

I.BACKGROUND

The UK-China Collaboration on Animation Education, one of the ongoing 9 Knowledge Economy Partnership projects in China, reached a new and deeper level with the conclusion of the 5-day-long event at the end of last month in Hangzhou, China.

With the facilitation of the British Council, a UK delegation comprised of 12 animation education experts from 6 UK higher education institutions were invited to attend the 9th China International Cartoon & Animation Festival (中国国际动漫节) in Hangzhou from April 26th to 30th, the CICAFA is regarded as the largest and most influential event in animation across China. A series of UK themed events took place during this week-long event, including the Sino-UK Animation Education Forum, International Undergraduate Illustration & Comic Exhibition, and return visits to 4 key universities located in Hangzhou.

This event marks the 4th phase of this joint animation education project between UK and China, and it is built on the success of the 8th CICAFA in April 2012 and a Hangzhou's return visit to 6 UK universities in Nov 2012. The objectives of the collaboration project were to facilitate discussions between policy makers, practitioners, and professionals from China and the UK, and build up long-term and sustainable partnerships at various levels and in different formats among government, HEIs and industry of the two countries.

This animation project falls into Knowledge Economy Partnership strand of IHE programme, BC's global initiative on higher education work, which is aimed at providing a platform and framework for the creation of sustainable, multilateral partnerships to drive forward global, regional and national knowledge economies.

II.PARTICIPANTS:

UK side: the UK delegation was comprised of 12 animation education experts from 6 higher education institutions of the UK, most of who were participants from previous sessions under this project:

- Royal College of Art
- University of Arts, London (Central Saint Martin's College)
- University of Portsmouth
- National Film & Television School
- University of Falmouth
- Edge Hill University

China side: Below is the list of major participants from China

- Hangzhou Municipal Government;
- Organising Committee of the China International Cartoon & Animation Festival
- China Academy of Art; (中国美术学院)
- Zhejiang University; (浙江大学)
- Zhejiang University of Media and Communication; (浙江传媒学院)
- Zhejiang University of Technology; (浙江工业大学)
- Hangzhou Normal University (杭州师范大学)
- Zhejiang Pro&High Cultural Ltd; (浙江普达海动漫艺术公司/学院)

III.IMPACT

Through a series of events during the compact 5 days visit, both sides had very good opportunities to continue and further the discussion on various potential collaboration projects that had been initiated previously, and both sides were very pleased with the open and substantial discussions and the progress that have been achieved so far. New partnerships are being built while the existing ones have been further strengthened.

Visiting Fellow Scheme:

The Central Saint Martins College at University of Arts, London presented its latest proposal on Visiting Fellow Scheme, where one research fellow/academic staff from Chinese universities could be invited to CSM to do research project in Animation. This would take place for three to up to six months based on the actual schedule of the applicant. The Fellow could work on projects with students, conduct archival research or complete a practice-based project for public exhibition or screening. CSM could host the visitor by providing research and exhibition facilities free of charge, and academic supervision during the research period.

Based on the discussion in last visit, a formal document on this scheme has been written, approved by CSM and disseminated to universities in Hangzhou, which details the application procedures, timelines, fees, and other academic standards for the Chinese applicants. One of the potential applicants Ms. Fu Yiwen (Amy) from Zhejiang University, one of the top universities in China, has already got sponsorship from her university and she will submit her application to CSM in due course.

This Visiting Fellow Scheme would be made an annual scheme and the number of fellows could be increased to 2-3 in future if the pilot goes well this year.

Joint Research Programmes:

Royal College of Art had an extensive and in-depth discussion with CAA, one of the most prestigious art schools in China, in establishing joint research projects, particularly for doctoral studies. As a pilot, it is proposed that both sides would start with a joint research project on combination of traditional Chinese color water painting skills with advanced computer animation skills.

An MOU has already been signed between Royal College of Art and China Academy of Art, and it will be updated to reflect the latest discussion from this time.

Joint Students Event:

Continuing the discussion at last visit, Edge Hill University presented the proposal of Sino-UK Creative Animation and Knowledge Exchange Festival, or the CAKE Festival, which aims to host a week-long animation festival specifically between China and the UK in the 2nd week of July 2014 at Edge Hill University. Edge Hill pledges to invite 100 Chinese students and up to 50 staff and industry representatives to the UK, providing free accommodation and food.

Surveys have been done at 4 of the universities in Hangzhou and the results showed that students are very enthusiastic about the festival. There are as many as 70 students who have expressed their intention to attend this festival in Zhejiang University of Media and Communication alone.

