

# Creative Arts & Humanities Education in Hong Kong: Issues and Solutions



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**The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology**

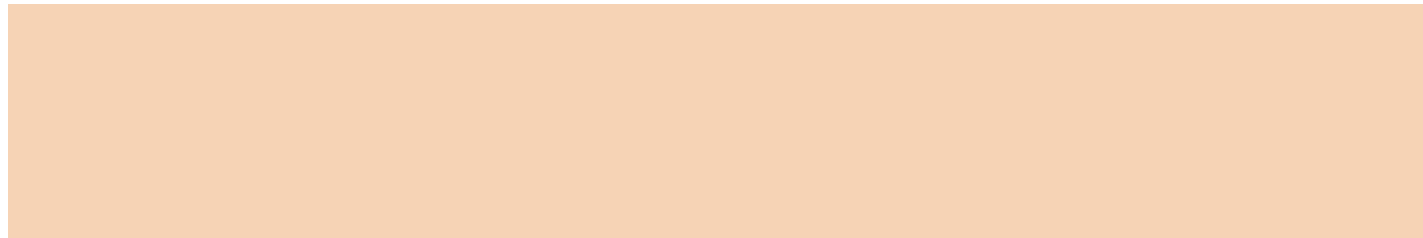


# Creative Arts and Humanities in the Past

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- ▶ Specialized instruction for creative arts did exist, but in the form of ateliers or guilds such as the *schola cantorum*

# Creative Arts and Humanities Issues

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- ▶ Conservatoire national de musique, 1795

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  - ▶ École des beaux-arts, 1648
  - ▶ Conservatoire national de musique, 1795
- ▶ Modern universities did not develop specialized arts education until the late nineteenth century but often firewalled these departments or schools from the 'Arts and Science' curriculum

# Creative Arts Education Issues in Contemporary China

In China, 'arts' education has remained especially isolated from the university and confined to such dedicated stand-alone schools as the:

- ▶ Central Academy of Fine Art, 1918/1950-
  - ▶ (Shanghai) Conservatory of Music, 1927-
  - ▶ Chinese Academy of Art, 1928-
  - ▶ Central Academy of Drama, 1950-
  - ▶ Beijing Dance Academy, 1954-
- 





# **Creative Arts in Contemporary China**

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## **Creative Arts in Contemporary China**

- **And yet, Chinese Visual Art, especially painting, has ironically flourished throughout the twentieth century**
- **Chinese Music reached a similar scale of global achievement from the late twentieth century onwards under the leadership of numerous distinguished performers as well as such composers as Bright Sheng, Chen Yi, Zhou Long, Tan Dun**

# Creative Arts Education in China

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- ▶ Chinese achievements in the Creative Arts are demonstrably greater than in the humanities and arguably approach the quality of Chinese achievements in engineering and science
  - ▶ However, unlike engineering and science which are taught to train engineers and scientists, humanities faculty generally teach the creative arts as Critics not Creators, as Consumers not Producers
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# The HKUST Solution

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The background of the slide is a scenic photograph of a sunset. The sun is a bright, glowing orb on the right side of the frame, partially obscured by a layer of clouds. Its light reflects on the calm surface of the water below. In the foreground, the silhouettes of several high-rise buildings are visible against the darkening sky. The overall color palette is dominated by the warm oranges and yellows of the sunset, transitioning into cooler blues and purples in the sky and water.


