



School of Arts Press

*October 2019 Edition*

## 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. We are preparing a new generation of students and researchers in the domain of creative digital media (CDM), merging core attributes of the arts, sciences, humanities, media and technology.

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

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

For anyone who has been wondering about the newest Sunway construction by the lake on the south side of Jalan Lagoon Saletan, I am delighted to share that part of the project includes university space for the School of Arts (SOA) and Sunway University Business School (SUBS). In addition to much-needed expansions for teaching space, the project will also include public exhibition and performance space, including a concert hall (1000 seats), recital hall, drama theatre, art gallery, and film screening room.

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.

Sincerely,  
Don Bowyer, Dean  
Sunway University School of Arts

## UPCOMING EVENTS

SOAR Deepavali Lunch  
- 31 October 2019  
- 12-2pm, Level 9, Sunway University

Ayden Adler's Public Talk  
- 4 November 2019  
- 5.30pm, LT3

Saxophone Recital by Tasuku Noguchi  
9 November 2019  
- 6pm, Live Arts Space

Vladimir Gerts Concert  
13 November 2019  
- 7pm, JC 2

23:59 Fashion Drama  
- 14 November 2019  
- 6pm, Art Gallery

DAD Graduation Showcase  
- 2-6 December 2019

For more information on SOA events, contact Sammy Chong at

## RECENT ACTIVITIES

### Lunchtime Concerts in October

The lunchtime concerts have made their comeback after a few months of hiatus! This time, two lunchtime concerts were respectively held on 30 September and 3 October at the Live Arts Space.

On 30 September 2019, the Department of Performance and Media were honoured to be able to invite the PEN trio to perform for the students in Sunway University. PEN trio is a woodwind trio and the members are Nora Lewis (Oboe), Phillip O. Paglialonga (Clarinet), and Eric Van der Veer Barner (Bassoon). As they are passionate about performance, education and scholarship, the group is dedicated to expanding the scope of the traditional trio d'anche, which was coined by bassoonist Fernand Oubradous in 1927 to describe the now legendary Trio d'Anches de Paris. During the lunchtime concert, the ensemble performed Three Places in Vienna by Jaren Hinckley, The Sequoia Trio by Jenni Brandon and many more.

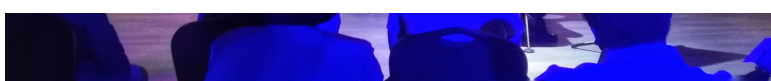


*The PEN trio performing.*

The Sutera Ensemble comprises of performers who are also educators and communicators who want to pass on the beauty of classical music to new generations and wider audience. The members of Sutera Ensemble are Angel Lee, the violinist, Andrew Filmer, the violist, Jonathon Oh, the cellist, Loo Bang Hean, a pianist as well as a guest pianist, Carolyn Lo. The programme included a violin-viola duo by Mozart, and another two pieces by Richardson and Faure, followed by a piano duet by Grieg, piano-viola duet by Clarke and Beethoven's C major quartet, 1st movement. Before starting each piece, Dr Andrew Filmer from Sunway University shared short background stories of the composer and the pieces to the audience, in hopes that the audience will be able to gain some insight into the compositions. The concert then ended with the whole ensemble putting together a piece by Beethoven which earned a round of applause from the audience.

If you are interested to listen to upcoming lunchtime concerts, do check out Sunway University School of Art's Facebook and Instagram account linked at the bottom of the newsletter!





*Piano and cello duet.*



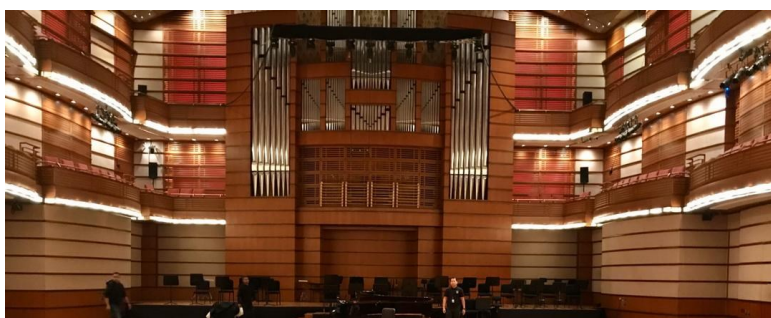
*Sutura Ensemble performing together for the finale.*

## Field Trip to MPO Chamber Music Concert

In line with School of Arts Week 8 Workshop week, a group of 50 students from the contemporary music (audio technology) and music performance degree programmes went on a field trip to the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO) chamber music concert at Dewan Filharmonik Petronas, KLCC on 16 October 2019. This field trip was beneficial to the students as the programme played were being studied in various classes. There are Franz Waxman's Carmen Fantasie which is being studied by 40 students for music history class, and Schubert piano trio which has been studied in the Chamber Music class. Dr Andrew Filmer, who teaches two of the classes mentioned above, along with Programme Leaders Mr Samuel Tan and Ms Christine Yong joined the field trip. The students had a chance to hear some of the performers speak right afterwards, and to find out about their process of preparation and collaboration.



