



Experiential Learning in Ethiopia



Faculty News

..Pages 2-4



Research

..Pages 5-7



Teaching and Learning

..Pages 8-10



Knowledge Exchange and Alumni Sharing

..Pages 11-16

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

I recently celebrated my first year as Dean of the Faculty of Arts. It has been an exciting 12 months discovering everything that makes us not only Asia's top university in the Arts and Humanities, but also ranks us first of 100 institutions worldwide for international outlook in these subjects. Our many achievements in research, teaching and learning, and knowledge exchange are highlighted in these pages. New developments this past academic year in teaching and learning, for example, include experiential learning trips for our students to North Korea and Ethiopia, and a joint course on contemporary Asian art co-organized with Christie's Education.

I have also launched several initiatives designed to ensure that our Faculty achieves even greater excellence going forward. In December 2015, I appointed a Faculty Gender Task Force to review practices, procedures, and policies within the Faculty with respect to gender, and I look forward to sharing its recommendations in an upcoming issue of the Faculty Newsletter. I am also actively working on establishing the Society of Fellows in the Humanities, an innovative scheme that invests in an internationally selected cohort of young, world-class researchers early in their careers to enhance the identity of the Arts and Humanities and bring further acclaim to the University.

Your support is needed to guarantee the Faculty's continued excellence in our mission to educate the next generation of Hong Kong's global leaders.

Whether you give to leave a legacy or to support a cause you feel passionate about, your gift to students, a programme, or an area of research or performance will help propel the Faculty to the front ranks of the world's leading research institutions. No world-class university anywhere thrives without philanthropy, and without a financially strong Faculty of Arts at its centre. Private giving makes the difference between a good institution, and a great one. Please contact us for more information about how you can help.



Derek Collins

Professor Derek Collins
Dean of Arts
dcollins@hku.hk

HONOURS FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING, RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE 2015

Outstanding Researcher Award

Professor Xu Guoqi, School of Humanities (History)

Research Output Prize

Moral China in the Age of Reform

By **Professor Ci Jiwei**, School of Humanities (Philosophy)

Published by Cambridge University Press (New York), 2014

Faculty Teaching Excellence Award

Dr Chong Li, School of Modern Languages and Cultures (German Programme)

Faculty Knowledge Exchange Award

Dr Alexandra Cook, School of Humanities (Philosophy) and team members **Ms Ho Ka Yan**, School of Humanities, **Mr Ma Kwan Ki**, The Kadoorie Institute, and **Dr Li Pui Sze**, School of Biological Sciences

'Take Action! Youth Biodiversity Conservation Leadership Training Scheme'

STAFF NEWS

The following academic and academic-related staff took up new full-time and fixed-term positions during the period of December 1, 2015 to April 30, 2016.

School of Chinese

Dr Eva Ng Nga Shan, Assistant Professor

School of Modern Languages and Cultures

Dr Li Ji, Assistant Professor (China Studies)

Centre for Applied English Studies

Dr Michelle Raquel, Senior Lecturer

PROFESSOR CHAN HING-YAN NAMED HONG KONG SINFONIETTA ARTIST ASSOCIATE 2016-2017

Professor Chan Hing-yan from the Department of Music has been named Artist Associate of the Hong Kong Sinfonietta for the 2016-2017 season. Chan's association with the Sinfonietta dates back to 1998, when it commissioned and premiered his composition, *Enigmas of the Moon*. It has since commissioned, premiered and toured with almost all of his orchestral compositions, which are lauded for their unique incorporation of Chinese elements.

Over the last twelve months, Dr Siok Wai-ting has been confirmed as Associate Dean (Postgraduate) with responsibility for taught postgraduates, was named a member of the Dean's Gender Task Force, has served as Chair of Linguistics, and has had to fill in for the Associate Dean in charge of research who is on sabbatical. On top of that, she continues to have the normal research and teaching responsibilities and PhD supervision demands. She also conscientiously builds family time into every day. How does she stay on top of it all?



Dr Siok Wai-ting

Hardcore discipline helps for sure. Dr Siok typically restricts work hours to 9am-7pm, scheduling her day thoroughly, including windows of time in between meetings when she can catch up on teaching notes or other work. She also has motivation in her children, aged six and eleven, whom she takes to school every day, rather than putting them on a school bus, so she can spend more time with them.

"This year it has all happened together. I think it's more interesting to talk about women!" she said. "Particularly if you have a family, you have to create a balance between taking care of your children and also having a profession."

Dr Siok has had to right that balance in a very short window of time because her new roles are demanding. As Associate Dean, she was involved in the preparations for a visit by the Research Grants Council this June, in addition to routine work associated with overseeing the Faculty's eight taught postgraduate programmes.

As Chair of Linguistics, a position she stepped down from in March, she had to focus on staff recruitment to fill two vacancies and on mentoring junior colleagues so they can succeed in gaining tenure. The short staffing also meant she had to take on more duties in the department, such as being chief examiner.

In the midst of her administrative duties, she is also keen to further develop her research on Chinese language learning. Dr Siok has been involved in several important studies showing that dyslexia lights up a different part of the brain in learners of written Chinese than in alphabetic learners, opening the way for developing new approaches to helping sufferers.

More recently, she has been looking at the impact of digital devices on Chinese character learning and how the proliferation of pinyin for character input is having a negative effect on users' ability to read and memorise characters.

For the immediate short term, though, the administrative demands are taking up much of her time. Dr Siok is comfortable with that.

"It's a necessity for senior staff to do administrative work. I think this is good experience because I can contribute to the administration of the Faculty and the University and I can understand more about what is happening here. I'm happy to learn through this role," she said.

POSTGRADUATE STUDENT NEWS

Dr Tse Heung Wing (PhD, School of Chinese) and Dr Zhou Feifei (PhD, School of English) were conferred Li Ka Shing Prizes (2013-2014) at the Graduate School Award Presentation Ceremony on December 11, 2015. Miss Huang Dao Zi, a PhD Candidate in the Department of History, was announced as the inaugural recipient of the Tse Family HKU – Cambridge Hughes Hall Scholarship (2015-2016) at the same event.

