

CHINA DIARY 3

This is my third trip to Beijing to participate in the exchange program sponsored by the Pickled Arts Centre. I was met at the airport by Xiao Chen, one of Li Gang's secretaries, and we took a cab back to the arts center. It was good to be greeted by the staff as an old friend. Li Gang was watching a calligrapher from Taiwan, Yang Tze Yung, create some scrolls. Tze Yung had participated in the recent Beijing art exhibit, and sold all of his paintings at the show to one collector and was awaiting payment. He and his friend were each purchasing a unit at the new arts complex being built approximately two miles away. I had seen the land for the complex on my last visit. Li Gang and he were discussing his participation in a joint show in Berlin. I just enjoyed watching the calligraphy.

After he left, Li Gang and I had a chance to catch up with each other and I gave him a book of the recent Rubens's drawings on exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I also gave him my old Jackson ESQ welding helmet so he could do more intricate and accurate welds, while relieving the neck and head pains caused by the constant up-and-down motion of a helmet that is not equipped with a computerized light sensing device. He had asked me to bring him one prior to this visit, but did not have the money for a new helmet which lists for approximately \$400 before shipping to China. Since all the rooms in the complex were full, I was assigned a couch for the first night with the understanding that once Brad moved out of his room the next day I would have that room for the rest of my visit.

After a brief nap, I went down to visit with Li Gang's parents and then a large group of us went to dinner at a new Beijing duck restaurant in the neighborhood. On the way we stopped off at another of Li Gang's studios to visit Rich, a sculptor from Australia who was working in wood. He brought all of his carving tools and was just starting on a wood maquette for a much larger sculpture. We also looked at some casting molds of Tracy Heneberger, a sculptor from Brooklyn, that were to be the basis for a bronze pouring within next few days. The castings were to be used to make a smaller version of Shan Shui, a sculpture commissioned for a New York City patent law firm last year.

We visited with the owner of the Imagine Gallery and then our large group went to dinner. The dinner participants illustrated the diversity of persons involved in the Bei Gao arts community and various foreign artists who were visiting Beijing. In addition to Yang Tze Yung, there were an artist friend of his from Taiwan, a new friend that he had met in Beijing, Tracy, John Sundvquist, a Swedish painter, who was having a show at the Pickled Arts Centre beginning in a few days, Brian Wallace, an Australian who was the proprietor of the Red Gate Gallery, Tong, a sculptor from Luxembourg, two French agents for a Paris art dealer, who were trying to get Li Gang to exhibit some of the works of the artists that they represent, and some Chinese artists represented by Red Gate and other friends. There was lots of food and beer. The main area of discussion was the recent Beijing art fair. The consensus of the people and dealers who participated was that it was a success. It had far

greater attendance and broader participation than the prior year's fair, and was especially good for Chinese artists. Brian Wallace noted that the success of the Beijing Art Fair was demonstrated by the higher prices realized at a very recent Hong Kong auction. One Chinese painter who came in with Brian announced that he had sold everything he brought to the show and that dinner was on him, as this was a celebration dinner.

John Sundvquist and Tracy discussed how much the artist should participate in arranging his art at a gallery show. Some artists felt that the gallery owners were in a better position to hang the exhibit. John felt that his paintings were so personal that he had to be intimately involved and control the process of arranging and hanging all of his pictures. Tze Yung, who was apparently trained as an opera singer, intermittently decided to entertain us and everyone else in the restaurant with Puccini and Verdi opera arias. We concluded the meal by singing happy birthday to Li Gang's five-year-old daughter, Wendy. Then 15 of us piled into Li Gang's van, and Tze Yung started singing more arias as if performing on the stage of La Scala. It was a bit over the top. After reviewing some excerpts in the Xu Bing book and some of my drawings, I went to sleep at approximately 10 o'clock. I was so tired that the couch was no obstacle to a long sound sleep.

