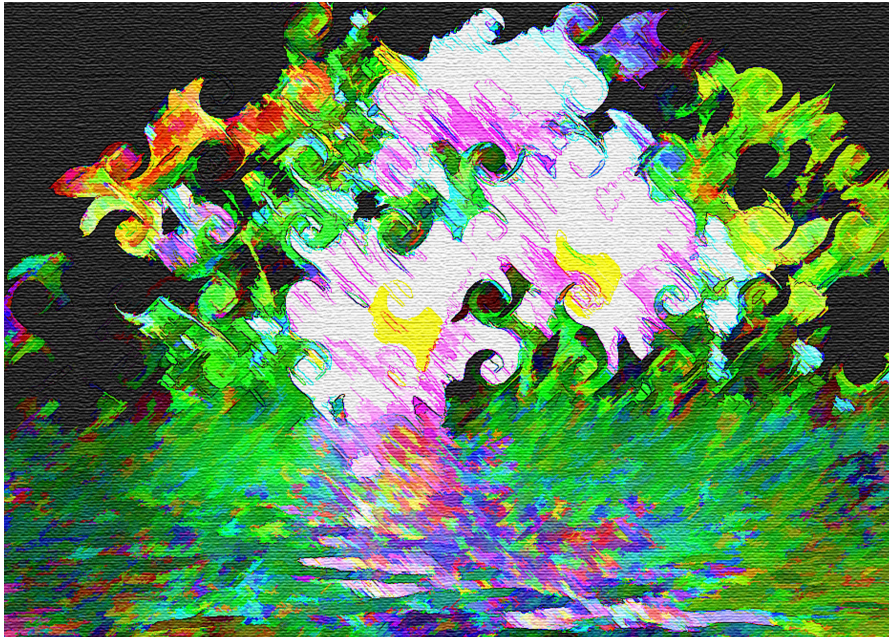


**Department of Languages & Cultures**  
**2018 Research Seminar Series**

A Talk by Suzanne Sun  
PhD Candidate, English and Linguistics & Languages and Cultures

**“All my Flowers are Dream Flowers”**  
**Gu Cheng and his Poetic Utopia**



Chinese poet Gu Cheng (1956-1993) arrived in New Zealand in 1988, seeking an escape from the collectivist horrors of the Cultural Revolution in a fantastic but ultimately dystopic poetic and lived utopia on Waiheke Island (July 1988 – Oct 1993). His poetic utopianism, I argue, challenges the utopian discourse of the official poetry in post-Mao China and offers a unique observational point of the Chinese utopian tradition and the boundaries of social dreaming. Utopianism, perennially defined as a negation of the present time-and-space, shapes itself differently in Gu Cheng's utopian world. I argue that Gu Cheng's utopian poetry, characterised by contradictions and ambiguities, produces a new understanding of utopia as a space of infinitely expanding and intersecting layers of dream and reality.

**Tuesday: May 8, 2018   2:00pm   A3N7   3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Arts Bldg.**