An Anthem for HKU Gala Concert
Old Hand In New Role

Professor Douglas Kerr joined the Faculty in 1979, when academic staff were mostly expected to teach, research was optional, and students were drawn from the same 15 to 20 local secondary schools. It is a different organisation today and, with greater workloads and demands for proof of excellence, one might think a rather daunting place to take up a deanship for the first time.

But like his predecessor, Professor Kam Louie, Professor Kerr says he is rather lucky. Both men inherited a Faculty that was stronger than its predecessors, with a mission to consolidate and strengthen it even more.

“Luckily for me, Kam has left the Faculty in probably better shape than it has been in all my time here. I see my job as trying to carry things forward and not drop the ball. I’m not looking to make major structural changes but to build on what we already have.”

Having said that, he has his work cut out for what is likely to be a one- or two-year tenure, until a University search committee identifies someone to take up a five-year deanship.

An urgent concern is staffing. Some programmes are “perilously understaffed, particularly in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures,” he said. New programmes such as China Studies, Hong Kong Studies and some of the language programmes have potential to grow and need more staff, while older, more established programmes need continued support.

Research also needs further nurturing, although it has strengthened considerably in recent years. A new fund will provide money for organising conferences, which are not only a great way to promote networking and exchange ideas, but also raise the Faculty’s visibility and prestige.

Professor Kerr also wants to see more students go abroad on exchange. “Anyone can see the difference that makes when they come back. It should be part of every modern student’s education.”

All of this work would have been unimaginable in 1979, when HKU was the first to offer him a job straight from completing his PhD at Warwick University. “When I first came, there were some professors who would go to the bar at 11am and be carried out 12 hours later. There was no performance review and not much pressure on them,” he said. “Now it is much more professional, though perhaps less colourful. We do so much more for students and new staff, research is out of sight better, and it is a much better university now. But it is also more pressured.”

He has risen to the challenge by establishing himself as a respected teacher and expert in literary history. He recently published Conan Doyle: Writing, Profession, and Practice, a cultural biography of the Sherlock Holmes’ author that starts from the texts to consider Conan Doyle’s life and wide-ranging cultural influence.

Professor Kerr also recently received an RGC grant to look at George Orwell in Asia, although that will likely have to wait until his deanship is over. For the time being, he is occupied as a full-time administrator, with some teaching duties on the side.

“The secret of this job is that the Faculty Office know what they are doing. If I have a problem, I know who to ask. They keep the mechanism running,” he said.

Linguistics and Modern Languages Ranked in Global Top 20

HKU made the global top 20 universities in Linguistics and Modern Languages in the latest QS University Subject Rankings announced on February 26, 2014. Modern Languages was ranked 17th and Linguistics 18th in this annual survey of the top 800 universities worldwide. Two further subjects, History and Philosophy, made the global top 50. The rankings are based on four key pillars, research, teaching, employability and internationalization.

For further information, please visit: http://www.topuniversities.com/subject-rankings/2014

The Kam Louie Arts Centenary Prize Established

In recognition of his leadership and the contributions made to the University’s development by the Faculty’s first executive Dean, Professor Kam Louie, over his eight-year term, friends and members of the Faculty have established a prize to be awarded annually to one Year 2 and one final-year BA degree student. The prize honours Professor Louie’s commitment to enhancing the learning experience of undergraduate students.
Staff Appointments

The following existing members of staff took up new full-time and fixed-term positions during the period of November 1, 2013 and March 31, 2014.

School of Modern Languages and Cultures

Dr Tim Gruenewald, Assistant Professor (American Studies)
Ms Kangsoon Lee, Senior Lecturer (Korean Studies)
Dr Chong Li, Lecturer (German Programme)
Mr Benoit Guerillot, Assistant Lecturer (French Programme)

Dr Chan Hing-yan Presented with Award for Best Artist (Music)

Dr Chan Hing-yan, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Music, was presented with the Award for Best Artist (Music) at the Hong Kong Arts Development Awards 2013 Presentation Ceremony held in the Grand Theatre of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre on April 25, 2014. A total of 29 awards were presented to local artists and arts organizations during the ceremony, organised by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, in recognition of their support and contributions to arts development in Hong Kong.

As a composer, Dr Chan has represented Hong Kong on many international occasions and his works have been performed extensively around the world. His first chamber opera, Heart of Coral, was performed during the 41st Hong Kong Arts Festival in March 2013.

Honorary Doctorate For Arts Alumna Ann Hui On Wah

The University of Hong Kong has conferred the degree of Doctor of Social Sciences honoris causa on Dr Ann Hui On Wah in recognition of her contributions to culture and society.

Dr Hui holds a BA and MA from the University of Hong Kong. She is one of Hong Kong’s most influential filmmakers and her films have been recognized with countless international awards. She has won the Best Director Award twice at the Golden Horse Awards and an unprecedented four times at the Hong Kong Film Awards. Her recent film, A Simple Life, won the Best Actress Award at the 68th Venice Film Festival and was widely acclaimed at many other renowned film festivals.

Dr Hui is an Honorary University Fellow, and as one of its first University Artists, she has generously shared her insights on film, literature and life with HKU members and the community.

Remembering Run Run Shaw: Master of the Arts

In Dr the Honourable Run Run Shaw (HonLLD 1980), who passed away on January 7, 2014, the Faculty of Arts has lost one of its most magnificent friends.

Dr Shaw was extraordinarily generous to the University of Hong Kong as a whole - and indeed to many other universities in Hong Kong and beyond - but it was appropriate that one of the Shaw Foundation’s latest and most splendid gifts was of the building at the HKU Centennial Campus that proudly bears his name, the Run Run Shaw Tower (逸夫樓). This beautiful state-of-the-art building opened in 2012 and houses the Faculty of Arts, and its smaller neighbour, the Run Run Shaw Heritage House (逸夫苑), is the new home of the Hong Kong University Press. These join the Run Run Shaw and the Runme Shaw Buildings (邵逸夫樓及邵仁枚樓) elsewhere on campus, as the built legacy of a great benefactor of the University.

