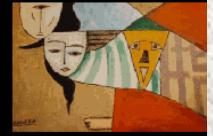




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SAIGEON ARTS, CULTURE & EDUCATION INSTITUTE



To Research, Document & Promote Vietnamese Culture

NEWSLETTER # 39

JANUARY 2012

A COUNTRY STAYS ALIVE WHEN ITS CULTURE IS ALIVE.

- SACEI Newsletter updates you on the latest news about Vietnamese-America.
- It serves as a link between SACEI members and those who are interested in the Vietnamese or Vietnamese-American culture.

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Editorial Note

Like many Asians, Vietnamese celebrate the Lunar New Year (also called Tet) on January 23, 2012. Thus each year, they celebrate twice: January 1st and Tet, which falls either in January or February depending on the year.

Each year is dedicated to a specific animal. The Rat, Buffalo (Ox for the Chinese), Tiger, Cat (Rabbit for the Chinese), Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Goat (Sheep for the Chinese), Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig are the twelve animals that form the Asian zodiac. Vietnamese use the Buffalo, Cat, and Goat while the Chinese prefer the Ox, Rabbit, and Sheep. The twelve-year calendar cycle means that the next Dragon year will fall on 2024. People born under the Dragon are said to be passionate, brave, and self-assured. They are either pioneering spirits or foolhardy people. They tend to be generous and blessed with good fortune. They fall in love

quickly and out of love as quickly. Dragon years tend to be good for business, although fortunes can be lost as easily.

Tet is the most important Vietnamese holiday because it is the celebration of the beginning of spring as well as a new year. It's also a national birthday (you are one year older no matter the month you are born in). As such, offices and businesses close for three days and housewives take a leave from cooking and doing household chores.



ThanhHa Lai: INSIDE OUT & BACK AGAIN



Photo by Sloane Bosniak

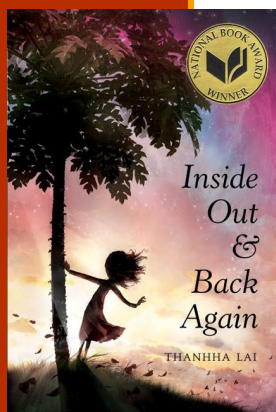
Winner of the 2011 **National Book Award** in the Young People's Literature category

I was born in Vietnam in 1965 (The Year of the Snake), where life was good. I went to school, ate lots of snacks, was top dog in my class, and was the youngest of nine children. Yes, I know...nine. But it was war time, and people were told to have lots of babies. On April 30, 1975, North Vietnam (the Communist side) won the war, and my family and I (living in Saigon, South Vietnam) scrambled onto a navy ship and ended up in Montgomery, Alabama. Why?

Believe me, we didn't know about Alabama to choose it. But to enter the United States, refugees had to have a sponsor. The man who had the nerve to take on all of us (10 in all) lived in Alabama. Life got more complicated, with me not speaking English and never having tasted a hot dog. Add to that my looks. I was the first real-life Asian my classmates had ever seen.

It took about a decade to get acclimated and to learn gram-

ThanhHa Lai: INSIDE OUT & BACK AGAIN...



Available on Amazon

matically correct English. By then we had moved to Ft. Worth, Texas, where I went to high school. I received a degree in journalism from University of Texas, Austin. I covered the cops beat at The Orange County Register in California for two years...

Hobbies, Interests, and Enthusiasms
I try to read a novel a night. As soon as my daughter goes down, I read. If I love the novel, I read every word until I finish it. If not so much, I flip and get the essence of what the writer is doing. I get to write Tuesdays through Fridays, usually. Something always comes up, but I can count on 15 solid hours a week to sit there and see what happens.

