

## ImaginAsian Participant Biographies

**Kate Agathon** is Purdue University doctoral student and is a community activist for the Asian American community. A former "Angry Reader of the Week" she is the producer of photographer William L. Snyder's *commUNITY* photo exhibit created to celebrate Asian Americans in the Midwest and to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. An online gallery can be seen at <http://williamsnyder.com/community>.

**Keiko Agena** is a L.A.-based artist best known for her portrayal of "Lane Kim" on the TV series, *Gilmore Girls*. These days it's all about her new company, Mango Pop! Here she designs cards, jewelry, and t-shirts, all featuring her original artwork and oh so witty dialogue. Visit her web site at [www.mangopop.com](http://www.mangopop.com).

**Jimmy Aquino** runs the internet radio station A Fistful of Soundtracks and writes and draws *The Palace*, a web comic that can be read at [afistfulofsoundtracks.blogspot.com](http://afistfulofsoundtracks.blogspot.com).

**Jeremy Arambulo** lives and draws comics in Brooklyn, New York. After graduating from Boston University, he landed a job as Art Production Assistant at Blue Sky Studios working on *Ice Age*. In addition to drawing comic art, he has created story boards for music videos and album covers. Find him on the internet at [JeremyArambulo.com](http://JeremyArambulo.com)

**Lindsay Bauer** is a native of Floyds Knobs, Indiana, and is a senior at Purdue University. She will be graduating in May 2010 with a Bachelor of Arts in Visual Communications Design and a minor in Communication.

**Darren Lee Brown** is a writer, artist, DJ, and musician currently residing in East Lansing, Michigan, where he is pursuing a Ph.D. in American Studies. He hails from the Bay Area and can be found getting lost in vinyl records on a daily basis.

**Minh Carrico** teaches design and photography at Edmonds Community College just outside of Seattle, Washington. Outside of the classroom, Minh works on a number of fine art photography projects and art installations that addresses identity.

**Jef Castro** is Fil-Am by way of New York. His need for a pop culture fix steered him to photo editing at *Entertainment Weekly* and *Vibe Magazine* and then on to television as production manager for AZN TV's award winning show on Asian and Asian American films, *Cinema AZN*. He has also storyboarded for various commercials, music videos, and feature films such as *The Motel* and *West 32<sup>nd</sup>*.

**Roxana Cazan** is an Eastern European MFA/Ph.D. student at Indiana University in Bloomington. She specializes in Ethnic and Post-colonial Studies, writes poetry, and teaches English Composition classes for multi-lingual students.

**May-Lee Chai** is a writer and educator. She is the author of five books, most recently *Hapa Girl: A Memoir*, and one book-length translation (from Chinese to English). A former reporter for the Associated Press, May-lee has published in traditional newspapers, academic journals, literary journals, and print magazines. She is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Grant in Literature: Fellowship in Prose among other writing awards. Find out more about her work at [www.may-leechai.com](http://www.may-leechai.com).

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**Lillian Chan** is a doodler & dreamer extraordinaire based in Boston, Massachusetts. By day, she designs MIMOBOT designer USB flash drives and during what free time that is left, draws the indie comic *ah-Lin!*, published in the *Sampan Newspaper*, New England's Only Chinese-English newspaper since 1979. For more information, visit [www.lillianchan.com](http://www.lillianchan.com)

**Bernard Chang** is an artist/designer known for his work in the comic book industry and entertainment design. Chang is best known for his work for DC, Marvel, and Disney. He signed on to his first-ever regular professional gig based on the contingency that the main character, Dr. Mirage, be an Asian American male superhero who didn't know kung fu. His official web site is [www.bernardchang.com](http://www.bernardchang.com).

**Cliff Chiang** lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. His artwork has been hailed for its "fluid and confident storytelling" and "sweeping linework and nuanced style." Graduating from Harvard University with a joint degree in English Literature and Visual Arts, he worked in editorial at Disney *Adventures Magazine* and Vertigo/DC Comics before making the leap into freelance illustration. To see more of his work, visit [www.cliffchiang.com](http://www.cliffchiang.com).

