

## HUMA 1671 Cantonese Opera in Hong Kong Culture

Prof. Sau Yan Chan

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 Medium of Instruction : Cantonese  
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 Office at Rm 3332; office hour: Wed 2.30-3.00, 5.45-6.15 pm

**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 Outline:

Week	Lecture Topics	Outlines:
1.	1. Course Overview 2. Ritual Context of Cantonese Opera Performance	a. The various types of temple festivals b. The bamboo theatre 戲棚 c. Ritual activities
2.	1. Ritual Opera 2. The Artists of Cantonese Opera 3. Repertoire 劇目	a. The organization of a series of ritual performance b. Opera troupe organization c. Training of actors and musicians d. Religious plays e. Main plays
3.	1. Tong Dik-sang 唐滌生 2. <i>The Floral Princess</i> 《帝女花》 3. Script and plot structure	a. Artistic revolution sparked by Tong Dik-sang b. The plot of <i>The Floral Princess</i> c. 《帝女花》之《香天》
4.	1. Makeup 2. Costume	a. The makeup processes b. Costumes used for character portrayal
5.	1. The Cantonese Dialect 2. Singing of Cantonese Opera	a. Tonal aspects of the Cantonese dialect b. Voice production c. Singing demonstrations
6.	1. Percussion Instruments Used in Cantonese opera 2. Major Speech Forms 說白	a. The major percussion instruments b. The mnemonics 鑼鼓口訣 c. Performance of percussion patterns d. Recitation of Patter Speech 數白攬
7.	Acting, Fencing and Stage Movement in Cantonese opera	a. Body gesture and symbolic movement b. Main stage movement sequences employed by the main roles c. Movement demonstrations

8.	The study of Cantonese opera in the ritual context: fieldwork techniques and methodology I	Student presentations I
9.	The study of Cantonese opera in the ritual context: fieldwork techniques and methodology II	Student presentations II
10.	The study of Cantonese opera in the ritual context: fieldwork techniques and methodology III	Student presentations III
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	a. Cantonese opera in post-Tong Dik-sang eras b. The comic tradition of Cantonese opera c. <i>Endless Love and Hatred in the Phoenix Chamber</i> 《鳳閣恩仇未了情》 d. Cantonese opera in the new millennium
13.	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

**Assessment:**

Course participation	10%
Presentation	20%
Term Report	30%
Final exam	40%

**References:**

1. 陳守仁、湛黎淑貞（2018）《香港神功粵劇的浮沉》，香港：中華書局
2. 陳守仁、張群顯（2019）《帝女花讀本》，香港：商務印書館（快將出版）
3. Chan, Sau Yan. "Cantonese Opera," in Chan Sin-wai ed. *Routledge Encyclopedia of Traditional Chinese Culture*. Abingdon: Taylor and Francis. (Forthcoming 2019)
4. Chan, Sau Yan. "Performance Context as a Molding Force: Photographic Documentation of Cantonese Opera in Hong Kong," in *Visual Anthropology*, Vol. 18 (2-3), 2005, pp. 167-198.