



Department of English Language & Literature  
DEPARTMENT SEMINAR SERIES  
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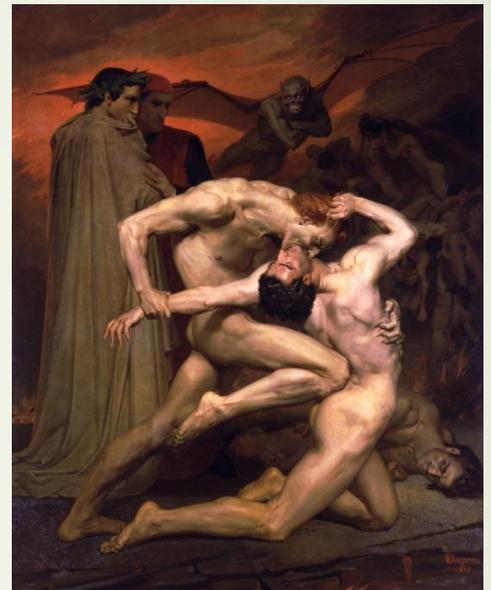
*Date & time:* Monday, 24 April 2017; 4:30p.m.

*Venue:* OEM1008, 10/F, OEN Hall Building, Ho Sin Hang Campus

## Let the Dead Bury Their Dead, Or Homo Will Not Inherit, Or Untimely Union: Disjuncture and Conjuncture of Gothic Time and Queer Time in *A Visitation of Spirits*

*Holden Liang*

Abstract: As the discourse of progress and history continues to sweep over the globe and impose its authoritative (re)organization of temporal experience, there is a no less global and persistent resistance to time's perceived irreversibility which at once sustains and plagues the modern condition. The Gothic, with its roots deeply grounded in experience of time, provides a site where the flow of time is not necessarily linear, productive or irreversible, whether it is of an antiquated setting – dilapidated mansions, haunted castles – where time refuses to move forward, or ghosts issuing from another time to haunt the present, thus offering an effective counter-discourse to the unrelenting chronometry of linear progression. As is in its characteristic hybrid nature, the Gothic is highly amenable to the queer in their shared impulse to destabilize notions of normativity. Since uncertainty and anxiety are essential to the genre, the Gothic's flirtation with homoeroticism, affinity for sexual ambiguities, and its play with innuendoes and metaphors combine to demonstrate a deep bond with the queer, especially when taking into account the temporal turn in queer scholarship. In this Talk, I will read Randall Kenan's queer gothic fiction *A Visitation of Spirits* (1989) to discuss how queer temporalities and the temporalities in Gothic narrative inform each other in their co-articulation of queer subjectivities, and how they enfranchise alternative views of time, history, and relationalities.



About the speaker:

Holden Liang is currently pursuing a PhD in Literary Studies at Hong Kong Baptist University, focusing on how literary works engage various temporal structures in their rendering of subjectivities. His research interests include time and temporality, narratology, genre fiction, and coming-of-age literature.