Congratulations to Our 2015 Arts Graduates!
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 May 1 to November 30, 2015.

School of English
Dr Brook Bolander, Assistant Professor
Dr Luciana Gattass, Post-doctoral Fellow

School of Humanities
Dr Oscar Sanchez-Sibony, Assistant Professor (History)

School of Modern Languages and Cultures
Dr Paul S Cha, Assistant Professor (Korean Studies)
Dr Daniel Trambaiolo, Assistant Professor (Japanese Studies)
Dr Max WL Wong, Assistant Professor (Global Creative Industries)

Centre for Applied English Studies
Dr Aditi Dubey-Jhaveri, Lecturer

Existing Staff

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

School of Chinese
Dr Tang Siu Fu, Associate Professor
Dr Isaac Yue, Associate Professor
Dr Yeung Man Shun, Assistant Professor
Dr Poon Hon Fong, Lecturer

School of English
Dr Lisa Lim, Associate Professor

School of Humanities
Dr Christopher Fraser, Associate Professor (Philosophy)
Dr Winnie Yee, Assistant Professor (Comparative Literature)

School of Modern Languages and Cultures
Mrs Kristina Tolinsson Ting, Assistant Lecturer

Centre for Applied English Studies
Dr Natalie Fong, Senior Lecturer
Mr Keith Hall, Lecturer
Mr Ken Ho, Assistant Lecturer
Ms Carly Ng, Assistant Lecturer
Mr Simon Scanlon, Assistant Lecturer
Ms Heidy Wong, Assistant Lecturer

Run Run Shaw Scholarships 2015/2016

In recognition of the generous support from the Shaw Foundation, the Faculty has set up a scholarship fund in memory of the late Dr the Honourable Run Run Shaw. The aim of the fund is to provide long-term financial support for Arts student exchange and enrichment purposes.

These prestigious Scholarships are awarded to non-final year BA students who are participating in a full-year Faculty- or University-level exchange programme. The 2015-2016 scholars are:

Mr Tony Chiu Hon Sang – University of Kent
Miss Choi Jieun – University of Melbourne
Miss Elizabeth Lee Shun Lok – University of Edinburgh
Miss Wan Zhengzheng – Mount Holyoke College
Miss Gertrude Wong Man Fong – Peking University

The Faculty believes that the study abroad experience should be an integral part of our students’ time at university and we are grateful to the Shaw Foundation for their support in achieving this goal.

194th Congregation - Faculty of Arts

The Faculty of Arts held its 194th Congregation on Saturday, November 28, 2015. 53 Research Postgraduate, 288 Taught Postgraduate and 436 Undergraduate Arts’ students had their degrees conferred during the Congregation’s three separate sessions in the Grand Hall of Lee Shau Kee Lecture Centre.

The Faculty was delighted to welcome back three of its distinguished alumni to speak at the Congregation. Honorary University Fellow Ms Annie Bentley was the Guest of Honour for the postgraduate session. Mr Andrew Fung Hau Chung, JP, and Professor Elizabeth Sinn Yuk Yee were Guests of Honour for the two undergraduate sessions. It was a proud moment with each graduating student awarded his or her degree on stage in the presence of teachers, parents and friends.

The Faculty’s Prize Presentation for Non-Final Year Awardees was held on November 20, 2015, in Loke Yew Hall.

Our Congratulations to all graduates and awardees!
Professor Derek Collins, the new Dean of Arts, is bursting with the possibilities for a Faculty that he praises to the skies, but also would like to see more engaged with the broader world.

The Faculty (and HKU) is a ‘hidden gem’, he said, maybe not as well-known in some places but with students and staff of very high quality.

“I have been literally blown away first and foremost by the students, who are stronger than they realise – many are functioning well in their third language and they are almost intrinsically international. And also by the staff and how international and diverse the University is in general.”

Having said that, he would like to bring some things to the table.

For students, he hopes to encourage them to pursue language training beyond Cantonese, English and Mandarin, and take up something like Arabic or Portuguese so they can communicate across more cultures.

Leadership and entrepreneurship should also be part of their training and goals, because Arts students have the communication, critical thinking and analytical skills that are assets in the business and non-profit worlds. Such capabilities are best put to use when students collaborate.

These skills are also important in building bridges between disciplines. He imagines co-curricular projects being initiated between computer science and music, or history and architecture. While some of this happens in the Common Core, he would like to see it revved up. “There are silos between the faculties and missed opportunities for students to collaborate. We have to work together to break them down,” he said.

Interdisciplinary connections are important for research, too, and he hopes to see more initiatives like the Centre for the Humanities and Medicine. He especially wants the Faculty to work at raising its international research profile, by looking beyond the constraints of government funding to international and private funding sources.

All these things will be important to take HKU and the Faculty to a status well within its reach: “You want anyone who thinks about China and Asia to think of HKU as the crucial place for furthering those ideas. It’s about situating HKU as the unique ‘must’ stop for trying to understand how Asia deals with the rest of the world.”

In case you think he is all business, Professor Collins, who previously was associate dean of humanities at the University of Michigan, likes to point out he has applied broad thinking and multidisciplinarity in his own life. His scholarship in Classical Studies combines literature and anthropology (he authored *Magic in the Ancient Greek World*), and his interests range from travel, music and art to car racing.

He hopes students will similarly find several passions through their Arts studies. In contrast, he cites the example of lottery winners who win and squander a lot of money, and then become depressed because they do not know what else to do. “Their imagination is limited and they don’t know what to appreciate. It’s the limitation of the imagination that you want to lift” – which is where Arts comes in, as a place to stir the mind and hopefully create some magical connections.

HKU RANKED ASIA’S TOP UNIVERSITY IN ARTS AND HUMANITIES 2015-2016

The University of Hong Kong has been ranked no. 1 in Asia (jointly with the University of Tokyo) and 44th in the world in Arts and Humanities in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2015-2016, announced on October 21, 2015. HKU is one of only two Asian universities that made it into the top 50 in this year’s Arts and Humanities subject ranking.

