



Coffee and Light Snacks

Saturday 12 December 2020 (9:45 am - 5:00 pm)

Session 1

Time:	10:00 am - 10:30 am
Topic:	The Cantonese God': Creative Forms of Civil Engagement on Social Media
Speaker:	HO Wing-Ki Vicky

HO Wing-Ki Vicky

The paper presents a case study of a Hong Kong-based Facebook page @thecantonesegod ('the Cantonese God') to explore creative forms of civil engagement on social media. 'The Cantonese God' is a satirical page that provides content curation and commentary of social and political affairs by appropriating the identity of the Christian God. Independent from any formal religious institutions, the page adopts a deity persona that is transcendental, omnipotent but also playful, ironic and even irritable and vulgar, which is partly consistent and partly disruptive to the conventional Christian understanding of God. Various religious symbols, metaphors and narratives are appropriated in the meaning-making of social and political commentary on the page. Chinese (including colloquial Cantonese) is the primary language used for the page. The idea of this Facebook page may not be original as an America-oriented page of a similar nature @God

precedes it, yet the communicative acts on the blurred boundaries of religion and politics with local Hong Kong characteristics on this page apparently appeal to the page community of close to 120 thousand followers. Interactions between the page administrator and the page followers are active. From the lens of post-secularity, the author of this paper attempts to explore how the appropriation of religious symbols and narratives for political commentary serves to articulate local sentiments amidst the increasingly frustrating social and political realities in the city of Hong Kong. The case study will be illustrative of creative ways to communicate political ideals and values in the online space.

BIO

Vicky Ho is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Creative Arts and Program Leader of Master of Creative and Cultural Industries Management at The Open University of Hong Kong. She teaches communication, advertising and public relations, new media culture, creative industries, creative economy and cultural policy. Her research interests include popular culture, popular music, media and religion, creative industries, and cultural policy.

Time:	10:30 am - 11:00 am
Topic:	There is No Mo(re/ther): A Creative Hermeneutics of “記你老母”
Speaker:	Raphael CHIM

Raphael CHIM

This paper proposes a hermeneutic reading of an insult directed at journalists, later appropriated by the protesters as praise for journalists, “記你老母”, which we shall grasp as a certain movement, a gesture determined by its object, that is, “your mother” (你老母). We would organize our reading in terms of the premise that this “your mother” does not refer to any maternal figure at all, but to a “No more”, as in the English rendition of the swear word, “Delay no more”. Drawing on Tanabe Hajime’s interpretation of nenbutsu or the practice of chanting Amida Buddha’s name, in *Philosophy as Metanoetics*, we would read this “No more” as an absolute nothingness to which individuals relate, and in cooperation with this nothingness, in repeating “記你老母” or any of its rendition, we allow it to hold sway over this world. It is a “No more” which has nothing to do with the “No more!”, which serves more as a plea in a time of troubles, and therefore as the expression of a “lack” and a call for the compensation of said lack. “No more” is, to the contrary, a positive nothingness, a pure force of negation which comes before any lack, but it nevertheless cannot exist without us. It is a principle of cooperation which is absolutely nothing and thus can only exist if we ourselves cooperate with this principle by cooperating with one another. Through this reading of “記你老母”, we appeal to the audience and call for a certain solidarity, united under this expression.

BIO

Raphael Chim is a PhD candidate at the Department of English, the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His research interests include creative writing, the philosophies of the Kyoto school, predominantly that of Kuki Shuzo and Tanabe Hajime, and the existential ontology of Martin Heidegger.

Time:	11:00 am - 11:30 am
Topic:	Creative Histories' in Archival Art Practice of Contemporary Hong Kong
Speaker:	CHENG Sau Wai, Vennes

CHENG Sau Wai, Vennes

History and creativity are often considered as an antagonistic pair. The historical records of socio-political events of the world's progress accentuate on their factuality that claim creativity – be it memory, dream, non-evidential opinion – invalid. However, history is man-made discipline and ensures no absolute *res factae*. Reinhart Koselleck, the German Historian, coins the idea of conceptual history and asserts memory, dream, and imagination as construct of historiography. They constitute another dimension for historical narrative. Connoting complexions of mnemonic, imagination, and creativity, art renders a site for historical reconfiguration. This paper aims to deploy the art of Hong Kong artist Lee Kai Chung and mediates re-enactment of history of the city. Archival research and historical assemblage are canons of Lee's artistic practice. Gaps and missing links are often found during his archival research; he fills them up with creativity and imagination. In his recent work *The Retrieval, Restoration and Predicament*, Lee interrogates the fluidity of monuments as a spatial representation of ideology. During his research in various archives, Lee has discovered documents and materials on histories of bronze statues located in the Statues Square. There were originally 12 statues erected in the square before Japan invaded Hong Kong in 1941, but only two - Queen Victoria and Sir Thomas Jackson – survive the Japanese Occupation. Lee re-configures the histories in an art installation that includes videos and fragmented sculptures. The fragmentation and reconstruction of the statues - insofar as historical representations - in the artwork signify not *res factae*; rather, it constitutes dialectical reflection of past and immediate for the spectators.

