

**WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY**



Australia-China Institute
for Arts and Culture



The 'Yunnan School' of Artists



Exhibition Period

13 November 2018 – 28 February 2019

Venue

Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture Gallery, Room EA.G.03, Ground Floor,
Building EA, Parramatta South Campus, Western Sydney University

Gallery Opening Hours

Monday – Thursday 10.00am – 3.00pm

Friday 11.00am - 3.00pm

For more information, please visit westernsydney.edu.au/ACIAC



The ‘Yunnan School’ of Artists

The group of six Yunnan artist painters and printmakers represented in this exhibition are 杨鹏 (Yang Peng), 王玉辉 (Wang Yuhui), 熊惠明 (Xiong Huiming), 沈德坤 (Shen Dekun), 吕敏 (Lyu Min) and 叶松青 (Ye Songqing).

This fine and intensive exhibition from recognized Yunnan artists gives an opportunity to understand the development of an historic and contemporary aspect of art practice post-Cultural Revolution in the context of all contemporary art formations throughout China.

The Yunnan movement is particularly interesting as an early, ‘homegrown’, influential art style of many artists born into the Yunnan region with relatively few ‘outsiders’ migrating into the province from the massive Chinese coastal growth of modern mega-metropolis and industry along with a moderate but steady degree of modernization in, for example, the ancient Yunnan city of Dali.

As the Cultural Revolution concluded in the late nineteen-seventies, art shifted from government control and influence to an international art market increasingly attracted to China along with a major expansion of artistic styles and themes occurring throughout the country.

It is worth noting, as below, an abbreviated time-line of key events in the development of Chinese contemporary art that contextualize Yunnan art styles and themes at important crossover points wherein Western and Chinese cultures blend, and some of these were enough to confuse even specialized audiences, artist and/or curator.

1976

- Along with Mao’s death the Cultural Revolution drew to a close.
- The influential first exhibition of art from the West held in post-war China was *Landscapes and French peasants: rural life in France in the 19th century 1820-1905* at National Art Museum Beijing and Shanghai. And that seminal exhibition seeded notions of a critical realism in Chinese realist painting.

1979

- Twenty-three radical Chinese artists set up their own exhibition of one-hundred and sixty cutting edge artworks as the initial showing of the Star Group.
- Wu Guanzhong’s first influential solo exhibition held at the China National Art Museum, and his technique hovered, with subtlety, between calligraphy, abstraction and realism, traditional Chinese motifs and western identity, tonal wash and saturated, opaque colour.

1985

- The groundbreaking ’85 Chinese New Wave Movement was exemplified by the ’85 New Wave Movement at the closure of the Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign with avant-garde groups springing up around the country.

The Yunnan School of Painting spans the 'scarring period' or 'Scar Painting' that referenced the emotional wounds of the Cultural Revolution and generated an interest in Rustic Realist painting. Yunnan art retains beauty and the ideal as the emphatic theme of art. As was the case for traditional western art prior to modernism and the shift from realism and narrative to the break out into all of the modernist movements. Particularly since the French artist, Marcel Duchamp, with the major shift in emphasis from beauty and the ideal to wonder and curiosity.

It is important to note that the Chinese province of Yunnan borders Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam as well as Tibet to the west and the Chinese provinces of Sichuan, Guizhou and Guangxi to the North and South East. And, the six Yunnan exhibitors in this ACIAC show testify to three historic influences on the development of their painterly styles and techniques as follows:

1. The famous pigment-based colourful body paintings and tattoos, as well as tribal clothing, of numerous minorities variously related to the province's Asian neighbours.
2. Ancient Buddhist cave paintings, discovered within Yunnan and notably the chromatic and opaque-pigment techniques of cave-temple paintings of Dunhuang, along China's Silk Road.
3. The modern western movement of cubism - reconfiguring renaissance conventions governing perceptions of realism that anticipate perspectival coda - as figure and object are geometrically semi-abstracted into numerous planes spatially and temporally onto a single plane. Thus, rendering a textural sense of 'feel' or 'lived experience' of depiction greater than a discrete, optical view.

Yunnan lacked the metropolitan, industrial and political environment of major cities in the North and East of China, Beijing and Shanghai. Even so, modernization particular to China still carries a remarkable quantum of sentimentality contrary to the West, for whom modernization retains a much cooler, more cynical reformation that would turn and mock the old ways, satirically and often insensitively. You can witness that flush of human feeling for the sentimental in Chinese cinema, for example, within many narrative films of unrequited love.

