



THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
**CENTENARY**  
Faculty of Arts



# Newsletter

Autumn 2012

Issue 6



## Arts Centenary - Celebrating a New Chapter in Our History



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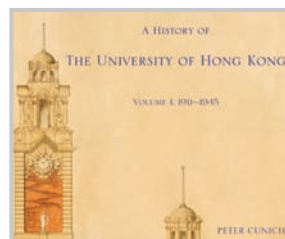
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## A NEW CHAPTER IN OUR HISTORY

Welcome to this Centenary edition of the Faculty of Arts newsletter!

2012 is a particularly significant year for the Faculty of Arts – it marks both the start of the Faculty's Centenary celebrations, as well as our move from the historic Main Building to our sparkling new home in Run Run Shaw Tower on the Centennial Campus.



Over the last 100 years, the Faculty has grown to become one of the finest humanities faculties in the region and internationally. In the pages that follow, some of our most distinguished alumni as well as recent graduates share their stories of life in the Faculty of Arts during the past half century – giving us the opportunity to recall through their words the pride, joys – and occasional pains – of being an Arts student or teacher at the University of Hong Kong.

## OUR NEW HOME

Many of these reminiscences involve the Main Building, the Faculty's 100-year old home until our move to Run Run Shaw Tower during this past summer. Although we had outgrown its walls, we all agreed that we could not leave without a proper goodbye, and a farewell event was held on Sunday, April 22, that brought together Arts staff, students, alumni, and friends in a joyful celebration of our time in this iconic building at the heart of the University.

The main ceremony, which was held in Loke Yew Hall, included opening remarks by former Chief Secretary for Administration The Hon. Mrs Anson Chan, poem readings by Professors Agnes Lam and Leung Ping Kwan, the presentation of the student Video Competition Prize by University Artists Ms Mabel Cheung and Mr Alex Law, a performance of Haydn's Farewell Symphony by the Hong Kong Chamber Orchestra, and a percussion parade around the Main Building led by University Artist Dr Lung Heung-wing. The whole afternoon took on a carnival atmosphere with activities highlighting the Faculty's diversity occurring simultaneously throughout the Main Building.

Our new home, the state-of-the-art Run Run Shaw Tower in the Centennial Campus, allows our Schools and Centres to be under one roof, a situation that facilitates more inter-disciplinary research and fosters a stronger sense of communal belonging and

communication. It also houses specially designed classrooms and innovative venues for performances and exhibitions. Its beautiful roof garden, stunning views across the harbour, and light-filled spaces convey the same sense of harmony and calm that inhabits the Main Building's peaceful corridors and courtyards.

## ARTS CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

The Centenary celebrations were officially launched with the inaugural MB Lee Distinguished Lecture in the Humanities delivered by Professor Jonathan Hay on October 25, 2012. The celebrations will run from October 2012 to September 2013, commemorating the admission of the first Arts students in October 1912 and the election of the first Dean of Arts, Professor A.E. Wrottesley-Salt, in September 1913, respectively.

Over the coming months we will be holding a variety of public events and activities that showcase the Faculty's extraordinary achievements over the past 100 years. Among these is the Arts Centenary photography project involving award-winning Hong Kong photographer So Hing Keung. These images, two of which are featured on this page, were captured in the last two months prior to the Faculty's move to its new home in Run Run Shaw Tower.

They offer glimpses of its history and, most importantly, of some of the people who have made it the outstanding academic enterprise that it is today.



Dr Carolyn Muir teaches a class in MB239

As we enter our second century with renewed confidence and energy, we will strive to reach new heights in our mission to provide a comprehensive, humanistic and liberal research environment for our staff and students, as well as lifelong learning opportunities for the community. Anniversaries encourage us to celebrate the past while looking forward to the future; what is more, they are an opportunity to thank the people who have made this journey not only possible, but also rewarding and exciting.

For details of Arts Centenary activities, please visit <http://arts.hku.hk>

For photos of the April 22 event and Faculty souvenirs, please visit <http://arts.hku.hk/april22>

## NEW STAFF APPOINTMENTS

The Faculty was pleased to welcome the following academic and academic-related staff who took up new full-time and fixed-term appointments between February 1, 2012 and October 31, 2012.

### *School of Chinese*

Dr Song Geng, Associate Professor  
 Dr Lee Tong King, Assistant Professor  
 Dr S.H. Choi, Teaching Consultant  
 Dr K.W. Siu, Teaching Consultant  
 Ms Chan Yan Yan, Language Instructor  
 Mr H.S. Lam, Language Instructor  
 Dr Y.T. Wong, Language Instructor  
 Ms Zhang Wei, Assistant Language Instructor

### *School of English*

Prof Adam Jaworski, Professor  
 Dr Olga Zayts, Assistant Professor

### *School of Humanities*

Dr Aaron Han Joon Magnan-Park, Assistant Professor (Comparative Literature)  
 Dr Johanna Wolff, Assistant Professor (Philosophy)  
 Dr Geng Xiujuan, Research Assistant Professor (Linguistics / State Key Laboratory of Brain and Cognitive Sciences)  
 Dr Gong Tao, Research Assistant Professor (Linguistics)  
 Dr Li King Ling, Post-doctoral Fellow (Linguistics)  
 Dr Edoardo Zamuner, Post-doctoral Fellow (Philosophy)  
 Ms Veronica PY Kwok, Research Officer (Linguistics / State Key Lab)  
 Dr Joey Tang, Research Officer (Linguistics / State Key Lab)  
 Ms Xu Guiping, Research Officer (Linguistics / State Key Lab)

### *School of Modern Languages and Cultures*

Prof Liu Haiming, Fulbright Visiting Professor (American Studies)  
 Dr Su Yun Kim, Assistant Professor (Korean Studies)  
 Dr John Wong, Post-doctoral Fellow (American Studies)

### *Centre for Applied English Studies*

Dr Angela C.K. Chan, Assistant Professor  
 Mr Simon D. Boynton, Language Instructor  
 Mrs Daya Datwani, Language Instructor  
 Ms Vivian Li, Language Instructor  
 Dr Connie Ng, Language Instructor  
 Dr Jane M. Robbins, Language Instructor  
 Ms Jane Tsoi, Language Instructor  
 Ms Laura J. Wakeland, Language Instructor  
 Mr Robert E. Walker, Language Instructor  
 Ms Rebecca Welland, Language Instructor

Mr Juan Castillo, Assistant Language Instructor  
 Ms Eleanor K.P. Kwan, Assistant Language Instructor  
 Ms Ellie Law, Assistant Language Instructor  
 Ms Karina Muse, Assistant Language Instructor  
 Mr Steven J. Roberts, Assistant Language Instructor  
 Mr Colin D.C. Tait, Assistant Language Instructor  
 Mr Kevin Yung, Assistant Language Instructor

### *Centre of Buddhist Studies*

Dr Gao Junling, Post-doctoral Fellow  
 Ven Dr Sik Fa Ren, Teaching Consultant

### *Centre for the Humanities and Medicine*

Dr Harry Wu, Post-doctoral Fellow

## EXISTING STAFF

The following existing members of staff took up new full-time and fixed-term positions during the same period of February 1, 2012 and October 31, 2012.

