Integration and Innovation:

An Exhibition of Chinese-American Art Faculty Association 2020

Zhiyuan Cong

It is my honor and privilege to congratulate the successful opening of Integration and Innovation: An Exhibition of Chinese-American Art Faculty Association 2020 in the Ruth Davis Design Gallery on the campus of University of Wisconsin-Madison. The Chinese-American Art Faculty Association is greatly honored and grateful to have this valuable opportunity to hold this exhibition together with the world renown, multicultural and multidisciplinary University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Integration and Innovation: An Exhibition of Chinese-American Art Faculty Association 2020 is the fifth major event we’ve held in the past few years with a focus on Chinese-American art faculty and their art works. The symposium, Imagination and Expression: the Comparison and Dialogue of Visual Art in Higher Education between China and the United States, held in the fall of 2013 at William Paterson University in New Jersey, focused on the comparison of East-West art education. In winter of 2014, we held the Collision and Confluence: Chinese-American Art Faculty Exhibition and Symposium, with the Center for Chinese Art at William Paterson University and Asian Cultural Center of New York as co-organizers, and with the theme of assimilation and mutual inspiration. In August of 2016, we co-hosted the Perception and Vision: Chinese-American Art Faculty Exhibition and Symposium with Guizhou Minzu University, China, to examine the survival, inclusion, enrichment and development of art in the new multiethnic and multicultural era of diversity and from the unique perception and vision of the special artist group of the Chinese-American art faculty. In November of 2019, the Artistic Development in Cross-Cultural Context: the Fourth Chinese-American Art Faculty Symposium and Exhibition was co-organized by the Association, the Center for Chinese Art at William Paterson University and the New York Gallery of Chinese Art, focusing on individual perception and inspiration in a cross-cultural context, exploration of visual art creation and expression, and promotion of artistic and cultural communication and development between the East and the West. The current and the fifth exhibition in 2020 will emphasize artistic and cultural integration and innovation. It is our hope that the art works exhibited here will highlight the efforts of exploration and creation of our art faculty members in their journey of cultural communication, and will explore the roles of theories of art creation and practice in cross-cultural exchange.

The Chinese-American Art Faculty Association was officially established in 2013. It is the first non-profit and academic organization in modern Chinese art history to be formally registered overseas. It provides a platform for communication and service for Chinese art professors teaching abroad. There have been three major waves of studying art abroad in modern China. The first one occurred in the 1920s, and the main destination was Europe and France in particular. The second wave took place in the 1950s for the USSR. And the third wave of studying art abroad was in the 1980s, with USA as its main destination. Due to historical reasons, the first two waves produced few art students who became art professors and stayed in the countries where they studied art. The third wave, however, saw a group of art students who stayed abroad, especially in the USA and North America, to earn their degrees and to become art professors in colleges and universities, and to form a unique group in college art education.

Members of the Chinese-American Art Faculty Association are art professors in colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. They are the first group of Chinese artists in Chinese art history to become art educators to teach in the classrooms of western art. They all have the international background of Chinese and western art and art education, their vision, perspective, art appreciation and presence all resonate with the international value and historical significance of Eastern culture of China and Asia. As a group and as an organization, they represent the east in the west and are the main force in east-west cultural and art communication and exchange, and act as bridge and tie in promoting art communication and development between the two cultures. They excel both in spreading the eastern essence of art in the western art world, bringing Chinese and eastern art and education to the international forefront, and in actively absorbing the traditionally profound and realistic western art in their own art creation and theoretical exploration.

This group of art faculty exhibits several unique characteristics. First of all, they are art creators and researchers embedded in the cross-cultural and cross-geopolitical artistic context. Most of them have received the dual education of the east and west cultures and art. Most of them have had the most prominent art education in China before going abroad to pursue further art studies, many already with a bachelor degree in art, some even with a master’s or a Ph. D degree in art. Many of them have already become established artists, with their own artistic style and philosophy. When they went abroad for advanced studies, they were enrolled directly into art masters or doctoral programs, to receive the best education a college or university can offer. They are, however, no longer the passive receivers of such education. Instead, they can choose and pick, they can compare and they can approach the art schools and methods with an exploratory and critical eye, in order to improve their own research and creation.

Secondly, they are the propagators of eastern art. When they were still in China, many of them were already professors in art institutes, many of them were the major players in the forefront of higher education. They were familiar with art education in China, including its traditions and its pedagogical structure. After completion of their advanced degrees in the west, they become art educators in colleges and universities in the west. They teach western art to western students, and at the same time, because of their familiarity and interest in eastern art education, they begin to apply their eastern tradition to western classrooms, thus making significant changes in western art education, and achieving insightful educational results. More importantly, their position as art educators in the west makes them, consciously or unconsciously, the most effective propagators of eastern art and culture in the west.

