



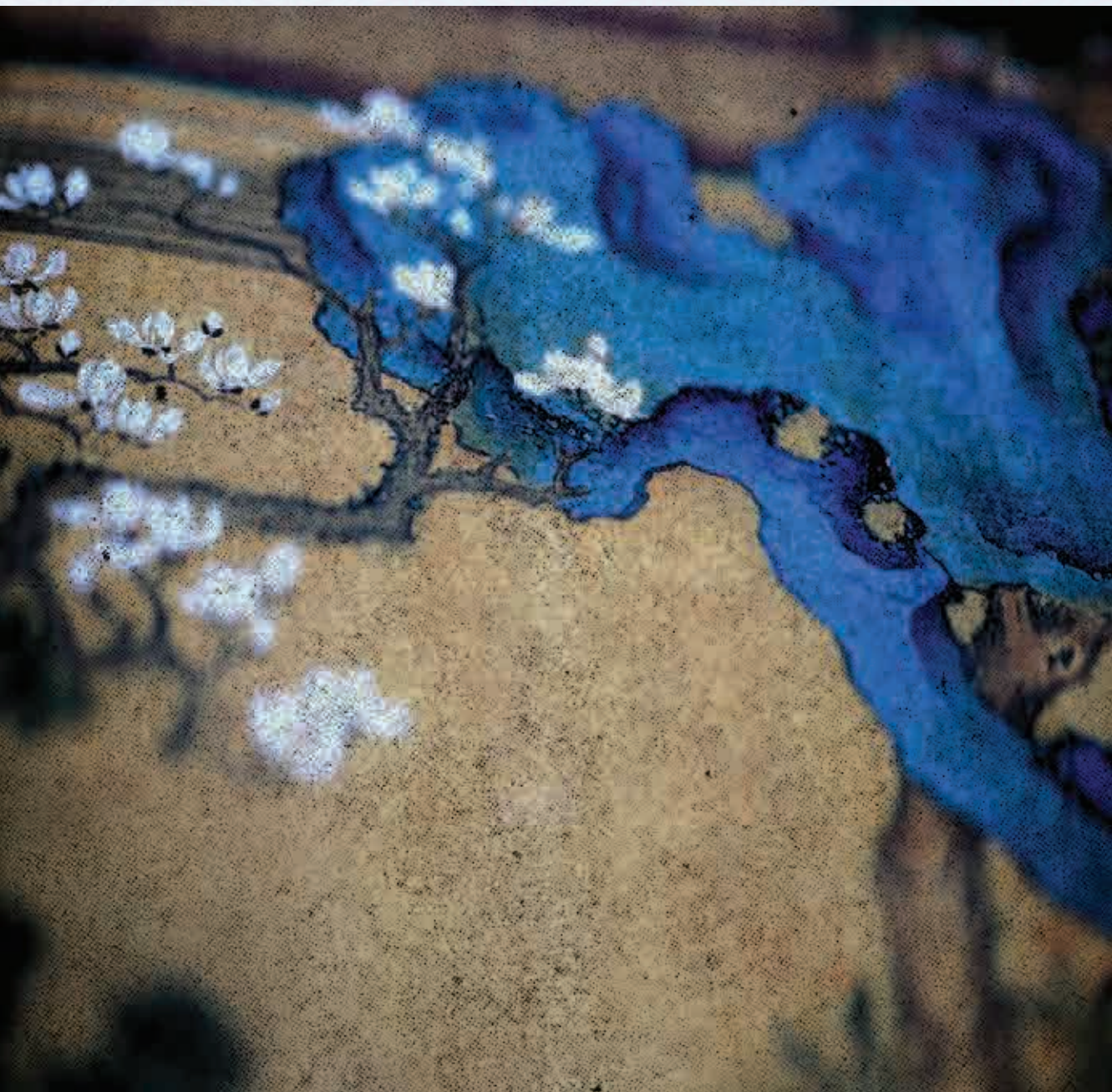
CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE

