

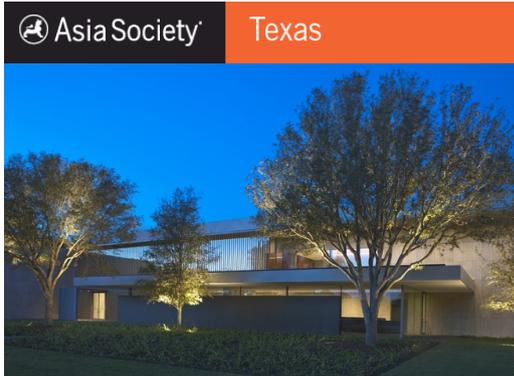
Asia Society Korea Center

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Celebrations in Hong Kong and Houston



Dedication and Ribbon-Cutting Mark Asia Society Texas Center Opening

Asia Society made history on February 9 and on April 14 with the Grand Opening of its new state-of-the-art homes in Hong Kong and Houston.

On February 9 in Hong Kong, leaders, staff and supporters of the 56-year-old institution, along with leaders of Hong Kong, gathered in the Jockey Club Former Explosives Magazine to celebrate, with great excitement, the opening of the new Asia Society Hong Kong Center. The complex — made up of new and restored British military colonial buildings — has been in the works for over a decade. Its opening marks a new era for both the Asia Society and the territory. It is the first time the Society has established cultural and exhibition facilities of its own in Asia.

Located at 9 Justice Drive, The Asia Society Hong Kong Center at The Hong Kong Jockey Club Former Explosives Magazine combines new construction with four former military buildings. Revitalized with funds generously donated by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and other local and international individuals and organisations, the ASHK Center combines heritage conservation with a distinctive modern aesthetic that has created a dynamic complex allowing the Center to extend our educational programs to the larger community. Farsighted Houstonians led by former First Lady Barbara Bush and former Ambassador Roy M. Huffington established Asia Society Texas Center in 1979. Sharing the vision of John D. Rockefeller 3rd, who founded Asia Society in New York in 1956, they recognized the need to educate Americans about Asia and to forge closer ties between Houston and the peoples and institutions of Asia. In 1995 the Texas Center’s Board of Directors voted to build a home for its programs and activities. The Board selected Japanese architect Yoshio Taniguchi, best-known in the country for his renovation and expansion of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, to design the building, located in Houston’s Museum District. Completed in early fall 2011, the 40,000-square-foot Center features the 273-seat Brown Foundation Performing Arts Theater, Louisa Stude Sarofim Gallery, Edward Rudge Allen III Education Center, Faye Sarofim Grand Hall, and more. It opened to the public on April 14.

With the opening of both the Hong Kong and Houston buildings, we can now expand in a significant way the scope of our arts and cultural offerings. Treasures from the Society’s Rockefeller collection on view at both locations demonstrate the multi-center scope of the Asia Society.

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News & Events

Caviar Market in Korea

Sang Hun Han, CEO and Founder of Almas Cavier Co. Ltd., on January 17th spoke at the Lotte Hotel Seoul about his company's valuable product. It was none other than the Sturgeon's caviar. Mr. Han established and started sturgeon farming back in 1992 to become a caviar producer, distributor and exporter. In order to get into the market, he began producing caviar in 2006 outside of Korea. In 2008, he was able to supply caviar to the Korean market and one year after that he was invited to various international food shows, including Boston International Seafood Show and European Seafood Show.

He stated that "In 1985, I bought caviar at Russian airport, I just paid \$400. However, things have changed quite a lot. If we try to buy the same amount of the caviar nowadays, we should pay 30 times more than that."

Contrary to other company's sturgeon farming system, he noted that he chose to facilitate an environmentally friendly one. "I'm convinced that our farming system have better ecological service than our rival companies do." As he explained, most of caviar farmers must kill the fish in order to obtain caviar. However, his company developed a way to get through the oviduct of fish. So he maintains his business without having to kill any fish. In a addition to that, due to the fact that it has natural immunity, sturgeon's spawn can help patients who lacks immunity.

Luxury indulgence purveyor told us that "What's more important is that while consumers currently need up to 2,000 tons of caviar per year, the market can only supply 150 tons. So this disproportion can make the price keep soaring."

My Year in Antarctica

Dr. Koh Kyung Nam spent a year (2006-2007) stationed as a medical doctor at the King Sejong Station, the Korean Antarctic Research Program in Antarctica.

Koh, a pediatrician at the Asan Medical Center in Seoul, brought home the dangers of global warming through an amusingly personal presentation of his Antarctic sojourn here at Asia Society's Korea Center. The Korean Antarctic Research Center focused on documenting climate and environmental changes in the Antarctic, but Koh presented his one-year adventure in both work and play.

