The Asian Australian Studies Research Network (AASRN) welcomes you to:

The Asian Australian Identities (AAI6) Conference

EMBODIMENTS AND INHABITATIONS

(Artwork credit: Nikki Lam, Falling Leaf Returns to its Roots / 落葉歸根)

Hosted by the IMMIGRATION MUSEUM (MUSEUMS VICTORIA)

Supported by Monash Asia Institute, Monash University, and Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We wish to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nations, the traditional owners of the land on which we are gathered today and whose land has never been ceded. We pay our respects to the local people for the privilege to gather on their land, and to their Elders: past, present and future.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to the Immigration Museum for generously hosting the conference in partnership with the support of the Monash Asia Institute (Monash University) and the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation (Deakin University).

Thank you to the conference committee, to everyone contributing papers and/or chairing, who has made this conference possible.

The conference image is very kindly provided by Nikki Lam, Falling Leaf Returns to its Roots / 落葉歸根, HD video, 2014. Check out this interview with Nikki at Peril Magazine.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE CONVENERS

**Mridula Nath Chakraborty** is the Deputy Director of the Monash Asia Institute, Monash University. A literary scholar and translator, Mridula has convened projects in literary-cultural diplomacy: *Australia-India Literatures International Forum* [a finalist in the inaugural Australian Arts in Asia Award in 2013], the Autumn School in Literary Translation and *Literary Commons*: Writing Australia-India in the Asian Century with Indigenous, Dalit and Multilingual Tongues. An outcome of these is a special issue in *Cordite Poetry Review* of 50 translations in 25 languages from *Dalit, Indigenous and tribal poetry*. Mridula contributes to cross-cultural advocacy and transnational literary-creative networks through her work as a core partner of *South Asia Diaspora International Researchers’ Network*, as Board Member of *Asia Pacific Writers and Translators* and via the Steering Committee of the Monash-Warwick Alliance *Migration, Identity and Translation Network*. She is the co-lead on *Literary Habitats*, a Monash-Warwick Alliance funded project.

**Jessica Walton** is a Senior Research Fellow at the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University. She is a Korean adoptee from the United States and is currently a chief investigator on a collaborative international grant funded by the Academy of Korean Studies on 1.5/2nd generation Koreans in Australia and New Zealand. She holds an Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (2016-2019) on South Korean and Australian children’s on-line/off-line intercultural relations focused on an anthropology of friendship and belonging. She is founding convener of the Oceania Ethnography & Education Network (OEEN).
ABOUT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

**OLIVIA KHOO** is Associate Professor in Film and Screen Studies at Monash University. She was convenor of the Asian Australian Identities 3 conference, “Regionalising Asian Australian Identities” (2009). With Audrey Yue and Belinda Smaill, Olivia was a Chief Investigator on an Australian Research Council Discovery Project on the History of Asian Australian Cinema. She is currently a CI on another ARC DP on *Media Flows between Australia and East Asia* (with Koichi Iwabuchi, Fran Martin and Audrey Yue). Olivia is the author of *The Chinese Exotic: Modern Diasporic Femininity* (Hong Kong University Press, 2007), and co-author of *Transnational Australian Cinema: Ethics in the Asian Diasporas* (Lexington, 2013).

**TSEEN KHOO** is the founding convenor of the AASRN. She is currently a Lecturer in Research Education and Development at La Trobe University. Tseen has published on Asian Australian culture and literature, and academic research and funding cultures – see Tseen’s Google Scholar profile. She has held an ARC Discovery (with Jaqueline Lo and Dean Chan) and been a Monash University Research Fellow and University of Queensland Postdoctoral Fellow. She is on the editorial advisory boards of the *Journal of Intercultural Studies* and *Australian Universities’ Review*, and was a founding editorial advisor for *Peril Magazine*.

**JAN MOLLOY** is an experienced classroom teacher, with over 30 years experience in Victorian government secondary schools. Since 2006, Jan has coordinated and developed education programs
at the Immigration Museum, Melbourne. She is actively involved in grassroots teacher professional development including the established tweetchats #histedchat, #edutweetoz, and #tmmelb. In 2011-13, she participated in an Australian Research Council Linkage grant with Deakin University, “Using museums to counter racism and increase acceptance of diversity among young people and teachers”. Jan is currently working with Koichi Iwabuchi and the Monash Asia Institute on the project, Migrant Diplomacy Exchange between Immigration Museums, Melbourne and Tokyo.

NADIA RHOOK lectures and researches history at La Trobe University, on Wurundjeri land. Her research is much inspired by her background in ESL teaching and, in 2016, she curated the City of Melbourne heritage exhibition Moving Tongues: language and migration in 1890s Melbourne. She has published in international and local journals including the Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History, Postcolonial Studies and Peril Magazine, and is currently writing a book about the politics of language and migration in colonial Melbourne, forthcoming 2018 with Duke University Press.
Welcome to the 6th Asian Australian Studies Research Network (AASRN) Conference, affectionately known as the AAI6 (Asian Australian Identities) Conference!

The AASRN has been active since 1999 and was formally established in 2006. As stated on the website, the AASRN is a “network for academics, community researchers, and cultural workers who are interested in the area of Asian Australian Studies. Asian Australian Studies is a growing field that investigates the cultures, politics and histories of those of Asian descent in Australia. Much of its work engages with the fields of diasporic Asian, transnational, and diversity studies”.

This bi-annual conference marks the 11th anniversary and there is much to reflect on and celebrate. To commemorate over a decade of meetups, collaborations, community activism, and collegial support within a strong and vibrant network, we have a few special events scheduled over the next few days. We have the launch of the Asian Australian Studies Special Issue in the Journal of Australian Studies (from AAI5) and a launch of Dr Helen Ngo’s recent book on The Habits of Racism (Lexington Books, 2017). We are also privileged to have the opportunity to listen to the founding convener of AASRN, Dr Tseen Khoo talk about the history of AASRN, based on a recently published chapter in The Digital Academic (Routledge, 2017). To round off the two days, we also have a special session run by Nikkei that involves a participatory reflection on your personal AASRN experiences over the years.

We wish to extend our utmost gratitude to the conference committee, all of the invited speakers, chairs, presenters, and the organisers of a fantastic line-up of panel sessions. Thanks also to the Immigration Museum for hosting, funding support from the Monash Asia Institute, and the Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation for their in-kind support. Without all of these collective efforts and generosity, this conference would not have been possible. We hope that by the end of the conference, the discussions over cups of tea and coffee will highlight the rich diversity of experiences of AASRN’s membership and future possible directions. We wish you all an engaging and exciting two days and look forward to your participation!

With best wishes,
Jessica and Mridula
LOCATION OF THE AA16 CONFERENCE

DIRECTIONS:

From Southern Cross station
By Walking: It is about a 13-minute walk from Southern Cross Station. Walk south down Spencer and turn left at Flinders Street. The Immigration Museum is on the corner of Flinders Street and William Street.

From Flinders Station
By Walking: It is about a 7-minute walk from Flinders Street Station. Walk west down Flinders Street and the Immigration Museum is on the corner of Flinders Street and William Street.

By Tram: You can get tram #35, 70 or 75 heading toward the Docklands/Etihad Stadium. It is only two stops from Flinders Street Station stop #5. Get off at stop #3 - Market Street/Flinders Street. Please note: trams are free within the city centre.