*Students listening tentatively during the sharing session.*







*Group photo with students, lecturers as well as the performers.*

## Khazanah Megatrends Forum 2019

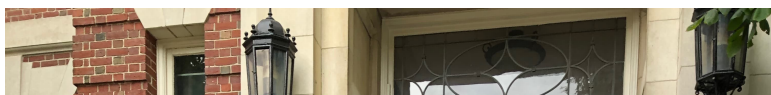
Upon special invitation by one of the speakers Dato Izham Omar, CEO of Primeworks, our first and second year digital film production students, together with their film production lecturer/producer Nandita Solomon attended the Khazanah Megatrends Forum on 1 October 2019. It was a cultural event which is part of Khazanah Nasional's global development conference held annually. The students were also able to meet Ronnie del Carmen, the writer and story artist for several films including Up, Inside Out, Finding Nemo and etc!



*Digital Film Production students with Ronnie del Carmen.*

## Invited talk at the Harvard Asia Centre

Professor Harold Thwaites, Head of the Centre for Research-Creation and Digital Media in Sunway University's School of Arts, was invited to Harvard on 4 October 2019 to give a presentation on the Hainan Boatbuilder of Pangkor: a Malaysian Digital Heritage Case Study, as part of the Asian Centre Seminar Series. The hour-long talk was attended by 25 post-graduate students, academic staff and was chaired by Professor Peter Der Manuelian, Director of the Harvard Semetic Museum and Barbara Bell Professor of Egyptology. The questions and discussion that followed were lively, productive and will hopefully lead to various collaborations with CRCDM in the near future.



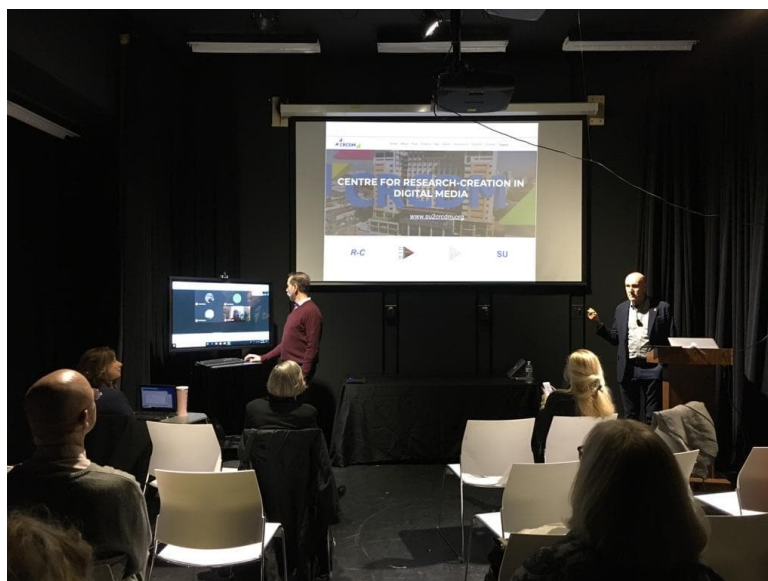




*Prof. Thwaites and Prof. Der Manuelian at the Harvard Semetic Museum.*

## VSMM 2019 Symposium in Canada

Professor Harold Thwaites was the Keynote speaker at VSMM 2019 Symposium- into the future of XR and Exponential Inclusive Tech at OCADU, 17 October in Toronto, Canada. Prof. Thwaites is the International Society on Virtual Systems and Multimedia (VSMM) honorary lifetime President. He spoke to an enthusiastic audience of 38 (local and on-line) staff and students on the “Past, Present and Future of VSMM and Related Technologies”, focusing on his work in CRCDM at Sunway University. This year, VSMM is holding 3 symposium events in Toronto, Dublin and Berlin under the banner theme focusing on virtual reality, virtual worlds, accessibility in VR-AR, exponential technologies, and how inclusive design can be integrated for a diverse and inclusive virtual (and actual) reality. The yearly VSMM International Conference was held at Sunway University in October 2016, and could perhaps return in the coming years.



*Prof. Thwaites presenting on CRCDM.*

## Media Talk on Nomophobia

"Are you addicted to your phone? Do you feel anxious when you are not with your phone, wondering if there are any important notifications or messages or calls you'll miss? Chances are, you are addicted to your phone. Nomophobia, "no more phone phobia" is an irrational fear of being away from your phone. It is the constant need to pick up your phone and respond to any of the notifications."

Dr. Prem Kumar Shanmugam, a psychologist on compulsive disorders and addictions was invited to Sunway University on 3 October 2019 to deliver a talk regarding smartphone addiction. Dr. Prem started off the talk with an introduction of what 'Nomophobia' is and what compulsive behaviours are. Further on, he explained how 'Nomophobia' can be diagnosed as an addiction based on the 'ABCDE' (Abstain, Behavioural control, Craving, Diminished, Emotional Response) diagnosis. With that, he was able to clearly explain to the students why and how smartphone addiction is a serious issue. Dr. Prem did not fail to provide statistics on smartphone addiction as well, providing full evidence of how it is affecting our lives today.

