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ABOUT THIS COVER

Berkeley alum, co-founder of the Black Panther Party, 3rd-generation Japanese American, leader in the third world Liberation Strike, activist for ethnic studies, FBI informant? The enigma of Richard Aoki persists despite numerous books and documentaries that have been made about him. His iconic look of sunglasses and a beret bearing an Asian American Political Alliance button will be forever ingrained in our memories, symbolizing the bold passion he brought as a civil rights activist.

editors' note

prior to this issue, the only article i had published in **hardboiled** took me a year to think through before i finally worked up the courage to just write it. despite four years in the high school paper along with brief stints at other publications, i felt too inhibited by my lack of knowledge about the asian pacific islander identity to define my own confidently. as a spring admit, i came to berkeley without much understanding of api issues, but i joined **hardboiled** because i found comfort in others who shared my passion for journalism. surrounded by passionately vocal students, i felt at once inspired but intimidated: hearing about the "model minority" and "problematic representations" was new to me, and it took me another semester before these concepts sunk in and before i finally felt ready to express my views in written form. the article that appeared in issue 15.3 describes my struggle to navigate through my maternal grandfather's death, and as much as it means to me, i still have not shared it with my parents. i feel that because i never knew wàigōng as a person, they would say i am being too emotional about the matter. what do i know about struggle?

as a co-managing editor in my third semester in **hardboiled**, i know the past year has been one of intense growth for me. even as i find support from the api community, i know that i have to confront reality: my parents do not know the student organizations i belong to, and least of all how behind i am in classes as a result of my involvement. they do not know how i identify.

what do i know about struggle, coming from a city where the average income is \$159,424, where asians make up 50% of the population, and of that number immigrants from taiwan and china make up the majority of foreign-born residents?

i learned about struggle in my own way, through my classes,

activities, and friends who told me their personal histories. yet most of all, i learned the hard way as well, from overcoming insecurities about my body, my sexual orientation, my history of self-destructive behaviors.

i realized that the trouble with mobilizing the api islander community to take on more activist roles comes from the misconception that only those who have been severely disadvantaged have more motivation to take action. this assumption fails to acknowledge that people like myself who hold the privilege of never having to worry about financial aid still have the potential to be educated about systemic inequalities. i believe that regardless of our economic status, we can afford to build trusting relationships within and across ethnic communities. we cannot brand suffering as a product of certain conditions limited to certain people who we condescend to assist. community comes not from preserving a stable identity, but deconstructing the many intersections that shape changing perspectives. from there, we can work together in a partnership built on recognizing difference rather than common experiences.

racism no longer pertains to just ethnicity anymore, and i hope this issue of **hardboiled** engages readers in a critical dialogue about how they are actors in their communities.

always in bold,

sam lai

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APIS AND THE VOTE



by sophia ng & katherine wang

Amidst all this talk of the upcoming election, the spotlight hasn't exactly been on Asian American voters. Yet, even though the Asian American community is still in the process of being shaped as a civically engaged and active demographic, it yields great potential to be heard. One in six Asian Americans today live in a swing state, with Asian Americans making up 9% of the population in Nevada and almost 7% of that in Virginia. While those numbers may not seem impressive at first glance, keep in mind that Obama is currently leading by only 1% in Nevada while Romney leads by the same percentage in Virginia as of the latest polls – differences so small that they are quite literally still within the margin of error. Add in the fact that over 30% of Asian Americans remain undecided in this race, three-four times higher than the national average of undecided voters, and it is clear the undecided Asian American voter has the potential to be a powerful game changer. Asian Americans are also the fastest growing minority in the United States (at an astonishing rate of 46% per year) and have a higher tendency than other groups to vote based on individual issues, rather than hard party lines.

Asian Americans remain a group largely ignored in this presidential race – and in general. A survey done this May shows that only 23% of Asian Americans have been contacted by the Democratic Party in the past two years and only 17% by the Republican Party—low numbers especially for a group with such high

numbers of undecided voters. Furthermore, Asian American representation in both parties is also appalling. Asian Americans consist of about 6% of the United States population. One would expect that the House of Representatives would reasonably reflect America's demographics with about 26 representatives out of a total of 435. The reality? Only seven API Representatives. It doesn't take much math to see the problem.

So, why are we so underrepresented and ignored? Sure, it may partially be because the Asian American voting bloc is not a very unified one due to its diversity, as evidenced by varying levels of support for each candidate (Indian Americans overwhelmingly support Obama, while Filipino Americans are slightly more in favor of Romney). But, the real problem is something you probably have already noticed and is largely our own fault. It's simple, really. Most Asian Americans just don't really vote. In fact, only 47% of Asian Americans turned out to vote in the 2008 presidential election, the lowest among all ethnic groups – and Asian American voter turnout has consistently been the lowest for decades. If we aren't going to vote anyway, our votes don't matter.

According to the Asian American Survey conducted by the Lake Research Partners, APIA Vote, the Asian American Justice Center, and the Asian American Institute in April 2012, the main reasons for not voting in 2008 were: ineligibility

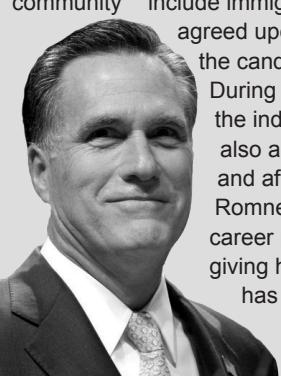
(36%), out of country/state (13%), no time (10%), didn't know enough about candidates (7%), and didn't like candidates (6%). However, it's important to note that the 36% ineligible voters weren't even counted when calculating the Asian American voter turnout. So, yes, only 47% of eligible Asian American voters voted in 2008. For a community in which a third isn't even currently eligible to vote and make up less than 10% of the overall population, those numbers are extremely low. If we even hope to make our voices heard, this is not the way to do it.

It really comes down to this. Do you care about how your tax dollars are spent? Do you want issues such as health resources and immigration to be reflective of the demands of the Asian American community? If so, you have to vote. In the end, civic participation is essential to getting the representation we need—and deserve. And if that is not enough to get you out to the polls on November 6th, perhaps Jon Stewart's Convocation Address will tie up loose ends—"Many people throughout history have fought for your right to do so. They've 'rocked' the vote, even accepted the difficult choice of 'Vote Or Die.' Here's a hint: pick the first one." Even more so, with California's implementation of online voter registration and absentee ballots, inconvenience is no longer an excuse. We cannot complain about the lack of representation or social change if we don't take it upon ourselves to start making what we want as a community a reality.

