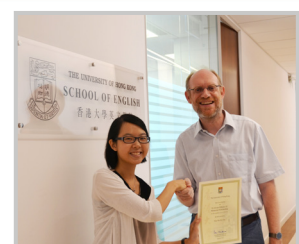




Spring 2015

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## PROFESSOR DEREK COLLINS APPOINTED NEW DEAN OF ARTS

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Derek Collins as the new Dean of the Faculty of Arts for a term of five years, with effect from July 1, 2015. Professor Collins is currently the Associate Dean for Humanities, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, and Professor of Greek and Latin, Department of Classical Studies, at the University of Michigan. He is a highly accomplished scholar specialising in archaic Greek poetry, Latin literature and history of the classical tradition, religion and magic. He has extensive administrative and leadership experience as chairman or member of university committees and advisory boards and also at the faculty level. We are confident that he will provide world-class leadership to the Faculty of Arts so that it will continue to advance and excel.

The Faculty would like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Douglas Kerr for his leadership and dedication during his term as Dean of Arts, from January 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

## 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 positions during the period of December 1, 2014 and April 30, 2015.

### *School of Humanities*

Dr Heeju Hwang, Assistant Professor (Linguistics)

### *School of Modern Languages and Cultures*

Dr Loretta Kim, Assistant Professor (China Studies)

## EXISTING STAFF

The following existing members of staff took up new full-time and fixed-term positions during the period of December 1, 2014 and April 30, 2015.

### *School of English*

Dr Adrian Pablé, Associate Professor

### *School of Humanities*

Professor Umberto Ansaldi, Professor (Linguistics)

### *Centre of Buddhist Studies*

Ven Dr Guang Xing, Associate Professor

The Faculty was very sad to lose two wonderful colleagues and friends earlier this year.

## DR ESTHER M.K. CHEUNG

Dr Esther M. K. Cheung, one of the University of Hong Kong's most beloved teachers and scholars, passed away on February 9, 2015, after a long illness.

Esther completed her undergraduate studies at the University of Hong Kong in 1981 and returned to HKU as a Faculty member in 1999. She chaired the Department of Comparative Literature, now in the School of Humanities, from 2003 to 2014. She was a leading figure in Hong Kong cultural studies, and was also a scholar of contemporary Chinese fiction and film, critiques of modernity and postmodernity, and visual and urban culture in the context of globalization. Esther was widely published as an author, editor and creative writer in English and Chinese. In 2011 she won a HKU Outstanding Teaching Award.



Esther will be fondly remembered by countless students and alumni of Comparative Literature, as well as by her colleagues in the Faculty of Arts and her many friends in the University and the community. She is greatly missed.

A Memorial Gathering celebrating Esther's life and work was held in Loke Yew Hall on March 13, 2015.

## PROFESSOR ROY HARRIS

Roy Harris was Professor and Head of English at HKU from 1988 to 1991. He had previously held Chairs in Romance Languages and General Linguistics at the University of Oxford, and after leaving Hong Kong he taught at Boston University and the École des Hautes Études in Paris. He was an original, important, and controversial thinker and teacher about language, linguistics, and semiotics. Among his many books were *The Language Makers*, *The Language Myth*, *The Language Machine*, and *Signs, Language and Communication*. He was also a leading scholar and translator of the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, the father of modern linguistics.

The School of English may be the oldest in Hong Kong – its history stretches back to HKU's founding more than 100 years ago – but it is brimming with vigour and enthusiasm.

The School's programmes remain popular, with more than 1,500 students enrolled in 2014-15 (not including its Common Core courses) and close to 2,000 to be enrolled from September this year.

It also performed exceptionally well in the recent research assessment exercise and has won the Faculty Knowledge Exchange awards for the past two years.

Dr Dirk Noël, who is Head, said: "I wouldn't want to call us an old school because of the connotations this has, although we do have a rich tradition. Instead I think of us as a young, vibrant unit. The majority of us have been at HKU less than 10 years, which implies we are very young in terms of years of service here for a start. But all of the School staff deserves credit for our dynamism, including the administration team led by School Manager Kitty Mak."

The high student numbers are motivated by the cachet employers attach to a major in English and also by the new curriculum structure. As before, students do not have to declare a major until the end of the first year but the rich palette of introductory courses the School now offers obviously appeals to students.

About 60 per cent of students in introductory courses go on to declare English Studies or Language and Communication as their major. In 2014-15, 19 introductory courses were offered, as well as 25 advanced and four Common Core courses. In September the numbers will increase to 20 introductory, 29 advanced, six capstone and again four Common Core courses.

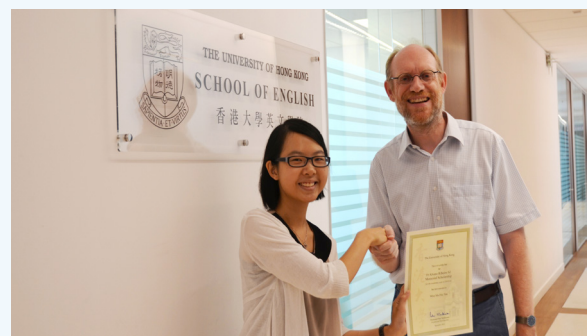
The capstone courses will be student-led rather than in lecture format and could involve students preparing and staging a conference or producing an online peer-reviewed journal on a specific theme, to name only a couple of ideas under discussion.

"The teachers won't supply new content. The idea is that students will draw on what they have learned," Dr Noël said. "We haven't done something like this before for so many students and will need to be creative in exploring new ways of experiential learning."

Teachers will, of course, also be working on their research, which scored highly in the recent research assessment exercise of the Research Grants Council. Some 22 per cent of the research output was deemed "world leading" against an average across Hong Kong of 10 per cent, and 32 per cent of the research was "internationally excellent".

Knowledge exchange activities have also been recognised. In addition to two Faculty KE awards (for projects on health communication and linguistic minorities), the School reaches out to the community through the Creative Writing Studio and the new HKU Black Box Theatre, which it manages.

Alumni are also on the School's radar. Dr Katherine Chen, who is herself an HKU alumna, contacts alumni of all ages regularly and invites them to share photos and writings about their time in the century-old, but invigorated, School of English.



