

# COLLOQUIUM BY JOSEPH LAM

## KUNQU PERFORMANCE OF CHINESE MEMORIES, REALITIES, AND DREAMS

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TIME: 1-2PM, MONDAY 14 DEC 2015

VENUE: AB 1079

**Speaker:** Joseph Lam, Professor of Musicology, University of Michigan; Director of the Confucius Institute, University of Michigan.

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### ABSTRACT:

Chinese people negotiate their lives practically and imaginatively, a cultural-social performance that multivalently unfolds with multimedia expressions on and off theatrical stages. A revealing example of such a performance is contemporary kunqu, a six hundred years old genre of Chinese opera that is being strategically promoted as a form of intangible Chinese cultural heritage and world theatre. The promotion has been most successful because kunqu performance makes not only entertaining and informative shows of talented scholars and charming beauties in love but also contested negotiations of Chinese identities and roles in factual and fictive terms. To illustrate this discursive performance of kunqu, this lecture will discuss its projection of idealized Chinese who were/are beautiful and youthful (qingchun), learned and refined (dianya), and rich and privileged (fugui).



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**BIO:**

Joseph Lam is Director of the Confucius Institute at the University of Michigan and Professor of Musicology, the School of Music, Theatre and Dance, the University of Michigan. A musicologist and sinologist, Lam specializes in the musics and cultures of Southern Song (1127-1275), Ming (1368-1644), and modern China (1900 to present). Lam regularly lectures in the US, Mainland China, Asia and Europe. His most recent publications include: "Music and Masculinities in Ming China" (Asian Music, 2011), and *Songdai yinyueshi lunwenji: lilun yu miaoshu/Historical Studies on Song Dynasty Music: Theories and Narratives* (Shanghai: Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press, 2012). Currently, he is working on a monograph entitled: *Kunqu, the Classical Opera of Globalized China*.