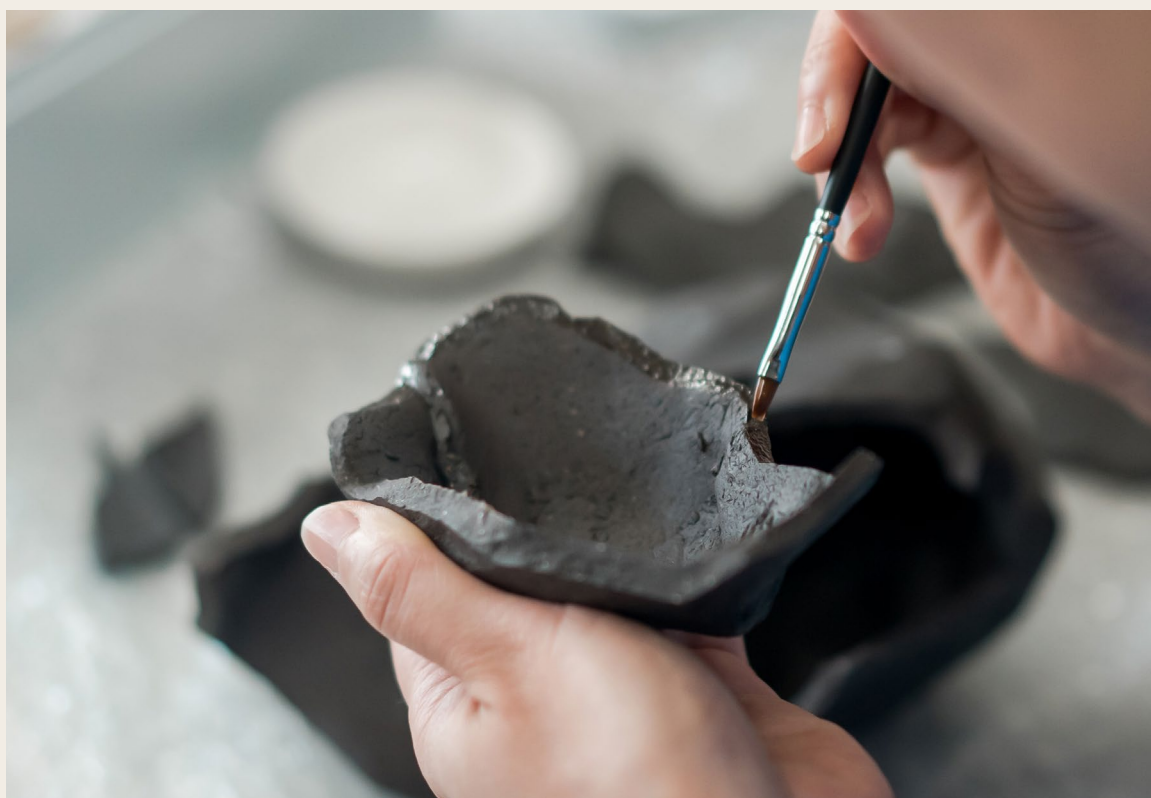


Yang Chi-Chuan 楊季涓





Editor's Note

Invited by Edouard Malingue Gallery in March 2019 to work on a project with Taiwanese artist Yang Chi-Chuan for the first time, I started to get to know her by regularly writing to her, and freely exchanging thoughts. I always enjoy getting to know artists through conversations; not only about their thoughts and ideas about art, but also about their understanding of life and of this world. Since 2019, I have been communicating with Chi-Chuan ever more closely, and exchanging words with her affords me rare and wonderful moments of emotional release, as the world has been changing drastically in these two turbulent years.

編者按

2019年3月，受馬凌畫廊邀請與台灣藝術家楊季涓合作項目，我們在沒有前期合作基礎下開始了信件往返，天馬行空地交換想法，作為了解及認識彼此的開始。我一直喜歡透過聊天來認識藝術家，不只是對創作的想法，更重要是他們對生活和世界的感知。從2019年開始，我與季涓的交流越來越緊密，而與她的文字往返也成了在這兩年的世界驟變下一個得以情抒的窗口。

August 4, 2019

Dear Freya

Meeting you in Hong Kong in March, I mentioned that I wanted to make plastic, sculpted objects that appear handcrafted and human. In May, I finally located a pottery workshop, and started playing around with ceramic. It has been a couple of months now, but I still cannot quite explain what is it that I have been making; generally speaking, these could be viewed as outlines or skeletons of some creatures (nothing as horrifying as from the Alien movies), or little hills and minerals. The inspiration could have been my trips to the archipelago of the Philippines. For a couple of years, every time I go vacationing there, I find inexplicably fabulous the locals' innocent attitude towards nature; the real, authentic natural landscape; and the fantastic scenes beyond and below water. Therefore, doing ceramics in a cleansed, undisturbed state inspired by that experience brings me to making creature-like, animalistic or organic shapes (I wanted to make corals, but then I got carried away). In hindsight, these objects that I have been making could easily be what most potters may craft, as they allow themselves to be guided by their hands and touches.

Although I also mentioned in March that I was not interested in continuing sound works or works that are narrative in nature, for the Guangzhou exhibition in June I collaborated with voice actors and made the work Dream. It made me realise that storytelling could be more than a murmuring, personal monologue. The wonderful genre of fable, for example, could be really magical and unreal, yet

三月份和你在香港碰面的時候，說到想要做一些造型物，比較手感、人味的東西。後來五月份，我終於找到一間陶藝工作室，就開始玩起陶土來了。一直到現在我做出來的東西都非常無法說明那些是什麼，但是基本上約略歸納一下，大概是一些像是生物外型或骨骼之類形體的東西（不是恐怖的異形那種），或者也可以說像是小山丘或是礦物之類。會這麼做大概是因為我這兩年來去菲律賓小島度假，被他們純樸面對自然的態度、還有真實的自然景觀、海面上下的景色震撼到難以說明，所以在放得很空的狀態下做陶土，就一直做出這些類生物的東西（其實一開始是想做珊瑚，但是後來就變形了）。只是我後來在想，這可能也是大部份玩陶的人很容易會去依照手感做出的造型物就是了。

三月雖然和你提到，我不太想繼續做和聲音、說故事有關的作品，但六月份廣州展覽中找了配音員合作作品《夢想》後，覺得好像說故事可以發展出另外一種不是自己喃喃自語的方式，尤其像寓言故事這樣很奇特的文體，可以變得很奇幻、不真實，但是事實上又有著某種現實，發展下去的



incorporating within a story some kind of reality, revealing rich potential and possibilities if fully developed. After participating in a group exhibition that involved forcefully marching into a village in Guangzhou, my ideas may have vaguely expanded a bit. It perhaps also has something to do with the scenes and memories from the Philippines, or with the arbitrarily sculpted creature-like potteries, as I in an undisclosed way try to fight a species of modernisation...or something.

