

**Arts Exchanges in Contemporary U.S-China Cultural Diplomacy**

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Dr. Patricia Dewey, Advisor

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Date

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In memory of my grandmother Yuhui Zhu and grandfather Ruixin Liu.

Curriculum Vitae

## EDUCATION

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 Diplomacy

**B.A. Arts Management**, China Conservatory of Music. Beijing, China  
 Sep. 5, 2007 – July 1, 2011  
 Final Research: *“A tentative discourse: the management and development  
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## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2011 *Researcher*: A needs assessment evaluation for international students of  
 Univeristy of Oregon
- 2010 *Paid Researcher*: Extension research on the atonal music outreach.
- 2009 *Third Place in National Competition*: Planning promotion of the music art  
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- 2007 *Paid Researcher*: Comparison between the Chinese opera music and  
 Foreign opera music Translated the opera “Peter Grimes”.

## AWARDS

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- 2012 *The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Performing Arts Managers Conference scholarship*,  
 International Association of Venue Managers, Inc. (IAVM)
- 2010 *National College Students’ Creative Experimental Projects Award*, China  
 Conservatory of Music
- 2009 *Original Music Drama “Transfer”*, *Excellent Award of The Golden Hedgehog  
 University Students’ Drama Festival*, Beijing
- 2009 *Third Prize, the 1<sup>st</sup> National College Students’ Audience Development Program  
 Design Contest for the Arts Exhibition*, China Association for Arts  
 Administration Educators (CAAAE)
- 2008-2009 *School Excellent Student Scholarship*, China Conservatory of Music
- 2008-2009 *National Inspirational Scholarship*, China Conservatory of Music
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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Marketing and PR Intern**, Hult Center for the Performing Arts, Eugene OR  
June 2012 – May 2013

- *Social Media* – Post on facebook and twitter on a consistent and regular basis. Select performances, draft posts, confirm approval and implementation.
- *Ticket sales tracking* – Daily reports from the ticket office are tracked and reported to the marketing manager for upticks and downswings. Tracking during particular promotion periods and the delivery of Ovation to patrons.
- *OVATION* – Contact presenters for marketing materials known as Assets including event descriptions and photography. Edit and proof read OVATION drafts and proofs.
- *Event management* – Use Event Management software system Ungerboeck known as UBI for Ovation calendar documents, print ad copy and information, social media guidance and a host of other needs that are addressed in the marketing department.
- *High Points for Working City* – A word document calendar of events is produced monthly with one version (4-weeks) going to Working City within the City of Eugene.
- *Database Management* – Maintain and update ACCESS database used for the distribution of OVATION and other media contacts.
- *E-News and On Sales* – Use Constant Contact for edit and release of On Sale announcements.

**Translator**, ChinaVine, Eugene OR  
Sep. 2011 – June 2013

- Write posts for Chinavine website, introduce China's performing arts to English-speaking and reading children, youth, and adults.
- Translate ChinaVine materials for website, promotion, and scholarly paper. Translated Doug Blandy and Kristin Congdon's speech at The Third World Chinese Art Education Symposium in Hangzhou, China.

**Stage Manager**, National Centre for the Performing Arts, Beijing  
April – June 2011

- Served as the assistant stage manager for drama *Wangfujing* by calling some cues, and prompting for operetta *Bat*.

**Production Intern**, Beijing International Music Festival, Beijing  
Oct. – Nov. 2010

- In charge of artist hospitality and services, including Howard Shore, Vienna boys choir, Los Romeros Guitar Quartet, and cellist Eckart Runge.

**Production Team Leader**, Beijing Traditional Music Festival, Beijing  
Oct. 2009

- Served as the leader of Reception Team, in charge of scheduling, logistics, and artist hospitality.

**Director**, “Shakespeare· Mask” Drama Club, China Conservatory of Music, Beijing  
March 2009 – July 2011

- Founded the club, organized 50+ members to learn and practice drama.
- Organized and directed original music drama *Modulation*, comedy *Zou Ji Prevailed upon the King of Qi to Welcome Remonstrance*, drama *The Courtyard Named Wotou*, and gave the performances on campus.
- “Shakespeare· Mask” Drama Club won 2009 “ Star Community Award” in China Conservatory of Music.

**Chairman**, Student Associations Union, China Conservatory of Music, Beijing  
Sep. 2009 – July 2011

- Responsible for the daily management of 13 students associations.
- In charge of the examination and approval of each association.

### VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

**Volunteer**, APAP|NYC 2013 Conference, New York City, NY Jan. 2013

- Responsible for registration desk and session support for over 3500 attendees.

**Volunteer**, The Americans for the Arts' Art and Economic Prosperity Study IV,  
Eugene, OR Oct. 2012

- Responsible for conducting paper-based surveys to attendees of Saturday Market, the first Friday Art Walk, and French Film Festival.

**Volunteer Public Relations**, The 29th World Conference of International Society of  
Music Education, Beijing Aug. 2010

- Responsible for media advertising, contacting 120+ media organizations, and assisted press conferences.

**Production Assistant**, International Conference on Women in Music, Beijing  
April 2008

- Responsible for providing hospitality services to artists including, transportation, translation, and stage assistant work.

**Translator and Artist Service**, Beijing International Piano Festival, Beijing  
Sep. 2008

- Participated in the reception and translation of work.
- Served as assistant for British pianist Peter Donohoe on his solo concert in National Theater.

### Abstract

Due to the rapid economic development and a lack of effective cultural communications, the rise of China has caused many countries to panic about whether China is a threat to the established order. To achieve “peaceful rising”, promoting cross-cultural communication has been put on the Chinese government agenda. This Master’s capstone focuses on arts exchanges employed in U.S.-China cultural diplomacy since the establishment of the Open-Door Policy in 1978. Focusing on four arts exchange case studies, this study discusses the effects of cultural policy on the arts exchanges and mutual understanding.

*Keywords:* U.S-China cultural diplomacy, Open-Door Policy, Cultural policy, Arts exchanges

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

**Problem Statement**

Cultural diplomacy is a field of public policy existing in many countries, including China. An effective cultural policy can enhance domestic arts and culture development, as well as communications with the outside world. As a type of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy includes the “exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding” (Walter, 2009, p. 74). Cultural diplomacy, at its core, is “for the people of a foreign nation to develop an understanding of the nation’s ideals and institutions in an effort to build broad support for economic and political goals” (Maack, 2001, p. 59).

In December 1978, China’s Communist leader, Deng Xiaopin, declared the Open-Door Policy at the 3rd Plenum of the 11th Central Committee. After the ten years of chaos during the Cultural Revolution, and a short interregnum of Hua Guofeng, China ushered in a new era of opportunity for her economy, politics, agriculture, and culture development.

Since China resumed diplomatic relations with the United States in 1979, the Chinese government has realized the important role that cultural diplomacy plays in international relations, and has signed a series of cultural interaction agreements. For example, the United States-China Accord of Cultural Exchange, which was signed in 1984, brought unprecedented thriving cultural exchange between the two countries. However, in recent decades, China’s rapid economic development brings this country

many benefits as well as issues. To build a positive international image and achieve a peaceful rising, China needs to increase the effort on cultural diplomacy in order to enhance foreign nations' understanding of China.

This research explores arts exchanges employed in U.S.-China cultural diplomacy since the establishment of the Open-Door Policy in 1978. I chose to focus on cross-cultural communication between the U.S and China because it is the setting in which I position my professional experience and career goals. This research can serve as a tool for cultural policy makers and for performing arts producers who are focusing on arts outreach and intercultural performance producing.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The goal of this research is to identify the position of arts exchanges in the political field. In order to solve this problem, it is essential to understand both the U.S. and China policy makers' attitudes toward cultural diplomacy, and their endeavors in arts exchanges.

On the Chinese side, even before the establishment of the Open-Door Policy, leaders were working on building a "normalizing" diplomacy with the U.S. through tools such as Ping-Pong diplomacy and panda diplomacy. As Deng told a group of Japanese businessmen in June 1984, "the present world is an open one, China's past backwardness was due to this closed-door policy ... the experience of the past thirty years or more proves that a closed-door policy would hinder construction and inhibit development... If anything, we will only open up still more" (Gittings, 2005, p. 221).

To discuss arts exchanges between the U.S. and China since the establishment of the Open-Door Policy, there are some significant concepts and cases that need to be included in this study. For the further review of literature, I have focused on U.S.-China cultural diplomacy policy and the effects of soft power. Historian Akira Iriye (1997) concluded that cultural diplomatic endeavors and achievements are ‘cultural internationalism’ that “entails a variety of activities undertaken to link countries and peoples through the exchange of ideas and persons, through scholarly cooperation, or through efforts at facilitating cross-national understanding” (p. 3). Zhi Li, a Chinese scholar, defined cultural diplomacy as a kind of diplomacy aiming to achieve specific political purposes or foreign strategic intent for a sovereign state through cultural dissemination, exchange and communication (2003, p. 83).

Furthermore, as cultural communication is deepening and increasing in frequency, people from different countries are showing their interest in learning more from each other and are able to accept various cultural perspectives. Joseph Nye (2004) defined this phenomenon as *soft power*: "A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries – admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to its level of prosperity and openness – want to follow it. In this sense, it is also important to set the agenda and attract others in world politics, and not only to force them to change by threatening military force or economic sanctions. This soft power – getting others to want the outcomes that you want – co-opts people rather than coerces them” (p. 5).