ROMNEY VS OBAMA

a guide for apa voters

photos: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/aheram>
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/gageskidmore>



Mitt Romney has taken an active stance to court the Asian American vote, lauding members of the community for their "wonderful culture," contributions to businesses and new products, and service to protect global freedom in remarks to the Virginia chapter of APIA Vote. According to his campaign website, Romney has selected former Secretary of Labor under George W. Bush, Elaine Chao, as the national chair of his Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders for Romney community. Chao's co-chair, Akshay Desai is the CEO of Universal Health Care. In terms of relevant policy issues, Romney holds no current stance on affirmative action. However in 2008, Romney stood against affirmative action and quotas, citing his belief that, "our nation is at its best when people are evaluated as individuals." Other issues of salience particular to the Asian American community include immigration and small businesses. While Obama and Romney

agreed upon their desire to support and cut taxes for small businesses, the candidates did differ among their perception of a small business. During the first presidential debate, Romney had proposed lowering the individual tax rates to lower taxes for small businesses. He also advocated for the "self-deportation" of illegal immigrants, and affirmed his stance against the DREAM Act. According to Romney's official biography on his campaign website, "Mitt is not a career politician. He has spent most of his life in the private sector, giving him intimate knowledge of how our economy works. But he has also been an outstanding public servant."

romney

Barack Obama has appointed several Asian Americans to key positions in his administration during his first term, including a record number of 3 to his cabinet of 15, and doubled the number of Asian Americans on the federal bench. During his term, he also reestablished the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to better evaluate the issues within the API community. He has promised to address issues of individual Asian American groups and remarks that the government needs to "stop grouping everybody just in one big category [because] dozens of different communities fall under the umbrella of the Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders." Obama supports affirmative action "as a means of overcoming both historic and potentially current discrimination." He is also a strong supporter of immigration and the Dream Act and is in favor of adjusting immigration and citizenship policy to favor those with advanced degrees. He does not believe English should be the official language of the federal government, while Romney does. Obama plans to support small businesses by offering tax credit to businesses, as well as fewer penalties for tax errors. Regarding healthcare, a survey conducted by the National Asian American Survey indicates that 44% of Asian American respondents claim to be "better off" because of Obama's healthcare plan. Also notable is Obama's upbringing in Indonesia and Hawaii, which some argue ties him closer to the Asian American community.

obama

Gangnam Style

by jenny lu

"Gangnam Style," a popular Korean song accompanied by a signature dance, has gained worldwide attention. The song has taken over radio stations, and PSY, the artist responsible for this catchy song, has appeared on multiple U.S. talk shows and other facets of entertainment. Hundreds of parodies and dance imitation videos have gone viral—videos made by celebrities, fans, and even students here at UC Berkeley. PSY has become a popular and successful chart topper in the U.S. music industry with this single, but should we be more conscious of the reception of "Gangnam Style" in America?

How do UC Berkeley students embrace this pop culture phenomenon? Ryan Clark, a first year student, said, "I think the song is quite comical...I think it's popular because it is a catchy tune with a simple but innovative dance."

When I was watching PSY's visit on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, I couldn't help but notice that PSY wasn't on the show for an interview; he was there to display his "silly" dance as the audience laughed, clapped, and cheered along. Sure, it's playful, but I would not fully consider this a positive reception. Viewers of the *Ellen Show* weren't actually interested in the song, the lyrics, or the meaning behind the song—they were drawn by the ridiculous signature dance and the catchy beat. PSY explains in an interview that "Gangnam Style" is actually a satirical piece aimed at mocking the high class South Koreans in Seoul who express their lifestyle through a particular way of dressing and presenting themselves: the "Gangnam" style.

Matthew Shong, a second year student, shared,

"Because of the lack of seriousness behind the video, I have no [concern about] the lyrical meaning behind the video other



photo courtesy of www.in.com

than the entertainment value of the music video itself." Despite the fact that PSY has a point behind his song, his music still falls under pseudo-individualization. PSY attempts to convey

a different message in his song, yet ironically, he is absorbing the fame and fortune that he has earned. The message of mocking materialism in the song has long been lost behind the dance and tune, but now it has also been lost within the artist himself.

Mary Thao, a second year student, stated, "[General audiences] were enjoying it for entertainment issues, which only reinforce the media stereotypes of Asian Americans." Throughout the video, PSY portrays a silly character, creating a ridiculous image of Asians; he exudes the qualities of the typical "funny Asian guy." He is emasculated and in a sense not sexually attractive, which has been the typical role of the Asian male in America. This song and its music video were allowed to become mainstream because they do not threaten American male masculinity. PSY and "Gangnam Style" are just another Asian media text that allows Americans to have a good laugh about how silly Asian males are—just like Ken Jeong (*The Hangover* and *Community*) in almost all his roles. PSY is simply a different form of the same stereotype we see in American media: the Asian who has to give up his talent and the meaning behind his music in order to conform to a stereotype that does not fairly represent us.

Of course, we can't help but be happy for PSY and his international success. We shouldn't even hold back from celebrating his success, enjoying the song, and learning the dance! However, we should be critical of this type of cultural "success" in America and what this means for Asian/Pacific Islander Americans and our representation.

Chinglish: No Dictionary Needed

by laurie song

Playwright David Henry Hwang's newest production has come to Berkeley: *Chinglish* follows an American signmaker as he makes his first business trip to China and discovers the linguistic and cultural differences that get lost in translation. Hwang, a second-generation Chinese American and one of the preeminent Asian American dramatists in the U.S., is best known for his critically acclaimed plays such as *FOB* and *M. Butterfly*, for which he has won multiple awards in theatre. In *Chinglish*, he takes a more lighthearted comedic look at how *guanxi*—personal relationships—can drive both business and private interactions in China.

Hwang explains his inspiration for *Chinglish*, which comes from his personal experiences: "China has become very interested in Broadway-style shows. And I'm the only even nominally Chinese person who's ever written a Broadway show so I started to be called over for a lot of different meetings. And I think that *Chinglish* the play comes out of my trying to deal with what it means to do business in China, and the things I understood, and the things I didn't understand."

Chinglish, directed by Leigh Silverman and produced by the Berkeley Repertory Theatre, is full of snappy, quick-witted dialogue that effortlessly transcends language barriers through the universal language of comedy. Because a significant portion of the dialogue is spoken in Mandarin Chinese, English subtitles are projected onto the set, often to amusing and contradictory effect. The scenic design—set in Guiyang, China—is impressively coordinated, with sleek transitions

between sets accompanied by snippets of pop music by Taiwanese American musician Wang Leehom.

