

Make It Fresh: Ang Lee's Subversive Re-invention of Transnational Canons

(In English)



BROKEBACK
MOUNTAIN

In his discussion about cultural difference, Homi Bhabha proposes a way to rethink “the realm of the beyond”, a notion which could well accommodate the subversive negotiation of cultural values and conventions that are typical of film genres. With numerous reputable film awards and a transnational career, Ang Lee is well-known for his accomplishment in film direction, especially in his re-invention of conventional film genres. His filmography shows a remarkable cultural connection between the conventions of the East and those of the West. This paper studies Ang Lee's two films, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000) and *Brokeback Mountain* (2005), each explicitly identified with an unmistakable genre, the former being a martial arts film, while the latter a western. Ang Lee has endowed upon both genres with an unexpected twist — the homoerotic portrayal in *Brokeback Mountain* rendered to the traditional icon of masculinity in American history, and the sweeping mood of the tender love story of the mandarin literati gently replacing the lethal action of the sword in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. The discussion will focus on Ang Lee's interrogation of the dominant discourse of universalism through discursive strategies — how the radical dis/mantling of codes has invoked a subversion and appropriation of the dominant assumption of the universality, in this case, of film genres. How has Ang Lee's films rejuvenated and re-invigorated transnational cinema, as well as transnational canons and genres, in the context of deepening globalisation?

Speaker:

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Dr Lee is currently a lecturer of humanities and English. Her main research interests are in gender and sexuality, cinema and TV studies, feminist theory, literary theory, queer and lesbian theory. She was Visiting Scholar in 2006–2009 at Department of Comparative Literature, The University of Hong Kong (HKU), teaching courses on gender, sexuality, and queer theory at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, meanwhile also serving as a dissertation supervisor for the MA programme.

Chairperson: Dr Julie Chiu

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Venue: Room 122,

**Chen Kou Bun Building,
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http://www.impawards.com/2000/crouching_tiger_hidden_dragon_ver3.html