THE rely on five categories of activities, including teaching, research, citations, industry income and international outlook, to compile their rankings. HKU did particularly well in the international outlook category, with the joint highest score of all top 100 institutions worldwide for the Arts and Humanities. This result underscores the value of our international collaborations and highlights our ability to attract undergraduates, postgraduates and faculty from all over the world. It reinforces the pivotal part the Faculty plays in HKU’s internationalization – one of the University’s three strategic themes for 2016-2019.

http://arts.hku.hk/
The School of Chinese has always occupied a special and somewhat separate place at HKU. It is the only unit where Chinese is the medium of instruction and, largely, of research output. And there is the challenge.

The School’s achievements have tended to be overlooked because of the language barrier and also because of a natural reticence of the minority to speak out. It is often mistaken as a “quiet” unit compared with others in the Faculty and the University.

Now, the new Head of the School, Dr Wu Cuncun, hopes to reach out to the university community and beyond.

“Many colleagues have a very strong Chinese education which makes us a little different from other schools in the Faculty. Part of my job is to get people to understand that,” she said. “I also hope colleagues can actively engage and keep in touch with the rest of the Faculty. We should feel comfortable to speak out and say what we think.”

One thing on Dr Wu’s mind is that the School’s research reputation has not been given its due recognition. While the School has a strong recent record in securing GRF grants, it did not do so well in last year’s research assessment exercise.

“I think one of the reasons is that more than 50 per cent of our publications are in Chinese-language journals. Theoretically, they are supposed to be treated equally [to English-language publications] but there are problems. I would like to see that change,” she said.

Recent recruits will help the cause because most have overseas qualifications from the West and are comfortable in English. (Dr Wu, after teaching at Nankai University in China for 10 years, spent 12 years teaching at Australian universities.) This should help the School to achieve her bigger ambitions.

“HKU is the leading university in Hong Kong and our School should play the leading role in Chinese studies. I hope we can consolidate the School’s international profile,” she said.

Dr Wu also wants to bring teaching more to the forefront and provide additional support for those teaching in the Chinese Language Enhancement Programme and Chinese Language Centre, which employ more than half of the School’s academic staff.

Her deep and infectious enthusiasm for HKU will undoubtedly be a help in her new position. She came here in 2010 because of the proximity to China, the research environment and the extensive networks with overseas universities – connections that have enabled her to spend 10 months at Harvard University as a Harvard-Yenching Visiting Scholar and two months at both Cambridge University and King’s College London.

“I love HKU and I think it’s a great place to do research. Most School members would agree there are lots of opportunities here,” she said.

“People have been really nice to me, so when my colleagues approached me to take up the headship, I felt I should do something to repay the School.”

The one trade-off is having to reduce her research activities, which focus on a topic that fascinates whatever the language and culture: sexuality in the late Ming and Qing dynasties, including homoeroticism, prostitution and pornography. “I really love my research, but I also like having the opportunity to support my colleagues and strengthen the School’s position,” she said.

YUNNAN CULTURAL STUDY EXCHANGE TOUR

The second Yunnan Cultural Study Exchange Tour, a joint initiative between the University of Hong Kong and Yunnan University, took place between October 9 and 18, 2015. Led by Mr Hayson Liu of the School of Chinese, 60 HKU students participated in this 10-day study trip which included lectures by prominent scholars, visits to major historic sites and an opportunity to engage with Yunnan University students in a number of out-of-class activities designed to broaden their horizons. After spending the first three days on the Yunnan University campus in Kunming, students travelled to Shaxi, Jianchuan, Lijiang, the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain and Dali.

The HKU and Yunnan University Exchange Programme is held under the auspices of the “HKU-China 1000 Exchange Scheme”.

http://www.chinese.hku.hk/
Authors and journalists may both be engaged in the act of writing, but in the 19th century authors waged, if you can excuse the expression, a little war of words against newspapers.

Journalists and newspapers were portrayed negatively by the likes of Anthony Trollope, whose self-serving editor-characters tended to be more interested in disrupting society to serve their own ends than the public interest.

To Dr Jessica Valdez of the School of English, this phenomenon is an opportunity for considering how 19th century novelists conveyed ideas about the literary value of the novel. A one-time aspiring journalist herself – she interned at the Baltimore Sun and Washington Post – she is investigating the depiction of news and newspapers in Victorian England and how this related to not only novels but also national identity, for a RGC Early Career Scheme-funded project.

Both the novel and the newspaper were fairly new phenomena at this time and had each been vilified as corrupting influences on society. Novelists like Trollope responded through unflattering portrayals of newspapermen, while Charles Dickens took a different tack, portraying a writer-character like David Copperfield sympathetically but “hiding the labour of writing as part of the effort to elevate the novel as a literary form,” Dr Valdez said.

“I’m also looking at what these attitudes tell us about their idea of the nation and the relationship of literature to the nation. Obviously the newspaper is essential to creating a sense of a national community through the perception that many other readers are also reading the same newspaper every morning. At the same time, though, many of these novelists were concerned about the effect that a mass media might have on the morality of the nation – how it sought to titillate readers and often jumped to conclusions.”

For someone like Dickens, the novel itself represented unity. It brought together different forms of writing (such as serialisation) into a single whole, while at the same time containing characters from different classes and opening up their eyes to each other, she said. In the political sense of unity, it competed with the newspaper.

In contrast, the sensation novel, which appeared in the 1860s and 1870s and offered fictionalised accounts of lurid newspaper stories, challenged such unity. Dr Valdez is also looking at the writer Wilkie Collins whose female characters were bigamists, poisoners and the like who sometimes looked to newspaper headlines for guidance “almost like a horoscope”.

“Wilkie Collins asks the reader to enter into the interiority of a character who we might otherwise write off. In a way he is challenging the idea of nation and the way that the national community is built on exclusion.”

