

EDITORIAL

Current Trends in Southeast Asian Media Studies

Welcome to SEAMSJ issue 5.1, titled “Current Trends in Southeast Asian Media Studies,” edited by yours truly. With this issue, the flagship publication of the Southeast Asian Media Studies Association has entered its fifth year of existence. It will soon be followed by issue 5.2, “Political Communication in Southeast Asia,” guest-edited by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jose Carlo G. de Pano of the University of the Philippines Diliman and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Orville B. Tatcho of The University of the Philippines Baguio.

This issue is densely packed with an eclectic collection of six research articles that deal with current trends and developments in the study of mass media across Southeast Asia. More specifically, the articles presented here are useful to scholars interested in the studies of film festivals and higher education, rap music and popular culture, journalism and heritage reporting, social media and enmeshment aesthetics, emerging media platforms and citizenry, as well as urban studies and mimetic art theory – whereby all of these are located in current Southeast Asian contexts.

In their article “Higher Education Film Festivals as Industry Nodes in Brunei Darussalam,” authors Dr. Yong Liu (Universiti Brunei Darussalam) and Dr. Alexander Fischer (Mahakarya Institute of the Arts Asia, Brunei) examine the qualities and purposes of the two institution-based higher education film festivals Brunei Film Blitz and PRISM UBD Short Film Festival. The authors are particularly interested in the synergies between higher education institutions and film festivals, the impact of higher education film festivals on the education and professional development of media studies students, and the importance of such public film events in the present and future Bruneian film and screen industry.

Christine Joy A. Magpayo (University of the Philippines Diliman) is the author of “Rapping and Mapping Women’s (Dis)Empowerment in the Songs of Pinoy Hip-Hop Artist Andrew E.” In it, she analyzes and contextualizes the lyrics of the prominent rapper Andrew Ford Valentino Espiritu, a.k.a. Andrew E., on the one hand focusing on the commercialization of popular culture to serve the preservation of current socio-political power structures, and on the other hand investigating the construction of narratives that oscillate between the objectification and the empowerment of women.

"Understanding the Practices of Cultural Heritage Reporters" by Dr. Bryan R. Realgo (Mariano Marcos State University, Philippines) explores the contexts, practices, and processes of cultural heritage reporting. The article advocates the reporting of cultural heritage as an important means to disseminate information, raises awareness of the importance of cultural heritage preservation, educates the public about cultural diversity, history, and heritage, and motivates each citizen to be an engaged member of society.

"Enmeshment Aesthetics: Social Media, Mobility, and Materiality in Chiang Mai, Thailand" by PhD candidate Kasidit Phikrohkit (University of California at Irvine) understands and analyzes Thailand's northern city of Chiang Mai as a provider of urban spaces where international and domestic tourists alike may participate in an ostensibly delicate yet potent consumer culture of café-hopping, self-imagination and self-performance, and enmeshment aesthetics. The author contends that social media are instrumental in the performance and reaffirmation of the social media users' sense of identity locally and globally.

In their article "Mediating the Pandemic in Jakarta: New Digital Platforms in a Time of Crisis," Dr. Andy Fuller (Utrecht University, the Netherlands) and Zaki Arrobi (Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia), a PhD candidate at Utrecht University, the Netherlands, are interested in Indonesia during the post-COVID-19 pandemic period as they investigate the two developing media platforms *Project Multatuli* and *LaporCovid-19*. During the post-COVID-19 period and through these platforms, Indonesians have been exploring and expressing pluralism and democracy in their country.

"Capturing and Interpreting Mediated Learning Spaces" is an engaging research paper by Dr. Maria Gwenetha Y. Pusta (Far Eastern University, Philippines). In it, she presents an exploratory study of communication studies students' perceptions and inferences of meanings of particular visual stimuli. Drawing from urban studies and mimetic art theory, the author investigates how students respond to particular learning spaces on a specific university campus in the Philippines, particularly how the sights of pictures of these spaces trigger certain feelings and memories of lived experiences.

Our readers may be pleased to learn that SEAMSJ has expanded and further internationalized its editorial board. Dr. Arnoud Arps (University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands), Prof. Dr. Bradley C. Freeman (Sunway University, Malaysia), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jonalou S. Labor (University of the Philippines Diliman, Philippines), and former SEAMSJ guest editors Assoc. Prof. Dr. John Charles Ryan (Southern Cross University, Australia), and Assoc. Prof. Dr. William F. Smith (Canadian University of Dubai, United Arab Emirates) have accepted our invitation to join the international advisory board. The team of assistant editors includes five new members, namely Assoc. Prof. Dr. Normahfuzah Ahmad (Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia), Dr. Ernesto C. Collo, Jr. (Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University, Philippines), Dr. Wai Yan Phyto Naing (Raks Thai Foundation, Thailand), Asst. Prof. Dr. Jenny Ortuoste

(University of Santo Tomas, Philippines), and Sara Mae San Juan-Robin (Far Eastern University, Philippines).

I would like to thank the following individuals for providing their expert reviews and impartial verdicts of submitted manuscripts: Dr. Swati Jaywant Rao Bute (Jagran Lakecity University, India), Herwin B. Cabasal (Far Eastern University, Philippines), Dr. Feorillo A. Demeterio III (De La Salle University, Philippines), Dr. Belinda F. Espiritu (University of the Philippines Cebu), Dr. Muthukumaran Kanasan (Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology, Malaysia), Martin Lukanov (Sofia University, Bulgaria), Dr. Mary Anne DC Mallari (University of Santo Tomas, Philippines), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Maria Gwenetha Y. Pusta (Far Eastern University, Philippines), Dr. Ratchaneekorn Ratchatakorntakoon (Chulalongkorn University, Thailand), Dr. Rommel B. Rodriguez (University of the Philippines Diliman), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Syamsul Zahri Subir (Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology, Malaysia), Asst. Prof. Jason Paolo Telles (University of the Philippines Baguio and Monash University, Australia), and Dr. Henrikus Joko Yulianto (Semarang State University).

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All editorial board members and I wish you much joy and academic inspiration and motivation with this new collection of research texts on current trends in Southeast Asian media studies.

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