Cast members include Michelle Krusiec, whose varied filmography includes a leading role in *Saving Face* and numerous film and TV appearances, as Xi Yan, the "suspiciously sexy bureaucrat"; Alex Moggridge as Daniel, the American businessman; Celeste Den as Miss Qian, a well-meaning but comically inaccurate interpreter; Brian Nishii as Peter, a British expatriate in China; and Larry Lei Zhang as Minister Cai of the local Guiyang government.

Though advertisements for *Chinglish* portray the play as a farce—a comedy full of hilarious linguistic misunderstandings, cultural misunderstandings, and sex—I find the message behind the madness far more interesting. Hwang makes incisive points about what it means to do business in a globalized economy in which the U.S. is no longer the sole superpower, and in which China is emerging as a land of perceived entrepreneurial opportunity. For instance, when Daniel becomes frustrated with Xi Yan's limited English, Xi Yan asks him why she should speak English and why he cannot learn to speak Chinese instead, revealing the double standard present in these exchanges.

Hwang also highlights the cultural differences that ultimately prove more difficult to bridge than the permeable language barrier. Most notably, he portrays this through the characters of Minister Cai and Peter, the British expatriate who

serves as Daniel's "consultant"—his linguistic and cultural translator. Hwang frames the underlying dissonance between the older Chinese generation from the Cultural Revolution and



photo courtesy of www.berkeleyrep.org

the younger generation within the context of politics and internationality. Though Minister Cai, a Communist Party member, seems to hold the key to doing business in Guiyang, it is later revealed that the navigation of *guanxi* is far more complex than either he or Peter could have imagined: when you play the game of personal connections and the owing of favors, the boundaries between legality and corruption become blurred. Surprisingly, the two—despite their generational and national differences—find mutual (and somewhat ironic) ground in their nostalgia for an idealized China of the past, for Chinese operas and army days left behind in the wake of China's rise.

In *Chinglish*, David Henry Hwang interprets modern China's continual political and cultural transformation—in which both Chinese and Westerners often find themselves lost—through the lens of personal relationships and comedy. Sharp, intriguing, and fast-paced, *Chinglish* is a play that has the audience laughing at the theatre and pondering its message all the way home.

小草有生命,请脚下留情!
I like your smile, but unlike you
put your shoes on my face.



HSAB: HMONG STUDENT ASSOCIATION @ BERKELEY

Promoting Community through Cultural Awareness

by HSAB cabinet members

The Hmong Student Association at Berkeley (HSAB) is a student-initiated service group created in 2008 with the mission to bring cultural awareness of the Hmong community, retain current students, and increase the enrollment of prospective students into higher education. In the space, we aim to provide academic and social support to current students through the implementation of educational discussions, social activities, and community involvements. Through these efforts, students are able to explore, learn, and think more critically about Hmong culture, history, and contemporary issues.

For fall 2012, we will hold meetings on the first Wednesday of every month from 7 to 9 pm that are open to the community. Every meeting covers a specific topic based on the interest of the Hmong community and members: for example, the most recent session on October 3 revolved around the origins of Hmong people and their migration patterns throughout Asia. The organization works alongside with other Asian Pacific Islander (API) groups on campus to provide a safe and confidential space for individuals to voice their concerns and opinions on issues that affect their lives.

In addition to academics and education, we also hold social events in which we hope to provide support for students by keeping them involved and motivated. These types of bonding provide students with the opportunity to meet their peers.

This spring of 2013, we will be holding our 5th

annual The Pursuit of Higher Education (PoHE), a three-day, two-night high school program in which we bring 36 participants specifically from the Central and Northern region of California to the UC Berkeley campus. The vision for PoHE this year is to create a sustainable high school program in which we can provide continual support and resources to all participants. PoHE aims to promote higher education through various academic and cultural workshops. In addition, students will get the opportunity to participate in peer-bonding activities, learn more about the Hmong culture, develop leadership skills, and create mentor-mentee relationships. Most of the high school students who participate in this program come from underrepresented and under-resourced communities. For most of them, it is the only opportunity to connect with college students and be exposed to a college campus, and we are very honored to be a part of this important event.

We want to continue to build a stronger and more supportive space for the community. Therefore, in the future we hope to establish a stronger economic and social foundation in order to provide continuous support and resources such as scholarships, networking and professional skills for our community.

*Come join us for HSABlloween
October 31, 7-9p @ 54 Barrows*





RICHARD

There's much to say about Seth Rosenfeld's new book, I'm sure, but so far, all I've heard is about ten pages of it. Whether Aoki was really an informant and to what extent, I don't know. But, what I do know is how callously Rosenfeld sensationalized something so impactful not only to those who knew and respected Aoki, but to the Asian American community. To Rosenfeld, perhaps, it is media fodder, but to so many others, it means a lot more – and that is something Rosenfeld was clearly aware of and manipulated. Why else would he choose to make a documentary of Richard Aoki – and drop the bombshell without sufficient evidence – just days before his book was published? To treat such a revelation with such little respect is not just disrespectful of Aoki, but of the entire API community. As a student journalist and former member of a constitutional team, I believe strongly in the press's responsibility for revealing the truth and would defend, had someone

found comprehensive, solid evidence of Aoki's involvement with the FBI, his right – his responsibility, even – to publish it. It is even understandable, given that Aoki is not the focus of his book, that Rosenfeld cannot give a comprehensive image of the truth surrounding Aoki's involvement with the FBI. But, he purposely chose to stir up controversy with only a partial understanding, making it seem like Aoki is a much larger part of his book than he is. And honestly? I think that demonstrates a complete lack of empathy and respect to the community he purposely targeted for a little extra publicity. An Asian American Studies professor at UC Berkeley and close friend of Aoki, Harvey Dong pointed out that "Rosenfeld should have asked people who knew Richard." Truth is, Rosenfeld had never even met Aoki in person and only talked to him in two phone conversations in 2007. Those who did know Aoki met the news with disbelief and outrage. Diane Fujino, who published Aoki's biography,

Samurai Among Panthers, earlier this year, was among the first to respond, pointing out that Rosenfeld relies on unconvincing evidence and provides neither motives nor conclusive evidence. Fred Ho, who worked with Aoki during the 90s, also spoke out in defense of Aoki. "If Richard was a FBI agent, how did he help the FBI? By training the Panthers in Marxist ideology, socialism? By leading drill classes at 7 a.m. daily and instilling iron discipline in their ranks? By being one of the leaders to bring about Ethnic (Third World) Studies in the U.S.?" Fred challenged. To a community often stereotyped as compliant and passive, Aoki is representative of what Asian Americans are capable of. Aoki's legacy lives on, in the Ethnic Studies department here, in this paper, even, and nothing should detract from what he has done for this campus and for both the Asian American movement and the African American movement – especially when there is no conclusive evidence he helped to sabotage either.