Parking:
There is a range of secure paid parking in the vicinity of the Immigration Museum.
# AAI6 Conference Program

**25-26 October 2017**  
Immigration Museum, 400 Flinders Street, Melbourne VIC

## DAY 1

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Speaker(s)</th>
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<td>8:00am ~ 8:30am</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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| 8:30am ~ 8:45am | Welcome                                       | Dr Mridula Nath Chakraborty  
Dr Jessica Walton |
| 8:45am ~ 9:30am | **Paper Session:** Hyphen-Nation/Hyper-Family | Dominic Nguyen Hong Duc Golding  
Christine Ko |
| 9:30am ~ 10:15am| **Keynote:** Habit, Embodiment, and the       | Dr Helen Ngo  
(Chair: Dr Jessica Walton) |
| 10:15am ~ 10:45am| Morning tea                                   |                                                                             |
| 10:45am ~ 11:45pm| Paper Session: Racial(ised) Re-presentations | Adam ZQ Seet  
Dr Caroline Mahoney  
A/Prof Joanna Elfving-Hwang |
| 12:00pm ~ 1:00pm| Lunch                                         |                                                                             |
| 1:00pm ~ 2:00pm | **Panel Session:** The homogeneity of being  | Kevin Bathman  
Joon Kwok  
Sheila Ngoc Pham  
Dr Arjun Rajkhowa |
| 2:00pm ~ 3:00pm | **Paper Session:** Border crossings/Shifting | Dr Jason Christopher Jones  
Nancy Lin  
John Zubrzycki |
| 3:00pm ~ 3:30pm | Afternoon tea (including a book signing with |                                                                             |
| 3:30pm ~ 4:00pm | **Talk/Q&A:** The Fictional Julie Koh         | Julie Koh  
Chair: Mridula Nath Chakraborty |
| 4:00pm ~ 5:00pm | **Paper Session:** Performing belonging       | Dr Monika Winarnita  
Dr Reagan Maiquez  
Prakash Subedi |

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<th>Time</th>
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| 8:30am ~ 9:30am | **Paper Session:** Intimate Labour/Gendered Bodies  
Chair: Dr Mridula Nath Chakraborty | Vasudha Mohanka  
Dr Nadia Rhook  
Dr Ashwinee Pendharkar |
| 9:30am ~ 10:15am | **Keynote:** Carceral archipelago: confinement architectures of the Pacific War | A/Prof Anoma Pieris  
(Chair: Dr Mridula Nath Chakraborty) |
| 10:15am ~ 10:45am | Morning tea                               |                                              |
| 10:45am ~ 11:45am | **Invited paper:** An Asian American(ist) in Australia: The Limits and Possibilities of Cultural Proximity | Dr Jane Chi Hyun Park  
(Chair: Dr Olivia Khoo) |
| 10:45am ~ 11:45am | **Invited paper:** Constructions of Asian American and Asian Australian Identities in the Lifestyle Sport and Subculture of Skateboarding | Dr Indigo Wiling, OAM  
(Chair: Dr Olivia Khoo) |
| 11:45am ~ 12:45pm | **Paper Session:** Imagin-Nations  
Chair: Tseen Khoo | Hoa Pham  
Dr Rosalind Macfarlane  
Dr Sukhmani Khorana |
| 12:45pm ~ 1:00pm | **Journal of Australian Studies – Special Issue Launch** |                                              |
| 1:00pm ~ 1:45pm | Lunch                                     |                                              |
| 1:45pm ~ 2:45pm | **Paper Session:** Memory Work  
Chair: Assoc Professor Gil-Soo Han | Jennifer Anderson  
Dr Michelle Aung Thin  
Maria Hach |
| 2:45pm ~ 3:15pm | **Afternoon tea**                         |                                              |
| 3:15pm ~ 3:45pm | **Invited paper:** Think globally, act locally: Sustaining Asian Australian Scholarly Activism Online | Dr Tseen Khoo  
(Chair: Prof Jacqueline Lo) |
| 3:45pm ~ 4:45pm | **Panel session:** What does AASRN mean to me?  
Chair: Dr Timothy Kazuo Steains | Mayu Kanamori  
Masako Fukui  
Dr Timothy Kazuo Steains |
| 4:45pm ~ 5:00pm | Closing remarks                           |                                              |
ABOUT THE INVITED SPEAKERS

DR TSEEK KHOO

TITLE: Think globally, act locally: Sustaining Asian Australian Scholarly Activism Online

ABSTRACT: This presentation examines AASRN’s history and the prevailing tensions for critical race scholars between old and new structures of academic community-building. It focuses specifically on the research network’s strategies in negotiating institutional space and resources, and its mode of development as a deliberately organic, ‘free’ organisation. Digital platforms and tools have transformed modes of community-building and mobilisation for us as critical race activists, but in what ways? While social media has boosted the potential reach of scholarly activist debates and projects, this can invite a flattening of diasporic community differences. This often results in the elision of the lived, material nuances and infrastructure of local contexts.

BIO: Dr Tseen Khoo is a researcher interested in critical race studies, Asian Australian politics and culture, and the higher education sector. Tseen is a Lecturer in the Research Education and Development (RED) team, Graduate Research School, La Trobe University. Her previous role was as a Senior Advisor (Research Grant Development) at RMIT University (2011-2014), and she has been a Monash University Research Fellow (2004-2009) and University of Queensland Postdoctoral Fellow (2001-2004). Tseen’s writing and publications focus on Asian Australian literature, racial minority public history, early career researcher experiences, and racial diversity issues in Australia. Since its formal establishment in 2006, Tseen has been the convenor of the Asian Australian Studies Research Network (AASRN).

JULIE KOH

TITLE: The Fictional Julie Koh

Julie Koh will speak about her career transition from corporate lawyer to published author, and her experiences as an Asian Australian writer of experimental, often satirical, literary fiction. She will
read from her short-story collection, *Portable Curiosities*, and outline the rationale and editorial process informing *BooksActually’s Gold Standard 2016*, an anthology of the best short fiction from cult writers of East Asia, Southeast Asia and the diaspora. Julie’s talk will be followed by an audience Q&A.

**BIO:** Julie Koh is the author of *Capital Misfits* and *Portable Curiosities*, which was shortlisted for the Readings Prize for New Australian Fiction, the Steele Rudd Award in the Queensland Literary Awards, and the UTS Glenda Adams Award in the NSW Premier’s Literary Awards. *Portable Curiosities* was one of the Guardian’s Best Australian Books of 2016, an Australian Book Review 2016 Book of the Year, a *Sydney Morning Herald Daily Life* feminist reading pick of 2016, and a Feminist Writers Festival Best Feminist Book of 2016. Julie’s short stories have appeared in the Best Australian Stories in 2014 to 2017, and Best Australian Comedy Writing in 2016. She is a 2017 *Sydney Morning Herald Best Young Australian Novelist*, a 2018 Stella Prize judge, and a founding member of experimental literary collective Kanganoulipo. She is also the editor of *BooksActually's Gold Standard*, and is currently writing the libretto for the satirical opera *Chop Chef*.

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**DR HELEN NGO**

**TITLE:** Habit, Embodiment, and the Lived Experience of Racism

This lecture will draw on the tools of philosophical phenomenology, and in particular the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, to explore some of the embodied dimensions of racism and its lived experience. What is it like to live as a person of colour – to inhabit these Asian, Brown, Indigenous, Black, Latinx bodies – in a racially hostile world? How do the stress and work involved in navigating these identities play out on the deep and intimate level of the body? Extending the work of critical race and decolonial thinkers such as Frantz Fanon, George Yancy, and Sara Ahmed, I argue that racialised embodiment is marked not only by a disjuncture on the level of the body schema, but also by movement through social space that fails to be fluid, co-ordinated, or transparent. This in turn raises questions around phenomenology’s usual treatment of the body as habitual and synchronously experienced in its temporal and spatial registers, as well as normative questions around the different relations to social and shared spaces. As I will argue, the steady presence of racism not only bears on one’s personal sense of embodiment, but also on the relations one can have (or might wish to have) in and to the world.

**BIO:** Dr. Helen Ngo is a lecturer in philosophy at Deakin University. She completed her PhD in Philosophy at Stony Brook University (USA), specialising in phenomenology, critical philosophy of race, and feminist philosophy. Her work explores the phenomenological and existential dimensions of racism, and the relations of self, body, and world entailed in its lived experience. She is the author of the monograph, *The Habits of Racism: A Phenomenology of Racism and Racialized Embodiment* (Lexington Books).
BOOK LAUNCH

Launched by Dr Amir Jaima (Department of Philosophy, Texas A&M University)

**BIO:** Dr. Amir Jaima is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Philosophy at Texas A&M University (TAMU). He completed his undergraduate studies at Swarthmore College. His primary research interests are in Aesthetics and Africana Philosophy. His doctoral research examined the relationship between philosophy and literature. Additionally, he is interested in Ethics, Feminist Philosophy, and Continental Philosophy. Amir is also a novelist and has a number of working “literary” projects that both inform, and are inspired by, his philosophical work.

