

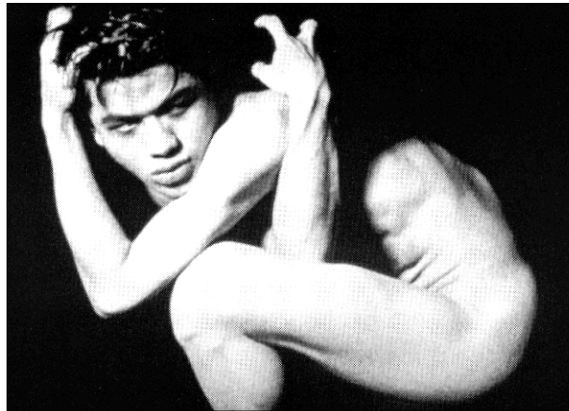
InformAsian



A monthly publication of the Gay Asian Pacific Support Network Los Angeles, Volume 14, Issue 5, May 2000

Queer Asian Artists: Damage Control

Gay Asian Pacific Support Network (GAPSN) and The Advocate Gallery present "Damage Control," a gallery exhibit that includes painting, photography, installation and mixed media works. Damage Control celebrates and critically looks at Asian Pacific Heritage Month by bringing together nine of the freshest voices in the Queer and Asian Pacific Communities. It is a rare chance for viewers to see in magnitude what Queer and Asian Pacific artists are producing.



Viet Le, Untitled, 1999
Gelatin Silver Print. Courtesy of the artist.

"Damage Control: a phrase that entered the mainstream from corporate culture. A wink, a handshake, a sweeping under the rug, an exchange under the table to improve a tarnished image. In this case, an exhibition celebrating Asian Heritage Month—an expose of aesthetic and political tactics perpetrated by a band of artistic accomplices."

The City of West Hollywood will also be honoring GAPSN Co-founder David Hong at a special ceremony during the public opening. David Hong, of the Los Angeles' gay pioneers, has been deeply

committed to the gay Asian community's civil rights struggle for over 20 years.

Damage Control runs from April 27th-May 14th. Most of the artists will be present for the public opening on May 4th.

Location: The Village at Ed Gould Plaza
1125 N. McCadden Place
Los Angeles, CA 90038
(One block E. of Highland,
N. of Santa Monica)

Date: Thursday May 4, 2000

Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Tickets: Free

Contact: Patrick Mangto (323) 993-7452

GAPSN Monthly Rap

"Fetishes & Sex Toys"

This month's rap promises to be one of the best ever! Join us along with Chinese Rainbow Association and Barangay as we explore the world of untraditional erotic practices with films, sex toy demos, and rap/discussion. If you only make one rap this year, make sure it's this one! (Or else you'll be hearing about it for years to come!)

Special Guest: George Wong

L.A. Fetish Man of the Year and Pantheon Leather Western Regional Man of the Year awards nominee.

(Warning: There will be some nudity.)

May 6, Saturday

8:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

The Village at Ed Gould Plaza
1125 North McCadden Place
Los Angeles

For more information contact
Chi-Wai or Andre (562)697-7336,
andreting@cs.com

GAPSN presents Southern California Film Premiere: Men and Women



Gay Asian Pacific Support Network (GAPSN) and Visual Communications present the Southern California Premiere of Liu Bingjian's "Men and Women," a groundbreaking new gay film from the People's Republic of China. For the first time, the burgeoning underground gay and lesbian subculture in Beijing is depicted, in brutal honesty and without shame.

The story centers around Xiao Bo, a country boy who comes to the city to find

himself. In Beijing, Xiao finds work and a place to stay in a clothing shop. Qing, the owner of the shop, mentions to her husband that she thinks that Xiao is gay. Little does she know her own husband also finds Xiao sexually attractive. Widely praised, critics applaud the film stating, "Director Liu's sharply observed street-level realism blends with utopian scenes imagining what gay activism with Chinese characteristics might be like."

(Continued on page 5)

GAPSN 2000

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GAPSN

Mission Statement

The Gay Asian Pacific Support Network is dedicated to providing supportive environments for gay and bisexual Asian/Pacific Islander men to meet, network, voice concerns, foster self-empowerment, and advocate on issues of significance to the gay API community.

Chair's Message

Greetings!

May commemorates Asian Pacific Heritage Month in the US and kicks off one of our most program-intensive months in GAPSN's history. In the past, GAPSN has focused most of its energy on the LGBT community and very little on the mainstream Asian and Pacific Islander (API) Community. That's about to change.

We feel that it's time that we share equal time with the Asian side of our identity. There is just so much going on this month we may have to take the rest of the year off just to recuperate from it (just kidding).

The official opening of "Damage Control," the Queer and Asian art show currently going on at the Village starts Thursday, May 4th from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. If you missed the exclusive GAPSN event on the 27th, here's your second chance. We are extraordinarily proud of the gallery and special shout out goes to Cirilo Domine for all of the work he's put into one of the best shows we've ever seen. In addition, **David Hong will be honored by the City of West Hollywood** for all of the work he has done and continues to do for the API community.

GAPSN Rap: Fetishes and Sex Toys. If you only attend one rap this year, make it this one. On Saturday, May 6th, from 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Village. We expect monster turn out for this multi-media presentation with the definitive API Leatherman—GEORGE WONG, LA Fetish Man of the Year and Pantheon Leather Western Regional Man of the Year awards nominee. Please don't attend if you are offended by NUDITY. Co-sponsored with Barangay and CRA.

GAPSN Town Hall Meeting to discuss the formation of separate GAPSN Foundation with 501(c)3 status on Tuesday, May 9th from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the GAPSN offices at the Village.

