

|Lai Chih-Sheng| 賴志盛|

VON BREITENBURG
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INTRODUCTION

Lai Chih-Sheng (b. 1971, Taiwan) carries out delicate spatial interventions—tightened wires, drops-gathering apertures or wall-breaking branches—pursuing a practice that deals with tension, the everyday and the personal across multiple mediums, in particularly installation and sculpture. There is a playful minimalist tendency in the way he observes detail and creates relationships between different parts of a given space, engaging the viewer’s sense of body and presence. As a member of the conceptual art collective Nation Oxygen in the 1990s, Lai in the early stage of his career frequented abandoned buildings and architectural ruins on the outskirts of Taipei, exhibiting artworks that concerned the idea of invalid labour. Deeply site-specific, his art is marked by an environmental affinity, a strong expansiveness, and a gentle, poetic quality that is in direct conversation with the audience’s curiosity.

Interested in self-reflexivity and how it applies to the tradition of conceptual art, Lai is engaged in a practice that is aware of its own ‘artificiality’ or absurdity. He consciously creates atypical realities within everyday circumstances that have a site-specific quality. In line with this consciousness of absurdity or atypicality, he explores minute perceptions. Lai Chih-Sheng also draws on his personal experience of working for 13 years as a professional bricklayer, using this as a foundation to comment on labour and consumption. As such, Lai strives to remove all vestiges of self-expression from his work, even going so far as transferring the responsibility for its completion onto his audience or the workers who install the exhibition.

Consider, for example, the solo presentation *temporary/present* at Taipei Dangdai 2022: reflecting upon operating models of art fairs around the globe, and upon continua suspended and distorted as impactful crises take place, Lai installs, dismantles, and changes artworks on an irregular and spontaneous basis for the duration of the Taipei Dangdai art fair. The exceptionally timed presentation explores the meaning of focused, singular statements at a time of confusion, and how a radicalised notion of temporariness can change life.

Drifting Sandbar (2018) presented at the 2nd Great Taipei Biennial of Contemporary Art makes use of a range of metallic cords stretch and string across the room, creating interventions in the

space that at once delicately fill it but also make its emptiness all the more palpable. A raised plank of the same glossy grey colour as the floor acts as the anchor for the strings and a portal for visitors to walk down and engage. This act of tracing space also appears, albeit in a different way, in the earlier work *Life-Size Drawing* (2012) presented at the Hayward Gallery, London in which single lines were drawn around the architecture of the space – delicate outlines, linear in form, but comparatively invisible to the naked eye. A drawing or painting action that relied heavily on labour, there is a pointing to futility while also honouring the textures of space.

Further interventions include *Border* (2013), recreated and presented at the Lyon Biennial in 2015 and Aichi Triennale in 2016, in which visitors edge along a narrow path suspended from the venue’s walls above a centerpiece of discarded materials left behind by exhibition installers. Taking to a stage in which one simultaneously observes and is observed, the mind is engaged as one is conscious of the generated waste but equally our bodies respond to the tight elevated walkway one has been granted by comparison to the below expanse of detritus. A sense of space and distortion is equally achieved in *Scene* (2015) in which the ceiling is lowered so it hovers right above visitors heads, as if entering a darkened yet luminous cave.

Ultimately, Lai Chih-Sheng prompts us to pay attention to our surroundings, to the nature of our bodily contributions, and to the peculiarities of space and the present. Through his skilful interventions and alterations, Lai points to the correlation between magnanimity and impact, demonstrating the weight and value of the sublime and minimal.

Lai Chih-Sheng lives and works in Taipei. He has held

介紹

賴志盛在空間或風景中進行細膩的干預性藝術實踐——繃緊的線索，收集水珠的小孔，或是破牆而出的樹木等。其創作以裝置及雕塑等多種媒介探索了張力、日常生活及個人經驗。賴志盛關注細節，常在特定空間的不同元素之間創造新關係，直接與觀眾的身體及存在感知相溝通，作品帶有一種輕鬆、富有玩樂意味的極少主義傾向。在1990年代，賴志盛是觀念藝術團體「國家氧」成員之一；他在事業早期於在台北周邊地區廢棄建築中展出的作品往往與看似無效的勞作實踐有關。其作品因此特定創作語境而帶有一系列顯著的特點：富有環境或空間親近性，帶有強烈拓展性，也帶有一種與觀眾好奇心直接對話的抒情細膩感。

