

**The Digital Prosthesis:
between Perception, Representation and Imagination**

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ABSTRACT

Through practice-based research, this thesis poses the following question: To what extent can an artist use the digital camera and its processing as a prosthesis for human vision and embodiment in order to produce artworks that propose a relationship to the object world that corresponds to the exploration of a singular vision? Can the moving image operate between perception, representation and imagination? Can the moving image engage its viewers in a manner similar to painting? What forms of installation can correspond to these research questions?

Triangulating a fine art practice in moving images with theoretical research into the philosophical analyses of perception, prosthesis, Flux-Image and the Matrixial Gaze, and with comparative studies of the practices of contemporary artists working with the moving image and varieties of installation, this thesis researches the relationship between the human subject, digital photographic prostheses and the external world with specific relation to time. Chapter One provides an analytical account of my work and exhibitions to explain the major questions I explore through practice. Chapter Two proposes a series of theoretical frameworks structured by the cultural and linguistic studies of prosthesis, a study of Paul Cézanne and the phenomenological concerns of being-in-the-world by Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Deleuzian notions of cinematic movement/memories/time, Christine Buci-Glucksmann's Flux-Image and Bracha Ettinger's the Matrixial Gaze and Metramorphosis. In Chapter Three, works and installation practices of three moving-image-based artists, Pipilotti Rist, Hilary Lloyd and Elizaeth Price, are introduced in order to explore modes of video installation. The thesis concludes with the presentation of the final exhibition *See the Seeing* (July 2015).

Digital prosthesis is not only a tool for generating archives and documentary effects. The thesis concludes that it also provides an alternative way of perceiving and imaging the world. The thesis examines the question of artworks' escaping from the conventional role of photo-mechanical image in representation and communication to see how moving-image artworks could generate an individual perception of the object, that is not an image of some thing, but a solicitation to viewers to stay with it. The works seeks to generate affection (in Deleuze's sense) while intervening in the flow of flux-image in the contemporary time.

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PREFACE

Van Gogh and Me

The vibrant oil paintings by the 19th Century Dutch artist, Vincent Willem van Gogh (1853-1890), are renowned worldwide. Yet his famous works are usually seen virtually, as mediated representations. In this section, I will use my own multiply-mediated visual experiences of encountering Van Gogh's paintings as a preface to open a space before presenting an analysis of my own work as part of my research-led doctoral studies and placing that practice in a methodological and comparative context.

I. The Fantasy Narrative

I would like to start with a cinematic experience that inspired me to become an artist. Incidentally, this was also my first encounter with Van Gogh's paintings. My earliest cinematic experience was a film called *Vincent and Me* (*Vincent et Moi* in French), a Canadian fantasy film made in 1990. This time-travelling allegory introduces cinematic technology as a way of overcoming the reality of space and time. My parents took me to a cinema in the centre of Kaohsiung city to see the film when I was eight. I remember very little, but the part of the plot that impressed me most was when the girl travelled through time to 19th century Arles, where she talked to Vincent van Gogh and painted with him. The girl painted in a similar manner to Van Gogh, and when they worked together, they drew black circles for the background of a famous old postman's portrait. I forget the details of how the girl got back to the 19th century, but since it was a fantasy film, there is no need to worry about such things. The reason I mention the story is not only because it was my first experience of watching a film in a cinema, but it was also the first time I came to know about an artist's artworks. It is also important because I learned about the process of making artworks through the representation of a director. Thus, my memory is of a cinematic method of encountering artworks experienced by those who were born in the transitional period between the proliferation of modern printed/analogue images and the advent of the digital moving image.

I 'saw' Van Gogh's 'paintings' in the film. Although I knew that the paintings in the film were stage props, they were still representations of Van Gogh's paintings. The

image of the film production expressed/mimicked the texture of Van Gogh's style, plenty of oil pigment accumulated on canvas with very strong colours; therefore, I had a very superficial impression of his painting style. It was not the result of an encounter with the actual paintings, but it was not a matter of a duplicate or representation alone. The memory was evoked by the fantasy plot of an artist and a follower's trans-time-space relationship. What I am trying to draw from it is that this was an experience that deeply impressed me and endowed me with knowledge of modern art via a cinematic pathway. As a result of this film, an eight-year-old Taiwanese girl who was born in 1982 came to recognise the attributes of Van Gogh's paintings and was able to acknowledge the passion in his artistic creations without having even seen the genuine oil paintings. It was after watching this film that I made up my mind to become an artist. However, when I look back at my childhood 'I', I feel a little bit embarrassed. I was so easily affected by these cinematic images that provided a close-up perspective of Van Gogh painting with rich, oily pigment. The speed of drawing the line, the circles and the passion of the art in the film truly attracted me. I was so moved by the movement of a brush stroke and the sense of the materials when I saw this moving image production that I am now able to recover this childhood encounter in order to begin an analysis of my own artistic practice at the intersection of seeing, mediated seeing, moving images created by a digital camera and objects with their own materiality.

II. 2D Representation of Artworks

I sometimes think that the images we carry inside us of the world outside become part of us, like an imaginary autobiographical film composed of our experience of encountering things from different perspectives or through different media. The situation is structured by different perspectives from perceiving the experience of encountering a thing. I argue that still/ moving images play a role as prostheses to help us to fill in the blanks of our missed/lost memories. Furthermore, in general situations, we increasingly encounter actual things with pre-packaged knowledge based on images in 2D media or online sources.

While I was writing this section, I found a short video clip of the Van Gogh film on YouTube, and 'Vincent' in the film questioned the girl about how she knew him so well in the future of 1990, she answered, 'I read about you in a book.' Her answer reminded me that my second experience of encountering Van Gogh's paintings was from the photographs in printed books. Books are a most convenient resource when

studying Art History in a non-European foreign country. Photographs of artists' works are widely used in 2D printed materials and teaching. Teachers can break the constraints of location and time with these photographically mediated materials to show students representations of artworks with the contents, pretty close colours, and attributes using PowerPoint or slides. However, a great deal is lost with mediated printed materials or slides. The scale of individual paintings is different, but when they are represented in slides or PowerPoint, they are misrepresented; they lose their true ratio in the real world. The only information about size is a number, which makes it hard to gauge the scale. Every slide is the same size, and photographs in printed books are compromised by the composition and editing of the book. The texture of oil paintings is also lost. While Van Gogh's paintings are more textured than those of 18th Century Neoclassicism, such as Jacques-Louis David, the infinite range of different textures of the originals is generalised and reduced when the paintings of these different genres are printed in a book; the reflection of the smooth paper somehow replaces the true uneven and unequal textures.

III. In a Crowded Exhibition Venue

The first time I truly encountered real Van Gogh's paintings was in 2009; however, the impact of other viewers crowding around prevented me from seeing the depth of these paintings. There was no chance to see them from a rational distance; in fact, I was only able to glimpse very small, partial areas of oil paintings through the huge expanse of visitors' backs. This is a common phenomenon of most special exhibitions of Western artists in Taiwan, especially masters like Van Gogh. I heard a complaint from two viewers sitting next to me, one of whom remarked that she could have seen clearer and complete images of Van Gogh's painting on the Internet., Her companion exclaimed, "I told you! It does not make sense to see the genuine paintings!" I occasionally watch a programme about Van Gogh on YouTube, in which an historian analysed Van Gogh's space and revealed his exceptional organisation of space which I had not noticed from the exhibition.

IV. Art Project – Google Cultural Institute

Google has created an art project that enables users to move in very close to examine many famous paintings of Western art history, which have been filmed in a super high resolution. On-line visitors are able to choose a museum and click on a work to view the textures and traces on the painting. This project is obviously based on so-called

photographic documents, and although it can bring out the very subtle details of paintings, the images are still just images of the physical works, which are preserved in virtual on-line museums. This is indeed an ambiguous situation with something being gained and lost at the same time. A visitor cannot normally see a panorama of a famous painting in a physical museum with a rational and complete vision, such as seeing Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* in the Musée du Louvre, while online viewers are able to experience an uninterrupted and close-up view through the digital image, they cannot feel the materiality of the true object/paintings.

V. Mediated Memory

The experience of really seeing Van Gogh's painting at a rational distance and with a comfortable view occurred during my visit to the Kröller-Müller Museum in 2012. Since I am studying for a PhD in the UK, it is easier to visit Europe than it was from Taiwan. Luckily, there were no crowds of visitors, so I looked forward to being able to see and stare at the paintings as much as I liked without being disturbed. In fact, when I tried to focus on this hard-earned chance, every personal memory related to Van Gogh's painting suddenly emerged and totally tainted my vision. My childhood cinematic memory, the memory of reading about Van Gogh's paintings in books or on the Internet, and the experience of the Taipei exhibition occupied too much space in my brain. Since the pure perception of vision is difficult, an alternative way may be drop the idealisation of pure perception and try to create diverse angles to make more spaces that accumulate into the thickness of the archives of our interior vision.

In this sort of situation, the image functions as a kind of prosthesis, filling up or fixing the missing pieces of the knowledge of something. The image becomes a controller/occupier to dominate the position of the very first blank of a particular experience of something without a true physical encounter. The image does not replace/extend/supply a former experience; rather, it creates a virtual experience. We are not sure if the interior vision in our memory emanates from a true experience or from a document/representation. Perhaps a contemporary person's interior vision of the *Mona Lisa* is a combination of many sources, the first of which is the partial physical encounter through the gap between the many visitors, and since the gap would change as the visitors moved, the vision may be a series of 'moving' 'shaking' 'blurring' 'slicing' visions with 'murmuring', 'howling' 'annoying' voices and sounds from the crowd. Secondly, the experience of partially reading 2D prints in different books, magazines or journals would be affected by the physical conditions of different publications, the

level/type of quality of the printing, and the kind of paper. Thirdly, there is the partiality of a digital image on the internet together with some quick impressions from several movies or TV programmes.

VI. Conclusion

Our contemporary memory or interior vision of a thing is entangled/interwoven by multiple mediated representations, including cinematic experiences, 2D representations and virtual resources. There are prostheses that mediate between the original objects and the viewers, but also give access to them. Most digital prostheses are widely used in our daily lives, especially in movies, art exhibitions in physical or online museums, and the process of making artwork. Examples of digital prostheses are digital cameras, projectors, even a cinema space, and virtual resources on the Internet. By adopting these digital prostheses, we can gain access to and circulate knowledge, promote the quality of vision, and widen the creativity of imagination; yet, we may also lose something on a perceptual, material and physical level.

My process of making artworks is based on these modes of multiple-mediated representation, which leads me to the main research question that I explore in my practice and the written thesis that accompanies it:

To what extent do I/can I use a digital camera and its processing as a prosthesis for the human vision and embodiment in order to produce artworks that propose a different relationship to the object world that corresponds with my exploration of a singular vision?

INTRODUCTION

To what extent do I/can I use a digital camera and its processing as a prosthesis for human vision and embodiment in order to produce artworks that propose a different relationship with the tangible world that corresponds with my exploration of a singular vision?

As indicated by the above research question, this study is both an investigation of the digital camera as a medium and in practice and an enquiry into the subjective experience of the world mediated by digital processes as extensions of embodied perception. Since I am both the artist-researcher and the subject/object of my own research, my art practice is necessarily self-reflexive without being narcissistic.

I. Photography: the Prosthesis and the Process

I have chosen the three words, perception, imagination and representation, to explore this question. These are the three constants of the ‘process’ of ‘Artworking’¹ when I use ‘digital prostheses’. They all interact with and are part of my subjectivity, my consciousness, and my embodiment. In terms of the body, I am interested in the communication between the eye and the brain, the movement from perception to cognition. These three states sometimes occur in order; I perceive, I imagine, I represent, but sometimes interweave simultaneously— I am perceiving, imagining and representing. I entitled my initial works during 2011-12 with gerundives: words with –ing endings: *Reading*, *Dropping* and *Dressing*. This not only articulates the structure of my process of making artworks, but it also implies cooperation between devices and my subjectivity. In other words, these nouns denote that this is my perspective based on working with digital prosthetic devices.

¹ ‘Artworking’ is a concept proposed by the painter Bracha Ettinger. I will explain the concept in later section. Bracha L. Ettinger, *Artworking 1985-1999* (Brussels: Palais des Beaux Arts and Gent : Ludion, 2000). For a fuller explanation of ‘artworking’ as the aesthetic extension of Freud’s concept of the economy of the psyche: dream-working, the work of mourning and working-through, see Griselda Pollock, ‘Introduction: Trauma and Artworking’, *After-Affects I After-Images; Trauma and Aesthetic Transformation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), pp. 1-33.

II. Perception

As a moving-image artist, I not only care about the works themselves, but I also consider ‘what happened before them’. Perception is always with us, although we sometimes forget its existence. Lao Tzu said,

We join spokes together in a wheel, but it is the centre hole that makes the wagon move; we shape clay into a pot, but it is the emptiness inside that holds whatever we want; we hammer wood for a house, but it is the inner space that makes it liveable; we work with being, but non-being is what we use.²

In an interview called ‘Still Speed’,³ Elizabeth Dugan tried to use the above words of Eastern philosopher, Lao Tzu, to begin interviewing the Vietnamese-American filmmaker and gender theorist, Trinh T. Minh-Ha, about her film, *The Fourth Dimension* (2001), which related to the issue of non-being and emptiness in the digital format of art creation. I would like to use part of Trinh’s answer as the inspiration for this section of the research, ‘Paradoxically, being is not being, and non-being is not a negation of being. The spokes’ use for the cart is there, where they are not’.⁴

Reverting to my practice, perception is an important component of my artworks. I depend on it to feel and experience the world I see and live with every day. The perpetual happenings before artworks may appear to be absent from the works, but they are essential elements of art creation. From my perspective, if my artwork and its processing were a book, ‘perception’ could be viewed as a couple of gaps that connect or separate the pages. The gaps are hiding among the pages and they only appear when the book is being read. For human beings, perception is a blank path that simultaneously connects and separates the body and the world. It enables us to receive information, colours, sounds, textures; in fact, everything that constitutes the world, from the external to the interior. With perception, my subjectivity has its own location in the world and it is also a way to distinguish me as an individual.

While I am concerned with perception, this does not mean that I am capable of studying everything I perceive without selection. I am not interested in the general perception theory; here, perception is more focused on human vision, especially the limits of vision, such as short sightedness, which is one the motivations for this research. Perception is so obvious, yet it is also invisible and private. For example,

² Barry Sandywell, *Dictionary of Visual Discourse: A Dialectical Lexicon of Terms* (Surrey, UK, England: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 436

³ Trinh T. Minh-ha, *The Digital Film Event* (New York: Routledge, 2005) pp. 3

⁴ Trinh T. *The Digital Film Event*, p. 3

when I am seeing, looking, watching, gazing, staring, or even with a quick glance, I can directly see someone who passes me on the street, but no-one else knows how much detail I absorbed. Normally, we only can sense the representation of someone's perception, such as seeing sketches, paintings, photos and videos of someone's vision/idea/imagination; hearing songs that indicate a mood, a story, an expression by a musician/composer's representation. It is difficult to trace the process of people's reception of outside information into their brain/mind and how they reassign their perception into art creations. Perhaps some mimesis from 3D or optical technology can produce something experimental, but it is not the original vision from the eyes. Seeing is a process of transferring images from the public to the private and artwork is the process of relaying it back to the public in a kind of visual loop.

III. Imagination

Imagination plays two roles in my practice; one is from my side, and the other is unknown audiences who come to see my exhibition. On my side, imagination is incited/inspired by my perception. When I pay attention to something, I not only perceive it, but my imagination is also spontaneously woven around it. Imagination is not continuous; it is more like ripples in a pond that keep widening, but can be interrupted suddenly. Imagination is similar to drawing a sketch, planning a project, or assembling a fantasy in the mind; it is a process of creating a daydream that does not require any kind of response.

IV. Representation

Representation here does not involve the act of totally loyally representing what I perceive; neither is it an imitation. It is a cycle of deconstruction/reconstruction that depends on how and what I perceive of the world. What I mean by representation is the process of transferring elements of private vision into public; in other words, it is the 'Artworking' process of selection. While editing may be considered to be the most obvious part of representation in practice, it needs to be said that representation is happening at every moment in the process. So, what is the least obvious part? Perhaps it is the link with my imagination, the brain activity. What is the concept of representation in my work? Could it be related to buried memories, brought to life with new stimulate, my self-identity and the function of my camera, or more? In the process of representation, I do not try to show all I see myself or my subjectivity/personality. This would not work. What I show is a combination of what I see by using a camera/

computer/ projector; in other words, what I want people to see through the process of my work and the way my subjectivity works in the process. I assume that, when these constants function in my working process, they wield an influence that results in living with digital technology.

V. The Digital Camera

‘The digital camera’ here refers to a general category of a ‘camera with the ability to shoot and make resolutions digitally.’ Technological changes have enabled digital cameras to be attached to numerous devices; for example, any Mac laptop can contain a FaceTime HD camera, and most mobile devices (such as iPad, iPhone, Tablet, Personal Computer, etc.) are equipped with ‘a digital camera’. These kinds of digital cameras are merely accessories for mobile devices with only a hole in them for taking photographs, but an example of the very accurate digital cameras with a ‘body’ of devices that I mainly use for my artworks is the DSLR, ‘Digital Single Lens Reflex Camera’. I started to use the Canon 60D in 2011. This was my first DSLR. It is not really a highly professional digital video recorder, such as the Canon EOS 650D or Canon XF105. This type of DSLR is mainly used to produce still photographs and the video recorder is just an additional function, which, as previously mentioned, can be found in most mobile devices.

I prefer to use my current DSLR in most projects so that I can record digital videos with its Canon Compact-Macro Lens 50mm 1:25, but I sometimes change the lens to a Canon Zoom Lens EF-S 18-135mm 1:35-5.6 IS. Sometimes I utilise my iPad camera when I need to use two cameras at the same time. So, why did I not just choose a digital video recorder in the first place? Despite the difference in price, the more important reason was that I did not consider the recording function to be sufficiently efficient to produce good work.

Before 2011, I used a Cannon PowerShot S50 and then a Cannon PowerShot G10, which were more portable than digital cameras, but had fewer functions. I used them to take still pictures rather than producing work by direct digital video recording. I only made one work in that way, but it was more of an experimental document. From 2005 to 2010, I usually made works by arranging still photos with a similar method of animation. In fact, the former two digital cameras were not purchased specifically for making artworks; in other words, the concept of how to purchase/choose a digital camera could be viewed as part of the ‘Artworking’ process. My use of a digital camera to make work happened by accident. I cannot remember the exact date or year when I

held my personal digital camera and suddenly saw a new way to produce artworks, but I am certain that the only reason I began to make digital moving images was that the function of the digital camera helped my eyes and generated a kind of viewpoint with a quality that could not be found in paintings or other visual representations. That is to say, I was looking for something related to temporality that could act as a kind of blurred boundary between speed and sluggishness and I had tried other ways to embody this notion, such as printmaking. I had originally expected to work with the process of exposure, but I found it was too 'dense' for me, not because of the material; I was just incapable of expressing what I intended to show. Although the process involved time and light, everything that happened within it seemed to be eventually pressed and buried in the paper. I needed something that could move with time. What I wanted was something that could be sensed by the thickness of its time, process and movement with a very quiet and slow pace. The only way I can describe it is as a kind of slow motion of imagination; for example, when someone grabs a piece of hot pizza from the whole and exposes numerous sticky stringy threads between the piece and the rest of the pizza. So, I started to make a series of moving images, but not by recording the movement. I made the movement by linking together numerous still photos, all of which were slightly different, in a virtual timeline, similar to constructing an animation. The biggest difference between my current and former works is what I have just described. Because of the former's lack of recording quality (less than a still photograph), I did not consider it as a permanent way of directly recording; frankly, I only tried it to test the image quality. I perceive and think about digital technology in these terms.

VI. Processing (with a Digital Camera)

Many people believe that the process of making artwork is mysterious. It is not; it is just hard to describe because it has no exact starting and ending points. In my case, I only realise that I am in the process at the very moment I feel that I am being pulled into a dimension in which the original timeline stops; this is a transitive state between distraction and concentration. This dimension has its own time/space/mood. It is a place I can hide in, a place where I can rest, a place where I can let myself float; it is a temporary shelter that covers me. I do not mean that I lose consciousness and shift into a daydream or that I am stunned or moved. My mind is crystal clear and I am completely sober and calm. It is like a state of meditation. For example, it can happen when I see a word in a sentence, a piece of blurred background in a photo, or a sound from an event. These subtle fragments from the everyday/ordinary/quotidian never fail

to grab my attention and stimulate my imagination. These kinds of experiences form the basis of my practice.

When I decide to try to produce a work according to my perception as mentioned above, I am almost always accompanied by a digital device in the process. The first step involves observing what I have chosen. The material I choose is a sort of medium. Sometimes I do not care what it was originally; I only care about the particular little section that attracts me. I normally use my camera to 'have a look at' and 'examine' the medium. From extensive experience of using a (digital) camera, I am interested in the difference between seeing images through the digital camera and the naked eye; more precisely, although the naked eye facilitates some vision, it is limited and there are blind spots that cannot normally be sensed. We cannot maintain the 'blur effect' when our eyes focus on the blurred background in our vision or take an extremely close look at it. The naked eyes always focus on the outer world from a rational distance. The digital camera not only helps me to record the vision from my perspective, but I can also expand the field of vision with some functions, such as the specification of different lenses. In other words, the digital camera helps to break the boundary that is located between my perception and my imagination.

The material I choose becomes hardly recognisable when seen through the lens; it seems as if I have unintentionally set a puzzle to the unknown audience to guess what it is; in fact, I just want to avoid displaying too much irrelevant information about my chosen material. I may be concerned about the texture of a book's cover, the transparency of a glass, or the leak of light from a blind. In maintaining a close-up position with the objects, I am attempting to detach the shape, the cultural meaning, the function, and the hint from a particular object. I normally prefer to decide the field of the images within the camera and avoid too much transformation or added effects after they have been transferred onto my laptop, where I deal with the issues of sound and a moving image collage.

If I have no specific plan to face an interesting object, I usually shoot several photographs or videos with similar/different angles as a general 'interview' of the photographed object. In fact, I seldom have good results when I stick firmly to a pre-formed plan. Sometimes the ideas come from the practical operation/movement in the process of putting the camera together with the object. If I just waited to see without the action of the camera, I would be merely imagining a project without actual means of realising it. I need to let my body move in a sort of speed that involves handing the camera with one hand without shaking, arranging an extreme horizontal angle to shoot,

fighting with the tripod or replacing a normal tripod, etc. There is no particular agenda for this kind of repetitive practical work, but it involves a long battle with bodily techniques, not to find my place in the process of creating the artwork, but to invite the digital camera to join me. Sometimes, the object is immaterial; it is merely a platform on which to wait for the impending transportation to send me to another place.

VII. The Prosthesis

According to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, we can find the origin and definition of ‘prosthesis’: ‘Prosthesis (philol.) addition of a letter or syllable at the beginning of a word. XVI. — Late L. — Gr. prósthesis, f. prostithénai add, f. prósto; see THESIS.’⁵

The English word ‘prosthesis’ is derived from the Greek ‘πρσθεσι’, which means application or addition. It was first recorded in the field of poetry and grammar around 1553. After 1704, it was adopted in the area of medicine to refer to artificial tools that were designed to ameliorate weaknesses in the human body and replace incomplete body parts. Generally speaking, the word ‘prosthesis’ may generate a negative feeling in people because of its propensity to suggest an image of a wooden leg or metal hand. It evokes a strange sensation because it implies imperfection. However, according to the *Oxford Dictionaries*,⁶ ‘prosthesis’ has two meanings, the first of which is indeed an artificial body part, such as a limb, a heart, or a breast implant, while the second is in a linguistic context, namely, the addition of a letter or syllable at the beginning of a word, such as the Spanish ‘escuela’, which is derived from the Latin ‘scola’.

The western disability studies scholar, David T. Mitchell, argues that the term suggests bodies that are incomplete and lacking functions that need to be fixed. Therefore, determining what kind of body is normal or subnormal affects the concept of prosthesis. Classical humanism considers that a body has a complete and fixed essence, so that prosthesis is just a route for a human being to restore an incomplete body to its original corporeal wholeness. The purpose of this concept of prosthesis is to overcome differences between normal and abnormal bodies. However, the human body is not a complete and closed system; it needs to communicate with the outer world and a circuitous system that combines prosthesis and the human element could transfer outer

⁵ *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, s.v. ‘prosthesis’ . <<http://0-www.oxford.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t27.e12031>> (accessed 10 June 2012)

⁶ *Oxford Dictionaries*, s.v. ‘prosthesis’ <<http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/prosthesis?q=prosthesis>>(accessed 10 June 2012)

matter into interior memories, consciousness and spirit. In this thinking, a prosthesis is not only an added supplement, but also a factor that constitutes a body. In *Technics and Time*, the French philosopher, Bernard Stiegler considers that the essence of human beings is non-essence, which is why they need to improve and transfer their identity through prosthesis-techniques. For instance, language is a significant prosthesis in the history of human civilisation. When humans communicate in the world, they generate identities, consciousness and reorganisation through language, and within this process, individuals' experiences are not only accumulated, but transferred into the group experience of society, transferring past memories and knowledge into both the present and the future. In this way, culture is protected and enhanced throughout the ages and digital techniques and digital images (film) represent one of the most important prosthesis in contemporary times.⁷

VIII. Human Vision

Alison Rowley noted that the French phenomenologist and philosopher, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, chose a beautiful artist statement by Paul Cézanne as recorded by Joachim Gasquet to be the epigraph to *Eye and Mind* (1961, translated in 1964)⁸, 'What I am trying to convey to you is more mysterious; it is entwined in the very roots of being, in the impalpable source of sensations'.⁹ Human vision is an extremely complex issue, and I have no wish to enter into a physiological or neurological, or even a philosophical discussion about vision here. I am simply using the term in an everyday sense to link the human vision with embodiment in my practice. I depend on my vision, which is behind the digital camera, in the process of making works. The digital camera is an extension of the eye, a prosthesis for vision to help me to create works in which to show the viewer what I see with 'embodied vision' and 'the very notion of being-in-the-world.'

Vision can be seen to have played a significant role throughout history as a kind of medium that helps humans to create images that represent what they see or express what they want to communicate. The complicated aspect may be the intersection between "how the vision happens through the body" and "how the body is in the

⁷ Jiann-Guang Lin, Nature, Technicity and Modernity: "Originary Prosthesis" in Films of Healthy Realism, *Art Critique of Taiwan*, No.50 (2012), p. 14-21

⁸ Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', in James M. Edie (eds), William Cobb (trans), *The Primacy of Perception: and Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, the Philosophy of Art, History, and Politics*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), pp.159-90

⁹ Alison Rowley, *Helen Frankenthaler: Painting History, Writing Painting* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2007), pp. 47

world". Here I need to provide some key words: soul, body, vision, world, in order "from the inside to the outside". These words are intertwined in extremely delicate ways so that it is hard to talk about them separately. Generally, in simple terms, we can think of three relationships: (1) the soul lives in the body (2) the eyes are on the body and enable vision (3) the body is in the world. The body appears in all three relationships; thus, it can be viewed as an agent. Vision goes through the body and is 'imprinted' onto the soul or mind

In his major study, *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), Maurice Merleau-Ponty provided a map for understanding the way the human body plays a role as the subject of perception. In his later study, *Eye and Mind* (1961, translated in 1964), his very last writing, he used painting as a medium to analyse the embodiment of vision and the way the body sees the external world and looks back into itself. *Eye and Mind* refers to the whole question of how vision is embodied in the mind.

