

FOREWORD

In the 'GlassRoutes' Exhibition at Bilston Craft Gallery Stuart Garfoot, and Emma Daker document an international community of artists and designers who have benefitted from a relationship with the University of Wolverhampton School of Art and Design and its highly respected Professor of Glass, Keith Cummings. This catalogue and its articles and images provide us with an opportunity to examine and celebrate forty years of international level studio-glass research, development and teaching in the West Midlands. It is worth considering the strategies that emerged as the academic environment responded to changes in economy, culture and industry. Where industry intends to capture and control design, technique and technology to retain control over its market share; universities must teach, experiment and disseminate. There is no better indication of a successful and sustained academic programme than the studio-glass students that have graduated from the School of Art and Design; and their subsequent roles in helping to establish glass programmes in Ireland, South Africa and China. Today it is Keith and Stuart's ongoing relationships with colleagues like Professor Guan Donghai, Tsinghua University Beijing; and Professor Xiao Wei Zhuang, College of Fine Arts Shanghai University which provide our glass programme with its most meaningful and sustaining exchange.

The University of Wolverhampton glass programme as we know it today emerged in a turbulent era of global change marked by job loss and industrial decline. From industrial roots, a studio-glass movement emerged focused upon material research

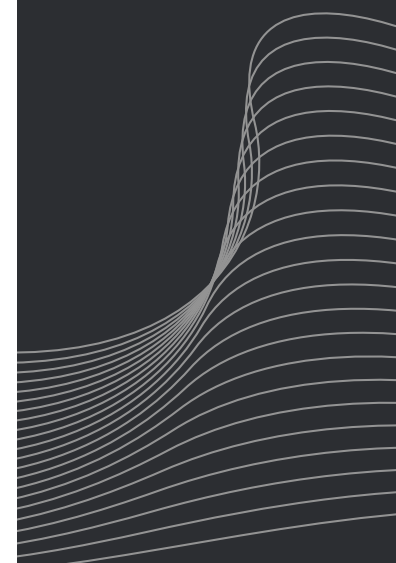
to enable new levels of individual creativity and expression. In his article to follow Professor Keith Cummings discusses "...education through glass, rather than education in glass." This is a concept which defines the value and importance of an arts education today. An art and design education develops a passion for learning, and an understanding of the historical, aesthetic, and economic milieu in which the creative contribution is made. It develops tacit knowledge, a sense that one embodies the potential for success while translating ideas into material form. Ultimately it is about developing confidence in an ability to manage demanding (and changing) technologies to achieve specific intellectual/creative aims through a mix of personal expression and design brief. It is this process of social-economic positioning and the eloquent promotion of one's ideas, coupled with an ability to organize and manage complex technical production which is the hallmark of the artist/designer entrepreneur.

Dr Bryony Conway, Dean of the School of Art and Design is the sustaining force behind the University of Wolverhampton and a great advocate of the studio-glass programme. She builds upon the foundation of the former Dean, Professor Andrew Brewerton. This exhibition was developed at Dr Conway's request after her conversations with Stuart Garfoot and Corinne Miller, Head of Wolverhampton Arts and Museums. This project is the result of the knowledge and vision of Stuart Garfoot and the curatorial expertise of Emma Daker, Curator at Bilston Craft Gallery. They worked closely with Professor of Glass Keith Cummings, and PhD

candidate in glass Xue Lu to develop the proposal and design of this international exhibition and catalogue.

This project would not be possible without the support of Jackie Lee, Crafts Officer and David Drake, Head of Visual Arts who provided advice on the bid to Arts Council England West Midlands. We are grateful for their recognition and the Arts Council's support for this exhibition.

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“当代玻璃艺术传播之路”展览序

Bilston手工艺博物馆举办的“当代玻璃艺术传播之路”展览,策展人Stuart Garfoot和Emma Daker记录了一个受益于Wolverhampton大学艺术与设计学院玻璃艺术课程和备受尊重的玻璃艺术家Keith Cummings教授的国际玻璃艺术家和设计师团队。此展览书目,其中的文章和图片为我们提供了一个机会:检验和庆祝英国中西部地区具有国际化水平玻璃工作室40年来的研究成果。学术研究环境回应经济、文化和工业变化涌现的战略是值得人们关注的。当工业企图抢夺并控制设计、技术和工艺来维持对于市场份额的掌控时,大学则必须进行教学、试验并散布知识技能。Wolverhampton大学艺术与设计学院玻璃工作室毕业的学生们,以及他们帮助爱尔兰、南非和中国建立玻璃课程所起到的作用,暗示者一个成功且持续发展的专业学术课程。如今,Keith和Stuart与中国北京清华大学关东海副教授和上海大学美术学院庄小蔚副教授的关系使我们的玻璃艺术课程更具意义,且持续着双方的交流。

众所周知,Wolverhampton大学艺术与设计学院玻璃艺术课程形成于全球变化,比如:失业和经济萧条的动荡时期。从工业的根源来说,玻璃工作室运动的出现主要集中于材料在个人创造力和表达层面上的研究。根据Keith Cummings教授文章中的论述“与其说是在进行玻璃艺术教学,不如说是通过玻璃材料来进行教育”,该观点定义了当今艺术教育的价值和重要性。艺术与设计教育发展了学生学习理解历史、审美和经济环境的热情,并在学习和理解中做出创造性地贡献。艺术和设计教育还发展了一种在将想法

转换成材料造型同时包含潜在成功的默许性的知识,从本质上说,这是一种通过混合个人表达和设计指令,在培养可以处理苛求(和变化)工艺技术,达到具体的、以创造性为目的的能力中发展信心。这样的社会——经济定位过程和个人想法雄辩性的晋升,加上组织和应付复杂技术生产研究的能力,是艺术家/设计师创业者的纯正标记。

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