# Facing Asia: Histories and Legacies of Asian Studio Photography

### 21-22 August 2010



A Conference hosted by the Humanities Research Centre, RSHA, ANU in association with the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

### Speakers Abstracts

### Communities, Categories and Norms: Group Portraiture in Milton M. Miller's Hong Kong and Canton Photographs

#### **Roberta Wue**

Assistant Professor, Department of Art History, University of California, Irvine

Milton M. Miller (1830-1899), the American photographer active in Hong Kong, Canton, and Japan in the early 1860s, is one of the rare early Western photographers working in Asia who focused almost exclusively on portraiture. Few photographers attracted a wider range of portrait patrons: his Hong Kong sitters include Chinese, American, Parsi, European and Japanese clients; although his works include portraits of single sitters, his oeuvre is notable for the number of pair and group portraits it contains. Miller has been justifiably celebrated for the compelling directness and seeming objectivity of his portraiture work, yet his works are not unthinking documents, they also present an intriguing and unique investigation into issues of group identity. This was a freighted issue for the fragmented, hybrid societies of trading centers such as Hong Kong and Canton, and recent discoveries by Edwin K. Lai and Terry Bennett on Miller's biography interestingly highlight the photographer's own conflicted encounters with others. This paper will examine Miller's particular portraiture practices in terms of his investigations of social identity, specifically through the themes of social groupings, communities and norms; these interests are also evident in his genre studies and depictions of ethnic types. Whether depicting groups of family members, friends or coworkers, these are images that define as well as describe these groups in terms of selection, composition and human dynamics. These are also images that raise intriguing questions on the functions of these images for possible audiences: are they straightforward portrait commissions, tourist mementoes, ethnographic documents, statements of photographic craft, constructions of social order, or something far more elusive?

**Roberta Wue** is an Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of California, Irvine. Her research focuses on visual culture and photography in late Qing China, with a particular interest in the interaction between images and their various audiences. She has published on painting, photography and advertising in nineteenth-century China; her work on photography in China includes the 1997 Asia Society exhibition and catalogue, *Picturing Hong Kong: Photography 1855-1910*, and an essay on the nineteenth-century Chinese portrait sitter in *Body and Face in Chinese Visual Culture* (Cambridge, MA, 2005).

#### **SESSION I IDENTITIES, ROLES, AND ASPIRATIONS**

#### **Photographic Portraits: Banal Reflections and Magical Prophesies**

#### Oliver Moore

Lecturer, Department of Chinese Studies, University of Leiden, Netherlands

Proposed within the symposium's suggested attention to Photographic Portraiture and Identity, this paper discusses studio practices prescribed, enacted and even imagined for the Chinese clients of studios in China during photography's first century, that is between 1839 and 1940. My sources comprise visual records conceived in a broad sense, so as to include not only photographic prints but also drawings (paintings), woodblock prints and lithographed images. I combine examination of this material with insights gleaned from textual records that range from Chinese newspaper advertisements, poems, diaries, stories and novels.

I use these data to outline a history of photographic portraiture in which the flow of fashion, the ascent of new social roles and various shifts in photography's technological possibilities are important ordering principles. However, to unify them, I analyze portraiture through my conviction that the category "studio portrait", reinvented as it was for each generation of its producers/consumers, represented the most successfully democratized form of personal visual statement. The photographic portrait was a chemical amalgam—social, psychological, aesthetic and commercial—between quotidian reality and an optimistic extraction (like fortune-telling) of the subject's aspirations for his/her portrayed identity. The image fused the banal and the prophetic—a manifestation that is equally present in the resurgence of portrait photography which happened after the establishment of Communist government in 1949.

Recourse to a broad base of visual and textual documentation will strengthen this analysis, because other cultural expressions, e.g. lyric verse and advertising copy, show how frequently and extensively photographic/prophetic enhancements of individual identity fulfilled studio portraiture's social and aesthetic ambitions. Since this fulfillment occurred both locally and transnationally, the content of this paper may also intersect with the symposium's attention to studio practices and cross-cultural photographic exchanges.



**Oliver Moore** wrote a social history of civil service examination culture during China's Tang period (618-907) for his PhD dissertation at Cambridge University (published as *Rituals of Recruitment*, E J Brill, 2004). He was a curator for five years in the Asia Department at the British Museum, London, where he specialized in various forms of Chinese inscription, and organized a number of exhibitions. Since 1998 he has worked as Lecturer in Art and Material Culture of China at the Department of Chinese Studies, University of Leiden. Within a Leiden project entitled *The Social History of Visual Images in Late Imperial and Modern China*, he will complete a history of photography in China.

#### **Essence in Focus: Early Photographic Studios in China**

#### Frances Terpak

Curator of Photographs, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles

Brought to Asia in the early 1840s by Europeans, photography was readily adopted by Chinese export painters, who learned the mystery of the new technology and practiced it alongside their traditional training. It was the southern port cities of Hong Kong and Canton where Chinese practitioners first opened studios. The career of Liang Shitai, also known as See Tay, represents a prime example. After operating a photographic studio in Hong Kong in the early 1870s, See Tay moved his business to Shanghai and then Tianjin, where, in photographing officials of the Qing court, he created a new hybrid aesthetic, blending literati conventions with the medium of photography. The Getty Research Institute's collection of photographs of China which represents an impressive number of prints by Chinese photographers, not only western practitioners, will be the subject of an exhibition opening in February 2011. By illustrating photographs from the collection, this paper will attempt to show how photography influenced late Qing visual culture and helped to shape China's image in the west.



Frances Terpak is Curator of Photographs at the Getty Research Institute where she has built their photographic and optical devices collections. Besides the history of photography, her research specialties include popular entertainment and optical devices in the early modern period. She curated the 1998 exhibition "Framing the Asian Shore: Nineteenth-Century Photographs of the Ottoman Empire," and co-curated with Barbara Stafford the 2001 exhibition "Devices of Wonder: From the World in a Box to Images on a Screen." In 2009 she co-curated with Zeynep Çelik, the exhibition "Walls of Algiers: Narratives of the City." Frances is currently developing an exhibition on early photographs of China that will open at the Getty in April 2011.