The following full-time PhD candidates are fellowship awardees for 2015-2016:

HKU Foundation Postgraduate Fellowships

Mr Luo Zhengpeng (School of English), Miss Leung Ka Yan (Hong Kong Studies), and Ms Diao Tiantian (Japanese Studies)

Jessie Ho Memorial Postgraduate Fellowships

Mr Kim Chanhee (Centre for Applied English Studies), Mr Sraman Nagasen (Centre of Buddhist Studies), and Mr Wong King Tung (Comparative Literature)

Lee Shau Kee Postgraduate Fellowship

Mr Nathan Kwan Ching-yin (History)

Hong Kong PhD Fellowships

Mr Lars Christian Nordvall (School of Chinese), Ms Collier Nogues (School of English), Mr David Saunders (History), and Ms Sanja Sarman (Philosophy)

The School of Humanities is 10 years old this year, an anniversary that almost caught even its head, Professor Timothy O'Leary, by surprise. So much has happened over the past decade – new curriculum, new campus and evolving expectations of university staff – that 2006 seems a long time ago.



Professor Timothy O'Leary

The School's early focus was on pooling the resources of six established departments – Comparative Literature, Fine Arts, History, Linguistics, Music and Philosophy – to improve efficiency. But in the process the School has also been developing its own identity and Professor O'Leary is keen to move that a little closer to the forefront while also promoting the distinct departmental identities. He has also just appointed the School's first Deputy Head, Dr Roz Hammers of Fine Arts.

Last December he organised a conference on "critical humanities" which he regards as a unifying factor within the School.

"Criticism, or being critical, is something that brings together a lot of humanities research and teaching across the disciplines. It might be art criticism, it might be historical or philosophical criticism, or social or literary criticism. I think criticism, and the various forms of critical thinking, is one of the important contributions that humanities makes to society," he said.

"Having said that, there are always challenges in developing inter-disciplinary research agendas or programmes. But it is important to pick up the common values."

Meanwhile, the School's discipline-based research reputation remains very strong. In the recent Research Assessment Exercise, three departments – Fine Arts, Linguistics, and History – were in the University's top ten performers, while Fine Arts scored joint top for the whole University.

While this is good news, there are also challenges ahead. There is a relatively high number of junior staff in the School who face the ever-greater challenge of gaining tenure. This is a major focus of Professor O'Leary's attention.

"What I see among junior teachers and researchers is a significant level of anxiety and concern about

tenure and promotion. There is an enormous need for mentoring and helping staff because the pressures they are under are increasing all the time. The teaching load can be quite heavy, the demand to produce research is relentless and now we also have to contribute to knowledge exchange and impact," he said.

"Standards seem to be getting higher and higher – there is certainly no complacency – and it is getting more difficult to get job promotion and meet the demands and expectations. Part of my job as School head is to help our staff manage and succeed. The main thing is to try to create conditions in which they fulfil their potential as teachers and researchers."

Professor O'Leary has also taken the initiative to tackle the problem of sexual harassment by appointing three Postgraduate Harassment Contacts for the School. These postgraduate students act as a conduit to make sure that students' complaints reach the right ears and also run sessions to educate undergraduate students about their rights and responsibilities.

Professor O'Leary is also contributing more broadly at the University level, as an appointed member of HKU's HeforShe Action Group and as a recently elected member of the HKU Council. He has been outspoken about the political challenges the University has faced over the past couple of years.

"With the recent events in the University and in Hong Kong, I think it's appropriate for the head of the School of Humanities and for a professor of philosophy like myself to engage in public discussion and debate about these issues. This is the kind of thing people in academia should be doing," he said.

PETER CHEUNG MEMORIAL PRIZE

In memory of a beloved father, Mr. Peter Cheung (1923-2011), an anonymous donor has pledged a donation of HK\$100,000 to establish a postgraduate prize for students pursuing a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics in the Faculty of Arts. Up to two prizes of HK\$10,000 each will be awarded annually to graduating Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics students whose academic performance is within the top three in the Master's programme.

The Master of Arts Applied Linguistics programme has been offered by the Centre for Applied English Studies (formerly named the English Centre) since September 1996. The programme is designed for people who are currently teaching, or who want to teach, English at tertiary level, and focuses on issues relating to the teaching, learning and use of English as a medium of tertiary academic and professional education.

Dr Otto Heim of the School of English comes from land-locked, fortress-like Switzerland, but it is the Pacific Islands, where boundaries dissipate in the water and connections between island communities hang on tenuous threads of voice and memory, that have caught his imagination.



Dr Otto Heim

Dr Heim was recently awarded a GRF grant for a project on the father of modern Pacific theatre, John Kneubuhl (1920-1992). He also co-organised an international conference at HKU in March titled *Island Cities and Urban Archipelagos*, which attracted scholars from more than 10 different disciplines and 23 countries.

“The ‘island cities’ theme interests me because of its interdisciplinarity and the way it mobilises the concepts of island and city that are not often brought together or seem to clash. It challenges us to think about our assumptions of globalisation and space,” he said.

“The writing from the Pacific also conceptualises space and boundaries differently from the continental context. Their cultures and identities are very much based on mobility. People leave little evidence behind like buildings or texts. So was there nothing? How can we recognise what was there? What is lost? How does it continue? It challenges the idea of globalisation as homogenisation.”

One way in which culture is passed on is through the oral tradition, including theatre. This is where Kneubuhl comes in.

American-Samoan Kneubuhl grew up in Hawaii, studied at Yale University and went on to have a successful career in Hollywood, writing for such shows as *Star Trek* and *The Fugitive*. Then in 1968 he turned his back on all that. He burned all his scripts and returned to the Pacific Islands to teach and study Polynesian culture and write plays that were greeted as groundbreaking on their first performances in Honolulu, Auckland and Pago Pago.

“It’s a fascinating life, but what is really interesting is, what if he is not the exception? What if this is a norm of Pacific life – not staying put, and maybe coming back?” Dr Heim said.

Even more interesting to a literature scholar is the fact that Kneubuhl did not formally publish the plays he wrote upon returning home. Dr Heim said this might have been inspired partly by a reluctance to say the work was finished and partly by ideas about loss in Polynesian cultures.

“Loss is a very central motive in Kneubuhl’s writing to the point where he sees the confrontation of loss as fundamental to Polynesian cultures. It relates partly to the distance, the separation, and the idea that a sense of connectedness can be most keenly felt in the sense of a loss – it’s not something retrievable. You can have it only in the form of a memory, of something that is gone.

