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**PHIL YEH, GODFATHER OF THE AMERICAN GRAPHIC NOVEL,
WILL APPEAR AT A CLOSING RECEPTION
ON SATURDAY JULY 12 IN LONG BEACH GALLERY**

Phil Yeh, often called the *Godfather of the modern American Graphic Novel*, will make a second appearance at Artistic Edge Gallery in Long Beach for a closing reception on July 12, 2008. The reception will be from 5 pm to 7 pm at 2105 East Fourth Street (corner St Louis) in Long Beach. Call (562) 433-5169 for additional information. Yeh's show runs through July 19, 2008. It features new fine art prints from a new book, *Steve the Dog & The Winged Tiger* by Geoff Bevington, Lieve Jerger and Yeh.



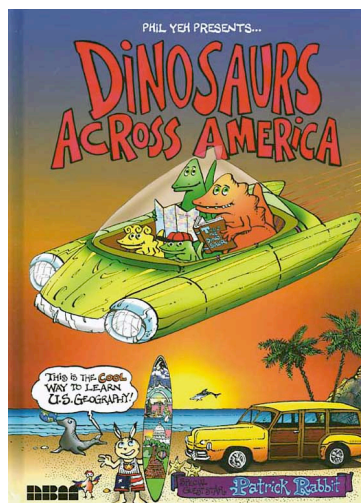
The opening of this show on May 31 was a huge success and this special closing reception is to thank the city of Long Beach for the support in Yeh's early career in the 1970s. Two gallery shows are planned for the month of August in Chicago, Yeh's birthplace. European exhibitions will follow in 2009 and then Yeh returns to China in 2010 to showcase the new work from his series *The Winged Tiger in China*.

Bevington, Yeh's longtime partner in Chicago, made a rare West Coast appearance at this opening. Bevington is the creator of Steve the Dog who is starring in a wonderful new illustrated book called *Steve the Dog and the Winged Tiger* co-written by Yeh. Copper lace artist Jerger has expertly colored the images from this new book and other works. Bevington's company,

The Checkered Giant, a division of Custom Direct, Inc. in Roselle, Illinois, has launched a new fine art print series of these images for the gallery and museum market. This Long Beach show is their first art gallery debut in the United States.

Many artists and old friends attended the May 31 opening including Tony Hawk artist Matt Lorentz, *Groo* colorist and film designer Tom Luth and Phil Ortiz, who worked on the animated *Simpsons* TV show in the beginning and has won several Emmy awards for his work. He has also drawn the *Simpsons* comic books for many years for Bongo Publishing. Ortiz and Yeh have been on a "Two Phils" tour for the last few years with appearances all over the world including Europe and China. They were special guest artists at the 3rd annual China Cartoon and Animation Festival held last spring in Yeh's father's hometown of Hangzhou, China.

Long Beach was home to Yeh's gallery in the 1970s and also where he founded his art newspaper *Uncle Jam* in 1973. This city was also the home of the modern American graphic novel, the term coined by former Long Beach bookstore owner and publisher Richard Kyle in the 1960s. Kyle published one of the very first American graphic novels in 1976 followed a few months later by Yeh's *Even Cazco Gets the Blues* in the spring of 1977. Cazco first appeared as a daily comic strip at Cal State University Long Beach in the fall of 1972. Yeh's efforts through his newspaper and his endless road trips on behalf of the comic book art form has resulted in a general acceptance of the graphic novel in the United States today. In the fall of 2007, NBM publishing in New York City released a new hardcover version of Yeh's best selling *Dinosaurs Across America* graphic novel, colored by Yeh's longtime partner Lieve Jerger. *Dinosaurs Across America* has recently been named one of the best 25 graphic novels by *School Library Journal* in their March, 2008 cover story. Yeh will be signing copies of this book and some of his more than 80 published books at the gallery closing reception on July 12 in Long Beach.



Yeh, who founded Cartoonists Across America & The World in 1985, is on the 23rd year of his 25-year world tour. The band of artists have painted more than 1700 murals throughout the world. These murals are often painted with the help of students of all ages. He is planning to return to California in September to visit schools and communities throughout the fall.

Artistic Edge gallery will also introduce a brand new limited edition fine art print from Yeh's new cartoon series being published in China by *Little Star* magazine. The fine art print was colored by Lieve and is Yeh's version of modern Shanghai, one of the most stunning skylines on the planet. Yeh first visited Shanghai in 1979, when his father was finally able to return home after coming to the United States to go to college in 1948. Over the years, he has visited his father's country and recorded his travels in both articles for newspapers and also in his many graphic novels. Yeh's mother is of European heritage from the Chicago area and he spent the first six years of his life in Wayne, New Jersey before moving to Los Angeles in the sixties. His work reflects his diverse background and life experiences and features characters from all over the world.

In February 2007, Yeh was invited to Beijing to judge an environmental art contest that *Little Star* magazine had sponsored. *Little Star* is an English language magazine that reaches students in many of the International Schools in China. The magazine asked Yeh if he would create a brand new four-page color comic strip called *The Winged Tiger in China*, based on one of Yeh's most popular characters. The new feature has run for the last year and will be gathered in a full color book for publication in 2009.



The "Two Phils" Tour also includes a new second guitar in their custom guitar series. These guitars are handmade by Patrick Bubien, the owner of *Guitarification* in Fallbrook, California. Many noted artists and writers have signed the first guitar, including Ray Bradbury, Alan Alda, Lynn Johnston, Kevin Eastman, Alex Niño, Greg Evans, Sergio Aragonés,

Simon Bisley, Patrick McDonnell, Bill Amend, James Gurney, and many others. This new guitar was recently signed by some of the comic book industry's greatest artists in New York City this past April, including Jerry Robinson, creator of *The Joker*, Carmine Infantino, Jim Steranko, Peter Laird, Nick Cardy and many others. At the BookExpoAmerica convention this past May, Yeh had the guitar signed by more notable artists from all fields including Academy award nominated graphic novelist Max Alan Collins, *Bone* creator Jeff Smith, Cheech Marin, and Tommy Chong. Yeh's hope is to have a series of these guitars covered with original artwork and on display in museums around the world in order to have more attention paid to writers and artists in our society.

"After my five month art show in the Cleveland Museum of Natural History in 2006, I was determined to get a display in the Cleveland Rock and Roll Hall of Fame one day. I like to dream big! It's the only way that we have continued to keep this tour on the road all these years," said Yeh from his Running Springs, California studio.

Yeh's latest comic book is called *Dinosaurs Across Route 66* and he has been touring much of the old mother road since last fall. A second printing of this Route 66 comic will appear in the summer. In the fall, Yeh will release a brand new book called *Dinosaurs Across California*. He hopes to have more books about each state done in the next decade. Yeh continues to speak in schools, libraries and communities about literacy and the arts. His talks are for all ages and designed to get people to read more and be less attached to their electronics. To see a bit more of his tour go to www.wingedtiger.com. To book Yeh in your community for speaking engagements and mural events, anywhere in the world, please contact Linda Adams at lindaadams35@yahoo.com

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