



Performing arts groups at Yale-NUS

Text by Clare Isabel Ee | Image by YNC Photography

At Yale-NUS College, the thriving performing arts scene is buzzing with life and activity, with an endless stream of creative ideas.

In terms of physical spaces, facilities like the recording studio, fabrication studio, and band room located in the West Core are fully equipped for students to use.

Most importantly, the arts scene is filled with passion and love for the arts that truly drives the growth of each art form on campus.

The Singers' Guild comprises seven groups, totalling more than 40 members. From The Wallets, Yale-NUS' first a cappella group that was formed on the chilly Yale University campus in New Haven nearly three years ago, to The Overtime Project, a barbershop quartet, to the Chamber Choir.

"It's been really exciting so far," shares Benson Pang (Class of 2018), Chairman of the Singers' Guild and member of The Overtime Project. "We're basically an umbrella organisation of various genres, styles and sizes. The smallest group is the barbershop quartet, made up of four people, while the largest is the Gospel Choir, which has close to 20 members."

He added: "Rather than being a group made up of groups, our singers from different groups really support each other, like

warming up together before our concert in 2015, or helping one another with their music."

The Singers' Guild held an end-of-year concert on 17 November 2015 performing to a full house. The concert, aptly titled 'On That Note', showcased all seven singing groups filling the College's Performance Hall with beautiful music all evening.

Patchwork Ivy, one of the newest a cappella groups to be formed, also flew to Hong Kong and Macau to participate in the Hong Kong International A Cappella Contest 2015 and the Hong Kong and Macau College A Cappella Competition 2015. One of its five members, Jamie Buitelaar (Class of 2018), clinched Best Vocal Lead award.

"It's been really amazing to see a community of singers begin to grow," Benson said. "The joy of music can really bring people together. That's why we do it, why we like to sing."

For dancers and those interested in dance, the Society of Yale-NUS College Dancers (sYNCD) is an umbrella organisation dedicated to creating performance opportunities for dancers in the College.

sYNCD comprises approximately 80 dancers that form six groups, each dedicated to its own genre: ballroom, bhangra, K-pop, hip hop, street jazz and contemporary dance.

On 22 November 2015, the society held the first dance showcase titled Choreographing Histories to a full house.

"Personally, I feel that performance opportunities help to motivate our dancers' learning as they work with their friends, and also helps them bond as a group," said Crystal Lee (Class of 2018), President of sYNCD.

During the semester, the group typically starts the term with dance workshops for students who are interested in learning some new moves.

"We encourage students with little or no background to join us, and classes are free even if there's an external conductor," said Crystal.

"The trend [at Yale-NUS] seems to be that people tend to try out a lot of different things," she added. "Looking at this positively, everyone is very open and receptive to new experiences, even though they may initially lack commitment to a particular organisation."

With a state-of-the-art Black Box Theatre located in the West Core of the campus, Yale-NUS students interested in theatre – academically or otherwise – have a perfect space ideal for rehearsals and experimentation.

The Fifth Wall, Yale-NUS' largest and most active drama group to date, staged two plays in the Black Box in 2015, Machine

written by Tan Tarn How and winner of Best Script in the DBS Life! Thearte Awards in 2003, and Burn This by Lanford Wilson.

They also put up In Short, a series of short plays, and the 24:00 Play, an experimental production where participants wrote and staged a play in 24 hours. The latter was so well received that they have decided to hold a second installment in 2016.

"From the first 24:00 Play, we realised that people at Yale-NUS do write plays – and we should tap on that," said Glen Koh (Class of 2018), President of The Fifth Wall.

In addition, The Fifth Wall is working with the Educational Resources & Technology (Arts & Media) team to bring in an expert in technical theatre, Mr Kenny Wong, to teach classes on sound, lighting and other technical aspects of theatre production.

"There are a lot of people who think theatre is all about acting, but if you're going to be taking part in theatre, you at least need to have a basic understanding of how theatre works," Glen said. "We're trying to push for a more holistic approach to theatre, where you have avenues to try a little bit of everything."