Education:
New York University (MFA)
University of Texas, Austin

Available on Amazon:

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/reader/0061962783/>



Photo by Nancy Crampton



Narumi Takahashi & Mervin Tran perform in the Juior Pairs-Free Skating event of the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Final on Dec 11, 2010 in Beijing, China

Mervin Tran: Skater

Mervin Tran (born September 22, 1990) is a Canadian figure skater who currently competes as a pair skater for Japan with Narumi Takahashi. They are the 2010 Junior World silver medalists, 2010-11 Junior Grand Prix Final champions, and 2008-2010 Japanese national champions.

Tran was born in Regina, Saskatchewan. He moved to Montreal, Quebec in 2007 to train with Richard Gauthier. His parents were refugees from Vietnam and Cambodia.

During the 2011-2012 season, Takahashi and Tran's first Grand Prix assignment was 2011 Skate Canada International, where they finished fourth. They won the silver

medal at their second event, 2011 NHK Trophy.



"Hands of Hope"
at Camp Pendleton Marine Base.
Oceanside, CA.



Hands of Hope: Dr. Nguyen Luu Dat

The hands were designed and created by Dr. Luu Nguyen Dat. This was part of a series of hands he built of concrete and cast in place. Some were designed as seating for adults while the two hands shown here are more monumental and also intended for the children. The artist, Dr. Luu, is a lawyer, a poet, and a writer.

When he and his family fled their home in 1975, they arrived at Camp Pendleton Marine Base near Oceanside California

where a refugee camp had been hastily set up. At the request of the camp commander, General Graham, Dr. Luu created his American version of the Hands of Hope, which has since become a Federal Monument. Those hands can still be seen today at an entrance to the marine base.



Water Pumps Donated by Viet-Americans to Indian Villages



While visiting Buddhist temples in India, Viet-Americans and Viet-Canadians noticed that locals have a hard time drawing out water from deep man-made wells. They decided to put up some money to build four hand-operated water pumps to ease the hardships of villagers of Bodhgaya, India.



Martin Gainsborough. Vietnam: Rethinking the State

Martin Gainsborough is one of the most accomplished of a new generation of academic and policy specialists on Vietnam and the politics and political economy of the socialist transitional states. *Vietnam: Rethinking the State* provides a highly sophisticated yet always accessible and eminently readable discussion and analysis of key issues in the Vietnamese reform process that will be of keen interest to students, teachers, government officials, journalists, the business community and others. His discussion of politics and the state, the Communist Party, political economy, cor-

ruption, local politics, legislative politics and other important areas will be important to our broader, comparative understanding of developments in China and other states as well.

Available on Amazon:

<http://www.amazon.com/Vietnam-Rethinking-State-Martin-Gainsborough/dp/1848133103>



Arts of Ancient Vietnam: Nancy Tingley

Once a strategic trading post that channeled the flow of riches and ideas among countries situated along the South China Sea and places as far away as India and Rome, Viet Nam has a fascinating history and an artistic heritage to match it.

The authors begin by discussing, for example, the elegant burial jars, iron axes, bronze artifacts, and jewelry of the early Sa Huynh culture; the bronze ritual drums of the Dong Son; and the jeweled gold pieces, excavated from the walled center of Oc Eo in the kingdom of Fu Nan. New scholarship investi-

gates the trade in gold and Chinese ceramics between Cham and the Philippine kingdom of Butuan. The final section is devoted to art from Hoi An, once a major international port. Of note are the ceramic wares produced in northern and central Viet Nam from the 16th to 18th century.

Available on Amazon:

<http://www.amazon.com/Arts-Ancient-Viet-Nam-Museum/dp/0300146965>



Arts of Ancient Viet Nam

Vietnamese Singers Before 1975

These are the old-generation singers who made their names in South Vietnam before 1975. Some of them are still singing and doing shows today in the U.S.

Duy Khanh

Hoang Oanh

Giao Linh

Huong Lan

Che Linh

Khanh Ly

Le Thu

Hung Cuong Mai

Le Huyen

Ha Thanh

Thanh Thuy

Huong Hong Que

Nhat Truong

Bach Tuyet

...

Samples of
vinyl album
cover before
1975