On the domestic front, Chinese policy analysts have advanced arguments supporting cultural exchanges between the U.S. and China. Take the opera *Madame White Snake* as an example. The 2011 Pulitzer Music Award winner, co-commissioned

by Opera Boston and the Beijing Music Festival, *Madame White Snake*, “represents the first main-stage opera commission for the local company and the first American partnership for the festival” (Eichler & Staff, 2008); the production also promoted the sister cities’ relationship between Boston and Hangzhou, China. However, some artistic representatives expressed their concern about the cultural attribution, arguing that the artistic trends would become vague and therefore lose traditional cultural heritage. Chinese music critic Xuefeng Liu mentioned in his blog (Liu Xuefeng’s Blog, 2011) that using English as the libretto language was a big mistake at the cost of national characters. He believes a Chinese opera should use the Chinese language; the standard of judging an opera as successful or not has nothing to do with its language.

How to look at the arts employed in U.S.-China cultural diplomacy, and how to balance the advantageous and disadvantageous effects of cultural exchanges, is the essence of this study. I have collected data about four important arts exchanges taking place within U.S-China cultural diplomacy endeavors to support my research. These are the *Nixon in China* opera premiered in 1987, the Chinese Culture Festival in Washington, DC in 2005, the Confucius Institutes since 2004, and the *Madame White Snake* opera premiered in 2010.

### **Research Methodology**

The purpose of this study about the U.S.-China diplomatic development since the establishment of the Open-Door Policy is to understand the operation of the Open-Door Policy, especially from a cultural policy perspective, and discover the profound influence of the Open-Door Policy on U.S.-China cultural diplomacy from 1978 to the present, and

establish a basic understanding about arts exchanges. At this stage in the research, the cultural values exchanged between the U.S. and China will be generally understood through the lens of soft power, and all the endeavors and achievements will be considered within the field of cultural diplomacy.

This project will start with socially constructed knowledge claims. As Crotty (1998) identified, “humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspective—we are all born into a world of meaning bestowed upon us by our culture” (p. 9). In my case, the United States and China are two countries developed in different historical, political, social and cultural environments, thus their people may hold different or even contrary values. As the researcher in this project, I sought to treat all the data equally, and attempted to balance and understand the differences. For example, in the case of *Madame White Snake*, even though this opera won high praise in the U.S., some Chinese scholars held different opinions because of their different cultural context. Ken Smith (2010) points out the modern stage design and costume exposed the production team’s insufficient knowledge of Chinese culture, and made the Chinese audience confused (p. 46). However, this ‘made in America’ opera, which was based on the Western artist understanding of Chinese culture, could be easier to be comprehended by the American audience due to this Western expression. I will look at the opera as a crucial step in U.S.-China Cultural exchanges instead of a Western misunderstanding of Chinese culture. Actually, that is why we need cultural diplomacy—to make cultural exchanges—to promote mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence.

To better construct this research, my research questions include:

**Main question:**

How are arts exchanges implemented as a tool of the Open-Door Policy used to enhance U.S.-China relations?

**Sub Questions:**

1. How was the Open-Door Policy established and operated?
2. How was U.S.-China cultural exchange developed after the Open-Door Policy?
3. How and to what extent have the arts been employed in cultural diplomacy between the U.S. and China?
4. How does cultural diplomacy affect the arts?

The significant definitions in my research include cultural diplomacy, soft power, and China threat theory.

China's Open-Door Policy is a comprehensive policy that guides multiple aspects of development in China. Collecting data on the tremendous changes in China since the establishment of the policy in 1978 would be a massive project. So I delimited the topic to U.S.-China cultural diplomacy. In addition, to narrow down the cases of the arts exchanges, I chose four events associated with different arts forms to discuss cross-cultural communication.

However, since this research involves multiple disciplines and fields, a literature review was required in a short time. An effective research timeline was necessary. In addition, previous research with similar perspectives is limited, which led me to collect data from different studies and build my conclusions on my own understanding.

## Research Design

My capstone research mainly involved historical literature review. Focusing on the Chinese Open-Door Policy's influence on U.S-China cultural diplomacy, I needed to separate this main topic into several aspects to research. In Chapter 2, I firstly needed to complete an history review of the Open-Door Policy's establishment and operation, which could provide me with a historical background on the establishment of U.S.-China diplomatic relations. Second, I focused on the development of U.S.-China diplomatic relations since Nixon's trip to China in 1972, and several mutual visits between these two countries since then. With the changes in the international situation, the United States has a different interpretation about the rise of China; I also analyzed the influence of 'China threat theory' and 'soft power'. Even though there are negative remarks about China around the world, the process of the U.S-China cultural communication has never been stopped. The arts and arts events employed in cultural diplomacy between the U.S. and China are vibrant and influential. In Chapter 3, I provide a case study of some of the iconic arts exchange events to evaluate cultural diplomacy's effect on U.S.-China relations. In addition, the frequent arts exchanges also brought significant changes to Chinese and American arts. How to understand these changes, and how to balance arts development and cultural heritage protection comprise the fourth chapter of my research.

There are three dimensions in my research. Firstly, Sino-American cultural diplomacy research needs to be treated separately, considering both the China perspective and the U.S. perspective. In the Chinese dimension, this contains a historic review of the Open-Door Policy, and Chinese cultural development since 1978. In the American dimension, this contains an analysis of national policy towards China and 'China threat

theory'. The third dimension of the research is to look at arts exchange events since the establishment of Sino-American diplomatic relations. The cases I chose are distributed in the period between 1978 to present, and show the changes of different forms of arts to various extents.

To support this study, the following two courses provided insights into these topics:

- AAD 605 Reading (Spring 2013)

By having private lessons with Dr. Patricia Dewey, I focused on data collection and analysis of Sino-American cultural diplomatic history.

- INTL 531 Cross-Cultural Communication (Spring 2013)

This course consists of students discussion and guests lectures, providing an exploration of globalization and cross-cultural communication. It is a good resource to conclude the experience and tendency of intercultural exchanges.



## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

**1971: Ping Pong Diplomacy**

It has been 35 years since China and the United States have officially established diplomatic relations. The healthy and effective diplomacy has brought considerable benefits and development for these two countries and contributed to world peace. To understand development of Sino-American diplomacy over the past few decades, it is necessary to track begin with Zhou Enlai's "Ping Pong diplomacy" in 1971, which opened a new chapter of Sino-U.S. diplomatic relations.

After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the United States adopted a blockade policy to China. However, because the confrontation with the Soviet Union was getting fiercer in the 1960s, the Nixon administration decided to improve relations with China. "Nixon had written in the October 1967 issue of Foreign Affairs, 'Taking the long view we simply cannot afford to leave China forever outside the family of nations'" (COC website). When 14-year ministerial level talks between China and the United States in Warsaw during this period didn't achieve any results, Nixon asked President Yahya Khan of Pakistan to send an oral message to Chinese leaders about his decision to normalize relations in 1970. The response from Chinese government also expressed the same wish, and Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai were also concerned about many details involved in this decision. Afterwards, the two countries' leaders began to look for opportunities to promote the relationship.

On one afternoon of the 31<sup>st</sup> World Table Tennis Championship in Nagoya, Japan in April 1971, the U.S. Table Tennis player Glenn Cowan missed his team bus to the stadium after practice and got on the bus of the Chinese team unexpectedly. On that bus, Chinese player Zhuang Zedong had a casual talk with Cowan and gave him a silk-screen portrait of Huangshan Mountains as a gift, Cowan gave Zhuang a T-shirt with a peace emblem flag and the words “Let It Be” the next day. The friendship between these two American and Chinese tennis players was breaking news in the midst of the Cold War and the Vietnam War, and was widely reported as a sign of the re-opening of Sino-U.S. relations.

Several days later, on April 6, 1971, the U.S. team received the invitation to visit China. *Time* magazine called it “Ping heard round the world” since this American delegation, including nine players, four officials, and two spouses, were the first American group to set foot in China since the Chinese Communist Party takeover China in 1949. On April 14, Zhou Enlai received the team and said, “The Chinese and American people used to have frequent exchanges. Then came a long period of severance. Your visit has opened the door to friendship between the peoples of the two countries” (COC Website) In China, sport always comes with a slogan says that “Friendship First, Competition Second”. By opening a door to the U.S. team, China tried to “put their mostly hostile neighbors on notice about a possible shift in alliances” (DeVoss, 2002). Seven hours after the meeting with Zhou, the U.S. announced plans to remove a 20-year embargo on trade with China. The Ping Pong Diplomacy opened a new chapter of Sino-U.S relations and paved the way of Nixon’s visit to China.

**1972: Nixon Visits China**

On February 21, 1972, 11: 27 a.m. China Standard time, Air Force One landed in the Beijing airport. Surrounded by the China's honor guard made up of 350 warriors, President Richard Nixon and the first lady Pat Nixon walked out of the plane. The handshake between Nixon and Zhou Enlai lasted for one minute, and this movement was live broadcasted by multiple television channels in America and China. As Nixon writes in his memoirs, "when our hands held, it was the end of an era, another age began". During the seven-day visit, the leaders of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America crafted *The Joint Communiqués* which marked the beginning of the normalization of Sino-U.S. diplomacy, and laid a foundation for further development of international relations.

Bringing the United States and China together was not easy. In early 1969, when Nixon had just assumed office, he was faced with a series of internal and external issues. Bugged down in the Vietnam War, as well as competition with the Soviet Union in the Cold War, American national strength was in a relative decline. In order to address this predicament and stop the expansionist momentum of the Soviet Union, Nixon planned to use balance of power diplomacy to maintain world equilibrium and build a multipolar world. Opening the door for U.S-China relations became a crucial step in achieving this goal. On the other hand, China was in an isolated position at that time, and its intense relationship with the Soviet Union put great military pressure on China. Thus, initiating a new diplomatic relationship became a common aspiration of the two countries.

