Peter Gordon

Making unfamiliar worlds available: books, historical perspective and the intimate stage

Peter Gordon is a Hong Kong-based publisher, editor, critic and theatre-maker.[1, 2] His most persistent subject is the distance between something existing and someone being able to encounter it. A novel can have readers in Asia and remain invisible to an international publisher. A celebrated opera can remain socially remote from a young Hong Kong audience. A trading system can have connected continents for centuries and scarcely register in the historical imagination of English-speaking readers. His career repeatedly approaches that distance as a practical problem: what would have to change in the form, setting, explanation or means of circulation for an encounter to become possible?

This is a useful way to understand the conjunction of publisher, critic, literary organizer and theatre-maker. Gordon has lived in Hong Kong since 1985, working across technology, international commerce and culture. With Juan José Morales he wrote The Silver Way: China, Spanish America and the Birth of Globalisation, 1565–1815. But the historical book belongs within a much larger life of arranging relationships between works and publics.[3]

The unifying sensibility is neither an indiscriminate enthusiasm for globalization nor the belief that cultural differences can be made to disappear. His more interesting work asks how people can participate in a common world without sharing the same language, background or assumptions. His failures and limitations become visible at the same point: the intermediary who opens a door also decides where the door is, and can mistake the view through it for the whole landscape.

1. Languages before a literary career

Gordon’s early international life preceded his professional connection with Asia. In a 2024 French-language interview, he recalled spending much of his childhood outside the United States, including time in Colombia. Spanish came early. Returning to an American school with a strong French programme gave him another Romance language and an introduction to French theatre, especially Edmond Rostand and Eugène Ionesco. Opera first reached him through reading; seeing a performance at eighteen made the attraction immediate. For him, the appeal was bodily: he described theatre’s emotions as passing through thought, while opera reached the body and heart even when listeners did not understand the words. His later move to Hong Kong came through an American computer company, motivated by a wish to live abroad again rather than an existing artistic appointment.[4]

This is a formation in moving between languages before it becomes a programme of

cultural mediation. The sequence matters. Hong Kong did not introduce an otherwise exclusively anglophone reader to the existence of other worlds. It became a place where earlier linguistic interests could acquire public and organizational uses.

He graduated from Harvard College in the class of 1980 and had studied with computer scientist Harry Lewis. A small episode from 2006 shows how that educational relationship later re-entered his life. Lewis read Gordon's review of Excellence Without a Soul, contacted his former student after roughly two decades, and the two began planning Hong Kong talks. Gordon had also spent ten years interviewing Harvard applicants. He wanted the visit to address a local misunderstanding: admiration for Harvard's brand could coexist with little understanding of the purposes of a liberal education. The projected book market was too small to justify the visit as ordinary sales promotion.[5]

The interesting intimacy here is intellectual and demonstrable: a teacher recognizes a former student's public reading of his work, and an old relationship becomes a new conversation in another city. It is also a characteristic reversal. Rather than merely importing an American credential, Gordon wanted Hong Kong listeners to examine what the credential was supposed to stand for.

2. Hong Kong: becoming local through useful work

When Gordon recalled his arrival in Hong Kong, one of the people who taught him to read the city was his Chinese boss. The boss recommended James Clavell's Noble House: not simply as exotic entertainment, but as a way of understanding the city's disasters, business conduct and foreign elites. Gordon used the memory to open his 2016 essay on expatriate writing. Fiction became an object through which a local colleague could explain his own city to a newcomer.[6]

The anecdote complicates an easy story about a Westerner bringing literary culture to an Asian commercial city. Gordon himself had to be instructed in how an apparently familiar English-language novel might mean something different to the people it represented. Hong Kong's internationalism is not a blank space in which an outsider acts. It contains existing judgments, resentments, histories and readers.

