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center for southeast asian studies

Winter 2012



M UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Letter from the Director



As you read this newsletter we will be winding down an exciting year of activities at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies. Over the course of the year we have brought more than three dozen scholars and performers to campus, while also hearing from some of our own distinguished faculty. The topics of these lectures and seminars have covered the gamut of discipline and geography, from flood relief in Myanmar, to photography in Indonesia, to corruption in Vietnam. We also collaborated with Professor Carla Sinopoli and the Museum of Anthropology to curate a virtual exhibition of the Museum of Anthropology Dean C. Worcester collection. You can read more about this amazing new resource on page six.

In December the Center partnered with U-M students' Southeast Asia Reading Group (SEAR) to organize a graduate conference and workshop, *Southeast Asia: Between the Lines*. In what we hope will be a model for the future we combined a day-long conference with a half-day workshop where graduate students from Michigan and elsewhere were able to interact with senior faculty around four academic themes. You can read more about the conference and workshop also on page six.

This has also been a wonderful year for Southeast Asian performing arts. In the fall we were pleased to host a visit by performers from the Indonesian Institute of the Arts at Surakarta (ISI). The group put on two performances, a dance and gamelan concert, and a shadow puppet play (page two). CSEAS and ISI-Surakarta also signed an MOU which will make more collaborations possible in the future. This spring, we hosted a shadow drama performance by Ki Purbo Asmoro and his troupe, which included live Javanese-English translation. Ki Purbo Asmoro is one of Java's best living *dhalangs*, and his translator Kathryn Emerson brought the world of *wayang* to non-Javanese speakers.

None of these activities would have been possible without the support of our faculty, students, staff and alumni around campus and across the world. Special thanks to Professor Nick Rine, whose term as Associate Director is coming to close, and the members of the executive committee, Nancy Florida, Fe Susan Go, Linda Lim, Nick Rine, Susan Walton and Fred Wherry. Last but not least, thanks to Kate Wright for all of her hard work.

Finally, we dedicate this issue to the memory of Professor Pete Becker who passed away on November 16, 2011. Pete was a powerful force for Southeast Asian Studies at Michigan and a dear colleague and friend. I invite you to read some of the tributes to Pete by his students and colleagues on pages three and four.

Allen Hicken, *Director*

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Regents of the University of Michigan: Julia Donovan Darlow, Laurence B. Deitch, Denise Ilitch, Olivia P. Maynard, Andrea Fischer Newman, Andrew C. Richner, S. Martin Taylor, Katherine E. White, Mary Sue Coleman, ex officio.

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New Institutional Links



Christi-Anne Castro (Musicology) brought CSEAS into a collaborative relationship with the **University of the Philippines-Diliman**, sparked by her recent trip there to participate in their conference “The Impact of Music in Shaping Southeast Asian Societies” at the College of Music. The conference was to inaugurate their new doctoral program in Music. Of the agreement, Professor Castro said, “I am excited that both institutions were able to quickly agree on a framework for cooperation, and I look forward to more engagement with UP-Diliman.”

CSEAS hosted top administrators from the Indonesian Institute of Arts-Surakarta (ISI) in September, 2011. ISI Rector T. Slamet Suparno and Professor Rahayu Supanggah visited along with a troupe of dancers, musicians, and singers. **Allen Hicken** and Slamet Suparno signed a Memorandum of Understanding which will allow for more collaboration between CSEAS and ISI in the future. Indonesian Consul General Benny Bahanadewa supported the exchange.



CSEAS was happy to host a visit from the top administration of Gadjah Mada University (UGM), Indonesia’s oldest and one of its most prestigious universities. Rector Sudjarwadi spent a day on campus with Djoko Luknanto, Chair of the UGM Center for Education Development, and Djoko Moerdiyanto, Executive Secretary. Their visit was assisted by Clare Banks of the Institute for International Education and they were joined by Haryo Winarso, Educational Attaché for the Indonesian Embassy. The UGM delegation met with Indonesian Studies faculty as well as with President Mary Sue Coleman, Provost Philip Hanlon, and Vice Provost for International Affairs Mark Tessler.