Thirdly, they serve as the most direct and most accurate interpreters of western art and culture for the Chinese audience. They live, conduct research and teach in the front line where eastern and western cultures collide and click, and they have a masterful understanding of the most up-to-date happenings and trends in the contemporary western art word. They can bring back, not only current art information, techniques, or materials, but also ongoing and future art judgement and pedagogy. With the opening up to the west, the modern western society could be as mysterious and enticing as a forest and dazzling too. It could be confusing to young artists with a single or narrow field of view. Instead, it needs to be approached with multiple and broad perspectives to achieve rational expectations, analyses and judgement. Faced with such an intriguing situation, an accurate judgement will play a critical role. It should be regarded as the foundation for success in our future art creation and art education. It is us, the Chinese artists and art scholars, who have been living and working for a long time in the cross-cultural and cross-geopolitical art environs, that occupy an irreplaceable, advantageous position in providing guidance for the elucidation of western art and its trends.

The uniqueness of this group carries challenge as well as opportunity. In America, they are viewed as artists from China, while in China they are considered artists living in America. They are often treated as artists in the periphery and ignored. But from the perspective of East-West communication and integration, they are right at the crossroads of East and West, and play a major role in such communication. Because of these unique features, this group of cross-cultural Chinese artists and scholars who live in the dual context of east-west art are not limited to a single perspective of the west or China, nor to a self-contained point of view of the past or the present. Instead, they share a multidimensional perspective that embraces the west and China, the past, the present and the future. It’s a comprehensive vision that is crossing the boundaries, a vision that is more inclusive, more discerning and more critical in the complexity of modern society. It is a vision more conducive to our future art creation and education, to the reform of our future art education infrastructure, and to the sustainability of our current art education system. For all these, their works of art, their efforts in exploration and creation in the process of cross-cultural communication, are all worth our attention and study, which is the theme of and the purpose of this exhibition.

# I would like to take this special occasion to express my sincere gratitude to the School of Human Ecology, the Center for East Asian Studies, and the Design Study Department, for their hard work in providing such as a valuable exhibition space and a window of communication for the professors of our association. My special thanks go to Professor Wei Dong, who is not only a well-respected professor at University of Wisconsin-Madison, but also the newly elected President of the Executive Committee of our association, for his ceaseless efforts, his contributions, and his active role in coordinating between the university and the association in exhibition planning, fund application, and in soliciting works of art for the exhibition. I would also like to thank the past executive committee who, under the leadership of Professor Josh Z. Yu, made tremendous efforts and contributions in the planning of the exhibition. My thanks also go to all the professors of the association for their active participation and support.

I wish our exhibition a great success.

Zhiyuan Cong, Professor

Chair, Board of Directors of Chinese-American Art Faculty Association

Director, Center for Chinese Art at William Paterson University

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融合与创新：全美华人美术教授协会2020年展览

丛志远

热烈祝贺《和与进：全美华人美术教授协会2020年展览》在美国威斯康辛大学-麦迪逊校园露丝戴维斯艺术设计画廊顺利开幕。 全美华人美术教授协会非常荣幸和感谢能有机会在美国这所多文化、多学科的著名学府-威斯康辛大学共同举办这个展览。

《和与进：全美华人美术教授协会2020年展览》是我们近几年来专门以全美华人美术教授为主体的第五次大型艺术研讨会和展览。2013年我们在新泽西威廉帕特森大学举办的《想象力与表达力：中美视觉艺术高等教育比较与对话研讨会》是以东西艺术教育比较为主题；2014年我们和纽约亚洲文化中心和威廉帕特森大学共同举办的《碰撞与融合：全美华人美术教授作品展览暨研讨会》以中西艺术有机结合、彼此渗透为主题；2016年我们和中国贵州民族大学联合举办的《视觉与视野：全美华人美术教授展览暨研讨会》是从这个特殊艺术家群体的视觉和视野，来审视在新的时代艺术的生存和发展；2019年我们在威廉帕特森大学和纽约中国艺术馆举办的《跨文化语境下的艺术发展：第四届全美华人美术教授艺术研讨会暨展览》是以跨文化的个人体验为灵感，探索视觉艺术创作表达，促进东西文化和艺术上沟通和发展。本次2020的展览强调的是艺术与文化的融合与创新。我们希望通过展示的作品，呈现艺术教授们在文化交流旅程中的思索与创作，进一步探讨跨文化交流过程中艺术作品的创作理论和实践。

全美华人美术教授协会正式成立于2013年。她是中国近现代中国美术史上第一个在海外正式注册的，非营利的，学术的，海外华人美术教授的学术交流和服务平台。中国在近现代共有三次出国学习美术的留学高潮：第一次是20世纪20年代主要去欧洲法国留学；第二次是20世纪50年代到苏联留学；第三次是20世纪80年代主要到美国留学。由于历史原因，前两次高潮，鲜有留学生在国外大学任职。第三次留学高潮，中国有一批留学生在海外，特别是在美国和北美完成学业，获得大学教职，从而形成一个独特的艺术教育群体。

