



PERFORMING ARTS ORGANIZATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 1, 2021

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(SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.) —Del Sol Quartet’s “Angel Island Insight” with The Last Hoisan Poets, featured in the 24th annual United States of Asian America Festival in an online performance on Saturday May 22, 2021 @ 2PM PT (5PM ET).

Presented by the [Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center](#) as part of the [24th annual United States of Asian America Festival](#).

“ANGEL ISLAND INSIGHT” with The Last Hoisan Poets & The Del Sol Quartet

Saturday, May 22, 2021

2:00pm -3:30pm PT / 5:00pm – 6:30pm ET

Online program on Zoom & Del Sol YouTube Channel

Tickets and registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/angel-island-insight-tickets-148442903721>

On Saturday, May 22, 2021 from 2pm-3:30pm, Del Sol Performing Arts Organization presents “Angel Island Insight,” an online program featuring performances by The Last Hoisan Poets and the Del Sol String Quartet, presented as part of the by the Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center’s 24th annual United States of Asian America Festival.

This 90-minute program considers the importance of preserving cultural memory through the languages of music and poetry. Three descendants of Angel Island immigrants, The Last Hoisan Poets - Genny Lim, Nellie Wong and Flo Oy Wong - use poetry to speak their individual truths and creatively reclaim the Hoisan-wa language and culture. Charlton Lee, founder of the Del Sol String Quartet adds, “As an Asian American artist, this opportunity to showcase a history that has both a direct connection to my ethnicity as well as a global connection is incredibly empowering.”

In a journey that flows from anger and sorrow, using gratitude as a way to find joy, this Zoom program weaves together poetry with performances by the Del Sol Quartet, music by Asian-American composers Kui Dong, Theresa Wong, Jungyoon Wie, Chen Yi, Huang Ruo, and a collaborative composition created with The Last Hoisan Poets. A Q&A will follow, moderated by Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation’s executive director Edward Tepporn.



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More about The Last Hoisan Poets

Genny Lim, Nellie Wong, and Flo Oy Wong, three monumentally influential women artists and poets, all trace their roots to China's Toisan villages, home of the Hoisan-wa Chinese dialect. Their special poetry readings in English and Hoisan-wa pay homage to their mother language which is at risk of fading from collective memory.

Genny Lim, former San Francisco Jazz Poet Laureate and SF Arts Commissioner, is a second generation Chinese American of Hoisan ancestry. She is the lone surviving author of the ground-breaking book, *Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island*, edited with Him Mark Lai and Judy Yung. The book published in 1980 sparked national attention on the long-forgotten history of Chinese detained on Angel Island and received the American Book Award. Lim's award-winning play, *Paper Angels*, set at the Angel Island immigration barracks, was the first Asian American play to air on PBS's American Playhouse in 1985 and was produced throughout the U.S., Canada and China. She is author of five poetry collections, *Winter Place*, *Child of War*, *Paper Gods and Rebels*, *KRA!*, *La Morte Del Tempo*, and an anthology of Senior Asian American memoirs, *Window: Glimpses of Our Storied Past*. Lim has collaborated in poetry and music collaborations with past Jazz legends, such as Max Roach and Herbie Lewis and long-time collaborators, Jon Jang, John Santos, Francis Wong and now, the Del Sol String Quartet.

At the age of 9, artist/poet/educator **Flo Oy Wong**, a De Anza College alumni, knew that she loved words. A few years later, say 79 years, she has become a poet who uses English and her parents' native Chinese dialect to show and to tell her collected stories of family and community. A co-founder of the Asian American Women Artists Association, she has received three National Endowment for the Arts awards. In 2018, Flo celebrated her 80th birthday with the publication of her art & poetry book, *Dreaming of Glistening Pomeles*. Through her art and poetry, she supports those who use their individual and collective voices for social justice. She stands by individuals and organizations who put diversity, equity, and inclusion into practice. As an elder, she connects with younger people who inspire her.

Oakland Chinatown-born, **Nellie Wong** has published four books: *Dreams in Harrison Railroad Park*, *The Death of Long Steam Lady*, *Stolen Moments* and *Breakfast Lunch Dinner*. Her poems and essays appear in numerous journals and anthologies. Two pieces are installed at public sites in San Francisco. She's co-featured in the documentary film, "*Mitsuye and Nellie Asian American Poets*," and among her recognitions, a building at Oakland High School is named after her. A poem of hers was nominated for the Pushcart Prize. She's traveled to China in the First American Women Writers Tour with Alice Walker, Tillie Olsen and Paule Marshall, among others. She's taught poetry writing at Mills College and in Women Studies at the University of Minnesota.



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More about Del Sol Quartet

Del Sol began as a thought on the night shift at Fermilab. Charlton Lee loved the cutting edge of physics research – always looking for the next discovery, pushing boundaries. But he missed the way music connected people, building community by communicating in ways physics never would. What if he could bring that scientific passion for exploration to a string quartet? Twenty-eight years later, Del Sol is still sharing music that brings out the endorphins. Music that asks why not?

Fascinated by the feedback loop between social change, technology, and artistic innovation, the San Francisco-based ensemble is a leading force in 21st century chamber music - whether introducing Ben Johnston's microtonal Americana at the Library of Congress, taking Aeryn Santillan's gun-violence memorial to the streets of the Mission District, exploring Andean soundscapes with Gabriela Lena Frank and traditional musicians, or collaborating with Huang Ruo and the anonymous poets who carved their words into the walls of the Angel Island Immigration Station during the years of the Chinese Exclusion Act. The current Del Sol lineup, marked by the arrival of violinist Sam Weiser alongside mainstays Kathryn Bates and Ben Kreith, bring a fresh energy, freedom, and precision to the group.