Dr Dirk Noël presents Ms Kitty Ma Hiu Yan (BA 2014) with the Fr. Alvaro Ribeiro SJ Memorial Scholarship 2013-14  
(Photo by Franky Lau)

## PROFESSOR XU GUOQI AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS SHIGEMITSU FELLOWSHIP

Professor Xu Guoqi has been awarded the Prestigious Shigemitsu Fellowship by the Japan Society of Boston in recognition of his outstanding scholarship in the field of international affairs. The award was officially announced at a ceremony in Boston on March 27, 2015.

Professor Xu is Professor of History at the University of Hong Kong and is one of the world's most prominent scholars in the fields of modern Chinese and international history. He is currently working on a shared history trilogy: *Chinese and Americans: A Shared History* (Harvard University Press, 2014, Chinese edition by Guangxi Normal University Press, forthcoming); *Asia and the Great War: A Shared Experience and Journey* (under contract for Oxford University Press); and *Ideas of China: A Shared and Imagined History* (in progress).

Romance and family were prominent themes in Korean popular fiction of the 20th century, particularly during the Japanese occupation when they were often the only safe topics for writers to explore. But because this type of fiction was generally considered to be too low-brow to be part of the Korean literary canon, it has until now been largely neglected in the academic world.

That is about to change as Dr Su Yun Kim, Programme Director of Korean Studies, embarks on a study of these stories supported by a GRF Early Career Scheme Award.



Dr Su Yun Kim

“Popular fictions have been neglected in academic studies because they are considered to be cheap and vulgar,” Dr Kim said. “In fact, they deal with human emotions and romance and family relations, which are very critical in Korean literature.”

Her work will build on an earlier manuscript she produced on novels featuring romances between Koreans and Japanese, which were published during the Japanese occupation from 1910 to 1945.

“These have been understood to be propaganda by the colonial state to encourage marriage between Japanese and Koreans as part of the assimilation policy. But while some of these stories did have political intent, at the same time they were an opportunity for writers to develop romantic novels and avoid censorship,” Dr Kim said.

Their format helped them to sidestep censorship because serialised stories and cheap novels were not deemed worth bothering about.

Dr Kim will be tracing popular romance and family themes from their earliest appearance in Korean theatre of the early 1900s to serialised novels up to the early post-war years, and even to television melodramas and films of the 1960s and 1970s. “There’s a certain continuity in the 1940s, ’50s and ’60s where the themes used again and again are romance and family relationships.”

These themes also carry across story genres. Dr Kim cited the example of spy stories, which in the 1940s

tended to be set in Manchuria. A typical story involved a Korean agent posing as a Japanese officer and falling in love with a Chinese woman who was a double agent. “These stories have been branded as propaganda but they were written in Korean. They show the conflict of the Korean and Japanese identities at the time of the assimilation policy,” she said.

Spy romances could still be found in B movies of the 1960s, such as a Korean agent battling the Japanese in Manchuria and, again, falling in love with a woman who turns out to be a spy. “There is a political backdrop, but you also have the backdrop of the pretty girl,” Dr Kim said. “Within the political realm there is always a non-political side and that is what interests me.”

Dr Kim hoped her study would bridge understanding of Korea’s past and present.

“The study of Korean literature and history has had a clear-cut line between colonialism and what came after. There is a disconnection between the two periods. I want to look at what continued, what has followed on,” she said.

## FACULTY SCORES HIGHLY IN RAE 2014

The Faculty of Arts was rated the best among Hong Kong’s eight UGC-funded institutions in the two broad areas in which its research submissions were assessed in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) 2014.

49% of the Faculty’s research submissions in the area of ‘Humanities’ and 63% in the area of ‘Creative Arts, Performing Arts & Design’ were rated as ‘world leading’ (4 stars) or ‘internationally excellent’ (3 stars).

History, cultural studies, linguistics and language studies, English language and literature, and philosophy were singled out as performing at a very high level.

These results confirm the value of our contribution to HKU and to Hong Kong and we aspire to an even stronger academic performance in the future.



Ultrasound is usually associated with medical matters, such as pre-natal care. But the pictures it provides of movement inside the body can be useful in other disciplines, too. In the first study of its kind, HKU scholars are applying the technology to look at how the various components of our mouths move together to articulate words and sounds in three languages, and how that ability develops from infancy to adulthood.

The project is being co-led by Professor Diana Archangeli in the Department of Linguistics and Dr Carol To of the Faculty of Education's Division of Speech and Hearing Sciences, who are collecting ultrasound imagery from English, Cantonese and Mandarin speakers, in children aged 2.5 to 4.5 years old and 4.5 to 7.5 years old and in adults.

"We're looking at the movement of the tongue in different populations, and at sounds that speech therapists have identified as very difficult for learners of these languages. We want to see how articulation changes as the body matures," Professor Archangeli said.

"With really young children, we assume they will have a lot of trouble articulating words. Some will be doing the tongue wrong, but some will be doing the right thing with their tongue and the acoustics aren't working yet."

The small size and different proportions of young mouths may mean they are producing sounds that adults cannot hear. For instance, a three-year-old may be making the right mouth shape for "k" but to the adult ear it sounds like "t". The ultrasound test will be able to pick this up.

With the older children, Professor Archangeli said they hoped to include children who had achieved proper pronunciation and those who were still struggling. "For example, a seven-year-old may be saying 'wun' instead of run'. We want to look at why they have this mispronunciation to see what is going wrong.

"It could be they are doing everything right but their mouth has not matured quite yet. It could also be

that they figured out how to say something that was acceptable at age two and since it worked, they turned their attention to new things. So they haven't adjusted the tongue configuration with the body's maturing. Our goal is to quantify these differences," she said.

The adult group will provide a benchmark for normal pronunciations.

The project team also includes post-doc fellow Jonathan Yip and research assistants Suki Yiu and Kelvin Cheung, and they hope to collect useable data from 10 subjects in each pool of population.

Professor Archangeli was previously involved in a case using ultrasound therapy at the University of Arizona for a 10-year-old who was mispronouncing words. Once the girl saw the difference between how her tongue should move and how she was moving it, she was able to correct herself. "To my mind it holds a lot of promise for therapists," she said.

The technology may also have potential in helping language learners form difficult sounds – such as "r" in English, "ng" in Cantonese or "eu" in French – by giving immediate feedback on articulation.