BIO

An academic and independent curator, Vennes Cheng currently a PhD candidate of Art History of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Her research areas include art archive, archival art, and historical and mnemonic contingency. Her articles on Hong Kong and Chinese contemporary art are published in Visual Art Archive in

Asia and Yishu. Cheng is one of the selected emerging art professionals 2018 of Para Site. An awardee of UK Chevening Scholarship in 2015/2016; she received an MA in Cultural Studies from Goldsmiths College, University of London. Cheng is a former Senior TV Producer of art and culture programmes at Radio Television Hong Kong.

Coffee Break 11.30-11.45

Session 2

Time:	11:45 am - 12:15 pm
Topic:	The Art of Protest: Artists and the Public Space in Hong Kon
Speaker:	Jennifer EAGLETON

Jennifer EAGLETON

Finding “space” for political expression both in a real and metaphorical sense is arguably becoming more difficult as the “second system” of tiny Hong Kong struggles to reconcile itself as part of “one [big] country”. This paper will look at how artists have responded to recent political happenings in Hong Kong through the use of murals, projections, and banners in the public space. Using both a visual and textual-analytical perspective, I will look at how the temporal “space” both informs and contextualizes these artworks in public spaces and reflects the wider sociocultural context of Hong Kong’s long political transition.

This paper will largely focus on Samson Wong, who is perhaps best known for his 2016 “Countdown Machine,” where he transformed the International Commerce Centre in West Kowloon into a timer that counted down to July 1, 2047 – the expiry date of China’s promise to let Hong Kong keep its way of life as well as his “Add Oil” machine in 2014 when he and his colleagues gathered online comments supporting the umbrella movement and projected them onto the facade of the government complex in Admiralty.

BIO

Jennifer Anne Eagleton, a Hong Kong resident since October 1997 is a close observer of Hong Kong society and politics. In 2012 she completed a PhD on how Hong Kong talks about democracy using metaphor. Jennifer has written a number of language-related articles for Hong Kong Free Press and is currently compiling a manuscript combining Hong Kong culture, photography, and political metaphor as well as an academic work based on her PhD thesis. A previous president of the Hong Kong Women in Publishing Society, Jennifer is a part-time tutor of discourse analysis at OUHK as well as a freelance writer, researcher, and editor on cultural topics. In her spare time she collects Hong Kong political pamphlets and artefacts.

Time: 12:15 pm - 12:45 pm

Topic: Socially Engaged Art Practices in the Hong Kong Countryside

Speaker: Frank VIGNERON

Frank VIGNERON

Over the past decade, the context of socially engaged art has expanded to the countryside of Hong Kong. Sign of a growing dissatisfaction with many aspects of the local environment (the out-of-control prices of the real estate, overpopulation, the devastation caused by the unbridled free market, the growing tension provoked by the PRC's interference in the affairs of Hong Kong, to name but a few), the move to farmlands operated by some Hong Kong artists is indicative of a very different type of creativity. Whereas 'creativity' is often related to an urban environment (as the expression 'creative industries' made clear ever since it was first coined in the UK), the type of creativity pursued and applied by these artists tend to take an 'opposite' direction: if urban creativity is about speed and the free market, rural creativity is about slowness and the pursuit of more 'authentic' values. What this authenticity entails is however not always perfectly clear for these art practitioners and their practice as artists/farmers is often laced with the doubts inherent in completely original pursuits. This paper will present the works of two New Territories based artists who are literally opening up new territories in the field of socially engaged art practices while creating contexts for new interactions. By interrogating the usual role of Hong Kong as an urban center, they also question the validity of an economic model that does not seem to offer much promise for the future.