Dr Shaw was a great patron of the sciences. But in a long and highly creative career in the cultural sector, in film and television, he was truly a master of the arts. His shrewd and imaginative leadership helped to create a stage on which Hong Kong’s creative and cultural talent was on display, and from which there emerged a modern Hong Kong identity. The arts and culture are the face that a community sees in the mirror, and also the face that it turns to the world outside. More than anyone else, Dr Run Run Shaw showed Hong Kong to itself and to the world.

In the new building that bears his name, new generations of students and staff of the HKU Arts Faculty carry on the work of culture: the work, like the building, is part of his legacy. In the study of history and languages, art and music and philosophy, and in new academic programmes like Hong Kong Studies and Creative Industries, which would have been close to his heart, the work continues.

“If you seek a monument, look around you.” Dr Run Run Shaw’s monuments are all around, but the most valuable are invisible ones: the great educational projects he so generously supported, which increase our knowledge of ourselves, and better the lives of many, now and to come.

Douglas Kerr
Dean of the Faculty of Arts
Professor Shih Shu-Mei, Endowed Professor and recent arrival to the Faculty, is a pioneer in Sinophone studies and has developed a rich and unique expertise that looks far beyond the realm of China itself.

Professor Shih focuses on Chinese-language literature produced by long-established Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, more recent Chinese communities in the U.S., Australia and elsewhere in the world, and by minority groups within China, such as Tibetans and Uyghurs who may write in the Chinese script but see China as a coloniser or at least as a dominating presence. All of these groups are notably removed from the linguistic centre of power – China.

“Traditionally Chinese literary studies has been about studying only Chinese literature written by Han Chinese. This is problematic in many ways,” she said.

“Oftentimes the word ‘Chinese’ is used for many different purposes, including racism and ethnocentrism. Who is Chinese? And a related question – what is Chinese-ness? Who decides these things? These are all totally open questions but they are assumed to be transparent or universal.

“In the end the term is simply a very Han-centric, northern-centric concept, although ‘Chinese’ is in itself a translation from European languages. The Chinese never needed to call themselves China, they were the Tang Dynasty, the Ming Dynasty, the centre of the world, the realm under heaven.

“But alongside that kind of centrism are all sorts of practices of marginalisation. People have not been paying attention to these things because, since the mid-19th century, China has been in trouble. But we can’t ignore this centrism now that China has risen. We need to think more retrospectively and look at the reality.”

Her interest is in the variations of writing produced by people at the margins rather than their commonalities, in the same way that postcolonial English studies focus on different English-speaking cultures.

“A lot of Sinophone literature engages with the local history of Chinese in these countries in relation to other ethnic groups, languages, cultures. Often these texts are quite multilingual,” Professor Shih said.

“There is an argument that there is more than one Sinitic language and the relationship between them is not that of the standard and non-standard, but that they are different languages. I’m trying to let people see the multiplicity, the differences, the complexities of language and culture in relation to race, ethnicity, gender – all these issues.”

A related perspective is the insight that this literature gives on China as a power centre and coloniser, particularly for such places as Southeast Asia, Hong Kong and Taiwan. These places are where the intersection of both Asian (Chinese and Japanese) and Western (British, French, Dutch, American) empires occurred, and we need to attend to this inter-imperiality. In the past, scholars only looked at Western colonialism in these places.

Professor Shih, whose endowment bestows the title Hon-Yin and Suet-Fong Chan Professorship in Chinese, is investigating these ideas from her new vantage point at HKU, where she arrived last July after 20 years at UCLA. She said moving here was a natural progression given Hong Kong’s location and its struggles with identity as a Sinophone community. HKU’s Southeast Asian connection was an added bonus.

“This School of Chinese was established with funding from the Straits Chinese in Southeast Asia. When I discovered that I was so happy – my work fits right in,” she said.

Hon-Yin and Suet-Fong Chan Professorship in Chinese

The Hon-Yin and Suet-Fong Chan Professorship in Chinese was set up by Mr Anthony Chan in 2005 in honour of his parents. Mr Chan has served as a Court Member of the University and has been involved with the Endowed Professorships Scheme since its inception. The Faculty is extremely grateful for his support and generosity.

The Endowed Professorships Scheme began in 2005, and to date, a total of 80 of these Professorships have been established at HKU. Each instantiates a partnership between HKU and its friends and benefactors, and works to the mutual benefit of the university and the community. The previous holder of the Hon-Yin and Suet-Fong Chan Professorship in Chinese was Professor Sin Chow-Yiu.

Endowed Professorships Public Lecture Series

Professor Shih delivered the second in a new series of Endowed Professorships public lectures on Tuesday, April 15, 2014 in the University’s Rayson Huang Theatre. The lecture, entitled “From World History to World Literature: China, the South, and the Global 60s”, was attended by Mr Anthony Chan, Mr Alan Chan and Ms Donna Chan.
Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was not only a titan of Western philosophy, but also an avid botanist. Few philosophers have attempted to draw a connection between the two, but now Dr Alexandra Cook of Philosophy has done so, producing a detailed book that last year made her the first woman to receive the Arts Faculty Research Output prize. Her research likewise inspired a three-year knowledge exchange project in Geneva, Switzerland, where Rousseau was born.

“You can ask, what does botany have to do with philosophy?” she said. “When a philosopher embarks on something like botany, he is going to pursue it seriously. In his Confessions, Rousseau says he’s not just going to look at nature with ‘stupid and monotonous admiration’, but rather, he has to develop a deeper understanding of it.”

While the study of botany was important to medicine in the eighteenth century, Rousseau advocated studying plants for their own sake rather than solely for their pharmaceutical properties. “He wrote: ‘if the study of the plants purges my soul that is enough for me. I do not desire any other medicine.’ This leads to his lying on the ground and contemplating the plant as it grew,” Dr Cook said.

“People say Rousseau’s a romantic, but the point that’s been missed is that if you are really going to get something out of this contemplation of plants, you need to have a means to understand them.”

