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POST PARLANCE WITH LEE SU

Artist shows a new perspective



The artist Lee Su inside his infinite box. COURTESY OF JOY N. WIEDER

By Joy N. Wieder
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Trained as an architectural designer, Lee Su now creates and teaches art full-time, including painting classes through Harvard Adult Education.

Su, a Chinese-American who was born in Vietnam and educated at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, R.I. was the For Art's Sake Artist of the Month in January. In March, he participated in Handmade Harvard, an arts and crafts fair hosted by the Harvard

More about For Art's Sake

CREATIVE OUTLET For Art's Sake is a non-profit community art association in Harvard dedicated to celebrating, supporting, and encouraging creativity within the community.

OPPORTUNITIES The assoc-

iation provides opportunities for artists, art appreciation, and advocacy for the arts through an online directory and website, community art solo exhibitions; a scholarship fund; provision of community service opportunities; granting art materials for a special proj-

ect; and sponsorship and promotion of creative workshops and community art projects and events.

INFO forartsake.harvard.org/; or email pc-cochrane@sigma1.com and melissaya3@aol.com

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FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD AND HEAD TO OZ



The Post talks to artist Lee Su

By Joy N. Wieder / for Wicked Local

GateHouse News Service

Posted Apr 02, 2012 @ 02:44 PM

Read more: [The Post talks to artist Lee Su - Harvard, MA - The Harvard Post](http://www.wickedlocal.com/harvard/news/x826293882/The-Post-talks-to-artist-Lee-Su#ixzz1sQshjaJ2)

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Harvard —

Trained as an architectural designer, Lee Su now creates and teaches art full-time, including painting classes through Harvard Adult Education.

Su, a Chinese-American who was born in Vietnam and educated at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, R.I. was the For Art's Sake Artist of the Month in January. In March, he participated in Handmade Harvard, an arts and crafts fair hosted by the Harvard Woman's Club and featuring the work of local artisans.

Su's exhibit, Delta, was on display in the Old Library during the month of March. In Delta, Lee explores color, space, light and time through drawings, sculptural models and animation.

Lee hopes his work will change people's perception of the world around them.

"It's about giving people a new perspective on things and life, this [exhibit] happens to be space and light and color," said Su. "This is basically light and space re-explained in different ways."

For information visit lee-su.com/

Where were you born and when did you move to the United States?

I was born in Vietnam in Saigon right after the war, and I moved to the U.S. in 1984. I came to Massachusetts when I was 8. My dad was with the U.S. military in the war so he was persecuted when the North Vietnamese took over. He escaped and the U.S. sponsored him over. [My parents] were over here long before I was and eventually they were able to get me over.

They left me behind with my grandmother. That was their only choice. My grandparents left China during the Japanese invasion, and they went to Vietnam.

What is your philosophy or motivation in creating your art?

I'm basically trying to get a new perspective with my work. I'm trying to look at time in a physical dimension more than just an ephemeral thing. A lot of my work is about creating a space that is not quite there.

Even the illusion of three-dimensional space in two dimensions is creating a space that is not there $\frac{3}{4}$ the illusion of space. I'm actually trained in architecture. This [architectural rendering] is a representation of the three dimensional space and construct with just two dimensions.

What do you want people to take away from all these abstract ideas of time and space, like this wooden box of infinity mirrors?

I don't expect a lot of people to wrap their heads around a lot of these [ideas]. What I tell my friends that just don't get it $\frac{3}{4}$ if you enjoy this for the sake of something visual, I would be very happy.

Like these children came in for an art class and they loved the box. They just went all over the box and played with the box for at least 30 minutes. I loved that. They're not appreciating it for the abstract ideas; they just loved the box. They tried to get inside it.

Again, I feel that this is something that ties everything together, because again it is creating a space that is an illusion to a space that isn't there. Some people call it the infinite box $\frac{3}{4}$ I added to that idea and called it "Delivery Room No. 8."

A lot of these have to do with thoughts of religion $\frac{3}{4}$ different powers and so forth. I'm not one to be able to explain those sorts of things, but I feel they are connected.

Tell me about the classes and private lessons that you teach.

I'm teaching at Assabet Valley Center for Continuing Education in Marlboro. I teach oil painting there. I teach gauche at Harvard Adult Education. My students in Harvard wanted to take oil, so maybe I'll do an oil painting class in Harvard next time.

I also teach private lessons. I teach people to draw and to paint and to "digi" $\frac{3}{4}$ meaning a digital media using a camera, using software and even building websites. We cater to everybody from 5 year olds to 105. It's mostly about how to make a good picture, a two-dimensional image. Medium comes along, but it's about picture-making basically.

The drop-in art class is going every Wednesday at the Wholesome Café in Ayer from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. $\frac{3}{4}$ just come in with \$10. The money will go toward the Harvard as well as the Shirley/Ayer PTOs. You get all the materials provided. Come in for two hours, and you get to have fun. And I get to clean up.

How are your methods useful to researchers of learning and language in animals and people with disabilities?

It's my visual methods that I'm talking about where I do an exploration that is visual rather than a language exploration. That to me seems very helpful, especially to animal communication because things are perceptual and visual. As well as people with disabilities.

Partially, I relate to myself where I had a car accident that gave me a traumatic brain injury. It hit the left side of my head. More and more I had trouble with language, on top of coming here and learning the language at 8. So I relied more on the visual and the tangible.

That's what I feel is more pertinent to people with disabilities, especially with left-brain disabilities.

What is your goal for your art making?

The main thing that I want to point out is that even though some of my art is very scientifically oriented, I tend to think of things in a different way. I collect all this mass of information that's floating around in my head without order and then I work off of tangents, going from one thing to another. The relics that develop, the physical manifestations, are the artworks that you see here.

I try to inform the public in general if they want it. To allow them the freedom of gaining information without all these copyrights that restricts them. So they can take any of my work, they can use it for their own good; they can make other things with it.

It's all about the pursuit of knowledge rather than the gain of 20 years of copyright. I think that's more important than the individual gain.

Although, I do have to eat.

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