BIO

Frank Vigneron is Professor and Head of the Department of Fine Arts at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, teaching courses in art history and about contemporary art. His research focus is on the history of Chinese painting from the 18th century onwards and on different aspects of contemporary Chinese art seen in a global context. In 2018, he published *Hong Kong Soft Power: Art Practices in the Special Administrative Region 2005-2014* and has recently finished the manuscript of a two-volumes publication tentatively titled *China Pluperfect: Epistemology and Practices of Past and Outside in Chinese Art*.

Time:	12:45 pm - 1:15 pm
Topic:	Site of Construction: The Reshaping of Hong Kong Culture after 1997
Speaker:	ZHANG Zexun Marco

ZHANG Zexun Marco

The paper intends to explore the formulation and implementation of Hong Kong's cultural policy after the handover in 1997. Lured by creative economy and aimed to promote city image, the government of the Hong Kong Special Administration (HKSAR) proposed to construct the West Kowloon Cultural District which is a culture-led urban regeneration project. The study intends to introduce discussion of this suddenly cultured policy which provokes questions concerning its role in achieving status and visible cultural capital among current global phenomenon – the emergence of 'global cities of the arts' or the now global aspiration among major cities to be a 'Capital of Culture'.

By applying interpretive approach, the study will argue that the policy makers should value Hong Kong's local cultural identity based on an Asia context, rather than by making profit in establishing a global representation of creative economy.

BIO

Marco Zexun Zhang is a PhD candidate, majoring in Arts Management and Cultural Policy at Queen's University, Belfast, UK. He previously studied Art History and Cultural Management in China and Hong Kong. His research interests include cultural policy and contemporary arts in Southern China. He is currently researching Hong Kong's cultural policy, specifically focusing on the West Kowloon Cultural District. He is supervised by Dr Victoria Durrer.

Lunch 1.15-2.00 Light lunch sandwiches provided

Session 3

Time:	2:00 pm - 2:30 pm
Topic:	The Immanent Critical Models in Recent Hong Kong Artists' Practices
Speaker:	ZENG Hong

ZENG Hong

The “handover art” is regarded as a surge of artistic responses to the 1997 reunification of Hong Kong and China, often presenting in the form of critical art (Clarke, 2001). The 2014 Umbrella Movement seems to be another crucial event which triggers local artists' critical creations. I identify that some of these recent artistic practices, however, surface in interventionist models which are distinct with the previous handover art. Using participatory observation, formal analysis and contextual analysis, this paper examines the interventionist models in these recent art projects. Speaking to the criticism on the creators' distancing revealed in critical art, Foster (2015) argues that there are interventionist models in which critique is explicitly positioned as immanent through some art techniques such as mimetic exacerbation and symbolic détournement. Inspired by Foster's defense for critical art, I explore how Hong Kong artists adopt those art techniques and other art forms such as participatory art, into the local context to create/initiate critical projects. I argue that their practices indicate the immanent models are essential for making critical art to confront an imminent political crisis, both intentionally and inevitably.

BIO

ZENG Hong 曾泓 is an academic and curator based in Hong Kong. Her research interests lie in contemporary art in Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta region in China, and also gender politics in film. She teaches at School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong, and Academy of Visual Arts, Hong Kong Baptist University. She recently published an article in the refereed journal *Asian Cinema*. She is the curator and exhibition producer of *Blown Away—Art, Science and Extreme Weather* (Tai Kwun, 2019), as well as the receiver of Yale-China Arts Activators Fellowship (2020).

Time: 2:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Topic: Hong Kong Street Music and Conflicted Uses of the City

Speaker: François MOUILLOT and Olaf HOCHHERZ

François MOUILLOT and Olaf HOCHHERZ

The paper discusses the social and cultural implication of different Hong Kong street music practices – including but not limited to busking – as a creative and contentious use of public space. Hong Kong street music culture is highly heterogeneous. A variety of performers from different cultural and class backgrounds and with different economic interests – including young local pop groups, local ‘live karaoke’ ensembles, foreign musicians established or passing through the city, south-east Asian migrant workers, and new Mainland Chinese immigrants – participate in street music without there being the presence of a dominant unified music culture. In this context, we argue that in street music practices, different uses of public space intersect. On the one hand, street music practitioners make use of the city’s public spaces for a variety of separate or combined purposes: as a site of personal expression, as a place to earn money, and as a stage for the individual development of musical skills and the development of musical careers. On the other hand, street music allows for the re-performance of both personal and collective identities. At the same time regulations of noise and of space usage shape how street music can be enacted in Hong Kong. This paper therefore begins articulating the ways in which street music in Hong Kong may be analyzed as the working-through-the-conflict of different uses of the city, the articulation of strategies to circumvent its limitations in face of the plurality of identities of street musicians.