Now, reading this, you may well be as baffled as I am. I suppose I will keep doing ceramic works intuitively for a while, since it is a rather long and tedious process anyway. It takes at least two to three weeks to finish a group of glazed or unglazed ceramics; both the process and progress go slower than expected. In the upcoming weeks I will be sourcing different materials – such as woven fabrics that I presently have in mind; or combining different raw materials – integrating them or sculpting them independently. I have to whine: I really hoped that I could make a composition that includes many small objects, but I am now stuck in the conundrum of how to and why. In any case, quantity matters, so I have to keep producing as it goes.

So much for talks about the technical and material aspects of things. Thematically, I hope the work could be about nature, and that's why I mentioned in the beginning of this letter a kind of human touch. It is just that, nature is colossal and abstract, therefore I did not know how to open this discussion with you any sooner...Eventually, the work should be a text or a fable that goes with sculpted objects. I have not started writing the story yet, but I hope it could be theatrical, and mostly dialogues between anthropomorphised objects. The story could be about comparing the natural world (and the creatures within?) with our own, especially since a lot has happened in Hong Kong and elsewhere around the globe. It could be calling for a different awareness amid the recent events, reconstructing metaphors that have to do with dichotomies, and returning to thinking about all species of lives, and their perceptions and feelings.

I previously invited you to write about life and experience from your perspective (possibly regarding Hong Kong). I thought it would definitely be an experience that is exterior to mine, so it can feed and inspire me much content-wise. Please kindly share with me your questions and ideas,

潛在可能性也許滿多的。或許在廣州這樣暴力介入一個農村的展覽方式之後，好像開啟了一點模糊的想法，其中似乎有一些關聯是在反應我在菲律賓小島上的人文景色，又或者一直到這幾個月那些很無意識的類生物小陶土，隱隱約約想要反擊一種現代化……還是什麼吧。

其實寫到這裡你應該跟我一樣茫然，但是我應該會再繼續以無意識的方式再捏一批陶，畢竟素燒釉燒下來，整體時程是以兩三週計算，工程算是冗長，熟悉度還有進度比原本預期的要緩慢。我接下來幾週會去尋找不同的媒材，舉例說目前想到的是像梭織類布料、或是其他原生材料做出不同媒合，可能是組建也可能各自為造型。說到這裡也要碎念一下，我其實很希望是很多個小東西構成的組件，但是現在還卡在如何組合、還有為什麼要組合的困境裡頭，但是無論如何，小東西的數量都要足夠，所以我只能先持續生產再看看了。

以上都是技術材料上的目前狀態。然後內容的想法上，我希望可以和「自然」有關，所以一開始會和你說到要有人味。只是自然很龐大也很抽象，所以我才會遲遲無法跟你討論什麼……但是應該會是以文本或寓言故事搭配造型物，故事雖然還沒有開始寫，但是希望是有劇場感的，擬人化之後的物的對話吧。內容上應該會是和自然界（的生物？）來暗喻 / 對比現在的生活處境，尤其最近香港發生這麼多事情，這幾年世界各地的波動也都很大，在這些事件之間喚起的不同意識，重組還有對立的隱喻之餘，也想要回到各種生命的感受上面去思考。

然後之前請你寫一些由你的角度來敘述生活（或許關於香港的）或是什麼樣的感受，我一方面覺得那會是在我以外的生命經驗，可以給我一些內容上的補充和幫助。有什麼問題或是想法請和我說，或是再等我有更多一些進展。這幾個月來總會有一種



and kindly be patient as I make progress and keep you posted. For months I have been torn between feeling that a breakthrough, a lucid moment of epiphany is within reach, and knowing that nothing has been right, that I am schizophrenic.

September 10, 2019

Dear Chi-Chuan

I started to enjoy writing to you from time to time, like going forward with or without a destination. I wrote a few more paragraphs the other day, as a tortoise and an owl have appeared in my life...

#The tortoise and the owl don't meet each other. There is no way for the former to go to the owl's home. He may well try, but because of his slow pace and the fact that he cannot leave seawater for too long, it is just not happening. The most substantial obstacle is, however, the fact that the owl belongs to the nocturnal world. The spatio-temporal separation is what really put a stop to the relationship. But why then, are they the protagonists of the story? Is the rendezvous happening in dreams, or on another dimension? It all depends on

快要想清楚的感覺，但是一轉頭又覺得一切都不對勁，精神分裂。

開始喜歡三不五時寫信給你，有目的沒目的地走。前幾天寫了幾篇，最近生活中突然出現了烏龜與貓頭鷹……

烏龜與貓頭鷹是不會相見的兩種生物。烏龜總是去不到貓頭鷹的處所，儘管他想嘗試，但由於行進速度太慢，加上無法離開海水太久，始終無緣一見。不過最大的障礙應該還是貓頭鷹屬於黑夜，時空的不切合讓這段關係注定無疾而終。但為何烏龜與貓頭鷹是故事的主角？他們的相遇是在夢裏，還是另一個次元？這端看你

your faith. In a world that is desynchronised with reality, they are twins.

#So I ask the fortune teller: what's left for free will, now that you have revealed it all? If my past that you have recounted is carved in stone, and my future that you have predicted is to unfold accordingly, is my existence merely a means to optimise the processes then? The fortune teller talks back: who babbles to you about free will? Who deems it true that a man can fight his fate? What's meant to happen, will happen...Those who come to me are simply impatient, and it is similar to hearing spoilers.

September 16, 2019

Dear Freya

I take great pleasure in reading your lines, which are real and tangible. I also feel prompted by your mails to respond with my own feelings and associations. I in fact often think about the series of short stories I have brought up previously. In a nutshell, it is a journey of self-healing, and of destruction-rebirth. There are no definitive answers,

的信仰。在那與現實不同步的世界裏，他們是雙胞胎。

我問算命的：你都講完了，那麼人還需要 free will 嗎？如果你看到我的過去是定論，你說的未來也會實現，我的存在只是為了極大化那些過程嗎？算命的回問我：是誰告訴你 free will？是誰讓你覺得人定勝天？該發生就會發生，來算只是因為人耐不住性子，這跟接不接受劇透其實差不多概念。

很喜歡看你寫的文字，都是可以真實感受到的事情或東西。而且看完你寫的都會很想回應一些自己的感覺或者聯想到的事。我其實也常在想我之前說了很多故事的短篇集系列，其實簡單說是一段既像是自我



Photo by Yang Chi-Chuan 攝影：楊季涓

but each time I finish composing a piece, reading a piece, or each time revisiting a piece after a while, it gives me uncanny chills. Then, the short stories are turned into artworks. In the first place, I was shy about hearing my own voice and stories, not knowing whether or not people may find me narcissistic or mad. Eventually I realised that it was a way for me to learn to accept myself, examine myself, and not back down when scrutinised by other gazes.