The impact of his activism is clear, the impact of his alleged informant identity much less clear and regardless of the truth, what he fought for – solidarity and understanding between minorities, for one – remains important. Ultimately, we must remember, as Dong said so aptly during his meeting with interns in APASD (Asian Pacific American Student Development) on September 25, that "stories like this shouldn't discourage us from making social changes." Yes, I think the evidence is inconclusive at best, yet in the end, no matter what Aoki may have chosen to do in the past, it doesn't change the fact that what he stood for – and what I still believe he truly believed in – is still worth striving for. As Newton once told Aoki, "the struggle for freedom, justice, and equality transcends racial and ethnic barriers." That struggle is universal, and it continues to this day. If anything, Rosenfeld's insensitive actions towards the API community only prove that.

As Berkeley students, it is our responsibility to find the truth – no matter how difficult it is for us to acknowledge. This means that the "facts" that Seth Rosenfeld presents in his book *Subversives* are not going to be accepted without a thorough investigation and analysis from community members. Rosenfeld's claims rest primarily on the testimony of deceased FBI agent Burney Threadgill, heavily redacted FBI documents on Richard Aoki, and M. Wesley Swearingen, a former FBI agent. A portion of the conversation Rosenfeld has with Threadgill is available online, and we are only able to hear what we are told is Threadgill's voice, saying "Oh yeah, he was a character. He said 'I don't have any interest in communism,' and I said, 'Well why don't you just go to some of the meetings and tell me who's there and what they talked about?'" We have no way of knowing whether or not it is actually Threadgill speaking, and the context of the conversation is only provided by Rosenfeld. Additionally, Rosenfeld claims that Threadgill brought up Aoki after seeing his name on an FBI document in 2002; however, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) states that it does not disclose any information about any person in their records, unless that person is already deceased. Aoki passed away on March 15, 2009 – which means that Aoki's name should not have been included in the FBI document that Rosenfeld claimed he possessed. Redacted information in the released FBI files on Aoki clearly demonstrates the type of censorship and level of privacy provided for people that are still living.

While we are still on the subject of the FOIA and redacted information, I would like to point out that because of the heavy censorship throughout Aoki's FBI file, we are unable to conclude what kind of information Aoki supposedly furnished, and who was actually involved. Because of this, it's hard to say whether Aoki was actually an informant – or being informed on. There are inconsistencies throughout the FBI file that make it appear as if Aoki were being informed on, rather than being the informant. For example, on page 53 of the FBI file, it states that Aoki is of "Korean" descent, incorrectly listing his ethnicity. A second example is on page 242, or AOKI-246, dated December 29, 1972. Rosenfeld states that on this particular report, Aoki is reminded to report his income from

the FBI on his tax return in a hand-written notation, which is not actually present on the document. Along with the incorrect references throughout the document, Rosenfeld constructs data that never really existed. During his short interview with Aoki, he claims that Aoki stated, "People change. It is complex, layer upon layer," in response to Rosenfeld's question about whether or not he was an FBI informant. Upon listening to the actual recording, one finds that what Aoki may have been referring to is ambiguous. Although Rosenfeld claims that the words were in the exchange immediately before the others, the transcript of the conversation never has Aoki saying that at all, despite Rosenfeld's claims. Why would Rosenfeld purposely edit out such an important part of the conversation? Instead, listening to the recorded conversation gives it different context than what his book makes it out to be. It is clear that Rosenfeld is at least somewhat guilty of manipulating his findings in order for them to resonate with his arguments.

Rosenfeld's self-proclaimed evidence has too many cracks for it to be considered admissible. Twisting the information on Aoki only serves to increase the sales for his book, *Subversives* – which, admittedly, piqued the interest of many students and community members alike. It is unfair for Aoki's legacy to be damaged in such a way, and Rosenfeld's information is barely circumstantial evidence at best.

While Rosenfeld's research may have come to the conclusion that Aoki worked as an FBI informant, it is inconclusive in determining whether or not this had an impact on the most important aspects of Richard Aoki's legacy. The 1960s was a period where the government was obsessively suspicious of any and all "radical" groups, and considering that FBI agent Burney Threadgill claimed that he first found out about Aoki via wiretap, it is very possible that Aoki was being monitored long before he supposedly became an informant. Today, the notion of being an FBI informant may seem absurd, but back in the sixties, it was likely that it did not bear the same weight. Aoki's legacy should continue to live on, despite the negative media surrounding the allegations brought up in *Subversives*.

AOKI

In August 2012, Journalist Seth Rosenfeld released his book, *Subversives*. In this publication, Rosenfeld dedicates a few pages of his book to accuse Aoki of being an FBI informant. Additionally, a short video titled "The Man who Armed the Panthers", which focused specifically on Richard Aoki, was released to promote his book.

by janice wong, jenny lu & katherine wang

No one knows. No one knows, for sure, if Richard Aoki was a FBI informant. So how do we come up with a conclusion as to whether or not to believe Seth Rosenfeld's claims?

Our Asian Pacific Islander American community is torn. There are avid believers who defend Aoki's image; there are believers who completely disagree with and refuse to understand Rosenfeld's claims. Bobby Seale, one of the Black Panther Party's founding fathers, wholeheartedly believes in Aoki's innocence. Seale stated, "This... is about a defamation of my old colleague... Richard Aoki being a so-called snitch? Bullshit."

Then there are those who are disappointed, confused, and lost—who is this man we had once deemed an honorable figure who stood for justice?

Aoki became the icon of API activism at Berkeley—his image screamed "Third World Liberation" and "Black Panther Party." Aoki was an educator; his dedication to supporting diversity helped land Ethnic Studies classes on this very university. We cannot let go of a hero who has defined and strengthened the activism in the Asian American community. We cannot let incoherent claims damage the work Aoki has done for social justice and

equality. We, as a community, will not allow a simple story to take away the legacy, history, and pride of the Asian American identity that Aoki helped to create. This controversy has riled a lot of attention, but we can take power in that. We can use this to shine light on the good that Aoki has done, all the contributions he made for our community, especially on the UC Berkeley campus.

In an interview I conducted with Harvey Dong, professor of Asian American Studies at UC Berkeley, he shared his personal experiences and memories of Aoki, his longtime friend since they met in their undergraduate days at Cal. Dong said, "If Richard Aoki was an informant, [the FBI] did a lousy job. Richard did exactly the opposite [of what the FBI wanted]. Richard brought unity. He didn't do things that would sabotage the university, but it changed the institution of the university for the better...With Richard's involvement, he bridged solidarity between Asians and Blacks."