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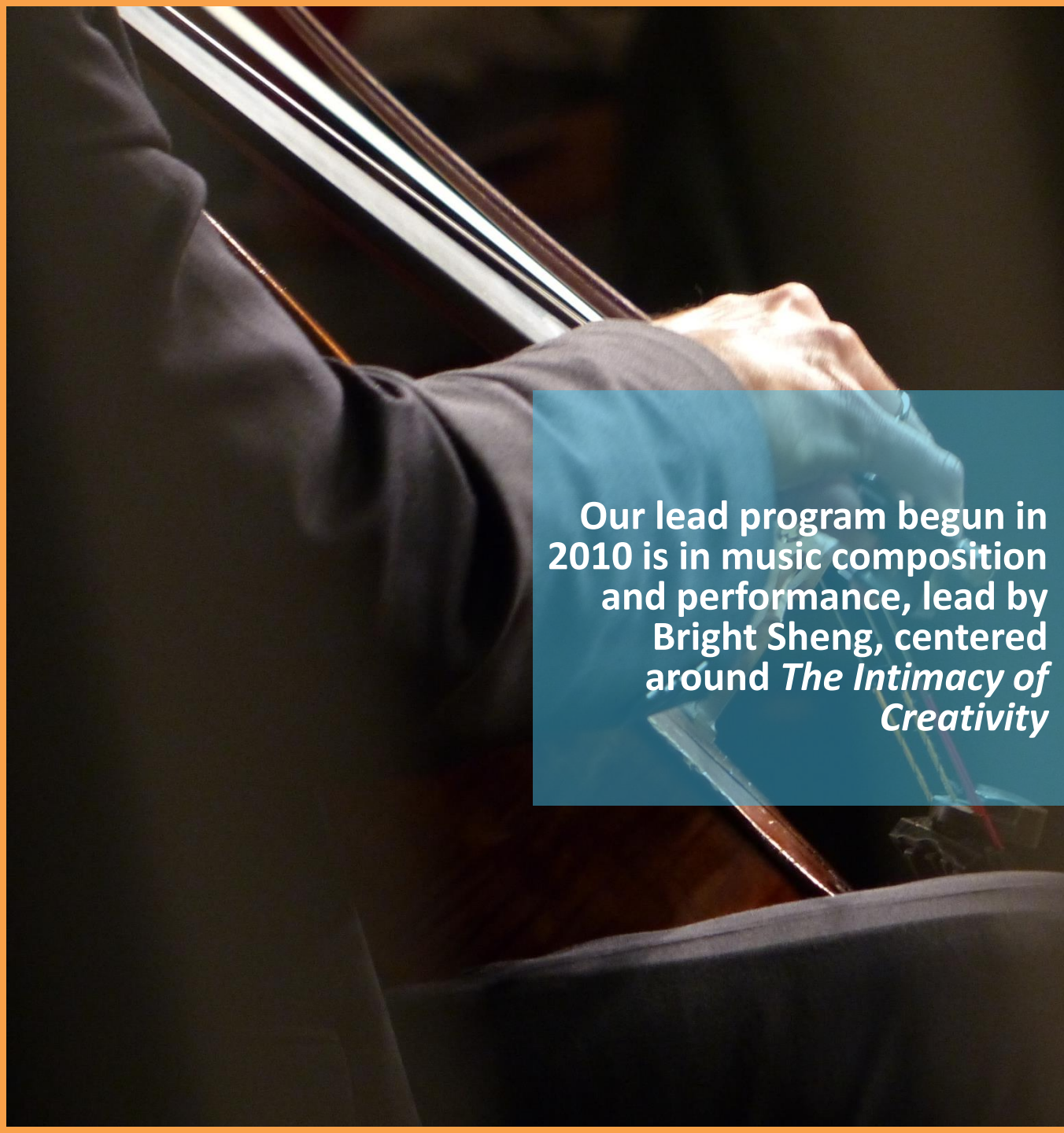
**Our students are taught to understand the arts from the perspective of creators and producers rather than consumers and critics**

