

Adventures in venture capitalism

Sheer poetry on a plate

Candid camera focuses on
adoption stories

Artistic degree of difficulty



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Adventures in venture capitalism



Ernestine Fu's entrepreneurial prowess extends to the nonprofit sector. She's the founder of Visual Arts and Music for Society, which has 32 chapters worldwide. Photo by Matthew Mahon

Many college students who work their way through school return to their dorms and share with their roommates the horror stories of working in retail and food service. Ernestine Fu, 20, returns to her Stanford University dorm room after work knowing that she has helped bring a deserving entrepreneurs' dream to life. Fu is currently Silicon Valley's youngest venture capitalist and the embodiment of a modern-day renaissance woman.

The job of a venture capitalist is to identify start-up companies that have the potential to be successful and provide them with capital to get their businesses off the ground. While these companies do possess a high degree of potential, the risk factor associated with them is even higher. With that in mind, venture capitalists have to be confident in the associates they hire and trust them to make wise decisions. Officials at the venture capital firm of Aslop Louie Partners saw something special in Fu and extended her an offer many college students wouldn't receive until years after graduating.

Fu was recently featured in Forbes magazine as an "All-Star Student Entrepreneur." In her interview, Fu discussed the qualities she looks for in entrepreneurs in which her firm could potentially invest. Those qualities

include passion, she said, "because people who love what they are doing create the best products"; flexibility, "to deal with the ups and downs of a startup"; and optimism, or "thinking big and having high expectations."

Fu believes that venture capitalists tend to invest in entrepreneurs who remind them of themselves.

Fu's entrepreneurial spirit has been evident since her high school years. While her parents saved enough money to pay for her education, Fu insisted on paying her own way by garnering multiple scholarships. Her salary as a campus associate with Aslop Louie covers the rest of her academic expenses.

Fu also exhibited her entrepreneurial prowess by creating her own nonprofit called Visual Arts and Music for Society in 2006. Based in Northridge, Calif., VAMS' membership reaches out to those who suffer from poverty, diseases, disorders and disabilities. Volunteers visit hospitals, orphanages, convalescent homes, burn treatment centers and homeless shelters to share their musical and other artistic talents. Currently, VAMS (www.vamsinternational.org) has grown to more than 32 chapters at different schools across the country and around the world.

Since founding the first VAMS chapter at North Hollywood High School and expanding the nonprofit to other locations, Fu implemented various other activities and initiatives, such as chairing the first Youth Leadership Seminar at UCLA and spearheading the VAMS Scholarship and Internship programs. "The challenges of management helped me hone my skills

as a leader," Fu is quoted as saying on the VAMS website. "In spite of all of the responsibilities, I became infused with a compassion and understanding of the underprivileged in the 'forgotten' part of society."

After examining all of Fu's accomplishments, it's easy to forget that she is only a junior in college. She is currently majoring in engineering with a focus in "frugal engineering" to assist the poor through new, cost-efficient methods of food and production, distribution, health care,



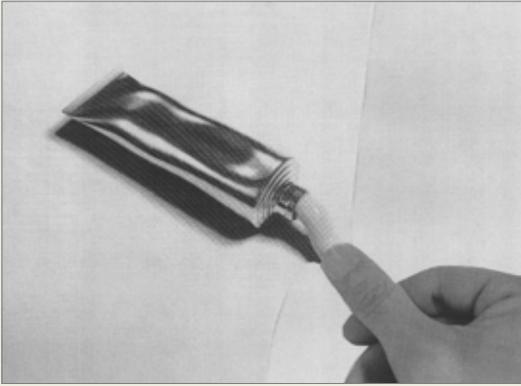
education and information processing. Fu is also the executive director of Stanford's Student Services Division. She oversees sustainable service initiatives for the university and the Bay Area. Her projects include Green Store, Student Initiated Courses, Legal Counseling, Tutoring for Community and Tech Consulting Service. Fu is also conducting research on the impact of extreme events from climate change on seaports.

As for her plans, Fu envisions combining her three loves, entrepreneurship, philanthropy and engineering, into something she wakes up every morning excited to do.

Degree of difficulty

The work of artist Alexandre Singh defies categorization. It cannot be painted with a broad brush, if you'll pardon the pun, as the mediums he uses are as diverse as the genres in which he dwells. Currently living in New York City, 31-year-old Singh works in contemporary visual art, performance art and storytelling, literature, video and more.

Born in Bordeaux, France, Singh studied at Oxford University's Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art, New York's School of Visual Arts, and the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, also in New York. His inspirations include Aleister Crowley, an influential English occultist of the early 20th century; Giordano Bruno, an Italian friar and alchemist who was burned at the stake in 1600; and French playwright Molière.



