

## China's Cultural Diplomacy and Nation Branding (Birmingham, 1-2 Dec 22)

School of Art, Birmingham City University, Dec 1-02, 2022

Deadline: May 2, 2022

CCVA

CCVA Annual Conference 2022:

China's Cultural Diplomacy and Nation Branding

The 15th Annual Conference of Centre for Chinese Visual Arts, Birmingham City University, in partnership with De Montfort University, UK

Dates: 1 & 2 December 2022

Venue: School of Art, Birmingham City University (to be confirmed - if the pandemic situation does not permit an on-site event, the workshop will take place as an online event).

Deadline for abstracts: 2 May 2022, 5 pm GMT

This two-day conference will bring together researchers and creative professionals to assess the political nexus between Chinese contemporary arts, diplomacy and nation branding. It focuses on the mobilization of creative expressions for the state's wider agendas to boost recognition and legitimacy, as well as projecting the country's global image and status abroad. This approach positions creative outputs at the intersection of aesthetics, statecraft, nation branding and state reputation management.

Our starting point is China's own self-representation: how the country wishes to appear and become legible on the global stage and how it portrays itself as an international power. As part of such image-making drives in recent decades, the realm of culture has been instrumentalized for national identity construction projects while serving, simultaneously, as one of the engines of the country's growing cultural and creative industries. Often examined as a form of soft power, these cultural expressions disseminate so-called Chinese values, ideals and ideologies that jointly orchestrate the country's international image and credibility.

We welcome papers that address all fields of contemporary arts – including art, design, performance art, film and others. How have they been embroiled in this process of perception governance and image control? How have they acted as cultural capital to enhance diplomatic relations, recalibrate China's nation brand, shape statecraft, or enable people-to-people exchanges? How have these roles been redefined in view of China's relationship with the world during and after the pandemic?

Possible perspectives for proposals include, but are not limited to:

- The growth of contemporary art biennials and Chinese museums along the routes of the country's Belt and Road Initiative
- How the arts impact the diplomatic process of the country's economic developments in Africa
- China-themed exhibits and national pavilions (at the Venice Biennale and the Venice Architecture Biennale, for example)
- The role of the arts in Chinese nation branding and soft power
- The mobilization of Chinese contemporary arts, state art collections and performances at embassies, global summits, diplomatic gatherings and official visits
- Curatorial and museum practices, including loan programmes, to bolster bilateral relations and media image
- Analyses of the government's cultural policy overseeing arts exhibits in the international realm
- (Non-)state-sponsored artists exchange programs, travel schemes and residencies
- China's international art and cultural exchanges during and after the Covid-19 pandemic

#### Guidelines/Timeline for Proposals:

Please submit one document, either Word or PDF, containing 1) an abstract of up to 300 words; 2) a 100-word biography, contact information and any institutional affiliation by 2 May 2022 to Dr Jenifer Chao, [jenifer.chao2@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:jenifer.chao2@dmu.ac.uk) or [ccva@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:ccva@bcu.ac.uk) with a subject titled '15th CCVA Annual Conference'. Any questions should also be directed to Dr Chao at the first email address. Conference presentations should not run more than 20 minutes. Successful proposals for conference contributions will be notified within 2 weeks at the latest. Invited full papers should be submitted by 31 March 2023, for the special double edition 10.2&3 of the Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art, to be published in the autumn 2023.

Should the situation allow, the conference will take place in person.

This conference is funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) as a part of our research and networking project 'Art Diplomacy and Nation Branding: The Visual Politics of Reinventing China'. For more information about the project, please visit our website: <https://china-art-nationbranding.org/>

#### Reference:

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