

## **Professor Siu-hung Lau Lectures on “*Ci* Poetry in the Life of Su Dongpo”**

On October 12, 2013, the National Central Library (NCL) and the San Francisco Public Library jointly collaborated in presenting a lecture on Su Dongpo as part of the Taiwan Lectures on Chinese Studies series and in conjunction with the Antiquarian Book Exhibition “A Genius of All Ages: Su Dongpo.” The event was jointly sponsored by the National Taiwan University Alumni Association of Northern California, the Northern California chapter of the Chinese-American Librarians Association, and the Chinese Literature & Art Association in America.

For this Taiwan Lectures on Chinese Studies presentation held in the Latino Community Room of the San Francisco Main Library Professor Lau Siu-hung was invited to talk on “*Ci* Poetry in the Life of Su Dongpo.” His speech was introduced by NCL Director General Tseng Shu-hsien and Deputy Director Chiang-Hua Tsai of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in San Francisco also delivered some remarks. Professor Lau received his doctorate in Chinese Literature from National Taiwan University’s Department of Chinese Literature. His research specialties include *Ci* poetry, Song-era literature, and *Shi* poetry. He has authored several books, including *Between Reading and Writing—Commentaries on Ci Poetry*, and *New Theories of Genre and Historical Perspectives on Ci Poetry*, and an anthology of *Shi* Poetry, *Outside Light Years*.

Professor Lau’s lecture matched the life of Su Dongpo with an exegesis of Su’s representative *Ci* poems from different eras, such as “To the tune of ‘Of Jinling,’” memorializing his deceased first wife, “Remembering Chibi, to the tune of Nian Nu Jiao” lamenting that he was certain to die before fulfilling his ambitions, and the line, “Now that there’s no rain and no shine too” from the poem, “Calming the Wind and Waves” reflecting the torrent of Su Dongpo’s feelings amidst all the reversals of his life. It is hoped that the emotional content of these *Ci* poems leads everyone to understand Su

Dongpo's spiritual world: how does one amidst the final parting of death cherish connubial, sibling and fraternal sentiment? And how amidst the travails and tribulations of life maintain passion and belief in life?

The splendid lecture and exhibition attracted over 150 members of the public. After the lecture, the San Francisco Public Library arranged a prize for members of the audience giving the correct answer. The winner received complimentary copies of two NCL publications *A Genius of All Ages: Su Dongpo* and *Life, A Walk through Misty Rain with Straw Hat*. This resulted in ardent emulousness among members of the audience to reply and reflected everyone's avid interest in Su Dongpo, as well as affection for traditional Chinese culture among member of the overseas public.



National Central Library Director General Tseng Shu-hsien speaks at the event



Deputy Director Chiang-Hua Tsai of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in San Francisco delivers remarks



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Audience members enthusiastically seek to answer a question after the lecture in order to win a prize