Dr Valdez hopes her project will contribute to a better understanding of the novel, which continues to be subjected to debate about when it began and where the line of “fiction” can or should be drawn. “I hope, with my analysis of the depiction of another form of writing within the novel, to see if this gives us an understanding of how Victorians understood novelness.”

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**RGC Early Career Scheme Funding Recipients 2015-2016**

**School of English**
Dr Jessica Valdez – Mediating Englishness: Newspapers and National Identity in the Victorian Novel

**School of Humanities**
Dr Kathryn B Moore – Visual and Spatial Intersections of Islam and Christianity in the Holy Land

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**Recent Publications by Members of the Arts Faculty**

*Languages in Contact*, Cambridge University Press.
By Lisa Lim and Umberto Ansaldo

By Paul Smethurst

http://www.english.hku.hk/
Every year in Hong Kong about 5,000 newly-arrived children enter local primary and secondary schools. The majority are from mainland China and South Asia and they are often disadvantaged from the outset in a system based on knowledge of Cantonese and English, and teaching to the norm.

That situation concerns Dr Chee Wai-chi of the School of Modern Languages and Cultures, who recently received a GRF grant to investigate the academic trajectory and social integration of teenage migrants in Hong Kong’s school system.

“My research interest has always been young people and education,” she said. “I think migrant students deserve our attention because they are in a difficult situation where they have to adjust to a new life on the one hand, and a very unfamiliar education system on the other.”

Migrant students have long been known to have disproportionately lower academic achievement in local schools. While Mainland students have a somewhat easier time because of the similarity of Cantonese and Putonghua, they struggle with English. Indian and to a certain extent Nepali students cope with English but struggle with Chinese. Pakistani students tend to struggle with both.

Dr Chee saw some of this in an earlier project on the initial experiences of migrant students that ran from 2008 to 2012. She interviewed 87 students aged 12 to 18 during their first year in Hong Kong and found many were optimistic – not necessarily for the best reasons.

“They compared their Hong Kong school with their hometown school and talked about the schools here being well-equipped with things like computers, air-conditioners and sports facilities, and the teaching quality being higher. Most of them said the teachers here were more professional than the teachers back home.

“I called this misguided optimism because their comparisons were based on their hometown rather than the Hong Kong context and other local peers,” she said.

Dr Chee will now go back to the same group for a comparative longitudinal study to see how they view things now that they are older and have gone further through the school system. Did they catch up in the curriculum and if so when, or did they drop out and if so why? Did they feel they belonged to Hong Kong and if so, at what point did that happen? For mainland students, did anti-mainland sentiment affect their educational decisions? These are some of the issues she will explore.

“I’m trying to see this from their perspective and reveal their experiences. If we understand what these students are going through, then we will be in a better position to provide effective support to them,” she said.

She hopes the results will contribute to better practices and policies based on equity and the integration of migrant students, so they do not flounder in Hong Kong’s educational system. Hong Kong itself could even benefit. “Ironically, Hong Kong claims to be a world city and inclusive,” she said. “If that is really so, then we should be helping these students to do better.”

http://www.hkstudy.hku.hk/
The “China-West Studies” Strategic Research Theme (SRT) continues to organize activities that stimulate discussion on the many ways that China and the West interact in the Humanities field. The SRT has members from the Faculties of Arts, Law, Social Sciences, Architecture and Education. Its current Convenor is Professor Stephen Chu, Programme Director of the cross-disciplinary Hong Kong Studies Programme in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures. Professor Zhang Xianchu of the Faculty of Law is Deputy Convenor.

The SRT has made a major impact in the international academic community by organizing events such as conferences and symposia, through which its members take a leading role in bringing colleagues from local and overseas universities together to make a claim for world leadership in this exciting field. Included here is a list of selected events held in 2015, as well as conferences supported by the SRT in 2016.

2015

What is China?
March 23-24

This two-day symposium, co-organized by the Department of Humanities and Creative Writing at Hong Kong Baptist University, focused on the concept of “China” (Zhongguo), which remains a controversial issue. The symposium raised several questions, including what it means to speak of Zhongguo in the 21st century.

Siting Postcoloniality
June 25-27

This conference and workshop organized by the School of English emphasized Hong Kong’s position as an important site for understanding postcoloniality and for initiating a global conversation on how forces of cultural hegemony work in complicity and conflict with state power and the agency of literature in postcolonial civil societies.

Workshop on Nation, Gender, and Genres: Literature and Film from Taiwan and Korea, 1930s-1960s
August 7

This workshop aimed to move away from the usual Japan/empire-centered comparative approach when treating the two countries and to offer new interpretations of filmic and literary texts from the specified era.

2016

The Remaking of Erudite Scholars: Western Knowledge and Confucian Learning in Eighteenth-Century China
January 29-31
School of Chinese

Asian Cultures in Dialogue: Politics and the Arts
May 6-9
Department of Comparative Literature

The Victorians and the Democratic Imagination
May 13-14
School of English

Jesuits and the Arts in China
May 2016
Department of Fine Arts

World Studies: Approaches, Paradigms, and Debates
June 23-25
Hong Kong Studies Programme

SRT Research Postgraduate Projects

A number of Research Postgraduate places are allocated to students whose research projects are aligned with the China-West Studies Strategic Research Theme. Current Research Postgraduates include Miss Jiang Linyan in Comparative Literature whose field of study covers Migration Studies, Postcolonial Studies and Hong Kong Studies, Miss Hu Enyi in American Studies who is researching the American educational missionaries at Yenching University, Miss Ivy Wong Hay Mun also in Comparative Literature, and Miss Wong Yin Tung in the School of English.

For further details on the China-West Studies Strategic Research Theme, please visit: http://www.rss.hku.hk/strategic-research/china/china-west-studies

For further details on the China-West Studies Strategic Research Theme, please visit: http://arts.hku.hk/research
PhD candidate Aaron Anfinson has come to Hong Kong and HKU via an unusual path that has crossed countries, cultures and religions, and is informing his research.

