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- short para on how proud we are to reach this milestone - My first interview question for the job of CEO was "What would you like Chinese Arts Centre to be in ten years?" I answered that would be it to be short come at the week we had then would have made the Chinese arts centre strong and the materials should be embracing Chinese artists for what they were, good artists. My interview was eleven years ago. For four thousand years have been an extremely great culture with of Chinese Arts Centre. We are consistently pushing people everywhere about Chinese art, the quality of our exhibitions is consistently high and the residency scheme is extremely beneficial for the careers of the selected artists. In recent years we have been concentrating on nurturing training and support schemes and the artists receive that all gained employment commitments of funding. I have no doubt that Chinese Arts Centre will be around for the next twenty one years, not because Chinese artists will still be making art, but because the work they produce is exciting, challenging and relevant to us all.
- brief history of organisation - Chinese Arts Centre was established in 1989 by a group of British Chinese artists based in Manchester. The artists were frustrated that the work was not being taken in mainstream venues, and was not included in the "biennial" movement of the time. Based in Chiswick, the Centre was financially supported by Manchester City Council and Arts Council of England. Composed of a Studio, education centre and bookstore it was an excellent space to show the work of British Chinese artists and the local Chinese community.
- ground breaking events: 1997 and the Hong Kong Handover proved to be a watershed in the development of Chinese Arts Centre. The British media was full of Chinese images and many arts organisations programmed Chinese related events. The dramatic increase in mainstream recognition of all things Chinese encouraged us to change our direction and, rather than just exhibiting work, we would proactively support the careers of artists of Chinese descent. In addition, 1997 marked the year that we expanded our remit to become a national charity and we started to work internationally rather than just with British Chinese artists.
- 1998 was the year of our first major touring exhibition - Representing the People - Touring to twenty national venues and seen by 250,000. Representing the People was the first independent exhibition to show artists from Mainland China in the UK. Aside from the quality of the art, the work itself was successful because it showed an honest and real life of life in China. Many of the artists in the exhibition are non "stars" in the international art market, not more so than Liu Xia or Dong Qiang's work, certainly not figureheads.
- 2000 marked the opening of the new Chinese Arts Centre following a £2.5 million pound lottery grant. Winning a £100 million for Manchester, the project built Centre in a new Regency Chinese contemporary art.
- individual artist / staff success - Gordon Cheung was spotted by Chinese Arts Centre at his graduation show. He was offered a three month residency which enabled him to successfully develop his practice and make a new body of work. Gordon's residency was made possible by the support of British Arts Council, which he was subsequently selected for. Ju Qing was the opening artist for the new Centre. One of the most respected artists in the world, Ju Qing exhibited with Chinese Arts Centre for the first time in the UK the week we were doing and wanted to support us. Sally Lu was the Curator of Chinese Arts Centre for three years. She was selected as a China Learning Fellow and has since gone on to be a successful independent Curator. Both the CEO and General Manager of Chinese Arts Centre have been in post for 11 and 10 years respectively, most of the other staff have been in post for at least five years. In a world where staff change is becoming increasingly frequent, the commitment, a job being and a tribute to the organisation.

IDENTIFIER

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ARTIST

Chinese Arts Centre, 1989-2013; Liu, Xiaodong, artist; Cheung, Gordon, (b. 1975), artist; Xu, Bing, (b. 1955), artist; Lai, Sally, Curator