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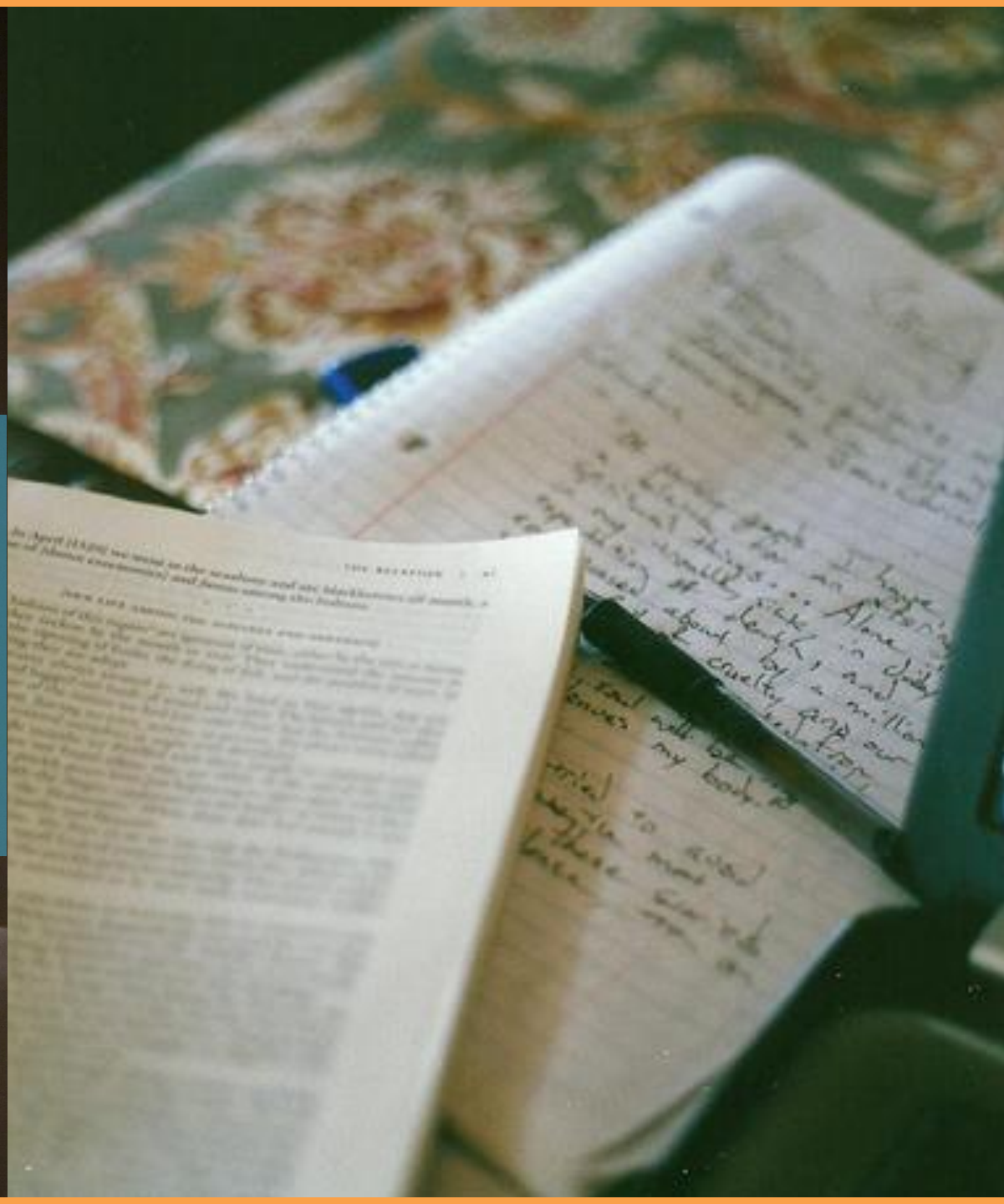
# Two HKUST Creative Arts Programs



