

Curriculum Vitae (December 2008)

Margaret Chan

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Contact Information

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Biographic Profile

Margaret Chan received her PhD in Performance Studies from Royal Holloway, University of London. Her MA (Performance Studies) was awarded with distinction by the Central School of Speech and Drama, London. Margaret was awarded the UK Overseas Research Scholarship and also the Thomas Holloway (Founder) Scholarship to read for her PhD. Margaret also holds a Certificate of Teaching, Higher Education (Distinction) Royal Holloway, University of London. Her first degree was in Business Administration from the University of Singapore

Margaret's research interest is in the field of Chinese spirit medium worship and Chinese Popular Religion. Her book, *Ritual is Theatre, Theatre is Ritual: Chinese Spirit Medium Worship* published by the Wee Kim Wee Centre, SMU and SNP Research represents a seminal investigation into the practice of *tang-ki* spirit medium worship, a signifying cultural practice of the Hokkien people. Although the worship is widespread in the major communities of the Chinese diaspora in Taiwan and South East Asia, the subject has received scant scholarly attention, so that Margaret's research has contributed to world knowledge in this field. Her research covers Singapore, Fujian in China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia.

Margaret is a pioneer of English Language Theatre in Singapore and was a journalist. She is Practice Asst Professor of Theatre/Performance Studies in the School of Social Sciences, and also teaches Creative Thinking for the Lee Kong Chian School of Business at SMU where Creative Thinking is a core module in the SMU curriculum. At SMU, Margaret also teaches Ethnography and Post-Modern Theatre Studies.

Degrees:

- PhD Theatre/Performance Studies, Royal Holloway, University of London (2002)
- MA (Distinction) Central School of Speech & Drama, London (1998)

- Certificate of Teaching, Higher Education (Distinction) Royal Holloway, University of London (1998)
- Bachelor of Business Administration, University of Singapore (1972)

Academic Awards:

- Overseas Research Students Award, U.K., 1999-2002
- Thomas Holloway (Royal Holloway, Founder's Scholarship), 1998-2002

Journalism Awards:

- *Commandeur, Association Internationale des Maîtres Conseils en Gastronomie Française*, awarded by the Government of France in 1990
- *Premio Interzionale Caterina de Medici XI Edizione*, awarded by the Chefs and Restauraners Association of Italy in 1994

Administrative Work, SMU:

- Senior Manager, Communications Studies Centre (defunct), School of Business, 1 Jan 2003 – 31 Oct, 2003
- Asst. Director, Office of Student Life, 31 Oct 2003 – 31 Mar 2004
- Assoc Director, Office of Student Life, 1 Apr 2004 – 30 Jun 2006

Present position:

- Practice Asst. Professor of Theatre/Performance Studies, School of Social Sciences, Singapore Management University.
- Instructor, Creative Thinking
- Instructor, Ethnography
- Instructor, Post-Modern Theatre Studies

Previous teaching positions:

- Senior Manager, Communication Studies Centre, Singapore Management University, 2003
- Lecturer of Acting and Directing in Department of Mass Communications and Department of Film, Sound & Video, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore, 1996
- Drama Teacher, Theatre in School programme, Dunman High School, De Yi Secondary School, Cedar Girls' Secondary School, 1996
- Business Communications, Stamford College, Singapore, 1973-1974

Publications, Academic:

- "Kuo Pao Kun: The Spirit of the Eagle", *Contemporary Theatre: The Director as Cultural Critic*, Vol. 13, Issue 3, Aug 2003. (Peer reviewed).
- *Ritual is Theatre, Theatre is Ritual: Spirit Medium Worship*. (2006). Singapore: Wee Kim Wee Centre and SNP Reference. (PhD Dissertation)
- "Warrior Gods Incarnate: *Tang-ki* Chinese Spirit Mediums". *Social Analysis*. Accepted for publication 2009. (Peer reviewed).
- "Bodies for the gods: Image worship in Chinese Popular Religion". Accepted for publication in *Motion and Devotion: New Trajectories in the Study of Material Religion* an edited volume to be published in 2009 by the Southeast Asian Studies

- Programme and the Asia Research Institute: National University of Singapore. (Peer reviewed).
- “The Magic of Chinese Theatre: Theatre as a Ritual of Sacral Transmogrification” to be published in an edited volume *Change & Innovation in Chinese Opera* by The National Museum of Singapore and The Chinese Opera Institute in 2009. (Peer reviewed).
 - “Chap Go Meh in Singkawang”, under revision.

