

Research Assessment Exercise 2020

Impact Case Study

University: **The University of Hong Kong (HKU)**

Unit of Assessment (UoA): **UoA 39 Music and performing arts**

Title of case study: **Collaborative Platform Developed out of Musicology Research Creates a New Generation of Cultural Leaders in Hong Kong**

(1) Summary of the impact

Professor Daniel Chua's research on Beethoven and alternative leadership models has provided the basis for Asia's first training programme specifically aimed at developing a new generation of home-grown cultural professionals. In response to the creation of the West Kowloon Cultural District (WKCD), Chua's Advanced Cultural Leadership Programme (ACLP) has trained more than 100 individuals since 2010 who are emerging as the managers and visionaries realising Hong Kong's ambitions. The young professionals nurtured under the aegis of the ACLP have created international networks and cross-sector collaborations that are having a lasting, transformative impact on Hong Kong's nascent cultural sector.

(2) Underpinning research

Chua joined the University of Hong Kong in 2008 and is currently an Endowed Professor in the Department of Music. His research is part of a growing field of intellectual inquiry and centres on politics and ethics in Western music, especially as embodied in the myth of the heroic Beethoven and how he shapes and drives modernity. Chua critiques the heroic leadership model and its claims to freedom, suggesting that it ultimately leads to a highly administered and authoritarian form of governance [3.1, 3.4]. As an alternative, he advocates a relational, values-based form of leadership, where freedom is given rather than seized, where charisma is replaced by values, and where the will is replaced by relation. Chua calls this Beethoven's 'other humanism' [3.2, 3.3, 3.4]. The ACLP is designed as an intervention in the cultural sector in Hong Kong and puts his research into practice by changing how cultural managers approach leadership roles. In contrast to most conventional business models of leadership, Chua advocates a humanities-led model of leadership that has been extrapolated from his research findings. Key terms in Chua's research for this model of leadership are: donation and grace, otherness and distance, freedom as difference-in-relation. These ideas are pertinent particularly in Asia where cultural leaders are hampered by two erroneous views of leadership. The first problem is the confusion of management with leadership, resulting in an emphasis on competence and efficiency but not the ability to lead change. This form of leadership is functional but non-relational. The second problem is an understanding of leadership based on the image of a powerful 'charismatic leader'. Leadership, in this view, is a position or status of power that authorises decisions that have to be executed dutifully by managers. This kind of leadership is top-down, status-led, and excludes many from taking on leadership roles.

Chua 'translated' the academic terms and philosophical concepts of his research into a more accessible and practical leadership model for the ACLP. Not only did Chua share these ideas with ACLP participants at the beginning of each programme and subsequent feedback sessions, but he also structured the course around the ethical import of his work. By designing the curriculum to reflect his research, Chua created a programme that presents leadership as a set of behaviours and values, loosely termed 'authentic leadership'. This is particularly evident in the first module, with Chua's Introduction, the session on 'Quiet Leadership' (as opposed to the 'Charismatic Leader'), and the whole-day self-reflection session where participants engage in a series of exercises to discover their 'authentic' selves. In Chua's model, leadership is not a character-type and can, therefore, be exercised by people who do not conform to the stereotypical 'charismatic leader'. It starts from an understanding of *who* you are and *why* you do what you do. From this perspective, leadership is not about a position you hope to acquire in the future, but a *choice* you make *now*. It is about influence and not power; it is about leading by example and not relying on status for legitimacy. It is collaborative and relational – the antithesis of the sovereign model of leadership

that resounds in the heroic Beethoven and follows ‘Beethoven’s *other* humanism’ as exemplified in many of the composer’s late works. Invited speakers share a series of curated case studies to demonstrate the relational aspect of leadership. Case studies include that of the restructuring of the Whitworth Gallery in Manchester, which involved input from the whole range of staff, from janitors to senior management, as well as that of the distributed management model of the Royal Shakespeare Company, which uses the concept of the ‘ensemble’ as a metaphor for leadership. Leadership is not an institutional function; rather, it operates at all levels of an organisation on the basis of trust and generosity, with a bottom line based on cultural rather than merely financial values.

(3) References to the research

- 3.1. Chua, Daniel KL. *Beethoven and Freedom*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2017. (288 pages)
- 3.2. Chua, Daniel KL. “Beethoven Going Blank.” *Journal of Musicology*, 31/3 (2014), 299–325.
- 3.3. Chua, Daniel KL. “Listening to the Other: A Counter-Cultural Ear in iPodic Times.” *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 135 (Special Issue, 2010), 103–8.
- 3.4. Chua, Daniel KL. “Beethoven’s Other Humanism.” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 62.3 (2009): 571–645.