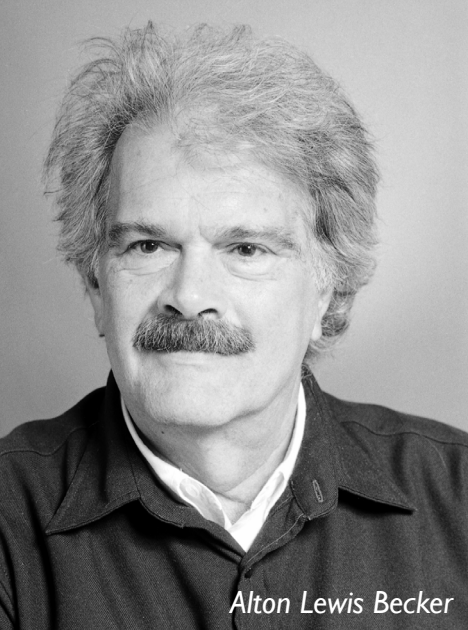


Back row, left to right: Imam Wahyudi, Embassy; Clare Banks, IIE; Kate Wright; Djoko Luknanto, Djoko Moerdiyanto, Agustini, and Reny Cordelia, Embassy. Front row left to right: Nancy Florida, Haryo Winarso, Sudjarwadi, Susan Walton, Jim Hoestery.



Back row, left to right: Imam Wahyudi, Clare Banks, Djoko Moerdiyanto, Allen Hicken, Kate Wright, Djoko Luknanto. Front row, left to right: Haryo Winarso, Sudjarwadi, Mary Sue Coleman, and Mark Tessler.

Alton Lewis Becker



Alton Lewis Becker

Alton Lewis Becker, professor of linguistics and Southeast Asian studies at the University of Michigan for many years, died on November 15 of complications from Parkinson's disease. He was 79.

Alton, known as Pete, was born on April 6, 1932, to Marguerite and Alton Becker in Monroe, Michigan. In high school, he had his own jazz band and made frequent trips to Detroit to hear famous bands of the 1940s like Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington, and Dave Brubeck. He also began canoeing the AuSable River in Michigan. His love of canoeing continued throughout his life.

While an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, he spent two summers working as a smoke jumper for the forestry service in Idaho. He married his fellow student, Judith Omans, in 1953, graduated with a B.A. in English from the University of Michigan in 1954, and went to the University of Connecticut where he simultaneously taught and earned his M.A. degree in 1956. He then took a teaching position at Ripon College, Wisconsin.

During these early years, in addition to his passion for canoeing, he became a serious birder. Until Parkinson's disease forced him to stop, he regularly tramped the woodlands of Washtenaw County in the early dawn.

In 1958, Pete was offered a teaching position at Kambawza College in Taunggi, Burma. He and Judith, with their son Matthew, moved to Burma, and their son Andrew was born there. As a result of his study of Burmese, his interests turned from English literature to linguistics. He returned to the University of Michigan in 1961, where he pursued a PhD. in linguistics, which he received in 1967. In 1969, he went back to Southeast Asia with his family, which now included a daughter, Margaret, to take a two-year position teaching linguistics at what is now the Universitas Negeri Malang, in Malang, East Java, Indonesia.

Along with his mentor, Kenneth Pike, and his colleague Richard Young, he co-authored the book, *Rhetoric: Discovery and Change* (1970), which has remained an influential book in the field of rhetoric. His long stays in Burma and Indonesia, as well as subsequent shorter stays in Malaysia and Sri Lanka, led to a rare understanding of the particularity of different languages and of how old texts are reshaped into present contexts. His book, *Beyond Translation: Essays Toward a Modern Philology* (1995), a collection of many of his seminal essays, received the University of Michigan Press Book Award for the best book published that year. The following is a quote from *Beyond Translation*.

“And why describe languages--that is, languaging in different societies? I think the answer...is to learn to converse with those we have difficulty conversing with. Whether they are our own neighbors and family or people halfway around the world, the same kinds of differences are involved, I think, and learning about one teaches about the other. Recognizing the dramatic differences I confront in speaking to a Balinese prepares me to recognize the more subtle differences I confront in speaking to my wife and children, and it teaches me to respect them, not out of some abstract moral principle but as the practical first step in having my own differences respected.”

Alton Becker taught in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Michigan until his retirement in 1985. The Association for Asian Studies recently inaugurated the A.L. Becker Southeast Asian Literary Translations Prize, which will be awarded to an outstanding English translation of a work of Southeast Asia literature.

In addition to his wife Judith, Alton Becker is survived by his children; Matthew of Huntington Beach, California; Andrew of Blacksburg, Virginia; and Margaret of New York City; his daughters-in-law Katherine Becker and Trudy Becker; and his grandchildren Sophia Becker, Adrian Becker, Daniel Becker, Timothy Becker, Matthew Becker, Trudy Becker, Ramona Petrini and Joseph Petrini; his brother and sister-in-law, Richard and Holly Becker; and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

April 6, 1932- November 15, 2011

“The lifelong work of A.L. (Pete) Becker, Professor Emeritus of Linguistics, has been transformative not only for Southeast Asian Studies, but also in the fields of linguistics and translations studies. His sensitive scholarship on language will continue to challenge us to explore the ways that languages produce meaning and affect realities. Becker’s theoretical meditations remind us that language is not transparent, that meaning is not waiting to be discovered underneath the word, but rather that it is to be felt across the grain of language’s surface.”