孔子学院

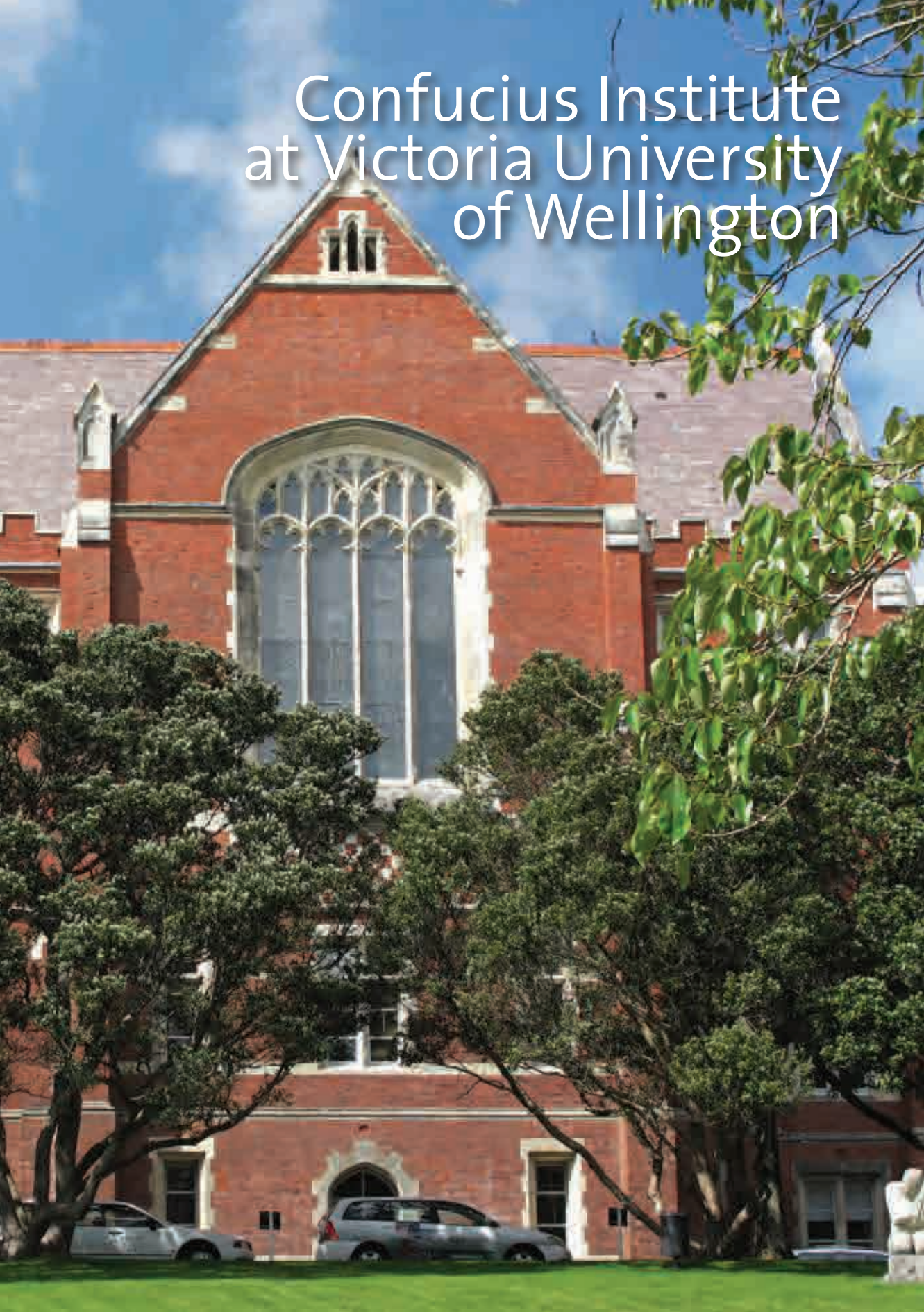
2013

Annual Report

Confucius Institute
at Victoria University
of Wellington



Confucius Institute at Victoria University of Wellington



From the Chairman

Opportunities to learn Chinese, and to become familiar with Chinese culture, are growing in New Zealand, but are still inadequate. As a country we need to give Chinese a more prominent place in our school curriculum, and in the skills we want our business and government representatives to have. Business success, without cultural understanding, will always be at risk. The Victoria University of Wellington Confucius Institute recognises this long term national priority, and with generous support from China will continue to offer programmes that help New Zealand build its China skills. I thank all those who have done so much to expand the Institute's activities this year.

Tony Browne,

Chairman of the VUW Confucius Institute



Tony Browne and Liu Yaru with
Mandarin Language Assistances

Our Mission

The mission of the Confucius Institute (CI) at Victoria University of Wellington is to build New Zealanders' understanding of and familiarity with China, its language, culture and people.