Alexandre Singh's "Assembly Instructions (Concerning the Apparent Asymmetry of Time)"

In a roundabout way, Adidas founder Adi Dassler has inspired Singh as well. Singh has said he wears only Adidas shoes. And then there's the 1,000-page tome he wrote about Dassler. Titled "The Marque of the Third Stripe," the book recreates Dassler's life in a world where America is the old continent and Europe is the new frontier – and where Singh explores our personal relationships to companies such as sports giants like Adidas. Singh was able to create a series of environmental installations in conjunction with the book, which served as a breakthrough point in his career.

Another contemporary icon and beacon of mass production, Ikea, forms the basis of a series of lectures Singh delivered regarding the master floor plan of the furniture retailer, which is replicated from store to store around the world. Ikea appears again in "Assembly Instructions," another series of lectures and collage-based installations on everything from dreams and memory to television.

In addition to dreams and memory, Singh has explored the concept of superstitions and what he calls the

"absurdity" of its consequences. He's wondered how much wood constitutes true wood when someone knocks on it, and whether Plexiglas counts as a mirror – and therefore courts bad luck – when it is broken. Such musings of Singh's find their way into all manner of media, including film. A few years back, Singh worked on a full-length Hollywood film script. Well aware that he wouldn't be able to garner studio interest in the big-budget script, he nonetheless pursued the endeavor in an effort to hone his screenwriting skills and ultimately use the text as the basis for yet another narrative performance installation.

Singh has exhibited his work throughout the United States and Europe at such venues as Jack Hanley Gallery in San Francisco; The Royal College of Art in London; White



Columns in New York City; and Monitor Gallery in Rome. His work has been featured in countless group exhibitions, including at Marino Marini Museum in Florence; Para/Site Art Space in Hong Kong; and Plug In ICA in Winnipeg, Canada.

Similarly, he collaborates on many of his projects, most notably "Hello Meth Lab in the Sun," a large-scale sculptural installation of modern industrial production sites, including meth labs, that served as the first collaboration of Singh and other notable artists Jonah Friedman and Justin Lowe. Finally, Singh has earned a series of grants over the years, such as the Rema Hort Mann Visual Grant in New York and the Arts Council of England Grant from Norwich Art Gallery.

Through it all, he has said that he sees each work as a "steppingstone" to the next – and that he tries to be more ambitious and more challenging with each iteration of his work. He's also said he is particularly attracted to what is difficult to do – which is perhaps why he is so successful at it.

Here, there, everywhere

Culture and geography are reflected throughout the works of three artists featured in this celebratory issue of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Although distinctly different in medium, the work of each artist has a common tapestry of Asian heritage with a fusion of Eastern and Western influence and cultures old and new. Yet, each artist maintains her respective cultural identity. The audience is invited to take a closer look at the juxtaposition through cross-cultural experiences and globalization.

AMY CHENG

Amy Cheng was born in Taiwan and raised in Brazil, Oklahoma and Texas. She received a bachelor of fine arts from the University of Texas at Austin and a master of fine arts from Hunter College, City University of New York.

Cheng uses patterns, repetition and imagery of what she terms “quotes from Chinese folk art” in her work. She invites the viewer to meditate on her use of those patterns, vibrant colors and old images that express a timeless culture. Her piece, “Before We Were Young,” infuses balls of irregular patterns and twirls. Cheng states, “The boy inspired this painting. His attitude of play seemed to call for an equally playful and joyful environment.” The 1970s drawing game called Spirograph inspired Cheng’s highly decorated piece, “Gorgeous Wish.” She used this game to create the pattern that surrounds the small red circle. The various shades of green illuminate the two stylized flowers of peach and pinks. “A Tale That Spun Gold,” seen on *Unity’s* cover, features two irradiating circles centered by a flower-like pattern. In the lower left corner is a man riding a donkey. A boy holding a vanquished lion overhead accompanies him. Cheng says the circular designs of



“Before We Were Young” by Amy Cheng



“Gorgeous Wish” by Amy Cheng

bright orange and yellows represent the “warmth and light of the sun.”

Cheng’s public art can be seen at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, Cleveland Street Subway Station in Brooklyn and the Lambert-St. Louis International Airport Metro Station. She has exhibited her paintings nationally and internationally.

RASHMI TALPADE

Rashmi Talpade acquired most of her knowledge of international art through books because few art galleries and museums existed when she was growing up in Bombay (now Mumbai), India. Photography became a source of inspiration when her father gave her a camera at age 14. She enjoyed the darkroom processing and printing of black-and-white film. Soon afterward, creating collages of her



photographic images became a major part of her work.