In terms of the relationship between the mind/soul and body, this is another complex issue in the long history of philosophy, but I will address it in a direct way from my experience of producing embodied artworks. I believe that the soul is increasingly enriched by accumulating numerous experiences and encounters in the external world. According to Merleau-Ponty, Descartes once claimed that ¹⁰ 'the soul is not merely in the body like a pilot in his ship; it is wholly intermingled with the body. The body, in turn, is wholly animated, and all its functions contribute to the perception'. The body's sensory system is a tool, extension, and representation of the soul, but the body is not just a sensitive cell. The perception of the body does not remain 'original' as the day we were born. We learn to improve the body from the experience of encountering the world and this improvement, in turn, influences the mind or the soul. I think that the body does not obey the soul; rather, they both acquire experience and cooperate with each other, and this assumption facilitates a further discussion of vision. The capability of seeing is one condition of being an observer. Before making artworks, an artist can be seen to be a hardworking observer. In *The Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (1992), Jonathan Crary maintains that 'the observer' is different from the passive spectator. A spectator is more like a viewer in a gallery or theatre. He explains that *observare* '...means "to conform to one's action, to comply with," as in observing rules, codes, regulations, and

¹⁰ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 'An Unpublished Text by Maurice Merleau-Ponty: A Prospectus of His Work', in James M. Edie (eds), William Cobb (trans), *The Primacy of Perception: and Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, the Philosophy of Art, History, and Politics*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), pp. 5

practices.’ Therefore, an observer is ‘..one who sees within a prescribed set of possibilities, one who is embedded in a system of conventions and limitations.’¹¹ I think that artists who work with perception and a digital camera are observers when they are in the process of making the artworks. ‘The prescribed set of possibilities’ could be seen as the function of the digital camera, which leads to the issue of ‘the digital prosthesis’. When reverting back to the topic, human vision, we can find that the artist’s perception of the body’s sensory system is that it is “a system of conventions and limitations”. In an essay on photographer, Uta Barth, Crary lists some data of perception related to her works, which is pointed out by the artist herself;

The more important data of perception, as disclosed in her images, are transitions, overlapping, indistinct limits, inconstancies, depositions, and vacancies. She singles out those conditions of vision which make perception non-identical with itself, which refuse the enduring conviction that the eye provides a seamless mirror image of whatever it confronts.¹²

Crary also mentioned that these conditions have more physiological determinations;

(1) the fact that the human eye has a blind spot; (2) that because of binocular display each individual eye sees a slightly different image; (3) that only a small area of the retina has the capability of optical clarity and that most of what we see at any given moments is indistinct, spatially uncertain, and chromatically vague; (4) that the luminous sensitivity of the eye produces afterimages that effectively prolong past perceptions into our experiences of the present;(5) that our visual field comes into being not through the instantaneous intake of a complete image but through a complex aggregate of eye movements that provisionally assemble that appearance of a unitary and fully in-focus world.¹³

This list is more about the optical external vision. Merleau-Ponty referred to a kind of interior vision, whereas this kind of vision is similar to “the image” of Bergson. In the introduction to *Matter and Memory*, Bergson says, ‘by “image” we mean a certain existence which is more than that which the idealist calls a representation, but less than that which the realist calls a thing—an existence placed half-way between the “thing” and the “representation”’,¹⁴ while according to Merleau-Ponty, ‘The enigma is that my body simultaneously sees and is seen. That which looks at all things can also look at itself and recognise, in what it sees, the "other side" of its power of looking.’¹⁵

¹¹ Jonathan Crary, *The Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1990), pp. 6

¹² Jonathan Crary, ‘The Singularity of The Everyday’ in Russell Ferguson, Holly Myers, and Uta Barth, *Uta Barth: The Long Now* (New York: Gregory R. Miller & Co.,2010) pp. 349

¹³ Crary, *Uta Barth*, p. 349

¹⁴ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Margaret and W. Scott Palmer, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1919), pp. 9

¹⁵ Merleau-Ponty, ‘*Eye and Mind*’, pp. 162

When looking out at the world, we do not forget to look back at ourselves as confirmation of where we are and what we are doing. Artworks are not only embodied mental proof but also traces for me to examine. I need to insert something between the body and vision, namely, a digital prosthesis. The body can be seen as an extension of the mind and a digital prosthesis can be seen as an extension of the body. More and more devices are dwelling in our body in a virtual way; thus, it is hard to avoid the fact that using an artistic thing is subject to a kind of regime. Although we appear to be constrained by various huge regimes and our own physical limitations, on the contrary, these blocks become indispensable to my creation.

IX. Producing Artworks

Since I am not just studying embodied vision, I need to produce an artwork, and I will explain the process of the film I intend to make. As a continuation of the section, ‘Processing (with the digital camera)’, further details of the production process will be provided in this section. I have no fixed procedure for creating artworks. Roughly speaking, the process can be divided into three parts: (1) Observing and shooting (2) Editing, and (3) Installing.

One aspect keeps haunting me in the process of filming and editing. I keep thinking about creating artworks that not only contain moving images, but also installations that make proprioception for the viewer; for example, I used a Marco lens to shoot my first year’s series. When I am shooting with a close-up scope of view, I am also imagining the moving images enlarged on a giant screen. In my imagination and practical installation, a large-scale screen would help to create a sense of being so close, yet so far away. The close-up moving images of unknown objects become a faraway landscape, which seems to belong to another planet. The proprioception is my relationship with the object world, which would now be different because of the way I have shown it.

X. Different Relationship to the Object World

Since I mainly choose everyday or common objects, they usually have their own particular function or position in the world and I just blur their temporal, superficial, functional or social attributes. I believe in letting objects be ‘objects’ as much as I possibly can. The texture, shape, light, and shadow may mislead viewers into thinking that my work has a minimalistic trend, which is not my intention. The reason I moderate the aspects I perceive to be irrelevant is that I hope viewers will spend time just feeling

the movement of ‘seeing’. My works cannot be seen as completed until they have been perfectly installed, and viewers are a key component to complete them. The embodied vision could temporarily inhabit the viewer or perhaps could become a tiny part of someone else’s bodily consciousness.

XI. Correspondences with My Exploration of a Singular Vision

The different relationship with the object world is marked by/given by/comes from something specific, namely, the way I experience the world, which is a kind of signature rather than just a general query about how we live in the object world.

Reverting to *Eye and Mind*, the essay that referred to what art (painting and sculpture) can tell us about the phenomenological situation of human beings in the world, I am interested in the phenomenological question: what relationship do I have with the object world as an embodied person? I am not speaking in general; rather, I am talking about the way I see the world and being in the world. My way of seeing is an expression of me. Philosophers study the way we experience objects in the world; as an artist, I want you (the viewer) to experience the world because of this embodied person that is me. When viewers go to see a show, it is not a general proprioception, but a singular one, which raises a question for me, which is also my second research question: **What is the relationship between my subjective vision and the electric eye? Which one does the viewer see in my exhibition?**

XII. The Optical Unconscious

The German philosopher and cultural critic, Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), suggested that the camera has a power, the optical unconscious, which reveals things we cannot see in *A Short History of Photography* (1931, trans.1972),

It is indeed a different nature that speaks to the camera from the one which addresses the eye; different above all in the sense that instead of a space worked through by a human consciousness there appears one which is affected unconsciously. It is possible, for example, however roughly, to describe the way somebody walks, but it is impossible to say anything about that fraction of a second when a person *starts to walk*. Photography with its various aids (lenses, enlargements) can reveal this moment. Photography makes aware for the first time the optical unconscious, just as psychoanalysis discloses the instinctual unconscious.¹⁶

¹⁶ Walter Benjamin, *A Short History of Photography*, trans. Stanley Mitchell, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) Location No.194, [Kindle version].

Phenomenologists like Merleau-Ponty contend that in vision the subjective and the objective cannot be separated. We belong to the world, we are the world, we see the world, and the world sees us. Some artistic experiences help us to understand this explanation. Benjamin observed that photography reveals something that the subject consciously cannot know, which is why he links it so closely with the surreal. Because the digital camera/prosthesis is not the subject, even though it is used by a human being, it can actually capture and arrange things in a non-human way, which obviously does not mean placing a camera and walking away to let it take pictures by itself.

XIII. Debates about Photography

Ever since photography was invented, there has been much debate about the relationship between a photographer, a camera, and the object to be photographed, and my research operates within this triangle. In *The Making of English Photography: Allegories*, Steve Edwards traces English photography and related critics with two parts: an industrial commercial form and an artistic form. The main debate in the 19th century was that the question if photography is a subjective vision, namely art, or a purely documentary one (just a machine). Edwards states: ‘By the 1860s, some writers would argue that photography belonged among the fine arts, while others insisted that it should properly be understood as an objective scientific practice untouched by human hands.’¹⁷ It indicates that there are two aspects of this complex debate, one of which is subjective vision since the copyright of photography belongs to the human behind the camera. On the other hand, people who may want to use a photo as evidence say that ‘the camera cannot lie’. ‘Pictures’ or ‘Documents’? Edwards also discusses the debate in Chapter 2 of *Photography: A Very Short Introduction*¹⁸. Although the debate of photography is not my subject, I still need to make a brief introduction of the important points. For my part, I aim to explore how what the digital camera and its processes introduce may be shown to have generated new possibilities in this relationship. I aim to explore the concept of prosthesis as a way to understand how the camera might work as a mediator of my relationship with the world and the viewer’s relationship with what I see and show. My research concerns the issue of digitally-mediated vision and the viewer’s experience of what I would like to make visible through the particular way I pay attention to the world and its objects via digital images. This involves a dialogue

¹⁷ Steve Edwards, *The Making of English Photography: Allegories*, (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania state University Press, 2006), pp. 11

¹⁸ Steve Edwards, *Photography: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

between subjectivity enhanced or extended by the machine and objectivity subjectivised by its gaze on the world.

XIV. How Does My Work Explore the Concept of Prosthesis?

In Section VII, I gave a general definition of prosthesis. So, what kind of prosthesis would I use during the process? What is the singular method I adopt during the process? Digital techniques play a different role in my artworks from that made explicit in behind-the-scenes features of DVD releases by animators Pixar and DreamWorks. The focus of these large visual-arts teams is the creation of dazzling and spectacular visual effects that are technically complicated to render, whereas my work, as well as that of others with a similar approach, emphasises the experience of using the tools and a special aesthetic language generated from the artist's singular experience of working with digital techniques. For example, Guang-Ming Yuan (1965–), who is one of pioneers in multimedia/video art in Taiwan has particularly emphasis on the concept/action of ‘scanning’ since his earlier career. He used the scanner to generate digital images to make works initially. Then he further created his own technique to present the action of ‘scanning’. He described how the operation of a particular digital ‘prosthesis’ held special meaning for him, ‘I deliberately aimed for a scan-like effect because to me, scanning was like "check". I was examining this memory from the past or perhaps something bizarre such as a dream.’¹⁹ In the recent years, Yuan has continued to adopt the concept of scanning but he has enlarged and transformed the action by ‘scanning’ his houses, urban/nature landscapes, political events and ruins over and over with digital cameras and dolly tracks. The scanning action is a way of examining, collecting and representing memories and meanings.

For an artist like me, what is called prosthesis is perhaps a sort of guiding light, shivering but shining in a blurred consciousness, or lighting an uncertain intuition. Working from within an unclear situation is always dangerous, but exciting. The prosthesis is like a boat suddenly spotted by someone who is about to drown. This is an appropriate metaphor for the state of an artist. The boat (prosthesis) exists, but it is not perfectly designed for particular people. The dying person should expend all his/her energy to approach the boat in order to survive, but survival is just a virtual concept

¹⁹ Wen-Yao Chen, ‘Beyond the Deception of a City Without Residents—A Critique of Yuan Goang-Ming’s Solo Exhibition “Human Disqualified”’ S-An Cultural Foundation, 2002, <http://www.sancf.org.tw/SANCF/arts_detail.php?artside=9&artsyear=2002> (accessed 4 April 2012) The original paragraph in Mandarin Chinese is, ‘掃描對我來說有點像是“check”，檢驗這個過去的記憶，或是檢驗一個夢，一個奇怪的東西。’

until the boat is secured. The process needs to be completed if the drowning person wants to overcome the stormy seas of life. In my imagination, this is quite like the action of using a machine (camera). The drowning and almost asphyxiated person needs to reach out to the boat, but is not certain if this action will result in pulling it closer for survival or pushing it further away, which would mean death. Perhaps the dying person would have been more skilful in using the boat if he/she had prior experience of such deep water.

‘Prosthesis’ implies multiple meanings, including supplement, addition and replacement, but I would like to argue that there is another meaning, since some people view a camera as a supplement for the human eye. Many creators in the visual arts consider techniques to be an extension of the body's physical senses because of their capacity to compensate for weaknesses in the artist's own senses. Digital cameras and camcorders are like mechanical versions of the human eye that can see further, closer and faster. However, this is just a perfect and positive precondition without considering other negative possibilities.

If the boat mentioned above was a kind of supplement or addition, there would be no risk of failure; the dying person might perhaps misuse the power to push the boat away. In fact, this is similar to using a camera. The camera is designed to augment the human's weakness but whether a camera is a supplement or not should be decided by the way in which people use it. The camera (prosthesis) needs to be activated by its user, who could successfully transfer a plan into practice. For example, some people regard the primary function of a camera as recording. A camera is used to capture an image as a way of retaining a memory, thus compensating for the brain's inability to accurately remember a large number of images. Photos are seen as marks, souvenirs, or records of our lives. However, if the skill of controlling the camera is substandard, the result of the recording will be a distorted memory, for instance, a picture taken by a shaking hand. The original reason for the recording will be lost and the original memory in the brain may even be supplanted or replaced by erroneous, unclear, blurred information. The prosthesis is not a fixed bridge for people to cross to another place without any effort; it is a living object or concept. Otherwise, there would not be many different kinds of photographs in the world taken by different people.

XV. What Were the Core Concerns of the Questions Explored with a Digital Prosthesis?

i. Eyesight:

Myopia was her fault, her lead, her imperceptible native veil. Strange: she could see that she could not see, but she could not see it clearly.²⁰

(Hélène Cixous, 2001)

When we open our eyes, the world spreads itself in front of us. The eyes connect to our cognition and we perceive the world with a silent posture. This is the normal relationship between the eyes and the outer world, but unfortunately, few people in the contemporary world have normal visual ability. With the exception of blind people, many may have the same problem as me; I have suffered from serious short-sightedness for approximately two decades. Everything has almost lost its clear boundary, its function, and its partial meaning. What I see with the naked eye is just a coloured block: words in books become black spots on white squares and machines in front of me become useless because I cannot find the buttons. Although human beings could perceive the world with other senses or rely on old habits, it cannot be denied that vision is the most significantly directive perception of our body. Fortunately, science has improved the situation, but without glasses, my vision of the world would be strongly blurred.

ii. The Naked Eye versus Eyes Adjusted with a Pair of Glasses

As mentioned above, although vision becomes acute with optical supplements, it cannot be restored to its original state. Human beings seem to have the desire to pursue higher levels of bodily perception. I really enjoy the experience of completing a prescription in an optician. Optometrists normally give customers who need new glasses a medical frame to measure their prescription. They put lenses in one by one to fill the frame and the world gradually becomes clearer with more layers of lenses. Every time I perceive this feeling, a question bothers me: what is the true vision? Is it the original vision or the one adjusted by science?

I can clearly see my finger with a close-up gesture, but I cannot do it when I wear a pair of glasses. I consider that this state of vision is the original reality for me with the naked eye. The difference of spatial depth in the two situations draws a line to separate

²⁰ Hélène Cixous, 'Savoir' in Jacques Derrida, *Veils*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), pp. 3

the naked eye from optically-adjusted eyes. I have been used to wearing a pair of glasses for many years, and I have made a strange discovery. Glasses improve my vision, but the adjustment is limited by distance. Because of the adjustment of the eyes, I have lost the ability to see closer things. I can see further, but I cannot see closer with glasses. If I wear a pair of glasses, my fingers become blurred at the same distance to my eyes.

The French writer, H el ene Cixous, used the concept of a veil to describe this kind of blurred vision;

She had been born with the veil in her eye. A severe myopia stretched its maddening magic between her and the world. She had been born with the veil in her soul. As the myopic people know, myopia has its shaky seat in judgment. It opens the reign of an eternal uncertainty that no prosthesis can dissipate.²¹

Eyesight problems not only change what we see, but also the way we approach the world; it can even be a way of being-in-the-world and it involves human personalities. Myopia does not only place a veil in front of my eyes but it also builds an invisible veil that separates me from other people (both with and without myopia); therefore, this veil gives me a different perspective of a unique field.

In a normal situation, glasses play a role as a supplement of vision, and they also stretch the eyes; more precisely, they seem to be another temporary organ on the human face that could perhaps be called a vision prosthesis. The weight of a pair of glasses and the unnatural frame gives me an uncomfortable feeling, but it is interesting that my body has adapted to this extra "organ". Somewhat unconsciously, my hand tries to adjust the position of the glasses, even when there are no glasses on my nose because I am wearing contact lenses. The habit had lived in my body for so long that the tool, the glasses, seems to be mixed with my sense of vision. However, although the glasses help me to see further, I find it hard to accept the fact that they weaken my ability to micro-see. I want to be close to objects. When I open my eyes every morning, I see many mountains. My face is close to my duvet and the closeness turns the soft curves of the duvet into a mountain ridge. This is my reality, my world. In a creative situation, a pair of glasses is no supplement for my eyesight, because what is considered a kind of weakness of my body could actually be a source of creativity. In this situation, glasses are not simply a tool for fixing a bodily fault, but they also become a destroyer of a unique perspective.

²¹ Cixous, *Veils*, p. 6

For me, neither the original nor the adjusted vision satisfies my enjoyment of seeing. A pair of glasses may purport to restore my “normal vision”, but it is not like normal vision with normal eyes. I often remove my glasses and go closer to objects so that I can enjoy the pleasure of seeing them. It is only in these moments that can I see the micro texture of objects, fibres of papers, smudges of used tissues, and the lustrous surface of an apple. Every page, drop, trace can be a space out of the world, but still belong to the world, and as an artist, I need to find a way to record my seeing and create a paradox.

Returning to some of my former works, it is interesting to note that I had become especially obsessed with the view out of windows. Because I wore glasses, I intentionally searched for views that could be seen through many layers of glass. Since I could not see clearly without glasses, I began to find a way of seeing more with them. The method of putting more layers of glass between the world and me brought me a sense of security. I could hide behind the glass windows and layers of lenses, including the lens of my glasses, the lens of my camera, and the eyes of a house, its windows. The layers formed an extraordinary space between the outer world and me. These three kinds of eyes overlapped and what I saw became more and more of a blur. The view out of the window seemed to be composed of colours because the shape, the boundary and the recognition of daily objects were all distorted, and the window became a kind of filter. Since making this work, I find that I am drawn to man-made objects rather than the natural world.

CHAPTER 1

Account of My Work

This section contains an account of my work in order of the date on which it was created, from Year 1 to Year 4. The work is also displayed in the same order in the **PhD Online dossier**²². However, before providing details of every work I made while studying for the PhD, I would like to explain the methodology of my creation.

I. Process of Making Works

There is no flow chart of the working process. My methodology cannot be divided into sharp blocks like steps. The stages are simultaneous, since I am perceiving, imagining and representing at the same time. Therefore, the order of the following sections is not the order of the process; it is simply for the purpose of making a record. The process has an ‘ing’-progressive tense; perceiving and imagining are what is happening in my brain, while representing is more about working with tools.

Perceiving, Imagining and Representing

For me, seeing is what lights the fuse to inspire me to create a work; however, seeing plays the role of a prelude in that sometimes a tiny spark appears and then nothing happens, so I would rather say that ‘perceiving’ is the catalyst for making works instead. This is because we sometimes see without perceiving. So, what does perceive mean? According to the *Cambridge Dictionaries online*, ‘perceive’ has a similar meaning to ‘see’, which is ‘to see something or someone or to notice something that is obvious.’²³ According to the *Oxford Dictionaries*, to perceive is to ‘become aware of (something) by the use of one of the senses, especially that of sight.’²⁴ This suggests that perceiving requires the senses to ‘open up a case.’ After sensing the world, our brain may or may not register it. We may not perceive something immediately we see it, but something

²² <http://www.huihsuanhsu.com/phd-dossier>

²³ *Cambridge Dictionaries online*, <<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/perceive>>, s.v. ‘perceive’.

²⁴ *Oxford Dictionaries*, <<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/perceive?searchDictCode=all>>, s.v. ‘perceive’.

may happen afterwards. Seeing is generally considered to be one of various sources of perceiving. It is the main source of my perception. When I perceive something, it means that my brain is moving and working. I begin to imagine how I can make a work. Imagining involves receptively rehearsing the shooting process and trying to conceive the result in my brain. This is an anxious and exciting time, although I try not to be too anxious. I normally begin a new project without hesitation. I might have several ongoing projects at the same time. I know something will happen when I begin to use my hands. Imagining does not stop when I am in the representing stage. Imagining is still moving when the work is done. Representing is what crosses the virtual and the actual. I can represent an image of a memory in my mind and I can also represent the image of the memory on a piece of paper. I would now like to talk about how an artist represents objects using digital techniques.

II. Techniques of Making Artworks

My works can be divided into two categories with two kinds of techniques. Basically I use two methods with different time-based productions to make ‘sources’ to build my works. Although I believe that they are not separate methods, they are different if a still photo is regarded as being different from a video.

I ‘connect’ videos and photos to build my works. One method involves moving videos and the other is based on still photos. I almost did not mix videos and photos in a work; rather, the gap between video (or photo) sections adds a cross dissolve effect, which interweaves two similar still or moving images, such as two videos or photographs shot at a similar angle.

I will address the time issue of the difference/sameness of videos and photographs in a later chapter, but here I refer to them as Method A and Method B.

i. Method A

Highlighted works made with Method A:

Reading
Dropping
Dressing (mute)
Settlement
Cup and Saucer
Blind 1 (mute)
Blind 2 (mute)
Blind 3
Blind 4 (mute)

Method A is more like a general cinema production. It involves directly shooting moving images with the recording function of a digital camera and then importing the video into a computer to process the post-production. I usually adopt the sounds from the environment where I make the work using this method and, although a portion of the time flow is cut, the movement of the photographed object remains. The movement seen in the video is a mixture of different movements. The artist's movement, the movement of the lens and the movement of the photographed object are original movements in a video source.

I bought a DSLR (digital single-lens reflex camera) before I moved to Leeds. I had never owned a higher resolution digital camera before. I had always made works with a common DC (digital camera) that had an average quality. My father had given me his old macro lens in case I might be interested in using it. I tried to use the function of recording with the macro lens when I borrowed the book of *Reading*. This was how I started to directly shoot videos and became obsessed with the intertwining movements in them. Multiple movements create a rhythm, an extended dimension, and represent my personal perspective.

I usually interweave videos together. Some of the works I have created using Method A have the characteristic of a moving image collage on a screen. Sometimes I split the screen with odd numbers of equal rectangles to create a composition, such as *Reading* with three rectangles, *Dropping* with five rectifications, *settled* with unequal rectangles, *Blind project* with rectangles that change positions. Two of the works I did not mention above are entitled *Dressing* and *Cup and Saucer*. They have a complete screen but their own way/meaning of collage. I will provide more details in their individual account sections.

ii. Method B

Highlighted works made with Method B:

Time-sculpturing project:

Rice Series (mute): *Rice* (mute), *Winter Rice* (mute)

Apple (mute)

Quinoa & Wheat

Method B is not new to me. I adopted it when I was a Master's student in Taiwan. I had a DC (digital camera) with a low recording quality, so I found another way to make/insert 'movement'. I 'stuck' numerous still photos together using effect: cross

dissolve as 'glue'. I then manipulated the degree of transparency of the cross dissolve to make the transition gradually change at a hardly recognisable speed.

I did not adopt this method in the Years 1 and 2, when I mainly worked with the movement of videos. When I finished the *Blind project*, I wanted to start a new one. The gap between the *Blind project* and the *Time-sculpturing project* was actually filled by a *Lighting project*. This was an uncompleted project that I had planned to produce for a proposal for a group exhibition entitled '*Leap Years*'. The project was made with videos but it made me re-think the concepts of seeing, time and light.

Although Method B is similar to the way in which animations are made, it is different in several aspects, for example, the production of animations involves many more still graphics than this method. Every frame requires more continuous details and stays for a very short time. Animation artists do not normally use cross dissolve when they want to make moving figures; they simply give the figures a reasonable speed to make the animation fluent without leaving gaps in the movement. They may use cross dissolve when they change scenes, whereas the cross dissolve effect plays a major role in method B. I am not seeking to make rational, clean, fluent and fast movements. I connect still photos in order and add a long cross dissolve effect between them with the aim of creating a concept of time outside the world in which I am living. The works belonging to method B are also meant to challenge our eyes, since they are from a world where there is no rational speed, accepted time mark, recognised aesthetic gesture, or categorised form of the appeal of art.

III. Account

i. First Year of the PhD: (September 2011–August 2012)

According to the work list, I made eight works in the first year, three of which will be highlighted in this section, namely, *Reading* (2011), *Drooping* (2011) and *Dressing* (2012). In fact, before making *Reading*, I had already made my first project, which I called *Blooming*. The subsequent order of my works is made/marked by a real timeline, and I believe that the PhD process is significantly related to the time section, which reflects the progress of the artist/researcher's condition and development. Although I made seven single channel moving image works in the first year, I would only like to highlight three of them, *Reading*, *Drooping* and *Dressing*, as mentioned above. However, although I will not highlight other works, I will still recount my experience of the process of making the other four works.

Blooming (1.1)²⁵

1.1 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Blooming*,
Video Still, 2011, Digital
Moving Image, Mute

The Background

This project was not finished and is not highlighted because it did not exactly correspond to the centre of my research interest/question; in fact, it could be considered to be a trajectory. Although the test was unsuccessful in terms of some digressions of my research direction and seemed to be a waste of time and practice, it was an essential process for an artist. With every failed practice, the camera, devices and objects seemed to teach me something I find hard to describe. Every time I am making a work, I can almost sense if it will be good or not long before I have finished it. This is an artist's intuition. Even though I sense that my work will not be good, I still need to experience, practice and encounter failure because it is a bridge that needs to be built to enable me to take the next step.

I began to make *Blooming* around October 2011. This was not a good time for me. I had no idea what I could make and I felt alienated in a foreign country. I kept finding excuses for my lack of energy and motivation and spent a great deal of time wandering around the streets of Leeds city or spending two hours in a supermarket just

²⁵ *Blooming* (2011) < <https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year1/october-2011-blooming> >

to buy a box of eggs. Every time I felt stuck, I found plenty of meaningless things to do, such as cleaning the floor again and again or washing my hair four times a day. People were always handing out flyers near the University, and whenever I finished wandering, I went back to the dorm room and felt even more anxious. I unconsciously crumpled these flyers up and with a sudden impulse, I grabbed my camera and started to take pictures of them. I had no clear purpose; just needed to find something that required physical energy to make my body move, make my brain focus, and then calm my mind. It was then that I realised that what I had thought to be useless wandering and cleaning were actually meaningful. These unsuccessful/useless practices actually activated me and defrosted my whole being when I had found myself to be stuck. It was like the warm-up process before doing a strenuous exercise. Since then, I have come to understand that making an unsuccessful work is simply a step toward making good work, and *Blooming* is that kind of work.

The Process

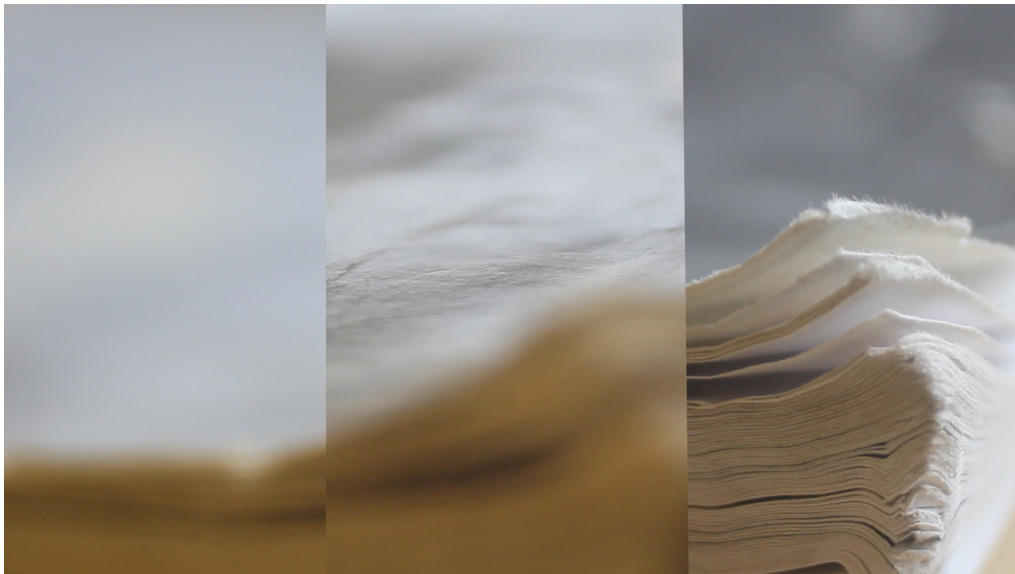
I imported these pictures into my computer and used Adobe Photoshop to transform them, one by one. I used the 'Finger Tool' function to blur the words and information on the flyers. Every picture was made slightly differently. The shape of the crumpled flyers was like the body of a flower. Then, I dragged the transformed pictures into a virtual timeline using software and joined them to form an animation, thus making a moving image, frame by frame. With the gradual change in the blurred pattern/words/contents, the function of the original flyers was gone. The pattern/words/contents became a gradually blurred, coloured, digitalised twisted mass in the moving image. I had no idea how to make an end for it. I knew the work was bad, but I still showed it to my former Primary Supervisor, Roger Palmer, who provided some critical and crucial comments about my works in progress. Roger Palmer shared his extensive experience of seeing videoed artworks and tried to guide me to do something more novel and challenging. He encouraged me to re-start and re-think the use of digital devices.

The Reflection

This particular moving image was just a visually animated moving image; it was not a related a way of thinking/seeing singularly and photographically. The graphics were animated using Adobe Photoshop and, apart from the first photo, they were virtual graphics, which were made based on the first one. Roger Palmer suggested that I should

find a key contextual reference to my former work. He asked me which artists I admired and, during our conversation, I mentioned several, such as Caspar David Friedrich, Eva Hesse, and Anselm Kiefer, prompting him to ask, ‘How can a 19th Century German Romantic landscape painter, a 20th Century German/American sculptor and a German painter/book-maker who uses natural materials such as sand and straw, all influence an artist who makes two dimensional works using digital imaging techniques?’ I was unable to give him an appropriate response to this primary question related to the context of my creation. I could not say it was because I admired and appreciated their work, because I knew that was not the reason, so I said it was because I felt there was a connection between my work and theirs. I sense a kind of familiarity and share their vision of the world. I will try to answer the question more fully in the following paragraphs by not only giving an account of my works, but also discussing how other thinkers/artworks/artists have become references in my creation of artworks.