The CI works to expand opportunities for New Zealanders to learn Chinese, at school, in community classes and through courses offered at the CI. It acts to build knowledge in New Zealand of China's long and rich culture by bringing Chinese music, literature and visual art to New Zealand and by facilitating cooperation and exchange between Chinese and New Zealand creative industries.

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Being part of Victoria University of Wellington it contributes to enhancing China Studies and research about China, and to building academic links between China and New Zealand, especially those with its Confucius Institute partner, Xiamen University. Hosting the Confucius Institute is part of Victoria University's strategy to build its engagement with China.

Our History



The VUW CI
was launched
by China's new
leader, President
Xi Jinping in
June 2010 ...

The Confucius Institute at Victoria University is the newest of three such institutes in New Zealand and part of the worldwide association of nearly 400 CIs operating with financial backing and support of Hanban – the Confucius Institute Headquarters in Beijing. The VUW CI was launched by China's new leader, President Xi Jinping, in June 2010 as a partnership between Victoria University and Xiamen University, and it started operating in early 2011. Its establishment was hailed as an important step in building cultural, educational and academic links between New Zealand and China.

Our People

The VUW CI is staffed by both Victoria and Xiamen universities. Its Advisory Board, which is chaired by New Zealand's former Ambassador to China, Tony Browne, has senior staff from both universities, led by VUW Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof. Neil Quigley, and Vice President of Xiamen University, Prof. Zhan Xinli. The other members of the Board are Mr Wang Shenggang (Education Counselor, Chinese Embassy), Prof. Deborah Willis (Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, VUW), Mr Mao Tongwen (Director of International Cooperation, Xiamen University), Prof. Xiaoming Huang (Director of New Zealand Contemporary China Research Centre), Prof. Yiyang Wang (Professor of Chinese, VUW), Prof. James Liu (School of Psychology, VUW) and Mr Feng Yu (Wellington College).

Victoria University appointed Dr Luo Hui as Director of the Confucius Institute; Xiamen University appointed Prof. Yang Xiaoping as the Deputy Director. The CI has two Hanban-sponsored teachers – Mr Liu Yaru based in Wellington and Ms Zhang Min based at Waiariki Institute in Rotorua. The office is managed by Ms Lai Ching Tan. In addition to its regular staff the CI benefits from the expertise of its Musical Consultant, acclaimed composer Jack Body, as well as a number of specialists from the Chinese community who manage the Discover China workshops.

Who We Work With

The CI's primary collaboration is with the schools and other organisations that are teaching Chinese, or wish to introduce Chinese into their curriculum. Within Victoria University, the CI works to develop partnerships with the Chinese Programme, the New Zealand Contemporary China Research Centre, the Centre for Lifelong Learning and other sections of the University involved in developing links with China.

Promotion of its cultural programmes sees the CI working closely with the New Zealand Centre for Literary Translation, the New Zealand School of Music, Te Papa (Museum of New Zealand



Minister of Education Hekia Parata with Chinese Ambassador HE Lutong Wang at a MLA farewell function at Parliament



Musical Consultant, Jack Body



Cultural Attaché Yuan Yuan with Luo Hui at Te Papa poetry launch

The VUW CI not only promotes Chinese language and culture in Wellington, but also reaches out to schools and communities across the lower North Island.

Te Papa Tongarewa), the New Zealand Federation of Film Societies, the Asia New Zealand Foundation, International Languages Exchanges and Pathways (ILEP), NZ China Friendship Society, NZ Chinese Language Association and Chinese community organizations. The CI also values its close working relationship with the PRC Embassy.

Where We Work

The CI at Victoria University not only promotes Chinese language and culture in Wellington, but also reaches out to schools and communities across the lower North Island. Resources make it difficult to extend full support to all parts of that region, but particular effort is being placed on supporting the exceptional commitment to Chinese teaching in Palmerston North, Wanganui, and the Bay of Plenty.

CI Resources

The CI is grateful for the support it receives from Victoria University of Wellington, from Hanban and from Xiamen University. The CI shares a building at 18 Kelburn Parade with the New Zealand Contemporary China Research Centre. Victoria University meets approximately half of CI's costs with the provision of premises, staff, administrative support, facilities and equipment. The CI also benefits from the generous support for its operational budget provided by Hanban, along with the supply of books, teaching materials and other resources. Xiamen University supports the CI by supplying staff, organising meetings and visits, and offering on-going guidance.

