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# Ruinscape and Slumscape: Picturing History and Violence in Global East Asia

## A talk by Tong Lam



This talk analyzes the politics and aesthetics of dystopian imagery in the age of global capitalism. The two cases under examination are Xiancun, an urban village facing forced demolition in Guangzhou, China and Hashima, an industrial wasteland in Nagasaki prefecture, Japan. In spite of their apparent differences, the slumscape of Xiancun and the ruinscape of Hashima are useful sites to reflect on the spectacle of history and violence in the conventional and new media, as well as to think about the possibilities of practicing critical history in today's new visual economy.

*About the speaker:* Tong Lam is a historian and visual artist. He is the author of *A Passion for Facts* (2011) and *Abandoned Futures* (2013). He teaches history at the University of Toronto. In 2013-2014, he is a fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin.

**Monday, 12 May 2014, 2:30pm**  
**Location: Hospitality Suite (top floor) of the Muirhead Tower, University of Birmingham**

**Open to the public**

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