

THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDIO GLASS AT SHANGHAI UNIVERSITY: THE INFLUENCE OF WOLVERHAMPTON UNIVERSITY AND PROFESSOR KEITH CUMMINGS

In September, 1998, I was sent by Shanghai University to learn the art of glassmaking at Wolverhampton University. The President of Shanghai University, Qian Weichang - a famous Chinese scientist and founder of nuclear physics - requested that I study as an ordinary graduate student rather than a visiting scholar. Upon completion of my two years of study, the plan was for me to return to Shanghai to establish the pre-eminent Studio Glass Art Major in China.

In the Glass Department of Wolverhampton University, students are encouraged to think broadly and to create visionary art works out of glass; a material with great expressive force. Each individual is expected to engage in uninhibited and intense communication with others in the studio environment. Each component of the syllabus is devised to encourage dialogue and to enrich the spirit of the creative arts. Moreover, the importance of working in different art disciplines to broaden an artist's experience forms an integral part of the glass studio. Therefore, under the guidance of the teaching staff, the graduate student has both the freedom and duty to embolden their dialectic thinking and creativity.

I was highly impressed with the studio-education method in England. The understanding I took from the experience inspired me in my efforts to create the new Glass Studio at Shanghai University. In this regard, I must give special thanks to Andrew Brewerton, the then Dean of School of Art & Design,

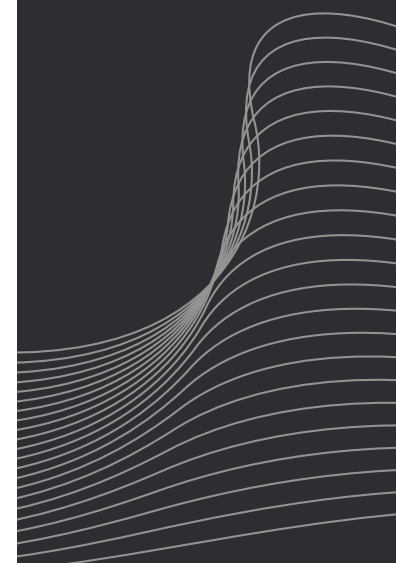
University of Wolverhampton, to Stuart Garfoot, Director of the Glass Department, and to the famed Professor Keith Cummings. All three of them provided me with the most profound and lasting knowledge of the Glass Art field.

Upon completion of my Masters Degree from Wolverhampton in 2000, I returned to Shanghai to establish the first Glass Art Studio in a Chinese University. In the beginning, there were many obstacles; we had no materials, equipment or contacts in any interrelated fields. All I had was a mental blueprint of what a glass studio should contain and some 300kg of books and other information, which I had brought back from England. Fortunately, China is a country of great industry and construction ability. I therefore toured China, visiting glass production areas, window glass corporations, electric kiln factories and had numerous discussions with engineering specialists. Combining the techniques I had learned in England with the most advanced industries in China, I established a cooperative venture known as Education-Science and Study Industry. The space for the project was somewhat limited but sufficient for all the technical requirements of glass art: cold processing, embedding, slump-casting, die-casting, blowing, centrifugal equipment, fusing and large mould kiln-casting. In response we were asked to provide design and technical support for the development of 7 new glass art factories over 2 years, each specializing in different techniques.

The venture was a great success. This success ultimately provided increased support for the Glass Art Studio at Shanghai University as all the cold processing equipment was donated by these factories.

With good materials and sound technical provision, education in the Glass Studio of the Fine Arts College at Shanghai University has entered a phase of rapid development. In 2003, the studio instituted a visitation system which received teachers and graduate students from the Central College of Fine Arts, the Fine Arts College of Tsinghua University and the Fine Arts College of China. In 2005, the studio also welcomed foreign students from the USA, Canada and Portugal. The course of study is energetic and, in addition to credit courses, also offers, professional workshops, seminars, art critiques, lectures from visiting international artists and cooperative projects with local factories. For further details, please visit our official website: www.glassart-studio.com.

The aim of the Glass Studio is twofold: ensuring we retain our position at the forefront of glass education and science, and guaranteeing that our graduates are equipped to have great impact in the field. The Glass Art Studio has been awarded the Cooper Award at the Fine Arts Exhibition of China 2004, the 1st, 2nd and 4th Awards at the Glass Art Competition in China 2004, the Excellence Award 2005/2006 and Academy Award 2006, 2007 at the Modern Hand-Craft Art Exhibition, and the >>



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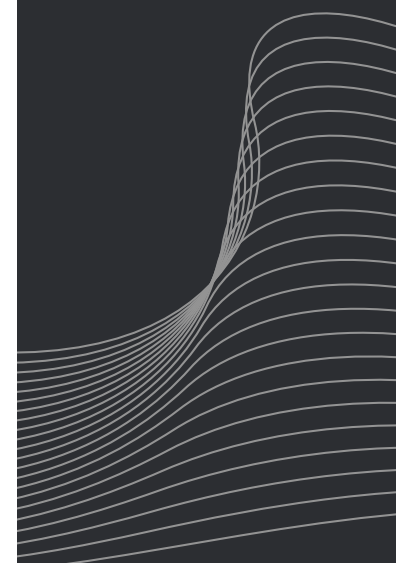
Special Item Award (2006) at the International Industry EXPO of China.

