



Welcome to CCIS monthly newsletter!  
Our goal is to provide news, program updates, and stories about life in the U.S. to international graduate students, post docs, visiting scholars, and their families at Stanford.

Please let us know if you would like to write an article for a future newsletter.

### Stanford University's Art Story

**By Dianna SU** - Dianna SU is a visiting scholar at the Stanford Center of East Asian Studies. She focuses on contemporary art and museum practices, especially the observation of and responses to contemporary Chinese art and Eastern European contemporary art after 1945.



Stanford is a campus full of art. There are artworks everywhere, from the buildings themselves to the sculptures around the campus. In front of Canfield Court and next to Meyer Green, your attention will be captured by the "Hello" sculpture created by a Chinese contemporary artist, Xu Zhen, especially for the university. The sculpture looks like a snake-like, twisted and towering Greek column that is discovering the unseen world through its head. It is where classical civilization meets with the global modern world. This artwork goes beyond the space of a gallery and comes to the outdoor campus, which combines nature and humanities. It has more characteristics of surrealism, more visual shock for the audience when they meet each other, and a more powerful impact on regular thought behavior than in galleries. At the same time, it is common to enjoy minimalist sculptures in the natural environment on the Stanford campus, which has more activity than when displayed in the space of galleries. Children can be seen playing with the sculptures, and tourists take photos for their memories. Then there are some realist sculptures and paintings, like the series of paintings of computer networking and internet connectivity pioneers. You can also see a single replica sculpture of Rodin's "The Burghers of Calais" in the main courtyard of the campus.

Stanford is home to a vast collection of Rodin's sculptures, thanks to the expertise of Rodin specialists here. On the campus lawns, you can admire many of Rodin's masterpieces, including the magnificent "The Gates of Hell". As you stand there, gazing at its intricate details, you may ponder the notion that mortals are preoccupied with worldly matters, while The Thinker in The Gates of Hell contemplates the stars and distant places. Additionally, the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford, which opened in 1891 and was renamed in 1999, houses an extensive collection of art from around the world spanning 1500 years. Having its own art museum is a rare privilege for a university, and Stanford is fortunate to have such a rich collection of global art. Visitors can revel in the bronze vessels of the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, the stainless-steel sculptures of Taihu rocks by a Chinese contemporary artist, the sculptures of Indian deities, wood carvings from Oceania and Africa, as well as the mixed media and abstract paintings by American contemporary artists. It is akin to strolling through a vivid world art history book.

As a visiting scholar at the Center for East Asian Studies (CEAS), I have had the pleasure of meeting many famous scholars who share a profound love for Chinese art and culture, such as Professor Richard Vinograd (my supervisor) and Professor Ronald Egan. CEAS hosts academic parties on its lawns, offering visitors a chance to meet and mingle with these renowned scholars in a relaxed setting. The East Asian Library boasts an impressive collection of books on Chinese classical culture and contemporary society. I have also seen displays of Chinese works, such as the small poster exhibition on research into Japanese comics and religion. The library's holdings have a close relationship with the research interests of the Stanford professors, which demonstrates the deep passion and interest students and professors alike have for Chinese culture.

Overall, Stanford University provides an ideal setting for immersing oneself in the world of art and culture, particularly in East Asian studies. The campus offers ample opportunities to engage with renowned scholars and learn about diverse cultures, making it a truly enriching experience for scholars and students alike.

### Bechtel fulfilled my life in the US

By Yuki Yamamoto



I'm Yuki Yamamoto. I worked from Japan last summer with my husband who is doing a masters. I worked full time as a chemical engineer at Canon for 11 years and I quit before coming to the US. Since this was my first experience of being "a housewife" and it happened to me in a foreign country, I had no idea at first what to do during the daytime when my children were at school, and I was worried I was going to waste the time. But my anxiety vanished immediately when I discovered what Bechtel offers to international students and families. There is a variety of programs and events every week! My schedule has been filled up by them and I have never been bored or lonely so far. Here are some programs I take and enjoy.

**ESL Classes:** I'm taking 3 classes every week. Each class is unique, educational and enjoyable. I have learned many English words and idioms, international cultures and social issues. I still have difficulty in explaining my experience or opinion in English and make a lot of mistakes, but the atmosphere of the classes is so friendly that I can keep trying and get better at speaking English little by little.

**English in Action Program:** I have paired up with an American lady who is an alumnus of Stanford and who worked in Japan for four years. We usually meet once a week on or near campus. We have visited almost all museums and gardens on campus together covering various topics of conversation. She is amazing, very kind, smart and patient. I realized that I feel most relaxed at speaking English when I am with her. I'm not a talkative person even when I speak Japanese, but time always flies when I spend one on one time with her.

**Spouse Education Fund:** I applied for this fund last year and took a class on Stanford Continuing Studies last winter quarter. It was a big surprise to me that so many donors and staff really think about the careers and lives of international "spouses or partners" because I had felt like an invisible person in society and nobody noticed me since I quit my job. The aim of this fund, to support spouses, I find very encouraging.

There are other programs I have participated in (Wednesday's Coffee, cooking, leadership learning, seasonal celebrations, etc..) I cannot appreciate enough the generous support of Bechtel staff and volunteers. Your support made my time in Stanford much more meaningful and enjoyable than I originally expected. What's more, I have gotten to know many wonderful friends through Bechtel's programs!

### My Stanford Journey

By Natalia Pulyavina



My journey at Stanford began several years ago when I came here as the spouse of Stanford visiting faculty. I was very lucky to come to Bechtel on the first day, right upon arrival. In fact, I came to Bechtel before we even got a place to live.

Bechtel helped me a lot in adapting to a new country and local environment, significantly improving my English, getting to know new people and making new, amazing connections. I felt so welcomed here, and many of my worries of being in a new country were resolved thanks to Stanford's beautiful community.

Then I happened to find an advert from Stanford d.school - they organized a Design Thinking workshop which was open to the Stanford community. I signed up just to try something new. After that workshop, I realized that I was falling in love with this methodology. Since that time, I began to study and practice Design Thinking. Thanks to my huge interest in this methodology and some research in a multidisciplinary field I have met colleagues at Stanford who invited me to join their research team as a visiting scholar.

Working in a multidisciplinary team on the development of Design Thinking approaches, we founded Janus Initiative (janus.stanford.edu). The research we did at that initiative helped me create a Next-Gen Design Thinking game which I proudly presented during my Design Thinking Workshop at Bechtel.

Summarizing my journey at Stanford, I need to say that I started at Bechtel as a spouse and came back to Bechtel with a strong wish to share my Stanford experience with other spouses.

My gratitude to Bechtel professionals, volunteers, and the community is endless. Ragna is very supportive! But I would like to mention Kate and my friends whom I met on Coaching Circle. They inspired me to run my own workshop at Bechtel and helped me to increase my self-confidence and courage to be able to do it.

Recently I read the article written by Mardi, and realized that if she hadn't started her coaching program at Bechtel, I wouldn't have been inspired to do my own workshop. This is a good example of how we can help others, by taking some steps for ourselves.

I'd like to ask spouses, especially new ones, not to be afraid to be actively involved in community life. Everybody has some knowledge, experience, ideas, or hobbies they can share with us. Maybe you will start the next chain of positive changes in somebody's life. And you will benefit from this!

You can also invite other volunteers to organize classes together as we did with Kate. We both benefited from this workshop, learned from each other and gained great experience and a lot of joy from working with the amazing participants.



If you enjoyed this newsletter, please feel free to share this link with your international friends at Stanford so they can receive it too.



CCIS this month is edited by Kirsty Lienard, Jessie Zhou and Kate Khatseyeva

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