### *School of English*

Dr Dirk Noël, Associate Professor

### *School of Humanities*

Prof Gina Marchetti, Professor (Comparative Literature)  
 Dr Roslyn Hammers, Associate Professor (Fine Arts)

### *Centre for Applied English Studies*

Dr Martin K.K. Tang, Language Instructor  
 Dr Clarence Wang, Language Instructor  
 Mr Parco Wong, Language Instructor

## DR DAVID POMFRET HONOURED WITH UGC TEACHING AWARD 2012

Dr David M. Pomfret, Associate Professor in the Department of History, is one of the winners of this year's UGC Teaching Award. The Award was launched by the UGC in 2011 to honour academics in the UGC-funded institutions for their outstanding teaching performance and achievements, as well as their leadership in and scholarly contribution to teaching and learning.

Since joining the University in 2001, Dr Pomfret has distinguished himself as a teacher, a pioneer and a leader within HKU, and beyond. The depth of his engagement with students and reflections on their learning processes and his remarkable record of sustained teaching excellence mark him as a highly unusual, talented and charismatic teacher. Dr Pomfret was awarded the University's Outstanding Teaching Award in 2010 and was also presented with the Outstanding Young Researcher Award in 2007/2008.

The Main Building's stone staircase has been many things to Elizabeth Wong Chien Chi-lien – a place where she wore her first ball gown, met former governor Lord Maclehoze, and once took a tumble. But most important was where the staircase led her.

"To me it was like going up the ladder to heaven, which was the Arts faculty," she says.



Attending a ball at Loke Yew Hall

Mrs Wong (BA 1959) was an English Literature major and at the time the faculty was a heaven of several gods with very human characteristics. Oxford poet Edmund Blunden was one of her tutors and she remembers him vividly.

"He was an old man at the time, at least he looked old. He must have in retrospect had the beginnings of Parkinson's disease because his hands used to tremble – I was afraid he would drop his papers. And his eyes would be looking at the ceiling. He never looked at us.

"One day I asked him what I thought was a stupid question. I said, Professor, I've read so many poems, can you tell me what is poetry? He rambled. He said 'poetry is like music, it's like sunshine. You can't touch it, you can't put it in your pocket, and yet you know it is there. It's like love, it has many forms. You hear it and it touches your heart.'

"I took notes because it was so strange to me. He didn't say poetry is a sonnet, a ballad, a rhyming couplet, he said, I don't really know.

"All the time he didn't think it was stupid [to ask]. I treasure that moment because of all the things he taught me, that's the one thing I remember."

Mary Visick had an even bigger impact on Mrs Wong, who greatly admired the satirical writings of Joseph Addison, founder of *The Spectator*.

"She would say, 'it's not enough that you admire Addison, it's not enough that you understand his work. If you really love his writing, you will write like him.

Why don't you write me a piece pretending you are him, in his style? Criticising Hong Kong in a nice sort of way, a satirical sort of way.'

"Which I did, and she liked it. And I find that has left me with a kind of mark all my life. Because in all my writings, even when I was in government, the official papers, I used to see things that other people take for granted."

Mrs Wong joined the civil service in 1969 and eventually became Secretary of Health and Welfare. She was known for her touches of humour such as sending poems to legislators who criticised her. In 1995 she stepped down and was elected to the Legislative Council where she stayed until 1997.

"I learned from Mary Visick. At the time I didn't realise it was her influence but later on I said, I have this habit of looking at things from a different angle and laughing at them," she says.

Today Mrs Wong is a novelist and teaches English drama and world literature part-time to secondary school students. She still puts her learning in practice by encouraging her students to create their own works.

"What I appreciate is that the professors didn't tell you what you should or should not think. They left you to think for yourself," she adds.



Mrs Elizabeth Wong Chien Chi-lien

*Mrs Elizabeth Libby Wong CBE ISO JP holds a BA (Hons) (1959) and DipEd (Distinction) (1960) from the University of Hong Kong. A teacher by profession, Libby taught before she joined the Hong Kong Government (1969 to 94). She retired in 1994 to go into politics. She was elected to the Hong Kong Legislative Council in 1995 with the highest number of votes. Since 1997, she has taught English and written many books on Hong Kong and the teaching of English and Poetry.*





Mrs Anson  
Chan Fong On-sang

The Faculty of Arts has a remarkable association with the family of Hong Kong's former Chief Secretary Anson Chan Fong On-sang.

Mrs Chan and her mother, painter Fang Zhao-ling, both graduated from the Faculty within a few years of each other and in 1996 they stood together

on the stage of Loke Yew Hall to receive honorary doctorate degrees. Mrs Chan's twin sister, Ninson, is also a graduate of the Faculty and more than a dozen other family members are HKU graduates, including her husband Archibald Chan whom she met at a dance at Loke Yew Hall.

The extended family has been important to Mrs Chan because it provided both stability – her father died when she was 10, leaving her mother a widow with eight young children – and an environment that valued education, including for girls. However, the upbringing was “very very strict” and it was not until her time at HKU, where she enrolled in 1959 on a bursary and graduated in 1962, that she found her feet.

“For the first time you experience such a great deal of freedom,” she says. “And I think those are the years when you learn to have some discipline. Because when you move from a very restrictive life to a totally free [one], where nobody is looking over your shoulder telling you to go to tutorial, to go to class, what time to go to bed, what you can do or not do, it takes actually a little while to acquire the necessary discipline.”

She admits to wasting time and not studying hard enough, but the self-discipline she acquired in the process – together with the communication skills and insights she learned from studying English Language and Literature – has paid off in her career.

Mrs Chan was unflappable as she blazed a trail through government ranks to become the first female head of a government department in 1984 (as Director of Social Welfare – ironically, she cut short an ambition to become a social worker in order to join the government) and the first female and first ethnic Chinese Chief Secretary, serving from 1993 to 2001.

One thing that prepared her for the rigours of the administrative service was her experience in tutorials, where she was questioned on every remark to provide evidence for her arguments. “You have to come up face to face with challenges, you have to produce reasons for what you're saying,” she says – very similar to her

encounters with her superiors in the civil service. An Arts education also helped her to cope with the pressures of a public life thanks to the appreciation of poetry and literature that she gained under such teachers as poet Edmund Blunden who taught in the Faculty from 1953 to 1964.

Studying the humanities “gives you some sense of perspective, of balance, it gives you some better sense of the things that should matter to you in life and the things that do not matter to you in life. And I think that learning that has been crucial to me in keeping my sanity in the 39 years that I spent with the Hong Kong government,” Mrs Chan says.

## AN INSPIRING ROLE MODEL

Painter Fang Zhao-ling was “a very cultured, every erudite person who read widely and travelled widely. I think she was very much a woman ahead of her generation,” says her daughter Anson Chan.

Madam Fang was raised by a mother who herself believed in providing daughters with the best possible education. She studied at Manchester University for two years in the 1930s and completed her BA in Chinese at HKU in 1956. Professor Francis Drake, then Head of the Department of Chinese, persuaded her to further her studies in Oxford University.

But it is painting that distinguishes Madam Fang. Mrs Chan says her mother's works have “a wonderful combination of naivete and sophistication” and they have been exhibited around the world.



At the 151<sup>st</sup> congregation with her mother, Madam Fang Zhao-ling, and The Rt. Hon. Christopher Patten

*The Hon. Mrs Anson Chan graduated with a BA (Hons) in English and English Literature from the University of Hong Kong in 1962 and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in 1996. Mrs Chan retired as the Chief Secretary for Administration of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government in 2001, after nearly forty years of distinguished service. In recent years, Mrs Chan has taken a prominent role in the campaign for full universal suffrage for election of Hong Kong's Chief Executive and all members of the Legislature. She is a recipient of the Grand Bauhinia Medal and is an honorary Dame Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George.*

For many university students the social life is as much a part of the learning process as the classroom. But for Mr Lee Jark-pui, being a student meant one thing: studying.