## HKU LINGUISTICS RANKED IN GLOBAL TOP 10

HKU made the global top 10 universities in the world in Linguistics in the latest QS University Subject Rankings released on April 29, 2015. Linguistics was ranked 9th in this annual survey of the top 800 universities worldwide, up from 18th last year. Modern Languages was ranked 15th and a further two subjects, History and English Language & Literature, made the global top 50. Published annually since 2011, the rankings are based on academic reputation, employer reputation and research impact.

## HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES PRESTIGIOUS FELLOWSHIP SCHEME

Professor Chris Hutton from the School of English has been awarded funding under the Research Grants Council's Humanities and Social Sciences Prestigious Fellowship Scheme 2014-2015 for his project entitled, "Defining Fundamental Concepts: The Legal Personhood of Animals".

Contemporary concepts of Chinese masculinity are changing in the wake of globalisation, much like masculinity around the world, argues a new book by Dr Song Geng, a cultural studies expert in the School of Chinese, and anthropologist Dr Derek Hird of the University of Westminster.



Dr Song Geng

Drawing on analyses of male representation in modern media and popular culture, and interviews with dozens of men and women in Beijing, the authors show how the Chinese male ideal has evolved over the years.

In traditional literature, the scholar or *wen* type of man, who was physically weak but spiritually strong, usually won the woman's heart, while his counterpart, the warrior or *wu* type, formed strong, non-sexual bonds with other men.

While elements of both types persist in some films and television dramas today, they are not prominent among modern urban ideas of masculinity, which are dominated by an ideal of male breadwinners who are highly sexed.

"The men we interviewed generally did not regard themselves as different from Western or other men. They would say, man has to be the breadwinner, power means masculinity – the more powerful you are, the more masculine you are," Dr Song explained.

"Many informants mentioned a popular dating show in China, 'If You Are the One'. It demonstrates the changing ideals about husbands or boyfriends. Most of the girls straightaway ask the male participants what their salary is and if they have a house or car. This focus also happens globally, not just in China, but people in the West would not be so straightforward."

Nonetheless, there are distinguishing characteristics to Chinese masculinity. The men interviewed said the ideal wife would be someone who was, firstly, good to her husband's parents, reflecting the persistence of Confucian values.

Sex also has a different connotation. Lifestyle magazines, which are a status symbol in China because of their cost, use sexy images of women to pitch to their well-off readers. In the West, these images were more common in magazines pitched at the lower classes, Dr Song said.

Economic class and location are important factors in how masculinity is perceived, and the authors acknowledge their focus is limited to urban, middle class men, who have been most influenced by Japanese, Korean and Western culture. But even within this there is a distinct Chinese dichotomy as the men both embrace the products and lifestyles of these cultures while also denouncing them. Anti-Japanese protests in 2005 and 2012 were examples of the latter.

Dr Song said two factors might be feeding that contradiction. One is cyberspace, where people have an outlet for a second identity. The other is government discourse on nationalism and national interests.

"The significance of this study is that it goes beyond men. It's about national differences, cross-national interaction, and the place of gender in the imagination of self and other. There is no such thing as a universally-accepted standard of masculinity. Tradition itself is not a fixed thing," he said.

*Men and Masculinities in Contemporary China* by Song Geng and Derek Hird is published by Brill Academic Publishers.

## POSTGRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Dr Chung Chi Kei (PhD, European Studies) and Mr Man Hiu Yeung (MPhil, School of Chinese) were conferred Outstanding Research Postgraduate Student Awards (2012-2013) at the Graduate School Award Presentation Ceremony on December 9, 2014.

Miss Zhai Yue (American Studies) was announced as the recipient of the Lee Shau Kee Postgraduate Fellowship (2014-2015) at the same ceremony. Miss Yang Yi (School of Chinese), Miss Eileen Waegemaekers (Linguistics), Mr Chung Yi Eun (Music) and Ms Mariangela Cocchiari (Philosophy) were each awarded the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship (2014-2015).

## ONLINE PROJECT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF UNIVERSITY SPEAKING (OPTIMUS)

The Centre for Applied English Studies has been awarded close to HK\$2.4 million by the University Grants Committee's Language-related Collaborative Language Fund to produce an online resource for the use of Hong Kong tertiary level students to improve their English speaking skills. The project is being conducted in collaboration with the English Language Centres of City University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Fresh graduates keen to teach English have ensured full enrolment in a new joint Master's programme that is not teacher training per se, but aimed at deepening knowledge about the English language and how it is learned.

The Master of Arts in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (MATESOL) is offered jointly by the Centre for Applied English Studies (CAES) and the Faculty of Education. It took its first intake of 31 students last September.

The CAES, which also offers the Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics (MAAL) on its own, saw this as an opportunity to push its boundaries.

"This is the first time the Centre has been involved in a partnership like this and it's an invaluable chance to extend our expertise to a wider community and contribute to the whole profession of English-language teaching," Associate Professor Dr Cynthia Lee said.



Dr Cynthia Lee

The full-time, one-year programme has attracted students mainly from Mainland China, most of them fresh graduates in English literature and English-language education who are hoping to pursue careers in teaching.

"They have said they chose to come to HKU because they would like to expose themselves to another learning environment. They also like that HKU is an English-medium university and that they can acquire the necessary language skills and methodology here," Dr Lee said.

The courses include in-depth study of such topics as grammar and pedagogy, phonetics and phonology, sociolinguistics and English-language education, second-language acquisition, and English-language teaching methodology.

In addition to course assignments, students must produce a 6,000-word essay and they are expected to emerge from the programme with an understanding of the key concepts and theories related to teaching English as a second or other language.

The MATESOL differs from the MAAL in that the latter is targeted at teachers, and others who are interested in the teaching, learning and use of English, particularly in the areas of English for Academic/Professional Purposes; it has been offered since 1996. CAES has also been involved in the community in offering numerous language teaching and teacher education programmes with the Education Bureau over the years.

