

## CAM HIGHLIGHTS, MILESTONES, AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS A Review of the Past Five Years: 2003 - 2008

### PRESERVING HISTORY / SERVING COMMUNITY

- After 20 years of dedicated planning, fundraising and renovation, the Chinese American Museum opened to the public on Dec. 18, 2003 with the goal of cultivating public awareness, understanding and appreciation for the more than 150 years of Chinese American history in the United States and the greater Los Angeles area. Since then, CAM has welcomed more than **200,000 visitors** through its doors, serving as a tangible link to the past and a promising point of entry for the City's multicultural future.
- Through the generous support of the Getty Foundation, the historic **Garnier Building balcony** was recreated on the museum's north façade, paving way for the installation of the public art panels. Engraved on these four vertical limestone panels is an original two-couplet Chinese poem written by renowned author and calligraphist Professor Lo' Ching, which narrates the past challenges and future hopes of Chinese Americans.
- On May 6, 2006, CAM received the City of Los Angeles' *Quality and Productivity Award* which recognizes and honors City employee teams for their initiative, creativity, teamwork, cost containment efforts and entrepreneurial spirit in providing a high level of customer service.
- In July 2008, Los Angeles' Chinatown was designated by First Lady Laura Bush as the nation's newest **Preserve America community**, a distinction that will provide Chinatown with national recognition as well as access to grant funds to support strategies to preserve its history and cultural heritage. The Friends of the Chinese American Museum (FCAM), the museum's support group, was named as the lead organization to direct program activities in partnership with a newly-created coalition comprised of prominent, community organizations based in Chinatown.

### EXPANDING THE DREAM

- On March 2, 2004, over 300 museum supporters descended upon Los Angeles' City Hall in support of a City Council motion to allocate the remainder of the historic Garnier Building –the oldest and last surviving structure from the city's original Chinatown and now the current home of CAM – for museum expansion. The motion passed unanimously, granting CAM access to **over 10,000 square feet** of undeveloped space for additional future exhibits, programs, workshops and community gatherings.

- In the Spring of 2006, Dr. Pauline Wong was appointed Executive Director of CAM to help lead the museum into its next phase of development.
- The **888 CAM Circle** was introduced as a new inspirational sponsorship level devoted exclusively to raising seed money for CAM's expansion project. Funds generated at this level support architectural and exhibit planning, construction and fabrication, and staff growth. More than 200 members have joined the Circle to date, contributing close to \$200,000 towards the expansion project.
- In August 2007, following a statewide competitive application process, a **\$100,000 planning grant** from the California Cultural and Historical Endowment (CCHE) was awarded to CAM, helping to officially kick-off the museum's expansion plans. Funding from CCHE will enable the completion of conceptual designs, engineering and architectural drawings to implement the adaptive use of the remainder of the historic Garnier Building. The planned expansion will increase CAM's capacity to add more galleries and multipurpose space for additional exhibitions, educational workshops and programs for the public.

## EDUCATION

- The **Docent Education Program** was created and launched in early 2004 to recruit and train a specialized core of volunteers to help provide in-depth tours of CAM to the visiting public. The intensive program prepares volunteer docents to discuss Chinese American history and contemporary issues with school children, college students and adult groups, and to engage them as they learn about the exhibits and history of CAM, the development of the Chinese American community in Los Angeles, and art created by members of the community. Since opening, CAM staff and docent have provided guided tours to nearly **6,000 school children** from over 20 school districts all over Southern California.
- In the Fall of 2005, CAM launched the **Family History Scrapbook (FHS)**, an activity book designed to help students in grades 4-8 and their families discover, explore and preserve their personal family history and cultural heritage through interactive workbook exercises. Used as an educational tool to enhance classroom lessons on U.S. history and immigration experiences, the scrapbook is the centerpiece of enriching workshops, offered free to schools, as a supplement to class tours of CAM.
- The **Education Fund** was introduced as a new sponsorship level to help CAM expand and reach its educational endeavors. Funds generated through the Education Fund support free buses for visiting schools and development of a range of innovative educational programs, exhibits and related activities designed to supplement and enhance the existing K-12 standard curriculum that would benefit teachers, students and families.

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- CAM's commitment to forging new ties with surrounding communities while strengthening existing connections, has championed the development, collaboration and/or participation of nearly **200 community-based events** ranging from festivals, exhibit-based workshops, art projects, arts and crafts workshops, book-signings, social mixers, presentations, film screenings, press conferences, and various other outreach events.
- Over the past five years, nearly **1,500 volunteers** have been engaged to assist with a wide range of programming events and activities including banquets, receptions, festivals, arts and crafts workshops, information booths, tour-giving, gallery-sitting, mailings, exhibit installations and de-installations, and artifacts-cleaning.
- Through CAM's annual *Historymaker Awards Banquets*, **24 individuals** and **four businesses** have been hailed as "history-makers" and honored for their vision, dedication and contributions towards the advancement of the Chinese American community.
- The **CAM Internship Program** was created to provide individuals of diverse educational and professional backgrounds with direct experience in working within a museum environment and department of choice. Internships at CAM are classified as non-paid, "experience-only" volunteer positions and range from short term, project-based opportunities to continuous, long-term assignments. CAM's Internship Program helps individuals foster job skills, teamwork, professional development, leadership and cultural and educational development through volunteer activism with the organization.
- Since 2003, CAM has hosted **18 interns** on site, providing hands-on experience, professional development, mentorship and access to working in various museum departments, including Education, Public Relations, Curatorial, Collections and Administration. Many of these interns were part of the Getty Multicultural Summer Internship Program.
- Recognizing the value of today's youth as a quality resource in helping to build a positive community, the **CAMpus Partnership Program** was developed as a school-based partnership program to help students and young adults foster teamwork, leadership, cultural, and educational development through volunteer activism. To date, CAM has cultivated rewarding partnerships with nearly ten campus-based organizations ranging from high schools to colleges.
- **Lantern Festival** has grown to become a beloved community tradition! Over the past five years, Lantern Festival has expanded tremendously in size, scope and activities, easily becoming a signature event for CAM and a point of destination for visitors from all over Southern California and beyond. New program ideas and features continue to keep Lantern Festival fresh and innovative so that with each memorable celebration, new visitors quickly become devoted fans and supporters of the event and the Museum project.

## EXHIBITIONS/COLLECTIONS

- CAM's Collection Department has acquired more than **5,000 artifacts** from the community over the past five years, adding to its growing collections of over 20,000 artifacts.
- Funded by the Ahmanson Foundation in 2004, CAM received 10 custom-made archival cabinets designed to create an artifact-friendly environment free of light, dust and moisture to promote the preservation of artifacts and archival materials.
- The featured works of **nine artists**, both emerging and established, have added their own indelible legacy to CAM's history: *Tyrus Wong, Steven Wong, Cindy Suriyani, John Kwok, Milton Quon, Sam Boi Lee, Diana Wong, Jake Lee and Corky Lee.*
- Since 2003, **14 temporary art exhibitions** ranging from watercolors, photography, installations and artifacts have graced the galleries of CAM.