

# Institute for Chinese Studies Lecture Series

## Su Dongpo's Artistic Expression in Multiple Genres and Forms

**50**  
1969–2019  
EAST ASIAN  
STUDIES  
CENTER

Friday, Oct. 18

4-5:30 pm

Hitchcock Hall 324



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One of the ways that Song dynasty writers differed from those of earlier dynastic periods was that they excelled in writing in an ever-increasing number of literary forms. It became common in the Northern Song for writers to develop talents in shi poetry, ci songs, the rejuvenated fu rhapsody, and more prose forms (including the relatively new biji) than their Tang dynasty counterparts had tried, or at least more than the major Tang poets had excelled at. For us today, this new genre versatility of Song writers leads to the intriguing phenomenon of a single author having multiple voices or personas, as he or she tailors self-expression to the conventions and proclivities of each form. Su Dongpo was a leader in this Song dynasty exploration of such expressive diversity, and we find many examples of him sounding quite different when writing on the same topic and even on the same occasion in different forms. Which voice is the real Su Dongpo? This may not be the right question to ask.



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