

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Asia Society Texas Center to Explore Chinese/Mexican Immigration Experience in Upcoming Exhibition

*The Other Side: Chinese and Mexican Immigration to America* Opens in Houston, March 28

Houston, Texas, March 5, 2015 — HOUSTON— Asia Society Texas Center is excited to announce its upcoming exhibition, *The Other Side: Chinese and Mexican Immigration to America*. Featuring six contemporary artists, the exhibition explores recurring issues of immigration, border relations, and labor practices that have persisted throughout U.S. history and remain timely today. The exhibition will be displayed in Asia Society Texas Center's Louisa Stude Sarofim Gallery from March 28, 2015 through July 19, 2015.

The inspiration behind the exhibition came about in 2012, when the United States formally apologized to those harmed by the Chinese Exclusion Act, a series of laws enacted from 1882 to 1943 prohibiting people of Chinese ancestry from becoming naturalized U.S. citizens. Fearing the so-called corruptive effects of the Chinese on the moral, cultural, and economic underpinning of mainstream, Euro-American society, Congress drafted laws which were the first to restrict immigration to the United States and had parallel consequences for other ethnic groups. The unusual gesture of legislative contrition, only the fifth in the nation's history, suggested the importance of admitting and examining the traumas of our nation's immigrant history.

"An exhibition like *The Other Side* could not be coming at a more important time for Houston, as we watch closely the developments around President Obama's actions on immigration," says Asia Society Texas Center Executive Director **Bonna Kol**. "We are a city made richly diverse by generations of immigrants, and this exhibition will bring people together in meaningful dialogue around thought-provoking artworks."

*The Other Side* strives to offer a more humanized perspective on the complex immigration issues often overshadowed by mass media. The title of the exhibition comes from the reference in Latin American communities to the U.S. as *El Otro Lado* —the other side. The term refers to the promise of the "American Dream" that drives thousands of people across the border looking for work, security, education and ultimately a better life. The exhibition seeks to examine what motivates human migration and to also shed light on the experiences of Chinese and Mexican immigrants who have come to America. Personal tales of hardships, adversity, discrimination, and sacrifices come together to provide a greater understanding of our nation's past; how far we have come; and where we still need to go.

The artists represented in the exhibition, **Andrea Bowers, Blane De St. Croix, Margarita Cabrera, Zhi Lin, Hung Liu, and Tony de los Reyes** each employ different styles and references and span different historic periods, geographic locations, cultural influences, and gender perspectives, but are seamlessly bound together by the common threads of memory, history, identity, and humanity.

"The experiences of Chinese and Mexican immigrants to America have been an important part of Houston's history and growth as a city," says the organization's Nancy C. Allen Curator & Director of Exhibitions **Bridget Bray**. "The exhibition highlights the shared experiences of these communities."

### ASIA SOCIETY TEXAS CENTER

1370 Southmore Boulevard, Houston, TX 77004

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To celebrate the opening of the exhibition, Asia Society Texas Center will host an exciting Chinese and Mexican-themed Night Market on March 27 from 6:30-9:30 pm. This vibrant night of food, arts, and crafts sponsored by American First National Bank will offer a free first-look at the exhibition.

Following the March 27 opening, regular admission to the exhibition is free for Asia Society Members and children ages 12 and under, \$5 for Nonmembers. Asia Society Texas Center is open Tuesday – Friday, 11 am to 6 pm and Saturday – Sunday, 10 am to 6 pm.

### About the Artists

Andrea Bowers was born in Ohio. She received her BFA from Bowling Green State University and her MFA from California Institute of the Arts. She currently lives and works in Los Angeles.

Born in Boston Massachusetts, Blane De St. Croix was educated at Cranbrook Academy of Art (MFA Sculpture) and Massachusetts College of Art (BFA Sculpture with Distinction). He is currently an Associate Professor and the Head of Sculpture at Indiana University Bloomington. De St. Croix lives and works in both Brooklyn, New York and Bloomington, Indiana.