賴志盛感興趣於自反性概念，以及這概念在觀念藝術傳統中的應用，他以此思考為基礎進行的創作往往對作品自身的「人造屬性」或荒誕屬性保有強烈意識。他有意識地創造帶有場域特定屬性的非典型日常現實。在關注荒誕或非典型現實之時，藝術家仔細探索微觀感知經驗。賴志盛在進行藝術創作時常引用其長達十三年的磚瓦匠職業經驗，以此為基礎探討勞作及消費主題。藝術家致力於在進行藝術實踐時去除自我表達的痕跡，甚至將表達的責任轉嫁於觀眾或布展技術人員身上。

以2022年於台北當代呈獻的個人項目「臨時」為例：賴志盛反思當前盛行的藝術博覽會形式邏輯，同時考慮因全球性突發事件而停滯或扭曲的時空間，在藝博會期間不定時呈現、拆除並更換展出作品，以探索單一旦專注的話語在紛亂當下的意義，以及激進的臨時性概念對生活造成的巨大影響。

在第二屆大台北藝術當代藝術雙年展展出的《浮洲》(2018)則在空間各處布滿了鋼絲線，以干預手段填滿了空間，卻又讓空間的空蕩屬性愈發顯著。如地面一般帶有亮灰色的平板錨定了多個鋼索，而觀眾也可在這高於展廳地面的位面上行走，與作品之間發生空間關係。曾展出於倫敦海沃美術館

的早期作品《原寸素描》(2012)則直接在建築空間上以單一線條「繪制」建築本身——精細地勾勒出建築輪廓的線性形式幾乎不是肉眼可見的。這種素描或繪畫行動仰仗於身體勞動，既指向了無用功的意義，也向建築的豐富材質致敬。

《邊境》(2013)曾參加2015年的里昂雙年展以及2016年的愛知三年展；觀眾必須沿著展覽空間牆面的狹長通路行走，而在展廳地面上展示的，則是一系列布展技術人員遺留在展覽中的廢棄材料。觀眾在此作品中陷入了觀察者及被觀察者的雙重身份，並因展場中的廢料、自身在高危梯階上的身體狀況，以及這兩種條件的反差對比而開展思考。空間感與扭曲感也在《這》(2015)中有所體現：作品將展覽空間的天花板拉低至觀者頭頂，因此觀者必須在一個昏暗卻又帶有奇異光芒的洞穴式空間中探索。

總的來說，賴志盛的作品促使我們關注周遭環境、關注我們做出的諸多努力，並促使我們在探索語境時關注空間及當下的獨特屬性。通過深邃而細密的干預性、轉變式藝術實踐，賴志盛指向了宏大意識與行為影響的對應關係，展現了深邃或極少之物的重量及價值。

Based on reflections on the museum’s mechanisms, curatorial practices, communities, and on-site participation, *Nikado*, guided by intuition, seeks to alter spatial relationships or create new spaces through movements that are as simple and light as possible.

This is at once a response to the museum’s gallery 201 and to *Outing*, elevating or collapsing aspects of this curatorial project and myself—and even extending back to a Nation Oxygen aesthetic judgement: it is about the anticipation of chance encounters and new games.

To put it simply, what moved me was seeing the suspended feet of the audience from the museum’s ceiling.

-Lai Chi-Sheng

《二階堂》基於場館機制、策劃、團體以及現場參與的思索，以儘量簡單輕巧的動作與感性的判斷，去改變空間的關係或創造出一個新空間。

這是對美術館展場201與川堂做一個同時性的回應，凸顯或凹陷關於這個策劃和我自己，甚至可回塑至國家氧式美學判斷：它是關於與偶遇及新遊戲的期待。

說白了，觸動我的是在美術館的天花板看到觀眾懸空的雙腳。

文／賴志盛

Withdrawal: Our Collective Existence
凹陷：我們的團體生活

Group Exhibition 群展

MoCA Taipei, Taiwan
台北當代藝術館，台灣

31.01 - 03.05.26

Nikaido
《二階堂》

Site specific, dimensions variable
現場製作，尺寸依現場而定



Installation view
展覽現場

Image courtesy of the artist
圖片由藝術家提供

Lai Chih-Sheng : Nod
賴志盛：點點頭

Solo Exhibition 個展

Project Fulfill Art Space, Taipei, Taiwan
就在藝術空間，台北，台灣

15.03 - 19.04.25

“Nodding” is often signifying approval, agreement, or greeting, but sometimes it can simply be a moment of zoning out...

In daily life, concentrating and distracted coexist. Just as there is always omission in meticulousness, an excessive pursuit of perfection often causes a defect. When the artist exerts all their effort to think more thoroughly, there are always small gaps that remain. In these moments of oversight, the artist captures the occasional gaps that emerge, from which allow a sudden flash of inspiration to appear.