#### Photography and China: Transmitting spirit

#### Claire Roberts

Senior Curator of Asian Arts, Powerhouse Museum, and Research Fellow, ANU

Since its introduction to China in the 1840s, photography has become a complex, culturally inflected medium, used for a variety of public and private purposes, and has played an extraordinary role in the transformation of visual culture, touching on many aspects of people's lives. Unlike indigenous forms of representation, such as monochrome brush and ink painting, with its deep philosophical underpinnings, photography, drawing on the science of optics and chemistry, made it possible for practitioners to create a fixed and reproducible representation of reality as they saw it.

This talk examines how Chinese practitioners of photography came to understand and use the technology, exploring its commercial, documentary and aesthetic capabilities and connecting it with their own cultural traditions. The introduction of photography to China was less a watershed event signaling a new kind of modernity through a new way of seeing, than a medium that was purposefully adopted and enfolded into an evolving language of image making, which in turn is inseparable from evolving constructions of individual identity in relation to changing pressures of society and history. Photography quickly became a means of extending the practical and creative and practical options of image creation, and a powerful, performative form of self-expression and cultural agency, in part through its continuation of traditional ideas of *chuanshen* or 'transmitting spirit'.



Claire Roberts is a Research Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University 2009-10. She is senior curator of Asian arts and design at the Powerhouse Museum, and a research fellow with Geremie R. Barmé's Australian Research Council–funded Federation Fellowship at The Australian National University. Roberts earned a PhD in Chinese history from the Australian National University. Her most recent publications include Other Histories: Guan Wei's Fable for a Contemporary World (2008) and The Great Wall of China (2006). Her books Friendship in Art: Fou Lei and Huang Binhong (Hong Kong University Press) and Photography and China (Reaktion) are forthcoming.

#### SESSION II TRANSFORMATIONS OF CHINESE PORTRAITURE

#### A New Elegant Gathering: Art, Politics and the Baoji Photo Studio in Shanghai

#### Yi Gu

Assistant Professor, Graduate Department of Art, University of Toronto, Canada

This paper examines how photo studio facilitated the identity transformation from traditional literati to modern intelligentsia at the turn of the twentieth century. My study focuses on the Baoji Studio, which was established by Ouyang Shizhi in 1888 and remained one the most acclaimed studios in Shanghai for the following four decades under the ownership of the Ouyang family. Tailoring various photographic practices to meet the needs of the treaty port intelligentsia, Ouyang Shizhi was crowned as the "studio owner in literati style". The Baoji Studio hosted the events such as photographing group portrait as counterparts of "elegant gathering," the literary or artistic gathering long held as a major forum for literati to consolidate shared cultural taste and social status. Meanwhile, thanks to the Ouyang family's connection to Kang Youwei, the leading reformer who advocated for a constitutional monarchy, the Baoji Studio established itself as a reformist, if not revolutionary, enterprise with social consciousness. Priding itself as a meeting place of political and cultural celebrities, the studio asserted its responsibility to establish the aesthetic standards of photography that was unmistakably Chinese. By analyzing the multifaceted social practices of photographers and customers anchored in the Baoji Studio, this paper will highlight studio photography's role in mediating the often contested pursuits of Asia's modernizing transition.



**Yi Gu** is an Assistant Professor of Chinese art at University of Toronto. Her research focuses on modern Chinese art, photography history, and art historiography. She has presented on topics such as the Chinese nomenclature of photography, imperial patronage of photography, and landscape photography and changing visuality. She organized the panel "Photographic Practices, Visual Transgression, and National Identity in Meiji Japan and Early Republican China" at the Association for Asian Studies Annual conference in 2009. She is currently working on a book manuscript, *Scientizing Vision in China: Photography, Outdoor Sketching, and the Reinvention of Landscape Perception*.

#### **Inscribed Photographic Portraits: Commemoration and Self-Fashioning**

#### Richard K. Kent

Professor of Art History, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, PA, USA

After briefly outlining a context for the flourishing of photographic studios in major Chinese cities like Shanghai, Beijing, and Tianjin at the end of the Qing dynasty and the beginning of the Republican period, this paper will focus on a group of unpublished portraits that bear calligraphic inscriptions written by the subject (or one of the subjects, in the case of group portraits) or by related family members. The act of appending an inscription of some length to a portrait, uncommon in the West, conforms to longstanding practice related to the tradition of painted portraits, especially those that depicted members of the literati or elite class. Literati during the Ming and Qing dynasties often solicited trained painters to depict themselves and, sometimes, their associates. To such portraits, the subject often added an inscription addressing the circumstances of the production; added to this might be inscriptions by others that spoke to aspects of the sitter's personality and accomplishments. Given the belief that calligraphy could mirror a writer's inner cultivation, the inscribed characters were as significant (if not theoretically more significant) than the painted portrait. The photographic portrait, because of its veridical information, altered the equation between image and inscription. But the latter, especially if demonstrating calligraphic accomplishment, could substantially enhance and, by offering additional social cues, shape an interpretation of the portrait (or group portrait).

This paper will explore the ways that inscriptions on early Chinese photographic portraits, as seen in several examples (some quite humble), served either to fashion identity or to commemorate an event in the life of the subject. An inscription thus could serve to elevate a portrait and enable it to transcend commonplace visual conventions in use by whatever professional photographic studio produced it.



Richard K. Kent is Professor of Art History at Franklin & Marshall College. He has published articles on various facets of medieval Chinese painting. His current research concerns early-20th-century Chinese photography, about which he is publishing a series of articles: "Fine-Art Amateur Photography in Republican-Period Shanghai: From Pictorialism to Modernism" (forthcoming in *Bridges to Heaven: Essays on East Asian Art in* Honor of Professor Wen C. Fong) and "Reclaiming Documentary Photography" (in Jerome Silbergeld, Humanism in China: A Contemporary Record of Photography, catalogue to a recent exhibition at China Institute, New York, 2009). In addition, he recently co-edited, with Christopher Zhu, the exhibition catalogue Embracing the Uncarved Wood: Sculptural Reliefs from Shandong, China (2009). In his role as a photographer, he is the primary contributor of black-and-white photographs to Central Market: Cornerstone of the Lancaster Community, with text by Linda Aleci (2009).