Mr Anfinson is the son of gospel singers and grew up in the sparsely-populated American Midwest, often traveling from town to town with his parents’ group. At 17, wanting a university education, he enrolled in the US National Guard, which paid his tuition fees provided he stayed with the military for six years. He was to be assigned to water purification services for humanitarian missions, but then the Iraq war began and he was grounded in the US, where he completed an English literature degree at North Dakota State University and taught in lower-income schools.

During this time, he also met his partner whose father was from Saudi Arabia and who grew up in a Muslim household. The cross of cultures and experiences left both with a desire to travel. In 2008, with his military commitment completed, they set off.

They first spent 18 months teaching English in Vietnam, then two years in Hong Kong where Mr Anfinson earned a Master of Education at HKU. In late 2011, following the “Arab Spring,” they were inspired to travel to the region of his wife’s family. They taught in Oman for a year, but Mr Anfinson, inspired by his experiences and the changing world, was keen to reflect on all that from a more academic perspective.

In 2013 he arrived at HKU to pursue a PhD on the sociolinguistics of legitimacy, attracted in part by the opportunity to have Professor Adam Jaworski as his supervisor.

He is looking at the branding of the nation and how entities such as the Islamic State use branding, language and nation-state frameworks to define a collective identity. The Islamic State, for instance, produces slick publications in English aimed at Muslims in Western countries.

“They have been using contemporary branding techniques, attempting to construct and market an identity to the outside world. They are attempting legitimacy through the mediatisation of violence and through constructing their own ‘state’ institutions. I’m interested in the language of that.”

He is still sifting through his research, grateful for the receptiveness to multi-disciplinary research in the Faculty and for the open environment in Hong Kong, where he has the freedom to pursue a potentially contentious topic.

“I’m lucky to be in the Faculty of Arts and the School of English, studying under Adam. I’m able to witness and take in such amazing, multidisciplinary research. I’m also able to receive feedback on my own work from various perspectives. This has been rewarding. Everybody has been very supportive. They are as curious as I am to see how my research will turn out.”

Postgraduate Student News

Ms Dong Xiaoxi, a PhD candidate in American Studies, has been awarded a 2014-2015 Fulbright-RGC Hong Kong Research Scholar Award. Ms Dong will be hosted by the University of Massachusetts at Amherst for ten months to research China’s reception of African American literature after 1949 and to explore how ideology has shaped Communist China’s interpretation of race and class, under the guidance of Professor Steven C Tracy.

Mr Gordon Fung Dic-Lun, a PhD candidate in Composition in the Department of Music, has won the Composition Award 1st Prize at the Singapore International Competition for Chinese Orchestral Composition (SICCOC) 2015. His piece, entitled Arise, You Lion of Glory!, was performed by Ms Yu Jia as a traditional pipa solo at the Award Presentation and Concert on November 21, 2015. SICCOC aims to promote musical creativity, stimulate international awareness and establish a repertoire of Nanyang- and/or Singapore-inspired Chinese orchestral pieces. This is the first time a Hong Kong composer has won the Composition Award 1st Prize at this Competition.

http://www.english.hku.hk/researchpostgraduates.htm
Ms Miranda Legg, Senior Lecturer in the Centre for Applied English Studies (CAES), this year received a Teaching Excellence Award from the University, an honour that recognises not only her teaching ability but also the considerable challenge she took on in designing the Core University English programme for the new four-year undergraduate curriculum.

Language proficiency is one of the key goals of the new curriculum, under which students have to complete double the number of English-language learning hours as before. Students need to spend 120 learning hours studying the first-year Core University English, and another 120 hours in their second or third year studying English in their discipline.

However, because students now enter HKU with one less year at secondary school and are also required to take Common Core courses alongside students from different disciplines, Ms Legg had her work cut out for her. She not only had to increase the quantity of material to be taught but also had to adapt the content to the needs of students studying the new curriculum.

“The students have diverse abilities and interests and we have to make sure they can function in both writing and speaking in the Common Core,” said Ms Legg, who believes the variety in ability is the result of the University admitting more students from beyond the elite schools and not a fall in standards (an oft-heard complaint).

“You can’t approach it as a deficit model because it’s not possible to identify everybody’s individual weaknesses. So we set standards that we want students to achieve and teach to those.”

The programme covers such things as academic writing and speaking skills, citation and referencing skills and avoiding plagiarism. Ms Legg said some students did question why they needed to study a subject they thought they had seen the last of. As a result, the Centre’s teachers had to spend a lot of time explaining how the course would help students develop essential skills, all while giving them as many writing and speaking opportunities as possible.

“For the most part the students understand and value what we do. So long as they understand the rationale of the course, we get very good feedback from students,” she said.

Ms Legg began planning the Core University English programme nearly a decade ago, soon after the new curriculum was announced, and has also produced a textbook to support it (now in its second edition following feedback from staff and students). The programme is the focus of her PhD at Macquarie University, which she is close to finishing. She has also recently been promoted to chair of CAES’ Programme Co-ordinators’ Committee.

“What we do well at the centre is tailor our courses to the needs of the students. I was lucky because I had an opportunity to create something new and meaningful, with impacts into the wider curriculum,” she said. “A lot of the work we do is not very visible to the academic community at HKU, so it was nice to get recognised. There is a lot of hard work that goes on by all teachers at the Centre.”

Standing Committee on Language Education And Research (Scolar) Funded Projects

Two projects led by teachers from the Centre for Applied English Studies have received funding of over HK$1 million from the Hong Kong Education Bureau’s Standing Committee on Language Education and Research.

The first, entitled “Case studies on how Chinese English learners in Hong Kong secondary schools mediate automated content feedback and related contextual learning elements for essay writing: Implications for pedagogy,” is led by Associate Professor Dr Cynthia Lee and Co-Investigators Drs William Cheung and Kelvin Wong from the Department of Computer Science at Hong Kong Baptist University. The project aims to shed light on the ways in which learning technologies can inform the teaching and learning of second language writing.

