

# Dr Federica Mirra

**Position:** Module Leader, University of Macerata, Italy and Assistant Editor, *JCCA*, Intellect

**Affiliation:** Visiting Research Fellow, Centre for Contemporary Visual Arts Asia, School of Arts, Birmingham City University **Email:** [federica.mirra@hotmail.it](mailto:federica.mirra@hotmail.it); [Federica.mirra@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:Federica.mirra@bcu.ac.uk)

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## Employment history

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Jan 2026 – Jun 2026	<b>Module Leader</b> (fixed-term contract), University of Macerata, Italy
Jan 2026 – Jan 2028	<b>Visiting Research Fellow</b> , CCVA, School of Arts, Birmingham City University (BCU), Birmingham, UK
Jan 2023 – ongoing	<b>Assistant Editor</b> , <i>Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art</i> , Intellect, UK
Jan 2023 – Dec 2025	<b>Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellow</b> , School of Arts, BCU
Jan 2019 – Jul 2025	<b>Visiting Lecturer</b> , School of Arts, BCU: MA Contemporary Arts China (2019-23); BA Fine Arts (2023-25); and Hunan Normal University, Changsha, China: MA Fine Arts (2024/25)
Sep 2021 – Nov 2022	<b>Research Fellow</b> , Chair of Chinese Culture and Society, University of St Gallen, Switzerland
Jan 2020 – Jul 2020	<b>Research Assistant</b> (part-time), Troy House Art Foundation, London, UK
Jan 2019 – Jan 2020	<b>Research Assistant</b> for the PGR Studio (part-time), BCU
Jul 2017 – Nov 2018	<b>Curatorial Assistant</b> (part-time), <i>Thailand Biennale 2018-19</i> , Krabi, Thai Ministry of Culture and BCU, Thailand and UK

## Education

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Oct 2018 – Apr 2022	<b>PhD</b> funded by the AHRC/Midlands3Cities Doctoral Training Partnership Award, School of Arts, BCU <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Urban Imaginaries: Contemporary art and urban transformations in China since 2001 (expected publication with Routledge by 2026)</li></ul>
Sep 2017 – Sep 2018	<b>MA</b> Contemporary Arts China, School of Arts, BCU (distinction)
Sep 2015 – Sep 2016	<b>MA</b> East Asian Studies (Chinese Studies), Leiden University, Netherlands
Sep 2012 – Jul 2015	<b>BA</b> Language, Culture and Society of Asia and Mediterranean Africa, Ca Foscari University of Venice, Italy (110 cum laude)

## Awards, external funding and scholarships

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(2023-26) **Leverhulme Trust**, Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellowship: £118,000  
(2024) **University of Bologna**, funding covering travelling to present at their workshop: £200  
(2022) **Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Science**, funding for conference: CHF 1,000  
(2020) **UCCL**, funding to conduct fieldwork in China: £2,000 (not used due to Covid-19)  
(2020) **University of Sydney**, merit-based scholarship to attend their workshop in Suzhou, China (online due to Covid-19)  
(2018-21) **AHRC**, Midlands3Cities AHRC Doctoral Training Partnership: £48,000  
(2017-18) **Birmingham City University** fee-waiver to attend the MA CAC: £3,000  
(2014) **Ca Foscari University of Venice**, merit-based scholarship to study one term at Jilin Huaqiao Waiguoyu Xueyuan, Changchun, China

**Languages:** Italian (native), English (fluent), Mandarin (C1), German (B2)

## Publications

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- **Monographs**

(exp 2026) *China Dreaming: contemporary visual arts and the city since 2001*, Routledge.  
(submitted), *The City as Art: Living aesthetics in contemporary Chinese southwestern cities*.

- **Journal articles and chapters**

(exp Feb 2026) 'Forest Chongqing: a photographic reportage by Yan Wang Preston', in Guo and Laughlin (eds.), *Reportage in the Chinese-Speaking World*, University of Michigan Press.  
(in press) 'Overlapping temporalities: square dance in China's southwestern region', in *Urban Co-Temporality: Historical and Theoretical approaches*, DeGruyter.  
(accepted) 'Visual narratives of the Belt and Road Initiative in Xinjiang', in Fletcher et al. (eds.), *Free to Work: creative practices and cultural labour across the arts*, Intellect.  
(2025) '[Living aesthetics in China: An Introduction](#)', *JCCA* 12:2-3, 159-174.  
(2024) '[Water calligraphy: a living aesthetics in China's south-western cities](#)', *JCCA* 11:1, 51-74.  
(2024) '[Artistic and Spatial Mobility in China's Urban Villages](#)', in García and Toivanen. (eds.), *Urban Mobilities in Literature and Art Activism*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 175-208.  
(2023) '[Erasure](#)', *Third Text*, 37:4, 487-507.  
(2023) '[Visual arts: imagining a shanzhai city in twenty-first century China](#)', *Visual Studies* 39:1-2, 60-72.  
(2023) 'Mobilità sociale ed artistica nei villaggi urbani in Cina', *Sinosfere* 18, [Sinosfere.com](#).  
(2020) '[The art of billboards in urbanized China](#)', *JCCA* 7:2-3, 275-300.  
(2019) '[Reverie through Ma Yansong's Shanshui City](#) to evoke and re-appropriate China's urban space', *Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art* 6:2-3, 393-413.  
(2019) 'Visual arts, representations and interventions in contemporary China: urbanized interface', *Journal of Visual Art Practice* [18:3](#), 282-284.

- **Edited journals**

(2025) '[\(Extra\)ordinary living in modern and contemporary China](#)', *JCCA* 12.2&3.

- **Exhibition catalogue contributions**

(2019) *Catalogue of Thailand Biennale*, Bangkok: OCAC, Ministry of Culture.  
(2018) *Thailand Biennale Short Guide*, Bangkok: OCAC, Ministry of Culture.

## Memberships and qualifications

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Advance HE Fellow (Nov 2025)	Centre for Contemporary Visual Arts Asia
British Association of Chinese Studies	Everyday Aesthetics Network
Italian Association of Chinese Studies	Urban Fringes

**PhD supervision:** Co-supervisor to Rucheng Yang, 'City Walk: The Driver for Urban Micro-Regeneration in Contemporary China', School of Architecture, BCU

**Peer-reviewer** for the following journals: *Humanities and Social Sciences*, *Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*, *Kervan*, *Visual Communication Quarterly*

## Selected conferences

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(2026) 'Everyday gestures, diasporic roots', ICA Conference, Prešov, 20-23 Jul.  
(2025) 'Lighting rivers and banks', BACS conference, University of Leicester, 3-5 Sep.  
(2024) 'Changsha Wenheyu', JEACS Conference, University of Central Lancashire, 26-28 Jun.  
(2023) '*Dishu*: Calligrafia nella Cina urbana contemporanea', XIX Convegno AISC, Sapienza University of Rome, 21-23 Sep.