Nancy Florida, professor of Indonesian Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan

“[Becker’s] ability to begin with a word – just a word – and elegantly paint a broad canvas that offers depth and insight is to me a hallmark of his long lasting and remarkable contribution to reshaping our thinking about philology, language, and translation. Under his influence, these fields of inquiry will remain relevant, dynamic, and inspiring.”

*Ronit Ricci, (PhD, Comparative Literature, '06)
professor, Australian National University.*

For Pete Becker

By Haj Ross, professor of Linguistics, University of Northern Texas

There is a web of light
The ones your thinking touched,

lifted, pointed out the way to.
I don’t remember just

what it was like before
I felt your smile on me

and knew:
there are true friends in thought.

It’s a lonely business, thinking,
way out beyond the city limits,

yes — my life too was changed.

and when you find the steps
of someone going up the mountain

It’s nothing like an empire
there are no rules to disagree with

to the peak you see the morning sun on
your own steps quicken.

it’s maybe like a genealogy:
you met Pete, you found your kin.

The magic that you feel
spreads out each time

Today we looked high up
saw a bird we would not see again

you meet another
in whose eyes you see:

thank you brother,
thank you forever for this light.

Alumni Return to Ann Arbor

In an extended celebration of our 50th anniversary, Fall 2010 saw the return of some of our alumni to our Friday-at-Noon lecture series, among a full slate of speakers. Winter 2011 continued the reunion with three more alumni in the series for a total of nine alumni who returned to Ann Arbor to share their expertise. These alumni added to the broad range of topics and scholars from around the world that we enjoyed.



Women at a Hizbut Tahrir demonstration, Jakarta.

Humanities

[Michael Charney](#) (U-M, 99) and [Kerry Ward](#) (U-M, 02), and [Charles Keith](#) gave talks that spanned continents and showed the connections forged through colonialism between Southeast Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Reminding us of U-M's important role in Thai language pedagogy, [Robert Bickner](#) (U-M, 81) discussed the teaching of Thai language in today's world.

[Anne Rasmussen](#), [James Hoesterey](#), [Anis Nor](#) (U-M, 90), and [Fuad Jabali](#) gave lectures that fell under the broad category of religion, discussing contemporary divergences within Islam in the Malay world.

Social Sciences

[Laura Junker](#) (U-M, 90) and [Ken George](#) (U-M, 89) addressed history as we can grasp it through material objects, Junker through Philippine archeology and George through material art.

[Denise Lewis](#), [Peter Brosius](#) (U-M, 92) and [Kathryn Robinson](#) addressed contemporary social problems in Cambodia, Malaysia, and Indonesia, respectively.

[Theary Seng](#) (UM, 00), [David Steinberg](#), [Chris Baker](#) and [Pasuk Phongpaichit](#) spoke on large-scale political changes in the region.



16th century elite Tagalog man and woman wearing imported silk clothing and indigenous gold jewelry as status ornamentation. From 1590 Boxer Codex, reprinted in William Henry Scott, *Barangay: Sixteenth Century Philippine Culture and Society* (Ateneo de Manila Press).



Statue of the Buddha in Thailand.

Art and Performance

[Forest McGill](#), [Justin McDaniel](#), and [Maurizio Peleggi](#) gave lectures on Thai Buddhist art and art history.

[FX Widaryanto](#), [Patricia Matusky-Yamaguchi](#) (U-M, 80), and [Rahayu Supanggah](#) brought the performing arts to our lecture series.

Please see our [audio-video archive](#) if you missed any of these terrific talks.

We thank our co-sponsors for their support: Africa Studies Center; Anthropology; Asian Languages and Cultures; Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies; Center for World Performance Studies; Eisenberg Institute for Historical Studies; Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy; History; History of Art; International Policy Center; Islamic Studies Program; MLK Jr. Day Symposium Planning Committee; Museum of Anthropology; North Quadrangle; Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives; President's Advisory Committee on Labor Standards and Human Rights; Rackham Graduate School; Residential College; School of Music, Theatre, and Dance; School of Natural Resources and Environment; Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments; Thai Studies Endowment at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies; U-M Libraries; U-M Museum of Art.