To facilitate Nixon's visit, the leaders of the U.S and China made a lot of effort: "three years of delicate feelers, of careful signals sent out and usually but not always

received, of indirect contacts, of intense internal debates, and, finally, of direct negotiations” (MacMillan, 2007, p. xx). Nixon’s national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, made two trips to Beijing to discuss grand strategy and details of Nixon’s coming trip with the Chinese prime minister Zhou Enlai in 1971.

Finally, Nixon and his party arrived in Beijing in 1972 and had the seven-day historic visit to China. During this visit, President Nixon met Chairman Mao Zedong and held talks with Premier Zhou Enlai. The two sides exchanged views on the global politics, the Sino-U.S. relationship, and Taiwan issues. *The Joint Communiqués* ( also known as The Shanghai Communiqués) were formally completed and announced in Shanghai on February 28, 1972. Nixon and his wife, Pat, also visited the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, and watched one of the eight model operas *The Red Detachment of Women* ballet produced by Jiang Qing, the wife of Mao.

Nixon’s trip to China won overwhelming positive reports by the media both in the U.S. and China. While in Shanghai, Nixon spoke about what this meant for the two countries in the future: "This was the week that changed the world, as what we have said in that Communiqué is not nearly as important as what we will do in the years ahead to build a bridge across 16,000 miles and 22 years of hostilities which have divided us in the past. And what we have said today is that we shall build that bridge." (UPI. com)

**Figure 1:**

**Joint Communiqué of the United States of America and the People's Republic of China**  
February 28, 1972

President Richard Nixon of the United States of America visited the People's Republic of China at the invitation of Premier Chou En-lai of the People's Republic of China from February 21 to February 28, 1972. Accompanying the President were Mrs. Nixon, U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers, Assistant to the President Dr. Henry Kissinger, and other American officials. President Nixon met with Chairman Mao Tsetung of the Communist Party of China on February 21. The two leaders had a serious and frank exchange of views on Sino-U.S. relations and world affairs.

During the visit, extensive, earnest and frank discussions were held between President Nixon and Premier Chou En-lai on the normalization of relations between the United States of America and the People's Republic of China, as well as on other matters of interest to both sides. In addition, Secretary of State William Rogers and Foreign Minister Chi Peng-fei held talks in the same spirit.

President Nixon and his party visited Peking and viewed cultural, industrial and agricultural sites, and they also toured Hangchow and Shanghai where, continuing discussions with Chinese leaders, they viewed similar places of interest.

The leaders of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America found it beneficial to have this opportunity, after so many years without contact, to present candidly to one another their views on a variety of issues. They reviewed the international situation in which important changes and great upheavals are taking place and expounded their respective positions and attitudes.

The Chinese side stated: Wherever there is oppression, there is resistance. Countries want independence, nations want liberation and the people want revolution--this has become the irresistible trend of history. All nations, big or small, should be equal: big nations should not bully the small and strong nations should not bully the weak. China will never be a superpower and it opposes hegemony and power politics of any kind. The Chinese side stated that it firmly supports the struggles of all the oppressed people and nations for freedom and liberation and that the people of all countries have the right to choose their social systems according their own wishes and the right to safeguard the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of their own countries and oppose foreign aggression, interference, control and subversion. All foreign troops should be withdrawn to their own countries. The Chinese side expressed its firm support to the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia in their efforts for the attainment of their goal and its firm support to the seven-point proposal of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam and the elaboration of February this year on the two key problems in the proposal, and to the Joint Declaration of the Summit Conference of the Indochinese Peoples. It firmly supports the eight-point program for the peaceful unification of Korea put forward by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on April 12, 1971, and the stand for the abolition of the "U.N. Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea". It firmly opposes the revival and outward expansion of Japanese militarism and firmly supports the Japanese people's desire to build an independent, democratic, peaceful and neutral Japan. It firmly maintains that India and Pakistan should, in accordance with the United Nations resolutions on the Indo-Pakistan question, immediately withdraw all their forces to their respective territories and to their own sides of the ceasefire line in Jammu and Kashmir and firmly supports the Pakistan Government and people in their struggle to preserve their independence and sovereignty and the people of Jammu and Kashmir in their struggle for the right of self-determination.

The U.S. side stated: Peace in Asia and peace in the world requires efforts both to reduce immediate tensions and to eliminate the basic causes of conflict. The United States will work for a just and secure peace: just, because it fulfills the aspirations of peoples and nations for freedom and progress; secure, because it removes the danger of foreign aggression. The United States supports individual freedom and social progress for all the peoples of the world, free of outside pressure or intervention. The United States believes that the effort to reduce tensions is served by improving communication between countries that have different ideologies so as to lessen the risks of confrontation through accident, miscalculation or misunderstanding. Countries should treat each other with mutual respect and be willing to compete peacefully, letting performance be the ultimate judge. No country should claim infallibility and each country should be prepared to reexamine its own attitudes for the common good. The United States stressed that the peoples of Indochina should be allowed to determine their destiny without outside intervention; its constant primary objective has been a negotiated solution; the eight-point proposal put forward by the

Republic of Viet Nam and the United States on January 27, 1972 represents a basis for the attainment of that objective; in the absence of a negotiated settlement the United States envisages the ultimate withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the region consistent with the aim of self-determination for each country of Indochina. The United States will maintain its close ties with and support for the Republic of Korea; the United States will support efforts of the Republic of Korea to seek a relaxation of tension and increased communication in the Korean peninsula. The United States places the highest value on its friendly relations with Japan; it will continue to develop the existing close bonds. Consistent with the United Nations Security Council Resolution of December 21, 1971, the United States favors the continuation of the ceasefire between India and Pakistan and the withdrawal of all military forces to within their own territories and to their own sides of the ceasefire line in Jammu and Kashmir; the United States supports the right of the peoples of South Asia to shape their own future in peace, free of military threat, and without having the area become the subject of great power rivalry.

There are essential differences between China and the United States in their social systems and foreign policies. However, the two sides agreed that countries, regardless of their social systems, should conduct their relations on the principles of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, non-aggression against other states, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. International disputes should be settled on this basis, without resorting to the use or threat of force. The United States and the People's Republic of China are prepared to apply these principles to their mutual relations.

With these principles of international relations in mind the two sides stated that: progress toward the normalization of relations between China and the United States is in the interests of all countries both wish to reduce the danger of international military conflict neither should seek hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region and each is opposed to efforts by any other country or group of countries to establish such hegemony neither is prepared to negotiate on behalf of any third party or to enter into agreements or understandings with the other directed at other states.

Both sides are of the view that it would be against the interests of the peoples of the world for any major country to collude with another against other countries, or for major countries to divide up the world into spheres of interest.

The two sides reviewed the long-standing serious disputes between China and the United States. The Chinese side reaffirmed its position: the Taiwan question is the crucial question obstructing the normalization of relations between China and the United States; the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government of China; Taiwan is a province of China which has long been returned to the motherland; the liberation of Taiwan is China's internal affair in which no other country has the right to interfere; and all U.S. forces and military installations must be withdrawn from Taiwan. The Chinese Government firmly opposes any activities which aim at the creation of "one China, one Taiwan", "one China, two governments", "two Chinas", an "independent Taiwan" or advocate that "the status of Taiwan remains to be determined".

The U.S. side declared: The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The United States Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves. With this prospect in mind, it affirms the ultimate objective of the withdrawal of all U.S. forces and military installations from Taiwan. In the meantime, it will progressively reduce its forces and military installations on Taiwan as the tension in the area diminishes. The two sides agreed that it is desirable to broaden the understanding between the two peoples. To this end, they discussed specific areas in such fields as science, technology, culture, sports and journalism, in which people-to-people contacts

and exchanges would be mutually beneficial. Each side undertakes to facilitate the further development of such contacts and exchanges.

Both sides view bilateral trade as another area from which mutual benefit can be derived, and agreed that economic relations based on equality and mutual benefit are in the interest of the peoples of the two countries. They agree to facilitate the progressive development of trade between their two countries.

The two sides agreed that they will stay in contact through various channels, including the sending of a senior U.S. representative to Peking from time to time for concrete consultations to further the normalization of relations between the two countries and continue to exchange views on issues of common interest.

The two sides expressed the hope that the gains achieved during this visit would open up new prospects for the relations between the two countries. They believe that the normalization of relations between the two countries is not only in the interest of the Chinese and American peoples but also contributes to the relaxation of tension in Asia and the world.

President Nixon, Mrs. Nixon and the American party expressed their appreciation for the gracious hospitality shown them by the Government and people of the People's Republic of China.

### **1978: Open Door Policy**

Sharing the same goals, Chinese and U.S leaders have been committed to advancing mutual beneficial friendly developments ever since. “This foreign policy radicalism was reversed under the post-Mao leadership, which has adopted a less confrontational, more sophisticated, more confident and, at times, more constructive approach toward regional and global affairs” (Gill & Huang, 2006, p. 21).

At the 3rd Plenum of the 11th Central Committee in December 1978, Deng Xiaoping, who was rehabilitated as the Vice-Chairman of the Central Committee, declared the reform of agriculture and the Open-Door Policy. Instead of Mao's self-sufficient economy, Deng initiated the decollectivization of agriculture and designated four Special Economic Zones (SEZs), including Shenzhen, Xiamen, Shantou, and Zhuhai, to open up to foreign investment. After living through the ten years of chaos in the Cultural Revolution, and the short interregnum of Hua Guofeng, China ushered in a new era of opportunity for her economy, politics, agriculture, and culture development.

