







## **ABOUT US**

The School of Arts at Sunway University offers a variety of disciplines, ranging from Advertising and Public Relations to Design, Architecture, Film Production, Theatre and Music.

School of Arts Press (SOAP) is a monthly newsletter in which we provide information student and staff achievements, past events as well as a notification platform for upcoming events.

## **ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS**

In this month's issue, SOAP highlights the various research publishings by SOA's academic staff: Dr Pauline's meeting with Tun Mahathir, Azmyl's new music release, and SunFM's radio debut!

#### School of Arts Press -

**Advisor/Editor:** Rachel Ong (SOA Arts Project Manager)

Writers: Sophia Alyssa & Annie (Nguyen

Phuc Thao Nguyen)

Design: Sophia Alyssa

**Cover Photo:** A photo of Prof. Crispin Bates amongst the tea workers in

Dibrugarh Assam.



School of Arts



School of Arts, Sunway University



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SCHOOL OF ARTS PRESS SEPTEMBER 2020

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Research is such a loaded word — with different meanings to different people. For many on social media, it seems that "research" means "I spent a few minutes on the Google, confirming my opinion." For most academics, though, it means something very different.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines "research" as "a detailed study of a subject, especially in order to discover (new) information or reach a (new) understanding."

The Oxford English Dictionary offers "The systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions."

Wikipedia (!?!) defines it as "creative and systematic work undertaken to increase the stock of knowledge." My, how Wikipedia has grown up during my lifetime!

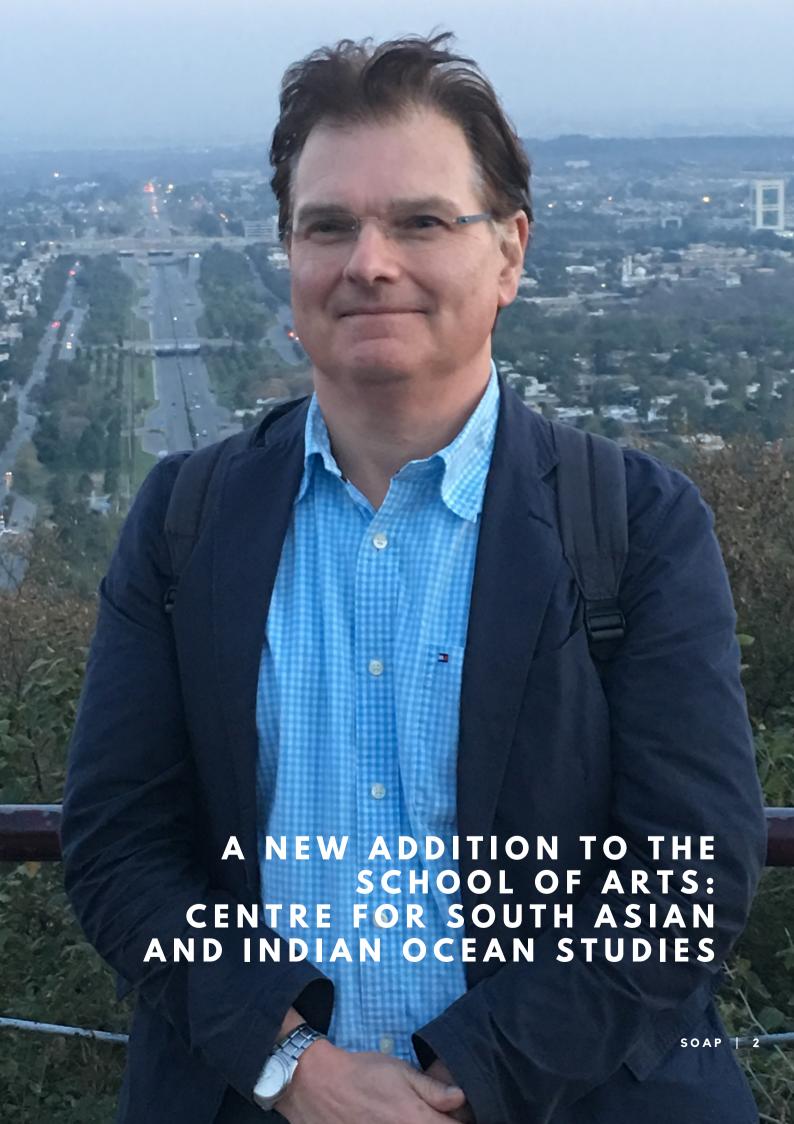
In the academic world, lecturers and professors are expected to engage in three broad areas of activity: research, teaching, and service essentially, to create knowledge, share knowledge, and use knowledge. In this context, it is generally recognized that "creative activities" in arts disciplines are equivalent to more traditional research in other disciplines. In fact, in the United States, the term "research/creative activity" is often used to reinforce this idea. Personally, I prefer the term "scholarship," as it can encompass both research and creative activities, without being so wordy.