## HONOURS FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING, RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE 2014

### *Outstanding Teaching Award*

Ms Miranda Legg, Centre for Applied English Studies

### *Faculty Teaching Excellence Award*

Dr Yeewan Koon, School of Humanities (Fine Arts)

Dr Eva Ng Nga Shan, School of Chinese

### *Outstanding Research Supervisor Award*

Professor Chan Hing-yan, School of Humanities (Music)

### *Research Output Prize*

*The Tragedy of Liberation: A History of the Chinese Revolution 1945–1957*

By Professor Frank Dikötter

School of Humanities (History)

Published by Bloomsbury Press  
(London and New York), 2013

### *Knowledge Exchange Award*

Dr Lisa Lim, School of English

"LinguisticMinorities.HK and LinguisticMinorities.HK:  
Connecting with the Communities"

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

### **JUNE 3-6, 2015**

The Sociolinguistics of Globalization: (De)centring  
and (de)standardization  
School of English

### **JUNE 10-12, 2015**

International Conference on Jing Jiao  
School of Chinese, Hong Kong Institute for the  
Humanities and Social Sciences

### **JUNE 11-13, 2015**

Faces of English: Theory, Practice and Pedagogy  
Centre for Applied English Studies

### **JUNE 25-27, 2015**

13th International Conference on Communication,  
Medicine, and Ethics (Comet)  
School of English, Faculty of Education, Li Ka Shing  
Faculty of Medicine

### **JUNE 25-27, 2015**

Siting Postcoloniality: Colloquium and Workshop  
School of English



Capstone courses require undergraduate students to consolidate and apply their learning in a deeper, meaningful way before they graduate. In Arts and Humanities, that would traditionally mean writing a research essay. But the Department of History recognised this did not suit every student. Its solution? Offer choice and variety, and let the students decide.

The Department offers six capstone courses, two of them in the field. Dr Peter Cunich, who teaches the East Asia Field Trip as well as the more traditional Theory and Practice of History, said this choice meant students had greater independence in directing their course of study.

“The History programme has for years been very open. We don’t have compulsory courses and we let students work out the best combinations for themselves. This is how liberal education takes place. You need interest as well as academic content,” he said.

The East Asia Field Trip began in 2012 and requires students to design a project to compare two places. So far trips have been organised to Macau, Guangzhou, Malacca and Penang, and students have compared such things as the impact of the Japanese occupation in the Second World War, and changes in Chinese identity as people migrate outside China. Students pay \$2,000 for the trip, with the rest subsidised by the History Endowment Fund.

“What we are trying to instil in them is ownership of heritage and the need for history graduates to play a role in the public debate about heritage issues,” Dr Cunich said. “Most of their work up to now will have been academic work using books. This gives them a practical project.”

Some students want to prepare for postgraduate work and History Without Borders, which was also introduced in 2012, is for them. The brightest students are invited to submit a proposal for a field project and if approved, they are paired with a research supervisor and receive up to \$18,000 to cover such expenses as travel and conference or workshop attendance.

Three to five students are admitted each year and Dr David Pomfret leads the course.

“These students are the most accomplished in our major. They have excelled throughout our programme thus far and have mainly engaged with secondary

materials and primary documents provided for them by their teachers. The course enables them to design their own research project overseas. They head into archives, often for the first time, to confront the challenges faced by professional historians – the archive might be difficult to figure out, access might be tricky, the archive tells you something you were not expecting.

“These are the students in their cohort who are most likely to go on to become researchers so this allows them to engage in the experience of conducting research. Some might find it doesn’t suit them to sift through documents all day. But many are enthused. Either way they will have learned more about research, and to reflect upon the question of what research is. This exercise boosts their self-confidence and capacity to think critically and independently. A number of students who have taken the course have already gone on to secure places in postgraduate programmes at top universities around the world.”

These two fieldwork courses are supported by a generous donation to the History Endowment Fund by History graduate Dr Alice Lam.

The three other capstone courses are Dissertation Elective, History Research Projects, and the Great Kantō Earthquake and the Reconstruction of Tokyo. “We wanted to provide History majors with a range of choices, not every student will go on to further studies in the discipline. This choice allows students to pursue a rounding-off experience appropriate for their particular pathway through the major programme,” Dr Pomfret said.



Dr Peter Cunich with students at Fort Cornwallis, Penang



Dr Facil Tesfaye, the Programme Director of African Studies who comes to HKU via Ethiopia, Berlin and Montreal, has ambitious goals to expand his programme and deepen his students' understanding of this vast continent.

Plans are being mooted to turn the current minor in African Studies into a major, which would make it the first in southern China.

Dr Tesfaye wants to bring a deeper understanding of Africa to students who may never have met an African person before and may totally be unaware of the long relationship between the African continent and China. The first documented exchanges date back more than 1,000 years, and China today is a major investor in the continent.

"Our work here is about opening up the minds of students who have very little information about Africa, and sensitising them to the diversity, the complexities and the problems of the continent as well as the opportunities it currently represents," Dr Tesfaye said.

He explained, "The students will be our ambassadors. When they go back to their families and society at large, they will be explaining what they see on the street. For example, they will be able to explain that the reason why there are so many black people in Chungking Mansions is because of trade. It's a good way to fight against stereotypes."

"And since HKU is an elite university creating tomorrow's leaders, the impact is going to be important at that level."

Since arriving last summer, Dr Tesfaye has taken several initial steps towards his lofty goals. A part-time teacher who researches Africans in China has been recruited. Courses have been revised to give students a stronger "hook" into African cultures. For instance, the new course on African music was designed to be used as a way of introducing students to African societies and to highlight the intermixing of cultures that can be observed on the continent.

Feelers have also been put out to African universities in order to set up and develop exchange programmes. Dr Tesfaye stated that attempts are underway to create working relations with non-academic institutions and to facilitate the internship component of the programme. He indicated that the African office of a multinational firm has been in touch with him to see how it can work with the programme.

"The possibility of an exchange with a company would be a way of ensuring that our programme is not what

the Germans call a breadless art," he said. "I hope we can create opportunities for Arts students to become cultural translators between their country of origin and any African country they will be working in."

"Africa Week" has also been shaken up and replaced by a new concept: Africa@HKU. According to Dr Tesfaye, a series of "Africa Days" will be interspersed through the year to emphasise the diversity of the continent. Two such events have been organised since he joined HKU. The event in November 2014 featured Angola and included an exhibition of cultural products, Angolan coffee and beer, and a talk about Chinese investment in the country. The second event held in March 2015 featured Ethiopia and included a lunchtime dance performance for the HKU community by an Ethiopian cultural group.