DAY 2

Since I did not have a chance to do any grocery shopping at Annie Lu's, Ming and Gang invited me to join them for a breakfast of Chinese crullers, cold cooked cod fish, tea, vegetables and hot noodle soup. Gang advised me that the metal fabricator that worked with me in the past was too busy. He introduced me to Chou Fong and explained to me that he used to work as a supervisor with the other metal fabricator, now had his own shop and would be just as good. I was a little concerned because I was used to working with the other metal fabricators, and they were able understand my sign language, drawings and what I was looking for. Chou and I then went to a steel yard to look for and buy the steel needed for my planned sculptures. Because I only had seven full days in Beijing and wanted to spend some time making marketing contacts and finishing the sculptures that I had started on my last visit, I decided to limit myself to 3 new sculptures, one for the entrance way to an office, another Chinese flag with new calligraphy spelling out English words in the inscription, and a variation of the Harmony series utilizing a Confucian saying about how the ocean takes care of all of the waves until they reach shore.

Chou and I went to his metal fabricating facility so he could show me that he had the people and the equipment to do the job. We went over how to cut the pieces of steel for each of the sculptures. I then went back to the Pickled Arts Centre so I could work on putting the polyurethane on the sculptures that were almost completed from my last visit. Four of us went off for lunch, John, Peter, an architect from Norway, Tracy and myself. Tong joined us halfway through lunch. The restaurant is located on a side street near the

arts center. If you did not know of this restaurant, there is no way that you could locate it or identify it. It seats approximately 20 people in the open room and there are two small rooms for private parties. The food was very good and lunch for five including tip was approximately \$3.50.

I was told that my large flag sculptures had been moved to another art complex, SAC, where I could finish them. I picked up the special polyurethane that Li Gang had stored for me and along with one of his helpers we biked to SAC, about two miles away. Since we could not locate the paintbrush that I previously used, we stopped at a local hardware store on the way. Rather than using a traditional brush I opted for two bamboo brushes. Basically the handle was various strips of bamboo glued together and the handle was the same length as the bristles. I thought that this type of brush would be easier to use for the large surfaces of my to 13 ft. by 5 ft. sculptures of the American flag, Chinese flag and appropriate calligraphy. When we got to Gang's studio at the SAC artist complex, which I previously described in China Diary 2, there was a group of young Chinese artists working on a large oil canvas of vines. They were doing this as background for an American painter, and then that American painter would add the figures. They were helpful in moving the large flags so I could apply the polyurethane on a flat surface to prevent drip marks. Li Gang's helper and I worked together as a team and put on two coats.

We then bicycled back to the Pickled Arts Centre and I went in to visit John's exhibit before the opening later that day. John's paintings are square and rectangular shapes of different colors, which are very susceptible to meditation and contemplation. They have a nice quiet way about them.

The art show was to begin shortly. After cleaning up and changing into clean clothes, I went down and looked at the various other art being exhibited at the show. There was an Argentinian photographer whose pictures were very strong but somehow disturbing. Also, Zhan Fangbai, a favorite of Li Gang's, had three large paintings. There was another artist, whose name I did not note, who used an almost erased out picture which was then painted over leaving an outline of the previously painted images, similar to what a beginning of a de Kooning painting must have looked like.

There were also two Chinese ink paintings on rice paper by Zhang Hao, one of which, "Paris," I liked. There were also two very interesting paintings by Mo Xiong. These reminded me of careful viewing of a reef, as the more you look the more you see.

