

“LANTERN STORIES” ILLUMINATES SAN FRANCISCO’S CHINATOWN



Photo courtesy the artist.

San Francisco, CA – (October 3, 2022) – A block of San Francisco’s world famous Grant Avenue in Chinatown is getting lit up in a brand new way.

It’s [Lantern Stories: San Francisco](#), a public art installation of 29 illustrated lanterns by Boston-based artist Yu-Wen Wu. Commissioned and installed by Robert J. Louie Memorial Fund, the project will open on the 600 block of Grant Avenue in early October and remain on view for the foreseeable future.

Wu, an award-winning interdisciplinary artist, created 29 lanterns to illuminate San Francisco Chinatown’s history, culture, and community. The images on the lanterns relate the long and fraught history and legacy of Chinese immigration in the United States. Many of the lanterns highlight the arts, calligraphy, music and performance, as well as the community’s strong commitment to education, entrepreneurship, and social justice. Images include Bruce Lee, Amy Tan, journalist Helen Zia, pioneer restaurateur Cecilia Chang, and many others.

Project coordinators Betty Louie and Tessa Wilcox of Robert J. Louie Memorial Fund stated, “We are thrilled to bring Yu-Wen’s lanterns to San Francisco’s Chinatown, and we are particularly excited about the depictions of and connections to the local community, both historical and present day.”

First commissioned by the Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy for Boston's Chinatown in 2020, Wu's *Lantern Stories* has grown into a national project with the hope that each lantern will offer opportunities for civic dialogue, the desire to learn more about the history of Asian immigration to the United States, and the social justice issues faced on multiple levels in Asian communities across the country. The project involves the processes of community engagement, intensive historical research, drawings, the design of the lantern forms, and the creation of images on the lanterns specific to each site.

For the *Lantern Stories* in San Francisco's Chinatown, artists from Boston and San Francisco lent their work to the creation of five lanterns to begin a bicoastal dialogue. These lanterns feature artwork by San Francisco-based artists [Phillip Hua](#), [Lenora Lee](#), [Summer Mei Ling Lee](#), [Cathy Lu](#), and [Christine Wong Yap](#). Said Wu: "In this new iteration, I'm excited to expand the focus of Lantern Stories beyond Boston's Chinatown and explore the impact of Asian American communities on civil rights more broadly. I'm especially excited by this opportunity for bicoastal dialogue and exchange of stories and ideas between these two communities."

ABOUT YU-WEN WU

[Yu-Wen Wu](#) is an interdisciplinary artist living and working in Boston. Born in Taipei, Taiwan, Wu's subjectivity as an immigrant is central to her artwork. Arriving at an early age, her experiences have shaped her work in areas of migration—examining issues of displacement, arrival, assimilation and the shape of identity in a new country. At the crossroads of art, science, politics and social issues, her wide range of projects include large-scale drawings, site-specific video installations, community-engaged practices, and public art. Wu's work has received numerous awards, has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and is included in several private and public collections.

ABOUT ROBERT J. LOUIE MEMORIAL FUND

Robert J. Louie Memorial Fund's mission is to support, strengthen and amplify San Francisco's Chinatown and the Chinese American community through the sponsorship of education, historic preservation, community events, civil rights and cancer-related issues in honor of the memory of Robert J. Louie, who embraced life with an open heart and generous spirit.

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