



# China Oxford Scholarship Fund

## China Scholarship Council Honours Outstanding COSF Scholars

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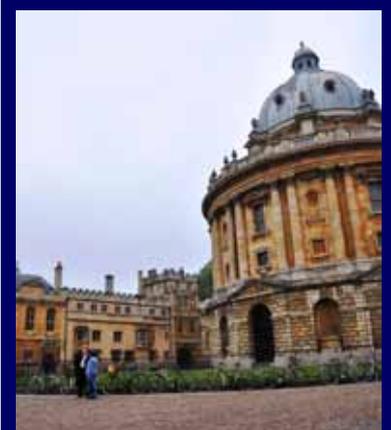


Trustee Xiaodi Bell, Minister Councillor Shen Yang, Wu Yimin, Peng Chun & Trustee Dyan Sterling

### *Inside this Issue:*

<i>Outstanding Students</i>	1
<i>Int'l Chairman's Letter</i>	2
<i>Russia and Rasputin</i>	3
<i>South Pole Talk</i>	4
<i>More on the China Awards</i>	5-6
<i>Oxford Playhouse</i>	7
<i>London New Year Event</i>	8-9
<i>Make a Donation</i>	10

The Chinese Government's China Scholarship Council has awarded two COSF Scholars its Outstanding Students Abroad award. The prestigious honours were given to COSF Scholars Wu Yimin who was a Wolfson China Scholar in 2008 and 2009 and COSF Scholar Peng Chun who was a Johnny Hon China Scholar in 2008. Yimin is reading for a DPhil in Materials and is at St Anne's College while Chun is reading for a DPhil in Politics and Law and is at Worcester College. Yimin and Chun are two of the current 246 Chinese graduate research students studying at the University of Oxford. China's Ambassador to Britain, H.E. Liu Xiaoming, and visiting Chinese Government State Councillor Madam Liu Yandong presided over the awards ceremony in London for Yimin, Chun and the 21 other awards recipients studying at various universities throughout the United Kingdom. The Outstanding Students Abroad award was established in 2003 and recognises academic excellence amongst privately-funded research graduate students studying outside of China. For more on Yimin and Chun's research work and comments from their supervisors at Oxford University, please go to page 5 and 6.



Did you know that 420 postgraduate students from China are attending the University of Oxford?

# International Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends,

- I would like to offer my hearty congratulations to Peng Chun and Wu Yimin for their Outstanding Students Abroad Awards. Furthermore, I would like to thank all those who have generously enabled every one of our excellent scholars to be funded and the COSF Awards Panel which has carefully chosen them.
- It is exciting to know COSF's Speaker's Programme continues to gain support. In March, it was an honour to have two renowned speakers participating in the programme. In Hong Kong, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and historian Prof. Edward Larson was a guest speaker on the South Pole and the University of Oxford's Prof. Mike Nicholson was a guest speaker on Russian history and culture. I look forward to more esteemed guest speakers headlining this programme in China and the United Kingdom.
- I am encouraged by the feedback from Scholars who have been able to enjoy COSF-related social events made available to them during their time in the United Kingdom. I am grateful to supporters, benefactors and the Trustees who have kindly hosted informal gatherings for the students in Oxford and London.
- As COSF celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, I hope that we will be able to raise much-needed funding to help cover our modest operational costs in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom. If you would like to make a gift, please go to our website or page 10 in this newsletter for information on how to make a donation. We welcome your support.

Timothy Beardson  
International Chairman



## COSF *Speaker's Event*



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One of the attractions of the Fund's Speaker's Programme is that it offers guests to enjoy talks that cover diverse topics. Last month's event which focussed on Russia's political history is testament of this. On March 14th, Prof. Mike Nicholson of University College at Oxford headlined a luncheon talk on the extraordinary events involving the assassination of the Russian orthodox Christian Grigori Yefimovich Rasputin in St Petersburg in 1916. Rasputin was viewed by many as a mystic and was believed to have had great influence over the Russian royal family. His death has often been attributed to Prince Felix Yusupoff who was thought to be a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed. Prince Felix read English and Forestry at Oxford University from 1909 to 1913. In Hong Kong accompanied by his wife Barbara, Prof. Nicholson expanded on the riveting events connected with Rasputin and his demise. Prof. Nicholson is a leading authority on modern Russian culture. He has also written extensively about Russian dissident Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and about 'gulag literature' in general. He takes a special interest in the culture of the Russian diaspora in China as well. The luncheon took place at The Hong Kong Club's Harcourt Room. The guests included Clair Beardson, Professor James Mirrlees, James Filmer-Wilson, Mary Bloch, Jacqueline Petts, Gabrielle Churchouse and Lucy Fennell. (Far left: Prof. Mike Nicholson)