This policy has indeed brought tremendous changes to China in a short time. Aspiring to economic self-sufficiency during the Maoist period, the 1950s and 1960s foreign trade in China grew at a slower rate than the economy as a whole. The American-Chinese trade amount was only \$92 million in 1972, however, after the Open-Door Policy, it rapidly grew to “\$1,189 million in 1978, \$5,478 million in 1981, \$8 billion in 1986, and \$13.5 billion in 1988” (Hsü, 1995, p. 858).

As Deng told a group of Japanese businessmen in June 1984, “the present world is an open one, China’s past backwardness was due to this closed-door policy ... the experience of the past thirty years or more proves that a closed-door policy would hinder construction and inhibit development... If anything, we will only open up still more” (Gittings, 2005, p. 221). At the initial stage of Open-Door Policy, Chinese imports largely consisted of raw materials, including agricultural products, chemicals and lumber. With the rapid development of agriculture in the following years, the focus of imports shifted to technology, industrial machinery, and services.

Initially when the Open-Door Policy was adopted in December 1978, the central leadership of China had hoped to import foreign science and technology without importing foreign culture and values. However, once the door to the outside world was opened, Chinese people didn’t want to return to the old days’ monotonous life and they were eager to communicate with the outside world. In the 10 years that followed, “more than 60,000 students and visiting scholars, as well as tens of thousands of officials and delegates, went abroad to study and visit, creating international exchange between China and the outside world” (Hsü, 1995, p. 872). In the meantime, imported music, movies, and clothing also spread Western culture and values to China.



**1997-present: China becomes a global power**

In 1997, Deng Xiaoping passed away. President Jiang Zemin had emerged from the shadow of Deng and began to strengthen this leadership. In his foreign policy, Jiang focused on international trade and economic integration. In 1997 and 1998, Jiang and Clinton exchanged visits to the United States and China, and talked about Taiwan issues and the preparation for joining the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Thought its rapid economic and military development, the role of China in the world has increasingly becomes important. Joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 offered China new access to the global market. In 2009, China's exports were \$130.7 billion (The Associated Press, 2010) making China be the world's leading exporter. In 2012, "U.S. exports and imports of goods totaled \$3.82 trillion... China's customs administration reported that the country's trade in goods in 2012 amounted to \$3.87 trillion" (Forsythe, 2013), making China the most important trade partner for some countries. However, while enjoying the largest trade volume, China is still "best known as a supplier of shoes, toys furniture and other low-tech goods" (Forsythe, 2013). Based on *The Annual Report on International Cultural Trade of China (2012)*, China's imports and exports of goods totaled \$2.974 trillion in 2010, but the total imports and exports of core cultural products were only \$14.39 billion, less than 1% of the total trade; and the ratio of exports to imports intercultural products was 1:3, which shows a big trade deficit.

Due to its astonishing speed and scale of economic development and lacking effective cultural communications, the rise of China has caused many countries to panic. Around the globe, many people believe that China is a threat to the established order. Also, there are many issues discussed that negatively impact China's development, "for

example, China as a possible threat to regional security and the global environment; the possibility of a melt-down involving famine or disintegration; the problems of Taiwan and Tibet, and alleged trade abuses such as failure to protect intellectual copyright or the use of prison labour” (Hunter & Sexton, 1999, p. 201).

According to the annual BBC World Service Country Rating Roll about *Views of US Continue to Improve in 2011*, “an average of 44 per cent say that China has a positive influence in the world.... The proportion of people holding the opposite view remained steady (38%)”.... “In the US, a majority of Americans lean negative (51%), but positive views have increased by seven points, to 36 per cent” (2011, p. 10) compared with 2010. Thus, the international image of China has strong potential for improvement. In recent years, the Chinese government has gradually strengthened cultural outreach abroad, and invested in the development of soft power.

“Soft power refers to ‘the ability to get what you want through attraction’. It departs from the conventional emphasis on military might, political leverage and economic power with its emphasis on ideology, diplomatic conduct, and culture” (Lai, 2006, p. 1). Chinese cultural festivals, movies, music, tourism and sports became to the main platforms for China’s cultural diplomacy; and culture has become the third pillar of China’s diplomacy after economy and politics.

For example, China has sponsored “Chinese Cultural Festival”, “Chinese New Year Celebration” in America, France, England, Korea, Bangkok, and many other countries every year. From 2003 to 2005, “Les Années Chine-France” was held both in China and France by these tow countries’ government jointly, which involved a wide range of cultural exchanges and over 300 projects. In 2005, “The Festival of China” was

held at the Kennedy Center in Washington. This was the largest Chinese performing arts celebration in American history and attracted over 400,000 audience participants (see case study 1).

China also promotes entertainment industry development by exporting and importing movies, sports and so on. In 2012, “China surpassed Japan to become the second-largest box office behind the United States, with theater earnings up 36 percent to \$2.7 billion from the previous year” (Mckay, 2013). The same year, Chinese novelist and short story writer Mo Yan was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature for his work as a writer "who with hallucinatory realism merges folk tales, history and the contemporary" (Nobelprize.org.), which set off a wave of reading Chinese literature overseas. In addition, the success of the 2008 Olympics Games in Beijing further showed Chinese culture and history to foreign athletes and audiences. Chinese martial arts have also become an Olympics sport. Some outstanding Chinese athletes, such as Yao Ming and Liu Xiang, have become well known all over the world.

## CHAPTER 3: CASE STUDY

This chapter analyzes four arts exchange cases employed in Sino-American cultural diplomacy. The first case, Festival of China at the Kennedy Center in 2005, the largest Chinese performing arts celebration in American history, is a successful of collaboration between Chinese government and the Kennedy Center as well as an example of modern China's international propaganda. The second case, the opera *Madame White Snake*, can be regarded as a Chinese story told in an American way, which provides a good exploration of intercultural communication. The opera *Nixon in China*, as a Sino-American political themed opera, has even not been performed in China. Therefore, this third case study is committed to finding the causes of this from an artistic production perspective. The last case study draws attention to the development of Confucius Institutes in the U.S., which represent Chinese soft power building and its issues.

**Case 1: Festival of China**

Organizing large cultural exchange events is one of the important means of cultural diplomacy used by the Chinese government. By holding various cultural projects overseas, China broadens its culture and softens its international image. One of the most important Sino-American cultural exchange projects was the Kennedy Center Festival of China in 2005. This was the largest celebration of Chinese performing arts in the Kennedy Center as well as in American history.

Beginning on October 1, China's National Day, and extending to October 29, this Festival of China was jointly promoted by the Chinese Ministry of Culture and the Kennedy Center. The festival cost \$5 million and featured 874 performers from the mainland and Hong Kong in 53 performances, ranging from the Peking Opera to shadow puppetry, from ballet to theatre (Marks, 2005). "The US mainstream media such as New York Times and Washington Post all gave large coverage of the festival. Statistics showed that 400,000 audience members participated in the festival on location, and another one million US people got access to the festival through TV or Internet" (Houston.china-consulate.org)

The idea of hosting a Chinese cultural festival was first proposed by the Kennedy Center in 2001 because as China was rising on the geopolitical scene, American people appeared to be eager to learn about this country and its culture, making it necessary to promote mutual communication and understanding. To successfully host this Festival of China, the Kennedy Center and the Chinese Ministry of Culture spent three years planning the event. Alicia Adams, the center's vice president for international programs and the festival curator had nine trips to China to choose repertoire based on the aim of "assembling a *mélange* of productions that would at once reflect on China's artistic legacy and provide glimpses of contemporary expression in the new China" (Marks, 2005).

### **Description**

This one-month festival consisted of visual arts exhibitions, fashion shows and various performing arts events, and all the exhibitions were free (see figure 2 for the

event calendar). Most of the performances' tickets were sold out before the festival even began.

<b>Exhibitions</b>		
Time	Theme	Highlights
Oct. 1 – 30, 2005	Transferred Landscape: Contemporary Sculpture From China	
Oct. 1 – 9, 2005	Beijing Prepares For The 2008 Olympics	Multimedia display
Oct. 1 – 30, 2005	Charming Beijing: Photographs Of The Chinese Capital	
Oct. 1 – 9, 2005	Enjoy Beijing: Open-air Marketplace	Old Beijing-style handicrafts
Oct. 1 – 30, 2005	Qin's Terra Cotta Warrior Exhibition	Life-sized terra cotta warriors and horses
Oct. 1 – 30, 2005	Tim Yip's China Red	
<b>Performances</b>		
Time	Performance	Highlights
Oct. 1, 2005, 7:30 pm	Festival of China & Beijing Cultural Week Opening Night Performance	Chinese folk arts
Oct. 1, 2005, 9:50 pm	Cai Guoqiang's Tornado	Fireworks event
Oct. 2, 2005, 10:00 pm	Kites On The Potomac	Kite making and flying activities
Oct. 2, 2005	China National Acrobatic Troupe	
Oct. 2, 2005, 8:00 pm	Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra with Lang Lang	
Oct. 4 - 16, 2005	The New China Chic	
Oct. 4 - 8, 2005	National Ballet of China	<i>Raise the Red Lantern</i>
Oct. 7, 2005, 3:30 pm	Open Rehearsal: National Ballet of China	
Oct. 7 - 9, 2005	Festival of China Trilogy of Modern Dance	
Oct. 9, 2005	Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra	Orchestra performs works on traditional Chinese instruments
Oct. 10 - 26, 2005	Contemporary Chinese Film Series	
Oct. 13 - 15, 2005	The China National Peking	<i>Female Generals of the</i>