GAPSN Politics: Come to a discussion of current CA Assembly and Senate Bills designed to increase Domestic Partnership rights on Thursday, May 11th from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Legislators such as Gloria Romero are scheduled to attend. This is part of GAPSN's ongoing commitment to the Right to Marry. This event is Co-sponsored with Bienestar at their East LA office at 5326 E. Beverly Blvd.

Long Beach Pride takes place on Saturday and Sunday May 20th & 21st. GAPSN will have a booth for both days. Long Beach Pride has been a long time supporter of GAPSN and we are proud to have a booth at the festival. Long Beach has one of the most relaxed and non-attitudinal pride events we've ever been at. So stop by and see us.

GAPSN presents Two Queer Asian Shorts Screenings in conjunction with Visual Communications as part of the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film & Video Festival. There will be two different screenings on Saturday, May 20th at the Directors Guild of America on Sunset Blvd. The Queer Asian Shorts I "Smooth & Clean Shaven" series includes "We Got Moves You Ain't Even Heard Of," "Unmapping Desire," and the infamous "The Queen's Cantonese." The Queer Asian Shorts II series includes "First Love and Other Pains," "The Offering," and "Love, Ltd." Please check out www.gapsn.org for exact screening times.

GAPSN presents "Men and Women", a groundbreaking gay film from Beijing in conjunction with Visual Communications as part of the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film & Video Festival. This coming of age film entails a love triangle between two men and a woman and includes scenes from the gay and lesbian underground subculture in Beijing. A reception for Queer & Asian film makers will follow the screening. This screening takes place Tuesday, May 23rd from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. with a reception to follow at the Village.

Whew! That's it for this month (and if we're still standing, we'll be preparing for GAPSN at Red Dragon and Christopher Street West next month.)

Cheers.

Patrick & Pei

Biography & Interview with David Hong

David Hong is a second generation Chinese American, born and raised in the Midwest. He has been active with GAPS/N from the very beginning when the group was formerly known as GARP and is a GAPS/N co-founding member and continues to be active in the gay API community on his own. David has held numerous Board Positions with GARP/GAPS/N serving as Interim Co-Chair, Publications Coordinator, Membership Coordinator, Newsletter Editor, Asian Pacific Organizations Liaison, and has served on several committees when not chairing a committee. He was the recipient of the 1991 GAPS/N Man of the Year and the 1993 Andrew Alabab Patron Award. He chaired GAPS/N's 1993 North American Asian/Pacific Islander Conference (NAPPI) which was held in Los Angeles. He has provided input to numerous API and API Friends Groups seeking valuable input on local and national conference organizational structures and has served as a panelist and workshop facilitator. He is also involved in several Gay API groups from across the country and maintains a self-interest visibility in personal networking.

David was also involved with the Asian/Pacific Lesbians & Gays (A/PLG), now known as Asian/Pacific Gays & Friends (A/PGF). He served as a Delegate-At-Large, Publications Coordinator, "1991 FANTASIA" Production Manager, 1997 International Friendship Weekend (IFW) Annual Meeting, and continues to assist the group when called upon.

Originally trained in the area of fine arts, he is a director of a production group that produces multi-media, communications, print media, film/digital photography, videography, graphic arts, computer graphics, and audiovisual production. With a background in stage production, he has directed or assisted Gay API and API Friends groups from across the country with their Mr. & Ms. Beauty Pageants, Variety and Talent Shows, and API Female Illusion Performance Arts Programs.

For the past few years, David has taken a leave of absence from GAPS/N and currently spends his time with his significant other "Nid" of 12 years and their daughters "Izzy & Chris" in their comfortable home entertaining their network of close friends.

Q: How were you introduced to the gay scene here in L.A.?

A: I moved to L.A. in 1981. My first notion was to identify the activities in Los Angeles. From reading the Frontiers, I found out that the Christopher Street West gay pride events [in June] were looking for volunteers. I met some key people there who assigned me to running the placards for the groups. They had to stand on Crescent Heights [Avenue, where the parade route began] to get themselves in an order according to a numbering system. So it was my task to monitor the groups, get them ready and to start them off.

"My outlook is I want to see the gay A/PI groups working together with the A/PI and Friends groups, not only in L.A., but in the state, in North America, to all of Asia eventually. Coming together to a point where we all know who each other is and what each other is doing."

Interestingly enough, Asian/Pacific Lesbians and Gays was a contingent in the parade. They told me about who they were, what they did, etc. They also told me about the upcoming Fourth of July picnic that they had in Griffith Park every year. So I went to the picnic and met more A/PLG people. It interested me because it was my first exposure to other gay A/Pis.

Q: How did you become involved with GARP [predecessor to GAPS/N]?

A: In late 1984, I joined GARP. I was still part of A/PLG. I started to get really involved in 1986. I felt my evolution was based on what my needs were. I was interested in meeting other A/Pis and in looking for a life partner. A/PLG had a lot of non-Asians in it. So GARP fulfilled a void that A/PLG couldn't, although A/PLG met my expectations in terms of building my organizational skills.

With the non-Asian members in A/PLG, I always let them know that I was interested only in Asians, and not with non-Asians. Some of them called me a lesbian, incestuous, etc. But then I responded, "Well, how come when I was at Studio One, I'd see whites with other whites? What do you call that?" I put them on the spot and they had no response. The non-Asians were upset about the all-Asian rap in A/PLG, too. I kept saying to myself, "What is wrong with them? We need our own safe space." And that's what GARP was all about. Safe space.

Q: Was the idea of a gay-Asian-only organization a strange concept?