Students only have to pay for the international flights, some universities such as Zhejiang University of Technology has a policy to fund as much as RMB10,000 per

person for its students taking international programmes.

Edge Hill University is now drafting a three-year MOU on this project in the hope of making the CAKE festival a bi-annual event, (the 2nd CAKE festival could be hosted in China in rotation). The MOU is expected to be signed by interested Chinese Universities within the following month.

To respond to the suggestion by Hangzhou in last Nov, the CAKE festival will be followed by a 5-day-long Cultural Visit or English Language Programme to maximize the value of the long trip for participants. The cost will be borne by the students.

Joint Animation Production Project

Representing University of Portsmouth, Dr. Roger Charles Eglin presented *The Stina and Wolf*, an animation film project that his university is currently working on in collaboration with professional animation companies in the UK. This project has already received a funding of RMB 5 million and a preview has been completed at Portsmouth. Dr. Eglin had a good discussion with Prof. Shen Huaqing from Zhejiang University on collaboration in the following modeling and production of this animation project.

Joint Degree Programmes:

Falmouth University took this visit to have further discussion with its potential partners Zhejiang University of Media and Communication, and Zhejiang University of Technology, both of the two universities have already started discussion with Falmouth in running joint degree programmes. Being impressed by the advanced facilities, deep integration with industry, and meeting with potential students of the two universities, Falmouth has strengthened its commitment to collaborating with China in Animation.

Substantial work such as curriculum mapping is currently being carried out and it was agreed that Zhejiang University of Technology will send its President to visit Falmouth University and sign an MOU early next year. It was agreed that they could start with 3+1 model and it is expected that first students would be transferred to Falmouth next year. Education Marketing team at BC will be following up with this project.

Hangzhou Zhijiang Cultural Park

On 27th April, UK delegation visited the Hangzhou Zhijiang Cultural Park (杭州之江文化创意园) which was also one of the 10 parallel sessions of the 9th CICAF. The Park became very first national level university park particularly for creative arts in China after being jointly accredited as “University Creative Park of China Academy of Art” (中国美术学院国家大学创意园) by Ministry of Education and Ministry of Science in 2011. The Park offers preferential policies and support, financial and non-financial, to arts graduates to start up their own business in Hangzhou. Ms. Hu Nainv, Director of the Park intends to attract UK graduates to start up their studios, which has arose great interest from UK universities, particularly the Central Saint Martins’ College, who has a very big percentage (33%) of Chinese students doing animation at CSM. This visit would create potential opportunities for those who wish to set up their own business upon graduation. CSM will have further discussion with the Park in future.

Media Reach

Being the largest animation festival in China, the 9th CICAF attracted a population of 1.23 million on-site viewers this year. UK has been a very active contributor and forms a strategic part of this great success at the facilitation of the British Council. The series

of events have undoubtedly enhanced UK's leading role in higher education and further raised UK's profile in China and achieved mutual beneficial results. The events have achieved great impact through extensive and in depth media coverage, which covers all forms of medias, both at national level and local level, including TV, newspapers, and various leading new media in China. The Opening Ceremony was broadcast alive on Hangzhou TV on 27th April 2013 with at least 1 million viewers watched the programme.

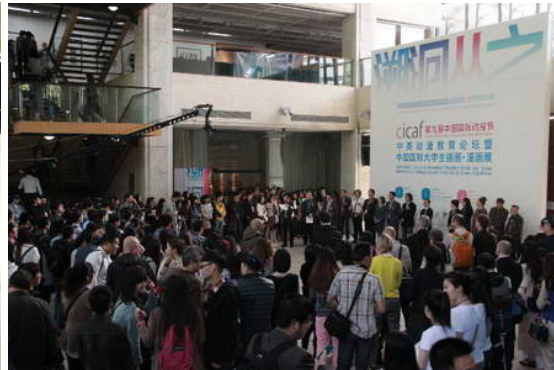
These events were reported on national media CCTV and China Daily.
<http://donghua.cntv.cn/special/dijzgjidmj/shouye/>
http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/hqgj/jryw/2013-04-27/content_8888903.html

The Sino-UK Animation Education Forum was made a feature programme and was broadcast on Zhejiang TV:
http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNTUzNDQyMTI4.html

These events were also reported by various government websites and industry media
<http://www.hangzhou.gov.cn/main/zwtd/bzbd/qykt/T440390.shtml>
<http://www.visionunion.com/article.jsp?code=201304280011>

IV. MAIN ACTIVITIES:

As a strategic part of the kicking off ceremony of the 9th CICAf, the Sino-UK Animation Education Forum & International Undergraduate Illustration & Comic Exhibition were held at Chin Academy of Art on April 26th 2013. A number of important people were present at the forum, including leaders from Hangzhou Municipal Government, China Academy of Art, and other 15 Chinese arts colleges, with over 200 people attending the Opening Ceremony.