Recognized as a “vigorous champion of living composers”, Del Sol has premiered hundreds of works by composers including Terry Riley, Gabriela Lena Frank, Frederic Rzewski, Ben Johnston, Chinary Ung, Mason Bates, Tania León, Erberk Eryilmaz, Theresa Wong, Reza Vali, Mohammed Fairouz and Peter Sculthorpe.

Many of these works are included on Del Sol's nine critically-acclaimed albums. PopMatters praised Del Sol's “unfettered mastery” on Terry Riley's *Dark Queen Mantra* (2017, Sono Luminus). *Scrapyard Exotica* (2015) elicited this rave in the New York Times. “I could be wrong, but I'm guessing it's been a while since you've rocked out to a string quartet recording. See if your foot can stay still once you put on this funky disc of rhythmically infectious (if often warped) music played by the adventurous Del Sol String Quartet.”

About Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation

From 1910 to 1940, Angel Island was the site of an U.S. Immigration Station that functioned as the West Coast equivalent of Ellis Island, although the Angel Island facility also enforced policies designed to exclude many Pacific Coast immigrants coming from eighty countries.

In 1970, the site was slated for demolition because of its deteriorated condition; but the discovery of Chinese poetry that had been carved into the walls of the detention barracks saved it from destruction and led to renewed interest in the Angel Island Immigration Station. Most importantly, the discovery of poetry increased awareness of the need to access the vivid lessons of sacrifice and triumph in the history of immigration.

Sparked by the discovery, Bay Area Asian Americans, spearheaded by Chris Chow, formed the Angel Island Immigration Station Historical Advisory Committee (AIISHAC). This organization studied how best to preserve the station for historical interpretation. In July 1976, their hard work came to fruition as the



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state legislature appropriated \$250,000 to restore and preserve the Immigration Station as a state monument.

The barracks opened to the public in 1983, and members of AIISHAC created the Immigration Station Foundation to continue preservation and educational efforts for the site, and to increase awareness of the contributions Pacific Coast immigrants make.

AIISF has provided vital financial support for the Immigration Station, serving as the non-profit fundraising partner for the site. Since 1994, AIISF has leveraged \$40 million to develop the cultural and physical landscape of the site. Foundation members preserved the poems on the barracks walls and created a collection of oral histories from those who had come through the Station and their descendants.

About the USAAF 2021

Each year, the [United States of Asian American Festival \(USAAF\)](#) presents up to 20 different programs reflecting the artistic accomplishments and cultural diversity of San Francisco's Pacific Islander and Asian American communities. USAAF showcases artists representing a diverse range of ethnic and cultural groups and aims to heighten the visibility of Asian and Pacific Islander (API) artists working in all disciplines - theater, music, dance, film, literature, visual arts, and more! Our goal is to nurture and empower these groups to be self-sufficient while providing the support they need to grow.

This year's USAAF is funded by the [San Francisco Arts Commission](#), [San Francisco Grants for the Arts](#), [California Arts Council](#), [Fleishhacker Foundation](#), [Zellerbach Family Foundation](#), [startsmall](#) and the [National Endowment for the Arts](#).

About Del Sol Performing Arts Organization's "Angel Island Insight" Program

Del Sol Performing Arts Organization's "[Angel Island Insight](#)" explores the history of the Angel Island Immigration Station by offering a suite of virtual and in-person programs that examines the musicality of the disappearing Hoisan-wa dialect by The Last Hoisan Poets (poets Genny Lim, Nellie Wong and Flo Oy Wong) and The Del Sol String Quartet. This artistic partnership explores the important influence and confluence of poetry and music on Asian American identity and culture in the United States. Collaborative performances will explore the Asian American immigrant experience, beginning with the poetry written by Chinese immigrants detained at Angel Island. Since the Angel Island Immigration Station's opening in 1910, the poetry carved into the walls of the detention barracks has spoken for the immigrants held inside. A performance by The Last Hoisan Poets invites audiences to listen to the sounds of Hoisan-wa, the dialect spoken by many of the Chinese immigrants who first came to America. Community knowledge of Hoisan-wa, once the "mainstream" dialect spoken by Chinese in the United States, has been slowly reduced, first by Cantonese and now with the emergence of Mandarin.

Del Sol's "Angel Island Insight" project will also include a mini-course of Angel Island's poetic history in collaboration with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at San Francisco State University; and a community online art exhibit, "Angel Island: In Sight 2021." These presentations will also expand public



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engagement with the premiere of composer Huang Ruo's "[Your Wall is Our Canvas: The Angel Island Project](#)" in October 2021.

This project was made possible with support from San Francisco Grants for the Arts and California Humanities, a non-profit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Visit www.calhum.org

The Humanities For All Quick Grant is a competitive grant program of California Humanities that supports locally-initiated public humanities projects that respond to the needs and interests of Californians, encourage greater public participation in humanities programming, particularly by new and/or underserved audiences, and promotes understanding and empathy among all our state's peoples in order to cultivate a thriving democracy.

"These projects will bring the complexity and diversity of California to light in new ways that will engage Californians from every part of our state, and, will help us all understand each other better," said Julie Fry, President & CEO of California Humanities. "We congratulate the grantees whose projects will promote understanding and provide insight into a wide range of topics, issues, and experiences."

A complete list of all Humanities For All Quick Grants can be found on the calhum.org website [here](#).

About California Humanities:

California Humanities, a nonprofit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities, promotes the humanities—focused on ideas, conversation, and learning—as relevant, meaningful ways to understand the human condition and connect people to each other in order to help strengthen California. California Humanities has provided grants and programs across the state since 1975. To learn more, visit calhum.org, or like and follow California Humanities on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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