China's impact in Africa was in fact what attracted Dr Tesfaye to HKU. He has a cross-cultural, multi-disciplinary background – growing up in Ethiopia and educated in Germany and Canada. He did his PhD on German colonial medical history in Africa covering history, political science and African Studies.

"Coming to Hong Kong was an opportunity for me. When you go to Africa every year or two as we diaspora people do, one of the things you witness is the growth of Chinese activity there. I can now be in the middle of where this is coming from," he said.



Dr Facil Tesfaye (fourth from right) with his students at the Africa@HKU – Ethiopia Today event

### JUNE LEUNG SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ARTS STUDENTS

Ms June Leung, an Arts alumna and one of the co-founders of Beacon College, has generously donated the sum of HK\$200,000 in support of scholarships for Arts students. Ms Leung established the scholarships with the aim of encouraging Arts students to attain all-round development and inculcate them with a sense of service to society.

The Scholarship will be awarded annually to a full-time, non-first-year undergraduate Arts student primarily on the basis of academic merit and holistic development.

Two postgraduate students in the Faculty have received international recognition for taking their artistic endeavours to the edges of their crafts, one in film, the other in new music.

## **Mixing Western and Ethnic Sounds**

Gordon Fung Dic-lun, a PhD student in music composition, brings together Western and ethnic instruments to create new sounds and new understandings.



Mr Gordon Fung Dic-lun

"I admire ethnic music a lot and would like to somehow preserve its essence and aesthetics by creating new works. I see a lot of possibility in this fusion genre, which has largely been unexplored," he said.

Before composing, he tries to learn different ethnic instruments and understand their history and mechanics, which then become part of compositions that are based on Western idioms. In this way, he brings a traditional essence into a contemporary context.

Gordon's musical interests include the Chinese *pipa*, Indonesian gamelan and instruments from such places as Japan, Korea, Croatia, Armenia and Persia, as well as modern composers such as John Cage and Gérard Grisey.

Last December he won 2nd Prize in the AGBU Sayat Nova International Composition Competition in New York and last July an Honourable Mention in the Atlas Ensemble Composition Competition in Amsterdam. He is also a finalist in the St Petersburg International New Music Festival, which will be held at the end of May this year.

Gordon has also recently had his pieces performed in Milan and New York, and last autumn he debuted a piece inspired by HKU's Fung Ping Shan Building for the Musicus Fest 2014 *Heritage* community concert programme.

## **A New Interpretation of the Trans Experience**

Siufung Law Wan Ling, an MPhil student in Comparative Literature, made himself the subject of a short film, *Unfinished*, documenting a female-to-male trans person in a way that brings a new perspective to this genre of film.

He came up with the idea in an undergraduate class taught by Dr Mirana Szeto, when he researched transgender autobiographies and found they followed a similar structure of coming-out, parental acceptance and the transition journey.



Still from *Unfinished*

"These narratives do not tell what trans subjects are actually thinking, especially about those things that are beyond their transition, such as their relationship with their bodies and what they think of transgender discrimination," Siufung said.

Siufung stepped into the breach with his six-minute experimental film, which combines poetry and black-and-white footage of his body. The poetry, which is supplemented with lyrics from the song "The Origin of Love", explores the lack of a "language" and name for transgender people.

"The Cantonese title of the film means 'not yet finished'. The ending of the film is the beginning of another individual story. I hope that, by making this first experimental film on local transgender, it will provoke other transgender individuals to create a language for their own stories," Siufung said.

*Unfinished* won a Special Mention at the Everybody's Perfect festival in Geneva last September and the Outstanding Film Award in the Fresh Fruit Festival in New York last July. It has also been screened at festivals in Paris, Hamburg and Zurich, and will be shown at the upcoming KASHISH Mumbai International Queer and ShanghaiPRIDE film festivals.

The most precious commodity in Hong Kong is space so it is fitting that the new University Artists, Glenn Davidson and Anne Hayes of Artstation, are obsessed with it.

They produce works that interrupt space and challenge people to think differently about their environment, most recently at Chi Wah Learning Commons where they erected a 9x4-metre paper arch. They are also exploring these ideas through technology, specifically SMS txt messaging.

“Our work has always tried to intercede in the ways that people perceive and relate to various things – technology, the spatial metaphor. The works can be philosophical, they can be political. They can have a whole range of different sorts of manifestations,” Glenn said.

During their first visit in February, the UK-based artists spent two weeks cutting recycled paper to very precise measurements and assembling them with paper gum tape to create the installation *Meeting Point*, an arch for Chi Wah, made, in Anne’s words, “entirely from data and paper”.

“The key words we use to describe the installation are that it interprets and occupies space, the architectural space, – we’re aware that’s quite a loaded word in the context of Hong Kong,” Anne said, referring to Occupy Central.

“One student told me it made him think these things were in a way existing with the same authority as the building, and looked strong and robust but were actually very fragile. One little rip and the whole thing would go down.”

Their texting projects have a challenging, architectural element, too. In Wales, they worked on a project to save a local working man’s pub, in which they projected real-time SMS txt messages about the pub from customers and passersby onto its facade. “Where government and corporations use large text to express ownership and brand their buildings, the TXT2Vulcan project captured citizens’ feelings, emphasising the pub’s sense of place” said Glenn.

That idea was further developed with a group that very much lacks power; incarcerated teens. In their recent project called TXT Inside/Outside, SMS txts from this marginalised group were selected for display onto a big city screen in Cardiff with their identities concealed

(for example, one teen father wrote about missing his child). The reactions and comments of passersby were videotaped and this movie was shown back to the young offenders, some of whom were moved to tears by the sympathy of strangers.

“In no small way that was transformative,” Glenn said. “Although they were covered in tattoos and played the hard man, in reality they were kids. A lot of them needed a good listening to.”

A third and developing area for the artists is sound and how sounds from the environment can be used to explore and reflect on a place’s history and use.

No firm decisions have been made yet on the focus of their next visit, although they are intrigued by the Sunday gatherings of Filipinas and the cardboard structures they use to mark out their space.