“It’s interesting to see how remembrance is intricately connected to creation. It’s not important that a play remains the way it is and handed down in the form it is. It’s more important to him that it gives rise to another play after this one.”

Nonetheless, Dr Heim has been tracking down copies of Kneubuhl’s unpublished plays and is talking to people in Pacific theatre to try to ensure his scripts remain a resource for theatrical production and research. “My motivation is to help keep his work within living memory and make it accessible to a public as far-flung as Kneubuhl’s life was.”

THRESHOLDS TO THE ‘ISLAND’ OF THE HKU CAMPUS

In conjunction with the “Island Cities and Urban Archipelagos” conference, the HKU Black Box hosted a six-week research and performative collaboration featuring the work of undergraduate classes in landscape architecture and creative writing. The project culminated in the production, *Thresholds to the ‘Island’ of the HKU Campus*, curated by Andrew Toland and Matthew Pryor from the Division of Landscape Architecture, and Aarti Hemnani and Page Richards from the School of English.

Across the visual and verbal arts, collaborative groups researched and studied scale, perspective, and perception toward four selected “threshold moments of arrival” on the HKU campus. The event welcomed conference participants and members of the HKU and wider communities to four performances on March 11, 2016.



Modern thinking about women's place in Chinese history has tended to the negative, casting women as hidden, downtrodden and bound. That narrative suited revolutionaries in the early 20th century, who equated women's fate with that of the country. But it has come under reassessment in recent times with the emergence of more and more evidence that women were not as confined and invisible as assumed.

Dr Yang Binbin of the School of Chinese recently received a GRF grant to look at learned women from the mercantile class in Huizhou in "early modern" China from 1700 to 1850, and how they helped to lift their families into the realm of the elites and initiated cultural and social changes.



Dr Yang Binbin

Merchants traditionally were viewed as the lowest among the four major social groups (the other three being scholars, peasants and artisans), but during this period they underwent significant upward mobility. Little attention has been paid to women's role in this transformation until recently, when women's writings of the time became more easily accessible. These works have inspired Dr Yang's project.

"I have been quite surprised by how much authority these women asserted in their family affairs, in business, in the economic system, in social projects like charity work, and also in literary and cultural productions," Dr Yang said. "My intention is to track their rise as women writers and also as cultural leaders, and to examine their interactions with the elite."

She is able to do so through family genealogies, local gazetteers and the writings of the women themselves. These women's publications kept a record of their social networks and circulated among the elites, who would write commentaries on them, thus making it possible to trace who the writers interacted with.

The genres of writing could vary from poetry to essays to diary-like accounts about the writer's efforts to get the right sort of education for her children, organise charity work, help her husband pass examinations for the civil service (a domain of the elite) and other activities – accounts which also were revealing of women's roles at the time.

"We make too many assumptions that Chinese women back then were invisible pretty much all of the time. I'm trying to show how visible they were trying to make themselves," Dr Yang said.

Her project will include case studies such as the Wang and Cheng families. The wife, a Wang, came from a mercantile lineage in Huizhou but her family had eventually established itself as a scholar's family in Yangzhou. The husband, a Cheng, was also from Huizhou but his family had engaged in salt trade in Yangzhou. The wife wrote extensively about educating both her husband and her children, and after her husband's death about persuading her son to sit the civil service examination instead of trading as his father had done. Her son succeeded and later published his mother's writings.

"This project is social history and it is also about literature. I'm looking closely at the writing strategies and texts and also trying to situate the texts in a broader social context and make sense of what was going on in these families and women's lives. It's important to provide a more complete picture of women at that time."

ONE BELT ONE ROAD VISUAL ARTS EXHIBITION 2016

The Faculty of Arts and the University Museum and Art Gallery contributed to a recent exhibition celebrating works by 15 contemporary female artists that reflect the cross-regional and cross-cultural concept of One Belt, One Road. Organized by the Hong Kong Federation of Women and curated by Ms Pansy Ho, the "One Belt One Road Visual Arts Exhibition 2016" was held at Sotheby's Hong Kong Gallery from 12 to 16 April, 2016.

In addition to providing images and content highlighting the historical and geographical significance of the Silk Road, Professor Derek Collins, Dean of Arts, Dr Florian Knothe, Director of the University Museum and Art Gallery, Dr Fung Kam Wing, Associate Professor in the School of Chinese, and Dr Tsui Chung-hui from the Centre of Buddhist Studies hosted a series of well-attended seminars and talks relating to the exhibition.



Chloe Lai covered the urban renewal beat for the South China Morning Post for 13 years, back when the issue was seen as purely a matter for government, business and property development. But the more she wrote, the more she realised that fundamental questions about the impact on people's lives and the whole point of urban renewal were not being addressed. So she jumped ship and plunged into a PhD with the Department of Comparative Literature and a new career in the non-profit world that have let her explore these concerns.

Her PhD, submitted this spring, is titled "Journalism as Part of the Neo-Liberal Urban Development Regime: The Case of Hong Kong," while her job is as curator of Urban Diary, a project to collect and publish stories about individuals who contribute to Hong Kong's sustainability and frequently encounter or confront urban renewal.

"Our message is that there are many interesting people who have done a lot for Hong Kong. If we want them to keep doing what they are doing, we need a city that is friendly to them," Ms Lai said.

But to the PhD first. It starts with the premise that urban development in Hong Kong has tended to give far greater weight to exchange value over use value. "Urban renewal happens because we only care about money and not how people live in the area. Most of the buildings that are knocked down are still structurally safe. They haven't decayed."



Ms Chloe Lai

Journalism for many years failed to tackle that issue, focusing instead on things like the profitability of the old Land Development Corporation and its successor the Urban Renewal Authority. That changed after public outcry over the URA's decision to knock down Lee Tung Street ("Wedding Card Street") in 2007.

"Because of the strong civil society alliance at that time, there was wide coverage of how people from Wedding Card Street were affected by redevelopment. The URA's side, on the other hand, only appeared in the business and property pages."

That shift has softened Ms Lai's assessment of journalism to a degree. While she started out feeling negatively towards journalists and journalism for holding onto the false notion of neutrality, she has developed a more nuanced view.