A photograph of two Shaolin martial arts performers in red uniforms with gold trim, performing backflips in a gymnasium. The performers are captured in mid-air, with their legs and arms extended. The background is a blue wall with a dark blue curtain at the top. The floor is a polished wooden surface. The text "2013 Highlights" is overlaid in the top right corner.

2013 Highlights

I liked when
the martial arts
performers moved
like different
animals – a snake,
a monkey, a tiger
and a frog!

Shaolin martial arts flips

Marah, Te Aro
School student

Chinese Teaching

The CI is committed to providing teaching assistants and teaching materials to schools seeking to establish or expand their programmes of Chinese teaching. In 2013, the VUW CI recruited and dispatched 12 Chinese Volunteer Teachers, locally known as Mandarin Language Assistants (MLA), to work at 18 schools and two tertiary institutions in New Zealand. This number quadrupled from 3 in 2012, and will likely increase to 18 in 2014. The accumulative achievements of the MLAs are astounding: this year our 12 MLAs offered a total of 175 language classes to 3,593 primary, intermediate, high school and tertiary students. In addition, they ran 214 school-based cultural activities, with a total of 6,519 participants from schools and local communities. The exponential increase in scope and impact is largely thanks to the enhanced financial support from Hanban, administrative support and pastoral care from local schools, and above all, the dedication, passion, and hard work of the MLAs.

The CI has overseen the establishment of two new Confucius Classrooms, one at Wellington College and one at Wanganui High School, both launched in May 2013. The ceremonies were attended by the Chinese Ambassador, the Deputy Vice Chancellor of Victoria University, Mayor of Wanganui, and other VIPs. Hanban Director General Xu Lin sent her congratulations. The CI now manages three Confucius Classrooms, including the one at Rotorua Boys High School. Confucius Classrooms act as regional hubs of Chinese teaching and receive designated funding from Hanban.

Apart from sending volunteer teachers, the CI regularly donates books and teaching materials to schools and local libraries, and provides opportunities for NZ students to visit China through summer camps and scholarships. In July 2013, the three CIs in New Zealand jointly organised a China Summer Camp for 100 NZ high school students, with special funding made available by Mme Liu Yandong, Vice Premier of China's State Council.



Students at a CI event



China summer camp



Confucius Classroom opening at Wanganui High School

In 2013, three Victoria University students took up one-year and half-year Confucius Institute scholarships to study in prestigious universities in China.



Discover China!

Discover China! – a programme that takes aspects of Chinese culture to schools to give students an introductory experience of Chinese calligraphy, painting, martial arts, music and cuisine – was launched in 2012 and enjoyed steady growth in 2013. Responses to Discover China workshops have been positive from students and teachers alike. This year the CI offered 43 workshops to 1,031 participants at schools and universities in Wellington and other cities. A new feature of this year's Discover China was a series of music workshops offered by Kong Jingyuan, a Mandarin Language Assistant who is an accomplished Chinese instrumentalist.

Apart from these locally sourced workshops, the CI also seeks opportunities to bring cultural performances to schools directly from China. In 2013, a 24-member Shaolin Martial Arts Group sponsored by Hanban toured NZ schools and offered martial arts and musical performances.



Kong Jingyuan at a music workshop



Teacher Training and Language Qualifications

The CI has extended its programme of Chinese teacher training workshops, developed and conducted by Mr Liu Yaru. This year 107 students participated in two series of teacher training workshops in Wellington and Palmerston North; 62 students completed the programme and were awarded a certificate. In September 2013, the CI and ILEP jointly organised a Chinese Teaching Seminar in Wellington; 42 local teachers and teachers-in-training attended the seminar.

Vicky is the
Dumpling Queen
... We all felt as
though we were
getting let in on
a family secret.

Ben, VUW student

The CI offered two HSK tests in Wellington and one in Rotorua this year; a total of 23 students sat these tests. In preparation for the tests, the CI ran a mock test and two workshops. These standardised tests, measuring all levels of Chinese proficiency, are an excellent complement to the NCEA tests and a useful qualification for New Zealand students seeking scholarships for advanced study in China.

Speech Competitions

The CI was the main contributor to the 2013 'Chinese Bridge' Speech Competitions. We hosted the Wellington regional competition and participated in the NZ national competition. Eric Foley, a VUW student, represented New Zealand in the international 'Chinese Bridge' competitions in China and advanced to Top 30. The CI also sponsored and participated in two local speech competitions in Rotorua and Palmerstone North.