### One, and the Same: The Figure of the Double in Photographic Portraiture from the Early Republican Period

#### H. Tiffany Lee

PhD Candidate, Department of Art and Art History, Stanford University, USA

In Lu Xun's essay "On Photography" (published in the January 1925 issue of *Yusi*), the critic and writer offers a satirical look at the Chinese response to and practice of photography. Recent studies on the history of photography in China often pay their respects to this important essay, for, despite the pervasive biting tone, the work illuminates the role and reception of this new medium in cultural context of the late 19th century. Curiously, little attention has been turned to a peculiar photographic genre mentioned within—that of portraits of "twos", including *er wo tu* (two-self picture—a well-known example is the *er wo tu* of Puyi sitting in a garden, taken by the Tung Hwa Studio in Beijing), *fen shen xiang* (split/separate body image), and *qiu ji tu* (self-begging-the-self picture) created through the techniques of double exposure or double printing. The emergence and popularity of "photographic-twos" during the early 20th century merits a second look, with a focus on what makes these images intrinsically different from earlier manifestations of doubles in Chinese visual tradition.

This paper begins by tracing a short history of double images prior to the invention of photography, beginning with examples of Chinese paintings, including *qiu ji tu*. By carefully examining photographs of doubles primarily from the 1910s through 1930s, I argue that the figure of the double functioned as a cipher for the technology of photography and its properties for mechanical reproduction. Although the technique for making these two-self or split-body images had been introduced and explained in early photography manuals, the mysterious aura surrounding the creation of these photographs persisted, and they exert a strange hold on the viewer even today. This paper will demonstrate how the double teased the limits of technology and pushed the boundaries of the singular self in Chinese photographic portraiture.



**H. Tiffany Lee** is a PhD candidate in Art and Art History at Stanford University. Her area of research is the history of photography in China, with particular interest in nineteenth-century portraiture and the relationship between painting and the photographic image. She received her M.A. in Visual Studies from University of California, Irvine, and B.A. in art history from University of Southern California.

#### SESSION III PORTRAITURE FOR WHOM? THE IDEA OF A JAPANESE PUBLIC

#### Performing Portraiture in Asakusa, Tokyo

#### Maki Fukuoka

Assistant Professor of Japanese Humanities, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan

In the early days of Japan's photographic history, the area known as Asakusa in the capital Tokyo became the hotspot for photographic studios. Yokoyama Matsusaburo opened his studio there in 1868, followed by Uchida Kyuichi, Kitaniwa Tsukuba, and Ezaki Reiji, just to name a few. By the early 1880s, nearly forty studios congregated in this small area surrounding the landmark Asakusa Senso-ji Temple, thus turning Asakusa into a tourist destination. Studios took portraits of the customers and also sold portraits of famous actors and courtesans who used these images to compete against one another. The photographic portraits taken at the studios in Asakusa as well as advertisements for the studios themselves convey the performative aspects of portrait photography from this period. The photographed subject posed in ways heavily inscribed with cultural significations of identity. Studios provided stage props to accentuate the performed identity of the photographed.

But Asakusa had also been a unique area just a few decades before the studios were set up: the area was filled with street performances and noisy crowds. Did this play a role in attracting photographers to Asakusa? What made Asakusa a suitable place for this new enterprise, and what made it possible to sustain such an abundance of studios?

This paper explores the historical interconnection between the area of Asakusa and the practices of the photographic studios from the late nineteenth century Tokyo. It analyses the photographic studios in Asakusa as one thread in an intricate fabric that comprised the dynamic, lively, sometimes eccentric, and always innovative area of Asakusa. This paper proposes photographic portraits as a burgeoning practice that responded to, and was shaped by, the particular performative sense that defined Asakusa. Incorporating newspaper articles, advertisements, and accounts by photographers themselves, as well as studio portraits, this project aims to explore photographic studios as themselves spaces of performance.

**Maki Fukuoka** is Assistant Professor of Japanese Humanities at the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan, specializing in the history of photography and the visual culture of modern Japan. She is interested in the intricate relationship between 'tradition' and 'modernity' in Japan and the ways in which their conflicting and often confusing relationships are represented or articulated visually. Her publications include "Contextualising the peep-box in Tokugawa Japan" in *Early Popular Visual Culture*, and "Toward a Synthesized History of Photography: A Conceptual Genealogy of Shashin" in *positions: east asia cultures critique* (forthcoming).

#### Special Pleading? Matsuzaki Shinji's 'Dos and Don'ts for the Photographic Customer'

#### Sebastian Dobson

Independent Scholar, Antwerp

Published in Tokyo in the summer of 1886, the pamphlet *Shashin hitsuyō – shakyaku no kokoroe* (The Essentials of Photography – Dos and Don'ts for the Photographic Customer) is one of the most unusual examples of nineteenth-century photographic literature not just in Japanese but in any language. Written by Matsuzaki Shinji towards the end of a varied photographic career, and endorsed by an established member of Tokyo's contemporary literati, it was addressed to an exclusively Japanese readership with the declared intention of providing the would-be patron with a useful *vade mecum* to having his (or her) portrait taken. For the reader who inwardly digested Matsuzaki's advice, there was not just the guarantee that a future visit to a photographer's studio would no longer be an ordeal, but even the promise that it could be a rewarding experience resulting in 'a picture worthy of the name of photograph'. For the hard-pressed studio photographer, Matsuzaki's text offered the corresponding benefit of a clientele which had been familiarised with current studio practice and disabused beforehand of any unrealistic expectations.

Matsuzaki's text offers a wide range of hints, from those universally applicable to any photography studio in the nineteenth century to those specific to Japan in the mid-Meiji period. The insight it offers into the latter is particularly useful in analyzing the extent to which a distinctively 'Japanese' approach to studio photography developed in the decades immediately following the establishment of the first Japanese studios in the early 1860s, and this hitherto little-used resource will be introduced in English for the first time.



**Sebastian Dobson** is an independent scholar of the history of Japanese photography. His recent publications include contributions to *Art and Artifice: Japanese Photography of the Meiji Era* (2004) and *A Much Recorded War: The Russo-Japanese War in History and Imagery* (2005), both published by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, as well as the entry on Japan in the *Encyclopaedia of Nineteenth Century Photography* (2007). In 2008 he was awarded the annual prize for research excellence by the Nihon Shashin Geijutsu Gakkai (Japan Society for the Arts and History of Photography).