The dominant botanical paradigm in Europe in the eighteenth century was classification, and that was the way Rousseau adopted for studying plants.

During his time, there were two main schools of thought on how to classify plants – the “artificial sexual system” (based on the number and positioning of reproductive organs) and the “natural system” (based on multiple characteristics). Feminist scholars have argued the artificial sexual system was highly sexist and by extension therefore so was Rousseau, because he wrote some favourable things about it.

Dr Cook, who has studied both systems in detail and carefully compared them with Rousseau’s writings, believes he has been wrongly accused. “He really separated himself from those views and took up the natural system of classification, which was compatible with his general philosophical presuppositions,” she said.

Through his writings, Rousseau urged others to take an interest in the study of nature, popularizing botany in writings that were widely disseminated and translated from French into English, Danish, Dutch, Portuguese and Russian. He even devised a novel set of 1,000 characters for denoting different plant parts and characteristics, and his ideas on plant classification influenced later writers on botany such as Goethe.

Dr Cook’s book, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and botany: the salutary science, details Rousseau’s botanical studies and served as the basis for a five-month, bilingual (French and English) outdoor exhibition at the Conservatory and Botanical Garden of Geneva to celebrate the tercentenary of Rousseau’s birth in May - October 2012. The City of Geneva invited Dr Cook to curate the exhibit and she gave several guided tours of the exhibition to members of the public. “Usually people in philosophy departments don’t do exhibits. But the Geneva Botanical Garden had the expertise and people – gardeners, curators, librarians and administrators – who did amazing work,” she said.


For details of the exhibition Je raffole de la botanique (I’m crazy about botany), please visit http://www.ville-ge.ch/cjb/rousseau_intro_en.php.

Dr Cook benefited from generous funding from the Research Grants Council for these projects.
The First World War, despite its name, is usually depicted as being fought by and for Europeans (and their colonial descendants). But Asia had a stake in the conflict, too, as Professor Xu Guoqi in History is showing in pioneering research.

Professor Xu has received an RGC grant and Oxford University Press book contract to write the first examination of Asia’s involvement in the First World War. His perspective is not the “big man” history of diplomacy or military strategies, but of the people on the ground.

“I am trying to document the collective voice, the shared experiences which Asians had in the war. I’m looking at five countries – China, Japan, India, Vietnam and Korea – and how it affected their development and was a turning point in their histories,” he said.

The latter three were colonies and followed their masters, voluntarily or otherwise – India and Vietnam joining Britain and France in Europe – in the hope their involvement in the war would edge them towards independence while the Koreans tried to use the war to break away from Japanese colonial rule.

China similarly wanted to regain lost sovereignty, especially from Japan. Its strategy was to align itself with the West to counterbalance the Japanese, and also to get Germany out of Shandong province, which it was occupying.

Japan also wanted the Germans out of China because they had thwarted Japan’s territorial ambitions there.

All of this added up to a great mix of Asian involvement, both in the European theatre and closer to home.

Japan battled Germany in China, trouncing the Germans in late 1914 and taking over their concession. This soon led it to issue its Twenty-one Demands on China, fuelling China’s desire to get involved in the conflict so it could at least win the peace.

But since China was a neutral state until it finally managed to join the war, it entered through the back door first, sending about 140,000 Chinese workers to France mainly via Canada. China insisted they were volunteers in order to protect its neutrality but, as Professor Xu documented in two earlier books on China’s involvement in the war, most of the workers came from Shandong, the place of tension with Germany.

Thousands of Asians died in the conflict, although the risk was lower for workers than combatants (about 3,000 Chinese workers died). But was it worth it?

“All five countries were excited about the post-war order under the Wilsonian blueprint. From the perspective of shared experiences, they had all linked their fates to the First World War, but they all ended up disappointed and quite disillusioned,” Professor Xu said.

India, Vietnam and Korea remained colonies. China came away empty-handed from the Paris Peace Conference, prompting the May Fourth Movement, and the Japanese, while they had their claims on Shandong legitimised, did not get recognition for racial equality from the West.

“My argument is controversial. Nobody has said Japan and China shared a destiny and experience. I am trying to bring in all these different voices and look at them from a comparative and international history perspective.”

Asia and the Great War will be published by Oxford University Press in fall 2016.

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**Postgraduate Student News**

Ms Kimberly Tao Wei Yi, a PhD candidate in the School of English, was recently awarded a prestigious Sir Edward Youde Memorial Fellowship 2013-2014. This fellowship scheme is designed to encourage and support full-time students pursuing research postgraduate studies. Ms Tao is currently conducting research for her thesis entitled, “Understanding Transgender: Finding the Meaning of ‘Transgender’, ‘Man’ and ‘Woman’ in Law and Society”.

**Wang Gungwu Prizes For Undergraduate And Postgraduate Students In History**

On the occasion of the Arts Faculty’s centenary celebration, Professor Wang Gungwu, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong, has generously donated a sum to establish the “Wang Gungwu Prizes for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students in History”. The prizes aim to recognise students who have excelled in their academic and research achievements.

The first recipients, Dr Henry Choi, Ms Angharad Fletcher and Ms Carol Lau, were presented with their prizes by Professor Wang in a ceremony held in Run Run Shaw Tower on December 6, 2013.

The balance of a loan fund set up by Professor Wang while he was in office to provide interest-free loans to students with financial difficulties will be re-designated to these prizes. More than 200 students have benefited from this loan fund since its inception in 1992.
Arts and humanities are often associated with the finer, deeper, non-monetary things of life, but in the 21st century they are also an industry. In recognition of that, the Faculty launched the Global Creative Industries (GCI) programme to break down barriers between business and the arts and prepare students for careers in this field.

Dr Dixon Wong of the School of Modern Languages and Cultures is the instigator of the programme, which is in its second year and has attracted keen interest from across the University. More than 200 students from various faculties enrolled in the introductory course in 2013-14 and over 60 have declared majors in the programme. A recent non-credit bearing course on creative management in the luxury industry also attracted a cross-section of students with the chance to earn an internship and cash prizes for top performers.

