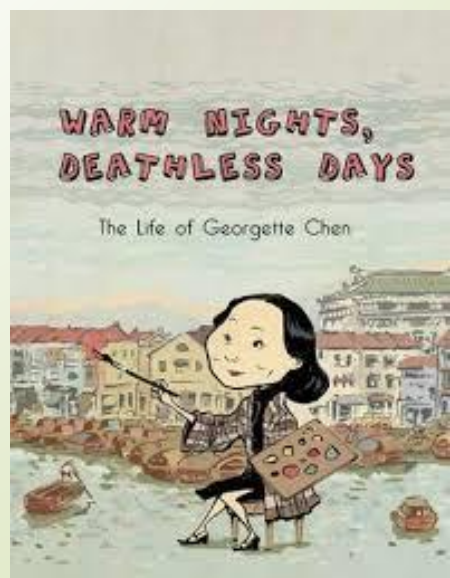
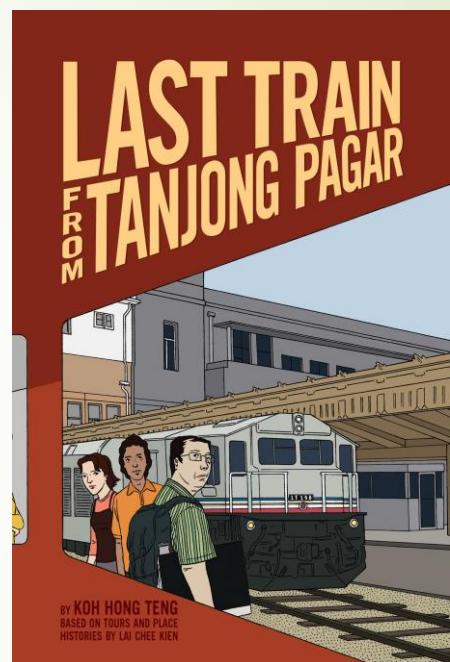


# Braiding, Affordances, and Cultural Critique in Recent Singaporean Graphic Novels

Sonny Liew's *The Art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye*, which won the Singapore Literature Prize in 2016 and three Eisner Awards in 2017, has been the subject of several academic essays because of its alternative depiction of Singapore's political history and unusual narrative structure. My talk looks at other less overtly contentious Singaporean graphic novels to show that graphic narratives about seemingly quotidian topics can also invite readers to engage in reflective thinking and cultural critiques of the country's authoritarian status quo. Drawing on Thierry Groensteen's concept of braiding and Caroline Levine's idea of affordances, I offer a formalist analysis of Liew's *Warm Nights, Deathless Days*,

which is about the life of Nanyang-Style painter Georgette Chen, and Koh Hong Teng's *Last Train From Tanjong Pagar*, which is based on heritage tours of Singapore's railway stations and civic district.



## Dr. Weihsin Gui

Weihsin Gui is Associate Professor of English at UC Riverside. His essay on Sonny Liew's and Koh Hong Teng's graphic novels is forthcoming in a 2019 special issue of *Moving Worlds: A Journal of Transcultural Writings about Asian comics*.