BIOS

Francois Mouillot is a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Music and Department of Humanities/Creative Writing at Hong Kong Baptist University. His interdisciplinary research is at the intersection of music and cultural/media studies. His work focuses on the mediation of popular and independent music practices primarily in relation to their infrastructural and technological dimensions and their implication in the context of contemporary minority cultures such as Hong Kong, the province of Quebec in Canada, and the Basque region in France and Spain.

Olaf Hochherz's research interests lie at the intersection of Music and Media Studies. He studies the role of technology in creative practices, with a particular focus on the practical and social formation of technologies. He is interested in questions of epistemology as they are discussed in philosophy of science and critical theory. Hochherz has pursued his research and taught at the School of Creative Media at City University of Hong Kong. In his PhD dissertation he analysed the role of experimentation in the interpretation and appreciation of experimental music. He is currently a research associate at Hong Kong Baptist University.

Time:	3:00 pm - 3:30 pm
Topic:	Hong Kong Artist Union - A Social Network of Multitude
Speaker:	Hong Kong Artist Union

Hong Kong Artist Union

2019 witnessed the city of Hong Kong in turmoil and the organic networks of self organised protests that are cultivated in the Anti-extradition movement. Concerning the shrinking freedom of speech in town, the Hong Kong Artist Union (HKAU) has been taking an active and leading role in voicing the artists' burning concerns over political censorship as well as the spread of white terror in the city. Through the network it has been building since the establishment in 2016, the HKAU endeavours to unite the multitude of individual artists for the cause of not only professional interests but also human rights and freedom in Hong Kong.

For example, on 12 June 2019, HKAU first called for a strike in the arts and cultural sector and advocated local institutions closing their doors and letting their employees go on the protests that day. Over 100 art organisations including independent art spaces or companies, commercial galleries and museums responded positively and this is the very first strike in Hong Kong's arts and cultural sector. Indeed, the HKAU also organised art practitioners in various demonstrations. Artists created props and placards to the protests and performative actions on site. Besides open letters, petitions and media liaisons, the HKAU contributed to local and international exhibitions and gave voices to its members. The union also proactively researching protest-related artworks created by local artists and engaged its members with the on-going protests in Hong Kong.

Aware of the shift of mobilisation in social change, the HKAU is committed to build a platform for networking artists who tend to work individually rather than collaboratively. We see the importance of unionising artists defending its professional codes as well as rights in a collective and cross-disciplinary manner. Yet, we also value individuality that empower artists to have their own voices. In this paper, we seek to investigate, by uniting artists through empowering individual practices, how we can build a sustainable network that celebrates diversity and facilitates mutual understanding as well as solidarity, especially in the face of political repression of human rights.

BIO

I've been told the members largely prefer to be anonymous. So I'll just say a few words about the collective instead. Established in 2016, Hong Kong Artist Union has recruited over 400 members. Their services available to HK artists include but are not limited to: providing legal consultancy, advocating for equality and fighting for fair treatment by organising talks, workshops, exhibitions, calling for strikes and protests etc.

Coffee Break 3.30-3.45

Session 4

Time:	3:45 pm - 4:15 pm
Topic:	The Self-making of Hong Kong Identities: An Ethnography of Anthem Singing
Speaker:	TANG Ho Yan Magdalena

TANG Ho Yan Magdalena

Hong Kong's Anthem Law controversy in 2017 sparks heated debates on freedom of speech in public and in private, the role of the education sector in national education, and the role of government in people's daily lives, such as the use of the anthem in sporting events and in online media. This paper is an ethnographic exploration of the performative politics of the anthem law controversy, focusing on three ethnographic sites. While the majority of the examples are from 2017 Anthem Law controversy, the notion of anthem singing (official and unofficial) raises questions and theoretical frameworks to understand musical events happening at Anti-Extradition Law controversy in 2019.

First, an incident in the Legislative Council during an Anthem Law public hearing on April 28, 2018, carried out by Chin Po-fun, who described herself as a member of Gau Wu group, a local political group active since the Umbrella Movement in 2014. Second, a series of protest-performances by the pro-democracy political party Demosistō, who performed the anthem "March of the Volunteers" in its original and parody form, as flash mob and public performances on the street. Third, I study professional artists' artworks inspired by the controversy, represented by an installation at Précédée, an alternative art gallery in Hong Kong.