If all that sounds rather more like a business programme, that’s fine with Dr Wong, who worked in a Japanese bank before entering academia.

“Business, arts, culture – these are all human activities and should follow a similar logic. Their classifications are a recent phenomenon. Why should we stick to them? I see no reason. It’s Zen Buddhism to me – the classifications are temporary, not essential.

“The whole world is moving towards a ‘cultural economy’. Producing cars may not be as profitable as producing movies or comics or pop music, so we’re moving from the survival stage where we have focused mainly on what we need towards something we can enjoy. Arts is part of the economy now.”

With that in mind, the GCI programme has been structured to provide understanding of both the special nature of the arts industry and business concepts.

“Traditionally business schools talk about manufacturing, finance, marketing and so on. But the product is quite different compared to cultural products and creativity. This implies a different management regime is needed, a different funding model, different careers.

“We train people who can come up with a new business model to run a cultural industry. We don’t train them how to make a movie or music, but how to use these to make businesses. You need to know what both artists and industry are doing, and put them together to generate profit and make the industry sustainable.

“Crossover is the key word. We’re training students to think in terms of crossing over categories, industries, fields, people, sectors.”

The luxury industry course is an example of that thinking. It was organised jointly with the TSL Foundation and speakers included TSL Jewellery Group founder Tse Sui Luen, music producer Chiu Tsang Hei and Hong Kong Television Network Ltd co-founder Ricky Wong Wai Kay. Students gave presentations at the end of the 10-week programme and the top three each received a $10,000 scholarship and a chance to intern at TSL.

This is the first such company programme for the Faculty and Dr Wong hopes there will be more. “Exposing students to these things encourages them to think out of the box,” he said.

Two prizes have been set up to recognize outstanding students majoring in English Studies. Both prizes are named after distinguished Arts alumni who very sadly passed away in 2013, Mrs Maisie Choa in October, and Fr Alvaro Ribeiro in April. They are greatly missed.

**Maisie Choa English Poetry Prize**

Mrs Maisie Choa (née Kotewall) studied English Literature and Geography and received her BA in 1941. She was the wife of Dr George Choa, also an HKU alumnus, who passed away in September 2013. The couple were lifelong supporters of their alma mater and contributed to the establishment of the HKU Foundation.

The Maisie Choa English Poetry Prize is generously supported by the Dr George and Mrs Maisie Choa Foundation. The Prize is to be awarded annually on the basis of academic merit shown in the coursework for courses related to English Poetry.

**Fr Alvaro Ribeiro SJ Memorial Scholarship**

Fr Ribeiro was awarded the King Edward Scholarship and completed his BA studies with first class honours at HKU in 1969. During his Assistant Wardenship (1989-1990) and Wardenship (1990-1992) of Ricci Hall, Fr Ribeiro also taught in the Department of English.

Fr Ribeiro’s contemporaries, family and friends have generously donated funds to set up the Fr Alvaro Ribeiro SJ Memorial Scholarship in his memory. The Scholarship is to be awarded annually on the basis of academic merit, intellectual achievement, and contribution to the community.

http://www.gcip.hku.hk/
The Challenge Of Teaching Chinese As A Foreign Language

The Faculty of Arts has long experience teaching Chinese as a foreign language (CFL) to everyone from diplomats and Hong Kong governors to lawyers and other professionals. In recent years the demand for such training has soared and moved well beyond elite circles, sparking debate on how best to convey the complexities of Chinese tones and characters to a diversity of novice students.

That issue was brought to the forefront at the First International Conference on Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language, organised by the School of Chinese in December. About 150 prominent scholars and participants from Asia, Australia, Europe and North America joined the event, the first of its kind to be held in Hong Kong.

Dr Lena Chan from the Chinese Language Centre was one of the organisers. “There are two different opinions on teaching culture and language,” she said. “Can a student master language from learning the language or learning the culture? And if culture is included, can it be taught in class and to what degree should it be included? We only have limited contact hours to teach students to listen, read, speak and write.”

Two leading scholars gave provocative keynote addresses on the side of pure language learning. Professor Chih-p’ing Chou of Princeton University argued that beginners should focus on sounds, tones, pronunciation and grammar, not culture. Even more radically, Professor Joel Bellassen of the University of Paris said the learning of written Chinese should be done by purely studying characters, without any intermediary such as pinyin.

Ultimately, Dr Chan said, both culture and language are important – a point that came out in another keynote address, by the Head of the School of Chinese, Dr CM Si, on an issue pertinent to Hong Kong: how to ensure non-native speakers of Chinese can gain sufficient proficiency to compete with native speakers.

Dr Si presented his research on the situation of the 15,000 students in Hong Kong’s school system who come from South Asian and other non-Chinese backgrounds and struggle to keep up with the curriculum.

“Many of them are born in Hong Kong and their parents want them to study in Hong Kong mainstream schools, but their proficiency is not up to standard,” he said. This affects their likelihood of getting into university and their job options, so Dr Si has proposed that the government establish a CFL curriculum for these students and provide teacher training and resource materials.

The School itself has many resources to contribute in this area. It began teaching CFL in the 1950s, to such high-flyers as future governors Lord Wilson and Sir Edward Youde and the Danish Prince Consort, Henrik. Today it has more than 800 non-Chinese learners and hopes in future to be able to offer a Bachelor’s degree in the growing field of CFL.

The networks and discussions from the conference have provided further impetus for that pursuit. The conference was sponsored by the Kenneth Fung Ping Fan Foundation Trust I and the Louis Cha Fund.

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The School of Chinese's Writer-in-Residence Scheme hosted Taiwanese novelist Chang Show-foong (張曉風) in 2014. Born in 1941, Professor Chang is a prolific researcher and writer. She has taught at Soochow University, Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, and the Center for General Education, National Yang-Ming University.