Liberal arts and social movements in the US

Text by Melissa Wang | Image by Aleithia Low

In January, Yale-NUS College played host to two distinguished speakers, Professor William Deresiewicz (*main photo*) and Professor Mark Tushnet, who gave public lectures as part of the President's Speaker Series. The speaker series is designed to enable the community to learn from and engage with some of the brightest academics and practitioners across a diverse range of disciplines on contemporary issues in our world today.

The best-selling author of *Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American Elite*, William Deresiewicz's work has generated much debate within the field of higher education. He also penned *The Disadvantages of an Elite Education*, a provocative essay which suggested some of the best American Ivy League universities produced 'elites' who were unable to interact with regular people.

On 12 January, he spoke to a packed audience who was interested in the purpose of a liberal arts education and what it means in today's context. With Yale-NUS College being the first liberal arts college in Singapore, the concept of such an education is still considered quite new.

"First of all, liberal arts has nothing to do with liberalism in the political sense," Professor Deresiewicz said. "It also does not involve the study of the fine arts."

Professor Deresiewicz stressed

that while the liberal arts include the humanities, a common misconception is that a liberal arts student is synonymous to being a humanities student. Considering that this education model encompasses Social Sciences, Humanities as well as the Sciences, he suggested that it is perhaps more accurate to use the term "liberal arts and sciences". He went on to define this more specifically as "the disciplines in which the pursuit of knowledge is conducted for its own sake".

"They don't include any of those that are in the applied, vocational or professional fields," he elaborated, sharing that these fields generally take knowledge and precisely apply it. This is opposed to what the liberal arts and sciences aim to do – which is to create knowledge instead of simply applying it.

"In the liberal arts, you don't acquire knowledge

– you debate it," Professor Deresiewicz explained.

He noted that liberal arts graduates are highly sought after, because they learn how to think critically, which equips them with the skills to see problems from a variety of angles and consider creative approaches to resolve them.

Formerly a Professor of English at Yale University, Professor Deresiewicz drew heavily on examples from the learnings of humanities to showcase how the liberal arts are an honest

Pericles Lewis shared that those who intended to pursue legal study in the United States would most likely have read Professor Tushnet's works. The co-author of four casebooks, including the most widely used one on constitutional law in the US, Professor Tushnet was well-placed to address the topic 'Social Movements and the US Constitution,' where he examined how social movements have affected the development and interpretation of the US Constitution.



Professor Mark Tushnet speaking on Social Movements and the US Constitution

confrontation of reality, in spite of our desire for clear and simple answers. He urged the audience to go beyond using education as a tool to fill a career, and instead use it to build one's self.

On 14 January, the College welcomed Mark Tushnet, William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Law at Harvard Law School. In his welcome address, Yale-NUS President

Largely using US-centric examples such as the civil rights movement, Professor Tushnet discussed how political parties sometimes accede to the demands of impactful social movements in order to gain political advantages.

To view the talks, tune in to the Yale-NUS College's Youtube channel at www.youtube.com/user/yalenuscollege/



Yale-NUS academic at COP21

Text by Melissa Wang | Image by Daniel Constable for Angel Hsu

In December 2015, the 21st Convention of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) also known as COP21, made the headlines with countries coming together to create a new climate agreement. This replaces the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, the older and only legally binding climate agreement to date.

binding,” Dr Hsu said.

“This left the agreement more open in terms of what countries could contribute. Everyone, both developing and developed countries, universally agreed to doing something about climate change, so Paris (COP21) was considered to be a huge success,” she elaborated, highlighting that the divide

cities, private sector and civil societies play instantly became extremely relevant and of interest.

Dr Hsu argues that these sub-national government and non-state actors can contribute significantly to global climate change action, and the impact that they have may be even larger than that

different levels of governments and business can contribute to global climate change action and “provide a lot more potential” to the climate change pledges made by nation states.

“That was something that appeared more prominently in Paris as compared to previous COPs and changed the rules of the game a little bit,” said Dr Hsu.

“We’re no longer just focused on the agreement, because now you have all these other actors who are stepping up with their own efforts against climate change.”

But what was so different and significant about COP21?

“If you think about how much the world has changed since 1997, it is a totally different picture,” explained Dr Angel Hsu, Assistant Professor of Social Sciences at Yale-NUS College.