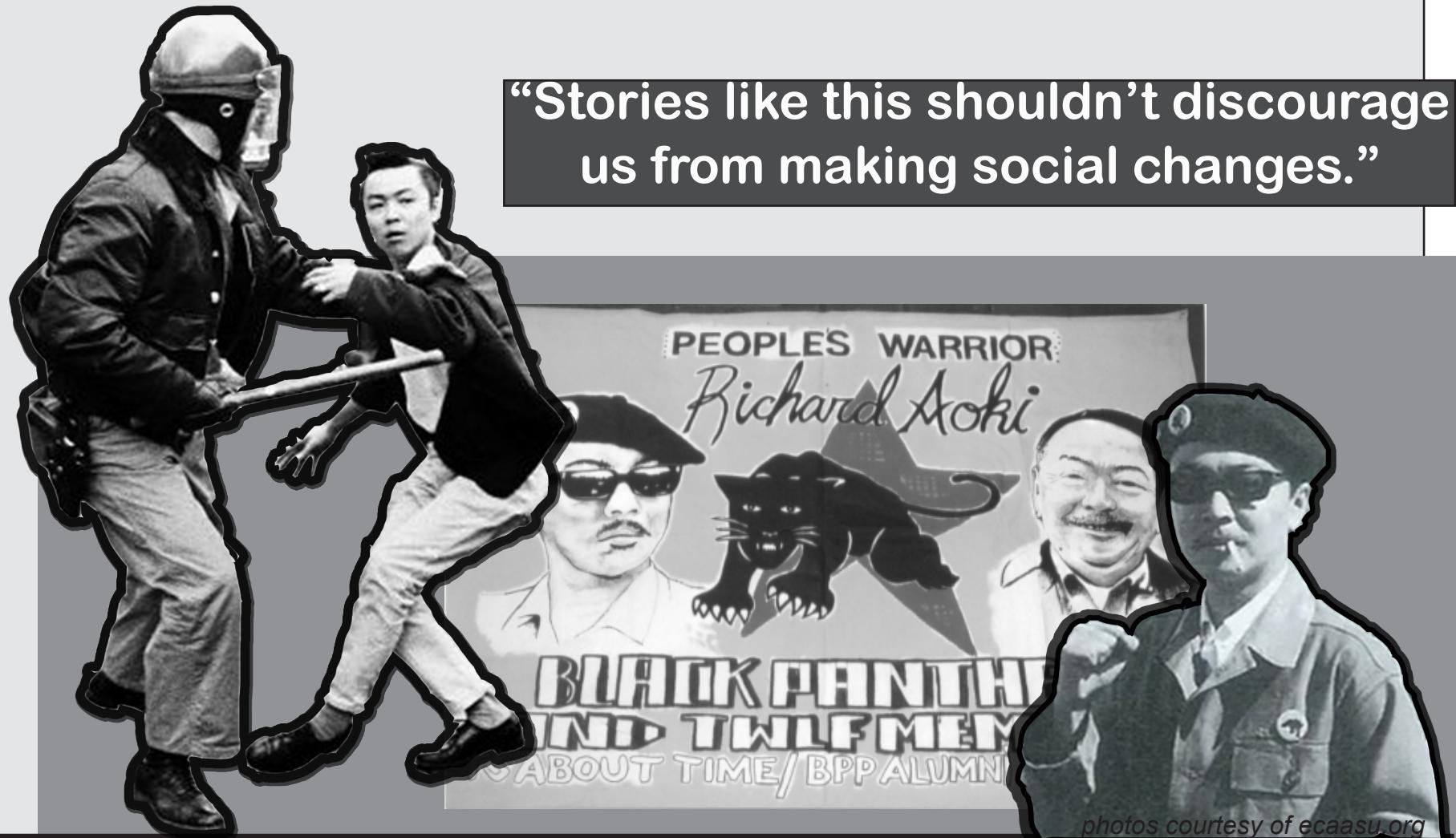
Aoki walked through the same paths we are walking today, he fought for some of the classes we have here today, he fought for education, opportunity, and understanding. He brought attention to the Asian Pacific Islander community; he showed society that we are not just the "model minority." He showed everyone

that we have a voice and that we must be heard. Most importantly, he fought for us—the future. Aoki was an activist who wanted a better society, a more inclusive community; he wanted a positive change.

Dong shared, "Richard's motivation was to inspire others to continue the struggle... Coming together as a community, people being involved and using knowledge and using it for the community. Revolution of the mind." After so many years of his continued fight for us, how can we turn our backs on him now?

We may never know if Richard Aoki was truly a FBI informant, but his actions in history never betrayed us. Throughout history, the API community has faced racism in the eye: we have been oppressed, we have been worked, stripped and exploited, and yet we have remained quietly resilient. Aoki may have been only one of few who have gained attention as an API American leader, but we will not be silenced anymore. As an Asian Pacific Islander American community, we must stand by Aoki's history and image. We will not let anyone take Richard Aoki away from us.

"Stories like this shouldn't discourage us from making social changes."



photos courtesy of ecaasu.org



THE MORAL MODEL MINORITY

WHY THE ASIAN AMERICAN CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IS SILENT ON JUSTICE

by nate lee

It may come as a surprise that most of the tables that line Sproul Plaza these days belong not to political groups, racial solidarity groups, or groups supporting social causes, but to Asian American Christian groups. And I bet that if you walked down Sproul on a school day and grabbed every flier that was thrust into your hands, many of them would be invitations to Bible studies, prayer meetings, and other wholesome events hosted by Christian fellowships.

I find it an ironic juxtaposition: here you have Sproul Plaza, the holy land of the Free Speech Movement and the birthplace of progressive student activism, and then you have a bunch of conservative Asian American Christian groups trying to invite you to their free BBQs.

I don't speak about these Christian groups disrespectfully because, well, I'm on staff with one. But I am heartbroken because, in spite of our hopes to proclaim Truth, when it comes to issues that matter to the rest of the campus and the world—issues like politics, race, and justice—the Asian American Christian community has, as Martin Luther King said of the Christian church, "lagged in its concern for social justice and too often has been content to mouth pious irrelevancies and sanctimonious trivialities." And in a world where the status quo continues to pull the marginalized into even greater depths of poverty and hopelessness, silence is compliance, and it is hurtful.

I believe the reason Asian American Christians are not more socially engaged is because we have internalized and co-opted the model minority myth into our theology. We have become the Moral Model Minority, silencing our distinct historical narratives and using God to validate our privilege.