Her debut collection, On the Other Side of the Carpet (地毯的那一端), was published when she was 25. Her literary works include Eternal Happiness (再生緣), The Jade Mind (玉想), and All the Stars are Here (星星都已經到齊了). She is the recipient of several awards, including the Chung San Literary Prose Award, National Literary Prose Award, Wu San Lien Literary Award and 6th Annual Top Ten Outstanding Female Youth Award.

Events held in conjunction with Professor Chang’s residency included an exhibition of her creative works, “The Aesthetic World of Chang Show-foong”, held in the University’s Main Library, and a public lecture on the topic of language varieties across the Taiwan Strait.
Senior secondary school students face tough demands – the now-or-never pressure to succeed in their studies, uncertainty about what they really want to do, and a great compulsive need to spend time with their peers. Inevitably, some of them buckle under the pressure and fail to meet their potential.

The Associate Degree (AD) and Higher Diploma (HD) streams in Hong Kong give such students a second chance to prove themselves and gain entry to a university – including HKU. The Faculty admits about 50 AD and HD students annually to the senior years of the BA degree curriculum. The students say they are both grateful and relieved for the opportunity.

Karen Ko Kwun-lam studied science subjects for her Advanced-level diploma and realised too late in the day that these were not right for her. She shifted her focus to the humanities in her AD and found the success that had eluded her.

“The courses I took in my Associate Degree were very challenging because I had to get really high marks every time. Otherwise I couldn’t have got into such a famous university as HKU,” she said. She entered HKU in September 2012 as a second-year double major in Linguistics and Korean Studies.

“I think that AD students are a little more hardworking. Other students had a first year of fun, joining clubs and working part-time, while we were focused on our studies. And because we had two years of academic training, it has been easier for us to finish our work. But we did miss that year of fun and it can be harder to make new friends in Year 2.”

Hyris Ma Yoi-yau, also a Linguistics major, agreed that the AD route to HKU, while not ideal at the time, left them better prepared for university life.

“Most of the AD students are more mature in their ways of thinking and more willing to cooperate with others,” she said. “They also communicate with their professors more because they know it’s better to understand what is expected of them.”

That is not to say there are no downsides to being an AD student. Apart from missing out on a first year with fewer pressures, their schedules can be all over the place as they try to fulfil all the requirements of their programmes and of the University – as well as fit in part-time jobs, exchanges and even club activities. Hyris has two jobs and sits on a club committee, Karen has gone on exchange to Korea, while Clara Wong Hoyi, who was admitted last September as a second-year Linguistics student, sits on a club committee and is hoping to go on exchange.

“If I had gone straight from secondary school, I think I would have come here and played, played, played. And sacrificed my GPA – that’s the norm,” Clara said.

The intense effort to cram it all in, however, means they will have something of great value at the end of the day, Hyris said. “I think of my future career. If I hadn’t got into HKU, my prospects would not be so ideal.”

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If you build it, he will come” is the mantra of Hollywood film *Field of Dreams*, in which a man builds a professional baseball ground in a cornfield. In the arts, the same blind faith can seem to be at work – that if you build a venue or cultural district, the culture will come. It is such misguided thinking that has inspired the Advanced Cultural Leadership Programme (ACLP) and the Faculty’s involvement in HKU’s performance venues.

Professor Daniel Chua, who came to the Faculty six years ago to head the School of Humanities, has been the chief instigator in these ventures. He advocates the need to groom leaders who can appreciate the higher value of arts and culture.

“Arts is at the interface of values in society. Artists are constantly pushing the boundaries and challenging our way of thinking. They are critical thinkers but in a sensuous, artistic form. It’s very important we know how to articulate these kinds of things and encourage artists when they do this,” he said.

Cultural leadership provides the framework for this flowering to happen. The ACLP, which began in 2011 and is offered jointly with the Clore Leadership Programme of the UK, admits up to 20 participants in each intake who all work in the culture sector. Over one year, they explore the value of culture in society and look in depth at practical issues such as governance, business strategy and organisational structure. They are also encouraged to pursue personal development.

The success of the programme can be seen in the ways that participants have enriched Hong Kong’s cultural community, for example founding the think tank CULTURE+, the Modern Academy which focuses on modern music, and various community organisations. They also help to lead the Cultural Leadership Youth Camp for secondary school students, an offshoot of the ACLP.

The programme’s achievements were recently recognised by Fu Tak Iam Foundation, which agreed to fund it for the next two years.

“This is a hugely expensive programme to run, but you cannot skimp on quality,” Professor Chua said. “We bring in people who have turned their organisations around and achieved impressive things, who run the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Tate Modern, Sadlers Wells. They are very willing to pass on their expertise.

In the cultural industries you can’t coerce people to do things because you don’t pay them enough and that’s not why they are doing this work. Leadership in these circumstances is not a position, it’s an attitude.”

He practices what he preaches as a member of the cultural management team that advises on the best use of HKU’s cultural venues. As with the ACLP, he sees a special role for the University in advancing the arts. “There has to be an intellectual backbone to what we do. It is fine to entertain and make money, but this is not the University’s business.”

Professor Chua will exercise his own intellectual backbone in the near future. He steps down as Head of the School of Humanities this summer and plans to write a book on Beethoven.

**ISM FELLOWSHIP**

The Yale Institute of Sacred Music (ISM) has announced that Professor Chua will be one of six new fellows joining its interdisciplinary community for the 2014-2015 year.

The ISM Fellows are established scholars, religious leaders, and artists whose work is in or is moving to the fields of sacred music, liturgical/ritual studies, or religion and the arts. The Fellows, who represent a cross-section of cultures and disciplines, have numerous opportunities to share their work with the community and to teach, as well as to work on their individual projects.
Motivated by their own lack of knowledge about Islam, a group of students has launched a publication to enlighten themselves and others about this often misunderstood religion.

*Connect* is the title of their magazine, out this spring, which has been supported by a grant from the Student Knowledge Exchange Fund and guidance from community partner Serving Islam Team (SIT).

Shirley Wong Lok-yin, a second-year Arts student, was the catalyst who brought everyone together through her own curiosity about religion and her desire to do something positive.