Rather than hyper-industrial urban life Yunnan artists turned to the fascinating and varied ethnicity of their province where, since ancient times, many ethnic groups have co-existed harmoniously; that in itself is a tremendously positive social achievement within an increasingly fragmented modern world. And, it can be said that around twenty-five ethnic minorities continue to live in peaceful co-existence. All of this adds up to why the Yunnan is rightfully referred to as 'rich', 'colourful' and 'beautiful' and these epithets very well characterise Yunnan 'heavy color' painting worldwide through the latter half of the twentieth century and well into the twenty-first century.

Dr David Cubby

Adjunct Fellow, Western Sydney University

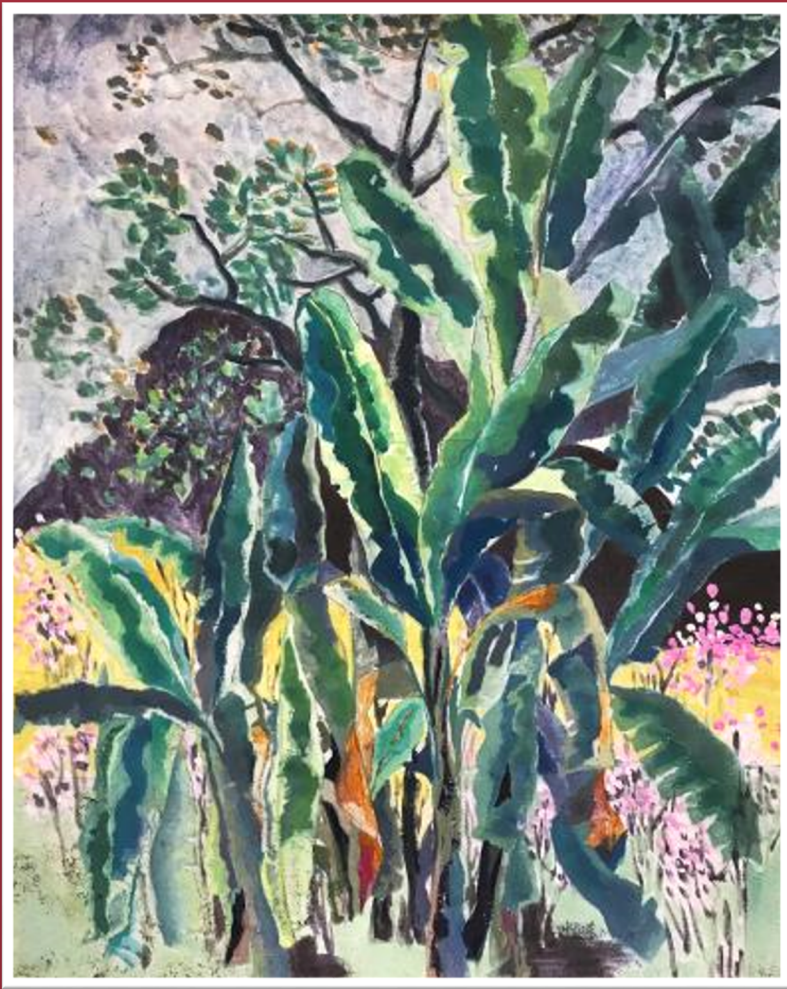
Key Researcher, ACIAC, Western Sydney University