Majority culture has told us that we have succeeded without any handouts, and we have responded with a resounding "Amen!" without realizing that our alliance with the dominant culture has forfeited our identity and implicitly cast an indictment on other minority groups. Many Asian American Christians, finding that

their Confucian values of hard work, personal achievement, and frugality aligned with the Protestant work ethic, have in fact replaced the Gospel with the American Dream. We have interpreted our signs of material and academic prosperity as God's blessing and have turned a pharisaic eye toward Black and Latino communities, LGBTQ communities, the poor, and the less privileged while forgetting that we were once in their shoes (and in many ways still are).

Our theology furthers this downward spiral into social oblivion. Church historian Tim Tseng calls it the "Evangelical deconstruction of Asian America" where the belief is that "our earthly identities ultimately do not matter [because] our Christian identity is our most important one." Is it a surprise, then, that Asian American Christians are quick to dismiss their own cultural identity? Perhaps in our pursuit to, as the Bible says, "be one in Christ," we have actually silenced our own unique stories and become cookie cutter Christians who no longer know themselves or their place in the world. Furthermore, the common Christian belief that this world is evil and passing away and that we should only be focused on some heaven in the hereafter only drives us to be more complacent toward a hurting world.

As a community, we have forgotten about our marginalized past. We have forgotten that the reason many of our ethnic churches were built was because white churches would not accept us. Our churches therefore became ethnic community centers where we could receive language training, develop job networks, and obtain positions of leadership. However, instead of continuing to identify as marginalized and expressing our faith in a way that promoted justice (like many Black and Latino churches have), we clung to our upward mobility, adopted a white Western theology, moved to the suburbs, called it God's blessing, and began to view the world from a distance, through a privileged lens.

We must remember that the Bible was written

for marginalized communities in diaspora, not for privileged folks whose greatest fear in life is failing chem. We cannot forget that Jesus was a poor refugee, that he represented a Jewish people who were oppressed by Roman imperialists, and that he led a revolution called The Way that stood in stark opposition to the status quo. But we don't want to believe this, because to believe in this Jesus threatens our hard-earned success. So we nail him to a cross and we crucify our own identities and narratives along with him.

To be frank, I strongly believe that issues of racial, sexual, political, social, and economic injustice have spiritual roots and solutions. The Christian community hopes to be a spiritual voice in the conversation on campus about justice. In light of all this, I apologize. I am sorry for my own silence, ignorance, and apathy, for the ways that the Christian community at Cal has been a purveyor of injustice rather than a co-laborer for peace. I apologize for the ways we have judged justice movements and have looked proudly upon the activist community.

The Asian American Christian community must reclaim its identity. We must refuse to adopt the story that American society gives us and instead tell our own distinct God-given narratives. We must see the world with new eyes and call out the ways that the dominant culture continues to prevent us from having the world that God desires: a world where there is no more violence or oppression, where relationships are made right, and where we can become whole again. We must realize that the Gospel is not just about converting individual souls for some paradise over yonder, but that it is about the restoration of all brokenness in the here and now. When we finally end our finger-pointing, we may find that we are just as much in need of conversion and salvation as those we have called "lost." When we join each other, we will find that our liberation and restoration are wrapped up together as one. This is revival. Amen.

Prop 30

A Bill to Save Public Education

by donald chan

Students have a chance this November to show Sacramento that they will not stand for any further cuts to public education by voting in favor of Prop. 30.

Prop. 30 raises the income tax on those making more than \$250,000 per year and raises the state sales tax by 0.25%, and the funds all go to education. While K-12 education and community colleges face the most cuts if Prop. 30 does not pass, the University of California faces a \$250.0 million cut as well, no small number given the many cuts in the past few years.

There is also a competing proposition to raise taxes for education, Prop. 38. It is expected to raise more money for education than Prop. 30 will because it increases taxes on those making over \$7,316. However, none of that money will go to community colleges or public universities, so the UC would still face a \$250.0 million cut. What's worse, if Prop. 38 passes, voters would be less likely to agree to a tax increase for community colleges or public universities in a future election. After all, voters do not want to raise taxes on themselves two elections in a row.

The consequences are dire if Prop. 30 does not pass. Course offerings may be cut. Students will not be able to enroll in required classes or electives that they want to take, and while some people may say that electives are not important, having a specialized field of knowledge can be the difference between a job and unemployment in this tough economy. It can be the difference between staying an extra semester and graduating early to save money. It can be the difference between fulfilling all the requirements for a double major or an honors program.

But Prop. 30 matters for API students in particular. In 2010, APIs comprised 13% of California's population, but comprised 39% of UC Berkeley's undergraduate student population. Similar stories hold true at other UC schools such as UCLA and UC Irvine. Looking around UC Berkeley, one probably figured out that APIs are overrepresented on campus, but 62% of API students in California are also enrolled in community colleges.

Yes, that's right, a majority of API students in California do not directly enroll in four-year universities. We are much more complex than the "model minority" myth ascribed to us. That generalization unfairly ignores those who do not fit the stereotype. Many APIs attend community colleges because they want to save money, because they want to be closer to home, because they are new immigrants, or simply because they

screwed up in high school.

Tina Savong '13, a Geography major in the Berkeley Cambodian Students Association, says, "People whom I know from my hometown—Long Beach, CA—[which has] a very high concentration of Cambodians, usually want to go to a city college first to save money or because they have that desire to help their parents financially. This means that instead of working towards a degree, they would rather work to form a source of income along with their parents."

In addition, many community college students are recent immigrants. I personally know many hardworking students from Hong Kong who study at community colleges and transfer to UCs. They are not citizens yet and cannot vote, but they want to remain in this country and become productive citizens. Compared to other ethnic groups, Asian Americans do not possess as much social and political capital, partly because the United States heavily restricted their immigration before the Immigration and Naturalization Act in 1965. Education, therefore, is essential for them to succeed in our society.

When API college students mobilize the API community, they can influence whether Prop. 30 passes. They can inform their parents and relatives about Prop. 30 and encourage them to vote. They can use their language skills to volunteer at community organizations and inform non-English speakers about Prop. 30 and the importance of voting. Lastly, they can band together and vote in a bloc. Even if they are unsuccessful, their actions will show politicians that they need to respect the interests of APIs and college students. APIs and college students are two often-ignored groups in the political process partly because of their lack of voting in comparison to other groups. Voting will empower the API community to become more influential in politics, because it will tell politicians that APIs do vote and that politicians can gain many votes if they help a group that the American political process has largely ignored.