“We are interested in Hong Kong street life. The idea is that there is a lot going on out there that perhaps students do not really come into contact with. In true Artstation style, we’d like to engage with something that’s hiding in plain view, taken for granted,” Glenn said.



Glenn Davidson and Anne Hayes of Artstation with students from the Department of Fine Arts who helped them create *Meeting Point*

Six highly respected artists from the disciplines of Film, Music, Literature and the Visual Arts have been appointed as University Artists for 2014 - 2016. The six artists are filmmaker Fruit Chan; Hong Kong film industry pioneer John Sham; award-winning cellist Trey Lee; acclaimed poet Henri Cole; and the directors of the groundbreaking art and technology partnership Artstation, Glenn Davidson and Anne Hayes.

**The University Artists Scheme is hosted by the Faculty of Arts and is supported by Dr Alice Lam.**



# TELLING THE STORY OF MALARIA IN HONG KONG

Malaria used to be endemic in Hong Kong, as much a part of the city as the seasonal rains that flooded the place and left behind breeding pools for mosquitoes. Hundreds of people died of the disease each year and many more were infected.

Now a new exhibition co-presented by the Centre for the Humanities and Medicine (CHM) and the Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences (HKMMS) is telling the story of malaria's scourge in Hong Kong.

Dr Ria Sinha, a post-doc fellow in the CHM, is the curator of the exhibition, bringing a mix of expertise that includes formal art training, a PhD on the malaria parasite from Imperial College London, and a current humanitarian focus on China's role in global public health, in particular malaria in Africa.

"I'd always been interested in exploring infectious disease outside the laboratory, particularly as research becomes increasingly specialised and focused. It's possible to become disconnected from the wider relevance of your work" she said.

"Malaria is a major disease and joining the CHM, which has a growing cross-disciplinary infectious disease research cluster, [in 2013] gave me an opportunity to think about the social, historical and cultural aspects of the disease as well. It was a unique opportunity."

The exhibition is one manifestation of that perspective. It starts with the arrival of the British, principally because that was when detailed health records began, and carries through to the present day.

Malaria was a mysterious disease in the 19th century and became known colloquially as "Hong Kong fever" which was in fact a catchall for a variety of diseases. It was not until Sir Ronald Ross discovered the transmission of the malaria parasite through mosquitoes in 1898 that the disease began to be recorded in Colonial Surgeon's reports as a single entity.

This discovery had a Hong Kong connection because Ross was mentored by Sir Patrick Manson, who helped to found the Hong Kong College of Medicine for Chinese in 1887 before returning to London.

The government and military tracked rainfall and malaria cases, and in 1930 set up the Malaria Bureau in what is now the Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences building to attack the problem full on. The

control effort was temporarily interrupted by the war, but by the 1970's malaria was no longer endemic in Hong Kong.

Dr Sinha said the continued vigilance of Hong Kong health authorities had kept malaria at bay ever since, but it remained a serious global problem with 3.2 billion people estimated to be at risk of infection – a point also brought out in the exhibition.

Artefacts for the exhibition range from the historical, including old photographs, documents and laboratory slides from the HKMMS archives, as well as insecticide sprayers loaned by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to contemporary mosquito nets, different brands of tonic water (which contains quinine, an old treatment for malaria) and educational stuffed toy versions of the malaria parasite and mosquito. The exhibition is designed to be highly visual and also includes a video created by a CHM postgraduate student, Georges Papavasilou.

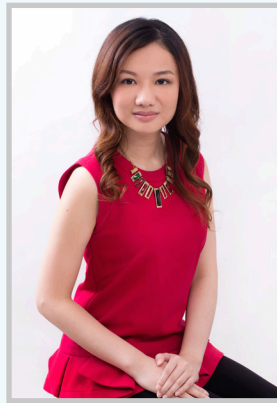
"Working on the historical context of malaria like this is fascinating. It provides a window into a successful eradication programme that was assisted by the convergence of numerous local factors including urban development, advances in general societal health and favourable timing. However, translating past experience into other malarious regions is proving a challenge." she said.

*Fever: The History of Malaria in Hong Kong is at the Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences April 25-July 26. Website: [http://www.chm.hku.hk/history\\_of\\_malaria.html](http://www.chm.hku.hk/history_of_malaria.html)*



Visitors are encouraged to pin their wishes for a world free of Malaria on the mosquito nets that form part of the exhibition

The acting bug has bitten deep into Rosalind Wong, who arrived as a fresh BA/BEd undergraduate in 2009 and was dismayed to find no English drama society at HKU. Itching to get on stage, she founded not one but two drama groups that are providing young thespians with performing opportunities.



Ms Rosalind Wong

She set up the Shax Theatre Group (Shaxbies) to compete in a Shakespeare festival at Chinese University and it became the starting point for expanding her ambitions.

The group performed a 20-minute excerpt of *As You Like It* in 2011, with Rosalind playing her namesake, a performance that brought her the best actress award. She was also director, producer, props person and costume designer.

"It required many months of preparation and countless hours – our rehearsals went until 2am or 3am. But because we got the Shaxbies started, others began to notice us," she said.

The following year they staged a 40-minute excerpt from *Hamlet*, performed for the same competition as well as a paying audience of 150 people at Chong Yuet Ming Theatre.

In 2013, when Rosalind was studying for an MA in Literary and Cultural Studies in the Department of Comparative Literature (part-time so she could continue her theatre work), they did a full production of *As You Like It* and excerpts from *Much Ado About Nothing* with more than 20 cast members. That was a dress rehearsal for two full productions last year, *Othello* and *Twelfth Night*.

"I thought it would be my last year so I should do something more. And through these productions I can find younger talents who can share my burden," said Rosalind, who nonetheless remains a driving force in the Shaxbies. Earlier this year, she directed the group in a production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at The Fringe Club, which was also included in the outdoor festival *Shakespeare in the Port 2015*, Hong Kong's answer to New York's *Shakespeare in the Park*.

All of that was not quite enough to satisfy her itch, though, so in 2012 she founded the Shadow Players,

whose members includes HKU and CUHK students and alumni. Their first production was an adaptation from Molière called *The Learned Ladies of the Mid-Levels*. Again Rosalind's performance was recognised, receiving a Heckler Award from the blogspot HKELD.