November 2018

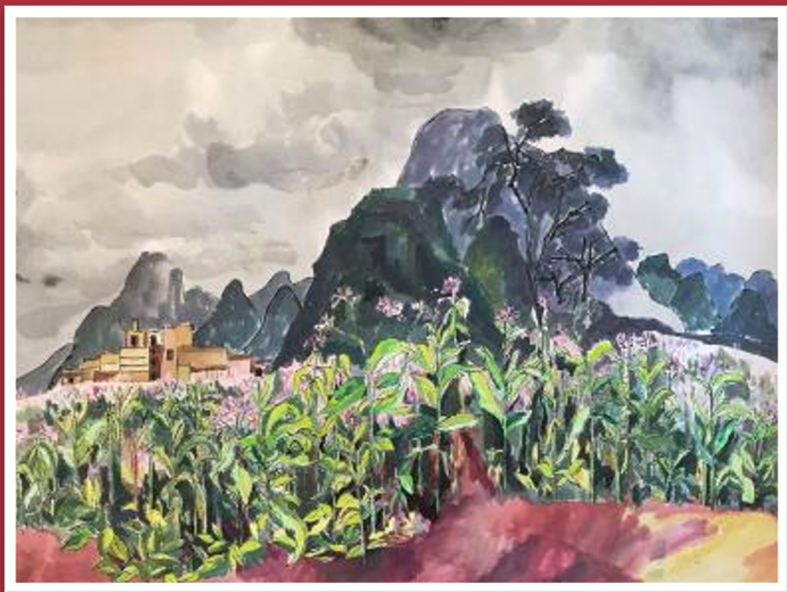


YE Songqing (叶松青)

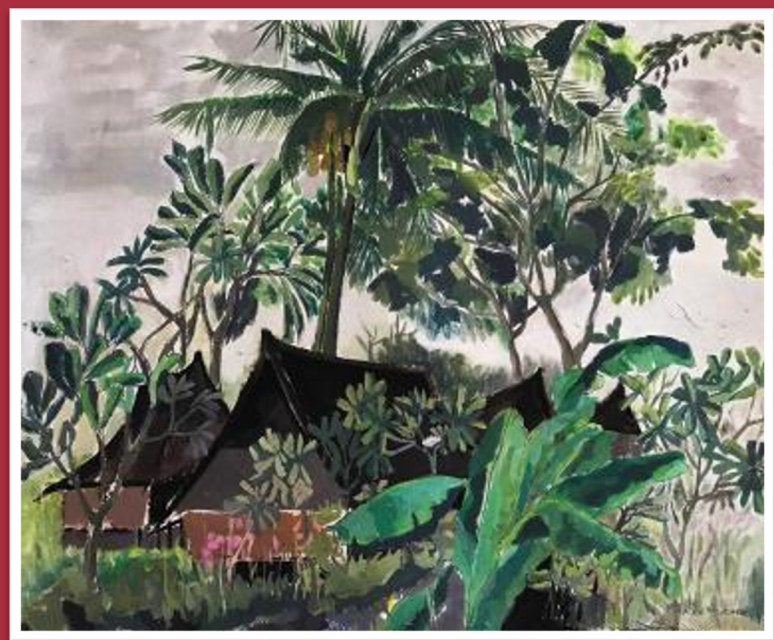
YE Songqing graduated from Yunnan Arts University with a bachelor's degree in Oil Painting and he did his postgraduate studies in Oil Painting at Nanjing University of the Arts. He has been researching on the integration of Chinese folk arts and the contemporary arts.