Years of endeavor have also had impact internationally:

1. Our work has been collected by the National Museums Scotland 2007 details can be found at www.nms.ac.uk.
2. For the past 2 years, several of our works have been included in the American Sculptural Objects and Functional Arts (SOFA) Exposition (2006/2007). SOFA is the most important contemporary decorative art and design exhibition in the world. For more details, please consult www.sofaexpo.com
3. Our Studio's work was also collected by the Alexander Tutsek-Stiftung Art Fund Institute (2008). This Institute is located in Munich and is the main study institution and sponsor of the European Institute of Glass Art. More details can be found at www.atutsek-stiftung.de

Our Studio has one of the most important university programs for Glass Art in China. As such, we aim to be socially responsible and collaborative in our field. We also strive to contribute to the social life and culture of our community. Furthermore, behind our success, lies the influence of English education and the contribution of the School of Art & Design at Wolverhampton University. Above all, our success owes a debt of gratitude to the extraordinary world wide influence of Professor Keith Cummings.

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上海大学玻璃学科的发展:来自WOLVERHAMPTON大学和KEITH CUMMINGS教授的影响

1998年9月,我受上海大学派遣去英国 Wolverhampton大学玻璃艺术专业学习。钱伟长校长(中国著名的科学家,核物理的奠基人)的要求是:不是作为访问学者,而是作为一个普通的研究生去学习,时间是两年,回来要创立一个达到国内先进水平的专业。

在Wolverhampton大学玻璃系,学生被鼓励采用富有表现力的玻璃材料去创作出与众不同的作品和艺术观念,不同个体可以在工作室高强度的创作环境下自然地进行交流,教学的每一部分都倾向于丰富艺术创作的经验,在更广阔的对话过程中进行交流。当今艺术间流行的学科间的交叉和互相促进在这里都能有所体现。研究生在专业工作室的环境中,在导师的指导下,被给予开发他们辩证思维和艺术成果的责任和自由。

英国的工作室教育模式在我的思想中打入了很深的烙印,这种影响在以后的日子里,一直贯穿于上海大学玻璃工作室的学科建设。我要特别感谢美术学院院长 Andrew Brewerton、玻璃艺术系主任 Stuart Garfoot和享有盛名的Keith Cummings教授,使我得到了在玻璃艺术领域最有用的知识。

2000年10月在Wolverhampton大学取得硕士学位后,我回到了上海大学并在那里创办了中国艺术院校中第一个真正意义上的玻璃工作室。当时面对的困难非常多,没有原料,没有设备,没有相关的技术人员,除了在我的头脑中有一个玻璃工作室清晰的蓝图之外,还有从英国运回中国的约300公斤重的书籍和资料。中国是一个工业基础设施建设十分完整的国家,我访问了中国玻璃原料产地、窗玻璃

制造企业、电炉制造工厂并同工程技术人员进行了深入的讨论,以英国带回来的技术为基础,结合了中国最先进的产业,开始了在中国称为“教学——科学研究——产业”合作的道路。工作室的规模不大,但是却涉及了整个玻璃艺术的相关产业,从冷加工、镶嵌、热弯、压铸、吹制、离心、热融到大型铸造,在不同的技术种类上,都建立了相对应的工厂。就这样在两年的时间里,工作室陆续支持了7个不同技术的玻璃艺术工厂。这些企业获得了极大的成功,投产当年这些工厂就创造了£5,000,000的产值。工厂的成功也给予了大学极大的支持,工作室的冷加工设备都是工厂无偿支援的。

由于材料和工艺技术的强大支持,上海大学美术学院玻璃工作室的教学进入了快速发展的轨道。2002年招收了玻璃艺术专业研究生。2003年建立了访问制度,开始接待来自中国其他艺术院校的访问教师和研究生。2005年工作室招收了来自美国、加拿大、葡萄牙的留学生。工作室的课程充满活力,除了学分课程之外,还有艺术评论、研讨会和国外艺术家讲座以及与工厂之间的合作项目,详情登录www.glassart-studio.com

玻璃工作室的目标是清晰的:1,始终处于教学和科学研究的前沿位置;2,毕业生能对该领域产生很大的影响。

工作室的作品得到了的中国美术大展铜奖(2004),中国玻璃艺术大奖赛一等奖、二等奖、四等奖(2004),中国现代手工艺学院展“学院奖”(2005/2006/2007),中国国际工业博览会“特色展品奖”(2006)等多项奖项。

多年的努力,使工作室成为一个具有国际影响力的地方:

1,作品被英国苏格兰皇家博物馆 National Museums Scotland收藏,编号:v.2008.2(2007)。这是世界上著名的博物馆之一,拥有国际一流水准的文物和国家收藏品,详情登录www.nms.ac.uk

2,连续两年入选美国SOFA国际雕塑和装饰艺术博览会(2006/2007)。SOFA,世界最重要的当代装饰艺术与设计展,详情登录www.sofaexpo.com

3,工作室的一批作品被德国Alexander Tutsek-Stiftung 艺术基金会收藏(2008)。基金会位于慕尼黑,是“学院玻璃艺术”重要的研究机构和赞助商,详情登录www.atutsek-stiftung.de

作为中国提供玻璃艺术研究生教育的主要院校之一,工作室非常重视承担社会课题,并且努力通过这种形式达到为学科的创造性做出贡献的目的,为社会的文化做出有意义的贡献。我想,在这些成就后面,一直有英国教育的影响,有Wolverhampton大学艺术设计学院玻璃系的贡献,也是Keith Cummings教授在国际范围内卓越影响力的见证。

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