A: To the non-Asians at that time, yes, because they were not accustomed to it. That never existed around them. But the all-Asian concept was not new, because in other cities, like Boston and Toronto, it's always been all-Asian. Those people were not exposed to that environment. GARP became a learning process for them.

In GARP, I know of a [white] support member who was profusely upset that we did not allow non-Asians into the rap. We told him that supporters were welcomed to have their own rap. But there was no effort to organize their own rap. They were there just to get the newsletters, provide support and things like that. But I've talked to this person [two years ago], the same person who for over the years always had a problem with GAPS/N. His response to me then was that he now fully understood why we needed an Asian-only rap.

Q: So the consciousness is changing in the larger community. What is your vision for the gay Asian movement?

A: My outlook is I want to see the gay A/PI groups working together with the A/PI and Friends groups, not only in L.A., but in the state, in North America, to all of Asia eventually. Coming together to a point where we all know who each other is and what each other is doing. In L.A., there's been at least a history of these groups working together successfully. In other cities, there are some divisions between the A/PI groups and the A/PI and Friends groups. And then there are cities that have one but not the other. But there are over 75 groups in total worldwide. I would like to see an international network, eventually.

Syphilis Cases Double Among Gays in L.A.

Los Angeles Times
By Julie Marquis

Health officials in Los Angeles County report that a syphilis outbreak among gay men in the area has doubled to 51 cases in two weeks. Peter Kerndt, director of the county's sexually transmitted diseases program, noted that 28 of the 51 men have HIV, which is particularly worrisome because syphilis sores increase the risk of HIV transmission. Five of the syphilis cases were identified in the County Jail. Last year, none of the 120 syphilis cases recorded in Los Angeles County were among gay men, suggesting a decline in safe sex practices among some gay men in the area. Michael Weinstein, president of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation, also noted that "with the [number of chlamydia] cases doubling in the last two weeks, that's pretty much proof positive there are hundreds of cases" in the county.

Free testing is being provided at mobile vans in the Hollywood area.

County Reports Sharp Rise in Hepatitis C Cases

Los Angeles Times Online
By Catherine Blake

New statistics indicate a significant increase in hepatitis C cases in Ventura County, California, although residents tend to be healthier than most Southern Californians. In 1998, 228 hepatitis C cases were reported, compared to only 95 the year before and only two cases in 1996. The figures can be found in the county Public Health Department's "Community Health Status Report," which notes that the area has wealthier residents who can afford better medical care. The sharp increase in hepatitis C cases could be a result of increased testing. In terms of communicable diseases in the county, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are the most common, with chlamydia the most common STD.

The number of chlamydia infections recorded in 1998 was up 18 percent from the previous year, for a total of 980 cases in 1998. Dr. Robert Levin, who oversees the county Public Health Department, suggested that "the increase is partly because people, especially young people, think HIV is not to be feared and that has emboldened them to not use barrier protection." More than 500 of the chlamydia cases recorded in 1998 were among young people between the ages of 20 and 29.

One in Ten Thai Military Recruits has AIDS Virus

Bangkok, Thailand—The HIV virus has so ravaged Thailand's armed forces—one in 10 of last year's recruits were found to have been infected—that military chiefs are being forced to scour for extra conscripts. Those identified as being HIV-infected were spotted only after signing up and will now have to be discharged early before their two-year terms are completed.

The army is paying the medical bills for scores of infected patients being treated in the military's hospitals. The impact of HIV has forced the armed forces to boost new recruitment from the normal 82,000 to 87,000 this year.

Major-General Saksin Tipyakaysorn, chief of the recruiting department, told reporters here that recruits had not been given a thorough medical examination prior to entering the forces. "Their symptoms have not shown up and we did not have their blood tested at the time they were recruited," he explained. He said many recruits contracted HIV while taking drugs, which was an endemic problem within the forces. Army spokesman Colonel Somkuan Sangpatranet was quoted in reports here as saying that about 26,000 men volunteered for the military service last year.

Of these, the terms of 2,300 men had been shortened from two years to six months, and that of another 14,000 to one year. Most infected recruits came from the north and central plains where drug abuse was reportedly prevalent.

Half of all candidates entering the armed forces have a history of drug taking. However, many generals do not turn down

recruits on this basis preferring to use the army to toughen up rookies with parade and drill work. They also train soldiers in new skills designed to educate them out of their drug-taking past and provide them with future employment on leaving. In the northern Loei province, soldiers are taught to farm crocodiles, boars and fish.

HIV infection is one of 12 categories of illness outlawed in the army. Candidates with kidney, liver problems eye and mental problems are also barred. The army has, however, pledged not to make up numbers by recruiting gays or transsexuals who are outlawed as "mentally ill". However, many soldiers remain at risk from contracting HIV thanks to the prevalence of massage parlors providing sex services in garrison towns. Recruitment of fresh candidates will be held from April 1 to April 11.

China's AIDS Patients Surges 69% in 1999

Agence France Presse

The Shanghai Daily reported that the number of AIDS patients in China increased 69 percent in 1999 from the previous year, with 4,677 new cases of HIV. The report noted there were over 17,000 confirmed cases of HIV or AIDS by year-end 1999, including 647 cases of AIDS. Dai Zhicheng of the Chinese Association of AIDS Prevention and Control asserted that "the figure has been rocketing for five years, and rampant sexually transmitted diseases and tuberculosis may make the situation worse."

Uncommon HIV-2 Virus Detected in China

Kyodo News Service

Health officials in China's Fujian Province report that they have diagnosed HIV-2 infection, which has been found primarily in western Africa, in a Chinese man. According to the Chinese News Service agency, the man recently visited West Africa. This is the first case of HIV-2 detected in China, the news service said.