	Opera Company	<i>Yang Family</i>
Oct. 14, 2005, 4:30 pm	Backstage At The Peking Opera	
Oct. 17, 2005, 8:00 pm	Shanghai Symphony Orchestra Featuring Tan Dun: China New Wave	The Washington premiere of Tan Dun's concerto <i>The Map</i>
Oct. 18 - 19, 2005	Shanghai Song and Dance Ensemble	
Oct. 21 - 23, 2005	Cathay: Three Tales of China	Ancient shadow puppetry techniques and cutting-edge multimedia
Oct. 21 - 22, 2005	Shen Wei Dance Arts	
Oct. 27, 2005, 7:30 pm	Ying Quartet	
Oct. 27 - 29, 2005	Beijing People's Art Theatre: Teahouse	The Beijing People's Arts Theatre's most seminal work by famed Chinese playwright and novelist Lao She
Oct. 28, 2005, 12:00 pm	Lunchtime Look-in: Teahouse	
Oct. 29, 2005	Shaanxi Folk Art Theatre	Shadow puppetry

Figure 2: Festival Events Calendar

To better facilitate presenting Chinese arts, the Kennedy Center redecorated its venue. The main hall was decorated with dark red banners, which led audiences to the Terra-Cotta Warriors exhibition and visual arts exhibitions; the open balcony was changed into Chinese traditional open-air marketplace where people could find a variety of Chinese cultural products, such as lanterns, Chinese knots, calligraphy, kites, and pottery. Through this design, audiences immediately felt the rich Chinese cultural atmosphere when they walked into the Kennedy Center.

The repertoire choices of the Festival of China successfully portrayed the profound Chinese history and culture as well as its contemporary new image, and the quality of the arts performance was not reduced because of the language barrier. For example, one of the highlights of this festival was the classic drama *Teahouse* presented by Beijing People's Arts Theatre. This work is one of the most seminal works by famed

Chinese playwright and novelist Lao She; the play chronicled the 50 year rise and fall of China from 1898 to 1948 by depicting the stories that happened as experienced by people gathering in a teahouse in Beijing. This drama involves a large amount of historical background and Beijing dialect. However, by reading the English subtitles, American audiences were able to comprehend most of the drama and instinctively respond to the development of the plot. In addition, the “Lunch Look-in” with *Teahouse* cast also provided the audience with a good opportunity to discuss the production and ask questions.

Another highlight performance was the ballet *Raise the Red Lantern* presented by the National Ballet of China. The ballet was adapted from director Zhang Yimou’s film of the same name. Compared with advanced Western ballet, Chinese ballet is still in its childhood period. Thus, performing ballet in front of an American audience could be easily thought as teaching fish to swim. However, the innovative production of the *Raise the Red Lantern* was fresh to the audiences: the costume design combined the characteristics of cheongsam and Peking opera costumes, and the orchestra also integrated traditional Chinese instruments and Peking opera sections. Furthermore, Kong Fu and acrobat techniques could be seen in the ballet. The magnificent design of the ballet revived the love tragedy and showed rich Chinese cultural elements.

### **Effects**

The Festival of China revealed a grander, ambitious China. The Festival provided a good chance to express Chinese culture and political propositions, and to eliminate the talk of “China threat”. The festival “is set right in the middle of the exchange visits by Chinese President Hu Jintao in September, and US President George W. Bush in



November” (Houston.china-consulate.org) As Elizabeth C. Economy, director of Asia studies for the Council on Foreign Relations in New York stated, “It’s coming at a very useful time for China... Anything, especially in Washington, that brings acrobats and arts and helps inform people about all the positives China brings to the world helps to provide a much more complete picture of the country” (Clemetson, 2005).

In its recent decades of development, China has built “a relatively well-off society” (Sun, 2005), and fed 23 percent of the world population with 7 percent of the world’s farmland. With its rapid development, China is seeking a way to promote its economic and cultural construction in a peaceful world. In the speech given by Sun Jiazheng, the Chinese Culture Minister, in downtown Washington on October 3, 2005, he mentioned three problems that need to be solved in order to broadcast Chinese culture and promote Sino-American cultural exchanges. First, China needs to know how to sell its cultural products; Second, China needs to expand its marketing network, and gain experience and knowledge to promote its products; Third, China hopes that “the US market could be more accessible so that more good cultural products from China can enter” (Sun, 2005).

The successful Kennedy Center Festival of China promoted solutions to the above problems to some extent. First, through this festival, Chinese culture was spread among the American public and obtained good feedback. On the public communication level, Chinese arts expanded their market. Second, on the artistic level, this festival enhanced the high-level artists communication. This festival premiered many arts works by Chinese artists and afforded them the opportunity to exchange artistic perspectives with American artists and audience. Third, this festival also promoted capacity building for Sino-American arts administrators. For example, in July, 2005, three months before the

Festival of China, Michael M. Kaiser, the former president of the Kennedy Center, helped lead a two-week management seminar for Chinese arts executives and officials. Many important issues in arts administration, such fundraising, education, customer relations, and program development were discussed in this seminar, which helped Chinese arts managers enhance their strategies in promoting products, and also improve their connections with the US arts market.

### **Case 2: Madame White Snake Opera**

In recent years, cultural exchanges between the United States and China have become more diversified and innovative. With the increase in communication and mutual understanding, people in the U.S. are not just satisfied with learning the exotic culture, but also attempt to express their understandings and ideas. The *Madame White Snake* opera—2011 Pulitzer winner for music—is a successful attempt to do so. The grassroots organization The Friends of Madame White Snake is committed to bring this opera to the world stage, and to build bridges between Asian and mainstream American communities.

Based on an old Chinese love myth, "Madame White Snake"(MWS) was co-commissioned by Opera Boston and the Beijing Music Festival, and produced by a group of internationally renowned artists. Its Chinese-American composer Zhou Long believes that his years of overseas life makes him see the Chinese arts and culture more objectively and gives him more space for artistic creation. Also, because the production team consisted of American artists, MWS integrated many modern and American cultural elements, such as the storyline, costumes, and stage design that are very different from the Chinese version.

### Description

In addition to the beautiful story and sophisticated production, the success of MWS was also due to support from the Chinese government in creating this cultural exchange opportunity.

The Open-Door cultural policy ensured the smooth operation of MWS opera, and its success, in turn, promotes cultural relations between the U.S. and China. For example, the partnership with Boston Mayor's Office opened a bigger and reliable market for MWS. Boston established Sister City ties with Hangzhou, China—the origin of the story of Madame white snake—in 1985. The purpose of the Sister Cities program is to create international understanding and goodwill. By working with the Boston Mayor's Office, the Madame White Snake opera promoted the sister cities relationship. “The Mayor has declared February 24, 2010 as the Madame White Snake Day in Boston, and invited the Mayor of Hangzhou to join in the Madame White Snake celebration and to open the opera with him” (Madame White Snake website - Friends).

The performance of *Madame White Snake* at the Beijing Music Festival also was a source of widespread concern in China. Founded in 1998, the Beijing Music Festival is one of the most significant cultural events in Asia. This grand annual music festival offers audiences a wide variety of music, including symphonic, operas, and jazz performances; and also premiered the works of Chinese and Western contemporary composers, such as Wenjing Guo, Xiaogang Xie, Krzysztof Penderecki, Howard Shore and others. Its conduct of encouraging both Western and Chinese contemporary music makes the Beijing Music Festival stand out in the numerous international music festivals, and also greatly stimulate cultural exchange between China and other countries.

The reason why the Beijing Music Festival could offer such great support to *Madame White Snake* and many other contemporary musicians and their works is that the festival is partly funded by its foundation—Beijing Music Festival Arts Foundation—that is endorsed by the Ministry of Culture of the People’s Republic of China and the Beijing Municipal Government. With the market increasingly opening, the Beijing Municipal Government vigorously supports cultural infrastructure and encourages various kinds of international cultural exchange, thus providing a favorable and convenient environment for cultural events.

### **Effects**

Is the Open-Door Policy effective for Chinese cultural diplomacy? The answer is yes. Recalling the decades since 1978, the Chinese people’s cultural life has had tremendous change, and China’s international image is improving all the time. The cultural exchanges between China and the United States are getting deeper and more free. Before 1990, due to the VISA policy and economic issues, the number of Chinese student in the U.S was very limited, however, in 2009/2010, China surpassed India as the country sending the most international students to the United States, and in 2011/2012, China sent nearly 200,000 students, almost twice the number of second-place India (CollegeNET, Inc.). In addition to introducing and exporting performing arts forms, American and Chinese artists also created art works to present their understanding of mutual culture, such as Opera Boston’s *Madame White Snake* opera, and Yimou Zhang’s *Turandot*.

An effective culture policy not only enhances China’s international status, but also offers an opportunity for Chinese people to re-examine themselves and their culture in order to address cultural heritage concerns. Because of the attention from Western

countries, some endangered, or humble but valuable cultural heritage, has regained the attention of its own country.