There was also a Chinese rock and roll band. Their instrumentation was quite unique, an electric cello, three different types of electric guitars and a drummer. They were quite good and the viewers seemed to enjoy their music. Although the music was entertaining I felt that it clashed with John Sundqvist's quiet contemplative small geometric oil

paintings. Then approximately 40 of us went off for a celebration dinner sponsored by Li Gang at the same Beijing duck restaurant where we had dined the night before. After another excellent meal, I returned to the compound and went to sleep in my new quarters. I slept for 12 hours

Day 3

Breakfast was left over Peking duck and other portions of the prior nights feast. John joined us for breakfast and we discussed a recent TV film concerning the Japanese atrocities perpetrated on the Chinese. Li Gang and John both felt that the Germans had paid substantial reparations and apologized profusely for the conduct in World War II, while Japan by comparison had paid only nominal reparations and had not apologized appropriately. After breakfast I biked 21/2 miles to the SAC complex to put another coat of polyurethane on the two large flag sculptures. While I was waiting for the third coat to dry, I tried to contact Li Long Ling, who lived in the complex with her sculptor husband. Previously, I had noted a very large sculpture in their artists studio/home from the outside that looked like a 20 ft. high angry Chinese soldier. Since I did not have access to a phone I was hesitant to knock on their door.

I then biked back to the Pickled Arts Centre and spent some time meditating before John's paintings and viewing the paintings of Mo Xiong in more detail. I then met with Xiao Chang, a calligrapher who Gang thought would be good for me to work with, since Lao Dhong was apparently not available or could not be reached. We worked for approximately one-hour on the calligraphy for the office sculpture, and it was slow going as it was difficult to communicate to him the style and feeling that I wanted. I had the same initial experience with Lao Dhong. We decided to take a break and went off to the local restaurant where I had previously lunched with non-Chinese artists.

On the way Chang insisted that I follow him on a detour, which led to the room in which he lived and worked. He showed me some of his recent calligraphy paintings and through sign language I understood that the large table he used to do his calligraphy also served as his bed, living room, etc. There was one small window and an area for a hot plate. Obtaining a better understanding of his calligraphy was very helpful in completing this phase of the three sculptures I had started.

As we left Chang's residence/studio a number of young Chinese children started to follow me. They love to say and hear the sounds of them saying "hello." Each time I responded, they would say hello more frequently and louder. By the time we got to the restaurant there were approximately 10 children ranging in age from 2 to 5 following us chanting "hello." Even after we went into the restaurant, four of them watched us through the window next to the table where we were sitting and the open door way. I let Chang do

the ordering and we had much too much to eat. I insisted that he take the leftovers. After about 20 minutes, two of the children came inside and camped out next to our table just to get closer. Then, they seemed to want something and Chang chased them off. After dropping the leftovers off at his studio/residence, we then went back to the Pickled Arts Centre to work on completing the calligraphy. For some reason everything started to click and the calligraphy for all three new sculptures was done by 10:00. We then had some tea and decided to call it a night as he was exhausted from working on this project. I read a little and was off to sleep before 11:30.

Throughout my stay in Beijing the weather was very good; the mornings and evenings were brisk, ranging from 45 degrees to 55 degrees Fahrenheit but the days were sunny and the temperature went up to the high '70s. There were a few isolated rain showers.

Day 4

I still had not gone to the grocery store and during my trip over my traveling alarm clock fell apart. So I slept until approximately 11:00 and wandered down to the arts center. Li Gang offered me some cereal with yogurt, which I gladly accepted. I was told to wait for one of his secretaries to accompany me to the computer store so they could scan the images and prepare a disc for a sign maker to do the etching of the letters in the steel. When she finally showed up at 12:00 she said she had to have lunch first and then after lunch told me she had too much work. I made arrangements with Heying, Gang's wife, that I would go to the computer place on my own and if I had a problem, I could call her. I then biked off to the computer store that I had used on two previous occasions for this type of work.