## COSF Speaker's Event



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Timothy Beardson & Prof. Edward Larson



COSF supporters in Hong Kong were able to enjoy learning about the challenges faced by those exploring the South Pole from a renowned expert on the topic. On March 16th, Prof. Edward Larson was the guest speaker for the Speaker's Programme which was held in the Windsor Room at The Hong Kong Club in Central.

While he is a professor of history and law, he is also an eminent speaker on polar topics such as the South Pole explorations undertaken by early 20th century explorers Robert Scott and Ernest Shackleton. Prof. Larson has also written numerous books such as *An Empire of Ice*. His titles also cover political and scientific areas. He won the Pulitzer Prize for *Summer for the Gods* which details the debate about evolution that raged in the 19th century in the United States.

On hand to enjoy Prof. Larson's talk were the Fund's International Chairman, Timothy Beardson and his wife Clair, Robert Herries, Gordon Jones, Prof. Paul Tam, Andrew Lo and Nicholas Sallnow-Smith. The guests were able to exchange their views on the talk and enjoy an informal question and answer chat with Prof. Larson. If you would like to attend or know more about our Speaker's Programme in Hong Kong, please contact us at [info@chinaoxford.org](mailto:info@chinaoxford.org) for more information.

## Outstanding Students Abroad Awards



H.E. Liu Xiaoming & State Councillor Madam Liu Yandong with the Outstanding Students Abroad award recipients

The China Oxford Scholarship Fund is delighted to inform its supporters that two of its Scholars have won the Outstanding Students Abroad award. The Fund is proud that both Wu Yimin and Peng Chun's graduate research work has been recognised by the Chinese Government's China Scholarship Council.

"This award is great recognition for Wu Yimin and reflects his determination and strong work ethic shown during his DPhil studies in Oxford. He has undertaken challenging experiments on the synthetic growth of graphene and achieved excellent results that will have an impact at the international level. Yimin is highly ambitious and has a passion for academic research and I am sure this award will help him develop a strong network back in China and accelerate his career progression internationally," said Dr Jamie Warner, Yimin's supervisor at Oxford University.

Yimin is currently a fourth year DPhil student and hopes his research work will play a major and significant role in the development of and future in sustainable energy and environmental protection.

"My research is focused on graphene, which is considered as one of the most promising candidates to replace the silicon as the revolutionary material for industry. The study will guide the industry to make large area single crystal graphene film for lots of applications, such as field effect transistors, solar cells, biosensors, filter for exhaust gases and so on. It would have a great impact in the areas such as sustainable energy, electronic industry and environmental protection for the future," explained Yimin. Meanwhile, fellow Scholar (continued)

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## Outstanding Students Abroad Awards

(continued) Peng Chun's research focuses on one of the biggest challenges that China continues to face in the 21st century: the appropriation of land and its legal implications. "My research project combines a historical and contextual analysis of the law and politics concerning compulsory land acquisition power in rural China. It examines how the compulsory land acquisition power has been conceptualized, conducted and contested in China over the past century and tries to demonstrate the tension and contradiction within the ongoing legal reform of such power," explained Chun.

His academic and social work have certainly made an impression on his supervisors such as Dr Patricia Thornton who is a professor in the Department of Politics and International Relations at Oxford. "I am absolutely thrilled and delighted to hear that my student, Peng Chun, was awarded the 2011 China Scholarship Council Outstanding Students Abroad award. When Chun initially came to discuss his work with me in 2010, I quickly saw that he was a student of not only extraordinary intellectual breadth and accomplishment, but also of vision: he is, without question, a credit to the fine legal training he received at Peking University, and to the wonderful teachers and scholars there. His research here at Oxford continues in that vein, and I would like to take this opportunity to say what an honour and pleasure it has been to work with him. I believe I must have learned at least as much from him as he has from me, if not more; and as his work as President of the Oxford Chinese Students and Scholars Association has already demonstrated, his contributions to the greater Chinese community here in Oxford have likewise been extraordinary," said Dr Thornton.

