

Invitation to apply to the

EACS Summer School

“Hidden in Plain Sight: Materiality, Meaning and Accessibility of Chinese Objects in Local Collections”

University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter Campus

4-8 September 2017 (Arrival 3rd September, departure 9th September)

Workshop website and programme: <http://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/humanities-performingarts/chinese-studies/eacs-workshop/>

Enquiries: Please contact the organiser Dr Thomas Jansen (t.jansen@uwtsd.ac.uk) for further information if required.

Admission and deadline

We will select 20 MA and PhD students in Chinese Studies from all over Europe. Applications by advanced undergraduates will also be considered. Applicants are requested to send a CV, an official certificate of their student status, and a motivation letter to Dr Thomas Jansen (t.jansen@uwtsd.ac.uk).

The deadline for applications is **15th May 2017**. Applicants will be notified via email on 25th May 2017.

Costs for participants

1. £50 Registration fee (payable upon confirmation of a Summer School place)
2. Travel to Cardiff or Swansea (onward travel to the University in Lampeter will be arranged by the organisers)
3. UK visa (if applicable)

Free of charge

Tuition

Accommodation (single student rooms on campus)

All meals

Coffee-breaks

Visa support (excluding visa fees)

Local trips to and from museums and tourist sites

Summer School Introduction

Lecturers:

- Dr Louise Tythacott, Pratapaditya Pal Senior Lecturer in Curating and Museology of Asian Art, SOAS
- Prof. Anne Gerritsen (Leiden), Professor of Asia-Europe Intercultural Dynamics
- Dr Stacey Pierson (SOAS), Senior Lecturer in Chinese Ceramics
- Dr Liu Jie (Beijing Union University), Department of History, Cultural Relics and Museology
- Dr Katharina Zinn, UWTSD, Senior Lecturer for Egyptian Archaeology and Heritage
- Dr Thomas Jansen, Associate Professor in Chinese Studies, Director of the Confucius Institute for Heritage, UWTSD (organiser)
- Staff of museums involved in the Summer School

Chinese objects often lead seemingly dormant lives in private collections and museums across Europe, especially in small institutions without specialist curators. This workshop aims to introduce participants to the issues, both theoretical and practical, involved in researching, curating and exhibiting Chinese objects from small museums or private collections. These include questions of preservation and presentation, as well as interpretation.

Objects can have contested meanings and simultaneous identities, depending on, for example, their life-cycle stage, where and how they are kept, and who has access to them. Objects are able to convey ambivalence as well as multiple potential narratives. Using various interdisciplinary theories and methodologies to examine, appreciate and interpret artefacts, drawing upon Chinese studies, History, Heritage Studies, Material Culture Studies and Anthropology, will enable us/allow us to explore Chinese objects within the various cultural contexts in which they occur, and to reconstruct an object's entire life-cycle and biography (Kopytoff 1986; Hoskins 2006). Understanding Chinese objects may even require a "re-theorization of heritage" (Waterton and Smith 2009: 15), especially if the aim is to introduce Chinese objects to a wider, non-specialist audience.

Chinese objects face specific curatorial, presentational and interpretive challenges, especially in small (regional) museums and collections; a particular challenge is the frequently unprovenanced object. Orhan Pamuk addressed these challenges in his novel *The Museum of Innocence* and in his museum in Istanbul with the same name. The catalogue to his museum includes Pamuk's *Modest Manifesto For Museums*, making a case for small museums and their collections as a chance to "reveal the humanity of individuals" (Pamuk 2012, [56]).

Taking inspiration from Pamuk, participants in the workshop will be introduced to the most recent scholarship on Heritage Studies, Material Culture Studies, as well as the curation of Chinese objects in museums and collections. These theoretical sessions will be complemented by field trips to local museums with (sometimes small) Chinese collections, where local experts will discuss practical issues of working with Chinese objects.

The workshop will incorporate the following three themes:

1. Hidden away? Chinese objects in small collections
2. Materiality of global interactions and local identities
3. Life-cycles: The narrative and writing of object biographies

Field trip destinations include:

- National Museum of Wales, Cardiff
- Cyfarthfa Castle Museum & Art Gallery, Merthyr Tydfil
- Glynn Vivian Art Gallery Swansea

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