

CCEM

McGraw Center

News Integrity Initiative

SHOWCASING THE BEST OF THE COMMUNITY AND ETHNIC MEDIA

NYCity News Service

Immigration | Politics | Culture | More » » | Boroughs » » | Latino » » | Black » » | Asian » » | Other » » | About Us | Cc
Town-Knight Center

OCTOBER 10, 2017

BY **LOTUS CHAU**

SOURCE: SING TAO DAILY,
SINOVISION | TRANSLATED

BY RONG XIAOQING FROM
CHINESE

ORIGINAL STORY 

Paper Sculptures: Tackling the Golden Venture through Art

Fold: Golden Venture paper sculptures Exhibition



[Get a glimpse of the “FOLD: Golden Venture Paper Sculptures” exhibition at the Museum of Chinese in America in the [video](#) from SinoVision English Channel. Find below the translation from Chinese of a Sing Tao Daily [story](#) on the show.]

The Museum of Chinese in America (MOCA) unveiled its fall exhibition “**FOLD: Golden Venture Paper Sculptures**” on Oct. 5. The exhibition presents the paper sculptures made by immigrants who were smuggled to the U.S. on the infamous ship the Golden Venture – sculptures made while they were detained at York County prison from 1993 to 1997 – and offers a rare peek into the minds of those immigrants.

The Golden Venture, a ship that was not made for transporting humans, went aground at Rockaway Beach in Queens on June 6, 1993, with 286 undocumented immigrants from China on board. When the ship was

Search

**NYC
ELEC
DATES &**

SUBSCRI

Email Ac

First Nar

Last Nan

* = requi

Preferre

HTML

Text



surrounded by law enforcement, some panicked immigrants jumped into the ocean. Ten drowned and the rest were arrested. Now the paper sculptures are like windows that allow viewers to examine the impact of American immigration policy and control via real stories and from an artistic perspective. The exhibition will be on view through March 25, 2018.

The paper sculptures not only mimic everyday objects but also convey the life experience and expectations of the adventurers. In the works can be found the artists' memories of their hometowns, their desire for the American dream and the bitterness of being detained for a long time. The immigrants impart these feelings through symbolic images, such as Chinese pagodas, lanterns, American eagles and caged birds. Through these works, they have elevated traditional Chinese paper folding to a new stage at a time when a new policy on political asylum might have them detained indefinitely. These immigrants are like sand lapped by the waves of American politics. Many of them are still living in limbo. [Editor's note: Although all were released from prison by 1997, [many do not have permanent resident status.](#)] Their route of pursuing the American dream is like the paper in their hands – folded with thousands of twists and turns.

Andrew Rebatta, the curator of the exhibition, said MOCA has a tradition of critically exploring contemporary immigration issues through historical perspectives. Previous exhibitions have covered topics from the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 to McCarthyism. "Fold" is a continuation of the tradition. It shows that today's growing anti-immigrant atmosphere has indeed sprouted from seeds buried in the controversial debates triggered by the Golden Venture incident.

Before the Golden Venture incident, the U.S. had much more lenient and humane policies toward asylum seekers who crossed the border without documents. After it, undocumented immigrants would be immediately detained after they crossed the border (...).

"Fold" is closely relevant to the world's situation and American politics today. Waves of migrants who have lost their homes and are struggling for survival are rising all over the globe. In the U.S. some politicians and people in power have been trying to instigate nationalism and xenophobia deliberately. Immigration is again a thorny topic. MOCA, which exhibited part of the works of the Golden Venture immigrants in an exhibition in 1996, hopes the updated exhibition can provide a deeper understanding of the Golden Venture incident as well as a historical angle to understand the current issues.

Other than the paper sculptures, the exhibition also includes a video segment and archival materials with relevant social and political details. A film made by the museum to analyze the changes in immigration policies after the Golden Venture, which includes interviews with many immigration lawyers, scholars, organizations and people who helped the Golden Venture immigrants, can be viewed.

Nancy Yao Maasbach, MOCA's president, said the museum will also host a series of film screenings, panels and workshops to help the viewers better understand and further discuss the topic of incarceration of immigrants. The Golden Venture incident, although it happened more than 20 years ago, is not out of date because similar stories are still happening now. "Fold" decodes the complexity of the Golden Venture incident through art that triggers the viewer's empathy.

MOCA is located at 215 Center St. in Manhattan. For more information, go to mocanyc.org.

Tags: [Golden Venture](#), [Museum of Chinese in America](#), [video](#)

SHARE THIS POST

3

Twitter

VOICES

Day of the reports @ bit.ly/Da

Embed



Be the



OTHER CI

NYC News Servi

219 Magazi

MOTT HAVEN HERALD

215 WES