

Eth-Noh-News

Celebrating Cultures East and West, Bringing People Closer to the Heart Through the Arts and Storytelling

BI ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

Spring-Summer 2011

With a Little Help From Our Artists Friends- Aide to Japan!

The power of Art gathers people to enjoy an evening of creativity AND help those in need suffering from Japan's worst natural disaster.

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Weaving Music with Storytelling

ENT begins a new era collaborating with musicians from the community.

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New Works.. and Many More "in the Works"!

Within the folk tales, myths and modern biographical stories, therein lies the tales of immigration, illumination.. and liberation! Read what new works Eth-Noh-Tec is creating.

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Alooooooha! Mixing Business with Treasures (of the Friendship Kind!)

ENT goes to Hawaii to shoot their next several DVD's and archiving Asian American cultural history

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Orcas Storyfest

Once again set your compass to the Northwest's San Juan Islands. ENT is producing the 4th Orcas Storyfest

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Eth-Noh-Tec Raises Funds For The Japan Disaster

ENT dedicated two 'Salon! You're On!' events for the **Northern Japan Earthquake Relief Fund** sponsored by the Japanese Community Cultural Center of Northern California. **\$1327** was raised thanks to those who attended both March 19 and the May 21 event ("This was one of the best salons!" quoted on March attendee)



The evening in March started with **Jim Berenholtz** lighting the 'First Light' candle, representing the sun, from our 1999 world tour to proclaim the end of the nuclear era and the beginning embrace of solar and other renewable energy. With a moment of silence for the people of Japan, a sacred space settled over the salon artists and audience. ENT then presented India's story '**The Kingdom of Fools,**' satire appropriate for what continues around the world with our governments. Following was a panel of three Asian American visual artists (**Flo Oy Wong, Kathy Fuji-Oka, Lenore Chin**) and their curator (**Matt McKinley**) showing their work and discussing their raison d'etre for painting and their ongoing process to survive in this economy as artists, as well as their artistic process. Then



Korean American **Amber Field** enlightened us with her musical talents playing the didgeridoo and small drum, voice and the combination of all three. Her lesson on how-to was also very impressive. Following this was the beautiful and touching poetry of Filipina **Aimee Suzara** who had us laughing one moment and crying the next.



And, finally **Destiny Mohammad**, African American musician mesmerizing us with her harp music and storytelling. Ahhh... Dialogue was as usual fascinating laced with numerous expressions of gratitude and admiration.

The evening ended with a Native American song of transformation and a call for change by Jim Berenholtz. Food and socializing with old and new friends punctuated an already fine evening, despite the heavy rain and windy storm.



May 21st Salon “Artists From The Heart” – (second fundraiser) held for the first time outside of our own studio at the Nihonmachi Terrace Senior Apartments in J-town



Karma Intertwined: Leon Sun, Nancy Hom, Bonnie Kwong, Cheeta Llanes and Tsering Wangmo (shown below), shared powerful poetry and images for peace between peoples of Tibet and China. (photo by Bob Hsiang)



Sushi Cal Band: Wes Ueunten and his neo-traditional Okinawan band played delightful mellifluous melodies drawn from Okinawan folk songs along with his accompaniment and lovely vocalist.



Center for Political Action: Zaigam Kabir speaking on the impact of the Earthquake and the Global Nuclear Issue. Volunteers Dexter Coleman and Ariel lend a hand for the event.

GAPA Men’s Chorus: Pan-Asian, multi-lingual harmonies. Offered many songs, beautifully directed and performed – chosen for their themes of peace and compassion.



Arts Marketplace: The room sparkled with jewelry, embellished with quilt-work, and charmed with knitted artistry through the marketplace of original work offered for sale. (photo by Bob Hsiang)



These fine artists donated portions of their sales to aide the people of Japan: Ellen Bepp, Kiyomi Koike,



Machiko Mimoto, Pamela Ybanez, Rich Tokeshi, Holly Calica, Sabrena Taylor, Anna Wong, Pam Wu, Leslie Yee Murata, Nancy Hom, Leon Sun.



Asian Pacific Island Cultural Center: APICC was a community partner in our production of “Artists From the Heart.”

Our salon was under the banner of their larger festival “United States of Asian America.” APICC has produced this festival for 14 years.