"My conclusion is you can't just blame the journalists if they are doing their job, but you can't rely on them either to counter the government or business. The problem is not with their methods but their blindspots. We all grew up in this environment of pro-development and pro-growth. We fail to ask very basic questions," she said.

Urban Diary prods journalists and others to consider the other side of the development issue with its stories of ordinary people interacting with their community, such as a fish stall owner, a roller-blade instructor, and the organiser of the annual Yu Lan (Hungry Ghost) festival in Staunton Street.

Last autumn Ms Lai published a collection of these stories, *Urban Diary*, and she also runs the website www.urbandiarist.com that features stories, photos and videos from contributors. "We are trying to keep stories alive, not only in areas being redeveloped but in all of Hong Kong."

YOUTH ESSAY CONTEST WINNER

Ms Zhu Wenchu, a final-year BA student majoring in Comparative Literature, was a winner in the Youth Essay Contest section of the Human Rights Press Awards 2016. Her prize was a fully paid trip to the 18th edition of the Far East Film Festival (FEFF) which ran from April 22 to 30, 2016, in Udine, Italy. Ms Zhu won for her review of Iranian director Jafar Panahi's documentary film *This Is Not a Film*.

The FEFF hosts top young critics from across the world as part of its Campus programme initiated in 2015, and Ms Zhu's application was selected from among 150 entries. Successful candidates participate in seminars, interviews and workshops focusing on both the art of film and the art of writing and contribute to a special FEFF Newsletter, *In Focus*.

In addition to a major in Comparative Literature, Ms Zhu, who hails from Nanjing in China, is studying for minors in French and in Chinese Language and Literature. Upon completion of her BA studies this summer, she will join the 2-year Regional Studies East Asia (RSEA) Master's programme at Harvard University where her full tuition will be covered by a Harvard-Yenching Institute Fellowship. Her research interests lie in modern Chinese Literature and Asian Cinema. Ms Zhu is also a published poet.

Requiring first- and second-year students to take English-language courses is never going to be popular – many of them will have had 12 years of studying the language and are tired of the subject. But academic writing in the arts and humanities requires a whole different set of skills from those learned in secondary school, as students who take the courses offered by the Centre for Applied English Studies (CAES) are learning.

All students across the University are required to take academic English courses, including one which targets language in the discipline. For Faculty of Arts students, that means learning not only how to write but also how to read at a higher level.

“Many of the students come from an exam-driven syllabus and they have developed the habit of treating reading and writing as being separate, and treating data extraction as the main aim of reading. They read purely to find information to support one stance or another for the question they are answering,” said Sam Cole, who co-ordinates the English-in-the-discipline programmes for Arts.



Mr Sam Cole

“We want students to read to engage with the text and respond to it. It’s a more interpretive approach and it is informed by reader response theory – the idea that reading isn’t just trying to figure out what the author is trying to say, but that reading for meaning is a socially-constructed thing. The reader brings their own experiences to the text.

“A good first test is to ask students to read an excerpt of a text and write a personal response. We see tension there because they want to treat reading as data extraction.”

The tension ramps higher when they work in groups on collaborative writing because they have to accommodate different interpretations of the text to produce the final product.

Students are also directed away from approaching reading and writing as chronological (read, take notes, then write) and to see it as a more recursive, back-and-forth exercise.

“It’s a bit of a shock for students that reading is quite a lot more work than they were expecting. It destabilises their theories about what reading and writing are and forces them to recognise that there is a lot more going on when people write in an academic setting,” he said.

The complexities of academic reading and writing are increasing as programmes become more interdisciplinary – for instance, an English major may work with texts that relate to both literature and linguistics, which each have their own English-in-the-discipline courses. Students take only one English-in-the-discipline course and in the past Arts students were assigned this based on their major. But now they can select the course that best suits their interest.

“We think of it as providing a range of offerings that more evenly cover the disciplinary spectrum represented in the Faculty’s programmes and we allow students to make their own choices about what’s best for them,” Mr Cole said.

“Students have a love-hate relationship about learning generic functions that can be used in writing. They like being spoon-fed but that won’t get them ahead. But we have students say that the course they have taken from us has trained them.”

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN ETHIOPIA – MAY 28 TO JUNE 5, 2016

Nineteen HKU students joined an educational field trip to Ethiopia led by Dr Facil Tesfaye of the School of Modern Languages and Cultures’ African Studies Programme and Dr Kofi Yakpo of the School of Humanities’ Department of Linguistics. Both African Studies and Linguistics offer field trips as capstone experiences in their respective curricula.

During their stay, the group were welcomed by Ambassador La Yifan at the Chinese Embassy in Addis Ababa, and worked with students and professors from the Universities of Addis Ababa, Aksum, Gondar and Bahir Dar on the various academic projects that they had prepared as part of their second semester coursework. Students also had the opportunity to visit the ancient capital cities of Aksum, Gondar and Lalibela and gain insight into the African continent’s long and complex history.



<http://www.english.hku.hk/researchpostgraduates.htm>

What do speed dating and art have in common? It's a question that was raised, most fittingly, at Art Basel Hong Kong, a market that brings together the best and some of the quirkiest of contemporary art from around the world.

In the months before the March fair, Dr Yeewan Koon had been working with Michelle Wong of Asia Art Archive (AAA) to deliver a workshop course on Hong Kong art to her senior Fine Arts students. AAA was planning to have a booth at Art Basel and it seemed a perfect opportunity to let students see the art world from a different perspective and talk to some of the experts and players who attend the fair.

But this was not going to be just any sit-down talk. The speed-dating formula was thought up as a way for students to get to the point quickly and to enable a range of experts to participate. The theme of their discussion was on how non-profit organisations can shape public discourses about art at a time when attention is increasingly focused on the for-profit art market.

Guests were invited from eight organisations, including the Tate Public Programmes in the UK, the global Delfina Foundation, Casco Office of Art, Design and Theory in the Netherlands, and locally, Para/Site, 100ft Park, Robert HN Ho Family Foundation, Hong Kong Museum of Art and AAA. They each sat in the hot seat for 10 minutes, being grilled by students who had painstakingly researched, revised and rehearsed their questions. Artist Marysia Lewandowska also took a turn in the seat.

