The AA&CC kicked-off two exciting new initiatives during the 2015-16 academic year:

The Asia in Maryland (AIM) Cultural Connection, a new series featuring local Asian American communities and their artistic and cultural work. The year’s AIM programs included an exhibition, two performances, and three workshops introducing Cambodian arts and culture in fall 2016. In spring 2016, we inaugurated the Asia in Maryland (AIM) Cultural History Project interdisciplinary studies course combining ethnography and oral history to explore, understand, and document Asian arts and culture in Maryland.

Asia@Towson, programs and activities highlighting the presence of Asian arts and culture in the TU campus community. In spring 2016, we initiated Asia@Towson with an exhibition exploring the activities, passions, concerns and meanings behind the pursuits of students involved in clubs at TU that relate to Asia.
SOUNDING THE SPIRIT OF CAMBODIA:
Khmer Music and Dance-drama in a Mid-Atlantic Community

September 19-December 12
Center for the Arts, Asian Arts Gallery

One thousand visitors encountered the beauty, history, meanings, and transformations of an ancient Cambodian tradition in the lives of musicians, dancers, and community members in Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, DC.

“I now better understand the importance of keeping traditions alive in order to connect.”

The exhibition also invited visitors to respond to the phrase “People around the world create art in order to ______.” Our intern, Alyssa DiNicolis, created this word cloud from the 200+ responses:

This exhibit was made possible by the Towson University Marriott Conference Hotel, E. Rhodes & Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, Citizens of Baltimore County, TU Student Government Association, TU College of Fine Arts & Communication, Maryland State Arts Council, Yoshinobu & Kathleen Shiota, Ro & Marius P. Johnson Legacy Charitable Fund, TU Center for Student Diversity, Anthony & Bonnie Montcalmo, The Friends of Khmer Culture, Capital Partners Securities, Co., Ltd., TU Marketing & Communications, Capital Services Group, and TU COFAC Diversity Committee and Theresa Esterlund.
Cambodian Classical Dance Intensive
Saturday, September 19
Participants used their bodies to gain a basic understanding of Khmer classical dance through a hands-on training with master dancers from Maryland and Washington, DC.
Co-presented with TU Department of Dance.

Classical Dance and Music of Cambodia
Saturday, October 3, 2015, 7:30 p.m.
Harold J. Kaplan Concert Hall, Center for the Arts
Maryland’s Cambodian Buddhist Society Culture Group shared an elegant performance of Khmer classical dance and music with two hundred people. Co-presented with TU Department of Dance.

“It gave me a greater appreciation for the subtleties of this art form. I especially appreciated the music.”

“The workshop broadened my knowledge on Asian performing arts; I had no idea how beautiful and intricate dance could be.”

Classical Dance and Music of Cambodia

Sunday, November 8, 2015, 3 p.m.
Harold J. Kaplan Concert Hall, Center for the Arts

One hundred forty-eight people experienced the celestial sights and sounds of Cambodian court dance and music as performed by Virginia’s Cambodian American Heritage dance troupe and Master Chum Ngek’s music ensemble.

“An enlightening experience.”

Cambodian Classical Costume-Making Intensive

Saturday, November 14.
Arts Gallery & Costume Shop, Center for the Arts

Participants joined master costume-maker, Sochietah Ung, for a full-day exploration of the intricate costumes worn in Cambodian classical dance-drama.

Co-presented with the TU Department of Theatre Arts


Cambodian Classical Music Workshop

Monday, November 16.
Recital Hall, Center for the Arts

Eighteen people took a crash course in Cambodian pin peat music with Master Chum Ngek and his ensemble.

Co-presented with the TU Department of Music
FAMILY ART DAYS

October 10, November 7, and March 6
Center for the Arts Atrium

Five hundred people enjoyed drop-in art activities, performances, interactive gallery experiences, and story time on these three dates.

November 7:
Participants designed and crafted Cambodian jewelry making with master artist, Sochietah Ung, thanks to a generous grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation.
Seventy-five people enjoyed a dance and music performance and hands-on dance demo by the students of Virginia’s Cambodian American Heritage, Inc. This event was co-sponsored by Pepsi.