"I didn't see it coming," she said. "I don't care about any award, I just want to perform. But if getting recognition means more people know about us, that's the most important thing. Because if you do drama and nobody comes to see you, you can't afford to continue."

She remains involved with the Shadow Players, most recently as co-director, and teaches English and speech and drama to young people through her new company, Shax Speakers. She is determined to promote Shakespeare and English theatre not only to university students, but also to young people who might not have the opportunity to read and perform these plays.

"I entered HKU not expecting to start these theatre groups. I have had so many surprises in the last six years," she said.

"I do this because it makes me happy, it's as simple as that. I do have doubts – other people I know have full-time jobs and stable incomes. But at the end of the day, I'm happy to put on any production" – even if that means leaving the acting bug on the sidelines. "I prefer to be an actress but I have to direct or else nothing will happen. Someone has to be creating."

## FOLKLORE AND MODERN CHINESE CULTURE COURSE

Dr Song Gang of the School of Chinese will be leading a group of students to Beijing this summer as part of the credit-bearing course "Folklore and Modern Chinese Culture" that he developed in collaboration with Peking University's Department of Chinese Language and Literature.

Launched in 2013, the three-week course explores prominent aspects of Chinese folklore, including myths, folktales, folk performances and art, architecture and rituals. Students also take part in a series of site visits around Beijing that are closely tied to lecture topics. The course is offered as part of the "HKU-China 1000 Exchange Scheme" and is supported by the Hong Kong Education Bureau.

## HKU THREE MINUTE THESIS COMPETITION 2015

Ms Vivian Kong Wai Yan, an MPhil Candidate in the Department of History, was the People's Choice Award and 1st Runner-Up at the HKU Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition held on March 10, 2014. Ms Kong, whose MPhil supervisor is Professor John Carroll, won for her presentation entitled, "Britons Only: The 1940 Hong Kong Evacuation", which explores the exodus of 4,000 British women and children from Hong Kong in June 1940 as a response to Japanese troops massing across the Shenzhen River.

3MT is an academic competition co-organized by the Graduate School and Knowledge Exchange Office that challenges Research Postgraduate students to explain their research within three minutes to a general audience.

## ARTS ASSOCIATION, H.K.U.S.U. PRESENTS "LIVING IN ARTS"

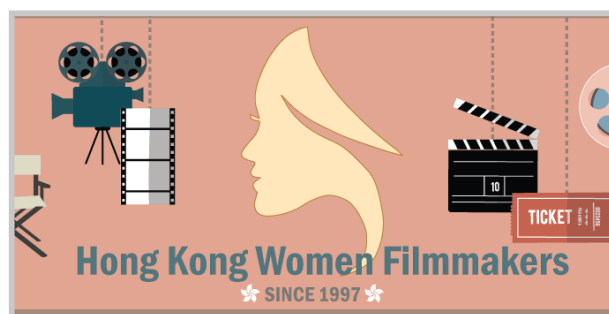
Arts Association, H.K.U.S.U., Session 2014-2015, presented their annual Arts Festival from April 13 to 18, 2015. This year's festival, held under the theme of "Living in Arts", included a book fair and an academic forum on Hong Kong poetry involving the editors of Sound and Rhyme Poetry Bimonthly.

The Festival featured an exhibition co-organized with the Play • Ground Sai Wan project. Members of the project created three-dimensional models of the Sai Wan area as a way of recording its architecture and rich cultural heritage. Play • Ground Sai Wan and the Hong Kong Public Space Initiative also organized a guided tour around the Sai Wan lanes in conjunction with the exhibition.



From left: Ms Becky Wong, Chairman, and Mr Frederick Yip, Vice-Chairman, External, Arts Association, H.K.U.S.U., with Ms Denise Tse and Ms Lang Lang of Play • Ground Sai Wan

## "HONG KONG WOMEN FILMMAKERS" WEBSITE LAUNCHED



The Department of Comparative Literature, the Center for the Study of Globalization and Cultures, and the Women's Studies Research Centre of the University of Hong Kong have launched a groundbreaking website on Hong Kong women filmmakers. The website focuses on women's contributions to the Hong Kong film industry and film culture in the post-1997 period and situates their work against the backdrop of recent Hong Kong history and politics.

"Hong Kong Women Filmmakers" showcases the recent documentaries, short films and feature film of both established and emerging women directors, producers, and scriptwriters, including Ann Hui (許鞍華), Mabel Cheung (張婉婷), Clara Law (羅卓瑤), Tammy Cheung (張虹), Carol Lai (黎妙雪), Barbara Wong (黃真真), Yau Ching (游靜), Mak Yan Yan (麥婉欣), Ivy Ho (岸西), Tsang Tsui Shan (曾翠珊), Louisa Wei (魏時煜), Angie Chen (陳安琪), Heiward Mak (麥曦茵), Emily Tang (唐曉白) and many others.

Professor Gina Marchetti from the Department of Comparative Literature initiated the project with the support of a grant from the Research Grants Council. The aim of the website is to promote widespread interest in how Hong Kong women filmmakers contribute to local cinema as well as global film culture, particularly in their treatment of gender, sexuality, the family, and questions of changing identities.

<https://hkwomenfilmmakers.wordpress.com/>

Established in 1995, the HKU Women's Studies Research Centre organizes seminars, conferences and symposia on subjects of importance to women and gender studies. It is committed to promoting research in areas crucial to the development of women's studies, such as gender, cross-cultural awareness, sexuality as well as the transformation of teaching methodologies and curricula.



## SECOND CENTURY LECTURE SERIES

The third Second Century Lecture was delivered by Professor Peter Singer, the most prominent ethicist of our time, on April 21, 2015. For his lecture, entitled “Ethics and Animals: Forty Years After *Animal Liberation*”, Professor Singer considered how well the arguments of his book *Animal Liberation*, first published in 1975, have stood up to critical examination.

Professor Singer is Ira W. DeCamp Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University, and Laureate Professor, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, at the University of Melbourne. He is the author of more than twenty books and in 2005 *Time* magazine named him one of the 100 most important people. His latest work, *The Most Good You Can Do: How Effective Altruism Is Changing Ideas About Living Ethically*, was published by Yale University Press in April 2015.

The Second Century Lecture was supported by the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Hong Kong International Literary Festival and Swindon Book Co Ltd.