The China Scholarship Council also awarded a cash prize of \$6,000 USD to each winner. "I would like to take this opportunity to thank the China Scholarship Council for not only recognising Peng Chun with an honour that he richly deserves, but also its role in continuing to support Oxford's wonderful Chinese students and scholars to bring their important work to fruition," Dr Thornton added.

"It is definitely a recognition which along with the COSF award I will be proud of for life. I have been inspired and encouraged by the generous support for young scholars from both the governmental and the social sectors. It constantly reminds me that there is a cause bigger than myself to serve," said Chun. In 2008, COSF Scholar Wu Guiyang (Laura) also won an Outstanding Students Abroad award. She earned her DPhil in Economics and was at Brasenose College.

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## Oxford Playhouse Evening



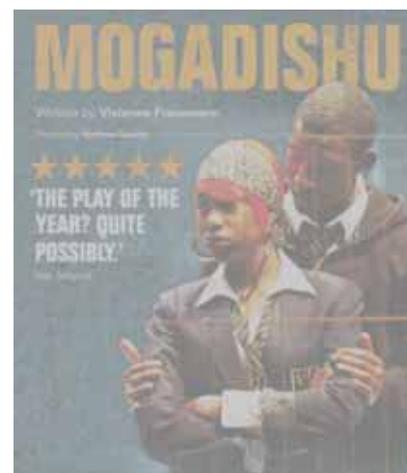
L-R Wan Xiao, Gong Wei, Felicity Tholstrup, Araceli Keelan, Jens Tholstrup, Tao Yu, Deng Feifei (Sophie), Wu Yimin and Vicky Ip

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A number of Scholars were able to enjoy an evening out at the Oxford Playhouse at the invitation of Araceli Keelan. On February 15th, the group attended the highly-acclaimed award-winning play *Mogadishu*. The work is the debut play by former teacher Vivienne Franzmann and is about a white teacher who tries to protect her black student from expulsion after the student has a scuffle with her. The incident sparks a catalogue of lies by the student who tries to cover up his actions.

“The play was very interesting though the ending was a bit heavy and sad. It really made me reflect on important social issues such as the boundary and limitations of social welfare,” said Scholar Tao Yu.

Joining the Scholars and Araceli were Araceli’s son, Geordie, and COSF supporters Felicity and Jens Tholstrup. “This nice event once again makes me feel proud that I was a China Oxford Scholar,” added Yu. Araceli has been hosting informal events for COSF Scholars since the Brian Keelan Award was established in 2007. Students have been able to enjoy afternoon tea gatherings and theatre events in Oxford as well as informal gatherings in London. The Trustees appreciate the efforts by friends and supporters for making this possible for the COSF Scholars.



## London Year of the Dragon Evening



Scholars and guests had the opportunity to enjoy a belated Chinese New Year gathering in London on March 10th. The Year of the Dragon informal celebration took place at the home of UK Trustee Xiaodi Bell. Xiaodi and her husband Nicholas organised a musical recital performed by the acclaimed Chinese musician Yao Yi as well as arranging for authentic and traditional home-cooked Chinese dishes for the guests.

The Scholars who attended the evening gathering were Deng Feifei (Sophie), Xu Chu (Sabrina), Xi Jiahe (Robert), Wu Yimin, Zhan Wang, Wu Boshen (Anthony), Jiang Xueyuan (Nathan), Yan, Fei and Ma Xiao (Hana). The students were able to meet other guests who included Rosie Grant, Henry Church, Sean Xu and his wife Kiki, David Buckley and Araceli Keelan of the Brian Keelan Award.

This is the second time Xiaodi has arranged for Scholars to visit her home in London for a Chinese meal. This time they were able to meet other university students studying in the United Kingdom. A great time was had by all and the Fund thanks Xiaodi and Nicholas for providing again such a warm welcome to our Scholars. You can view Yao Yi's piano recital on COSF's YouTube channel called *China Oxford Videos*.

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# London Year of the Dragon Pictorial



Musician Yao Yi providing guests with background information about her recital.



Guests and Scholars enjoy a brief break during the piano recital.



Scholars Yan Fei and Wu Boshen (Anthony)



Guests queue to enjoy the home-cooked Chinese dishes on offer.



Deng Feifei (Sophie), Yan Fei, Xiaodi Bell, Kiki & Sean Xu, Xu Chu (Sabrina) & Xi Jiahe (Robert)



Wu Boshen (Anthony) and Yao Yi

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