March 6:
Students from three clubs (Chinese American Student Union, Muslim Student Association, and Filipino Cultural Association at Towson) led art, music, dance, and Arabic writing activities.
Co-presented with the TU Community Art Center; NAEA Towson Student Chapter; and the TU Department of Art + Design, Art History, and Art Education Galleries.
Thank you to our volunteers who made these days successful!
Asia@Towson: Friendship, Family and Fun in Towson’s Asian Culture Student Groups

February 11-May 14, 2016
Asian Arts Gallery, Center for the Arts

This evolving, student-produced exhibit introduces some of the rich and diverse Asian arts and culture-related activities taking place as part of some of Towson University’s amazing clubs.

As of March 31:
• Approximately 700 people have visited
• Ten clubs are represented
• Forty-nine students have worked on curating the exhibit

What interested you most about the exhibition?
• The interactivity
• It is student-run
• The creativity of students on our campus.
• The variety of cultures represented.

What new knowledge did you gain from your gallery visit?
• A better understanding of beliefs and traditions spread across Asia.
• Towson has so many cultures and I never really realized it.
• Great insight to the groups and people here at Towson.

What else would you like to share with us?
• It was an intriguing exhibit packed with various, unique info.
• There should be more exhibits like this one on Towson’s campus.

This exhibit was made possible by the generous support of the TU College of Fine Arts & Communication; E. Rhodes & Leona B. Carpenter Foundation; Citizens of Baltimore County; Maryland State Arts Council; Ro & Marius P. Johnson Legacy Charitable Fund; Yoshinobu & Kathleen Shiota; Capital Partners Securities, Co., Ltd.; COFAC Diversity Committee; TU Center for Student Diversity Asian Pacific Islander Student Development Program; TU Department of Art+Design, Art History, Art Education; TU Department of Theatre Arts; TU Marketing & Communications; and Capital Services Group.
Asia@Towson Student Mixer

Wednesday, March 9.
Asian Arts Gallery and Atrium, Center for the Arts
Two hundred Towson students enjoyed free food, music, and art and culture activities led and inspired by TU’s extraordinarily diverse culture clubs.
Hosted by the TU Center for Student Diversity Asian Pacific Islander Student Development Program.

Jayamangala Music and Dance

Friday, March 11.
Harold J. Kaplan Concert Hall, Center for the Arts
TU Alumna and award-winning dance master Shobha Subramanian and her troupe shared a performance of exciting rhythms, exquisite gestures, and ancient stories of Hindu gods and goddesses with one hundred seventy-two audience members.

“Exhilarating and highly informative.”

Presented with support from the TU College of Fine Arts & Communication; E. Rhodes & Leona B. Carpenter Foundation; Citizens of Baltimore County; Maryland State Arts Council; Ro & Marius P. Johnson Legacy Charitable Fund; Yoshinobu & Kathleen Shiota; Capital Partners Securities, Co., Ltd.; TU Marketing & Communications; Capital Services Group; Daisy Jones; Anthony & Bonnie Montcalmo; Susan Picinich & Stanley Max; John & Ber the Ford.
The Asia in Maryland (AIM) Cultural History Project

In spring 2016, we initiated the Asia in Maryland (AIM) Cultural History Project, an interdisciplinary studies course in Towson University’s College of Fine Arts & Communication. The course combines ethnography and oral history to explore, understand and document Asian arts and culture in Maryland. Students generate primary-source documentation on the history of the cultural life of Asian communities in Maryland. Their research assists the Center with creating bridges between Towson University and the local community. It will also inform the Center’s future programs.

Thank You Professor Stacy Spaulding and TU Department of Mass Communication & Communication Studies for collaborating with the AA&CC on this project!

ASPIRE

As a self-supporting department of Towson University, the Asian Arts & Culture Center relies on generous donations to accomplish its mission. To learn how you can help, contact:

Joanna Pecore
AA&CC Director
410-704-2718
jpecore@towson.edu
http://www.towson.edu/asianarts/support/index.asp
Proposed for Fall 2016

Chinese Folk Pottery: The Art of the Everyday

This exhibition explores the challenges faced by contemporary folk potters in China—including ethnic minorities and Han people—as the demand for traditional wares steadily declines in tandem with China’s rapid modernization. As a result of this change, village potters have migrated to the cities in search of more lucrative work, the dragon kilns that operated for centuries are cold and threatened by extinction, and the traditional knowledge and skills of contemporary folk pottery (minyao, peoples’ pottery) struggle for survival. The exhibition showcases objects created for daily use collected through research trips by curator, Marie Woo, between 1995 and 2009 from Tibetan, Dai, Miao, Bai, and Han potters. It introduces an “alternative” look at Chinese ceramics (in contrast to the Chinese Imperial porcelain that is well-known throughout the world) and offers an opportunity to examine diverse aesthetics, functions, production values, and personal stories associated with these traditions that are part of China’s 8000 year-old ceramic history.