One of the most interesting part of the talk was when Dr. Prem introduced "Maslow's Hierarchy 2.0" whereby the 'physiological needs' becomes WiFi and mobile devices. Consequently, 'safety needs' then becomes passwords, Google Maps and Waze. 'Belonging and love needs together with esteem needs' becomes social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Tinder. Lastly, 'self-actualisation needs' becomes platforms such as Pinterest, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Isn't it eye-opening how dependant we are on our mobile devices today? Though our devices are important, and plays a major role in our daily lives, remember to use it with caution; don't let it become an addiction!



*Dr Prem introducing the "nomophobic" version of Maslow's Hierarchy of needs.*

## INTRODUCING SOA STAFF AND STUDENT

Dr Goh Yi Sheng







Dr Goh Yi Sheng has been with Sunway University's School of Arts for a little over a year now, and she currently teaches Sustainable Design in the Department of Art and Design. She had spent eighteen years of her time abroad studying and working before deciding to come back to her hometown, Malaysia in 2018. Dr Goh had pursued her Bachelor's degree and Masters degree majoring in Industrial Design in Taiwan and the United States respectively, and later obtained her PhD in Consumer and Design Sciences in the United States. Prior to her return to Malaysia, she had also taught in the National Cheng Kung University in Tainan, Taiwan.

As a lecturer, she prioritises the experiential learning method for her students. Hence, she often brings her students out for field trips, allowing them to gain real life experiences rather than relying on textbooks and the Internet. Recently, she brought her students along with students and a lecturer from the School of Hospitality to the Sungai Lima Fishing Village in Klang for a field trip. The students were able to see the village environment with their own eyes, talk to the people in the village to learn about the villagers' lives and see how they can use design to contribute to the local community. The Sungai Lima Fishing Village is also one of Dr Goh's research project titled Design for Sustainability - Social Innovation Project in Sungai Lima. In this project, she proposes ways to promote sustainability in the village through raising awareness of the value of their own culture, educating them about the importance of mangrove and birds (both resident and migratory), and creating new sustainable business such as eco-tourism. Dr Goh explained the reason behind selecting this village as her subject of research was due to how she feels connected to the villagers and how their friendliness, purity and sincerity motivated her to help them.

Dr Goh sees design as something more than the aesthetics, but also providing solutions to problems. "Design is not all about prettiness and being artsy, but also to understand the underlying needs and to work with uncertainties and pull together different streams of expertise to create solutions to solve the problem within the context," said Dr Goh. Therefore, she hopes that more people will understand the broader concept of design and be more open to discover the opportunities in sustainable design.

### Soo Kah Yee, June







June Soo is a Semester 2 student from the MA in Visual Communications and Media Studies. She finished her Diploma at Taylor's University, Malaysia and her Degree in Melbourne, where she majored in advertising. As she is deeply intrigued to advertising yet still want to learn marketing and branding to enhance her knowledge, she decided to pursue the Masters course in Sunway University that allows her not only to learn about design but also gain knowledge on marketing and branding. June is also passionate about fashion design. She started out with a project from one of the subjects in her course and expanding it to her own fashion brand, where she likes to call it her passion project. In this project, she deconstructs old clothing and transforms them into new clothing, which at the same time supports environmental sustainability.

Besides noting that Sunway University has given her an adequate amount of resources and good facilities, June appreciates that the university has taken the initiative to lead the community in creating an environmentally friendly campus, such as carrying out the #TheLastStraw campaign and many other activities to promote environmental sustainability. This further encouraged her to do her part in contributing to the environment. When talking about the lecturers in her course, she emphasizes that Professor Kenneth is a great educator who does not hesitate to share his every bit of knowledge to his students and June was also able to meet many good writers through him. The MA in Visual Communication and Media Studies has provided her a great learning platform to learn not just about advertising and design but also taught her how these skills can be applied in the real world with marketing and branding.

As of now, June is content with her personal achievement of getting a job and starting her career in a field that she is passionate about. As her job requires her to work in the field of digital marketing, she felt grateful that she was able to apply the knowledge she learned from this course for her job interview. Other than that, through taking this course, she managed to balance her design skills and academic writing skills which she thinks is equally important and can definitely enhance her performance and be beneficial for her future. In the near future, she definitely hopes to achieve an honours in her Master's degree. June believes that knowledge has no boundaries, therefore she leaves a short message to the readers of this newsletter, "to anyone who is not sure of what to do and feel like they need to gain more knowledge, the MA in Visual Communication and Media Studies will not only build your academic skills but also in terms of your mentality and personality, some of the professors and lecturers are prominent people that may teach you life lessons, so for those who are interested in the field of media, do check this course out! And also, BE SUSTAINABLE!"

## CONNECT WITH US

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