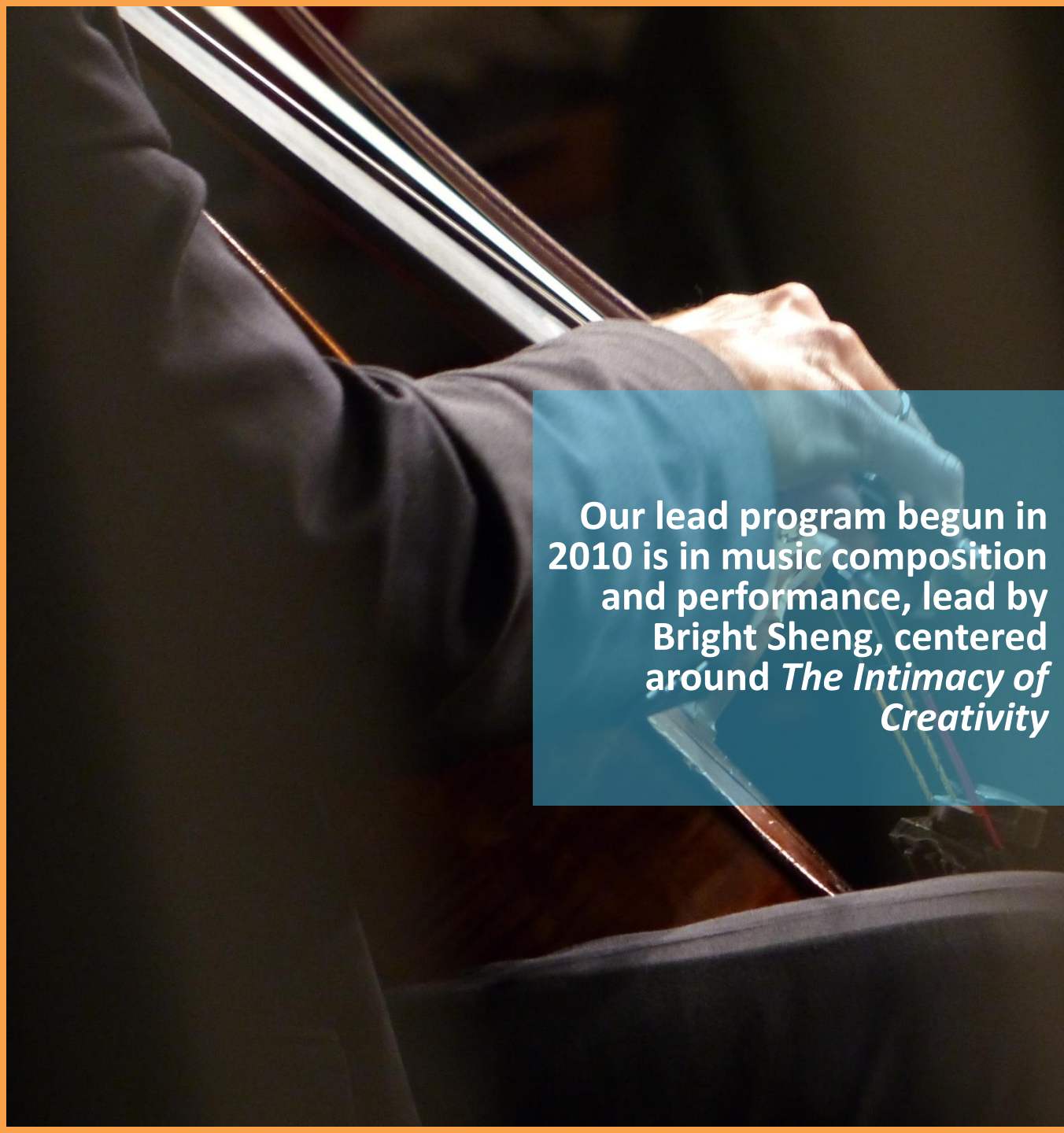


A close-up photograph of a person's hands playing a violin. The person is wearing a dark, long-sleeved garment. The violin is held in their left hand, and their right hand is positioned to play the strings. The background is dark and out of focus.


