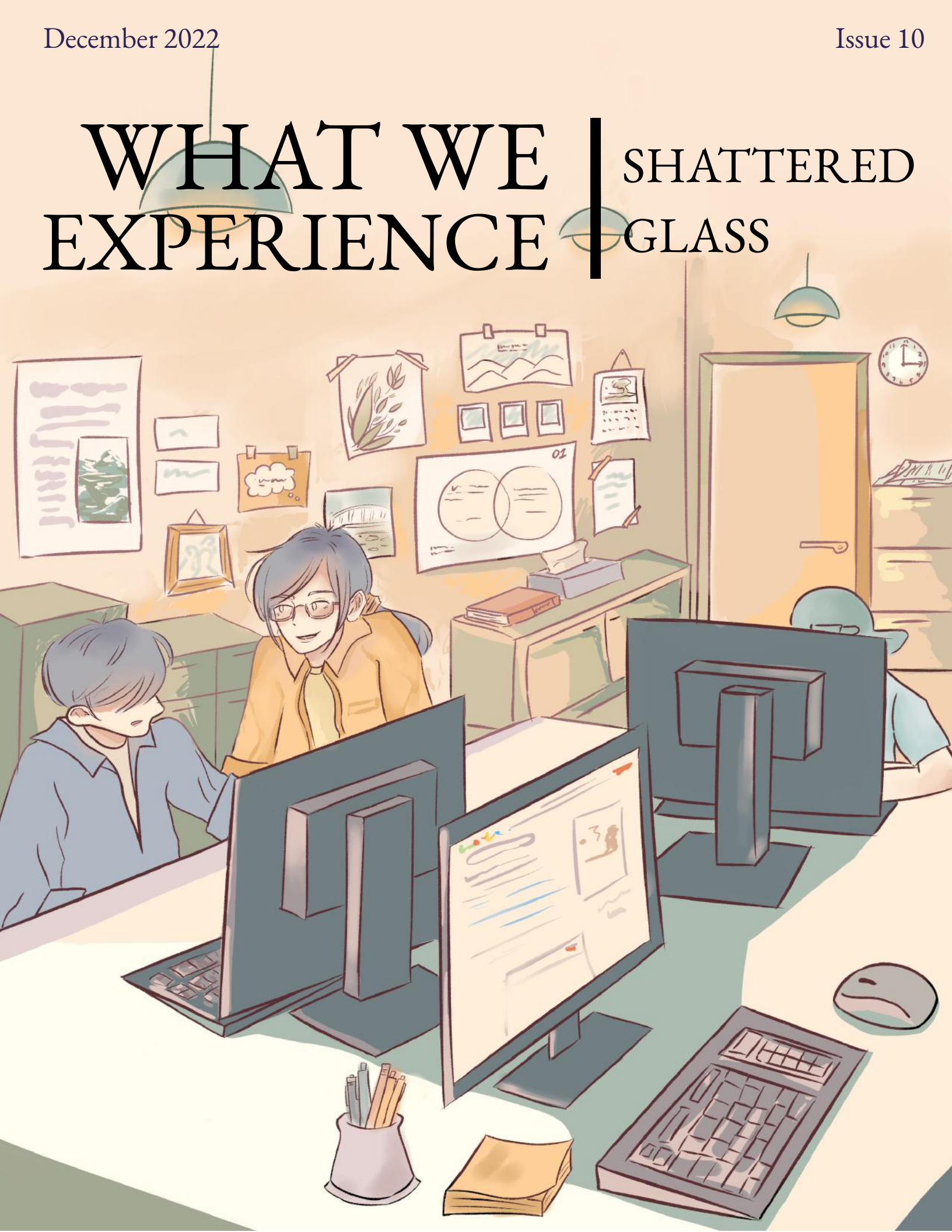
December 2022 Issue 10

WHAT WE EXPERIENCE | SHATTERED GLASS



Artist Reflection:
Gabriella Ignacio

When I think of businesses, especially small businesses, I often envision relatively close-knit communities within a quirky, inviting office space (though this is obviously a generalization). With this issue's cover, I intended to convey a similar space, one that many people may see themselves in or even relate to.

Letter from the Founders

Dear reader,

Welcome to our tenth quarterly issue! We are beyond excited, as always, to present to you our issue. Thank you for taking the time to read our magazine. We are so grateful for all of your support.

If you are new to our magazine, our names are Jeenah Gwak and Hope Yu, and we are two college students from the greater Seattle area, now at Stanford University and Carleton College respectively. Our project began as one of our many ideas. As Asian adolescents living in American society, we have witnessed countless instances of discrimination and xenophobia against people of Asian descent. Additionally, despite living in a relatively Asian-dense region, we have been exposed to various forms of social injustice against Asian Americans, such as the lack of Asian representation in academic curricula and recent COVID-19 related events. These occurrences galvanized us to take action.

Taking into consideration our abilities, we decided that promoting awareness through written works would be the most appropriate course of action. Through our magazine, we seek to share the untold stories of Asian-American experiences surrounding racism and societal pressures that are often overlooked in society. We hope to educate and inspire you to take action in your own respective way.

Our magazine, *What We Experience*, is released quarterly, on the last Sunday of every March, June, September, and December, covering the experiences of various Asian identities. This tenth issue, titled “Shattered Glass” in reference to the "glass ceiling" metaphor, covers topics related to Asian existence and participation within the US economy and business sector. From reviews of local food and clothing establishments to larger scale analysis, our writers and illustrators have explored a multitude of topics to present to you.

This tenth issue will continue our series on AAPI individuals in various aspects of society.

Thank you for supporting us in our journey to advocate for the Asian-American community. We hope you enjoy our magazine and feel inspired to share it with others.

Sincerely,
Jeenah Gwak & Hope Yu

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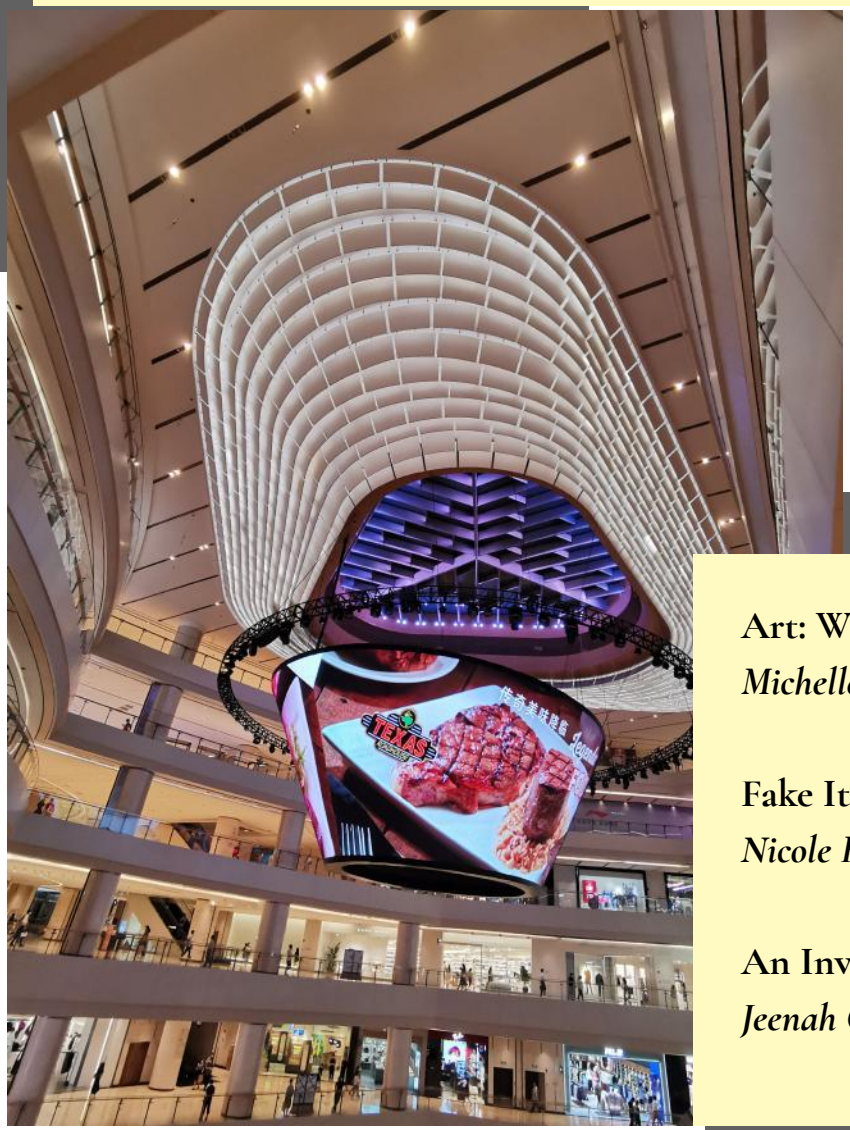

