

# *The University of Hong Kong*

## *The Phantom on Film* A Roundtable

Gaston Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra* (*The Phantom of the Opera*, 1909-1910) may not be great literature, but it is a unique record of the most important social and artistic institution in the 'capital of the nineteenth century', Paris. More significant still, since the novel's publication it has radically transcended that historical-geographical specificity and become the object of constant creative re-interpretation all over the world. Nowhere is this more compellingly illustrated than in the fifty-plus screen adaptations - silent films and talkies, horror films and musicals, cartoons and telenovelas and more - that have been made in places as far apart as Hollywood, Brazil and China between 1916 and today.

Take, for instance, the enormously influential 1925 Hollywood adaptation, complete with a full score and color tinted footage, or such 'quasi-musicals' as Brian De Palma's *Phantom of the Paradise* (1974), and *The Phantom Lover* (1995), starring Leslie Cheung. The latter may well be said to be a remake of an older, Chinese-language adaptation: Ma-xu Weibang's *Song at Midnight* (*Yebang gesheng*, 1937), arguably the first Chinese horror and billed as "the most fascinating and creative of all interpretations of Gaston Leroux's horrid tale" (David Robinson). Long thought to be lost, *Yebang gesheng* resurfaced in the West in the late 1990s along with its sequel, *Yebang gesheng xuji*, made in 1941 at the height of the Sino-Japanese war. This roundtable will examine these and other film as well as television adaptations, fan art and last but not least Lloyd Webber's legendary musical.

### Speakers:

Jacqueline Avila (University of Tennessee)

Giorgio Biancorosso (HKU)

Timmy Chen (The Hong Kong Polytechnic University)

Annette Davison (University of Edinburgh)

Clarice Greco (Universidade de São Paulo)

Cormac Newark (Guildhall School of Music & Drama, London)

John Snelson (Royal Opera House, London)

This program is the fruit of a collaboration between *The HKU Black Box*, the Music Department (HKU), and *The Phantom on Film, Screen adaptations of Le Fantôme de l'Opéra: Routes of cultural transfer*, an international research network funded by the Leverhulme Trust.

Friday, 24 March 2017, 5:00pm  
The HKU Black Box, LG54, Run Run Shaw Tower, Centennial Campus  
The University of Hong Kong