The commercial route into books was Paddyfield.com, founded in 1999. Its own retrospective describes an early Hong Kong e-commerce operation offering English-language books at internationally competitive prices. The firm's surviving website is now a farewell notice, not evidence of a continuing retail business.[7] Gordon's later university biography identifies him as a founder and says that the Hong Kong International Literary Festival operated from this office until 2007. The combination of bookselling, publishing and events was materially close: an office and its working relationships supported more than one kind of literary activity.[8]

This was collective work. A 2004 profile of Paddyfield managing director Elaine Leung describes how festival founders Nury Vittachi and Jane Camens recruited her to help

expand the programme. She brought business knowledge, publisher contacts and access to authors; she also wanted more activities for children. Gordon’s role in building the festival should therefore be understood alongside theirs, rather than inflated into sole authorship of its existence.[9]

One surviving Chameleon Press school programme makes the mechanics unusually tangible. A Nury Vittachi visit of approximately two hours cost HK$3,500; for another HK$300, a school could receive a substantial bundle of his books, with quantities varying by title. Paddyfield handled book sales, and Gordon was the publishing contact. The offer combined an encounter with a writer, an institutional purchaser and inexpensive access to the text.[10]

The unit of cultural work was consequently larger than a book and smaller than a grand institution. It was a coordinated occasion: someone chose a writer, arranged an audience, made the economics work and ensured that the audience could continue reading afterward. A business transaction could supply the conditions for attention.

3. Festivals, prizes and the unequal geography of recognition

By 2006 the Hong Kong festival had grown from its 2001 beginnings into a ten-day programme hosting sixty authors. Time reported substantial Man Group sponsorship, little government funding and a mixture of readings, meals and ticketed encounters. Gordon was then its director. Celebrity and sociability helped finance and draw attention to a wider literary gathering.[11]

The Man Asian Literary Prize applied a related mechanism to publication itself. Contemporary plans targeted Asian novels not yet published in English; they contemplated both a translator’s award and purchases for libraries and educational institutions. The 2006 announcement listed Gordon’s festival, review, publishing and bookselling positions together. These were connected capabilities within the proposal, not four unrelated entries on a résumé.[12]

The Japan Foundation’s contemporary report on the first award describes the practical promise more precisely: a US$10,000 prize for the author, US$3,000 for the translator, and Chameleon Press editing and printing the winning novel if it had no publisher. Recognition was meant to have a route into an actual book. A prize could reduce the uncertainty surrounding an unfamiliar writer, create publicity and help a manuscript cross a commercial threshold.[13]

But who could be recognized, and by whom? The first prize generated a dispute over its judges. Nury Vittachi criticized a panel he considered insufficiently Asian; Gordon defended its diversity. The disagreement was not just personal friction. It exposed different definitions of representation: residence, ancestry, literary expertise and international

standing do not coincide.[14]

Translation scholar Harry Aveling made a deeper criticism of the publicity surrounding the prize. Examining a 2007 International Herald Tribune article, he challenged the implication that Asian literature became mature when English-language international publishing noticed it. He singled out Gordon's reported difficulty identifying an Asian literary industry as an example of overlooking an already extensive cultural world. Aveling's target was the rhetoric of recognition, not a claim that Asian authors should forgo wider readership.[15]

That criticism establishes a necessary distinction. Helping work cross a language boundary is valuable; treating the far side of that boundary as the place where its value begins is something else. Gordon's practice lives inside this tension. English is a useful channel, but it is also a filter whose exclusions must remain visible. No literary intermediary can solve that problem merely by having generous intentions.

His organizing also moved beyond the festival and prize. The Hong Kong Trade Development Council's 2010 Book Fair programme named him as a moderator among a broader coalition involving booksellers, Chinese-language writers, visiting anglophone authors and David Tang. Here the task was not to build a separate literary enclave, but to connect author conversations to an enormous existing public event.[16]

4. A publisher close enough to discuss the paper

Chameleon Press's stated focus is writers living in Hong Kong or strongly connected with it, especially poetry, short fiction, essays and selected children's books. It also works with funding bodies and philanthropies. Its Inkstone Books imprint offers publishing services to individuals and organizations. That combination suggests more than one route by which a book can become financially possible: a market-facing literary list, supported cultural projects and commissioned production. It does not disclose what proportion of revenue any route supplies.[17]

An account by Tammy Ho Lai-ming brings publishing down to the scale of a particular relationship. Discussing Hula Hooping, she explained that she chose Alvin Pang's photograph for the cover and that Ricky Garni supplied the spiral motif. Gordon allowed her substantial participation in dimensions and paper choices. The finished object thus emerged from a writer's preferences, other artists' contributions and a publisher willing to accommodate them.[18]

This is a useful corrective to the tendency to discuss small presses only in heroic terms. Editorial intimacy need not mean a charismatic publisher imparting a vision to passive authors. It can mean knowing which decisions to share. A preference for paper, a change of image or the format of a page is one way a writer acquires a relationship to the physical life of the work.

