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From Apple to Zat: New Book, "In China, My Name Is," Pursues a Unique Cultural Development in Modern Chinese Society

Latest entry from Mark Batty Publisher documents the 'why' and 'how' of the Chinese trend of selecting a most diverse assortment of English names

Contact Joel Samberg for review copies or author interview requests at 1.973.857.8070 or via email at media@markbattypublisher.com. Information on "In China, My Name Is" is also available online at <http://markbattypublisher.com/books/in-china-my-name-is/>.

New York, NY, February 25, 2009 — In China, most people regard the giving of a name as one of the most important personal choices one can make in life. But since Chinese words improperly pronounced often have completely different meanings than what is intended, many Chinese select English names that have certain significance for them while also offering international visitors, and even residents, a far easier chance to pronounce them correctly. That concept is what is explored in a new book from Mark Batty Publisher called "In China, My Name Is."

Researched, written and photographed by Valerie Blanco and Ellen Feberwee, Dutch travelers and students of international social trends, "In China, My Name Is" introduces the reader to dozens of Chinese people and their reasons for selecting their English names. The explanations are accompanied by full-page color photographs of all of those interviewed, including the young and old, the city dwellers and the provincial folk, and many others in between.

Apple, Henry, Molly, Phoenix and Zat are among the nearly 200 names—some deeply personal, some random, some humorous—discussed in the small-format, 176-page book.

Apple, for example, says she selected her name because she always dresses in green and often turns red with shyness. Young Henry's name was chosen for him because his Chinese name is Han Rei, Han being an ethnic group and Rei meaning lucky. Molly named herself after the Demi Moore character in the American movie, "Ghost." Phoenix picked his name because he admires both the bird whose spirit is said to never die and the American city that has a basketball team he

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likes very much. Zat says that her English name has no meaning at all, but was selected merely because it was “simple and easy to remember.”

Zat and several others featured in the book provide additional comments on the trend, and how their friends and family have reacted to their English names.

Both Blanco and Feberwee studied marketing concepts and branding at the Amsterdam Fashion Institute before temporarily relocating to Shanghai. Having already developed a working relationship, they decided to combine their research skills, journalistic resources, cultural interests and social curiosities on a project that would explore a movement they noticed while living in Shanghai: the use of many English names by Chinese natives.

“We hope ‘In China, My Name Is’ accurately shows some of the cultural changes taking place in China, and the differences between Chinese people and Chinese hopes and dreams,” state the authors, who include in their book short and informative essays relating the changes and differences both to Chinese customs and increased international influences. “We wanted to share simple stories, touching stories, and perhaps even future developments resulting from a far more open-door policy in China with the rest of the world.”

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"In China, My Name Is"

Valerie Blanco & Ellen Feberwee

Gift Book, Popular Culture

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