Given the broad range of professional and cultural perspectives of the participants, the students had rich material to work with. For instance, they quizzed the Director of the Hong Kong Museum of Art, Eve Tam, on the difference between Hong Kong art and art from China. Marko Daniel of Tate was asked how art can be used to bring together people from different walks of life. Para/Site, 100ft Park and AAA were asked about the impact of politics on their organisations. Many other topics were covered too, such as the boundaries between profit and non-profit, how curators select artists, and how location affects a gallery's impact.

"We wanted to enrich students' knowledge about the role of non-profit art organisations and let them know that alongside Art Basel HK are events that look at the less commercial side of art," Dr Koon said.

The event was held on March 24 at AAA's Art Basel booth, which was located just outside one of the main exhibition halls where thousands of people passed by, some stopping to listen and look.

The students were energised by the experience. "It was a new way of learning and every single one of us was involved," said Sonia Tam, a fourth-year Fine Arts student.

"We spent a lot of time preparing our questions and I learned a lot about the contemporary art scene," said her classmate Shanni Liu. "I also learned how to ask good questions and respond to the answers given. It was rewarding to engage with people active in non-profit organisations."



Dr Yeewan Koon (back row, fourth from left) and Fine Arts students

ASIA SOCIETY ARTS GAME CHANGERS AT HKU

The University's Loke Yew Hall hosted an afternoon conversation with 2016 Asia Society Arts Game Changers Yoshitomo Nara and Cai Guo-qiang. The event, held on March 21, 2016, to coincide with Art Basel Hong Kong, was moderated by Dr Yeewan Koon, Associate Professor in the Department of Fine Arts, and Ms Michelle Yun, Senior Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at Asia Society Museum.

Born in Quanzhou, China, Cai Guo-qiang is one of the most iconic artists working today and is best known for his signature explosion events. His multidisciplinary practice draws upon eastern philosophies and socio-political issues to facilitate an exchange between the viewer and the larger universe around them.

Born in Hirosaki, Japan, Yoshitomo Nara is one of Japan's leading artists. He continues to attract audiences internationally through his expressive depictions of children and animals ranging from paintings and drawings, to three-dimensional works employing FRP, ceramic, bronze, and large-scale installations.

Dr Victor Teo of the School of Modern Languages and Cultures has been studying North Korea for years as part of his research and teaching interest in the illicit political economy and comings-and-goings along China's remote borderlands, as well as a general interest in North Korean and Asian affairs. He has developed both expertise and contacts, which he put to use this academic year to take HKU students to the Hermit Kingdom.

Seeing as North Korea regards the outside world with suspicion – and vice versa – the process of getting there was, unsurprisingly, not straightforward. The 25 participating students for the October 2015 delegation had to be carefully vetted by Dr Teo and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK – the country's official name). They did manage to reach the country in time for the 70th anniversary of the founding of the Korean Workers' Party last autumn.



North Korea Field Trip October 2015

"We didn't get into the stadium as originally planned, but we were able to be near the parade and stand in the street with North Korean citizens for more than seven hours," he said. "It was a spectacle and the North Koreans were really happy to see us – they were taking pictures of us and we were taking pictures of them."

"I don't agree with the policy of isolation towards the DPRK. It only confirms the Korean people's perception of the outside world gleaned from official narratives – that the "outside world is all out to get them." If they can't come to us, we should go to them and show them who we are."

That perspective also underpins Dr Teo's other work on the country, including a GRF project on the traders who move between the borderlands of North Korea and China and a non-profit think tank he has set up, the DPRK Observatory, to conduct academic activities centred on the country.

<http://www.chinast.hku.hk/>

"A lot of what is written about North Korea focuses on high-powered politics and the country's relations with South Korea, the US, China and Japan, and most of it tends to come from Western-dominated mass media. I want to look at what is happening on the ground," he said.

One outcome of that effort is a photo exhibition he organised on campus in December titled "Everyday Life in North Korea". The photos, taken by Dr Teo, his students, and School Technician Mr CK Lee, featured military officers, road markings for choreographing marches and parades, factories, fishing fleets, and ordinary people doing ordinary things such as travelling by ox and cart and visiting a scenic site to do some sketching. Students from Dr Teo's Korean Studies course on the DPRK helped to research and write the captions – it is the only course at HKU solely devoted to North Korea (he also teaches two Common Core courses that have content on the country).

Dr Teo recently completed a three-month fellowship at the University of Cambridge where he delivered a public lecture entitled, "Bad Boy in Rough Neighbourhood: DPRK and the Security of East Asia." One of his forthcoming projects is to take a group of academics and students drawn from various universities, including Oxford, Cambridge and HKU to North Korea. In September 2016 he will start a one-year Harvard-Yenching fellowship to further his research on China's Borderlands and the connections to the global illicit political economy.

He is also looking forward to including further fieldtrips into the teaching curriculum, after the success of last autumn's visit and a second trip in March 2016, in his drive to lift the curtain on this isolated corner of the world. This would help increase students' awareness of what really goes on in this remote part of Asia and augment his teaching and research on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.



North Korea Field Trip March 2016

When the Music Library recently held an exhibition of music notations, it was a demonstration that music can be a visual as well as an aural experience. This library is one of the best places in Hong Kong to appreciate that.

Opened in 1982, the HKU Music Library is the only standalone music library in Hong Kong, and the primary repository of music materials at HKU, including books, scores and audio-visual materials.

The printed materials include facsimiles of manuscripts written by such composers as Bach, Brahms and Mozart in their own hands, providing insights into the development of their compositions as well as the quirks of their writing styles (Beethoven's notes, for example, rush across the page with lots of cross-outs, while Stravinsky's are so even and precise that they look like a computer printout).

Kwan Yin-yee is the Music Librarian in charge of all these materials. She brings her own unusual interests to the job – her Master's thesis at the University of Hawaii was on the role of the accordion in Cultural Revolution-era music – as well as an understanding of the changing role of the library.

"In the early years, the collection was mostly classical music, but now we have materials on music and mind, arts administration, ethnomusicology, film music, and a strong collection of scores from contemporary composers. Professor Chan Hing-yan has been very supportive of the Library and greatly contributed to its development. The Library has expanded to support the different interests of faculty members and to meet the needs of postgraduate students.