Reading (1.2)^{26*}



1.2 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Reading*, Video Still, 2011, Digital Moving Image, 5'10'', Loop, 16:9, Sound

The Background

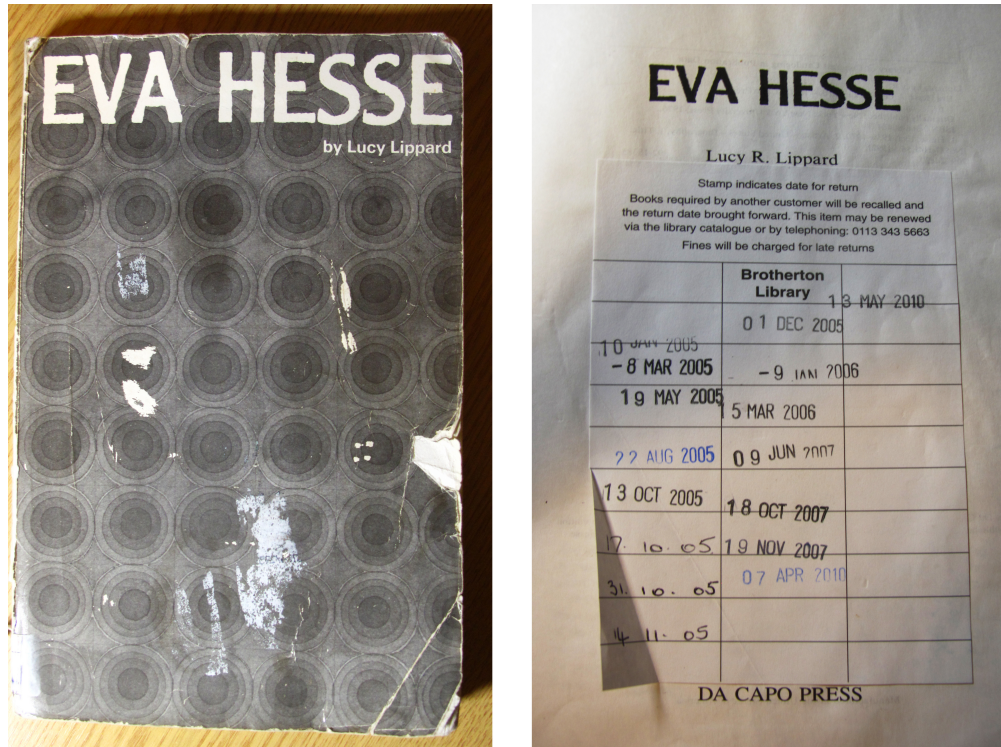
Reading is the first highlighted work I created in the UK. The object I photographed in the film is the book entitled *Eva Hesse* (Lucy R. Lippard. 1976), which is the 1992 edition, the first edition having been published in 1976. As I mentioned in the first section, when I was a student in college, I made various sort of artworks using different formats. Some were installations of sculpture made of mixed materials. I did some

²⁶ *Reading* (2011), < <https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year1/reading> >

research of modern art when I was studying for a BA, and Eva Hesse was one of artists I studied. I thought she had an interesting way of dealing with materials and arranging the objects she created. The move to Leeds was a great challenge, as was starting the art practices of PhD research, and I observed some substantial changes in myself in 2011. While rethinking the context of my former works, I searched for some books or portfolios of artists I appreciated in the library of the University of Leeds, even though they were not closely related to the digital film field, and this was where I found this book.

What Is the Work?

The object to be photographed: It concerns a book (1.3) in the library. Unlike searching for a material to fill my thoughts, such as more layers of glass, a book is a new and unexpected object within my work. After the unsuccessful production of *Blooming*, I needed some inspiration and stimulation as I looked through the library of the University of Leeds, where I came across an old book entitled *Eva Hesse*, written by Lucy R. Lippard. I initially just borrowed it from the library in order to know more about Eva Hesse. I wanted to acquire a deeper understanding of the context of her works, but as I began to read and my hand touched the paper, I could not help being attracted by the book itself (1.4). I perceived it to be an object in its own right so that, at that moment, it transcended its function as a book. I could sense that the book had been read and used many times over the years; there was a kind of time rambling through the book with silent speed. The pages had turned to a sort of light yellow, the edge of the cover had been broken, the body of the grey printed cover had been much softened and the surface had been partially scratched by former readers. The shape of the book was no longer symmetrical as a result of the invisible movement of every reader thumbing through it. The cover had lost a section, and there was a trace of folding. Fibres of paper appeared on the edges of every page, which inferred a trace of the repeated touching. The right side of the pages had been slowly sculpted by readers' fingers to resemble a section of a wave or a hill. This man-made object was no longer one piece of the original publication or book because it had been gradually changed, re-shaped, and individualised in time and space. It had become a unique continuously-changing soft sculpture. The same book will be found in other libraries, but its physical condition will be different from this one found in the library of the University of Leeds. This old paper



1.3 The Book *Eva Hesse*, written by Lucy R. Lippard
Borrowed from Brotherton Library, University of Leeds



1.4 Details of The Book *Eva Hesse*

book has been transformed into a unique being-in-the-world with the fusion of time, space and movement, and it is still gradually transforming as it sits on my desk. I archived a small part of the movement and change during this endless transformation from the day I borrowed the book to the day I put it back in the return box. Various sections of movement overlap in the book. My fingers touched what former readers's fingers touched. When reviewing the list of readers and the trace of different users, I knew I was not alone within the field of fine art. I started to imagine how other '*Eva Hesse / Lucy R. Lippards*' in other libraries might look. I have become one of 'sculptors' who have contributed to this soft sculpture. Through the photographic seeing/thinking, a book is not only digitalised from its organic status, archived from a paper book to a digital short film, but also sculptured from a mechanical production to a unique artistic creation. The book was originally one publication of '*Eva Hesse / Lucy R. Lippard*' created from a press. When the editions were printed and bound, they must have all looked quite similar, almost the same. Then, they were the product of a mechanical reproduction, but now they are individual objects. The object aspect of this work needs to be expanded into a further discussion of the issue of mechanical reproduction and physical time and space.

I am not surprised that I was so attracted by the book, the object, the soft sculpture. According to my imagination module of time²⁷, the body of a book is exactly as I described it. Thin layers with very tiny gaps which are connected one by one (by contents/languages), but separated (by artificial production/ post-edition). When I consider it as an object, a soft sculpture, the book is orientated by a timeline; however, the entire book can be seen as a miniature/embodiment of an object within a growing, moving timeline.

The Process

That was a difficult time of searching for inspiration. When I sensed the beauty of the old book, I seemed to be excited, but anxious. I assumed that most readers had not observed what I had in the *Eva Hesse* book, and I asked myself many questions, such as 'What is the best way to emphasise what I see?' 'Does this topic that fascinates me also attract other people?' and 'How can I represent what I see rather than just recording it?' I held the old book with a sense of fear that I cannot use the material very well.

²⁷ See Chapter 2, Part III Mind, Brain, Movement and Time, pp. 104

At the very beginning, I used my Canon EOS 60D with an EF-S 18-135mm f3.5-5.6 IS lens. Although this lens displayed high quality, I was not satisfied with degree of close-up, so I changed to another lens, the Canon Compact-Macro Lens EF 50mm 1:2.5, which is a kind of macro lens that was able to focus on the detail while blurring other parts. It gave me the feeling that I was walking in a dream through thick fog with only one bright and clear section. I could see more delicate details of the old book through this lens than I could with my naked eye. I tried to take some still photos but quickly found that the more interesting point was in the process as I slowly zoomed in and out and saw the movement through the LCD monitor of the digital camera. It seemed that the object itself would gradually appear, but partially in a thick fog; in other words, it seemed as if a puff of wind was tenderly blowing the fog away. When I saw this intriguing movement on the LCD monitor, I decided to give up original way of making an animation by jointing several still pictures. I began to directly record using the slow movement of zooming in and out.

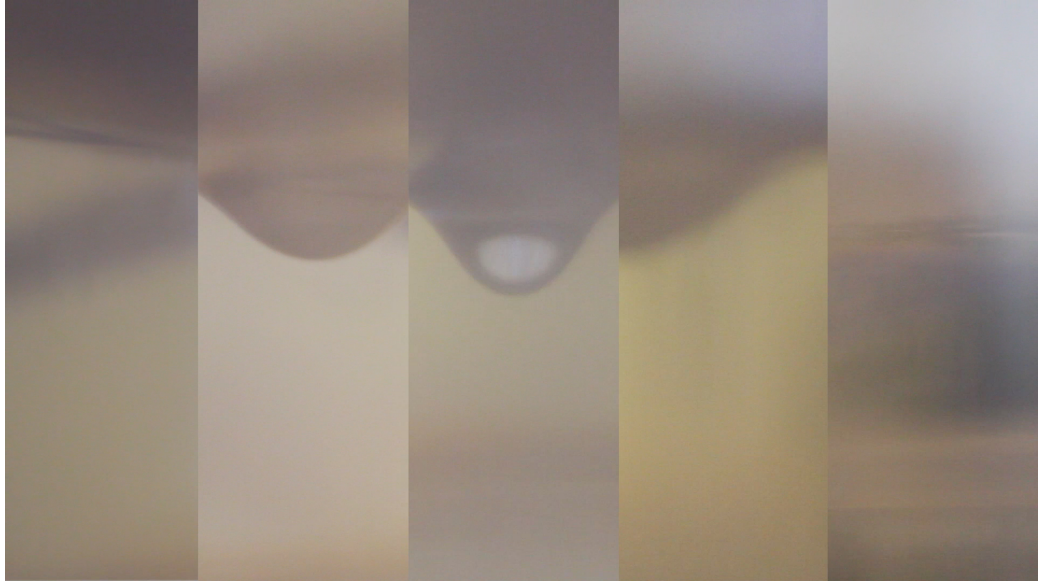
Before *Reading*, I rarely made works by directly taking a video, apart from former work I recorded in the process of making a crystal experiment. I normally took numerous pictures and made moving images frame by frame and used a tripod to prevent my hand from shaking. I made several tests and recorded the book from many angles, and every video was slightly different. In these videos, I saw many of the touched pages become light yellow hills or seashores shrouded in a grey thick fog and the book no longer existed. The colours, quality and texture of the videos reminded me of my former oil painting, which I did in the drawing programme at college. Some of the fundamental programmes focused on the human body or a still object. I liked to depict partial bodily muscles or some folding textiles and transform the wave of the body or textiles into a section of a horizontal landscape. In this case, I used a very close-up gesture, pretending that I was a small thing lying in front of the bigger book/object. Using a macro lens helped me to imagine that I was a creature that could shuttle through the object. I land slowly on the silent light yellow seashore and sneak into a mysterious grey cloudy area. I am nervous so I hesitate to march forward, but turn back, and then I repeat my movement again and again. I create a moving landscape and the movement of zooming in and out seems to beckon viewers to walk into the 'moving landscape painting' with the tempo of the movement. I can become the monk in *The Monk by The Sea* (Casper David Friedrich 1808-10) or the wanderer in *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* (Casper D. Friedrich 1818), standing and gazing at the changes of nature.

The book seems to be a model of nature, while I am an extremely small person or non-human standing in front of it, seeing the sculptured pages as a hill or a wave in the sea.

After importing videos into Final Cut Pro software on my computer, I select some of them to be source of the completed work. I examined all the videos that only captured the partial book and I found that I had shot them from very slightly different angles. If I displayed some of them together, they could represent the appearance of the whole book but with different timelines. This book seemed to be cut into three sections, which could move individually. They had similar beginnings: a blurred object with a blurred background. I designed every section to show a clear image at different random moments with the clearest image appearing in a very short moment. Viewers could guess what the original object was when that moment arrived. The progress of watching the zoom-in-out movement to the focus point and waiting for the moment when the image is clearest that seems as if a thing/human/non-human is walking in a fog and trying to push the fog aside with his/her /its own weak expiration. I adopted the original soundtrack from the environment, the sound of operating the machine and the sound of my own breathing. The soundtrack is not very beautiful, but it is close to the situation. When one section moves rather obviously, its soundtrack becomes louder. I wanted to draw attention with the location of the sound. With this technical prosthesis, I was taken further away from the object and then I stared at it with a close-up gesture. An image of the particular object was represented and became a whole new 'object'; in other words, the 'technical prosthesis' embodied the image I had retrieved by adopting a 'fantasy prosthesis'. The film was not just about the book; it was about my fantasy of the book. The appearance of the old book inspired me to imagine the changes in it and the shape of it invoked a memory and stored knowledge about the 'landscape.' My way of seeing allowed me to wander into the book and the camera helped me to represent what I perceived to be its 'landscape.' Using the software on my computer, I post-produced the source and created a whole new landscape to show viewers. The viewers do not see the book, they see how I perceived the book and manipulated it using software to make a collage of videos. Because of some composition considerations, I made three vertical sections of the frame. While each section has its own movement, the three of them together seem to have a kind of rhythm. There are three kinds of breathing rhythms and three kinds of touching by the distant seeing of me, the person, connected by a digital camera. The shape of these three sections is like a breathing, moving hill or seashore. The whole vision looks like a moving landscape that can be seen as a natural sculpture.

The film is designed as a looping video because there should be no beginning or end; the end is the beginning.

Dropping (1.5)^{28*}



1.5 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Dropping*, Video Still, 2012, Digital Moving Image, 3'54'', Loop, 16:9, Sound

The Background

Dropping is a rather simple work compared to *Reading*. This is not to say that its filming process was simple, but rather that its background is not complicated. In fact, the filming process was much more complex than *Reading*'s. I bought a Brita water filter jug when I moved to Leeds and filtered some water to drink every day. One day, as I was filtering a jug of water, I found that the filter cartridge seemed to be overdue. I stared at the filtering process for a while and, although I had used the filter jug for one or two months, I could not stop staring at the filtering process. I enjoyed watching the water passing through the cartridge and becoming a drop before falling to the bottom of the jug. Then I changed the cartridge and found that the pace of the filtering became much slower. The drop looked as if it was being squeezed into a drop shape and the sound of the falling water was very impressive when I focused on the process.

²⁸*Dropping*, (2012)

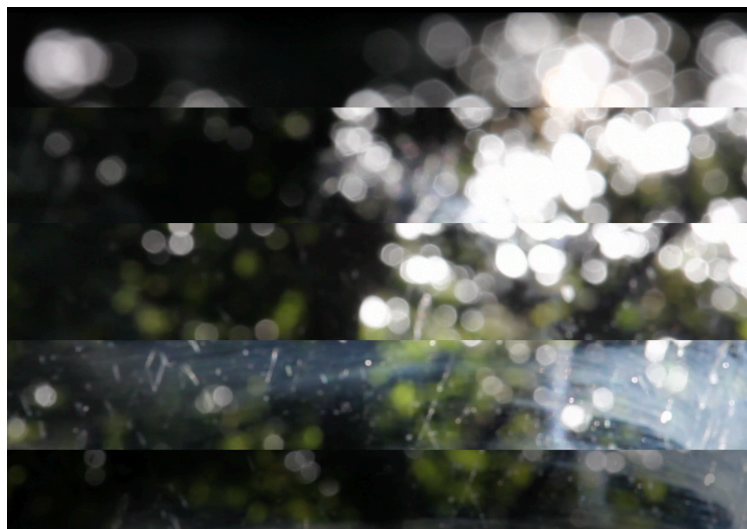
< <https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year1/dropping> >

The Process

I took my camera with a macro lens to see the process for clearer vision, because it is my habit of seeing. Then I started to film the drops. I filmed them about 10 times on different days because I couldn't drink so much water in one day. When I imported these draft videos into my computer, I was astonished and delighted by the sound and image. The droplets reminded me of raindrops falling down from the eaves. The sound of drops is a kind of trans-international, trans-race, trans-location, trans-gender, trans-level audio symbol that can be heard on a rainy day, in the kitchen or, the shower, etc. Viewers' consciousness would unconsciously count the sounds' rhythm and create another new interior rhythm with the other dropping sounds derived from their memory; an in-hearable rhythm in the brain. The intervals of the drop's images and sounds depict a different module of time. I designed five sections for different droppings. They act together and have different colours because I shot the videos at different times. The presentation of this work will be discussed in detail in a later section of the paper.

Tree and Light and Walking (1.6)²⁹

1.6
Hui-Hsuan Hsu,
Tree and Light,
Video Still, 2012,
Digital Moving
Image, 2'42'',
Loop, 4:3, Mute



These two works were finished in the same period as *Reading* and *Dropping*. The reason they are not highlighted is that they were a kind of practice/experiment. The camera movement of the two films was not good enough. *Tree and Light* relates to the afternoon light as it came through the leaves, but this kind of shot was not 'fresh' enough for me. *Walking* was shot with very unstable camera work. I was wearing my

²⁹ *Tree and Light* (2011) and *Walking* (2011)
<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year1/treeandlightwalking>>

camera round the neck in front of my chest when I wandered around Leeds city. I recorded the pace of my walking and the view of the street. Then I interwove the videos with very thin sections of frame, but the result looked too dizzy and meaningless. I could not convince myself to show these two works at a public exhibition; however, this failure was, nonetheless productive for the next project.

Dressing (1.7)^{30*}



1.7 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Dressing*, Video Still, 2012, Digital Moving Image, 9'48'', Loop, 16:9, Mute

The Background

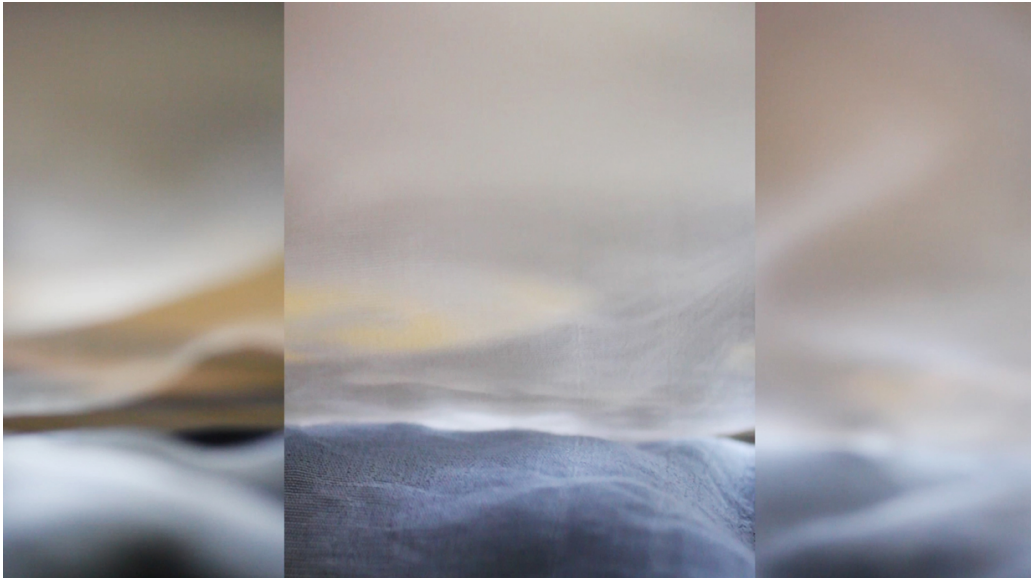
Dressing is my second favourite work of my first year. The object I photographed was a page in a magazine with a commercial advertisement showing a model wearing a light ivory grey thick woollen dress. The surface of the paper was matt; in fact, it was quite rough and I could smell printing ink, as I got closer to the page.

The Process

I took my camera to observe the page as usual. I used an 'insect viewpoint' to see the advertisement. Using the macro lens, I started with the model's face. If I did not mention that the beginning of the video consisted of a women's face, viewers would hardly recognise it and the viewing experience of my work would be somewhere between familiarity and alienation. Viewers would try to recognise what they are watching, and it would look very familiar, but what could it be? The beginning of the

³⁰ *Dressing* (2012) <<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year1/dressing>>

video resembles an exploration of an unknown celestial body. There are two depressions on the ground, which are, in fact, are nose holes of the model. As the time passes, the holes gradually disappear like the changing sands of a desolate desert. The knitted pattern of wool is totally transformed into a completely unrecognisable image, like the ripple of the wind through the trees. The viewer can only see the wave of a wild desert or a place that is not inhabited by humans, which seems to be very distant, and may even be out of this world. So close an observation leads to faraway scenery, and the 'insect viewpoint' carries the seeing from the face of the model and touches the texture of the woollen dress. The seeing was not always clear; sometimes it was blurred. The repeat movements of zooming in and out created a sense of flirting/evoking viewers' curiosity between the rhythms of revealing and concealing. When the scene became blurred, I made a cross dissolve between two different videos using the software, Final Cut Pro X, and this caused a slow transformation. The colour tones of the video did not change when I made the post-edition on the computer because I appreciated the natural light grey/yellow tone, which is hard to describe. I rarely changed the original colour. The work was like a journey/adventure to a very far place, but not from a human perspective. I think the vision was from an automatic machine (or an A.I. robot) or a kind of small insect that can survive in an environment where humans cannot, and the non-human thing is crawling close to the ground to help someone to view the scene from another place. The scenery was also reminiscent of a world after human beings had disappeared or become extinct or moved to another planet.

***Chrysalide* (1.8)³¹**

1.8 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Chrysalide*, Video Still, 2012,
Digital Moving Image, 8'00'', Loop, 16:9, Sound

The Background

I was watching a movie one day with my laptop on the bed and I stopped to do some cleaning. I picked up some clothing and unconsciously draped it over the screen. When I finished doing other things and returned to the screen, I found that I had forgotten to stop the movie and some moving light was penetrating the thin cloth. The folds and shape of the clothing looked just like mountain ridges.

The Process

I directly recorded what I saw and imported the videos into Final Cut Pro to make a collage. I made three vertical sections. The moving light from the movie looks like something unknown that is about to come over the mountains (made by the cloth). The light, sounds and landscape make fictional sense, but there are still no humans in the film. I create these kinds of landscapes to represent the notion of a gap, a space, or a shelter where I can hide. These places are like the chrysalides spun by silkworms to make a private space in which to wrap themselves in order to undergo the transformation of life.

³¹ *Chrysalide* (2012) <<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year1/chrysalide>>

Note: No Humans or Non-Humans

Here I need to write a short conclusion before continuing with the text. It can be seen from *Reading*, *Dropping* to *Dressing*, that my works have a virtual dimension. The context of these three works is the same; no human/ non-human land. My work tends not to include any human image or any narrative storytelling. To my mind, stories are only for humans. Only a human would recall a memory and tell it to others. However, although humans are absent in my films, there is still a trace of humanity in a very veiled way. The human was there once, but now he or she has gone. In *Reading*, the book was obviously shaped by readers; we know it was written by Lucy R. Lippard, we know it talks about Eva Hesse and we even know that the filmmaker is called Hui-Hsuan Hsu, but these humans are all absent/gone. In *Dropping*, we know the water was poured by someone, we know the Brita filter jug was designed by someone and the jug was produced by people in a factory, but they are all absent/gone. The sense of absence is stronger in *Dressing*, and the viewer cannot even see a hint. I created a kind of strange feeling by reducing the trace of the artist. I tried to make everything seem very natural, but this kind of 'natural' retains a notion of oddness. Viewers cannot easily distinguish the odd immediately; they need to see the film again and again. I normally use non-human as the subject of my film, not like some films use actors and actresses, or it could be said that if I treat humans as objects, other objects can replace the human characters in my film. The no human/ non-human land also infers/imagines that, when doomsday comes, what will remain in the world will be objects, object archives and devices created by humans. What my works want to convey is the imaginary moving images that represent my perception of objects seen through the lens of my camera.

Summary of Developments in My Practice-Led Research During Year1

The only aspect of my work that has not changed is my core approach, my way of seeing. Before 2011, my moving image works were made up of several still photographs joined together so that they would become moving images as in a conventional animation. All my earlier works were without sound and shown within a single frame.

After moving to Leeds, I began to work in new ways, directly recording digital videos with sounds to produce montages of sound and visual material that created an interwoven timeline. The significance of the objects I photograph has changed. My obsession with windows as surfaces to be looked at and through has developed into an interest in certain used or worn everyday objects. Parallel to this change of focus I also developed a new visual form for my films. I divided the frame into several vertical

sections, e.g. three in *Reading* and five in *Dropping*. This idea was firstly derived from the triptych form, but I am also aware that illustrators of comic strips often arrange several images to occur spontaneously on the same page, but in fact, every section on the page has its own timeline.

The way of presenting my works has also radically changed because of a decision to abandon the practice of projecting directly onto a wall or presenting videos on LCD monitors. I now consider that the use of projection onto canvas is more poignant and more appropriate to my images. The way a projected moving image occupies a primed canvas surface reminds me of strange and unknown landscapes with their picturesque colours and textures. I first made two small canvases for experimental purposes in my studio, followed by three bigger ones for the installation of my work in the exhibition, *Pieces of Eight*.³² I chose rather thick wooden stretchers for the canvasses in order to emphasise a sense of their physical presence as objects.

Exhibition: *Pieces of Eight* – Installation Difficulties and Solutions (1.9)



1.9 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, 2012,
Installation Process of *Dropping* at Project Space Leeds

As described above, I currently use canvasses as projection surfaces. I originally envisaged that the works would be viewed as ‘moving paintings’, each one precisely and individually fixed to the wall. I also expected that the projectors would be suspended from the gallery ceiling and would, therefore, not be seen by viewers. However, because of practical limitations at the PSL, I changed the way of setting up

³²*Pieces of Eight* (April 2012)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year1/pieces-of-eight>>

the projectors, which meant that they had to be placed inside white boxes positioned on the gallery floor. I decided to install two canvases (*Dressing* and *Reading*) in one small space, positioned across two adjacent right-angled corners in order to create the maximum space for viewers and minimise the disturbance to my images caused by the projector boxes. Another work, *Dropping*, was rather more easily installed in another space, so I was happy with the completed installations of *Dropping* and *Reading* but it did not include a most important point: the quality of projectors.

i. Reflection of The Exhibition (1.10)

After completing the installation, I was able to reflect on its success and failure. I came to the conclusion that two of the principal aspects of the work could be improved in future exhibitions, as shown below.

1. Projection

The physical distance between the image and the projector should be considered more in future installations. The white boxes should be removed because they are totally irrelevant objects and really disturbed the view of the works. Furthermore, I need to consider purchasing my own projector or finding another way to present the videos. In fact, although I was not quite satisfied with the quality of the projection (especially *Dressing*), I am aware that I need to learn to accommodate these problems and find a way to deal with them.

2. Sounds

Dropping was installed in a rather quiet space that was appropriate for viewers to hear its clear and insistent sounds. In comparison, the sound track of *Reading* is rather gentle, like breathing and pulsing. As *Reading* was in a space just next to another artist's video work that included loud human voices, the different positioning of the works should be more sensitively considered in future. Perhaps employing wireless headphones would be a solution.

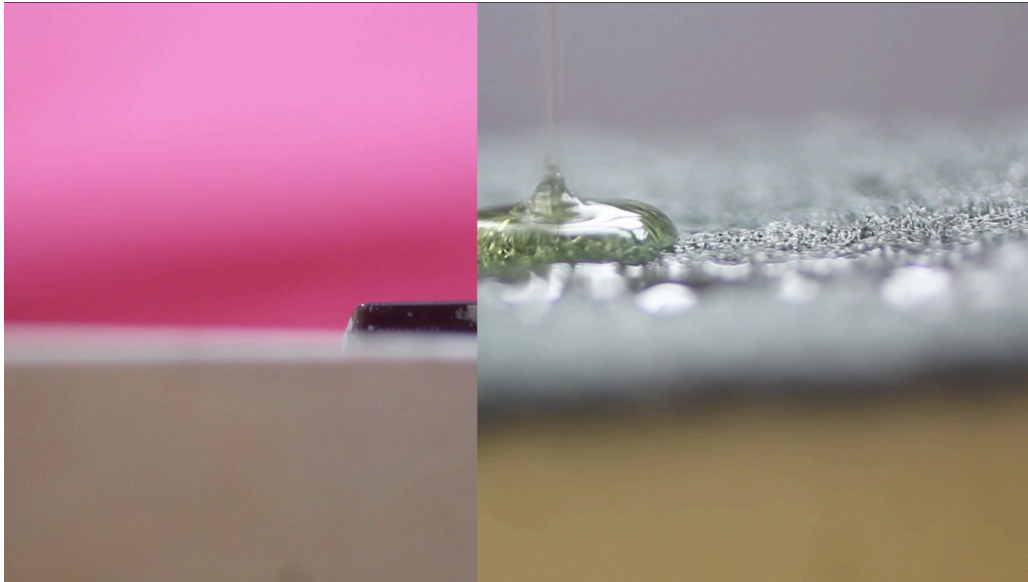


1.10
The Process and
Result of
Installation at
Project Space
Leeds, *Pieces of
Eight*, Leeds, UK,
2012

ii. Second Year of The PhD (September 2012–August 2013)

After the Transfer Viva (28 June 2012), I entered the second year of my PhD journey. The first year meant the fresh, the unfamiliar, and the unknown for me, while the second year seemed to be bumpier, independent and challenging. After making a couple of works and having the first experience of a group show in the UK, the next stage of making new works and acquiring more experience of public presentations as a professional artist become the most significant driver for me, especially in the beginning of the new academic year. In the second year, I kept testing some works that were outside my original direction, although they were not very good because they a long way from what I intended to achieve. Apart from making works, the theoretical writing of my work was also an important part of the second year. I made nine single-channel moving image works and completed a project that contained four works. As I did for the first year, I would like to recount my experience of all these practices. I would especially like to highlight two single moving image works entitled: *Settlement?* and *Cup and Saucer*, and a project called *Blind Project*.