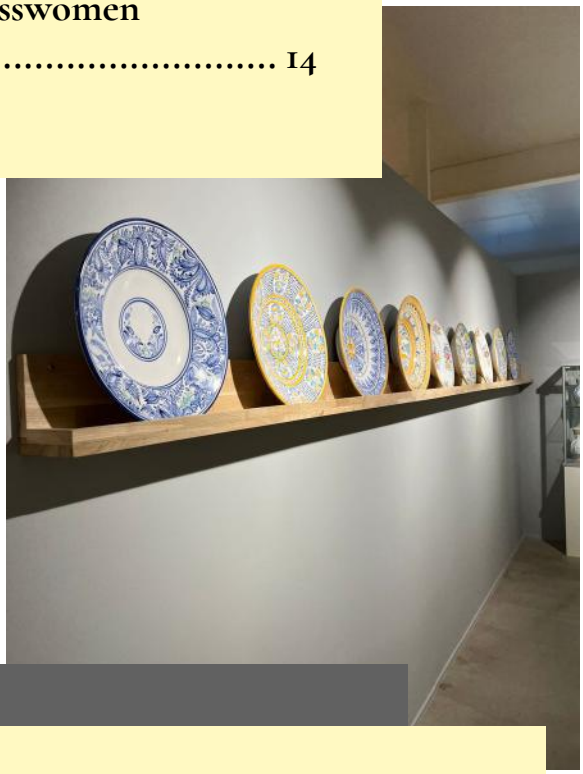

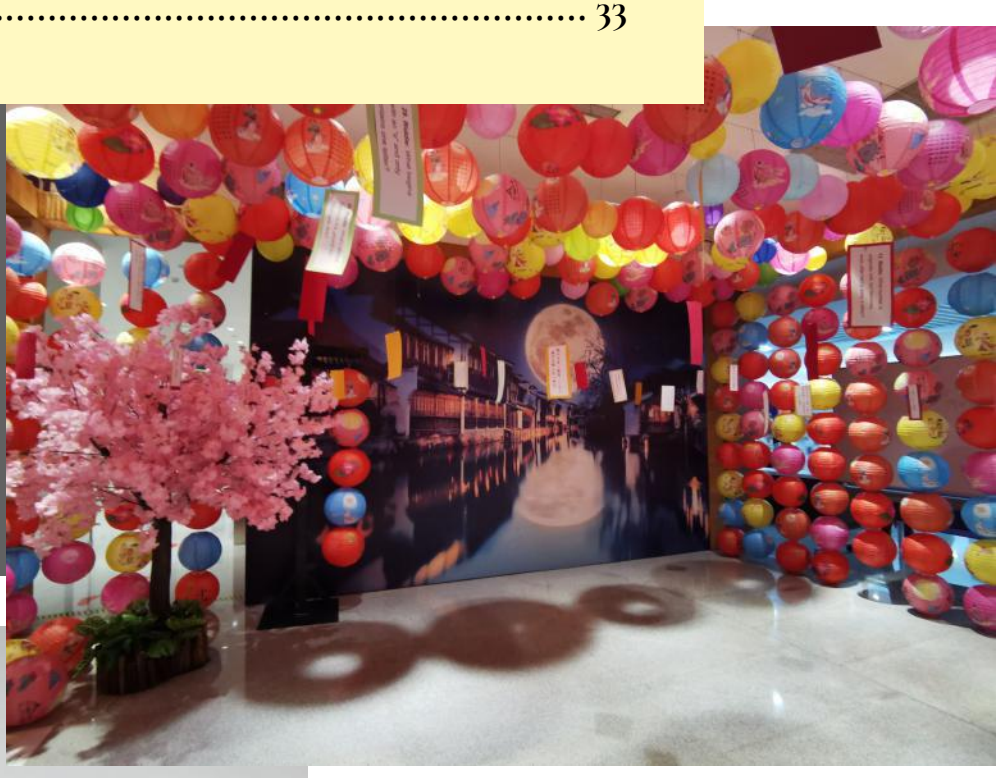

"A Thousand Deaths" to Immortality:

The First Asian American Featured on U.S. Currency

By Hannah Dy

"They didn't know what to do with me at the end, so they killed me off."

Anna May Wong is often heralded as the first Asian-American Hollywood movie star and now, she has recently become the first Asian-American icon featured on American currency. Known for her roles in over sixty different film productions and theater performances, Wong's most famous quote stems from her struggles in navigating the 20th century film industry as a third-generation Chinese immigrant: "When I die, my epitaph should be: I died a thousand deaths. That was the story of my film career."

Born in Los Angeles, California, on January 3, 1905, Wong was raised primarily in Chinatown, alongside her seven siblings. Throughout her early childhood and teen years, Wong's passion was the film industry; she frequently skipped class to watch movies or observe the growing number of film production sets moving into the area. Around her neighborhood, her persistence to join the film industry earned her the nickname "C.C.C." or "Curious Chinese Child."

When she was fourteen, with the help of a family friend on set, she debuted in her first background role as a background extra in "The Red Lantern" (1919). She eventually dropped out of high school completely to pursue acting full-time. She appeared in background characters for the next three years.

She starred in the world's first Technicolor full-length film, "Toll of the Sea" (1922). However, Wong's career was swiftly challenged and redirected by the racism deeply embedded into Hollywood culture. The early 20th century was often characterized by "The Yellow Peril", or the prevalent xenophobic fear that Asian immigrants threatened Western ideals and society. Even before her work in the industry, Wong often recounted stories of being bullied for her Asian heritage, so much so to the point of having to switch schools to escape harassment.

Her acting opportunities were limited to roles that perpetuated stereotypes so off-putting that when Wong visited China later in her career, she was met with much disdain for how she portrayed Chinese people. Many protested her visit and called her "the stooge who disgraces China" and "embarrassment." Wong's roles depicted Asian women as helpless victims in "Bits of Life" (1921) and a submissive lover who worships her White male partner in "The Toll of the Sea" (1922). Some have even cited her portrayals as the birth of the "Dragon Lady" stereotype, which frames Asian American women as dangerous and exotic.

"Why is it that the screen Chinese is nearly always the villain of the piece, and so cruel a villain—murderous, treacherous, a snake in the grass," Wong remarked in a 1933 interview. "We are not like that." Many voiced shock at her fluency in English, despite her being born and raised in Los Angeles. Once, in the cast screening process, she was dismissed as "too Chinese to play a Chinese" and was replaced by a White woman donning yellowface. Even then, laws against interracial marriage barred her from portraying an on-screen love interest to a White male lead, thus being replaced by White actresses donning yellowface.

Wong fought back against Hollywood ardently. When offered more caricature characters to portray, she refused and instead starred in indie films that gave her more freedom over her portrayals. For instance, she starred in the Asian-American-directed film, "The Silk Bouquet" (1926), which was intended for Asian-American audiences. In 1924, she established (the albeit short-lived) Anna May Wong Productions in hopes of producing films with less stifling restrictions on her creative expression. Ultimately, Wong moved to Europe in 1928 to pursue more opportunities in the British, French, and German film industry. There, she was enthusiastically met with much more acceptance of her heritage.

During the early 20th century, both the French Impressionist and German Expressionism movements welcomed an artistic, avant-garde approach to film that embraced the dramatic unprecedented: chiaroscuro lighting, in-depth psychological exploration of characters, surrealist beauty, etc. Perhaps this championing of the unorthodox gave European film-makers a more open mindset than their American counterparts. It could also be argued that Wong experienced more success later in her career because her more established credentials earned her more opportunities. Either way, Wong was quickly welcomed into the European performance industry and adapted, learning German and French as well as consulting a Cambridge University speech tutor to produce a crisp British accent. She was appointed as Mayfair Mannequin Society's "World's Best-Dressed Woman" and continued to star in several European plays such as "The Flame of Love", "Springtime", and "A Circle of Chalk." As for films, she was cast in "Piccadilly" (1929) and "Road to Dishonor" (1930).

Despite the discrimination she faced (once famously receiving only $6,000 for playing a lead role while a white actor was compensated $12,000 for less than 25 minutes of screentime), Wong persevered and carved her own legacy into Hollywood. She eventually returned to America after being offered a role in Paramount's "Daughter of the Dragon" (1931). Wong also later starred in the first American television series with an Asian American lead role ("The Gallery of Madame Liu-Tsong" (1951)) that was written exclusively for her. She was inducted into Hollywood's Walk of Fame in 1960. Wong became both the namesake and recipient of awards. Look Magazine regarded her as "The World's Most Beautiful Chinese Girl." Upon her death at the age of 56, the New York Times heralded her as one of "the most unforgettable figures of Hollywood's great days."

In the end, Wong's career as an actress is more than just her talents on screen. She used her influence to push for room for Chinese creatives. She worked in advocacy charities and wrote prefaces for prominent Chinese cookbooks. Not only is Wong's perseverance admirable but her mere presence as an Asian American actress forges a path for others to follow, even to this day. Almost a century later, Lucy Liu, the second Asian American actress to be in Hollywood's Walk of Fame, credited Wong as a "pioneer" who guided her own acting career. "If my body of work somehow helped bridge the gap between stereotypical roles, first given to Anna May, and mainstream success today," Liu said. "I am thrilled to have been part of that process."

As a part of the American Women Quarters Program, Wong will be commemorated alongside Maya Angelou, Sally Ride, Wilma Mankiller, and Nina Otero-Warren as a part of the 2022 collection. Over thirty million quarters will be minted with her face and "Anna May Wong", the stage name she chose for herself when she merged her English name with her Chinese one (Wong Liu Tsong).

During her time, Wong's search for belonging seemed in vain. Now, the nation celebrates the actress for fighting so hard to preserve her dignity and heritage. "That's why this quarter is important," Paula Yoo, author of one of Wong's biographies titled "Shining Star: The Anna May Wong Story", says, "Because she's minted, she's part of Americana, she's part of American history."

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TRANSFORMATIONS OF EARLY ASIAN-AMERICAN INDUSTRY

BY MEILAN UYENO

Photo Courtesy of Stacey Uy via Medium

The names Tanaka Farms or Freeman Wineries might sound familiar. Many of you have likely encountered produce from Tanaka Farms, or tried Freeman Wineries' signature wines, or know someone who has. With roots as far back as the nineteenth century, both Asian-owned businesses have flourished over the years. From Oregon's famous Bing Cherries to grapevines grown by Chinese farm workers in Napa, early Asian-American agriculture has greatly influenced our nation's food and beverage industries.

Beginning in the early 1800s, large groups of Chinese immigrants began making their way to America to find employment. Major industries were looking for cheap labor such as railroad workers, fishers, factory workers, and farmers. Initial groups of single men were recruited as contract laborers from Southern China, and by 1870, Chinese workers represented about 20% of California's workforce. These workers spent years laying down the foundation of their new country. From constructing railroads to establishing fisheries to introducing new products, Asian Americans have been vital to the development of America.

Despite their establishment of and work on the Central Pacific Railroad and first transcontinental railroad, all immigrant workers faced workplace discrimination in the form of extremely low wages, poor working conditions and unequal rights. Even after miles and miles of track had been laid down, many Americans still refused to acknowledge the back-breaking labor of the Chinese workers. In a ceremony marking the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad, the then-transportation secretary claimed "who else but Americans could chisel through miles of solid granite. Who else but Americans could have laid 10 miles of track in 12 hours?" (Volpe). The work of "Americans" was applauded, but by law, Chinese workers were not given the title of "American". The railroad would have been impossible without the contributions of Chinese immigrants who were ineligible to become US naturalized citizens by federal law.

Chinese Labor was Exploited to Finish the Transcontinental Railroad // Photo Courtesy of history.com

By 1882, anti-Chinese violence was at an all time high across the nation alongside strong anti-Asian sentiment. This resulted in the first Chinese Exclusion Act.

