A warm welcome to new and returning UofT students and staff for the academic year 2022-23, and our new RCL Canada-Hong Kong Library newsletter. The newsletter is designed to offer updates and insight into our Library, its collections, facilities, and programmes.

This issue highlights achievements over the past year amid the challenge of COVID-19. They may be small steps, but for the longterm development of the Library these are noteworthy accomplishments and to be celebrated. My appreciation of the Library team whose camaraderie and support made all the difference in meeting the challenges. Whatever 2022-23 brings I know we will do our best for UofT, the community and the Library. 

Dr. Maria L.C.Lau, Director, Richard Charles Lee Canada-Hong Kong Library

Donation from the Chinese University of Hong Kong

In December 2019, CHKL received a gift of about 10,000 items of monographs and journals from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. This donation is the result of a MOU signed between the University of Toronto Libraries and the Chinese University of Hong Kong Library in 2019. This donation greatly enriches CHKL’s collection, with 50% growth in the number of monographs. Along with this donation, the Chinese University of Hong Kong Library also kindly sent us the bibliographic records, which speeds up the processing of these items immensely. As of date, about 20% of the donation has been added to the library catalogue and are ready for use. In order to make enough shelving space of ca. 250 linear meters, CHKL is currently undertaking a major cleanup of the backlog materials, which includes de-duplication, deselection and cataloguing. This will be followed by a shifting project to re-organize the library materials on shelf.

Selected items (1950s – 60s popular fictions) are now on display at CHKL. The donation arrived at UofT in December 2019.
On Tuesday May 24, 2022, the Richard Charles Lee Canada-Hong Kong Library hosted the 2022 Bernard H.K. Luk Memorial Lecture in Hong Kong Studies. It is an annual event in memory of Prof. Bernard Luk (陸鴻基教授) for his dedication and contribution to the establishment of the Hong Kong Studies Collection at CHKL. This year, the lecture, titled “Envisioning Global Hong Kong Studies,” was given by Ching-Kwan Lee, moderated by Renita Wong (Chair of Luk Memorial Lecture Committee, YorkU), and joined by two discussants Winnie Ng and Vincent Wong. We were delighted to have Abidin Kusno, Director of YCAR to give an opening remark and Gordon Anderson, Coordinator, East Asian Studies, YorkU to introduce the speaker.

Ching Kwan Lee is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Her talk sketched three intellectual approaches to developing Hong Kong Studies as a globally relevant and significant field of knowledge. Using recent studies as examples, she illustrated the epistemic possibilities of construing Hong Kong as a case, Hong Kong outside in and Hong Kong as global assemblage. The inspiring talk was attended by more than 40 in-person participants and over 180 joined via live-streaming.

Hong Kong Seminar Series
Cantonese Opera’s Costume Design in Hong Kong – Public Talk and Exhibition

To celebrate the Asian Heritage Month 2022, the Starlight Chinese Opera Performing Arts Centre (Starlight COPAC) and the Richard Charles Lee Canada Hong Kong Library jointly organized the event Cantonese Opera’s Costume Design in Hong Kong. This community engagement event
Former UofT Chancellor, the Honourable Dr. Vivienne Poy paid a pleasant visit to the Richard Charles Lee Canada-Hong Kong Library on March 17. Joined by Larry Alford and Loryl McDonald, Maria updated Dr. Poy on the library’s new initiatives and shared some rare titles selected from the collection. We are thankful for Dr. Poy’s continuous support. She delighted us again this time with another thoughtful gift – a new photography book Precious Moments she co-authored with Neville Poy. In your next visit to CHKL, perhaps you can sit back and enjoy the precious moments the authors wish to share with you!

A Pleasant Visit

New Additions Displays started this March

Located at the most frequented area of the RCL Canada-Hong Kong Library, the New Additions display draws attention of the incoming users. Select from new arrivals and renew bi-weekly, the combination of topics brings Hong Kong studies closer to our library users. The relevancy, scope, and visual element are all at play. Considering the diversity of users, each round of New Additions includes both Chinese and English titles. The books bearing a cheerful green flag “From CUHK to CHKL” means those selected from the Chinese University of Hong Kong Library’s recent donation. The displays serve as a special introduction of the newly added books to the users. Hope you will stop by to read them in your next visit!
The GSLA Experience – A Reflection by Mitchell Ma

This is my fourth year (technically my 3rd since I was away one whole year on exchange in China) working at the Canada-Hong Kong Library. I still remember vividly the first time I came across the place. It was March 2018. I was browsing through the UofT library website for research materials for a course paper on Hong Kong archaeology. That is when I noticed there is a place called CHKL.

During my first visit to the CHKL, I was immediately taken aback by the atmosphere. The vast collection of Hong Kong-related books immediately made me feel like I was in Hong Kong, and I imagined it would be a very nice environment to work in. Later that summer, I saw a GSLA (Graduate Student Library Assistant) vacancy for the CHKL advertised online. I immediately applied. I got an interview, and the rest is history.

At the time, I had little idea what I got myself into. I just wanted to work in a Hong Kong-related environment. Moreover, being a graduate student who usually worked alone with artifacts in the archaeology lab, I thought the library would be a nice change of environment that allowed me more interactions with living people. Little did I know it would have such an impact on my development.

Through my GSLA role, I learned about how an academic library works. It also exposed me to a range of people that I would not otherwise have met. The knowledge and insights I gained from my interactions with them are extremely rewarding to my development both as a person and as an academic. For instance, it taught me the wisdom to be diplomatic and how to work better as an effective team player.

I am also extremely grateful for the support that my supervisors have given me most notable of which is allowing me to experiment with new ideas for the library, including the development of a social media presence for the CHKL. In a stroke of luck, this project translates back to my professional career and helped me land a position as social media coordinator for the Society for East Asian Archaeology.

Working as a GSLA also got me to rethink what I want to do as an academic. By interacting with the public, I learned the importance of public engagement and that it is something I want to include in my research. Furthermore, working at the CHKL let me understand how much I like to learn about Hong Kong. All of which I am extremely thankful for.

From the Community - Donations

The Library is always grateful to our donors who enrich our collections with their generosity. CHKL received two significant donations on Cantonese Opera, one from the Soong Kam Wing Music & Arts Centre, this collection consists of sound and video recordings, photo albums of performances and posters etc. Another came from the family of Beatrice Jai and Raymond Jai, the collection includes music scores, photo albums, sound and video recordings, and books. We are also thankful to have received donations of unique books, journals, pamphlets, archives and more importantly a new category - research data on Hong Kong, they are all valuable additions to our collection on Chinese Canadian and Hong Kong Studies.