Whatever label you use, it is exciting to see the wealth of scholarship being produced by the academic staff in the School of Arts at Sunway University. A few recent examples are described in the pages that follow.

Please forward this email to anyone who would be interested in receiving a monthly review of upcoming events and past successes in the SOA. Links to subscribe or unsubscribe are included at the bottom of the newsletter.



**Professor Donald Bowyer** Dean of School of Arts









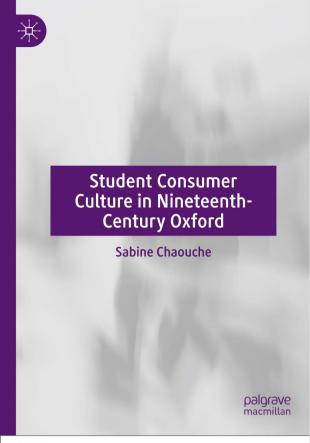
The School of Arts is delighted to announce its newly approved department: Centre for South Asian and Indian Ocean Studies. The research Centre will be led by Professor Crispin Bates, who for ran similar, years а internationally renowned Centre at Edinburgh University within the UK.

CSAIOS or the Centre for South Asian and Indian Ocean Studies was recently established within the School of Arts with the approval of the Senate. It was set up to promote interdisciplinary research on the culture, trade, and history of countries that are linked together by the monsoon winds.

It marks a new development not only for Sunway but also for Malaysia as a whole, which unlike its neighbouring countries has never had such a research centre, despite the long established links between the Malayan peninsula and the Indian subcontinent. It is therefore intended that the Centre will become a nodal point for research in this field, and will affiliate members from across the country as well as across departments within Sunway.



Prof. Crispin Bates joined the School of Arts in September 2019. He is a professor of Indian History. Besides heading CSAIOS, he also leads an AHRC project on the history and legacies of Indian anthropological thought as co-investigator. He is an academic editor of several book series. Some of his research interests are: the 'subaltern' in South Asian History, Indian migrant labour and the South Asian diaspora, Modern history of the Indian Ocean etc.



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1st ed. 2020, XV. 318 p. 11 Illus.

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## Student Consumer Culture in Nineteenth-Century Oxford

- Adds to the current research on nineteenth century consumerism by investigating a particular elite masculine culture
- Appeals to scholars and researchers across a range of fields in social and economic history including consumption, retailing, masculinity, elites, cultural studies, and male dress
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  Offers insight into the local history of Oxford and the University

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## DR SABINE'S **"STUDENT CONSUMER CULTURE IN** NINETEENTH-CENTURY OXFORD"

School of Arts' Associate Dean, Dr Sabine recently published a book entitled "Student Consumer Culture in Nineteenth-Century Oxford". The book is available as an eBook here and the print version is now available on Amazon.