Mr Lee graduated with a BA (Hons) in Economics in 1962 and eschewed the barn dances and most other social activities during his time at HKU for the warm wood of the Main Building's rooms.



Mr Lee Jark-pui

"I still remember the library," he says, which at that time was located in the Main Building. "It was all wood – wooden chairs, wooden tables. I liked the atmosphere."

"You can call me a bookworm with a vision. Everyone has to prepare for the next stage of life. So when you're in university it's a time you prepare yourself for getting into society. Of course you can make friends and then you have to build up your network for the future. You can study so that you can apply your knowledge or understand society better. You can fall in love so you can get married when you graduate. There are different choices, people have to make their choice."

Mr Lee took the second route and applied his learning to enrich his contributions to society. He is Executive Director of Lippo Ltd and serves on numerous government committees and non-government organisations, such the Agency for Volunteer Service, the International Chamber of Commerce – Hong Kong, China, the Hong Kong Council of Social Service, the government's Social Welfare Advisory Committee, and the Legal Aid Services Council.

"Studying Political Science and Sociology made me more committed to working for universal values in life, like freedom, equality, that sort of thing," he says. "That's why I still do quite a bit of community work. In the process we hope to build up human dignity in our society."

The seeds of that commitment were nurtured by his teachers such as Dr Edward Szczepanik, who wrote a textbook, *The Economic Growth of Hong Kong*, and later became the last Prime Minister of the Polish Government in Exile before handing over to Lech

Walesa in 1990. Other memorable teachers included Dr S.S. Hsueh in Political Science, Ms Dorothy Kwan in Sociology and Professor E.S. Kirby in Economics.

He remembers them for the quality of their teaching rather than their writings. "I think from one point of view a great teacher is one who really can bring the student forward along the road of knowledge. But these days you have some other value measurements, [that] because this person has written a great deal, therefore he must be a great teacher. To which I don't subscribe."

Mr Lee did allow for a little diversion from studying, albeit still related to scholarly pursuits: he was Librarian of the Economics Society and enjoyed attending its talks. But overall, he was relieved to be distanced from the sometimes intense social side of student life.

"I did not live in a hostel," he says, "because of what we called the ragging of new students, which I disliked. When I heard of it I thought it was not good. Fortunately I lived very close to the University so I was exempted from living in halls."

"My main interest was to study, to learn and to equip myself to serve humanity when the time came. That's it."



Mr Lee speaking at the Arts Fellowship Scheme kick-off event

*Mr JP Lee graduated with a BA (1st Class Hons) in Economics and Political Science from the University of Hong Kong in 1962. He is currently an Executive Director of Lippo Limited, Chairman of the Agency for Volunteer Service, as well as Chairman of the International Chamber of Commerce - Hong Kong, China. Mr Lee has been dedicated to public service in Hong Kong for over forty years. He is an unofficial Justice of the Peace and was awarded the Silver Bauhinia Star by the Chief Executive, HKSAR, in 2006 and the OBE by HM Queen Elizabeth II in 1997.*

Bridge-building was required experience when Professor Lee Ngok became the first Hong Kong-bred dean of the Faculty of Arts in 1976. His bridge was the L-shaped bar of the Senior Common Room (SCR) in Hung Hing Ying, opposite the Main Building.



Professor Lee Ngok

Professor Lee – nicknamed the “godfather” of the Chinese staff by his expat colleagues – spent a lot of hours in a visible position at the bar.

“Only the elite would be allowed to sit at the very corner of the L-shape,” he says, including himself. “This was semi-serious but then people get used to it.

“Things were done there in terms of serious discussions, negotiations, exchange of views, agreeing to disagree. Actually it was a very rich experience.”

And it got him thinking. Deans were elected by their colleagues but the candidates were selected by department heads to ensure leadership came from the top. What if Professor Lee, who had been with the Faculty only eight years, were to throw his name in the ring?

Professor Lee joined the Faculty to teach History in 1968 after earning his BA and master’s degrees at HKU and his PhD at the University of London. He thought it was time for a change – not only in leadership selection but also in teaching and research.

Moreover, he wanted to see change in the disparity between expats and locals. Expats even on the lowest rungs of the academic ladder received housing and other perks that were denied to non-senior local academics.

“That was quite a major motivation, indirectly. Although the dean’s job is not mainly that sort of thing, fighting for parity, but being on the senior management team ... I could talk about the pros and cons, get them really thinking about it.”

He was up against Mary Turnbull, his colleague in the Department of History, and while the election was friendly, he did have a strategy.

“My strategy was to lobby for support from the expats – mostly at the bar!” he says, half-joking. “There were a lot of expats sympathising with the plight of the locals. Of course that’s not the only reason I stood for dean.”

Academic matters were paramount and during his deanship he introduced two new departments, Fine Arts and Music, and made preparations for the establishment of a third, Japanese Studies.

The curriculum was also revised to a modular system, annual exams were introduced and students were given greater choice in courses and programmes, something his critics charged resulted in “dim sum” degrees but which have become the norm.

He was less successful in raising the research profile because resources were lacking. And the disparities between expats and locals remained until the 1990s, long after he stepped down in 1985 to start up HKU SPACE, the University’s continuing education arm.

Professor Lee is now retired but he still visits the SCR, now located atop KK Leung building. The bar is still tended by Katherine, whom he hired in 1974 when he was chairman of the SCR.

“When I was on an academic tour of America in 1980 I compared it with others in some of the Ivy League schools like Harvard and Stanford. They also had that sort of environment, but I think ours is even more congenial,” he says. “It’s the very thing a university should have.”

*Professor Lee Ngok holds a BA (1963) and MA (1967) from the University of Hong Kong, and a PhD from the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). He joined the University first as a Lecturer in History (1968 to 1976); then as a Senior Lecturer in History (1976 to 1984); and later as a Reader in History (1984 to 1986). He served as Dean of the Faculty of Arts from 1976 to 1985.*



A 1981 caricature of Prof Lee which appeared in the HKU publication *Interflow*



Lam Sum-chee was raised by a single mother in the old Kowloon Walled City without running water or a flushing system. Today he is a retired financial guru who has just set up an endowed scholarship for students in need. His transformation from poor boy to rich man started in the Faculty of Arts.

Mr Lam entered HKU in 1964 on a bursary that covered the cost of his tuition (about \$3,000 a year) and his lodging. Without it, he could never have afforded to attend university. With it, his life changed.



Mr Lam Sum-chee

"The bursary came from HKU before the government introduced any grants. I didn't have to do a lot of part-time work so I had the time to pursue my studies and to really enjoy what I was reading," he says. "It was really a luxury for me. I lived in St John's College and I had my own room, although we shared toilets."

He majored in history and the lessons he learned helped to launch him down the path of investment.

He began investing in the stock market while teaching at St Stephen's College in Stanley to top up his income, and applied his academic learning to the pursuit. History had taught him to appreciate trends over decade-long horizons and longer, and to understand that patterns repeat themselves. But that was not all.

"I started to collect annual reports and clip newspaper articles. Where did I learn my filing system? The HKU library," he says.

"You don't need to be an economics or business graduate to make a lot of money. History has helped me a lot, it gives me patience. And I have learned from what I witnessed myself."

He has earned many millions of dollars from this approach and now wants to give back so others can receive the same opportunities that he had.