Developing countries, rather than developed countries, are now the heaviest contributors of carbon emissions, and they are fast outpacing their predecessors who were key to the 1997 agreement. In addition, many countries including the US, were no longer willing to commit to any legally binding deal, which signalled a need for a different approach.

“Paris (COP21) was really different because the discussion was not surrounded on whether or not the agreement would be legally

between the roles developing and developed countries would play in combatting climate change is now narrowed.

An expert in Environmental Policy, Dr Hsu has participated in seven COP meetings in the last decade as an academic and analyst, helping to work towards this Paris deal. Her role revolves around producing analysis that helps to inform the negotiations at the annual COP meetings. She also helps to make the negotiations more understandable and contextualises it for external audiences like the US Congress.

COP21 however, saw Dr Hsu playing her biggest role yet. Precisely because of the political difficulty of getting nation states to agree on tackling climate change and the trickiness in enforcing legally-binding agreements, Dr Hsu’s research into the roles that

of nation states. She had the rare opportunity to present her ideas at an official UNFCCC press conference, with the two most important people at COP21 – Secretariat Christiana Figueres and President Laurent Fabius. Invited to share about her research, Dr Hsu addressed the significance of these sub-national government and non-state actors, by analysing and contextualising their efforts alongside those of nation states.

“Any time you heard any UN or French government official talk about what city states and region were doing, my group (at the Yale Data-driven Environmental Solutions Group) produced that analysis,” describing how her research directly informed negotiations at COP21.

Dr Hsu stressed the importance of understanding how the

“We’re no longer just focused on the agreement, or about ‘legally binding’, or relying on nation states to deliver, because now you have all these other actors who are stepping up with their own efforts against climate change.”

In addition, Dr Hsu produced another report written in collaboration with former Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger’s group R-20 Regions for Climate. *Scaling up: Local to Global Climate Change* looked at case studies of nine cities and regions implementing effective climate policies, including examples from six of the top ten carbon-emitting countries. The analysis found that if these efforts were scaled up to a national level, the impact would be phenomenal, further demonstrating Dr Hsu’s argument on how sub-national governments influence global climate change actions.

At Yale-NUS, Dr Hsu teaches modules that look into environmental policies. She is also part of team that teaches Comparative Social Institutions, a Common Curriculum course that all students undergo.



Lunar New Year celebrations at Yale-NUS

Text by Daryl Yang | Image by YNC Photography

Yale-NUS College heralded the arrival of the Lunar Year of the Monkey with a week-long series of celebratory events organised by a student organisation, the Yale-NUS Global China Connection (GCC).

The Yale-NUS GCC aims to introduce and expose the College community to Chinese culture, business and current affairs. Students tried their hands at Chinese calligraphy and making traditional dumplings over the week, before the College ushered in the Lunar New Year with a finale concert on 4 February 2016.

Rachel Lim (Class of 2018) oversaw the planning of this year's celebrations, which have increased in the variety of activities from last year's edition because they wanted to engage a wider part of the Yale-NUS community.

"Lunar New Year is one of the most important cultural events in the Chinese calendar with many interesting customs and activities," explained Rachel. "We wanted to share some of these Lunar New Year festivities with the Yale-NUS community, especially since our community is so diverse and many of our international students could learn more about Chinese culture as well."

The finale concert held on Thursday, for example, was co-hosted by Will Goebel (Class of 2019) and Eva Klein (Class of 2018); two international students who have been attending Chinese language

lessons. The concert also included a segment where current Chinese language students performed a medley of popular Lunar New Year songs.

of 'anger' in an immaculate Beijing dialect.

"I was especially impressed by how well he has mastered the Chinese language," said Jessica.

persons whose lives and lived experiences are so different from our own," he said.

"Hopefully it is in these moments and events each year that we can share and



Daryl Yang (Class of 2018) as the 'God of Fortune'

Jessica Teng (Class of 2018) shared that for her the highlight of the concert was a xiangsheng (crosstalk) performed by Jay Lusk (Class of 2018).

A traditional Chinese comedic performance, a xiangsheng is usually performed in the form of a monologue or a dialogue in a rapid, bantering style using language that is full of puns, jokes and allusions.

