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Bulletin

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Elite Training for WTO

Secret Agents

Rescue University Seal



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NEWS ROUND-UP

- 1 " **University Governance in the Spotlight**
- " **Star Turn for Museum Show**
- 2 " **A Shot in the Arm for Chinese Medicine**
- " **Coastal Trails Bid**
- 3 " **Faculty of Arts Inspires**
- " **Environmental Awards**
- 4 " **SWIMS in the Swim**



INTERNATIONAL

- 5 " **HKU Joins International Genome Project**
- 6 " **Elite Training for WTO**



RESEARCH AND TEACHING

- 8 " **India Crashes into Asia**
- 9 " **Sportsmen and Women Try to Forget**
- 10 " **Excellence in Research, 2002-2003**
- 26 " **Teaching Fellowship Awards**
- 29 " **Do Primates See Red?**



PEOPLE

- 30 " **The Impact of Revolution**
- 31 " **Secret Agents Rescue University Seal**
- 32 " **Families Triumph**
- 36 " **The Allure of Language**
- 37 " **Grand Old Man of Hong Kong History**



THE ARTS

- 38 " **Who is the Girl in the Golden House?**
- 39 " **Ching Lau Revisited**
- 40 " **Bare Necessities**



University Governance in the Spotlight

Following a review of its governance and management structures, and the adoption of the review report by the Council, the University is in the process of a major reform to enhance transparency and accountability. The changes were proposed by an independent review panel of international experts.

The size of the Council has been reduced from 55 to 24 members, and its composition includes lay members (who are in the majority) and elected members of academic and non-academic staff. The size of the Senate has also been reduced from 180 to 50 members. The smaller sizes will enable them to function more effectively as decision-making bodies.

The report also argues that the appointment of full-time academic

managers as Deans, Pro-Vice-Chancellors and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor will help professionalise the management to enable the University to be more responsive in this fiercely competitive and rapidly changing environment. Vacancies for these positions will be filled after rigorous search internationally. Such a management structure will enable the Vice-Chancellor to focus more on promoting the University to our stakeholders in the outside world.

Professor Lap-Chee Tsui, the Vice-Chancellor, said that the changes would increase confidence in the University's self-governance and management, particularly among investors from the public and private sectors.

"We are running a complex organisation, and in the challenging times ahead for the tertiary sector", added Professor Tsui, "we need a rigorous decision-making process that shows clearly where authority and responsibility lie, with proper checks and balances that conform to the highest standards of corporate governance."



Star Turn for Museum Show

An exhibition exploring extremes of the universe – from supernovae to the big bang – got off to a top flight start when its opening coincided with a visit by Chinese astronaut Yang Liwei.

The exhibition, by the Department of Physics, opened in the Science News Corner of the Science Museum at the end of October 2003 – the week that Mr Yang was greeted by adulating crowds at the venue.

"During that week we opened, the interest in anything related to space was enormous. The timing was perfect," said Dr Jason Pun, who organised the exhibit with research assistant Anisia Tang.

In fact, the exhibition, entitled *Extremes of the Universe*, had been planned long before Mr Yang's visit, to tap into people's curiosity about space.

"We chose that theme because in astronomy people always ask us how big things are. We're trying to describe some of the biggest things out there," he said.

The exhibit features panels on supernovae (the death of a heavy star), the big bang (the first moments of the universe), gamma ray bursts (the biggest explosions in the universe), neutron stars (the densest objects in the universe), the Sun (the closest star to Earth) and the search for extra-terrestrial intelligence (the research project with the most participants). Another panel described the development of astronomical research in Hong Kong and China.

One of the purposes of the Science News Corner is to highlight research at universities in Hong Kong. The display space is offered on a rotating basis and visitors to the museum vote on which display they would like to see, from a list of proposals.

Dr Pun encouraged other researchers to submit their proposals.

"It's a good way to reach out to the public and introduce your research, and show the large variety of work that's going on right here at HKU," he said.

The exhibition was on display at the museum until the end of January 2004. A leaflet and website have also been produced (www.physics.hku.hk/~astro/exhibit2003/index.html).

A Shot in the Arm for Chinese Medicine

Chinese medicine has moved a step closer to becoming a mainstream therapy with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between a consortium of local and international institutions.

The University will provide the headquarters of the 16-member group. It includes Yale University, the Chinese Academy of Sciences and PhytoCeutica, a botanical drug firm based in Connecticut, as well as universities in Hong Kong and Mainland China.

The aim is to establish a common database to assist in research and promote the development of a scientific platform on which to produce high-quality Chinese medicine.

The lack of evidence-based research on Chinese medicine has hampered its acceptance as mainstream therapy but the new research should lead to better-priced, safer health-care products.

Our Genome Centre will play a key role in conducting advanced research such as identifying the impact of various herbs on human cells.



Coastal Trails Bid

Walkers will be able to promenade from Kennedy Town to Aberdeen along a 5km long series of interconnecting coastal trails, if the brainchild of a University teacher gets the green light.

Dr Bill Barron, from the Centre of Urban Planning and Environmental Management, has drawn up the radical plan with think-tank Civic Exchange in a bid to open up Hong Kong's enclosed shoreline.

The green plan aims to also open up debate about the stretch of coast, which had been targeted for development by the government under the controversial Route Seven road extension project.

Barron said: "Although the government has postponed the project we felt it was time to address the issue of the shoreline without turning it into another Route Seven fight."

"In the debates over the use of the harbour the complaints have been two fold: the harbour keeps shrinking; and, the government keeps promising us access but then doesn't deliver."

Barron and the Exchange team believe that the proposal could become a major attraction both for Hong Kong residents and tourists by tapping into the areas natural resources.

As well as offering superb views of the mountains, sea and surrounding landscape, the trails would benefit from being largely covered by trees and also offer the potential for future developments.

Starting with a wooded path in Kennedy Town, the trails would move

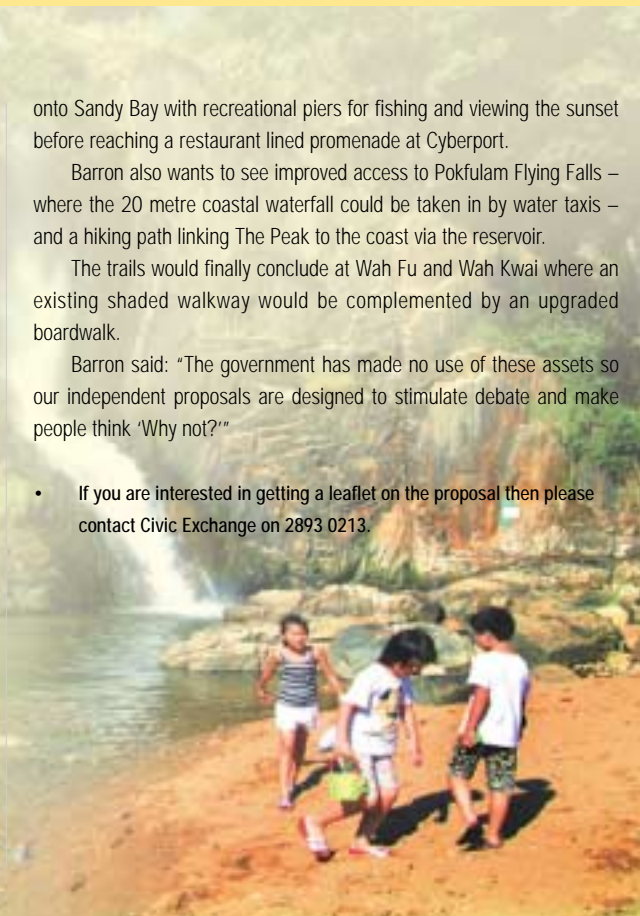
onto Sandy Bay with recreational piers for fishing and viewing the sunset before reaching a restaurant lined promenade at Cyberport.

Barron also wants to see improved access to Pokfulam Flying Falls – where the 20 metre coastal waterfall could be taken in by water taxis – and a hiking path linking The Peak to the coast via the reservoir.

The trails would finally conclude at Wah Fu and Wah Kwai where an existing shaded walkway would be complemented by an upgraded boardwalk.

Barron said: "The government has made no use of these assets so our independent proposals are designed to stimulate debate and make people think 'Why not?'"

- If you are interested in getting a leaflet on the proposal then please contact Civic Exchange on 2893 0213.



Faculty of Arts Inspires

Since its formation as one of the three founding faculties in 1912, Arts has become one of the flagship faculties of the University. The Faculty recently marked its ninetieth anniversary in a series of celebratory events spanning the year, recognizing its contributions to Hong Kong society and its commitment to nurturing intellectual and community leaders.

The diverse anniversary celebrations were organized by individual departments and the Faculty itself under the slogan 'Inspiring through Humanities'. These included the publication of *An Impossible Dream* comprising a series of essays spanning the history of the University, to scholarly lectures, musical performances, and an art exhibition.

The cornerstones, however, were the Inaugural Distinguished Alumni Lectures focussed on the theme of 'The Humanities and Society' and a homecoming banquet in November 2003, which brought back some of Hong Kong's leading figures, together again in a University forum.

For the Lectures, the Faculty welcomed back distinguished Arts alumni Dr Anson Chan, the Honorable Martin Lee, Mr John Chan and Dr Alice Lam and a broadly based audience from within the University as well as the community.

The former Chief Secretary and Lee also joined other key guests Professor Louis Cha and Dr Lee Shiu at the banquet, which saw more



Entertainment at the banquet.

than 700 alumni and friends of the Faculty enjoy a relaxing evening of reunion and reminiscence, and which resulted in funds raised for the Arts Faculty Endowment Fund through generous donations pledged for paintings and calligraphy presented to Arts.

The Acting Dean, Professor John Malpas, said: "We have been delighted and very encouraged with the success of the events and of the enthusiasm of the participants be they students, staff, alumni or community leaders, and we are now looking forward to taking the Faculty of Arts to greater heights in the fine tradition of our first ninety years."

Environmental Awards

The University's role as a pathfinder in environmental efficiency has seen it scoop up another award.

Thanks to pioneering work on energy-efficient air conditioning insulation the Estates Office received the award from the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department in November 2003.

Paul So, who is in charge of facilities management at the Estates Office, said: "We are very pleased with this award. We were the pioneers who first took part in this scheme back in 1999.

"So this is recognition of all the hard work we have put in to promote energy efficiency and conservation in Hong Kong."

The award was in acknowledgement of the improvements to the chill water plant for both the Knowles and Haking Wong Buildings but the University work has not stopped there.

They have also installed occupancy sensors, which readjust settings or turn them off.

So said: "The work goes on. We are determined to keep at the forefront of environmental efficiency."



The University is up for another award after being shortlisted for the best environmental reporting award category in the 2003 Hong Kong Eco-Business Awards.

CLP Power Hong Kong Limited and Cathay Pacific Airways Limited have been previous recipients of the award that is sponsored by the Environmental and Conservation Fund.

Marianne Tso, the University Green Officer, Des Mabbott, Director of Safety, Sheila Stimpson, from the Registry, Paul So,

Senior Assistant Director of Estates and report researcher Mandy Lao gave a presentation in December 2003 to the panel of judges. The results of the competition will be announced in mid-February.

One panel member complimented the team by saying it was one of the most reader-friendly reports that he had seen for a long time.

The event is organised by The Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, the Environmental Campaign Committee, Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce and Hong Kong Productivity Council.