Our lead program begun in 2010 is in music composition and performance, lead by Bright Sheng, centered around *The Intimacy of Creativity*







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We plan to launch in 2014 a successor program in creative writing lead by Liu Zaifu with the participation of Gao Xingjian and Mo Yan



A photograph of a man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a black jacket, sitting and clapping his hands while smiling. He is positioned on the left side of the frame. The background is a blurred indoor setting with warm lighting. An orange triangular graphic element is in the top right corner, and an orange rectangular graphic element is in the bottom right corner.

**Bright  
Sheng**

**In each program, three to four  
composers or writers in residence  
teach and produce research in  
their respective areas**



# The Intimacy of Creativity

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Internationally-acclaimed, annual two-week partnership devoted to promoting an intimate dialogue between composers and performers



**01**

**Open Discussions**

**02**

**Preview Concerts**

**03**

**World Premiere Concerts**

**04**

**Lunchtime Lectures**



01

## **Open Discussions**

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World-renowned composers and performers, together with emerging composers, present and revise their chamber music compositions after in-depth Open Discussions on the campus of HKUST

**Lo Ka Chung Building, HKUST**



02

**Preview Concerts**

03

**World Premiere Concerts**

04

**Lunchtime Lectures**

01

Open Discussions

02

## Preview Concerts

Revised compositions are formally presented at Preview Concerts at HKUST

**Lo Ka Chung Building, HKUST**



03

World Premiere Concerts

04

Lunchtime Lectures



01

Open Discussions

02

Preview Concerts

03

## **World Premiere Concerts**

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And at World Premiere Concerts in  
downtown Hong Kong

**Hong Kong City Hall, 2014**



04

Lunchtime Lectures

01

Open Discussions

02

Preview Concerts

03

World Premiere Concerts

04

## **Lunchtime Lectures**

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Distinguished Guests are given the opportunity to speak more in-depth about their work.





# FINANCIAL TIMES

FINANCIAL TIMES TUESDAY MAY 3 2011

## CLASSICAL MUSIC

### The Intimacy of Creativity

Concert Hall, Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

★★★★★

**Ken Smith**

The composer Bright Sheng came to Hong Kong's University of Science and Technology with an intriguing proposal: if playwrights can have extended rehearsals where scenes in their head are shaped on the stage with help from actors, why shouldn't music benefit from a similar process?

So, as part of UST's inaugural programme, entitled *The Intimacy of Creativity*, an international gathering of young composers received a week of daily feedback from musicians in residence, the Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Yehudi Wyner and Sheng himself, all in front of UST students and interested observers. The results were put to the test at a sold-out concert at Hong Kong's Academy for Performing Arts on Sunday.

Though my own spot-check of rehearsals barely detected structural changes in the pieces, the music's dramatic character evolved sharply as performers grew more familiar with each composer's personality.

Clarinetist Richard Stoltzman and pianist Mary Wu found in Pedro Faria Gomes's *Nachtmusik* an allusive tonality where silence was as much of an entity as the sound. Wu, along with violinist Min-Young Kim and cellist Raman Ramakrishnan (both of the Daedalus Quartet) navigated so many influences in Ted Goldman's *Scrudge*, from Brahms to Indian raga to alt-rock, that silence was barely an option. In Ming-Hsiu Yen's *Lego City*, these four musicians scaled a modular verticality shaped by pulsating rhythms, but only after negotiating Yen's placement of their instruments in an uncomfortably high register.

