



DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
香港中文大學 音樂系

Colloquium

25 November 2014, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Rm LG01, Hui Yeung Shing Building, Chung Chi College,
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

'Building the Chinese Musical World from the Colonial Shanghai Archive'

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Joys Cheung is Research Assistant Professor (Ethnomusicology) at the Department of Music, CUHK. She earned her PhD in Musicology (Ethnomusicology) at the University of Michigan, and her Master's degree in Ethnomusicology at the University of Texas. Her research interests lie in Chinese music in relation to modernity, with topics including music building in interwar Shanghai, Communist revolutionary performing arts as political ritual, and comparative Kantian and Daoist sublime. Her writings have appeared in *Asian Music*, *Twentieth-Century China*, *The Routledge Film Music Sourcebook*, *Reading Chinese Music and Beyond*, *Ars Lyrica*, and *Atlantic Studies*. Currently, she is finishing her book on colonial Shanghai, while developing a new project on the sound culture of *guqin*. She has served on SEM's Jaap Kunst Prize Committee (2012-13).



The archive of colonial Shanghai, since its openings in the 1980s, has afforded a series of new studies on the cultural history of Chinese modernity in the interwar period. While those studies fruitfully illuminate the modern Chinese conditions of literature, art, and film, music calls for archival techniques and analytical strategies that are unique. Discursive, reportorial, advertising, organizational, visual, notational, and sound data are all important sources to create a musical ethnography of the city. Between digging historical data and reading their musical and cultural revelations, conducting interviews with local seniors is a useful part of my archival research. Finding a narrative that addresses particular Chinese musical experience within global flow of Western musical technology and practices is the goal. The theme issue, examining China vis-à-vis the colonial West, is a familiar one. But what so new to offer in the narrative, as it has developed, is the internally divided complexity of the Chinese musical world. This particular sociological perspective, which engages both Westernized and defensive music advocacies in the Shanghai archive, productively leads a search of how "music" emerged as a new practice field in Chinese modernity. The presentation reflects on my archival experience.