Gordon was also a coeditor, with David McKirdy, of Eight Hong Kong Poets in 2015. The anthology placed Leung Ping-kwan, Shirley Geok-lin Lim and Eddie Tay alongside Jennifer Wong, Tammy Ho, Sarah Howe and other voices. Joel Swann's review read it as both a record of a literary community and a proposition about its future. His discussion dwelt on class, linguistic misunderstanding and the difficulty of recovering an older city through memory.[19]

Another reviewer, Michael Tsang, set the book beside the 1993 anthology VS.: 12 Hong Kong Poets. For him, the intervening development of presses, public readings and a more coordinated community changed what such an anthology could represent. Gordon's editorial work belongs to that accumulated history. It did not conjure Hong Kong poetry from absence.[20]

An anthology makes a small but consequential argument: these writers can be read together. That is not the same as declaring them interchangeable, ethnically homogeneous or equally attached to the city. The form can let proximity coexist with difference. For a publisher concerned with circulation, this is also a kind of intellectual work: giving readers a provisional scale at which a previously dispersed body of writing becomes perceptible.

5. Reading as a way of staying in relation

The Asian Review of Books, created by Gordon in 2000, became part of the Royal Society for Asian Affairs in 2025. He remained its editor.[21] Its endurance matters to his life because a recurring review is a different commitment from a festival or a book launch. It requires returning to new work after the ceremony is over.

His 2016 review of Alfred A. Yuson's The Music Child and the Mahjong Queen demonstrates such continuity. The manuscript had been shortlisted for the Man Asian prize in 2008; publication arrived years later. Gordon recognized that delayed appearance as fulfilling the original ambition. But his review did not stop at the institutional success story. It followed the novel's movement among languages, magical events and musical traditions, finding particular pleasure in the human voice and the relation between prose, poetry and performance.[22]

The object of attention is revealing. A critic who also works in opera hears the novel as well as classifies it. He is interested in what happens when words become sound, when cultural references meet inside a work, and when a reader's recognition is bodily or musical rather than solely explanatory. The pleasure is specific enough to resist the flattening label of "cross-cultural writing."

A different Gordon appears in his April 2026 review of Trading at the Edge of Empires, a scholarly collection about Francesco Carletti's journeys around 1600. He values the intercontinental story but wants more of Carletti's own account, particularly of the Manila-galleon crossing, and a more integrated narrative. He also reports the traveler's participation in slave trading and the incongruity between that conduct and his expressed

moral misgivings. The review’s impatience is not with research as such; it is with a form that can leave a compelling life behind layers of specialist commentary.[23]

Read together, these two pieces disclose a standard that travels across Gordon’s activities. Knowledge should retain texture: a voice, a journey, a conflict, the felt sequence of an experience. Context matters because it changes what readers can notice, not because displaying context is itself a sufficient achievement. The same preference helps explain both his attraction to compact historical writing and his willingness to adapt an opera rather than present it as an untouchable monument.

6. The economics of being read

Gordon’s 2011 essay for Cha puts an economic argument beneath this sensibility. Writing specifically about English-language publishing in East Asia, he describes small markets and distribution discounts that could leave a publisher roughly thirty-five cents from a dollar of list price. Digital production lowers barriers, but does not automatically create attention or abolish the need for editing. A file being available is not the same as a writer being read or earning a livelihood. He also questions the apparently natural length of a book: production and distribution technologies help determine which sizes of text seem commercially viable.[24]

The essay is valuable because it does not divide technology and literary judgment into opposing camps. Gordon’s concern is how the technology changes the relation between writers, publishers and readers. Lower production costs can widen participation while increasing the difficulty of selection. An editor’s role can survive a change of medium, but the way that role is paid for may not.

The Abbreviated Press, associated with ARB, later proposed prose works of 4,000–15,000 words and a four-week publication target. This was a proposed model, not a verified measure of each book’s production.[25] It exemplifies a willingness to alter the container rather than require material to reach a conventional commercial length.

The practice requires several kinds of competence at once: selecting, explaining, coordinating, producing and finding a setting where attention can become sustainable. The intellectual life is not floating above that work. It is partly made possible by it.

