

HUMA 1671/CORE 1661
Spring 2023
Cantonese Opera in Hong Kong Culture
 Prof. Sau Yan Chan ; IA: Mr. Law Chun Yin

Medium of Instruction: Cantonese
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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 commercial theatre and the bamboo stage, and its marketing strategies, aiming at unfolding to the students how an art form should be appreciated through the aesthetical, functional and even commercial perspectives.

Course Outline: (Cantonese opera=CO)

Weeks	Lecture Topics/Activities	Outline:
1. 9/2	1. Introduction to CO in HK 2. Ritual/Religious opera 神功戲 3. Course overview	a. Types of CO performance b. Types of temple festival c. The bamboo theatre 戲棚 d. Ritual activities 神功活動 e. Course activities
2. 16/2	1.CO artists 2.Repertoire 劇目 3.The Floral Princess 《帝女花》	a. Opera troupe organization b. Training of actors and musicians c. Routine plays 例戲 d. Main plays 正本戲 e. Script and plot structure of <i>The Floral Princess</i>
3. 23/2	1. Construction of bamboo theatre 2. The White Tiger Ritual 3. The accompanying ensemble 4. Major instruments 5. 《帝女花》之《香夭》 6. Fieldwork methodology and ethics	a. Floor plan of bamboo theatre b. Troupe taboos as rules for troupe management c. The juxtaposition of Chinese and Western instruments d. Singing 《香夭》
4. 2/3	Fieldwork I(A) 潘西洲洪聖誕 《英雄掌上野茶薇》	a. The Performance context b. Backstage preparation c. Appreciation of the performance
5. 9/3	1.Review of fieldwork I(A) 2.Tong Dik-sang 唐滌生 (1917-1959) 3. <i>The Purple Hairpin</i> 《紫釵記》	a. CO of the 1950s b. TDS’s operatic revolution c. Script and plot structure of <i>The Purple Hairpin</i>
12/3 (Sun)	Fieldwork I (B) 上水 古洞觀音誕 <i>The Purple Hairpin</i> 《紫釵記》	a.The Performance context b. Backstage preparation c. Appreciation of the performance
6. 16/3	1. Review of fieldwork I(B) 2. The Cantonese dialect 3. CO singing demonstration	a. Tonal aspects of the Cantonese dialect 粵語九聲 b. Tonal exercise c. Voice production 發聲 in CO singing and speech

7. 23/3	1. Percussion instruments in CO 2. Major speech forms 說白	a. Major percussion instruments b. The mnemonics 口訣 c. Performance of percussion patterns d. Recitation of speech
8. 30/3	Stage movement demonstration	a. Body gesture and symbolic movement b. Main stage movement sequences employed by the main roles
Mid-term break	(5/4-11/4)	
9. 9/4 (Sun)	Fieldwork II Commercial performance in Ko Shan Theatre <i>The Purple Hairpin</i> 《紫釵記》	a. Briefing: fieldwork techniques, courtesy & ethics b. On-site visit c. Tour of backstage d. Appreciation of the performance
13/4	No class meeting	
10. 20/4	1. Review of Fieldwork II 2. Makeup and Costume in CO 3. Makeup and Costume demonstration	a. The makeup process b. Costumes used for character portrayal
11. 27/4	1. Development of CO: 1960s to the present 2. Briefing on term report and exam	a. CO in post-Tong Dik-sang era b. The comic tradition of CO c. <i>Endless Love and Hatred in the Phoenix Chamber</i> 《鳳閣恩仇未了情》 d. CO in the new millennium e. New works of CO
12. 4/5	1. Conclusion: Cantonese opera and Hong Kong culture 2. Briefing on term report and exam	a. CO in Hong Kong VS CO in Guangdong Province b. CO and cultural identity of Hong Kong people c. Preservation and future development of CO in Hong Kong
5/5 (Fri)	Premiere of the refined version of <i>The Floral Princess</i> in Shaw Auditorium, HKUST	

Assessment:

Class participation	10%
Fieldwork participation I: Ritual performance	10%
Fieldwork participation II: Commercial performance	10%
Term Report	40%
Final exam	30%

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 (2022) 《帝女花讀本》(修訂第二版)，香港：商務印書館
3. 陳守仁、張群顯、何冠環 (2021) 《紫釵記讀本》，香港：商務印書館
4. 陳守仁 (2023) 《粵劇簡明讀本》，香港：三聯書店(香港)有限公司，即將出版