Settlement? (1.11)^{33*}



1.11 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Settlement?*, Video Still, 2012, Digital Moving Image, 10'04'', Loop, 16:9, Sound

³³ *Settlement?* (2012) <<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year2/settlement>>

The Background

Settlement? was the first work I made at the beginning of the second year. I moved out of the student dorm and rented a small old flat. The landlady, who called herself an artist, had hung a great many of her paintings on almost every wall. While I found it hard to accept her taste in décor and the state of disrepair of some of the furniture, the rent was cheap. She only rented the flat out in the winter because she always travelled to the south of the country then. She hoped that I would keep the décor and setting of the flat in same the way as she left it. In fact, I did not like her paintings. I have to admit that I tend to be ‘neat freak’, a tendency that can usually be found in my works. I cannot endure any graphics, lines or colours that disturb my vision and feeling, especially if I have to live in a small flat. She also had some furniture that was useless to me, so I decided to take photographs to help me to remember the way the flat had originally been and clean it at the same time. Then I prepared to take down the things I did not like, and during the process of taking down the photographs and cleaning, I thought it would be interesting to make a work of the flat.

The Process

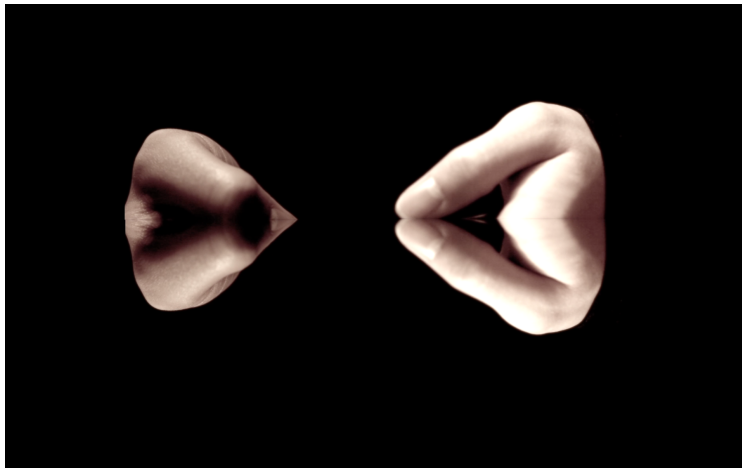
The primary aim of my idea was to give viewers a space for imagination. Of course, I did not show a panorama of the flat. I partially showed some objects and some activities of cleaning/arranging, thereby building an image between the physical living space and some basic chores of daily life. I wanted to invite viewers to enter the moving image and gaze at the movements that occur quietly in our ordinary everyday lives from a close-up perspective. I was inspired by the concept of ‘house’ in a book entitled *The Poetics of Space* (1994) written by Gaston Bachelard in which he says, ‘I should say: the house shelters day-dreaming, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows one to dream in peace.’³⁴ I began to plan to make a film about a space/house/home. The space in which I filmed in my work bears no relationship with my own home/family.

This flat is a space of home/non-home; a paradoxical space and state of mind somewhere between intimate security and strange isolation. This rented flat offered me a sort of Illusionary suspension. It could be seen as a miniature of being in a foreign country. The status that could be described in this situation was of being insecure mentally, but having a secure physical place to stay. I lived there, but I did not think I belonged there. The reason for the mentally insecurity was a time issue due to the

³⁴ Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994.) pp. 6

period of renting. I knew this would be a temporary space for living because of my circumstance of studying abroad. I am always a foreign person in this country, literally a stranger/visitor, with a status between getting in and not-in, hovering between sensitivity and rationality. Sometimes I doubt myself; I think my personality makes me like this. My personality makes me partially involved and partially alienated; sometimes I am both a participant and a bystander, an insider and an outsider in some situations in a state of being between present and absent. I can see the same tendency in my works. I obsess about my status, hiding behind/in something but seeing things out of/through it. The something could be a pair of glasses, the glass of a window, gaps in the pages of a book, a cup of water, leaves of trees, or a camera. I am there in my films, but I am also not there. This is not a total notion of hiding in the dark because I actually take risks; my hiding is based on a semi-transparent form. I feel that I hide behind my glasses and the movement of my eye rolling is silent, but if someone suddenly sees my face, he/she will notice my seeing. I could perhaps avoid the risk if I wore a pair of sunglasses, but then I could not see the original colours of the outer world. I think I can hide behind a glass window, but in fact, the glass is semi-transparent or transparent; I just have a little more security by not getting wet or touched by rain or people, etc. I think I can hide behind a camera, but the camera is much smaller than my body; in fact, it will be more dangerous if I keep 'wearing' a camera in front of my eyes. Therefore, the security/insecurity is conceptual not physical. Locating myself in-between makes me excited/unstable, but also peaceful/silent.

Throughout the filming, I tried to project my self-identity to fill the gap of the ambiguities/opposites. By adding my own memories, could this place be turned into my own 'settlement'? I added the question mark in the title because I was not sure if the use of settlement could be considered appropriate to describe a 'temporary home'. The close-up perspective also coincided with a sort of paradox, enabling viewers to see the images with a feeling of being so close, but so far away. The close-up perspective would force viewers to focus on the texture of the objects, but it would also reduce the ability to recognise the objects so that viewers would get lost when they wanted to find out what they were seeing. This sort of uncertainty coincides with the sense of insecure of temporal rent. With this singular way of thinking seeing, I also want to quote a sentence from Trinh T. Minh-Ha, 'Where you are is where your identity is; that's your place, your home and your being now.' (Trinh, 2011, narrative words in *The Fourth Dimension*.) as a further reference of this work.

Garden and Good Morning (1.12)³⁵

1.12 Hui-Hsuan Hsu,
Garden, Video Still,
2012,
Digital Moving Image,
04'41'', Loop, 16:9,
Sound

The Background

There was a potential crisis in my next step. I could say that I understood the strengths of my creation, but I was afraid that I would repeat myself if I continued to do things in the same way. I intentionally shifted the direction of making because I wanted to change my original way. I made two new works in the last month of 2012, and although the result was not good as I had expected, it was also not as bad as I had presumed.

I tried to become involved with some issues that were normally considered to be 'crucial issues', which tended to be more public and not so enclosed. I wanted to avoid staring at 'small things'. (This was a failure at first because I got lost in the definition of physically or perceptively small and big and ignored the fact that work should be based on a key point). The digital and mobile trend attracted me to discover it and, since I intentionally avoided focusing on still objects and physical materials, the relationship between digitalisation and humans became the main objective of the experiment. *Garden* is about the general phenomenon of using mobile phones. Many people can be seen using smart phones in most public spaces and the behaviour of repeatedly scrolling the touch screen with the thumb creates a new dimension for the human body and spirit. As people scroll with their thumb, a private path to another world spreads before them. Touch screens seem to be mirrors that reflect and respond to the finger tips. In one new work, I used several shots of partially moving fingers to rebuild other moving objects like animals, mouths, and unknown creatures. Originally I wanted to make a documentary of contemporary humans' gestures when using smart phones. They are

³⁵ *Garden* (2012) and *Good Morning* (2012)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year2/gardengoodmorning>>

unnaturally, repeatedly and oddly squiggling with different recognisable sound effects. This test was a good experience, but there were too many intentional sound effects disconnected from the close-up fingers; therefore, technical and audio effects overwhelmed the original idea. The second try, *Good Morning*, was a better fit for the original purpose. It depicted a montage of real and virtual behaviour in one channel. The real touching of our own bodies and objects is diverse, but the touching of different images on a screen feels the same. *Good Morning* clearly show the difference between the physical and the digital. Wrong directions may be taken in the process of creating, but this does not mean that the solution is to turn back to a former safer way. Being lost could force artists to more actively reflect on the way they make their works.

*Magic Project*³⁶

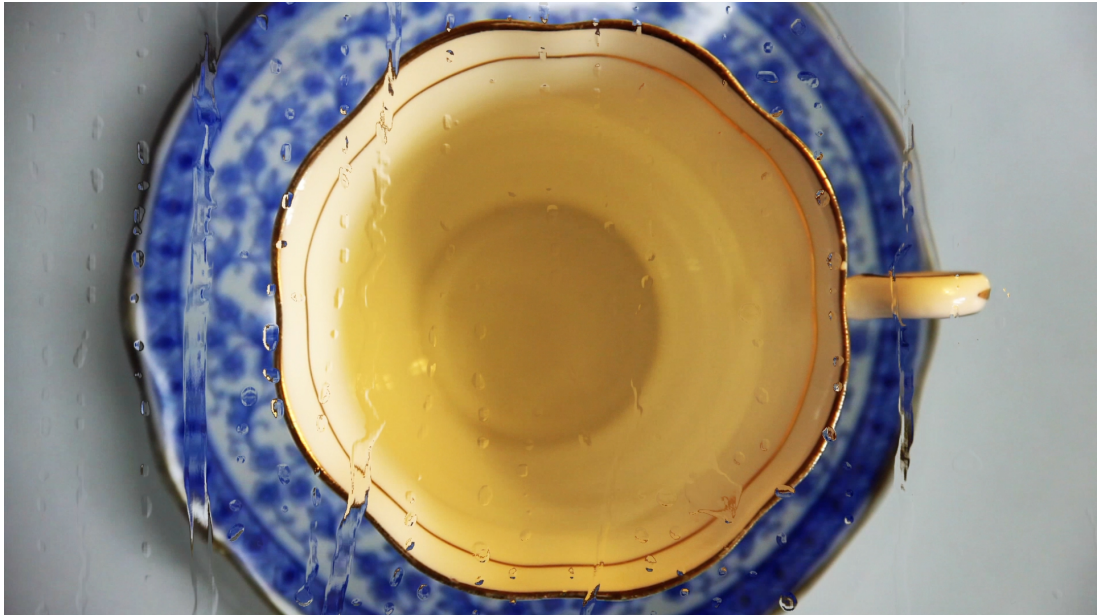
After making the former two unsuccessful works, I kept working hard to overcome the problems. I made more tests during the spring of 2013, and there were five finished works: *Cup and Saucer**, *Water Cup*, *A Horizontal L*, *MM's*, and *Viewing*, and one unfinished work: *Dear Chevy*. I would only like to highlight *Cup and Saucer*, since I consider that the other works are not good enough. They have a common attribute, which is magic. I am not recording the performance of a magic trick, but trying to use the camera with different kinds of display devices to create the notion of magical oddness or illusion, a kind of seeing outside the rational and the usual. The theme is interesting in itself. I would call it *Magic Project*, but the settings and camera movement are in too much disarray, like most of my compositions. They look like sketches of my thoughts. For example, I liked the short film entitled *Water Cup*, but I did not give it an appropriate ending. I used an iPad to take a photo of an ice cube and then displayed it. I put an empty water cup with some water stains in front of the iPad, set the camera and started to film. I avoided putting my finger on the frame and touching the iPad screen to “enlarge” the ice cube. What the camera ‘sees’ is an unknown white icy thing like liquid moving in a water cup. It is assumed that prospective viewers must know that the white thing is not water, although it seems to be ‘in’ the water cup. Then, as I reduced the size of the ice cube photo on the iPad, the camera would see the white thing gradually disappear in the cup. In the end, I made a bad design that involved suddenly pouring water into a cup; it was too ‘crude and rash’, so that the whole gentle magical mysterious atmosphere generated from the beginning

³⁶ *Magic Project* (2013)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year2/magicproject>>

was suddenly destroyed. *Cup and Saucer* is the only work highlighted in this term time because it has a more complete structure and better quality.

***Cup and Saucer* (1.13)³⁷**



1.13 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Cup and Saucer*, Video Still, 2013, Digital Moving Image, 01'43'', Loop, 16:9, Sound

The Background

The objects in *Cup and Saucer* belonged to the landlady of the flat I rented from September 2012 to April 2013. As the rental period was nearing the end, I wanted to make another work involving the objects that were in the flat, but did not belong to me. The landlady had left plenty of plates, bowls and cups in the cupboard, and I found a lovely matching cup and saucer. In the beginning of the work, potential viewers would see a bright yellow thing with a black background before the image suddenly turned black with a short, clear and melodious sound. This sound came from an iPad; it was the sound that occurs when the fingers 'wake the iPad up'. Having 'woken up' the background, the whole moving image turned black and white and the cup and saucer started to shake together. After a few seconds, only the saucer was moving and the cup seemed to be frozen in a stop-motion. 'How can a saucer move, but a cup be still?' 'How can they seem to be together in the beginning and then be separated in two different dimensions?' I presumed that my viewers would have these questions when

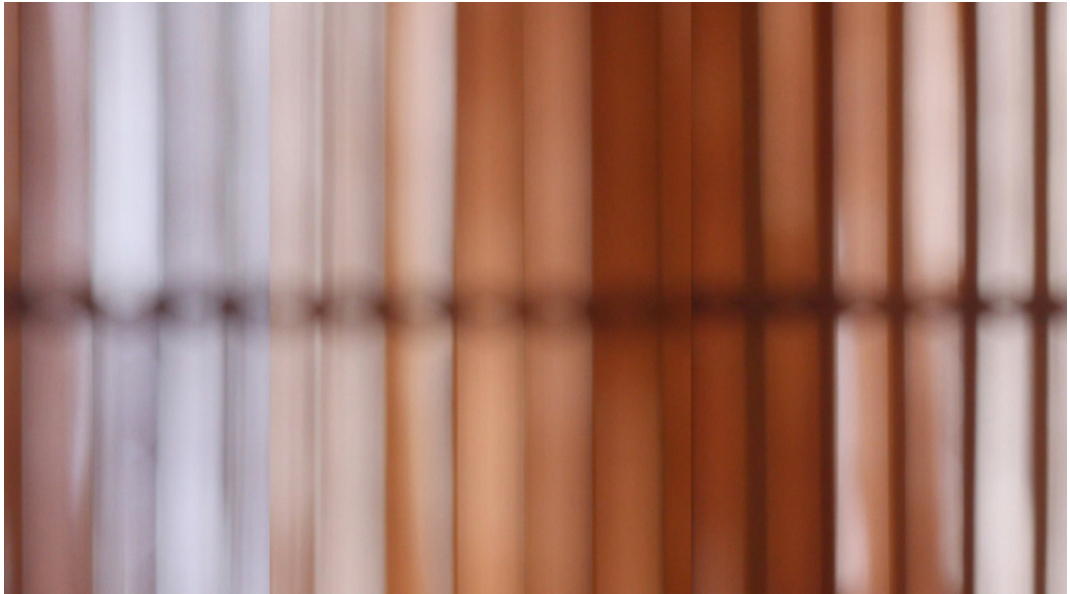
³⁷ *Cup and Saucer* (2013)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year2/magicproject/cupandsaucer>>

they watched the work, so I made a trick just in front of the camera, but the camera could not see it because the trick related to virtual and real images.

In the working process, cup and saucer, were separated from the very beginning, and the saucer was a pre-recorded moving image displaying by the iPad. The iPad was both the camera and the screen. Then I put the cup on the iPad screen (on the moving image of the saucer) just like a saucer normally holds a cup. I set the main camera to film the cup (on the iPad) and saucer (in the iPad) with an overlooking angle. I then cut the edge of the iPad when I edited the film on a computer so that viewers could not see that the saucer was actually a virtual image in another display. However, that was not the end of the trick. I then set a layer of rain over the 'layer' of the cup in a virtual way. The image became colourful when the rain fell, and then turned back to black and white when the rain had gone. The rain's direction of falling was also an odd point. It was vertical, from the top to the bottom of the frame of the presumed display, which was the normal angle to fit the potential viewers' way of standing, but the cup and saucer layers were not set at a normal angle. The angle was like that of a human flying in the air and looking down. 'Is the film recorded by a photographer, who is wearing a transparent mask or a machine flying/floating in the air and encountering rain?' 'Wait...how can a cup and saucer float in the air? If they can, how can the cup appear to be frozen in the air?' This was the illusion I wanted to make for the audience. It can be seen from the description and explanation of the way the work was made that it was interwoven by layers of virtual and real, overlooking and eye-level shooting. These points make it hard for viewers to immediately see the work unless they spend more time gazing at it. I especially liked the ending and the beginning, the way of waking up and turning off the background, which also made a clean loop.

Now I can answer the question my potential viewers asked at the beginning, 'Why would the cup be shaken with the saucer?' 'Hui, you said they are in different dimensions, one is in the iPad and the other is outside the iPad, aren't they?' The answer is simple. I shake the iPad (which plays the role of the saucer and displays a moving image of a saucer) and the cup on the 'pretended saucer' by holding my hands together, avoiding shooting because the shaking is not made by shaking the camera. The work is sharp-looking, cleanly set and with no other unnecessary disturbances.

Blind Project³⁸*Blind 1***Blind 2***Blind 3***Blind 4* (3 Screens)****Blind1*** (1.14)³⁹

1.14 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Blind 1*, Video Still, 2012,
Digital Moving Image, 02'18'', Loop, 16:9, Mute

I made four works in the project. I had no clear direction when I made *Blind 1*. My original motivation was I was attracted to see an object closely. This was a blind in the living room of my second rented flat in the UK, which was made in a Japanese style. The material may have been a dark brown coloured wood. One day the living room was flooded by sunshine from the west and when I rolled down the blind, sunlight leaked through the gaps between the blinds in the form of a thread, which made me stop and stare. My right hand manipulated the openness and closeness. I saw the light illuminate the dust on the blind and then rise into the air and finally arrive on the floor. I was too close to the blind, so the bright sunlight made me squint. It seemed that I could not see as clearly as usual, but something extraordinary happened. I tried to use the camera to record what I saw but what the camera shot was too clear, so I made it out of focus. When I rolled the lens to let it go out of focus, the blinds gradually turned semi-transparent. This was very similar to the function in Adobe Photoshop. When users

³⁸ *Blind Project* (2013)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year2/blindproject>>

³⁹ *Blind 1*(2013)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year2/blindproject/blind1>>

overlap two photos, they can adjust the transparency to make the upper one become a little transparent to reveal the lower one and thus form the effect of an overlapped image. The ‘out of focus’ lens made the blind look semi-transparent and thinner. The light created a rhythm with the movement of my hand rolling the blinds, and I recorded the movement numerous times and imported them into the computer. I turned the videos 90 degrees from horizontal lines to vertical lines. I did not equally split the screen into three portions. I intentionally made the line between the split sections look like the shades between blinds. The virtual and actual boundaries looked as though they were lined up together but, in fact, they came from different dimensions.

Blind 2 (1.15)⁴⁰ and ***Blind 3*** (1.16)⁴¹

The object photographed in *Blind 2* and *Blind 3* was a blind in the bathroom of the same flat of *Blind 1*. It was characterised by dust, noise and baby blue coloured metal material. Dust had accumulated on the blinds and when I rolled them back, I could see that there was dust in every role. When I rolled the rope, it made a noise because the material was metal. The blind was an object that showed movement, time and music and I used these characteristics.

Blind 2 was mute. It was not raining on the days when I shot the video; in fact, it was even sunny. On warm afternoons, the blue metal blinds reflected the sunshine and colours from outside. The warm pink colour from outside came from the blurred stone walls of the houses opposite. The time from 1- 2 pm is my favourite time of the day. It is normally still bright, but the air is sweeter and the atmosphere slower than the freshness of the morning. There are no worries about lighting compared with 3 – 4 pm or 4-5 pm, when the sunshine may become very tricky with an uncomfortable angle. Another point I like about the period from 1-2 pm is that it is a break time, so that some people take a nap or leave their seats. The world seems to slow down and be quiet. This is why I made *Blind 2* mute. I imagine that I am someone who does not take a nap or a lunch break, but stay behind a window to enjoy the absence of others from 1-2 pm every day.

⁴⁰ *Blind 2* (2013)

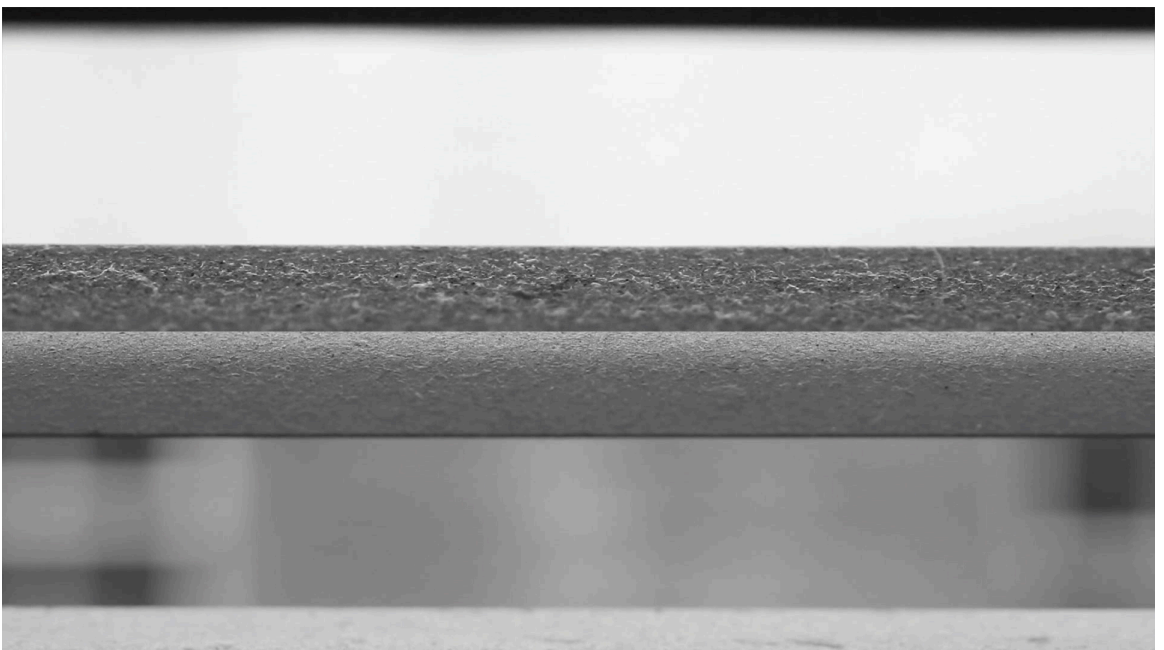
<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year2/blindproject/blind2blind3>>

⁴¹ *Blind 3* (2013)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year2/blindproject/blind2blind3>>



1.15 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Blind 2*, Video Still, 2013, Digital Moving Image, 09'59'', Loop, 16:9, Mute



1.16 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Blind 3*, Video Still, 2013, Digital Moving Image, 07'36'', Loop, 16:9, Sound

The view opens and closes with the slow rolling of the blinds, pulling and pushing, distant and close. The particles of dust are too close to be recognised and become part of the faraway abstract scenery. The blind becomes a changing landscape, such as a grey plate far away or a blue wave coming toward me. Nothing needs to be done but seeing; the work looks abstract, but it is also actual. *Blind 3* looks similar to *Blind 2*, but the inner substance is very different. The work includes sound. I shot the video on a cloudy day, while the neighbours living upstairs from me were watering their plants and cleaning their flat. In terms of the composition, I made a video collage. The split screen was divided into two horizontal zones, and when the video frame got to 00:05, the middle virtual line seemed to be an actual boundary between the blinds. The frame of 00:05 illustrated my aim to make an illusion between the virtual and the actual. It was a similar composition as *Blind 1*, but *Blind 3* was calculated more accurately. When the frame got to between 02:28 and 02:29, I deleted one collage layer (the upper one), while the base layer showed the position of a very blind turn with a sharp actual line. When the time got to 02:39, I suddenly pasted an upper layer onto the moving base layer. The sudden pasting action did not look odd, neither did the sounds and tempo. It was like a clean, sharp movement with the sound. The main sound came from the environment and the noisy sound from rolling the blinds. It is like working with a sort of industrial machine. I intentionally shot the sense of the sharpness of the blinds, such as the moment when the blinds were rolled, to show the thinnest edge. Since the day I shot the video was very cloudy, the temperature of the colour may also have been colder than it was in *Blind 2*. The particle of dust looked sharper. Since the work involved a complicated composition and sounds, I decided to make the image black and white. The black and white tone echoed a sense of the industrial, and the blind became an instrument in *Blind 3* and made music with life.

Blind 4 (1.17)⁴²

Blind 4 was site-specifically made for my solos exhibition at York College in 2014 (1.18). The exhibition avenue is located against a giant glass curtain wall, and sometimes sunshine comes from outside. There are two structured walls with a corner. I think the *Blind project* was a good fit for the avenue because there was also a window where I made it; therefore, there was something that could be connected, namely, light, material

⁴²*Blind 4* (2013)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year2/blindproject/blind4>>



1.17 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Blind 4*, Installation View, 2013, Digital Moving Image Installation, 3 LCD Monitors, 07'46'', Loop, Mute.



1.18 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Blind*, 2013, Installation View, York College Gallery, York, UK.

and transparency. Since I planned to show *Blind 1* with a single LCD monitor in a horizontal way, I thought it would be a good idea not to have another symmetrical shape on two walls, but to make an odd number (I prefer odd numbers) of screens with a virtual arrangement. *Blind 4*'s blind images were horizontal and the screens were set vertically with the blind contrary. *Blind 1* and *Blind 4* were both mute. Since the avenue was an open space with a high ceiling in a building, works with sound were not suitable because of the various sounds around the space.

Summary

The aim of the *Blind Project* was to give an alternative and exceptional way to see and then perceive the world. It was not a special way with advanced, spectacular or trendy effects; it was an experiment or a demonstration to make a subtle difference in the perception of the ordinary everyday life, such as not walking too straight forward, seeing with half-opened eyes, or slowing some regular movement. My main interest was in seeing, looking and perceiving so I worked with a visual digital prosthesis, a digital camera, to make these subtle differences more obvious. By seeing these 'archives' of my experiments, viewers might find their own new rhythm of being-in-the world.

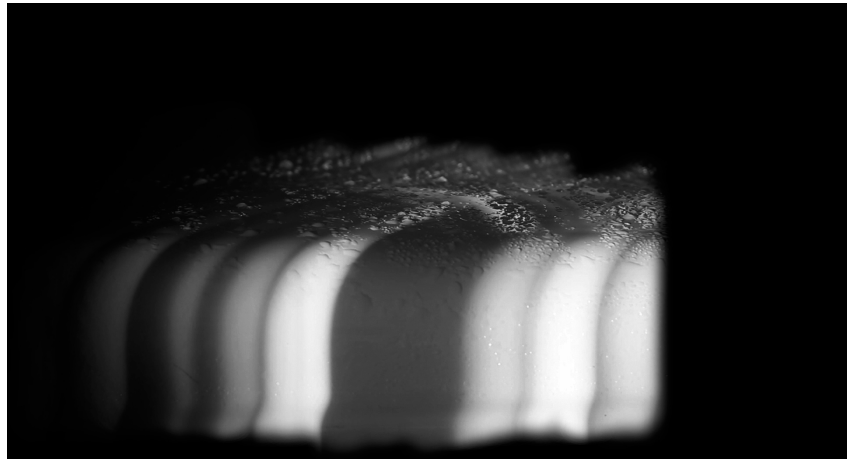
iii. Third and Fourth Years of The PhD (September 2013–August 2015)

The two most important things in the third year were to prepare the PhD final show and finish this thesis. I researched some former practice-led graduates' thesis and especially emphasised on their way of dealing with the final show. Some had final show with short period while some used other exhibition documents without a final show. Due to the attributes of my works, I insist that I should hold a final show and invite examiners to see it in person. I searched and approached numerous places and people to seek a space for the final show. Due to numerous reasons, I was rejected several times. Very few suitable opportunities can fit the right timetable and space. I had an opportunity to put on a show with a senior artist, my former Primary Supervisor, Roger Palmer. We discussed the theme and direction to make a proposal to apply the exhibition. The working title of the show was Leap Years, and I drafted a new on-going project called the '*Lighting Project*' to fit the theme. Although the exhibition was not made as we wished and the on-going project was not completed, the process of making/thinking the *Lighting Project* stimulated me to do another more self-satisfactory project: *Time-sculpturing project*. This project would be further developed in the fourth year. I had

another opportunity to have a short period to present my work at ‘Set The Controls For The Heart Of The Sun’—a new artist studio/space in Leeds. What the curator could offer me was a small studio. My supervisor team suggested me to decline this offer and use the Lifton studios inside of the University of Leeds instead. They thought that I would technically receive more support from our school’s staffs and I could use more space to show more works.

Lighting Project (1.19)⁴³

1.19
Hui-Hsuan Hsu,
Lighting 1,
Video Still,
2014,
Digital Moving
Image, 12’16’’,
Loop, 16:9, Mute



The *Lighting Project* was about working with a static digital video camera in order to make projected works that examine and process daylight in different configurations. I planned to film the summer sunlight from outside as it shone on the interior wall. The installation method involved projecting the summer sunlight onto the exhibition avenue’s wall in winter.