SWIMS in the Swim

The windswept and interesting Swire Institute of Marine Science (SWIMS) has unveiled a \$8 million upgrade designed to boost facilities and improve the Institute's profile.

To usher in the new era SWIMS welcomed Vice-Chancellor Professor Lap-Chee Tsui for a celebration ceremony in December 2003 at the refurbished Institute, which first opened its doors in 1990.

James Hughes-Hallett, Chairman of Swire Pacific – which donated \$4 million towards the costs – was also shown around the new facilities by the Institute Honorary Director Dr Gray Williams.

Williams said: "This refurbishment has allowed us to step back a little and review what we need and our future needs.

"With our close proximity to the shores we are in a unique position to take advantage of these facilities.

"These are brilliant shores and there is nowhere else in the world quite like it."

Situated on the tip of the Cape d'Aguilar Peninsula, SWIMS has played host to generations of marine scientists eager to take advantage of the unique location.

Buffeted on one side by the full force of the open seas, the Institute is also just metres away from the sharp contrast of a comparatively sheltered bay.

Although originally autonomous, SWIMS now comes under the umbrella of the Department of Ecology and Biodiversity.

Williams, who has been at the University since the Institute's inception, believes that this has allowed the institute to rationalise its resources.

As a consequence this has meant less pressure on space.

As well as having a secure and designated library, the Institute has seen a radical redesign of the laboratories, which has meant students are given much greater bench space.

The specialist laboratory equipment has been allocated designated rooms to cut down on clutter.

For students using the aquarium, a modular shelving system has been brought in which gives students greater flexibility to design their

own tanks and experiments.

Jasmine Ng, a PhD student in marine ecology, said: "I started here a couple of years ago and the renovation has vastly improved the working environment.



James Hughes-Hallett (left) and the Vice-Chancellor.

"The lab is brand new and the design has brought better order and more space with it.

"The aquarium is very good with tanks, filters for the sea water and pumps. It means that the sea-life is in a much better environment."

For the first time, SWIMS also has emergency power as a back up in case there is problems with the power grid.

To go hand in hand with the refurbishment of the residential block, the upgrade has also seen the Institute guaranteed a fresh water supply for the first time.

Williams said: "The ceremony was really a family affair for staff and those involved with the Institute to celebrate its achievements to date and this latest stage in its development.

"I believe we have every reason to be proud of these achievements and with this upgrade I think we are in the position to further enhance our reputation and global profile."



HKU Joins International Genome Project

University researchers are involved in an international project to create a genetic map that would be used in identifying genes related to common illnesses, such as asthma, cancer, diabetes and heart disease.

The haplotype map (HapMap) is the next stage in the Human Genome Project, which identified three billion genes in humans. We share most of these genes, but at least 10 million are variations called 'SNP's' (for single nucleotide polymorphisms). The variations are often grouped in 'neighbourhoods', called haplotype blocks, and the HapMap will seek to identify these blocks.

The HapMap project involves researchers in the United States, Britain, Japan, Canada and China (including Hong Kong), who are analysing samples taken from people of African, European, Japanese and Chinese ancestry.

Hong Kong HapMap Group has been assigned two per cent of the map and the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Lap-Chee Tsui, is leading the Group, with researchers from The University of Hong Kong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

They have received \$25 million from the University Grants Committee, \$10 million from the Innovation and Technology Fund and \$2.5 million from two sponsoring companies.

The University's Genome Research Centre has also invested resources and effort in developing the technology infrastructure for this project, as well as other high throughput platforms for genomic research.

"I am glad that scientists at the three Universities are working together on this large-scale project. This will not only allow us to contribute to the international consortium and gain valuable experience in high-throughput genotyping experiments but will also provide us with the technology platform to tackle common health problems in the region," said Professor Tsui.

Title: To Construct a Haplotype Map (HapMap) of 2% of the Human Genome

The University has beaten the National University of Singapore to become the regional centre of the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) elite training programme.

Led by Don Lewis and his deputy Matt Bushehri, the team based within the Faculty of Law will now be responsible for training officials from 32 countries across the region.

Starting in June this year they will be responsible for an intensive three-month course designed to train top foreign officials in the fine detail of WTO trade policy.

Busher, a Research Assistant Professor, said: "This has been satisfying for a number of reasons. It has been a project that involved a lot of people from across the University with different disciplines and different units and has been a truly remarkable effort."

The bidding proposal was prepared by the University's Faculty of Law. The programme is multi-disciplinary in nature, and, involves expertise and support from the University's Institute of China and Global Development, Faculty of Business and Economics, Centre of Asian Studies, Centre of Urban Planning and Environmental Management, and Faculty of Education, in addition to the Faculty of Law itself.

The Faculty kick-started the idea with an application to the University to fund an East Asian International Economic Law and Policy Programme (EAIEL).

Aiming for local, regional and international impact, EAIEL was designed to develop research, training and teaching across the region.

Once they had received this funding the team used it as a launch-pad for an ambitious application to the WTO to take on their training programme, which was being regionalised.

Elite Training for WTO

Bushehri said: "We wanted to be their regional partner to build the capacity for government officials in the region for trade policy.

"We were not the only institution to apply but it boiled down to Singapore and our University.

"We then had a site visit from the WTO and what was great was that we had the full support of the other faculties and centres, senior management and the SAR government."

The hard work paid off when they received the good news late last year (2003) that they were successful. But the hard work was only beginning.

Bushehri said: "We were surprised when the WTO asked us to provide this training for 32 countries in the region: from Afghanistan right down to Pacific Islands.

"Mainland China, India, Pakistan and Malaysia are just a few of the countries who we will be inviting to send people here for training."

Participants will be taught WTO principles such as non-discrimination between local and foreign firms, liberalizing markets and the importance of an open regulatory system.

For now, however, Bushehri and his team are drawing up the programme with the help of WTO and preparing for the 30 officials expected to arrive this summer.

He said: "This can only boost Hong Kong's international profile because, although it is a truly international city, it is a bit low key in terms of information and resource.

"This is why this has been so gratifying."

India Crashes into Asia

Two University academics have teamed up to help solve one of the great mysteries of modern geology: when did India come crashing into the Asian continent and create the Himalayas.

Professor Jonathan Aitchison and Dr Jason Ali, both from the Department of Earth Sciences, and members of the Tibetan Research Group have produced convincing evidence that this event happened 30 million years ago.

This has produced seismic shift in the world of geology where conventional wisdom had it that this happened 55 million years ago.

Aitchison set his face against the orthodox view thanks to years of research in Tibet where he was studying the geological development of the unique territory.

He said: "As more and more information filtered in from my Tibet work, I was forced to develop a radical new scenario to explain how India had slammed in Asia about 30 million years ago, in the process eliminating an ocean and creating the world's most spectacular mountain belt.

"A key issue, however, is where exactly was Asia at time of the collision?"

It was only when Aitchison expounded this theory to Ali a few years ago that the final pieces of the jigsaw began to fall into place for the New Zealander.

Ali believed that he could do this through using the magnetic 'fingerprint' that rocks hold.

He said: "Rocks tell you where they were on Earth when they formed. Their minute magnetic particles act as compasses telling us how much they have subsequently moved."

What aided the academic with his continental-scale 'jigsaw' puzzle was two scientific papers which had emerged recently reporting magnetic data from the Faroe Islands and Krygyzstan.

Ali, however, came up with the key which lay in the less than glamorous surrounds of the Isle of Sheppey in south-east England.

He said: "About 15 years ago I was in Sheppey dealing with some rocks for my PhD and it occurred to me that they might be useful for this research."

After 'crunching' the numbers Ali and Aitchison came up with tectonic model and a 'palaeo' map that radically shifted the position of the Asian continent 50 million years ago.

Ali said: "The data tells you where to place the block (of continent) when Asia collided with India – there is no way they could have slammed into each other 55 million years ago.

"There was a distance of about 2000 kms between them."

The model also told them that Aitchison's hunch was right and that the collision would have happened around 30 million years ago.

Ali said: "We have just had our paper accepted for a prestigious *American Geophysical Union*

Monograph which will come out this Spring (2004).

"The wider scientific community is slowly coming on board in terms of Jonathan's concept which is quite a radical theory.

"Together we have come up with a much more convincing model whereas previous working models were based on unscientific guesstimates rather than hard information."



Drilling into the ancient ocean floor at 4 km altitude in Southern Tibet.

Sportsmen and Women Try to Forget

The Institute of Human Performance (IHP) has its eyes on the Olympics prize by developing a revolutionary form of training that teaches sportsmen and women to forget to learn.

Dr Richard Masters and his team are determined to help Hong Kong gear up for Beijing in 2008 by taking our sportsmen and women back to basics in a bid to beat the best.

Rather than clutter athletes' minds with a barrage of information and techniques, the IHP team is evolving a programme known as 'implicit motor learning'.

One routine tried at the IHP, which is based in Pokfulam, was to see how people's rugby skills held up after a vigorous exercise session on a gym bicycle.

Masters recalled: "Those who had explicit knowledge fell to pieces but those with implicit knowledge improved by comparison."

The wider implications of this work, however, go way beyond sport.

Masters believes that motor neurone disorders such as



Associate Professor Masters said: "When athletes' skills fail them for most of them it is because they are too aware of what they are doing.

"When they make a mistake it is because they are too aware of how they are doing and there is too much knowledge of skills."

What the IHP aims to do is peel back the layers of coaches, trainers and technique in order to strip away the 'anxiety factor' of over-analysing performance.

The question is how do you do this?

Masters said: "We teach people their skills in such a way as they don't know how they do it. We have found that, if anything, these peoples' skills can get even better.

"We do this by teaching somebody a new skill but giving them a secondary task such as counting backwards in sevens, which is pretty hard to do."

The intention is to build up a skill base that is more robust under pressure.

Parkinson's disease are a case in point. He said: "Sufferers trying to pick up a cup in a restaurant will become anxious and the anxiety will make matters worse. If the skill is implicit it will stand better scrutiny."

For now, however, the eyes are on getting Hong Kong's sporting talent in amongst the medals when China hosts the world's greatest games.

One example of this is a project called Analogy Learning. This is a form of implicit learning by drawing analogies in order to convey sporting skills.

Masters said: "For example on tennis coaching. We get the subjects to draw a right angle triangle with their arm holding the racket for a top spin drive. That one rule encompasses all the teaching that a coach will give but the subject does not realise they have these skills.

"It is a fast and implicit way of learning and relevant to the Olympics in 2008. We might yet use them to train Hong Kong's athletes."