The second, entitled “Analysing English learners’ experiences in the transition from senior secondary mainstream and shadow education to university studies,” is led by Mr Kevin Yung and Co-Investigators Dr Natalie Fong from CAES and Dr Ora Kwo from the Faculty of Education. The project investigates the state of English learning among first-year university students and evaluates the extent to which their learning background and English proficiency meet the language needs of tertiary education.
When people think about Hong Kong, a lot of them think about Hong Kong films,” says Professor Gina Marchetti of the Department of Comparative Literature. So what better way to showcase both this art form and HKU’s scholarship than by launching a MOOC on the subject?

MOOCs – which stand for “massive open online courses” offered usually by universities – have mushroomed around the world. HKU has four MOOCs, all free of charge, including “Humanity and Nature in Chinese Thought” by Chad Hansen, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, as well as courses developed by the Faculties of Architecture and Medicine and the Journalism and Media Studies Centre. When it was decided this year to add more such courses, Professor Marchetti did not hesitate.

“I begged to do it,” she said. “One of the things we do extraordinarily well here at HKU is Hong Kong film, another is cultural globalisation from an Asian perspective, particularly taking into account Chinese culture. I feel this MOOC really showcases that about HKU and we have an obligation as an institution to share it with the rest of the world.”

The MOOC, which will be launched next autumn, is building on a Common Core course called “Hong Kong Cinema through a Global Lens,” which invites guest speakers from the industry to class and includes live demonstrations of swordplay by the Department of Comparative Literature’s Dr Aaron Han Joon Magnan-Park so students can analyse the quality of fight scenes in films.

These things are all being filmed for the MOOC, which will be a joint offering by Professor Marchetti, Dr Magnan-Park and Dr Stacilee Ford of the Department of History and the American Studies Programme. They are still preparing the course and assessment materials and plan to have a strong element of feedback mechanisms so students can seek clarification and learn from each other.

“There can be an impression of dumbing-down with MOOCs,” Dr Ford said. “I signed on because of the professionalism of the HKU E-learning Pedagogical Support Unit, which coordinates the development of the University’s MOOCs, and the determination by Gina and Aaron to keep the intellectual engagement at a good level.”

The MOOC is not Professor Marchetti’s only online project. Earlier this year she launched the Hong Kong Women Filmmakers website, which was developed from her GRF-funded project on Hong Kong women filmmakers from 1997 to the present day.

“The website wasn’t part of the grant but I thought it would be a good way to display all the material that had been collected,” she said. The website contains detailed profiles of more than 45 Hong Kong women filmmakers, a special section on women filmmakers of the Umbrella Movement, a select (but extensive) bibliography and other materials.

Professor Marchetti said some of the filmmakers told her they were looking at their own work in new ways after seeing it in relation to other women filmmakers in Hong Kong. “They don’t get the recognition they deserve and I hope this will be a place where they can network and contact other women in the industry,” she said. “I also hope it will inspire younger filmmakers to see there are opportunities for women in Hong Kong film culture.”

Hong Kong Women Filmmakers is at https://hkwomenfilmmakers.wordpress.com/
HKUx (HKU MOOCs) is at http://tl.hku.hk/hkuxonline/

Comparative Literature Students Published in “Film Matters”

Two students from the Department of Comparative Literature, Mr Alexander Espeland and Ms Jee Hee Lim, have had their undergraduate research papers published in the peer-reviewed film journal Film Matters. Published three times a year by students and for students, Film Matters celebrates the work of undergraduate film scholars. Mr Espeland’s article, “The Specter of War in Contemporary Japan: Unclaimed Trauma, Contesting Masculinities, and the Disintegrated (National) Body in Ichi the Killer,” and Ms Lim’s article, “Satirizing Phallocentric Capitalism in South Korea: Modification and Commodification of the Female Body,” appeared in Volume 5 Issue 2 of the magazine.

Mr Espeland and Ms Lim completed their research papers under the guidance of Dr Aaron Han Joon Magnan-Park.
The Arts Association is 100 years old this year and stronger than ever. Both membership and energy are up, driven by students’ enthusiastic involvement in the Umbrella Movement. But while this all sounds promising, it may not have been what the early founders of the association had in mind.

The Arts Association was set up by professors and, until the 1970s, it was a loosely academic body with membership of both staff and students. Activities were internally focused, consisting largely of dramas, debates and sports competitions.

Frederick Yip, a second-year student in History and Politics and Public Administration and Vice-Chair of the association, has been compiling its history for a commemorative book that will also include interviews with famous alumni and writings by members past and present.

“We’ve been trying to trace the activities that were organised by the association. For example, before World War II, there were drama shows in the Grand Hall [now Loke Yew Hall]. In the 1950s and 1960s, debating competitions were popular – the motions were quite general and academic, on topics like literature and women’s rights.

“They also had events like interfaculty soccer competitions and our team won several times. They had social dinners in the 1950s and 1960s, too, where they usually invited professors and deans to come.”

The tone of things started to change from the 1970s when the association became a strictly student organisation. This was a time of growing social and political awareness among HKU students over such issues as the Diaoyu Islands dispute and corruption. In the 1980s, when discussions about Hong Kong’s future began to dominate, a current affairs standing committee was formed and it sets the tone for today.

“It’s one of our most prominent standing committees because we all want Arts students to be aware of current affairs and to be active, especially after the Umbrella Movement,” the Chairman, Becky Wong, a second-year English Studies and Translation student, said.

“In terms of engagement in current affairs and politics, we are getting better and better. Students are more involved, especially from last year. So it’s a very encouraging result and we all feel very optimistic about it. At our high table dinner, we had hundreds of participants, which was good to see.”

There are nonetheless complications with that uptick in interest, Frederick said. “We now have to serve more than 2,200 members and communicate with them. That will be the challenge for the association in future,” he said.

Moreover, the move from the Main Building has made it more difficult to reach students. Arts students used to spend a lot of time there and would often drop by the Arts Association office. Now, they are more scattered across the campus. “Bonding is a big issue, although it’s compensated for by the increase in participation,” Becky said.