I made 3-4 drafts of the proposal although I was not satisfied with the results. Two of the works involved animated sunshine projection. One was a window scene with natural light filmed in the daytime and projected onto the curtain of the same window, while another was what I thought originally was the film of the summer sunlight.

It was difficult to present this project in the venue. I needed the gallery to allow me to have a show so that I could make a proper installation. Therefore, I used the experience to take the project as a bridge to create a new sculpturing project entitled *Time—sculpturing project*.

⁴³ *Lighting Project* (2014)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year3/lightingproject>>

*Time–Sculpturing Project*⁴⁴

Rice Series:

Rice (1.20) *

Winter Rice (1.21) *

Quinoa & Wheat *

*Apple**

This project was made by means of an extended and random mix inspiration. I was thinking about time and light. I was in a kind of daydream, staring at my watch, seeing the second hand ticking and walking across every mark. When I returned to reality, I found that the minute hand had just passed 2 minutes. This was a short period because a pack of fast microwave rice shows that it only takes two minutes to heat. It was strange that I could feel the sense of a very long or short period of time when I focused on the movement of the second hand because I also felt a tempo mixed by my own heart beating and the second hand ticking sounds. I counted something with the tempo. I did not murmur numbers or recognise the passing of time; I just has a sense of time. This reminded me the feeling of looking at the afternoon sunlight on the wall; the piece of 'light' 'floating', 'surfing' and 'flowing' on a wall, and sometimes the sunshine would disappear for a while. It was like a door or an exit leading to a dimension without time pressure, an access to a state of being in a 'vacuum'.

I have exhibited three works in the final exhibition in July of 2015. Two were the *Rice Series: Rice* and *Winter Rice*. I was exploring how to make more work in the final show with the similar process and direction as the *Rice series*. The result was that the third work, *Quinoa & Wheat*, was a site-specific one for the Lifton Studios and summer nature light. I have made a deeper and better exploration through the latest work.

*Rice Series*⁴⁵

I had no exact motive to make this project, but I was thinking about time, light and space. I was frustrated by unsuccessful proposals and the stock development of new works. One day I would like to make an experiment. The shooting process taught me

⁴⁴ *Time–Sculpturing Project* (2014-2015)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year3/timesculpting-project>>

⁴⁵ *Rice Series* includes two works (for now):

Rice (2014) <<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year3/timesculpting-project/rice>>, *Winter Rice* (2015)

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year4/winterrice>>



1.20 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Rice*, Video Still, 2014,
Digital Moving Image, 86'26'', Loop, 16:9.



1.21 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Winter Rice*,
Video Still, 2015,
Digital Moving Image, 10'16'', Loop, 1:1.

something that I felt it could worth developing further. It started when I bought an Acrylic desk because I wanted to know what an object looked like through a macro lens if it was put on a transparent desk against a white wall with the light from a desk lamp.

I wanted a transparent desk because I originally wanted to make objects float like an astronaut in the air without too much after-effect. I admit that I am quite a fan of science-fiction movies. The possibility of transcending the ordinary dimension of everyday life attracts me, so that, in my former works, such as *Reading* and *Dressing*, I usually created some places where there was no trace of life and with an angle close to the ground. Also, my work does not contain much warmth; it involves testing experiments. Sometimes I record the partial results of an incomplete experiment and my perspective is usually in the form of a close-up. I am not acting like ants in a big forest. I am imaging the view from a camera as a space probe and I am the person behind the machine.

Back to the work. Why use rice? I had a pack of Basmati rice, which is an economical choice for my main staple food. Basmati is a variety of long-grain rice, which is traditionally from North India and Pakistan. I can find Basmati rice very easily in most supermarkets in the UK. Today, the Taiwanese mainly eat Penglai Rice or Japonica Rice. Penglai Rice is a new breed that was created by the Japanese when they colonised Taiwan. Before the colonisation, Taiwanese farmers used to grow Indica Rice, which was a kind of long grain rice that originated in China. The Japanese used Japonica rice to breed Penglai Rice, which is a short-grain cultivar. Generally speaking, Penal Rice is softer and more tender and chewy than Basmati. I can buy Japonica rice in Chinese or Japanese markets, but it is more expensive and inconvenient, so I usually choose Basmati Rice for financial reasons, although I appreciate japonica rice more. Although there seems to be little difference, it actually matters to an Asian.

I had an electric rice cooker but it was broken in that time. There was half a pack of basmati rice left, but it was past the sell-by date, so it was inedible. The day when I made the shooting experiments, I thought of the ‘useless’ rice and put some rice grains on the transparent desk to observe through my macro lens.

Basmati rice normally looks thinner, dryer and darker than Japonica Rice when I see it in my hand. Japonica Rice is whiter, shorter and rounder. However, in the macro lens, very close up, the rice grain’s point was just in front of me. The length of the rice grain was shorter and the light of a lamp projected on the object made it smoother, whiter, shining and quite stunning. The grain was like a pearl or a pebble that had oddly appeared on a piece of glass or an iced ground. Basmati looked like cooked Japonica on

the desk and through the camera, and I was able to see ‘the taste’ I had missed for months. I was able to perceive another kind of sensual perception through the camera. I started to put more and more rice grains on the desk. I put them on one by one. It was not easy. Tiny grains were easily moved by a sudden action. It was also hard to put them with equal gaps. I also tested the light. I manipulated the light. The light gave the grains shades and a reflection on the acrylic desk. Sometimes there were more than one reflection. I shot some continuous photos and wondered what would happen if I joined them. I put them onto the computer and added a cross dissolve effect between every photo. I then manipulated the different angles of light on the rice grains to form a spectacular moving lighting image.

Description of the Work

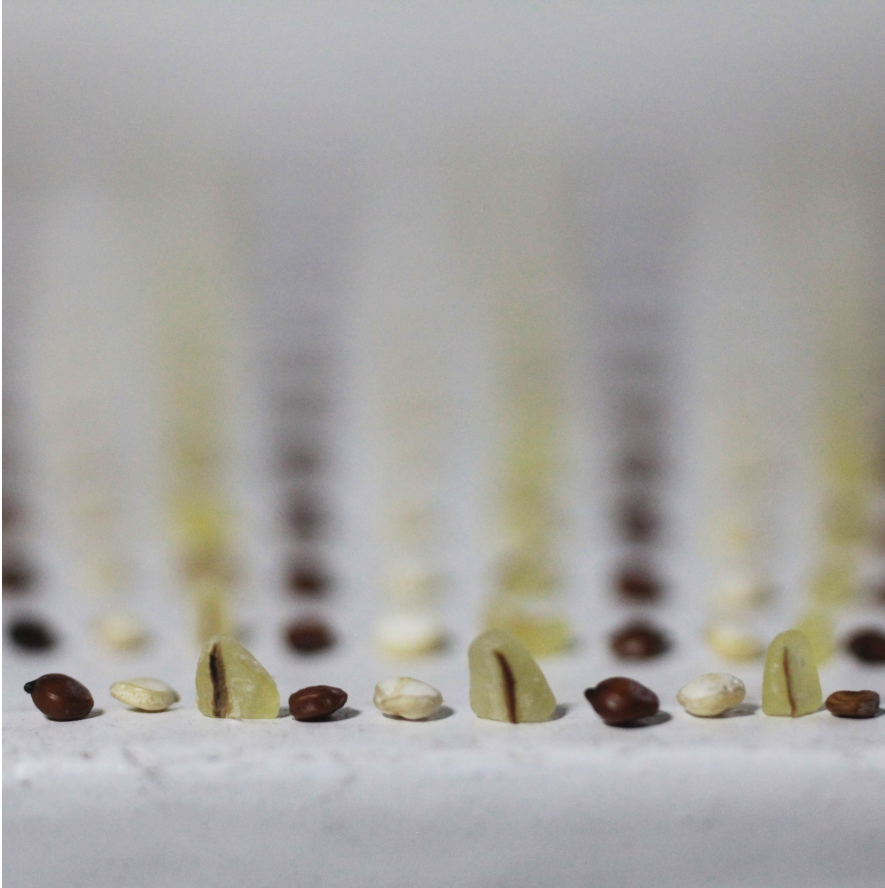
In this process, I worked with time, movement, rice and light. The object photographed was rice. I placed the grains of rice one by one, and when they had filled the ‘frame of the screen’ in my lens, I removed them one by one. I took a photograph whenever I placed a grain of rice or changed the direction of the light. I used 465 grains of rice and took 1355 photographs. Then I joined the 1355 photographs together in software and edited them to make a moving-image.

The main concept of the film is ‘measuring’. I used the process of placing rice to measure the range of the lens’s zooming in/out and the frame. The clear zone moved from the furthest to the closest line. I used a Canon Compact-Macro Lens EF 50mm 1:2.5. to take the film. The results of the experiment showed a specific range of the lens. Since the lens is a Macro lens, the scale of the rice was changed by the process of seeing photographically. The rice looked like a stone or sculpture on an iced ground or floating in milky air. The original materiality of rice was transformed. I manipulated the light to create a virtual movement to place the ‘stones’ into a different dimension.

In the process of filming, I was not only a photographer, but also a farmer or a scientist. I needed to be careful of the physical condition of the environment when making the photographs. Since the floor of my room is not firm, I needed to stand in the very same place to take every photo. If I stood in a slightly different place, my weight would unbalance the floor. I needed to keep my room sound and stable to avoid small grains of rice moving. When placing the rice grains one by one, the time passed through my fingers. The time had not gone because I preserved every moment of placing every grain of rice. I imported 1355 photographs into my software, extended every photo’s thickness and made an overlay between every photo.

This was a work designed to be played on a loop. It ideally welcomes viewers to encounter it at any second of the film. I do not expect viewers to see a whole round (01:26:26) of the loops, but they will be able to sense what I would like to convey in any second of the work.

Quinoa & Wheat (1.22)⁴⁶



1.22 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Quinoa & Wheat*, Video Still, 2015, Digital Moving Image, 33'02'', Sound, Loop, 1:1.

The work was with similar direction to the *Rice* and *Winter Rice*. The most different point was that I explored the sounds aspect in the work. I will illustrate the installation, technical and sound details in the section ii and v of the Conclusion.

⁴⁶ *Quinoa & Wheat* (2015) < <https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year4/quinoa--wheat>>

Apple (1.23)⁴⁷

1.23
 Hui-Hsuan Hsu, *Apple*,
 2014,
 Digital Moving Image
 Installation View,
 Projection on custom
 round wood screen,
 13'37",
 Loop, 16:9

**Description of the Work**

This work involved an apple, a desk lamp, a paper with a white background, and time. However, I was not offering a video to depict an object (apple) or to show a kind of digital device. I wanted to quietly dislodge the readable signs from the familiar. I created a platform to show something between the familiar and the unfamiliar. I wanted to subtly make an apple a non-apple, make light non-light and make time non-time. I wanted to create a sense of a vacuum. The oddness is that the apple looks normal, but the oddness can be seen after viewing it for some time. The motivation for the work came from an over-chilled apple. The coolness made the apple look as if it was wearing a veil over a fading red surface with some lighter random spots. I left the apple on a table and watched it naturally defrosting and the prolonged watching made me want to make this work. The shape, the surface and the gesture of the observation evoked a sense of being involved with astronomy although I was looking at a thing so closely. The photographed object still retains its character, but the unfamiliar familiarly makes

⁴⁷ *Apple* (2014) < <https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year3/timesculpting-project/apple>>

the viewer wonder and imagine. By looking at a common object, I expect to show the viewer an opportunity to find their universe in their eyes.

The Process

I did not use a close-up perspective as I usually did. I took a 'normal' and 'straight' angle. I retained the whole shape and tried to make the apple like an ordinary graphic to show a common knowledge for a medical, psychological or educational test. I intentionally used a white background and tried to make the photograph less artistic. I placed the apple in the middle of the frame. I did not move it and I just adjusted the desk lamp to make the light projection from different angles, so that, in the series of still photos, the only changing factor was the spot lighting. The moving trajectory of the lighting surrounded the apple so that the light formed very classical light spots on the surface. Then I imported the photos into the computer software, Adobe Photoshop. Having ordered the light surrounding the apple, I overlaid the photos onto each other, one by one. I intentionally removed every obvious shadow that occurred because of different lighting sources in every photo and just retained a very light and small shadow in the top photo. Then, I imported these photoshopped photos into Final Cut Pro to make an animated video. I placed the dissolve effect to join these continuous still photos to blur and overlap the changing of successive photos. In time, the animation showed the movement of the lighting spots onto the apple's surface. Because I removed the shadows, the apple looked odd. We are used to seeing light and shadow appearing together, but here the shadow had gone. I would like to pretend that the apple was floating in a vacuum like a planet or a sculpture in an unknown dimension. I plan to show the work playing on a loop. The viewers can see the time, imagine their sense of the universe and encounter any second of the work, no matter when they enter the exhibition.

CHAPTER 2

Part I The Prosthesis

Introduction

How can I situate my practice in a theoretical context? Or rather, what resources exist for me to present the research question of my practice in relation to a selected range of writings on vision, the body, the gaze, the image, and the artwork? As a Mandarin speaker, I am exploring both the process of considering the digital moving image not as a virtuality or substitute but as a means of exploring human perception in its own physiological fragility and variability as well as in terms of understanding, via the difference between Chinese character thinking and Western alphabetic thinking, that which words such as mind, brain, imagination, memory... etc seek to convey as the registration of perception as memory and as the storehouse of what becomes a subject.

Motive for Adopting ‘Prosthesis’

While working on the transfer paper in April 2012, I was searching for a word that could cover multiple meanings, namely, ‘device’, ‘relationship’, and ‘extension’. Firstly, it needed to be a noun to replace the device, the ‘camera’. Although I mainly use a camera, it is not the only device I use in the process of making artworks. Although the camera is the main stimulus to address the research, the laptop, software, and projector should also be generally included in the devices. Secondly, the relationship between the artist and the device is the central concern of my work and research; therefore, a word is needed to connect the subject and the object. Thirdly, it should be something designed to extend or improve human beings’ physical condition in the way that a camera can help human beings to immediately freeze a moment that cannot be captured by the human eye.

The word ‘prosthesis’ did not appear in my thoughts until my mother sent me some Taiwanese food and books in a giant box⁴⁸. One of the books was a journal published by the Tainan National University of the Arts—*Critique of Taiwan* 2012,

⁴⁸ My mother sent me a huge parcel of Taiwanese food as a birthday present. In addition, she thought I might be interested in reading some of the newest Taiwanese journals and randomly chose two or three of the newest volumes of *Critique of Taiwan*. This was a beautiful/useful present/coincidence for me.

No.50. (藝術觀點),⁴⁹ which was entitled *The Prosthetic-Image: Or, How We Learn to Stop Fearing and Love the Heterogeneous Body*. (趨向影像—幽肢：或，我們是如何學會停止恐懼以及熱愛異質的變體) This title hit me immediately. The editors had used a hyphen to connect the words *Prosthetic* and *Image*. This astonished me and reminded me that artwork itself is a kind of prosthesis. I began to focus on the term, *Prosthesis*. I found some references by reading the footnotes of the articles, including Ceila Lury, Bernard Stiegler, John Crary, David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder. The journal included eight articles discussing the issue. The Journal was edited in Mandarin Chinese, and the articles are written by authors who write mainly in Mandarin Chinese with some particular English footnotes. The use of Prosthesis in Mandarin Chinese in this journal can be found to be three kinds, 義肢, 幽肢, 假肢 in order of frequency of use.

Meaning of Prosthesis in Mandarin Chinese⁵⁰

Taiwanese people normally use the term 義肢 to represent a prosthesis. It can be seen on the signboards of most medical prosthesis stores, and is most frequently used by different authors in journal articles. However, Chinese people do not use 義肢 (prosthesis); rather, they call it 假肢 (prosthesis). Nevertheless, 幽肢 is the key word used by the editors in the main title. This term was probably created by editors to replace the general use of 義肢 (prosthesis). As a Taiwanese, I have come across this term in general conversation or reading before, but I am not entirely sure of the meaning of the replacement. However, since editors still use 義肢 even though they use 假肢 in their introduction, I will explain/analyse the Mandarin Chinese meaning of these terms and hope that the reason for using them may become clear later.

⁴⁹ Jiann-Guang Lin and Song-Yong Sin, 'The Prosthetic-Image: Or, How We Learn to Stop Fearing and Love the Heterogeneous Body', *Critique of Taiwan* No.50 (2012)

⁵⁰ I am Taiwanese and I can speak Mandarin Chinese, Taiwanese and English. When explaining the kind of native language I speak, I need to describe the complexity first. There are multiple complex and persistent issues between Taiwan and China, including culture, politics, economics, identity and language. The official language in Taiwan is Mandarin Chinese but it does not mean that everyone in Taiwan is Chinese. It could be said that just because people use the same language, it does not mean that they are from the same country, similar to the linguistic situation between U.S.A, U.K. and other countries taking English as the official language. Although Taiwan appears to have an independent government, the status of the world is in a mist, and in terms of the language issue, Taiwan has adopted Mandarin Chinese as its official language since it was established as a 'country' in 1912. At that time, speaking the dialect (namely Taiwanese) in schools was a punishable offence. The Taiwanese speak Mandarin Chinese and write in the traditional Chinese format, whereas China uses simplified Chinese. The two groups speak with different accents. The language used in Taiwan and China has many differences; for example, when mentioning prosthesis in Mandarin Chinese, the Taiwanese use 義肢 and the Chinese use 假肢. They have the same general meaning, but there are very subtle differences in the language and cultural habits.

Mandarin Chinese is an extremely poetic and fascinating language, but it is also extremely complex. One character can represent various meanings when it is placed next to different characters and then is enveloped into different terms. The following is my hypothesis of the editors' thought of 幽肢. There is no doubt that 肢 means the limb of an animal, but what is the meaning of 幽⁵¹? According to my knowledge of my native language and an online dictionary,⁵² the shape of the character 幽 is mainly structured by a skeleton 山 (shān, a mountain) and some '幺' that look like planets or insects on a mountain. According to the pronunciation of 'yōu', 幽 sounds very like 黝 (yōu). In Mandarin Chinese, similar pronunciations can sometimes refer to similar meanings⁵³. 黝 means the colour black; therefore, 幽 can infer a scene in darkness, not a bright place, and unsuitable for a gathering of people talking loudly. When describing a private 'under the table' meeting, especially related to a sexual affair, it can be said to be 幽會.⁵⁴ When imagining a flourishing forest on a mountain, the sunshine would find it hard to break through the trees, so there would be plenty of dark corners and shadows. Therefore, 幽靜⁵⁵ is a compound adjective to describe the status of being physically silent and psychologically peaceful. A poorly-lit place, such as a valley, which is perfect for hiding something/someone is called 幽谷,⁵⁶ which can also infer that someone is not hiding voluntarily. A person who may be imprisoned and forced to stay out of the

⁵¹ 幽 is pronounced yōu.

⁵² 漢典 <<http://www.zdic.net/z/19/js/5E7D.htm>> (accessed 30 March 2014)

⁵³ It is possible to tell a story using Mandarin Chinese, even with only two or three characters. For example, three characters of my name, 徐嘒堦 (Hsu, Hui-Hsuan) given to me by my parents, have a character in the middle which is also pronounced "hui", but the meaning of 嘒 is totally different from the more general character 會 (hui, meeting; date). 嘒 is a rarely used to make a name in Mandarin Chinese. 嘒 has two meanings, one is visual, a small but bright star, while the other is audial, a kind of quiet but clear and melodious sound. In fact, when my full name is made of three characters, it has a new meaning, which matches the attribute of my artworks. The last character 堦 (xuān) is also a rare word. 堦 is an ancient round instrument made of clay with six small holes. My surname 徐 (xú) is an adverb, slowly and gently. The combined meaning of my full name is an image of a gently small shining star with a slow low volume but clear and melodious sound from an instrument (device). The reason for devising such a name may be that my parents were primary school teachers, but also played the zither in their spare time, so they were quite passionate about music when I was born. Then, they shifted their interest to study ceramics when I was seven years old. They had no idea that they were hiding a character that showed their future career in my name. Today, they are both internationally well-known, especially in Asia, for their artwork constructed in clay.

⁵⁴ 會 (hui) can mean a group/one-to-one meeting, an event/ceremony/assembly or a date, particularly between two people.

⁵⁵ 靜 (jìng) means quiet and silence.

⁵⁶ 谷 (gǔ) is a valley.

public view is called 幽禁.⁵⁷ A dark and silent forest can also evoke a sense of ghostly imagination. A ghost is 幽靈.⁵⁸ The 幽 of 幽肢 can be seen to have ghostly attributes, like a puff of smoke with a weak white light, floating or flying like an absent presences in the dark/night who prefer not to show themselves in public or in the bright light of day. 幽肢 means a prosthesis that connects humans, the Others, and the world in a secret and ghostly way.

義肢 is the most general usage of prosthesis in Taiwan. 義⁵⁹ is made up of 羊⁶⁰ and 我⁶¹. 羊 is an animal, sheep or goat. In ancient Chinese culture, sheep meant kindness and hospitality, but a sheep or a goat also means oblation. 我 means the singular first person pronoun, I, me, myself. However, in ancient times, 我 was not the singular I. 我 included an 戈 (gē, dagger; chaos caused by war); therefore, 我 was an ancient weapon of warriors or soldiers. Some characters that imply weapons, war and fighting mainly have an 戈 in them, such as 戰 (zhàn, war), 戟 (jǐ, halberd), and 伐 (fá, attack; strike). In various artworks in ancient literature, scholars did not use 我 for I. They mainly used 吾(wú) or 余 (yú) to mean I. Qin Shi Huangdi (秦始皇帝) began to adopt or create 朕 (zhèn) as his own personal pronoun, but only the emperor could use it. 我, the particular weapon, gradually disappeared after the Qin Dynasty (秦朝, 221-207 BC). 我 was more used with 們 (mén) in the earlier usage, while 我們 means the plural pronoun, us.⁶² Soldiers carrying weapons could evoke a sense of unity and passion.

As time passed, 我 was gradually developed to mean a sense of self-consciousness because the weapon (戈) in 我 can be seen to be a sort of boundary consciousness or ego defence to differentiate myself from the Others and the world. When looking back at 義, a general and similar explanation of 義 could be someone trying to do something nice (like the symbol of the sheep) or nicer than before. When

⁵⁷ 禁 (jìn) means a kind of physical prohibition, such as locking someone in a space.

⁵⁸ 靈 (líng) here can either mean the soul, which is different from the body, or on some occasions or religion, it means deity, especially in polytheism. Ghost and deity are notions beyond human but they are with humans and can conceal themselves. They are absent while present. Sometimes people would use 靈魂 (hún) to mean a piece of the soul.

⁵⁹ 義 is pronounced as yì.

⁶⁰ 羊 is pronounced as yáng.

⁶¹ 我 is pronounced as wǒ.

⁶² Shao-Yi Liu, GuoXue, 27th November 2011, < <http://www.zdic.net/z/1a/sw/6211.htm>, <http://www.guoxue.com/?p=2702>> (accessed 30 March 2014)

looking at 義 in depth, it has subtle differences in meaning. Right/good/kind behaviour related to a sense of justice (正義) and 義舉⁶³ or 義行⁶⁴ are things that make society better and near perfect or support/uplift some vulnerable/non-profit groups/events/institutions. These kinds of actions or support normally ask for nothing in return. They are similar to being a volunteer in an institution; a volunteer is called 義工.⁶⁵ A sense of loyalty in relationships and affection, especially between friends or co-workers or the mafia or a gang, is said to be 義氣.⁶⁶ This is a sort of group atmosphere that has a bright side, but is also blind; for example, people need each other and help each other, whether they are doing good or bad things. The most important point is that this affection does not ask for any reward; it is completely voluntary. In this sense, it is easy to see that 義 implies sacrifice like offering sheep as an oblation.

When someone adopts a child, the child would be called a 義子⁶⁷ or 義女⁶⁸. When celebrities or rich people adopt children from poor countries as a charity, whether it is right or wrong, it appears to be a good thing. Some couples who cannot have their own children would also consider adopting a child. Adoption is apparently a kind of action that makes make people or a family complete. It is also an artistically-chosen relationship without original biological ties. Therefore, biologically and genetically, an adopted child can be said to be a ‘fake’ or ‘unnatural’ son/daughter. Finally, we can go back to examining 義肢 (prosthesis). 義 is used for 義肢 (prosthesis) and can have a variety of deep meanings. A prosthesis has no biological tie to the body; it is fake and unnatural, which is why Chinese people normally use 假肢 for a prosthesis. 假⁶⁹ means fake and not original.⁷⁰ In addition, a prosthesis is normally designed to help people to become more complete or better, so they need to choose a suitable prosthesis. Sometimes people adopt a prosthesis that may appear to perfectly match their body, but they sometimes suffer from its use. This is not a true perfection; it is just a superficial

⁶³ 舉 (jǔ) is an action or a behaviour.

⁶⁴ 行 (xíng) is a behaviour or capability.

⁶⁵ 工 (gōng) is labour.

⁶⁶ 氣 (qì) is a status of spirit.

⁶⁷ 子 (zǐ) here means a male child, a son.

⁶⁸ 女 (nǚ) here means a female child, a daughter.

⁶⁹ 假 (jiǎ)

⁷⁰ In my opinion, the Taiwanese 義肢 used for prosthesis is more diverse and much better related to deep cultural thinking than the single meaning of 假肢.

impression. A prosthesis would not ask any return from the user because it is artistically designed for a particular person; therefore, in some sense, a prosthesis is voluntary.

The reason the editors chose to use 幽肢 rather than the more common term 義肢 is much clearer after the above analysis and comparison. The adoption of 幽肢 as a key word in the title gives a prosthesis a more imaginative, active personality and more humility than 義肢. 幽肢 explains that a prosthesis can be a lightweight mediation like a ghost or a deity to invisibly control/manipulate/affect throughout the relationship. In addition, the most important point is that the volume focuses on image, more specifically a moving image like artwork in a video or film. Moving images have similar characteristics to ghosts and deities, somewhere between real and virtual, between still and moving, between light and shadow, between absence and presence, between subjectivity and objectivity, and between the physical and psychological. 幽肢 has room for more creativity and more discourses than the general 義肢 in fine art research.

Having read the journal, I began to focus on the concept of ‘prosthesis’. My interest was aroused by the Taiwanese journal, but the editors had adopted the concept of prosthesis from some Western scholars or thinkers. My initial understanding of the idea of prosthesis in my mind is based on my native language. The Mandarin Chinese meaning and the English meaning are diverse because of the difference between the Eastern and Western Cultures. An original English prosthesis from Western cultural research is introduced in the next section.

Meaning of Prosthesis in English

What is the originality of ‘prosthesis’ in linguistics? According to The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, ‘Prosthesis (philol.) addition of a letter or syllable at the beginning of a word. XVI. — Late L. — Gr. prósthesis, f. prostithénai add, f. prósto; see THESIS.’⁷¹

According to the Oxford Online Dictionary⁷², the English word contains two meanings;

In Medicine it can mean an artificial body part, such as a limb, a heart, or a breast implant. In Linguistics: the addition of a letter or syllable at

⁷¹ "Prosthesis" Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology. Ed. T. F. Hoad. Oxford University Press, 1996. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press. University of Leeds. Oxford University Press. Love the Heterogeneous B2031>

⁷² *Oxford Online Dictionary*, <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/prosthesis?q=prosthesis>, s.v. ‘prosthesis’.

the beginning of a word, as in Spanish *escuela* derived from Latin *scola*.

Sarah S. Jain (1999) describes, ““Prostheses” as discursive frameworks, as well as material artefacts.’⁷³ The English word ‘prosthesis’ is derived from Greek ‘*προσθεσι*’, meaning application and addition. Its use was first recorded around 1553 in the field of poetry and grammar ‘as a term of rhetoric meaning ‘attached to’ or “setting forth” or, literally, “adding a syllable to the beginning of a word.”’ After 1704 the word was adopted in the area of medicine for the use of artificial tools to ‘replace’ or ‘supply’ or ‘complete’ the weaknesses of the human body, namely missing/ageing organs.⁷⁴ Generally speaking, a ‘prosthesis’ may generate a negative feeling in people, although it is ideally designed to perfect our imperfection. It may recall the classic image of a wooden leg or metal hand; however, following the cross-field cooperation of digital, medical and military technology, the definition of ‘prosthesis’ has increasingly expanded. More and more exquisite digital devices can be described as personal prostheses, and giant machines for factory labour and telecommunication systems can be described as public prosthesis. In terms of medical use, a prosthesis is not only an external joint with an unlike human appearance, but also an artistic internal organ. ‘A degree of incorporation into the body’⁷⁵ should be re-considered and re-examined when this kind of cooperation is taken for granted today.