Mystical Arts of Tibet: Residency, Ceremonies, Sand Mandala Creation & Lectures

The Asian Arts & Culture Center proposes a four-day Tibetan sand mandala painting residency, including opening and closing ceremonies; daily chants for world peace and healing; and lectures introducing the Tibetan Buddhist approach to healing, the Buddhist philosophy of emptiness and illusion, and the contemporary history of Tibet. These programs will be free of charge. Supported in part by the COFAC Diversity Committee.

“It is my hope that everyone witnessing these events may find in them inspiration and understanding that in some way contribute to their own inner peace.”

—His Holiness the Dalai Lama
Inspired by Tradition: China’s Precious Folk Potters

The AA&CC will partner with Towson University’s departments of History and Asian Studies and with the Mid-Atlantic Region-Association for Asian Studies (MAR-AAS) to host a workshop for K-12 teachers to integrate Asian arts and culture into their curricula. The workshop will involve a visit to the Chinese Folk Pottery exhibition, examinations of diverse pottery techniques, discussions about the forces contributing to cultural displacement, and group breakout sessions to develop lesson plans incorporating material from the workshop.

Baltimore Collects: The Collector’s Perspective

Nationally recognized art collectors from the Baltimore/Washington metropolitan region discuss their personal histories in collecting Asian art and sharing their collections among educational and cultural institutions to benefit the community.

Proposed for Spring 2017

Karaoke Spring

In spring 2017, the AA&CC will illuminate the art and culture of karaoke, especially its Asian roots, in innovative and playful ways while engaging diverse audiences in dialogue about this rich worldwide phenomenon. We will foster dialogue and cross-cultural awareness across Towson University and local Asian communities while engaging them in producing and sharing an interactive exhibition and complementary public programs. Supported in part by the Maryland State Arts Council.

Asian Traditions: Sita, Gentle Warrior

Students will be prepared for roles in a production of Sita, Gentle Warrior, which explores the identity of Sita, the heroine of the 2000 year-old pan-Asian Ramayana epic, from a contemporary, global perspective. While the traditional story is presented from the male point of view, this production recounts the journey from Sita’s perspective, revealing her strength and power as well as her identity as the universal mother of the earth. This universal view will be emphasized through participation by dancers from multiple Asian traditions, including Towson University student dancers. In partnership with the Towson University Department of Dance and Center for Student Diversity.
The Asia in Maryland (AIM) Cultural History Project

Building upon our success in spring 2016, the AA&CC will offer another semester of the Asia in Maryland (AIM) Cultural History Project interdisciplinary studies course, combining ethnography and oral history to explore, understand and document Asian arts and culture in Maryland. A collaboration with the TU Department of Mass Communication and Communication Studies.

Cambodian Classical Music Ensemble at Towson University

In collaboration with the Department of Music, the Asian Arts & Culture Center, will establish the first Asian music ensemble available as a for-credit course for Towson University students. Under the direction of Cambodian master musician, Chum Ngek, students will learn to perform pin peat, a Khmer classical music genre that has been performed for centuries as the driving force behind classical dance and for sacred, royal, and religious ceremonies.

Online Exhibitions

AA&CC is working to make these exhibitions available online: Meditation, Sounding the Spirit of Cambodia, and Asia@Towson.

AA&CC Art Collection Online

In collaboration with TU’s Special Collections & Archives, Albert S. Cook Library, AA&CC is digitizing, cataloguing, and posting our art collection online in ways that are useful and relevant to teachers and students.
Meet Our Newest Team Members

Alyssa DeNicolis
Intern

What are you studying at Towson University?
I'm a junior with a major in Communications, and a minor in Marketing.

What do you do at AACC?
I'm an intern. Some of the things I'm working on are: managing the membership and sponsorship programs, helping them distinguish between the two, drafting a letter of how members can renew/update their memberships, working on a list of Asian holidays, and writing down all the responses of this semester's interactive exhibit.

How did you first get involved with AACC?
I got an email because of my major. I looked on their website, and since I'm interested in Asian culture, and I work at a Chinese restaurant, I thought this is a good opportunity to fuse communications and arts.