**Dan Choi** is an infantry officer in the United States Army and an LGBT rights activist. A West Point alumnus, he is most known for publicly challenging America's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy, which forbids lesbian, bisexual and gay (LGB) service members from serving openly.

**Keith Chow** is the Education and Outreach Editor for *Secret Identities*. For several years, Keith was a high school English teacher and freelance writer for Wizard Entertainment's *ToyFare Magazine*. From 2004 until just recently, he was the Education Specialist at Diamond Comic Distributors.

**Judy Chu** is the first ever Chinese American woman elected to Congress. She was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives as a Representative of California's 32nd District in July 2009. Dr. Chu has been dedicated to education for decades, and was a community college professor of psychology for 20 years. She holds a Ph.D. in psychology and a B.A. in mathematics.

**Dawen** is a soul/r&b singer-songwriter based in Los Angeles, California. A singer-songwriter, Dawen hopes his music will further the dialogue on racism and social injustice in American society. His debut album *American Me* is available now on iTunes and Amazon. Find out more about Dawen at [www.dawen.us](http://www.dawen.us).

**Far East Movement** (also known as FM) is a rapping, songwriting and music event producing group formed in 2003 in Los Angeles, California, consisting of Kev Nish, Prohgress, J-Splif, and DJ Virman. Their songs continue to be shown in the media and TV networks including VH1, MTV, and E! The group recently signed a record deal with Cherrytree Records. FM's web site is [www.fareastmovement.com](http://www.fareastmovement.com).

**Angelina Fielding** is a self-taught artist living and working in Lafayette, Indiana. Over the years, she has worked in several mediums including: watercolors, charcoal, acrylics, oil and mixed media. Her art has been showcased in several locations including Indianapolis, Atlanta, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, and Brooklyn.

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**Kip Fulbeck** is an American artist, slam poet and filmmaker. He is the author of *Permanence: Tattoo Portraits; Part Asian, 100% Hapa; Paper Bullets: A Fictional Autobiography*; and the upcoming *Mixed: Portraits of Multiracial Kids*, as well as the director of a dozen short films including *Banana Split* and *Lilo & Me*. Kip has been featured on CNN, MTV, and PBS, and has performed and exhibited in over 20 countries. Find out more about Kip's work at [www.seaweedproductions.com](http://www.seaweedproductions.com).

**Kian Goh** is a founding partner of *super-interesting!*. She previously worked with Weiss/Manfredi Architects in New York City on projects including the Smith College Campus Center and the Barnard College Nexus, and with MVRDV in Rotterdam on the Metacity/Datatown exhibition and Eyebeam proposal. She teaches design and sustainability at Parsons The New School for Design, and serves on the board of directors of the Audre Lorde Project.

**Larry Hama** is a writer, artist, actor and musician who has worked in the fields of entertainment and publishing since the 1960s. He is best known to American comic book readers as a writer and editor for Marvel Comics, where he wrote the licensed comic book series *G.I. Joe: A Real American Hero*, based on the Hasbro action figures. He has also written for the series *Wolverine*, *Nth Man: the Ultimate Ninja*, and *Elektra*.

**Lisa Hanasono** is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Communications at Purdue University. In addition to her scholarship, Lisa strives to be an active community member. A *Yonsei*, she is an Editorial Board Member of the *Pacific Citizen*, a national Asian American newspaper. She is a proud member of the Japanese American Citizens League, the nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization.

**Mike Honda** represents the 15<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of California in the U.S. House of Representatives. A Japanese American, Honda was born in Walnut Grove, California in 1941 and spent his early childhood in the Granada War Relocation Center, an internment camp in Colorado. He is serving his sixth year as Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. To learn more about Congressman Honda, visit <http://honda.house.gov>.

**Edward Hong** is a graduate of the College of William & Mary with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and Asian Pacific American Studies. Passion to make a change in this world through the performing arts and activism defines Edward's ongoing life and it is the struggle against all things unjust that gives him this passion to be an activist, a rebel, and a stubborn man.