I walked into the wrong computer store and through sign language they led me to a store that was 40 feet away. That was the right store as they greeted me as an old friend. Three different sets of calligraphy were seamlessly scanned, cleaned up, organized and laid out on Adobe Acrobat in just over an hour. Previously, it took us almost a full day to accomplish this. The store had saved the prior work and the sub folder containing my work was labeled "friend." That was a really good feeling. The only problem was that the equipment needed to make a disc was broken and they were not getting the replacement part until the next day. They told me that my disc would not be ready until 3:00 in the afternoon. I called Heying and she suggested that I take pictures with my digital camera and she would download the pictures on her computer to generate a disc that could possibly be used by the sign shop for the etching of the calligraphy. I took the pictures and then biked back to the arts center where they were downloaded into one of its computers and we printed out a disc. After that was done, I biked over to Gang's other studio at SAC to put on a fourth coat of polyurethane to the two very large sculptures and returned to the complex by 6:15.

On the way to leaving the compound for dinner Li Gang wanted to talk and we ended up eating leftovers for a light dinner. Chang stopped by to visit and wanted to paint a scroll as a way to say thank you for an enjoyable dinner and completion of our joint portion of the project. Gang picked out a Chinese poem about a soldier who was working up courage to do battle in the desert. Chang was not happy with his first three renditions, but he was happy with the fourth and presented it to me as a present. The calligraphy portion of the scroll is approximately eight feet long by two feet across and we left it hanging over the couch so it could dry. At about 10:00 I went to my room and read some of the new de Kooning biography before going off to sleep.

Day 5

I was up early to try to coordinate a side trip to Shenyang. Four phone calls and five e-mails made me realize that I was going to focus on completing my work on the new sculptures and making some marketing contacts in Beijing. That morning Gang and I discussed the hanging of one of my large combination flag sculptures, "A Journey," on the outside of the Pickled Arts Centre until it was sold. I thought it was a good idea and the sculpture was delivered to the arts center that morning. We then decided where and how it was to be placed.

Then Gang, Peter and I decided to have lunch at a local dumpling restaurant. Again, the food was excellent. Although Peter is an architect, he had never worked at an architecture firm, but had been able to get isolated jobs on his own. He was in Beijing for three months to do the architectural work for a Norwegian sculptor who was having a major show later this year. He been very sick the prior week and he was just starting to feel better.

Upon my return from lunch, the 4 small sculptures that I had worked on in my prior visit were at the arts center. However, each needed to be polyurethaned so I made arrangements with Gang's staff to transport the sculptures and my bike over to the SAC complex. After putting on an initial coat, I then went back to the computer store to pick up the discs, since the disc prepared from the photographs was too imprecise for the etching of the calligraphy. After I got there the principal of the computer store decided to repair the computer so that it could create data discs. Gang then contacted the fabricator who came over and picked up the discs.

I then went to dinner with two employees of the American Chamber of Commerce for China. Before dinner we toured the arts center complex and spent some time in the gallery. They were very impressed with the facility and thought it would be a great place for private parties. Both Martha Vinson and Jim had been recently transferred to Beijing from other American Chamber of Commerce offices, but were totally unfamiliar with the Bei Gao section or the thriving artist community. I took them to the same Beijing duck house,

because I knew the food was reasonable and very good. Jim collects antique maps of Asia and explained that in Taiwan this is a very hot area. After graduating college in Canada he taught at a Korean school. He then became employed by the European Chamber of Commerce and transferred to the American Chamber of Commerce and had been stationed in various parts of the world. Martha had previously been in charge of the American Chamber of Commerce in Indonesia. However, her fiancé lived in Beijing. Since they wanted to get married she resigned her position in Indonesia and was offered a position in Beijing which she gladly accepted.

Mrs. Vinson explained the role of AmCham China and had an idea. Would I lend one of my Chinese flag sculptures to AmCham in exchange for an article about me in their monthly magazine? She felt it would expose the sculptures to American businesses with offices in China and the theme was consistent with AmCham-China's mission. She would make arrangements to pick up the sculpture and have it installed with the understanding that there would be no charge for the rental, but if I sold the sculpture then they would release it. I thought it was a good idea and if it was moved while I was in China I agreed to supervise the move and work with their maintenance people on how to install and maintain the sculpture. She said that they would be there the next day to pick it up and let me know when the truck was arriving at the Pickled Arts Centre, so I could direct them to the other Li Gang studio where the sculpture was stored. They then dropped me off at the arts center. I was ready to go to sleep after a long day.