Their commemorative publication will offer a timely context to all of these changes. Alumni have been invited to share both memories and photos, and the book will be released early next year.

The tone of things started to change from the 1970s when the association became a strictly student organisation. This was a time of growing social and political awareness among HKU students over such issues as the Diaoyu Islands dispute and corruption. In the 1980s, when discussions about Hong Kong’s future began to dominate, a current affairs standing committee was formed and it sets the tone for today.

“It’s one of our most prominent standing committees because we all want Arts students to be aware of current affairs and to be active, especially after the Umbrella Movement,” the Chairman, Becky Wong, a second-year English Studies and Translation student, said.

“In terms of engagement in current affairs and politics, we are getting better and better. Students are more involved, especially from last year. So it’s a very encouraging result and we all feel very optimistic about it. At our high table dinner, we had hundreds of participants, which was good to see.”

There are nonetheless complications with that uptick in interest, Frederick said. “We now have to serve more than 2,200 members and communicate with them. That will be the challenge for the association in future,” he said.

Moreover, the move from the Main Building has made it more difficult to reach students. Arts students used to spend a lot of time there and would often drop by the Arts Association office. Now, they are more scattered across the campus. “Bonding is a big issue, although it’s compensated for by the increase in participation,” Becky said.

Their commemorative publication will offer a timely context to all of these changes. Alumni have been invited to share both memories and photos, and the book will be released early next year.

One Century on, The Arts Association Keeps Evolving

Arts Students Recognized by the Undergraduate Awards 2015

Three students from the Faculty of Arts have had their papers “highly commended” by the Undergraduate Awards 2015. Ms Guan Zheng, a final-year History major in 2014-2015, was recognized for her paper, entitled “Student Movements in Wartime China, 1937-1949.” Two final-year English Studies majors in 2014-2015, Ms Helena Hu Pan and Ms Jacqueline Leung, were also highly commended for their papers in the Literature 1710-Present category.

The Awards, first established in 2009, aim to celebrate and support the world’s brightest and most innovative undergraduate students by recognising their best coursework and projects. This year’s awardees were selected from among 5,117 submissions from students in 255 universities across 39 countries.


https://www.facebook.com/artsassohkusu/
What’s the Chinese For ‘Grexit’?

A new website launched under the School of Chinese is providing interpreters, students and the public with a bilingual repository for translating terms from the news and other everyday sources that have not yet made it to the dictionary.

The “Resources for Interpreting” website has received more than 5,000 visits since its launch in July, as well as positive feedback and endorsements from scholars and professional interpreters in Hong Kong and abroad.

Dr Eva Ng instigated the website after spending more than a decade asking students to submit Chinese-English bilingual terms from the news on a weekly basis, which she compiled into a list and kept on her personal website. That list became the basis for the website’s searchable glossary database.

“I’m a former court interpreter and I know glossary compilation is an indispensable part of the practice of interpreting. Students in my interpreting class often come across terms that they don’t know the equivalent of in the target language, so it’s very important for them to have an extensive vocabulary in both languages and to build up that vocabulary from daily life,” Dr Ng said, citing buzzwords such as “Grexit” and “smartphone addicts.”

The bilingual glossary is turning out to be useful to more than students and teachers. Even professional interpreters use it as a handy toolkit.

The website also contains information on the practice, learning, teaching and research of interpreting, developed in collaboration with scholars from the University of New South Wales and Hong Kong Baptist University. “I wanted to create a website where all the information about interpreting is a click away,” Dr Ng added.

Dr Ng received two Knowledge Exchange Fund grants, one to set up the website in the 2014-15 academic year and the other to sustain and expand it during the current academic year. “It’s meaningless if we stop here, especially for bilingual terminology. You have to update it regularly to make it useful, so this continued support from the KE office is important,” she said.

Apart from news sources, Dr Ng and her research assistants have also drawn terminology from court proceedings that she obtained through her other projects. In 2009 she was given rare permission by the High Court to access the audio recordings of nine trials for teaching and research purposes. She received a grant from the Leung Kau Kui Research and Teaching Endowment Fund in 2009 and a Teaching Development Grant in 2014 to transcribe and develop the materials.

The recordings contain terms relating to such things as triad slang and sexual offences, which have been added to the website. The transcripts have been used in class to let students test themselves against the court interpreters and critique the professionals’ work, and in a mock trial with the Faculty of Law. Students have also visited the High Court to see interpreters live in action.

“I try to bring in authentic materials and give students a chance to learn from real people rather than just listening to a tape,” said Dr Ng, who hopes to further develop these court-based tools, as well as the website, to bridge the ever-evolving complexities of English and Chinese.

Resources for Interpreting is at http://www.interpreting.hku.hk/

Dr Eva Ng

Funded KE Impact Projects 2015-2016

Second Century Lecture Series
Professor John Carroll (Associate Dean - Outreach)

German with Fun - Language and Cultural Project for Secondary School Students
Dr Chong Li (German Programme)

Losing Your Voice: Hong Kong’s Disappearing Dialects
Dr Cathryn Donohue (Linguistics)

E3 (Engage, Empower & Enhance): An Evaluation of the Impact of ProWriteHK
Dr Ken Lau (Centre for Applied English Studies)

#LinguisticMinoritiesHK #outreach
Dr Lisa Lim (School of English)

Resources for Interpreting - Enhancing the Impacts
Dr Eva Ng (School of Chinese)

Cultures of Death: The Yasukuni Shrine and Contemporary Sino-Japanese Relations - A Public Forum
Dr Victor Teo (Japanese Studies)
Mount Rushmore is an iconic American monument, its surface carved with the faces of four presidents who were instrumental in the country’s founding and expansion. More than two million people visit every year, guided to its remote location by elaborate signage, roads, carparks and visitor amenities.