Mr Lam set up a History scholarship in 1986 providing \$10,000 a year and so far 32 students have benefited. In 2004 he also set up the Evergreen Scholarship that provides full fee and hostel expenses and so far 13 Arts students have benefited. This year he established the Evergreen Scholarships and Bursaries Endowment Fund to sustain the giving.

"I hope some of the recipients will also feel grateful to the University and who knows, maybe one day one of them will make bigger donations than I have," Mr Lam says.

## **Memories of the Main Building**

**Barn dances** were a highlight of student life in Mr Lam's day. The floor at Loke Yew Hall was covered in hay procured from Dairy Farm, which had a farm at Chi Fu. Soft drinks were served as students danced to the latest tunes from the Beatles and other pop stars.

"We all came in our jeans and we came to meet girls," he says. But success was not guaranteed. The Medical faculty was mostly boys, the Arts Faculty mostly girls. "At the barn dance, the Medical boys tended to take our prettiest girls."

**Azaleas** were a sign that it was time to get serious about studying. "The purple azaleas flowered in March and April and used to cover the whole slope where KK Leung, the Knowles Building and the lily pond are. They used to say, when you see the flowers you know exams are coming."

**The arches.** Mr Lam has a special fondness for the Main Building arches. "I like the neo-classicism of this building very much and now in my own house I have five arches with the centerpiece on as part of the decoration."

*Mr Lam obtained his Bachelor degree in Arts from HKU (1967) and became an Honorary University Fellow in 2007. As one of the first generation of financial analysts in Hong Kong, he worked for financial institutions like HSBC, Merrill Lynch and UBS during his career. He is retired and resides in Hong Kong. Mr Lam's Evergreen Fund is generously supporting the University's "Turn \$1 to Five" Campaign— with a HK\$30 million matching donation.*



Mr Lam at the University's graduation ceremony in 1967



Admission to the University of Hong Kong used to mean more than a good education. It was entrance to a life at the top of society, where job offers rolled in and graduates could pick and choose. Students therefore liked to show off where they came from.

Professor Edward Chen (BA 1967) remembers the University shop being stocked with jackets, ties, bags, cardigans, bookmarks, book covers and other items imprinted with the University logo, that were all flashed openly by students.



Professor Edward Chen

"In terms of dress it was logos everywhere," he says. "You dressed quite properly because being University students you were very much respected. People looked up to you [because] you are HKU, you are going to be a very important person in society."

But that elite status, plus the limited intake of only 500 students per year, made the University a difficult place to get into.

Most came from wealthy families because there were no government loans or grants, although twenty scholarships and bursaries for the entire Hong Kong were available to help the brightest students, such as Professor Chen.

He had been raised in a single-parent family and gained entrance to HKU on his own talents and hard work, earning a full scholarship and bursary for his outstanding A-level results. This was all the more remarkable because he had to switch completely from science to arts subjects in Upper Form 6 when he decided to pursue Economics rather than Medicine, in order to meet the Faculty's requirements. "That's how restrictive the Arts Faculty was," he says.

Once through the University's doors, however, school was a breeze. Students were not required to attend lectures and only had to pass their exams. "It was very difficult to get into the University but it was so easy to get out with an honours degree," he says.

The world was a graduate's oyster from there, but in Professor Chen's year there was a complicating factor: the 1967 riots. Waves of people demonstrated on the streets as chaos in China spilled over the border.

"As an Economics student there are usually many jobs waiting for you," he says. "But in May 1967 we did not even know whether there would be an exam the next morning. There could be a curfew, the way could be blocked by pineapple bombs, anything. But to my best memory I think all my exams did take place."

Employers were not hiring, though. His classmates struggled to find work until the end of the year when things quickly got back on track. But by then Professor Chen had decided to continue studying and thus became "an academic by default". He earned his master's degree at HKU (by this time Economics was in the new Faculty of Social Sciences) and PhD at Oxford, and joined the HKU academic staff, staying until 1995 when he became President of Lingnan University (then College).



Professor Chen at the University's graduation ceremony, City Hall, 1967

One goal he brought from his HKU experiences to Lingnan was to keep student numbers low. There were only about 2,000 students in his undergraduate days. "You knew everybody at that time, if not their names then their faces," he says. "There was a sense of community, a sense of loyalty to the University."

Also pride. Professor Chen attended both the Golden Jubilee celebrations in 1961, when he came to watch a performance as a secondary school student, and the Centenary celebrations in 2011 when he was among the invited guests. "I was lucky to have this kind of experience," he says.

*Professor Edward K Y Chen graduated from the University of Hong Kong with a BA in Economics (1967). He was Director of the University's Centre of Asian Studies (1979 to 1995) and President of Lingnan University (1995 to 2007). He was appointed to the Legislative Council (1991 to 1992) and the Executive Council (1992 to 1997).*

Film-making duo Mabel Cheung Yuen-ting (BA 1973) and Alex Law Kai-yui (BA 1976) may have graduated at different times from the Faculty of Arts, but they both brought a desire to test the boundaries.

Neither of them bothered to attend many classes and Alex spent his entire second year in Japan, which was just about possible back then because there were no exams in that year.

"I actually enrolled in a Japanese university, International Christian University, for one semester. Then I got tired of school because I couldn't understand what they were talking about, so I just travelled all over Japan," he says, laughing.



Ms Mabel Cheung and Mr Alex Law

Mabel had more serious distractions as she had to work part-time to provide money for her family. But she also kept a busy schedule as sports captain of Lady Ho Tung Hall and social butterfly. There were, for example, 10-15 Christmas balls each year as faculties, halls and associations each held their own events and she attended many of them.

"You cannot repeat your gowns," she says, "and back then we didn't have money to buy gowns. So we went to the tailor and we had to design our gowns, buy the fabric, have them made. It was a really big thing. You can see how busy I was – I didn't have time to go to classes!"

Many students were politically active at the time including Alex who, among other things, helped to shower 5,000 protest leaflets on Queen Elizabeth's limousine when she visited HKU in 1975. Mabel only went to one demonstration, at the Lily Pond, because singer Sam Hui was making an appearance and a free lunch was offered. (Alex compares them to the unlikely lovers of the 1973 Hollywood film, "The Way We Were.")

Apart from the high times, though, both graduates have more serious memories of University life. Mabel

was supported by Mary Visick when she got accepted to Lady Ho Tung Hall but could not afford the costs.

"She said, 'You have a job (youth), the future, everything, but you don't have money. I don't have anything but I have money.' She helped me to get all kinds of grants and loans and helped me personally," she says.

Alex says he learned as much from tutors and friends over coffee or just strolling together along the Main Building's driveway as he did inside the classroom.

He also remembers Loke Yew Hall as the start and finish to his studies – where he was bused to find out his matriculation results, and where, at his final exam, he met one of his professors for the first time. "He said, 'oh, you are the Alex Law I have never seen'," he says.

Mabel and Alex have returned to HKU in recent years as University Artists to encourage young people in the arts. They have few regrets although Mabel admits to one.

"It was final exams and I was sitting in my room studying at five or six o'clock in the evening. I was never usually there at that time and I saw a beautiful sunset. It was the first time I realized that I could see the sunset from my room. I had missed all these sunsets and it was already too late because there was only one month to go. It was one time I thought maybe I shouldn't have played so much."