Southeast Asia: Between the Lines Conference and Workshop

By Jessica Hill



Chip Zuckerman (far right) on the Anthropology panel



Jim Hoesterey and Sebastian Dettman



Dominic Nardi (right) with an invited student from Australia



Vicente Rafael (left) and U-M students Saul Allen (second from left) and Dashini Jeyathurai (far right)

In December, CSEAS hosted “Southeast Asia: Between the Lines” a two-day graduate student conference and workshop organized by U-M’s Southeast Asian Studies Reading Group. The first day featured graduate student presentations on four moderated panels of Geography/Sociology, History, Political Science, and Anthropology/Environmental Studies. Several University of Michigan students from diverse disciplines presented at the conference: **Sebastian Dettman** (Southeast Asian Studies), **Dominic Nardi** (Political Science), **Saul Allen** (Asian Languages & Cultures), **Dashini Jeyathurai** (Women’s Studies and English), and **Chip Zuckerman** (Anthropology). The second day featured theme-focused workshops facilitated by invited faculty moderators. Invited moderators and workshop facilitators included: Ian Baird, University of Wisconsin-Madison; Vicente Rafael, University of Washington; Dan Slater, University of Chicago; and Anna Tsing, University of California, Santa Cruz.

This conference was made possible with the support and tireless work of Program Manager Kate Wright, Director Allen Hicken, and affiliated Southeast Asian Studies faculty and staff. Financial support for this event came from the Henry Luce Foundation, U-M’s Rackham Graduate School, and the Departments of Anthropology, History, Political Science, and Sociology. The conference proved to be an enriching experience for presenters and participants, fostering discussion across disciplinary boundaries among faculty and students, and strengthening bonds among scholars of Southeast Asia.



Joseph Beal Steere with his team of University of Michigan students, 1887. Credit: Bentley Historical Library.

Dean Conant Worcester Photographic Collection web exhibit

From 1890 to 1913, Dean Conant Worcester took thousands of photographs of people and places throughout the Philippines. Worcester first went to the Philippines with a University of Michigan zoological expedition lead by Joseph Beal Steere. The majority of photographs were taken while Worcester served as the controversial Secretary of Interior in the U.S. colonial government from 1901-1913. Simultaneously disturbing and beautiful, these photographs portray the perspectives and emphases of a leading proponent of the colonial mission. This exhibition features a subset of the nearly 5,000 glass negatives and lantern slides in the Museum of Anthropology’s Worcester Collection. Thanks to **Carla Sinopoli**, professor and director of the Museum of Anthropology, Julia Falkovitch-Khain, web designer, and the Museum of Anthropology, owner of the [Worcester collection](#).

New Gamelan Online Resource

As a part of an on-going project at CSEAS to bring gamelan music to K-12 teachers and classrooms, **Vera Flaig** (PhD, Ethnomusicology, 09) and **Jesse Johnston** (Ethnomusicology) collaborated on creating a [web resource](#). The website provides lesson plans and resources, including sound recordings, musical notations, and templates for wayang character puppets. We hope the website helps more teachers bring the enchanting sounds of the gamelan to their students. Thanks to Vera and Jesse for all their hard work!



ISI Surakarta dancers in North Quad’s Creative Commons Atelier

Faculty News



Richard Atienza (Asian Languages and Cultures) is currently working with other Filipino instructors from the NRC institutions to formulate proficiency guidelines for the specific language attributes of Filipino. He was also awarded a teaching fellowship from the Center for Global and Intercultural Study and will lead a group of 19 students to the Philippines this summer under the Global Intercultural Experience for Undergraduates (GIEU) program.

Nancy Florida (Asian Languages and Cultures) is a member of the supervisory board of the American Institute for Indonesian Studies (AIFIS). The establishment of AIFIS in Jakarta is supported by The Henry Luce Foundation and the Putera Sampoerna Foundation. It provides a venue for intellectual exchange

between Americans entering Indonesia for academic research purposes and Indonesian scholars and students. It will maintain a library, host seminars and lectures, and offer short-term Indonesian language classes. For more information visit the [AIFIS website](#). Florida was also honored with a special award from the Indonesian Embassy (see page 13).

Kathy Ford (Public Health) spent Winter 2011 and Winter 2012 terms as a Visiting Professor at the Institute for Population and Social Research at Mahidol University. She researched projects related to HIV prevention and welfare of the Burmese, Cambodian and Lao migrants in Thailand. With a research grant from the Amnuay-Samonsri Viravan Endowment for Thai Studies through the Center for Southeast Asian studies and a grant from the Thai Research Foundation, she also conducted a preliminary study of the impact of the violence in the three Southernmost provinces in Thailand on the welfare of the Muslim population in that area and consequent migration to Malaysia. This research continues.

Webb Keane (Anthropology) will be teaching a graduate seminar on the “Anthropology of Ethics” at the Oslo Summer School of Comparative Social Science Studies, University of Oslo, Norway.