On Election Day, support Prop. 30 and vote against Prop. 38, in hope of preventing further cuts to community colleges and public universities but also in hope of advancing API goals in American politics. We CAN change our future. We CAN change this country.

Figure 2
Current and Proposed Personal Income Tax Rates Under Proposition 30

<http://ivn.us/>

Single Filer's Taxable Income ^a	Joint Filers' Taxable Income ^a	Head-of-Household Filer's Taxable Income ^a	Current Marginal Tax Rate ^b	Proposed Additional Marginal Tax Rate ^b
\$0-\$7,316	\$0-\$14,632	\$0-\$14,642	1.0%	—
7,316-17,346	14,632-34,692	14,642-34,692	2.0	—
17,346-27,377	34,692-54,754	34,692-44,721	4.0	—
27,377-38,004	54,754-76,008	44,721-55,348	6.0	—
38,004-48,029	76,008-96,058	55,348-65,376	8.0	—
48,029-250,000	96,058-500,000	65,376-340,000	9.3	—
250,000-300,000	500,000-600,000	340,000-408,000	9.3	1.0%
300,000-500,000	600,000-1,000,000	408,000-680,000	9.3	2.0
Over 500,000	Over 1,000,000	Over 680,000	9.3	3.0

^a Income brackets shown were in effect for 2011 and will be adjusted for inflation in future years. Single filers also include married individuals and registered domestic partners (RDPs) who file taxes separately. Joint filers include married and RDP couples who file jointly, as well as qualified widows or widowers with a dependent child.

^b Marginal tax rates apply to taxable income in each tax bracket listed. The proposed additional tax rates would take effect beginning in 2012 and end in 2018. Current tax rates listed exclude the mental health tax rate of 1 percent for taxable income in excess of \$1 million.

**2012-13 Spending Reductions if
Voters Reject Proposition 30**

(In Millions)	
Schools and community colleges	\$5,354
University of California	250
California State University	250
Department of Developmental Services	50
City police department grants	20
CalFire	10
DWR flood control programs	7
Local water safety patrol grants	5
Department of Fish and Game	4
Department of Parks and Recreation	2
DOJ law enforcement programs	1
Total	\$5,951
DWR = Department of Water Resources; DOJ = Department of Justice.	http://ivn.us/



A NIGHT TO REMEMBER



As soon as the curtain lifted to reveal Clara Chung onstage at Zellerbach Hall, the crowd went wild with cheers. The artist more popularly known as Clara C has seen a meteoric rise in her public profile: from winning competitions and garnering millions of views on YouTube, her mesmerizing voice has captured the hearts of a wide fanbase. Her surprise performance at the 2012 Kollaboration San Francisco on September 8 brought full circle the path that her career as an independent musician has followed since she won Kollaboration 10 two years ago. Since its inception in 2000, Kollaboration has reflected the changing face of entertainment as more Asian Pacific Islander Americans like Clara C gain popularity and break into the industry that continues to exclude them.

Although Kollaboration in its current state encompasses shows held in 14 cities across the United States, the very first show in Los Angeles on August 2000 focused more on generating interest in Korean American talent. Founder and longtime host Paul "PK" Kim saw a need for recognizing the people who shared his background but not the spotlight in mainstream media. As a talent showcase and organization, Kollaboration aims to provide "Empowerment through Entertainment," and the 3-year-old SF show brings together Asian American musicians, dancers, and comedians from the Bay Area as well as outside of it for a night of celebration.

At the third Kollaboration San Francisco held on September 8 this year, the crowd that filled Zellerbach Hall no longer questioned if Asian Pacific Americans would remain invisible in entertainment. Established names like Jeremy Passion and Joseph Vincent headlined as guest judge and guest performer, respectively, while up-and-coming acts like Monsters Calling Home and UC Berkeley's own SoulFull competed for the \$1000 prize. However, attending Kollaboration does not mean simply being an observer. Following its goal to inspire individuals to pursue their creative interests, the event also includes a freestyle vocal and dance portion in which audience members can take the stage to show off their skills to win a \$100 prize. In this way, Kollaboration encourages

Kollaboration SF 3 competitor Peter Chung quit his day job to actively pursue his dream as an acoustic singer-songwriter.



attendees to participate in the experience in order to bring artists and viewers closer together. This year's winners of Kollaboration SF include \$1000 grand prize winner Peter Chung and audience choice winner SoulFull, who took home \$500.

On being invited to judge, Passion observed, "I think it's cool because it shows that they trust me somehow in my critique. I've always wanted to be a part of Kollaboration somehow, so to be invited as a guest judge, it seems really like a great opportunity."

Now held at Zellerbach Hall at UC Berkeley for the past two years, Kollaboration SF has a staff of 20 volunteers who put in months of planning between early spring 2012 and fall 2012, managed by executive director and Cal alum Christine Minji Chang.

The sense of community that Kollaboration SF promotes operates in many ways: volunteers, performers, and attendees back each other up in their common purpose to cultivate talent. Chang sums up the close-knit relationship of the staff in a quote taken from one of the members: "The staff becomes a family, and it's all people that you never thought you'd meet, that you'd never thought you'd spend that much time with." By completing community service once a month, the staff gains a better understanding of the people who make up the local area.

Chang added, "Performers become a part of our family too: we are all supporting each other so they see all the hard work that goes into it, and we appreciate their talent. We want to see it grow because it's representing us, and so it becomes this community. Everyone who attends the show becomes a part of the family."

From the attendee standpoint, the best part about Kollaboration SF is the close interaction new and old fans can have with the performers. Before the show, all the judges, competitors, and performers hung out on the second floor of Zellerbach, and during that time **hardboiled** took our fair share of photos with the ever dashing Joseph Vincent. When last year's Kollaboration SF winners, the 4-man singing group named ANAK, graced the stage with their smooth vocals and charisma,

our publicity director Kassie swooned when a member took her hand as he sang to her.

In the 12 years that have passed since Kollaboration began, the presence of Asian Americans in the entertainment industry has grown tremendously with much credit to the online community, the new frontline in vying for fame, publicity, and recognition.

In an age of where “virality” and “blowing up” have become more synonymous with YouTube success than biology exams, it’s no wonder that rising Asian American artists have turned to the Internet – our perennial outlet of exchange – to express and share their talent. The guest judge for Kollaboration SF, Jeremy Passion – popularly known as just “Passion” – is undoubtedly one of the first Asian American YouTube artists to embrace the video site as a means of accruing widespread recognition. Passion noted that his first video “Lemonade” became viral online and helped “to start the acoustic movement of artists on the Internet.”