"Also, the focus is now not only on print but on electronic resources, and on learning spaces. We provide a variety of seats such as sofas and coffee tables, discussion rooms and multimedia stations. Our space has gone beyond the traditional one of stacks of books and reference materials."

The library is also much more than a storage and study space. Outreach activities such as the exhibition on music notations are becoming more frequent – Ms Kwan has also organised public talks on the *guqin* and Chinese tea culture, and on translating poems and songs, and will soon stage an exhibit of a medieval chant notation donated by Professor Daniel Chua. Another talk relating to the *guqin* is planned this year.

The library receives more than 5,500 "visitor-counts" each month when classes are in session, including HKU SPACE students and alumni who tend to use the facility on weekends. Students from other faculties like to book study tables there to enjoy spectacular views of Hong Kong – the library is located on the roof of Run Run Shaw Tower.

"People can also find peace, quiet and a comfortable environment here," Ms Kwan said – as well as some reminders of the library's old home in Hung Hing Ying Building. The library's old brass plaque and photos from its old stacks decorate its new home, bringing a touch of the past to the present, and future, home of the Music Library.



The HKU Music Library is located on the 11th floor of Run Run Shaw Tower

NOTES TO KNOW

Run Run Shaw Tower's Ground Floor Gallery hosted the exhibition, "Notes to Know: Musical Notations in the West and East", from December 1, 2015, to January 31, 2016. Co-organized by the Faculty of Arts and the Music Library, the University of Hong Kong Libraries, the exhibition explored diverse ways used to notate music in different periods and cultures, including cipher notation and John Cage's notation for 4'33".



Medieval Chant Notation

Image source: a folio from a large choir book. Professor Daniel Chua donated the parchment manuscript, which he purchased in London's Portobello Market, to the Music Library.

A re-configured field trip course led Dr Cathryn Donohue and her Linguistics students to the unexpected discovery of dying languages in Hong Kong, and spurred their efforts to preserve them.

The trip was part of a capstone course that usually involves a study trip overseas in the summer. But because of a scheduling conflict for some students, Dr Donohue agreed to run a course earlier and locally, focusing on Waitauwa (Weitou dialect) that has been spoken in New Territories' walled villages for over a millennium.

"We went there prepared to study the tones and other linguistic aspects of the language, but we were not prepared to find how few people still spoke it. With only grandparents and great-grandparents using the language, it's officially critically endangered according to UNESCO's classifications. So we also became very interested as to why it had come to this brink of extinction, in the hope that we might be able to do something to stop it disappearing altogether," Dr Donohue said.

One issue was that this rural dialect was often considered "worthless" because it was not linked to obvious economic or social opportunities. "Losing a language is a blow to us as linguists, but also a blow to the community because so much of our culture is embodied in how we speak," she said.

Waitauwa is not the only Hong Kong language in decline. Dr Donohue subsequently organised another local field trip, this time focussing on the language of the Fisherfolk (Shuilowa, formerly 'Tanka'), with the support of the Gallant Ho Experiential Learning Centre. Students visited communities in both Aberdeen and Stanley to document the varieties and contribute to ongoing language preservation efforts. Dr Donohue and the students also contributed to the WAY Project's *Living on the Water* event in Stanley over Easter by giving talks on Shuilowa to the general community.

Thanks to Knowledge Exchange funding and a HKU Small Project Grant, Dr Donohue is also making a short video documentary about Hong Kong's disappearing dialects and creating a web site geared towards the general public to introduce the key issues and archive materials, including the audio-recordings, student videos, and project reports. The site, dialects.hku.hk, is scheduled to launch in the summer. Next year she will be leading a group to look into other local communities that have a history in Hong Kong, such as Hakka, Hokkien and Chiu Chow.

"The hope is that we can purge the negative stereotypes and get people to understand that the unique and varied background of its population is what makes Hong Kong what it is today. Getting people to want to embrace their linguistic and cultural heritage as part of their contemporary identity would be an important step towards language maintenance and preservation," she said.



Dr Cathryn Donohue (first from right) and students involved in the project

FUNDED INTERDISCIPLINARY KE PROJECTS 2016-2018

A one-off interdisciplinary KE fund was established in early 2016 to encourage cross-faculty collaboration on projects of two year's duration. Three interdisciplinary KE projects involving members of the Faculty of Arts were funded for 2016-2018.

Keep Alive Beacons on the Sea – Decoding Historic Lighthouses in Hong Kong and Nearby Ports

Co-Project Coordinators:

Dr Peter Cunich (Arts - Department of History)

Dr Ng Fung Fai (Architecture – Department of Real Estate and Construction)

Sounding Architecture

Co-Project Coordinators:

Dr Jose Vicente Neglia (Arts – Department of Music)

Mr Thomas Tsang (Architecture – Department of Architecture)

Working Together Across Arts, Medicine and Education: Enhancing Genetic Literacy in Genetic Counselling Consultations

Co-Project Coordinators:

Dr Olga Zayts (Arts – School of English)

Dr Brian Chung Hon-yin (Medicine – Department of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine)

A knowledge exchange project initiated by Dr Li Chong, Lecturer in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures, to introduce German language and culture to secondary schools in Hong Kong is turning out to be a winning proposal for a host of parties.

HKU undergraduates studying German get an opportunity to apply their learning and teach the language to secondary school students. Secondary school students acquaint themselves with a new language and culture, fulfil some of the “other learning experience” requirements in the local curriculum, and can be encouraged to select the subject as a formal elective for the HKDSE. Project co-ordinator Dr Chong can gather material for her research on the impediments to learning German as a foreign language in Hong Kong. And of course, the local German community gains from the spread of a positive view and appreciation of their country.



Dr Chong (seated, fourth from right) and her students host a session at HKTA Tang Hin Memorial Secondary School

“Honestly, if you ask any secondary school student in Hong Kong what they know about Germany, the first thing they will mention is Nazism. And maybe sausages and beer. There is, regrettably, little appreciation of Germany’s rich literary, musical and architectural traditions, or awareness of its tremendous technological innovations. I want to provide students with a realistic and positive image of contemporary Germany,” Dr Chong said.

She was motivated to do the project because of her own passion for the country, where she lived for 11 years, as well as the opportunity to interact with the local community and give her senior undergraduates a chance to share their knowledge.