#### Facing the Public: Shifting conceptions of portrait photography in Late Meiji Japan

#### Karen Fraser

Assistant Professor, Department of Art & Art History, Santa Clara University, California

This paper examines the circulation and use of portrait images of women in the second half of the Meiji period (ca. 1890-1912). From photography's earliest days in Japan, portraits of the celebrated denizens of the floating world were common. Such images, like their wood block print predecessors, were widely circulated and frequently put on display. Important examples confirming this practice include an untitled print from the early 1870s by Utagawa Hiroshige III showing a commercial display board with portraits of geisha, and the infamous 1891 exhibition "Ryounkaku 100 Beauties," featuring portrait photographs by Ogawa Kazumasa. However, portraits of "ordinary" women were not viewed or publicly displayed in this fashion, instead being limited to "private" viewing among family and friends. Beginning in the 1890s, however, portrait images of women who were not part of the entertainment world began to appear and circulate in print, a practice that coincided with innovations in print technologies that allowed for the mechanical reproduction of photographic images. Significant events that reveal this new trend included the 1895 publication of portraits of women writers in Bungei kurabu (Literary Art Club), the 1908 publication of portraits of young women in a national beauty contest held by the Jiji shimpō newspaper, and the advent of reader-submitted photographs in ladies magazines of the early twentieth century. This paper traces this significant shift from private to public conceptions of the role of photographic portraits of women, linking these new ideas to the ways in which portraiture was circulated in new print technologies (Meiji "new media"), and arguing that this change was intricately linked to an increasingly politicised emphasis on the role of the bijin, or beauty, that the new media helped to facilitate.



**Karen Fraser** is Assistant Professor in the department of Art and Art History at Santa Clara University in California. Her research interests include photography production, circulation, and reception within Japan; the relationship of photography to class, gender, regional, and national identity; and the uses of photography in international exchange. Her forthcoming publications include a thematic survey of Japanese photography (*Photography and Japan*, from Reaktion Books), and she is currently working on a book manuscript that examines nineteenth-century commercial photography produced for the Japanese domestic market.

#### SESSION IV DESPITE EMPIRE: INDIAN EYES AND PICTORIAL FORMATIONS

#### The product of private desire: cartes de visite in nineteenth-century India

#### Jim Masselos

School of Philosophical and Historical Enquiry, University of Sydney

The French invention in 1854 of a technology to produce multiple small photographic images led to the creation of cartes de visite, photographs pasted on cards slightly larger than visiting cards. The format became immensely popular – a mass craze that spread around the world from the late part of the 1850s, not least in India where local photographic studios were soon producing them in great numbers. Their use varied. Some cartes were harnessed to official needs and so joined the panoply of the instruments of imperial control. The overwhelming bulk of the cartes however were very much the product of private desire in that private individuals commissioned them for their personal use. In consequence the finished cartes had to satisfy the sitter as much as reflect the art of the photographer.

This presentation looks at some of the issues necessarily raised by the widespread popularity of the cartes. Thus the paper will look at some of the common elements and conventions that developed in the format and consider similarities (or differences) between photographs produced in one or more studios. An associated issue is the question of genre and whether the studios produced images that can be put into categories, identifiable by a particular treatment of subject matter, style or approach. Put simply: what were the genres that emerged within the cartes format? Equally interesting is the question of gaze. Given that private individuals commissioned most cartes, was there reciprocity in the gaze between the camera and the subject, an equality of gaze between sitter and photographer, or did one dominate the other. Did the unblinking camera's eye determine the finished image or did the wishes and the gaze of the sitter have a significant impact on what was created. Who was dominant?



Jim Masselos is an Honorary Reader in History in the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry at the University of Sydney. He is the co-author with Narayani Gupta of *Beato's Delhi 1857, 1997* (Ravi Dayal, Delhi, 2000) and with Jackie Menzies and Pratapaditya Pal of *Dancing to the Flute. Music and Dance in Indian Art* (Art Gallery of NSW and Thames and Hudson, Sydney, 1997) and with Naresh Fernandes of *Bombay Then and Mumbai Now* (Rolli, Delhi, 2009). He is the author of *Indian Nationalism: an history* (Sterling, New Delhi, 2005) and *The City in Action. Bombay Struggles for Power* (Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2007). His edited volume, *The Great Empires of Asia* (Thames and Hudson, and the University of California Press) is due for publication late in 2010.

### Ethnography and the Visual Trace: Modalities for Reckoning Communities in India, 1855-70

#### Akshaya Tankha

Research Scholar, Alkazi Foundation for the Arts, New Delhi

This paper seeks to explore the field of early ethnographic photography in India through a study of three photographers working under the aegis of the British Raj between c.1850-70. The works of Dr. Narayan Daji (1828-75), William Johnson (worked in Bombay between 1855 & '60) and Dr. Benjamin Simpson (1831-1923) form among the earliest precedents of ethnographic photography in colonial India, forming the bedrock upon which later visual experiments were undertaken within the burgeoning field. William Johnson is credited with the publication of *The Oriental Races and Tribes*, produced in two volumes in 1863 and 1866, one of the earliest ethnographic/ethnological albums produced worldwide, while the works of Daji and Simpson were included in the first volume of the epic 8 part series, *The People of India*, published soon after in 1868.

Working at a time when the novelty of the camera was at its zenith, its fidelity to reality unquestionable and beyond compare, the colonial government placed vast resources to fund ethnographic projects across the subcontinent, inviting professionals and amateur enthusiasts alike, to survey and 'frame' segments and aspects of the vast sea of humanity they ruled over. The works of Daji, Simpson and Johnson figured among the earliest exhibitions organised by photographic societies, garnering critical reviews and generating a discourse around images that attempted to collapse the intangibility of reality into overlapping and often confused affiliations of race, caste and occupation.

Here lie the seeds of a photographic genre still trying to furnish a vocabulary to *license* the object of its curiosity. It is this fertile space that my paper will attempt to unravel, drawing on the critical framework of Christopher Pinney's *The Coming of Photography in India* (2008) and Nicolas Thomas's *Licensed Curiosity* (1994). My interrelated concerns will be the aesthetic choices that these precedents utilize to visually (and consequently intellectually) frame their subjects and the milieux through which these images travel, thereby highlighting a network which encompasses the object, practice and technology of photography and the discourse it engenders.