Speaking of fortune telling and free will: I always thought that I was a faithless person, but when I have intense and complex feelings, I'd go to the Xingtian Temple and pray. One time, going with a friend to the Temple, I purchased a fortune bracelet (and as my wish was later granted the bracelet actually fell apart, astonishing); I always believe that, besides hard work and struggles, there's more to life, including inexplicable fate and destiny. I cannot ever forget what somebody once said to me, that life has the best arrangement in store for me, that I will be able to experience something that can purge all the unhappiness, and eventually arrive at a most deserving fate. This is a way to look at it that I am content with, and is also what motivates me from within, for a long time. Come to think of it, I do have my own belief of some sort, or I do at least desire peeping into the future.

I shall respond to your turtle and owl story with a photo I took. It captures a moment of minor clarity as I work around with ceramics, grouping things together, forming a kind of sandpit from childhood memories. Or, it may resemble the great outdoors, utopian and strange, colourful, with pebbles and sand, just a bit bleak. It could be the land's end, or a starting point.

September 19, 2019

Dear Chi-Chuan

Do not worry about not replying immediately. Sometimes it takes me days to get an idea and start pushing the pen to reply to your letters.

Yesterday I listened again to the recordings you made at the Yulin Harbour. I was very fond of your tone of sincerity, therapeutic but also deeply sad. Qu Chang once named it "in-skull orgasm" (ASMR, or autonomous sensory meridian response) - what a perverse yet apt description! The ceramic world in your photo is seemingly akin to what that term described, a paradise that seems like heaven, a

療癒又像是毀滅重生的過程。即使沒什麼答案，可是每一次寫完、念完，再一段時間後回去看 / 聽，都有很奇妙的感覺。然後他們變成了作品，一開始害羞聽到自己的聲音和故事，不知道人家聽到會不會覺得我自膩呢喃、瘋了之類的，到後來才發現那是讓自己接受自己、學會如何看自己、不為其他眼光而畏縮的過程。

然後關於算命和 free will，其實我一直都以為自己是沒信仰的人，但是在心情複雜的時候都會去行天宮拜拜，有跟朋友去祈求過幸運手鍊（而且願望達成手鍊就斷了，非常驚奇的經驗）；也總是相信人生除了一定要努力之外也有無法說明的命定，甚至我總忘不了曾經有人要我相信人生會有最美好的安排，那是會突破所有不開心的經歷，最終抵達最值得自己擁有的安排。這是我非常喜歡的說法，也是長期以來深植在內心的小力量。想一想，原來自己還是有某種信仰，或對未來的窺探慾望吧。

烏龜和貓頭鷹我以一張照片回應，是我做陶土摸出一些些頭緒的小小段落，那像童年的沙坑，也像是一個又理想又奇怪的大自然，有色彩有石頭有沙，但是有點荒蕪；像世界的盡頭，但又可能是個開始。

不要擔心沒有立即回信，有時候我收到你的信也想等個幾天有靈感時再起筆。

我昨天再把榆林港的錄音檔拿出來聽，我很喜歡你誠懇口吻下帶有的療癒感卻極度悲傷，瞿暢說這叫「顱內高潮」，好變態的描述但很貼切！照片裏的陶土世界似乎有類似感覺，一個看似極樂的天堂，暖色生長開的世界卻毫無生氣。我最近在寫某



world built upon warm colours yet lifeless. I have been recently drafting an exhibition proposal, trying to see the uncanny side of the everyday from the perspective of Go games, to examine how human beings have lost the sensorial intuition to naturally communicate with the world and to connect.

October 2, 2019

Dear Freya

Finished reading your mail, I thought this "in-skull orgasm" description was utterly wonderful. Gosh! it is perverse indeed, but also quite appropriate. I am not sure whether it is my accent or tone; whenever I had to record my voice for an artwork, even when there's nothing sad about it, there had to be a mild melancholia in my voice. I cannot wrap my head around it. However, I do also think that it fits my feelings post-installation: a bit chilled, but also mildly warmed.

Regarding the exhibition proposal you mentioned, I reckon that it is in a way what I have in mind as I work with ceramics. I thought people should have been able to feel and to mould more intuitively and purely. An example could be those who'd often go climbing or hiking; they are close to the nature, and are able to tell which plants are edible as the ancients do, just like Shennong; they know what to do to treat the environment better, and how to save endangered animals...They are more perceptive, sympathetic and sensitive. This is why I started working with clay, a material and texture that is closer to nature, trying to get closer to my inner self, to shape life-like, organic forms, by the way of handcrafting, a seemingly primitive manner. Now I have gradually developed a kind of textured objects that look like modern time trash and wastes, and I'd build a scene by arranging and choreographing these objects. I am also interested in trying to integrate these and present an object whose form is uniformed and singular. Generally speaking, the textures, details and forms all have something to do with the ecological, human or non-human life. That's why I appreciated it very much when you talked about the uncanny side of the everyday, and how human beings have lost the sensorial intuition to naturally communicate with the world and to connect. What you have described is probably close to my wish to forge something with my own hands.