Excellence in Research, 2002-2003

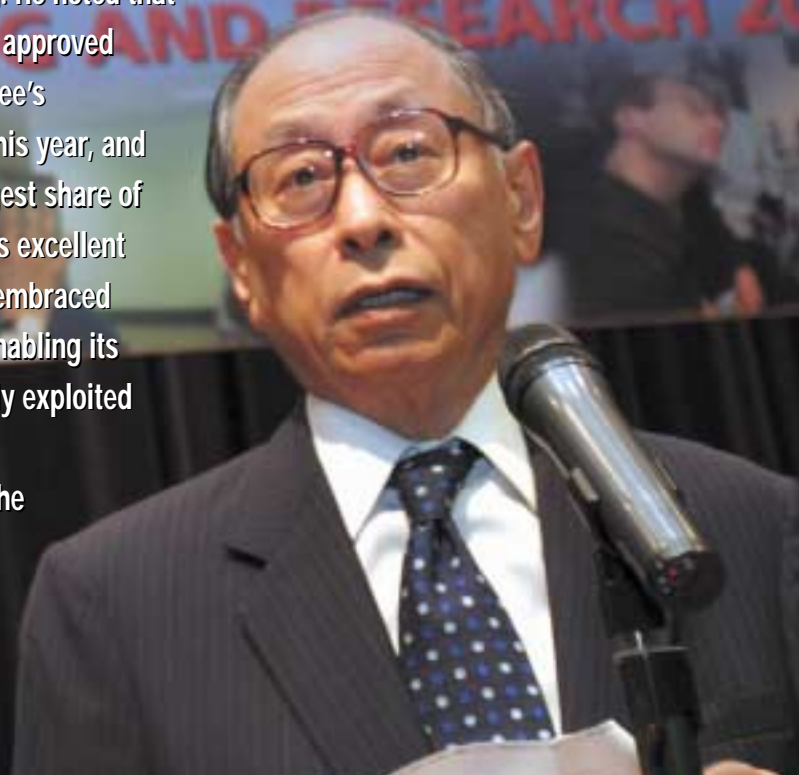
Outstanding achievement on the part of the University's researchers was recognized at the Award Presentation Ceremony for Excellence in Teaching and Research 2003, held on November 25, 2003. At the ceremony, three University Teaching Fellowships were awarded and research awards were conferred on 15 outstanding researchers.

Speaking at this fourth annual ceremony, the Vice-Chancellor Professor Lap-Chee Tsui reminded his audience that outstanding achievement in both research and teaching lay at the heart of the University's reputation.

The Vice-Chancellor noted that we lived today in a knowledge-based economy, and that such an economy required investment in developing new knowledge and people. Referring to the recently developed strategic plan for the next five years, he pledged that the University would use its advantages as a leading research-based institution to continue to develop its teaching and learning. The University, he said, would continue to educate both itself and the wider community through the path-breaking research that it undertook and published.

Dr the Hon. T.L. Yang, who gave a concluding address at the ceremony, praised the quality of the University's researchers and reminded the audience of its impressive record of publication and excellent record in competing for research funding. He noted that the University had achieved the highest number of approved research projects in the University Grants Committee's Competitive Earmarked Research Grants scheme this year, and (for the sixth time in the past seven years) the largest share of funding. He also referred warmly to the University's excellent supporting infrastructure, pointing out that it had embraced information technology enthusiastically, thereby enabling its excellent library and other facilities to be more fully exploited by both staff and students.

Further information about the recipients of the research awards and their areas of research can be obtained from the website or email address provided after each article.



Outstanding Research Student Supervisor Award

The Outstanding Research Student Supervisor Award is granted in recognition of supervisors of research postgraduate students who, through their highly effective guidance, have especially benefited their students in the pursuit of research excellence.

Professor Jim Chi Yung

Professor: Chair of Geography

Professor Jim's core research lies in the relatively new fields of urban forestry and soil, and how they can be exploited in Hong Kong. He has a secondary interest in the environmental impacts of recreation and tourism. He believes in interdisciplinary research, and is keen to explore areas that fall between traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Many of his recommendations for a greener urban environment in Hong Kong have been put into practice. He

hopes eventually to convince both the government and the community generally that it is entirely feasible to transform Hong Kong into a garden city. For his love of trees, his friends have given him the affectionate nickname sue wong — 'king of trees'.

Professor Jim firmly believes that good teaching is a process that can enlighten the giver as much as the receiver. He thinks that excellence and scholarship are contagious. He says that, as a research supervisor, he most enjoys watching his students' intellectual growth and career advancement. He feels that supervising research postgraduates is the greatest gift that a university teacher can receive.

Professor Jim received an Outstanding Researcher Award four years ago.

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Professor Wong Wing Tak

Reader, Department of Chemistry

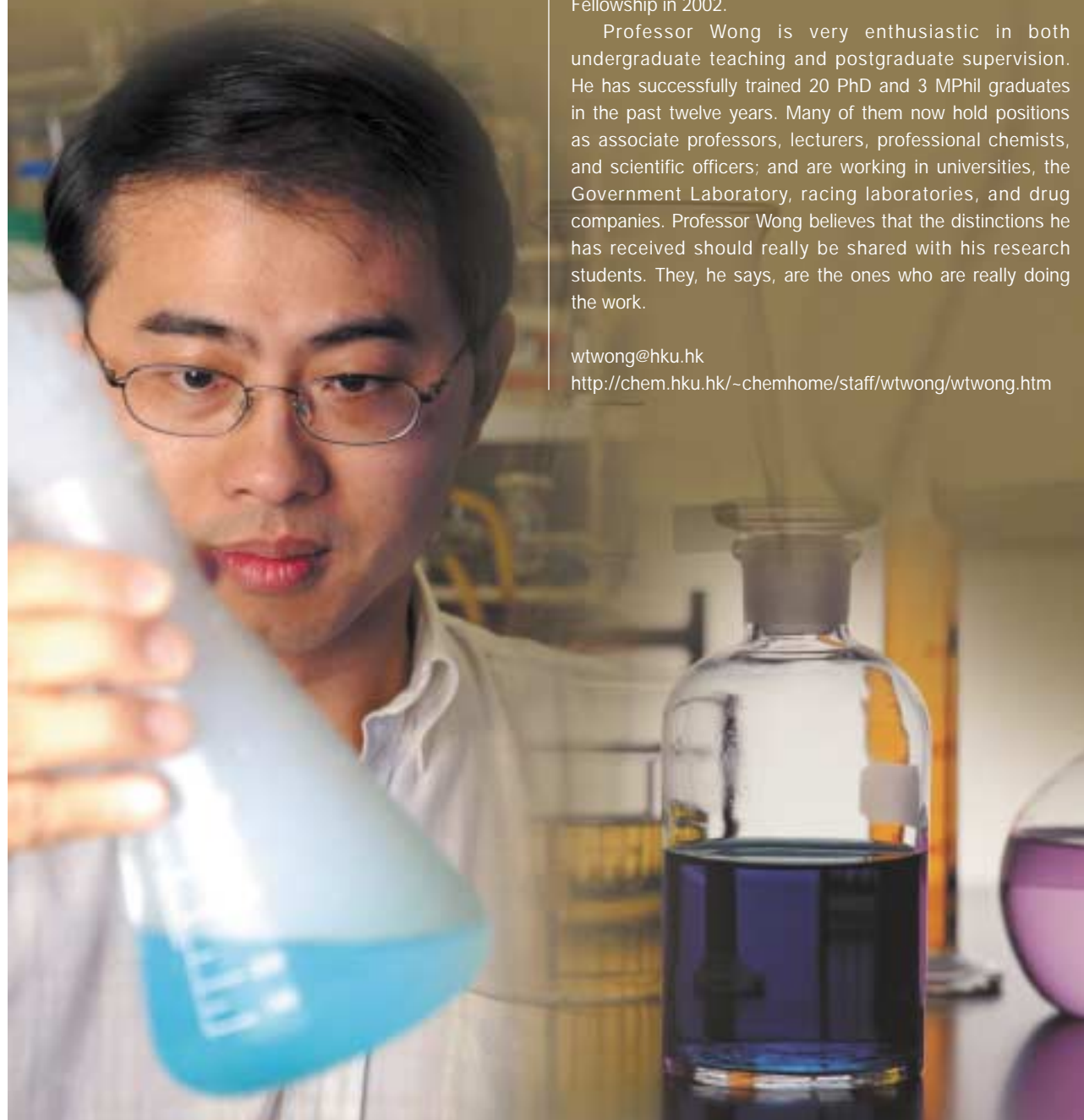
Professor Wong's major research interests include metal cluster chemistry, X-ray crystallography, lanthanide chemistry, and nanomaterials. In the past twelve years he has published more than 280 research papers in these areas. He was invited to serve on the editorial board of *Journal of*

Cluster Science in 1998, and was appointed to an editorship of *Acta Crystallographica* in 2001. He has made important contributions in the area of mixed-metal cluster chemistry, and has written several key review articles in this field. The University of Cambridge awarded him the degree of Doctor of Science in 2000, in recognition of his research accomplishment. He also won an Outstanding Young Researcher Award in 2001, and a Croucher Senior Research Fellowship in 2002.

Professor Wong is very enthusiastic in both undergraduate teaching and postgraduate supervision. He has successfully trained 20 PhD and 3 MPhil graduates in the past twelve years. Many of them now hold positions as associate professors, lecturers, professional chemists, and scientific officers; and are working in universities, the Government Laboratory, racing laboratories, and drug companies. Professor Wong believes that the distinctions he has received should really be shared with his research students. They, he says, are the ones who are really doing the work.

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Outstanding Young Researcher Award

The Outstanding Young Researcher Award is given to researchers of promise who have attained excellence in their research performance within 10 years of receiving their PhD or equivalent.

Dr Chau Kwok Tong

Associate Professor, Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering

Dr Chau is particularly interested in multidisciplinary electric vehicle technology (especially permanent magnet brushless motor drives, soft-switching power converters, battery management systems and vehicular system integration). In these areas, he has authored a book, published over 70 international journal papers, and presented over 100 international conference papers. His book *Modern Electric Vehicle Technology*, published by the Oxford University Press in 2001, is the first monograph on comprehensive electric

vehicle technology. He is also a co-editor of the *Journal of Asian Electric Vehicles*.

Dr Chau is the Honorary Director of the International Research Centre for Electric Vehicles. Dr Chau believes that he is the catalyst of this research group, that the group is the fuel for the advancement of electric vehicles, and that electric vehicles are the driving force for a better environment. Basically, his research philosophy is to strive for a better environment. His ultimate dream is to see a world in which all cars are electric vehicles with absolute-zero emissions.

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Dr Steven Chen Feng

Associate Professor, Department of Botany

Research in Dr Chen's laboratory focuses on microalgal biotechnology and modernization of traditional Chinese medicines. Dr Chen is particularly interested in understanding how heterotrophic biosynthesis takes place in algae, which may lead to a controllable process for manufacturing algal products. The idea of biosynthesis seriously challenges the conventional wisdom that algae must be cultivated photosynthetically, using light as an energy source and carbon dioxide as a carbon source. In recent years, Dr Chen has also investigated how bioactive ingredients from Chinese medicinal plants can be used for the treatment of various diseases, in collaboration with

colleagues in the Faculty of Medicine and other institutions worldwide. Since joining the University, Dr Chen has edited three books and one special issue, and authored over 120 papers in SCI-listed journals.

While Dr Chen believes that collaboration among members of his laboratory is a key to success, he also encourages his students to think and analyze scientific issues critically and independently. He always tells his students "To other human beings, you should be as nice as possible, but to scientific problems, you should be as critical as possible".

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Dr Li Yuguo

Associate Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering

Dr Li's research interests lie at the interface between indoor environments and thermo-fluid mechanics. His current research interests at the University include architectural fluid dynamics and dynamical phenomena such as bifurcation in internal flows. He has been fascinated by the very rich physical phenomena in building airflows. His work on a theory of natural ventilation has provided a design basis to engineers and architects. His expertise and advice were called upon during the recent SARS scare, and he is now working in the exciting new area of

engineering control of respiratory infectious diseases in buildings.

After his first degree in engineering and PhD in physics (fluid mechanics), Dr Li has always benefited from inter-disciplinary research. He is fond of the saying "If you want a new idea, read an old book". Or, to put it another way, "Read a book in another discipline," or "Make a friend in another field." Dr Li also believes in the value of collaboration with colleagues in Hong Kong and overseas. He particularly enjoys working with his research students, as he regards them also as excellent sources for fresh ideas.