Chinese workers were denied American citizenship and were given little to no representation or acknowledgement. Unlike natural American citizens, the immigrant workers who had contributed years of work to the foundation of America were not protected by American law at all, nor were they given the right to own land, and much of their free will was stripped under the immigration title. With the exclusion act, Chinese immigration was banned for the next 60 years.

As the Chinese population decreased dramatically, new Asian immigrants began arriving to replace the labor. Korean laborers first settled in Hawaii and later moved towards mainland America, working as railroad builders and agriculturalists. Various waves of immigrants from countries across Asia – such as Japan, Korea, and India – arrived in the US, and each time, they were closely followed by Asian exclusion legislation. By 1924, nearly all Asian immigrants were excluded from law and denied citizenship or land ownership.

One of the areas in which Asian labor had the most expansive impact was the agricultural and farming industry. In the late 1800's, Japanese farmers began working strawberry fields in California. By 1910, about 80% of California's strawberry farmers were Japanese, kickstarting America's strawberry industry. Japanese immigrants played a major role in the early cultivation and nationwide consumption of strawberries. Initially working as contract laborers to fill out "farm hands" on orchards and strawberry farms, Japanese workers spent years harvesting and transporting the berries.

The first generation Japanese immigrants really took to strawberry farms. Strawberries are an extremely difficult crop to grow, and they take many hands to cultivate properly. Most Japanese immigrants that followed took whatever work they could find, and strawberry farms were always looking for additional

hands. In the early 1900's, the Japanese-American population grew dramatically, but many of the immigrants could not speak much English which forced them into farm labor where little communication was needed. Japanese Americans worked strawberry farms all across the west coast, centered along the California coast.

Japanese immigrants were initially drawn to America by the prospect of good work opportunities. Many workers wanted to send money back to their families and eventually earn enough to return home. However, over the years, many farm workers made America their home. Many started out as day laborers or share-croppers and eventually moved to owning land by rent. It was extremely difficult for first generation Japanese workers to own land, however, due to legal restrictions such as the Alien Land Laws.

After the Gentleman's Agreement later banned all Japanese immigration, Filipinos – the only Asian group with unrestricted immigration to the US – started forming farm labor unions throughout Washington, Oregon, and California.

Bing Cherries // Photo Courtesy of Specialty Produce

The Philippines had previously been annexed, and these labor unions were major for Filipino Americans who began migrating to the west coast to work in farms and canneries. Although they were allowed immigration to the US, Filipinos were still not granted naturalization rights until many years later.

Bing Cherry

One of America's staple fruits is the Bing Cherry. Known for its unusually deep, dark red, almost purple color, Bing cherries are America's most produced variety. Ah Bing, the man who helped propagate it, is one of the most largely forgotten people in America's history. In the early 1870's, Ah Bing joined a group of single men who immigrated to America to labor in established orchards for cheap labor. The prospect of rich farmland and abundant resources drew many Asian immigrants to the Pacific Northwest. Settling in Oregon, Bing began laboring at cherry orchards. Bing worked on the now well known Luelling Farms for over 30 years, harvesting produce and planting fruit trees.

All across the west, Chinese immigrants were working in orchards and on farms, contributing years of new agricultural knowledge. Bringing with them various new farming and irrigation techniques, Asian immigrants accelerated the development of certain crops. Although not much is known about Ah Bing, his impact on Oregon's orchards is seen throughout the cherry industry. Bing supervised teams of orchard workers and worked alongside them grafting, propagating and caring for the trees. One of his rows produced the new "Bing cherry", which Luelling suggested be named after the Chinese foreman.

Tanaka Farms

With years of experience directly in the fields of American farms and on the business side of contract work, Asian Americans began their own farms. In the late 1900's, one of the country's most well-known Asian-owned farms – Tanaka Farms – was built by Takeo who was an Issei- a first generation Japanese American. Takeo migrated from Japan to California, and his family started off working as farm hands on a small farm. Generations of his sons worked in shipping and cultivating different crops on the farm until

Farmer Tanaka, a third generation Japanese-American, began packing and distributing his own produce across the country.

Tanaka acquired about 300 acres of his own land to start his own farming business, and the remaining 30 acres that the farm is currently located on were once part of a massive strawberry farm. Tanaka Farms is now located in a valley in the heart of Irvine, California, and has attracted tourists from around the nation. Today, the farms host a variety of educational tours, produce markets, pumpkin patches and much more. It also grows over 60 different varieties of fruits and vegetables from melons to strawberries to lettuces.

Akiki Freeman - Founder of Freeman Wineries // Photo Courtesy of Emily Martin

Asian-Owned Wineries

After decades of harvesting fruits and working in factories or on railroads, cheap labor jobs filled by Asian Americans have evolved into more established, professional work.

Today, there are many successful Asian-owned businesses and companies such as Freeman Wineries. A native to Tokyo, Akiko Freeman started her winery with her husband, following their dream of owning a small family run winery. Ken and Akiko Freeman first branded their winery in 2001 and have grown their business through their increasingly popular Pinot Noir and Chardonnay programs.

Sonoma County, California has always been well known for its wineries and liquor influence across the country. Asian Americans have been a major part of the development of the wine industry throughout California, especially in Sonoma. Decades ago, Chinese immigrants built the first wine caves and tasting rooms, using techniques from the railroads they had worked on previously (sonomacounty.com). Without the help and contributions of Asian immigrant workers, America's wine industry would have been set back by about 30-50 years. Some of the best grapevines have been harvested and transported by Asian Americans, and many of America's first wine caves were built by Asian Americans.

Following their Asian-American roots, Freeman Wineries have cultivated some of California's best vines, and the Freemans are recognized internationally as one of California's most acclaimed small producers.

I'm sure many of you wouldn't have expected Asian immigrants to have had such a large impact on America's wine industry. When I think of America's wine roots, I wouldn't have pictured Asian grapevine workers at the heart of it. I never would have imagined the years of work early Asian immigrants put specifically into wine making- pruning vines, distilling the liquids, building the wine caves etc. The once cheap labor that had drawn so many immigrants from all over Asia evolved into much more polished work over the years, and it allowed more prosperous immigrants the opportunities to begin their own businesses.

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The Climb To CEO: Famous Asian-American Business Women

By Michelle Fung

Many barriers exist for Asian-American women when entering the white male-dominated American business industry. As Asian Americans, they are often perceived as unassertive and lacking in social and leadership skills due to racial stereotypes, making it difficult to climb the corporate ladder and form the necessary network connections. As women, they face the pressure to stick to the traditional sphere of domestic life and are provided with inadequate support systems primarily due to gender bias. This may be discouraging for many, but the stories of thriving individuals can bring new perspectives to the business world as society continues to fight for a more equal industry. Here are three Asian-American businesswomen — Vera Wang, Indra Nooyi, and Sheila Marcelo — and their journeys to success in an industry working against their every move.

VERA WANG

ASK

Vera Wang is an American fashion designer. Born to Chinese immigrants in 1949, she grew up on Manhattan's Upper East Side in New York where she often attended high-end fashion shows with her mother. At a young age, Wang was a talented figure skater, however, she stopped skating competitively after failing to qualify for the Olympics in 1968. She then attended Sarah Lawrence College, studying for a semester at the Sorbonne in Paris. It was in France that she "learned to appreciate beauty," as Wang says in a 2019 interview with Harvard Business Review, a statement which later influenced her career in fashion. After graduating in 1971, Wang worked at Vogue Magazine and advanced in the company, becoming a fashion editor by 23. She then left Vogue to pursue her dreams of being a fashion designer in 1987, working at Ralph Lauren as the design director for all women's clothing.

Wang founded her company in 1990 at age 40, opening Vera Wang Bridal Store in New York City. Her business venture was encouraged by her father, a businessman, after Wang struggled to find herself a wedding gown the previous year. She ended up designing her own dress, leading her father to see the opportunity in the bridal. According to Wang, her motivation to succeed came from past failures: "I didn't make the Olympic team. I didn't become editor-in-chief at Vogue. I really blamed it on myself that I didn't make the cut, and you get motivated from that." This motivation fueled her pursuit of fashion, which became her "next passion" after figure skating, eventually pushing her to the design industry instead of staying in journalism. She has also talked about how her Chinese heritage has influenced her career, saying, "My parents were immigrants, and they never allowed me to be spoiled. You worked. You worked. You worked. That's an immigrant mentality. And when I'm in China now, I feel Chinese. I'm proud of everything positive about my heritage, which is the desire to work and better oneself."

Penske Media/Rex/Shuttershock

Today, Vera Wang has bridal boutiques all around the world. She is the sole owner of the company and serves as both the business and design head. Wang's namesake brand has expanded to include ready-to-wear fashion, jewelry, eyewear, and home furnishings, and has licensing deals with major retailers such as Zales and Kohl's. In 2013, Wang was the recipient of the Council of Fashion Designers of America lifetime achievement. Her 60th bridal collection debuted fall of 2019, and she continues to design with no plans to stop.

INDRA NOOYI

The New Yorker

American business executive Indra Nooyi was born in Madras (now Chennai), India in 1955. As a former CEO of PepsiCo, she was the first woman of color and the first immigrant to run a Fortune 50 company. Nooyi attended Madras Christian College and the Indian Institute of Management in Calcutta, then began working in business at the textile firm Mettur Beardsell before becoming a product manager at Johnson & Johnson shortly after. After moving to the United States in 1978, she attended Yale University, earning a master's degree in public and private management. Nooyi worked at Boston Consulting Group as a strategy consultant for the next six years, later serving executive positions at Motorola, Inc, and ABB in the strategy and planning departments.

Nooyi joined PepsiCo in 1994 as senior vice president of corporate strategy and development. By 2001, she was named CFO and President of the company, and oversaw the restructuring of PepsiCo's spin-off restaurants and bottling operations. Nooyi became CEO in 2006, making her the first woman to lead PepsiCo. During her first six years as CEO, she dealt with the company's financial crisis, spearheaded plans for international expansion, and addressed the then-unstable North American bottling relationship.