**Wild Banana Tree
(2017)**



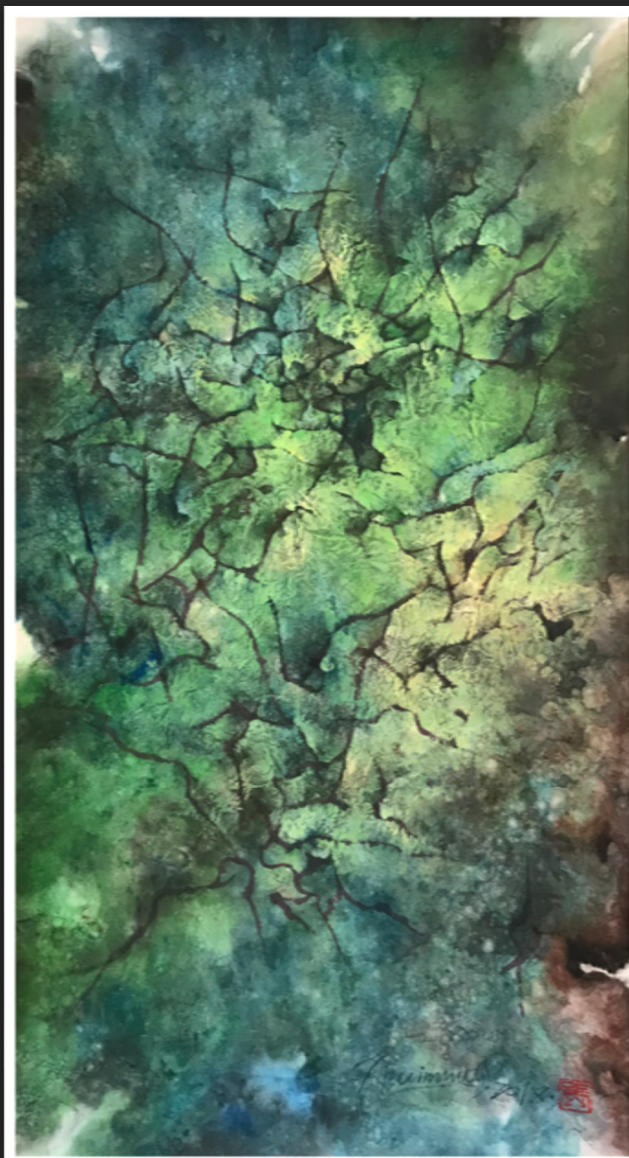
**The Rainstorm is Coming
(2017)**



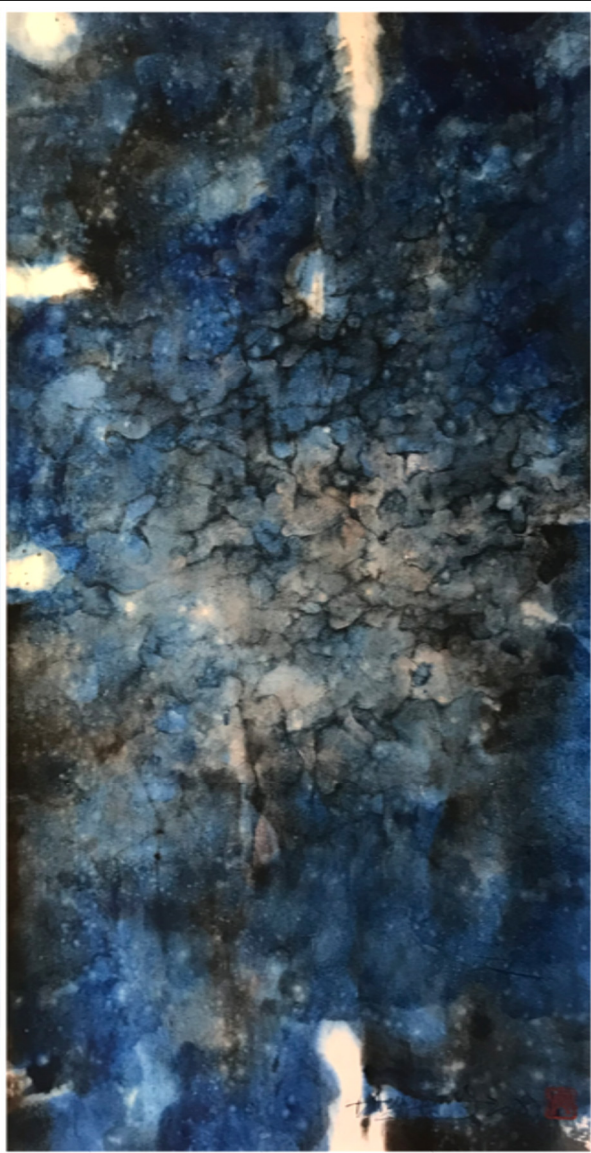
**Green Plants of Xishuangbanna
(2017)**

XIONG Huiming (熊惠明)

XIONG Huiming was born in Kunming of Yunnan province in 1954. He is the Art Editor of the Aurora Publishing House, and he is also a member of the Yunnan Artists' Association, a standing council member on the Board of the Kunming Artists' Association and council member of the Chinese Painters' Association.



From left:
Dreams on the Plateau - A Kiss from the Green (2018)
Dreams on the Plateau - Dancing Flower (2018)
Dreams on the Plateau - The Sound of Water (2018)