[External image / 外部圖片] Yellow-and-white Penguin Specials cover of The Silver Way, with both authors’ names and a sailing ship.
The Silver Way, by Peter Gordon and Juan José Morales, in the Penguin Specials edition shown for their November 2017 University of Hong Kong book talk. Penguin Specials cover / University of Hong Kong Libraries reading-club event page · Rights retained by the source and respective rights holders; no open license stated. · Image source

7. The Silver Way: changing the past available to the present

The Silver Way appeared as a short Penguin Special in 2017. Its subject is the exchange linking China, Manila and Spanish America from the sixteenth century to the early nineteenth. The publisher presents the book as a challenge to conventional accounts that begin global integration much later, with the rise of Anglo-American power.[26]

Gordon's explanation of the purpose is sharper than a claim to have discovered an unknown trade route. Speaking to Caixin, he stressed that Spanish speakers had not forgotten this history. The deficiency lay in the historical examples available to many English-speaking readers. Beginning too late could make a powerful China seem anomalous and encourage predictions drawn mainly from twentieth-century antagonisms. Looking farther back enlarged the set of imaginable relationships. His historical interest was therefore also an inquiry into how a narrative conditions political expectation.[27]

The distinction between forgotten history and unevenly shared knowledge connects the book to his publishing life. A work can exist, and even be familiar somewhere, without entering another public's practical vocabulary. Gordon's contribution is best understood as an act of reorientation: moving information between historical imaginations, rather than claiming that the material had no earlier interpreters.

In their joint response to the "Thucydides Trap," Gordon and Morales proposed integration without either ideological convergence or major war as a possibility history could help recover. Crucially, they acknowledged violence in Southeast Asia and warned against letting any explanatory label displace reality. The claim was an alternative to inevitability, not a guarantee of peaceful commerce.[28]

Their 2018 essay on the Spanish dollar approached connection through the concrete workings of money: reliable weight and purity, anti-clipping edges, supply and habitual acceptance. It treated a global currency as an achieved relationship of trust and use, rather than the automatic expression of a nation's strength.[29] In December 2024 they returned to the historical analogy in a joint South China Morning Post commentary on Chancay port and Hong Kong's possible role in China–Latin America exchange.[30]

The attraction of this perspective is that it makes the contemporary map less predetermined. The danger is that a memorable route can become a reassuring metaphor, compressing coercion, asymmetry and radically different political conditions. The strongest reading of Gordon's historical work preserves the distinction between an analogy that makes another outcome thinkable and evidence that the outcome will occur.

8. From a historical argument to an object and a conversation

Painter and Patron, Gordon and Morales's subsequent collaboration, shifts from a system of exchange to the sixteenth-century Códice Casanatense: watercolours attributed to an Indian artist, accompanied by Portuguese annotations and preserved in Rome. The

publisher frames it as an Asian view of the maritime world between Africa and China.[31]

The project began with the Italian consulate’s wish to make the manuscript better known in Asia. Gordon described unexpected discoveries through close looking: a pose resembling a European illustration, a carefully depicted dagger, a figure recurring across different scenes. These became clues to relations between painter and patron. They remained arguments about unidentified people, rather than recovered biographies. Plans for a Macau launch and Portuguese translation were interrupted by Covid restrictions.[32]

That shift in scale matters. An oceanic history can make “Asia” and “Europe” seem like stable actors exchanging goods. An object made across cultural conventions invites a more intimate question: whose eye is doing the looking, and how is that eye made legible to someone else? Here Gordon’s historical and editorial interests appear to meet in the problem of making another perspective available without assuming it is simply our own.

The books also entered institutional conversations outside the usual literary circuit. A September 2017 Washington programme placed Gordon with China–Latin America analyst Margaret Myers and historian Tatiana Seijas, with Spanish, Mexican and Philippine cultural institutions collaborating. A November New York programme placed him with Spanish and Mexican consuls and Americas Society/Council of the Americas vice president Eric Farnsworth.[33, 34]

These programmes show how the history could become useful to different publics: scholars, diplomats, policy readers and those engaged in international exchange. Their importance is the kind of conversation they assembled, where a historical account could complicate the assumptions participants brought to contemporary relations.