*Ms Mabel Cheung is an award-winning director. She graduated from the University of Hong Kong in 1973, majoring in English Literature and Psychology. She holds an Advanced Diploma in Drama and Visual Arts from Bristol University, UK, and an MFA Degree in Film Production from the New York University Graduate Film School.*

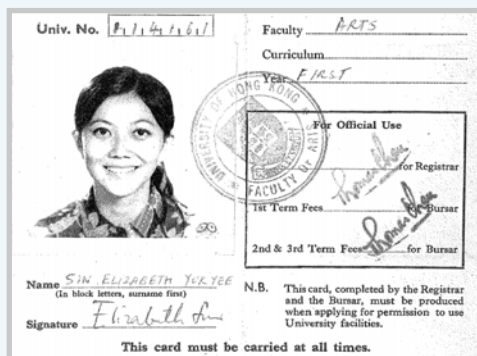
*Mr Alex Law is an award-winning producer, script writer and director. He graduated from the University of Hong Kong in 1976, majoring in English and Chinese Literature. He then studied at the New York University Graduate Film School and received an MFA Degree in Film Production there.*

*Their latest work is the motion picture "Echoes of the Rainbow," winner of the Crystal Bear award at the 60th Berlin International Film Festival, Generation Section, as well as four Hong Kong film awards.*



Loke Yew Hall was once more than a University auditorium. It was an important venue for the community where concerts, plays and other functions were staged regularly. As such it was an early candidate on campus for air-conditioning.

Dr Elizabeth Sinn (BA, MPhil and PhD, all earned at HKU) remembers climbing the steps up to Loke Yew Hall as a secondary school student and being awed by the Main Building. But she also remembers subsequently sitting final exams in 1974 in its icy interior. As with many public venues in Hong Kong, the air-con was turned up high.



"It was always freezing. You used to really feel it sitting there for three hours. There was one time when my friend went to the hall for an exam and she probably hadn't had breakfast, probably hadn't slept, and she fainted. Len Young came to carry her down those [stone] steps.

"A lot of girls had crushes on him because he was very handsome and he was head of the History Department and he just had this air about him. I think many of the girls wished they had fainted as well!" she says.

Dr Sinn, though, had other things on her mind. She was already married when she entered HKU after working for three years. Dr Young left more of an impression on her as a lecturer than a heartthrob. "We had some very good lecturers," she says.

Other memorable teachers were David Turner who came "dressed to the nines" in three-piece suits and injected his lectures with dramatic flair, and Hans Schmidt, who showed up in open-neck shirt, flip-flops and jeans.

They embodied the much more relaxed environment on campus in those days, when teachers smoked in class and drank heavily, and students did not bother to attend lectures. "In that sense it was very British – this thing that when you're a university student, you're

not a child anymore and it's really up to you to decide whether you need to come to a lecture or not," she says.

The staff were also the most international thing about the Faculty as there were few non-local students in the early 1970s. However, there was a downside to this in terms of bias against purely HKU qualifications – something that did not work in Dr Sinn's favour.

"Some of the teachers who knew me and taught me and who gave me first-class honours still thought that because I didn't have an overseas degree I wasn't good enough. So I never had a teaching job in the History Department," Dr Sinn says, although she became Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the Centre for Asian Studies.

Fortunately such attitudes have diminished but change has also affected the much-admired Main Building – something that catches Dr Sinn's historical eye.

She points out the visible additions made to the Main Building after World War II – you can see where the pattern of the tiles change. And she laments the loss of the Chemistry Building lawn, an expanse of green where she liked to relax and where graduation receptions used to be held. It gave way in the 1980s to a road and the modern Kadoorie Biological Sciences Building. "The Chemistry lawn and the Main Building were integral parts. Now it looks like we belong to a different planet," she says.

*Dr Elizabeth Sinn holds a BA (1st Class Hons) (1974), MPhil (1980), and PhD (1987) from the University of Hong Kong. Her first book, "Power and Charity: The Early History of the Tung Wah Hospital, Hong Kong," was published in 1989. Her latest book, "Pacific Crossing: The Gold Rush, Chinese Migration and the Making of Hong Kong," will appear in late 2012.*



Dr Elizabeth Sinn (third from right)

If beauty is in the eye of the beholder, then Philip Chen may be forgiven for feeling that the corridors of the Main Building underwent a dark transformation between his first and second year as a history student.

When he arrived as an undergraduate in 1974, he was full of wonder at the school environment.

“It was bright and elegant and what you think a university should be. The corridors were not very long but the tiles were interesting and I remember the notice boards and professors putting things up on their doors.



Mr Philip Chen

“I had got into HKU and was studying in these buildings, [and] even though the rooms were not very modern, [this] was a very good feeling,” he says.

But Mr Chen was also being affected by another feeling— of itchy feet. He had never travelled abroad or had a passport at the time he entered HKU. He had a desire to see the world and it was under this influence that the Main Building corridors momentarily lost their shine.

At the end of his first year he convinced a cargo ship operator to let him stay on board for the summer, travelling through Southeast Asia to Australia and back.

“The problem is these cargo ships don’t really sail to schedule. By September I was still in the Pacific Ocean, closer to the Philippines than HKU. I had to send messages to the University but who do I send them to?” This was at a time when there was no email, no internet, and not even mobile phones.

He had spoken the previous autumn to the Dean, Professor Green, about dropping an English course for philosophy. Although he was reluctant to ask another favour of him, he could think of no one else to whom he could send a message.

“I finally arrived late for school. I didn’t know my schedule. I’d missed lectures and tutorials. The first message when I got back was, Professor Green wants to see you.”

Professor Green’s office was on the corner of the first floor of the Main Building and his secretary told Mr Chen to wait outside.

“The corridor never looked so long. The building never looked so depressing. All this effort, all this aspiration, all this joy to get into HKU which I had felt on the same corridor a year ago – now I have a bit of a problem.

“I thought I might get a serious reprimand or even kicked out. How can some freshman come back after one year and say, sorry, I’m missing the start of school?”

As it turned out, his fears, perhaps a hangover from the strict days of secondary school, proved to be unfounded. Professor Green was too busy to see him in the end but sent a message saying since Mr Chen had returned to class, he was satisfied he was back on track.

“I was off the hook and extremely happy,” Mr Chen says.

The Main Building corridors brightened up again and he was able to settle into his main goal: to expand his understanding of the world.

Mr Chen says he benefited enormously from an Arts education, which broadened his mind and provided him with information useful in his career. He spent 33 years with Cathay Pacific and his postings around the region have been enriched by his history and philosophy lessons. He is now building Hang Lung Properties, a well known Hong Kong-based company, into a truly national company.

He has also retained his warm first impressions of the Main Building.

“I go back to HKU a lot. I live within walking distance and the Main Building has never looked too remote or far away. It’s probably not part of my glorious past but something that is still a part of me,” he says.

*Mr Philip Chen obtained his BA in 1977. He spent 33 year with Cathay Pacific before joining Hang Lung Properties.*



The early 1970s were marked by ferment on campus as students began asserting their rising political consciousness. Protests against Japan's claim over the Diaoyu Islands and corruption in Hong Kong, disillusion with the colonial government, demands that Chinese be made an official language and a pro-China movement were all fuelling discussion and division at HKU and other campuses in Hong Kong.

Against that backdrop barrister Henry Lo (BA 1979) stepped into the Main Building in 1975 to take up studies in Philosophy and Political Science, and found himself swept up in the debates.

He joined the HKU Students' Union and in 1977 became its president, taking a year off from studies to devote himself to his duties.

"Prior to my time, there were some student movements in Hong Kong that resulted in students becoming more aware of their responsibility towards their mother country and of course to society," he says.