Dr Sabine's book explores the students' consumer practices and material desires within the nineteenthcentury Oxford. Consumerism surged undergraduates in the 1830s and decreased by contrast from the 1860s as students learned to practice restraint and make wiser choices, putting a brake on past excessive consumption habits. This study concentrates on the minority of debtors, the daily lives of undergraduates, and their social and economic environment. It scrutinises the variety of goods that were on offer, paying special attention to their social and symbolic uses and meanings. Through emulation and self-display, undergraduate culture impacted the formation of male identities and spending habits. Using Oxford students as a case study, this book opens new pathways in the history of consumption and capitalism, revealing how youth consumer culture intertwined with the rise of competition among tradesmen and university reforms in the 1850s and 1860s.



Part of SPRINGER NATURE



Prof. Sabine Chaouche is an Associate Dean (Research) in the Department of Film and Performing Arts. Her main expertise lies in the history of European acting and staging, and early modern literature and culture. Professor Chaouche has extensively published on early modern performances. performances.





Differences in visual-textual platforms, technical-strategic communication & professionalism vs encroachment between Malaysian & American PR practitioners' social media practices

> \* Chuan Tek Pheung Tunku Abdul Rahman University College

> > Cheng Ean (Catherine), Lee Sunway University

Lim Siz Siz Tunku Abdul Rahman University College

#### ABSTRACT

Social media platforms and their affociances are found by researchers to affect the public relations (PH) industry and its practicusms taken six modern and the public relations (PH) industry and its practicusms taken six modern and the process of the public relations (PH) industry and process of the public relationship to the public relationsh

Keywords: social media, public relations, Malaysia, comparative study, survey

\* Corresponding author

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The use of mobile technologies for learning in higher education:

\* Cheng Ean (Catherine) Lee

Students' readiness

atherinelee@sunway.edu.m

Serena Wai Yee Leow Sunway University

> Xiang Jie Kong Sunway University

## ABSTRACT

A rapid evolution of technologies and their proliferation in the education system has created a new paradigm of learning with universities embalsing on the integration of mobile technologies in higher education. As a result, mobile learning has emerged as a new way of learning, Mobile learning utilises elected and the state of t

Keywords: mobile technologies, mobile learning, students' readiness, private university Malaysia.

\* Corresponding author

# DR CATHERINE'S JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS IN SIR

Our SOA lecturer, Dr Catherine Lee Cheng Ean recently has two journal publications uploaded in the Sunway Institutional Repository (SIR). Both articles are published in a Scopus (Q3) and Web of Science - Emerging sources citation index journal.

In the first paper, Dr. Catherine, together with her colleagues - Chuan Tez Pheung and Lim Siz, investigate "Differences in visual-textual platforms, technical-strategic communication & professionalism vs encroachment between Malaysia & American PR practitioner social media practices".

The second paper is a collaboration work of Dr. Catherine, with another SOA lecturer - Ms. Serena (Department of Communication), and Mr. Kong Xiang Jie. They worked together on the topic about "The use of mobile technologies for learning in higher education: Student's readiness".

We are looking forward to seeing more journals published by our SOA lecturers on SIR which explore more interesting and helpful topics.



Dr Catherine Lee is Senior Lecturer at the School of Arts, Sunway University and has more than 19 years of teaching and research experience in higher education. She has published extensively in local and international peer-reviewed journals as well as presented at local and international conferences.





## DR PERLINE GUEST IN THAILAND'S RANGIT UNIVERSITY, INTERNATIONAL **DESIGN SYMPOSIUM 2020**

In August, Dr Perline Siek was invited as a guest to present her artwork at the 8th International Design Symposium 2020; Work In Progress, "Mind The Gap" that was organised by Rangsit University, Thailand. This "work in progress" is a yearly event done in collaboration with the Art & Design Dean Council of Thailand, and a worldwide committee with participation from Thailand, China, Hong Kong, the United States of America, Japan, India, France, the Netherlands, and so on.

Dr Perline presented a series of 2D watercolour paintings blended from one piece to another continuously. The piece features two buffalos and lotus set around the base with the sky positioned at the top of the panorama, creating a seamless effect.