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DR JANE PARK

**TITLE:** An Asian American(ist) in Australia: The Limits and Possibilities of Cultural Proximity

**ABSTRACT:** This talk provides a critical account of my experiences as an Asian Americanist at Sydney University, looking at how and why my background in this field failed to translate to Australian colleagues and how this has changed my approach to concepts of race and ethnicity, culture and nationality. I reflect on these personal experiences by situating them within the context of parallel – yet also quite different – histories of Asian diasporas in Australia and the US and how they have become visible (or invisible) against shifting notions of whiteness, ‘blackness’ and ethnic otherness. I end by drawing on recent developments in popular culture, in particular the launch of Chinese Australian television sitcom, *The Family Law*, and compare it to its American counterpart, *Fresh Off the Boat*, to suggest possible research paths for comparative cultural research on Asian diasporas in white settler-colonial nations.

**BIO:** Dr. Jane Chi Hyun Park is a senior lecturer in Gender and Cultural Studies at Sydney University. Her work examines the cultural impact of popular media – from film, television and music to advertising and the Internet – on shifting notions of race and gender in the US and Asia Pacific.
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR ANOMA PIERIS

TITLE: Carceral archipelago: confinement architectures of the Pacific War

ABSTRACT: World War II substantially altered Australia’s relationship with Asia: Australian soldiers were criminalised in Japanese Imperial Army (JIA) prison camps spread across the Pacific; the continent functioned as a prison for the British and US military’s prisoners of war (POWs); the nation interned resident aliens who were nationals of Axis enemies; and Australians turned petty imperialists over native labour in New Guinea. All of these processes were mediated by specific military technologies deployed for demarcating sovereign boundaries. These boundaries in turn were mobilised and contested in a broader imperial border politics.

How did internment on the Australian continent compare with other regional strategies? What carceral technologies were deployed? How were the borders of a settler colony reinscribed by these penal processes? What legacies did they leave?

This paper approaches wartime incarceration from a discipline focused on spatial planning, physical infrastructure and residential accommodation to uncover hitherto unexamined histories of Australia’s Pacific War. It looks at penal accommodation through three spatial typologies of prison, camp and home. Australia is contextualised in a global struggle for regional supremacy, fought by Britain’s Allies against Japan, where soldiers and civilians become unwitting victims of this politics. They are captured, segregated and incarcerated based on their national affiliations and the relations of those nations to Allied or Axis powers. Civilian prisons, military camps and industrial dormitories are repurposed as penal facilities and POW labour is deployed for wartime production.

This wartime physical geography is envisioned as a carceral archipelago, where camps emerge like islands around the Pacific Basin, each with its own distinct spatial pattern and punitive logic. It includes JIA camps in Singapore and Japan, camps for Japanese Americans and Canadians in North America, and camps in Australia’s southeastern and western states; the main foci of this study. The paper includes a detailed examination of one such camp configuration: the Tatura Group in Victoria, which forms its own archipelagic cluster around the Waranga Basin. It asks how we approach this global history and interpret its physical residue through contemporary heritage practices, today.

BIO: Anoma Pieris is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Architecture Building and Planning, University of Melbourne. Her publications include Architecture and Nationalism in Sri Lanka: The trouser under the cloth (Routledge 2012) and Hidden Hands and Divided Landscapes: a penal history of Singapore’s plural society (University of Hawaii Press 2009). Anoma is co-author, with Janet McGaw, of “Assembling the Centre: Architecture for Indigenous Cultures, Australia and Beyond” (Routledge 2015). This paper forms a part of a four year research
project entitled *Temporal cities, provisional citizens: architectures of internment*, which explores how expertise in architecture and related fields was mobilized in the production of WWII internment environments and evaluates their legacy for histories of detention.

**DR INDIGO WILLING, OAM**

**TITLE:** Constructions of Asian American and Asian Australian Identities in the Lifestyle Sport and Subculture of Skateboarding

**ABSTRACT:** This paper explores constructions of race, racism and belonging within the skateboarding scene. As figures like Jeremy Lin in the world of basketball reveal, Asian American males in traditionally Western and hyper-masculine sports can be the targets of considerable racism. Sport is not just about athletic achievement but also plays a critical role in the construction of ‘imagined communities’ (in the Benedict Anderson sense) and identities. Various social constructions of sport, identity and ‘authenticity’ can exclude or marginalize. Nevertheless, as this paper argues, boundaries of inclusion and exclusion need to be seen as porous and flexible.

How do Asian Americans and Asian Australians, often stereotyped as ‘passive’, ‘bookish’ and ‘non-athletic’ pave a space for themselves in the lifestyle sport and subculture of skateboarding?

The talk provides examples of how race and racism are sometimes suspended, averted, or overcome through practices such as ‘hyper’ and ‘alternative’ masculinity for males, female empowerment narratives for females, self-directed racial humour and parody, and things such as subcultural capital. The paper concludes by arguing that such practices can chip away at presumptions of whiteness as the measure of belonging in skateboarding and key to embodying being a skater, and provides directions for future research into other sports and subcultures.

**BIO:** Indigo Willing has a PhD from The University of Queensland and lectures at Griffith University in sociology and criminology. She is also an Adjunct Research Fellow at the Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research. Indigo is a former ARC Research Fellow studying Australian multiculturalism, the recipient of the Medal in the Order of Australia for her work with adopted Vietnamese, and the past recipient of a travelling fellowship with the Australian Academy of Humanities & Rockefeller Fellowship in Boston. Her research interests include identities, migration, cosmopolitanism, transnationalism, and subcultures. She is also a skateboarder and does volunteer work in various community sectors.
ABOUT NIKKI LAM

Nikki Lam is a visual artist and curator based in Melbourne, Australia. From video and installation, to writing and performance, Nikki's practice engages in the complexity of belonging through the exploration of self, memory and space. Working primarily with the moving image, she is also passionate about the cross-sections of screen cultures, media arts and representations of narratives and histories. She is interested in exploring the translations of post-colonial identities and narratives in the hybrid world, often through the studies of rituals, language and their visual representations.

Born in Hong Kong (1988), her work has been shown as part of Underbelly Arts Festival, SafARI, Firstdraft, BUS Projects, The Ferry Gallery (Bangkok, Thailand), Galleria Marcollini (Forli, Italy), and toured around the world with Over View International Festival of Video Art. Her most recent curatorial projects include Frames of Seeing (2017) at Nite Art, Screen as a Room (2016) at THE SUBSTATION and Channels Festival (2015).

Nikki is the former Artistic Director (2014-2016) of Channels, The Australian Video Art Festival, a biennial showcases contemporary video practices and continues to investigate the evolution of video culture. She is an editor-at-large at Peril Magazine, an arts and culture journal with Asian-Australian focus. Nikki has a Bachelor of Visual Arts in Photomedia (2009, Monash University) and Executive Master of Arts (2014, University of Melbourne). She has worked in multiple arts organisations including Footscray Community Arts Centre and Foundation for Arts and Creative Technology (FACT) in Liverpool, UK. She is currently at Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) and is a member of the Advisory Committee at Channels Festival.
PANEL SESSIONS

PANEL SESSION 1: The homogeneity of being Asian Australians: Am I Asian enough for you?

ABSTRACT: Constance Wu, an Asian American actor, in a recent interview said, “My experience as a Taiwanese-American who grew up in a white community in Richmond, Virginia, was much different to that of an Asian person in Taiwan. Reporters often lump the two together and think that when I talk about Asian-American narratives that they can cite ‘Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon’ or ‘Mulan’ as proof of concept when it’s a different experience.” In this themed panel, we explore what it means to be an Australian from the perspective of Australian-born-and-bred Asians and newly arrived Asian migrants. Reflecting on our lived experiences in Australia, we ask how long does one need to live in Australia before they are truly accepted as an “Aussie”? Do accents, customs and religion play a role in defining one’s Australian identity? Where do the lived experiences of born-and-bred Asian-Australians and newly arrived Asian migrants intersect and diverge? We navigate the often difficult terrain in fitting into a new culture, the customs and traditions that are inevitably gained and lost and the possible incompatibility of Western and Asian values in our lives. In the eyes of mainstream Australia, do they see a distinction between the groups?