Special Thanks to the Volunteer Team! Our standing ovation goes to the fantastic volunteer core who made pots of Filipino Adobo stew, cooked rice and brought refreshments and all the logistics to produce this event! So grateful to all of you: Christine Olsson, Juanita Tamyao Lott, Yoshito Saito, Yukiko Sadaoka, Rosette Diaz, Sue Rupp & Jose Ingojo, Leon & Karen Sun, Dexter Coleman (and the CPA gang!), Yvette Hochberg, Gwendolynn Barr, Vidda & Dennis Chan, Cheeta Llanes, Bob Hsiang, and Lilia Aguero! A HUGE round of applause and gratitude goes to Robin Bouc and the staff of Nihonmachi Terrace who so generously offered us use of the space to hold the May 21 event.



Shown here is the dynamic trio: Vinay Patel, Jennifer Banta, and Pam Wu.

The Economy

ENT gigs are still down by about 70% and yet we feel very busy! How is that? We know from friends that when they retire, they are as busy as ever. We’re not retired, but we’re supposed to have extra time given we’re not performing and traveling as much. Yet, we are busy! If anyone out there can explain that, let us know!! In the meantime, our staff is

down to minimal hours. Still, we are blessed with a fine techno-wiz **Diana Thompson** and an accounting volunteer **Simon Murage**. Thank you both so much for all you provide for Eth-Noh-Tec! And good news, Robert’s ‘hunting’ skills have improved the picture for next year’s performance calendar. Every little bit is welcome!

Internship Program: “With a Little Help From Our Friends”

This Fall we were aided by handful of energetic and dedicated students from **SF State University’s Asian American Studies Class**.



Each year Eth-Noh-Tec goes to campus to make a powerpoint lecture demonstration of our cultural activism in the community. As a result students have the opportunity to sign up for 20 hours of community service in our organization.



They learn about the ins and outs, ups in downs of running a non-profit arts organizations. Everything from researching new markets to approach, to seeking out connections in the community, to helping to produce one of the salons. In fact, their culminating class project was:

“Salon! You’re ON! Community Arts” an evening of student performing arts projects: spoken word, skits, interpretive dance and a video film fest. A special thanks to **Valerie Soe, Asian Am. Studies** professor, her class, and the wonderful students that helped us: Patag, Raenne, Charmaine, and Daphne!

ENT and Music



In these first few months of 2011, we’ve been approached by four music groups to collaborate on projects: Stories with music! We’re extremely excited about this! Some of our stories are woven with Robert’s flute, our taiko drumming or song. But

having a full sound outside our own opens up a whole new possibility. Already we have performed our stories with a full cello ensemble (**Cello Madness Congress**); in Mariposa, a shared weaving of pieces with the **San Jose Taiko Group**.

On the horizon stories with a chorus of men (**GAPA Men’s Chorus**); stories with Tuvan throat singers (**Chirgilchin**), and stories with a Chinese traditional orchestra (**Melody of China**). Can you hear it? The imagination soars! Fingers crossed for funding!!

New Works!

We were awarded a Zellerbach Family Foundation grant to create 12 new pieces: Here they are so far:

1) India’s *Kingdom of Fools*: a foolish king and his foolish prime minister rule their kingdom turning day into night, right into wrong and wrong into right. Sound familiar?;

2) Tibet’s *Monkey in the Tree*: 3 good friends attempt to learn the magic of turning water into gold through the art of letting go. However, they cannot not think about the monkey in the tree;

3) Pan Asia’s *Rabbit in the Moon*: Taking the stories of various Asian cultures, we find how the rabbit got to the moon you see on full moon nights;

4) India’s *Omen Bird*: the story of a princess who attempts to outwit fate, but falls right into it’s open arms anyway and the adventure it provides;

5) Chinese America’s *Red Altar*: the true story of Nancy’s ancestors and their journey from China on a junk boat and the life they encounter as they begin the fishing industry in the Monterey Bay area, California;



6) Filipino America’s *A New Pair of Wings*: the magical story of Robert’s mom’s journey to America at five years of age; (can you spot Robert’s mother in this school picture?)

7) China’s *Star Rabbits*: the origin of stars;

8) Philippines’ *Monkey Wind*: arrogant monkey challenges the winds from each direction bragging that not one of them can knock him off the tree.

... In the Works!