Queer Asian Shorts I: “Smooth and Clean Shaven”

Saturday, May 20th @ Director's Guild Theater on Sunset Blvd.
Check www.gapsn.org for exact show times and directions

The Queen's Cantonese (Lessons 1, 2, & 3)

Directed by Wayne Yung

Wayne Yung's tart but informative three part ESL tapes on queer and straight etiquette is given a uniquely bilingual spin featuring young cute Asian boys, Caucasian boyfriends, and unnervingly prim & proper fag-hag, The Queen's Cantonese will provide the viewer with an inventive way of practicing one's newly learned language. This is one that you have to see to believe.

Angel

Directed by Wayne Yung

This movement piece is a poetic exploration of one man's fall from grace as he becomes disillusioned with gay ideals of desire.

Unmapping Desire

Directed by Sheila James

Unmapping Desire is a poetic video carrying the themes of separation, polit-

ical borders, and social boundaries that prevent women from loving women.

Search Engine

Directed by Wayne Yung

Using phone sex, chat lines, databases, and internet searches, a young gay man uses digital technology to remember his past boyfriends and to search for future ones.

Voices Like Rain

Directed by Jeff Lee

You can see something a million times and still not understand what you're looking at. It doesn't matter if you can see it. Just as long as you feel it.

We Got Moves You Ain't Even Heard Of

Directed by Clover Paek

We Got Moves You Ain't Even Heard Of reappropriates the Karate Kid to complicate and pervert 80's teen heart-throb Ralph Macchio.

Queer Asian Shorts II

First Love and Other Pains

Directed by Simon Cheung

Simon Cheung's feature debut is a flowing and satisfying exploration of the love and pains between a determined college student and his reluctant and very proper white English professor.

Love, Ltd.

Directed by Jennifer Phang

Love, Ltd. observes the contemporary Asian American family, in which each member is forced to find their own

way to deal with homosexuality. We confront homophobia through a quirky, unrelenting tale that will surprise and delight you.

The Offering

Directed by Paul Lee

The Offering is an elegiac meditation about the passing of life, told through the story of love and friendship between a Japanese monk and his novice from their initial encounter to their final parting.

Victory in Police Misconduct Case: 'Not Guilty' Verdict for Men Arrested in Police Raid of Gay Gymnasium

Taipei Times

On December 20, 1998, a squad of policemen forcibly entered the AG Club, a well-known gay gymnasium located in Taipei, and arrested two men found caressing each other in a private compartment under the charge of "obscenity in public." The incident has been described, and letters of protest requested, in IGLHRC's Emergency Response Network, Vol. VII, No. 5, Pt. 1, 1998 (see http://www.iglhrc.org/world/ne_asia/Taiwan1999Feb.html).

Upon finding the two men, the policemen allegedly instructed them to remove their clothes and pose for photographs in sexually suggestive positions—thus furnishing "proof" of the allegations. A-cheng, a personal trainer working in the gymnasium, also faced arrest under the charge of providing sexual services to customers after he called into question the legality of the policemen's actions.

In mid-February 2000, the Taipei district court found the two men as well as A-cheng innocent on all charges. The ruling judge, Wu Chiu-hung, commented to the Taipei Times, "When things such as this happen, the only thing that the court can do is render a not guilty verdict. This is a decision of law, but it can do little to correct the wrongs that have been done to the defendants." Justice Wu referred to a wave of highly biased media coverage which followed the arrests, portraying A-cheng as a "pimp" and manager of a gay sex venue—publicity that, led to the loss of his job and income, not to mention incalculable damage to his social relationships. "He did nothing wrong, but only tried to stop the police from arresting his customers," Justice Wu told the media.

Volunteers from the Tongzhi Hotline, a support service for lesbians and gays, continue to place what is now notorious as the "AG Club incident" within a context of wider, disturbing patterns of police brutality toward their community. They also have decried the highly biased treatment by the media, characterized by vilification of the defendants and the glaring omission

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 1)

The arrival of *Men and Women* clearly announces that independent cinema in China is alive and well. The film is presented as part of the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film & Video Festival Fifteenth Edition in celebration of Asian Pacific Heritage Month.

A reception with gay and lesbian film makers from the Film Festival will follow the film.

Location: The Village at Ed Gould Plaza Auditorium
1125 N. McCadden Place
Los Angeles, CA 90038
(one block E. of Highland,
N. of Santa Monica)

Date: Tuesday May 23, 2000

Time: 7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.

Tickets: \$10.00

Contact: Patrick Mangto
(323) 993-7452

Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center

Legal Services Department

The Legal Services Department assists more than 5,000 people a year. Our programs include:

- 1.) Legal Clinic
- 2.) Lawyer Referral Service
- 3.) Pro Per Project
- 4.) Immigration Law Project

The Legal Clinic provides access to a wide range of no- and low-cost legal services. Primarily by providing one-on-one attorney consultation appointments to persons in need of counsel-and-advice, self-help assistance, occasional representation and additional services, the Legal Clinic assists thousands of clients in more than 20 areas of law including:

- business
- employment
- insurance
- civil rights
- family
- landlord/tenant
- consumer
- government benefits
- personal injury
- criminal
- immigration
- wills & estates

With more than 100 attorney and administrative volunteers under Legal Services staff supervision, the Legal Clinic provides four evenings of attorney consultation sessions each week, with 1-5 attorneys scheduled per evening. Please call (323) 993-7670 for an appointment or more information. When you contact us, please feel free to let us know that you were referred by GAPSIN.

Our State Bar-certified Lawyer Referral Service provides access to attorneys who represent clients who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, HIV-impacted, or transgendered. Please call (323) 993-7670 for a referral or more information.

