

FEATURED SPEAKER

Prof. LILY KONG, Ph.D

Title: THE MAKING OF SUSTAINABLE CREATIVE/CULTURAL SPACE: CULTURAL INDIGENEITY, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Professor Lily KONG is Professor of Geography, Vice-President (University & Global Relations), and concurrently Director of Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore.

In her presentation at *Arte-Polis 2*, entitled “The Making of Sustainable Creative/Cultural Space: Cultural Indigeneity, Social Inclusion and Environmental Sustainability”, Professor Lily Kong shares experiences from Shanghai and Singapore, two economically vibrant Asian cities which have recently adopted creative/cultural economy strategies. Professor Kong’s paper examines new spatial expressions of cultural and economic interests in the two cities: state-vaunted cultural edifices and organically evolved cultural spaces. She discusses the simultaneous precarity and sustainability of these places, focusing on Shanghai’s Grand Theatre and Moganshan Lu, and Singapore’s Esplanade – Theatres by the Bay and Wessex Estate.

Their cultural sustainability is understood as their ability to support the development of indigenous content and local idioms in artistic work. Their social sustainability is examined in terms of the social inclusion and community bonds they engender, while environmental sustainability refers to the articulation with the language of existing urban forms, and the preservation of or improvements to the landscape. Professor Kong argues that while both Shanghai and Singapore demonstrate simultaneous precarity and sustainability, Singapore’s city-state status places greater pressure on it to ensure sustainability than does Shanghai within a much larger China in which Beijing can quite well serve as the cultural hearth while Shanghai remains essentially a commercial centre.

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