“I was, and still am, thinking about my religion. Protestantism, Catholicism and Islam have similar roots, and I have been thinking why I would choose one instead of the others,” she said. “Also, as a student in Comparative Literature, I knew it was important to learn more about different cultures.”

She came across the SIT in Mongkok which is trying to help the Islamic community integrate in Hong Kong. She knew little about Islam – “at first I thought that ‘Islam’ and ‘Muslim’ were the same,” she admitted – but through discussions with SIT founder, Wael Mohamed Ibrahim, she came to learn more. She also came to realise that she and her fellow students could do something to improve knowledge and understanding about Islam in the wider community.

The idea for a publication seemed a good starting point, but their aim has been to make it more of a cultural study than a religious publication, and to connect Muslims and non-Muslims. SIT gives input to ensure they portray Islam correctly.

“We want to facilitate cultural exchange and give a voice to those are not so familiar to us, and to break cultural stereotypes,” Shirley said.

The theme of the first issue is love and marriage and it has been an eye-opener. The students were surprised to learn that Muslims tended to marry in haste because they were not allowed to date – they interviewed Hong Kong people who had converted to Islam to do this.

They also discovered that Islam was still regarded as taboo by some, even within their own team. One student, a devout Christian, felt uncomfortable with the focus on Islam and eventually left the team.

Joyce Fong Lok-lam, also a second-year Arts student, noted people had had negative views about Muslims since 9/11. “Even this incident shows how people feel kind of antagonistic about Islam. They think if it’s not their religion, they shouldn’t be involved.”

Others, though, have been enlightened by the experience. Jamie Tse Wing-tung, another second-year student, said, “I thought Muslims would be secretive and isolated from other people. But after meeting with them I found them willing to talk and connect to people from other religions. They want to fit in in Hong Kong. This changed my attitude to Islamic culture, which has been portrayed quite negatively in the mass media.”

About 1,000 copies of *Connect*, which is in English and Chinese, have been distributed to university campuses and in the Islamic community in Hong Kong. The team are now preparing their second volume.
"Knowledge exchange" is the latest mission of universities and aims to extend the impacts of teaching and research into the community. This is a straightforward enough task for disciplines such as Medicine or Engineering, but how can it apply to the likes of History or English?

HKU has been working on this question with Leeds University, which has developed successful community partnerships with everyone from media and museums to governments and voluntary groups, supported by its Arts Engaged programme. Historian Dr Laura King was one of four Leeds scholars to visit the Faculty in recent months to share their experiences. “What we have found is that researchers get loads of benefits from this kind of work and it can increase the quality of their research,” she said.

Dr King is a case in point. Her speciality is fatherhood in the UK in the 20th century and she has helped a theatre company develop themes on the topic for its play “Our Fathers”, which debuted in June 2012. The play has toured ever since and a number of performances included post-show discussions chaired by Dr King and featuring different experts, who field questions on fatherhood from the audience.

“Our general aim is to provoke people to reflect on what fatherhood means, how fundamentally life has changed, and how people’s individual experiences in their own families relate to the broader picture of social change and continuity.”

“It was exciting for me to talk to the theatre company about key concepts from academia and see the different ways that they approach them as performers and people who write creatively. Together we are able to do something more powerful than when we work alone. Audiences respond much more to a performance about fatherhood inspired by my research than if I just spoke on research.”

During her visit here, Dr King gave talks and workshops about the play and other outreach work at Leeds to the Faculty and the University’s Knowledge Exchange Office. She also undertook the more conventional academic activity of lecturing, on fatherhood, at the invitation of the Centre for Humanities and Medicine and Department of History.

Dr King has been tracking changes in the role of fathers in Britain over the 20th century, such as their presence at birth, a recent phenomenon coinciding with greater social and geographical mobility, the rise of the nuclear family, and the predominance of hospital births. “My take from history is that our assumptions about the roles of mothers and fathers are much more informed by cultural norms than any biological basis,” she said.

The topic has universal appeal because everyone has a father and most men will become fathers, making it an ideal topic for knowledge exchange. Scholars can relate, too, which helps in convincing them that academic work can be translated into outreach. “Arts and Humanities researchers are not always sure how research can fit into this. Bodies like Arts Engaged and HKU’s KE Office offer practical support and also help people navigate the tricky world of impact, knowledge exchange and public engagement.”

**HKU International Poetry Prize 2014 Call For Submissions**

The School of English is pleased to announce that renowned poet Li-Young Lee will be the final judge of the HKU International Poetry Prize 2014. Li-Young Lee is the author of four critically acclaimed books of poetry, his most recent being *Behind My Eyes* (Norton, 2008). Lee’s honors include fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, The Lannan Foundation, and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, as well as grants from the Illinois Arts Council, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

The School is inviting submissions for the HKU International Poetry Prize 2014 from poets around the world writing in English who have not previously published, or self-published, a full-length collection of poems. The winner receives HK$2,500 and publication of a first collection of poems with the Hong Kong University Press. Deadline for submission is December 31, 2014. For further information, please visit [http://www.english.hku.hk/prize.htm](http://www.english.hku.hk/prize.htm).
The male bower bird makes a beautiful nest on the ground, which usually is interpreted as an effort to impress the female bird. But that view does not sit well with feminist, scholar, journalist and publisher Germaine Greer, who spoke in April as part of the Faculty’s Second Century Lecture Series.

“Male display is a way of impressing other males,” she said, citing poets who write love poetry not to read to their lovers, but to be read by others. “The important thing about male display [is], if you watch the female bower bird – and I do live with them – you’ll see that she’s more interested in eating.”

The line drew a laugh at the talk, which focused on culture and gender. But Professor Greer was most serious about her aim to “improve the questions” being asked about women’s role in producing culture.

“When we discuss culture, we are generally discussing the culture of the elite. In fact all human beings have culture and we would do well to keep that fact in sight,” she said.

But in looking back over history, “it’s when we concern ourselves with the culture of the elite that we become aware that women are not makers of it. Women sing songs but they don’t write the words or the music. They play instruments but they seldom compose.”

