

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



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Creative Arts and Humanities in the Past

- ❖ In the past, the creative arts were holistic
 - ∞ Medieval *trivium* and *quadrivium* - grammar, rhetoric, and logic; arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music
 - ∞ Confucian “six arts” “六艺”, that is ethics, music, archery, chariot-riding, calligraphy, and arithmetic 礼、乐、射、御、书、数
 - ∞ 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

- ❖ Such specialized creative arts education evolved separately from humanities and the university with the formation of formal 'arts' schools as the
 - ❧ 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

- ❖ 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

- ❖ 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

The HKUST Solution

- ❖ HKUST has launched an alternative approach to creative arts education based on the principle of Research Embedded Teaching, by which we mean
 - ∞ Our teachers are active practitioners who teach a curriculum based on their own 'research,' that is creativity rather than criticism
 - ∞ Our students are taught to understand the arts from the perspective of creators and producers rather than consumers and critics

Two HKUST Creative Arts Programs

- ❖ Our lead program begun in 2010 is in music composition and performance, lead by Bright Sheng, centered around The Intimacy of Creativity
- ❖ We plan to launch in 2012 a successor program in visual arts and graphic design, lead by Xu Bing, based on his World Symbols Project
- ❖ In each program, three to four composers or artists in residence teach and produce research in their respective areas



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THE INTIMACY OF CREATIVITY

盛宗亮與國際作曲家/演奏家聚會香港

The Bright Sheng Partnership: Composers
Meet Performers in Hong Kong



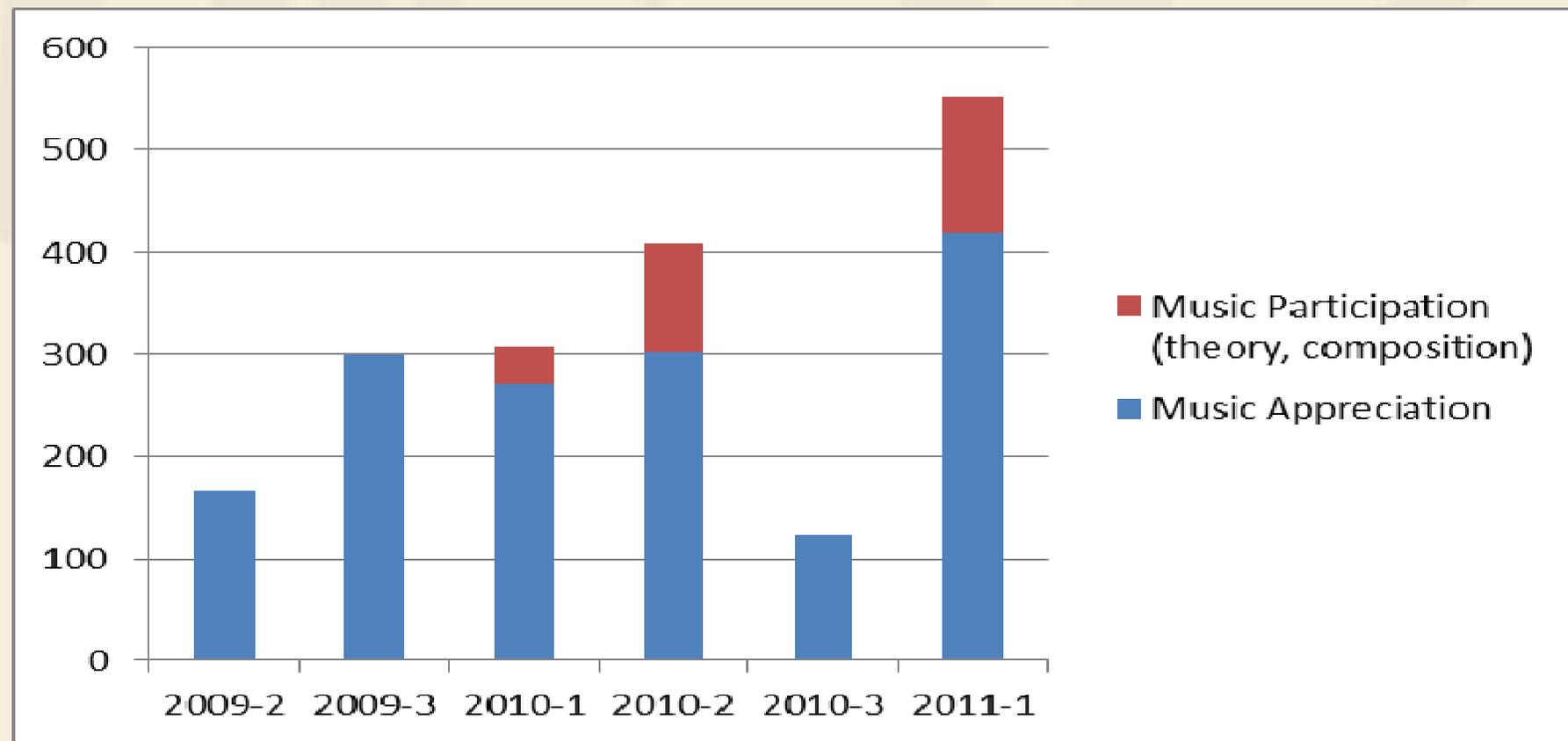
- ❖ An internationally-acclaimed, annual two-week partnership devoted to promoting an intimate dialogue between composers and performers
- ❖ World-renowned composers and performers, together with emerging composers, present and revise their chamber music compositions after in-depth Open Discussions on the campus of HKUST
- ❖ Revised compositions are formally presented at Preview Concerts at HKUST and World Premiere Concerts in downtown Hong Kong

The Intimacy of Creativity 2011

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

- ❖ 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

HKUST Music Enrollments 2009-2011



Creative Arts Education at HKUST

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

Creative Arts Education at HKUST

Through music theory and music composition, including the Intimacy of Creativity, the HKUST Arts Program, in other words, teaches new ways of critical thinking and criticality

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

The HKUST Arts Requirement

- ❖ Currently enrollment in Arts courses at HKUST is largely optional. Beginning in 2012, the vast majority of HKUST students will take Arts courses as part of a required Common Core Education
- ❖ By 2013/2014 approximately 3000 taught UG students, that is one-quarter our entire student body, will take music or visual arts every year

The Goals of the HKUST Arts Program

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

The Goals of the HKUST Arts Program

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

The HKUST Ideal

- ❖ The Master said, “Enrich yourself with the Odes. Base yourself on Propriety. Fulfill yourself through Music.”
- ❖ “兴于诗，立于礼，成于乐” 《论语》