"As to the 'how', there were different approaches at that time. Some were quite dogmatic, biased or irrational."

Mr Lo and his allies sought to tone down the heat on campus.

"We – the union, the cabinet and those associated with us – insisted on a more rational approach with which to seek to understand what a university education, life, are about," he says.

"To understand China was not our sole concern as undergraduates at HKU. It should not be our sole concern. Our concern should be education and our future and our contribution towards humanity."

The message was not easily digested. He faced sharp criticism and endured many long meetings to spread this message – "easily 10 hours", he says.



Mr Henry Lo

"One of the very memorable things at that time was that we met for long hours," he says. "We had to resolve [matters] by way of votes at union council, that was the due process. And of course before we put things to vote we had very critical arguments where there were these different approaches to things."

The debates extended to the University administration, too. Dr Rayson Huang was Vice-Chancellor and Mr Lo remembers they had a "frank exchange of views" over plans to raise tuition fees before the University came to the decision to spread out the increase over three years, at \$100 per year.

The climate of debate and argument, which also existed on other university and college campuses across Hong Kong, started to diminish after China's Open Door policy was announced in late 1978.

Mr Lo says his education as an Arts student influenced his approach as a student and later in life.

"The training we had was such that we would be inclined to truth seeking, to be reasonable, to be rational. Of course, rationality was not at the expense of passion."

That ideal today takes physical form in his calligraphy, which seeks to capture the point where meaning and emotion meet – "The Unified Stroke", as he called his 2008 exhibition at the University Museum and Art Gallery, where he finds order in disorder. Much as he helped to do during the tumultuous days of 1970s campus life.

*Mr Henry Lo Hon Yiu graduated from HKU in 1979 with a BA in Philosophy and Political Science and is a practicing barrister in Hong Kong. He is currently Vice President of the HKU Arts Alumni Association. He was President of the HKU Students' Union in 1977, Member of the Court of HKU between 1987 and 2002, Deputy Chairman of Convocation of HKU between 1993 and 2002, and Chairman of the Senate Working Group on Communication, HKU, between 2001 and 2003.*

The Main Building is not just a place of study but a setting in film and literature, giving it an extra layer of interest for Arts students.

Connie Lam graduated in 1996 with a double major in Comparative Literature and Fine Arts, and she remembers sitting around a courtyard lily pond with her friends, comparing it to the version described by author Eileen Chang in her writing.

“We talked about her description and the only [difference] was there were not so many water lilies. We also used to wonder if there were still fish in there,” she says.

“There are not many universities that have novels and movies made about them.” Ann Hui, Mabel Cheung Yuen-ting and Ang Lee have also used the Main Building in their films.

The history and architecture of the building are also a point of interest for Fine Arts students who would otherwise struggle to see examples of colonial style, which drew on the European styles of the past, in Hong Kong.

“I remember in our first year studying ionic and Corinthian columns. Instead of looking at the slides, our professor pointed them out in the Main Building.

“We could understand them almost immediately. It’s a place that’s so artsy, so artistic. You need a place with that ambience to study art history.”

You also need a place to hang out with fellow students and Ms Lam found that in Room 239, a shabby but comfortable room with long tables instead of desks and a sink that indicated it may have been used for painting classes in the past.

“There were not many of us in Fine Arts, only 20-something classmates. We were very tight. We liked to spend time in Room 239, having a giggle, sharing, sometimes staying there until 11 o’clock at night. There was a telephone there, I think for emergencies, but sometimes we could call that number to see if our friends were there. We treated it like a home,” she says.

The people in that memorable home have also lingered in Ms Lam’s memory. Mr Yan, the office clerk, would come to students’ rescue when they struggled with slide projectors and all kinds of other problems. The

Indian art lecturer had long before also been her English teacher in Form 1 at secondary school.

Visiting lecturers provided eye-opening perspectives on Chinese and Japanese art, and a visiting US professor allowed her to make a video for an assignment rather than write a report, a highly unusual opportunity at the time. Ms Lam says all of these things have been useful in her career (she is now Executive Director of the Hong Kong Arts Centre).



Ms Connie Lam

“My arts education has been really important first because it helped me to develop a certain sense of visual literacy, and second because it was an alternative way to know the world. Art is related to history and how the world changes. Whenever it changes, it affects the arts.”

Art of a certain time can also connect one to the past, a feeling that still washes over her when she returns to the Main Building. “When you are inside the building, it seems you are seeing the history of Hong Kong also. There are not many places that give you this sense,” she says. “You can lose yourself there for just a moment and feel the past.”

*Ms Connie Lam graduated from the University of Hong Kong with a degree in Fine Arts and Comparative Literature in 1996. She joined the Hong Kong Arts Centre (HKAC) in 1997 and has been its Executive Director since 2009. She currently chairs the Hong Kong Arts Administrators Association and is the executive producer of “Big Blue Lake” (2011), the first feature film produced independently by HKAC, as well as a huge devotee of the promotion of public art and local comics in the Hong Kong community and beyond.*



What would a chronicle of the Main Building be without a love story? It is after all a favourite for wedding photos, and its tall arches, columns and Victorian tiles convey romantic charm.

For Khadinn Khan and Huby Ko, who both graduated in 2007, it was the place where the first seeds of love were planted.

In their Fine Arts classroom, the windows were often darkened by teacher, Dr Carolyn Muir, so students could better appreciate the examples of Italian Renaissance art that she flashed on a wall using an old-fashioned slide projector. Huby, a Linguistics major, noticed that Khadinn, a European Studies major, was a good student.



Mr Khadinn Khan and Ms Huby Ko

“One day there was a test and I hadn’t prepared much so I intentionally sat next to him just to peek a little at his test paper. That was my first impression of him,” she says.

That may have been the end of it but they both joined a European Studies trip at the end of their second year led by Dr Wayne Cristaudo. In a Paris café they spoke to each other for the first time. Two days later, their group climbed the Eiffel Tower and sparks began to fly – literally.

“It’s a very romantic place. Every hour the lights on the tower sparkle. That moment is just amazing and at that moment Khadinn stood next to me,” Huby says.

Where he has been ever since. The couple were married in 2011. “The Eiffel Tower is a magical place,” Khadinn agrees.

But just as impressive to them both has been the Main Building. Huby, who now works for agnès b., says it was what attracted her to HKU.

“When I was in high school I made the decision that I had to enter HKU and it was all because of the Main Building. Because I like old buildings,” she says.

Khadinn, who is an art expert with an art insurer, regards the Main Building as particularly relevant to his major. “It has a connection to colonial times with

the columns, the clock tower and everything. Even though we’re in Hong Kong, we have that connection to Europe through this building style and this environment. That’s important to us as students.”

Though the building does have its disadvantages. “In old buildings like the Main Building you have a humidity problem. The walls and floor tiles get wet so you have to be careful,” he says. “But then again, you feel that privilege of being an Arts students and being in the Main Building. It provides you with inspiration.”

The inspiration has been particularly important for Khadinn, who had his secondary school studies in the UK cut short when he was diagnosed with a bone tumour. He returned to Hong Kong, where he recovered, and studied at HKU SPACE before being accepted into the Faculty.

“What I currently have – especially my career and my wife – it all comes from my education at HKU,” he says. “It set our path for the future. Whatever we feel, it can always come back to our education.”

Adds Huby of her romance: “It all starts from the Faculty of Arts, the small dark classroom in the Main Building and the trip to Europe.”