**Akshaya Tankha** is Research Scholar at the Alkazi Foundation for the Arts since October 2008, and Curatorial Assistant for the forthcoming exhibition *The Artful Pose*, a collaboration between the AFA and the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Museum, Mumbai, opening on 27 February 2010. He is a graduate in Art History (MA) from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and in Social Anthropology (MPhil) from Cambridge, UK. His research interests include early ethnographic photography, museum studies and contemporary art. He has contributed articles to magazines and journals including *Marg* and the *IIC Quarterly* among others.

#### **Princely Performances: the Portrait Studio in British India**

#### Wendy Garden

PhD Candidate, Australia Centre, School of Historical Studies, University of Melbourne

In late nineteenth century British India the people of India were not only the subjects of portrait photographs, made within an anthropological or ethnographic investigation of race, but were consumers as well. Many Indian elites commissioned their own portraits and a number took up photography both professionally and as a hobby. Indian princes also deployed the photography studio to make visual statements about their power and wealth. In the colonial encounter these portraits reveal the negotiations between British cultural influences and Indian heritage undertaken by many Indian princes at this time. In this paper I will consider photographs by two Indian princes. Sir Mahbub Ali Khan, the sixth Nizam of Hyderabad, described as the perfect Victorian gentleman for his mimicry of British dress, remained ideologically Indian. He commissioned Indian photographer Lala Deen Dayal as his personal photographer to document various aspects of daily life in his court. I will contrast studio portraits of the Nizam with the self portraits by photography enthusiast Maharaja Ram Singh 11 of Jaipur. Ram Singh also embraced modern reform brought by the British while remaining a traditionalist in most areas of Rajput custom and religion. By comparing portraits of the Nizam with the self portraits of Ram Singh, I will argue that Indian princes utilized the camera as a powerful means of self determinism that privileged the complex and often conflicting entanglement between cultures that characterised late nineteenth century British India.



**Wendy Garden** is a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne in the Australian Centre, School of Historical Studies. She completed a Masters of Arts in Art History in 2004. This project focused on photographs of Indian elites and British colonials during the high imperialist period of the British Raj. Her current project entitled *Troubling the archive: navigating photographic meaning between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians*, analyses recent strategies by a number of Australian artists who engage with the nineteenth century archive to interrogate colonial representations of Aboriginality. Wendy Garden was Curator at the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 1999-2003 and Art Curator at Banyule City Council 2002-2009. She is currently the Gallery Curator at the Maroondah Art Gallery.

#### SESSION V DIASPORA COMMUNITIES

### Photography's Challenge to US imperialism and American eugenics: The "Asian types" of the Gerhard sisters and Caroline Gurrey

#### Anne Maxwell

Senior Lecturer, English Program at the University of Melbourne

This paper examines the photographs of "Asian types" produced by three American women photographers in the period 1904—1915. This was the period when the United States of America as a relatively new purveyor and occupier of foreign territories was mounting displays of non-western peoples at imperial exhibitions, and when eugenics—that school of thought designed to ensure the supremacy of the white race was just beginning to galvanise an American public made anxious by the sudden proliferation of African Americans and Asian immigrants.

Esme and Mamie Gerhard from St Louis and Caroline Gurrey from Hawaii created images of Asians that came to influence the way the American public thought about the peoples from the "Far East" some of whom were now American subjects; the Gerhards as a result of the highly artistic series of images they created of the Japanese, Chinese and Philippine subjects on display in both the Anthropological and Midway sections of the St. Louis Exposition of 1904, and Gurrey as a result of the superlative set of prints showing the anatomical and physical features of "mixed-race Hawaiians" that she supplied for the 1921 Second International Eugenics Congress held in New York, and the Alaska-Yukon Exposition of 1926.

And yet although these images were displayed (and in the case of the Gerhards, generated) within the heavily imperialist context of these exhibitions, there is much about their styles and the way subjects appeared that sets them at odds with the exhibitions' racialist atmospheres. In the case of the Gerhards it is the emphasis placed on the subjects' postures and the artistry of their costumes that produces this effect. With Gurrey it is both the highly self-conscious lighting and framing techniques and the subject matter she deployed—in particular her calculated beautification of the "hybrid" was an idea that sorely clashed with mainstream eugenic thinking.



Anne Maxwell is a Senior Lecturer in the English Program at the University of Melbourne. She has published numerous articles on colonial and postcolonial literature and is the author of *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions* (Leicester University Press, 2000), *Picture Imperfect: Photography and Eugenics* (Sussex Academic Press, 2008) and *Human Futures: Eugenic and Genetic Engineering in Literary Science Fiction* (forthcoming Toronto University Press, 2010). She is currently writing a book about the role of photography in the colonisation and settlement of Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific.

#### **Early Chinese-Australian Commercial Photographers and their Work**

#### Sophie Couchman

School of Social Sciences, Latrobe University, Melbourne

Chinese-Australian commercial photographers have been rendered invisible in our histories because of their very ordinariness. Evidence of commercial photographers of Chinese ancestry in Australia dates from the 1890s. These photographers do not, however, appear to have been artists of notable aesthetic merit, to have created work that pushed the boundaries of Australian photography or to have dominated a particular aspect of the photographic industry. They have therefore been overlooked in Australia's photographic histories. Many ran small-scale businesses in rural towns as part of larger businesses such as general stores. The semi-amateur nature of some of these businesses meant that they were often not included in commercial street and trade directories. It is the ordinariness of their businesses and work which makes them so interesting. This demonstrates that even within the context of exclusionary legislation and anti-Chinese attitudes, Chinese Australians were an integral part of Australian life and that their ancestry did not always define them or their activities.



**Sophie Couchman** works as the part-time curator of the Chinese Museum in Melbourne and is an honorary research fellow at La Trobe University. She has just completed a PhD in Asian Studies at La Trobe University on how Chinese in Australia have been photographed from the 1870s until the 1930s. As part of her PhD she built the Chinese-Australian Historical Images in Australia website (<a href="http://www.chia.chinesemuseum.com.au">http://www.chia.chinesemuseum.com.au</a>). Prior to this she researched the social history of Melbourne's Chinatown between 1900 and 1920 for a Masters thesis at Monash University.

