

Highlights from the Chinese Program

The Poetic Heart of Modern China

For the second time, Professor Mingwei Song invited the major poets of the Chinese speaking world to Wellesley for recital and discussion. On February 26, 2025, Mr. Wang Jiaxin and Mr. Wang Yin read their poems and had a lively conversation with students studying Chinese at Wellesley.

Eminent among contemporary Chinese poets and essayists, Mr. Wang Jiaxin (b. 1956) has received numerous awards, and been translated into both European and Asian languages. Former Luce Poet-in-Residence at Colgate University, and 2013 resident in the University of Iowa International Writing Program, he is the author of many poetry and essay collections, as well as a prolific anthologist. A distinguished translator of Yeats, Tsvetaeva, Mandelstam, and particularly Paul Celan, many of his own poems have been translated into English, and he is the author of *Darkening Mirror* (2016), a volume of his poems in English.

Mr. Wang Yin (b. 1962) is one of the so-called experimentalists, who pushed experimentation with language in new directions. He works as a columnist and reporter at Southern Weekly, China's leading liberal newspaper, covering culture and the arts. His art criticism and interviews with artists have been collected in three volumes in China, and his own photography—often work documenting his engagement with contemporary art—continues to gain recognition internationally. He is the author of *A Summer Day in the Company of Ghosts* (NYRB, 2022).

At Wellesley, both poets read their new poems, some dealing with the contemporary themes, including the War in Ukraine, Protests in New York, and their experience as poets in exile from their home country, China, with bittersweet nostalgia and sober reflections. Their reactions with our students were candid and inspiring. The event was co-sponsored by EALC and CSA.



Wang Jiaxin, Wang Yin and Mingwei Song



Above: Dr. Chiara Cigarini



Above: Emily Jin, Mu Ming, Mingwei Song



Science Fiction Workshop

On April 30, 2025, a Science Fiction Workshop took place on Wellesley campus. The main organizers are Professor Mingwei Song and Dr. Chiara Cigarini, an Marie Curie Fellow affiliated with the Università Ca' Foscari of Venice. Dr. Cigarini is currently a postdoc fellow at Wellesley under Professor Song's sponsorship. Her research project is hydrant future, mainly about water crisis and its representations in literature. The two invited speakers are the novelist Mu Ming and our own alumna, Emily Xueni Jin '17. A water policy specialist, Dacotah-Victoria Splichalova, join the workshop remotely and presented her research. The workshop was co-sponsored by EALC, CSA, and the European Union. Professor Mingwei Song and Dr. Chiara Cigarini moderated the event.

The April 30 workshop consists of three panels. The first panel focuses on the fluidity of gender in contemporary Chinese science fiction, featuring a conversation among Mu Ming, Emily Jin, and Mingwei Song. Mu Ming shared her experience as a woman writer, and Emily shared her experience as a bilingual translator of the contemporary science fiction by women writers in both the United States and China. In the second panel, Dr. Cigarini introduced her research project on water, water policy, and representation of water in science fiction. Mu Ming and Emily joined the conversation. In the last panel, Dr. Cigarini invited students to brainstorm about possible scenarios for finding solutions of the water crisis, either from the political or technological perspectives, or both. The last panel culminated in students' reports, which Mu Ming would design into story backgrounds. The project will continue into the summer, with artists and writers actively involved, leading to two more workshops in Yunnan, China, and Taipei, Taiwan. Wellesley is an essential part of this project.