At the concert, Jay delivered an entertaining monologue about a conversation between a father and son on the meaning

The week-long celebrations, which were supported by the Dean of Students Office and the Rectors' Offices, were well-received by students, faculty and staff.

For Dean's Fellow, Samson Berhane, the goal of such celebrations on campus is not only in the festivities themselves but also what makes them sentimental and meaningful.

"When you have a community as diverse at Yale-NUS, it is not always easy to relate to

celebrate our own culture and a piece of our lives we hold dear with others in the Yale-NUS community whether it is through food, music, or the arts," he added.

"As the organisers, it makes us happy and fulfilled that we managed to bring some of the Chinese New Year spirit of sharing and reunion to our community," shared Rachel.



Yale-NUS students organise arts camp for children

Text by Clare Isabel Ee | Image provided by Camp Chartwell

Over the semester break in December 2015, seven Yale-NUS students came together to run Camp Chartwell: Voyage, an arts camp for children aged six to nine. Through the camp, participants are exposed to different forms of arts in a fun and creative manner, deepening their understanding of the arts and also helping them grow in confidence and self-expression.

Founded in 2008 by Mariel Chee (Class of 2017) and her friend, Nicole Ng, from School of the Arts (SOTA), Camp Chartwell has grown from a small workshop-style camp held at Mariel's residence, to a full-fledged experiential arts camp held at the Little Arts Academy.

"It started off as a holiday project. We were 14 years old at that point and wanted something to do during the holidays," explained Mariel. "We 'hired' some of our friends from the different arts courses [in SOTA] and ran a four-day arts camp for girls. We had music, dance, theatre and art students."

Founded upon a deep conviction in the importance of nurturing an interest and appreciation for the arts from a young age, this was the fifth instalment of Camp Chartwell. Themed 'Voyage', the camp saw 17 boys and girls participating, a number that has remained quite steady over the years.

"Some of them come back for every camp because they like it so much!" said Mariel. "Some parents may have also heard of us from online blogs

or e-magazines on the arts, and so on."

As Mariel's fellow founder, Nicole, is currently studying abroad, Mariel tapped on some of her artistically inclined friends at Yale-NUS, who each specialises in a different art form.

For instance, Jevon Chandra (Class of 2017) came up with creative music lessons for the students, which aimed to impart two critical skills – appreciation and creation.

"As the children had different skill levels, we avoided using classical musical notation. Instead, we used our customised form of notation to even the playing field, and condensed elements of the traditional score down to its most crucial and accessible

elements," Jevon shared.

"That allowed everyone, regardless of skill level, to have a hand in creating through composition, and to listen and appreciate everyone else's contributions thereafter," he added.

Working together with her schoolmates, who live on the same campus, also facilitated the overall process.

Mariel highlighted: "Because the team all knew each other, it was easy for us to collaborate."

The three-day camp costs S\$300 per child and includes meals, art materials and a Camp Chartwell T-shirt. It was previously held at the Goodman Arts Centre, before migrating to the Little Arts Academy, which aspires to be the leading

arts academy for young people regardless of their personal circumstances.

"We're holding it there because we feel that the Academy's vision is quite aligned to ours – for example, the cost of the venue goes directly into supporting financially disadvantaged children to receive an arts education," Mariel said.

Brought together by the common love for arts and an interest in helping to develop children in this area, Mariel and Nicole have plans to grow Camp Chartwell more strategically in the years to come.

For more on Camp Chartwell, check out their website at campchartwell.wordpress.com



Participants enjoying a dance session at the camp.

Humanities curriculum at Yale-NUS

Text by Jeannie Tay | Image by Weave for Yale-NUS

As Singapore's first liberal arts college, starting a curriculum from scratch presented immense challenges, but at the same time, provided Yale-NUS College with opportunities to innovate and achieve the educational mission of the college: to found a community of learning.

Since Yale-NUS College started its first class in 2013, the College has offered a wide spectrum of courses to its students spanning its three broad divisions – Humanities, Science and Social Sciences.

The Humanities Division, which houses majors such as Arts & Humanities, History, Literature, and Philosophy, has exciting plans to enrich the experiences for Yale-NUS students through its innovative arts and humanities offerings. Divisional Director of Humanities, Professor Rajeev S Patke, is excited about the plans, which he hopes will make it possible to develop the all-rounded potential of Yale-NUS students, regardless of their majors.