Dr Perline practices a design philosophy based on Maslow's Hierarchy which organises the levels of the human needs in a five-tier model, depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. It describes the levels of philosophical awareness starting from the basic human needs to the pursuit of living well and the meaning of life.

This philosophy is also practiced by the researchers within the Design & Cultural Innovation studio, NTNT, Taiwan, with whom Dr Perline has previously worked and collaborated with.

Click to view Dr Perline's entire painting in 360 panorama here!



Dr Perline Siek ran a design college in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for 20 years prior to joining Sunway University. She is active in watercolour painting and has participated in a number of international conferences. She has also been invited as a guest speaker for several design talks and design workshops in Taiwan.



## SCHOOL OF ARTS SUNFM DEBUTS AT WORLD COLLEGE RADIO DAY



Photo Source: College Radio

The Department of Communication has launched its very own college radio, SunFM! SunFM is a place where students are able to create their own podcasts and play music. With the soft-launch on October 2nd, SunFM will be a student-operated online radio station and with recruitments still open, students are welcome to head on over to the DoC Facebook page to apply!

SunFM recently made its debut at the 2020 World College Radio Day (WCRD)! Being one of the only 24 student radio that were invited for the 24-Hour Global Marathon, this was their first ever participation. World College Radio Day is an international event where hundreds of college radio stations around the world come together and celebrate the medium of college radio, ultimately raising greater awareness of these student-led stations.

The students involved produced a 58 minute programme and hosted the show for the broadcasting of WCRD 2020. They show played music by various Malaysian artists like Yuna, Lunadira, Bihzu, and Zee Avi to short interviews on Azmyl Yunor's new music release and students' experiences with the new realm of learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Listen to programme here!

# AZMYL YUNOR'S KAPUK & THE RELEASE OF JOHN BANGI BLUES

Have you heard? Azmyl Yunor is back again with new music! Azmyl released 'Kapuk', a single from his recently released album "John Bangi Blues". Inspired by folk legend Woody Guthrie's adage 'This machine kills fascists', 'Kapuk' stands as a symbol that amplifies the voices of the voiceless. The music video is also a continuation of Azmyl's creative collaborations with artists. He shared that he is a big fan of Shika, the illustrator of Kapuk's music video, and he has always wanted to work with her and collaborate on a project. Kapuk's release was featured in a write-up by NME, an international online magazine that covers music and pop culture.

A few days after Kapuk's release, John Bangi Blues was exclusively released on Azmyl's Bandcamp page.

John Bangi Blues is Azmyl's first full album released since 2015. The album was recorded live back in November 2019, within three hours. It was co-produced by Ariff Akhir, featuring Kristopher Chong from Salammusik and Ammar Khairi from Vega and The Maharajah. Fans are also able to get their hands on a physical copy of the album as it is now released for purchase. A treat awaits those who purchase the CD: a hidden unlisted bonus track.

The Sun Daily also featured Azmyl about his music endeavours this year. In the article, Azmyl talked about his interest and integration of the everyday Malay language across his body of work and discussed language usage in a multicultural Malaysia in the context of music.