Jain suggested that Freud ([1930] 1962) gave a ‘hesitant caveat’ to prosthesis: ‘...When he puts on all his auxiliary organs he is truly magnificent, but those organs have not grown on him and they still give him much trouble at times.’⁷⁶ Jain mentioned that this warning was derived from Freud’s own experience of using a prosthesis because of throat cancer in 1923. Once the prosthesis was embedded in his mouth, it could not be taken out for more than two hours, otherwise the tissue around the mouth and nasal cavity would shrink. It seems that once a prosthesis is used in a human body, there may be reflective pain when it stops being used. This kind of ‘simultaneously wounding and enabling’ embodiment of using prostheses and the over-ideal expectation of technology form a polarisation, which Jain argued in the article is ‘The prosthetic imagination: Enabling and disabling the prosthesis trope’ from various perspectives, including disability, labour, mass production and marketing. Jain was concerned that

⁷³ Sarah S. Jain, ‘The prosthetic imagination: Enabling and disabling the prosthesis trope.’ *Science, Technology & Human Values* 24.1 (1999), p. 32

⁷⁴ Jain, ‘The prosthetic imagination’, p. 32

⁷⁵ Jain, ‘The prosthetic imagination’, p. 32

⁷⁶ Sigmund Freud, [1930] 1962. *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey. New York: W. W. Norton, pp. 42

promising technologies may not only enable, but also in some way, disable human bodies/organs.

At the beginning of this section, I gave a general definition of ‘a prosthesis’. So, how does my work explore the concept of a prosthesis? What kind of prosthesis would I use during the process? What singular method would I adopt during the process? Digital techniques play a different role in my artworks to that made explicit in behind-the-scenes features of DVD releases by the animators at Pixar and DreamWorks, who emphasise large visual-arts teams relying on the creation of dazzling and spectacular visual effects that are technically complicated to render. My work, as well as that of others with a similar approach, focuses on the experience of using the tools and a special language generated from individual artists’ experience of using digital techniques.

As for an artist like me, I would like to provide an interesting example related to the adoption of a prosthesis. There is a proverb in Chinese: 水能載舟，亦能覆舟。 (Water can overturn the boat as well as float it). Another interpretation in English is ‘The same knife cuts bread and fingers.’ At a glance, these two interpretations in a different language seem the same; they are about using a tool as a prosthesis to deal with an object and it may simultaneously hurt and help during the process.

The Chinese interpretation may mislead people that the water is the tool, the prosthesis, but in fact, the sentence contains two meanings; one is that there is a person on the boat and the other is that the prosthesis is the boat. In the former, the human adopts the prosthesis, while the human is absent in the latter. This hypothesis treats the body of water as the prosthesis (by an unknown invisible subject), which can make the boat float, but can also devour it. The English interpretation has no such problem; the knife is clearly the tool and the fingers refer to a human presence. When humans work with an unfamiliar tool/device/object, it is always dangerous, but exciting. The following is an imaginary plot made by me that includes a human, a prosthesis and an object;

A girl is running away from something. She arrives at the river and there is a boat but she has never rowed a boat or learnt to swim. She is confronted by an escaping prosthesis, a boat and an unknown object, a river. If she conquers her fear and successfully moves across the river she will survive and there is a new path on the opposite bank.

This is a metaphor designed to describe the use of a device as a prosthesis in the process of making artworks. The river and the boat (the object and the prosthesis) are created by nature and humans, but they are not a perfect ‘fit’ for everyone. The girl needs to

immediately create a personal set of skills to use the boat on the water in order to survive, and survival is just a concept until she does. The process needs to be achieved if the girl wants to overcome her current difficulties. I imagine that this situation is quite like the action of using a photographic device (camera). The girl is panicking and almost on the edge of a nervous breakdown; she needs to work out a way to balance the water and the boat. She needs to familiarise herself with the structure of the boat and the unstable and irregular flow of the water. The water relates to the object being photographed, and the boat is the camera, which is the medium between the person and the object. Therefore, I would like to revise the proverb: 人能水上泛舟，亦能覆舟水中。(Humans can row the boat on the river as well as drown with the boat in the river). It can be imagined that the girl might practice with some clumsy gestures. This is the passage through familiarity. I think that operating a device would share the same statement. Through every awkward practice, the girl (the artist) might find a very singular method to connect the object and the prosthesis.

The word, ‘prosthesis’ implies multiple meanings, including supplement, addition and replacement, but I would like to argue the meaning, since some people would view a camera as a supplement of the human eye. In the visual arts, many creators considered techniques to be an extension of the body's physical senses because they compensated for the weaknesses of the artist's own senses. Digital cameras and camcorders are like mechanical versions of the human eye that can see further, closer and faster. However, this is just a perfect, positive precondition without considering negative possibilities.

If the above-mentioned boat was a kind of supplement or addition, there would be no risk of failure, although the girl may perhaps misuse the power to upset the boat. In fact, this is similar to using a camera. Cameras are designed to augment the human's weakness, but whether they are a supplement or not should be decided by the way in which people use them. The camera (prosthesis) needs to be activated by its user, who could transform some plan into a successful practice. For example, some people emphasise the primary function of a camera, which is recording. A camera is used to capture an image as a way of retaining a memory, compensating for the brain's inability to accurately remember a large volume of imagery. Photographs are seen as marks, souvenirs or records of our lives; however, if the skill of controlling the camera is substandard, for instance, the picture is taken by a shaking hand, the memory will be distorted. The original meaning of the recording is gone and the original memory in the brain may even be supplanted or replaced by unclear, wrong and blurred information.

The prosthesis is not a fixed bridge for people to just cross to another place without any effort; it is a living object or concept. Otherwise, there would not be many different kinds of photographs taken by different people in the world.

The Fault of Epimetheus–The Original Fault of Body

The western disability studies scholars, David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder, argue that the term suggests that bodies are incomplete and lacking functions that need to be fixed by a prostheses, and the determination of a normal or subnormal body affects the concept of a prosthesis.⁷⁷ Classical humanism considers that the body has a complete and fixed essence, so that a prosthesis is just a route to restore an incomplete body to its original corporeal wholeness. The function of this perspective of prosthesis is to overcome the difference between normal and abnormal bodies. However, the human body itself is not a complete and closed system; it needs to communicate with the external world. A circuitous system that combines a prosthesis and a human could transfer the outer matter into interior memories, consciousness and spirit. In this way of thinking, the prosthesis is not only an added supplement, but also a factor that constitutes a body.

I used the essay written by Benjamin Roberts, ‘Cinema as mnemotechnics: Bernard Stiegler and the industrialisation of memory’,⁷⁸ to help me to understand Bernard Stiegler’s multi-volume work *Technics and Time*. This essay is about Bernard Stiegler, who writes about the way in which humans represent themselves and their consciousness by non-human or inorganic means. Roberts wrote the essay to illustrate that Stiegler’s emphasis of considering technics shifted from ‘prosthesis’ to ‘mnemotechnics.’ According to Roberts, in *Technics and Time 1: The Fault of Epimetheus*,⁷⁹ Stiegler attempts to explore the role of technology in a changing society and is seen to proceed his argument with two different threads related to prosthesis/technics at the beginning of the work. The first thread involves addressing the anthropological question of the origin of humans and showing a potentially different perspective. Roberts explains Stiegler’s perspective as follows;

⁷⁷ I am drawing on ‘Nature, Technicity and Modernity: "Originary Prosthesis" in the Films of Healthy Realism’ in which the author Jiann-Guang Lin discusses the word ‘prosthesis’ of David T. Mitchell and Sharon L. Snyder.

⁷⁸ Benjamin Roberts, 2006. ‘Cinema as mnemotechnics: Bernard Stiegler and the industrialisation of memory.’ *Angelaki*, 11(1), p.55–63

⁷⁹ Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time: The Fault of Epimetheus. Vol. 1*. Trans. Richard Beardsworth and George Collins (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998.)

...the origin of the human is to be found not in some essence of the human being itself, whether biological or transcendental, but rather in a new relation between the living and the non-living, or a new process of exteriorisation whereby the “interior” of the living being becomes inextricably bound up with an “exterior” realm of tools or of inscription.

In the second strand, Stiegler aims to show that technics have been repressed throughout the history of philosophy, from Plato to Heidegger. He especially refers to Heidegger’s fundamental error of technics, which he perceives as failing to recognise the importance of technics’ constitutive role in temporality. Why does Stiegler say that technics have long been repressed as an object of thought in the history of philosophy? Roberts believes that the two ostensibly different strands of Stiegler could be explained by the character of Epimetheus. Protagoras’ version of the Greek myth is that Epimetheus and Prometheus are brothers. Epimetheus gives various animals different, but balanced, powers in the belief that this balance could help to maintain harmony as different species vanished or were overpowered. Unfortunately, forgetful Epimetheus makes the mistake of not giving humans any power. In *The Collected Dialogues*, Plato describes Epimetheus leaving humans ‘naked, unshod, unbedded and unarmed’. When Prometheus realises the mistake, he steals skills from the gods in the form of art, and fire from Zeus, in an effort to repair the fault in humans;

Since then, man has had a share in the portion of the gods, in the first place because of his divine kinship he alone among living creatures believed in gods, and set to work to erect altars, and images of them. Secondly, by the art which they possessed, men soon discovered articulate speech and names, and invented houses and clothes and shoes and bedding and got food from the earth. (*The Collected Dialogues* 322a)⁸⁰

This result could refer to the two strands mentioned by Stiegler. He notes the myth for illustrating the origin of humans. Humans are not like other animals with a pulsating consciousness; we are actually weaker in terms of speed and strength. In effect, the essence of humans is non-essence; as Roberts mentions, ‘The origin of the human is thus constituted by a lack.’⁸¹ Therefore, there can be no standard for classifying people as normal or abnormal, because we are all born with a fault.

The personality of the brothers is more important to Stiegler. Prometheus is described as clever, while Epimetheus is depicted as foolish. Although it seems that

⁸⁰ Plato. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, in Edith Hamilton, Huntington Cairns(eds), Lane Cooper (trans), (Princeton: Princeton University Press,1961.)

⁸¹ Roberts, 2006. ‘Cinema as Mnemotechnics’, p.55–63

Prometheus was kind in correcting his brother's mistake, Roberts proposes that this action caused a double fault,

Epimetheus is forgotten by a philosophy, which would see humanity constituted positively through the gifts and qualities that Prometheus bestows, and not through the original lack or fault of Epimetheus.....It is necessary for both Titans, Prometheus and Epimetheus, to understand the "origin" of the human, which would be constituted both by the lack or default and what comes to make up for that default in the form of a prosthesis (tekhne-).

It is because tools or technics are not seen as being subordinate to humans that human history has not evolved with genetic factors, but with technical evolution or 'the evolution of "organised inorganic beings".'⁸²

Anything could be a prosthesis; for example, a notebook, a cosmetic, an eye shadow, a mug, a car, a train, etc., but there is a philosophy that seems to be afraid that technics would dominate society and overpower humans so that, for example, humans would lose their position in labour practices, like Adorno's concept. Within this process of technical evolution, individual experiences are not only accumulated, but also transferred into a group experience of society, transferring the past experience, memories and knowledge into both the present and the future, thus protecting and enhancing culture. Digital techniques and digital images (film) are the most important prostheses in contemporary times.⁸³

Tertiary Memory

At the end of the first volume of *Technics and Time: The Fault of Epimetheus*, Stiegler mentions an important term, *Tertiary Memory*, which he develops in later volumes. The discussion is based on Husserl. Stiegler uses the idea of *Tertiary Memory* to argue the distinction between Husserl's Primary and Secondary Retention in temporality. As Roberts mentions, 'For Husserl, primary retention is part of the very constitution of the temporal object and therefore part of perception in as much as we perceive temporal objects. The key example of a temporal object in Husserl, and the one that Stiegler concerns himself with, is the melody.'

It seems that the title of my thesis can echo Husserl's concept of retention. As Stiegler emphasises, the act of perception can refer to the primary retention, and the

⁸² Stiegler, *Technics and Time*.p.17

⁸³ Jiann-Guang Lin, Nature, Technicity and Modernity: 'Originary Prosthesis' in Films of Healthy Realism, *Art Critique of Taiwan* 2012, No.50, p.14-21

secondary retention is related to the imagination. However, I would like to share a partial perspective of Stiegler's argument in which he says, 'I no longer agree at all with Husserl when he claims that primary retention owes *nothing at all* to secondary retention.'⁸⁴ Husserl makes an absolute distinction between primary retention (perception) and secondary retention (imagination); in fact, he believes they are opposites. Absolute distinction does not work when considering a kind of retention/memory collected by technics (whether digital or analogue). Stiegler calls this means of retention/memory *Tertiary Memory*. Suppose a melody is the object, if a technic creates a *Tertiary Memory* and preserves the melody in a space, such as a tape or video stored on the Internet, the file can be played repeatedly. Stiegler describes this process as follows;

You only have to listen twice to the same melody to see that between the two auditions, consciousness (the ear, here) never hears the same thing: something has occurred. Each new audition affords a new phenomenon, richer if the music is good, less so if not, and that is why the music lover is an aficionado of repeated auditions – a variation of selections ... From one audition to the next the ear is not the same, precisely because the ear of the second audition has been affected by the first.

As mentioned at the beginning of my thesis, the three states of Perception, Imagination and Representation sometimes occur in order; I perceive, I imagine, I represent, but sometimes they are interwoven, and I am perceiving, imagining and representing all at the same time. A video artist who works with perception, imagination and representation, although complex, may be the best example of this argument. The complexity is that the artist is both the observer and the creator at once. At best, the artist could be the embodiment of proof that the primary and secondary cannot 'always' have absolute distinction; sometimes the distinction is present, but for a short duration. I would like to use my working process as an example for analysis.

When I find something intriguing, I will take as much time as I can to perceive it. I really enjoy this process, even though it may be for a very short time and I only employ primary retention. I do not know how many minutes or seconds I should take, because I am normally beginning to imagine how this *temporal object* can be seen with a camera lens. How can I draw it into my work? This is an act of imagination as well as selection because I am 'framing' it in my brain. The moment I grab my camera, the absolute distinction between primary and secondary retention is immediately blurred. I

⁸⁴ Bernard Stiegler, 'The theater of individuation: phase-shift and resolution in Simondon and Heidegger.' *Parrhesia* 7 (2009), p. 46-57.

observe/record with my camera in front of my eyes, and Stiegler's *Tertiary Memory* is simultaneously being created/recorded in my memory and the memory card of my brain/camera. My body and mind are not only creating a new *Tertiary Memory*, but some preserved experience of creating a past *Tertiary Memory* is immediately emerging to intervene in my present actions, my primary retention and secondary retention.

According to Roberts, 'The gramophone record is one example of the constitution of the temporal object through the intertwining of primary, secondary and tertiary memory.' The melody example reminds me of Ceal Floyer's audio installation work: *'Til I Get It Right* at DOCUMENTA (13) (Kassel, Germany 2016). Ceal Floyer merely used a loop of two lines of lyrics from a song by the American country singer, Tammy Wynette, 'I'll just keep on' and 'Til I Get It Right' to create an endless soundtrack in an empty space. Although the audience can guess that this audio work is a repeated loop, there is no gap or on/off point for them to sense it. There is no 'space' for them to take a break because the perception/imagination mushrooms immediately and repeatedly. They can only imperceptibly murmur or hum the melody and lyrics with the audio using the mouth or the mind and then they may have an incomplete plot in mind to think about the possible relationship between these two lyrics. The audio itself belongs to a tertiary memory. When spectators are walking in the empty space, the audio is generally installed inside their minds, and their consciousness can be intertwined with their perception and imagination because of the representation. As time passes, the audio work will increase the perception/imagination and representation (the murmuring or humming of some spectators may force themselves/other spectators to sense the double representation) will appear again and again.

Cinema is another example, which is normally a general term for technologically-moving images. Cinema is a technology that lives temporarily alongside its spectators, and these two entities build a *conjugation of two coincidences*, which Stiegler describes as follows;

.....on the one hand, the photo-phonographic coincidence of past and reality
... inducing this "reality effect," that is, this belief which is installed in the
spectator immediately by the technique itself.

Although not every kind of moving image emphasises the 'reality effect' or 'the reality', the characteristic of technology related to moving images is capable of grabbing spectators' attention and forcing them to share some time with the moving image, and the selected scope of communication is more or less inevitably embedded

into the spectator's consciousness in the process. I assume that the factor is the ability of the means of representation, which signifies the movement of nature of 'being-in-the-world.' Even an animation or cartoon is a way to 'represent' the world. The important factor in movement is temporality. There is a simple connection between the film and the spectator, namely, duration. Films invite the audience to share a period of time with them and this can build up a field for this particular consciousness. The other coincidence according to Stiegler is as follows;

...on the other hand, the coincidence between the film flux and the flux of consciousness of the film's spectator that triggers, in the play of movement between the photographic stills linked by the phonographic flux, the mechanism of complete adoption of the film's time by the time of the spectator's consciousness that, itself a flux, finds itself captured and "borne along" by the movement of images.

Why does Stiegler direct us from the 'tools become prosthesis' via the *tertiary memory* to 'cinema as mnemotechnics'? This is a process from a single term to a whole system. When thinking about a prosthesis, people usually regard it as an external tool, but in fact, it is installed in our consciousness in an invisible way during usage. Some particular devices/tools, such as audio/visual-related devices, could be mental prostheses that intervene/relocate/transform our consciousness. Cinematic technology is constituted of a photographic device, audial device, projecting device, architectural space, and the spectators' consciousness, which is affected by their previous cinematic experience.

Roberts provides the following short conclusion from Stiegler with a recorded temporal object, a recorded melody;

...it is not perception which makes possible memory and the artefact but the artefact that makes possible both primary and secondary retention: the record allows both the perception of the melody and, crucially, the constant modification of that perception through repeated auditions.

The advent of photography obviously transformed sociology, anthropology, philosophy and art. Celia Lury's work, *Prosthetic Culture: Photography, Memory and Identity* (1988), in which she asks the crucial question, 'What happens to identity in the age of digital imaging?' is analysed in the next section.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Celia Lury, *Prosthetic Culture: Photography, Memory and Identity*, (New York: Routledge 1997), pp.2

**Historical Context of the Vision of Prosthetic Culture:
Photography, Memory and Identity (Lury: 1998)**

The concept of ‘prosthesis’ in the title is borrowed from *Prosthetic Culture: Photography, Memory and Identity*. Celia Lury demonstrates the way in which the relationship between the consciousness, body and memory can be redefined by the change in the method of seeing in the age of digital imagery. She considers some of the ways in which self-identity has changed and is now constituted as a possession of the individual in the contemporary Euro-American society. She suggests that democratic societies have encouraged a kind of possessive individualism, which can be renegotiated in a process of experimentation in what could be called a prosthesis culture. She focuses her analysis on photography and its subjective effect. In a prosthesis culture, the fact that a prosthesis could be perceptual or mechanical would facilitate a kind of self-extension.

In adopting/adapting a prosthesis, individuals create (or are created by) a self-identity that is no longer defined by the edict ‘I think, therefore I am’; rather, it is situated in the statement ‘I can, therefore I am.’ In the ensuing mediated extension of capability, the relationship between the consciousness, body and memory that once defined the possessive individual as a legal personality is experimentally disassembled and reassembled.

Lury suggests that photographic images play a key role in refiguring individuals’ prior self-understanding, since the ability of photography to frame, freeze and fix its objects contributes to this realisation. Although she proposes a wide range of sociological thinking of photography and prosthesis in this book, I will focus on Chapter 7: *Moment and The Body of Photography*⁸⁶, and use her partial theory that emphasises observation and observers as the primary contextual route to explore the further possibilities of digital filming in my future research.

Lury attempts to situate the development of related computer-aided photography, digitalisation and its implications, which she calls ‘non-dimensional’ personalities, by beginning with a discussion of the relationship between vision, the body and subjectivity. The unconscious is considered to be an incommensurable medium between the senses of the human body (including vision) and the components of consciousness (including memory). ‘Photography will be presented in terms of its ability to intervene in this incommensurability as perceptual prosthesis.’⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Lury, *Prosthetic Culture*, p.177

⁸⁷ Lury, *Prosthetic Culture*, p.156

Lury also considers the aesthetic context of the development of photography and its subjective effects via the changing definition of art during the twentieth century. She begins with a debate about observation and observers and introduces the work of the art historian, Jonathan Crary, to help her to explore the radical break in the concept of observation between classical and modern in the mid-1800s.

The break is associated with the collapse of what he calls the *camera obscura* model of vision, and its displacement by radically different notions of what an observer was and of what constituted vision: a physiological optics.⁸⁸

Based on the *Camera Obscura*, Lury suggests that one interpretation of a modern, contrasting model would be that of the *Camera Lucida* by Roland Barthes (1981). According to Jonathan Crary⁸⁹, the classical model of vision dominated the way of seeing during the period from the late 1500s to the end of the 1700s. This method of seeing was based on a precondition of human-centeredness with clear boundaries between the inside and outside, empirical phenomena and introspection, and the observer and the observed. The action of vision and vision itself seem to be ignored in this process of seeing. In terms of the other model, Crary argues that vision has become a bodily process in modern observation: ‘The body which had been a neutral or invisible term in vision now was the thickness from which knowledge of vision was derived.’ He also cites Goethe’s *Theory of Colours* (1810) to provide his research with proof of the emerging emphasis on vision. He suggests that Goethe defines vision as an irreducible amalgam of a physiological process and external stimulation. Having reconceptualised the process of vision, the position of the observer should also be reset within ‘an un-demarcated terrain where the distinction between the internal sensation and external source is irrevocably blurred and the body of the observer is constructed as a surface of inscriptions on which plays a promiscuous range of effects.’⁹⁰ The historical context of vision will be temporarily suspended here because I aim to enter the space created by Lury to contextualise a prosthetic culture. I am particularly interested in chapter 7, in which she emphasises the long, slow emergence of vision and its final separation from other bodily senses. This historical and critical review of the concept of vision of classical and modern models represents an important concept for

⁸⁸ Lury, *Prosthetic Culture*, p.157

⁸⁹ Jonathan Crary, ‘Modernizing vision’, in H. Foster (ed.) *Vision and Visuality*, (Seattle: Bay Press, 1988) pp.29-51

⁹⁰ Lury, *Prosthetic Culture*, p. 159

my research: the blurring of clear boundaries between two different entities, especially self-identity and the Other.

Part II Perception and Human Vision

The painter ‘takes his body with him,’ says Valéry. Indeed we cannot imagine how a mind could paint. It is by lending his body to the world that the artist changes the world into paintings. To understand these transubstantiations we must go back to the working, actual body—not the body as a chunk of space or a bundle of functions but that body which is an intertwining of vision and movement.⁹¹

Introduction

In his essay entitled ‘*Eye and Mind*’, the focus of the French phenomenological philosopher, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, is the manner in which the artist confronts the situation of Being-in-the-World (*être-au-monde*, 在世存有). He approaches this question from the position of painting, notably that of Paul Cézanne. As part of my larger research questions and practice, I am also exploring perception and being in the world.

I.

What could an artist’s reading of *Eye and Mind* offer to practice-led research of the digital moving image? What is the purpose of introducing *Eye and Mind* in a section devoted to perception and the human vision? Following the previous analysis of the idea of a prosthesis, I would like to ask myself a further question: What happens to the world while I am using a digital prosthesis to see and deliver works? Can an artist working with digital technology in contemporary times learn anything from Merleau-Ponty? Although his essay is not a perfect fit with my work, especially since the medium I use did not exist in Merleau-Ponty’s time, thinking about a digital practice through the lens of Merleau-Ponty’s reflection on painting is not inconsistent. Firstly, Merleau-Ponty’s remarks about painting would be relevant to my work because it is possible to regard the way I use a digital camera and moving images as a sort of painting. Merleau-Ponty writes about painting; he writes about Cézanne transforming his understanding of the world and representing the world in a painting. Although my artwork does not involve painting, I am engaged in transforming time, materials, surfaces and movement. I create a surface when I install monitors like vertical canvas blocks or directly project a video onto canvas.

⁹¹ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p.162

Furthermore, from my perspective, there is also the question of the embodiment of the subject the being-in-the-world me is seeing. The main topic of my work is actually seeing 'seeing'. The digital camera is understood to be a prosthesis for seeing, which connects the body to the world; therefore, I have good reason to explore the important early 20th century writing about seeing and being-in-the world. In terms of what I could learn from *'Eye and Mind'*, the medium is not the problem, nor is the skill and methodology of the painting; it is how Merleau-Ponty perceives *Cézanne's* presentation of his way of seeing and being-in-the world. It comes back to the question of what happens to the world when I am looking at it in this way. Even when I use digital camera or digital post-editing device, I still 'take my body with me' when I work. What I aim to argue is that work represents a way of soliciting seeing, which is approaching a kind of painting.

What can be learned from what I do? I am not doing things because I have a programme that tells me I need to do them. I am trying to find out what happens to the world when I look at it in this way and work with these materials and this medium, which is partly the prosthesis, the camera, but the other part of my work is what I do, what I make as an artwork, and the doubt I have about myself and the way it is represented. It may fit the word 'painting' projected on the canvas and I have explored different formats, but I am not making people look at a tiny screen or a huge screen; I use screens as part of the materials when I show my works so that, in a way, I am soliciting a certain kind of gaze associated with paintings. I put three LCD monitors together when I showed *Blind Project* (2014). I projected videos onto hand-made canvases when I exhibited *Reading* (2011), *Dropping* (2012) and *Dressing* (2012), so that viewers were not obliged to only watch one box-like screen and told to only see the content; on the contrary, they were given surfaces, volume, and atmosphere. Merleau-Ponty writes about painting to illustrate how our understanding of art is about vision, being-in-the-world and representing the world. In other words, *Cézanne's* work is used to support Merleau-Ponty's philosophical ideas.

II.

Being-in-the-world is an experience shared by all human beings. Merleau-Ponty is interested in the relationship between humans and the world. He attempts to understand humans' situation of *being-in-the-world*. I introduced Maurice Merleau-Ponty in this section because he analyses the perception of making art. He also philosophically reflects on the way in which [modern] artists respond to the world by means of an embodied consciousness. Merleau-Ponty especially appreciates practices in modern art that emphasise perceptual, sensuous, embodied experiences. In this essay, he writes about the map of perception knitted in art by the manner in which particular modern artists explore the relationship between perception, sensation and embodied consciousness. What he senses has already happened in art enables him to borrow these embodiments as examples through which he can theorise the co-situation of subject and world in his philosophy, being in the world.

Why art? Merleau-Ponty's philosophy examines the human subject in a primordial relationship or encounter with the world, of which it is always already a part. Art is an arena in which humans operate at the point where the boundary between subject and object is blurred, so that these two points, which have been separated for a long time, can return to a united state. This is because artists like Paul Cézanne are capable of ignoring the consequences/profit/pressure of achievement; they can be passionate and are able to maintain faith in the pure relationship between humans and the world, which is based on perception, especially seeing. Merleau-Ponty's essay focuses on the significance of Cézanne's painting, which, according to him, is about 'seeing' and 'being-in-the world'. Why does he think this about this particular artist?

I am studying the English version of *Eye and Mind*, translated from the French by Carleton Dallery in *The Primacy of Perception: and Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, the Philosophy of Art, History, and Politics*. The English version is accompanied by three different Chinese versions. '*Shen Ti Xian Xiang Xue Da Shi Mei Luo Pang Di De Zui Hou Shu Xie : Yan Yu Xin*' (身體現象學大師梅洛龐蒂的最後書寫：眼與心)⁹² is translated by Jow-Jiun Gong in traditional Mandarin Chinese, while the other two versions are translated in simplified Mandarin Chinese—'*Yan Yu Xin : Mei Luo --Pang Di Xian Xiang Xue Mei Xue Wen Ji*' (眼与心：

⁹² Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Shen Ti Xian Xiang Xue Da Shi Mei Luo Pang Di De Zui Hou Shu Xie : Yan Yu Xin*, trans. Jow-Jiun Gong (Taipei: Art & Collection Ltd, 2007) (Original work published 1964)

梅洛--庞蒂现象学美学文集)⁹³ is translated by Yun Han Liu and ‘*Dang Dai Fa Guo Si Xiang Wen Hua Yi Cong : Yan Yu Xin*’(当代法国思想文化译丛：眼与心)⁹⁴ is translated by Da Chun Yang. These three Chinese versions have different footnotes, explanations, and translations that help to better understand some terms, especially since some of them are unfamiliar in Eastern culture.

I will comment on *Eye and Mind* on the basis of my own practice-led artistic work with digital photography and videos. As previously mentioned, this is a dynamic essay about how people have/operate/live with their perception, especially the way of seeing, with a particular focus on painters. It can probably be assumed that Merleau-Ponty’s ‘painter’ is Paul Cézanne. If this challenging and complex essay can be seen as an extended research into Cézanne’s vision, and what Merleau-Ponty calls ‘Cézanne’s Doubt’,⁹⁵ it can be analysed from an artist’s point of view. Far less attention is devoted to Cézanne in *Eye and Mind* than is accorded to Cézanne’s Doubt, and the position Merleau-Ponty gives to Cézanne in art history changes across the two texts, which will be discussed later. In *Eye and Mind*, Merleau-Ponty seems to be writing about his evolving doubt of a painter’s (Cézanne)’s vision. Merleau-Ponty can be viewed as the theoretical Cézanne; Cézanne’s process of making artworks is the embodiment of Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy.

Before analysing a selection of key passages from *Eye and Mind*, it would be useful to examine what Merleau-Ponty considers to be the doubt of Cézanne. He begins by placing Cézanne in the waves of Romanticism, Realism and Impression. Yet, he argues that Cézanne was producing something different and difficult; he wanted to return to the ‘object’.