This disparity is seen starkly in art, a field of great interest to Professor Greer. Women generally did not learn to paint until the 18th century, when painting developed from a skilled trade into a pursuit of the leisure class. Women in their droves took up painting but their work was not highly regarded. One book on 19th century painters, for instance, included six women of 700 entries (the book was written by a woman). The Tate collection in Britain has more than 74,000 works but only about 3,000 by women. However, Professor Greer said the discussion should not stop or even start with the numbers.

“[You could say] women don’t paint as well as men and you could even argue the best women painters don’t paint as well as … the second best or third best men. That’s not the issue. Have another look. [Women] are not painting, they’re doing something else,” she said.

She highlighted Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama, who paints dots and nets and creates installations that evoke a sense of infinity. Women have embraced installations and new media because these forms are more organic and not confined by a frame, which women are more at ease with, she said.

There is a catch, though. Installations are not nearly as highly valued as paintings and this is where Professor Greer’s discussion on culture and gender is crystallised. Women artists in new media “busted the market, not playing the game. In the meantime, in great auction houses of the world, art is selling for prices that are criminal, the yearly income of small African republics. This is rubbish.” She concluded with a call to arms: “Women have got to keep up their pressure on it and absolute rejection of it.”

Germaine Greer was born in Melbourne and educated in Australia and at Cambridge University. Her first book, *The Female Eunuch* (1969), took the world by storm and remains one of the most influential texts of the feminist movement. Professor Greer has had a distinguished academic career in Britain and the USA. She makes regular appearances in print and other media as a broadcaster, journalist, columnist and reviewer.

In addition to her lecture at the University’s Rayson Huang Theatre on April 8, 2014, Professor Greer also spoke about her latest book, *White Beech: The Rainforest Years*, at an event organised by the Hong Kong International Literary Festival. The Second Century Lecture was generously supported by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Swindon Book Co Ltd.
In a special tribute to Professor Lap-Chee Tsui, who completed his tenure as the University’s 14th Vice-Chancellor on March 31, 2014, the Grand Hall of the Lee Shau Kee Lecture Centre hosted the first live performance of the reconstructed University Anthem by the Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Diocesan Choral Society and HKU Students’ Union Choir, under the baton of University Artist Yip Wing-sie.

The University Anthem was first performed at the Opening Ceremony of the University held on Monday, March 11, 1912, in front of the newly completed Main Building. It was revived for the University’s centenary under the guidance of Professor Daniel Chua, Head of the School of Humanities. The Anthem was given a new set of orchestral colours by Dr Chan Hing-yan of the Department of Music and was performed and recorded in City Hall on May 18, 2011.

During the Concert, “An Anthem for HKU”, Co-Convenor Professor Daniel Chua presented Professor Tsui with three very special gifts from members of the Faculty: a piece of choral music composed by Dr Chan Hing-yan, an artwork designed by Professor David Clarke, and a poem written by Dr Page Richards. Each artwork marks a breakthrough in the history of science, forming a lineage that connects Galileo’s compound microscope, Darwin’s theory of evolution, and Professor Tsui’s genetic discoveries in his identification of the defective gene that causes cystic fibrosis.

**MUSIC: OF SEVEN – FOR MIXED CHOIR**
Dr Chan Hing-yan  
Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Music

The number ‘seven’ acts as the DNA of this three-minute composition. The work’s underlying structure is a seven-section design suspended from three statements of a three-note musical cryptogram derived from the initials of Professor Tsui’s name: T-L-C.

**ART: DARWIN EVOLVED**
Professor David Clarke  
Department of Fine Arts

Professor Clarke subjected a photograph of the influential scientist to a process of repeated photocopying. By copying that original image, and then copying that copy (and so on over multiple generations) he has made use of a technique which combines faithful propagation with subversion.

His choice of the method on this occasion was influenced by certain similarities between it and our current understanding of the process of evolution, which Darwin of course laid the groundwork for.

**POETRY: THE MICROSCOPE**
Dr Page Richards  
Associate Professor, School of English

**THE MICROSCOPE**

In the light of this microscope, big things get small. Glass slides squeeze mountains into plain sight, worth a thousand words.

The lens lowers. Our eye suddenly sees muscovite, for instance, a mineral staged in low relief and long parallel axes, its thin section observed, briefing the imagination. Petrographic grain turns from the inscrutable into a kaleidoscope of reasonable grandeur left-over from massive heat and pressure. Then, the living organism, its clear slide of stain: nuclei round and methylene blue, bacteria malachite green, the coverslip wet, marking the edge, a getaway to step back, breathe, take it all in. It is this, this frame we are born for. Yet no bright look, no sharp eye, is all-protecting, or protected. Each fact its own shimmer.

There is love, love of seeing up close deep patterns of accuracy, the human body reawakened, unknowable and knowable. *  

Up the down microscope of light shoots glints and nicks, imperfect blues and greens to bend the lives we lead, electrify.  

We hope to glimpse more, help more those we know and those we do not, inordinately hidden, inordinately moving.

Look again, look into this microscope, see the beauty of design: the genetic sequence, the human chain of life, our hours of hopes and errors and dreams sliding between this earth and base of sky. Small things get big. And we—trying, trying to improve the given and the made, alongside many hands from HKU generously waving us on to look and see what moves us, what we can still do.

Presented by the HKU Foundation, “An Anthem for HKU” was held on February 7, 2014 in the Grand Hall of the Lee Shau Kee Lecture Centre. It was produced by the Cultural Management Team and the Development & Alumni Affairs Office. Convenor Dr Patrick Poon Sun-Cheong and Co-Convenor Professor Daniel Chua announced that, with the generous support of the Concert’s patrons, HK$2M was raised for the Cultural and Humanities Fund. The University Artists Scheme 2011-2013 was generously supported by the Daniel Chan Fund.
FROM PHOTOGRAPHY TO MUSIC: A CREATIVE DIALOGUE BETWEEN DAVID CLARKE AND CHAN HING-YAN

Photographer Professor David Clarke of the Department of Fine Arts and composer Dr Chan Hing-yen of the Department of Music embarked together on a cross-disciplinary creative dialogue combining their artistic skills. The project was a meditation on transience and the acceptance of endings – the former in the way Professor Clarke treated the fruit and flower theme, and the latter because one of the mediums used, Polaroid film, was about to disappear at the time, having been discontinued by its manufacturers.