For example, the Division will be launching a new Artist-in-Residence programme soon, which will bring in one local and one overseas arts practitioner, drawn from among the different arts genres (e.g. painters, sculptors, writers, dancers, musicians, etc) to live and work with students and faculty in the College for either a semester or a year. Recognising the value of integrating theory with practice, the Division regularly hires external arts

practitioners, such as poet Alvin Pang and animator Yanyun Chen, to lecture at the College on a part-time basis, and impart their practice-based experience to the students. "This is a pragmatic way to bring in outside experts who will complement our academic expertise with practical skills, and integrate the learning with the real world," says Professor Patke.



Professor Rajeev Patke in a class

Recognising that many learning opportunities take place outside the classroom, Professor Patke feels that it is important to recognise and encourage such learning in order to develop the overall growth of students. To this end, Professor Patke shared the view that the Division is exploring the idea of integrating the co-curricular aspects of student life with the curriculum through awarding academic credits to students taking up artistic projects outside the classroom,

such as film, art, or writing projects that students might undertake on their own as part of their interests, for which the College would like to find a co-curricular academic context.

In terms of infrastructure, Professor Patke is confident that the College spaces are well endowed to support the learning of the arts and humanities. For example, spaces such as the Performance

of the artists and authors involved, thus extending the reach of what is done in the College to a much wider audience, enabling them to share in the arts experience created at the College with the a wider public. "The vision is to bring all these together as we integrate the practice of the arts into the life of the College," adds Professor Patke.

To support Yale-NUS' global curriculum, the Humanities Division also offers a wide range of language courses for students. Through collaboration with NUS and Yale University, the College has expanded the language offerings and introduced online classes for Italian, Russian, and Portuguese, in addition to Chinese, Spanish, Latin, Greek and most recently Arabic, which are all taught on campus. Other developments in the Humanities Division involve the full range of Common Curriculum Courses under the Historical Immersion rubric, as well as the offering of a wider range of electives contributing to the majors in History, Philosophy and Literature.

Yale-NUS offers a distinctive curriculum that emphasises broad-based multi-disciplinary learning across the natural and social sciences, humanities and the arts. Students are exposed to an interdisciplinary inquiry-based curriculum which enables them to master a broad body of knowledge and techniques, taught by a globally diverse faculty of leading educators and researchers.



Harnessing technology to support a global curriculum

Text by Jeannie Tay | Image by Aleithia Low

Since admitting our inaugural class in 2013, Yale-NUS College has been exploring new ways to redefine liberal arts and science education for a complex, interconnected world. To facilitate active learning among its diverse student body, the College actively harnesses technology to support its innovative and global curriculum.

This semester, Yale-NUS launched its first-ever joint course with Yale University, where students from both institutions have the opportunity to take the same course together despite being thousands of miles apart.

Students in the “China’s Energy and Environmental Sustainability Challenge” course ‘enter’ a virtual classroom and meet with Dr Angel Hsu, Assistant Professor of Social Sciences at Yale-NUS College, and carry out an active discussion with classmates in a borderless setting, bringing with them perspectives from all over the world.

Aided by online learning software, Dr Hsu and her students in Singapore and New Haven, Connecticut, discuss and debate on issues relating to energy and environmental challenges in China, and learn quantitative tools for analysing energy-related issues. “Connecting students in New Haven and Singapore on the important topic of China’s energy and environmental sustainability provides a truly global perspective in the classroom. Students come not

only from the United States and Singapore, but Pakistan, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and China, which makes for an enriching and diverse dialogue,” said Dr Hsu.