Publications, Others:

- *Foodstops – 1000 Places to Eat and Drink in Singapore*. (1992). Singapore: Landmark Books.
- “A whiff of nostalgia” in *Singapore: Places, Poems, Paintings*. Koh Buck Song (Ed.). (1993). Singapore: First Edition. pp. 38-41.
- “26 years later ... from she who was Cicada” in *The Sword has Two Edges* by Li Lienfung. (2004). Singapore: SNP Editions. pp. 144-149.

Seminars & Conferences:

- “Reviewing the Peranakan Identity in the 21st Century”, Peranakan Association Singapore, **15th Baba Convention**. Asian Civilisations Museum: 2002.
- “Ritual is Theatre, Theatre is Ritual – Chinese Theatre as a Magical Act of Transformation”. **10th annual Performance Studies international (PSi) conference. Perform: State: Interrogate**. SMU: 15 - 18 June 2004.
- “The Mystical Lion – The Secret behind the Mask in Chinese Lion Dance”. Public Lecture under the aegis of **SMU School of Economics of Social Sciences in collaboration with SMU Office of Students Life, The China Society and the Singapore Wushu Federation**. SMU: 18 Sep 2004.
- “*Tang-ki* Spirit Medium Worship”. **Asia Research Institute (ARI) public seminar, NUS**. 8 May 2006.
- “The Magic of Chinese Theatre”. **Wellsprings: Chinese Opera & Theatre Conference. National Heritage Board & Chinese Opera Institute**. 16 Dec 2006.
- “*Tang-ki* Spirit Medium Worship: Madness or Reason”. **The Sacred in a Global City: Symposium on religion in Singapore**. NTU Dept of Sociology and Asia Research Institute, NUS. 9-10 March 2007
- “Anthropological mapping of Singapore food and identity”. **Appetite for Geography: Food and its Geographic Expressions, GTA Seminar 2007. Geography Teachers’ Association of Singapore**. 31 March 2007.
- “*Tang-ki* Spirit Medium Worship in the 21st Century”. **Asian Civilisations Museum Conference on Shamans and Spirit Mediums**. 7 Apr 2007.
- “Image Worship in Chinese Popular Religion”. Asia Research Institute and National University of Singapore Southeast Asian Programme **Roundtable Conference prelude to International Conference “New Directions in the Study of Material Religion”**. (Jointly organized by the Religion Cluster of the Asia Research Institute and Southeast Asian Studies Programme, NUS). 9 Apr 2008.

- “Bodies for the gods”. **International Conference on “New Directions in the Study of Material Religion”**. (Jointly organized by the Religion Cluster of the Asia Research Institute and Southeast Asian Studies Programme, NUS). 13-15 Aug 2008
- “Chap Go Meh in Singkawang: The Theatre of Ritual and the Circus of Politics”. **Social Sciences and Humanities Seminar Series**, School of Social Sciences, Singapore Management University. 31 Oct 2008.
- “A New Dawn of Chinese-Dayak Relationships: Spirit Mediums and Politicians on the West Kalimantan Stage”. **International Conference on “Religion in Southeast Asian Politics: Resistance, Negotiation and Transcendence”** (Organised by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore and co-sponsored by the Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University). 11-12 Dec 2008.

Talks & Discussion Groups in the Community:

- “What is an actress doing with *tangka* worship? - Your Training should not limit your job options”. **Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts**. A talk on career opportunities for degrees in theatre. 2 Feb 2007
- Member: Roundtable Discussion “Unmet Social Needs in Singapore in the Non-Profit sector”. **Lien Centre for Social Innovation**, Singapore Management University. 14 Nov 2008.
- “A Growth versus a Fixed Mindset: Learning makes You the Best that you can be”. **Republic Polytechnic**. A talk in conjunction with the Creative Engagement module, a component of the Industry Orientation Programme. 9 Dec 2008.

National Committees:

- Member: Creative Industries Workforce Skills Qualifications (CI WSQ) Arts & Culture work group, for the year 2007.
- Member of the Arts & Culture Manpower, Skills & Training Council (AC MSTC) formed by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) and the Ministry of Information Communications and the Arts to oversee the Industry Capability and Manpower Development of the Creative Industries in Singapore. 2008 & 2009.