The Pro Per Project provides no- and low-cost assistance on a self-help basis to clients who need to file answers to eviction notices, name changes and temporary restraining orders. It also provides assistance with wills and powers of attorney. Volunteers conduct client intake and pre-

pare documents ready for filing in court. Please call (323) 993-7670, ext. 4 for an appointment or more information.

The Immigration Law Project (ILP) is the only program in Southern California specifically addressing the immigration legal needs of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered persons. Working in conjunction with the Legal Clinic, the ILP provides consultations with experienced immigration lawyers, forms-completion assistance with naturalization applications and other basic INS forms, and on occasion, pro bono representational assistance with sexual orientation-based asylum cases. Please call (323) 993-7670, ext. 3 for an appointment or more information.

The Anti-Violence Project

In Los Angeles County lesbians and gay men have consistently been either the No. 1 or No. 2 target of hate crimes. Many victims, including Asian/Pacific Islanders, never report the anti-gay, lesbian and transgender harassment they experience because of fear of being outed or concern about law enforcement insensitivity.

It is important for victims to report hate incidents and hate crimes. Reporting creates a written record of facts, which may be helpful in pursuing criminal and/or civil remedies against the perpetrator(s). Reporting hate incidents that one might consider "minor" is also important because hate incidents can be the prelude to more serious hate crimes.

SERVICES

Established in 1988, the Anti-Violence Project is the largest and most comprehensive victim services program in southern California specifically assisting victims of homophobic, anti-transgender, and anti-HIV/AIDS violence, threats of violence, vandalism and harassment. In 1999, we served almost 450 victims of hate crimes and hate incidents. We provide a wide range of victim recovery and empowerment services including:

- phone and in-person intake
- crisis intervention and follow-up counseling
- documentation
- advocacy with law enforcement and prosecutors
- Victims of Crime compensation assistance
- restraining order preparation
- attorney consultations

IF YOU HAVE BEEN VICTIMIZED by a hate crime or hate incident, contact the Anti-Violence Project for assistance. We can help report the crime or incident to the police or the L.A. County District Attorney's Hate Crime Suppression Unit for investigation and prosecution.

How to contact us: Clients from Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura counties and parts of Riverside and San Bernardino counties can contact us via our toll-free number or e-mail. When you contact us, please feel free to let us know that you were referred by GAPSIN.

Telephone: (800) 373-2227

e-mail: avp@laglc.org

New Essays & Publications on Queer Asians

Lesbian Histories and Cultures: an Encyclopedia. Bonnie Zimmerman, editor. (New York: Garland, 2000) [v. 1 of The Encyclopedia of Lesbian and Gay Histories and Culture]

Gay Histories and Cultures: An Encyclopedia. George E. Haggerty, editor. (New York: Garland, 2000) [v. 2 of The Encyclopedia of Lesbian and Gay Histories and Culture]

Porn 101: Eroticism, Pornography and the First Amendment, edited by James Elias et al. (Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1999)

Beyond 'Looking for My Penis': Reflections on Asian Gay Male Video Porn, by Daniel C. Tsang, pp. 473-478 [The reference is to Richard Fung's pioneering essay]

A New Reader in Chinese Tongzhi (Essays and Conference Proceedings) edited by John Loo. Hong Kong: Worldson Books, 1999, worldson@hkstar.com, ISBN: 962-922-501-8. Based on the first queer Chinese (Tongzhi) conference since the return of Hong Kong to China (in 1998). Includes 50 or so contributors.

GAPSN Contributes to the Introduction of AB 2000: Legislation to Fight Hate Crimes

By Myron Dean Quon

Last August, GAPSN participated in a meeting on hate crimes and hate violence convened by Antonio Villaraigosa, Speaker of the California State Assembly. (The State Legislature now refers to this group as the L.A. Hate Violence Task Force). That meeting and subsequent discussions with the Speaker by GAPSN have resulted in newly-introduced legislation by the Speaker.

A number of ideas emerged about ways concerned organizations can better promote tolerance in Los Angeles and in the state. One set of problems centered on the need to support the efforts of local human relations commissions—which exist at the city and county level. Excellent work is being accomplished at the local level, but these commissions struggle to accomplish their missions as separate entities—often with inadequate funding and staffing.

The Speaker has introduced a bill this session, AB 2000 would create a state level Human Relations Commission to help the capacity building of the local commissions.

It would bring together the commissions as a network, to encourage a shared vision of civic unity, to facilitate cooperative planning and resource development. This commission would exist under the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. It would partner with local agencies, provide technical assistance and help coordinate the sharing of resources and planning.

This Commission would be a strong step forward in strengthening California's infrastructure for tolerance. Speaker Villaraigosa needs GAPSN's support. In addition to the Board submitting a letter to the Speaker's office, I encourage individual members to submit letters of support concerning the relevance of hate-crimes prevention to gay and bisexual API men. Simple letters of support should be sent to:

Hon. Antonio Villaraigosa
Speaker of the California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814

For more information, please contact me at MQUON@lambdalegal.org.