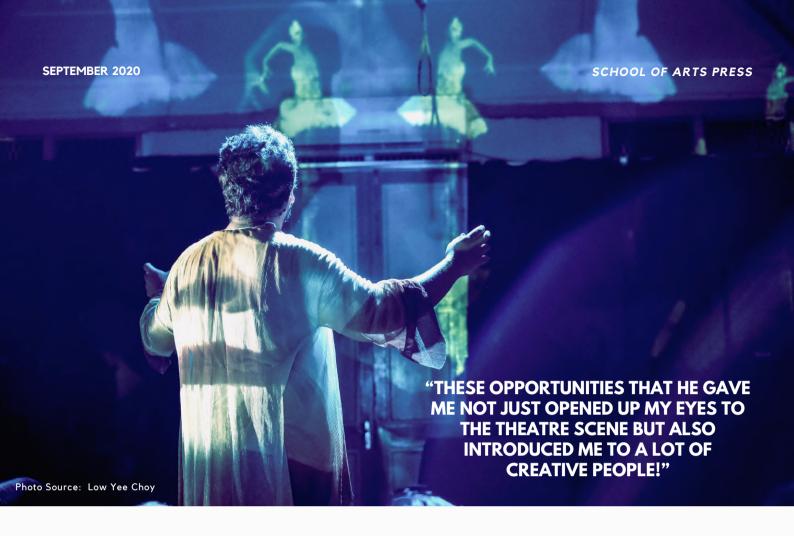




Azmyl Yunor @ Azmyl Yusof is a senior lecturer in the School of Arts. He is also an independent English and Malay language singer-songwriter, multiinstrumentalist, and writer. He is a journalist and filmmaker by training.







In this issue of Life After SOA, School of Arts Press reached out to Low Yee Choy, a fresh 2020 graduate from the School of Arts Diploma in Performing Arts (DPA) programme who had brought new life to a 1970s Malay theatre play earlier this year!

Choy recounted the time he first DPA's met Kelvin Wona. programme leader. He had no idea how much Kelvin would impact his life at the time. Choy now cherished the knowledge that he gained and grateful that he was given the opportunity to study with Malaysia's most prominent theatre directors. Being under Kelvin's wings, it inspired him to follow in his footsteps. So he approached his lecturer for opportunities to be involved in the theatre world. He expressed that he was "super nervous" at first. But within two weeks of working with Kelvin, Choy held positions like assistant stage

manager for the 2018 production, INDICINELIVE! V, and a year later he was the stage manager for INDICINELIVE! 6 and BROHEMIA!. All of which were Kelvin's very own productions. Choy shared that while he was managing these productions, he was also juggling school and a part time job but it was a golden opportunity that he would not miss and is always grateful for.

Choy also shared that with those opportunities, it opened up a lot of doors in his journey into theatre. He met Khairi Anwar, an artistic director at Anomalist Production through BROHEMIA! in 2019. Coincidentally during that time, seeking Choy was internship opportunities. Knowing that he wanted to do creative work and may have a chance to do a directorial debut in Malaysia, he pitched an idea to Khairi. Little did he know, his idea was accepted

and he received a gig to direct a show under Khairi's company. Takina on "Bukan Bunuh Diri", an old controversial Malaysian play, Choy's show was sold out earlier this year on March 11th. However, due to the COVID-19 situation, the audience turnout was unfortunately small. Despite that, Choy rose above it and admitted that the experience was a lesson and it helped him grow as a director. Ultimately, he was immensely grateful for the opportunity that was given to him and it landed him a feature on The Star.



Photo Source: Low Yee Choy





Currently, Choy is busy setting up his own theatre and film company, named Lowercase Laboratories, along with his friends who were also his classmates in DPA. He realised that there were a lack of opportunities for young and upcoming creatives. Even though he was privileged to gain the priceless experiences in the School of Arts, not many would be able to share the same sentiments. With Lowercase Laboratories, he hopes to provide a platform for aspiring theatre and filmmakers to present their works while simultaneously acting as a platform for him and his friends to do the same and collaborate with other creatives. He hopes that his company will last long, and will continually provide to many young and upcoming creatives in the long run.

Choy is looking to move forward in either a theatre or a film degree next year and a long term goal of pursuing a Masters in theatre. He also aspires to direct a show overseas one day!

Right now, his company is in the works to launch a series of theatre productions as well as several short films in the near future. Be sure to catch the launch of Lowercase Laboratories this December at Sunway College's Rooftop Theatre as they put on a theatre production called "malus", directed by Choy himself. Stay tuned!

"Life After SOA" is a series of the newsletter that features School of Arts alumni and their stories about being a student in SOA and life after SOA.