**Daniel Inouye** represents Hawaii in the United States Senate. A *Nisei*, he was assigned to the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team, the most highly decorated unit in the history of the Army. A Medal of Honor recipient, he is an eight-term U.S. Senator and the second most senior member of the U.S. Senate. To learn more about Senator Inouye, visit <http://inouye.senate.gov/Home/Home.cfm>.

**Michael Kang** is a filmmaker who wrote and directed the movies *The Motel* and *West 32<sup>nd</sup>*. His acclaimed feature film directorial debut *The Motel* premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2005 and won the Humanitas Prize. Michael was a fellow at the Sundance Filmmakers Lab in 2002 and won the 2002 Geri Ashur Award in screenwriting through the New York Foundation for the Arts. For more information, visit [www.kangisman.com](http://www.kangisman.com).

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**Margaret Kasahara** was born in New York City and currently resides in Colorado Springs, Colorado. She has exhibited her artwork in museum shows, including the Denver Art Museum, the Japanese American National Museum, and numerous others. In addition to the inclusion in numerous private and corporate collections, her artwork has also been featured in editorial and corporate print media.

**Maxine Hong Kingston** is a Chinese American writer and Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley. She has contributed to the feminist movement with such works as her memoir, *The Woman Warrior*. Kingston has received several awards for her contributions to Chinese American Literature including the National Book Award in 1981 for her novel *China Men*.

**Yuri Kochiyama** is a *Nisei* civil rights activist who advocates on a variety of human rights issues. From her experience with racism and internment during World War II, Kochiyama has created bridges with many ethnic groups through her work for social justice. Kochiyama is well known for her affiliation with Malcolm X and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize through the “1,000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005” project.

**Stella Lai** grew up on a small, car-less island southwest of Hong Kong Island called Cheung Chau. Her work has been featured in magazines such as *The Face*, *IdN*, *Beautiful Decay*, *Giant Robot* and *Vogue China*. In 2007 Stella was selected as one of 10 artists from around the world to design a can for Pepsi. While not working on commercial projects, Stella is busy working on new paintings for her next exhibition, having already shown in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Atlanta, Miami, New York, Manchester, Shanghai and Beijing. Her work can be seen at [www.tree-axis.com/stella/#/home](http://www.tree-axis.com/stella/#/home).

**Jennifer 8. Lee** was a reporter at *The New York Times* for nine years. She harbors a deep obsession for Chinese food, the product of which is *The Fortune Cookie Chronicles* (Twelve, 2008), which explores how Chinese food is all-American. Read about her fascinating discoveries at [www.fortunecookiechronicles.com](http://www.fortunecookiechronicles.com).

**Judy Lei** is a junior at Smith College with a self-designed Asian American Studies major. She is passionate about poetry, playwriting, progressive politics, and Pikachu. She is currently working on *Dividing Lines*, a play about interethnic conflicts within the Asian Pacific American community.

**Jianming Li** is originally from Guangzhou, China. When he was six years old, he moved to the United States with his parents. Currently, Jianming is a postdoctoral researcher at Purdue University. Jianming is presently working on a book project, with the theme being Indiana landscapes. To see more of his work, visit [www.jliphotography.com](http://www.jliphotography.com).

**Tao Lin** is a poet, novelist, and short story writer. The author of five books of fiction and poetry, he won the 2005 December Prize for his first poetry collection, *you are a little bit happier than i am*. He is the founding editor of Muumuu House, and co-editor of the literary press Ass Hi Books with Ellen Kennedy.

**Jerry Ma** became one of the first creators of Digital Webbing Presents, where his graphic short story “Burn” led him to launch the indie studio Epic Proportions with his brothers ([www.epicprops.com](http://www.epicprops.com)). He is the art director and one of the editors of *Secret Identities: The Asian American Superhero Anthology*

**Nhat Meyer** is a photojournalist of Vietnamese descent whose extensive portfolio of work includes coverage of the Athens 2004, Beijing 2008, and Vancouver 2010 Olympics. To see more of his work, visit <http://nhatgnat.com>.