The title “Nod” also carries this meaning. We nod to show approval or greet someone, but sometimes, we are just daydreaming or even dozing off. Art also situates in a similar position—most of the time, we are constantly “nodding”, agreeing to contexts, ideas, or norms. However, the moment of breaking free from routine and surpassing existing frameworks might come from that moment of sauntering—a brief escape from reality, unwittingly entering another state, perhaps even dazing. Consciousness drifts to another space or time, and the inspiration for creation often flashes in these drifting gaps.

Lai Chih-Sheng hopes his works resonate with this kind of state. The site-specific works in this exhibition originate from a random experience: Lai recently moved to countryside and noticed that when the internet signal was weak, thumbnail images in albums would display sharp, contrasting, and layered jagged color blocks, representing an unfinished visual state. He transformed this visual state into an element of his creation, reflecting on the lighting typically installed in contemporary exhibitions. The artist uses three different shades of gray paint on the empty wall to simulate the light and shadow. These lighting usually existed to enhance the artworks but have now become the main subject, like the imprint left on a screen after prolonged use, retaining a sense of an ongoing situation.

Moreover, the artist will present two other series of his paintings work. The first series originated during the pandemic. At that time, due to moving or quarantine, unfinished paintings were stored in semi-transparent zip-lock bags for protection. When viewed through the bag, the colors appeared thin, and the shapes and textures being enveloped, draw in people's attention to observe, making the part of “unfinished” become a different viewing experience. The other series involves Lai repeatedly painting on the canvas, preserving the texture of the paint, and deliberately leaving an unpainted area at the brink and the middle of the canvas as the final finishing touch. This creates a sense of eternal, responding to the continuity between creation and viewing.

- Project Fulfill Art Space

「點點頭」通常示意認可、贊同或問候，也可能只是打了個盹……。

日常中，專注與分心是並存的，就如縝密之中總有疏漏，過度的追求完善反而導向空乏。許多時候，最好的想法並非靠努力思考得來，而是某個當下突然浮現的靈光。在百密一疏中，藝術家捕捉到那偶然出現的縫隙。當然藝術並不是仰賴著這樣的偶然，只是在創作的過程，用盡全力試圖思慮的更加詳盡時，總是會有這樣的一絲間隙留下。

「點點頭」這個展名也帶有這層意涵。我們用點頭表示認可或打招呼，但有時候，這個動作只是出於放空，更甚是打起瞌睡。藝術的狀態也是如此——大部分時間，我們都在不斷「點頭」，認可既有的脈絡、觀念或形式。但真正打破慣性、超越既有框架的時刻，可能來自於那個「打瞌睡」的瞬間——短暫地脫離現實，不知不覺進入另一個狀態，甚至做了一個小夢。意識游離在別的空間或時間，而創作的靈光，往往就在這些游離的縫隙中閃現。





Installation view
展覽現場

Image courtesy of the artist
圖片由藝術家提供









Clearing
空地

Solo Exhibition 個展

TheCube Project Space, Taipei, Taiwan
立方計劃空間·台北·台灣

15.06 - 21.07.24

To work here, an empty space is the key, no scenery to distract, no clutter to see.

Especially in the administrative areas adjacent to the exhibition venue, where the atmosphere is dense and crowded, the only way out is probably to find a new site that maintains a sense of openness or appears more spacious.

I'm going to do some adjustment work, which includes real and unreal, empty and filled, tilted and horizontal. While making the physical and visual sense of the scene out of sync, the floor underfoot should also have a slight sense of expansion.

Lastly, I'd like to hang a small seascape.

- Lai Chih-Sheng

在這裏的工作，首先可能要創造出一片空地，讓自己看不到什麼風景。

特別在當我感受到相鄰於展場的行政區域，他（它）們極其密集與擁擠的狀態，我只能設想另一條出路去抵達某種新的現場，即是保持它的空曠感，或試著讓它顯得更為空曠。

接著我將在空間裡做一些調整的工作，它包含著真實與虛幻的，留空與填滿的，傾斜與水平的。一方面讓臨場的身體感與視覺不同步，另個方面要使腳下的地板產生些許擴延感。

最後，我想在這裡掛上一小幅海景。

文／賴志盛



Installation view
展覽現場

Image courtesy of the artist
圖片由藝術家提供



One year project – Outing
一年計劃「川堂」

Solo Exhibition 個展

Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei (MOCA), Taipei, Taiwan
台北當代藝術館，台北，台灣

27.01.24 - 05.01.25

The