PRESENTER BIOS:

Kevin Bathman migrated to Australia via Malaysia in 2004. As a designer, storyteller, producer and social change advocate, he is interested in using creativity to address environmental, cultural and social justice issues, and believes that the arts is an untapped avenue for catalysing change. In 2013, he co-founded an arts initiative called Carnival of the Bold, a movement of social change through the arts that champions the role of artists as agents of social change. Since 2012, Kevin has been researching the history, connections and cross-cultural stories between the Chinese and Indian culture for his project, the Chindian Diaries.

Joon Kwok is a Creative Producer with over 15 years experience producing events and major celebrations, with particular expertise in multicultural festivals and cultural diversity in the arts initiatives. She initiated the BrisAsia Festival for Brisbane City Council and, more recently, has worked in community engagement and programming for OzAsia Festival in Adelaide. Her passion for artist and sector development work has seen her increasing cultural diversity engagement in
Queensland theatre through the Australia Council for the Arts’ landmark Theatre Diversity Initiative, and developing the City of Gold Coast’s Multicultural Artists’ Development Program, including the delivery of Fuse: Cultural Diversity in the Arts Forum. Joon is currently the Convener of the Australian Bureau of Asian Creatives and a member of the Queensland Government's Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council. She is also a PhD candidate investigating the ways in which joyful urban multicultural community celebrations that generate social capital can be designed and evaluated.

Sheila Ngoc Pham is a writer, producer, broadcaster and communications professional, working in radio, digital media, education, public health and community development. She was born in Adelaide where her Vietnamese parents were settled after a stint in a refugee camp in Malaysia. Although she has spent most of her life in Australia, Sheila has also lived in the United Kingdom, Thailand, Belgium, The Netherlands and Italy. Her writing has appeared in a range of print and online publications, and she produces radio for the ABC. She has postgraduate degrees in bioethics and public health, and undergraduate degrees in linguistics and psychology.

Dr Arjun Rajkhowa works in tertiary education in Melbourne. His research interests include media, human rights in Asia, postcolonial politics, literature and popular culture, and gender and sexuality. He has written for academic journals and for online media outlets such as The Conversation, Kafila, The Hoot, Peril, Overland, Words Apart, Scribbler.co and Southern Crossings. He has been a volunteer radio programmer for community radio in Melbourne for over three years.

PANEL SESSION 2: What does AASRN mean to me?

ABSTRACT: AASRN brings together a diverse group of scholars, activists, artists, and more, under a shared interest in, and experience of, Asian Australian identity. During some 18 years of activity, AASRN has hosted a wide array of discussions and interests, and the network has been a personally significant community for many of those involved. This session aims to bring together some of the voices of those who have been affected by AASRN, and it seeks to create a moment of sharing in the unique sense of community offered by the network. Members of Nikkei Australia asked conference presenters to write a short reflection (max 300 words) on what AASRN has meant to them personally. Approximately six of these pieces have been chosen and volunteers amongst the conference attendees will read out these pieces during the session – these volunteers will read reflections other than their own. All of the reflections will be available for attendees to read at their
own leisure. This form of verbatim theatre involves, according to Maggie Inchley, ‘the physiological embodiment of another human being through the sounds of [the performer’s] voice.’ This aspect of the session clearly engages with the conference theme’s focus on embodiment, but, more than that, it is our hope that the embodied performance of others’ reflections on AASRN will allow the audience to share in interpersonal connections that cause them to consider the shared inhabitation that the space of AASRN (and even perhaps AAI) offers. We would ideally like to exhibit the voices of those from different generations of AASRN’s history to get a sense of the group’s influence over time and to draw together the older and newer members. The session will include a short explanation of the aims of the session, brief impressions by the speakers on their performance and the words spoken, and a discussion session with the audience about the session and what AASRN has meant to them.

PRESENTER BIOS:

Mayu Kanamori is a Sydney based artist and storyteller working across mediums including theatre, performance, photography, installation, writing, radio and documentary making. Her performance works include The Heart of the Journey, CHIKA: A Documentary Performance, In Repose, and Yasukichi Murakami: Through a Distant Lens. As a radio producer Mayu has received a commendation for United Nations Association Media Peace Award Promotion of Multicultural Issues, Broome NAIDOC Non-Indigenous Reconciliation Award and has been a finalist for Walkley Awards for Excellence in Journalism. She is a board member of The Koto Music Institute of Australia, on the management committee of Living with Our Dead, and a founding member of Nikkei Australia. [http://mayu.com.au](http://mayu.com.au)

Masako Fukui is an independent writer, award-winning radio documentary producer and audio storyteller. She is a regular contributor to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation’s Radio National, producing programs on a range of issues including religion and ethics, health, social issues, history, food, design and the arts. Previously, she was a bilingual radio and print journalist working for major Japanese, Australian and American news organisations in Tokyo and Sydney. She has a social work degree and was previously a health and sexuality educator.
Dr Timothy Kazuo Steains was awarded his PhD from the University of Sydney in 2017. His thesis was entitled *Becoming Mixed: Intercultural Engagement with Japan in Contemporary Australian Literature, Cinema, and Theatre*. His academic interests include Asian Australian Studies, Mixed Race Studies, and Inter-Asia Cultural Studies.
ABOUT THE PRESENTERS
(in alphabetical order)

JENNIFER ANDERSON
TITLE: A stranger knocks and a door opens: writing about transcultural ‘inhabitations’ from early post-Mao China

ABSTRACT: Back in 2002, ghosts from three decades earlier began to stalk my present insisting on a hearing: they invaded my dreams, flooded me with nausea or guilt or sorrow upon waking, and spurred me to write about them or draw them in repeated iterations in an effort to get at their essence. What was this haunting all about? Was it an attempt to make myself whole again after suppressing association with and memories of mainland China, the anodyne and the menacing, after the Tiananmen Massacre of 1989? These ‘trigger’ memories were the catalyst for writing a ‘creative’ memoir Ganyu: Moving encounters in early post-Mao China, about my experience as an Anglo-Australian student of Chinese in Nanjing between 1979 and 1983. What began as a process fuelled by remorse and bitterness toward the party-state for its repression of intellectuals and urban young people since Liberation slowly transformed into something far more nuanced, a kind of memorial to those who destabilised my cultural certainty and offered experiences that provide rich food for continued interpretation and thought. This presentation will explore the impacts of remembered intersubjective experience on the heart-mind (xin), a concept that incorporates embodied affect and cognition in ever-widening circles of relationship, with reference to other Anglophone memoirs from the period and to related Chinese literary themes.

BIO: Jennifer Anderson graduated in Mandarin Chinese from Melbourne University, and studied modern Chinese literature on a postgraduate exchange scholarship at Nanjing University (1979-1981). She returned to Nanjing in 1983 on a Ministry of Education fellowship. In China, she collaborated on the translation and annotation of selected short stories by May Fourth Chinese women writers, published in 1985. She has taught Mandarin Chinese, EAL, adult literacy, teacher training and tertiary study skills, coordinated country-based poverty alleviation programs, and designed curriculum and learning materials. She has worked in Cambodia, Vietnam, China and Australia. Jennifer is about to submit her PhD.

DR MICHELLE AUNG THIN
TITLE: Cosmopolitan Rangoon through the eyes of Gordon Luce or how the politics of authenticity shape the intimate
ABSTRACT: This year, I will begin working with un-catalogued private papers in the Luce Collection to inform a creative project that explores the nature of home; do we belong to the homes we are born into or to the homes we make for ourselves? The Luce Collection, housed at the National Library of Australia, gathers the books, photographs and papers of Gordon Hannington Luce, an English scholar, teacher and poet who arrived in Burma in 1912. Luce married a Burmese woman and lived in Rangoon until he was expelled as a foreigner in 1964. As a long-term Rangoon resident, he experienced firsthand the complex rules governing intersections of class, race and wealth during the city's cosmopolitan, plural colonial period. He was also a witness to the drive for cultural authenticity after independence and prior to military rule.