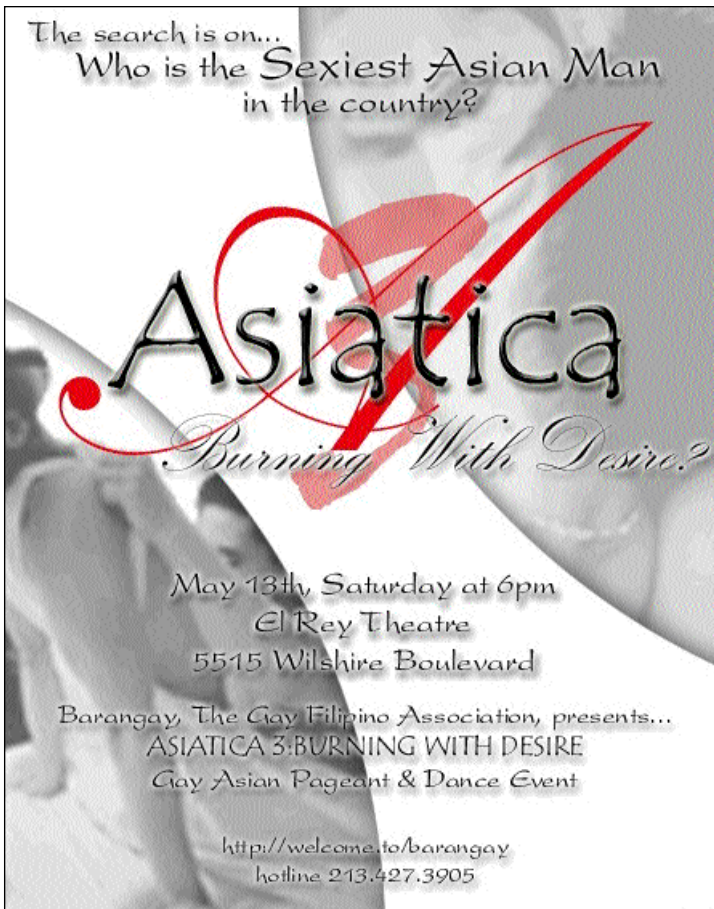
Get Registered!

By Myron Dean Quon

Last year, California made history when it passed into law the creation of the nation's largest domestic partnership registry. Enclosed with this issue of InformAsian is a copy of the domestic partnership registration form. If you're in a committed relationship, you should strongly consider registering:

- It can help with legal recognition of your wishes, if you haven't yet created any durable powers of attorney
- Registration assists with showing the general public the number of gay couples living within California
- Pending legislation will extend the rights and responsibilities affiliated with domestic partnership registration.

Please read the Declaration of Domestic Partnership carefully to determine whether you qualify, and if you do, consider registering!



The search is on...
Who is the Sexiest Asian Man
in the country?

Asiatica
Burning With Desire?

May 13th, Saturday at 6pm
El Rey Theatre
5515 Wilshire Boulevard

Barangay, The Gay Filipino Association, presents...
ASIATICA 3: BURNING WITH DESIRE
Gay Asian Pageant & Dance Event

<http://welcome.to/barangay>
hotline 213.427.3905

State Assembly Majority Whip Dr. Gloria Romero

Invites you to a town hall forum to discuss
**Legislation Relating To Domestic Partnerships
And Its Impact On
The Gay/Lesbian Community**

Hosted by
**Bienestar and
The Gay Asian Pacific Support Network**

Date: Thursday, May 11th
Place: Bienestar Service Center
5326 E. Beverly Blvd.
Los Angeles, 90022
Time: 7:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

This forum is a joint effort by GAPSN and Bienestar in an effort to inform both the Gay Latino and Asian communities about the importance of the legislation that are being considered by state legislators.

For more information, please call (323) 981-3426

National Association for the Education and Advancement of Cambodian, Laotian and Vietnamese Americans

By Peter Nguyen

I would like to invite your organization to join us for the upcoming NAFEA annual conference, which will be held on May 19-20, 2000 at Double Tree, 100 The City Drive, Orange, CA 92868.

This year's NAFEA annual conference marks a significant milestone in our Southeast Asian American communities' history. We plan to use this opportunity to commemorate the 25 years since the first Southeast Asian refugees arrived in the U.S. and entered our public school systems. Camp Pendleton in Southern California was the first home of many of our Vietnamese American students' families. Many teachers reached out to this first group of refugee students. So we will also honor the teachers who volunteered to teach in refugee camps as well as those in public schools who worked with Southeast

Asian American students in newcomer centers and other language programs.

Along this commemorative theme, we will be celebrating our NAFEA's 21st birthday. The National Association for the Education and Advancement of Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese Americans was founded in 1979 as NAVEA, the National Association for the Vietnamese American Education to promote quality education and advancement for Vietnamese Americans. The founders were Vietnamese bilingual educators who felt a need to develop an organization which could help ease the transition of refugee children to the U.S. and to create a network among professionals for sharing information. In 1987, NAVEA was transformed into NAFEA to advocate for all Southeast Asian American students and families. Thus, this year's conference will

validate the 20 years of leadership and service that bilingual Southeast Asian American educators had given to their communities and society.

Our NAFEA 20th Annual Conference theme *NAFEA 2000: Remember our Past as We enter our Future* seeks to hold all of the above significant into coming together in the new millenium. As the peoples who we place great value and respect on our ancestors, we wish to honor our forebears, our founding members, as well as all those who devoted their time and resources to assist Southeast Asian refugee and immigrant students in the early years.

We hope that this NAFEA 2000 conference will begin a stronger partnership in the communities in California.

If you would like more information please contact Peter Nguyen at (714) 652-3898 or e-mail: NAFEA2000@aol.com

Man Receives 'Gay' Payday in Court From Friend's Wife

By Irene Lin
Taipei Times

Calling someone "gay" in Taiwan can cause real trouble, a recent court case has shown. The Taipei District Court in Taiwan recently awarded NT\$300,000 in damages to local exporter Wang Lung after the wife and two sons of a close friend called him a homosexual.

Prior to his victory in civil court, the man also succeeded last year in a slander charge against the three. The court proceedings did not consider the man's sexual orientation in its decision, or make public whether or not the man was in fact homosexual.