個展覽計劃，想從圍棋的世界來看日常性的毛骨悚然，人是如何失去與世界自然溝通、connect（連結）的感官本能。

那天看完你的信，實在覺得「顛內高潮」這個說法相當奇妙，天啊～就像你說的感覺好變態，但是又滿合適的。不知道是不是我語調的關係，在我錄音的作品裡頭，即使沒有要去說悲傷的事，最後都會有一股淡淡的哀愁，自己都不太明白。但同時也覺得，這樣也的確貼近我展覽裝置後的感覺——有點冷，但是又有一點點暖。

然後你說到展覽計畫，我覺得好像某種程度也是我在以陶土製作所想的事情，總覺得人應該有一種更純粹的感受或是造型能力，就像是習慣登山健行、親近自然的人，會像古代人一樣辨識什麼可以吃，像是神農食百草；怎麼對環境好、怎麼保護受困的動物 ... 等等，所謂更有知覺、同理心、敏感度。所以用陶土這樣更貼近自然本身的質地，以看似原始的手工，試著貼近自己的心，去做出看似類生命、有機的形狀。現在漸漸延伸出製作一些看似較現代的垃圾、廢棄物的材質物件，搭配建構一個景觀；或是也想要嘗試組合成為單一造型的物 ... 整個來說，其實這些東西裡頭的材質、細節和造型，都和一個自然生態、人或事物的生命有關吧。所以很喜歡你說到，「日常性的毛骨悚然，人是如何失去與世界自然溝通、connect（連結）的感官本能」，這樣的描述，可能也和我想要捏出一些東西有相似的部分吧。



Photo by Freya Chou 攝影：周安曼

January 6, 2020

Dear Chi-Chuan

I genuinely feel that this correspondence over recent months has aligned our frequencies closer to one another. I have been thinking after our last meeting about the focus and emphasis of the exhibition, but I am sure time will usher us to a common ground. I thought perhaps it is meaningful to turn our exchange into voices, but then I thought, will anybody be interested at all in our conversations? I scavenged these shells a couple of days ago at the beach in front of my place, when I thought these were merely washed, deformed stones. Some of the shells have merged with the minerals and turned into something alien. It's just like what you said: mutation as such renders life forms more interesting.

Things turn into stones, stones turn into sand seems to me very much like a drawing. Despite the colours and the shapes of the ceramic works, the vitality of the creatures is seemingly frozen. Unlike our correspondence, it appears to be venturing forth, making breakthroughs, deciding a kind of living condition under ordinary circumstances. I am not sure how single-sided is this interpretation. There is therefore a conflicting beauty, a certain contrast about it. I look forward to seeing the artwork's further development, which I imagine would culminate in paradoxical anxiety: plump, luscious yet deformed, gentle but also stinging. Back to the favoured term of in-skull orgasm once again: the moment of passion is to be found only in the brain, extremely private, directly and immediately channelled.

January 13, 2020

Dear Freya

What you have gathered by the sea indeed look like the things I have in mind as I carry out the ceramic works. For reasons that escape me, I feel the strange, eerie shapes very intensely. I was talking to Edouard Malingue Gallery's director Wenjing the other day about my work, and she asked me: what gave birth to the distance and difference between the private whispers and murmurs that I used to make, and the present rather macro, grand, surveying view of things? Also, what are the similarities? Come to think of it, I may say that although the forms or themes are apparently different, I have perhaps merely translated the

真的覺得我們這幾個月來的信件往返不知不覺將頻率拉近了，上次見面後我便開始思考展覽可以怎麼聚焦，但我想時間會把我們推向一個節點。我想過也許可以把我們的文字變成聲音，但又覺得會有人感興趣我們在聊什麼嗎？這些貝殼是我前天在家門前的沙灘撿的，當時只是覺得幾顆石頭被海水沖刷後有些畸形，有些貝類與石頭交融在一起，變成了其他外星生物。就像你說的，這些變異讓生命的形狀變得更有趣。

《東西變石頭，石頭變成沙》對我而言真的很像圖畫，不管顏色、陶瓷的形狀等，唯獨那些生物的生命力好像被凍結了。相對於我們的文字，其實是有種試圖衝破羈絆、在常規下找到一種生存條件，不知道這是否是我單方面的詮釋。因此對照作品看，有種衝突的美。我很期待這件作品後續的發展，我的想像是一種矛盾的不安，在看似甜美下帶著畸形，在柔性中保有尖銳。還是很喜歡「顱內高潮」的說法，激情的瞬間卻只存在腦內，極度私密又直接導入。

你海邊撿到的石頭的確很像我在做陶時候腦子裡想的那些東西，不知道怎麼的對那些奇形怪狀很有感覺。前兩天和馬凌畫廊總監文靜在討論作品，她問我：以前那樣私人的喃喃自語，和現在這作品相對比較宏觀的模樣之間的差異怎麼造成的，相似處又是什麼？仔細想想，其實突然覺得好像造型或內容上的差異看似很大，但事實上原本文字語言方式和個人的呢喃，是轉換到了造型上。尤其手捏的那些陶，就像



murmurs into the plastic and the sculptural. The ceramics that are handmade are very much like the old fragmented stories of mine; it is just that they are now in odd shapes, shrunken and scattered.

May 24, 2020

Dear Chi-Chuan

I went through the recordings, are there only objects and sounds in the Berlin exhibition? I cannot remember telling you that I enjoyed very much seeing the *Things turn into stones, stones turn into sand* at the Taipei Dangdai in January. The installation was quiet, and the marine animals in it appeared to be largely deformed. Beneath the tranquillity, however, there seemed to be a sharp discontent. It has become a starting point on which I envisage our Hong Kong exhibition. Receiving your mail, I quickly scanned the text document for the first run, and I liked that you have brought myths along in the script, beneath the massive piles of knowledge and information. Again, it returned me to the imagination of a contrast. But as I got to the recordings, the magical was suddenly all gone. I can only hope that my feedback is not too naive,

是之前那些碎片一樣的故事，只是轉成了奇怪的造型，微小的四散。

我聽完了，柏林的展覽現場只有物件以及聲音嗎？不知道我是否跟妳說過我很喜歡一月在台北當代看到《東西變石頭，石頭變成沙》，整個裝置很安靜，海洋生物看起來很畸形，但在安靜之下有種尖銳、不滿，那種反差是我開始想像我們香港展覽的一個點。收到妳這封信，我先打開了文字檔快速掃過，我喜歡在龐大單調的知識 / 資訊量下妳挾帶了神話，回到了我想像的反差。但當我打開聲音檔時，那種魔幻突然消失了。希望我的反饋不會太過直白，很想知道妳是如何構思聲音與物件的關係。

as I am very interested in knowing more about the ways in which you bridge sounds and objects.

The world is changing too fast indeed, sometimes human beings are just impossibly stupid. But I like the way you put it: let's use this absurdity and make a performance out of it!

May 25, 2020

Dear Freya

Reading your mail, I find the contrast you talked about very interesting. It encourages me to reflect constantly upon the decisions I have made for this work. Frankly, for a period of time after the editing process, I asked myself that question too: whether a Discovery channel-like scenario is appropriate or not for this work.