Day 6

I still had no working refrigerator and did not want to impose any more on Li Gang's family. After a cup of tea, I decided to walk to the main street to have a late breakfast at the dumpling house. I met John on the way out and we walked together down to the main street where he caught a cab to meet a friend to do some sightseeing. Unfortunately, the dumpling place was not going to be open for another hour so I decided to walk back to the complex. I ran into a young Australian painter and his wife, who are also going into town for some sightseeing. After visiting for about 15 minutes, I went back to the compound and got on my bike so that I could put on more coats of polyurethane at the sculptures located at the SAC studio of Gang.

I called Li Long Ling and she came over to look at what I was doing and to invite me for lunch. Her studio/living quarters were also in the SAC complex. She then showed me the studio and upon closer look, what I thought was a 20 foot sculpture of a fierce Chinese soldier, was really a sculpture of a sad migrant construction worker. Her husband apparently had done a whole series of smaller bronze sculptures on this theme. He was represented by the Red Gate Gallery. Ling considers herself a designer. She uses ordinary materials such as tires, threaded pipe and plumbing fixtures to construct furniture, and was

branching out into more decorative sculptures. Her latest line of sculptures were pieces of different types of threaded pipe, with each piece the same diameter, constructed to look like a man or a woman. The man had a faucet and when you unscrewed the faucet, you then had a woman. Each of the other parts of these sculptures was movable to a limited degree. There were a series of candelabras made with the same threaded pipe. She also used two tires laid flat on the ground and then stitched fabric over the top tire to form chairs. At the Pickled Arts Centre she had designed a chair using threaded pipe and then stretched a piece of leather for the seating area. It was made for someone who is Chinese.

Her parents were visiting for a month, since her husband was doing some postgraduate work in Amsterdam. Her aunt was going to do the cooking, and one of her friends, who I had met at one of the Beijing duck house feasts, came over to join us for lunch. Long Ling did not like tall or heavy furniture so she'd come up with a unique solution for the dining table. It was on the second floor immediately above the staircase. The legs were only 14 inches high but she cut a hole in the floor so that you would sit Japanese style with your feet going in the hole in the floor to dangle over the staircase. Because her mother had arthritis, she sat in a regular chair away from the table. Once you got used to the sensation, it was a very comfortable way to eat. Lunch was stuffed buns and dumplings. The stuffing was various vegetables with garlic and seasonings, which were very good. A glass of beer was an excellent accompaniment. It was decided that we would talk in English because she and her friend wanted to practice English. Neither of her parents nor her aunt spoke English, but we managed to communicate.

I got a call from Gang that Martha Vinson was over at the Pickled Arts Centre to pick up the sculpture. So after lunch I biked back to the arts center. Gang offered the use of his truck and employees to help move the sculpture. It took us the rest of the afternoon to transport the sculpture to the AmCham office, including almost an hour and a half to come back because of the incredible traffic of downtown Beijing. They were going to install it the next day.

When I got back to the Pickled Arts Centre, Li Gang invited me for a drink with a Norwegian architect, his wife and a Norwegian expatriate who had decided to retire to Beijing with her nine-year-old son and Alex, a Scottish art history teacher who was spending the night on the cot that I had previously used, before flying back to Scotland the next day. He'd been traveling for two years throughout the world and was anxious to get back to his family. He was a very interesting person and had a lot of good ideas. After some tea, Gang decided to drive us to a special tea house, which happened to be owned by an American, not far from the Beijing duck house. The place was unmarked and down an unmarked road. The building was beautiful and was magnificently landscaped. They gave us menus that looked like New York City menus with New York City prices, but we were there to drink beer. The cost of beer was what he would spend at a fancy New York restaurant,

but it was a beautiful place to drink. After a discussion of art and architecture, the Norwegian architect told me that America got what it deserved when the World Trade Center was destroyed. Since I did not know the relationship of this architect to Gang, I attempted to defuse the situation. Shortly thereafter it was time to drop off the Norwegian couple and proceed back to the arts complex.