In the next six years, she focused on improving performance in terms of product quality and global footprint. She was also the creator of "Performance with Purpose", the PepsiCo company pledge to make healthier products, reduce environmental impact, and serve communities. According to Nooyi, this idea was rooted in her belief that companies "are a part of society and have a duty of care to the communities they are a part of." The integration of this belief transformed the company and served as a precursor to the application of ESG — the consideration of non-finance aspects such as environment, social, and governance concerns to increase value — in other businesses seen later in the decade.

Northwest Asian Weekly

For Nooyi, a major focus of her career has been family, saying that "The family I created with my husband Raj and two daughters is my proudest achievement." She published her memoir, My Life in Full: Work, Family, and Our Future in 2018, which offers a deeper view into her career and leadership as well as her experiences balancing her work with her home life. When asked about the subjects of her memoir, Nooyi said that "There are several key messages in the book, and they all intersect. One is that family is core. We have to elevate it into the global conversation, and not minimize it as a female issue. Another is that women represent an untapped talent pool and empowering them to contribute fully to paid work is important for families, companies, and the economy as a whole." She hopes the future of business will allow those "who want to and have ambitions to balance both work and family" will have the support necessary for young women to achieve their entrepreneurial endeavors without being forced to choose between the two.

Nooyi stepped down from PepsiCo in 2018 after twelve years as CEO. In 2021, she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame for her extraordinary achievements in the business world. Today, Nooyi participates in interviews about business advice, travels for her book tour, and serves on a number of boards, including those for Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and the Partnership for Public Service. She is still consistently ranked by Forbes as one of the most powerful women in the world.

SHEILA MARCELO

Sheila Marcelo is a Filipino-American businesswoman in the technology industry. Born in 1970 in Manila, Marcelo grew up in an entrepreneurial household, as her parents were in the coconut industry. The business led to Marcelo traveling to the U.S. several times throughout her childhood, attending school in America for a short time before moving back to the Philippines. Marcelo eventually moved back to America for university, graduating from Mount Holyoke with a degree in economics and an M.B.A. and J.D. from Harvard University.

Carnegie Corporation of New York

In between her time at Mount Holyoke and Harvard, Marcelo worked for a couple of years, debating whether she wanted to go to law school. Her time at a litigation consulting company placed her on a project for the Orion satellite, causing her to fall "in love with technology."

She then spent some time at a telecom consulting firm before matriculating. After graduating, Marcelo ended up teaching at Harvard Business School for a year before realizing that she "needed more operational experience" to teach the business courses. This led to her joining a small, unnamed start-up that later became Upromise, a company focused on helping families save for college. During her time there, Marcelo gained web and management experience, supporting her dreams of starting her own company. She proceeded to work at the Ladders and planned to move to the company headquarters in New York, but ultimately decided the strain would be too much on her family. After putting in her notice, Marcelo worked at venture capitalist Matrix Partners, which allowed her to gain more entrepreneurial experience while staying in Boston.

In 2006, Marcelo founded Care.com, an online platform that helps people find caregivers for their children, elders, homes, and pets. The idea for this site was largely based on her own experiences, as Marcelo struggled to balance work and child care for most of her education and career. She had her first child during her time at Mount Holyoke and became pregnant again during her fourth year of her program at Harvard. As a result, Marcelo had to drop her son off at daycare in order to "dash off" to class in law school, calling those "very difficult times." When asked about the connection between Care.com and her own life, Marcelo said "Because I got pregnant in college, I juggled with care. The other thing that I failed to add is that my husband's parents were deceased, and my parents were in the Philippines, so we didn't really have a lot of support here for our family. We had to find care on our own."

Regarding her Filipino heritage, Marcelo remarked in an interview with Loida Nicolas Lewis—another Filipino-American businesswoman— for The FilAm magazine that "It is only fitting that, as a Filipina, I founded Care.com. The Philippines has a very nurturing culture and is one of the biggest exporters

of care in the world. In the U.S. we're best known for being the world's largest marketplace for care." She has also said that the "matriarchal society" of the Philippines encouraged her to become an entrepreneur, as she did not grow up with the gender stereotypes seen in the U.S. She grew up watching her parents split the work of their coconut business evenly, and it was not until Marcelo moved to America that she experienced discrimination due to her gender. She has commented on the clear discrimination present in the business space, noting that "raising more awareness, and role modeling, especially for women" is important to combating those barriers for women.

Alberto E. Rodriguez/Getty Images

Marcelo served as chairwoman and CEO of Care.com until early 2020 when the company was sold to IAC. She currently serves as CEO of Proof of Learn, a Web-based learning platform that aims to spread the accessibility of quality education, which she co-founded in 2021. For her accomplishments in business, Marcelo became the youngest recipient of the Harvard Business School Alumni Achievement Award in 2014. She was also recently awarded the 2022 Helen G. Drinan Visionary Leader Award from Simmons University. Today, Marcelo works with non-profit organizations to advocate for women in business worldwide.

The stories of CEOs Vera Wang, Indra Nooyi, and Sheila Marcelo show the potential for Asian American women to find success in the business industry in spite of systemic barriers. I found their varying career paths, from fashion design to food and drink to technology, motivating, as each exemplifies Asian-American success in different sectors of business. These three women continue to serve as leaders for not only young businesswomen, but all individuals, and I hope that reading about their journeys leaves you inspired to pursue your own ambitions, just as they did.

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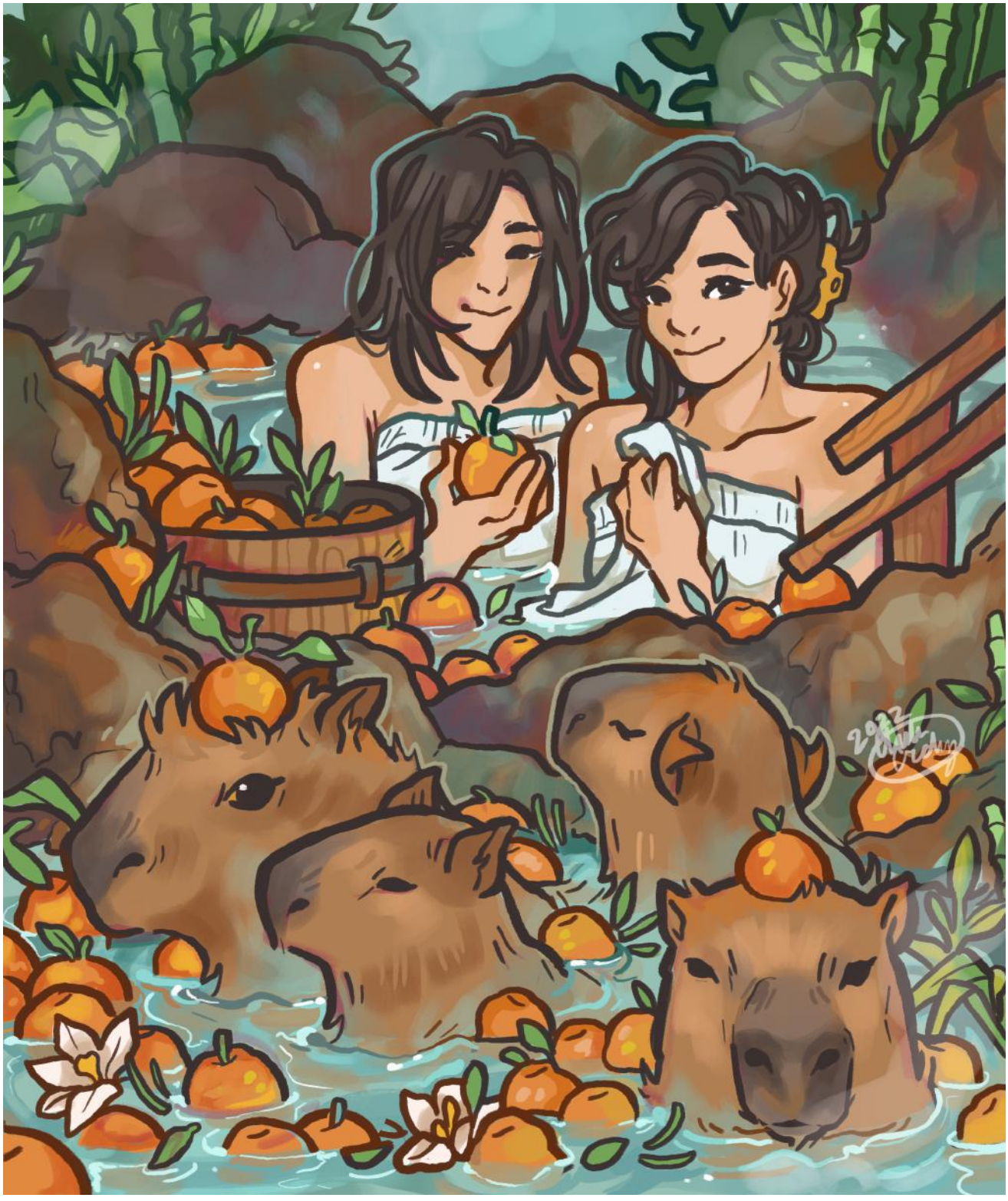
Winter Solstice Yuzu Bath
By Michelle Ip



This artwork depicts a Japanese tradition that is typically done on the day of the Winter Solstice. In Japan, many people mark this changing of the seasons by taking a traditional "yuzu bath", which is a hot spring filled to the brim with fragrant citrus fruits called yuzu. Yuzu are a hybrid citrus fruit commonly found throughout East Asia and can be submerged in the hot water in a cloth sac, or float freely in the water. These citrus-infused baths invite not only humans, but also animals such as capybaras to enjoy the soothing health benefits of the yuzu. In fact, many viral videos on social media consist of capybaras relaxing in the yuzu baths, with some variations offering oranges as an alternative to yuzu. Either way, this kind of Winter Solstice celebration is a major hit for humans and animals alike!

Fake it Till You Make it

By Nicole Kim

Abidas, Sunbucks, iPed... do any of these words look familiar? They probably should because they are Adidas, Starbucks, and iPad, except intentionally misspelled. Countless counterfeit products and knock-offs are currently being produced in Asia to satisfy the high demand for relatively cheap luxury brand items. Of course, in affluent areas such as Singapore and Tokyo, people may visit glamorous shopping streets right by their 5,000 square feet mansion to purchase a limited edition Gucci bag on a monthly basis or so. However, it is clear that not everyone can access well-known designer brands. In fact, the whopping majority of the population is considered either middle-class or lower-class, who cannot nonchalantly spend money on everything. This means that for more than 93 percent of the entire population, counterfeits are an eye-catching option when it comes to meeting their desires for a luxurious life, according to Pew Research Center. Take a moment to note that counterfeit products are not necessarily bad - although labeled with negative connotations, both the production and consumption of counterfeit products satisfy those who want to sell and earn money as well as those who want to buy and earn fame.