(Prof. Wang Zan, Vice President of CAA hosting Opening Ceremony of Sino-UK Animation Education Forum at CAA on April 26th)



In his Opening Speech, Mr. Chen Xiaoping, Vice Mayor of Hangzhou Municipal Government spoke very highly of the UK contribution to both animation education and industry sectors in Hangzhou through the participation of the previous two CICAf's in 2011 and 2012. He particularly mentioned that *"Great achievements have been made in animation area through the collaboration with the British Council, UK has brought to Hangzhou world leading knowledge and valuable experiences in animation talents training and management, which really widened the horizon of industry, academics and students in China."*

(Photo above: Mr. Chen Xiaoping, Vice Mayor of Hangzhou Municipal Government delivering his speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Forum on 26th April 2013)

Mr. Matt Burney, the Cultural and Education Consul of the British Council pointed out that *“over the past two years we have established strong links and relationships between our two countries through previous events. Today’s events mark another significant milestone in promoting exchange and cooperation between our two countries in the field of animation education.”*



(Photo above: Mr. Matt Burney, the Cultural and Education Consul of the British Council delivering his speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Forum on 26th April 2013)



At the Forum, a total of 6 UK animation education experts from 5 world class arts colleges delivered keynote presentations, including Royal College of Art, and National Film & Television School etc. Their topics mainly focused on creativity and research projects at the forefront of the discipline. UK experts introduced creative doctoral researches and practices, Documentary Animation Investigation, visualization of the Tactile Memory and had very good communication with Chinese counterparts in areas of mutual interests, such as transformation from imagination to visual creation etc. The day-long Forum attracted over 200 leaders, staff and students from over 15 HEIs to attend, covering almost all major arts/animation colleges in China.

(Photo above: Prof Joan Ashworth, Head of Animation from Royal College of Art delivering keynote presentation at the Forum on 26th April 2013)



The International Undergraduate Illustration & Comic Exhibition was also held along with the Forum at CAA on 26th April. Student from UK universalities were also invited to exhibit their works at the 5-day long exhibition.

(Photo: Viewers at the International Undergraduate Illustration & Comic Exhibition at China Academy of Art on 26th April 2013)

From April 28th to 30th, the UK delegation visited 4 key animation and arts HEIs in Hangzhou, respectively are Zhejiang University of Media and Communication; Zhejiang University of Technology; Hangzhou Normal University and Zhejiang Pro&High Animation College, all of these 4 HEIs were the participants of previous events under this animation project and also visited UK in Nov 2012.

The delegation was very well received at each of the 4 universities, apart from the welcomes by President or Vice President of the universities, the delegation was particularly happy to be able to meet and communicate with academic staff and learn more about students' animation works at each stop.

(Right Photo: Meeting with Prof Li Jun, Vice President of Zhejiang University of Media & Communication on 28th April 2013)



On April 30th, a special session of “Closed-door Consultation on UK-China Animation Education Collaboration” was particularly organized at Zhejiang Pro& High Animation College, where representatives of all participating universities were gathered together and had a plenary discussion on various collaboration projects.

(Left Photo: Edge Hill University presenting CAKE Festival 2014 at the Consultation Meeting on 30th.)

V. Feedback from Participants:

“We are very happy with the thought of working with CAA on joint research projects; we had very good discussion and will email the thoughts very soon regarding suggested next steps. “

--Prof. Joan Ashworth, Head of Animation, Royal College of Art

“This is a high quality event, and I have developed a better understanding and a close link with my Chinese counter parts”

--Dr. Roger Eglin, Principal Lecturer, University of Portsmouth

“This was my first visit to China and I had a great time. I thought everything was well organized and geared to making sure we all could work as efficiently as possible. Jack and his team put a lot of effort in to getting us what we wanted.”

--Derek Hayes, Senior Lecturer, Digital Animation, Falmouth University

**Jack Zhou,
Higher Education Manager, IHE, British Council China.**

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