The programme began in 2014 with 10 schools and about 400 students and increased to 19 schools and 750 students this academic year. The schools range from top-tier direct-subsidy schools, such as St Stephen’s in Stanley, St Paul’s Co-Ed in Central, and Heep Yunn in Ma Tau Wai, to government-aided schools, such as La Salle in Kowloon City, Sacred Heart in Chi Fu, and HKTA Tang Hin in Sheung Shui.

The German consulate has also become involved and generously supported this outreach initiative, providing souvenirs and arranging for its staff to speak at workshops.

“This project generates a win-win-win situation for everyone involved. I very much hope it can be a long-term collaboration between the German programme and local schools,” Dr Chong said.

Dr Li Chong was awarded the Arts Faculty Teaching Excellence Award 2015.

GENESIS OF A MUSIC: THE GENIUS OF HARRY PARTCH

Students and teachers from the Faculty’s Department of Music took part in a unique experiment to recreate the music of visionary composer, theorist and creator of musical instruments, Harry Partch (1901 – 1974).

Partch, whose parents were American missionaries in China in the late 19th century, grew up in California under the influence of Chinese lullabies and Cantonese opera. Inspired by ancient music theory, modern science, and a first-hand awareness of folk and non-Western classical music, he developed a 43-note scale that embraced just intonation. He also invented a large body of new percussion and string instruments capable of performing these subtle tunings.

Only three complete ensembles of Partch’s iconoclastic instruments exist in the world. In recent months, Hong Kong has seen its first emulation of these inventions. Students spent four months sourcing materials, designing and constructing six Partch instruments, which made their public debut at an evening performance and discussion on the Asia Society Hong Kong Center’s Landscape Terrace on April 9, 2016.

Speakers included members of the creative team: Dr Deborah Waugh, who teaches in the Department of Music and is also the Director of the HKU Percussion Ensemble; Mr William Lane, Artistic Director of the Hong Kong New Music Ensemble; artist, designer and HKU graduate Mr Jason Chong; and Dr Eli Marshall from the Department of Music at Cornell University. These discussions were interspersed with performances of Harry Partch compositions by the HKU Percussion Ensemble and Hong Kong New Music Ensemble.



Film director and current University Artist Fruit Chan, who has been beloved by film scholars and fans of serious cinema since his landmark 1997 film *Made in Hong Kong*, offers this advice to would-be filmmakers: films can be made cheaply today, skills can be learned, but you better have good ideas.

“So many young people make movies today but they are not mature. They have the film language and skills but they want to move too fast. They don’t know how to control their actors and their storylines are problematic.

“I tell them they need to say something new, whether it is simple or deep. First you have to get the idea and develop it,” he said.



That perspective has shaped Mr Chan’s engagement with the Faculty. He proposed holding scriptwriting workshops for students to focus on evoking and crafting ideas and, last year, five workshops were organised that centred on the basics of character, story and visuals. He also advised the students to read widely, from newspapers and comic books to literature, to get ideas and inspiration for creating their own stories.

Mr Chan was seeking inspiration of his own in deciding to participate in the University Artists Scheme. “I wanted to know which way young people are thinking and their ambitions – I am doing this for myself so I can create something for young people,” he said. But he is equally interested in grooming the next generation of filmmakers.

He sees potential in the “second wave” of filmmaking in Hong Kong that is emerging from young independent directors. The first wave came in the 1980s, when Mr Chan himself learned his craft before making his own films. Today’s market for Hong Kong films is much smaller due to greater competition from around the region, but he believes local filmmakers can still carve out a niche, citing the film *Ten Years* as one example.

“It’s like starting over. We have to forget the prime time [of Hong Kong cinema], this time will be different,” he said.

“I really want young people to make the second new wave of Hong Kong movies. The old directors like me – I’m very embarrassed, I don’t know nowadays which way I want to go – but for young people they know. If they don’t see a good way in front of them, they create another way.”

Much like Mr Chan did himself 20 years ago with *Made in Hong Kong*. He was the first filmmaker to really tackle what the 1997 handover meant for ordinary people in Hong Kong, particularly youths – although ironically, young audiences back then preferred mainstream blockbusters to Mr Chan’s arthouse production. Even today, he reckons his film has not been so widely seen, “but now, after 20 years, young people are totally different. At least they care about what is going on in Hong Kong, they care about their future and Hong Kong’s future,” he said.

The Faculty hosted a screening of *Made in Hong Kong* this spring. Last year it also hosted a screening and talk of Mr Chan’s latest film, *The Midnight After*.



Supported by
Dr Alice Lam

The University Artists Scheme was officially launched in 2008 and is the first programme of its kind to be held at HKU. The Scheme brings artists of international caliber to our campus to enrich the lives of our students, staff, and the wider Hong Kong community. 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 University Artists Scheme is hosted by the Faculty of Arts and is supported by Dr Alice Lam.

UNIVERSITY ARTIST TREY LEE PERFORMS WITH DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC STUDENTS

University Artist Trey Lee performed on HKU's Grand Hall stage for the first time on Saturday, May 14, 2016, with talented young musicians from the Department of Music's Advanced Music Performance course. The event was co-presented by the HKU Cultural Management Office, and the University Artists Scheme supported by Dr Alice Lam.

Since his appointment as University Artist in 2014, acclaimed cellist Trey Lee has held three masterclasses for students in the Advanced Music Performance course, coordinated by Professor Chan Hing-yan and Dr Giorgio Biancorosso. Their work together culminated in the May 14 free public concert, "Shared Stage: Trey Lee and HKU Musicians".

Seven students performed on stage with Trey Lee: Ms Golda Chan (piano), Ms Cheryl Hui (percussion and marimba), Ms Oliver Kwong (soprano), Ms Rosanne Lee (soprano), Mr Jeffrey Lui (piano), Ms Grammy Yeung (*guzheng*), and Mr Patrick Yeung (harmonica). The programme also included the world premiere of a piece composed by PhD candidate, Gordon Fung Dic-lun, and performances by esteemed Italian pianist Bruno Canino and violinist Gian Paolo Peloso.