#### **ARTIST'S TALK**

#### The Pseudo-Archive

#### Pushpamala N.

Contemporary Artist, Bangalore, India

Artists are scavengers who use varied kinds of references in their work, thereby creating their own archive out of disparate materials. The new archive finds creative connections between categories seen as opposed: high and low, central and marginal, insignificant and significant, in search for a more profound insight into what shapes our world. The artist talk will illustrate how she references early photography in her work, seeing it as cultural memory.



**Pushpamala N.** was born in Bangalore in 1956, and lives between Bangalore and New Delhi. She is a video, photo and installation artist, writer and curator. After receiving a BA in Economics, English and Psychology from Bangalore University, she studied sculpture at M.S. University, Baroda, where she did her post-graduation in 1985. Since the mid 1990s she has been mainly working in photography, performance and video. She uses women's stories and women's material as a device to explore history, memory and contemporary society. In all of her works Pushpamala N. is chief actor as well as director, and has a charismatic on-camera presence. Her work has been shown at numerous international exhibitions, biennials, and festivals, including the Johannesburg Biennale; ENSBA, Paris; Tate Modern, London; Saatchi Gallery, London; Mori Art Museum, Tokyo; La Verreina, Barcelona; Bose Pacia New York; Nature Morte, New Delhi and Chemould Prescott Road, Mumbai. Her work is part of several major collections such as National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; Saatchi and Saatchi, London. Besides her artistic activities, Pushpamala N continues to lecture widely.

#### SESSION VI WOMEN AND DOMESTICITY

### Photographing the Feminine: Women and studio photography from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in India

#### Suryanandini Narain

PhD Candidate, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta and School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Innumerable photographic images housed in Indian archives and personal collections from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century foreground women as subjects of studio photography, calling for an independent investigation. These works embody various complexities pertaining to the sociological realities of colonial India, interjections by anthropological studies, the particular gender relations and aesthetic conventions of the period that amalgamated western and local tastes and intentions. Revelations and questions abound equally in these images which become historically pertinent, testifying for the evolving technology of the camera while also visualizing the dynamics of gender in a period of historic transformation in the subcontinent. This paper seeks to address the concurrence between the politics of gender and photography in the studios of Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta, addressing the topic of 'portraiture and identity' of women, as documented and imagined by the lens.

Women as subjects of the visual arts are an oft studied area, although within the precincts of photographic studios they offer new insights. When pictured alone they may refer to an absent presence, either by markers of dress or the objects they bear, situating them socially as married or unmarried, classifying them as ladies of an elite social segment or nautch girls for a male audience. When positioned with books, musical instruments and fantastic backdrops, they exceed the indexical function of representation, and feature on circulating objects of contemplation such as cartes-de-visite and boudoir portraits. Conventionalized aesthetics perpetuated the repetitive use of the same props, backdrops and postures in the studio space to release only so many possible portraits to clients, paradoxically offering imagined statuses and locations within stereotyped frames. The tension then, is between the studio's role as possible liberator or controller, whether the frame packs in a figure with centripetal force or whether it releases its contents with centrifugal energies. What women can present is a certain flexibility of meaning, mobile in their positioning and mutable their acquired significance in relation to the objects or people who surround them.

In order to present the interests of this paper comprehensively, there shall be segments addressing the following concerns: a historical examination of women in photographic studios of the period, both as sitters and photographers; a sociological study of the active location of women in studio photographs in positions of power or submission according to the delineations of social custom: age, class, relationship and status; an aesthetic and anthropological examination of image construction: object person arrangements, the influence of painting and conventions of portraiture, the constraints and liberation of taste in the face of technology; a specific study of client-photographer relations, including theoretical debated pertinent to the sensitive subject of gender in an age when purdah and women's social liberation coexisted; a concluding comment on the manner in which contemporary women artist-photographers have responded to this theme often through self portrait images. The source material for this paper derives from private archives and personal collections.



**Suryanandini Narain** is a graduate in Art History from Jawaharlal Nehru University (2004-6) and holds an M Sc. degree in Visual Anthropology from the University of Oxford, UK (2006-7). She has published with *Jamini, International Arts Quarterly of Bangladesh* (2004, 2006), *Art India* (2006 – 7), *Visual Anthropology Review* (2009) and *The Marg* Magazine volume on Gender in Colonial India (forthcoming). She has also lectured with the Alkazi Foundation for the Arts at the India International Centre, New Delhi (2008, 2009) on the subject of women in early photographic studios of India. Her research interests concern the interception of photographic media with digital and painterly techniques in the space of the studios in North India.

# The Home as Studio: Tea rituals and constructions of respectable domesticity in family photographs from the Netherlands Indies (colonial Indonesia) in the early twentieth century

#### Susie Protschky

ARC Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of History, Monash University

This paper examines family portraits of Asians and Indo-Europeans in the Netherlands Indies (colonial Indonesia), one hundred years after the first uses of photography in Southeast Asia. It focuses particularly on images of an important ritual of daily life that was frequently depicted in colonial family albums: the taking of afternoon tea, a cultural practice that was widespread among diverse social classes and ethnic groups in the Indies. Family photographs and albums are treated in this paper as ego documents *par excellence* (historical sources that provide insights into self-representation) since the makers were the primary subjects. For many Indo-European families, photographs of themselves taking afternoon tea in modes that were distinct from how other groups in Indies society (such as Chinese) took respite provided a significant venue for asserting (to themselves and to others) their aspirations for upward social mobility and to 'European' status through performances of respectable middle class domesticity.

In using family albums as sources, this paper aims to interrogate what constitutes a 'studio' and its subjects. Though outside the studio, the Indies home emerged as a space in which particular historical identities were repeatedly and consistently framed and expressed. Far from encouraging greater variety in modes of representation, amateur photography of the kind seen in family albums generated new tropes which made certain parts of the colonial home – the front veranda, the parlour, the dining room – into stylised spaces for particular expressions of domesticity. Non-studio settings were thus capable of producing stylised images that objectified selves as subjects in much the same way that studio portraits did.