A member of Asia Society's Asia 21 Young Leaders group, Koh highlighted the shoreline's progressive encroachment on the landscape as global warming has caused much of the South Pole to melt over the past decade. At the same time, through a playful PowerPoint presentation, he also illustrated the vibrancy of the environment we stand to lose in one of the world's coldest regions.

Koh showcased many of the "aw-inducing" fauna of the South Pole alongside photos of himself and other members of the 17-man research team taking advantage of the snowy landscape to ski and — wait for it — even pose bare-chested outdoors in the sub-zero weather. (Koh explained that there were no women stationed at the Research Center during his tenure there.)

Asia Society's prestigious Asia 21 Young Leaders Group, a core group of leaders highly selected among leaders tasked to lend their expertise to a deserving organization that works in under-privileged sectors and to promote greater public visibility for the contributions of younger leaders of diverse backgrounds. The Asia 21 initiative has 600 members worldwide, all under the age of 40, including an Oscar-winning documentary filmmaker, diplomats, civil rights activists and journalists.



Special Lecture

Academic rigor, analytics and innovation: An introduction to the world's most diversified casino entertainment company, Caesars Entertainment, and its Chairman, CEO and President, Gary Loveman.



Gary Loveman (Chairman, CEO and President of Caesars Entertainment Corporation) spoke at Asia Society Korea Center as the guest of the April 26th Special Luncheon.

Loveman began his career at Caesars in 1998 after his years as an associate professor at the Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration and a teacher of consultant to the Harrah's Entertainment. He is currently a member of the President's Export Council, chairman of the Business Roundtable's Committee on Health and Retirement, and also director of Coach, Inc. and FedEx. Loveman also sits on the Board of Trustees at the Children's Hospital Boston and the Visiting Committee of the Department of Economics at M.I.T.

News & Events

U.S.-R.O.K. Relations in the New Year

H.E. Sung Y. Kim, the U.S. Ambassador to Korea, was the guest speaker at the Korea Center's February Luncheon. Following is an excerpt from his speech. For the full transcript, please visit <http://asiasociety.org/policy/strategic-challenges/us-asia/us-rok-relations-new-year>



Last October, a few hours before the White House state dinner for President Lee Myung-bak, the U.S. Senate confirmed me as the next U.S. Ambassador to South Korea. That was approximately 4 months ago, roughly 100 days. Ever since Franklin Delano Roosevelt pioneered the first "100 day" concept in 1933, many have used the 100-day standard as a yardstick for gauging progress and prospects. I am a little short of my first 100 days as U.S. Ambassador, but during this short period there have been major events that illustrate the importance and breadth of the U.S.-ROK relationship, and I want to highlight these developments in my remarks today.

President Obama has said the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea is the strongest it has ever been, and one illustration of that strength came when President Obama welcomed President Lee to Washington last October. This was the first state visit by a Korean president since 1998 and only the fifth state visit of the Obama presidency.

As President Obama said, our alliance is — quote — "based upon common values, shared national interests, the bonds of sacrifice during the Korean War, and ties between our people." The U.S.-ROK relationship is broad and deep, and at the core of that relationship is our alliance. We are indispensable allies, and the U.S.-ROK security relationship is a central pillar of security throughout Asia. If the U.S.-ROK security alliance is the backbone of our relationship, then the heart is our people-to-people connection.

What stands out about our people-to-people ties is the degree to which they have been formed by the people themselves, with little or no governmental intervention. Today there are over 2 million Koreans and Korean-Americans living and working in the United States. Korean Americans can be found in every corner of the American economy: business owners, doctors, lawyers, bankers, scientists, architects, teachers and on and on. And I'm told there are also a few who have done well in diplomacy.

Korea continues to send the largest number per capita of students from any nation in the world to the United States — almost 100,000. As we have done for decades, the United States is helping to train the next generation of Korean leaders. And Americans are learning about Korea through these bright young Koreans.

Another major event from the beginning of my tenure as Ambassador was the passage of the KORUS FTA by the U.S. Congress in October and by the Korean National Assembly in November. Indeed, this is probably the most important achievement in our bilateral relationship in a generation.

Korea and the United States are now in the process of reviewing and discussing our respective laws and regulations. We are making our best efforts to get this done as quickly as possible, so both countries can begin realizing the benefits of the FTA. The KORUS FTA covers more than \$100 billion of two-way trade in goods and services. It's important to realize that KORUS is more than trade statistics. Consumers in both countries will benefit greatly from tariff cuts. So it is vitally important for both economies and is a natural extension of our mature trading relationship. The KORUS FTA also represents a new milestone in the strengthening of our bilateral alliance. KORUS will bring our relationship to a new level and tie our two countries together as partners for the long term.

Let me say a few words about North Korea. The death of Kim Jong-il last December reminded us all that North Korea makes our alliance essential, both for the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula and for the rest of Northeast Asia.

I want to emphasize that the new leadership in Pyongyang has not produced a change in U.S. policy. The United States remains committed to peace and security on the Korean peninsula, denuclearization, the promotion of human rights, and the peaceful reunification of Korea.