To accommodate those who seek high-quality counterfeit goods, various factories in Asia manufacture fake Rolexes, faux Versace dresses, and more. Take Bangkok, Thailand as an example: counterfeit products are openly on display without any securities guarding the street markets. This may seem odd at first, but these markets are common all across Asia. In Thailand's Patpong Road Night Market, a fake Rolex Oyster Perpetual Submariner costs less than $100 (3,560 baht), which is substantially less than the $6,500 (231,409 baht) for the genuine item. Similarly, what resembles the original Dr. Martens boots are only $31 (999 baht) at the Night Market. The original Dr. Martens with the actual logos on the leather and soles cost $93 (3,000 baht), 3 times as much as the price its look-alike is being sold at in Thailand. A young Thai shoe seller promotes his products with confidence: "Same design. Same material. This one is made in Thailand." (Interview by Richard Ehrlich from cnn.com)

Surprisingly, there is more pride than shame in purchasing counterfeits in most Asian countries like Thailand because fake designer brand items are normalized in specific regions. China, for example, is known to be the top global source of counterfeits that exports all sorts of goods including but not limited to high-quality knock offs of DVDs and upmarket designer handbags. These goods are routed overland or shipped directly to Bangkok or other Southeast Asian countries with developed markets. China seems to be the most prominent exporter of counterfeits due to its large producing facilities where fraudulent imitations are perfectly made. Producers make use of the external similarity, a disguised combination of trademarks, and the similarity of graphic designs and colors to mix the fake with the genuine. At this point, there seems to be a reason behind why China's knock-off product businesses continue to flourish.

The Secretary-General of the Germany-China Economic Association thinks that "there is cultural origin as to why the Chinese counterfeit." (Harry Yang from chinaipmagazine.com) Traditional Chinese Confucian education requires reciting and copying, so students take scholars or poets as role models and appreciate the ideas of the forefather to retell them. Imitation of others is an act of honor in Confucian culture, but counterfeiting is different according to the Secretary-General. The conduct of imitation is done openly whereas the conduct of counterfeiting is done secretly. Counterfeiting rather counters the value of social honesty, so the prevalence of counterfeiting might be due to the lack of traditional culture, not due to cultural origins. The strengthening of law enforcement and supervision never occurred in China, so the restraints of the traditional moral concept of honesty was never properly established.

Although counterfeiting is done with harmless intentions in most cases, it indeed hurts the companies that design the actual products.

"Counterfeit products not only attack the name and value of a known business, but, in many cases, can cause harmful, and sometimes fatal, consequences for the unsuspecting buyer," said Mark Zito, Deputy Special Agent in Charge for Homeland Security (HSI) Los Angeles. Zito also claims that these fakes have no place in a fair, legitimate marketplace. Because of the questionable process of gaining profit from counterfeits, the issue of intellectual property rights infringement has been highlighted regarding counterfeiting. The niche designs of famous brands have been used by numerous unidentified producers who at the end benefited from the work of others. Even when those people are sued, high-end product counterfeiters tend to be extremely wealthy, so they decide to defend themselves in court proceedings with expensive legal teams. Although it is illegal to sell fake items without permission, CNN states that vendors at Thai markets pay the police "every month or every two months" and the "cash allegedly goes to allow their stall to sell counterfeits" and avoid crackdowns.

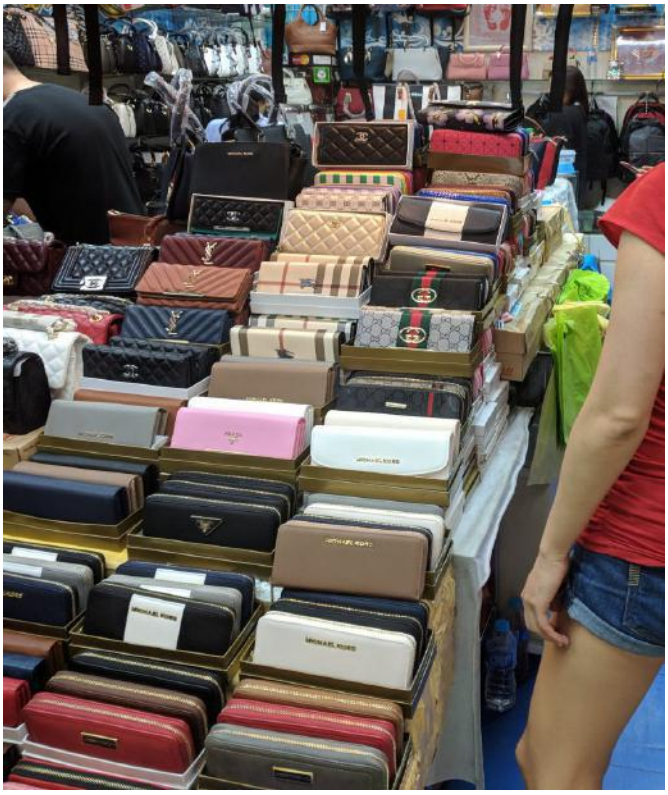


Photo Courtesy of Lollipuff

An additional harmful aspect of counterfeiting is the lack of strong enforcement that brings on adverse effects on consumers who are often oblivious of the downside of purchasing counterfeit goods. Automotive parts, safety equipment, electronics, and prescription drugs are only some of the counterfeit products known to be dangerous as these products may present potential threats to public safety. Most counterfeits are disguised well with a legitimate trademark, making customers vulnerable to serious health and safety concerns. For instance, in 2019, The US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) confirmed that potentially unsafe bike helmets were widely available online. The ICE stated, "to be legally sold in the U.S., bicycle helmets are supposed to meet standards set by the Consumer Product Safety Commission ... when purchasing products online, however, it can be difficult to know if a product purchased is truly certified as safe" (Steve Francis from ice.gov). Unfortunately, this is not an issue just with helmets. Other products that may be hazardous are continuously being counterfeited and mislabeled, risking customers' safety. Customers of counterfeit products should understand that at times, the benefits of the products they purchase do not outweigh the drawbacks.

Photo Courtesy of ICE

Despite their infamous inauthenticity, what keeps counterfeit businesses rolling are the targeted customers who cannot possibly purchase a genuine luxury item in their given economic situation. Unless one hits a jackpot at Wynn Las Vegas Casino, it is unlikely for them to immediately become a millionaire. Counterfeit businesses acknowledge the necessity of counterfeit products and strategically target the middle class that desires recognition and inclusion in the upper class community. A study conducted by Kassarjian, a marketing researcher, mentions overlaps and dissonances in one's 'real-self' and 'ideal-self.' "If put in terms of willingness of purchasing counterfeit goods, if a counterfeit makes an individual's real-self closer to the ideal-self, then he is more likely to purchase that good" (Kassarjian, 1971). Similarly, if someone is not satisfied with their current status in society, they will naturally lean towards purchasing products that would help increase self-esteem and bring them closer to their ideal self.

It seems like one can build a new identity off of counterfeit products that boost their confidence. However, the constant use of counterfeit products as if they are actual products may damage the reputations of those who publicly wear counterfeit designer products yet refuse to admit that their possessions are not real. For instance, Ji-ah Song, also known as Ji-a or Freezia from the Netflix show Single's Inferno, is notorious for her use of counterfeit products on TV shows and other social media platforms to gain popularity. When netizens became aware of how her Chanel sweater was not of the right shade of pink, they started digging through what they found as distrustful clips of Ji-a wearing counterfeit designer goods and acting completely natural, disguising her worries about suspicion. They accused Ji-a of multiple offenses, from undermining hard-working designers to single-handedly damaging a brand's value.

"But actually the biggest crime alleged was that she was a fake – and that she pretended to be something that she is not," said Se-Woong Koo, the editor of Korean Exposé, a newsletter focusing on contemporary Korea. Like Ji-a, some people attempt to build a whole new persona off of affordable counterfeit products. Presenting fake identity as one's genuine identity may be satisfying for the one faking their persona since they would be one step closer to their 'ideal-self'. In the long run though, having a fake identity rather than actually putting in effort to improve oneself would leave one on the riskier pathway down to achieving one's ideal life. The suspicious acts of hoarding fake luxury items to better oneself is most likely to be seen in Asia where there are endless options when it comes to purchasing counterfeit products.

What is settled now is a culture of embracing imperfection. In any particular country in Asia, someone carrying a fake luxury purse is hardly ever given weird looks but is rather encouraged to enrich their lifestyle through the occasional use of counterfeit products. Since people of the same background in similar economic situations understand one another, it is socially acceptable to adore counterfeit products in particular regions, especially in middle-class Asian countries where genuine items are rarely imported because of the meager interest in costly authentic products. To conclude, neither the benefits nor the downsides of counterfeits seem to be completely reliable, making it quite complicated to make decisions on further regulations or support for counterfeit product businesses in Asia.