Besides using technology in teaching, the College has also pioneered ways to facilitate active team learning with

of Educational Resources & Technology, said, “Moving forward, we are looking into developing online and distance learning approaches to connect our campus with Yale University and other universities through co-taught courses and remote guest lectures.” Mr Panko also added that there are plans

Professor Bryan Penprase, said that the new CTL will work closely with the ERT department and the President to bring in experts in advanced pedagogy, and to foster new technology-enhanced courses at Yale-NUS. This effort can involve new “global classroom” courses with international

“At Yale-NUS, we need to explore how to use technology effectively - not for technology’s sake - but to improve the classroom experience for students and enhance learning at Yale-NUS College”

wireless collaboration tools. At the learning spaces at Yale-NUS, such as classrooms, study rooms, and lecture halls, students and faculty can collaborate easily by connecting wirelessly to a common platform or main screen and share multiple displays for presentations or discussions.

There are exciting plans to harness technology to bring Yale-NUS closer to the world, and the world to Yale-NUS campus.

In addition to Dr Hsu’s online course with Yale University, Yale-NUS also offers three online language courses, namely Portuguese, Italian and Russian, through partnering with Yale University.

On the plans to support faculty in using technology, Mr Ken Panko, Yale-NUS’ Director

of Educational Resources & Technology, said, “Moving forward, we are looking into developing online and distance learning approaches to connect our campus with Yale University and other universities through co-taught courses and remote guest lectures.” Mr Panko also added that there are plans

to use technology to enable undergraduate research such as data collection and analysis tools, with the eventual aim of making such data available publicly for wider use. To foster excellence and innovation in teaching, Yale-NUS has founded a new Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL). The Centre provides consultation to faculty on their courses, provides programming and resources to share new ideas and best practices in teaching and assessment, and supports new faculty to develop their teaching.

A new initiative of the Centre is to join in a task force convened by Yale-NUS College President Pericles Lewis, to explore new ways to foster technology-enhanced teaching. The Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning,

partners, as well as making better use of online forums, creating wiki pages with students, using clickers, iPads, and other technology in class, and exploring ways of using online tutorials in many of the classes.

Professor Penprase pointed out that the goal of CTL is to help faculty share and learn from each other, and to create a teaching culture that is innovative, responsive to students, and providing the best quality of teaching possible. “Technology is part of this mixture, and at Yale-NUS we need to explore how to use technology effectively – not for technology’s sake – but to improve the classroom experience for students and enhance learning at Yale-NUS College,” added Professor Penprase.



Public lecture by renowned China expert Bates Gill

Text by Melissa Wang | Image by Aleithia Low

The United States and China – unmistakably two of the most prominent nations in the world today – have a power struggle that seems ever-growing.

However, some scholars are optimistic about the situation, including Professor Bates Gill.

Professor Gill is a renowned China expert with a 25-year international career as a scholar, policy advisor and institution-builder. He is currently Director of China Matters, a not-for-profit advisory based in Sydney, and a Visiting Professor with the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney.

On 13 January, Professor Gill delivered a public lecture at Yale-NUS, which discussed the enduring paradox of US-China relations, and provided insights on the past, present and potential future situation of the relationship.

First highlighting the importance of US-China relations, Professor Gill deemed it as “the most important and consequential bilateral relationship”, that will determine the region’s security and prosperity ahead. With China as a rising powerhouse contesting the US presence in Asia, US-China relations are fraught with increasing tension.

Unpacking the paradox, Professor Gill explained:

“The two countries have never been so interdependent, or shared as much global relations – but they are also at odds.”

Tapping on his expertise, Professor Gill largely focused on addressing the issue from China’s perspective, looking at the drivers and constraints of China’s foreign policy.

Contrary to the overall pessimism in the media and amongst scholars on the problematic US-China relations, Professor Gill

the tensions are kept in check despite their existence.

Overall, he found that the US-China relations can be “defined by a conclusive sense of schizophrenia”, where it swings between tension and interdependence – at times close, and at times bitterly hostile. Effectively, the drivers and constraints resulted in

auspices of the Tan Chin Tuan Chinese Culture and Civilisation Programme, which aims to increase the understanding of China and Chinese culture amongst the students at Yale-NUS College.

The Tan Chin Tuan Foundation also supports Yale-NUS’ Chinese Language Scholarship Programme and co-curricular

“The two countries (the United States and China) have never been so interdependent, or shared as much global relations - but they are also at odds.”

instead emphasised the positive aspects, to tell the “untold success story” of the relationship.

He touched on three major drivers of China’s foreign and security policy, namely the historical struggle of what he termed ‘geo-demography’; aggrieved nationalism; and China’s growing wealth and power.