<http://hkumea.hku.hk/staff.htm>



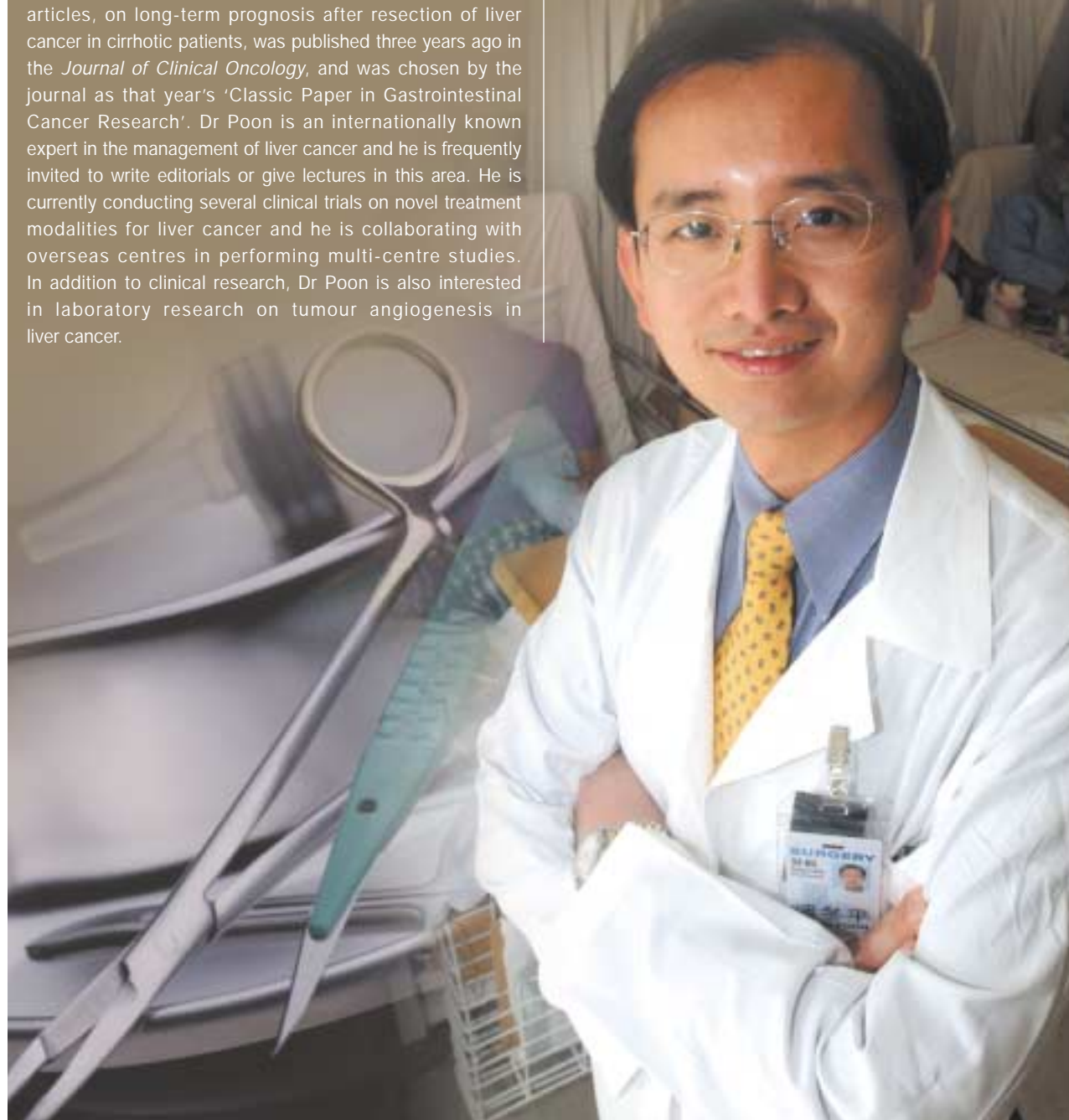
Dr Ronnie Poon Tung Ping

Associate Professor, Department of Surgery

Dr Poon is a specialist in hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgery. His research interest is the management of various hepatobiliary and pancreatic diseases, in particular liver cancer. He is the author of over 100 articles in international journals, and has written seven book chapters. One of his articles, on long-term prognosis after resection of liver cancer in cirrhotic patients, was published three years ago in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, and was chosen by the journal as that year's 'Classic Paper in Gastrointestinal Cancer Research'. Dr Poon is an internationally known expert in the management of liver cancer and he is frequently invited to write editorials or give lectures in this area. He is currently conducting several clinical trials on novel treatment modalities for liver cancer and he is collaborating with overseas centres in performing multi-centre studies. In addition to clinical research, Dr Poon is also interested in laboratory research on tumour angiogenesis in liver cancer.

Dr Poon feels that the new generation of clinical academics should actively participate in basic research in this genomic era. He believes that clinical academics are in a strategic position to translate new findings in laboratory research to bedside applications in the diagnosis and management of diseases.

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Dr Tse Hung Fat

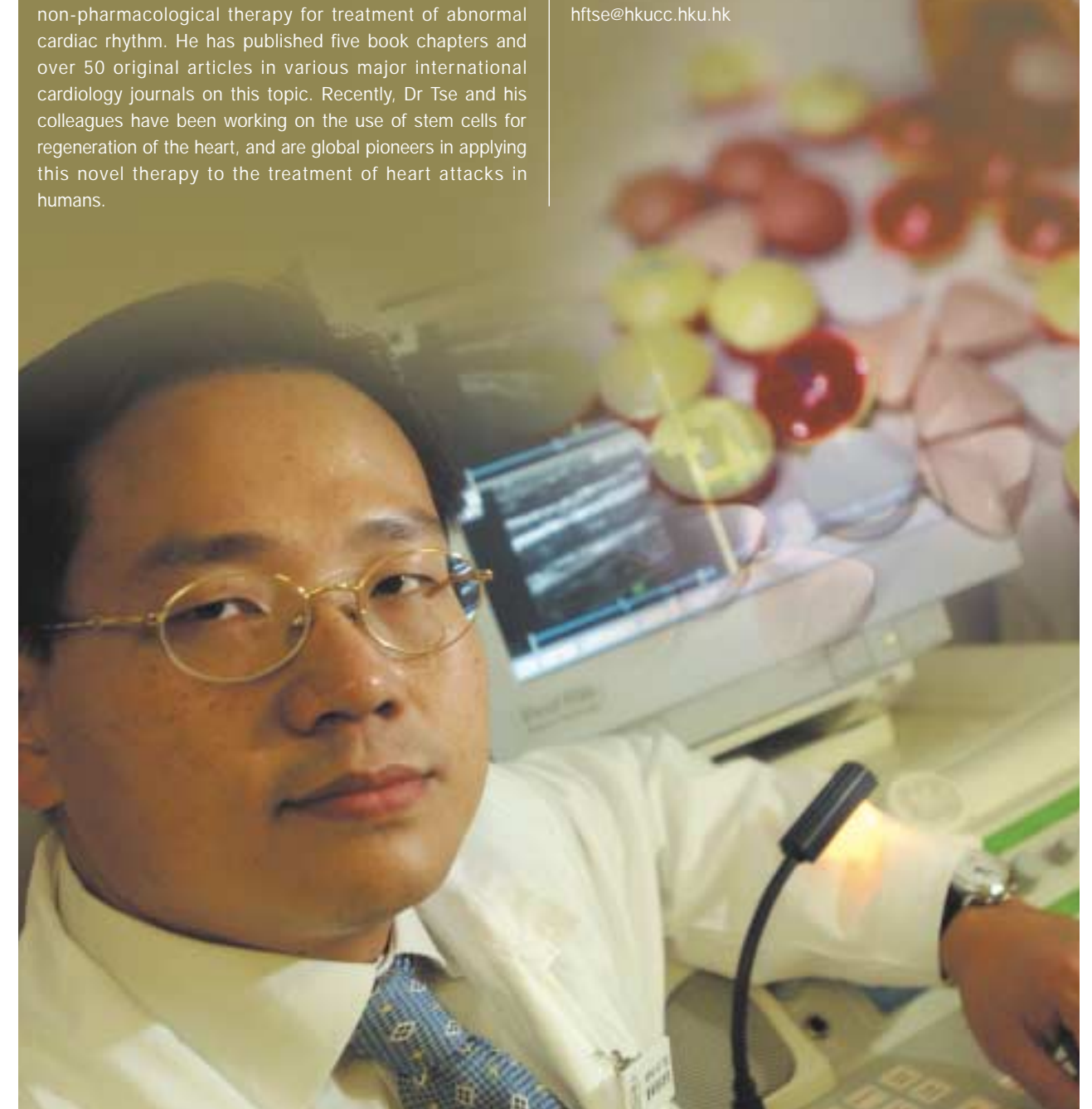
Associate Professor, Department of Medicine

Dr Tse is particularly interested in the development of novel therapies for treatment of cardiovascular diseases. He has established the first large animal laboratory for research and training on cardiovascular medicine in Hong Kong. In the past few years, he has focused on the development of new non-pharmacological therapy for treatment of abnormal cardiac rhythm. He has published five book chapters and over 50 original articles in various major international cardiology journals on this topic. Recently, Dr Tse and his colleagues have been working on the use of stem cells for regeneration of the heart, and are global pioneers in applying this novel therapy to the treatment of heart attacks in humans.

Dr Tse believes that close collaboration between different disciplines (scientists, engineers, and clinicians) within the University is vital important for success in the proactive development of translational medical and bioengineering research.

Dr Tse is currently the Director of the University's Sun Chieh Yeh Cardiovascular Research and Training Laboratory.