Before I conclude, let me briefly comment on an issue that goes beyond Korea: America's high-profile "pivot" towards Asia. The concept has received much attention but the truth is America has always been deeply engaged in East Asia. As both President Obama and Secretary Clinton have demonstrated, the U.S. understands the strategic importance of reinforcing our relationships in the region. But our partnerships in the Asia-Pacific region are not new. They are longstanding and run deep; in the case of Korea, we have been deeply engaged since 1945 and before. In short, our commitment to Korea, Northeast Asia and the rest of Asia is long-standing and it is strong. And it is permanent.

The United States is, has always been, and will always be, a Pacific power.

News & Events

Asia Society Korea Center Scholarship Awards Ceremony

Asia Society Korea Center held its 2011 Scholarship Awards Ceremony here at the Seoul Global Center. The scholarship was generously funded by the Lotte Foundation.

Providing for the children of disadvantaged multi-ethnic and refugee families is a relatively new phenomenon in Korea, and poses particular challenges for the Korean government. As it has not traditionally been a country of immigration, Korea, for the most part, has in place neither adequate relevant legislation or workable practical mechanisms for ensuring proper education for children of lower-class, multi-ethnic and refugee families. Even when these families manage to overcome systemic hurdles, they often lack financial resources to cover the high cost of education in this country.

To help offset some of these costs, and to give greater voice to children of mixed-ethnicity families, the Asia Society Korea Center, in cooperation with the Seoul Global Center, established a scholarship fund in 2009 to help further the hopes and dreams of these children. We seek to enhance people's awareness of such families, create a discourse about new partnership opportunities, to embrace non-governmental approaches, and to stimulate the imagination, potential, and future growth — not just of multicultural children, but of Korea itself.

The recipients of the 2011 scholarship are:

Man Joong Jeon, Jong Bae Lee and Eun Young Bae from the Junggok Elementary School;

Hyun Koo Kang from the Seochang Elementary School;

Eun Ah Kho from the Burim Elementary School.

The following schools have also received funding towards their education program:

Mongol School of Korea;

Eunpyeong-gu Multicultural Family Support Center;

Mangwon Children Care Center;

Happylog Children Care Center.



The Millenium Eruption of Mount Baekdu

A seemingly dormant volcano located on the border between Manchuria and North Korea (and the tallest peak on the Korean peninsula) is potentially capable of destructive eruptions, argued **Dr. Moon-sup Cho**, Professor of Geology at Seoul National University, in a luncheon presentation here at Asia Society Korea Center.

Dr. Cho's presentation, "The Millennium Eruption of Mt. Baekdu," referred to historical narratives and data from geological research by Tohoku University of Japan, in which an analysis of carbon dating of *tephra* layers (airborne volcanic discharge) found on the island of Hokkaido revealed an apparent pattern in the sequence of historical eruptions. The last one of significant magnitude, dubbed the "Millennium Eruption," took place around the 10th century A.D. and other documented preceding eruptions are estimated to have occurred in 1000-year cycles.

As Dr. Cho explained, all of this leads to the conclusion that it's time for us to witness an eruption — but he went on to assure his listeners that recent studies of the region's seismic activity dismiss the possibility of an imminent crisis.

The professor concluded with a remark on the challenges of obtaining information related to Mt. Baekdu due to restrictions from the North and a dearth of historical records, forcing researchers to rely on limited resources. And as the volcano is categorized "dormant," showing almost no noteworthy volcanic activity, government support for further study remains limited. Dr. Cho hoped for an international effort to encourage the government to support extensive studies in volcanology.

H.E. Eamonn McKee, Ambassador of Ireland to the Republic of Korea, followed with a brief presentation on Ireland's experience with the Eyjafjallajökull (pronounced *eye-a-fyat-la-jo-kutl*) eruption of Iceland in spring 2010. Amb. McKee explained that Europe was not fully prepared to deal with the event, which caused mass disruptions and considerable financial losses in the aviation industry.

Ireland alone tackled the crisis by immediately activating the Government Task Force for Emergency Planning, a concoction of up to seven different governmental agencies. Meanwhile, the E.U. responded to the eruption by establishing the European Aviation Crisis Coordination Cell, managed by EUROCONTROL, the region's air traffic management organization.

In his concluding remarks, Amb. McKee drew three experiential lessons from the event. Early activation of a task force, fast availability of up-to-date information through multiple channels, and persistent planning for future disruptions are crucial measures needed for crisis management.



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On December 27, 2007, Asia Society Korea Center was designated as a public donation body by the Republic of Korea's Ministry of Finance and Economy. This means that donations to Asia Society Korea Center are subject to tax exemptions. The donor will therefore be able to receive full tax benefits, which gives prospective donors one more good reason to donate! The contributions will be used to develop innovative programs and world class events for Asia Society Korea Center's members. Help make a difference!

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