Just 160 kilometres away, down an unlit road through poverty-stricken Native American land, a small, rusted, graffiti-covered sign marks another iconic American site. Wounded Knee is where more than 200 Lakota people were massacred in 1890. Following the publication of Dee Brown’s book “Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee” in 1970, the site became a symbol for the history of the government’s aggression against Native Americans, an aggression that was driven in large part by the westward expansion of Rushmore’s leaders.

Dr Tim Gruenewald, head of American Studies, encountered these contrasting memorials almost accidentally in 2001. He was driving from Atlanta, where he did his MA, to Seattle to begin his PhD studies, when he decided to take a detour to Wounded Knee. He literally got stuck in the mud at the isolated site.

“I was surprised I was the only visitor, but what was really against expectations was the lack of any remembrance infrastructure,” he said. “Most people in America have probably heard of Wounded Knee, but that rusty sign was the only historical marker. It was in such a sorry state.”

He then drove on to Mount Rushmore and was so struck by the contrast that he was inspired, on the spot, to make a documentary about these two places.

It took a few years. First he had to complete his PhD and get his career underway. But in the summer of 2009, just before moving to Hong Kong, he returned to the area with visual artist and photographer Ludwig Schmidtpeter. They spent a month filming and interviewing about 50 people. Dr Gruenewald then spent five years in post-production in between his academic duties at HKU.

The end result, Sacred Ground, was released late last year. It touches on the complex relationship between modern-day America and its native population and explores contrasting approaches to remembering the history of the United States. In fact, Mount Rushmore is located in the Black Hills, which are sacred to the Lakota people.

“Part of this film is asking, what is America about? Is it Mount Rushmore or Wounded Knee, or do they belong together? They are two sides of the same coin, you wouldn’t have one without the other. Many would say that’s a given, but when you go to Wounded Knee, nobody is there,” he said. “Is this not worth remembering? There are national memorials for Jefferson, Washington, Lincoln, the Vietnam War, World War II, 9/11 and so on. Why is this part of U.S. history excluded from the national remembrance discourse?”

The film played at several film festivals in the U.S. and won an “Independent Spirit” award at the Idyllwild International Festival of Cinema in California in January. It connects to Dr Gruenewald’s current research project on memorials and memory museums in Washington, DC, and New York City, which also investigates the intersection between remembrance sites and the national imagination.

For more information about Sacred Ground, visit http://sacredgroundfilm.com/
As a visiting University Artist, renowned actor, producer and businessman John Sham Kin-fun has one thing in mind: “I’m happy to talk about anything, but since this is an artist thing, let’s stick to art.” Given his other background as a one-time political activist, and the current times, it is an almost impossible agenda to follow.

The art is certainly covered. Mr Sham has a simple goal in agreeing to be a University Artist: “I want to discuss with the students where the Hong Kong film industry is going and the future of the industry.” At his first talk at HKU in November last year, he brought along director Derek Yee and screened his film *The Lunatics* to open up discussion about the social responsibility of the filmmaker.

But as much as he tries to heed an artistic agenda, politics inevitably creeps into the conversation – not surprising since Mr Sham has strong personal connections with the pro-democracy camp, Umbrella Movement and government and was involved in Operation Yellow Bird to assist Chinese dissidents after the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown.

For instance, at one talk he asked students why they did not like Hong Kong-China co-productions, which open the door to the China market for Hong Kong filmmakers. These films typically flop at the local box office, but are a big success in China.

“The students will say they don’t know why they don’t want to see these films, but when you grill them, they start to think. Quite a lot of them will say, ‘Nobody told me the film was good’ – of course, because nobody saw it in the first place!

“I know the answer, it’s very simple. They don’t trust the films made in China, they think they are phony, they think they are censored.

“You hear moviegoers say these filmmakers don’t care about their feelings, they only care about the market. I say, well, as a businessman you can’t blame them. But as a creative person, do I agree with them? Now that’s another story.”

As a businessman, Mr Sham knows a great deal about cinema in China. He owns the country’s second largest cinema chain, having decided this was a better way to engage in the China market than navigating around censorship. It also lets him indulge romantic notions about the power of cinemas.

“When I grew up, the cinema was a place for dreams. I think China needs a lot of dreams. You can limit what people see by censoring movies, but going into a movie in a dark place you share with other people, your minds are full, it’s a different experience already. And of course it is a business opportunity – I have to make money for the company.”

People in Hong Kong, on the other hand, need confidence in the future – and many students are looking for answers in the Umbrella Movement. Mr Sham, who was also a student activist in his youth, sees another way. A former freelance investigative journalist for the *Sunday Times* and *Granada Television*, he is preparing to launch his own media outlet, HK01, which will include a news website and hefty print weekly that are heavy in investigative reporting. He is pushing his staff to turn the media and Hong Kong establishment on its head.

“I want Hong Kong people to be less helpless, be more confident, gain back our own good values – to stop being defeatist,” he said. “We will be daring. The world progresses by saying no, not by saying yes. Our motto is ‘solutions’. Hong Kong has to get back on its feet.”

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

Upcoming events to be held under the University Artists Scheme in 2016 include a one-month residency by Glenn Davidson and Ann Hayes of Artstation in February, a concert by Trey Lee in the Grand Hall of the Lee Shau Kee Lecture Centre in May, and two major public talks featuring filmmaker Fruit Chan and film industry pioneer John Sham.

http://arts.hku.hk/knowledge-exchange/university-artists-scheme
When Aarti Hemnani, the manager of the new HKU Blackbox Theatre (HKUBB), was an Arts student at HKU in the early 2000s, she was desperate to do theatre. But apart from a drama programme with Dr Page Richards, which held robust springtime performances around the Main Building fountain, often in the late-day heat, there were few opportunities. She had to look off-campus for her theatre fix.

That memory made a lasting impression on Ms Hemnani, who jumped at the chance to take on the HKUBB after years working in non-profit art education in Singapore and commercial theatre in Hong Kong. “During the interview process, I was asked why I wanted to leave what I was doing and come and do this. Immediately I said when I was a student, I would have been over the moon to have a theatre at HKU,” she said.

