

Images of America

By Huang Chong-Kai

Austin, Texas

From the bar on the Sixth Street, a white brother was calling me and greeted me. He reached out and gave me five, almost like to hug me. He asked: 'You'd watched the game?' I didn't know what was the game, but I nod. After few seconds I found out I wore an Iowa sweater, but the jacket covered two letters, only OW.

New Orleans, with Saunia, Chow, Adriana

Visited the Whitney Plantation. The guide is a black man, telling the history of the plantation, the history of the slaves, and the history of the south. The three levels are stacked together. This well-preserved plantation is a step-by-step reminder of all kinds of historical memories. I felt like walking into the world of Colson Whitehead's novel *The Underground Railroad*. It seems that you can hear the bell ringing, the black slaves huddled in the wooden cabin and the white master had a meal in the big house. A heavy rain drenched us, we waited for the bus that didn't know when it would come.

Chicago, with Gina, Roberto, Yusho, Baysaa

I went to the Major League game for the first time. Went out of the subway station and walked to the Guaranteed Rate Field to see two teams with poor records. The White Sox's rookie pitcher is called 'rain-maker', every time he pitches, it would be rain. We saw that he was hit by a lead off home run and then knocked down by three home runs in an inning and then it rained twice.

Iowa, with all of you and nice people

Gina, Roberto and I were invited to a panel at Coe College. Few days later Professor Mònica Fuertes-Arboix invited us to her house. She is a Catalan from Barcelona. We had a hearty dinner at her house, chatting and dancing. The new coming Japanese librarian, Mr. Tsuyoshi Harada, always talks a few

words when we meet in the library. We had a lunch together and talked about his life in the United States.

You cannot go to Armenia to know a writer there.

You cannot go to Mongolia to know a poet there.

You cannot go to Pakistan to know a playwright there.

You have to be here to know these writers from 27 different countries.

In the United States, lots of people from different places in the world, they meet with various memories and cultures, speak different accents of English and try to live together.