

News Release

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USC Pacific
Asia Museum



The Other Side: Chinese and Mexican Immigration to America

USC Pacific Asia Museum presents the new exhibition *The Other Side: Chinese and Mexican Immigration to America* in the Changing Exhibition Galleries from February 7 through July 20, 2014. Through a collection from five contemporary artists of visual narratives about the Chinese and Mexican immigrant experiences, the exhibition explores the recurring issues of immigration, border relations and labor practices that have persisted throughout U.S. history and remain timely.

The selection of works employs a mash-up of different styles and references, spanning historic periods, geographic locations, cultural influences and gender perspectives, bound together by the common threads of memory, history, identity and humanity.

The artists featured are Andrea Bowers, Margarita Cabrera, Tony de los Reyes, Zhi Lin and Hung Liu. Andrea Bowers' *No Olvidado (Not Forgotten)*, a fence monument comprised of 50" x 120" graphite on paper drawings, acts as a memorial honoring those who have died crossing the Mexico - U.S. border. Margarita Cabrera's construction of desert plant sculptures from discarded Border Patrol uniforms further navigates the socio-economic layers of migrant workers and the gender association concerning sewing and mass production. In his *Border Theory* series, Tony de los Reyes approaches the U.S. - Mexico border as a site of abstraction and explores the layered structures and formations of political, cultural, economic and aesthetic identity.

In his continuing exploration of the harsh reality and racism faced by Chinese immigrant railroad workers, Zhi Lin's new large-scale abstract paintings record the physical and emotional hardships of their journey. Hung Liu's portraits of Polly Bemis and China Mary draw attention to the female experience in late 1880s. Her *Jiu Jin Shan (Old Gold Mountain)* installation made of more than 100,000 fortune cookies over a railroad track pays tribute to the Chinese migrant workers who lost their lives building the railroad.

The political messages and the confluence of art and social change are beautifully articulated through these thoughtfully researched and meticulously constructed paintings, drawings, sculptures and installations. By presenting these emotionally poignant and conceptually engaging works, the exhibit hopes to offer viewers a humanized perspective to the complex immigration issues often overshadowed by mass media and politics.

This exhibition was conceived by Nancy Tom and is guest-curated by Chip Tom with support provided by *Columbia College Chicago, the Los Angeles County Arts Commission and Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority.*

About USC Pacific Asia Museum

USC Pacific Asia Museum is among the few institutions in the United States dedicated exclusively to the arts and culture of Asia and the Pacific Islands. The museum's mission is to further intercultural understanding through the arts of Asia and the Pacific Islands. Since 1971, USC Pacific Asia Museum has served a broad audience of students, families, adults and scholars through its education and outreach programs.

USC Pacific Asia Museum is located at 46 North Los Robles Ave., Pasadena, CA 91101. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission is \$10 general, \$7 students/seniors and free for museum members and children under 12. Admission is free every fourth Friday of the month.