Theatre Lead Roles:

- *Goa*, University of Singapore Drama Society, 1975
- *The Graduate*, University of Singapore Society, 1976
- *The Sword Has Two Edges*, Experimental Theatre Club, 1977
- *The Seven Ages of Man*, Experimental Theatre Club, 1979
- *Emily of Emerald Hill*, Arts Festival, 1985
- *Emily of Emerald Hill*, Commonwealth Arts Festival, Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh, 1986
- *Emily of Emerald Hill*, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Traverse Theatre, 1986
- *Piaf*, Theatreworks, 1987
- *Beauty World*, Theatreworks, 1988
- *Green Socks*, Theatreworks, 1989
- *The Altar*, Practice Theatre Ensemble, 1991

- *D'Rama Drama*, Substation's Guinness Garden Performances, 1992
- *The Evening Climb* (Mandarin), Practice Theatre Ensemble, 1992
- *Lao Jiu*, Theatreworks, 1993
- *Death in Tuas*, Theatreworks, 1993
- *Emily of Emerald Hill*, President Wee Kim Wee Tribute Performance, 1993
- *The Importance of being Ernest, the musical*, Bob Nimmo Productions, 1994
- *Lao Jiu*, Theatreworks, Festival of Perth, 1994
- *No Parking on Odd Days*, Practice Theatre Ensemble, 1994
- *Death of a Salesman*, Singapore Repertory Theatre, 1994
- *Blithe Spirit*, Wild Rice, 2001
- *Honk*, Singapore Management University, 2009

Television Lead Roles:

- *Fast Forward*. Presenter of the educational video series for the Singapore National Productivity Board, Singapore, 1990
- *Easy Maths*, educational video series for the Singapore National Productivity Board, 1991
- *The Ra Ra Show*, Singapore Broadcasting Corporation, 1993
- *Mum's Not Cooking Tonight*, Singapore Broadcasting Corporation, 1993
- *Masters of the Seas*, Television Corporation of Singapore, 1994
- *Troubled Water*, Television Corporation of Singapore, 1995
- *The Golden Pillow* (Chinese), Television Corporation of Singapore, 1995
- *Appetite for Asia*, (Presenter) Channel 5, Australia, 1997
- *House of Chow*, Mediacorp Singapore, 2001
- *The Brand New Towkay*, Mediacorp Singapore, 2001
- *Anak Metropolitan* (Malay), Mediacorp Singapore, 2002
- *Aku Hero* (Malay), Mediacorp Singapore, 2004
- *Maggie & Me*, Episodes 1 & 2, Season 2, Mediacorp Singapore, 2007

Feature Films:

- *Homeland*, (Omnimax), 1990
- *Medium Rare*, Singapore, 1991
- *Army Daze*, Singapore, 1996
- *Forever Fever*, Singapore, 1997

Script-writing:

- 1987 Creator, *Deliciously Singapore*, a cooking series in Mandarin telecast over Television Singapore
- 1991 Script Writer, *Medium Rare*, Singapore's first English language feature film
- 1991 Script Consultant, *Easy Maths* educational video series for the Singapore National Productivity Board
- 1992 Playwright, *D'Rama Drama: A New Look at the Ramayana*
- 1997 Script Writer, *Appetite for Asia*, Channel 5, Australia

Journalism:

1975-1978 Editor, *Metrication Digest* and *Our Metric Way*
1978-1995 *Restaurant Reviewer for the New Nation, Sunday Nation, Sunday Times*
1981 Editor, Trend Pages, *New Nation*
1988-1990 Editor, *Wine & Dine*, Singapore
1980-1995 Correspondent, *Majalah Selera*, Indonesia
1996 Correspondent, *E&O Magazine*, London

Food Consultancy:

- Spinneys International B. V. Group, 1990
- Raffles Hotel, 1991

Management and Administration:

- Personal Asst. to Chairman Metrication Board, 1975-1978
- General Manager, National University of Singapore Society, 1981-1982
- Publishing Manager, Times Guides Pte Ltd, 1982-1983
- Senior Manager, Communications Studies Centre (defunct), School of Business, Singapore Management University.
1 Jan 2003 – 31 Oct, 2003
- Asst. Director, Office of Student Life, Singapore Management University. 31 Oct 2003 – 31 Mar 2004
- Assoc Director, Office of Student Life, Singapore Management University. 1 Apr 2004 – 30 Jun 2006