Talpade states, "As an artist whose primary medium is photography, I create work that rests between two worlds – Bombay, India where I was born and raised, and America, where I now reside." The photomontage "Textures of Bombay" portrays quick images photographed from a moving car. This interactive piece tells a story of old and new and rich and poor: a brief, but in-depth reflection of urbanism and Talpade's roots and heritage.

"There are over a thousand different shades of blue sky," says Talpade, "and that light throws a different spectrum of color on various parts of the globe." In "City Scape," she has built a new landscape out of those various shades of blue and the collages show fractions of everyday life that she terms, "harmonious, but full of contradiction." Her utilization of hundreds of photographs creates intrigue at every glance.

Talpade suggests that her audience take notice of details that suggest fictionalized worlds and then step back and envision how her work multiplies spatially to create a complete image.



"Textures of Bombay" by Rashmi Talpade

SIN-YING HO

Sin-ying Ho was born and raised in Hong Kong and lived in Canada before coming to the United States. She holds a bachelor of fine arts from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and a master of fine arts from Louisiana State University. She also studied at the Jingdezhen Ceramics Institute in China. The city, Jingdezhen, is considered the birthplace of porcelain.

Ho fondly remarks that she uses porcelain for her vessels and sculptures because it is reminiscent of her Chinese culture. "The Western iconic logos," she says, "represent modernization and consumerism in China today." Her vessel, "KFC, Walmart," incorporates those logos as well as Chinese language and symbols. Ho states that this porcelain vessel is called meiping, a well-known form that serves plum wine in China. The meiping, painted with blue and white flowers, was showcased in the homes of rich families and imperial courts, especially during the Ming dynasty. "Temptation: Life of Goods No. 1" stands 6 feet tall and is inspired by the silhouette of the human figure. The 100 flowers are delicately hand painted with cobalt blue pigment. Upon closer look, one notices Ho's use of iconic Western brands as collage images within the shape of an old Chinese coin (circle and square).

Ho states that, conceptually, her work illustrates the intersection of cultures — East and West and old and new. Some of her work can be seen in the permanent collections of the Icheon World Ceramic Centre in Korea, Glenbow Museum in Canada and Yingge Ceramics Museum in Taiwan, to name a few.



"City Scape" by Rashmi Talpade



"KFC, Walmart" by Sin-ying Ho



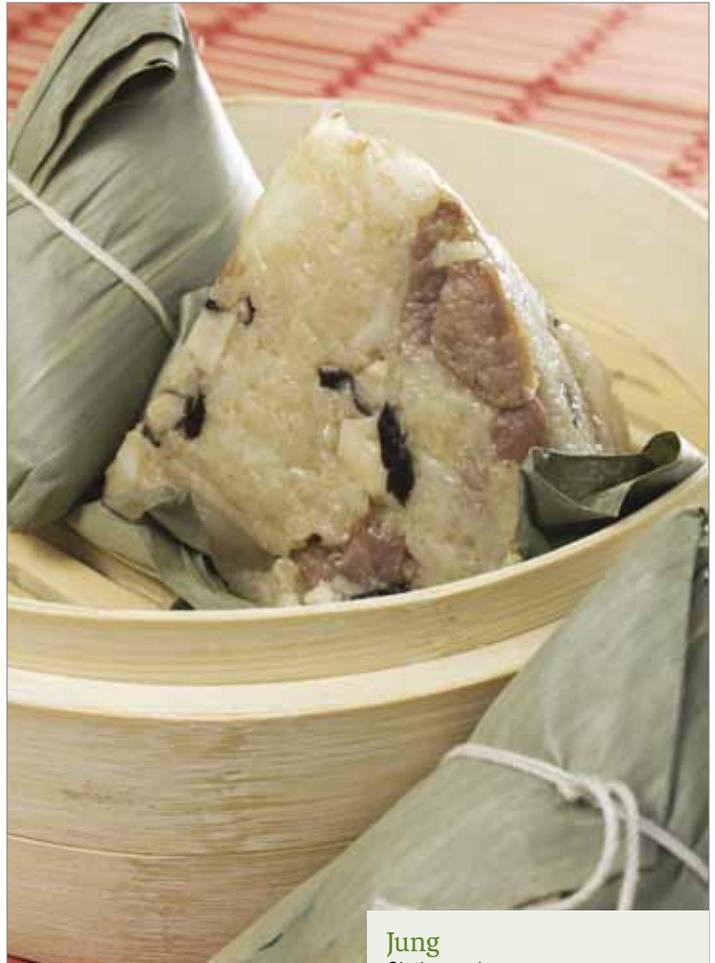
"Temptation: Life of Goods No. 1" by Sin-ying Ho