9. An opera small enough to meet its audience

Opera makes Gordon’s interest in proximity unusually concrete. He is artistic director of operalab, a Hong Kong cooperative that develops chamber-scale productions for institutional partners and makes them available for further use. Its support can include dramaturgy, dialogue, subtitles, musical arrangements and direction. The division of work is explicit: Marco Iannelli is music director; Chen Yong coordinates operations and relationships with Chinese companies and conservatories; Lorna Chan oversees production and filming. Gordon is not the solitary maker of a travelling cultural object.[35]

The design can be seen in Rita: three singers, no chorus and a new chamber arrangement.[36] This is an aesthetic with material consequences. Intimacy is not just an emotional aspiration; it is partly built through the number of performers, the size of the ensemble and the relationship between the fictional setting and the room in which an audience sits.

His own account of Waitress on Top explains the adaptation. Pergolesi’s La serva padrona became a contemporary restaurant comedy in Hong Kong. Recitatives were replaced by spoken dialogue and music from Donizetti’s Don Pasquale was added. Gordon wrote the

new dialogue and directed; Iannelli supplied the musical work. The aim was not merely to shorten an opera, but to make a fresh dramatic sequence through which listeners could encounter its music.[37]

The production subsequently became a film at the Peninsula Hotel, broadcast by RTHK on Christmas Day in 2021 and shown during that year's Italia Mia festival. The filmed version expanded the musical material further. Stage, hotel, screen and broadcast were different forms of access to a continuing production.[38]

Pomme d'Api, announced for French May in 2022, used French singing, new English dialogue and English or Chinese subtitles. Its domestic triangle was reset in Hong Kong. Gordon emphasized the story's portability and the appeal of Offenbach's ensembles; Etta Fung, Chen Yong, Isaac Droscha and pianist Hsu Wei-en formed the performing group, with Iannelli again as music director.[39]

Multilingualism here is functional rather than ornamental. Different parts of the event perform different jobs: singing preserves a musical language, dialogue carries immediate dramatic action, subtitles offer another route to comprehension. A spectator need not command every layer to enter the work. This is a practical answer to the question of how a shared experience can accommodate unequal linguistic knowledge.

10. The circulation of a production, and the limits of analogy

Rita extended the model. Operalab records Hong Kong performances in 2020 and 2021, a film at Haw Par Mansion, an RTHK broadcast and a 2022 screening in Lisbon. Guangzhou Opera House adopted the production for an in-the-round staging. The work travelled as a reusable production and as a film.[40]

A 2021 HKUST discussion around Rita identified the precise creative roles: Iannelli handled musical adaptation and direction, Gordon English dialogue and stage direction, and the singers participated in explaining the approach. It also recorded Gordon's earlier direction at Macau's Teatro Dom Pedro V. The performance was surrounded by another form of work, helping a public understand what had been changed and why.[41]

Gordon's opera activity received Italian recognition in 2019, when he was named a Knight of the Order of the Star of Italy.[42] But the award is less explanatory than the recurring teaching work. His 2024 PolyU talk on opera and popular culture began with music listeners might already know from cartoons, advertisements, films or musicals. The invitation did not require people to first acquire the identity of an opera-goer.[43]

In April 2026, another PolyU programme had him tracing La bohème back to Henri Murger's portrait of young artists in Paris and forward through its adaptations. This moves beyond introduction to repertoire: it examines the history of a familiar cultural image, the precarious creative life, and asks how literature and performance taught later

audiences to recognize it.[44]

It would be too neat to say that The Silver Way caused this theatrical practice. The chronology and Gordon’s earlier interests argue against such a simple conversion. What can be seen is a durable affinity. His historical writing examines how people, objects and conventions acquire new uses through movement; his opera work participates in that process. In one case he reconstructs the conditions of an encounter. In the other he helps make them.

11. What sort of intellectual life does this make?

Gordon’s practice works through several kinds of closeness. There is proximity to a writer’s material preferences; to the sound of a fictional voice; to a teacher encountered again through criticism; to performers whose capacities determine what can be staged; and to histories familiar in one language but strangely distant in another. These are not interchangeable intimacies. Each requires a different form of attention and grants a different kind of authority.

His most distinctive questions concern intelligibility. What background must be supplied, and what can be left for pleasure to discover? Which features of a work can change while something important survives? When does an inherited historical frame make a present situation impossible to understand? Why does a work that deserves readers fail to reach them? Such questions are intellectual without being confined to academic production.

