

Public Roundtable

In Public:

Writers, the Law and Free Expression

Peter Godwin

PEN President

Chan Koonchung

Award Winning Author

Susan Orlean

Award Winning Author

Art Spiegelman

Award Winning Author

Thursday, 15 January 2015, 1830 - 2000

Academic Conference Room, 11/F, Cheng Yu Tung Tower

The University of Hong Kong

In this public roundtable, moderated by Professor Scott Veitch (HKU), international activists and award winning authors will discuss pressing questions facing freedom of expression in the world today - Do writers have any political obligations? In many parts of the world times of political challenge brought to the fore artists, writers and intellectuals who were at the vanguard of political movements and were catalysts for major social and political change. Do those individuals exist today, and where? Has that role been obviated by new ways of making change? Do writers have the same degree of influence they once did to disseminate ideas and shape political and social thought, or has their role been subsumed by the mass media and mass culture?

Peter Godwin, PEN President - 2010 Guggenheim fellow and an award winning foreign correspondent, author, documentary filmmaker, and screenwriter. He was a foreign and war correspondent for *The London Sunday Times* and the BBC, and has reported from over 60 countries.

Art Spiegelman won the Pulitzer Prize in 1992 for his masterful Holocaust narrative *Maus* - which portrayed Jews as mice and Nazis as cats. *Maus II* continued the remarkable story of his parents' survival of the Nazi regime and their lives later in America. In 2007 he was a Heyman Fellow of the Humanities at Columbia University where he taught a Masters of the Comics seminar.

Susan Orlean is the best-selling author of eight books, including *The Bullfighter Checks Her Makeup*; *My Kind of Place*; *Saturday Night*; and *Lazy Little Loafers*. She has been a staff writer for the *New Yorker* since 1992. Her work has also been published in *Esquire*, *Rolling Stone*, *Outside*, *Smithsonian*, and the *New York Times*.

Chan Koonchung (陳冠中) is a sinophone writer from Hong Kong. His novel *The Fat Years* (盛世中國 2013年) has been translated into 14 languages. His latest novel is *The Unbearable Dreamworld of Champa the Driver* (裸命). He is a journalist and, since the 1970s, he has been a magazine publisher, filmmaker and producer in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and mainland China. He is also the author of *Hong Kong Trilogy* and many non-fiction books including *My Generation of Hongkongers*.

*To reserve a place, please email Joyce Fung at joycef@hku.hk.
For all other inquiries, please email Lindsay Ernst at lernst@hku.hk*