He was accompanied by a slew of up-and-coming artists, including folk pop darling Clara C and the effervescently dreamy Joseph Vincent. Although unsigned, these YouTube sensations have played a vital role in encouraging young musicians and artists to embrace social media as the status quo. They tour constantly. They tweet pics on the road. They update their v-blogs and chic websites. But perhaps most importantly, they remind us of their courage and unyielding passion to pursue their artistic dreams, and show us how much fun they can have in the process.

One of the competitors, singer Dustin Ako, notes that “even though [my songs have] really cool rhythms and a lot of soul in them, [I try to] reach out to people’s emotions, so we try to reach out to a very broad demographic. We do that through YouTube, Facebook, things like that.”

Kollaboration SF succeeds not only on the virtue of its meaningful message to the Asian American community, but also on its openness and accessibility to the most impressionable members of our community – teenagers and young adults. The snark ebullience and tongue-in-cheek charm of host Paul “PK” Kim perhaps best encapsulates the tone of Kollaboration SF: that yes, it’s a significant performance arts event that showcases the best and brightest up-and-coming talents from around the state. But don’t get it twisted: this is as much a celebration and night on the town as it is a time for honorifics. Hilarious banter, arena-concert cadences, and a strong sense of community pride dominate the vibe of Kollaboration SF. It’s a place where we come to not only support members of the community trying to make it, but also to unite under a larger consciousness of artistic representation. Unlike a summer music festival or MTV awards show, material indulgence and celebrity boorishness are replaced by an unwavering sense of determination.

To these artists, even if a record deal or nation-wide tour isn’t on the immediate horizon, their very existence is remarkable. Clara C mentioned in an online interview with The Other Asians that “I believe that independent artists are going to have a lot of things going for them. My dream is to sell out the Staples Center. I think it’s possible without a label.” As the YouTube view counts and retweets continue to increase, so does our confidence in this new generation of conscious, meaningful artists. To us, they’ve already found success.

photos courtesy of **sarah kim**



KOLLABORATION SF

by **christian ting and sam lai**



CRY WOLFFS! VIOLIN



JAYNE RIO



JOSEPH VINCENT

Corey Wolffs, professionally known as Cry Wolffs! Violin is a talented contemporary violinist hailing from San Francisco, CA. Picking up his first violin when he was 4, Wolffs has since been classically trained in the Suzuki method. As his skills grew, so did his fanbase. Wolffs is an accomplished solo performer, who has made stellar appearances in clubs and entertainment venues throughout the Bay Area. Perhaps what is most compelling about Cry Wolffs is his uncanny ability to meld his sophisticated understanding of classical violin composition with a urban, contemporary sound. His rendition of “Secrets” by OneRepublic captured audience with its poetic sensibilities and undeniable groove. Truly, Cry Wolffs! Violin is an artist who plays to all ears and airwaves.

No stranger to the Filipino American (FilAm) music industry, Jayne Rio made her professional debut in 2000 as a member of the successful R&B group 4th Inversion. After a solid run with the group, Jayne decided to go solo. Since that time, she has developed a loyal fan base across both communities and blogspheres. Her powerful vocals, sassy style, and bubbly personality have charmed legion of followers and YouTube subscribers. Rio has had a productive time in the media spotlight: She manages her highly successful YouTube channel, finished as a finalist in the 5th Season of American Idol, and recently was in the TOP 12 for My Grammy Moment to sing amidst superstars like Justin Timberlake. She is currently signed to Breakstone Production with fellow label mates ANAK and is promoting her mini album, Red Eye Flight.

With a breezy, lyrical charm and dreamy good looks, Joseph Vincent has earned the praise and fanatic adoration as one of YouTube’s most promising artists. Vincent, a Filipino American born and raised in Los Angeles has made a name for himself as a talented singer-songwriter. His YouTube channel currently has over 60 million view counts for both his covers of popular songs as well as his own personal material. Perhaps best known for his guitar-driven sound, Vincent’s velvety, yet passionate voice evokes Jack Johnson and Vincent’s perennial inspiration, Jason Mraz. When asked what his favorite song was, Joseph simply replied: ‘A Beautiful Mess’ by Jason Mraz.” Unlike the song title, Joseph Vincent is simply beautiful. And ridiculously talented. He is currently on a US tour with Clara C promoting his debut album, Blue Skies.



FAME

a hardboiled exclusive with bobbi vie, founder/organizer of FAME

by kassie pham

So... you're Bobbi Vie?
Yes.

Who or what exactly are you?
We're a group of people that do what we love.

And what is it that you love doing?
All things dance and all things fashion, more specifically in the hip hop/street side of things.

What's the purpose of F.A.M.E.? (Why was F.A.M.E. started? What does F.A.M.E. stand for?)
F.A.M.E. is an acronym that stands for: fashion, art, music, exhibition. The way we see things is that we'd rather have people from the community doing things for the community as opposed to people outside of it such as well....business folks.

Who or what is "the community"?
The people: you, us, them, we, him, her, etc.

Why is it important for the community to do events like F.A.M.E. instead of business folks?
It is important because we know what is missing and what is needed so whatever we produce will be more genuine and of course more welcomed.

How long is the planning and implementation process? How much time is devoted to F.A.M.E.?
Since the inception of the first F.A.M.E., March 2010, the planning process has extended from 3 months out to at least 6 months out. It might not sound realistic but we are planning around the clock always searching for new ideas and building with veterans in the scene.

What's the poison of choice for those late nights working on F.A.M.E.? Coffee? Energy drinks? Water? Food? More food? Bacon?
Ha, good question. We've tried all of the above and so far it seems that mixture of 5-Hour Energy

and coffee work best. Next up is probably 5-Hour Energy and Vietnamese coffee.

Where did the theme "My Favorite Things" come from?

It came from one of the women's fashion magazines in a bookstore we happened to stop by.

I noticed that there were a lot of APIs (Asian/Pacific Islanders) attending F.A.M.E.. Was this expected?

Yes, because we're the Bay Area and San Jose has one of the largest Vietnamese populations. Secondly, because we're heavily involved in the street dance community as well.

Were APIs specifically in mind when creating the event?

No, because we knew the API community would come out to support.

What do you think the large API turn-out says about the API community in the Bay Area?

It seems that the API community likes to stick together and support one another.

When people leave, what should they be walking out with?

A smile and inspiration.

Where would you like to see the community and F.A.M.E. be 10 years from now?

In 10 years time, we would like to wake up to a community of people doing what they love. Hopefully by then, F.A.M.E. would be a destination for aspiring as well as seasoned creatives.

What can people expect for the next F.A.M.E.?
You can always expect us to reinvent ourselves somehow someway.



*photos courtesy of Mark Chua
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