*Mr Khadinn Khan holds a BA in Fine Arts and European Studies from the University of Hong Kong (2007). He is currently an Art Expert & Business Developer with AXA Art, Asia.*

*Ms Huby Ko holds a BA in Linguistics with minors in European Studies and Spanish from the University of Hong Kong (2007). She is currently working for agnès b. Hong Kong Limited.*

Stand on the outside of the Main Building and it appears to be a regular four-sided structure. But enter its doors in pursuit of a specific room or even a particular floor and you step through the looking glass.

Whole sections exist in isolation from others, some rooms are impossible to reach without passing through other rooms, and it is far too easy to pass the place you are looking for if you don't keep an eagle eye on room numbers.

That experience has left Kammie Lau, who graduated with a BA in Linguistics in 2012, with memories of a magical Main Building.



Ms Kammie Lau visits a school construction project in Siem Reap

"Have you ever realised you can never remember the way? I always get lost in the Main Building," she says. "If I'm not paying attention, I miss the room number and have to go all the way around again. It makes the building feel bigger, because you need to walk for ages to get to the room you are looking for. It's like a maze. When I was a fresher it almost felt like Hogwarts."

The shrinking figure of Alice in Wonderland would be another comparison.

"The ceiling is so tall that you feel you can breathe, unlike modern architecture that's so cramped and crowded. When I walk along the corridors of the Main Building I feel very small" – and that's a good thing. "You shouldn't feel big and arrogant at university because you are there to learn."

Ms Lau's perplexity at the building's layout may in part have been due to the fact she had less time to familiarise herself with it than others. She spent her entire second year at the University of Cambridge on the HSBC Overseas Scholarship 2010-11, an opportunity she embarked on with the full support of her teachers in the Department of Linguistics.

One of her favourite teachers also evokes a Main Building memory for Ms Lau.

"His office was right next to the fountain. A habit he had was to turn off his lights even if he was inside his

office. It almost felt like he was pretending that he was not inside so I had to go to the fountain and peak in the window to see if he was there. It definitely sounds strange but this was one of the things I usually did in the Main Building," she laughed.

Ms Lau is now doing an MPhil at Cambridge and clearly is talented in linguistics, but the transition back to HKU as a third-year, after spending her second year in England, was not easy.

"When I was just back from Cambridge, I felt I couldn't catch up with anything – the way of teaching, all the hassles related to course registration, the lectures – Cambridge was all about Eurocentric theories and HKU was more on the side of applied linguistics in an Asian context," she says. "On the second floor of the Main Building there was an open area outside the Fine Arts library with benches. I liked to sit there and calm down and think about what I had learned in my practice and how I would spend my time in university. One thing I love about HKU is that I can take courses in other disciplines. I remember sitting on the benches brainstorming on my essay on Baroque Art.

"It can be really difficult to find a place to sit down in HKU because there are a lot of people and it's a small university. A place where you can spare time for yourself and not have to talk to anyone else. The Main Building was that quiet place where I could enjoy time on my own."

*Ms Kammie Lau holds a BA in Linguistics from the University of Hong Kong (2012). She is the recipient of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Scholarships, HSBC Overseas Scholarship Scheme and the HKU-Cambridge Hughes Hall Scholarships. She is now an MPhil candidate in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics at the University of Cambridge.*



Ms Kammie Lau (centre) with delegates from the Harvard College in Asia Program 2009



## HKU CONCERT SERIES

The second semester 2011-2012 programme featured an inspirational concert celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Department of Music. Preceded by an exciting taiko welcome that featured master Ryo Shimamoto and postgraduate student Carrie Carter, the concert presented three compositions for Balinese gamelan and soloists by HKU composers Gordon Fung Dic-lun, Daniel Lo Ting-cheung, and Austin Yip Ho-kwen. The event also included performances by celebrated pianist Mary Wu and acclaimed violinist James Cuddeford.

Other popular events included Chamber Gems performed by members of the Hong Kong Sinfonietta; a celebration of the 100th anniversary of Arnold Schoenberg's seminal masterpiece *Pierrot Lunaire*, with Paul Zukofsky conducting the Hong Kong New Music Ensemble; violinist Euna Kim and pianist Evelyn Chang bringing together works by Schnittke, J.S. Bach and Shostakovich; alongside performances by the Hong Kong Wing Kamerata, The Composers Guild Ensemble, the University Chamber Choir, and students in the Department of Music's Advanced Music Performance class. The final performance of the semester was by French pianist Francois Chaplin in a community outreach event held in conjunction with Le French May Festival and the First Initiative Foundation.

## SUMMER INSTITUTE 2012

The fourth Summer Institute in the Arts and Humanities was held from June 25 to August 10, 2012. The Faculty welcomed over 200 visiting and exchange students from all over the world to its credit-bearing courses, and 160 secondary school students to its non-credit-bearing courses, including outstanding local students from the University's Academy for the Talented.

This year's cultural events featured a performance of Tchaikovsky's Chamber Music by the prestigious Bard College Conservatory of Music, with a pre-concert talk by Dr Chan Hing-yan of the Department of Music; as well as five events held in conjunction with the HellHOT! New Music Festival 2012, including the Jo Kondo 65th Anniversary Portrait Concert, Yat Po Singers A Cappella Composer Workshop & Concert, and the Ligeti Quartet's Modern Classics.

## STUDENT KE PROJECT: TAKE LOVE

As part of the University's commitment to Knowledge Exchange (KE), a new Student KE Project Grant Scheme was introduced in 2011-2012. The aims of the Scheme are to promote a culture of contributing to society through applying the knowledge that students have gained at HKU, nurture a spirit of innovation, and promote engagement with external organizations.

*Lighthouse Productions* was one of the first groups to benefit from the Scheme. The production group was established with a mission to support students in creating and managing performing arts events in Hong Kong. For its March 2012 production, *Lighthouse Productions* staged the sold-out show *Take Love* at the Fringe Club in Central. *Take Love* consisted of four short plays and two monologues revolving around the theme of love, entirely directed, produced and acted by HKU students, including Charles Fong, Sammi Cui, Danielle Chin, Suhani Jain, Adrienne Chiu, Heidi Law, Ingrid Chen, and Michael Headrick. Their mentor for the project was Dr Robert Peckham of the Department of History, School of Humanities.

## FAITH AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE

June 14, 2012 marked an exciting new beginning for HKU, as the Rt Hon Tony Blair delivered the inaugural address for the newly created Faith and Global Engagement initiative at HKU. The former British Prime Minister is the Founding Patron of the Tony Blair Faith Foundation (TBFF) which works among key universities worldwide, to form a strategic network for teaching and dialogue to promote understanding within an interfaith exchange. The lecture inaugurated the partnership between the Faith and Global Engagement initiative at HKU and the TBFF Faith and Globalisation Initiative.

## CNN U.S. ELECTION DEBATE: ASIA MATTERS

HKU students and members of the public had the opportunity to witness a presidential-style debate between a Democrat and a Republican at an event co-organized by the School of Modern Languages and Cultures on September 26. Ross Feingold, Chair, Asia, Republicans Abroad, and Alex Montgomery, Chair, Democrats Abroad Hong Kong addressed issues ranging from relations with China and the economy to leadership and foreign policy in an hour-long debate moderated by CNN anchor/correspondent Kristie Lu Stout.

Should language be taught simply as a tool to communicate, or can it be a starting point for deeper cultural explorations? This is a question that concerned the School of Chinese when it saw the government launch the Chinese language curriculum in 2000.

