

## Interview with Gnome International, Inc.

by Kat Avila

When I joined the cosplayers chasing down anime and manga bargains in the exhibit hall at Anime Expo 2005 in Anaheim, California, an artist promotion booth with quality posters caught my eye. Mickey Lu and Adam Lee, CEO and CFO, respectively, for Gnome International, Inc., were greeting visitors with smiles and promotional postcards. I spoke with Mickey Lu to learn more.

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*Gnome International showcases artists from Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China, and helps these artists put together promotional packages. At Anime Expo 2005, I saw the wondrous and magnificent posters of Evan Lee and the stylish So What line of T-shirts and postcards by Mark of PhalanX. Which other artists were represented?*

Not only does Gnome International, Inc., provide a gateway for Asian artists to the United States, we do so vice versa [U.S. artists to Asia]. We also assist the artist in bringing out their name through the collaboration of transferring two-dimensional artwork into an intellectual property that would adapt into a product of some format. Many artists do not know how to value their properties properly or how to pursue further in a higher developed stage. At Gnome International, Inc., we assist artists by reinstating the artist's intellectual property, then we assist them in developing further possibilities, such as company collaborations, crossover art events, conventions, etc.



At Anime Expo 2005, we held a showcase displaying the arts from Evan Lee and Mark of PhalanX. The Ray toy you photographed is an adorable and unique monster created by a group called Sooo, consisting of four graphic designers who share a similar devotion in many different fields. Ray was created for their first anniversary celebration as a designer group and friends working together; simultaneously, Sooo wishes to address the issue of war, so Ray was created. Ray's body shape is redesigned from the shape of a water mine used by the marines. The menacing metal texture and feeling of war and negativity is taken away by replacing with the color of a bright green in hopes to bring out a positive vibe.

*According to his web site, Taiwan artist Evan Lee incorporates "today's popular goth and lolita trends to create his avant-garde style." He had a show in May 2005 at Gallery Nucleus in Alhambra, California. Will any other galleries in the U.S. be showing his astounding work?*

At the moment, we are taking each step one by one. The Evan Show at Gallery Nucleus in Alhambra was Gnome International Inc.'s very first show that showcased our ability in promotion as well as marketing for artists in enhancing art and life awareness. The end result was very satisfying, and the hard work paid off.

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We are still looking into other galleries that may be able to showcase Evan's beautiful art in the region of downtown L.A. or Long Beach. We try to find places where Evan's art will create a tremendous impact on the public. Not only are we looking for places to showcase Evan's art, we are also looking for places where we can display the *So What* series, which is an entirely different market. As we get close to producing another stunning show, we will have it posted on our website at <http://www.gnomeinternational.com> to keep our visitors informed of the details.



*What is the inspiration or theme for the So What product line?*

*So What* is a symbol for teenagers out there today. It's a slogan that doesn't provoke anything disrespectful, but more of an attitude of saying "So what" in tough situations and sometimes for mistakes. For example, if you fail a test, you can say "So what" and go on with life. Just because you failed a test doesn't mean the world is ending. So what if we fall, we fight back until we succeed. This slogan tells us to move on, to become stronger as we fall. Drive yourself to the limit even if you know you are going to stumble along the path. Stand up and move on. *So What* comes in various series: Christmas, Halloween, Sports, and many others. *So What's* nature is to adapt to different lifestyles of the 21st century.

*How was your experience at Anime Expo 2005?*

Anime Expo was great. This was our first time exhibiting there. The other times I was part of the hordes of customers. Now it was the other way around! The anxiety was greater than being a visitor because of the various people you meet. It's amazing how you meet artists from around the world just by standing there. Not only that, we got interviewed quite a few times by different TV stations representing different areas of the globe. It was extremely exciting to see all this happen during those four days of exhibiting. Meeting the artists was priceless; I would say socializing with the people was the best part.

*Besides putting together promotional packages for artists, what other services does Gnome International offer?*

Gnome International, Inc., not only produces promotional packages for artists, we also provide printing services, publishing services, and manufacturing services with our very own clothing line *Open Mind Collection* coming to you next year. Evan Lee's art was put together into an artbook published by Kinston Publishing, a branch of Gnome International, Inc. By providing the best book quality to the artists, nothing can go wrong. Promotional packages, printing fliers and oversized waterproof posters, exotic die-cut stickers, and publishing their works of art into forms of art books are just a few services that we provide.

We are now working on our next branch of products, which will be apparel. When you think of Gnome International, Inc., you can think of us as a way to get your art out to the world without losing the copyright to your art. We will help artists without getting our hands on their art. We'll work with you through the whole manufacturing process providing the best quality service there is to give. At Gnome International, Inc., we believe quality artwork is what will enhance the living aesthetics of everyday people, hence, "art and life."

*Where will your booth be traveling to next?*

Our next show will be at San Diego's Comic-Con, July 14-17, displaying under the name of PhalanX. The main display will be the *So What* designer vinyl series. The newest editions of the *So What* vinyl series will be showcased there and will be available for purchase as well. The designer of *So What*, Mark, will be arriving from Taiwan and will also be there to greet you.

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