Rangoon is the city of my birth and was home to four generations of my Anglo-Burmese family who are of mixed Burmese, Indian, Dutch and German descent. I know Rangoon from secondhand memories and dubious family tales. One of my aims for this research project is to reconstruct the Rangoon of my family's past, when the city was a sticky cross-cultural web of religious, sexual and cultural affiliation. In this paper, I will reflect on how the tension between archival and oral histories influences my representation of Rangoon. Drawing from the experience of researching in the Luce collection and my creative process, I will consider how 'home' is constructed in both political and imaginative terms.

BIO: Michelle Aung Thin’s research interests include colonial Burma, authenticity and identities in-between limits of race, ethnicity and culture. She is also interested in how writers in Myanmar use the mobile phone for their work. Michelle was the first Asialink resident to Myanmar in 2014 (funded by Arts Victoria). Her first novel, The Monsoon Bride (Text 2011), was shortlisted for the Victorian Premier’s Literary Awards as an unpublished manuscript and won a Readings Foundation/Wheeler Centre Fellowship. Michelle has a PhD from The University of Adelaide and currently teaches at RMIT University. She is the 2017 National Library of Australia Creative Writing Fellow (funded by the Eva Kollsman and Ray Mathews Trust).

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JOANNA EFLVING-HWANG

TITLE: What Does an Australian Look Like? Asia-Australian Perceptions of ‘Australian Appearance’ in Multicultural Australia

ABSTRACT: This presentation draws on a small scale pilot study which focused on identifying some key themes relating to appearance, attractiveness and belonging, and which were considered important for young Asian Australian men and women. Some existing literature on appearance and belonging in Australia as well as in other Western diasporic contexts has suggested that young people of Asian descent are more likely to feel dissatisfied with their appearance than their white Australian peers. Moreover, some recent media reporting has asserted that Asian Australian women in particular are tempted to ‘deracialise’ their bodies through cosmetic surgery in order to better conform to what such media representations describe as mainstream white beauty ideals in Australia. Using grounded theory approach, data analysis from eight in-depth semi-structured interviews suggests that while media may have had some influence on the participants’ ideas of attractiveness and desirable beauty, their personal perceptions of attractive appearance were informed by much broader multicultural notions of desirable appearance which may draw on various transnational sources, but without necessarily negating the participants’ sense of belonging to Australia per se. However, the interviews also suggested a correlation between the participants’ early school experiences and sense of belonging with their level of satisfaction with their own appearance.
BIO: Joanna Elfving-Hwang (PhD Sheffield University, UK) is Associate Professor of Korean Studies at the University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia. Her research focuses on beauty, cultures of cosmetic surgery and sociology of the body in Korean society and popular culture.

DOMINIC NGUYEN HONG DUC GOLDFING

TITLE: To embody whiteness

ABSTRACT: As an Asian adoptee, being raised white, calling out racism, and being accused of reverse racism exposes the minefield of cultural expectations. This presentation builds on my Masters thesis Being White: Art, Writing and Performance making by Vietnamese and Korean transnational adoptees. Though the thesis examines the impact of whiteness upon the adoptee, the birth mother and adoptive mother when it comes to searching and identity in art, this paper looks at the embodiment of white privilege as an Asian adoptee. What do I mean when I say ‘I have privilege’ as a transnational adoptee? Or when I say ‘I am a white’ Australian, yet marked as not white?

Being white assimilated and being anti-racist ally with refugees, I act as a medium between two worldviews, that of the bogan and the PoC/liberal ‘elite’. Adoptees are expected to be these identities. To demonstrate this, I’ll present an academic performance paper to show that these tensions are not just academic but that assimilation has damaging effects on our psychology, it is a lived cultural war on the body. Whiteness is a form of erasure, it is cultural genocide. If we step out of the order defined of us both as Asians and as Whites, the settler state will clarify our position as the Other. As recently indicated by Dutton and Turnbull’s statement on citizenship: “Membership of the Australian family is a privilege and should be afforded to those who support our values, respect our laws and want to work hard by integrating and contributing to an even better Australia” (20/4/2017, The Age).

BIO: Dominic Nguyen Hong Duc Golding came in a box, ‘Operation Babylift’, one of some 300 plus children and babies evacuated from orphanages in South Vietnam. Dominic has worked with Australian Vietnamese Youth Media as an actor and project officer. His shows include Shrimp, which won the Drama Victoria Award, Mr. Saigon, Ms. Hanoi at La Mama. He is the curator for Refugees I Survivors and Ex-detainees two exhibitions Unseen Habitation and Vessels to a Story. He is an arts and special needs worker, and sits on the Committee of two NGOs that support those with disabilities from migrant backgrounds; the National Ethnic Disability Association and Diversity ‘n’ Disability.
MARIA HACH

TITLE: Intergenerational Hauntings: Memory, Embodiment and Affectivity of Historical Trauma Among Cambodian-Australian Women

ABSTRACT: Using the concept of ‘intergenerational hauntings’ (Cho 2008; Gordon 2008; Abraham and Torok 1994) as the basis for further exploration, my research investigates the affective force of the Cambodian genocide – a period marked by extreme suffering, death, loss, fear, and dislocation – as it is experienced across time and space; incubated, transmitted and embodied by the generation following. In particular, I explore the ways in which 1.5 and second-generation Cambodian-Australian women experience, understand, and negotiate historical trauma within particular geographical and temporal contexts. Drawing from my theoretical and empirical research for my PhD, this paper will discuss the different ways that Cambodian-Australian women recover ‘invisible’ histories, how they experience silence, and their understanding and articulation of embodied experiences of inherited trauma at different moments in time. Reflecting on interviews that I have conducted with Cambodian-Australian women, I argue that the affective force of the ‘Killing Fields’ is relational, contextually driven, cultural, discursive, and a site of continual negotiation.

BIO: Maria Hach is a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne in the school of Culture and Communication and Gender Studies. She completed her BA degree at Monash University in 2007 and a Master of International Development at Monash University in 2010. Maria has background working in immigrant and refugee women’s health, cross-cultural education, advocacy and community development. Maria’s PhD research explores affectivity of historical trauma among Cambodian-Australian women. Her learning and research interests include memory and trauma, political and cultural identity, critical race, migration, and feminist methodology and perspectives.

DR JASON JONES

TITLE: Godzilla as Memory: Retracing the nuclear through Monster Film

ABSTRACT: Godzilla has from its inception been more than a giant monster. Throughout Godzilla’s more than 60 years of international popularity, Godzilla has remained intimately connected with the human, serving as the mirror of morality by which we may judge human action. Such was the standard set by the 1954 Japanese original film, Gojira, in which the monster represents Japan’s being dragged back into the wartime destruction wrought by the firebombing of Tokyo and nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Even with the defeat of Godzrilla, the film
does not allow for a feeling of hope. Instead, we are left with a decision to make: continue down the road of nuclear weapons development and assure our mutual destruction or give ourselves the opportunity to prosper as a species by reflecting upon our behavior and reigning in destructive tendencies so as to ensure survival.

The nuclear arms race and the extension of nuclear weapons testing to colonial sites so as to avoid the concomitant fallout – literal and figurative – saw to it that the world would be united by the potential for nuclear destruction to transgress all borders. Godzilla would be released only two years after Australia’s having been brought into the nuclear age as the result of British nuclear testing, thus enmeshing both Australia and Asia in the nuclear ambitions of far-away places. Here, we will examine how Godzilla and other monsters in film have served as a means of memory, working to criticise or trivialise humanity’s penchant to create novel means of self-destruction.