I argue, performers in this study intended to negotiate and reconstruct a social reality by performing counter-actions, in reaction to an institutionalized version of identity proposed from the "top-down" and reinforced by law. Drawing on the concept of performativity and performative contradiction as defined in feminist and critical scholarship, especially in the works of Judith Butler and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. I show how these "bottom-up" examples of performance and protest contribute to the self-making of Hong Kong identities.

BIO

Magdalena Tang is a conductor and researcher based in Hong Kong. Tang is keen in socially-conscious art projects and studies the discourses of music. Her academic work was presented in International Society of Music Education World Conference in 2018. Her artistic projects, *Avro Part – A Musical Evening* (2017) and *Empire Theatre and I: A Musical Monologue* (2019) were performed at Edmund Maulouge Gallery and PMQ. Past collaborators include iDiscover and The Hong Kong Institute of Architectural Conservationists (HKICON). Tang graduated from Boston University with a Master of Music in Choral Conducting. Tang is now a PhD candidate at the University of Hong Kong with scholarships, conducting ethnographic works on contested and negotiated identities in relation to musical activities in Hong Kong.

Time:	4:15 pm - 4:45 pm
Topic:	Artist-Activists in Protest Hong Kong: Trans/formation of Subjectivity
Speaker:	CHAN Ka-Lai Kelly

CHAN Ka-Lai Kelly

This paper examines the latest development of the creative and collective resistance in Hong Kong against a controversial extradition bill and erosion of freedoms. Based in an activist call for leaderless organisation, and de-centralised social media communication to confront an 'identity crisis' and resist further erosion of democratic autonomy. I take up Chen Kuan-Hsing's call for decolonising work that proceeds from the inner logic of the colonized social formation to overcome multiple histories of imperialism. This article traces an emergent contemporary Hong Kong subjectivity from the British handover (1997), through The Umbrella Movement (2014) through to the current anti-extradition protests all of which uniquely give new momentum to creativity, activism and the development of localism.

Four contemporary types of visual displays are analysed to explore how artist-activists as public pedagogues inform a subjectivity that is contemporary, globally-focused, locally-identified, and unique to Hong Kong. In its method, design and conceptual frameworks, this Asia As Method-linked study by me as insider/outsider investigator seeks to put Chen's theoretic to work on the streets of today's Hong Kong. I argue that the recent explosion of new art forms is not only working as a significant public pedagogy but at the same time creating a unique subjectivity in an emerging Hong Kong that needs them.

BIO

Kelly Chan is a video ethnographer, designer and a Ph.D. member at Creative Agency and School of Education at RMIT University. Her research focuses on creativity education in the Asia Pacific. She has worked as a teacher in various settings in Hong Kong for over a decade. Her previous research project used visual methods to explore happiness of young artists.

Time:	4:45 pm - 5:15 pm
Topic:	The Creative Art Forms of Political Protests: Malaysia and Hong Kong
Speaker:	David C.E. TNEH

David C.E. TNEH

The recent protest of Hong Kong citizens against China's 2019 extradition bill has created a fire storm of protests in the island state of Hong Kong. The Beijing government has clearly underestimated the impact of the proposed legislation and within the shortest span of time; Hong Kong became an epicentre of street protest that even defied the expectations of the Hong Kong executive administration. On the other hand, Malaysia's regime change on the 9th of May 2018, was a culmination of a growing disenchantment with the ruling government over a period of four decades and its shock defeat in the 14th General Elections was unexpected by many political analysts and researchers. Analyzing both political scenarios, one could see an interesting development taking place in the sovereign economies of Hong Kong and Malaysia: the proliferation of artistic genres such as poster art, comics, graffiti, internet memes, poetry and visual images that encapsulate the spirit of creative political resistance of the region. This exploratory paper will discuss the dynamics of such a resistance in both sovereign states to unravel the role of the Arts (collectively as well as regionally) in its various creative forms in resisting the hegemony of the state, particularly in the era of 21st century digital disruption.

BIO

David CE Tneh dabbles in the creative arts and is from Malaysia. He has published in *Asiatic*, *Cha: An Asian Literary Journal*, and *Transnational Literature*. David has taken a hiatus from writing for the past few years but writes predominantly on themes such as identity, resistance, memory and immigration. He was recently awarded the 2019 Study of the United States Institute, institutional fellowship by the US Dept. of State to New York University-Steinhardt. He is currently the Dean of the Faculty of Creative Industries, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Malaysia.