The *Madame White Snake* opera was made in the U.S., which means it combined a large number of adaptations associated with Western contemporary music, aesthetics, and logic. On the one hand, these adaptations made the story more understandable to American audiences, and would be easier to spread. After the world premier on February 26, 2010 at the Cutler Majestic Theatre in Boston, and the premiere of an expanded version of the opera in Beijing in October, 2010 at the Beijing Music Festival, *Madame White Snake* was awarded the 2011 Pulitzer Prize for Music. The work was described by the Pulitzer committee as a "deeply expressive opera that draws on a Chinese folk tale to blend the musical traditions of the East and the West" (Oteri, 2011). This innovation of artistic expression also enticed Chinese people to revisit their own cultural treasures. During the 'Smashing the Four Olds' campaign of 1964 in China, the legend of white snake was banned as 'old culture', and related books, performances, such as its Peking opera version, were all forbidden in that period. However, after decades of opening the door to the outside world, many arts and arts form have been regained people's attention and have been restored in improved versions. The legend of white snake was made into movies, a TV series, and different factions of Chinese opera. To date, the U.S. version of *Madame White Snake* opera makes the old story more international.

On the other hand, some Chinese scholars and cultural workers expressed their concern about the 'over-cultural-blending' brought from the increasing cultural exchanges. Such an example, the Chinese music critic Xuefeng Liu mentioned in his blog (Liu Xuefeng's Blog, 2011) that using English as the libretto language was a big mistake

at the cost of national characters. He believes a Chinese opera should use the Chinese language; the standard of judging an opera as successful or not has nothing to do with its language. Ken Smith also points out the modern stage design and costume exposed the production team's insufficient knowledge of Chinese culture, and confused the Chinese audience.

However, the purpose of *Madame White Snake* opera was not to tell the authentic classical Chinese story to the American audiences, but rather to tell a simple love story. In addition, as Chinese cultural diplomatic relations with the United States continue to develop step by step, Americans' understanding of Chinese culture also needs to take some time. The attempt of *Madame White Snake* is a successful case both in artistic and cultural exchange perspectives. In short, the opera deepened cultural exploration in both China and the United States.

### **Case 3: Nixon in China Opera**

*Nixon in China* is a three-act opera by John Adams, with a libretto by poet Alice Goodman. This opera is the first work of American composer John Adams. In 1983, theatre and opera director Peter Sellars met Adams at a music festival in New England and proposed him to compose an opera based on the Nixon's trip to China, and drew Adam's attention. After doing several years considerable research and historical literature study, John Adams and Alice Goodman completed this historical themed opera. On October 22, 1987, this opera was premiered at the Wortham Theatre Center in Houston with John DeMain conducting the Houston Opera.

Following the premiere, *Nixon in China* received mixed critical reception. Typical among detractors were Valerie Scher's "Now we Have 'Nixon' to Kick Around" and Melinda Bargreen's "Nice Try, But This Eagerly Awaited Work is a Failure" (Scher 1987, C4; Bargreen 1987, D1). Martin Bernheimer simply called the music, heard at a San Francisco preview, "Minimalist Mush" (Bernheimer 1987, 1). On the other hand, Richard Dyer hailed *Nixon in China* as "a significant step in the history of American opera, a considerable achievement in its own right and a milestone commanding future vistas of even greater promise" (Dyer 1987, p. 7 as cited in Johnson, 2011, p. 2).

In the debates of divergent opinions, *Nixon in China* has been recorded twice and continues to be performed widely in both Europe and North America, such as the European premiere at the Muziek Theater in Amsterdam in 1988, Paris in 1991, and London in 2000. "In 2011, the opera received its Metropolitan Opera debut, a production based on the original sets, and in the same year was given an abstract production in Toronto by the Canadian Opera Company" (*Nixon in China* (opera), Wikipedia). In 2012 at the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Nixon's trip to China, the opera *Nixon in China* was put on stage again by Eugene Opera and San Francisco Opera.

Although this opera has been performed in Europe and North America several times, its visibility is still not high. China, as the main part in this historical event and this opera, has never presented this opera before. Thus, this opera is not known well to Chinese audience and researchers.

There are multiple reasons that this opera could not be performed in China. Based on my watching experience of the 1987 DVD recording version and Eugene Opera

version, and combined with related literature review, I will analyze three issues about this opera's production and content.

## **Description**

### 1. Stage design

Overall, the stage design and costume design of both of the 1987 recording and Eugene Opera version are in accordance with history. Especially the 1987 version reappeared many details about this trip. In 1970s China, people usually wore grey, blue, black, and green tunic suit, some of them also wore oversized black-rimmed glasses, women cut neat short hair and wore canvas flat shoes, high heel was not common in that age. So the simple dresses of Chinese women were in a sharp contrast to Pat Nixon's red trench coat and high heels. This reflects the different culture and political background of the two countries in a different angle. The costumes for women in the opera had some artistic changes which could more fit on stage performance but still respect history.

In addition to costume design, stage design and props design can also present indirectly the character and give more information beyond their dialogs. The Air Force One landing on the stage has always been a good case in stage designing. This appears in the first scene in Act 1. The plane and hanging ladder makes the scene spectacular, solemn and reliable.

However, not all scene design keeps the same since 1987. For example, the meeting with Chairman Mao in his study room (Image 1) is an important scene in the opera also in history. In 1972, Mao was very old and suffering from bronchitis and emphysema, but he was still like reading various books particularly in history. In Nixon's memoirs he mentioned it was a smoke-filled room, but full of books, paper, and there are



even many books on the floor (Chen, 1989, P. 237). The room full of books can be viewed as another aspect of a description about why Mao had a philosophical conversation with Nixon, which includes incomprehensible content. However, as the opera presented in different places and reproduced by different artists, this scene's design has been changed to be more simple. Such as the Colorado Opera's version in 2008 (image 2), this version's design, which is more abstract and modern comparatively, can make audience feel the combination of historical events with current time and focuses on the singers' performance, but also reduces the characters' manifestation.



Image 1: History photo (1972)



Image 2: *Nixon in China* produced by Colorado Opera (2008)

## 2. Adaptations:

The production of the opera *Nixon in China* was indeed based on considerable historical documents, and Alice Goodman had a deep research on Chinese contemporary history and Mao's literature. But after all, this is an American Opera, targeted to American and European audience. As John Adams said in an interview, the fact that his work isn't on the Chinese radar screen doesn't bother the him at all. "This is an American opera, about American mythology...The worst thing I could do would be to parody Chinese music. It makes 'Turandot' unbearable...I wanted to maintain an integrity of the musical palate. I knew that they played music for Nixon on his visit, but had no interest in that at all" (Frisch, 2009) So some adaptations to characters and plots may become the reasons why this opera has never been performed in China.

For example, last year, when some of my Chinese friends and I watched *Nixon in China* at the Hult Center for the Performing Arts presented by Eugene Opera, we felt uncomfortable about the design for Chinese leader characters. In that show, Premier Zhou Enlai never stood up straight to say a word. The real person Zhou Enlai has always been recognized as an elegant diplomat with agile thinking and humble attitude. His whole hearted advocacy to Chairman Mao let him never be overthrown in that turbulent period. However, humble does not mean cowardly. The character Zhou Enlai in that show failed to build a great leader who made Nixon's trip happen, but rather appeared as an old timid clerk with a worried face. In addition, as I mention above, in 1972, Mao is very old and seriously ill, however, his thoughts were still very sharp and he was able to control the whole situation. In Nixon's memoirs and the opera libretto can see, during the conversation between Nixon and Mao, Nixon could not quite understand the real

profound meaning about what Mao said to him. But in Eugene Opera's version, we did not see a wise and farsighted leader at all. The figure of Mao on that stage was just an old dying smoker.

In addition, in Act 2, there is a scene that shows Nixon and his wife watching the model opera ballet Red Detachment of Women with Jiang Qing, this wife of Mao. Model opera is one of Jiang Qing's "masterpiece" to show her support of Mao's leadership. The costumes and the way the dancers performed were major features of the history period. Through this ballet and other model opera, people can see her extreme left tendency and strong utilitarianism. Different from any previous version, the Eugene Opera presented this scene with a 'Hollywood-style emotion' (Plot Synopsis). Instead of traditional grey women's uniform (image 3), the ballerinas wore sparkling shorts and sexually attractive costumes while dancing a kind of dance between ballet and pole dancing. The main dancer Xi'er in this ballet, who supposed to be a pure but strong young lady who comes from a poor family, became a scheming and very sexual attractive modern girl. I think this new adaption not only completely failed to present the function of watching this ballet during this trip, but also misinterpreted the original ballet and 'Hollywood style'.



Image 3: The Red Detachment of Women shown in 1987 version

## Conclusion

Even though there are various problems in this opera caused by the cultural gap, artistic techniques and political and times differences, the opera *Nixon in China* can still be treated as a good politically themed artistic work. No matter the historical events, or literary works, or folklore stories, adaption is a necessary step when we transfer them into other art forms. For *Nixon in China*, an American opera focused on a western audience, the way it presents should meet the western audience's needs. However, if this opera wants to have better development on a world scale, I think it should have a more Chinese audience friendly adaptation. Then, it would become a positive artistic work that can also promote U.S.-China cultural exchanges.

