

# Notts Through Chinese Brush

## Curatorial Statement

*A brush is more than an artist's tool—it is a vessel of memory, culture, and lived experience. Every brushstroke carries traces of where an artist has been, what they have witnessed, and how they make sense of the world. As artists move across places and stages of life, the same brush begins to tell entirely new stories.*

**Notts Through Chinese Brush** brings together three artists whose practices are rooted in different traditions of Chinese art, yet who now share a common home in Nottinghamshire. Having each journeyed from their place of birth to build new lives in the UK, they bring with them not only years of artistic practice, but also memories, cultural heritage, and evolving perspectives shaped by migration and belonging.

Working across **Shan Shui (Landscape) Painting**, **Mogu Painting (沒骨畫)**—a distinctive "boneless" technique that creates form through colour rather than ink outlines—and **Chinese Calligraphy**, the artists explore what happens when artistic traditions travel. These practices are not static expressions of heritage; they are living, evolving languages that continue to respond to new places, people, and experiences.

The resulting works are neither purely traditional Chinese art nor simple depictions of British life. Instead, they inhabit the space where cultures meet and influence one another: where Eastern brushwork encounters the landscapes of Nottinghamshire; where memories of one homeland are woven into the rhythms of another; and where artistic traditions become a bridge between past and present, East and West.

## Featured Artists & Artistic Practices

### Dr Jeffrey Tsz-wun Kwong

#### Chinese Calligraphy

*Reimagining place, language and belonging through the timeless art of Chinese writing.*

### Mr Ping-Kin So

#### Traditional Shan Shui (Landscape) Painting

*A poetic interpretation of landscape through classical Chinese brush traditions.*

## Ms Jin Wu

### Mogu Painting (沒骨畫)

*Exploring the expressive beauty of colour, flowers and nature through one of China's most distinctive painting traditions.*

### Biography

## Featured Artists

### Dr Tsz-wun Kwong

#### Chinese Calligraphy

Dr Tsz Wun Kwong is a calligrapher, educator, and scholar whose artistic practice explores the enduring relationship between language, place, and cultural identity. Trained under renowned Hong Kong calligrapher **Mr. Man Wai-leung**, he combines the discipline of classical Chinese calligraphy with contemporary reflections on community, belonging, and cultural exchange.

Formerly a Lecturer in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Dr Kwong brings together academic scholarship and artistic practice in his exploration of Chinese calligraphy as a living cultural tradition. His works invite audiences to discover how brush and ink can transcend language, revealing the beauty, rhythm, and philosophy embedded within Chinese writing.

For this exhibition, Dr Kwong presents a series of calligraphic works inspired by Nottinghamshire's people, places, and local identity, demonstrating how the timeless art of Chinese calligraphy can become a bridge between cultures.

### Mr Ping-Kin So

#### Traditional Shan Shui (Landscape) Painting

Mr Ping-Kin So is a Hong Kong-born artist specialising in traditional **Shan Shui (Landscape) Painting**. Trained in classical Chinese painting, his artistic practice is rooted in the philosophy that landscape is not merely a representation of nature, but an expression of harmony between humanity and the natural world.

Following his relocation to Nottinghamshire, Mr So found renewed inspiration in the region's rolling countryside, woodlands, and changing seasons. While remaining faithful to the aesthetics and brush techniques of traditional Chinese landscape painting, his recent works

respond to the quiet beauty of Britain's rural environment, creating a dialogue between Eastern artistic traditions and Western landscapes.

Through expressive brushwork and poetic composition, his paintings invite viewers to experience familiar scenery through the contemplative lens of Chinese art.

## Ms Jin Wu

### Mogu Painting (沒骨畫)

Ms Jin Wu is a Chinese painter whose practice centres on the elegant tradition of **Mogu Painting** (沒骨畫)—a distinctive technique that creates form through colour and layered brushwork rather than defined ink outlines.

With decades of dedicated study in Chinese painting and calligraphy, she has developed a practice deeply informed by classical aesthetics while cultivating her own expressive artistic language. Her work reflects a lifelong commitment to preserving and celebrating the richness of traditional Chinese painting while bringing fresh perspectives to this historic art form.

Inspired by flowers, birds, and the natural world, her paintings reveal the quiet beauty and vitality of everyday life. Through the expressive qualities of the Mogu tradition, she captures the delicate balance between strength and gentleness, precision and spontaneity, inviting viewers to experience the poetic essence of nature.

## Community Gallery

### The Magic Brush

#### *From Ancient Symbols to New Imagination*

Art has the power to connect people across cultures, generations, and experiences. As part of **Notts Through Chinese Brush**, **The Magic Brush** invites the youngest members of our community to become part of this cultural conversation.

Inspired by the origins of Chinese pictograms, local schoolchildren were encouraged to explore how some of the world's oldest written symbols first emerged from observations of nature. Mountains, rivers, trees, birds, and animals gradually evolved into Chinese characters, preserving traces of the natural world within their forms.

Using these ancient symbols as a starting point, each child was invited to transform a chosen Chinese character into an original artwork through their own imagination and creativity. Working in a medium of their choice, they reinterpreted ancient forms through contemporary eyes, creating works that are both deeply personal and wonderfully imaginative.

Together, these individual artworks form a collaborative community gallery that celebrates creativity, cultural curiosity, and the universal language of visual storytelling. Displayed alongside the work of the featured artists, they demonstrate that artistic traditions are not confined to the past—they continue to inspire new generations of makers and storytellers.

The Magic Brush reflects one of the central ideas of **Notts Through Chinese Brush**: that every brush carries a story, and every artistic journey begins with a single brushstroke.