

Welcome Remarks at the Joseph Rykwert and the Humanities of Built Heritage – A Memorial Symposium

7 December 2024

TC08, The Create, 15/F M+ Tower, WKCD, TST, HK

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the Joseph Rykwert Memorial Symposium, which is the Inaugural Event presented by the CIPSH Chair Programme in Cultural Heritage and Creative Humanities at The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK).

CIPSH is the acronym for the International Council for Philosophy and Human Sciences, an international academic organization founded in 1949 in Paris under the initiation of the first Director-General of UNESCO, Julien Huxley, with the objectives to improve communication among scholars, enforce a better knowledge of cultures, and to bring forth their richness and diversities.

The CIPSH Chair programme was created in 2018, modelled after the programme of UNESCO Chairs, to highlight and encourage existing research networks of centres of research in the humanities, to attract greater attention to the humanities worldwide, and to enhance recognition of their importance in contemporary society.

There are now 21 academic research centres as member organizations under CIPSH and nine CIPSH Chairs created since 2019 in seven countries. The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong is proud to have one CIPSH Chair established since August this year, among the two Chairs created in the Greater China – the other at the Chinese Academy of Sciences University in Beijing. I congratulate our colleague Prof Desmond Hui, Department Head of Art and Design, as the Chairholder for the next five years.

At a time when humanities centres and departments worldwide are scaled down or being closed down because of funding cut, we at HSUHK are still strongly committed to uphold the core values of the arts and humanistic education which we believe would be essential to the growth and sustainable development of society.

In March this year, we opened the Creative Humanities Hub in our Shatin main campus as the new home to our School of Humanities and Social Science, with state of the art facilities in the teaching and research of creative humanities subjects, including art and

design, theatre and performing arts, creative writing, cultural and creative industries, cultural and built heritage studies, and digital arts and humanities.

Today's inaugural event timely celebrates this vision with the commemoration of a great and foremost humanistic scholar in architectural History Prof Joseph Rykwert, whose writings and ideas on cities and culture have captivated our imagination throughout history. Through Prof Hui's initiation, we have invited and assembled 20 scholars worldwide from seven countries and nine territories, who are former students, colleagues and friends of Prof Rykwert, to present their insights of learning from the master.

I congratulate you all for the success of this memorial symposium!

Thank you.