Wang, an exporter, had rented an apartment from his friend Lu Chung-hsiung, the father of four sons. Wang told the court he was verbally abused by Lu's wife and two of his sons the day he moved out of the apartment on July 5, 1998.

"Wang and Lu [Chung-hsiung] have slept together for 15 years. He is gay," Lu's wife and sons told Wang's mother, who was at Lu's house that day, the court heard. Wang's brother-in-law and two friends—who went to the Lu's to help Wang move—confirmed to the court they

had heard the Lu's wife and sons say, "Wang sneaked into my little son's [brother's] room and took off his pants."

Wang, insulted by the remarks, filed a lawsuit against Lu's wife, Lu Wang Wen-pi, and the sons, Lu Hsueh-chang and LuHsueh-chieh, in 1999 for slander.

"Objectively, what the defendants have said degrades Wang's social status. Thus the court believes the plaintiff must have gone through tremendous mental suffering over these remarks," said Lai Chien-yi.

He won the case and following an appeal by the defendants, the mother and sons were sentenced to 30 days in detention, but were allowed to commute their sentence to a fine of NT\$900 a day.

The civil court, meanwhile, granted Wang's request for compensation last

week on the grounds that Wang's reputation had suffered substantial damage from the remarks.

"Objectively, what the defendants have said degrades Wang's social status. Thus the court believes the plaintiff must have gone through tremendous mental suffering over these remarks," said Lai Chien-yi, the judge who granted the compensation.

"It's debatable whether calling someone gay is slander. And it might be ideal if everyone could take a healthy attitude toward homosexuality. But the fact is our society as a whole still looks at homosexuals in a very negative way. And therefore the court still has to take this mentality into consideration in assessing a case of this kind," Lai said.

The judge also took the context of the remarks into account. "I think what Wang found most unbearable was how his mother must have felt after hearing these disparaging remarks," Lai said.

Wang Ping, secretary-general of the Gender/Sexuality Rights Association, said yesterday that Wang's case showed that Taiwan still had much to learn about homosexuality. "It's kind of a dirty word in this country. It means abnormal, or even perverted," Wang said.

Fellowship Announcement: Organization of Chinese Americans—Greater Los Angeles

Internship Summary: Organization of Chinese Americans—Greater Los Angeles Chapter (OCA-GLA) is seeking an energetic and resourceful student to serve as a fellow working in a variety of civil rights areas including voting rights, hate crimes, political empowerment, and education. The fellow would be placed at the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) and work under the direct supervision of the directing attorney of the Voting Rights & Anti-Discrimination Unit. In addition to gaining valuable experience in organizing and educating the Asian Pacific Islander community at APALC, the fellow would also work closely with the OCA-GLA Board to organize collaborative events and activities. OCA-GLA activities may include, but are not limited to, organizing annual dinner, youth and community service days, political educational forums, and social activities. The fellow should expect to assist with related administrative work.

Temporary Internship: Part-time internship running from May 2000 through end-August 2000; at least 15 hours/week for the month of May; at least 30 hours/week from June-August 2000.

Qualifications: Demonstrated ability to organize and coordinate project with maturity, initiative and timeliness. Strong written and oral communication skills. Strong organizational skills. Interest in civil rights and familiarity with Asian Pacific American community preferred. Familiarity with Microsoft Word, Excel,

PageMaker and the Internet necessary. Must have driver's license and access to car.

Salary: Stipend \$750 (\$150 for May; \$200/month for the months of June-August 2000) and validated parking.

Application Process: Internship will begin immediately (May 1, 2000). Interested applicants should send a resume with one reference postmarked or faxed by April 17, 2000 to:

APALC

Kathay Feng, Director
Voting Rights & Anti-Discrimination Unit
1145 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 977-7500 x212 phone
(213) 977-7595 fax

Organization of Chinese Americans has represented the hopes and aspirations of Chinese Americans through its forty-four chapters nationwide by advocating for the civil rights and civic participation of all Asian Pacific Americans. This fellowship was made possible by a generous donation from the LAW OFFICES OF ENG & NISHIMURA.

An equal employment opportunity employer, the Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California is in its fifteenth year as a private, nonprofit organization providing legal services, community education and civil rights advocacy on behalf of low income and Asian Pacific Islander communities in Southern California.

(Continued from page 5)

of community perspectives highlighting police abuses of human rights.

Moreover, a heated debate in Taiwan over the appropriateness of this police conduct has contributed toward a change in the law under which the two men faced arrest for alleged conduct in an enclosed, private room at the AG Club. Civic Law Number 234 called for fines or arrest in cases of "overt lewdness in public places." Recently, however, it has been amended, instead penalizing "overt lewdness, with the intention of public exhibition." This amendment, while imperfect, at least appears to require the demonstration of an actor's intent that his or her act be witnessed--protecting pri-

vate acts and persons from the voyeuristic intrusiveness of official surveillance, as well as from the vague vocabulary of a legal system elastically disinclined to restrict its definition of "public."

IGLHRC wishes to congratulate Justice Wu for rightfully upholding the human rights of the defendants involved. IGLHRC also recognizes lesbian and gay activists and supporters in Taipei for their work in advocating for human rights and raising public awareness. And IGLHRC recognizes A-cheng, who has found new employment and is now lauded as a hero in the lesbian and gay community, for his courage in breaking codes of silence around police brutality—and paying a steep price.