Upon my return there was a group of artists talking outside. There was the Australian painter and his wife, Mick, an Irish composer/artist, and his wife Irene, a food artist, Brian Wallace, the proprietor of the Red Gate Gallery, John Sundvquist and his Australian friend who is writing a book on the sacred places in China. Tracy and a few other artists joined us for dinner and we again went off to, surprise, the same Beijing duck house that I had dined at three out of the five previous evenings. But it was the company that counted.

I sat next to Mick who described how he was combining sound and art to create something unique and was to give a performance of his art in Japan the following week. He discussed why he believed that John Cage was such an important composer. Mick also described the 10 day train trip he and Irene had taken from Moscow, through Siberia, then through Manchuria and finally arriving at Beijing. The best part of the trip was the silence of the Gobi Desert as the train chugged through the ever so quiet and bleak landscape. He also noted that Russia was like a desert wasteland and that the moment the train came into China everything seemed to come alive. He compared the silence in music to the open spaces in painting and sculpture. We then discussed ways of creating space in our art and life in general. For example, on my walk I noticed many different sounds but did not hear the sound of any birds, notwithstanding the numerous trees in the area. Although there are lots of dogs it seemed that the dogs hardly ever barked. Irene then described some of her food sculptures and that Mick, who is a chemist at the university, sometimes worked with her on these projects. They had managed to use their ideas for art projects to get enough grant money to fund three months of adventure. After we completed dinner we then went over to join Letitia, the owner of Imagine Gallery, and the two French artist agents who were just starting their dinner. We then made arrangements to have a local taxi to take us back to the arts center, where we all went our separate ways as everyone was tired.

Day 7

The morning was spent installing my "A Journey" sculpture on the outside wall of the Pickled Arts Centre. Although I agreed to pay for a special hoist to lift the sculpture, which weighs approximately 300 pounds and is 13 feet by 5 feet with a depth of approximately 2 feet, Gang and his helpers believed that they could lift the sculpture using a pulley and manpower. An hour and a half later the sculpture was installed and secured. We then took some photographs to commemorate "the event." Everyone seemed to like the

way the sculpture looked and worked in the context of the entrance to the gallery.

We then went to the sign maker to pick up the etched steel to take to the fabricator for bending the largest sculpture, which was going to be another flag waving in the wind, and to go over the details for completing all three sculptures. Tracy decided to come along for the ride, since I was leaving the next day. I decided to make more detailed drawings so that there would be less of a chance of a misunderstanding. Although they had a limited staff of approximately six employees, by utilizing a jig and careful welding of support joints they were able to easily bend the flag to a shape that I was satisfied with. I felt much more confident after this visit that this fabricator would be able to properly complete the sculptures. By then it was 2:00 and Gang, Tracy and I were very hungry. We went to the dumpling house where the three of us and Gang's driver, who is the same person who worked with me on the first coats of polyurethane, had lunch. Because I was told that this was a fairly typical lunch I will describe the menu briefly. We started with fermented tofu, seasoned with peanuts and chile, which was immediately supplemented by a type of barbecued beef off the bone, but similar to taste and texture to barbecued beef ribs, Hong Kong style beef noodle soup and three types of fried dumplings. We drank the local beer supplemented with a shot of a local rice liquor. The thought of getting back on my bike to put on the final coats of polyurethane on the four small sculptures was daunting.