10 ARTS

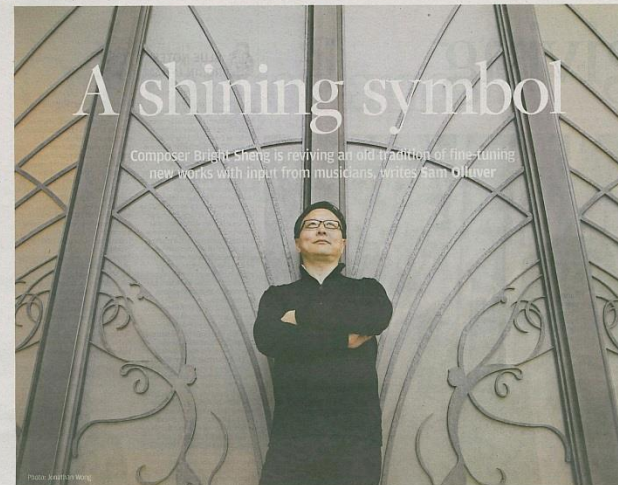


Photo: Andrew Wong

**B**right Sheng Zongling is a classical composer, conductor and pianist with a love in his heart about the intertwining of the three roles. The Chinese-American composer has spent most of his life in the United States, but he is trying to reconnect with his roots. Sheng came to Hong Kong in 1980, and he is now a professor at the University of Science and Technology. He is also a composer, conductor, and pianist. He has composed over 100 works, including operas, symphonies, and chamber music. He is currently working on a new opera, "The Red and the Black".

Sheng's music is a blend of traditional Chinese and Western influences. He has a deep understanding of both cultures, and he is able to create music that is both familiar and new. His music is often characterized by its emotional depth and its technical complexity. He is a true artist, and his work is a testament to his talent and his dedication to his craft.

Sheng's music is a reflection of his life and his experiences. He has lived in both the East and the West, and he has seen the world from many different perspectives. His music is a result of his unique perspective, and it is a gift to the world. We are lucky to have him in Hong Kong, and we are lucky to have his music.

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**Hong Kong, specifically, is more open than most places. In every way, it is the right place**

BRIGHT SHENG (LARGE)

Sunday Morning Post

## A shining symbol

Composer Bright Sheng is reviving an old tradition of fine-tuning new works with input from musicians, writes Sam Oliver

# Lee Ou-fan reviews

## The Intimacy of Creativity

Lee Sheng is professor of Musicology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. A lover of music since childhood, he also writes classical music reviews and is a record collector.

This evening as to Bright Sheng himself, I find that his music has a history of collaboration. In 1980-1981, for example, he was invited to compose for the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology Festival of Music. At that time, he was still a student at the University of California, Berkeley. He had just finished his master's thesis on the music of Shostakovich. He was a young man, full of energy and ideas. He was a composer, a conductor, and a pianist. He was a true artist, and his work was a testament to his talent and his dedication to his craft.

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Concerts Reviewed: World Premiere Concert 1 & World Premiere Concert 2, 1st and 8th May, 2011, 8pm, HKAPA Concert Hall

# The Intimacy of Creativity

All students, as part of their Arts Curriculum, hear and watch the creative process in action

- ▶ Understanding first hand the complexity of the creator/producer perspective of art