Explaining each of these major drivers in greater detail during his talk, he sought to provide insight on the direction of China’s policy, and why this upsets their American counterparts. Professor Gill also raised in his talk, four strategic constraints China faces, which has helped her to ensure that

a situation that Professor Gill found best explained by the French phrase “plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose” or the Chinese phrase “越变越是老样子” which loosely translates to “the more something changes, the more it stays the same”.

Professor Gill championed placing more emphasis on the current positive aspects of the relationship, which include unprecedented government interactions, military ties, trade and investment relations as well as people-to-people exchanges, in terms of tourism, education and science, between the two superpowers.

This public lecture by Professor Gill was held under the

activities which help deepen our students’ knowledge of China.

Professor Gill’s talk can be viewed at the Yale-NUS College’s Youtube channel at www.youtube.com/user/yalenuscollege/

J Y Pillay Professor Nicole Constable

Text by Serena Quay | Image by Aleithia Low

Renowned Anthropology professor and researcher Nicole Constable is the inaugural recipient of the J Y Pillay Professorship at Yale-NUS. This Professorship is part of the J Y Pillay Global-Asia Programme, which was set up to honour Professor J Y Pillay, a pioneer who made groundbreaking contributions to Singapore as a top civil servant and corporate leader.

Extremely honoured to be named the J Y Pillay Professor,

situations of Hong Kong and Singapore.

“One of my immediate research aspirations is to develop a better sense of the comparative dimensions of migrant labour in Hong Kong and Singapore, including policies and laws, and a better understanding of the different challenges faced by workers in the two cities,” she shares.

For instance, there is a strong migrant community that

enthusiastic, interested, hardworking and very bright. There seems to be a desire for learning that’s very impressive,” Professor Constable says. She hopes to develop the strongest possible anthropology major in Yale-NUS through strategic hiring of exceptional faculty as well as thoughtful and innovative curricular development.

“Nicole Constable is a well-known anthropologist who has done very extensive work

Professorship was awarded to distinguished scholars whose expertise and international renown add to the research and teaching reputation of the College.

He adds, “The College is pleased to be able to attract such high quality scholars to its faculty, and we are looking to fill a few more chair professorships.”

Professor Constable’s attraction to Anthropology blossomed at a young age. Having spent most of her growing years in Canada and the United States, she discovered that moving around made her interested in many places and in contrasting them.

“I was interested in people, in stories, in different cultures, in politics and economics, gender issues and many different things,” shared Professor Constable, explaining that all of these interests culminated in the study of Anthropology.

Apart from being an established researcher, the multi-talented professor loves to weave and write poetry. Professor Constable also adores the Singapore Botanic Gardens, which she deems as “absolutely amazing”, for its wide variety of orchids.

Sir Peter Crane FRS, Dean of the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and Professor of Botany and Bryan Garsten, Professor of Political Science at Yale University were previous J Y Pillay Visiting Professors.

“One of my immediate research aspirations is to develop a better sense of the comparative dimensions of migrant labour in Hong Kong and Singapore, including policies and laws, and a better understanding of the different challenges faced by workers in the two cities.”

Professor Constable notes that the objectives of the professorship fits well with direction of her research work in Anthropology.

“My work is quite transnational in terms of looking at Asia,” the affable Professor of Social Sciences explains. She elaborates that while her research focuses largely on Hong Kong, her interests have expanded well beyond. At present, Professor Constable is looking into the similarities and differences between the

champions migrant workers rights in Hong Kong. In Singapore, on the other hand, locals are the ones who take it upon themselves to be the voice of migrant workers in Singapore.

Since moving to Singapore in 2015, Professor Constable has striven to get a first-hand experience of the local community. She also appreciates the meaningful conversations she has had with students at Yale-NUS.

“The students are very

on migration, mobilities and transnationalism, focusing on East and Southeast Asia. Her work, which deals with international labour, migrant domestic workers, and social issues related to transnational migrant workers, are very relevant in today’s globalised world, which is seeing significant movements of people for work and refuge,” shares Professor Tan Tai Yong, Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs at Yale-NUS, highlighting that the