Professor Clarke began by taking photographs of flowers and pieces of fruit using Polaroid instant film, then scanned those images at high resolution and printed them at a larger scale as giclée (high quality ink-jet) prints on artist paper. The second half of the dialogue was created when Dr Chan produced a new musical composition entitled *Adieu Sequence* in response to Professor Clarke’s works, thereby making another leap in the creative process from the medium of photography to that of music.

Professor Clarke’s photographs were exhibited at the University Museum and Arts Gallery from November 12 to December 1, 2013 and are currently showing in the Ground Floor Gallery of Run Run Shaw Tower. Dr Chan’s *Adieu Sequence* was performed during the exhibition and inspired Dr Esther Cheung, Chair of the Department of Comparative Literature, to compose a poem, *Moving Stillness*, dedicated to David and Hing-yen.

For more information on this project and to hear the piece composed by Dr Chan, please visit: http://arts.hku.hk/dclarke.

POSTCARDS FROM HONG KONG

Graduates from the School of English’s Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing in English (MFA) had their works performed on stage at The Fringe Underground on March 21 and 22, 2014.

*Postcards from Hong Kong* featured eight short, ten-minute plays showcasing different perspectives of modern day life in Hong Kong. From the silly to the profound, the abstract to the absurd, the plays were written by promising new Hong Kong writers including Irene Tsang (winner of the SCMP/RTHK Hong Kong’s Top Story Award 2012), Vincci Pun (winner of the SCMP/RTHK Hong Kong’s Top Story Most Creative Award 2012), Wilson Chik, Michael Cheukachi, Kaitlin Trowbridge, Long Wong, Samuel Chan and Oliver Wong - all graduates of the MFA Program. The plays were performed and directed in collaboration with some of Hong Kong’s most accomplished theatre artists.

*Postcards from Hong Kong* was presented by “The Black Sheep Family”, established by playwright Shane Sakhrani to support and develop the writing of students and alumni of the MFA Program which co-sponsored the event.

LIN XI: THE HONG KONG I LOVE

The School of Modern Languages and Cultures’ Hong Kong Studies Programme hosted a talk by HKU alumnus and acclaimed lyricist, Lin Xi (林夕), in the Grand Hall of the Lee Shau Kee Lecture Centre on April 10, 2014.

Lin Xi, Hong Kong’s leading lyricist, is almost synonymous with Cantopop. He graduated from the HKU Faculty of Arts in 1984. Before becoming a full-time writer, he worked as a teaching assistant, newspaper editor, and creative director/manager/consultant for various media. A prolific lyricist, he has won many awards including Radio Television Hong Kong’s “Golden Needle Award” in 2008 and the Composers and Authors Society of Hong Kong “CASH Hall of Fame Award” in 2012.

Lin Xi evoked Hong Kong through its culture, lyrics and urban characteristics and shared his thoughts on issues such as censorship during an extended Q&A session in the packed auditorium.
Recent Publications By Members Of The Arts Faculty

A Defiant Brush: Su Renshan and the Politics of Painting in Early 19th-Century Guangdong, Hong Kong University Press.
By Yeewan Koon

Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics
The Centre for Applied English Studies recently published the inaugural issue of its Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics. Building on the strengths of its predecessor, the Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics which ran a total of 31 issues from October 1996 to August 2013, this new journal has set itself the goal of fostering discussion and scholarship about the learning and use of English in Asian contexts.

In addition to contributions with a pedagogical angle, the journal solicits papers which look at English in relation to language policy and within Asian social and cultural contexts. The first issue takes as its theme “English as a Lingua Franca in Institutions of Higher Education in Asia”. For further information, please visit http://caes.hku.hk/ajal.

Yuan Yang: A Journal of Hong Kong and International Writing
The latest issue of Yuan Yang: A Journal of Hong Kong and International Writing is now available from the University bookstore and School of English General Office (Room 735, Run Run Shaw Tower).

Yuan Yang is a literary journal hosted by the School of English at the University of Hong Kong. Each year it offers a collection of stories, poems, creative nonfiction, or plays by writers in Hong Kong and throughout the world. The journal has a special focus on the work of young and emerging writings in Hong Kong. It also showcases the original work of writers from around the world, including Nigeria, Vietnam, China, Canada, England, America, Russia, Australia, and India.

Yuan Yang is also accepting submissions of poems, short stories, short plays, creative non-fiction in English as well as submissions of images for its cover art for its next issue to be published in 2015. The submission deadline is September 15, 2014. For details, please visit http://www.english.hku.hk/yy.htm.

Arts Events

MAY 29, 2014
Professor Pheng Cheah, University of California, Berkeley

JUNE 4-5, 2014
Cultural Leadership Summit 2014
Advanced Cultural Leadership Programme

JUNE 11-14, 2014
10th International Conference on Grief and Bereavement in Contemporary Society
Mortal Histories: Death in Mass Culture
Centre for the Humanities and Medicine

JUNE 30 TO AUGUST 23, 2014
Summer Institute in the Arts and Humanities

JULY 7-18, 2014
Summer Institute for Linguistic Research
Department of Linguistics

JULY 10-12, 2014
Australasian Victorian Studies Association Annual Conference: Victorian Transport
School of English

JULY 14-16, 2014
KCL/HKU PhD Summer School in Sociolinguistics
School of English

JULY 14-16, 2014
Post-Asia Film, Media and Popular Culture Conference
Department of Comparative Literature

SEPTEMBER 6, 2014
Cultural Leadership Youth Workshop 2014
Advanced Cultural Leadership Programme

Faculty of Arts
THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

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