

## The Asian Arts & Culture Program at UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center

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**CONTACT:** Sue McFarland, 413-577-2486 (aacp@acad.umass.edu)  
**WHAT:** Tai Yuan Puppet Theatre from Taiwan  
**WHEN:** Sunday, March 1  
**TIME:** 2:00 PM  
**WHERE:** Bowker Auditorium

### *Appearance of rare Taiwanese puppets extends Chinese New Year celebrations!*

To honor the start of the 2015 Chinese New Year on February 19, the UMass Fine Arts Center Asian Arts and Culture Program follows up with a special family friendly presentation of the **TAIYUAN PUPPET THEATRE** in ***A Sea of Puppets*** on **Sunday, March 1 at 2:00 p.m.** in Bowker Auditorium, UMass Amherst. The performance features the historic Taiwanese art form of glove puppetry and is the result of a collaborative effort among the Asian Arts & Culture Program, Five Colleges, Incorporated and the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) under the “Spotlight Taiwan” project. General admission is \$15 with \$10 tickets for seniors and those ages 17 and under. Tickets are available by calling the Fine Arts Center Box Office at 413-545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS. Online at: [fineartscenter.com](http://fineartscenter.com).

Taiwanese Glove Puppet Theater has a rich and varied tradition in which music, carving, embroidery and a delicate performance technique all come together. The art form originated in China's Fujian Province in the 17th century and later spread to Taiwan, where it flourished. ***A Sea of Puppets*** is still performed on one of the traditionally carved wooden stages. With amazing skills, the puppeteers bring the exquisite puppets in their embroidered costumes to life. Using a range of delicate gestures and exciting acrobatics, the puppets tell the romantic story of a young man as he saves a girl from the hands of a villain. In the show the audience experiences all the characters of traditional Taiwanese puppetry: the young lady, the scholar, the clown and the villain. Powered by the virtuosity of the Taiwanese puppeteers, the show uses no dialogue and is suitable for audiences of all backgrounds and ages. No language skill is required. The Taiyuan Puppet Theatre has performed at venues such as the Purcell Room and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the rainforests of Central America, the Traditional Opera Theatre in Hanoi, Union Square in San Francisco, Casa Mila in Barcelona, the countryside of Cambodia and, of course, the squares and theaters of old Taipei. Created in 2000 by Paul Lin and managing/artistic director Robin Ruizendaal, the Taiyuan Puppet Theatre continues to expand the glove puppetry art form. The company is based at the Lin Liu-Hsin Puppet Theatre Museum in Dadaocheng, the old center of Taipei.

An informative talk about Taiwanese puppetry by Ms. Wu Shanshan, Executive Director Taiyuan Puppet Theatre Company introduces the performance. After the show audience members have the opportunity to meet and greet the puppet “stars” and get an in depth view of how the puppets are manipulated.

Spotlight Taiwan events are funded in part by the Ministry of Culture, Republic of China and Special patron Dr. Samuel Yin, with additional support from the Five Colleges, Incorporated.

The Fine Arts Center's Asian Arts & Culture and Center Series are sponsored by Baystate Health & Health New England. Asian Arts & Culture Program Season sponsor is the Pioneer Valley Hotel Group. High resolution images are available at: <https://fac.umass.edu/Online/PressImages>

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