What's the best thing you like about AACC?
I like that they're celebrating different art cultures, and they also encourage you to share your own culture. They want to include everyone and listen to everyone's story. It's a very enriching environment.

What do you wish other people knew about AACC?
I wish people knew we existed. I didn't know this place was here until I saw the Japanese tattoo exhibit last semester, and it was really interesting.

What would people be surprised to know about you?
I've always wanted to be a spy. I want to go into a criminology program, but I'm not stealthy in any way. I've been to the Spy Museum in DC. I'm also into running. I ran half a marathon in the summer.

What's your favorite place in the world?
This place by my house; a creek. I go there to read, think, and draw. I like being surrounded by wilderness, and being outdoors.

Angela Donati
Intern

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Leslie Kim
Gallery Attendant

What are you studying at Towson University?
Middle School Education Math and Science.

What do you do at AACC?
Gallery attendant. I check how many people come to the gallery, and it's my responsibility to make sure everything in the gallery is safe and not broken. I also keep up with the temperature and humidity.

How did you first get involved with AACC?
I take classes in this building, and as I was walking by I saw the flyer, and also saw the ad on HireJHU. I applied because it's convenient. I've taken art history before, I like this gallery, and I enjoy analyzing the artwork.

What's the best thing you like about AACC?
I like the tattoo exhibition, and I remember seeing the meditation. My supervisors are really nice. I like the fact that I get to see these exhibitions by working here.

What do you wish other people knew about AACC?
I wish people knew about our exhibits, and I forget to check out our surveys and evaluations.

What would people be surprised to know about you?
I've been only living in America for five years, and my English is really good. I started learning English when I was ten in South Korea.

What is your favorite place in the world?
I love Korea or Shanghai. I lived there for two years. It was really fun living there. It's like a New York in China.

Elizabeth Martinez
Gallery Attendant

What are you studying at Towson University?
Art Illustration.

What do you do at AACC?
I'm a gallery attendant. I greet people who come in, write down the humidity and temperature, answer their questions if they have any, and lock up.

How did you first get involved with AACC?
I saw a posting at HireJHU, and it was something I was interested in as it's related to my major.

What's the best thing you like about AACC?
I like that it's small and more intimate. The events are interesting.

What do you wish other people knew about AACC?
I wish that people knew about the Center.

What would people be surprised to know about you?
I have six cats at home. I also have three dogs. And they all get along with each other. It's hard these days because I have two kittens, and they need different food, so I try to keep them away from the other cats so they won't eat the kitten's food. I walk one dog, because the other one is old, and the third one has three legs only.

What is your favorite place in the world?
My room. It's a nice personal space where I have everything for myself.
Thank You!

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Shannon Smith
Cultivation & Operations Assistant

Brittany Ton
Intern

What are you studying at Towson University?
I'm a senior, double majoring in Advertising and Art. I like the idea of solving problems with creativity.

What do you do at AACC?
I'm an intern. I focus on the marketing and design aspects of promoting different events and programs. I also represent the Chinese American Student Union (CASU) for the Asia@Towson exhibit.

How did you first get involved with AACC?
I became aware of AA&CC when I went to Tattoo Fest. I got to be more involved when we did the Asia@Towson brainstorming meetings. I got an essence of what AA&CC does and I knew it would be a great thing to be a part of.

What's the best thing you like about AA&CC?
It's very unique compared to other things on campus. They want to bring in these cultural aspects that a lot of people don't see every day, and encourage meeting people from different cultures. AA&CC challenges you to see things from different perspectives. It connects people and makes the world not seem so big.

What do you wish other people knew about AA&CC?
I wish people knew how amazing it is. AA&CC is a great resource; it's an opportunity to learn new things.

What would people be surprised to know about you?
I have red hair, but I'm not Irish. So, I think you can't judge someone's cultural background by how they look.

What is your favorite place in the world?
In the slant of cultural studies, I have red hair, but I'm not Irish. So, I think you can't judge someone's cultural background by how they look.

What is your favorite place in the world?
The Creative Alliance
Dance Place
TU College of Fine Arts and Communication
TU Community Art Center
TU Center for Student Diversity
TU Center for Student Diversity-Asian Pacific Islander Student Development Program
TU Department of Art+Design, Art History, Art Education
TU Department of Dance
TU Department of Mass Communication and Communication Studies
TU Department of Music
TU Department of Theatre Arts
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Farewell and Thank you!
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Angela Donati
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Leslie Kim
Laura Latis
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