Course Code: HUMA 1671
Course Title: Cantonese Opera in Hong Kong Culture
Course Offered in: Fall 2019
Course Instructor: Professor Chan Sau-yen
Medium of Instruction: Cantonese

Course Description: The “culture” of a community encompasses social and personal behaviour, language and dialects, visual and performing arts, economic activities and the ideas, beliefs, and customs of its people. As a traditional genre of performing arts unique to Hong Kong, Cantonese opera has a long history of development and is entwined to arguably all such aspects of Hong Kong culture. Set within the socio-cultural context of Hong Kong, this course explores the genre in terms of its course of development, repertory, plots, script structure, performing techniques such as singing, acting, reciting and fencing, troupe organisation, training of artists, performing venues including theatre and the bamboo stage, and its marketing strategies, aiming at unfolding to the students how an art form should be appreciated through both the aesthetical and functional perspectives.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course ILOs</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of Cantonese opera</td>
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<td>2. Explain how Cantonese opera is entwined with Hong Kong culture</td>
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<td>3. Employ fieldwork techniques and methodology</td>
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<td>4. Apply critical and analytical thinking in understanding Cantonese opera and Hong Kong culture, and in fieldwork participation</td>
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<td>5. Integrate critical and analytical thinking to other art genres and academic disciplines</td>
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# Division of Humanities
## Tentative Course Syllabus

## Course Outline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Briefly outline what this topic will cover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | 1. Course Overview  
2. Ritual Context of Cantonese Opera Performance | a. The various types of temple festivals  
b. The organisation of a series of ritual performance  
c. The bamboo theatre 戲棚 |
| 2    | 1. The Artists of Cantonese Opera  
2. Repertoire 劇目  
3. The Floral Princess《帝女花》 | a. Opera troupe organization  
b. Training of actors and musicians  
c. Religious plays  
d. Main plays  
e. 唐滌生 and 《帝女花》 |
| 3    | 1. Makeup  
2. Costume | a. The makeup processes  
b. Costumes used for character portrayal |
| 4    | 1. Script and plot structure  
2. Singing demonstration | a. How to decode a script  
b. 《帝女花》之《香夭》 |
| 5    | 1. Singing of Cantonese Opera  
2. The Cantonese Dialect | a. Voice production  
b. Tonal aspects of the Cantonese dialect |
| 6    | Tong Tik-sang 唐滌生 and Cantonese opera of the 1950s | a. The historical development of Cantonese opera from 1930s to 1950s  
b. The revolution sparked by Tong Tik-sang  
c. Representative masterpieces by Tong |
| 7    | The Preservation of Cantonese Opera Materials | Visiting the HK Museum of History |
| 8    | The Structure of the Vocal Music of Cantonese opera | a. Major melodic instruments used in Cantonese opera  
b. Tunes  
c. Melo-rhythmic forms  
d. Narratives |
| 9    | 1. Percussion Instruments Used in Cantonese opera  
2. Major Speech Forms 說白 | a. The major percussion instruments  
b. The mnemonics 鏟鼓口訣  
c. Performance of percussion patterns  
d. Recitation of Patter Speech 數白欖 |
| 10   | Acting, Fencing and Stage Movement in Cantonese opera | 1. Body gesture and symbolic movement  
2. Main stage movement sequences employed by the main roles |
| 11   | Fieldwork: Ritual Performance at 石澳天后誕 | a. Briefing: fieldwork techniques & ethics  
b. On-site visits  
c. Tour of backstage  
d. Appreciation of the performance |
| 12   | The Development of Cantonese opera: 1960s to 2010s | 1. Cantonese opera in post-Tong Tik-sang eras  
2. The comic tradition of Cantonese opera  
3. Endless Love and Hatred in the Phoenix Chamber 《鳳閣恩仇未了情》  
4. Cantonese opera in the new millennium |
| Conclusion: Cantonese opera and Hong Kong Culture | a. The uniqueness of Cantonese opera in Hong Kong as compared to Cantonese opera in Guangdong Province  
| b. How Cantonese opera creates an identity of Hong Kong people and culture  
| c. The preservation and future promotion of Cantonese opera |

**Planned Assessment Tasks:**

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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term test, presentation or project</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project report</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Readings:**

陳守仁、湛黎淑貞（2018）《香港神功粵劇的浮沉》，香港：中華書局