I was later reminded that, as I was composing the script for the work at an early stage, I realised that, on the one hand, many of the movies I find compelling in recent years are sci-fi. Although many of them seemed unreal, excessively romantic or overwhelmingly utopian, at a time

這個世界的確變化太快，人類有時蠢到不能理解，但我喜歡妳說的——就用荒謬來表演些什麼吧！

收到你的信之後，覺得你說到的反差很有意思，也讓我不斷回想這件作品過程的每一步決定。坦白說這個聲音剪輯完後有一段時間，我也曾經問過自己這 Discovery 般的情境是不是合適。

我後來想起來，這件聲音的書寫前期，一方面，我正巧發現自己這幾年看完很有感受的電影都是科幻電影，而這些電影即使在觀看過程覺得不可能是真實，可能過於浪漫、過度烏托邦，但是卻在這些既混亂



like now, chaotic yet rationalised, the movies always managed to blow me away good, with the messages they were trying to convey. On the other hand, many people asked me after seeing the Taipei Dangdai presentation whether I was an environmentalist (laugh) – seriously though, I think I am more interested in disciplines and topics like geology, critical theories of the spectacle, the formation of the world, and the problems it causes – so I suddenly felt the urge to learn and know more. That's why I went to the libraries before I departed, and brought some books with me to Berlin.

I deem the Discovery channel-like, pedagogic first half of *Plastonki* a means to prelude and to counterbalance the fable that is the second half of the work (this may be why I was pleased when you talked about contrast). To put it simply, the work progresses gradually from the rational to the affective. On a more personal level, it serves to actualise my love for sci-fi, and to deal with the experience of wanting knowledge.

The objects I show in Berlin are different from the ones shown at the Taipei Dangdai, which were biomorphic but inexplicable organisms. The Berlin works are newly made ceramic objects, closer to trash and wastes: bottles, plastic boxes, bottle caps, cigarette butts, pebbles of different sizes...There is only a small quantity of organic forms. Perhaps in response to the stone questions proposed in *Plastonki*, it includes some rock climbing bricks on the walls, also made of glazed ceramics. Additionally, I think there might be some dim flares in the exhibition, pertaining to primitive imaginations of fire. The objects and the narrative together give birth to a worship that deals with the theme of faith, or to an elaboration of an ignorant situation.

I don't know if I have made it any clearer...or any further (?) I may have to think it through more carefully, but I do reckon a detour to reformulate and reconsider is rather unique a journey.

May 25, 2020

Dear Chi-Chuan

Yes, there are definitely sci-fi elements in your work and it is probably what I meant by contrast as well. The pictorial-like objects are in fact a community of organisms from an alien time and space; time's not suddenly frozen, but flows into another

卻又有道理的狀況下，讓我總會倒抽一口氣的被影片要告訴我們的事重擊；另一方面，可能是因為台北當代的作品，很多人會問我是不是環保人士這個問題（笑），但其實要理智一些說，比較起來我好像對地質、景觀甚至是世界的形成和造成的問題有更大的興趣，所以突然覺得有必要補充一些知識，所以出發前去了圖書館，也買了書到柏林讀。

對我來說這個《Plastonki》的前段很Discovery的知識內容，是在鋪陳後段寓言故事的反差（這可能就是看你說到反差，我覺得很好的原因），簡單說也是從理性到感性的漸進。再私人一點的原因的話，就是滿足自己對科幻電影的喜愛還有對知識匱乏後的閱讀有感。

柏林展覽的作品物件，不同於台北當代的那些既像生命又無法說明的有機形體，是我在柏林新製作的一些陶土作品，這些陶製品一部分更接近垃圾和廢棄物，像是寶特瓶、塑膠盒、瓶蓋、煙蒂，大小不一的石塊等，有機形體僅是少部分；或者是呼應《Plastonki》裡頭對石頭的疑惑，所以牆面上會有一些陶土釉燒成的攀岩磚。目前還想像會在現場有一些微弱的火光，原始對火的想像之類的。物件元素和故事內容轉化出和信仰有關的崇拜，或是敘述一個無知的狀況。

實在不知道這樣說是不是越說越迷糊了……或是越說越遠（？）我可能還要再更仔細想一想，但是這樣重新想的過程我覺得滿特別的。

是的，作品裡面絕對有科幻元素，可能這也是我看到的反差，在狀似圖畫般的物件卻是一群外來時空的生物體，時間不是瞬間凍結，而是進入了一個不同的次元。知



dimension. Within such a framework, the pedagogic supplement is justified, and I definitely understand your wish and concern regarding clarity. It could be that, just like you said, imaginations are not enough before seeing the completed presentation, but ceramics that are increasingly deformed, mutated and industrialised – marvellous! My only concern is that: compared with videos, what's pure and challenging about sounds, is how to attract the audience with merely a voice. Sometimes, deliberately losing yourself is good, but when a clear narrative structure or a lesson is in place, I cannot be sure about the outcome.

Now that we are talking about sci-fi: have you ever thought that, as you work with ceramics, the shapes that you form are mediums through which you can communicate with extraterrestrial beings?

May 26, 2020

Dear Freya

I am the one that is most grateful, for the ongoing correspondence and discussion between us. I don't think fast enough, but composing letters is a good way for me to try to articulate my thoughts. I have also been frequently and happily surprised by your questions and thoughts. Ceramics as mediums through which I can communicate with extraterrestrial creatures – this is an excellent idea. I am at the moment having a potter's block, trying to come up with new possibilities, and your inquiry gives me a fresh perspective.

My point of departure may be sci-fi; may be to take as a premise alien creatures, unfathomable scientific researches, or even transcendental, trans-dimensional ideas, but the most important goal was indeed to communicate with some life forms. It could be extraterrestrial beings as you said, or anthropomorphised, inorganic, speechless characters from my stories. They are ephemeral and abstract, yet they are apparently related to the question of faith that occupies an important place in my conceptual framework.

The sounds and the environments of the Berlin exhibition so far exist only in my imagination of course. I only wish I'd be able to go back and work on installing the exhibition, and only then will we be able to reasonably adjust our concerns...

