

Designing Educational Initiatives for the Music of Asian America Research Center

ERIC HUNG

Abstract: Largely because of decreasing budgets, advocacy has become a hot topic in archives in recent years. In her 2015 SAA Presidential Address, Kathleen Roe called on archivists to be much more active and imaginative in showing how archives can be relevant to and inspiring for everyone. Despite the increasing attention on advocacy, there has not been much writing on education programs at archives.

The Music of Asian America Research Center (MAARC) is a new online information center and post-custodial digital archive that documents, makes accessible, and interprets the music making of Asian Americans across boundaries of ethnicity and genre. It seeks to give Asian Americans (particularly musicians) a sense of what Michelle Caswell calls “representational belonging,” to contribute materials for educators who want to create more inclusive curricula and lesson plans, and to advance research on Asian American music.

My poster discusses a course that MAARC is currently developing on Asian American history. The course adapts Commemorative Museum Pedagogy, a methodology developed by Julia Rose, and uses oral histories, musical excerpts and other materials from our digital archive to teach five key “difficult” moments in Asian American history: Chinese labor and its discontents, the Japanese internment during World War II, the simultaneous growth of the Asian American Movement and the Model Minority stereotype, the arrival of Southeast Asian refugees, and the aftermath of 9/11. The archival materials will not only personalize the course content, but also help our audiences be more reflective and consider the relevance of past events to the world today.

About the Author:

Eric Hung is Executive Director of the Music of Asian America Research Center. From 2004 to 2018, he was Assistant/Associate Professor of Music History at Westminster Choir College of Rider University. He received a Ph.D. in Musicology from Stanford University and his MLIS in Archives and Digital Curation from the University of Maryland. Also an active performer of Western classical music, Balinese music and Chinese music, he has performed in Germany, Austria, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, and in numerous cities in North America.