Open Discussion Broadcast at  
Radio Television Hong Kong



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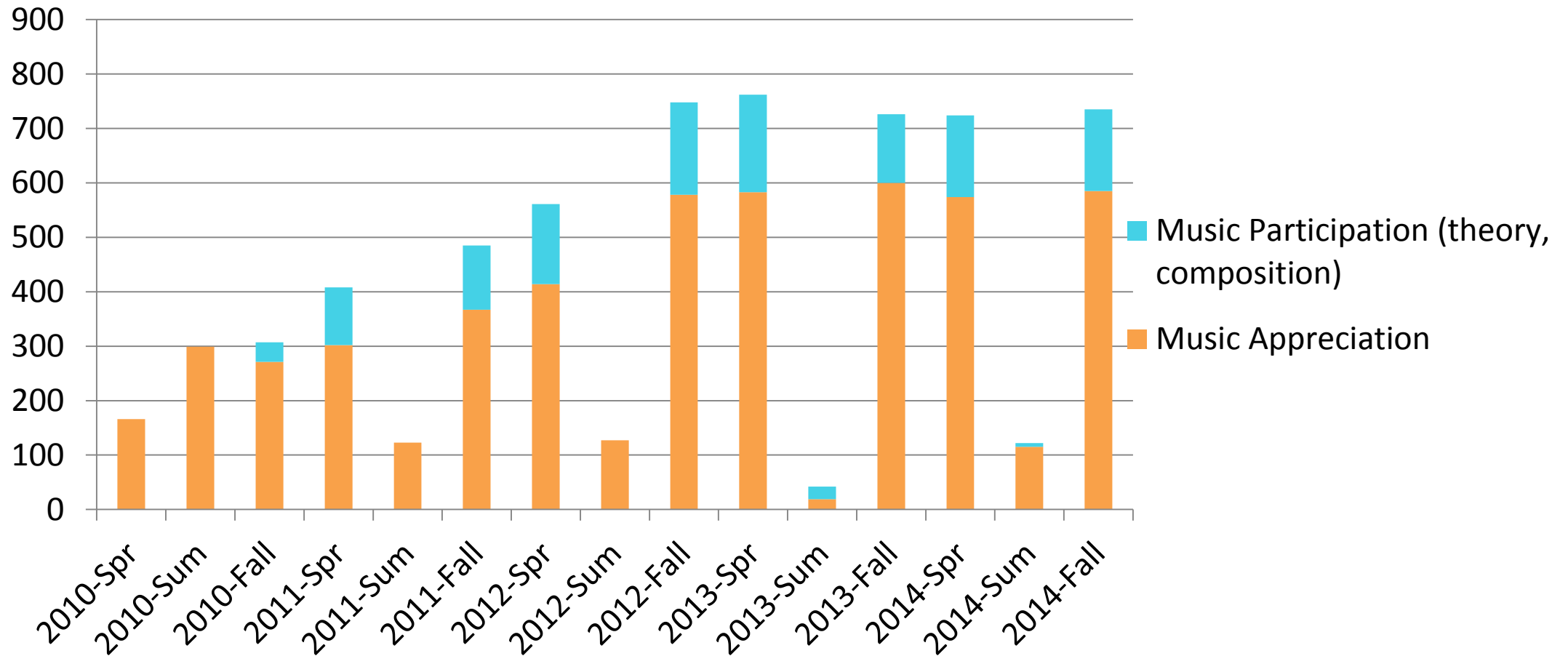
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- ▶ Understanding first hand the complexity of the creator/producer perspective of art
- ▶ Experiencing first hand the emerging 21st century collaborative model for the production of art
- ▶ Learning the value of creativity and collaboration and its applications in such other fields of study as the Arts



Open Discussion Broadcast at  
Radio Television Hong Kong

# HKUST MUSIC ENROLLMENT 2010-2014





# Creative Arts Education at HKUST



- ▶ Student enthusiasm for music participation classes, as opposed to music appreciation and music performance, show their genuine interest in deepening their understanding of the creative process and their willingness even to attempt to be creative themselves

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▶ Many students who begin with appreciation-oriented courses choose to continue with such participation-oriented courses as Music Theory and Music Composition



# Creative Arts Education at HKUST

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# Creative Arts Education at HKUST

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- ▶ We thereby challenge the traditional notion of creativity by the “lone genius” and focus on collaborative processes of production
- ▶ We therefore teach the Arts as a continually transforming creative process rather than as a static product





# The HKUST Arts Requirement



Beginning in 2012, the vast majority of HKUST students now take Arts courses as part of a required Common Core Education.



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Currently, approximately 2500 taught UG students, that is one-quarter our entire student body, take music or visual arts every year





## HKUST Summer Music!



### 2014 Summer Courses

- ▶ A New Approach to Music Making
- ▶ Music of the World

Beginning in 2013, the HKUST Summer Music program, lead by Bright Sheng, offers

- ▶ Courses open to students from Hong Kong, mainland China, and beyond,
- ▶ Including *A New Approach to Music Making*, a course developed and taught by Bright Sheng.