**Susie Protschky** is an ARC Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of History at Monash University. She gained her PhD in History from the University of New South Wales in 2007. Her research concentrates on the Netherlands Indies (colonial Indonesia), and she specialises in using visual sources – including photographs – as historical documents. Susie has had various articles published in international peer-reviewed journals (including *Gender & History* and *History of the Family*) on colonial representations of nature and landscape, and on customs surrounding food and eating, in Netherlands Indies. Her first book, *Images of the Tropics: Environment and Visual Culture in Colonial Indonesia* is to be published by KITLV Press (Leiden).

### Concubines with Cameras: Photographic Representations by and of Royal women in early twentieth century Siam

#### Leslie Ann Woodhouse

Independent Scholar, San Francisco

Thailand's royal elites are known for their adoption of "modern" techniques of representing their civilization, such as mapping, collecting and photography. Those familiar with Siam's Fifth Reign (1868-1910) know of King Chulalongkorn's passion for photography, which was shared by many other Siamese elites. But few know that photography was also practiced by a handful of the king's concubines, who recorded rare images of domestic life within the palace. In fact, one of the most famous images of King Chulalongkorn, taken as he cooked a meal on the back porch of his palace, was shot by one of his concubines, *Chao Chom* (royal consort) Erb Bunnag.

As a royal consort, Lady Erb had access to the king's private domestic space, as well as that of his other consorts and wives. Hence Erb's photographs also feature other royal consorts rarely seen outside the palace. Of these photographs, one especially interesting series showcases the ethnic difference of a politically important royal consort, Princess Dara Rasami. This consort, who came to the Siamese court from the neighboring kingdom of Lan Na, was well known within the palace for her adherence to the traditional dress and hairstyle of her homeland. In a series of eight photographs, taken sometime between 1902-1910, Dara Rasami's ethnic difference is literally performed: the photographer documents Dara unwinding her long hair from its customary bun, before a staged dressing table and two strategically placed mirrors. As the audience for these photographs was other Siamese royal concubines and elites, these images assisted the Siamese in constructing a hierarchy of civilizations called "siwilai." Thus, Lady Erb's photographs demonstrate how the Siamese elite "gaze" catalogued ethnic difference even within the most intimate quarters of the palace.



**Leslie Ann Woodhouse** completed her PhD in Southeast Asian history at the University of California, Berkeley in 2009. Her research concerns the political roles played by royal consorts and concubines in nineteenth- and early-twentieth century Siam (now Thailand). She received a Fulbright IIE grant to Thailand from 2004-05. Leslie is an

independent scholar currently based in the San Francisco Bay Area.

#### **Convenors**



**Luke Gartlan** is Lecturer in the School of Art History at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, where he teaches modules on the history of photography and colonial-era visual culture. He has held research fellowships at the University of Vienna (2004-05) and Nihon University, Tokyo (2005-2007), and is currently HRC Visiting Fellow at the Research School of Humanities and the Arts, ANU. Luke has published articles in *Visual Resources, Early Popular Visual Culture,* and *The La Trobe Journal*, and recently guest edited a special issue on photography in nineteenth-century Japan for *History of Photography* (May 2009). He has also contributed catalogue essays for the National Gallery of Victoria and the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography. He is currently working on a monograph on the aristocratic photographer Baron Raimund von Stillfried and his role as a cultural mediator and interpreter of Japanese culture.



**Gael Newton** is Senior Curator of Photography at the National Gallery of Australia. Since 2006 Gael had been researching the history of photography across the Asia-Pacific region. She contributed a number of entries in this area to the Routledge *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth century Photography* (2008). The first National Gallery exhibition in this program *Picture Paradise: Asia-Pacific photography 1840s-1940s* was held at the National Gallery in 2008 and currently on view in the Photography Gallery is a permanent collection display of 'Portraits from India 1850s-1950s'. Gael contributed national surveys on photography in Southeast Asia entries in this area to the Routledge *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth century Photography* (2008) and is preparing a major exhibition on the first century of photography in Indonesia for 2013.

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### SOME CONVENIENT EATING PLACES

(NOT NECESSARILY GUARANTEED BY THE HRC, RSHA)