## HKU GAMELAN PERFORM FIRST CONCERT “DOUBLE MUSIC” IN THE GRAND HALL

The HKU Gamelan performed their first concert in the Grand Hall of Lee Shau Kee Lecture Centre on April 17, 2015. “Double Music” brought together the HKU Gamelan, HKU Percussion Ensemble and the Hong Kong New Music Ensemble (HKNME) in a programme inspired by the rhythmic vitality and complex sonorities of Indonesian gamelan music.

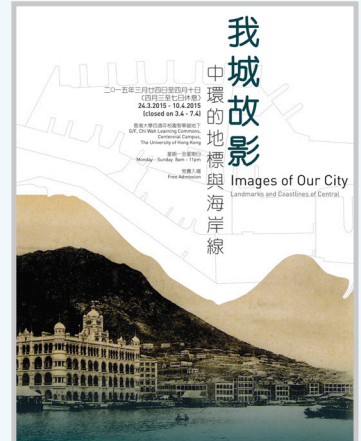
The concert featured new works for Balinese gamelan by Hong Kong composers Joyce Tang and Fung Dic-lun, as well as gamelan-inspired works by John Cage, Lou Harrison, and Claude Vivier. A new composition for modified gamelan and chamber ensemble by Swedish composer Kristofer Svensson was premiered alongside recent works by well-known Indonesian composers.

Acquired in 1995, the HKU Gamelan is the only one of its kind in Hong Kong and offers students, staff and alumni an opportunity to play in a non-Western ensemble. practice and practice-led research. Their work has been seen across the UK, USA, Canada, Japan, Australia and in many European countries.

## OLD HONG KONG IMAGES PHOTO EXHIBITION

A student-led exhibition, “Images of Our City: Landmarks and Coastlines of Central”, was held from March 24 to April, 2015 in the Foyer of Chi Wah Learning Commons.

Featuring photos and postcards of various sites, including Queen’s Road and Des Voeux Road in the late 19th century, Connaught Road in the early 20th century and Edinburgh Place in the 1950s, the exhibition explored changes to Central’s coastline and landmarks across time.



Founded in 2012, “Old Hong Kong Photo” aims to conserve the collective memory of Hong Kong citizens through the development of an online museum. The photo exhibition is an initiative led by students from the University of Hong Kong, Chinese University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Ms Jodie Cheng, a BA student majoring in History, coordinated the HKU exhibition.

The exhibition was presented by Old Hong Kong Photo (<http://www.oldhkphoto.com> / <https://www.facebook.com/oldhkphoto>) and co-organized by the Faculty of Arts and Hong Kong Global Network (<http://hkgn.net>).

## SCHOOL OF CHINESE WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE

The School of Chinese’s Writer-in-Residence for 2015 is Professor Wang Xiaoni (王小妮). Professor Wang is widely regarded as one of the most important poets writing in Chinese today and has produced over 20 novels and volumes of poetry and essays. Her latest poetry collection, *Something Crosses My Mind / 《有甚么在我心里一过》*, was published in a bilingual edition by The Chinese University Press in 2014.

Professor Wang delivered a public lecture, entitled “Fantasy and Reality: Forty Years of Chinese Poetry”, on April 2, 2015, and was involved in the selection of the awardees for Hong Kong University Modern Poem Competition 2014-2015.

Dr Mui Kwong-chiu (BA 1998, MPhil 2001, PhD 2005) has composed music for everything from the East Asia Games, Shanghai Expo and World Harmonica Festival, to Radio Television Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra and local dance groups. His briefs can be a little crazy – compose a 28-second theme tune featuring “wild sounds”, or create a musical world in precisely 60 seconds – but he succeeds within these tight limitations because he has no sense of constraint.



Dr Mui Kwong-chiu

Both in his childhood and at HKU, Dr Mui was fortunate to be given free rein in pursuing his creative interests. His father, a Cantonese opera singer and musician, told him to do what he liked. “One of my great assets is that he allowed me a lot of freedom to pursue the arts. In Chinese society there are often generation gaps, but my father said, do what you want to do. He left it to me to decide,” he said.

Similarly, at HKU his PhD supervisor Dr Joshua Chan gave him space and freedom. “He knows his music but he also allowed me to be free in my music,” Dr Mui said.

“Artistic and musical creative freedom are very important to me. Especially in music, it means having an environment where you can bring things out from yourself, not have it given to you. I think that’s the meaning of education. You have to do it on your own and bring it from yourself.”

Dr Mui came to HKU as a mature student, having previously studied cinematography at Baptist University. He wanted to go beyond pop sounds and easy listening, and delve into serious music. So serious, that early in his career he rejected a commission to compose a commercial jingle, feeling it was a betrayal of his serious music ambitions. It took him three years to change his mind, not only because of the money but also because he wanted to give back and share his talent.

His commissions have become higher profile and higher end over the years. The 60-second piece was composed for the 2008 Olympic Torch Relay Ceremony. The 28-second piece was for an RTHK programme on the environment and involved listening to all manner of sounds – wild animals, a baby crying, a car engine, bicycles, footsteps, as well as a 20-centimetre stack of CDs provided by the station – before he perfected his piece.

Dr Mui has also composed much longer orchestral pieces and is one of the few composers in the world to compose for the harmonica. He likes to incorporate Eastern and Western sounds and instruments, and to work on multimedia pieces that involve dance, film, visual arts and theatre.

Inspiration comes from Eastern and Western philosophy and religion, and a sense of space. Like his creativity, his idea of “space” is unconstrained. “I like to go to the mountains or seaside, or scenic spots in China. But if I don’t have time to get there, then I read about them or enjoy photography, painters and poems. These are my sources of inspiration,” he said.

Dr Mui Kwong-chiu was Guest of Honour and delivered the Keynote Address at the 192nd Congregation and Diploma Presentation Ceremony for the Faculty of Arts, Postgraduate Session.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE ARTS FACULTY

***Old Hong Kong***, FormAsia Books Limited.  
By Peter Cunich

***The Myth of the Intuitive***, The MIT Press.  
By Max Deutsch

***Mark Twain in China***, Stanford University Press.  
By Selina Lai-Henderson

***Chinese Masculinities in a Globalizing World***,  
Routledge.  
By Kam Louie



## Faculty of Arts

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

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