Because that I had not heard from Martha Vinson on any problems concerning the installation of the sculpture and to thank her for the enthusiasm, I decided to give her call. She advised me that one or two of the Chinese employees had complained to the head of the American Chamber of Commerce office in Beijing upon his return for business trip. Without knowing anything about the sculptures they were upset that there was writing on the Chinese flag. Because one of the key missions of the American Chamber of Commerce in a foreign country is to better relations between American businesses and the local community, the head of the American Chamber of Commerce office in Beijing felt the better course of action was to return the sculpture. This was so even though almost all of the comments she was aware of were very favorable. This sculpture had been on display for one month at the Pickled Arts Center and there were there no complaints. According to Li Gang many of the Chinese viewers, especially those that understood the sculpture and how it came about, really liked it. I advised Mrs. Vinson that I understood and I did not want to get her or Jim in any difficulty. Subsequently, on my return to New York City, I came up with a proposed solution of doing a Chinese flag without any calligraphy, and having the calligraphy on a separate sculpture that would be located over the corner of the flag or separate from the flag. It could be either on an adjacent wall or to the side or above the flag sculpture. I also wanted to redo the calligraphy on "True gold fears not the test of fire." Since it is impractical to do it on the original sculpture, this means that I will have to create a new waving flag in any event. I also feel confident that I can do this from the United States thanks to my working relationships with the Chinese artisans and workers and the use

of computer photography and email.

However, art must be served so upon our return to the arts center, I got back on my bike and peddled over to Gang's SAC studio to put on a final coat. The artists were still working on the background for the American painter were leaving as I was arriving. They asked me to lock up and wanted to know if I was going to be there over the weekend. I explained that I was going back to America and we talked for a few minutes. I again thanked them for their help and we said our goodbyes. Upon my return to the arts center Gang said he wanted take me for a farewell dinner. However, since we had eaten such a large and late lunch I was not hungry so we compromised by having a snack at his place. Also Chang was going stop by to drop off the completed scroll since he had previously taken the dried calligraphy back to his studio/home to make into a scroll.

In the interim, I decided to go back to the studio of the SAC facility to pick up the 4 small completed sculptures because I wanted to take one of them home, give one to Gang as previously promised, and put the other two in a safe place for storage. Gang's Uncle and I took the van over to the SAC studio. Unfortunately, none of the keys worked. Gang's uncle suggested that we climbed through the second-story window and drop-down into a totally dark studio with no lights and then scale the inside to bring the sculptures out through the window. Henry does not speak English and it took me about 20 minutes to persuade him that this was not a good idea, and that we would either get the sculptures early tomorrow morning or Gang would put all four in storage until we figured out how to ship one of them back to the states. Upon my return to the arts center Gang gave me the completed scroll and explained that since they did not know when I was coming back, Chang did not hang around. Gang said he would extend my appreciation and thanks to Chang. We then looked at the scroll and I asked Gang if he could send me a translation of the poem.

Day 8

I got up earlier than normal so that I could make arrangements to pick up the 4 small finished sculptures at the SAC studio and was told by Gang that they were already on their way to us. He picked out the "Harmony" sculpture that he wanted. I took the other one, which we packed in bubble wrap, with me to the airport. Gang graciously arranged for his uncle to take me the airport.

In retrospect that this was another fantastic experience. I felt much more comfortable and was able to do a lot more on my own. This trip only reinforced my belief that the Chinese artisans and persons servicing their needs are industrious, ingenious and in almost all instances a pleasure to work with. I felt that I accomplished more in one week than I could accomplish in six months in New York. I know part of this is due to the fact that I could concentrate solely on art without any distractions. A major part of this is also

due to the fact that everything needed to complete large and complex metal sculptures is located within a very small area, and that there were skilled people ready, willing and able to work with me to complete what I consider to be a joint project. Of course, without the help and contacts of Li Gang none of this would have been possible. His willingness to work with visiting artists, often sacrificing time for his work and his family, is something that I really appreciate. I look forward to returning to China to work on more sculptures at a truly unique space with the chance to interact with artists from all over the world.