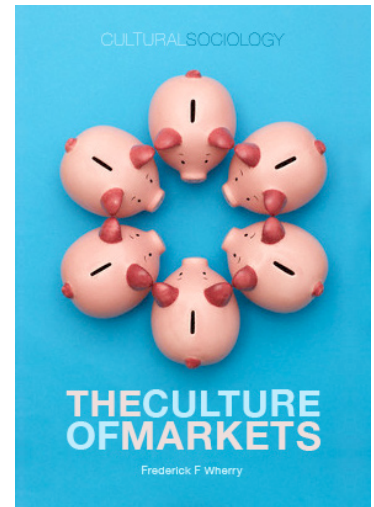
Stuart Kirsch (Anthropology) was the discussant for the [Yale Indonesia Forum conference on West Papua](#) in New Haven, Connecticut, on April 16th, 2011. He later attended meetings to discuss the human rights situation in West Papua at the United Nations, Human Rights Watch, the Department of State, and Capital Hill. His participation at the Yale conference was supported by a grant from the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Michigan.

Linda Lim (Business) gave multiple lectures in the past year, among them several in Singapore and the Philippines while she was traveling there in March 2011. Highlights include: “Challenges for the Singapore Economy” at the Civil Service College, Singapore; “Currency Wars in an Era of Asian Economic Leadership?” a public lecture at the Asian Institute of Management, Manila, and “Beyond Gender: The Impact of Age, Ethnicity, Nationality and Economic Growth on Women in the Singapore Economy”, a lecture at a conference on “Women’s Choices, Women’s Lives: Shaping the Next 25 Years” held by the Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE) and the National University of Singapore Society.

Gayl Ness (emeritus, Sociology) is again teaching a Freshman seminar with much Southeast Asia material. He says, “It is great fun and the students give me HOPE!” He is also adjunct professor at Khon Kaen University’s College of Public Administration in Thailand, where he is collaborating on a major field study of the process of decentralization. The team will have a workshop at the end of April and a final conference with research results in August or September, 2012.

Susan Walton (Residential College, School of Music, Theatre, and Dance) organized the year-long residency of FX Widaryanto, who directed the dance drama of the Islamic Amir Hamzah story, performed in March 2011. While Widaryanto was in residence, she organized an international conference “Islam and the Performing Arts” in January 2011 with grants received from a variety of campus units. She also gave gamelan performances at the Indonesian Cultural Night and at Artscapade at the University of Michigan Museum of Art. In addition, she arranged for a performance, a lecture, and two workshops by Purbo Asmoro and his troupe in March 2012 (see back cover).

Fred Wherry (Sociology) published *The Culture of Markets* (Polity Press, 2012) in January. The book includes some illustrative examples from Thailand but largely focuses on markets across the globe. Examining the cultural logics and dynamics that constitute and guide markets, the book questions the logics of pricing, differing labor market outcomes, and discusses reasons why national governments emphasize the country’s “personality” and history in economic policies.



Henry Wright (Anthropology) visited the Department of Archaeology at Silpakorn University in Bangkok in July 2011. He saw their laboratories, spoke with students, and gave a lecture on using archaeological methods to study the organization of traditional states. He also visited highland Yunnan in June 2011 to help plan future research on the archaeological sites of the spectacular Dian culture. The sites in this area are threatened by the growth of modern Kunming. He hopes to be back to help with fieldwork this summer.

Thanks to **Judith Becker** (emerita, Ethnomusicology) and **Rudolf Mrázek** (History) for their book donations to the newly established American Institute for Indonesian Studies in Jakarta. Becker donated copies of her book *Karawitan Source Readings in Javanese Gamelan and Vocal Music* (volumes 1-3; 1984) and **Pete Becker**’s book *Writing on the Tongue* (1989). Mrázek donated his copy of his son Jan Mrázek’s *Puppet Theater in Contemporary Indonesia New Approaches to Performance Events* (2002). All books were published by the Centers for South and Southeast Asian Studies in the Michigan Papers on South and Southeast Asia series. The books will become part of a permanent library at the American Institute for Indonesian Studies.

Southeast Asia Languages and Literatures in the Hatcher Graduate Library

Southeast Asia is a region of many languages, each with its own literary traditions ranging from epic poems to prose masterpieces, from folk tales to historical chronicles. To help celebrate LSA’s Language Theme Semester, the Southeast Asia Collection at the Graduate Library is exhibiting some of the most well-known literary works from each major Southeast Asian language group, along with excerpts and translations, curated by Mya Gosling (SEAS ‘06). The exhibit, which opened in February 2012, is called U-M Library Celebrates Language.



Student News

Tessa Adzemovic (LSA, junior) won honorable mention for her essay *Indonesia Pie* in the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia's Indonesian Writing Contest held Fall 2011. Tessa had first travelled to Indonesia on a Global Intercultural Experience for Undergraduates trip with **Augustini** in 2009.