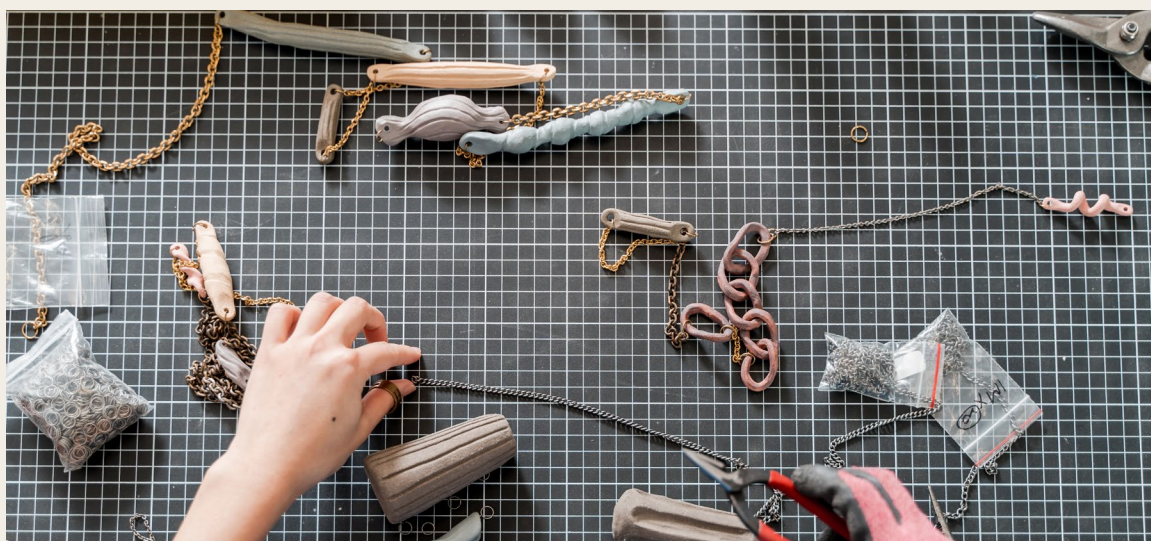
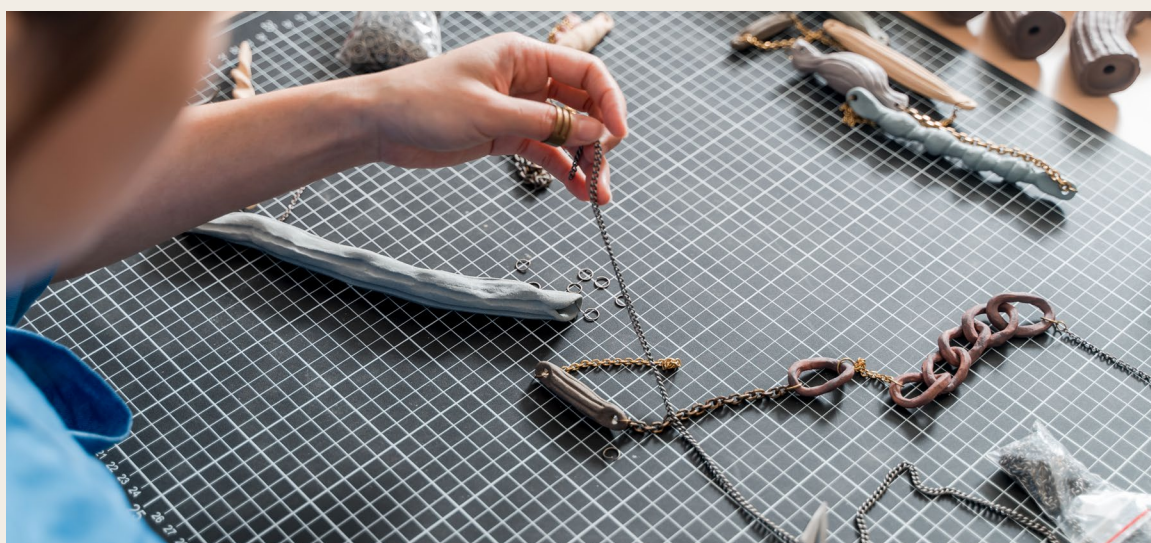
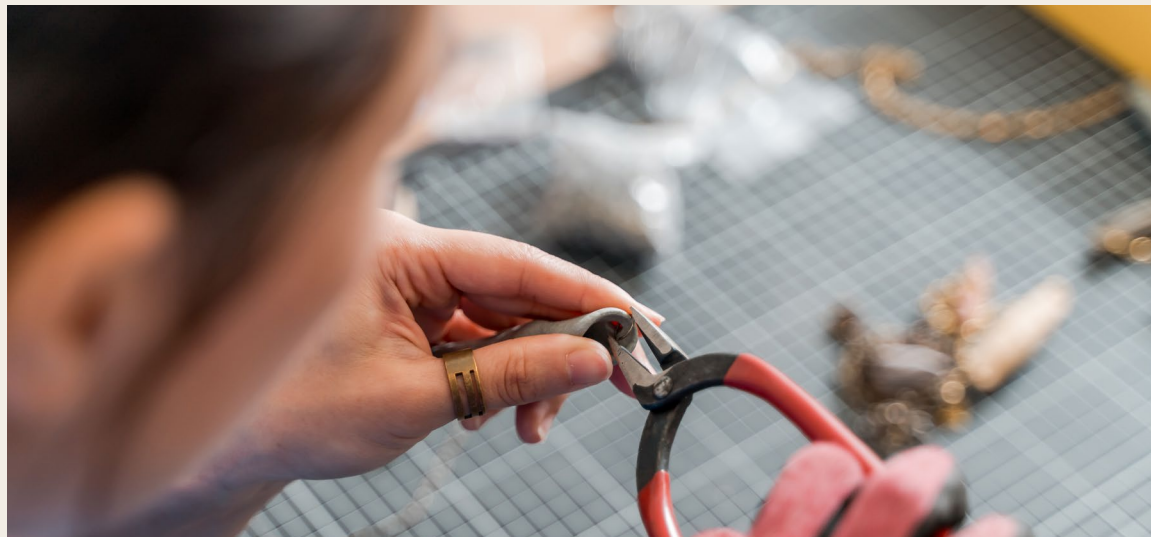
識部分的補充在這樣的脈絡下的確有它的道理，也明白妳希望再說清楚些的顧忌。可能誠如妳說，沒有看到完整呈現還是缺少了些想像，但越來越畸形或工業化的陶土，感覺非常好！我唯一的顧慮是聲音與錄像比較起來，其純粹也具挑戰的地方是如何只用聲音捕捉觀眾的注意力。有時候刻意的迷失是好事，但當有一個明確的故事軸或知識理解時，我自己也不是很確定效果會如何。

