

College of Asia & the Pacific

# PROGRAM

# 2023 ANU TAIWAN UPDATE

5–6 September 2023



Australian  
National  
University



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# Introduction

January 2024 will see elections for Taiwan's presidency and for Taiwan's parliament, the legislative yuan. Tsai Ing-wen, Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party president is coming to the end of her two terms, so in May 2024, a new president will be inaugurated. Whether that election will see a second DPP president, or a return to KMT rule, or perhaps the first president from the Taiwan People's Party, Taiwan's politics will change. Apart from the cross-strait relationship, the new president will have to face economic issues, some of which resonate with Australia's experience: that of a slowing from the post-pandemic mini-boom, Chinese trade boycotts, and an aging population. At the same time, Taiwan continues to flourish culturally with writers, filmmakers, musicians, and artists of all kinds engaging with Taiwan's present and the sometimes overwhelming legacy of colonialism and authoritarianism.

In the 2023 ANU Taiwan Update, scholars and commentators grapple with the place of Taiwan in the world, how the Taiwanese government, media, and people deal with the actions of their vast neighbour hovering to their west, the internal challenges of a vibrant, complex, and changing country, and what the future may bring for, arguably, Asia's most progressive democracy.

*The ANU Taiwan Update is an initiative under the ANU Taiwan Studies Program 2022–25, which is a partnership between the College of Asia and the Pacific at the Australian National University and the Ministry of Education, Republic of China (Taiwan).*

# Day 1 Overview

## Tuesday 5 September

Auditorium, Research School of Social Science, 146 Ellery Crescent, ANU

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### Drinks Reception

RSSS Auditorium, 146 Ellery Crescent, ANU

5:30pm

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### Welcome & Introduction

Delivered by

Professor Benjamin Penny, School of Culture, History and Language

Professor Sally Wheeler OBE MRIA FAcSS FAAL, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International & Corporate)

5:50pm

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### Keynote Address

### From “Austere Rock” to “Most Dangerous Place on Earth”

6:10pm–7:30pm

Brian Hioe, Founding Editor, *New Bloom*

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# Keynote Address

## From “Austere Rock” to “Most Dangerous Place on Earth”

In the past few years, Taiwan has gone from a place of relative obscurity to one of significant global focus. Although the threat of Chinese military invasion is not a new one, after the live-fire exercises that followed US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi’s visit to Taiwan, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and an increased awareness of Taiwan’s importance to global supply chains, Taiwan is now spoken of as the “most dangerous place on Earth” – as the title of an article in *The Economist* described it.

But what does the media narrative occlude about the situation in Taiwan? Is the possibility of a Chinese invasion spoken of in hyperbolic terms? Likewise, to this extent, do perceptions of the Chinese threat within Taiwan differ from international views?



### **Brian Hioe**

Founding Editor, *New Bloom*

Brian Hioe is one of the founding editors of *New Bloom*, an online magazine covering activism and youth politics in Taiwan that was founded after the 2014 Sunflower Movement. He is currently a non-resident fellow at the University of Nottingham’s Taiwan Studies Programme.

Hioe’s writing has been published in *The Washington Post*, *The Nation*, *The Guardian*, and *The Diplomat*. He regularly makes appearances to comment on Taiwanese politics in outlets including *Al-Jazeera*, the *BBC*, and others.

# Day 2 Overview

## Wednesday 6 September

Seminar Room, China in the World Building, Fellows Lane, ANU

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### Lunch

Tea House, China in the World Building

12:30pm–1:15pm

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### Session 1

#### **A Third Party on the Rise: Anti-establishment but not populist**

1:15pm–2:15pm

Associate Professor Kai-Ping Huang, National Taiwan University

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### Break

2:15pm

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### Session 2

#### **The Taiwan–China–US Triangle: Risks Rising**

2:30pm–3:30pm

Harry Genn, Former Australian diplomat and intelligence analyst

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### Afternoon Tea

3:30pm

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### Session 3

#### **Is TSMC Taiwan's 'silicon shield'? From the semiconductor supply chain to US-China-Taiwan relations**

4:00pm–5:00pm

Associate Professor Chun-Yi Lee, University of Nottingham

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### Film Screening

#### ***A Letter to A'ma* 給阿媽的一封信**

6:30pm–9:00pm

RSSS Auditorium, 146 Ellery Crescent, ANU

*An in-conversation between Brian Hioe and Film Director Hui-Ling Chen (online) will precede the screening. The conversation will be conducted in Mandarin and translated into English.*

# Session 1

## A Third Party on the Rise: Anti-establishment but not Populist

Taiwan's presidential election in 2024 is an open race with the ruling DPP seeking a third term with their nominee William Lai. If voters were to vote today rather than in January, Lai would have a higher chance of winning. However, Ko Wen-je, a former Taipei mayor who represents the Taiwan People's Party, is gaining momentum and becoming a serious challenger to Lai. By contrast, the KMT has been struggling to regain second place since nominating Ho Yu-ih, the mayor of New Taipei. Despite the fact that Ko and the TPP are considered "anti-establishment", they are not simply angry populists. Further, the DPP is unlikely to win the election simply by appealing to anti-China sentiment. With the looming threat of war with China, all candidates will have to embrace the status quo, which is where the majority of Taiwan voters stand.