1) India’s *Flowering Tree*: a love story filled with magic and sacrifice;

2) Chinese America’s *Memories*: Nancy meanders through memories that finally give her her place in America;

3) “*Tales of the Kojiki*”: a two-hour epic of only the first of 3 books on the

mythology of how Japan was created onto the landscape of the planet and the many adventures of her many gods and goddesses.

This will be presented in the **Going Deep Festival 2012** (slated for April 11-15, 2012), 5 day storytelling event of classic long stories, myths and epics from around the world. Festival will take place at Eth-Noh-Tec Studio. And ...

4) we're open to ideas!! Give us the name of a favorite Asian folktale you'd like us to create for performance! Send to: nancy@ethnohtec.org

...Turning Into New Shows!



Tales from 'The Red Altar'

Why is Nancy's immigration piece called 'The Red Altar'? When Nancy's great great grandparents sailed from China they brought with them a red altar. Inside they placed incense and plates of mandarin oranges to the goddess of the sea and to the goddess of mercy, asking for blessings, for fortune and good luck,

safe passage and a good life once they arrived in California in 1850.

America's history begins as a land of the indigenous peoples, immigrants, and slaves. Our history books hold stories about the early white immigrants, their interactions with the indigenous, and their relationship with the slaves they brought over. There are books written to dramatize, romanticize, even rewrite this history. Rarely are there stories of the early Asian immigrants to this land and their experiences in the New World.

Immigration issues continue to be a hot topic in this country: who has the right to be here, who has the right to work here, who has the right to be educated here, who has the right to obtain medical care. And, who gets to determine who has any of these rights?

To know one's story and the story of others helps to eliminate hate, stereotypes, misconceptions, prejudice. To tell and hear the stories of the many peoples of this American fabric is to give us all equal standing in this land. To tell and hear the stories of the contributions of all the peoples of this land is to give us all the unquestioning right to be here.

And so, Eth-Noh-Tec has created a program of their immigration stories: **'The Red Altar'**, the 1850 immigration story of Nancy's Chinese family, **'New Pair of Wings'**, the magical story of Robert's mother's immigration from the Philippines at age 5, and a new song of American Asian immigration composed and written by Robert titled **'Same Dreams'**.

Despite the NEA scholar/academician panelists (that's right, not artists) questioning how the stories serve the public, and accusing the stories as 'self-serving', we are determined to continue performing these stories and have recorded them for one of our new DVDs. They illuminate and inspire, and hopefully build the bridges we so need in this country from culture to culture, ethnic group to ethnic group, people to people.



Photo above: *Americans of Chinese descent rummaging through the smoldering remains caused by anti-Chinese, ethnic-cleansing arsonists.*

We have made trips down to the Monterey Bay area to film the environment – the places where the Chinese fishing villages were situated and burned down, what remains, and interviews with researchers and historians in Monterey, Carmel, and Pacific Grove to fill out our performance as well as the DVD. Very excited!!

National Storytelling Magazine



Nancy has been asked to be editor of a special focus on Asian American storytelling. Asking eight Asian American storytellers to write an article that can open up a community dialogue on our processes, our projects and what they mean to us was the request. Hopefully the articles will open up minds and hearts to what issues we face as Asians in America and how our storytelling is one way we've responded to the issues we have experienced – even if unexpected.

The articles by **Anne Shimojima, Motoko, Alton Chun, Brenda Aoki-Wong, Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo, Linda Fang, Arif Choudhary**, and the Chinese teller inside **Cathryn Fairlee** will appear in the Nov.-Dec. 2011 issue of Storytelling Magazine. You can find out more info on the magazine: <http://www.storynet.org/magazine.html>

Hawaii!

Mixing Business With Treasures (of the Friendship Kind)

Nancy and Robert took a trip to Hawaii – no one had to pull our legs for that! Our journey there was 3-fold: 1) to perform for our long-standing Board member **Ric Trimillos'** combined retirement and 70th birthday bashes,



2) to record 2 new DVDs through **Jeff Gere's** community TV contacts, and

3) to begin a new project interviewing those who were the starters and leaders of **the 70's Asian American Arts Movement** on the west coast.



We're not getting any younger and as pioneers, this is a very important piece of history to document. We were able to get 3 very important interviews:

Kenny (shown above) and Chizuko Endo (pioneers in Japanese American Taiko) and Adela Chu (founder of SF Carnival).

We have a list of 3 more to do in Hawaii, so we'll be back! Awww.... What a shame!