VUW student Eric Foley
at Chinese Bridge Speech
Competition

Mandarin Corner

In August 2013, the CI took over the management of Mandarin Corner from the NZ China Friendship Society and NZ Chinese Language Association (Wellington). Both organizations remain as supporters and promoters. The CI is now both the organiser and the sponsor of this weekly social gathering for Chinese conversation practice. The CI revamped the format and designed new publicity materials, and assembled a team of enthusiastic Mandarin Language Assistants as hosts and facilitators. These measures are paying off: attendance has been on the rise and feedback has been positive.



Chinese Language Buddies

Arts & Culture

Gillian Ansell, violist in the
New Zealand String Quartet



Music

In 2013, the CI presented several top quality musical events in Wellington:

- A recital featuring Chinese countertenor Xiao Ma and pianist/conductor Yanjia Huang
- A concert of the complete Ligeti and Debussy etudes, featuring two world-class pianists Zou Xiang (Beijing) and Jian Liu (Wellington)
- Journey to the East I: Between Strings, a concert of contemporary Chinese and NZ compositions, featuring the NZTrio and the Chinese guzheng virtuoso, Chen Xi-Yao
- Journey to the East II: a composer portrait featuring music by Gao Ping, performed by the New Zealand String Quartet, Gao Ping (piano) and David Griffiths (baritone)



Xiao Ma (right) and Yanjia Huang (left) in concert



Zou Xiang and Jan Liu

”.....in scale and sonorities, [‘Between Strings’] was an exquisitely crafted rapprochement of East and West.” –

William Dart,
New Zealand Herald

NZ Trio and
guzheng virtuoso, Chen Xi-Yao



Film

Film has emerged as another strong suit of the CI's arts programme. In 2013, we sponsored 18 screenings of 3 Chinese films at Film Societies in 12 different cities. We brought the filmmaker Han Jie on a fruitful visit that included Q&A with audiences, a film class at VUW and a meeting with the New Zealand Film Commission. In September, the CI sponsored Massey University's Chinese film festival on two of its campuses. In November, the CI co-sponsored the screening of 10 films at the 2013 Chinese Film Festival in New Zealand.

Literature & Art

In August, the CI hosted a week-long literary festival entitled 'Chinese Literature Re-imagined' featuring lectures, panel discussions, art exhibitions, literary translation and poetry reading with noted local and international scholars and artists – Prof. Bonnie McDougall from University of Sydney, Hong Kong filmmaker Angie Chen, Toronto photographers Lee Ka-sing and Holly Lee, NZ artist Ya-Wen Ho and VUW Professor Yiyan Wang. Partners of the festival included the NZ Centre for Literary Translation, Wai-te-ata Press, the Hong Kong Festival and Te Papa. The festival created an occasion for artistic collaboration and intellectual exchange, and was well-received by lovers of literature and art.

Festival Celebrations

To celebrate all facets of Chinese culture and promote close ties between Chinese and Kiwi communities, the CI sponsors and participates in traditional festival celebrations throughout the year:

- Chinese New Year Festival at Te Papa (National Museum of New Zealand)
- Mid-Autumn Festival 'China Dreams' concert at Capital Performing Arts in Wellington
- Cherry Blossom Festival at International Pacific College in Palmerston North
- Mid-Autumn Festival celebrations at Rotorua Boys High School and Tauranga Chinese Community School



Filmmaker Han Jie
visiting Wellington



New Zealand Poet Hinemoana
Baker at film discussion



Te Papa launch of Li Bai poetry



Looking into the future

Our work to
promote the
arts and cultural
understanding
has been
applauded
by the arts
communities
in both New
Zealand and
China.

In 2014, the CI will continue to improve and grow its Chinese language programmes to meet local needs. In addition, we will take steps to implement new initiatives spearheaded by Hanban, such as the Confucius China Study Plan, the Confucius Institute Day, and the Core Teacher Programme. These new initiatives and new resources will significantly enhance the CI's function not only as a supporter of Chinese language teaching but also as a leading facilitator of teacher training, curricular development and China-related research.

Our work to promote the arts and cultural understanding has been applauded by the arts communities in both New Zealand and China. In response to the call to cultivate diversity and individuality within the global CI network, we will focus on arts and culture as a our niche and continue to present traditional as well as new and emerging Chinese cultural productions. In addition to our strengths in music and film, we will also explore the potential of literary translation as another important vehicle for understanding China.

Contacts

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Cover image by Lee Ka-sing – Courtesy of Lee Ka-sing

Feature images by Evan Li – Courtesy of Evan Li