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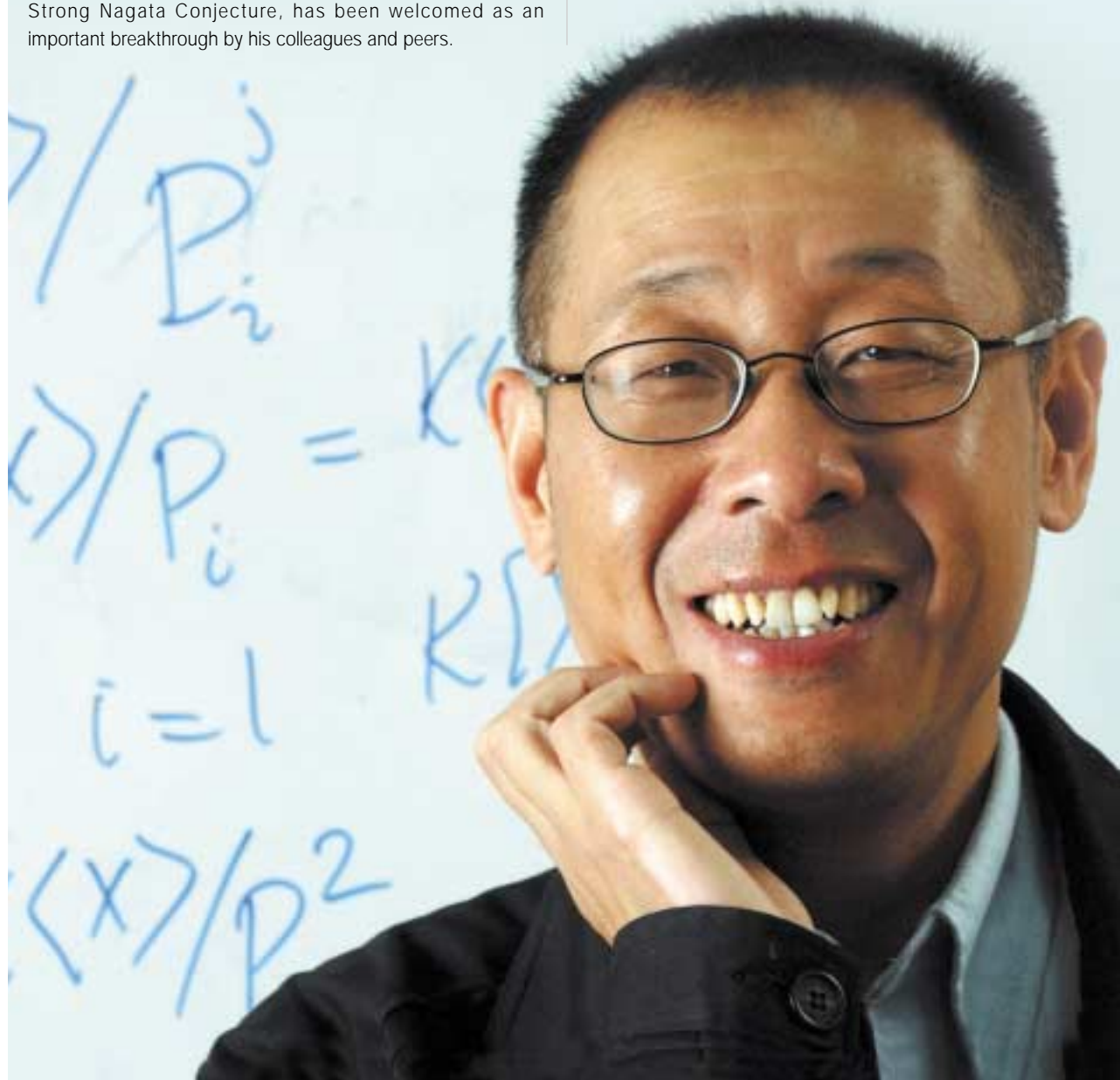
Dr Yu Jietai

Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics

Dr Yu's area of interest is Affine Algebraic Geometry and Computational Algebra. This is an important and flourishing area of research. At one level, it involves purely mathematical problems such as the famous Jacobian Conjecture, but it also has a strong Computer Science component. Dr Yu has recently done some important work which has established him as a leading figure in this area. In particular, his recent resolution (with U. Umirbaev) of a long-standing crux in this field, the Strong Nagata Conjecture, has been welcomed as an important breakthrough by his colleagues and peers.

Five years ago Dr Yu established the very successful Combinatorial and Computational Algebra Research Programme at this University. Since its inception the programme has attracted distinguished mathematicians from all over the world.

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Dr Simon Zhao Xiaobin

Associate Professor, Department of Geography

Dr Zhao formerly worked in the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the State Planning Commission, and was involved in many national key and award-winning projects. He was a visiting fellow of MIT and of the University of Washington, and subsequently established three research institutions — the Centre for China's Urban and Regional Studies, the International Centre for China's Development Studies in HKU, and an International Working Group funded by the Albany-based Urban China Research Network.

Dr Zhao is an urban and regional specialist who focuses on China's urban and regional development issues and geography of trade and finance. His works are largely policy-related and

practically influential. He was influential in making the case for China's current 'Go West' Development Strategy. His pioneer research on urban control resulted in a relaxation of the policy for controlling the development of large cities in China. More recently, his research on the implications of China's accession to the WTO, the CEPA agreement, and the development of national financial centres, have aroused lively debate in China and foreshadowed policy changes in Hong Kong. Dr Zhao is a multi-disciplinary scholar and has published widely in geography, planning, economic, and business journals.

Dr Zhao loves being a teacher and enjoys the company of his students. He also loves beer and golf.

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Outstanding Researcher Award

The Outstanding Researcher Award is conferred for exceptional research accomplishments of international merit.

Professor Lau Yu Lung

Professor: Chair of Paediatrics and Head of the Department of Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine

Professor Lau is particularly interested in the study of paediatric infectious diseases and immune responses and the genetics involved in immunologic and infectious diseases. He and his colleagues have established the disease burden of several childhood infectious diseases, and their findings have been used by the HKSAR Government in its formulation of

public health policy. Research at his laboratory has focused on developmental immunology using cord blood as a model, and he has recently been considering why infections such as bird flu and SARS in children result in much lower death rate than adults. His research group has also identified several disease susceptibility genes in lupus, tuberculosis and SARS, which may help in the management of patients.

Professor Lau believes that research plays an important role in ensuring a high standard of clinical care for patients and high-quality decisions in public health. He also encourages his students to be independent thinkers, which is the goal of university education. He firmly believes that teaching and learning are inseparable.

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Professor Victor Li On Kwok

Professor: Chair of Information Engineering

Professor Li pioneered the study of wavelength-convertible optical networks. In fiber optical communications, digital information is represented by light pulses of different wavelengths (or colours). Conflicts occur when multiple transmissions at the same wavelength share the same fibre. By devising a way whereby a transmission can be changed from

one wavelength to another, Professor Li has greatly improved the capacity of the system. More recently, he has obtained government and industry support to develop a complete 3G handset, and to transfer 3G technologies to industry.

Professor Li is Managing Director of Versitech Ltd, the University's technology transfer and commercial arm. His advice is routinely sought by civil servants, industrialists, and academic organizations, and he has lectured and consulted extensively around the world. He says, "For a researcher, the biggest satisfaction is to see one's research results put into practice."

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Professor Ng Tung Sang

Professor: Chair of Electronic Engineering and Dean of the Faculty of Engineering

Professor Ng is an expert in mobile communication technologies, especially in CDMA which uses spread spectrum techniques. In recognition of his contributions to signal design and processing in spread spectrum communications systems in a series of papers in *IEEE Transactions*, he was elected a Fellow of the IEEE. He is currently an editor of *IEEE Transactions on Mobile Computing*.

Professor Ng is very active in international professional engineering activities. He was the Vice President of Region

10 (Asia including India and China), IEEE Circuits and Systems Society for two terms; a member of the IEE President's Strategic Working Party on future governance and developments; and the General Chair of the 1997 IEEE symposium on Circuits and Systems in Hong Kong with over 1000 participants.

He was awarded an honorary doctorate by Australia's University of Newcastle in 1997 in recognition of his contributions to engineering education. He was also awarded the Senior Croucher Foundation Fellowship in 1999, and the IEEE Millennium Medal in 2000.

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Professor Yang Dan

Reader, Department of Chemistry

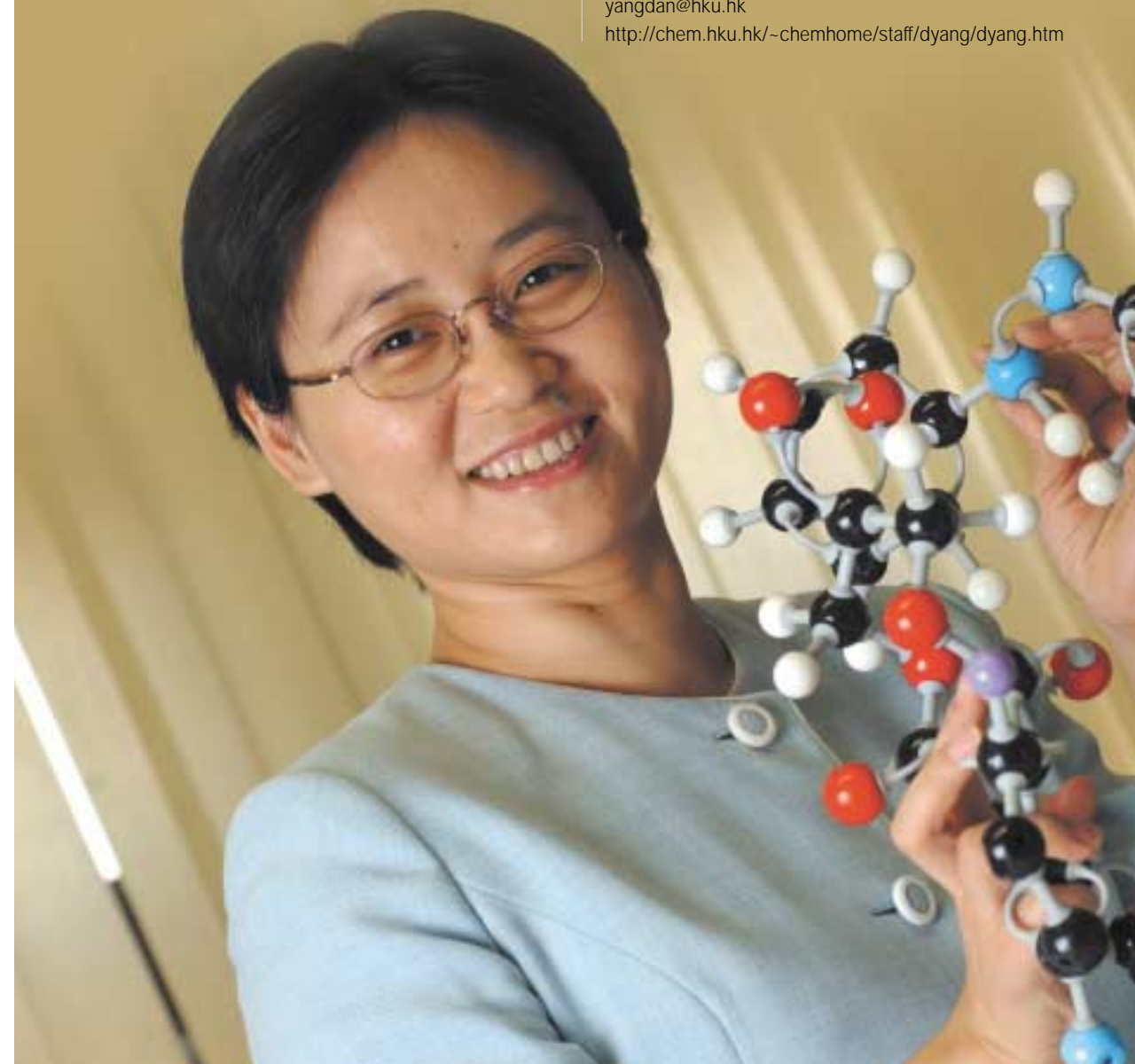
Professor Yang is particularly interested in the development of efficient and environmentally-friendly methods for drug synthesis. Besides contributing to basic research in synthetic organic chemistry, she and her fellow-researchers at HKU have developed a catalyst in the synthesis of a key intermediate for Diltizem, a billion-dollar drug for the treatment of high blood pressure and chest pain. This has been successfully applied by a Japanese pharmaceutical company. She is currently applying the tools of organic chemistry to tackle challenging problems in

cell biology, proteomics, and genomics.

Professor Yang has won two international awards: the Mr and Mrs Sun Chan Memorial Award in Organic Chemistry (in 2000), and the Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation's Unrestricted Grants in Synthetic Organic Chemistry (in 2001). She also received an Outstanding Young Researcher Award in 1999, a Croucher Senior Research Fellowship in 2001, and the National Outstanding Young Scholar Award in 2003. She has given invited lectures at prestigious universities around the world, including Harvard, Stanford, Yale, Columbia, Princeton, UC-Berkeley, Chicago, UCLA, and Tokyo.