Selected Grant Funding

- 1) Title of Grant: Advanced Cultural Leadership Programme
Sponsor: West Kowloon Cultural District
Period of Grant: 2011–2013 Value of Grant: HK\$3,160,000
- 2) Title of Grant: Advanced Cultural Leadership Programme
Sponsor: Fu Tak Iam Foundation Limited
Period of Grant: 2014–2015 Value of Grant: HK\$4,800,000
- 3) Grant Awardee: Professor Daniel Chua Title of Grant: *Beethoven and Freedom*
Sponsor: Research Grants Council (RGC)
Period of Grant: August 2009–July 2013 Value of Grant: HK\$494,000

Chua was a Director-at-Large of the International Musicological Society and is currently the Society’s President (2017–2022). He was on the Board of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra from 2010 to 2016.

(4) Details of the impact

It has long been lamented that, while Hong Kong is a leader in international finance, the city is not viewed as a cultural hub: 20% of the GDP of major developed countries comes from the cultural sector, but in Hong Kong a mere 5% derives from the arts. In response to feedback from visitors on this perceived lack of cultural opportunities and venues, the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) identified the WKCD as suitable for development as a cultural hub and established the WKCD Authority in 2008. However, the development of the WKCD and creative industries highlighted the deficit in the cultural infrastructure of the region, which posed a unique challenge in terms of recruitment of local skilled cultural leaders. The ACLP was designed to train individuals already in leadership roles at cultural organisations in Hong Kong to shape nascent cultural policy and then steer it in fresh and innovative ways.

The ACLP was established in 2010 in collaboration with the UK’s Clore Leadership Programme (Clore) (<https://www.cloreleadership.org>). The aim of Stage 1 of the programme, which was achieved in 2017, was to develop 100 diverse, skilled cultural leaders with a minimum of five years’ work experience from across the sector. Participants were drawn from large institutions such as the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), as well as small charities or commercial organisations such as ESKYIU Architecture. Stage 2 of the programme, which is now under way, is aimed at building on the successes and relationships established during Stage 1 to foster a network of leaders for Hong Kong’s emerging cultural movement, and to further its transformational work.

The ACLP had six cohorts between 2011/2012 and 2016/2017, involving 104 participants. It enjoyed consistently high ratings and one hundred percent of participants in the 2014/2015 ACLP indicated that they would recommend the programme to another cultural leader; 93% said the programme led them to a renewed sense of vision or purpose; and 80% asserted that the programme resulted in increased collaboration. Such high evaluations reflect the programme's profound impact on participants; this is further reinforced in external reports, participant testimonials, and the resulting projects developed by those who undertook the programme [5.1]. In 2015, Sharon Armstrong Williams, Fellowships Manager with Clore, assessed the impact of the ACLP in a report based on her in-depth interviews with 20 participants. According to Williams, "[p]articipants from across the cohorts reported a significant impact on themselves, and the way in which they lead projects and people. For many, the first residential course was transformative and helped them to understand themselves and others on a deeper level [...] In terms of wider impact, many spoke about the ways in which they were already instigating change within their organisations and the community." From her interviews, Williams remarks that "the shift in the way in which people relate to others is significant," as is "the intellectual move from the leader as a figurehead to that of someone who empowers and inspires others" [5.1]. In a separate 2014 report by Sue Hoyle, Director of Clore until 2017, one ACLP participant states that, "I realize that leadership is not about a personality but about someone who shares their values with others and works at all levels" [5.1]. Ye Shufang, Deputy Director (Education) of the Singapore National Gallery, states that the ACLP workshops "provided dynamic scenarios for open-ended discussions which challenged, broadened and deepened [her] understanding and thinking about art, culture and cultural leadership" [5.2].

ACLP participants initiated many meaningful cultural exchanges in Hong Kong as a result of their participation in the programme. For instance, 2014 ACLP alumnae Pauly Lee and Bobo Lee organised the International Workshop Festival of Theatre, held in the WKCD between August 6 and November 14, 2015. The Festival consisted of eight public lectures and corresponding workshops designed to give local theatre practitioners the opportunity to learn from leading theatre and contemporary performance artists from around the world [5.1, 5.3]. Susanna Siu, Executive Director of the Antiquities and Monuments Office, partnered with Grace Cheng, another ACLP participant who runs Art in Hospital (an art therapy non-governmental organisation), to create a programme connecting Alzheimer's patients with museums called "Journey for Active Minds: Jockey Club Museum Programme for the Elderly." The programme ran from March 2014 to August 2015 and organised over 200 museum-related events for 500 people [5.4].

As a direct result of the ACLP, many participants are now part of a network with key cultural leaders in the UK, including current or former directors of the Barbican, Tate, RSC, and Sadlers Wells. The first showing of the WKCD's Sigg Collection of contemporary Chinese art at the Whitworth Gallery in Manchester in 2015 was a consequence of the ACLP bringing the directors of both institutions together [5.5]. Eve Tam, who was Director of the Hong Kong Museum of Art when she joined the ACLP, writes that it "has helped [her] connect with a wider cultural network with counterparts in HK and in UK, sharing visions and strategies with like-minded people. Above all, it showed [her] the way to authentic leadership which has helped craft [her] unique way of contributing to the cultural development in HK" [5.6]. Tam was recently promoted to the position of Assistant Director (Special Projects) with the HKSAR LCSD. The new Director of the Museum, Maria Mok, is also an ACLP alumna.

