Alumni Spotlight

Song, April
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Project Overview

- My project spotlights the intellectual influence of Chinese and Taiwanese University of Michigan alumni who returned to China and published primarily in Chinese.
Objectives

- Research across the U-M Library collections and databases to obtain biographical information and investigate the influence of Chinese and Taiwanese alumni.
- Feature alumni works from the U-M Library collections.
- Conduct interviews with several chosen contemporary alumni.
- Create a website to spotlight the alumni and feature their works.
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The Alumni Spotlight features notable alumni of the University of Michigan who originally come from the Greater China region (Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan). It highlights the intellectual influence of University of Michigan alumni who returned to the Greater China region after completing their education and continued to publish their works in Chinese. The alumni profiles present biographical information, photographs, and several interviews with contemporary alumni. The book showcase window to the right of the biographical information on each profile page features a three dimensional representation of the alumni’s works which opens to a formal citation of the work and a link to the item in Mirlyn, the University of Michigan Library’s catalog.

An accessible version of this homepage is available on the Alumni page.
INTERVIEWS

Yong Cheng 永城

"Every life is a mirror that allows us to find ourselves. My works come from my experiences; they are those mirrors."

Yong's Interview
Image Courtesy of Yong Cheng

Wu Hao 吴皓

Interviewed by April Song on July 6, 2016

"My upcoming film, "People's Republic of China," continues my interest in Chinese youths by focusing on China's popular online showrooms; here kids in their late teens and early twenties can attract millions of fans by singing karaoke live online, and become multi-millionaires in the process."

Wu's Interview
Image Courtesy of Wu Hao
Wu Hao

吴皓

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER AND BLOGGER

MBA 2000

GO TO WU'S INTERVIEW

BIOGRAPHY

Originally trained as a molecular biologist, Hao Wu is a Chinese independent filmmaker and blogger. He holds an Master of Science from Brandeis University, and received his Master's in Business Administration from the University of Michigan Ross School of Business in 2000. Wu is currently a fellow at the New America Foundation.

INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCE

Hao's documentary work works to break stereotypes about China and show the complexity and diversity of Chinese society. His films have been screened at international film festivals and have won several awards.
Nowhere To Call Home
A Tibetan in Beijing

Askwith Media Library
The University of Michigan
University Libraries
919 S University, Rm 2002 Shapiro
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1185
Wu Hao 吴皓

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER AND BLOGGER

MBA 2000

GO TO WU'S PROFILE

TALK ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

I spent two years at the University of Michigan Ross School of Business for my MBA. It was an eye-opening experience for an ex-molecular biologist who had spent many years in various laboratories -- the diverse student body, the friendly atmosphere, and the great learning opportunities. Quite transformative. I felt like a different person -- more curious and more confident -- after those two years.

HOW DID THE UNIVERSITY INFLUENCE YOUR CAREER?

I discovered my interest in product management in the technology sector at Ross. After graduation, I worked for Internet companies like Excite.com and Earthlink in the Silicon Valley, and later moved back to China and continued my career at Alibaba and TripAdvisor. In 2008-2011 I was TripAdvisor's China Country Manager. As my career progressed, so did my passion in more artistic and creative endeavors. In 2012 I decided to take some time off to pursue documentary filmmaking full time. Now four years later, I am still making, and enjoying making, documentaries.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO FILM DOCUMENTARIES SUCH AS “BEIJING OR BUST”? HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE TOPIC FOR “NOWHERE TO CALL HOME,” YOUR MOST RECENT WORK?

I did "Beijing or Bust" on the side as a part-time project when I first moved back to China in 2004. Having been away from China for 12 years, it was mind-boggling to observe how China had changed and to make sense my own migration experience from China to the US and then back. "Beijing or Bust" tells the experience of six American-born-Chinese (ABC) as they migrated from the US to China to search for identity, career and purpose in life. In some way, making the film was a way for me to understand China again.

I produced "Nowhere to Call Home" so I wouldn’t call it my work. Documentary films are truly directors' babies. The last film I directed, "The Road to Fame," was about China’s one-child generation. It tells the story of students at China’s top drama academy staging the American musical "Fame" as their graduation
AN INTERVIEW WITH

Yong Cheng 永城

BUSINESS CONSULTANT AND
BESTSELLING MYSTERY NOVELIST
BS 1997
MBA 2000

GO TO YONG'S PROFILE

TALK ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

- 请简要谈谈您在密歇根大学的学习生涯。

这个问题的答案，大概不太好简单。1995-1997年，我在密歇根大学工程学院攻读机械工程学士学位。虽然只有短短两年，却非常令我难忘。作为一个跨学的留学生，陌生的环境、生疏的语言、学业的压力和紧张的经济状况都给我很大压力。但其中最大的压力还是来自经济。我曾多次每周打四份工。在中餐馆、快餐店，学校实验室和研究中心都打过工。记得我的第一份工作是这样的：早晨9点到学校上课，下课后赶去餐馆打午餐，下午两点半赶回学校上课，下午五点再去餐厅。然后一直工作到夜里10点，回家后再开始念书，要到凌晨三四点睡觉。这样忙碌的日子，我始终坚持到美国的两个假期才稍微放松了。我记得我住在安阿伯郊外的一所小房子的地下室，每月150美元租金，骑一辆20美元买来的自行车。从北校到南校大约40分钟。在冬天雪地里每天骑车上下学，是一个令人难忘的体验。正是这段艰苦岁月，让我初尝人生之苦，理解奋斗的意义并非锦上添花，而是为了生存，不仅是当下的生存，还有未来的生存。

It is not easy to answer this question briefly. From 1995 to 1997, I was studying Mechanical Engineering at the University of Michigan College of Engineering for my Bachelor's Degree. Although it was only a little more than two years, it is still fresh in my mind. As a transfer student studying abroad, I was under a lot of pressure from the new environment, unfamiliar language, academic pressure, and tight economic situation. But among these, the strongest pressure was from my economic situation. At one point in time, I worked up to four jobs: a Chinese restaurant, a fast food restaurant, a laboratory, and a research center. I remember my daily schedule as follows: I arrived at eight in the morning to class; after leaving class, I went to work the lunch shift at the restaurant; at two in the afternoon I rushed back to school to go to class; after five, I had to be at the cafeteria again. Then, I worked until ten at night; only after I returned to my dormitory, did I begin to study. I would not be able to sleep until three o'clock in the morning. I was so busy that I did not have time for the loneliness and homesickness most people feel they first go to the United States. I remember that I lived in the basement of a small house at the edge of Ann Arbor; my monthly rent was $100. Riding a used bicycle that I bought for $20, it took forty minutes to get to North Campus. In the ice and snow, riding the bicycle to and from school every day was an experience that is hard to forget. I was from this difficult time that I began to taste the bitterness of life; I came to understand that the meaning of working hard is not to get icing on the cake, but to survive. Survival not only for the present, but for the future.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WRITE YOUR MYSTERY NOVEL SERIES?
Lessons Learned

- An understanding of the organization, scale, services, and work within itself in the U-M Library.
- How to efficiently find everything from books to articles to microfilms in the U-M collections and databases and outside them.
- The alumni stories are inspirational because they show influence and movement across fields and around the world.
Next Steps

- Research was originally conducted on 49 individuals.
- We narrowed down the scope the number of people because of time.
- Adding alumni to the site through the WordPress interface is easy.
Thank You!