Impressionism uses painting to try to capture the very way in which objects strike our eyes and attack our senses. Objects are depicted as they are instantaneously perceived, without fixed contours and bound together by light and air.⁹⁶ Merleau-Ponty then argues that this ambition comes at a price:

The result of these procedures is that the canvas—which no longer corresponds point by point to nature—affords a generally true impression through the action of the separate parts upon one another. But at the same

⁹³ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Yan Yu Xin : Mei Luo --Pang Di Xian Xiang Xue Mei Xue Wen Ji*, trans. Yun Han Liu (Beijing: China Social Science Press, 1992) (Original work published 1964)

⁹⁴ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Dang Dai Fa Guo Si Xiang Wen Hua Yi Cong : Yan Yu Xin*, trans. Da Chun Yang (Beijing: The Commercial Press Ltd, 2007) (Original work published 1964)

⁹⁵ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, ‘Cézanne Doubt’, *Sense and Non-sense*. trans. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Patricia Allen Dreyfus (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1964). pp.9–25

⁹⁶ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Cézanne Doubt’, p.11

time, depicting the atmosphere and breaking up the tones submerges the object and causes *it to lose its proper weight*.⁹⁷ (my emphasis)

Cézanne did not ignore what was gained from Impressionism, because impressionists did focus on perception, but he asked himself how he could make painting perceptual and still capture the solidity of the world. Merleau-Ponty argues that Cézanne risked everything for his fidelity to the world.

His painting was paradoxical: he was pursuing reality without giving up the sensuous surface, with no other guide than the immediate impression of nature, without following the contours, with no outline to enclose the colour, with no perspectival or pictorial arrangement. This is what Bernard called Cézanne's suicide: aiming for reality, while denying himself the means to attain it.⁹⁸

However, according to Merleau-Ponty, he also held on to his contradictory ambition to produce work with perception in order to understand the world using knowledge created by painting, by art.

Cézanne did not think he had to choose between feeling and thought, between order and chaos. He did not want to separate the stable things which we see and the shifting way in which they appear; he wanted to depict matter as it takes on form, the birth of order through spontaneous organisation. He makes a basic distinction not between "the senses" and "the understanding" but rather between the spontaneous organisation of the things we perceive and the human organisation of ideas and sciences.⁹⁹

What Cézanne did was refuse to know or follow rules for knowing. He followed his way of being-in-the world, his seeing, his perception. Cézanne had a singular way of 'returning to the object'. He did not paint an apple by drawing a border and filling it with colours, and then adding shadows to make it more three-dimensional, like the conventional Western style of painting. He built the volume of the apple with the accumulated actions of his hand. His painting shows exactly what the eye sees. Cézanne's apple is made in a generous form. Merleau-Ponty claims that Cézanne avoided traditional artistic 'tricks'; he simply found the volume and made it happen with colours.¹⁰⁰ Was that the doubt of Cézanne? Can I do this? According to Merleau-Ponty, '...he needed a hundred working sessions for a still life, a hundred and fifty

⁹⁷ Merleau-Ponty, 'Cézanne Doubt', p.12

⁹⁸ Merleau-Ponty, 'Cézanne Doubt', p.12

⁹⁹ Merleau-Ponty, 'Cézanne Doubt', p.13

¹⁰⁰ Merleau-Ponty, 'Cézanne Doubt', p. 11-12

sittings for a portrait.’¹⁰¹ The thickness of Cézanne’s unfinished paintings is evidence of how long it took for him to produce one of his masterpieces. Merleau-Ponty does not pay attention to the greatness of Cézanne’s work; he merely emphasises the fact that he worked in this way.

A century later, this gives me permission to do what I am doing in my work. This valuable event can support my research. I used to be a painter, and although I no longer paint, I am interested in how I can pursue this exploration of perception, being and becoming, with the same kind of question in my mind, while performing a different procedure. On the one hand, I wonder if I can make the digital camera a kind of extension of my sight, thereby working with a prosthetic vision. On the other hand, *Eye and Mind* is about being-in-the world, not about the mechanism, which is why I wanted to take a step back and look at an essay about a painter, which is similar to what I am attempting to do. I do not want to know what I am doing in advance and I am not seeking to provide information about the external world. Some viewers have commented that I am perhaps rendering an illusion of the world, but this is not what I am doing. Informed by Merleau-Ponty’s philosophical reading of Cézanne, I suggest that my work involves seeing ‘the seeing’; thus, by filming, I let something happen. I immerse myself and the viewer in the process of approaching the world with a digital camera, and allow the world to happen within the time in my frame.

III

Eye and Mind is composed of five sections, which can be summarised as follows;

Chapter 1: relates to the context of Cézanne: science and art

Chapter 2: refers to the painter’s core concept of addressing the relationship between the see-er and the visible

Chapter 3: contains a related literature review; a critique of René Descartes’s *Dioptric*, offering a new perspective of space and the body

Chapter 4: is a comparative study; Merleau-Ponty compares the depth, colour, form, etc. of modern painting with that of other artists. It is notable that he criticises the movement of photographic artworks that may have provided an opening for Gilles Deleuze later.

Chapter 5: this short fifth chapter was obviously meant to be a conclusion, but Merleau-Ponty did not finish it.

¹⁰¹ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Cézanne Doubt’, p.9

Rather than give an account of the entire argument, I will select some key passages and indicate how they have become resources for my research into perception and the making of digital images.

Science and Art

Merleau-Ponty suggests there are two ways of approaching the world: science and art. Science positions the human eye and brain above objects, looking down on the world so that the world is viewed generally.

Science manipulates things and gives up living in them. Operating within its own realm, it makes its constructs of things; operating upon these indices or variables to effect whatever transformations are permitted by their definition, it comes face to face with the real world only at rare intervals.¹⁰²

Science is, and always has been, that admirably active, ingenious, and bold way of thinking whose fundamental bias is to treat everything as though it were an object-in-general...¹⁰³

Science classifies things into categories so that events can be valued with levels and sensations can even be monitored. There is a kind of relationship between high and low, in and out, true and false. The boundary is clear and sharp like a bar chart. This is the scientific way. Science produces knowledge of the world in general from an abstract observation, whereas ‘art, especially painting, draws upon the fabric of brute meaning which operationalism would prefer to ignore. Art and only art does so in full innocence.’¹⁰⁴ The sensible, situated and specific body/mind which is ‘my own body’ meets the world. It is always singular: it is my body, which suggests a highly personalised experience.

It is as if in the painter’s calling there was some urgency above all other claims on him. Strong or frail in life, but incontestably sovereign in his rumination of the world, possessed of no other “technique” than the skill his eyes and hands discover in seeing and painting, he gives himself entirely to drawing from the world.¹⁰⁵

According to Merleau-Ponty, scientists persistently draw ways from the world, whereas artists are allowed to say ‘I do not have to know this, to be capable of telling

¹⁰² Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p.159

¹⁰³ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p.159

¹⁰⁴ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p.161

¹⁰⁵ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p.161

everything, interpreting everything. I can simply allow it to happen'. Something between the singular eyes and hands is produced by engaging with the world. This is the point raised at the very beginning of this section, as well as the key question; Merleau-Ponty introduces Valéry as the critic who said that the painter 'takes his body with him.'

The Intertwining of Vision and Movement

Compared to the abstract scientist, the artist does not only look at things rationally with a pure mind and rationality, but works with the world at a distance. The artist devotes the body to producing perception, and the perception draws the body and world closer together. As Merleau-Ponty said, 'My mobile body makes a difference in the visible world, being a part of it; that is why I can steer it through the visible.'¹⁰⁶ Painters look at their hands moving and perceive that this movement is engaged with the movement of world and their eyes. 'We see only what we look at'¹⁰⁷ and for the artist, seeing is a way to move toward the world.

The Overlap

'My moving body' is moving itself toward 'the visible world.' 'What I can reach' is part of 'what I can see' and they are parts of Being. Merleau-Ponty calls this 'the extraordinary overlapping.'¹⁰⁸ 'My movement is not a decision made by the mind.'¹⁰⁹ The artist is different from the scientist in that the relationship between the artist and the world is not as sharp a shape. When the painter raises a hand to hold the brush to paint, the eyes can see hands working, but the eyes and the hands are not functioning because they are ordered to do so. The eyes see what attracts them, but they do not only see what is in front of them; they also see back into the artist's body. The eyes may see the mountains and then the hand that is holding the brush. The artist is seeing the subject with an object if we think of our body as a sort of object. 'I say of a thing that it is moved, but my body moves itself; my movement is self-moved. It is not ignorance of self, blind to itself; it radiates from a self....'¹¹⁰ This is what Merleau-Ponty calls 'the enigma.'¹¹¹ Right here, the boundary between the eye and the mind is broken. The eye has its movement and so does the body; neither is dominated by the other. I, the mobile

¹⁰⁶ Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', p.162

¹⁰⁷ Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', p.162

¹⁰⁸ Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', p.162

¹⁰⁹ Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', p.162

¹¹⁰ Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', p.162

¹¹¹ Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', p.162

body, am approaching the visible world, but the trick is that the mobile body is right in my own field of vision and in the world.

The Enigma

‘The enigma derives from the fact that my body simultaneously sees and is seen’.¹¹² Here, Merleau-Ponty is talking about my work. By seeing the seeing, I give my seeing of seeing to the viewer. My work is a kind of circle; I see my seeing and I film it and then I provide it for the viewer to see. The enigma lies in the circulation; once it starts, it is hard to find the end and the starting point generally melts into the other points to form an endless loop, and right there, we can sense the existence of being.

The Initial Paradox

‘Visible and mobile, my body is a thing among things; it is one of them. It is caught in the fabric of the world, and its cohesion is that of a thing’¹¹³ Unlike some daily objects, such as cups or desks, the body ‘moves itself and sees’. Here Merleau-Ponty again challenges the Western philosophy that separates body and mind. This raises the question of how to see the relationship between me and everything else in the world. From the phenomenologist’s perspective, everything in the world is a kind of being whereas physicists believe that everything in the world consists of matter, or specifically, quanta. For Merleau-Ponty, the body moves and achieves consciousness because of a reflex: I am both seeing and seen.

The Interior

What if our eyes were made in such a way as to prevent our seeing any part of our body, or some diabolical contraption were to let us move our hands over things, while preventing us from touching our own body?¹¹⁴

The particular connection between sight and movement makes us human. In my work, I intentionally avoid placing myself in the films. I try hard to avoid recording any trace of me: I do not expose my hands or my voice. If the film is a transformation of my sight, I only leave it with the movement with which I made it. In other words, I strive to be a kind of absent presence.

¹¹² Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p.162

¹¹³ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p.163

¹¹⁴ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p.163

A human body is present when, between the see-er and the visible, between touching and touched, between one eye and the other, between hand and hand a kind of crossover occurs, when the spark of the sensing/sensible is lit, when the fire starts to burn that will not cease until some accident befalls the body, undoing what no accident would have sufficed to do...¹¹⁵

Yet, what of the painter, Cézanne? What are the things of the world from his perspective? His painting is his embodied response to this question. In the Western view of painting during the Renaissance, painting could be understood to be a depiction of the world, a metaphor for a window; everything in the painting was organised and framed to generate the perspective, and Cézanne may be not part of it because he did not produce pictures of the world; rather, his paintings were a kind of record/registration of his encounter with the world. He tried to make the world come into being by means of colour and light before the viewers' eyes so that the paintings would seduce the viewer to come and be with them. What Merleau-Ponty wanted to say was that Cézanne's paintings gave us a way to understand the world. So, where is my body in my work? It is absent but also present in the film. Viewers can sense me, but they cannot see me; they can only see what I transfer from my eyes to the camera's eye and from the eye of the projector to their eyes. This journey of seeing enables something seen privately to be seen publicly, and at the same time, become another private seeing. While I am seeing in my work, the body is becoming, the seeing is becoming, the connection to the world is becoming, without saying, explaining or showing my presence. I am always hiding, but this is also a way of presenting myself. I think this is what Merleau-Ponty calls a 'strange system of exchange.'¹¹⁶

From Mental Image to Artwork

'Things have an internal equivalent in me; they arouse in me a carnal formula of their presence.'¹¹⁷ What happens after seeing? An image is generated in my mind/brain, but it is not a 'faded copy', which is what something becomes when my affection is aroused during the movement of seeing. When I make art, I am putting the inside outside again. Art, such as the animals in the Lascaux Caves, which are the colour, shape and light of stones, would stimulate people to bring something alive in their heads. When looking at the paintings in the caves, we are not looking at pictures or copies of animals; we are encountering a movement that circulated through the artist and the materials he used. The shapes, colours, and even the smells inspire viewers to see these animals with

¹¹⁵ Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', p.163–164

¹¹⁶ Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', p.164

¹¹⁷ Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', p.164

emotion in their heads; they may see, feel, and remember them from before. Something else may be recalled at the same time. The circulating movement makes human flesh, not data; it connects the body to the world. It also brings us images or perhaps it could be said that images are always travelling in the movement, in which case, there is a double movement;

They are the inside of the outside and the outside of the inside, which the duplicity of feeling [*le sentir*] makes possible and without which we would never understand the quasi presence and imminent visibility with make up the whole problem of the imaginary.¹¹⁸

Artwork is not a complete copy of the world, nor is it entirely equal to the artist. Artwork is always becoming, but never becomes. The artist is trying to set a ‘trap’ to make something stay in the state of becoming. Artwork is mediated so that it is accompanied by a different order of movement of the artist. For example, when I am making a film, the movements are made from the process of measuring, positioning, rolling, etc.

Making artwork involves moving an image through the imaginary to the imagination. I take the outside to the inside and the inside to the outside again in the form of artworks. I have to use something to mediate the works. During this process, the ‘imaginary’ is working and it takes humans beyond the world and gives them the freedom to think differently, to have great imagination. The artist actualises the imagination and returns it to the world in a different way in the very gesture of posing movements. Artists are not only receivers; they are also providers.

The eye sees the world, and what it would need to be a painting, sees what keeps a painting from being itself, sees – on palette – the colours awaited by the painting, and sees, once it is done, the painting that answers to all these inadequacies just as it sees the paintings of others as other answer to other inadequacies.¹¹⁹

The palette is not just an instrument, which can be viewed as a pre-painting. When the painting comes into being, something is addressed with the coming to identify something that has not yet been found to be visible. So, what is my own work about? I am not making a picture of anything; I am trying to make a vision visible. When I film rice, I am not just sitting staring at the rice. I am making the process of ‘seeing the rice’ happen. In Merleau-Ponty’s sense, seeing rice not only involves using a digital camera

¹¹⁸ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p.164

¹¹⁹ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p.165

with a macro lens; I am also trying to contribute my body, the flesh, the substance, the sense of being-in-the world. In fact, I am making more effort to use my own perception than using digital post-editing in the working process.

Part III Mind, Brain, Movement and Time

In Part II, I transferred what I learned from reading *Eye and Mind* into my practice-led research from the artist's perspective and the way of Being-In-the-World. This was an attempt to cross different academic disciplines to address the question of being-in-the-world that is shared by painting, philosophy and the digital moving image. The object of my seeing is not the central question; 'seeing' itself is the thing on which I am focusing. In the sub-section 'From mental image to artwork' in Chapter 2 Part II, I mentioned that an image is generated in our brain/mind after seeing. An 'image' is not a copy of something; it is not simplified as a print, a photo, or a video. I am not quite sure if I should use 'brain' or 'mind' as the 'storeroom of image' inside a thinking subject. The English title, *Eye and Mind*, is translated from the original French title 'L'Oeil et L'esprit', and the Chinese title is 眼與心. In English, the mind is obviously different from the heart; the former is mental, while the latter is physical, although the heart could be described as the source of feeling, such as when someone says, 'You have broken my heart'. In Chinese, 心 can represent both 'heart' and 'mind', so sometimes translations are confusing. It is said that 心 can be translated as spirit and mind when the term infers a mental space. However, where is the mind/spirit/心 located?

Since I am reluctant to plunge into the complex fields of neuroscience, neurology and psychology, I would like to explain why I decided to use 'brain' to replace 'mind' in the thesis. There were two reasons, one of which is that my native language is Mandarin Chinese, and the other is the title of an interview by Gilles Deleuze, *The Brain is The Screen*.¹²⁰

Brain and Mind

I referred to several western philosophies in the previous section, and since every philosophy is based on language, the meaning of a word is related to the language used by the philosopher. Since I am using specific terms, such as brain, mind, memory etc. in the process of this research, I need to consider how to match their dictionary definitions with my artwork. Some may think of art as an international 'language' without a

¹²⁰ Gilles Deleuze, and Melissa McMuhan, 'The Brain Is the Screen: Interview with Gilles Deleuze on *The Time-Image*' *Discourse*, 20.3. Fall 1998, pp.47–55

linguistic translation so that everyone should be able to ‘read’ it. However, when researching practice-led art, language is a tool to verbalise the thoughts of the researcher.

When I first wrote some passages, my supervisor questioned my use of ‘brain’ because, as a Westerner, she assumed I was referring to neuropsychology or neurology; however, I come from a Mandarin-speaking tradition. When I encounter some words in English, such as ‘brain’, I automatically translate them into Mandarin when I need to think more deeply, and in Mandarin, a term created by characters would have more than one meaning. This is how my supervisor and I came to discuss linguistics and the meaning of words. What I need to translate is brain, which may not be universally understood in Mandarin. This is based on a Mandarin-speaking tradition, not totally from a Mandarin dictionary definition. I am using this language to think what the word might mean to me when I read Merleau-Ponty or Deleuze. In an ideal world, I would hope that art is legible internationally, but some works use very specific references that require a local language. I have to confess that, in my own research of artwork, I have encountered many differences of language.

When referring to something that is happening or being recalled or memorised, the usual way to describe the ‘space’ where memories are preserved or emotional feelings occur is ‘腦海(nǎo hǎi)’ or ‘心裡 (xīn lǐ)’ in general Mandarin Chinese conversation or writing. ‘腦海(nǎo hǎi)’ or ‘心裡 (xīn lǐ)’ is usually used at the end of a phrase or sentence. This compound Mandarin Chinese term is engaging and poetic. 腦 (nǎo) is brain and 海 (hǎi) is sea.

As a native speaker of Mandarin Chinese, I believe there are other terms that also mean the same space, but the two terms, ‘腦海(nǎo hǎi)’ or ‘心裡 (xīn lǐ)’ are the most commonly used. I cannot tell which is the most frequently used, but I can describe the different degrees of the two slightly similar meanings.

According to an online Mandarin lexical dictionary, the translated definition of ‘腦海’ is, ‘主管記憶、知覺、思想等的腦部，因其廣泛如海，故稱為「腦海」’(Translation: The brain is the part to manage the memory, perception and thought. What the brain can manage is as wide as the sea, so it is called nǎo hǎi.) According to this definition, 腦海(nǎo hǎi) is actually almost synonymous with the ‘brain’. 腦海(nǎo hǎi) seems to be just a modified word, but it is still ‘the brain.’ The sea is used as a model to parallel the abstract wideness of the brain. However, ‘brain’ and ‘the brain sea’ are two different things in my interpretation of 腦海 (nǎo hǎi). 腦海 (the brain sea) is

part of 腦 (the brain). If the brain is seen as the earth, the brain sea can be seen as The Pacific. The brain has numerous sections. The brain sea is a specific place where thoughts, memories and perceptions are floating or sinking or accumulating onto or into it. Some movies have images to describe the imagination, where there are numerous rooms to preserve different kinds of memories. As for me, I do not think that memories are separately preserved in rather dry and still spaces with different compartmental walls. Perceptions, thoughts and memories are randomly linked, intertwined and interwoven, moving, presenting, representing, expanding and shrinking. Thus, they should live in a borderless space like the sea.

Sometimes it is said that ‘記憶不斷浮現在我腦海裡’ (Translation: Some haunting memories constantly recur to me). We native speakers would use 浮現 (recur/float up) and 腦海 (nǎo hǎi) to describe something which sunk into the depth of the sea of the brain before but now usually floats up to the sea and we can have the image of the memories in our brain. The brain sea is a space where memories are preserved, not devoured. Forgotten memories may have sunk to the bottom of the sea but they have not disappeared and occasionally they float up when we encounter something that can stimulate the power switch. The thoughts or memories in the 腦海 (nǎo hǎi) appear with images.

Another term 心裡 (xīn lǐ) is related to the mind, but the word 裡 emphasises the meaning of ‘inside’ or ‘the deepest place’. According to the same online Mandarin lexical dictionary¹²¹, the definition of 心裡 (xīn lǐ) is, ‘心中, 指頭腦中的思想或情緒。’ (Translation: The inside of mind. It refers to the thoughts or feeling in the brain). When talking about an emotional feeling that is occurring in the mind, native speakers generally use 我心裡覺得... (I feel...). 心裡 is a space in which emotions/thoughts occur with instant reflection. There is still something in the mind, but it seems that what is in the 心裡 (mind) is more abstract and virtual thinking and direct feeling whereas what is in the 腦海 is something with haunting attributes, sounds and visual images that have been there for a long time. It could be said to mean ‘bear something in mind’ (把某事記在心裡) or a thought comes to mind (有個念頭從我心裡油然而起) and the something tends to an idea, a concept or reflection, a virtual thing

¹²¹ *The Dictionary Revised by Ministry of Education, R.O.C.*, <<http://dict.revised.moe.edu.tw/index.html>>, s.v. ‘心裡’ (accessed 21 November 2014)

that is noted in the mind. Then this virtual thing is transformed into the 腦海 (the brain sea) and becomes a memory with images for us to rethink.

I need to use the term related to the place where mental or spiritual activities happen for thinking about my artworks. The mind and the brain are not the same for me. I prefer to use 腦海 (the brain sea) to more specifically re-interpret the word ‘mind’. In my Mandarin way of thinking, the 心裡 (mind) is more for abstract, virtual ideas, thoughts, instant emotions and short memories, where something happens and is temporarily noted, whereas the 腦海 (the brain sea) is a space with movement. Its function is to recur/recall/rethink what has been transformed from the 心裡 (mind) in a visual form and as a medium by which to display moving images. The 腦海 (the brain sea) is more like a sort of ecosystem, which can not only show the old traces of genes, but can also mix developing breeds and stimulate the system to create new things. Whether brain and mind are used in Mandarin or English, they partly overlap, but also have differences. My thinking is to develop an artistic way to rebuild the definition to escape from common lexical use. The move is also a refusal to simplify the differences between words and languages. Sometimes it is difficult to find an exact equivalent word to meet the meanings between languages, even in Latin-based Western alphabetical thinking, such as English, German, French, etc. For example, since the language in which Merleau-Ponty originally wrote *Eye and Mind* was French, the original title was ‘L’Œil et l’Esprit’. ‘Esprit’ literally means ‘spirit’ in English, but the word , if we say ‘spirit’ in English is used to either refer to a ghost or something religious, and neither of these meanings meets the content of the human thinking/perceiving in Merleau-Ponty; they cannot deal with the issue of being-in-the world. Furthermore, ‘esprit’ translates into German as ‘Geist’ which sounds quite like ‘Ghost’ in English , but it refers to intellectuality or cognition not spirit.

When translating ‘esprit’, the term ‘spirit’ may be used and this may suggest a ghost, but it can also mean liveliness, as in a ‘spirited horse’ ‘Some showed spirit.’ In English, spirit also refers to a higher level of the mind and even a religious dimension, ‘spirituality.’ ‘Geist’ in German refers to an idea of the mind that is somewhere between the intellect and intelligence, and the English idea of spirit, as in spirituality, is not exactly mind, or reason, or intelligence. Like ‘l’esprit’, ‘Geist’ is the liveliness of the mind; the activity of human reflection. However, there is no exact word in English that can be used for ‘Geist’. It is possible that human beings encounter some circumstances that cannot be described by an existing word in different languages or between different

cultures; therefore, philosophy and art are creating and dealing with something that is happening, but is hard to describe. Especially in art, this is crucial to see the tiny part of things that do not overlap.

Image and ‘The Brain’ by Gilles Deleuze

Before discussing what brain means to Gilles Deleuze, I would like to address the concept of image, which is a key concept in my research, but an open one. Image is not an image of X or Y, but an image in itself. Image is a huge issue with a long history that stretches from Plato’s cave allegory to contemporary times. Image has become an increasingly complex issue. With the development of photography, cinema, technology and digital inventions, image is moving with time, music, lights and humanity. While technologically, my works are based on making moving images, they are absolutely not movies; in fact, it is hard to identify the precise genre into which to put them. Obviously my artwork is not a movie that tells a story, with figures, locations and plots. Although I do not see my work as 100% video artwork or so-called experimental film, moving images are an important element of it. As mentioned in the last chapter, I prefer to see my work as a sort of painting, while not being a painting. I could also see it as sculpture, since I think that what I do with moving images and time is a concept that belongs to sculpture, especially expanded sculpture. I would like to suspend the classification of my work for a while because I am sometimes suspicious of all classification of artworks. My own weak voice that comes from deep inside me when I face the issue of having to classify my works, sounds like this: ‘Classifying is sometimes just pasting labels on things. It reveals a fear of an insecurity before the unknown. Sometimes people rely on labels as guidelines to see things without taking risks. Labelling makes them comfortable but they lose the ability to encounter, explore and react.’

Despite my doubts about classification, I am willing to explore the issue of image related to cinema, movement and time because what I am going to read is a text written by a French philosopher who loves classification, Gilles Deleuze. Deleuze made numerous classifications, but according to him;

All classifications are like this: they are mobile, they vary their criteria for each class, they are retroactive and reworkable, unlimited. Certain classes are very crowded, others empty. In a classification it is always a matter of bringing together things which are apparently very difficult, and of separating the very close. It’s the formation of concepts.¹²²

¹²² Deleuze ‘The Brain Is the Screen’, p.50

For Deleuze, classification is not a fixed term. It should be understood with the power of ‘becoming (devenir)’. Classification should not be regarded as solid matter; it needs to be seen as a liquid, clear flowing, but not totally separating. In my artwork, image is a sort of refraction of the flow of time/times; moreover, it is a fundamental element of knowledge, communication, and humanity. It is always an issue at every moment. Philosophers use image to link their main concerns in their philosophy to resolve current issues, which is why I have chosen to discuss Deleuzian philosophy of image and time. There is movement within the word ‘moving’ and image was also mentioned in the last chapter about *Eye and Mind*. For Merleau-Ponty, an image is not a copy of something. According to him, there is ‘an internal equivalent in me.’¹²³ Image is a singular thing of itself.

Gilles Deleuze is a philosopher, who thinks *with*, rather than about, cinema. Movement is an important concept in Deleuzian philosophy, since it is relevant to the force and processing of an image. Speaking of movement, I know there are different notions of movement in my processes; the movement of eyes, hands, thoughts, cameras, devices, etc. I also know that ‘movement’ is based on ‘duration’. What arouses my curiosity is why Deleuze wrote two different volumes on the movement-image and the time-image. I believe that the difference between the two is the key point of his philosophy about cinema. How can cinema and philosophy be placed together? Deleuze does not base his philosophy on cinema. He explains the link between his philosophy and cinema, as follows;

I wasn’t stupid enough to want to do a philosophy of cinema, but one conjunction made an impression on me: I liked authors who demanded that movement be introduced into thought, “true” movement.¹²⁴

Then, he continued;

How could there not be a conjunction with cinema, which introduced “true” movement into the image? It was not a matter of applying philosophy to cinema, but of going straight from philosophy to cinema. And inversely as well, of going straight from cinema to philosophy.¹²⁵

What grabbed Deleuze’s attention about cinema was ‘something bizarre’, which he explained as

...its ‘unexpected ability to show not behaviour, but spiritual life’. Spiritual life is not the dream or the fantasy, which have always been dead-ends for

¹²³ Merleau-Ponty, ‘Eye and Mind’, p164

¹²⁴ Deleuze, ‘The Brain Is the Screen’, p.48

¹²⁵ Deleuze, ‘The Brain Is the Screen’, p.48

cinema, rather it's the domain of cold decision, of absolute determination (entêtement), of a choice of existence.¹²⁶

Why am I spending time on this specific paragraph? Because Deleuze uses the word 'entêtement'. The French word for head is 'tête', while 'entêtement' is translated as stubbornness. In English someone can be said to be hard-headed. 'Stubbornness' actually refers to someone's thinking; it is related to the 'mind' not literally the 'head'. According to the former paragraphs about the differences in languages, what Deleuze is trying to say is not about 'spirituality' because if the word 'spiritual' is directly translated into French, it will be 'esprit'. When he mentions a 'spiritual life', the French translation is 'la vie de l'esprit'. 'L'esprit' has the same meaning as the French *Eye and Mind* (L'Œil et l'Esprit); therefore, the 'spiritual life' for Deleuze is 'the life of the mind.' So, how can cinema and philosophy co-exist? Deleuze makes his key statement, as follows;

In short, cinema not only puts movement into the image, it also puts it into the spirit. Spiritual life is the movement of the spirit. One goes quite naturally from philosophy to cinema, but also from cinema to philosophy. Their unity is the brain. The brain is the screen.¹²⁷

Having explained the translation between languages, it can be seen that, for Deleuze, cinema has the ability to present the 'spiritual life', which is 'the life of the mind.' Cinema not only puts movement into image, it also puts movement into 'thinking'. If cinema is a device for thinking about the world, and if it is used to question the meaning of life, it also puts thinking into movement. It is a two-way thing. The remarkable point about cinema is not just that it makes movement; rather, it establishes a method to force people to keep thinking and moving. Where do cinema and thinking meet? The unity (i.e. of cinema and l'esprit (mind)) is the 'cerveau' (brain). It is interesting to note that French catches the liveliness, not English, to resolve my confusion about Deleuze's key statement.. It is known from *Eye and Mind* that 'mind' is 'l'esprit' and then, Deleuze wrote about the 'spiritual life'. This gives me a clue to translate the 'spiritual life' into 'la vie de l'esprit' not 'vie spirituelle'. The issue is the entry of thinking with the process, orderliness, and the mind, not about intellectuality, and to this end, it can be found that the brain is where cinema and philosophy meet.