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Professor Yuen Kwok Yung

Professor: Chair of Infectious Diseases and Head of the Department of Microbiology

Professor Yuen's particular area of research interest is emerging infectious diseases in South East Asia. He has been the leader in the infectious disease training of both clinical microbiologists and physicians for the last 15 years. He divides his time between identifying important medical problems related to emerging infectious diseases through his work with patients, and in research and teaching to resolve these problems. He has published more than two hundred

papers on the clinical and microbiological aspects of emerging infectious diseases, including SARS, avian flu, and the newly-discovered diarrhoeal bacteria *Laribacter hongkongensis*.

His work in these fields has been recognized by various institutions. He has been appointed a Joint Professor of the Fudan University Medical College and the Nanjing University Medical College, and has received honorary professorships from two other Mainland tertiary institutions. He also advises the HKSAR Government as a member of several important local committees, including the Advisory Council on Food and Environmental Hygiene, the Task Force Group on SARS, and the Expert Working Group on Avian Influenza.

Professor Yuen says he feels at home with microbes, and values the opportunities they provide him for research.

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Dr David Zhang Dian

Associate Professor, Department of Geography

Since he embarked on his academic career 20 years ago, Dr Zhang's research interests have straddled a range of related fields, including geology, geomorphology, hydrochemistry, archaeology and other environmental sciences. He has applied these interests to China, Europe and America, but in recent years his research has focused particularly on the Tibetan Plateau. He recently discovered and dated 19 ice-age human handprints and footprints in this region, with help from Dr Li Sheng Hua in the Department of Earth Sciences. This major scientific discovery has challenged a number of orthodox

scientific and historical theories, and generated great interest in both the scientific community and the public at large.

Dr Zhang believes that collaboration is the best way to achieve great success in research. His recent advance on alkaline rain theory is also a good example of teamwork. He is presently working on a study of the relationship between climate change and the incidence of warfare in China in the past millennium, and is also pursuing studies of deserts and high mountain regions with colleagues both in the Department and in other institutes. He is particularly willing to contribute his broad knowledge to his students and society.

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Teaching Fellowship Awards

The latest round of awards for teaching excellence have come and gone but *The Bulletin* has delved behind the scenes to ask some of the teachers and students about what makes a winner.

The University Teaching Fellowship is awarded to acknowledge the outstanding contributions that members of staff make towards teaching within the University.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor John Spinks, who oversees the scheme, said that the complex evaluation process ensured that the scheme went beyond being a 'popularity contest'.

He said: "We are looking to highlight quality teaching and contributions to the standard of learning in the University and trying to ID individuals who can be exemplars of good practice.

"It is extremely difficult to ... home in on just a few because the quality is so high."

Dr Lam Tai Pong, Associate Professor, Family Medicine Unit of the Department of Medicine, said: "Teaching should be the opportunity for students to stand up and learn rather than teachers simply standing up and saying what they want.

"In teaching sessions I identify their deficiencies and by throwing the right questions I can see how they respond and help them realise their weaknesses and act on them.

"I also research medical education developments and attend education seminars to gain a conceptual framework.

"In medicine it is very important to have positive role models because, after all, we are looking after human beings not machines and this is something my students must understand.

"They must get the agreement of patients through understanding and cooperation.

"Obviously I am very pleased with this award and felt it was a great honour but I also see it as an endorsement of the faculty's decision to introduce a new curriculum in 1997.

His student Rudolph Chow said: "I have known Dr Lam for seven years. I started off as a colleague but later became a student on two postgraduate courses: Postgraduate diploma in community geriatrics and postgraduate diploma in community psychological medicine.

"Tai Pong is a very kind man who always helps students and is always there for you. But there is also his teaching style. Instead of rote learning he uses the time to illustrate principles and asks many questions and promotes interactive teaching."



Ms Juanita Ho, Teaching Consultant, Department of Social Work and Social Administration, said: "A few years ago we changed to a problem based learning (PBL) curriculum. The philosophy is to encourage self-directed learning because our mission is to encourage life long learning.

"There are two parts to the teaching. The first is this PBL which focuses on group work. We will have a few case details but then it is up to the student to find the materials and references to present at the next tutorial for presentation and discussion. My role is as a facilitator rather than a teacher.

"Then there is the practicum group which involves a real task. Students will work on projects with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) where the group will try to assess the NGO and write up their proposals.

"This is a really exciting area and with PBL I can feel a different momentum when you are teaching these experiential projects.

"With such a diverse set of students, each with their own experiences and perspectives, they can contribute different ideas. A lot of my teaching stems from my own experiences as a student.

"To have my work recognised has been a great honour."

Joanna Lai, who is a recent master in social work graduate and is now working as a social worker, said: "She is very impressive, very talented and organised, with a fast and analytical mind. She can lead a group well and insured that whenever the lesson was coming to an end we had discussions to review the session. This is important because it can be quite critical. You are forced to assess the contributions of yourself and your classmates which can be difficult. But without this critical input you will not improve.

"Her group skills were very strong and we learned a lot from her on group dynamics but at the same time she was very caring. I remember during my second year – even though she no longer taught me – she was only too willing to help me out when I went to her with questions or problems."



Juanita Ho

Dr Henry Lau, Associate Professor, Department of Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering, said: "I really try to put student-centred learning into action: What the student feels is the most important aspect of capturing knowledge. In particular, as an engineer they need practical exposure and practical case studies to appreciate the abstract knowledge we deliver."

"There are lots of 'hands on' projects, competitions, firm visits and on-site surveys. I ask them to build models prototypes and enter competitions to both apply and appreciate what they have learnt. I also use new technology to deliver courses through on-line web-based e-learning systems. Students can, for example, go into a virtual environment inside the company. Different modes of learning help to capture knowledge."

"I am pleased to have the recognition of the years of effort spent on this and also feel it vindicates the importance of experience sharing because I do not come from an academic background but a work one."

Student Albert Ko, from his department, said: "I have known him for two years since I first joined HKU. I think he has a very good very strong academic background and is a willing teacher who is prepared to spend time with students to a level that most supervisors are not prepared to do."

"There are lots of times when students look for supervisors only to find that they are often too busy with administrative duties. But Lau spends lot of time with students."

"I think he is a mentor who creates team spirit among research students. Abroad research students work together towards common goal and this is quite uncommon in Hong Kong."

"Lau, however, creates this kind of cooperative environment."



Do Primates See Red?

When Peter Lucas developed his groundbreaking theory of why our primate cousins developed colour vision he had no idea of what he was letting himself in for.

The anatomist spent five nerve wracking months in war-torn Uganda painstakingly piecing together evidence that not fruit but leaves have been the key evolutionary factor.

Lucas said: "I spent five months in Kibale. It became quite dangerous with remnants of Idi Amin's army, Muslim separatists from the north and various other units."

"The mountains were nearby and on the border between Congo and Uganda where this rag-tag army were coming down to do raids."

"I had just come down to Kibale and a few people were killed and then this army became trapped by the Ugandan army. It was pretty frightening at times."

A Reader in the Department of Anatomy, Lucas had long been interested in the evolution of man but in 1998 began to focus on the development of colour vision.

Humans are rare among mammals in having trichromatic vision, which revolves around a two colour axis: red-green and yellow-blue – which intersect at right angles.

All colours we see are a variation on this axis.

Early mammals had poor colour vision because they were largely nocturnal animals but 90 million years ago the order of primates – including humans – developed.

As humans evolved they developed red-green vision, in addition to the yellow-blue axis they inherited. Not all monkeys, however, have been so lucky.

While all old world monkeys (OWM) also got red-green vision most new world monkeys (NWM) did not. The questions is why?

Conventionally scientists thought this was to do with monkeys being able to discriminate between ripe and unripe fruit.

When it was discovered that one species of NWM had developed trichromatic vision completely separately from OWM, however, Lucas was intrigued.

He said: "Fruits are not always available so what are you going to eat when they are not around? Leaves are the critical resource that monkeys need to survive when fruit are not around."

"In tropics 50 per cent of young leaves are red. My view was that they developed colour vision to find edible leaves."

It was only when *Nature* magazine published a paper in 2001 that Lucas's theory began to get the notice of the wider scientific community.

But last year (2003) has seen the full fruits of Lucas's global research published in *Evolution* magazine.

What his research team witnessed was evolution in action.

They found that while some primates possessed routine trichromatic vision – colour vision as standard – others saw variations within the same species.

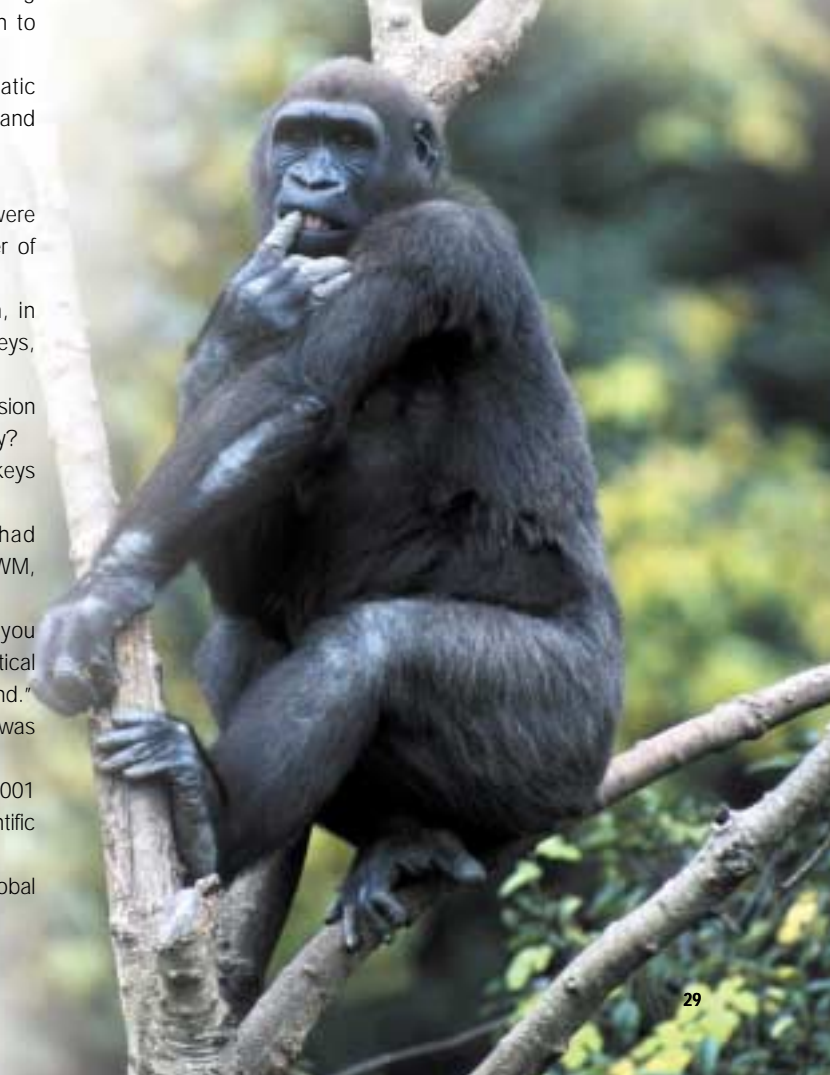
Some would be dichromatic – blind to red-green – while others were trichromatic.

Lucas said: "Primates are very complex and there are still evolutionary changes taking place."

"For example the distribution of red-green colour blindness seem to have a geographic factor because it becomes more prevalent the further you are from the equator."

For the time being Lucas has put a stop to the research but he believes his theories will stand the tests of time.