**DR SUKHMANI KHORANA**

**TITLE:** Asian Australians on Screen: What performance, for which audience?

**ABSTRACT:** This paper delivers preliminary findings from the ARC Linkage Project on migration and diversity on Australian television (with Prof Kate Darian-Smith, and Prof Sue Turnbull). With the increasing calls for diversity in the media generally, and on television screens specifically from a wide range of stakeholders (institutions like Screen Australia, advocacy groups, and high-profile media personnel of colour), there is ample empirical evidence that our public and commercial broadcasters have a long way to go in terms of ‘reflecting’ contemporary Australia. There is also more emphasis on institutionalised strategies, and looking towards overseas models to make this happen. However, there is little reflection on how Asian Australians and other media producers/writers/actors of colour embody the representation of their ethnic identities when it is mediated by a variety of televisual genres. Drawing on interviews with high-profile Asian Australian screenwriters Ben Law and Tony Ayres, this paper explores the performance of ethnicity for an imagined audience. This is essential to ascertain whether the representation of diversity is sought for its own political sake, or because it is envisaged as expanding the habitus of Asian Australian audiences in particular.

**BIO:** Sukhmani Khorana is a Senior Lecturer in Media and Cultural Studies, and Academic Program Leader (South West Sydney) at the University of Wollongong. She is the editor of a Routledge anthology titled *Crossover Cinema* (2013). Sukhmani has published extensively on news television, diasporic film, and multi-platform refugee narratives. She has a forthcoming monograph on food and cosmopolitanism in Australia.
**ABSTRACT:** Much has been written about the recent wave of Chinese* migration that has occurred since the late 1980s. The majority of this research has focused on demographic and quantitative data collection and the settlement difficulties encountered by new migrants and the emergence of new family dynamics. It is well documented that a major contributing factor to the increase of Chinese migration in the late 1980s and through the 1990s is due to the introduction of the Business Migration Programme. Officially, this programme was introduced by the government to attract international capital and entrepreneurs to Australia. However, unofficially it is understood to mean that migrants who entered through the Business Migration Programme are extremely wealthy. I argue that this policy change has led to a lack of diversity in socio-economic class within the Chinese migrant community, resulting in the development of a monoculture based on the possession of wealth and a particular lifestyle. What effect does this monoculture have on the migrants who don’t fit socio-economically within their own migrant community as well as feeling disconnected from the Western world they are now residing in? My research as a visual artist draws upon my own experience as a Taiwanese immigrant who entered with her family as a young child on the family visa, bringing with them no wealth and social capital resulting in feelings of shame and invisibility. My presentation will explain how I explore this sense of double marginalisation through my arts practice, in particular the immersive installation works. (*My research refers to Chinese migrants as those from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, however the focus will be on the Taiwanese context)*

**BIO:** Christine Ko is an emerging visual artist based in Brisbane working with large scale immersive installation and photomedia. She is currently a PhD candidate at the Queensland College of Art (Griffith University) where she is using an autoethnographic methodology to further her research on the marginal and hybrid experience of the contemporary Chinese-Australian migrant. She has been selected as a finalist in the Clayton Utz Art Award, MAMA Art Foundation National Photography Prize and the Toowoomba Biennial Emerging Artists Award. She has exhibited locally and internationally and recently had her first solo exhibition in Melbourne where she showed her largest installation to date, which engaged and delighted visitors with its immersive and transformative qualities. [www.christineko.net](http://www.christineko.net)
NANCY LIN
TITLE: Speaking the Mother Tongue: Constructing a Chinese-Australian Maternal Genealogy through Radio

ABSTRACT: Cultural theorist Rey Chow contends that the relationship between language and migration need not always be thought of as loss, asking “how to strive for self-recognition even as one is forced to efface oneself in the process of speaking” (2014, 17). Through this presentation, I will reflect on an aspect of my recently commenced practice-based PhD inquiry and on my creative radio practice, which asks how we can compensate for this fragmentation of the mother tongue through the construction of a Chinese-Australian maternal genealogy. I will discuss audio recordings I made of my grandmother, my mother and I speaking to each other in three different languages (Fuqing dialect, Mandarin, and English), showing the fragmented nature of speech in our relations, about our experiences and movements between rural China and metropolitan Melbourne over the last three decades. My personal, familial experience is both a unique and common one in the experience of Chinese-Australian migration narratives, and especially given the large numbers of Chinese speakers in Australia. I ask, how can we symbolise, or render audible what is otherwise perpetually lost in translation between us? What can be created outside of what is spoken and heard between generations who migrate to or were born in Australia, and find themselves both losing and enacting a selfhood through attempts to communicate in English or the mother tongue? Speaking to ideas around loss and creation, I will discuss the generative potential of a feminist poetics of sound in creating new forms of expression for the diasporic experience of language, and by extension, new modalities for expressing Asian-Australian feminism.

BIO: Nancy Lin is a practice-led PhD candidate at RMIT University researching diasporic experiences of language and maternal genealogies, through creative radio practice. She is a radio producer and has had her work broadcast on Triple R, SYN, CRN, CBAA, and Radio Adelaide.

DR ROSALIND MCFARLANE
TITLE: River Notes: Diaspora as Methods of Inhabiting in Adam Aitken’s Poetry

ABSTRACT: As a self-identifying Asian Australian poet, Adam Aitken has published five poetry books and a recent memoir. Many of Aitken’s works exhibit an embodied diasporic consciousness
as he explores relationships to places in different international locales. One example is found in Aitken’s writing on rivers in two poems, “Notes on the River (Tonle Sap, Siem Reap, Cambodia)” (2012) published in *Capitalism Nature Socialism* and “Notes on the River” (2015) published in *Guide to Sydney Rivers*. Both poems contain sections relating to people, the non-human, literature and industry which are layered throughout each work. I will use Sarah Dillon’s idea of the palimpsest to examine these layers. However, the poems can also be considered a palimpsest in the way they are layered with each other. The poems repeat sections of the other, often verbatim, though they represent rivers in Cambodia and Australia respectively. It is this textual layering which is highly significant as no layer is privileged, an idea Dillon explores in relation to palimpsests and literature, but which Jaqueline Lo, using Kuan-Hsing Chen, relates to diaspora as method. I use the intersection of these ideas to interpret Aitken’s poems as a textual representation of Lo’s idea of diaspora as method. Ultimately this combination suggests a new way of reading inhabitation of riverscapes through depictions of water. Engaging with Cecilia Chen, Janine MacLeod and Astrida Neimanis’s notion of relating to water in a more collaborative way, one that opens new possibilities and yet unrecognised communities, I argue that Aitken’s poems suggest new possibilities that uses diasporic notions of method to question how inhabitation occurs and proposes ways it could be reconceived.

**BIO:** Rosalind McFarlane recently completed her doctorate in Asian Australian poetry and depictions of water at Monash University and her thesis was received highly commended from her school. Originally from Western Australia her work engages with ideas of place, collaboration, ecocriticism and representations of water. She has been an AGL Shaw Summer Fellow at the State Library of Victoria and been most recently published in *Contemporary Australian Feminist Poetry, Cordite, Antipodes, Axon* and *Colloquy*. 

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**DR CAROLINE MAHONEY**

**TITLE:** ‘It’s really not racist to say the name ‘Asian’: Being Asian Australian in an elite girls’ school

**ABSTRACT:** This paper explores the ways one schoolgirl constructs her identity as Asian Australian within the context of an elite girls’ secondary school in Melbourne. Kate is the eldest daughter of Vietnamese-born parents and has attended Kirkswood College on a scholarship since Year 5. My analysis is based on interviews conducted with Kate when she was in Years 7-9, between 2013 and 2015, as part of my PhD research into young women and interculturality. Interculturality refers to thinking about and interacting with others respectfully and equitably, while also thinking reflexively about the influence of one’s own background on such thoughts and interactions. In this paper I interrogate the ways Kate’s construction of herself as Asian Australian both facilitates and impedes her engagement with interculturality, for different reasons, in different contexts. I argue that Kate’s construction of herself as minoritised and/or marginalised help her to both perform her Asian Australian identity with confidence and to identify and critique structural racism. However I also highlight that Kate’s immersion within Kirkswood College’s highly competitive academic environment, combined with her take-up of discourses of self-improvement.
and meritocracy, potentially hinder her ability to appreciate diversity and to recognise structural bias.

