

## The UNSW Judith Neilson Chair of Contemporary Art

### Paul Gladston

The UNSW Judith Neilson Chair of Contemporary Art (JNCCA) was founded in 2017 with a multi-million AU\$ endowment gifted by the Australian philanthropist and art collector Judith Neilson AM. The Chair has a brief to produce innovative research, advocacy and teaching with an emphasis on contemporary art related to the Sinosphere (inclusive of the mainland People's Republic of China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Sinophone/culturally Chinese diasporas). The JNCCA's endowed funds support two academic posts: the UNSW Judith Neilson Chair Professor of Contemporary Art and an associated fixed-term post-doctoral fellowship – the first post-doctoral fellow Li Yu-chieh has moved on successfully to full-time academic posts at Lingnan University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the second Minerva Inwald to a full-time academic post at the University of Melbourne.

Since joining UNSW Art and Design as the inaugural Judith Neilson Chair Professor of Contemporary Art in May 2018, Prof. Paul Gladston – formerly of the University of Nottingham, UK and the University of Nottingham Ningbo, China – has established a comprehensive, internationally engaged platform in support of the Chair's aims. This platform now comprises, among other things:

- A supporting team of professional staff, including the JNCCA Project Manager, Ms. Wen Chen, a social media facilitator and an in-house designer
- A dedicated UNSW JNCCA website and social media presence
- The scholarly book series 'Contemporary East Asian Visual Cultures, Societies and Politics' (Palgrave Macmillan, est. 2020 – 12 publications as of 2025)
- Peer-reviewed publications by the Chair and Post-doctoral Fellow, including two monographs, several edited collections and journal articles in tier-one contexts
- The 'JNCCA Editions' series (est. 2025), which aims to republish texts related to the Chair's research and curation in revised and expanded forms
- A series of seven research-led exhibitions across a network of leading university and other galleries in the UK, Taiwan, mainland China and Australia
- A research, publication and exhibition partnership with the Springtime Centre, 798 Art District, Beijing
- A growing team of visiting professors and fellows, among them Prof. Frank Vigneron (Chinese University of Hong Kong) and Prof. Wang Chunchen (Central Academy of Fine Art, Beijing)
- The Chair's election as a Distinguished Member of the UK-China Humanities Alliance, Tsinghua University, Beijing and to the Board of Trustees of the internationally renowned journal *Third Text*
- Regular contributions to the news and arts media, including *The South China Morning Post*, *China Daily*, ARD (Germany's equivalent to the BBC), Bloomberg Media, Nikkei and the ABC
- Collaborations with leading arts institutions, including The Brooklyn Rail, New York the Asia Society, Australia and the 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Sydney
- Ph.D.s and postdoctoral research fellowships under the supervision of the Chair, including positions funded by the China Scholarship Council and UNSW scholarships
- The UNSW undergraduate programme 'East Asian Contemporary Art' (est. 2019), which achieved 100% student satisfaction in 2022, 2023 and 2024

- The Chair's work as an eternal Ph.D. examiner and consultant for leading higher education institutions, including the University of Glasgow, the University of York and the Chinese University of Hong Kong

Paul Gladston's internationally recognised award-winning research ('best publication' - Awards of Art, China 2015) and curating continues to meditate critically on the significances of Sinospheric contemporary art with reference to the concerns of critical theory. Since joining UNSW his writing has been translated into Chinese and Russian. More information and news about the work of the JNCCA can be found at its dedicated UNSW web site: <https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/jncca>.

The planned activities of the JNCCA over the next five years include a major exhibition of contemporary video and new media art from the Sinosphere opening at the SOAS Gallery, University of London (2026) and then touring to venues in China, the US and Australia (2027-2029). Paul Gladston is currently working on a new monograph provisionally titled *Dis-/Continuing Traditions: Interventions with Classical Chinese Aesthetics by Contemporary Artists in China*. Working in collaboration with the University of Maryland, The JNCCA will establish a biannual 'Judith Neilson Chinese Art and Visual Culture Lecture Series' (starting in 2026) as well as a biannual post-graduate research seminar series (starting in 2027), the latter under the direction of the JNCCA Post-doctoral Fellow.