Hua**      *Brothers* (2010)  
*China in Ten Words* (2011)  
*Cries in Drizzle* (2007)
- Zha Jianying**      *China Pop: How Soap Operas, Tabloids and Bestsellers Are Transforming a Culture* (1996)\*  
*Tide Players: The Movers and Shakers of a Rising China* (2011)

# Acknowledgements

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**Michael Roberts**, Executive Director, New York Public Programs

Michael Roberts supervises Asia Society's New York public programming. He joined the Society in 2009 after eleven years as Executive Director of PEN American Center, the U.S. arm of the worldwide writers' association promoting human rights and free expression. Under his leadership PEN launched the first major annual U.S. festival of international literature, PEN World Voices, now in its eighth year. Previously he served as a lawyer, Assistant to the President and Secretary to the Boards of Harvard University, where he also occasionally taught in courses in literature.

**Nina McPherson**, Consulting Senior Program Associate, Asian Arts and Ideas Forum

Nina McPherson, is an independent editor and translator who began a lifelong engagement with Asia as a Yale-China teaching fellow to Wuhan, China (1984-86). She worked as a journalist in China and Hong Kong in the late 1980s, and has written and broadcasted on Asia-related subjects for leading news publications, including the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *The Financial Times*, *The BBC World of Books*, and *The International Herald Tribune*. She is also a translator of contemporary Vietnamese fiction, most notably five novels by the acclaimed Vietnamese writer and dissident, Duong Thu Huong.

**Amitava Kumar**, Professor of English on the Helen D. Lockwood Chair at Vassar College

Amitava Kumar provided extensive curatorial guidance on contemporary Indian writing for the 'Chindia' Dialogues on behalf of the Asian Arts and Ideas Forum partner and co-sponsor, the Asian American Writers' Workshop, where he is serving his second term on the Board of Directors.

**Andrea Lingenfelter**, translator, scholar, poet

Andrea Lingenfelter offered invaluable scholarly advice on contemporary Chinese poetry and literature for the 'Chindia' Dialogues, as well as introductions to leading Chinese authors, scholars, editors and poets.

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