**BIO:** Caroline is an Associate Research Fellow in the School of Education at Deakin University, Australia, working on the ARC-funded study *International students in secondary schools: a study of transnational connectedness* (DP160103181). Her doctoral research employed a sociology of education/youth perspective, alongside theories of subjectivity, to analyse interculturality in girls’ everyday lives. Prior to commencing her PhD in 2013, Caroline worked with community languages schools and as a Japanese language teacher in New South Wales. While studying at the University of Sydney and Waseda University, Tokyo, her research focused on Australian Japanese language teachers.

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**DR REAGAN MAIQUEZ**  
**TITLE:** Community Theatre and Performance Within Filipino Migrant Activist Groups in Melbourne

**ABSTRACT:** This paper explores the creation of community theatre and performance within the experience of Filipino migrant activists groups in Melbourne. In the last five years, I have been involved as a writer, director, and artistic consultant of three main Filipino migrant organisations that cater to the issues of women, workers, and young people. They are Migrante Melbourne, Gabriela Australia, and Anakbayan Melbourne. In this presentation, I narrate my experience working with these organisations as a volunteer and an involved member. I will present cases of theatrical works that we have developed in lieu of our organising and advocacy. As a community organiser and a previous academic in the Philippines who migrated here in Australia, I will examine these experiences and theatrical productions regarding their themes and content and formulate insights as to how community theatre and performance contribute to an overall understanding of issues and challenges faced by the Filipino migrant community in Australia, and perhaps in relation to situations faced by migrant cultural groups from developing societies in Asia. Finally, I will link these initial insights to embodiment and inhabitation that are also greatly foregrounded in the field of theatre and performance studies.

**BIO:** Reagan Maiquez completed his PhD at Monash University’s Theatre, Performance, and Music Program and received the department’s best doctoral thesis for his auto ethnographic research on flow and performances in the Philippines. He has taught and undertaken research in the humanities, theatre, and cultural studies in the Philippines and Australia. Currently he is a founding secretary and board member of Australia Asia Performance Community Inc., a not-for-profit research and creative organisation of Asian, Asian-Australian, and Australian performance scholars and theatre practitioners.
VASUDHA MOHANKA

TITLE: Surrogacy, Precarity and Indo-Australian mobility

ABSTRACT: Popularly known as “the surrogacy capital of the world”, the Indian nation-state, since the past year, is working towards banning commercial commercial surrogacy arrangements especially for foreigners, queer populations, single people, Non Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs). Through banning the commercial nature of surrogacy, and calling altruistic surrogacy arrangements with close female family members for only heterosexual married couples with no living children (biological or adopted) as “ethical”, the Indian state is recreating forms of control over women’s bodies. It will possibly strip commercial gestational mothers (read surrogates) of their agency to labour, and reproductive decision making. Such interventions by the state, in terms of a ban, will have serious ramifications for Asian (read Indo-) Australian identities, especially in terms of (dis)embodiment(s), labour, mobility and the children born out of such arrangements. Due to the heavy regulation and ban on commercial surrogacy in Australia, Australians have often travelled to parts of Asia, some which were till recent times, fairly less regulated in terms of commercial surrogacy. With the recent proposed ban in India, many especially feminists, fear commercial surrogacy practices and arrangements may become underground making the surrogate’s role increasingly precarious with perpetually growing anxieties due to the uncertain nature of mobility. Children born as a result of such arrangements may be in an equally or more precarious position due to issues of genetics, citizenship, bloodlines, gender, race, sexuality, religion and identity.

BIO: Vasudha Mohanka is a Doctoral Scholar at the School of Humanities and Social Inquiry at the University of Wollongong. Her dissertation focuses on looking at media narratives tracing the history of In Vitro Fertilisation in India. Her primary research interests are feminist debates, reproductive technologies and transformation of bodies due to various technologies and phenomenology.

DR ASHWINEE PENDHARKAR

TITLE: Hidden figures - Invisible diasporas and the power dynamics of intimate labour

ABSTRACT: Migrant communities struggle for inclusion and acceptance into the dominant host collective without losing their distinct identity. Migrant (and minority) community archives, as a space for the records, stories and memories of lasting value to these communities are considered the
means to defy the silence and the marginalisation imposed by traditional archival practices and to claim a place in the host society’s national metanarrative. However, diasporas are neither homogenous nor equal. Established hierarchies between races, classes, cultures and genders have profound effects on the practices of intimate labour and these hierarchies are often replicated in the diasporas. The intimate service providers – carers, family members, houseworkers, and undocumented workers – remain invisible within the diasporas and doubly marginalised in the archival discourse. Acknowledging the potential of diasporas to be sites of exploitation as well as resistance, this paper presents ‘participatory living archives of self-narratives’ as a means of self-empowerment and subversive agency to achieve social change for this invisible diaspora.

BIO: Dr Ashwinee Pendharkar is a research associate at the Centre for Organisational and Social Informatics, Faculty of Information Technology at Monash University. Her research interests span postcolonial studies, diaspora studies, South Asian diasporas, migrant community archives and social informatics.

DR HOA PHAM

TITLE: More than the model minority- social commentary in Asian-Australian diasporic writing

ABSTRACT: Typical migrant writing follows the tropes of exile, coming to the new land, assimilating or acculturating to the host culture and the return home. However diasporic writing can also take a socio-political stance and challenges the host culture and norms. Alice Pung and Chi Vu politicise and interrogate their stance as Asian-Australian writers in the Australian mainstream context. Alice Pung in An Unpolished Gem states unequivocally “This story does not begin on a boat”. Pung has become a social commentator on race and class issues writing newspaper and magazine commentaries as well as compiling collections of Asian Australian and high school stories. She challenges the boundaries of the good migrant story and the model minority by expressing views contrary to the mainstream, for example preferring to read to a juvenile justice centre in Malmsbury than a private girls’ school in Kew. Chi Vu with her play “The Colored Alien” also critiques the mainstream in theatre world and the “ethnic” play that she self reflexively is required to produce. The play involves cross race casting with Mai the Vietnamese-Australian playwright being played by a white actress and Dave being played by an Asian actor. This cross over leads to multiple readings of some of the exchanges of the play for example when Mai rants about how she is perceived as a typical Asian writer just writing food plays like around Pho. Mentioned ironically Chi Vu has written a performance piece called “Banh Chung” which is based around the Vietnamese New Year dish and is a commentary on the Vietnam/American War. Vu has also written an article on the 1.5 generation Vietnamese diasporic artist which reflects her practice as traitor or translator of cultures. Pung and Vu’s work is collectively able to empower the “Asian-Australian” reader and audience by representing diverse and politicised “Asian-Australian” points of view.

BIO: Hoa Pham is a psychologist and writer of eight books. She is the founder of Peril, www.peril.com.au an Asian Australian on-line arts and culture magazine and has received numerous grants and awards for her writing. Wave has been translated into Vietnamese, and The Other Shore won the Viva La Novella Prize. She also holds a doctorate in creative arts from Western Sydney University. More information can be found at www.hoapham.net
DR NADIA RHOOK

TITLE: The Bendigo Doctor, James Lamsey: Tracing the corporeal and racial borders of medicine in Victoria, 1880-1912

ABSTRACT: The history of medicine in Australia has often been imagined as the exclusive domain of British and Australian-born white men. From the 1850s gold rushes, though, Chinese practitioners were part of the daily fabric of health and medical practice, and remained so even after the 1901 Immigration Restriction Act effectively limited Chinese oceanic immigration. This paper draws on a case study of Toi Shan-born Bendigo Doctor and prolific proprietor, James Lamsey, to challenge historic and contemporary stereotypes about Chinese doctors as ‘quack’ herbalists. It does so via a focus on corporeal intimacy and distance. In the last 15 years, scholars have shown, the profound implications of bodily proximity for the making of colonial power, including medical power. This, not least lead by the calls of critical feministic scholar Ann Stoler for attention to the ways in which empire not only operated by rationality, but also by sentimentality and the affective politics of touch. How, I ask, did Lamsey earn the trust of his white patients, and what does this tell us about the ways that racial borders were not only formed and negotiated at the port, but also on the surfaces of buildings, skin and bodies?