The School had always viewed the study of Chinese as something more than language and literature – as something that conveyed history, philosophy, tradition and all matters of Chinese culture. It therefore applied for and received a grant for an eight-year project that aimed to take this approach into school-based learning.

Starting in 2003, a series of books on Chinese culture was developed for junior and senior primary, and junior and senior secondary, and tested in schools. The feedback from teachers, students, parents, and principals, plus academic experts in 10 different countries, was used to revise the texts which are now available in nearly 1,000 primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong.



Dr CM Si (centre)

“In the past Chinese language learning was only regarded as a tool where you listen, speak, read, write, and no more. We’ve tried to put a Chinese cultural element into these subjects,” says Associate Professor, Dr Si Chung-Mou, who led the project.

Primary school children are provided with short poems and passages from classical writings to memorize and recite in class. “By memorizing them, they get the most important thing from classical Chinese – the thoughts, dialogues, values of the people who wrote them. It’s also useful for students later on because it can help them to improve their spoken Chinese. And when they write compositions, classical elements can be included, so it will enhance their writing ability,” he says.

“Of course we can’t increase their workload too much, so they just learn one small poem or passage each week.”

The junior secondary school students learn about different aspects of Chinese culture – 24 categories in all covering such topics as festivals, historic sites, legends and Chinese thoughts.

“At senior secondary school, we try to train their critical thinking and get them to think about what’s good or what’s bad about Chinese culture.”

The project has resulted in 10 books, which have

been picked up by Peking University Press and produced using simplified Chinese characters.



“People are concerned that everything is about money, and what about values and spirituality in their children’s development. These Chinese classics can connect them to the philosophical thoughts of the past,” Dr Si says.

The Ministry of Education has also funded an English version of three of the publications, *Introduction to Chinese Culture*, to promote an understanding of Chinese culture to the rest of the world.

*With the “Incorporating Culture Elements into Chinese Language for Schools in the Chinese Communities” project, Dr Si Chung-Mou shared the Faculty Knowledge Exchange Award 2012 of the Faculty of Arts with Dr Peter Cunich.*

## FUNDED KE IMPACT PROJECTS 2012-2013

Nine Knowledge Exchange Impact Projects put forward by members of the Faculty were funded this year. These projects represent outstanding examples of how the Faculty’s research strengths can benefit the wider community. The funded projects are:

### Cultural Leadership Youth Programme

Project Coordinator: Professor Daniel KL Chua

### University Museum and Art Gallery Website

Project Coordinator: Dr Roslyn L Hammers

### Second Century Lecture Series

Project Coordinator: Professor Douglas Kerr

### LinguisticMinorities.HK

Project Coordinator: Dr Lisa Lim

### Contagions: Cultural Perspectives on Emerging Disease

Project Coordinator: Dr Robert Peckham

### The Power of Intimacy: The Writers’ Guidebook to Hong Kong Neighborhoods

Project Coordinator: Dr Page Richards

### Sharing Stories – Raising the Sense of Community in Rural Pat Heung, New Territories

Project Coordinator: Dr Mirana M Szeto

### Public Forum on Global Governance, Underground Economy and Its Impact on Food and Human Security in Greater China and East Asia

Project Coordinator: Dr Victor Teo

### Migration Memory and Creative Digital Narratives

Project Coordinator: Dr Esther Yau

## BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE: THE WITNESS TO WAR PROJECT

Hong Kong experienced terrible upheaval in the Second World War but personal accounts of these experiences and the painful choices they involved have been scant. HKU has been working to change that in a unique collaboration with local secondary schools.

The Witness to War project involves secondary school students interviewing elderly family members about their war experiences and recording and transcribing the interviews. The best ones are selected by the Department of History to be placed in the University Archives.



Dr Peter Cunich (left) with Mrs Helena Leung and Jason Shum, two of the participants in the project

"This is a different kind of knowledge exchange," says Associate Professor of History, Dr Peter Cunich. "The University has benefited enormously from it. We have received more back from this than we have put into it."

The project was suggested to Dr Cunich by Bruce MacNamara, a history teacher at Canadian International School. The Department offered to provide them with an interview template and to brief students on historical methodology and the Second World War. University Archivist Stacy Gould also showed them her facilities and explained the importance of archiving historical documents.

In return, more than 250 oral histories have been deposited at the Archives since 2006 – making it the largest collection of publicly available interview transcripts on the Second World War in East Asia. The material has also proven useful to researchers at HKU.

On the school side, the benefits have been even more profound. The students and their families have been deeply touched by the interview experience. A certificate ceremony held at the end of each year usually ends up being a highly emotional affair.

"Some of the experiences these people recount are quite horrendous: cannibalism in Sai Ying Pun, rape, trekking halfway across China, losing family members, losing family then being reunited with them at the end of the war. There's a full range of emotion," says Dr Cunich.

"Quite often this stuff has been buried deep down for decades. These people have never talked about it before and they are finally getting the opportunity to do so, to someone who is interested in what they have to say.

"For the students, they gain a first-hand glimpse of warfare and they're touched personally by what war means to their families. It's a powerful emotional and psychological experience."

Many of the interview subjects are in their 80s or 90s, making this a now-or-never project. The project's success has prompted two other local secondary schools to join, and inspired similar projects in Tokyo and Kuala Lumpur.

*With the "Witness to War" project, Dr Peter Cunich shared the Faculty Knowledge Exchange Award 2012 of the Faculty of Arts with Dr Si Chung-Mou.*



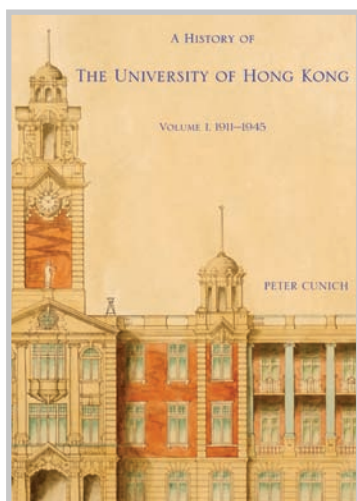
Dr Peter Cunich and HKU Archivist Ms Stacy Gould (second from right) at a certificate presentation ceremony at the Canadian International School with co-director of the project, Mr Bruce MacNamara (far right)



## RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE ARTS FACULTY

*A History of The University of Hong Kong: Volume 1, 1911-1945*, Hong Kong University Press.  
By Peter Cunich

This month sees the publication of Dr Peter Cunich's first volume on The University of Hong Kong. This fascinating book traces the history of the University from its establishment in 1911 to the end of the Japanese occupation in 1945, and evaluates the success of its early mission to educate the new generation of Chinese youth who would lead the modernisation of China. As the first university to be established in Hong Kong, the early decades of the University's history represents the foundation of the whole higher education system in Hong Kong and the book demonstrates the important contribution that HKU made to the development of both Hong Kong and Malaya, the two areas whence most of its students were drawn.



*Religion, Redemption and Revolution: The New Speech Thinking Revolution of Franz Rozenzweig and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy*, University of Toronto Press.  
By Wayne Cristaudo

*A Philosophical History of Love*, Transaction Publishers.  
By Wayne Cristaudo

*Disciplinary Identities: Individuality and Community in Academic Discourse*, Cambridge University Press.  
By Ken Hyland

*Learning to Become a Professional in a Textually-Mediated World*, Peter Lang.  
By Ken Lau

*The Chinese Diaspora on American Screens: Race, Sex, and Cinema*, Temple University Press.  
By Gina Marchetti

## OUR NEW CONTACT INFORMATION

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