Sheer poetry on a plate

Traditional Chinese foods, like so many other things in the Chinese culture, often have a long history. Zongzi, a rice delicacy wrapped in bamboo, is no exception. The dish, commonly known as jung, honors Qu Yuan, an ancient Chinese poet whose popularity with the people incited the jealousy of the emperor around 300 B.C. He was banished and ultimately committed suicide by drowning himself in a river. Legend holds that, in their grief, the Chinese people threw packets of rice into the water to prevent fish from feeding on the poet's body. Today, jung is regularly enjoyed at the modern-day Dragon Boat Festival. Held in cultures around the world, the festival commemorates the poet and his patriotism.

While various cultures call the dish by different names and utilize different fillings, classic jung is a study in healthy carbohydrates and protein. Most agree that rice and some sort of leaf constitute the main ingredients. The rice – a glutinous variety, also known as sticky or sweet rice – is stuffed with different fillings and then wrapped in bamboo or reed leaves, though some countries substitute leaves of other plants, such as bananas or maize. Depending on the type of leaf used, the jung will have a distinct aroma and flavor, and the faint skin of the leaves will sometimes leave an indelible imprint on the other ingredients.

But it's the fillings that have the most potential for appeasing the palate. Fillings may differ from region to region, though mainstays include dates, sweetened red bean paste, Chinese black or shiitake mushrooms, chestnuts and/or peanuts. Others include the shelled beans known as mung, taro and duck eggs. Many jung connoisseurs like to add some sort of meat filling, such as chicken or pork. In fact, pork is readily available in



Jung

Glutinous rice
Bamboo leaves
Preferred filling(s)

China, and meat dishes often use pork over other options. Red-cooked pork, Chinese sausage, Chinese barbecued pork and salted pork fat are some of the varieties of fillings found in jung.

Steaming and boiling are acceptable jung cooking methods. Depending on how the rice is cooked – many people choose to stir-fry it ahead of time – the steaming or boiling may take several hours. The finished product should resemble a triangular pyramid shape, the result of wrapping the jung correctly, a skill that is passed down within families. Indeed, the preparation of this Chinese delicacy is usually a family event, as is the act of enjoying it.

Prepare the glutinous rice. This may require overnight soaking. Some recipes also suggest soaking the bamboo leaves overnight. Boil the bamboo leaves. Let cool and pat dry. Scoop the rice onto the bamboo leaves. Scoop your preferred filling(s) onto the rice. Fold the leaves around the rice and filling and secure with twine. Simmer the jung for 2 to 5 hours (timing will depend on the filling).

Standard fare? Not on this chef's menu

Home to more than 6,000 restaurants, Chicago may be one of the top foodie cities in the country. Widely known for everything from deep-dish pizza to Chicago-style hot dogs with tomatoes, onion, hot peppers and a pickle, the Windy City is also home to some of the country's most diverse restaurants, reflective of its cosmopolitan population.

Not surprisingly, Chicagoland chefs seem to be all over Bravo's Top Chef competition; of 29 chefs selected for season nine, six were working chefs in Chicago. Chicago favorite chef Radhika Desai, "Top Chef" season-five "chef*testant," has been active in the restaurant scene since graduating the Cooking and Hospitality Institute of Chicago.

Desai, a first-generation Indian American, has participated in the James Beard Foundation's Celebrity Chef Tour and is a frequent participant in Chicago's food festivals. She's been working as a personal chef since exiting English gastropub in 2011, where she was executive chef.

Born in Cincinnati, Desai grew up in an eclectic Indian home and her approach to cooking reflects that.

Asked by CenterStage Chicago on the best advice she had received about working in the city, she reflected, "I had lunch with (Rick Bayless) and

my executive chef when I was working at Vermilion. He told us that Chicago has something for everybody, different tastes, different cultures, different styles, and as a chef in this city if you just do what you do, and do it well, you will find your niche. I've tried to keep that in mind and just stay true to my style."

No matter the venue, from the small-plate cuisine at Between Boutique Café and Lounge (where she was executive chef while on "Top Chef") to the British pub fare at English, Desai's approach reflects strong flavor pairings in untraditional ways. Case in point: panko-crusting Lobster mac-and-cheese, which she created while at English, or the lamb burger she created for Chicago's Hamburger Hop festival combining feta, cucumber, mint and cilantro, a sort of deconstructed/reconstructed gyro.