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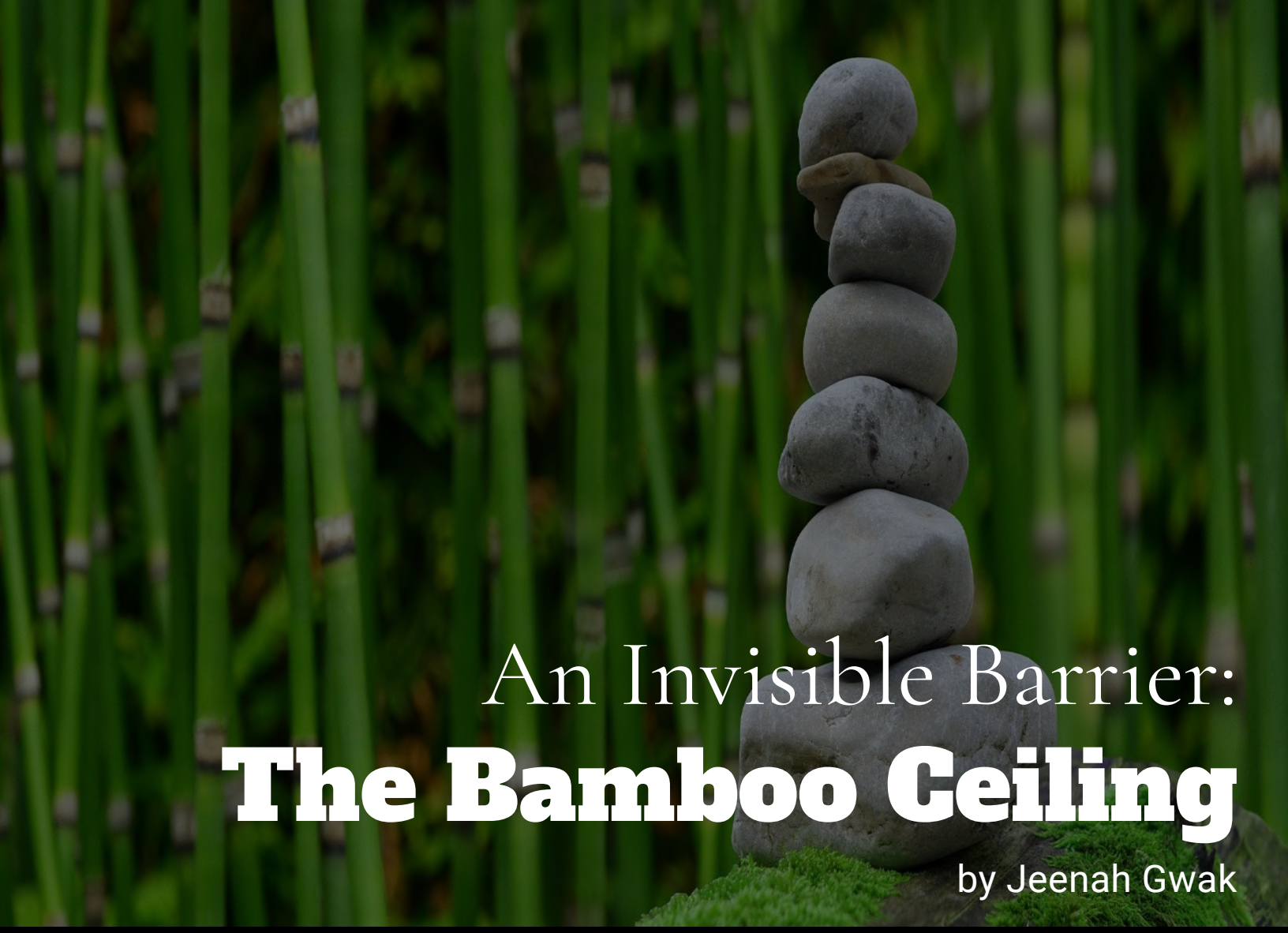
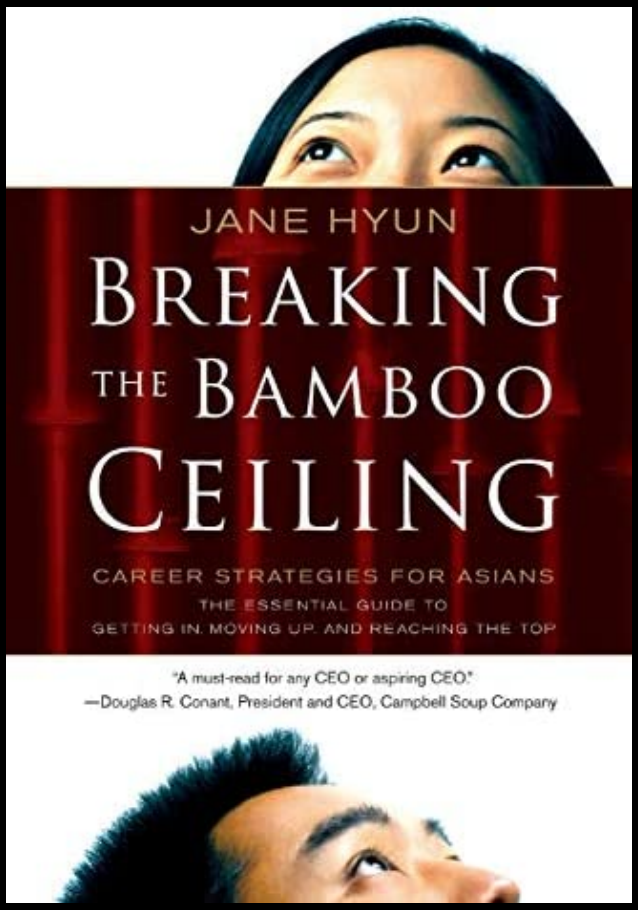


An Invisible Barrier: The Bamboo Ceiling

by Jeenah Gwak

Photo Courtesy of Schäferle

One seemingly normal headline, published on a typical Monday morning, brought disapproval from multiple public voices. It read, "Oscars: Diverse Field Sees Asian Actors Shatter Bamboo Ceiling," published by The Hollywood Reporter. It was written by reporter Rebecca Sun, the Senior Editor of Diversity and Inclusion, on March 15th, 2021. One such public voice was Esther Park, a Korean American who runs "The Fake Podcast." She explained that given the rise in anti-Asian sentiment and hate crimes, it was not the appropriate time to use the phrase "bamboo ceiling" (Kubota). In response, reporter Sun later changed the headline to "Oscars: Diverse Field Sees Asian Actors Finally Break Through," explaining that she had not intended this to evoke controversy. In fact, Sun had written the article to celebrate the number of Asian-American performers nominated for an Oscar that year, "with minorities forming the majority in both actor categories (Kubota). In her tweet, she highlighted that she understands the history and meaning of the "bamboo ceiling," and had hoped to "make a legitimate reference" despite the media's "lengthy history of problematic headlines about Asian culture" (Kubota).

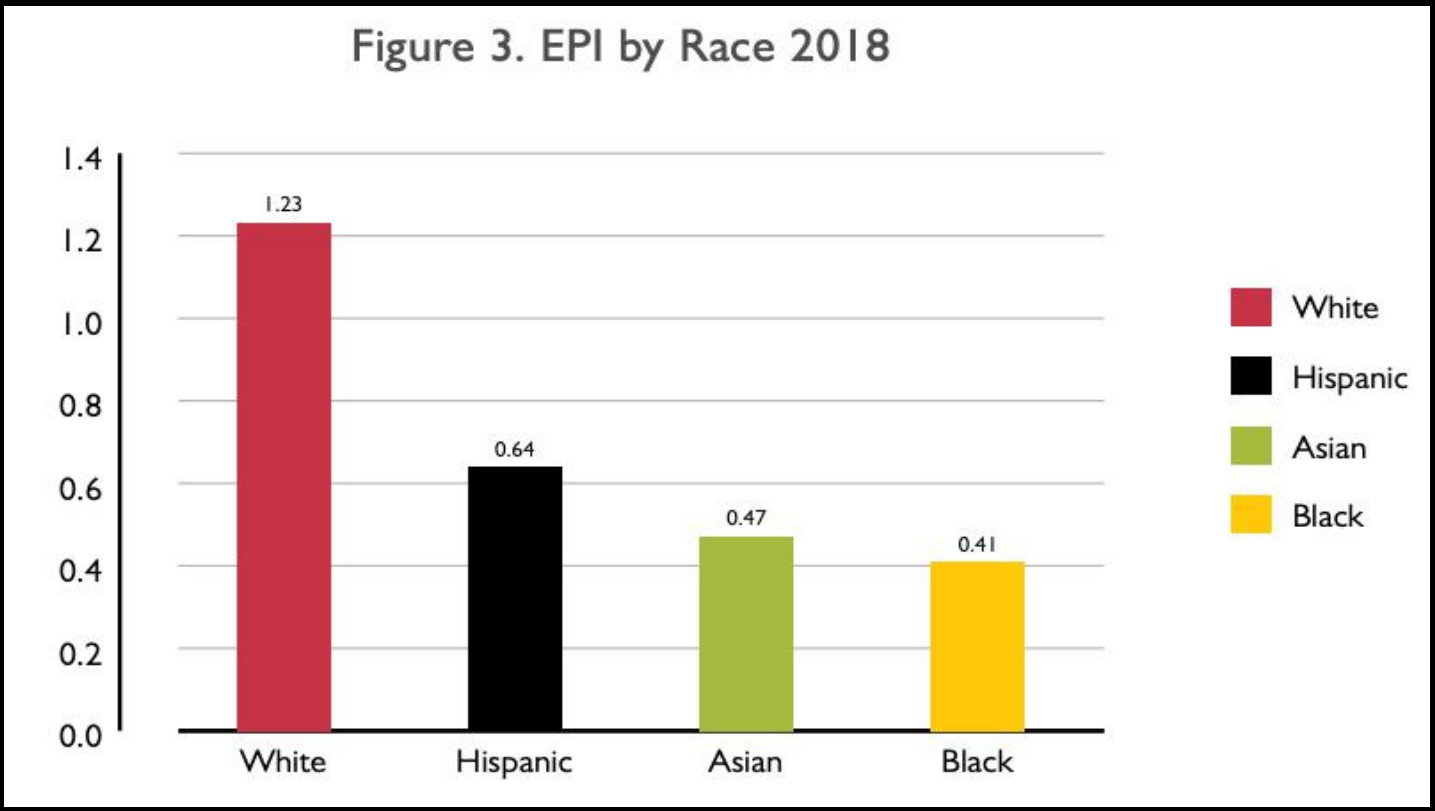


Courtesy of Jane Hyun

The term "bamboo ceiling" sounds familiar to many because it is a play on the phrase "glass ceiling," which refers to barriers that women face in the workplace that prevent them from attaining executive positions at the same levels as men (Nunes). The "bamboo ceiling" phenomenon describes "Asian Americans' puzzling lack of leadership representation" in the workplace, regarding the lack of Asian representation in executive positions (Mundy). It was coined by Jane Hyun, a leading career coach and advocate, and was originally used to refer to the discrimination and injustice that Asian Americans face in the workforce. Jane Hyun even wrote the book Breaking the Bamboo Ceiling in 2005 to dive into the phenomenon, in the form of case studies and stories. The cover describes the book as "career strategies for Asians" and "the essential guide to getting in, moving up, and reaching the top." In her book, Hyun claims that the lack of Asian representation in executive positions is a result of multiple factors, describing the problem as a "combination of cultural, organizational, and individual factors that impede the career progress of Asian-American talent" (Hyun). She dives into the various implications of the "bamboo ceiling," discussing the challenges that Asian Americans face in corporate settings. With the publication of this book, the use of the phrase "bamboo ceiling" quickly became common – working Asian Americans were finally able to place a finger on the problem that they had been struggling with for years.