# HKUST Music Alive!

An aerial photograph of a large outdoor concert venue at HKUST. A large orchestra is performing on a blue stage, with many musicians seated with their instruments. A large audience is seated in the foreground, facing the stage. The venue is surrounded by modern architecture and greenery.

Began in 2012, the HKUST Music Alive! concert series expands the initiative beyond the classroom by:

- ▶ Promoting HKUST as a destination for creative, well-rounded global leaders exposed to the power of the arts.



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- ▶ 8-10 concerts per season feature acclaimed international and local artists



# HKUST Music Alive!

An aerial photograph of a large outdoor concert venue at HKUST. A blue stage is set up on a paved area, with a large orchestra performing. The audience is seated in rows of red chairs, filling the courtyard. The background shows the modern architecture of the university buildings.

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- ▶ 8-10 concerts per season feature acclaimed international and local artists
- ▶ The 2012 inaugural event featured the internationally-acclaimed Munich Chamber Orchestra and was attended by over 800 students and university community members





## Richard and Mika Stoltzman

Hailed by The New York Times as “Richard Stoltzman is by any standards, one of the world’s premier clarinetists...”

5 Nov 2013



## Jing Wang and Friends

Concertmaster of the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Jing Wang, is joined by the finest musicians in Hong Kong.

1 April 2014

# Development of Arts Facilities

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- ▶ **Cheng Yu Tung Building (RAB),** including a 400-seat Multi-Purpose Theatre and arts classrooms scheduled to be completed in 2015



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- ▶ Cheng Yu Tung Building (RAB), including a 400-seat Multi-Purpose Theatre and arts classrooms scheduled to be completed in 2015
- ▶ 1000-seat, state-of-the-art HKUST Performing Arts Auditorium, currently being proposed

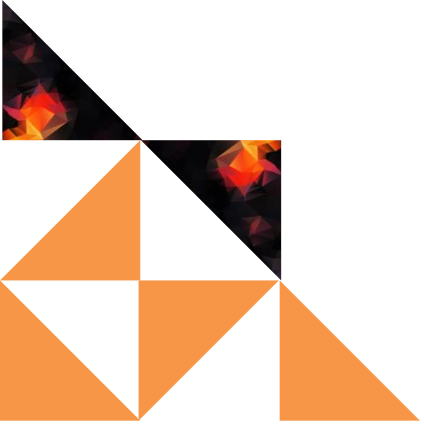


# HKUST Center for Creative Arts Education

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- ▶ Arts education-related programs at HKUST



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- ▶ Arts education-related programs at HKUST
- ▶ Performing arts initiatives, including *The Intimacy of Creativity* and *HKUST Music Alive!* series



The image features a central orange circle with the word "Goals" in white. Two thin orange lines intersect at the center, forming an 'X' shape that divides the background. The corners of the image are decorated with geometric patterns: the top-right and bottom-left corners have orange and white triangles, while the top-left and bottom-right corners have black triangles with orange and red abstract shapes.

# Goals

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**Arts Education at HKUST, in other words, serves two different purposes:**

- ▶ We offer and produce what the the Financial Times calls “the most innovative music program” in Hong Kong

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**Arts Education at HKUST, in other words, serves two different purposes:**

- ▶ We offer and produce what the the Financial Times calls “the most innovative music program” in Hong Kong
- ▶ We also use this program to educate our students about the Arts, about creativity, and about collaboration to prepare them for a life-long critical engagement with the aural, the visual, and the world of work



# Goals

**By placing the creative process at the heart of  
Creative Arts Education at HKUST**



Our students discover the real inner-workings of  
creativity

# Goals

## **By placing the creative process at the heart of Creative Arts Education at HKUST**

- ▶ Our students discover the real inner-workings of creativity
- ▶ Our students learn to value the power of those creative inner-workings in their own lives



**Ideal**

The Master said, “Enrich yourself with the Odes. Base yourself on Propriety. Fulfill yourself through Music.”

“興于詩，立于禮，成于樂”《論語》



**THANK YOU** 🚀