As unexpected side benefits, we also got to perform at **Kealoha's Poetry Slam**. The evening was electric as the very impressive young poets gave us hope for our future. And, we recorded a very important 1-minute video for our **Green Grows the Story** project. Three locations were chosen to make our pitch for 'Green Grows the Story' – our youth environmental project, and was produced and filmed by **Sharon and Tom Au-Curtis**. Thanks

so much!! You can see it on our webpage: www.ethnohtec.org.

Orcas Storyfest

July 30-Aug 6, 2011

2011 is the year for our 4th storytelling festival that we produce on rural Orcas Island in Washington State. It will take place the first week of August and feature:

Judith Black, Doug Banner, Arif Choudhury, Eth-Noh-Tec, and special guest Rumi poet: Anji Ringzin (not shown below).

Always fun and always a treat, we present in several venues for families and seniors for free, and the general public for a small fee. The community is very generous in their support through food and meal donations as well as homes for our guests to stay in – if they don't want to tent with us! Always the Friends of the Orcas Island Library donate a small grant to defray travel costs for our guests tellers. This year that grant was cut in half because of the economy. Still, tellers do it out of the kindness of their hearts and to play with us in one the most beautiful places in America. It becomes sort of a 'free' vacation! Thanks to our storytelling friends! Come up if you're in the area first week of August.



More Summer Fun! Global Storytelling Institute

Eth-Noh-Tec has been invited to **Eastern Tennessee State University** to be a part of the Global Storytelling Institute along with fellow storytellers and scholars Joseph Sobol and Hannah Harvey. We will be sharing our experiences in creating international storytelling-based cultural exchanges in their local communities and abroad. The course considers methods of developing cross-cultural exchanges, ethical pitfalls, and unique possibilities that storytelling performance offers as a tool for dialogue and bridge-building.



Hands-on in approach, our contribution in the course offers a microcosm of the global storytelling we experience with the Gengcun community in China, the exchange of stories and cultural benefits for all. We will then perform with students at the Umoja Festival (Johnson City, TN). Whether planning an intercultural gathering in your neighborhood, an international delegation, or even a trip for a solo storytelling global trek, this institute—though it may not have all the answers—will point out roadmaps, warnings, wrong-ways, and right-of-ways en route along the storytellers' international bridge (trip-trap-trip-

trap...). For more information visit: <http://www.etsu.edu/stories/institute.htm>. Scroll down to Special Early Fall Institute.

What Eth-Noh-Tec Needs

Well, the story is not new. The title is 'We Need Funding'. Nancy and Robert have never had a raise since they first started getting paid at all for running the organization, which was probably in 1990, despite the fact that we started in 1982! Back then we were young and our art was everything and we artists did it all out of love.

Becoming a non-profit in 1990, things changed. A meager \$1000 a month each was our initial admin salary. It has remained that now for 21 years! Wow. Now, that's love!

But can we even do that? Before, the artistic fees kept us in good stead. But without many gigs, there isn't much of that.

We are extremely grateful for those who have consistently given for years and years. You have kept us going - not only your checks, but also your faith and belief in our mission and that what we do is an important service and gift to the world.

So we are asking that you continue to find a way to donate to Eth-Noh-Tec in these hard times so that we can keep Eth-Noh-Tec going. Our expenses to keep the business/office operating remain the same. We are strong in our convictions to keep our programs running and we have trust

that the economy will turn around somehow. We believe in miracles!

With all the predictions about what 2012 will be or bring, Eth-Noh-Tec is preparing for a better economy by attending showcase conferences this year hoping to lure presenters to our booth for hiring next year. Wish us the best! And wish the world the best, too! We are facing some very challenging times.

2011 & 2012 What's Up?

Already we are looking at the Fall Winter salon season which will launch our lucky 7th year! As our theme of community building grows we are still looking for potential poets, singer/songwriters, ensembles in music, dance, theater as well as teams of visual artists, film makers, and photographers to present for 2011-2012 roster. If you can recommend any talented artists we'd love to hear from you. In the works we have salons with cultural focuses on Latino Culture (possible in sync with **"Los Dias De Los Muertos"**), a theme titled **"Salon! You're WONG!"** (Artists with The Last Name Wong), and a special concert of visiting artists from Tuvan, Siberia, the throat singing group **"Chirgilchin"** www.chirgilchin.com