Such unusual pairings aren't always easy to construct, she says, thinking back to her days as a park ranger in Death Valley, her first job out of college before pursuing her culinary career.

"... As far as cooking went, I didn't have a lot of resources to work with, so I had to be creative. When I cooked for the other rangers I'd plan out the presentation to help overcome the lack of ingredients," Desai told Centerstage.

Herb Grilled Salmon with Tomato Orange Fennel Chutney

4 6-ounce salmon filets
1 sprig thyme
5 basil leaves
1 tablespoon olive oil
3 to 4 sprigs thyme
Sea salt and fresh ground pepper to taste
½ pint yellow cherry tomatoes, halved
½ pint red cherry tomatoes, halved
1 large navel orange
¼ c olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
3 scallions chopped
2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
½ teaspoon mustard seeds
½ teaspoon fennel seeds
Grated zest and juice of 1 lemon
Salt and fresh pepper to taste
Chutney

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Toss tomatoes in olive oil. Arrange on baking sheet and roast for 25 minutes. In the meantime, segment the orange and in a bowl combine segments with all other ingredients. Let tomatoes cool and combine. Season with salt and pepper.

Heat grill. Chop fresh herbs for salmon. Rub salmon with olive oil and pat herbs firmly on flesh. Sprinkle with sea salt and pepper. Place herb side down and cook on both sides until just barely pink in the middle. Enjoy chutney on salmon.

Recipe courtesy of Radhika Desai, reprinted from <http://getfitportland.wordpress.com>.





Candid camera focuses on adoption stories



Deann Borshay Liem

Samurai warriors believed that the sword was only as mighty as its master. If handled correctly, that sword could change the tide of battle and potentially win a war. In the world of film, the most powerful tool is the camera lens. The images captured through it can open the minds of an audience and transport them to new worlds.



Deann Borshay Liem's adoption records.

Writer, director and producer Deann Borshay Liem, 54, yields this tool in a fashion similar to the sword-wielding samurai warrior. Her mission, however, is to tell the stories of under-represented communities in order to promote cultural understanding and encourage positive social change. To carry out this mission, Liem created Mu Films (www.mufilms.org). This nonprofit production company based in Berkeley, Calif., distributes independent documentary-style films.



Deann Borshay Liem's adoptive parents raised her in California.

At the age of 8, Liem was adopted by an American family living in San Francisco from her native country of South Korea. Liem's adoptive father introduced her to the world of film. "When I was growing up, he was obsessed with making home movies," Liem recalls. "He would spend hours shooting, editing and making creative titles for his movies. Then we would all gather in the living room and watch them together while I ran the projector at a young age."

Liem first got involved in filmmaking through the Center for Asian American Media in San Francisco. CAAM was started in the 1980s specifically to address and combat negative portrayals of Asians in mass media and to produce, distribute and exhibit films by and about Asian Americans. Liem would later serve as the director of CAAM, when she worked with Congress to support minority representation in public media.

After her time with CAAM, Liem created Mu Films. "The name 'Mu' is the Korean pronunciation of the Chinese character that means shaman, artist, warrior or people who connect heaven and Earth through the tree of life," Liem explains. "So the name, to me, is symbolic for people who are able to bridge very different worlds." So far, Mu Films has produced two feature-length documentaries with another two currently in development. Liem has been honored as a Sundance Institute Fellow and is a recipient of the Rockefeller Film/Video Fellowship.

Perhaps the best explanation for Liem's success is her willingness to share the remarkable true story of her own

adoption and search for her lost culture. The idea for Mu Films' Emmy-nominated documentary, "First Person Plural," derived from the family videos her adoptive father made when she was a child. "His films portrayed me as a happy, assimilated child, an Asian face in an otherwise white family with no history or connection to my birth country," says Liem. "The film grew out of a desire to 'interrupt' this narrative of happy and ready assimilation and to be in control of the telling of my own history." Today, it's been reported that a third of the 30,000 children adopted abroad and brought to the U.S. are Asian.

Mu Films' most recent documentary, "Geographies of Kinship," takes a deeper look into the world of Korean adoptees and the quest to re-connect with their culture. Since the Korean War (1950-53), South Korea has sent approximately 200,000 Korean children for adoption overseas, with a majority of these children relocated to the U.S. Overseas adoptions have continued in spite of Korea's modernization and industrialization in the post-war years. "I think it's important that we understand this historical context and hear as many stories from adult adoptees as we can, so that policy makers can make informed decisions about the future, and adoptive families and adoptees can form communities and support one another," Liem explains.