**Kai-Ping Huang**

Associate Professor, National Taiwan University

Kai-Ping Huang is Associate Professor of Political Science at National Taiwan University. Her research interests include party systems, formal institutions, and democratization focusing on East and Southeast Asia. Her work has appeared in the *Journal of Democracy*, *Comparative Politics*, *Journal of Contemporary China*, *Social Indicators Research*, and several edited volumes.

# Session 2

## The Taiwan–China–US Triangle: Risks Rising

As the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has increased its intimidation of Taiwan, more countries and international groupings have spoken out against the threat or use of force. The United States and others have also shown greater support for Taipei with substantive and symbolic measures aimed at increasing Taiwan’s resilience and lifting its international profile — even as critics argue that “too much” support for Taiwan makes drastic PRC moves more likely. Taiwan itself is unlikely to precipitate a crisis, but China’s intentions are opaque, and future US policy is uncertain. Risks are rising.



**Harry Genn**

Former Australian diplomat and intelligence analyst

After joining the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 1989 Harry worked on international security and China-related issues in Canberra and was posted to Shanghai, Beijing and Taipei. From 2008 to 2019 he led analysis on China and North Asia at the Australian Office of National Assessments (later the Office of National Intelligence). He was awarded the Australian Intelligence Medal in 2021.



# Session 3

## Is TSMC Taiwan's "Silicon Shield"? From the Semiconductor Supply Chain to US-China-Taiwan Relations

Semiconductors are components that feature in many of the devices powering modern, everyday life. These include computers, mobile phones, vehicles, and household appliances. Semiconductor production is intricately linked to the global value chain, meaning that it depends on processes occurring in various parts of the world. However, unforeseen global events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, or geopolitical conflict, disrupt supply chains.

This lecture will introduce the geopolitical tug of war that is presently occurring in the semiconductor industry. The development of Taiwan's premier semiconductor manufacturer, the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC), will be the focus of the lecture.



**Chun-Yi Lee**

Associate Professor, University of Nottingham

Chun-Yi Lee is Associate Professor in the School of Politics and International Relations, and Director of the Taiwan Studies Program, at the University of Nottingham. Her first book, *Taiwanese Business or Chinese Security Asset?*, was published by Routledge in 2011. She is currently working on her second monograph, which is on semiconductor manufacturing and geopolitics. She is editor in chief of the online academic magazine, *Taiwan Insight*, and co-editor of the 'Taiwan and World Affairs' book series with Palgrave.

# Film Screening

## *A Letter to A'ma* 給阿媽的一封信

Chen Hui-Ling | 2021 | 1h45m



Chen Hui-Ling's *A Letter to A'ma* is a brilliant and deeply felt exploration of Taiwan's complicated and often traumatic past. Exhilaratingly photographed, the documentary focusses on a series of encounters between school and university art students and their grandparents. The students — it would appear — are often hearing stories about their grandparent's lives for the first time. The way the student process these shocking, or confusing, or confounding recollections are reflected in the art they produce. *A Letter to A'ma* is a profound and moving meditation on connections between generations, on the unearthing of history, and on the vital importance of individual experience.

### Awards:

Best Documentary and Best Music, Les Rimbaud du Cinéma 2021

Best Documentary, Best Music and Best Photography, Festival International du Film Indépendant SMR13



### Hui-Ling Chen

Film Director, *A Letter to A'ma*

Hui-Ling Chen was a plastic art teacher in high school and left her post to study cinema in France. After studying cinema, she returned to Taiwan to found the educational project: "The collective memory of the island", while filming the documentary *A Letter to A'ma*. She has cooperated with many schools across Taiwan to guide young people to express their own story artistically. The film testifies to the achievements over the ten years of the project. In 2018, she won an award from the Ministry of Education for her contribution to artistic education for the younger generation.



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## Contact us

**Australian Centre on China in the World**

<http://ciw.anu.edu.au/>

**College of Asia & the Pacific**

<https://asiapacific.anu.edu.au>

### Update Organisers

Benjamin Penny

Professor, School of

Culture, History & Language

[benjamin.penny@anu.edu.au](mailto:benjamin.penny@anu.edu.au)

Nancy Chiu

Senior Project Officer, Australian

Centre on China in the World

[nancy.chiu@anu.edu.au](mailto:nancy.chiu@anu.edu.au)

Event website

<https://bit.ly/3DGDDsM>



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*The ANU Taiwan Studies Program 2022–25 is a partnership between the College of Asia and the Pacific at the Australian National University and the Ministry of Education, Republic of China (Taiwan).*