Having gone to Vietnam in 2009 on a Fulbright, **Bretton Dimick** (Ethnomusicology) stayed another year, and in the summer of 2011 wrapped up two years of dissertation research with the Ca Trù Thái Hà Ensemble in Hanoi. He came back to the U.S. to continue work on a dissertation in Ethnomusicology on the music, poetry, and history of *ca trù* (Vietnamese sung poetry). Last summer he also finished his MA thesis in Southeast Asian Studies, which explored early twentieth-century Vietnamese music.



Tessa Adzemovic in Indonesia

Kamayani Gupta (LSA, '10), Fulbright English Teaching fellow to Dungan, Malaysia, has competed in the Pepsi Refresh Contest to win funding for her pen-pal project. She intends to link her Malaysian students with students at River Rouge middle school in Detroit, who will photodocument their lives and exchange the photos with each other. The project will raise awareness and intercultural understanding as well as teach language and literacy skills. She is raising money to provide 20 cameras for each school.

Dashini Jeyathurai (English, Women's Studies) has a forthcoming chapter titled "Rethinking the Circuits of Male Desire Across Multiple Dostanas" in *Perceptions of Masculinity: Challenges to the Indian Male* edited by Moti Gokulsing, Rohit Dasgupta, and Diviani Chaudhuri. She also has two book reviews forthcoming in *Postcolonial Text and Contemporary South Asia*. She recently presented at CSEAS' Southeast Asia: Between the Lines conference and at UCLA's Thinking Gender conference. Dashini also presented her dissertation research at Rackham's Centennial Symposium: Michigan Graduate Students in the World. Last but certainly not least, she married her partner this past summer!

Jesse Johnston (School of Information) presented on a panel at last year's Association for Asian Studies meeting in Honolulu (March 31-April 3). The panel, "From Collection to Knowledge Production: Examining the Archive(s) in Southeast Asia" was organized by **Ricky Punzalan** (School of Information) who gave a paper titled "These Images Are Similar, but Are Not the Same: Digitization and Worcester's Visual Archives of Indigenous Filipinos." Jesse gave a paper titled "Performance as Archives in Southeast Asia: An Ethnomusicological Perspective." He received an International Institute travel grant to attend the conference. In fall 2011, he consulted with Ana M.T.P. Labrador, Technical Advisor to the National Museum of the Philippines, about instituting a database for cataloging the Museum's anthropology collections and on the redesign of the Museum's website.



Ellen Myers (Residential College, '12) received a grant offer of a Fulbright Teaching Assistantship for Indonesia. Myers studied Javanese dance, Southeast Asian music and culture, and Indonesian language while at U-M, and she first went to Indonesia in June 2011 with CSEAS' collaborative study abroad trip. She is eagerly awaiting her placement city from the Fulbright office, and can't wait to get back to Indonesia.

Dominic Nardi (Political Science) visited Aung San Suu Kyi in December to deliver the Wallenberg award from the University of Michigan (see page 11). He also published an [op-ed piece](#) on Burmese political reform in New Mandala, a publication of the Australian National University's College of Asia and the Pacific.

Kharis Templeton (Political Science, '12) defended his dissertation, *The Origins and Decline of Dominant Party Systems: Taiwan's Transition in Comparative Perspective* in January 2012. He is currently teaching at Eastern Michigan University. Congratulations, Kharis!

Mai Ze Vang (LSA, '12) was featured in a U-M New Service [article](#), highlighting her dedicated study of Thai language. Mai Ze graduates this year, and is seeking research opportunities in Thailand.

Chip Zuckerman (Anthropology) presented a paper at the 2011 Cornell Graduate Student Conference on Southeast Asia. The Cornell Conference awarded his paper, entitled “Lao Lum, Lao Theung, Lao Suung: A Few Reflections on Some Common Lao Ethnonyms,” the “most outstanding paper of the 13th annual SEA graduate student conference.” A version of the paper has been published in their [Spring 2012 E-Bulletin](#).

CSEAS' New MA students



Emma Nolan-Thomas



Jacob Gold



Jessica Hill



Megan Ryan

The **Thai Student Association**, led by **Thunyarat Amornpetckul**, raised a total of \$7,142.50, equivalent to about 220,667.54 Thai Baht, for the Thai Red Cross Society in October and November 2011. The donations went to help the victims of the Thai Floods. Thanks to the Thai Student Association for their efforts and for all who contributed.

The **Filipino-American Student Association** celebrated their 25th Anniversary on March 31. We look forward to the next 25 and beyond!



Student Cultural Nights

This winter we enjoyed Cultural Night performances from four of our student organizations. The Vietnamese Student Association, on February 4; the Indonesian Student Association on February 18, the Malaysian Student Association on March 10, and the Thai Student Association on March 31. All of the Cultural Nights offered terrific performances and wonderful food to the entire community.