One of the most common stereotypes about Asian Americans is the "model minority" myth, which arbitrarily characterizes Asians as law-abiding, disciplined residents of the United States who are hardworking, and therefore, economically successful. Because of the seemingly positive characterization of Asian people, the "model minority" myth, in turn, implies that Asian Americans are at the top of the workplace environment due to their economic success. In fact, this idea that Asian Americans are "overrepresented in the upper echelons of American society" is widespread, which, to say the least, inaccurately portrays the situation. Asian Americans are not overrepresented; rather, they are underrepresented at the higher, executive levels of employment (Kiersz).

While Asians are well-represented in corporate and professional roles, they are significantly underrepresented in executive positions. But representation doesn't seem to be the issue at hand. Buck Gee, who is an executive advisor to the Ascend Foundation (a non-profit organization that seeks to improve Asian-American representation in the workplace), told Insider that the problem is not representation, but the "equity of promotions" (Kiersz). Compared to their White counterparts, Asian Americans often receive less promotion offers and opportunities in the workplace. Hence, Asian employees are more likely to hold the same position for longer periods of time without promotions, while their White coworkers are steadily moving up to executive and managerial positions.



Courtesy of the Ascend Foundation

The Ascend Foundation analyzed data from the 2018 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and results showed that Asian Americans "made up about 13% of the professional workforce but just 6% of executive and senior officers and managers" (Kiersz). These numbers might not seem significant, but in comparison, White workers made up around 69% of the professional workforce, but 85% of the executive workforce in the same year (Ascend Foundation). To compare the data between the races, the authors at Ascend made an index called the Executive Parity Index (EPI) which is the "ratio of the executive share divided by the professional share" (Kiersz). An index above 1 indicates overrepresentation at the executive level, while an index of less than 1 implies lack of representation (Kiersz). The graph for the executive parity index is above.

Generally, employees of color are underrepresented in executive positions, with Asians, Blacks, and Hispanics having EPIs less than 1 – Asians and Blacks had EPIs less than 0.5 – while White people are overrepresented in executive positions, with an EPI of 1.23.

Disparities, when shown for different races (i.e., White, Asian, Black, and Hispanic), prove that people of color, in general, are significantly underrepresented in executive positions. Take the Fortune 500, for example, which refers to a list of 500 of the largest companies in the United States, put together by Fortune magazine each year. Although this list was first published in 1955, it wasn't until 1986, when Gerald Tsai, a Chinese American, became the first CEO of Asian American descent (as the CEO of American Can) to join this list (Zweigenhaft).

In 2000, around 2% of Fortune 500 CEOs were Asian (Zweigenhaft). In 2020, not much had changed, with only 2.5% of the CEOS identifying as Asian (Zweigenhaft). Between these two years, from 2000 to 2020, there have only been 35 CEOs on the Fortune 500 who identify as Asian (Zweigenhaft). Although this list compiled by Fortune 500 only includes CEOs and does not consider other higher executive positions, the statistics mentioned alone display the prevalence of the "bamboo ceiling" phenomenon throughout the years.

So, why are people of color, specifically Asians, underrepresented in executive and managerial positions in the workforce? Exact reasons do not exist, but prejudice is likely a reason, as cultural differences certainly play a role. People see Asians as the "model minority" population, lacking assertiveness and leadership. The "bamboo ceiling" exists because of these stereotypes, and there doesn't seem to be improvement over the years regarding Asian-American representation in leadership positions.

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The Minnesota Hmong Markets: A Perseverant People

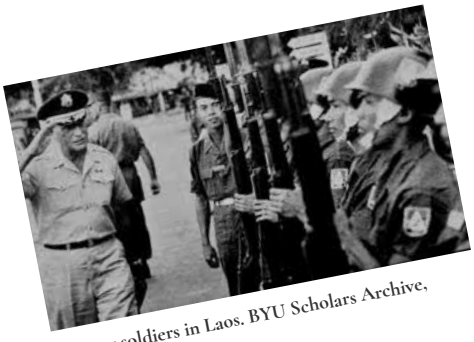
My advisor at college was the one to tell me about the Hmong markets. I had previously known about the large population of Hmong people residing in Minnesota but nothing more. Quickly, it became apparent that there was much more to the story than I had ever known.

By Hope Yu

The Hmong commander Vang Pao, 1961. John Dominis/Time Life Pictures — Getty Images.

A Hmong Boy Soldier, 1968. Minnesota Historical Society.

Choua Thao, the first Hmong female nurse during the secret war. Roger Warner, PTJ.



Hmong soldiers in Laos. BYU Scholars Archive,

The original home of the Hmong people is thought to be the Huang He river basin of central China[7]. However, the expanding Han Empire pushed them south, forcing them to resettle. Starting in the 1700s, the established Hmong kingdom in Southwestern China became no more as the people were again forced out or subject to intense persecution and death, resettling mainly to Laos, Vietnam, Burma, and Thailand; the sole Miao group to do so. Only two to three million remained in China.

In 1961, during the Vietnam war, Eisenhower and then Kennedy approved a program headed by the CIA to recruit and train mainly Hmong locals in Laos to fight against the communist regimes of Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam[5]. Considered a secret war and dually one of America's deadliest, these people were initially subject to the terrors of war alongside the cruelty of the United States. Once the Communist party of Laos took over in 1975, the US troops pulled out and the Hmong were left to the mercy of the communist regimes. Most attempted to flee through the Laotian jungles to Thailand but many were caught, tortured, raped, and murdered by local governments. Those who managed to escape then lived in Thai refugee camps dependent on "American rice-drops," and UN refugee support while they suffered daily abuse from Thai officials[6]. It is estimated that between 30,000 - 40,000 Hmong boys and men died during and because of the secret war, and around 500,000 Hmong people were killed or wounded[8]. To this day, tens of thousands of active bombs in the mountains of Laos remain an incredibly dangerous reminder of the suffering that occurred.

The CIA had initially promised the Hmong that, regardless of the outcome of the war, they "would continue to protect and provide aid to all Hmong people," by providing a pathway to the US[8]. Once the US had lost, they did provide airlift support to Thailand but only for a small percentage of the approximate 40,000 Hmong fleeing. In regard to US immigration, the US government initially claimed that the Hmong were "too primitive" and were not given asylum alongside Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees post Vietnam war[9]. Eventually, after negotiations heavily led by certain American individuals with direct connection to the Hmong, the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act was amended to allow Hmong inclusion; although, initially, only high ranking Hmong officials and those employed by the US government were allowed entrance. The US government, in supposed thanks, eventually created housing and spaces for displaced Hmong families and communities to reside within the US.

The Wall Street Journal

The New York Times

PBS

Meet Minneapolis

Jenn Ackerman for The New York Times

Pao Houa Her for Resy

Caitlin Abrams for MPLS ST PAUL

Visit St. Paul

Because of where the US government gave the money to create these communities, mainly the Lutheran and Catholic church, a large percentage of Hmong ended up in Minnesota, although many eventually moved to California. These immigrants began their livelihoods within the US by relying on farming and agriculture. Although the climate and soil conditions were different, the farmers persevered and, in only a decade, they, "had revitalized the Saint Paul and Minneapolis Farmers Markets, transforming them into some of the most vibrant markets in the country, while also changing Minnesota's taste buds for Thai chili peppers and Chinese bok choy," (HAFA). During the 1980's, alongside the aforementioned sponsors, Hmong farmers created projects and organizations like Hiawatha Valley Farm Cooperative with the Church World Services and the Minnesota Agricultural Enterprise for New Americans with the University of Minnesota and Lao Family Community.

Past a need for sole survival, the 21st century allowed new generations of Hmong to establish themselves within the economy of Minnesota on almost all fronts, going beyond agriculture. From law firms to grocery stores, the Hmong quickly put themselves in a position of success.

The idea of a formal Hmong selling grounds began in the early 2000s, when "entrepreneur Toua Xiong had the idea of turning an abandoned lumber yard on Como Avenue near the state capitol into a sort of urban Hmong town square, calling it Hmongtown and subdividing the space into hundreds of stalls that individual vendors could rent by the year or the day, in the case of the outdoor farmers' market stalls," (Grumdahl). At that time the economic recession in the US affected different communities disproportionately, the Hmong included; the "Hmong Village is the creation of nine local Hmong entrepreneurs, who in 2009 had a bold plan in a lousy economy. They dreamed of opening a multimillion-dollar shopping destination in St. Paul so large it could house 250 Hmong businesses," (Pioneer Press). However the banks were opposed to the idea, citing that it was too ambitious and thus wouldn't approve any loans. Turned away, the original nine decided to pool their own money to rent a warehouse and Hmong business owners began to line up to help them out as word spread. Eventually in 2010, Hmong Village opened with "17 eateries, two grocery stores, a chiropractor, a pharmacy, hair salons, an insurance agent and a law firm, along with a vast checkerboard of small shops," (Pioneer Press). From there, it only rose in popularity. The neverending maze of stalls boasts traditional Hmong food among clothing, accessories, and home goods. Popular dishes include Roasted Chicken Laarb, Khao piak sen, Koj thiab ntiv, and Boba.

Today's Hmong farmers make up more than 50% of the farmers at markets in the greater twin cities area. Despite this decade spanning story of immense success, Hmong people are consistently subject to the whims of a society that does not prioritize their success or meet their needs, instead they are forced to navigate unnecessary language barriers and "face many barriers to accessing land, financing, training, research and markets and building sustainable family businesses," (HAFA). Additionally, recent events have created major barriers for their success: Covid-19 brought down business rates momentarily but are expected to return to pre-Covid level soon and the rising temperatures, especially the past summers, have taken a major toll on the produce production. To assist with these difficulties, organizations such as the Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA) have a long historical presence within Minnesota.