全美华人美术教授协会的成员是来自美国和加拿大等北美高等院校的华人美术教授，也是中国美术史上第一批站在西方艺术教育讲坛上的华人群体。他们具有国际当代中西艺术与艺术教育特征，其视野、视角、判断力、在场性，与中国和亚洲的东方文化的国际意义和历史意义相呼应。作为一个群体和机构，他们是东西文化和艺术在西方交流和传播的主力军，也是促进当代东西文化和艺术上沟通和发展的桥梁与纽带。他们既长于向西方主流文化传播东方文化精神，将中国和东方的艺术和教育引向国际前沿；也长于在自己的创作和理论探索实践中，直接接触、吸取西方植根于历史传统和社会现实的文化精神。

这个艺术教授群体有其特殊性。首先，这个群体是跨文化、跨国界的双重艺术语境的创作实践者和研究者。他们大多数接受了东西美术的双重文化、艺术的薰陶。在到西方留学之前，他们中的大多数已经接受了中国最优秀的艺术教育，不少人，不但已经拥有本科学位， 而且还有硕士甚至博士的学位。很多人在国内已经是卓然成名的艺术家，形成了自己的艺术思想和哲学体系。来到西方时， 他们直接进入最高的学位——美术硕士和艺术博士，有机会进入西方最优秀的学校和学术环境接受教育。他们对西方艺术和艺术教育，不再是全盘接受， 而是用比较、研究、批判吸收的态度和方法，使他们的研究和创作更上一层楼。

其二，这个特殊群体是东方艺术的传播者。出国之前， 他们中很多人已经在国内各个艺术高校任教， 相当大的一部分甚至是高校教育一线的主力和骨干。他们熟悉中国的艺术教育传统和体系。来到西方，他们经过几年的拼搏和奋斗，又活跃在美国主流艺术领域，并登上了高等艺术教育讲坛。他们不仅仅向西方的学生传布他们了解和学到的西方知识和才华，而且还运用本身对东西方教学的经验，改革西方的艺术教学，达到最大效用的教学成果。更重要的是，他们每天站在高等学府的讲坛上，自觉或不自觉的成为在西方最有效的东方文化和艺术的传播者。

其三，这个特殊群体又是对中国观众介绍西方现代艺术的最直接，最准确的诠释者。他们生活、研究、教学和创作在东西文化碰撞与交融的第一线，他们了解和掌握西方现代艺术最前沿的信息和动向，他们带回中国的，不仅是现代艺术的信息，技术和原始材料，而且是正在进行着的、向着未来发展的艺术判断和教育理念。由于东西方的全面开放， 西方的现代社会有如迷人的森林，其诱惑性令人眼花缭乱。单一视角和狭窄视野有可能让一些年青艺术家对未来产生迷茫，而多维视角和宽阔视野则有助于对未来的期盼、辨析、判断。在这样的情境中，准确的判断力具有决定性作用，是艺术和教育在未来走向成功的前提。在这个方面，长期生活和工作在西方的跨文化，跨国界的双重艺术语境的中国艺术家和学者，对诠释西方现代艺术和对现代艺术的导向，拥有不可替代的优势。

当然他们的特殊性也给他们带来特别的机遇和挑战。在美国，他们被认为是来自中国的艺术家，在中国又被认为是生活在美国的艺术家。他们常常因为处于东西方艺术的边缘地带，而被疏忽。但是从东西文化交流和融合的角度， 他们又是位于东西方的交叉路口，是东西文化交流的第一线和主力军。由于这些特殊性，这批“跨文化”的双重艺术语境的中国艺术家和学者的视角既非单一的西方视角或单一的中国视角，也非单一的过去视角或现在视角，而是西方与中国、过去、现在与未来的多维视界，这是跨界的多向的全方位的视野。这样的视野更具有包容性、更有利于在繁杂的当代世界里进行甄别和选择，从而在西方和中国的文化中，取各者之长；这有利于预览未来的艺术和教育理念，有利于构建未来的艺术教育机制，从而使当下的艺术教育机制获得可持续发展的特性。正是这一切，他们创作的作品，以及他们在跨文化交流过程中的思索与创作，无论成熟和非成熟的思想或作品都值得我们关注和研究。这也是成为我们举办此次展览的主题和初衷。

# 在此，我要特别感谢威斯康辛大学人文生态学院，东亚研究中心，艺术设计系共同努力，为我们协会教授提供了如此难得的展览机会和交流窗口；特别感谢董伟教授，他既作为威斯康辛大学的资深教授， 也是我们协会执行委员会的新任主席，积极在大学和协会之间为展览的筹措，资金的申请，和征集作品所作的不懈努力和重要贡献。最后我还要特别感谢我们前任协会执行委员会在余震谷教授领导下对展览筹备工作的全力配合和奉献，感谢我们协会教授们的积极参与和支持。

预祝展览成功！

丛志远 教授

全美华人美术教授协会董事会主席

美国威廉帕特森大学中国艺术中心主任

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