對了，既然我們聊到了科幻電影，妳在製陶的時候有無想過妳摸出的形體是妳與外星生物溝通的橋樑？

我才是最感激你願意這樣和我反覆通信討論，我思考不夠快速，不過透過這樣的信件我可以比較好去琢磨我自己，也透過你的提問和想法，讓我可以有很多驚喜。譬如說，你問我製陶的時候有沒有想過是一種和外星生物的溝通橋樑，我覺得這是一個很好的點子，尤其在現階段我也正好有些在捏陶的停滯期，還正在思考可以有什麼新的可能，你的提問讓我換了一個角度去想。

如果說我的起始點是從科幻電影，可能是外星生命，也可能是超越想像的科學研究做為基底，或是超越時空或次元的哲理，但的確最重要的目的，還是和某生命的溝通，可能如你所說是外星生物，又或者是我故事中擬人化的那些無生命和言語的角色，還無法具體，但是好像更貼近我整體想法裡關於信仰這件事情。

至於柏林展出的聲音和現場，都還是只存在在我的想像裡，只希望可以順利回去好好佈展，到時候就知道該怎麼調整我們的擔憂了……



July 28, 2020

Dear Chi-Chuan

How's life in Berlin? My quarantine is finally coming to an end; carefully calculated and curated, 14 days have passed. Life goes on in one way or another, and there is never a perfectly ideal distance between us and the measurement of time. It's very nice here at Yuhsin's place in the Yangmei District: the cactuses in the yard are 10 years old, growing astonishingly with pride. I often visit them at dawn when it's cool, so that I can enjoy the weather and avoid meeting the neighbours. Yuhsin and my parents stocked a lot of food for me before I came back — deli food, dry food, snacks, juice, red and white wines. I am overwhelmed and deeply moved by family and friend's love, and by the Taiwanese cultural tradition of enough is never enough!

It's my second quarantine. I had to immediately move into a quarantine hotel the first run, when I went back to Hong Kong. The complicated border entry procedure that lasted for a whole day made me extremely tense and anxious, so much so that I even thought about giving up my Hong Kong residency and just move back to Taiwan. The second run is better this time; I know the drill now, and I am mentally and physically stronger, so it went by smoothly. The third wave of the pandemic is happening right now in Hong Kong. After the week in which I left, for days there have been increasing numbers of new covid positive cases. Our lives and emotions go up and down as cold numbers rise and fall. I am frustrated.

July's gone in another two days' time; half of 2020's gone. We try to lie about how everything's fine, by building logical rhythms and regularities against a reality that is utterly incomprehensible. Birds' chirping at 5am in the morning, for example: the birds on Cheung Chau come regularly to the tall banyan by my window everyday at 5am and start singing. Do all the birds around the world do that? Birds in Taiwan — or birds in Yangmei to be precise — are civil and only chirp quietly, almost just like how Taiwanese speaks. Birds in Hong Kong are like local café owners: agile, loud and impatient! By 7am, the Taoyuan local authority would Line me and check me up. After a routine exchange with them I'd get up and meditate. By 10am, I'd receive SMS from the Ministry of Health and Welfare, asking me to check boxes, and I also have to Line them my body temperature records. I realised that, no matter how detailed or complicated is the process, how careful and cautious is the surveillance, the

柏林生活好嗎？不知不覺我的隔離期也到了尾聲，14天在嚴謹的計算和安排下也這樣過去了。有時忙也是這樣過，閒也是這樣過，我們對時間的度量永遠沒有一個安心舒適的距離。語心 楊梅家很舒服，院子有10年養成的仙人掌，他們驚人地以各自姿態生存著，我喜歡傍晚天涼些時出來看看他們，一來納涼，二來不怕鄰居側眼。語心和我爸媽在我回國前儲存了很多食物，熟食、乾糧、零嘴、果汁、紅白酒都有，我滿受家人朋友的愛以及台灣人深怕吃不飽的文化情誼，很是感動！

這是我第二次隔離了，上次回香港時因為第一天被迫住進隔離旅館，加上整天通關入關的繁瑣程序，搞得我情緒緊繃焦慮不堪，甚至動念放棄香港身份索性搬回台灣。這次回來，可能是預先有了準備，身體精神上都強壯些，日子過得挺平順。香港最近有了第三波疫情，在我離開的那週後，連續幾日感染人數增加。我們的生活情感曲線隨著冷感數字的起伏，上上下下，我覺得有些厭煩了！

七月再兩天就過去，今年一半就這樣結束，我們嘗試在無法理解的現實中建立符合邏輯的規律以謊騙生活的正常。如，每日清晨5點的鳥鳴——長洲島上的鳥也是5點就來我家窗邊的大榕樹唱歌，全世界的鳥都這樣嗎？台灣的鳥，或精確點說是楊梅的鳥，比較含蓄，叫聲很小，跟台灣人說話一樣，比較輕柔。香港的鳥像茶餐廳的老闆，快速、大聲、不耐煩！7點，桃園鄉公所的人會 Line 我問今天的身體狀況如何，機械式的回覆後，我起身打坐；10點整再收到衛福部的 SMS 要我勾選今天的健康選項，同時也發 Line 要我記錄每天的體溫。我發現就算這些詢問再繁瑣，盯梢再嚴謹，唯一可以仰賴的標準僅是人的誠實與否。原來這是台灣防疫成功的關鍵要



only dependable criterion is one's honesty. Turns out this is what guarantees Taiwan's triumph over covid!! For 14 days, I have been regularly taking my body temperatures, making records and reporting back to the government. They are trying to be nice and humane as well, supplementing their routine SMS with emojis.

I am not sure whether I look forward to lifting the lockdown or not. Of course, I miss my family and my cat, and I have to keep working no less! However, it seems that I am already used to and confined by the newly conceived routine. The ones quarantined are safe; the ones staying away from them are safe too. So ain't we all safe living like this?

Sometimes, faking a smile could be a good exercise and even a good sport, don't you agree?

I hope the exhibition goes well!

It's pouring here in Yangmei, and so it's finally cool and soothing!

¹ A friend of Freya.

素！！14天來我就這樣規律地量體溫、記錄、回報。政府部門也算有心，除了罐頭簡訊外也會送上 emoji，添加些人味。

我不知道我是否期待解封的那天，當然我想念家人和我的貓，以及必須打起精神工作！但，我好像也被這規律給制約了。隔離的人是安全的，與隔離的人保持隔離距離的人，也是安全的。如果繼續這樣的生活，大家不都安全了嗎？

有時候強顏歡笑是挺好的練習及運動，你不覺得嗎？

希望你展覽進行順利！

楊梅的天空正下著大雨，天涼爽了些！

¹ Freya 好友。



Yang Chi-Chuan

Born 1985 in Taipei, Taiwan

Pervading Yang Chi-Chuan's (b. 1985, Taiwan) work is a delicate, mnemonic quality engaging with our relations between people, places, objects and events. One may think of her works, that span drawings to installations, as a series of narratives about the relationships between things. Permeating her practice is a story-telling quality - warm, endearing, engaging - prompting the viewer to be transported into scenarios and be subtly privy to a wide range of questions regarding life, from family to politics, urban environments and various cultural fabrics.