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**Goh Nakamura** is a San Francisco-based musician who writes ditties about parking tickets, impossible crushes and faraway dreamlands. A fortuitous 2007 feature on YouTube's front page brought his music videos over a million views and earned him a huge new fan base from all over the world. Goh's vocals and guitar work are featured prominently on the scores to Ridley Scott films *A Good Year* and, most recently, *American Gangster*. More information can be found at <http://goznakamura.com>.

**Kim-Duyen Nguyen** is a high school senior living in Kansas City, Missouri. Watching cartoons as a child inspired her to pursue art. An aspiring comic book artist or a children's book illustrator, Kim plans to attend art school next year to major in illustration or graphic design.

**Bich Minh Nguyen** received the PEN/Jerard Award for her memoir *Stealing Buddha's Dinner*, which was named a Chicago Tribune Best Book of 2007, a BookSense pick, and was also selected as The Great Michigan Read for 2009-2010. She is also the author of the novel *Short Girls*, which was named a Best Book of 2009 by *Library Journal*. She teaches literature and creative writing at Purdue University.

**Bao Phi** AKA Thien-bao Thuc Phi, is a Vietnamese American spoken word artist, writer and community activist living in Minnesota. Bao has twice won the Minnesota Grand Poetry Slam, and also won two poetry slams at the Nuyorican Poets Café in New York. He is the first Vietnamese American man to have appeared on HBO's *Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry*, and the National Poetry Slam Individual Finalists Stage, where he placed 6th overall out of over 250 national slam poets.

**Parry Shen** is an actor best known for his lead role in the 2002 breakthrough film *Better Luck Tomorrow*. He can be seen next in the highly anticipated sequel, *Hatchet 2* and Activision's biggest video game to date, *True Crime*. Managing Editor of *Secret Identities: The Asian American Superhero Anthology* he has been profiled on *Entertainment Tonight*, and *Extra* as well as in *Rolling Stone*, *People Magazine*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. His official web site is [www.parryshen.com](http://www.parryshen.com).

**Akemi Shimbashi** is the lady behind *Letsu Go!* on Twitter, where she promotes Japanese-related events around Los Angeles, California. A writer by education and a web project manager by trade, Akemi enjoys digital photography and videography, karaoke, crafting, growing mini-cacti, and learning how to play the accordion.

**Beau Sia** grew up in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where he spent most of his childhood facing identity issues. Being Chinese-American only added to the confusion about his lack of fully understanding his cultural diversity. His only outlet was the arts. It was only after a chance viewing of spoken word on MTV that he discovered writing. Beau has appeared frequently in *Russell Simmon's Presents Def Poetry* on HBO. He was featured in the 2000 ESPN X Games and on *Hardball with Chris Matthews*, *Last Call with Carson Daly*, *Showtime at the Apollo*, *The Today Show*, and *The Tony Awards*.

**William L. Snyder** is an adventure sports, wedding, lifestyle, and portrait photographer. He is the creator of *commUNITY*, the provocative photographic exhibit exploring Asian American identity in the Midwest. An avid mountain biker and adventure sports enthusiast, his work can be found at [www.williamlsnyder.com](http://www.williamlsnyder.com).

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**Lac Su** is an executive for TalentSmart, a global think tank and management consulting firm during the day. After 5 p.m. and on the weekends, he is a husband, a father, a painter, a photographer, and a writer. He was born in Danang, Vietnam, grew up in Los Angeles, and now resides in San Diego. *I Love Yous Are for White People* is his first book—a memoir.

**Ryan Suda** is the founder of Blacklava Clothing, the premier online store for Asian American apparel and products. Although the company was established in 1992, it was not until 1995 that the focus switched to an Asian American focus. Suda credits taking an Asian American Studies survey course and touring with the Asian American theater company HereandNow as his inspiration. Blacklava's web site is [www.blacklava.net](http://www.blacklava.net).