Other cultural leaders who have benefited from the ACLP include William Lane and Sharon Lu. Lane, Founder and Artistic Director of the Hong Kong New Music Ensemble (HKNME), states that the programme "was integral in helping to organise [his] mind and strategise important HR appointments. [He] learnt that when working in a tiny team, it's important to 'know yourself' in order to be able to allocate work efficiently according to the strengths and interests of potential teammates. These lessons of authentic leadership in arts administration have carried through [his] current part-time MBA studies, where [he is] also applying the same principles in a business context." His participation also resulted in collaborations with the Hong Kong Sinfonietta, the WKCD and the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts [5.7]. ACLP principles informed the

establishment of the “My University Spotlight Encounters” (MUSE) concert series, which was designed for the University of Hong Kong’s new, 900-seat public concert hall. Sharon Lu, an ACLP alumna, heads the Cultural Management Office (CMO), which is responsible for overseeing over 30 MUSE concerts and talks each year. According to Lu, her “role as Programme Director of MUSE has undeniably been impacted by [her] experience in the ACLP, both in terms of the model of cultural leadership it promoted and the collaborations it enabled,” and that the “forms of leadership instilled in [her] by the ACLP contribute to MUSE’s success.” In her CMO post, Lu adopts a distributed management structure that eschews a top-down approach to leadership, and places emphasis on change through innovative, intellectually informed programming. MUSE also benefits from the alumni network established by Lu’s participation in the ACLP. Joint collaborations include the Hong Kong Philharmonic’s Swire Classic Insights concert series, and performances with Die Konzertisten, one of Hong Kong’s foremost chamber choirs [5.8].

As well as training working professionals, the ACLP extended its capacity-building to secondary school students to start seeding the next generation of cultural leaders. A youth camp funded by the Arts Development Council was run in 2013, 2014 and 2015, engaging a total of 60 students in a leadership course to prepare them for future careers in the arts. The camp recruited former ACLP fellows to inspire students to pursue their passion in creative arenas and also to help prepare them for professional life. One hundred percent of participants said they would recommend the camp to their friends, and the overall usefulness of the camp was rated at 95.56%. In their feedback, students wrote they learned to “think creatively,” to “be positive to limitations,” to “be confident,” and to “be a better leader.” The ACLP also organised workshops for a total of 90 students from seven of Hong Kong’s tertiary institutions in 2013, 2014 and 2015 [5.1].

The value of the ACLP to the arts community is clearly demonstrated by the external funding and support it has received. The WKCD provided HK\$3,160,000 to the programme between 2011 and 2013. Speaking in 2012, then WKCD CEO Michael Lynch stated that the “ACLP can help cultural leaders of tomorrow shape their vision, roles and responsibilities in response to Hong Kong’s changing cultural landscape.” The ACLP also benefited from a grant of HK\$4,800,000 from the Fu Tak Iam Foundation Limited to support the programme in 2014 and 2015. The ACLP was included as a case study in a November 2015 publication by the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), an institution established in 1997 by the leaders of 25 countries, together with the European Commission, and which today counts 53 members. The ACLP was held up as a model at the 8th ASEF Public Forum on Creative Cities in Asia and Europe held on November 24, 2015, in Korea. The Forum brought together 15 experts from 13 countries, and participants included government officials, researchers, educational institutions, and international civil society organisations. In line with the aims of the ACLP, the official report on the Forum highlighted the need for cultural institutions in Asia and Europe to “work together to create a programme aimed at re-invigorating mid-career cultural leaders, offering them an opportunity to self-reflect and rethink how they approach their work” [5.9].

(5) Sources to corroborate the impact

- 5.1 Advanced Cultural Leadership Programme Pre-Final Report (August-November 2015) for Fu Tak Iam Foundation Limited.
- 5.2 Statement from Ye Shufang, Deputy Director (Education) of Singapore National Gallery.
- 5.3 Website of the WKCD International Workshop Festival of Theatre:
www.westkwoon.hk/en/whats-on/past-events/international-workshop-festival-of-theatre
- 5.4 Hong Kong Museum of History press release, dated 3 June 2014.
- 5.5 Website of the M+ Sigg Collection exhibition at the Whitworth Gallery:
<http://www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/pastexhibitions/msigg/>
- 5.6 Statement from Miss Eve Tam, Assistant Director (Special Projects), HKSAR LCSD.
- 5.7 Statement from Mr William Lane, Founder and Artistic Director, HKNME.
- 5.8 Statement from Ms. Sharon Lu, MUSE Programme Manager.
- 5.9 ASEF Publication: Cities: Living Labs for Culture? Case Studies from Asia and Europe.