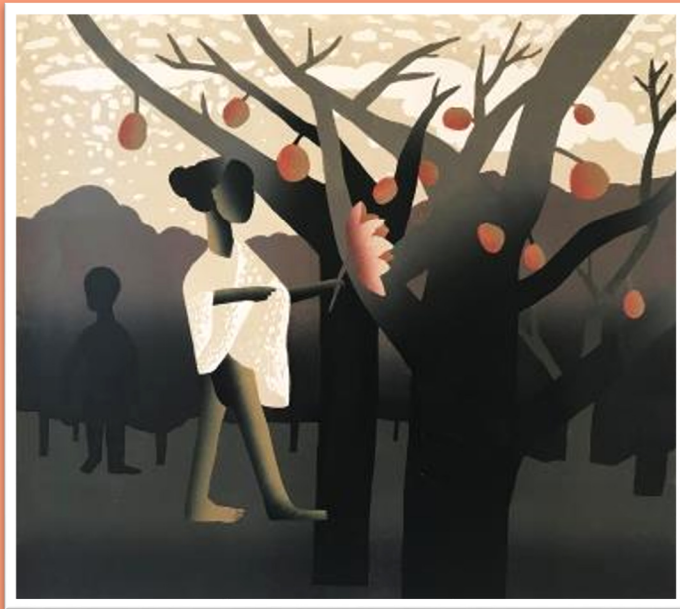


LYU Min (吕敏)

LYU Min was born in Kunming of Yunnan province in 1962 and she graduated from Yunnan Arts University with a bachelor's degree in Print-making in 1986. She currently teaches in the Yunnan School of Applied Arts. She is a professional painter of the Painting Academy of Yunnan, and she is also a member of the Chinese Artists' Association, a member of the Chinese Print-painting Association and deputy director of the Print-painting Arts Council of Yunnan Province.



**Mountain Flowers
(2018)**



**Sunset
(2002)**



**Autumn Melody
(2000)**

WANG Yuhui (王玉辉)



WANG Yuhui (aka Yihui) was born in Kunming, Yunnan Province, and he specialises in print-painting. He started his study of print-painting in the Department of Fine Art of Yunnan Arts University in 1979. Since graduating in 1982, he has been working in the Yunnan People's Publishing House.



**Nature My Closest
(2018)**

YANG Peng (杨鹏)

YANG Peng was born in 1957, in Wenshan, a city of the Yunnan Province, China, and is an artist with a notable national reputation. He is a current member of the China Artists Association, Committee Member of the Chinese Painting Society, Distinguished Professor of Yunnan University, Post-graduate Tutor, Chinese Painting and Calligraphy Research Institute at the Central Research Institute of Culture and History, member of the Senior Professional Title Appraisal Committee in Arts of the Department of Culture of Yunnan Province, Government Counsellor of the Yunnan Province. He is also a Committee Member of the China Great Wall Academy of Painting.



Under the Greenwood Tree
(2001)



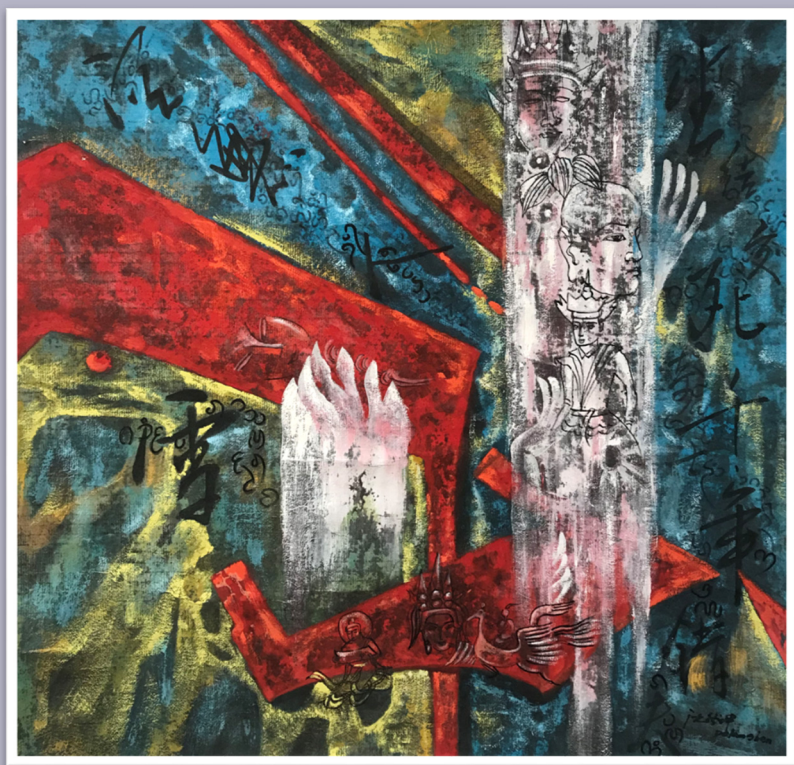
Walking Through the Jungle
(1997)

