

PROFESSORIAL LECTURE

# Works, Marks and Personae: De(Re)Constructing Narratives in Intellectual Property Law

Professor David Tan  
Vice Dean (Academic Affairs), NUS Law

WEDNESDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2019  
6.45 PM - 8.00 PM

AUDITORIUM, BLOCK B LEVEL 3, NUS LAW (BUKIT TIMAH CAMPUS)

In his critique of consumption, Jean Baudrillard contends that the consumer no longer relates to a particular object in its specific utility, but to a set of objects in its total signification. Thus, increasingly, when consumers make their purchases, they do not simply select goods and services purely for their functional or utilitarian values, but are buying into the significations of these commodities in the construction of their self-identities.

Objects of intellectual property (IP), in particular copyrighted works and trademarks, represent far more than a bundle of legal rights. They are invariably associated with a set of cultural narratives and semiotic meanings which are ultimately consumed. In this Lecture, David Tan explores how the encoded narratives in certain objects of IP may be read as polysemous texts that invite playful semiotic recodings, culture jamming and poststructural disruptions. It also suggests how audiences who engage with works of copyright and trademarks via such textual signification may avail themselves of a number of defences under the current legal regime.



## ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Professor David Tan is Vice Dean (Academic Affairs) and Director of Intellectual Property at the EW Barker Centre for Law & Business at NUS Law. David holds PhD, LLB (First Class Hons) and BCom degrees from the University of Melbourne and an LLM from Harvard. He has been a regular visitor at Melbourne Law School and the University of Hong Kong Faculty of Law teaching courses in intellectual property and popular culture.

At NUS Law, David pioneered courses in Entertainment Law, Freedom of Speech and Privacy & Data Protection Law. His areas of research cover personality rights, copyright, trademarks, freedom of expression, constitutional law and tort law. David has published review essays since joining NUS Law in 2008. His law publications have appeared in a wide range of journals that include *Yale Journal of International Law*, *Harvard Journal of Sports & Entertainment Law*, *Law Quarterly Review*, *Sydney Law Review*, *Singapore Journal of Legal Studies*, *Media & Arts Law Review*, *WIPO Journal* and *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law*. His monograph, *The Commercial Appropriation of Fame: A Cultural Analysis of the Right of Publicity and Passing Off*, was published by Cambridge University Press in hardback (2017) and in paperback (2018).

David is also a well-known fine art and fashion photographer in Singapore, whose works have appeared in *Harper's Bazaar*, *Elle*, *Marie Claire*, *Vanity Fair*, *Time* and *L'Officiel*. He has had six solo photography exhibitions, which include collaborations with Cartier and Versace.

## PROGRAMME

6.15pm: Registration  
6.45pm: Introduction & Welcome  
7.00pm: Lecture  
8.00pm: Dinner Reception

## REGISTRATION

There is no registration fee for this lecture but seats are limited.

Visit <https://nus.edu/2Lbf7Yp> or  
Scan the QR Code below to register by  
Wednesday, 09 October 2019, 5.00 PM



## CONTACT PERSON

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## CPD POINTS



Public CPD Point: 1  
Practice Area: Intellectual Property  
Training Level: Foundation

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