They also make his role vulnerable to criticism. An intermediary can emphasize portability at the expense of what resists translation. An accessible story can become too smooth. A selection made for anglophone readers can be mistaken for a judgment on an entire region. A culturally connected organizer can blur the distinction between reviewing, advocacy and participation. These are reasons to attend to the specific decisions, disclosed roles and competing interpretations, rather than either celebrate or dismiss the career as “bridge-building.”

The most persuasive account of Gordon is therefore not that he transcends cultural boundaries. Boundaries keep giving his work something to do. His achievement lies in treating them as neither final barriers nor inconveniences that a little goodwill automatically removes. A book needs an edition, a reader needs a point of entry, a production needs an ensemble, an unfamiliar historical possibility needs a usable narrative.

At its strongest, his work creates a form in which something distant can become near enough to matter while remaining different enough to alter the person encountering it. That is a modest description of individual acts of editing, criticism and adaptation. Across a long career, it amounts to a substantial public vocation.

Notes

1. Peter Gordon, author biography, South China Morning Post. Establishes Hong Kong residence since 1985 and the combination of technology, culture and international trade/investment; it does not provide an itemized employment history.↩
2. operalab, “About us”, current company description, checked 6 October 2026. “Cooperative” is its own organizational description, not a verified legal incorporation category.↩
3. Peter Gordon, author biography, South China Morning Post. Establishes Hong Kong residence since 1985 and the combination of technology, culture and international trade/investment; it does not provide an itemized employment history.↩
4. Iris Martet, “Peter Gordon: ‘J’adapte des opéras français pour le public de Hong Kong’”, Le Petit Journal, April 2024. Gordon’s retrospective account; the English prose paraphrases the French interview. It does not establish a complete language repertoire or professional translation competence in every language he discusses.↩
5. Ying Wang, “Lewis To Embark on Overseas Book Tour”, The Harvard Crimson, 22 October 2006. The article establishes Harvard class year and the teacher–student relationship. The visit was prospective when reported.↩
6. Peter Gordon, “Borrowed Writers on Borrowed Time”, Caixin Global, 28 September 2016. The opening autobiographical anecdote was accessible; no claim here relies on the remainder of the essay.↩
7. Paddyfield farewell page. The page states the 1999 founding year; its closing-sale dates do not display a year, so no precise closure date is supplied.↩
8. Hong Kong Baptist University Department of English, Spring 2014 programme, entry for 20 January, “Hong Kong Publishing: Commercial, Personal, Academic.”↩
9. “Book lover revels in spreading the gospel of the printed word”, South China Morning Post, 28 February 2004. Contemporary profile of Elaine Leung; the accessible portion supplies the roles described.↩
10. Chameleon Press, “Authors in the Schools: Nury Vittachi”, historical programme sheet. Quoted amounts are package prices, not Gordon’s pay, profit or a current offer.↩
11. Bryan Walsh, “Best Literary Event”, Time, 15 May 2006.↩
12. Hong Kong International Literary Festival, 2006 Man Asian prize announcement and questions and answers, preserved by Oxford Brookes. Initial plans are not represented as audited outcomes.↩
13. Japan Foundation, Japanese Book News, no. 51, “Asian Literary Prize Announced”, 2007.↩
14. AFP, “Contenders for Asia book prize out Friday”, Philippine Star, 19 July 2007.↩

15. Harry Aveling, “‘Belatedly, Asia’s Literary Scene Comes of Age’: Celebratory English Discourse and the Translation of Asian Literature”, Asiatic 2, no. 2 (December 2008), especially pp. 19–21. This is Aveling’s criticism of a reported statement and its surrounding discourse, not an independently established measure of Gordon’s language competence.↩

16. HKTDC, “Celebrated British Authors to Highlight July Book Fair”, 24 June 2010.↩

17. Chameleon Press submissions and Inkstone description. Undated institutional description; not financial statements.↩

18. Margaret Stawowy, interview with Tammy Ho Lai-ming, Up the Staircase Quarterly, undated page, discussing Hula Hooping and the 2014/2016 anthologies.↩

19. Joel Swann, review of Eight Hong Kong Poets, Hong Kong Review of Books, 19 February 2016. Description of the anthology’s contents here is mediated through the review, not a claim to have read the complete anthology.↩

20. Michael Tsang, “A Hong Kong Poetic Modernity: Eight Hong Kong Poets”, Cha, March 2016. The opening comparative discussion was accessible through search indexing.↩

