

NEH Lecture Series  
and CSUSB Modern China  
Lecture Series Present:

# CONSUMING REVOLUTION:

The Museum and the Gallery in  
Post-Socialist Beijing

with Dr. Lynda Bell  
(UC Riverside)

NOVEMBER 13, 2014

Noon - 2 p.m. in Pfau Library

PL-4005 (4th Floor)

#### Speaker Bio:

Lynda Bell, associate professor of history at the University of California, Riverside, is a specialist in modern Chinese history. She first resided in China from 1979 to 1982, conducting research for her Ph.D. dissertation on modern Chinese silk production while based at Nanjing University. She has worked as a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, and at Peking University. She also was the faculty director for the University of California's Education Abroad Program based in Beijing. Professor Bell's current work explores the history and memory of 20th century Chinese revolutionary politics in two separate projects. The first is an archival study of mass campaigns

to mobilize rural women for state building in the critical, formative period of the early 1950s. The second is an exploration of how government and private citizens today commemorate China's revolutionary decades in museums, art galleries, and other public venues. Delineating exactly how and why "red culture" remains vital both publicly and privately in post-socialist Beijing is a central goal of this project.



#### Lecture Description:

In 2011, a massive renovation of the exhibit on modern Chinese history housed at the National Museum on Tiananmen Square was completed. This permanent exhibit, "Road to Rejuvenation," presents the most authoritative official view of the decades of revolution led by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the very political party that still governs China today. The first part of this talk explores the history of the exhibit and its treatment of the most controversial episodes in mass politics led by the CCP during the revolutionary years—the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. In the second part of the talk, a contrast is drawn between the "Road to Rejuvenation" and two long-term artists' projects in Beijing, launched by the artists' gallery called Long March Space, that also consider the legacies of China's revolutionary era. The contrasts between public and private consumption of revolution are thus explored, in an effort to understand not only how an instrumental historical narrative first crafted during the socialist era is being reshaped, but also how collective memory of revolution operates through hegemonic negotiation over cultural expression in the post-socialist present.

*Co-Sponsors: CSUSB History Club/Phi Alpha Theta, CSUSB History Department, NEH Lecture Series (Dr. Rueyling Chuang), College of Extended Learning, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, College of Business and Public Administration, University Diversity Committee, and the CSUSB Intellectual Life Fund*