Running throughout her work is the subject of domesticity, one that is close to individuals hearts, the foundational core of our early years. *Picturing the stories you have told me* (2018), for example, is a series of crayon drawings accompanied by a story-telling audio. The delineations, made of a prime medium used in classrooms as a child, evoke youth, a time of the past. The drawing's delicacy and size suggests fragments, subtle captures of memories, snippets of stories, here and there. Complemented by a vocal narration, there is a sense of immersion, as if the viewer is stepping into the intimacy of this world and welcomed, trusted. These various angles support the title while equally adding a layer of mystery, the 'you', the 'me', begging the questions of when, where - leaving these as ones for us to lean in and find out.

The everyday is equally manifested in *Nine Lines* (2018), a large-scale installation that portrays a jumble of electricity lines, entangled, leaning in on each other. As if uprooted from the streets, one bends, the other still carries a microphone, each linked the one to the other. On the one hand one thinks of our surroundings on the streets, that one passes everyday and takes for granted, but one also thinks of change, of departing eras, each street replaced by taller, more efficient, more organised modes of energy transport. Yang thus creates a vehicle for contemplating the shifts in our society, whether urban or societal. One could also say that each pole in *Nine Lines* has a bodily presence, anthropomorphic - standing, leaning, arms intertwined.

楊季涓

1985 年生於台灣台北

楊季涓作品中充斥一種與記憶相關的細膩特質，探索了我們與人、地點、物件及事件的諸多關係。從素描到裝置等不同媒介的作品，可被視作是一系列與事物聯繫有關的敘事。楊季涓藝術實踐的敘事既溫暖、親密又與切身體驗息息相關，鼓勵觀眾投入至不同的情境之中，以深邃的方式介入至有關生命、家庭、政治、都市環境及諸多文化纖維的問題之中去。

貫穿楊季涓創作的是私人經驗這一主題。此獨特主題對每個人來說都是重要的，也是我們人生早期發展的核心基礎。以《那些妳曾經說過的事》(2018) 為例：此作品是一系列配有敘事音頻的蠟筆畫。使用兒童教室常見材料創作的畫面讓人想起童年或是過往的時光。精細的小尺幅畫作也像是碎片、以深邃方式捕捉的記憶，或是故事的斷裂章節等。音頻敘事元素為此作品帶來一種沈浸感：觀眾就像是能夠走進私密記憶世界一般——記憶的主人邀請並信任每一位觀眾。作品的多個角度既支撐了作品主題，又為作品平添了一層神秘感：標題中的「你」或「我」都在促使觀眾設身處地去質詢敘事的時空語境。

《九條線》(2018) 也以同樣的方式展示了日常生活經驗。這是一件大型裝置作品，錯綜複雜的電線在其中交插、相依。像是從街道中拉出的電線桿或傾倒而立，或配有話筒，以線路與彼此相連接。觀眾以此開始考慮每日途經卻常忽視的街道環境，也以此開始考慮變遷、老年頭的景象，考慮被高效、更富組織性的能源傳輸方式替代的小街道。楊季涓以這樣的作品創造了思考都市結構變遷或社會性變遷的媒介。除此之外，《九條線》中的電線桿貌似帶有一種身體性存在狀態，像是人一樣站立、傾倚、手牽手。

Developing from this notion of immersion, Yang has also created various installation works that involve a setting, as if entering a delicate theatrical environment, a backdrop for a lengthier story. *Essays: A Platform* (2017), for example, presents multiple hours of narration in the context of a multi-storey raised floor, the entirety dimly lit by a delicate drop light. It is atmospheric, nearly spectral, as if engaging with beings and bygonees from the past. There is an architectural element, the use of pebble dash, that one finds typically in the outside of buildings. A drain is even incorporated, heightening the sense of having stepped into an exterior environment despite being indoors.

Ultimately, Yang creates a delicate practice across mediums that is about recounting, preserving, pasts, thoughts, persons, acting as an interpretative visual cataloguer or keeper of secrets. In a world of flux there is a stillness to her practice, one that invites you to step in and discover at your own pace what is or indeed was. Through capturing yet sharing these insights, Yang leaves a human legacy of insight, and empathetic discovery filled with warmth.

Yang's recent solo exhibitions include: 'Plastonki', Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany (2020); 'Have a Good Day', Taipei Artist Village, Taiwan (2017); 'Tick-Tock', Things That Can Happen, Hong Kong (2017); 'Essays During the Night', Juming Museum, Taipei, Taiwan (2017). She is the Finalist in 2018 Art Sanya Huayu Youth Award, China and 2017 Taipei Arts Award.

Acknowledgement

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Edouard Malingue Gallery
马凌画廊

楊季涓以沈浸性概念為基礎發展的多樣裝置作品也帶有強烈的舞台佈景感。觀眾就像是走進了精緻的舞台環境，其中充斥著悠長敘事的不同情節。《短篇集：石子台》(2017) 就是如此：這作品在劃分為多個層級的昏暗空間內呈現了長達數個小時的敘事。此作品是氛圍式的，幾乎帶有一種魂靈氣氛，觀眾似乎可以在這裡與過往的人和事展開溝通。《短篇集：石子台》的建築性元素——抵石子——一般出現於室外環境中；其中下水道的元素也強調了裝置的室外環境屬性。

作為詮釋性視覺記錄者或秘密守護者，楊季涓創作的細膩跨媒介藝術實踐與回溯、保存、過去、思想、人物有關。她在紛亂的世界中創造靜止，邀請你進入並以自己的步調發掘事實的真相。通過捕捉、分享其觀察，楊季涓創造了一種富有人性光輝的洞察性價值，以及一種異常溫暖的共情發現。

楊季涓近期的個展包括：「Plastonki」, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 柏林, 德國 (2020)；「短篇集：風和日麗」, 台北國際藝術村, 台北, 台灣 (2017)；「Tick-Tock」, 咩事藝術空間, 香港 (2017)；「短篇集：從夜晚 10 點到清晨 5 點」, 朱銘美術館, 台北, 台灣 (2017) 等。她曾入圍 2018 年華宇青年獎, 2017 年台北美術獎。

致謝

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