Aung San Suu Kyi Given Wallenberg Award

Finding Wallenberg on the Road to Mandalay?

By Dominic Nardi (Political Science)



On October 25, 2011, the University of Michigan Wallenberg Committee awarded Aung San Suu Kyi the 21st Raoul Wallenberg Medal *in absentia* for her non-violent struggle on behalf of democracy and human rights in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma). Myanmar's military rulers had kept Daw Suu under house arrest for much of the past 24 years and only released her on November 13, 2010.

By the time I delivered the medal to her in Yangon last December, the government had inched towards Daw Suu's vision of greater freedom and democracy.

The Wallenberg Committee didn't predict – indeed couldn't have expected – these developments when selecting Aung San Suu Kyi for the award. Since 1988, the military has ruled Myanmar directly. The junta announced elections for 1990, but reneged when Daw Suu's National League for Democracy (NLD) won over 80% of the seats.

Surprisingly, following the 2010 elections – in which the junta's favored party, the Union Solidarity and Development Party, won just under 80% of contested seats – Myanmar's elites have taken gradual but genuine steps toward reform. President Thein Sein has legalized trade unions, relaxed censorship, pursued currency reform, released hundreds of political prisoners, and suspended construction of the unpopular Myitsone Dam. The military itself has largely stayed out of politics.

Even more remarkable is the change in the political atmosphere. One can now hear citizens in teashops discussing politics without fear. Local media – including the government-owned *New Light of Myanmar* – reports on Daw Suu's every move, often quite favorably. Street vendors now sell posters and calendars with Daw Suu's photos on them. Perhaps most dramatically, billboards in downtown Yangon feature Aung San Suu Kyi's profile and ads for an NLD education benefit concert.

Aung San Suu Kyi herself has begun the transformation from resistance leader to politician. After meeting with President Thein Sein in August, she stated that she believes the president's commitment to reform was genuine. She recently observed that while the pace of reform is not "as fast as a lot of us would like" it is also "not too slow." Indeed, the NLD has decided to contest in 48 upcoming by-elections. Daw Suu herself will run for – and win – a seat in the *Pyithu Hluttaw* from the Kawhmu district.

"Even more remarkable is the change in the political atmosphere. One can now hear citizens in teashops discussing politics without fear."

This year is also arguably the first time when the United States is in a position to provide constructive assistance to Myanmar society. Both sides hailed Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's visit in early December as the beginning of a new era in U.S.-Myanmar relations. While there, she announced a major concession: the U.S. would no longer veto World Bank development projects for Myanmar. President Obama also announced that he would appoint a full ambassador, as opposed to a *chargé d'affaires*.

There is also a unique opportunity for American universities to engage with Myanmar. Fifty years of military rule have devastated the education system, leading to a shortage of professionals who understand public management. The U.S. Information Center and local NGOs regularly invite foreign experts to discuss constitutional law and democratic politics. However, Myanmar intellectuals hope to develop a broader relationship with American educational institutions.

In awarding Aung San Suu Kyi the Wallenberg Medal, the University of Michigan has engaged in promoting democracy and human dignity in Myanmar. The university boasts top experts across the natural and social sciences as well as the means to share that knowledge with Myanmar. There is even precedent for such a relationship – many of the Philippines' current political leaders and judges received training in the University of Michigan.

When I met with Aung San Suu Kyi, she expressed her desire that one day – when Myanmar becomes a democracy and she can leave the country freely – she could visit Ann Arbor to thank us personally for our support. Hopefully, we can speed that day along by sharing our expertise with her country.



In 1989, the government changed the official English-language name of the country from “Burma” to “Myanmar.” I use “Myanmar” rather than “Burma” to reflect international practice. However, this does not indicate any political bias.

Thank you to the Miller-Tran families

CSEAS is proud to announce the new Miller-Tran Endowment for Vietnamese Language. Funded by a generous gift by Lawrence and Phyllis Miller, the fund will be used to support Vietnamese language instruction at the University of Michigan. Wait for our Fall 2012 newsletter for a profile of the Millers, and what inspired their gift to CSEAS.



U-M students on a recent trip to Vietnam with Thuy Anh Nguyen (far left)

Awards

CSEAS was pleased to award Thai Studies research grants to graduate students: **James Atkinson** (Political Science); **Matthew Gallon** (Archaeology); **Jessica Hill** (CSEAS); **Jacob Gold** (CSEAS); **Ajay Shenoy** (Economics) and faculty members: **Kathy Ford** (Public Health); **Meredith Miller** and **Etienne Turpin** (Urban Planning).