SHEN Dekun (沈德坤)



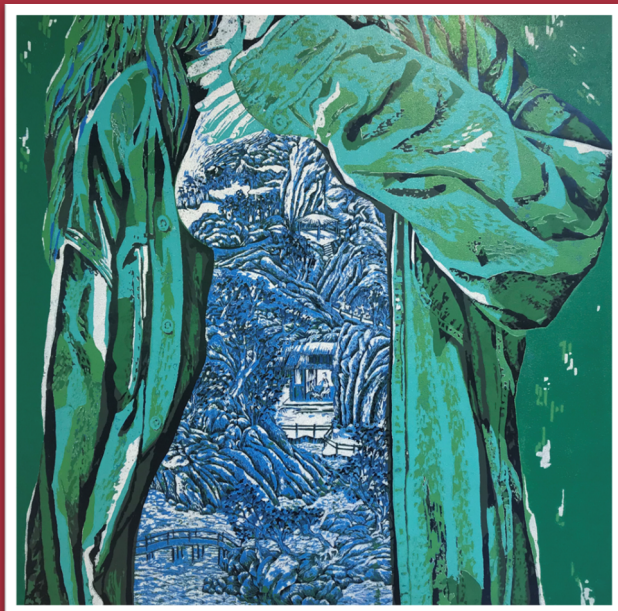
The Peacock
(2013)

SHEN Dekun was born in 1957 in Kunming, a city of the Yunnan Province, China. He is a postgraduate tutor in Kunming University of Science and Technology, graduate student from the Ministry of Education, Expert Judge of the Academic Degrees Centre, member of the Architectural Society of China, member of both the provincial and municipal Artists Association, member of the Chinese Culture Promotion Society.



The Words of God
(2016)

WANG Yuhui (王玉辉)



**Ideal Landscape 1
(2004)**



**Ideal Landscape 2
(2004)**

**Ideal Landscape 4
(2005)**



**Ideal Landscape 3
(2005)**



About ACIAC

Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture (ACIAC) is positioning itself as a hub and national resource centre for cultural exchange between Australia, China and the Sinosphere (including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and other centres of Chinese culture), and for collaborative action in the arts and cultural fields. It is building on the strengths of Western Sydney University and on existing exchange programs in the University.

The Institute will enhance existing exchanges between the University and partner universities overseas, particularly in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. It is launching significant new research programs of relevance to the Australia-China relationship, and will engage with the

local community in Western Sydney and particularly with ethnic Chinese groups, businesses and individuals.

Located in one of the most ethnically diverse urban centres of Australia, ACIAC will also have great local significance in building a new multicultural urban society, and it will harness local support and engagement in its programs.

For more information, please visit **westernsydney.edu.au/aciac/about**





MASTER OF CHINESE CULTURAL RELATIONS

BE A CULTURAL NAVIGATOR

This Master program is offered by the Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture, in collaboration with the School of Humanities and Communication Arts. A challenging degree program which is designed to meet the needs of cultural institutions and government departments increasingly engaged in cultural exchanges between Australia and China.

The course will help you develop an understanding of Australian and Chinese cultures and their cultural policies, intercultural communication, international business management, and cultural diplomacy.

This degree program requires 18 months full-time study. Individual units may be taken separately and students in full-time employment can spread their studies over successive years. Australian students may engage critically with local culture through one unit of study in China. Students who only complete part of the course can obtain a certificate or diploma. The first year of this program is focused on coursework, and the second year on a major research project. The purpose of the project is to encourage students to apply the knowledge and skills from

previous units to a real-life setting which may involve a work placement in Australia. For both domestic and international students, this Masters program also provides a pathway to higher degree research study.

The Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture will offer up to 33 scholarships in the calendar years 2018, 2019 and 2020 for Master of Chinese Cultural Relations (MCCR).

The scholarships will provide a cost of living stipend and cover all or partial tuition fees. Equal numbers of these scholarships are available to domestic and international applicants. Applications will be considered based on previous academic achievement and relevant work experience.

For more information, please visit
www.westernsydney.edu.au/

Contact Information

+61 2 9685 9944

ACIAC@westernsydney.edu.au

Australia-China Institute for Arts and Culture

Ground Floor, Building EA, Parramatta Campus (South)

Western Sydney University

Locked Bag 1979

Penrith NSW 2751 Australia



For more information,
please visit <https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/>