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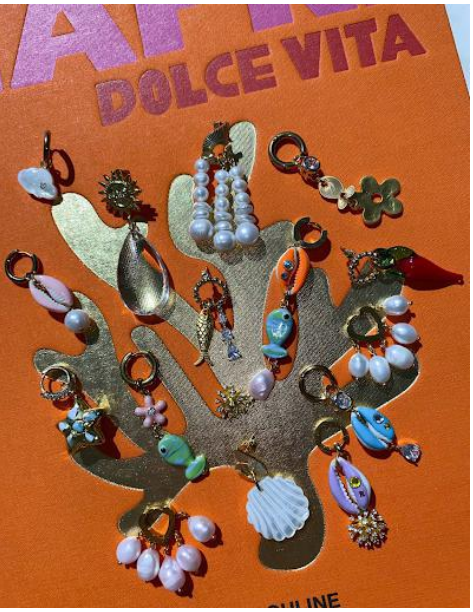
Local Businesses

favorite shops from the team



Notte Jewelry

If you're ever looking for jewelry or other daily accessories made of unique materials such as seashells or pearls, Notte Jewelry is the place to go! Founded by Jessica Tse, Notte Jewelry provides all sorts of accessories ranging from earrings to pins, and the pieces are all individually designed and crafted from an eccentric mix of unexpected materials. The designs for many of the items are influenced by Tse's time in New York, Florence, and Italy. Notte is highly recommended for fun, unique accessories!

Website: nottejewelry.com

Spice Waala

Indian Street Food Restaurant

Founded in 2018, married duo Uttam Mukherjee and Aakanksha Sinha created Spice Waala in the hopes of bringing "unapologetically authentic" Indian street food to Seattle. With only 13 items all under $10, the couple has indeed achieved this goal, with reviews from The Seattle Times and avid foodies raving over their business. I'd highly recommend you check out either of their 2 locations!

2008 NW 56th St, Seattle, WA 98107
340 15th Ave E #202, Seattle, WA 98112

kandykreate

"My business is my passion and hobbies I enjoy doing! Ever since I was young, I have enjoyed crafting and making things. As I got older, to support those hobbies of mine, I wanted to be able to support myself with my own crafts. Thus, I slowly began selling products while trying out new art materials." Khammy Fang, CEO of kandykreate, an Asian-American teen-owned online crafts business. Website: beacons.ai/kandykreate

TRES Sandwich House

Cofounded by chefs Minako Matsumura and Makoto Ogasawara, TRES Sandwich House is a Japanese–style sandwich shop. Their sandwiches are made fresh each morning with fluffy white bread and contain a wide variety of fillings, ranging from strawberries and cream to yakisoba. Since the sandwiches are crustless, TRES also has a box full of bread crusts that customers are free to enjoy. I highly recommend the pork cutlet and curry croquette sandwiches.

1502 145th Pl SE. Bellevue, WA 98007
Hours: everyday from 8:00am - 2:00pm

King Donuts

King Donuts being in the heart of Rainier Beach has made it a staple in the neighborhood. Growing up, I remember passing by this place very often. Whether that be going to Safeway for groceries or towards Kubota Garden for a field trip, I have always spotted King Donuts. While King Donuts has had their many paint jobs throughout the years from Yellow to Blue and Blue to Pink, they have now moved to the Kenyon Center in South Seattle. King Donuts have a wide variety of donuts (shocking), and as well as different Asian cuisines like teriyaki and phad thai.

7820 Rainier Ave S, Seattle, WA 98118

Coffeeholic House

I've never been the biggest fan of ube, but Coffeeholic House's Purple Haze was a mind blowing experience. Seattle's first Vietnamese coffee shop brought out the best flavors of purple yam, leaving me both filled and craving for more. They also serve a wide variety of both classic and innovative coffee options, their most popular items being the Coffeeholic Dream and Vietnamese coffee. Highly recommend for high quality coffee and coffeehouse vibe.

3700 S Hudson St, Seattle WA 98118 (Take-away only)
8525 Greenwood Ave N, Seattle WA 98103 (Dine-in available)
Website: coffeeholichouse.com

Other Mentions

Jamjuree Thai
Monsoon
Timeless Tea
Don't Yell At Me
Kimchi Bistro
Betsutenjin Ramen
Mee Sum Pastry
Japonessa Sushi Cocina

Get Happy At Home - Monsoon Seattle

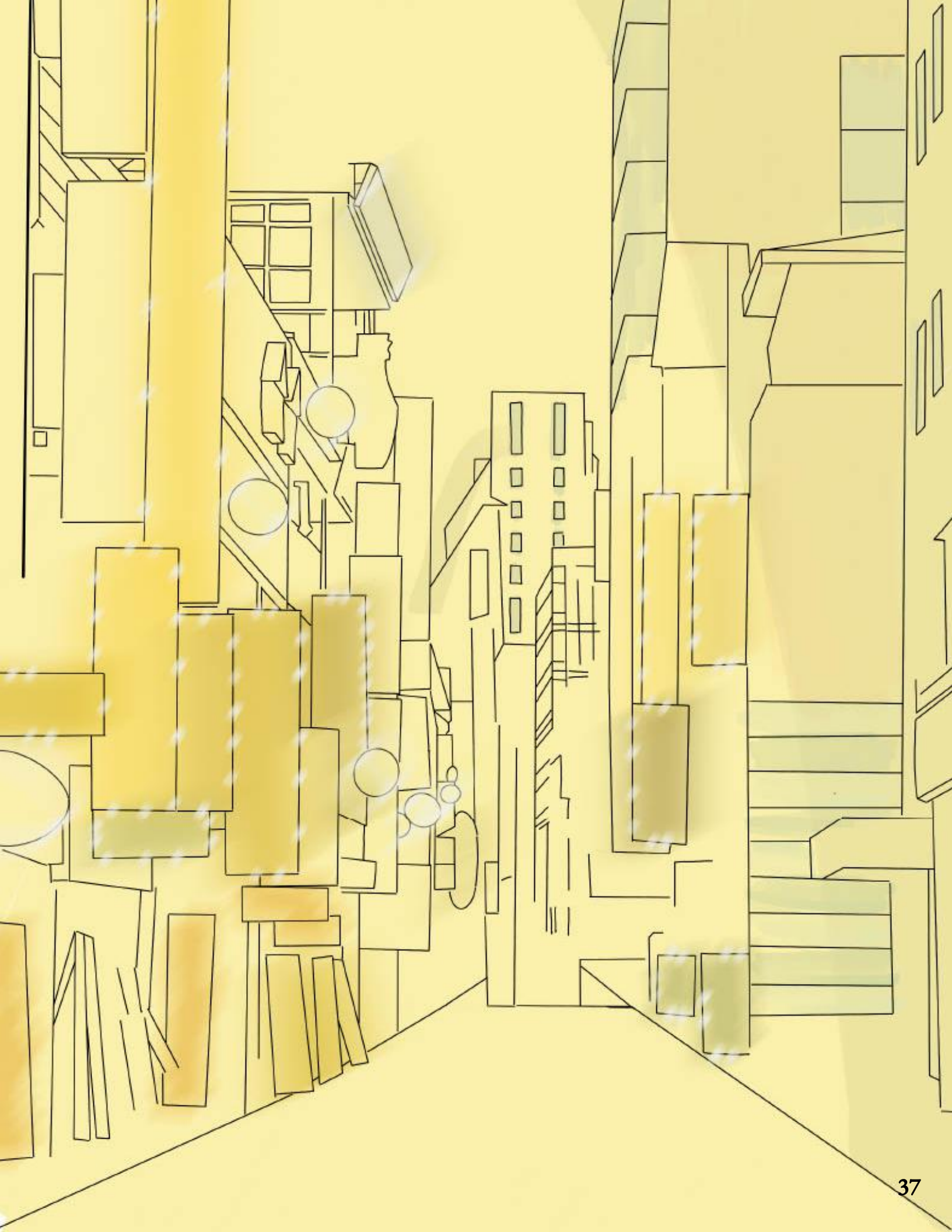
Don't Yell At Me - Kirkland Blog

Mee Sum Pastry

ALLISON CHAN

Simple Changes

This month has helped me reflect on the changes in the world. I looked at many landscape pieces for reference and I was shocked by the drastic changes. Some of the old markets my family visited when I was younger had either significantly changed or been completely removed. It made me realize the reality of gentrification and how social media portrays the more developed parts of the city rather than the parts living in poverty. This was my inspiration; in this art piece, I decided to mix in a little bit of the older and newer parts of the city markets. I enjoyed comparing and combining each place, and seeing the similarities and differences between the older and newer generations.



meet the team

Jeenah Gwak

founder, editor-in-chief

(she/her; human biology - neuroscience & piano performance at Stanford University) Thank you, as always, for reading our 10th issue and supporting us! Besides the AAPI community, I am passionate about the brain, piano, reading, sleeping, and lifting.

Hope Yu

founder, editor-in-chief

(she/her; math - history & asian studies at Carleton College) Hi! I spend a lot of my time reading, watching BTS dance practices, studying, and hanging out with friends + family. I'm a large museum enthusiast and an advocate for a full 8 hours of sleep.

Ashley Chen

editor, writer

(she/her; NYU Shanghai) My passions include playing piano and videogames. In my free time, I likes to watch Chinese dramas and hangout with my friends. For *What We Experience*, my favorite topics to write about are Asian American mental health and current events.

Gabriella Ignacio

design manager

(she/her; Newport High School) I really enjoy art — whether it be making my own or appreciating the works of others — and looking for places to try new food. Being a part of this magazine has been very valuable for me, and in the future, I hope to keep writing and being involved in Asian-American spaces.

meet the team

Meilan Uyeno

writer

(she/her; Bellevue High School) Hi! I'm a competitive diver and I love to bake and ski. You can always find me outdoors in the sun somewhere!

Allison Chan

artist/writer

(any pronouns; Garfield High School) Hobbies and interests of mine are swimming, coding, painting and running.

Nicole Kim

media manager

(she/her; Bellevue High School) Hi! Some activities I enjoy doing are visiting new places and spending hours at museums. I am passionate about learning foreign languages and connecting with culturally diverse groups of people.

Michelle Fung

writer

(she/her; Hazen High School) Hi! In my spare time, I enjoy painting, going to parks, and playing board games. I also like writing poetry and playing the flute.

writer not pictured: Hannah D