

From the Editor

Taking up the editorship of *CHINOPERL Papers* again, I want to first thank the out-going editor Kathryn Lowry (Brown University) for her work from 2003-07. Second, I want to welcome associate editor Sujane Wu (Smith College) and thank her for volunteering her service.

I would also like to thank David Rolston (University of Michigan) for his help in finalizing the text of this issue and arranging for it to be printed.

The tasks before me when preparing this issue brought back memories of working under the patient tutelage of Harold Shadick (1915-1992), a founding member of CHINOPERL and the longest serving editor of the *Papers*. Under Harold, I learned how much work goes into reading submitted papers, sending them out for refereeing, begging referees to return their evaluation, proof reading, and finally sending the issue off to print. The relentless march of technology makes the job of editing both easier and harder. Editors are required to do much more in the way of formatting and preparation for printing. But the most important factor to a successful publication are the papers submitted. *CHINOPERL Papers* remains the only publication dealing with oral and performing literature in all its forms. I hope that the *Papers* will continue to serve the interest of scholars in this rich and varied field.

This issue contains three papers on drama. Bell Yung's essay deals with the bold reinvention of Peking opera in a biographical staging of the life of the Jingju *divo* Cheng Yanqiu (1904-1958), a female role performer, and an innovator in his time. It is heartening to know that, although we readers are not privy to the stage performance, "traditional" Chinese drama continues to inspire.

Fan Pen Chen's report on the marionette theatre of Shaanxi describes in detail the ritual setting of the performance. She also includes a translation of an entire play, noting the local variations on traditional motifs.

Victor Carvellas' playlet is a whimsical commentary on diametrically opposite themes in two well known *chuanqi* drama: *The Peony Pavilion* by Tang Xianzu and *The Lute* by Gao Ming. He has also included synopses of the plays for readers who may not be familiar with the details of the original works.

Regina Llamas' detailed report on the symposium "The Interplay of Oral and Written Traditions in Chinese Fiction, Drama and Performance Literature" held in Oslo, Norway November 5-6, 2007 summarizes each and every presentation. Her efforts give those of us who could not attend

this important meeting valuable information on research by scholars in the field.

In this issue, we also honor the memory of the storyteller Gao Zaihua and CHINOPERL supporter Professor Theodore H. H. Pian, The obituary by Vibeke Børdahl includes an English version of Gao's oral autobiography. Bell Yung remembers Professor Pian, husband of our honorary lifetime president, Professor Rulan Chao Pian. Newer members of CHINOPERL may not have met this remarkable gentleman, friend and fatherly figure to many CHINOPERLERS.

I would like to encourage all scholars (and graduate students) to consider presenting papers at the annual CHINOPERL conferences held in conjunction with the annual meetings of the Association for Asian Studies. I would further like to encourage presenters of papers at the annual conferences (as well as scholars who cannot make them, of course) to consider submitting your presentations for publication in *CHINOPERL Papers*. *CHINOPERL Papers* is the only journal in English that is exclusively devoted to publishing research and other material on the various genres of oral performing literature in China. It is a refereed journal of longstanding and you will get specialist feedback on your submissions. All submissions will receive prompt attention. Please consult the style sheet at the end of this journal.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone that back issues are available for purchase. A list of the contents of the back issues and an ordering form can be found toward the end of this issue.

Lindy Li Mark January 2009