Shared Stage: Trey Lee and HKU Musicians

COLLABORATION WITH THE HONG KONG ARTS FESTIVAL

The Faculty and Department of Music collaborated with the 44th Hong Kong Arts Festival to bring the acclaimed Rundfunkchor Berlin, an official partner of the Berlin Philharmonic, to Loke Yew Hall to perform *Human Requiem*, a special rendition of Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* that features a unique choreographed performance and engages the audience in the action, guiding the listeners to reinterpret this choral classic. In addition to the two main performances, the collaboration included an open rehearsal for students and members of the HKAF Young Friends programme, and a public talk with the production's conductor and stage director moderated by Dr Giorgio Biancorosso from the Department of Music.

NEW JOINT COURSE WITH CHRISTIE'S EDUCATION HONG KONG

The Faculty of Arts and Christie's Education Hong Kong launched their inaugural five-day seminar programme titled "Contemporary Asian Art: An Insider's View" on July 6, 2016. Jointly taught and organized, this new initiative, leveraging the expertise of the two institutions, focuses on modern and contemporary art in Asia, in particular China, Japan and India. The art historical portion of the programme is conceived and delivered by the faculty in the Department of Fine Arts, while the market-related portion is developed by Christie's Education.

The programme combines art seminars with site visits to artists' studios, galleries, Christie's and museums, as well as conversations with art professionals and patrons. Featured speakers include collector and architect William Lim; gallerist Edouard Malingue; Jonathan Stone, Christie's Chairman of Asian Art; and Henry Tang, former Chief Secretary for Administration.

KINSEY COLLECTION TO BE SEEN FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ASIA

The Faculty is working with the University Museum and Art Gallery (UMAG) to host an exhibition of artefacts from the Kinsey African American Art & History Collection from December 2016 to February 2017. The Kinsey Collection includes rare and authentic art, artifacts, books and manuscripts that reveal the untold story of African American achievements. On tour since 2007, the Kinsey Collection has visited the Smithsonian and earned the President's National Award for Museum and Library Services. This will be the first time that it is exhibited outside of the United States.

The School of Modern Languages and Cultures' African Studies and American Studies programmes are working with UMAG to develop student and public initiatives in conjunction with the exhibition and the Department of Music is exploring the possibility of holding a concert in the Grand Hall. The exhibition has the support of the Consulate General of the United States of America in Hong Kong.



Bernard, Shirley and Khalil Kinsey (seated front) with US Consul General Clifford Hart, HKU President Peter Mathieson, Dean of Arts Derek Collins, and UMAG Director Florian Knothe

<http://arts.hku.hk/knowledge-exchange>

Ms Annie Bentley (BA 1971, MBuddhStud 2010 [HKU], AdvCertEd [Oxon]) has been a powerhouse in the Hong Kong public relations field for nearly three decades, dealing with prominent clients in retail, property, insurance and banking, such as Rolls Royce, city'super, IFC, the Wharf Group, AIA and Standard Chartered Bank. It is a career that has capitalised on all the language and communication abilities that were conferred on her as an Arts student, and also on the opportunities from being in the right place at the right time.



Ms Annie Bentley

"I'm totally bilingual and totally bicultural, and in the 1960s, 70s, 80s, 90s someone of standing in two languages and two cultures was very blessed. Everything came together for me," she said.

Ms Bentley was an outstanding student from a young age and although she did not fulfil her mother's dream to become a doctor, she nonetheless went on to great success at HKU. At the end of her first year, she was voted best female undergraduate and received a \$1,500 prize. Her parents were so proud they allowed her to enter Lady Hotung Hall the next year.

After graduation in 1971, she moved to the UK where she read Education at the University of Oxford and was editor of the Oxford English dictionary with Chinese translation. A decade later she returned to Hong Kong where, she said, she "bumbled" into PR and made her mark. After only a few years, she set up her own company in 1987, Bentley DDB Needham, in partnership with the world's biggest group of PR and advertising agencies, and became a leader in the field in Hong Kong.

Her success caught the attention of HKU's Vice-Chancellor in 1994, Professor Wang Gungwu, who was putting together a group of alumni to help develop an education and research fund for HKU. That culminated in a dinner in 1996 at Loke Yew Hall that went on to inspire greater things, as Ms Bentley described in frank terms.

"We were sitting at a long thin table, we couldn't talk to anybody, and we were being served endless food. It was boring! But I looked around and got a strange sensation – the last time I had been here was 25 years ago for my final exams. And that's where I came up with the idea of a 25th anniversary for our class," she said.

With former classmates, she organised a combination reunion and fundraising event that included dancing and round tables, and raised more than \$1 million for the University. It also launched a tradition among graduation classes of holding reunion fundraisers.

Ms Bentley credits her Arts degree with preparing her for a career of forging connections and translating ideas to others. "An Arts degree broadens the mind and equips you with the language to express your views forcefully, critically and with compassion, It is meaningful, fun and financially useful – in that order," she said.

To illustrate that point, she cites a story about a farmer who decided to leave the family business to the son who could fill their barn at the lowest cost. The eldest, an agriculture graduate, filled it with wheat and grain. The middle son, an engineer, filled it with straw for thatched roofs. "The youngest, a graduate of Fine Arts and Creative Writing, bought a lamp – and filled the barn with light!" she said. Guess who got the farm.

Ms Bentley was Guest of Honour and delivered the Keynote Address at the 194th Congregation for the Faculty of Arts, Postgraduate Session. She has been Chair of Robert Black College since 2011 and is working on the College's 50th anniversary celebrations in 2017. In recognition of her contributions to the University and the community, Ms Bentley was honoured with an Honorary University Fellowship in 2013.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE ARTS FACULTY

Decoding Chinese Characters, Greenwood Press.
By Chow Bun-ching

The Cultural Revolution: A People's History, 1962-1976, Bloomsbury Press.
By Frank Dikötter

Teaching and Researching Writing (3rd edition), Routledge.
By Ken Hyland

Youth and Empire: Trans-Colonial Childhoods in British and French Asia, Stanford University Press.
By David Pomfret



Faculty of Arts

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Arts Faculty Newsletter

<http://arts.hku.hk/knowledge-exchange/newsletter>

Editorial Team: John Carroll, Edward Shen,
Georgina Challen, Cyrus Chan

Writer: Kathy Griffin

Please direct your comments to arts@hku.hk.