He said: "This is extremely important in terms of understanding abilities and senses and I think that it shows there is a place for intuitive research in these days of what I consider to be often formulaic research."



The Impact of Revolution

China needs to be confident enough to pick and mix from the best of the world's diverse cultures as well as its own if it is to keep growing and fulfill the vision of Sun Yat-sen.

This was the key message of the world-renowned scholar Professor Wang Gungwu as he marked the unveiling of the Sun Yat-sen statue with a distinguished lecture.

Returning to the University where he served as Vice-Chancellor, Wang stressed that China could only be strong if it drew strength from a broad base of cultures.

Relying solely on China's traditional 'political culture' of Confucian orthodoxy of elite officials who rule and the rest, who are ruled, was no longer enough.

Wang said: "New opportunities to remake a different but no less vibrant Chinese package of cultures can be found everywhere.

"The impact of the revolution started by Sun Yat-sen shows that political culture is but one part of Chinese heritage."

To forge a future political culture China needed to look to political participation and urban populism, as well as commercial competition and scientific imagination.

In his lecture – *Chinese Political Culture: The Impact of Revolution* – Wang pointed at the life and times of Sun as proof positive of the effect of diverse cultures.

Sun, Wang argued, was shaped by a world in which the western powers were conquering and colonising the world thanks to industrialisation, commerce and science.

Wang said: "This comes out most clearly in his statement about the secret of European wealth and power.

"Ren neng jinqicai, di neng jinqili, wu neng jinqiyong, huo neng jinqiliu"

"If I may paraphrase this, it means 'maximising talent in human resources, maximising benefits from natural resources, maximising the use of material products, and maximising the flow of cash and goods'."

Sun went further than his contemporaries, noted Wang, by stressing the importance of science and invention, and support

and protection for merchants and commerce.

It did not stop there argued Wang.

Sun also looked to better transport, trade, manufacturing and, crucially, modern farming techniques to help China compete on a level footing.

But Wang believed that external factors alone do not help explain Sun's development.

From a humble peasant background, Sun came up against the suffocating political culture of mandarins and their rigid brand of Confucianism.

In his late 20s Sun lobbied senior Qing officials with his reformist but conventional ideas but quickly realised that the son of peasant would never capture their ear.

Wang said: "Thus he came to realise that the prevailing mindset was probably incapable of change and this led him to abandon his faith in the dominant political culture."

Within a matter of months Sun went to Hawaii where he set up a revolutionary society and on returning to China began agitating for rebellion in Guangzhou.

Thus Sun was set on a path of populism – appealing to the masses to overthrow the old regime – and showing an infinite capacity to adapt to changing demands.

Wang said this "qualifies him to be called the first modern professional politician of China, certainly the first who consciously saw himself as a revolutionary."

This meant Sun setting up his own revolutionary party but the Guangdong activist soon realised that in China political power rested in the barrel of a gun.

Once deposed by China's warlords Sun never regained power but Wang believed Sun would surely approve of a nation where modern education, trade and science prosper.

For China, Wang believed, the lessons of the past also hold lessons for the future.

Wang said: "Even with a revolution, a great heritage is never lost. Its inspiration is always on offer and the best of it will invariably survive."



Secret Agents Rescue University Seal

From the Triad infested dens, through the checkpoints of the Imperial Japanese Army and onto Free China, the escape of the University Seal has the stamp of fiction about it.

But only now – 61 years later – is the true story of the two Hong Kong agents who helped smuggle the seal out of the occupied colony beginning to emerge into the light.

It centres on the incredible bravery of Agent 36 Lau Teng Kee and Agent 63 Raymond Chang who found themselves working for the secret British Army Aid Group (BAAG).

This was set up in China to help escapees from occupied Hong Kong, aid the Chinese forces and gather intelligence on the Japanese through a network of agents.

Lau was sent into the devastated colony in 1942 to make contact with RC Robertson, who was a Professor of Pathology at the University and who had been asked to hide the Seal.

The University authorities were eager to keep it safe because it was sole remaining piece of regalia from its inception in 1913 and used to validate all contracts, as well as degrees.

At great risk to himself, Lau made contact with Robertson at the then Bacteriology Institute of Hong Kong Medical Department – now the Museum of Medical Sciences – where he was watched by guards.

Lau, however, was then forced to seek out the help of Triads in Yau Ma Tei because he was not confident that he could smuggle the heavy Seal out of Hong Kong.

When the seal failed to arrive in Waichow, where the BAAG regional HQ was stationed, Lau was forced to return to territory to find out what had gone wrong.

This time Lau returned with a companion – Raymond Chang, Chang was a former University student and gunner with the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Force who had managed to escape arrest in the aftermath of the invasion.

The pair discovered that the frightened smuggler had been forced to bury the seal in the face of repeated security sweeps by the Japanese army.

While Lau managed to round up 23 University students and lead them out of the territory and into comparative safety, Chang smuggled out their belongings, including the seal.

This incredible story has only emerged thanks to the pioneering research of Lady Elizabeth Ride, whose father Lt Col Lindsay Tasman Ride headed the BAAG in China.

Ride, who was brought up in Hong Kong but now lives in Norway, is forensically pulling together all the records of the BAAG, which has largely been forgotten since the war.

At a lecture given at the University in November, Ride praised



Lady Elizabeth Ride with the Seal.

the 'ordinary men and women of Hong Kong' who made up the vast majority of BAAG agents.

Ride said: "I think it is important that the actions of these people are not forgotten. This story is a perfect illustration of the bravery of people who worked for BAAG."

This bravery would, however, eventually cost Lau his life.

Recruited by the British Special Operations Executive, he was landed in Japanese occupied Malaya by submarine.

He and his party were never heard from again, and it is presumed that they were executed, probably in Changi Prison in Singapore.

Chang is believed to have survived the war and returned to Hong Kong.

- If you know what happened to Raymond Chang could you please contact Lady Elizabeth Ride c/o Dr Peter Cunich, Department of History.

Families Triumph

The setting was the Hong Kong Coliseum, the event was The University of Hong Kong's 168th Congregation and the object was to turn 5,185 graduands into graduates. The Pro-Chancellor of the University, Dr the Hon. David K.P. Li, presided and the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Lap-Chee Tsui, addressed the assembly.

In the audience were 193 graduands at doctoral level, 1,956 at master level and 3,036 ready to receive bachelor degrees in front of their families.

But before the ceremony got underway *The Bulletin* decided to talk to a cross section of graduands and their families to find out their personal stories.

For Chick Ka Shing the Congregation was not just a personal triumph it was also a family triumph as he was the first in his family to reach university.

The Food and Nutritional Science graduate was present in Hung Hom along with his mother Wing Tsin and his aunt Siu Mei to witness a piece of family history.

Mainland migrants – Ka Shing came over when he was seven-years-old – Wing Tsin, a part time maid, has spent the last seven years nursing her husband Kwung Ming.

Chick said: "I am very proud especially for my mother because it has been a very tough time with my father suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

"I feel so grateful to my mother because she has had to bring up not just me but my two younger sisters and young brother as well.

"Although she does not show her emotion easily I can tell you there were a few tears shed today."

Now with health chain OSIM, Chick is helping develop a new health food line but has also developed fond memories of his time at the University.

He said: "It was a most enjoyable time and provided me with plenty of opportunities to learn as well as participate in extra curricular activities.



Chick Ka Shing

"I went to Australia for a month and it was really good. I met a lot of people from around the world and got the chance to travel around the country."

Brought up in Sham Shui Po and educated in Ming Kei College, in Mongkok, Chick now bears the burden of acting as a role model for his younger siblings.

Wing said: "I am very pleased. We came to Hong Kong to see our children get a good education and I always believed my son would succeed.

"We did not have to push him too hard either."

With a master's degree in journalism under his belt Timothy Leemaster feels his decision to move to Hong Kong from California has been fully vindicated.

The San Diego native has completed a two-year part-time course at the University after setting his heart on seeing a slice of Asia, as well as studying.

Leemaster said: "I came for the whole China story and wanted to develop a knowledge of Asia and Asian economics.

"I thought studying here would be better."

Combining teaching English as a second language with his studies, Leemaster also managed to fit in internships with well-known media empires.

These included the *Far Eastern Economic Review* and Bloomberg, which the University of California: Los Angeles graduate called the 'highlight' of his stint in Hong Kong.

He said: "I am very happy with the professors and it was a very good programme, which was well geared to what I was looking for."

His parents Sharon and Paley Leemaster had come over from the US for the ceremony. Mrs Leemaster said: "We came just for this. We are proud he is graduating with distinction."

Just to prove his commitment to Hong Kong, Leemaster has even been learning Cantonese.



Timothy Leemaster



Cheung Man Lee

A graduate with a bachelor degree in Management Studies, Cheung Man Lee will not pretend that balancing work and study was an easy task but she was determined to enjoy the congregation.

With her parents Cheung Ming Wo and Sze Oi Hing in attendance, Cheung admitted that graduating was a relief after putting in more than 20 months hard work.

The insurance manager said: "It was very hard studying at the same time as working and I found the workload heavy but there have been many benefits.

"I have made many friends in many different industries and now if I have any problems I can call them up for help.

"I also enjoyed the lectures. They really helped expand my mind."

Dental surgeon Helena Wong is no stranger to the University, after all she graduated from HKU and she likes it so much she keeps coming back for more.

This time round, Wong has got a masters degree in dental surgery after a two-year course that balanced her job as a private practice dentist.

She said: "It was a challenge to combine a full time course with working at the weekend but I need the knowledge that education brings.

"Certainly during the masters course I realised I had and have a lot more to learn. I am just beginning on the path to another level.

"Maybe next year I will try to start an advanced diploma."

Now she has graduated Wong is working seven days a week, again, but this time in practices across Hong Kong.

The congregation ceremony was a rare break for Wong and with her parents Peter Wong and Susanna Lung in attendance, there was even time for family pictures.

Mr Wong said: "We are very happy and proud that she has got this Masters."



Helena Wong



Kong Cheuk Ting

Kong Cheuk Ting was celebrating the completion of a three year doctorate degree in biochemistry with the Department of Pathology.

Along with her mother Kwok Kin Min and father Kong Ni Kwai, she was taking pictures minutes before the ceremony began in the colliseum.

Kong said: "I am still working at the university as a research associate so I must like it.

"Obviously I am very pleased to have got the doctorate and I really enjoyed the work."

Her father said: "We are very proud of her. She worked very hard and this is a reflection of determination and dedication."