**Amy Tan** is a writer who is well known for her novel, *The Joy Luck Club*. Her work has been translated into 35 languages, and her essays and stories are found in hundreds of anthologies and textbooks. Tan visited Purdue University in 2006 as part of the Purdue University Libraries Distinguished Lecture series. An autographed copy of her novel, *Saving Fish from Drowning*, is a gift of the Purdue University Libraries to the *ImaginAsian* permanent collection.

**Nishiki Tayui** was born in Japan in 1973. Her work includes painting, interactive art, public art and community-based art. Her first solo exhibitions were in Portland, Oregon and Tokyo, Japan. Her work can be seen at [www.nishikitayui.com](http://www.nishikitayui.com).

**Tak Toyoshima** is the creator/artist of the nationally syndicated daily comic strip *Secret Asian Man* (*S.A.M.*). Hailed for its stereotype-breaking content, *S.A.M.* often centers its discussion on what it means to be Asian American, as well as other race and ethnic-related issues. Keep up with *S.A.M.*'s adventures in race relations at [www.secretasianman.com](http://www.secretasianman.com).

**Donnytello Tran** is an illustrator of things he finds amusing, including the smell of durian to the power of Dustin Nguyen's hair. He is working on a children's cookbook and blogs for [neaat.wordpress.com](http://neaat.wordpress.com). He aspires to illustrate every Asian American hero ever. His illustration blog is <http://donnytellotran.wordpress.com>.

**Sophia Travis** currently lives in Bloomington, Indiana, where she has been a member of the Monroe County Council since 2004. Of Japanese and Finnish descent, she is the president of the Indiana University Asian Alumni Association and is also well known for playing the accordion and singing in her band, Mitten.

**Phil Yu** is the creator and editor of [angryasianman.com](http://angryasianman.com), a popular Asian American news/culture website. Building a steady, loyal readership since 2001, the blog has been called by the *Washington Post* "a daily must-read for the media-savvy, socially conscious, pop-cultured Asian American." Mixing humor with criticism, Phil's commentary has been featured and quoted in stories for the *Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, National Public Radio, CNN, *USA Today*, MSNBC, Newsday and CBS News. His web site is [www.angryasianman.com](http://www.angryasianman.com).

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**Frances Kai-Hwa Wang** is a second-generation Chinese American from California who now divides her time between Michigan and the Big Island of Hawaii. She is an editor of *IMDiversity.com* Asian American Village, lead multicultural contributor for *AnnArbor.com*, a contributor for *NewAmericaMedia.org*, and author of the syndicated column, *Adventures in Multicultural Living*. She is a popular speaker on Asian Pacific American and multicultural issues and she team-teaches *Asian Pacific American History and the Law* at the University of Michigan.

**Joz Wang** is the blogger known as "jozjozjoz" who caused an international incident when she jokingly called a piece of electronic equipment "racist." Aside from being co-editor of *8Asians*, she also writes at L.A. Metblogs and at her personal site. She received one of her undergraduate degrees from UCLA's Asian American Studies department and currently sits on the Board of Directors of East West Players, the nation's premier Asian American Theatre.

**Frank Wu** is a law professor, author, and public intellectual. He was recently appointed as the new Chancellor & Dean of UC Hastings College of Law in San Francisco, California, a position he will assume in July 2010. He is the first Asian American professor to teach at Howard Law School, as well as the first Asian American to serve as dean of Wayne State University Law School in Detroit, Michigan.

**William Wu** was nominated five times for the Hugo, Nebula, and World Fantasy Awards. He has published over a dozen novels as well as over 50 short stories that have appeared in a wide variety of magazines and anthologies, which include *Omni Magazine* and the best-selling 1996 *STAR WARS: Tales from Jabba's Palace*. His most acclaimed book *Hong on the Range*, was chosen for the Wilson Library Bulletin's list of science fiction "Books Too Good To Miss".

**Jeff Yang** is an author and journalist who pens the column "Asian Pop" for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Editor-in-Chief of *Secret Identities: The Asian American Superhero Anthology*, Yang founded and was editor and publisher of the pioneering Asian American periodical *aMagazine* for over a dozen years.