

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Tribal Inspiration

Chiwan Choi · Thursday, April 4th, 2013

We had a chance to get away last week. It's Judeth's Spring Break right now and through awesome friends like [Faye Lane](#) and Sunyoung Lee, of our partner in crime [Kaya Press](#), we were able to afford a few days in New York. We imagined eating a lot of good food, seeing some theater, drinking a "few" beers, and enjoying a city we love and miss so much.

But the trip ended up being anything but relaxing. And it was fucking awesome.

One of the original motivations (or excuses) to take a trip to NYC was the event that Kaya Press was going to be holding at NYU. It was for the release of [The Hanging on Union Square](#), a truly unique novel that was self-published by the author, H.T. Tsiang, in 1935 and that Kaya was republishing and bringing to a new generation of readers.



I don't just say this because Writ Large Press is totally in love with Kaya Press, but they are doing spectacular work. Just the last two books they've done have blown me away — *The Hanging on Union Square* and before that, a translation of an unknown LA masterpiece, *Lament in the Night*, a pulp novella that was written in Japanese by a first generation Japanese-American laborer about LA's own Little Tokyo. Exciting work that humbles me in its scope.

Anyway, the NYU event was fantastic. A packed house. Sunyoung introduced us to numerous Asian-American writers and artists and other makers. We even had an amazing night at [Shanghai Gourmet](#) the next night, about a dozen of us killing a million soup dumplings. Mmmmmmm.

One meeting that Sunyoung put together that I'll probably be revisiting a lot as we move forward with many of our projects is the one we had with Veronica Liu. Veronica is the quite remarkable writer/editor/publisher/activist who created the [Word Up](#) bookstore and community space happen in Washington Heights.

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I can't really get into all the details of the Word Up story because there's so much and is so rich, but the way she was able to conceive it, fight for it, learn from it, and as one person was able to impact in entire community is pretty remarkable. Read up on it [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#).

I think Veronica is someone we will continue to learn from and we'll be watching her progress in finding a new space for Word Up.

We did get to attend two fantastic art events while there. One was the Basquiat show at the Gagosian Gallery in Chelsea. How was it? It's Basquiat! C'mon!

Then there was a show at S.2.A on Bowery and Kenmare, Annabel Daou's new space. Annabel is a dear friend and [one of our very favorite artists](#). We met with her to see [the current show](#), *We Could Have Had It All* by Itziar Barrio. Yes, the title is from an Adele song, from "Rolling in the Deep" to be exact.



We talked afterward at a bar around the corner and instantly started coming up with ideas and themes for a collaborative project in this unique space. I'll keep you posted on things, but for now, we are already looking to do a weekend of ridiculously cool shows that will continue our exploration of the meaning of writing and publishing.

To say the least, we are totally geeked.

Finally, there was Robin Grearson in Brooklyn (in Bushwick, my old neighborhood) who put together a cool show at her studio and was kind enough to invite me to read. It was a combination of photo exhibit and readings, all exploring the sense of space and home. It's the kind of event that has always inspired me—a bare bones show that brings together a small tribe of talented and creative people. And [Jami Attenberg](#) even dropped in!

I [spoke of Robin before](#) and I know I will continue to do so because Robin is somebody that Writ Large Press will always want to throw down with on any creative endeavor.

Speaking of a sense of home and space, this past week reminded me that just because we are a small press, it doesn't mean we are relegated to one tiny place in the world. We can go and do anything we want. It is just about finding and connecting with people with vision that inspire us.

It's simply about meeting them anywhere in the world and saying to them, "Hey, let's do something."

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