The Allure of Language

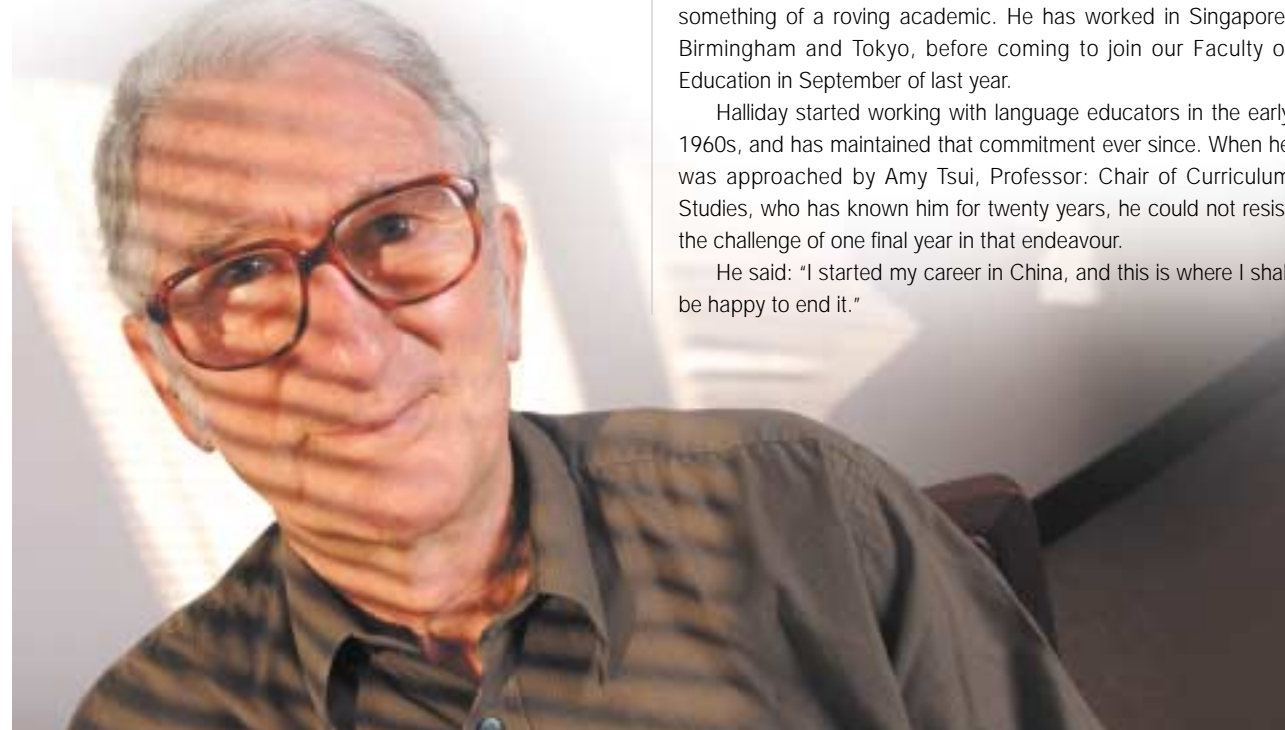
It should come as no surprise that Distinguished Visiting Professor Michael Halliday, as a world-renowned linguist, should be a man of many words. But he has a story to tell.

A British Intelligence Officer in World War II, Halliday went on to watch the Chinese revolution unfold in Beijing – and then to feel the chill of the Cold War back at home.

What links the many lives that Halliday has lived has been a love of language – Chinese in particular – and the determination to help people understand the world they live in.

Born in 1925 in the U.K., Halliday had quit school early in 1942 to take up intensive study of Chinese for the British armed services. By 1944 he was serving in Calcutta, India, working in Chinese intelligence and helping to make sense out of the confused situation in wartime China.

Released from the army in 1947 Halliday experienced China at first hand when he went to Peking University to continue his Chinese studies. He recalled: “The situation was chaotic, with fighting never far away. There was rampant inflation – I did some part-time teaching, and we were paid partly in kind and partly in stacks of currency note, which had been printed by an English playing-card company and were worth about the same as their other products! It was clear that the Chiang Kai-shek government was nearing its end.”



For the second half of his three-year stay in China, Halliday was present at the dawning of a new, Communist-run era. He was impressed by the initial achievements. He said: “The great thing was that right away the new government stabilized the currency, and in this way earned themselves a lot of merit. They brought order.”

He was tempted back to Britain in 1950 with the offer of a scholarship at the School of Oriental and African Studies at London University. His return, however, was something of a shock.

“England was very different from when I had left it”, Halliday said. “The country was in the grip of the Cold War. I lost my position at London because I refused to promise not to join the Communist Party. Instead I went to study in Cambridge, where the authorities did not join in the witch-hunt.”

After studying Chinese dialects, and the early history of Mandarin, Halliday moved over into the comparatively new subject of linguistics. He said: “I wanted to help to give value to less recognized varieties of language, like children’s speech, informal talk, languages outside the standard western canon.”

Halliday went on to Edinburgh, then to University College London, and finally in 1976 to the University of Sydney, from where he retired at the end of 1987. Since then he has been something of a roving academic. He has worked in Singapore, Birmingham and Tokyo, before coming to join our Faculty of Education in September of last year.

Halliday started working with language educators in the early 1960s, and has maintained that commitment ever since. When he was approached by Amy Tsui, Professor: Chair of Curriculum Studies, who has known him for twenty years, he could not resist the challenge of one final year in that endeavour.

He said: “I started my career in China, and this is where I shall be happy to end it.”

Grand Old Man of Hong Kong History

From the top of a bank of filing cabinets containing 140,000 index cards, The Reverend Carl Smith pulls down a small wooden plaque that sums up his life’s work. “If I ever do get it all together,” it reads, “I doubt I will be able to figure out what it is.”

The Rev. Smith has spent four decades recording the minutiae of Hong Kong and Macau life onto those index cards, and the idea of trying to make sense of all of them makes him laugh. “I understand some of what that [plaque] means,” he says.

At 85, The Rev. Smith is probably the oldest historical researcher in Hong Kong and certainly one of the more respected – he recently was honoured as a Distinguished Fellow by the Centre of Asian Studies.

What started as a schoolboy curiosity about his family background has become his passion, which he still pursues despite failing eyesight. He has researched local history, especially genealogy, since high school days when he began investigating his ancestors’ lives.

“I went to libraries and archives, and I became interested in the community these people were in, what their lives were like, what they did in it – the local history,” he said. “It became my hobby.”

When he came to Hong Kong in 1961 with his church (later part of the United Church of Christ) to teach theology to Chinese students, he brought his hobby with him.

“I started out looking at Chinese Christians, but to do that I had to look at everything. I made cards for many things relating to the Hong Kong area and up to Shanghai – people, places, institutions, opium, prostitution, all sorts of things,” he said.

The story he uncovered was largely one of upward mobility. Chinese Christians were taught English and used that skill to become compradores or businessmen or work for government, as The Rev. Smith reported in two volumes of essays written from 1965-1985, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen and the Church of Hong Kong*.

But his insights into Chinese Christians are only part of the legacy of his efforts. The information he has collected about daily life in the region, recorded by hand or typewriter on his index cards, is useful to any local historian.

The Rev. Smith draws his material from birth and death notices, shipping and court news, church records, land deeds and wills, visits to cemeteries and any other records he can find. He is also able to read records in Chinese and Portuguese.

A copy of his index cards is kept at the Public Records Office in Hong Kong and at Tokyo University, for any researcher to use. This lasting contribution to local and regional history led to the



Distinguished Fellow honour for The Rev. Smith, who since 1971 has pursued his research while working odd jobs.

The Centre of Asian Studies summed up his contributions: “We are indebted to him not only because we can use his data or read his writings. He has encouraged and advised scores of scholars, listening patiently to their ramblings and sharing his insights. To them, he has been a great source of inspiration through his tireless dedication to scholarship, his insatiable intellectual curiosity and great love of knowledge.”

The Rev. Smith is slightly embarrassed by the accolade (“I don’t know why they gave it to me,” he mumbles) but does not have time to give it much thought. After a 40-minute interview, he is off to another appointment, before departing for Macau, where he is filling in the gaps of Macanese history for the Cultural Institute of Macau – and adding to his collection of cards.

Who is the Girl in the Golden House?

You might feel tempted to admit that your raunchy novel is based on your own sex life but former University Professor John Biggs looked shocked at the suggestion that *The Girl in the Golden House* might, in any way, reflect his own personal life.

"Certainly not!" My protagonist, Chris Wong, narrates in the

first person. I'm not a Chinese lawyer, so it's not my experience I'm writing about."

Biggs, a born-and-bred Tasmanian, however makes no apologies for turning the traditional axiom of 'write what you know' on its head, as the former educationalist gets inside someone else's head.

He said: "Wanting to make a statement from the Chinese point of view and being an expat was a risk and could be regarded as a bit cheeky.

"But I take it as the writer's prerogative. It also helps that I enjoy the protagonist being quite different from me."

Despite these apparent hurdles *The Girl in the Golden House* has garnered good reviews for its portrayal of the sexual awakening and growth of its protagonist Chris Wong.

The readers see Wong, a lawyer, as he made his rites of passage from a teenager in the 1970s right up to the unfolding drama of the Hong Kong handover in 1997.

Biggs, who is a world expert in how people learn, was a Professor in the Department of Education between 1987 and 1995. He believes that there is a universal aspect to the story.

But by his own admission, the Australian novelist also had some inside knowledge. He visits Hong Kong regularly, where his Chinese partner, Catherine, was working until very recently.

He said: "I feel privileged to see through her the local culture that many expats don't see.

"What I have found as well is that writing the book has been a tremendously enjoyable experience and one I intend to build on."

The Girl in the Golden House by John Biggs, 1740760336, PANDANUS, August 2003, available at Kelly & Walsh Books, 2522 7893, address Shop 304, Pacific Place, Admiralty.



Ching Lau Revisited

First it was a feast of food with a show on restaurants and now its sinful look at sex with the University Museum and Art Gallery mounting an exhibition of Hong Kong's old brothels.

Thanks to the diverse photographic collection of local historian Cheng Po Hung the Museum's latest foray into local legend is Early Hong Kong Brothels.

With nearly 100 photographs to call on the collection catalogues the development of the world's oldest profession from the 1850s until the era of Suzie Wong in the 1960s.

The idea came to Museum Director Yeung Chun Tong after being approached by a local drama group who were interested in researching the history of prostitution for a play.

He said: "I introduced them to Cheng and he offered help in providing them with photographs of early local brothels.

"I then thought it would be good idea to use this opportunity to write a book and mount an exhibition to coincide with the play in November.

"Cheng has already provided us with the material for an exhibition on early Hong Kong eateries and – along with his lectures on local history – have been very popular.

"This is another step in our move to increasingly focus on local Hong Kong history."

The exhibition will end on February 29, 2004.



Bare Necessities

The husband and wife team of Jean and Sun-chang Lo teamed up to create a daring exhibition that combined female nudes with stripping revered Chinese calligraphy down to its bare essentials.

Their Nudes and Naked Calligraphy exhibition that took centre stage at the University Museum and Art Gallery that played at the end of 2003 with both the human form and forms created by the human mind.

Sun-chang, who arrived in Hong Kong via Guangdong, Taiwan and the US, is an Associate Professor with the Department of Architecture while Jean is a part-time Lecturer with the same Department.

The nudes gives Jean free reign to explore her background in fashion and life drawing but the couple team up to deconstruct calligraphy before reassembling it in a grid pattern that throws up new images.

Sun-chang said: "Most calligraphy has become an elitist art and the aesthetics have become removed from calligraphy and calligraphy has become removed from life.

"We wanted to strip meaning, structure and form away and then reconstruct them in a dynamic and symmetrical way. We wanted to return calligraphy to its original primeval state.

"We wanted to make an essential connection between ancient and modern."

The genesis of the exhibition lay in 1999 when Museum Director C.T. Yeung saw Jean's work but it was only in early 2003 that she was invited to mount this exhibition, along with her husband.

Sun-Chang said: "Jean was a fashion designer, which requires a deep understanding of human form to fit the garment over the body, as well as illustrating human form.

"All along she has done life drawing and she can roam freely with the tiniest nuance in a way that the human body becomes an art rather than a discipline: you let the line speak.

"In that way (human nudes) are very calligraphic because Chinese calligraphy stresses a three dimensional line which is also naturalistic and lively."

