

Organizer: **Lai, Linda**, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong  
Chair and Discussant: **Man, Eva**, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong

**What is in a 'Talking Head'? – A Visual Ethnography on Performativity, Reflexivity and Social Interactionism.**

The panel consists of two papers analyzing around 60 talking-head videos shot 2005-2009, initiated and supervised by Linda Lai. A group of video researchers and media studies students in visual ethnography, social interactionism, gender politics and globalization theory invited acquaintances to talk in front of a video camera based on three criteria: to re-tell the story of Cinderella, to tell a self-selected tale, or to talk spontaneously whatever comes to mind.

Talking heads are usual practice in mainstream documentaries, assumed to be purely vehicles for information, transparent and neutral in showing the subjects' opinion. The talking-head documents we collected, however, demonstrate the constructedness of talking heads as cultural artefacts whereby camera presence becomes observable events of a performative nature. Both presentations adopt the software NVivo for video analysis.

Since the presentation needs time to show video clips, the panel consists of two paper presenters and one discussant.