Margarita Cabrera was born in Monterrey, Mexico and received her BFA in Sculpture and MFA in Combined Media from Hunter College of the City University of New York. She currently lives and works in El Paso, Texas.

Zhi Lin was born in Nanjing, China, and graduated from the China National Academy of Fine Art. In 1987, Lin attended the Slade School of Fine Art at University College, London where he later completed his MFA. Lin is a Professor in the Painting and Drawing Program at the University of Washington, Seattle.

Hung Liu was born in Changchun, China, and graduated from the Central Academy of Fine Art in Beijing. She emigrated from China to the U.S. in 1984 to attend the University of California, San Diego, where she received an MFA. She currently lives in Oakland and is a tenured professor in the art department at Mills College.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Tony de los Reyes received his BFA from California State University, Northridge, and his MFA from San Francisco Art Institute. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

### About the Exhibition

The exhibition is co-curated by Chip Tom and Bridget Bray. Major support provided by Chinhui Juhn and Eddie Allen, Mary Lawrence Porter, the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance, Nancy C. Allen, Nancy and Robert J. Carney, The Clayton Fund, Reinnette and Stan Marek, and anonymous friends of Asia Society. Lead funding also provided by Leslie and Brad Bucher, Holland and Jereann Chaney, The Favrot Fund, and Dorothy Carsey Sumner. Funding is also provided through contributions from the Quan Law Group, Patti and Richard Everett, Cora Chin, Sylvia and Edgard Kuri Slim, Kit Shum and Ying Zhu, and the Friends of Exhibitions, a premier group of individuals and organizations committed to bringing exceptional visual art to Asia Society Texas Center. An earlier iteration of this exhibition was organized by University of Southern California Pacific Asia Museum in 2014.

Presenting partners include the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas, Asian American Bar Association, Chinese American Citizens Alliance, Cristo Rey College Preparatory School of Houston, International Trade Center, and League of United Latin American Citizens.

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## Related Programs

Saturday, April 25, 12:00 pm

Creation Station: Ancestor Quest

Explore identity and ancestry through fun family trees, themed art projects, and engaging tours of the gallery.

Friday, May 1, 6:00 pm

### **Authors & Asia: (Re) Imagining America**

This presentation by Dr. Shelley Fisher Fishkin and Dr. Stephen Klineberg explores Chinese and Mexican American immigrants' creative re-imagining of place and history in their new country.

In collaboration with Kinder Institute for Urban Research

Sunday, May 3, 2:00 pm

### **Artists Talk: Margarita Cabrera, Tony de los Reyes, Zhi Lin, Hung Liu**

Four artists featured in the exhibition will discuss their work and personal histories.

Thursday, May 7, 6:00 pm

### **Young Professionals:**

#### **Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and Cinco de Mayo Leo Bar**

In celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month and Cinco de Mayo, this Leo Bar spotlights Asian-Latin fusion food.

Saturday, May 9, 12:00 pm

### **Boy Scouts Workshop**

Earn your American Cultures Merit Badge and learn how immigrant groups contributed cultural traits to the United States.

In collaboration with Boy Scouts of America, Sam Houston Area Council

Saturday, June 6, 7:00 pm

### **Creation Station: Chinese and Mexican Culture**

Celebrate Chinese and Mexican cultures through storytelling and themed art projects.

Saturday, June 6, 7:30 pm

### **Asia Society Presents! *One Song: Chinese and Mexican Music of Home***

Houston artists Summer Haiyan Song and Vanessa Alonzo present traditional music from China and Mexico.

Presenting Sponsor: Bank of America

## About Asia Society Texas Center

With 11 locations throughout the world, Asia Society is the leading educational organization promoting mutual understanding and strengthening partnerships among the peoples, leaders, and institutions of Asia and the United States. Asia Society Texas Center executes the global mission with a local focus, enriching and engaging the vast diversity of Houston through innovative, relevant programs in arts and culture, business and policy, education, and community outreach.

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