See Telstra's yellow pages for many other Canberra restaurants

ASIAN	Asian Café, Mlbourne Building, 32 West Row, Canberra City (open 7 days) Banana Leaf Restaurant and Café, U2/240-250 City Wlk Canberra China Plate Chicnese Seafood Restaurant, 41-43 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra City The Chairman and Yip Restaurant, 108 Bunda Street, Canberra City (open 7 days) Civic Asian Noodle house, 34 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra City Happy's Chinese Restaurant, Garema Place, Canberra City (open 7 days) Sammy's Kitchen, Garema Centre, Bunda Street, Canberra City (open 7 days) Hidden Dragon BBQ Noodle, Shop 37A, City Market, Bunda Street, Canberra City Oriental Kitchen, 88 Garema Place, Canberra City	6262 6233 6248 5522 6162 3838 6248 7109 6247 5145 6249 7015 6247 1464 6248 9896 6248 7868
FRENCH	Tip Top Aisan Gourmet, 24 Garema Place, Canberra City  Ardeche Restaurant, 222 City Walk, Canberra City (Monday – Saturday)  Courgette Restaurant, 54 Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra	6248 8230 6230 4800 6247 4042
INDIAN & PAKISTAN	Flavours of India, 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor Garema Centre, Canberra City Shalimar Indian Restaurant, Tasman House, Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra City Blu Ginger Indian Restaurant, 5 Genge Street, Canberra City Taj Mahal Indian Restaurant, 39 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra City	6257 3690 6249 6784 6247 2228 6247 6528
ITALIAN	La Posada, 60 Alinga Street, Canberra City La Scala, (Center Cinema Bldg), Garema Place, Canberra City Mama's Trattoria, 7 Garema Place, Canberra City (open 7 days) Mezzalira on London, Cnr London Circuit and West Row, Canberra City (open 7 days)	6248 5444 6248 8338 6248 0936 6230 0025
JAPANESE & KOREAN	lori Japanese Restaurant, 41 East Row, Canberra City Coo Japanese izakaya, 15 East Row, Canberra City Shogun, 1 <sup>st</sup> Floor, Garema Center, Canberra City (open 7 days) Sizzle Bento, 3-4 City Walk, Canberra City Tasuke, 102 Alinga Street, Canberra City	6257 2334 6257 2233 6248 8888 6262 6022 6257 9711
LEBANESE	AB Lenbanese Restaurant, Cnr Northbourne Ave and Alinga Street, Canberra City	6230 4233
THAI	Lemon Grass Restaurant, (Melb. Bldg), 65 London Circuit Canberra City Three Mothers, 34 Garema Place, Canberra City ZenYai, 111 London Circuit, Canberra City	6247 2779 6249 8900 6262 7594
TURKISH	Turkish Pide House Restaurant, 16 Moore Street, Canberra City	6249 8700
SEAFOOD BUFFET	Rydges Lakeside, London Circuit, Canberra City (Friday and Saturday nights only)	6247 6244
SINGAPORE	La Pasa Singaporean Cuisine, 75-89 Alinga Street, Canberra City	
VIETNAMESE	Metro Vietnam, 49 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra City	62627266
GENERAL	Anise, 20 West Row Canberra City Australian Pizza Kitchen, East Row, London Circuit, Canberra City Barocca Café, 60 Marcus Clarke, Street, Canberra City The Blue Dish Restaurant, 65 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra City Boat House by the Lake, Grevillea Park, Menindee Drive, Barton Bolero Caffee, Cnr London Cct and Constitution Avenue, Canberra City Bookplate, National Library of Australia, Parkes Charcoal Grill Restaurant, 61 London Circuit, Canberra City (first class steaks, Mon-Sat) Café Fontaine, upper level, Canberra Centre Café Macchiato Bourbon Bar, Cnr London Circuit and East Row, Canberra City Du Jour, (Modern Australian cuisine), 15 Edinburgh Avenue, Canberra City Garden Atrium Restaurant, 242 Northbourne Avenue, Canberra City Hudson's in the Garden, Botanic Gardens, Clunies Ross Street, Canberra City King O'Malleys, Cnr City Walk and Moore Street, Canberra City Kinsgland Vegetarian Restaurant, Dickson Plaza, 28 Challis Street, Dickson Kitschen (Modern Australian cuisine), 18 Lonsdale Street, Braddon Krave, Cnr Alinga and East Row, Canberra City Pancake Parlour, Alinga St, Canberra City (by bus interchange) (open 7 days)	6257 0700 6257 2727 6248 0253 6245 5000 6273 5500 6257 7773 6262 1154 6248 8015 6257 6978 6248 8755 6162 4588 6247 6888 6247 6888 6247 0111 6262 9350 6247 2946 6247 3333 6247 2982
	Red Sea Restaurant, 47 Norhtbourne Avenue, Canberra City Rolo's Pizza and Restaurant, 35 East Row, Canberra City The Hermitage, 170 London Circuit, Civic Square, Canberra City Waldorf on London, London Circuit, Canberra City	6248 5931 6247 4530 6230 0857 6262 9263

Conference Dinner will be held at University House; on Saturday 21 August at 7.00 pm. Bookings must be made with the Programs Manager before 10.30am, on Saturday.

#### Menu:

Chicken & Potato Provencale with Fresh Tomato, Olives, Red Wine & Paprika Stir-Fry Beef in Plum Sauce with Fresh Asian Vegetables & Hokkien Noodles

Marinated Tofu Stir-Fry with Fresh Asian Vegetables, Rice Noodles, Fresh Basil & Coriander

A Freshly Tossed Salad

Steamed Herbed Scented Rice

Oven Baked Sour Dough Rolls

Selection of Sliced Seasonal Fruits

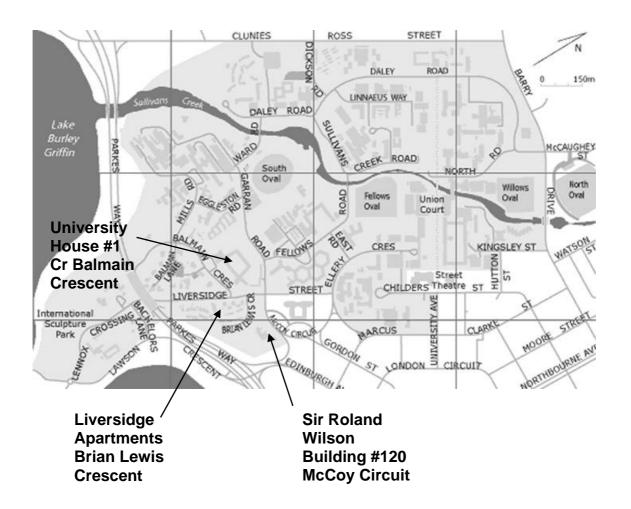
Chefs Selection of Fresh Cakes and Slices

Tea and Coffee



The cost of dinner is \$50.00 per head to be paid to Leena Messina, Programs Manager, Humanities Research Centre. This cost includes drinks.

# THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY CANBERRA



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## HUMANITIES RESEARCH CENTRE Research School of Humanities and the Arts College of Arts and Social Sciences

#### **Presents**

### Work-in-Progress Seminar Series 2010

The Work-in-Progress Seminar Series is presented by staff and Visiting Fellows from the Research School of Humanities & the Arts. The series is held on selected Fridays from 1 – 2.30 pm, throughout the year, in the Theatrette on Level 2 in the Sir Roland Wilson Building.

#### Semester Two

August 27	Dr Luke Gartlan, School of Art History, University of St Andrews, UK	The Jinrikisha through the Lens: Tourism and Modernity in Meiji Japan
October 1	Dr Petra Kuppers, Department of English, University of Michigan, USA	International Disability Arts: Issues, Tensions, Opportunities
October 8	Dr Mary Edmunds, Visiting Fellow, RSHA	The mantra of certainty. Native title, resource companies, and negotiating agreements.
October 15	A/Professor Kenneth Tan, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Academic Affairs, Singapore	Patriarchy, the strong state, and the creative economy in Singapore
October 22	Dr Russel Smith, English, School of Cultural Inquiry, RSHA.	Samuel Beckett's sentimental antihumanism.

#### All Welcome

Convenors: Ken Taylor and Alastair MacLachlan

Sir Roland Wilson Building, Bld #120, McCoy Circuit, Canberra. Phone: 6125 6674