BIO: Nadia Rhook lectures and researches history at La Trobe University, on Wurundjeri land. Her research is much inspired by her background in ESL teaching, and in 2016 she curated the City of Melbourne heritage exhibition Moving Tongues: language and migration in 1890s Melbourne. She has published in international and local journals including the Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History, Postcolonial Studies and Peril Magazine, and is currently writing a book about the politics of language and Asian migration in colonial Melbourne, forthcoming 2018 with Duke University Press.

ADAM SEET

TITLE: Asian Australian Internalised Racism

ABSTRACT: Although Asians have been active participants in Australian society since before Federation in 1901, much literature suggests that they recognize their status as the ‘other’ in
contemporary Australian life. For some Asian Australians, this translates into a sense of being marginalized from ‘mainstream’ Australia; for others it is experienced through a range of anti-Asian racist sentiments, language and behaviour directed towards them. The literature also identifies a phenomenon of Asian Australians constructing their self-identity in ways that appear to internalize some anti-Asian beliefs and attitudes. Research on pan-Asian ethnic groups in the US suggests that Asians internalize racialized and subalternate identities, which produce feelings of low self-esteem, negative body image, and higher stress levels amongst several other deprecating effects. The purpose of the study was to explore how experiences with racism can impact on the construction of identity amongst Asian Australians. Utilizing a social constructivist approach and Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework, I investigated the experiences of two second generation Asian Australian university students through the conduct of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a narrative-inquiry research design. The study found that the dominant circulating ideologies of contemporary Australian society contributed towards the shaping of perceptions and construction of identity for the participants.

**BIO:** Adam ZQ Seet is a current PhD candidate at Deakin University, pursuing a study in internalised racism amongst Asian Australians. He was born in Singapore with predominantly Chinese and Malay ethnic/cultural heritage, and was raised in several different locales, in particular two different Australian states. Hiking, backpacking and reading postcolonial scholastic literature are amongst his hobbies. The above abstract was accepted as part of a Master’s level thesis conducted out of Monash University, which served as a precursor/ pilot study to his current research interests.

**PRAKASH SUBEDI**

**TITLE:** ‘Are you Indian? Are you Chinese?’ Negotiating Identity among Nepalis in Australia

**ABSTRACT:** Prithvi Narayan Shah (1723-1775), the Nepali king who ‘unified’ more than 50 principalities and laid the foundations of modern Nepal, said that “Nepal is a yam between two boulders [India and China].” Even if the authenticity of this quote is doubtful, it presents a perceptive metaphor for the sensitive situation of a small country situated in between two giant superpowers. Maintaining a balanced relationship with each, while protecting its sovereignty, has been a preoccupation for Nepal during the last two centuries, and its national and foreign policies have been largely guided by the fact of its location. This preoccupation spills over into popular discourse and expresses itself as a compulsive nationalistic fixation among Nepalis who feel the persistent need to differentiate themselves from Indians and Chinese. It is quite ironic then, that most Nepalis who arrive in Australia (and other Western countries) are frequently mistaken as either Indians or Chinese. In an attempt to maintain their ‘Nepaliness’ vis-à-vis their perception as Indian or Chinese, they often employ deliberate strategies. For instance, certain socio-cultural practices that are considered acceptable while in Nepal are mostly avoided when abroad. Through the study of literary, cultural and social-media texts, and by deriving cases and examples from
experiences of diasporic Nepalis, primarily in Australia, this paper makes an attempt to understand how Nepalis are perceived beyond the borders of Nepal, and how they negotiate ‘Nepali’ identity in such situations.

**BIO:** Prakash Subedi is a Nepali writer and academic, currently working on his PhD in Literary and Cultural Studies at Monash University. His publications include two volumes of poetry, *Stars and Fireflies* (2009) and *Six Strings* (a co-authored anthology, 2011), two edited volumes of essays on Ibsen, and poems, essays, critical writings, translations and reviews in journals and magazines in Nepal and abroad. He has worked with a number of literary organisations in Kathmandu, and has served as an editor to journals *Of Nepalese Clay, Literary Studies* and *Devkota Studies*. His areas of interest include Nepali and South Asian literature, translation, Buddhist studies, theatre and poetry.

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**DR MONIKA WINARNITA**

**TITLE:** Eurasian Virtually: Multimedia expression of Indonesian and Philippine mixed descent families in Melbourne Australia

**ABSTRACT:** Cultural studies scholars have analyzed Eurasians as a multimedia commodity that is multicultural, global, and an upwardly mobile class that can be consumed by white, colored, and mixed-race societies (Goon and Craven 2003; Matthews 2002). Although research on migrants in these societies has looked at their multimedia expressions of identity and belonging (Morley and Robins 1995; Wilding 2012; Gifford & Wilding 2013), those of mixed race descent have not received significant scholarly attention. Through anthropological research, this paper focuses on multimedia hyphenated-identities, together with participant observation of intergenerational family relationships amongst mothers and daughters of mixed race descent drawn from the Indonesian and Philippine communities in Melbourne, Australia. In Australia these groups of women are part of the third largest, and steadily growing, Southeast Asian migrant population. They are active participants in the international flows of media, communication and ideas. The multimedia output and stories of these women focus on how their intergenerational relationships are coloured by the discourse which is centred on a hierarchy of race and ideals of Eurasian whiteness together with negative depictions of marriages between Southeast Asian third world women with first world white or Anglo-Australian men, and of the families which result from these unions. By focusing on a combination of fieldwork and digital ethnography of online multimedia expression, the paper seeks to understand how family members of mixed Indonesian/Philippine and Anglo-Australian descent negotiate hyphenations of the self in society within the interrelated spatial scales of family/home, ethnic community, national and virtual space.

**BIO:** Dr Monika Winarnita is a Research Associate at La Trobe University, Melbourne in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. She completed her two-year Postdoctoral Fellowship in Anthropology at the University of Victoria, BC Canada, on a Canadian Social Science and Humanities Research Council-funded project on *Southeast Asian Women, Family and Migration in the Global era*. She is the author of *Dancing the Feminine: Gender and Identity Performances by Indonesian Migrant Women* (2015, Sussex Academic Press UK, Asian and Asian American Studies.
JOHN ZUBRZYCKI

TITLE: The Rise of the Rope Trick: The changing nature of Indian magic on the Australian stage

ABSTRACT: When Indian magic was first presented on the Australian stage in 1841, it was performed by an ex-convict named Powell Courtier who had never been to India and had never seen a real Indian magician. Why would Courtier choose Indian memes for a magic show? How would he have obtained information on what Indian magic was, and how would audiences have responded? For many Australians in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, their first encounter with the popular culture of India was through magic. A century after Courtier’s debut, Indian jugglers, as they were often referred to, were a regular fixture at Australian theatres, country shows and circuses. They presented a variety of acts including the famed Indian Rope Trick. Western magicians pretending to be Indian, however, were as numerous, indicating the strong influence Orientalist tropes had on popular entertainment. My paper will compare three Western performers who staged Indian magic in Australia: Courtier; the Fakir of Oulu, the Englishman Alfred Sylvester who performed in Melbourne in the 1870s; and Karachi, a Gypsy from Plymouth who mastered the Indian Rope Trick in England before moving to Western Australia in the 1940s.

BIO: John Zubrzycki is a doctoral candidate in the school of Humanities and Languages at the University of NSW. He is researching transnational exchanges between India and the West in the methodology of stage magic. He has a degree in South Asian history and Hindi from the Australian National University, and has worked in India as a foreign correspondent, diplomat and consultant. He has worked for numerous media organisations including The Australian where he was World Commentary Editor. He is the author of The Last Nizam: An Indian Prince in the Australian Outback, and The Mysterious Mr Jacob: Diamond Merchant, Magician and Spy, which was published in April 2017 by Transit Lounge.
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