Undergraduate Language Excellence Awards

Our language lecturers nominate the most impressive undergraduate language learners in their classes at the end of each year. This year, we recognize **James Den Uyl** (second year Indonesian); **Sean-Matthew Calo** (second year Filipino); **Kohlee Marie Kennedy**, (second year Thai); and **Bianca Khanh-Linh Nguyen** (first year Vietnamese) for their extraordinary efforts.

Albert D. Moscotti Best Paper Award for 2012 goes to **Dominic Nardi** (Political Science) for his paper “Controversial Signals or Signaling Controversy? A Model of Judicial Behavior in Indonesia’s Mahkamah Konstitusi.” His paper analyzes court cases in Indonesia’s constitutional court to examine theories of judicial behavior, asking why Indonesian judges exercise the kind of independent judicial review that they do, even with the kind of constraints that would lead an observer to question the very independence of the judiciary.

Judith Becker Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Research on Southeast Asia in 2012 goes to **Ajay Shenoy** (Economics) for his paper “Market Failures and Misallocation: Decomposing Factor Misallocation by Source.” His paper explores Thailand’s rice markets to propose a new theory of economic growth, particularly for the agricultural sector of the developing world.

Nancy Florida honored by Indonesian Embassy

On February 10, Ambassador Dr. Dino Patti Djalal presented the Ambassador’s Special Award to Professor Nancy Florida at CSEAS.



Nancy Florida and Dino Patti Djalal



Jess Hill and Megan Ryan



Cheryl Yin, Nat Tuohy, and Chip Zuckerman

The text of the award reads “The Ambassador Special Award for Outstanding Achievement in Education is herewith presented to Professor Nancy K. Florida in recognition of her outstanding achievements in the field of education, in particular for her contribution towards building a deeper understanding and knowledge of the finer arts and meaning of the Javanese Literature and Culture and its preservation, as part of a curriculum in Indonesian Studies in the United States of America. Through her unbounded capacity and enthusiasm in sharing her insights on Indonesia with U.S. scholars, students and the American public, Professor Florida continues to play a crucial role in strengthening and elevating the ties of friendship between our two nations.”

Congratulations Nancy, for well-deserved recognition!

Donor Thanks & CSEAS Initiatives

Thank you to our Donors

Thank you to all our supporters. Your generosity makes our work possible.

Bold indicates first-time donors.

* indicates faculty/emeriti/staff

Agustini*	Nancy Florida*	Erika Lindensmith	Gavin Shatkin*
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CSEAS Initiatives

The Center for Southeast Asian Studies continues to build on our established strengths, expand faculty and student ranks in a dynamic world region, and offer opportunities for learning about Southeast Asia to our community. To support the following initiatives, please visit our [website](#).

Southeast Asian Language endowments

Filipino Language Endowment (731413)

Indonesian Language Endowment (731412)

Miller-Tran Endowment for Vietnamese Language (731410)

Thai Language Endowment (731411)

These language endowments are used to support the teaching of Southeast Asian languages at Michigan.

Funds are used to support the hiring and retention of our outstanding language lecturers and for student scholarships.

Javanese Gamelan Endowment (731164)

This endowment supports programs in the Javanese performing arts at the University of Michigan, including annual concerts and upkeep of the University of Michigan Gamelan Ensemble and residencies with prominent Javanese musicians, dancers and puppeteers.

Indonesian Studies Initiative (312227)

Indonesian Studies has long been a particular strength at the University of Michigan. We support faculty and

student research, teaching and public programs on Indonesia, and we are building toward an endowment for Indonesian Studies.

Student Initiatives

Undergraduate (309964) Student Support and Graduate (309966) Student Support

Michigan's superb undergraduates have few opportunities to "discover" Southeast Asia on their own. These funds provide incentives for undergraduates to study Southeast Asia during their time at Michigan. We continue to attract the very best graduate students interested in the region, and we support their education as much as we can.

The Amnuay-Samonsri Viravan Endowment for Thai Studies (572202)

allows us to fund all manners of engagement with Thai Studies. We have used income from the endowment to support student travel to Thailand, for graduates and undergraduates, and for faculty and graduate student research in Thailand.

Philippine Studies Endowment (731185)

This endowment supports the continued study of the Philippines and Filipino languages and cultures at the University of Michigan. Income from the endowment supports faculty and student research, teaching and curricular development about the Philippines at the University, and outreach to the local community.



Center for Southeast Asian Studies

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Members of Susan Walton's gamelan class rehearse with members of Ki Purbo Asmoro's gamelan troupe before the March performance at the University of Michigan Union ballroom. Ki Purbo Asmoro spent three days at U-M, offering master classes to gamelan students, a public lecture with translator Kathryn Emerson, two public workshops, and a major shadow drama performance.