21. Royal Society for Asian Affairs, “Asian Review of Books”, current institutional description, checked 6 October 2026.↩

22. Peter Gordon, review of The Music Child and the Mahjong Queen, Asian Review of Books, 1 November 2016. Analysis concerns Gordon’s review; the novel was not independently read for this profile.↩

23. Peter Gordon, review of Trading at the Edge of Empires: Francesco Carletti’s World, c. 1600, Asian Review of Books, 22 April 2026. Analysis concerns the review rather than an independent reading of the scholarly collection.↩

24. Peter Gordon, “To e- or not to e-: Chameleon Books (Hong Kong)”, Cha, November 2011. Substantial article text was available through search indexing despite direct-fetch failures. The margin is his contemporary general estimate, not a measured Chameleon operating margin.↩

25. Abbreviated Press, imprint statement and Painter and Patron description. The latter’s 2020 publication year is independently listed by the RSAA. Neither book’s full text was available for this profile.↩

26. Penguin, The Silver Way bibliographic and author page, paperback dated 2 January 2017, ISBN 9780734399434.↩

27. Poornima Weerasekara, “The Silver Way: How Mexican Silver Coins Paved a 16th-Century Sea Route to China”, Caixin Global, 16 June 2017. Used for Gordon’s stated purpose, not as sole authority for all the article’s historical details.↩

28. Peter Gordon and Juan José Morales, “The ‘Silver Way’: An Alternative to ‘Thucydides Trap’”, The Diplomat, 19 June 2017.↩

29. Peter Gordon and Juan José Morales, “When the Dollar Spoke Spanish”, AsiaGlobal

Online, 25 January 2018.↩

30. Peter Gordon and Juan José Morales, “Can Hong Kong reclaim its role as Asia’s gateway to the Americas?”, South China Morning Post, 6 December 2024. The joint byline, standfirst and opening were accessible; no account of unread later sections is implied.↩

31. Abbreviated Press, imprint statement and Painter and Patron description. The latter’s 2020 publication year is independently listed by the RSAA. Neither book’s full text was available for this profile.↩

32. André Vinagre, “Códice Casanatense: As influências do pintor que retratou a chegada dos portugueses à Ásia”, Ponto Final, 10 July 2020. Interviews with both authors; the reported reconstruction is their hypothesis, not an established identification.↩

33. SPAIN arts & culture, Washington discussion of The Silver Way, 7 September 2017 programme. Evidence of an advertised event and its collaborators, not proof of a particular travel route or of subsequent policy or investment outcomes.↩

34. SPAIN arts & culture, New York Silver Way launch, 9 November 2017 programme. The PDF’s later creation timestamp is not the event date.↩

35. operalab, “About us”, current company description, checked 6 October 2026. “Cooperative” is its own organizational description, not a verified legal incorporation category.↩

36. operalab, Rita, production history. Reception claims on the company page are not treated as an independent evaluation. Screening and staging records do not establish Gordon’s personal travel.↩

37. Peter Gordon, “A modern Asian setting for Pergolesi’s ‘La Serva Padrona’”, Asian Review of Books, 5 November 2019. A participant’s account with his role explicitly disclosed.↩

38. operalab, Waitress on Top, production and film history.↩

39. Logan Martell, “French May Arts Fest to Present Hong Kong Premiere of Offenbach’s ‘Pomme d’Api’”, OperaWire, 25 May 2022; includes Gordon’s explanation of his choices.↩

40. operalab, Rita, production history. Reception claims on the company page are not treated as an independent evaluation. Screening and staging records do not establish Gordon’s personal travel.↩

41. HKUST Cosmopolis Festival, “Discussion with the Creative Team for the Opera Rita”, 23 April 2021 programme and biographies.↩

42. “Editor Peter Gordon named ‘Cavaliere’ by Italian Government”, Asian Review of Books, 5 June 2019, reporting the 3 June ceremony; the honour is also confirmed by Italian Cultural Institute production biographies.↩

43. Hong Kong Polytechnic University, “Hip-Hopera: Opera’s Greatest Hits & Pop

Culture”, 31 October 2024 programme.↩

44. Hong Kong Polytechnic University, “La Bohème: from the beginning”, 14 April 2026 programme. It documents the announced topic, not an independently viewed recording of the talk.↩