Befittingly, Dr Richards, who oversees drama and creative writing at HKU, is the driving force behind the theatre, which opened earlier this year. She made a bid for the space when the new Centennial Campus was in early development, determined to have a theatre that could support not only performances but also writing and experimentation.

“I know how important space is to the kind of studio practices that go along with research practices in drama and creative writing. The more you feel connection to a space, the more it inspires generatively new ideas and work in writers,” she said.

The theatre’s design also promotes focus and contemplation, collaborative work across disciplines at the university, and engagement with the wider Hong Kong community. It features black walls and windows, which offer a protected space for fresh ideas and invention. It has a flexible stage, the flexible seating of an intimate space, as well as a giant screen and projector.

For Ms Hemnani, one of the key advantages of the HKUBB is that it is unlike commercial theatre where “you go in, make magic for a week and leave.” Here, the focus is on experimenting and developing works over longer periods of time. Creative writers see their work move from the page to the stage, while theatre specialists play with how to convey stories.

The first full-scale production in the theatre was a play written by MFA graduate Wilson Chik. There have also been workshops, symposia, film screenings, community outreach and other such events, although Ms Hemnani said they were careful to leave time for creation. “We need to have space within to allow for interesting things to come up,” she said. Some recent examples: an upcoming collaboration in 2016 with the “Island Cities and Urban Archipelagos” conference and with the HKU Landscape Architecture programme to explore scale and space; and plans for a new puppet opera.

Dr Richards said these explorations gave breadth to the theatre, but as a university they were also concerned about depth. Quality matters too, and she and Ms Hemnani are seeking to curate something that is both a community resource and a source of creativity. “We want to convey the idea that anything is possible, but along with experimentation, we need to keep the bar raised high,” she said.

Added Ms Hemnani: “It’s time for the Hong Kong story to be developed and for local writers to have a platform. Isn’t it wonderful to have a home for them!”

HKU Blackbox Theatre

**Winner of The HKU International Poetry Prize 2014 Announced**

The School of English is pleased to announce that Z G Tomaszewski has been selected as the winner of the 2014 HKU Poetry Prize for his manuscript *All Things Dusk*. The Prize Presentation was held on November 17, 2015 in the groundbreaking HKU Black Box Theatre. Z G Tomaszewski was joined at the event by renowned international poet and the Prize’s Final Judge, Li-Young Lee.

The HKU Poetry Prize welcomes submissions from poets around the world writing in English and who have not previously published, or self-published, a full-length collection of poems. The Prize is supported by Hong Kong University Press and the HKU Culture & Humanities Fund.

[http://www.english.hku.hk/hkubb.htm](http://www.english.hku.hk/hkubb.htm)
**Africa’s Premier Diva – Angelique Kidjo @ HKU**

Ms Angélique Kidjo, singer, songwriter, two-time Grammy Award winner in 2008 and 2015, and UNICEF Goodwill ambassador from Benin, West Africa, spoke at the University of Hong Kong on October 30, 2015. Ms Kidjo’s talk focused on her artistic life, her political engagement as well as her foundation “Batonga”, which advocates for the empowerment of young girls through secondary school and higher education in Africa.

*The Guardian* has listed Ms Kidjo as one of its “Top 100 Most Inspiring Women in the World” in art, film, music and fashion, and she was included among “The 40 Most Powerful Celebrities In Africa” by *Forbes* magazine in 2011. The event was co-organized by the HKU African Studies Programme and General Education Unit. Ms Kidjo was in Hong Kong to perform in the World Cultures Festival presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department.

**Local Artist Joyce Cheng Discusses Gender Politics**

The Department of Comparative Literature invited local artist Joyce Cheng to a panel talk on body and gender politics on November 4, 2015. Ms Cheng, the daughter of Hong Kong actor/singer Adam Cheng Siu-chow and comedian Lydia Sum Tin-ha, is one of the very few Hong Kong celebrities who openly support gay rights. The legalization of same-sex marriage in the US has stirred up debate locally. In this talk, Joyce shared her views on femininity, sexuality, body consciousness, and the response of the Hong Kong entertainment industry to these issues.

**Hong Kong International Literary Festival 2015**

The Faculty hosted two celebrated writers in conjunction with the Hong Kong International Literary Festival 2015.

The first event, on November 2, featured acclaimed British philosopher Professor AC Grayling speaking about his latest book, *The Challenge of Things*. In this collection of essays on the world in a time of war and conflict, Professor Grayling explores ways out of the habits and prejudices of the mind that would otherwise trap us forever in the deadly impasses of conflicts of all kinds.

The second talk, on November 8, brought the award-winning writer Dame Margaret Drabble to the campus to discuss *A Day in the Life of a Smiling Woman*. The author wrote the fourteen stories that comprise this collection over a forty-year period. In each of them, she examines the private lives and passions of everyday people.

**MB Lee Distinguished Lecture in The Humanities**

Professor Timothy D Taylor from the Department of Ethnomusicology at the University of California, Los Angeles, delivered the fourth MB Lee Distinguished Lecture in the Humanities on December 4, 2015. In his lecture, entitled “Valuing Music,” Professor Taylor argued that there are different regimes of value in which cultural goods, such as music, can be located: an older regime that emphasizes the exchange value of cultural goods, and, today, a new regime in which the digital distribution of music has given rise to forms of value that accrue from users’ curation of music.

The Lecture was a featured event of the East Asian Regional Association of the International Musicological Society 3rd Biennial Conference, “The Enterprise of Musicology: Trends in our New Age,” hosted by the HKU Department of Music from December 4 to 6, 2015.

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**From left: Professor Derek Collins, Angelique Kidjo, African Studies Programme Director Dr Facil Tesfaye and Assistant Director of the General Education Unit Dr Wong Chi Chung**

**Ms Joyce Cheng**

*http://arts.hku.hk/knowledge-exchange/newsletter*

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