## Case 4: The Confucius Institute

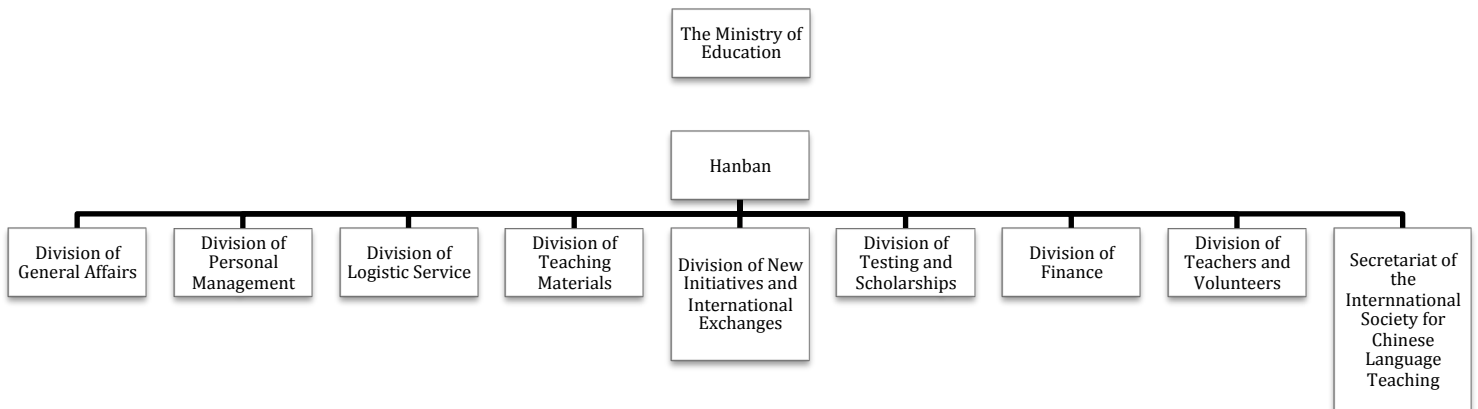
In 2004, the five-year plan formulated by the Chinese government for Chinese language education abroad, known as the Chinese Bridge Project (汉语桥工程), covered eight aspects of content: 1. Accelerate the construction of Confucius Institutes; 2. Improve multimedia audio-visual teaching materials, chengfeng Chinese (乘风汉语), and Great Wall Chinese (长城汉语); 3. Support the Chinese project in Advanced Placement (AP); 4. Strengthen the quality of language teachers; 5. Popularize the Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK); 6. Improve the Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (TCFL) program; 7. Fully take advantage of the Chinese Bridge Project fund to assist for Chinese libraries overseas; 8. Expand the influence of the Chinese Bridge—Chinese Proficiency Competition.

The Confucius Institute is a significant part of this project. The Confucius Institute Headquarters, or Hanban (汉办), was established in Beijing on April 9, 2007, affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education. The mission of Hanban is:

To make policies and development plans for promoting Chinese language internationally. To support Chinese language programs at educational institutions of various types and levels in other countries. To draft international Chinese teaching standards and develop and promote. (Hanban headquarters website)

The organizational structure of Hanban is provided in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3:



All the Confucius Institutes are operated by Hanban in conjunction with universities in China and local partner institutes abroad. There are basically three types of partner institutes abroad: foreign universities, public or social organizations, and foreign corporations and targeted Chinese language students in the world of business. Most partners in the United States are institutions of higher education. The first

Confucius Institute established in the U.S was at the University of Maryland in 2005. By 2010, there were 257 Confucius Institutes/Classrooms that had been established in the U.S.

There are multiple reasons that this institute was named Confucius Institute. Firstly, Confucius is an important representative of Chinese traditional ideologists. His thought blends philosophical speculation, moral cultivation and humanistic care as an integrity, which represents the most influential part of traditional Chinese culture and is a summary of oriental humanistic philosophy. Second, Confucius advocates ‘和’ which means harmony and peace, and stresses ‘和而不同’ which means harmonious but not clannish. This thought is also congruent with the idea of Chinese diplomacy—agreeing to disagree. The Confucius Institute is true to Confucius ideals, and aims to promote the exchanges between Chinese culture and other cultures, in order to build a peaceful, common prosperity and harmonious world.

To achieve this goal, Confucius Institutes offer various courses and services in different regions in this world as well as online. “Apart from language classes, the institutes organize a wide variety of cultural activities ranging from music, calligraphy, cooking, and traditional Chinese medicine to hosting talks on China’s economy, history, culture and society” (Siow, 2011, p.1). Take the University of Oregon Confucius Institute for Global China Studies as an example, which as initiated by the Univeristy of Oregon office of International Affairs in 2009. The University of Oregon Confucius Institute offers three Chinese Calligraphy classes, Chinese Language courses, and one Chinese class which can be taken for 1-3 credits. In addition to these courses, this institute also holds various events regularly. “Recent events include a lecture by a

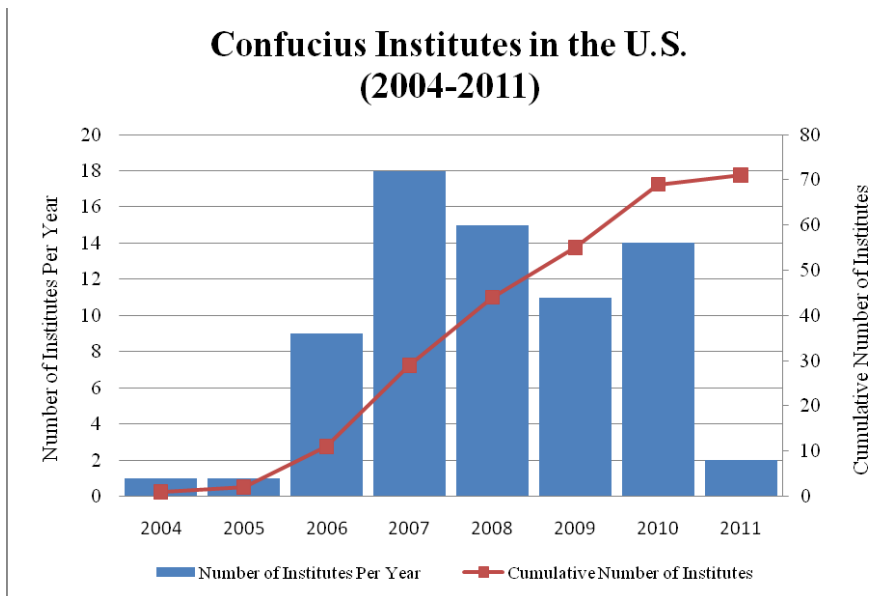
professor emeritus at Harvard on Deng Xiaoping, a folk music concert featuring musicians from the Central Music Conservancy, in Beijing, a panel discussion on Chinese foodways, and a symposium on China’s role in regulating the global information economy” (Redden, 2012).

Though diverse programs and events, Confucius Institutes have allowed many to gain a better understanding of a country that only a decades ago was largely perceived as mysterious and indecipherable (Siow, 2011, p.1). With ongoing cultural outreach, Confucius Institutes help to eliminate stereotypes and enable more people to see China and its culture objectively.

### Description

Since 2005, when the first Confucius Institute was founded at Maryland, the network has spread rapidly to different regions in the U.S. (see The Confucius Institute in the U.S chart shows below). The list of Confucius Institute in the U.S. by year can be found in Appendix List of Confucius Institutes in USA by Year.

Figure 4:



Given that such a large number of institutes have been established only in a few years, issues and concerns have emerged.

Firstly, human resources is a very serious problem that the Confucius Institutes are facing. “It is thought that some 100,000 people will be needed every year to work as Chinese language teachers overseas. However, the number of people who can be trained each year to teach the language to non-Chinese remains at about 5000” (Ren, Z. 2011, p. 9). To solve this problem, the Ministry of Education launched its volunteer programs. It provides volunteers a short-term training and sends them overseas to teach Chinese. It also attracts many Chinese-speaking people and graduate students living overseas to participate as volunteers. On the one hand, the volunteer program solves the urgent need of human resources and ensures the institutes’ normal teaching plan. On the other hand, inadequate teaching experiences and limited teaching training of volunteers may not ensure the teaching quality. In addition the rapid expansion touched a nerve of many ‘China threat’ believers, leading to some negative international opinions. One example is the Visa complication for Confucius Institute in the U.S in 2012.

From the Chronicle’s report (Fischer, 2012):

“The memorandum, dated May 17, states that any academics at university-based institutes who are teaching at the elementary- and secondary-school levels are violating the terms of their visas and must leave at the end of this academic year, in June. And it says that, after a “preliminary review,” the State Department has determined that the institutes must obtain American accreditation in order to continue to accept foreign scholars and professors as teachers.”



This event caused an intense dispute between the U.S and China. Several Chinese commentators believed that this was a sign that the U.S. had grown scared of China's growing influence. "This decision runs completely counter to the popularity of Chinese language study among American college students," Hu Xijin, editor of the nationalist tabloid Global Times, wrote on Sina Weibo. "The Confucius Institutes have absolutely nothing to worry about. Let the American universities worry" (Chin, J. 2012). Some people also expressed concern about how this would affect U.S-China diplomacy.

However, on May 24, 'U.S. officials had denied that the directive was intended to specifically target the Confucius Institutes and quoted one State Department official describing it as "simply a regulatory matter" (Chin, 2012).

Through this incident, we can see that Chinese cultural outreach and economic development are still facing resistance. This is not a false alarm. This incident exposes U.S wariness and concerns of seeing the Confucius Institute system as a Chinese cultural invasion. Nonetheless, given the principles of Chinese diplomacy and the initial success of Confucius Institutes so far, I think it is unlikely that Confucius Institutes will deviate from their goals to advance language and cultural education.

### **Conclusion**

Through establishing Confucius Institutes, China has learned to use culture to ease external concerns and to gain appeal. To have a greater development in the future, I think there are several aspects that need attention.