California Domestic Partnership Bills Pass First Hurdle

Sacramento, CA—Three domestic partnership bills sponsored by the California Alliance for Pride and Equality (CAPE) passed the Assembly Judiciary Committee today. These bills are authored by Assemblymember Sheila Kuehl (AB 2211), Assembly Majority Whip Gloria Romero (AB 1990) and Assemblymember Darrell Steinberg (AB 2047). Committee members passed each measure by an identical 10 to 3 vote. The three bills are:

AB 1990 (Romero) provides registered domestic partners the right to make medical decisions for each other if either partner lacks the capacity to make decisions regarding his or her health care.

AB 2047 (Steinberg) places registered domestic partners in line to inherit property if one partner dies without a will as well as allows a partner to be designated as administrator of his or her deceased partner's estate.

AB 2211 (Kuehl) revises the statutory will form to include domestic partners, provides conservatorship rights, and allows a registered domestic partner to make funeral arrangements and decisions regarding the deceased partner's autopsy. The bill also authorizes a domestic partner to bring a cause of action and recover damages for negligent infliction of emotional distress and wrongful death, to the same extent that California law allows spouses to bring these causes of action. Lastly, AB 2211 recognizes registered domestic partnerships from other jurisdictions for purposes of these legal protections.

AB 1990 now goes to the Assembly Health Committee while AB 2047 and AB 2211 move to Assembly Appropriations Committee. These bills build upon the success of last year's landmark legislation, AB 26 by Assemblymember Carole Migden, which established the statewide domestic partnership registry within the office of the Secretary of State. Last year's AB 26 provides hospital visitation rights between registered domestic partners and allows government employers to extend health care benefits to the domestic partners of their employees.

Upcoming Events

May 4, Thursday

7:00–9:00 p.m.

GAPSN Gallery Opening
Public opening for the Art
Exhibit and City of West
Hollywood honors David Hong

May 6, Saturday

8:00–9:30 p.m.

GAPSN Rap
The Village at Ed Gould Plaza
1125 North McCadden Place
Los Angeles

May 9, Tuesday

6:30–9:00 p.m.

GAPSN Open House on the
501c3 discussion

May 11, Thursday

7:00–8:30 p.m.

Domestic Partnership forum
with Beinsatar and other
People of color CBO's
Bienestar Service Center
5326 E. Beverly Blvd.
Los Angeles

May 14, Sunday

2:00–4:00 p.m.

GAPSN Board Meeting

May 19 & 20, Fri. & Sat.

NAFEA Annual Conference
Double Tree Inn
100 The City Drive
Orange, CA 92868

May 20, Saturday

API Film Festival
GAPSN is sponsoring a series
of film shorts

@ The Director's Guild
Theater

May 20 & 21, Sat. & Sun.

Long Beach Pride

May 23, Tuesday

GAPSN is hosting the API
Film Festival and a reception
for the Directors and producers
after the movie at the Village.

GAPSN Town Hall Meeting: 501(c)3 Discussion

GAPSN is considering the formation of a separate 501(c)3 entity specifically for the purpose of fundraising for GAPSN. In the past, GAPSN programming has been greatly hampered by our lack of funds. One of the reasons that we've had trouble attracting funding is that many corporate and individual donors selectively give money based on the organizations tax status. GAPSN is currently a 502(c)4, meaning that we engage in political activities. This also means that we are not eligible for tax exemption. By creating a separate 501(c)3 entity, we can offer tax exemption for individuals and foundations willing to donate funds. Funds raised by the 501(c)3 entity will be used specifically for cultural and educational programming.

The Town Hall Meeting will discuss the ramifications of creating a GAPSN Foundation that will allow us to do more fundraising for our programs. **CONTRARY TO RUMORS, GAPSN ITSELF IS NOT BECOMING A 501(c)3, AND OUR RAPS WILL CONTINUE TO BE A SAFE SPACE FOR API'S TO COME TOGETHER AND MEET.** The discussion is on the subject of creating a separate entity to do fundraising in order for us to be able to improve and expand our programming to the gay and bisexual API community.

The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 9th from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the GAPSN Office at the Village. Contact Pei Chang at (310) 888-7423 for more information.

Long Beach Pride

The pride season is here. GAPSN is going to be at the Long Beach Pride for the first time on May 20th and 21st. Long Beach Pride has grown every year, and this year GAPSN is going to be there, we have a lot of API LGBT who live in Long Beach and surrounding area and this is a great way to reach them.

We are looking for GAPSN members who would like to volunteer their time on Saturday and Sunday to staff the booth, if you are interested in volunteering please give us a call at (213) 368-6488.

Hope to see you all there.

GAPSN Message Boards

GAPSN's message boards are now open. If you have something (or someone) to sell, or if you would like to make an announcement to GAPSN membership, GAPSN will have new message boards open starting next month in our monthly newsletter. Just e-mail your messages to Gordon at ghara@aol.com or mail them to our mailbox. All senders are kept in confidence unless noted otherwise.

InformAsian is a monthly newsletter for the members and supporters of the Gay Asian Pacific Support Network (GAPSN). Publication of any person's name and/or photographs is not to be construed as an indication of sexual orientation. Opinions expressed are those of the contributor and are not presented as the views of InformAsian, its editor, or GAPSN. First name and last name by initial are printed unless otherwise instructed. Annual membership fees for general and supporting members are: Single: \$24.00, Couple: \$40.00, Student: \$25.00. There will be a \$12.00 charge for overseas postage. Checks (U.S. funds, no cash) to be made payable to GAPSN. Send to:

GAPSN Membership
P.O. Box 461104
Los Angeles, CA 90046
(213) 368-6488
gapsn@yahoo.com

GAPSN Seeks Any And All Submissions

GAPSN is seeking submissions for our newsletter. As a voice for the gay or bisexual Asian male, we'd like any stories, poetry, jokes, etc. that you would care to send us. Authors retain all rights to their work (and you can brag that you've been published.)