

## **MEDIA ADVISORY | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Unique Year of the Water Snake Celebration aboard Historic Sailing Ship *Balclutha***

San Francisco – February 19, 2013 – Chinese Whispers in partnership with the San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park will present “[Transformations and Renewals](#),” a fun, informative and inventive celebration of the lunar year of the Water Snake on Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> aboard the 19<sup>th</sup> century sailing ship *Balclutha* at Hyde Street Pier.

**What:** In honor of the year of the Water Snake, which symbolizes transformation, this unique Lunar New Year event will present an afternoon of poetry and multimedia storytelling that celebrate the spirit of transformation and resilience in Chinese pioneer communities. Audience members will participate in a “Chinese whispers” a.k.a. “Telephone” game, to enact the way that history gets transformed as it is passed down through time. They will also have the opportunity to take a self-guided tour of the “Chinatown” section of the *Balclutha*, which re-creates historical Chinese maritime cannery workers’ living quarters.

**Who:** Noted San Francisco poet Genny Lim, co-author of “Island: Poetry,” will read poems on the theme of transformation, and community proxy storytellers will bring to life family memories passed down through generations in the Sierra Nevada foothills and the Bay Area. The event will also include a presentation by SFMNHP Exhibits Curator Richard Everett on the little-known history of the Chinese maritime cannery workers on ships such as the *Balclutha*, as seen through the eyes of journalist Max Stern who shipped out “incognito” with the cannery hands.

**When:** Saturday, Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

**Where:** Aboard sailing ship *Balclutha* at Hyde Street Pier, San Francisco, in the enclosed Shelterdeck, Accessible. \$5 Park Historic Vessels admission.

**Why:** This multimedia storytelling event on a historic ship presents an exciting alternative to traditional Chinese New Year celebrations, with a fun twist on the Year of the Water Snake. The enjoyable and informative program provides a new perspective on the transformation of the historically marginalized Chinese immigrants into a vibrant community today in the Bay Area, and brings community voices to share family stories and little known histories.

[Chinese Whispers](#) is a San Francisco nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing to light the overlooked history of the Chinese who helped build the Transcontinental Railroad, mines, and settlements of the American West, through an innovative program of research, community storytelling, and cross-cultural public engagement. The project was created by Project and Artistic Director [Rene Yung](#). To learn more about [Chinese Whispers](#) please visit <http://chinese-whispers.org/>

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park includes a fleet of historic ships, the Maritime Museum, a Visitor Center, the Aquatic Park Historic District, and a maritime library. Built in 1886 as a cargo ship, the *Balclutha* is one of the last tall ships still floating in the world, and joined the salmon fishing trade in 1902. The park offers both regular programs and special events. For more information, call 415-447-5000 or visit <http://www.nps.gov/safr>.

**Photo ops:** Multimedia storytelling in 19<sup>th</sup> century interior of *Balclutha* combines the contemporary and the historical; cross-cultural, intergenerational public interactions on board ship

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