Firstly, for the Confucius Institute internal management, leaders need to make reasonable goals and set realistic short-term plans and long-term plans. China aims to open one thousand Confucius Institutes by 2020. In accordance with its development in

the past few years, it probably can achieve this goal. However, considering the shortage of human resources, insufficient funding, and uncertain changes in demand, overly high expectations will likely negatively impact its healthy and sustainable development.

Secondly, for the external environment, policy makers should offer proper guidance and support. China's development is inevitable and irresistible; Confucius Institutes, as the olive branch extended by China to the world for peaceful development, need to be understood objectively and correctly.

## CHAPTER 4: KEY FINDINGS

The goal of this research was to explore the position and functions of arts exchanges in the political arena. The study sought to describe the achievements and experiences of contemporary Sino-American cultural diplomacy, and to serve as a source of information for cultural workers who are interested in cross-cultural communication. More specifically, this capstone can be a tool for U.S-China arts representatives.

This capstone began with a literature review providing a comprehensive historical background of Sino-American relations since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The history review shows the increasing frequency and depth of arts exchanges between the U.S. and China after the normalization of U.S.-China diplomacy in 1979, and the necessity of cultural diplomacy because of China's rapid economic development after the declaration of the Open-Door Policy in 1978. The next chapter explored four major U.S.-China arts exchange cases, illustrating the achievements and issues in Sino-American cultural diplomacy, and also demonstrating the complementary relationship between arts exchanges and foreign diplomacy. Though promoting mutual understanding, cross-cultural communication enhances U.S-China diplomatic relations.

This research mainly focuses on exploring the question: "*How are arts exchanges implemented as a tool of the Open-Door Policy used to enhance U.S.-China relations?*" Sino-American arts exchanges indirectly reflect the two countries' foreign diplomacy policy and political propositions. China is eager to build a friendly international image to facilitate its peaceful rising; thus the cultural outreach endeavors that China has been conducting are mutually supportive with the idea of foreign policy.

Faced with the intensifying process of globalization, the connections between country and country, individual and individual are getting denser. “Globalization is intimately linked with the intensification and speeding up of time-space compression in economic and social life” (J. Xavier & R. Rosaldo, 2002, p. 6). This leads to more cross-cultural communication and outreach, which is also the demand of world peace. Mutual understanding can resolve unnecessary conflicts and achieve mutual benefits. But arts outreach requires appropriate methods and operations. At the early stage of cultural outreach, it is impossible to ask the laymen to accept an entirely foreign value system, since they may not share any history or cultural background. Making things easier is important. Take the opera *Madame White Snake* as an example, as mentioned in Chapter 3, this opera caused a debate on “over culture blending”. Some Chinese music critics think English lyrics and modern stage design in this opera is not helpful for Chinese culture outreach as well as Chinese cultural heritage protection. A very common performing arts version of the Madame White Snake story in China is Peking Opera. If Chinese artists introduced this authentic story through authentic Peking opera to American audiences, it would not only require the audience focus on the storyline, but also have specific knowledge about classical Chinese language, and Peking opera, which would be very complicated for the American audiences. If they felt confused at the first time they get to know Chinese culture, it would be more difficult to intrigue their interests to keep learning Chinese culture. But the Opera Boston produced *Madame White Snake* adopted modern stage design and adaptations, make the story more understandable and appreciable to American audiences. Thus, conducting arts exchanges and outreach firstly needs to define the awareness level of the target audience. Keeping

the arts authentic is certainly good, but the effect of specific modes of presentation is equally important.

In conclusion, to promote Sino-American cultural diplomacy through arts exchanges, I have three suggestions.

First, for U.S and China policy makers, maintaining world peace should always be given top priority. Without a peaceful development environment, no one can benefit. On the U.S. side, the government should objectively treat the rise of China, and conduct serious cultural diplomacy. Taking the Visa complications of the Confucius Institute as an example, impulsive moves cannot lead to correct results and will also hurt the feelings of the two countries' people. On China's side, while enjoying the rapid development, maintaining an appropriate pace is crucial. Laying a solid foundation for growth is also very important.

Second, for the masses, intercultural communication competence needs to be addressed. According to Chen and Starosta (1996), "intercultural communication competence can be conceived of as the ability to negotiate cultural meanings and to execute appropriately effective communication behaviors that recognize the interactants' multiple identities in a specific environment" (p. 219). Developing effectiveness and appropriate competence could help individuals obtain meaningful and productive communication experiences.

Third, for American and Chinese cultural workers, having a sense of social responsibility could make a positive impact on the country's international image building. With technological advancements, spreading and receiving information is getting easily and increasingly instantaneous. People can learn about other countries' culture through a

variety of channels. Movies, TV pop shows, visual arts and so forth; all imbue audiences with the country's culture and values. And arts appreciation and entertainment are important parts of American and Chinese people's lives. As writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED talk "The Danger of A Single Story (TED Conferences, LLC), single and repeated negative publicity can lead to a mass formation of a simple and arbitrary bias toward a national image and culture. Both countries' artists and producers should take full advantage of their countries' rich culture resources and demonstrate the multiculturalism. Arts representatives should enrich storytelling, and break stereotypes. Creating claptrap art works just for economic benefits and catering to vulgar tastes is short-sighted and reckless.

For my professional goals, this research laid a foundation for my understanding of Sino-American cultural diplomacy, and trends in cross-cultural communication. To further promote mutual understanding through the performing arts, this study describes and analyzes several major arts exchange events, focusing on programming, producing and presenting. This study could serve as a reference for people doing related research in cultural diplomacy, and for anyone wishing to know the history of American-China cultural exchanges.

This research mainly concentrates on Sino-American official arts exchange events. For further research, extending the range of arts exchange events and arts forms is needed. There are increasing NGOs committed to arts outreach in the U.S and China, and these organizations could provide rich resources for cross-cultural communication study. In addition, international audiences' needs and aesthetics are changing. To better enhance

the acceptance of foreign culture, extensive research on international audiences will be imperative.

**Appendix: List of Confucius Institutes in USA by Year**

2004

·University of Maryland: College Park, Maryland

2005

·San Francisco State University: San Francisco, California

2006

·Bryant University: Smithfield, Rhode Island

·Confucius Institute in Chicago: Chicago, Illinois

·Confucius Institute at China Institute: New York, New York

·University of Hawaii at Manoa: Honolulu, Hawaii

·University of Iowa: Iowa City, Iowa

·University of Kansas: Lawrence, Kansas

·University of Massachusetts Boston: Boston, Massachusetts Michigan State

·University: East Lansing, Michigan

·University of Oklahoma: Norman, Oklahoma

2007

·Arizona State University: Tempe, Arizona

·University of California Los Angeles: Los Angeles, California

·Community College Denver: Denver, Colorado

·Confucius Institute in Indianapolis: Indianapolis, Indiana

· University of Memphis: Memphis, Tennessee

· Miami University: Oxford, Ohio

· University of Nebraska-Lincoln: Lincoln, Nebraska

· New Mexico State University: Law Cruces, New Mexico

· North Carolina State University: Raleigh, North Carolina

· University of Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

· Portland State University: Portland, Oregon

· Purdue University: Lafayette, Indiana

· University of Rhode Island: Kingston, Rhode Island

· Rutgers, the State of University of New Jersey: New Brunswick, New Jersey

· University of Texas at Dallas: Richardson, Texas

· University of Toledo: Toledo, Ohio

· University of Utah: Salt Lake City, Utah

· Wayne State University: Detroit, Michigan

2008

· University of Akron: Akron, Ohio

· University of Arizona: Tucson, Arizona

· Confucius Institutes in Atlanta: Atlanta, Georgia

· University of Central Arkansas: Conway, Arkansas

· Cleveland State University: Cleveland, Ohio

· University of Minnesota: Twin Cities, Minnesota



- University of Montana: Missoula, Montana
  - University of South Carolina: Columbia, South Carolina
  - University of South Florida: Tampa, Florida
  - Stony Brook University: Stony Brook, New York
  - Texas A&M University: College Station, Texas
  - Troy University: Troy, Alabama
  - Valparaiso University: Valparaiso, Indiana
  - Webster University: St. Louis, Missouri
  - University of Wisconsin-Platteville: Platteville, Wisconsin
- 2009
- University of Alaska Anchorage: Anchorage, Alaska
  - Alfred University: Alfred, New York
  - George Mason University: Fairfax, Virginia
  - Kennesaw State University: Kennesaw, Georgia
  - University of Michigan: Ann Arbor, Michigan
  - State University of New York at Binghamton (Confucius Institute of Chinese Opera): Binghamton, New York
  - Pace University: New York, New York
  - Pfeiffer University: Charlotte, North Carolina
  - Presbyterian College: Clinton, South Carolina
  - San Diego State University: San Diego, California
  - Confucius Institute of the State of Washington: Seattle, Washington
- 2010
- University of Chicago: Chicago, Illinois
  - Columbia University: New York, New York
  - University of Delaware: Newark, Delaware
  - Georgia State University: Atlanta, Georgia
  - University of Kentucky: Lexington, Kentucky
  - Miami Dade College: Miami, Florida
  - Middle Tennessee University: Murfreesboro, Tennessee
  - University of New Hampshire: Durham, New Hampshire
  - State University of New York at Buffalo: Buffalo, New York
  - State College of Optometry, State University of New York: New York, New York
  - University of Oregon: Eugene, Oregon
  - Stanford University: Palo Alto, California
  - University of Texas at San Antonio: San Antonio, Texas
  - University of Western Kentucky: Bowling Green, Kentucky
- 2011
- Pennsylvania State University: University Park, Pennsylvania
  - Western Michigan University: Kalamazoo, Michigan

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