¹²⁶ Deleuze, 'The Brain Is the Screen', p.48

¹²⁷ Deleuze, 'The Brain Is the Screen', p.48

Deleuze believes that what is inside the brain is molecular. ‘There are molecular speeds that make up the slow beings we are.’¹²⁸ The molecular is like numerous points in the brain and when we encounter new things, information or images, we are thinking and using these stimuli to make the brain work and the brain will build up a circuit. What happens when we see a film at the cinema? Deleuze explains that ‘...cinema, precisely because it puts the image in movement, or rather endows the image with a self-movement, never ceases to trace and retrace the circuits of the brain.’¹²⁹

Cinema and Deleuze

Deleuze wrote two volumes about cinema. *Cinema 1: The Movement Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. Paola Marrati mentioned that Deleuze claimed, ‘This study is not a history of the cinema. It is a taxonomy, an attempt at the classification of images and signs.’ at the very beginning of the Foreword of the French edition.¹³⁰ Deleuze firstly classified images as *Movement-Images* and *Time-Images*. Roughly speaking, his dedicated classification of movement-image is more like the Hollywood movies and the time-image is more like Italian Neorealism and The French New Wave. Movement-image has three notions: perception-image, affection-image and action-image. Movement-image seems to fabricate a familiar pattern for viewers to follow, while Time-Image can ‘bother’ viewers much more with uncanny feelings.

Deleuze provided the notion of movement-image by critiquing the criticism of cinema by Bergson. In 1907, in *Creative Evolution*, Bergson thought that cinema was ‘a cinematographic illusion.’¹³¹ Bergson believed that cinema was based on a formula: still images in sections, plus abstract movements. However, Deleuze argued that Bergson had introduced the movement-image in another book before *Creative Evolution* and cinema. He maintained that ‘the discovery of the movement-image, beyond the conditions of natural perception, was the extraordinary invention of the first chapter of *Matter and Memory*.’¹³² According to *Cinema I: The Movement-Image*, it is well known that Deleuze's aspect of ‘movement-image’ was directly developed from Henri Bergson’s *Matter and Memory*. Deleuze believed that cinema was not providing a succession of still pictures (images plus movement), but creating what he called ‘movement-image’. Deleuze described what is experienced in the cinema as a passing

¹²⁸ Deleuze, ‘The Brain Is the Screen’, p.48

¹²⁹ Deleuze, ‘The Brain Is the Screen’, p.49

¹³⁰ Paola Marrati, *Gilles Deleuze: Cinema and Philosophy*, (Baltimore: JHU Press,2008), pp. 64

¹³¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*. Trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.), pp.1

¹³² Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, p.2

movement, not animated still frames, but something like the effect of ‘dissolving’ two video clips. Even if our eyes could catch an almost still frame, the next frame is spontaneously seen as continuous. The video clips which are captured by a camera are not an immobile section with added abstract movement. (Animation genre is not in this type.) The section has its own movement, which is a mobile section.¹³³

Time

When I enter ‘time’ into the search engine of Amazon, a genre of books that especially intrigues me is ‘time management’. This refers to two fundamentally vital bases of our human life: one of which is that all human beings will die one day but time will run on anyway, and the other is that we generally live by the clock. Time is a concept created in human civilisation. It may be that human beings are the only species on the earth that is concerned about time, entwining time with consciousness, and furthermore have the desire to control time. Based on a sense of the existence of time, human beings have created numerous forms to count and measure ‘time’ that passes in our limited life. Different civilisations have created different calendars based on different observed sources. Different inventors in different fields have created numerous devices to measure the duration of time, such as the hourglass and chronograph. Different languages have their own unique grammatical tense, which allows people to manage time through language. The psychologist, Robert Levine, gave the preface a fascinating title: *Time talks, with accents*. He quoted a paragraph from Jeremy Rifkin¹³⁴ in *A Geography of Time: The Temporal Misadventures of a Social Psychologist*: ‘Every culture has its own unique set of temporal fingerprints. To know a people is to know the time values they live by.’¹³⁵ This indicates the various cultural aspects of time. The inner concept of time was distinguished as different civilisations created their own calendars with different perspectives of stars or sun or moon. Although people observed the same objects (satellites), they eventually developed different cultures.

Today, time is much more synchronised across the globe than before. Different cities use the same temporal markers although they are in different time zones. Everyone living in the same time zone follows almost the same clock time. Why do people need so-called time management even if they are living in the same clock time? Firstly, society needs most people to work in a regular way, and the concept of time

¹³³ Deleuze, *Cinema 1: The Movement Image*, p.2

¹³⁴ Jeremy Rifkin, *Time Wars: The Primary Conflict in Human History*. (Henry Holt and Co,1987)

¹³⁵ Robert Levine, *A Geography of Time: The Temporal Misadventures of A Social Psychologist*. (New York: Basic Books, 1998)

management reminds people to constantly look at their personal clocks and make sure that their personal time is not too different from the Coordinated Universal Time. So, there are always periods called peak/off-peak time every day in every city. Most people seem to follow the notion of a Coordinated Universal Time pattern. However, everyone has a different sense of time. We cannot follow the united time every second. We must fall into our own flow of time sometimes and then something reminds us and we return to the united time flow. In fact, we usually transmit from homogeneity to heterogeneity and back to homogeneity, and then fall into heterogeneity receptively and constantly in a day. Our consciousness is usually time-travelling, which may explain why our ancestors needed to create a united time for the development of civilisations.

If we have no watch or clock with us, how can we ‘sense’ the time passing? We can perceive the existence of time by observing some specific phenomena or encountering some events such as shrivelling leaves, growing children, and the movement of the sun/moon. Generally speaking, time is running in a straight and recoverable way forward to an unknown ‘end’ although no-one knows if there is an end. This is a vital issue in different current studies debated by different respective viewpoints, such as physics, astronomy, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, psychology and literature, etc. The context of my interest in time is based on the time when human beings were familiar with the context of time and temporal units. I have no intention to become involved with philosophical debates or scientific aspects such as the *Theory of Relativity*. My interest in time is the relationship between light, vision and subjective/objective time. The most relevant points of time in my works are duration and extension. The main research question related to time is the extent to which the photographic and the digital intervene in the flow of time. The issue of time has long haunted and intrigued me. My artworks do not all directly talk about the issue of time but I am obsessed with the status of people living between the homogeneity and heterogeneity of time.

Light, Time and Vision

Before the emergence of the united clock time, the traces of time were deduced by observing the movement of three main planets that can project or reflect light, the sun, the moon and the stars. People in ancient times invented ways of measuring time, locating themselves, and creating a way of predicting/previewing the future by observing the regular/irregular trajectories/movements of the planets.

Even today, the people of Greater China use at least two kinds of calendar, one of which is the Solar Calendar and the other is the Chinese Calendar, which is usually misunderstood as a kind of Lunar Calendar. The correct name in Chinese is ‘y⁻inyáng lì’ [陰陽曆]¹³⁶. ‘y⁻inyáng lì’ [陰陽曆] is a Lunisolar Calendar. According to Helmer Aslaksen, ‘Lunisolar calendars are solar calendars that just happen to use the lunar month as the basic unit rather than the solar day.’ In other words, the Lunisolar Calendar uses the moon’s movement to define the circle of months and the sun’s movement to identify the circle of years. The Lunisolar Calendar is also called ‘nóng lì’ [農曆] and contains 24 ‘jiéqì’ [節氣] (solar terms or solar nodes in English). Aslaksen explains that ‘the seasonal markers cut the ecliptic into four sections of 90 each. The 24 “jiéqì” cuts the ecliptic into 24 sections of 15 each’.¹³⁷

‘Nóng’ (農) means agriculture. The 24 ‘jiéqì’ are markers for noting some weather- changing attributes such as humidity, temperature, etc. The 24 ‘jiéqì’ are 24 transiting periods that provide a guide for farmers to prepare for the next change in the weather. The Modern Chinese Calendar has precise dates for the 24 periods according to the sun’s position in the zodiac. The Chinese Calendar (y⁻inyáng lì [陰陽曆]) is still used in contemporary Greater China. Some important traditional holidays such as Chinese New Year, the Dragon Boat Festival, the Autumn Festival, etc., are almost all marked by the Chinese Calendar, not the Solar Calendar. The 24 periods not only give notice to farmers, but also provide a health warning for everybody. In ancient times, the observation of astronomy was a significant way to provide a country’s leader with a future direction.

Why do I think there is a strong connection between light, time and vision? The connection is the observation of the activity of the stars. I can imagine that this should be a long, regular, and repetitive observation. Ancient people used the naked eye to gaze at the movement of stars in the sky to collect information to measure their present and their future. The image of these stars comes from past, the extremely faraway distance, the unit of which is a *Light year*; thus, the image is a delayed one. In other words, the calendar is a kind of ‘work’ based on the past, but it runs in the present and into the future. Humans brought an intimate scheme into their daily lives by looking at a very distant object, so how did they record what they saw? I suppose they were drawing while they were observing the sky. This was actually work that involved observational

¹³⁶ Helmer Aslaksen, *The Mathematics of the Chinese calendar*. (National University of Singapore 2010), pp. 15

¹³⁷ Aslaksen, *The Mathematics of the Chinese calendar*. pp. 15

skill, seeing and representation of time. By the mid-19th century, the observation of astronomy had progressed far beyond making a calendar. The universe was observed to resolve or investigate its scale and boundary, and telescopes were used to improve the observer's vision. The triangular model of observer/recorder, tool/device/prosthesis and object was actually constructed a long time ago, ever since humans grabbed the section of a branch to draw a draft of what they were seeing. After collecting information about movements, observers processed a sort of numeral post-reproduction in the form of mathematics, and this time-based 'work' was interwoven with layers of time, which is very similar to my process of making artworks.

The calendar time/clock time is an invisible boundary, which we sometimes cross, but sometimes voluntarily go back inside it. When we watch a movie that lasts for an hour and a half, we expect to follow the flow of the timeline of the story, but sometimes we can be distracted by encountering a specific part of the plot. An image may suddenly flash into the brain and leave immediately as the viewer needs to re-focus on the rest of movie. Does this viewer still see the movie as lasting for an hour and half? Is the missing part of the duration overlaid or replaced?

Photography, Cinema, Video and the Digital Media

In the first chapter of 'Passing Time' in *Death 24x a second: stillness and the moving image*,¹³⁸ Laura Mulvey interprets the issue of time by means of a combination of the narrative processes of time represented or mediated by media intervened/represented/created time. When photography was invented around the 1830s, it was a time-based media/art/index intervening the running time. Before then, humans could not 'freeze' images through optical devices onto material such as paper. Photography broke the continuity of time and refreshed the way of making indices by representing a past moment. The past does not vanish as time passes; it is preserved in the present. After about 60 years, cinema emerged to represent past times. Technically, early cinema was not able to actually represent a natural pace with a duration. The projectionist needed to follow the scheduled pace planned by the director to create the illusion of animation/movement with continuous frames. Early cinema merely represented a continuous series of images until the late 1970s, when operators began to be capable of manipulating the speed of time with the advent of video technology. Then, in 1997, just after the centenary of cinema, the first film with a digital format entered the market. Laura Mulvey describes the dramatic revolution of visual mechanism and

¹³⁸ Laura Mulvey *Death 24x a second: stillness and the moving image*. (Reaktion books,2006), pp.17-32

communication technology in the last two decades before the Millennium as, ‘The resonance of ageing, and of death, associated with the cinema’s centenary coincided with the arrival of a technology that created a divide between the “old” and the “new” media.’¹³⁹

In the period from the 1890s to 1997, cinema underwent a transition from a ‘material base and poetics’ to ‘intertextual and cross-media’.¹⁴⁰ Before the arrival of digital formats, a material base occupied the position between past and present. The passage of time was inscribed on photosensitive paper and celluloid by light with photographic skills and cinema— a ‘natural magic’ process.¹⁴¹ The digital operation of taking photographs and making film detached the physical materials and transferred the light into a numerical system, an abstract form, and the material connection between objects and images disappeared.

Stillness and Moving Images

I normally have two methods for making works, one of which involves directly recording video sources, while the other is shooting photographs and making a kind of animation. Not only is the methodology different, but also the concept. The first genre involves creating a kind of video collage with multiple synchronistic movements from different sources:

1. The movement of the lens
2. The movement of myself (hands, breathing, gestures, etc.)
3. The movement of the object

Most of my first and second year works belong to this genre;¹⁴² for example, the object photographed in *Blind Project* was blinds, and during the shooting process, I used my right hand to adjust the lens (zoom in and out), while my left hand rolled the blinds slowly to keep rotating the slats. As I rotated the slats, the light from outside leaked through the gaps between the plates in a cyclical way. The aim of the project was to create a rhythm of movement from difference sources and times that would be transplanted into the viewers’ own movements (their eye balls rolling, their pace of walking in the exhibition, their breathing...etc.). The other genre of my works is to use

¹³⁹ Mulvey, *Death 24x a second*, p.18

¹⁴⁰ Mulvey, *Death 24x a second*, p.18

¹⁴¹ Mulvey, *Death 24x a second*, p.18

¹⁴² Works of the first year: *Reading, Dropping, Dressing* and

Chrysalide: <<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year1>>; Works of the second year: *Settlement, Cup and Saucer, Blind Project*:

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year2>>

the dissolving transition between photographs to make a new pattern of time. My third year work, *Time-sculpting Project*, belongs to the type. For example, in *Time-sculpting Project: Rice Series*, since I wanted to process the action of measurement, I used rice as the smallest temporal unit in the work. It would be hard to count the grains of rice when eating or cooking it, and I think that this is similar to the way we live with the united time units, seconds, as we sometimes focus on our own pace and time and walk away from the united timeline. I wanted to create a unique timeline through a non-man-made temporal unit, so I chose a different method to make a video by linking numerous photographs of rice in order. More detailed information can be found in the Chapter 1: Account of My Work.

Time Model

Let me take an example of my own work to explore this issue of time and image. As previously mentioned, the virtual model of time and image that I call a ‘moving–image object’ in my brain is as follows;

A semi-transparent dumpling with numerous pores. The dumpling is constructed of sheets of dough wrapped around each other. They are not completely tightly wrapped; there are gaps between the sheets/layers. The sheets/layers in the gap are connected by an element: the materiality is similar to melting cheese. Two sheets will sometimes move in opposite directions, but they are still linked by the shifting elements, like melting cheese. The whole moving semi-transparent glutinous structure seems to have a peristalsis and the centre of the structure can attract new sheets to contribute to the larger structure.

This model is a very old idea that has been accumulating step by step in my mind. I was thinking how time would look if it were a shape, and when I thought about time, an image would accompany it, so I already had this virtual model before I began to work with a camera, photography, and moving images. I have long been interested in the issue of time, not in terms of the past, the future, the present, or even ‘the decisive moment’, but the passage and movement of time. This kind of movement is not speedy. I am interested in the kind of movement that looks as if it is still, but is actually moving. a kind of subtle movement that exists, but is easily ignored. For example, I argue that the genre of ‘still life’ should not exist. Even if an apple is placed on a table, there is still movement between it and the table. I searched suitable media and methodology to ‘actualise’ my thinking of time. I tested numerous materials and made countless experiments. I used paper, clay, printing and installation, and I finally found that

photography can effectively resolve the issue. The way I constructed the model of time and image is illustrated below.

Photograph–Semi-Transparent Moving Slice

I argue that a photograph is not a still image. It may look still, but viewers see a moving image in their heads by the action of ‘looking at’ it, which is a product of their imagination. When looking at a picture of a forest, I can see wind and rain; when looking at a picture of a harbour, I can see the tide and the sunlight. There is something vibrant living in the photograph. A photograph does not represent a frozen moment, but a melting moment. Time is only frozen at the moment the photograph is taken, but as soon as it is looked at, it begins to melt in the viewer’s brain. Melting has movement. A photograph represents a period in time, a little slice of time from the giant flow. Therefore, I assume that the basic elements of time based on the image in our brain are numerous semi-transparent moving slices. Why semi-transparent? Because the impression is borrowed from melting ice cubes and the attribute of time, namely, continuous movement. We can see through something that is transparent, but we can only partially see through a semi-transparent thing. We can see an ‘impression’ or a ‘shape’. This is the same as looking at something with movement. When trying to imagine that we are looking at someone running, we can hardly see details of the runner’s face or expression but we can see a ‘summary’ of the person and the continuous movement. In the process of making works, I make every slice thicker. I extend the time of every slice. I make the movement on the slices slower, longer and almost suspended in a creative timeline.

Gaps and Pores: Time Leap

The model is not a fixed and rigid structure. There are gaps and pores between the slices. Our eyes, brain and a camera cannot capture everything. Some movements or details are lost. Although a digital prosthesis is a kind of extension of human sensory organs, it still has limitations. While the Google Art Project has contributed to making a virtual museum to enable a detailed look, it is still hard to sense the actual scale of the artworks. When we take pictures with cameras, we hardly catch every second. Even if we set the automatic mode to take pictures every second, there are still subtle gaps the camera cannot capture, and these are the spaces we fill with imagination and creativity.



2.1

The illustration of adding 'cross-dissolving layers'

The Element between the Gaps

I made a metaphor to describe how I linked every slice. It looked like melting cheese with threadlike sticky elements that make two slices of toasts stick together. These elements were the mode of transition. When I made a work, I added cross-dissolving layers (2.1) on two photographs or videos to make the movement between two slices.

The grey zones in the illustration are where I made cross-dissolving layers to link two differently-prolonged slices. This was the way I filled the gaps. The transitions between were not movements that would make things pass quickly; on the contrary, the transitions were very slow. The illustration shows that the transition (the movement I created) was the main point of the whole timeline.

Looping: Time Is a Circle

I do not think that time should proceed or return in a straight line. The software, Final Cut Pro, contains a virtual timeline, on which I can edit photos and videos. I cannot only place one layer of time, but different timelines spontaneously. In addition, I think that time is a circle with no beginning or end, so I tend to make moving images on a loop. When the video is coming to the so-called end, the last frame is the same as the first; in this way, this moving-image object can stay alive in the dimension I create.

Provisionality and Tininess

Where did you take the video? What is the object you filmed? How long did it take you to make the work? I am usually asked these questions when I encounter people who are looking my works. I also ask myself, does the location matter? Does the object matter? Does the time I spend matter? In fact, what matters to me are the provisionality and tininess of the object, location, and phenomena.

The objects I photograph are not chosen based on any memory; on the contrary, they are almost always daily essentials that I buy regularly from the supermarket or use every day. I use 'tininess' to describe the objects, but this does not refer to the actual scale; rather, it means the volume of existence of these objects. They bump into my daily life and spend a period of time with me, but we hardly ever pay full attention or devote a specific period of time to viewing these daily objects. The provisionality is not an actual short moment, second or minute; it is a comparative degree of timeliness.

Who cares how many people have touched a book borrowed from a library? Who cares how long an apple bought from a supermarket stays with you in your room? Who cares about how many grains of rice you would cook before you eat it? Who cares about how much dust there is on the blinds that protect your privacy in your flat? Who cares how long a cup and saucer have been in a rented flat? The gaps and pores are made because provisionality and tininess are usually ignored when we perceive the world in our virtual moving-image object in our heads.

In the process of making my artworks I am translating this provisionality and tininess into a single look, transforming the provisionality and tininess into an endless cycle of looping and transcending the degree of provisionality and tininess by leaping ahead of the actual clock time in numerous instant snapshots and videos. I am using a digital prosthesis with my own subjectivity, eyesight and perception to create a way to adjust the scale of objects and prolong the movement of time to make an infinite expansion with digital imagery in a creative dimension.

Part IV The Flux-Image

Three potential theoretical frameworks were built in Part I, II and III in Chapter 2. Merleau-Ponty's *Eye and Mind* and Paul Cézanne were mentioned in Part II to discuss 'being-in-the word', 'perception' and 'consciousness'. The reading of Gilles Deleuze's the moving image, the cinematic image (the movement-image/the time-image), which is the issue of image in the era of cinema, was used in Part III to help me to 'What is doing the perceiving or the remembering?' The former two sections were related to the question Cézanne's question posed about painting and the philosophical questions asked by Deleuze about the movement-image and time-image. The third theoretical framework about contemporary time in Part IV will be introduced in this section of the paper.

By reading the interview, *'For an Esthetics of the Ephemeral'* (2014) between the French philosopher, Christine Buci-Glucksmann and the art historian/curator, Emanuele Quinz, I began to understand the creative term,¹⁴³ 'Flux-Image', which Buci-Glucksmann had introduced in her book entitled *Esthétique de l'éphémère*, written in 2003. According to the response to a question by Quinz, the Flux-image was developed in the wake of Deleuze's Movement-Image and Time-Image with Buci-Glucksmann's aesthetics of time and the ephemeral. This chapter will be based on the following three questions that reflect my reading of the text and how the structure can be relevant to my research:

1. What is new about this regime of images: the flux-image of the ephemerality of the media world by Buci-Glucksmann?
2. What can art do in this era? What is the position of art? Can artists use this new phenomenon, but not for marketing purposes?
3. My artistic project is about being-in-the world, perception and consciousness. After reading about the Flux-Image, are there any points relevant to my research?

I. What Is the Flux-Image?

Emanuele Quinz provided a basic definition of flux-image (the time within the image) when he said, 'The esthetics of the ephemeral is tightly connected with this regime of

¹⁴³ Christine Buci-Glucksmann & Emanuele Quinz, 'For an Esthetics of the Ephemeral', *Hybrid*, January 2014 < <http://www.hybrid.univ-paris8.fr/lodel/index.php?id=314#tocto1n1>>(accessed 26 March 2015)

images, which you define as flux-image.’ Christine Buci-Glucksmann proposes a new image culture called a flux-image, which is not cinematic. According to her, ‘an image may be without a model, allowing for the creation of the real, rather than simply a simulation or illusion’. This is a kind of image people experience without a basis in reality; for example, by developing a notional relationship with the online identity of people or virtual figures in social networks or online games in the contemporary digital era. Buci-Glucksmann made the following three points to explain the flux-image:

1. Flux-images imply images of images, immediate communication (e.g. images from a war witness), the creation of images with no outside reference. Not like photographs in traditional Western thinking where the image is an image of something. One side is real; the other is a copy. A flux-image is not an image of something, nor is it a copy of the reality; it is the image itself. It is not for the purpose of making a copy; it is a tool to speak, to create a cultural flow. Furthermore, when people distribute this kind of image, an ‘image of an image’ is generated in the online network.
2. An intercultural aspect is connected with the globalisation of images. Images can talk without the need of a language, or they may be regarded as a new language beyond geography, politics and culture. A notion of freedom of human rights, identity and communication can be expected in a flux-image; however, the lack of regionality, individuality and exceptionality seems to yield to the strong flow of time. Even if there are some samples of singular points in the flow, they will be forwarded and spread sooner or later. Something original exists near the borderline; for example, something that rarely happens will suddenly be pushed to the centre of a social network, i.e. Facebook or Reddit, to become the most seen video or photo.
3. Flux-images are fluid and ephemeral because the process definitively prevails over the being. Contemporary people expect to acquire fresh knowledge or a new experience with images and then skim over the current experience and proceed to the next. This is why various online fora exist in the apps of mobile phones. Everything is ephemeral in the way it is exchanged, caught up with, and widespread as quickly as possible. Many things are experienced by an image rather than reality so that, in some sense, we save time to experience more ephemerality. The marketplace needs a new strategy to cope with the pace of this ephemeral trend, and this is the aspect of the effect and affect of flux-image time.

Therefore, flux–image is connected with the concept of ephemerality. Buci-Glucksmann mentions that she came to realise the different issues of time and image between Japan and the West from her experience of Japan. ‘Japan was already experiencing a culture of flux. This culture involved a temporal approach that differs from that of the West, i.e. an approach that considers impermanency, and thus ephemerality, as positive.’ This reminds us that the concept of temporality in the East and the West is slightly different. Perhaps with the influence of different religions, myths and histories, time is more like an endless straight line in the West and more like a circle in the East. They both lack clear beginning and ending points, but are fundamentally different. The timeline in the East seems to be looped in the same path as a circle, but every circle is unique. Nothing can remain the same forever; even if people have a chance to come back to the same place, it is different at every moment. Buci-Glucksmann continued to say,

...it seemed necessary to me to view the ephemeral as a new method of thrusting oneself into the present and the future. This is because the ephemeral is not a moment in time, the instant according to Aristotle, or the mere “presenteeism” of a time with no future. Instead, it is the passage of time, its modulation and delicate resonance.¹⁴⁴

The word ‘passage’ implies a sense of flowing, and this flow would disappear into the gap between moments (i.e. every instant) and make the temporal a paradox that contains both density and fluidity. Buci-Glucksmann also implied a potential importance related to art; ‘...prior to being an artistic reality, it is a mode of living affecting human relations, now rapping with the culture of flux and networks, and all of this globalised instability and inequality.’ The flux–image has already become an everyday phenomenon in the high street, on television and in online networks. Whether ephemerality is perceived as being positive or negative, it is the main way of the current marketplace.

l'éphémère affirmatif, qui accueille avec une joie tragique les vibrations suspensives du temps qui résonnent dans l'entre-temps (Deleuze) de l'instant. Cet éphémère serait capable de transfigurer les "images-flux" du marché en des formes artistiques pleines d'humour, de sensualité, et d'une profonde légèreté.¹⁴⁵

The literal translation of the above text affirms that ephemeral succeeds with tragic joy in the precedent suspension of the vibration of time, which resonates a between-time of the instant (dans l'entre-temps (Deleuze) de l'instant). This ephemeral will or will not be

¹⁴⁴ Christine Buci-Glucksmann & Emanuele Quinz, ‘For an Esthetics of the Ephemeral’

¹⁴⁵ ‘L'art de l'éphémère, *Figures de l'art* n°12’, 30th May 2006 <http://www.fabula.org/actualites/l-art-de-l-ephemere-figures-de-l-art-ndeg12_12877.php> (accessed 26 March 2015)

capable of transfiguring the flux-image of the marketplace of the media into an artistic form of humour, sensuality, and profound lightness. Most humans have developed a way to cope with the new regime of image/technology with/without consciousness and living in the time, and as Buci-Glucksmann said, ‘As a result, there is no more ontology of images, and the whole of metaphysics, developed around the category of *mimesis*, is no longer relevant in examining the regime of flux-images.’ So, what is the strategy for the new regime? What kind of concept can analyse this new phenomenon? What is the position of art in the culture of flux?

II. What Can Art Do in the Era of the Flux-Image?

Emanuele Quinz mentioned Jean-Louis Boissier’s relation–image and attempt to find the connection between the power of art and image, and Buci-Glucksmann replied,

Mais il faut voir comment, dans l’esthétique de cette image, on trouve les composantes théoriques de son analyse. Car il ne s’agit pas d’en rester au seul défilé des images, au zapping des flux, à leur immersion. Il faut retrouver dans les images une configuration, un écart, voire une polysensorialité hybride (visuel/son, par exemple) qui en fait la valeur esthétique.

(In English: But it is necessary to see how the theoretical components of their analysis may be found in the esthetics of these images. It is not merely a question of parading through images, zapping through flows or being immersed. It is necessary to find a configuration, a space or even a hybrid polysensorial appeal (i.e. visual/sound) in the images that contributes to their esthetic value).¹⁴⁶

The French version more clearly illustrates what Buci-Glucksmann was saying. The theoretical components of the analysis can be found in the aesthetics of an image. An image can have value because of its subject or its ability to reveal the world, but if we accept this point, we are denying that it has anything to do with perspective, like the great traditional Western artists. If it is not to do with *mimesis*, and not with gradient, which refuses to see an image as an abstraction, what is its value? Buci-Glucksmann is saying that images have an aesthetic value, part of which comes from polysensoriality, which appeals to many senses, such as a sense of space and configuration.

¹⁴⁶ Christine Buci-Glucksmann & Emanuele Quinz, ‘For an Esthetics of the Ephemeral’

III. Does the Flux-Image Make a Relevant Contribution to My Research?

The former two sections included Paul Cézanne's moment and Gilles Deleuze's cinematic moment. Now it is the turn of the contemporary moment with the third philosopher, Christine Buci-Glucksmann, who is saying that this is a new regime of a flux-image moment. Two elements of the flux-image philosophy of Buci-Glucksmann are particularly crucial to my research. She says that there is an implication for art in that artists can intervene in different ways, but that something in these images gives them the material means to begin to analyse what they are doing. Some people may see my work as a kind of research, an evaluation of what is happening in the new kind of movement-image of the present, an assessment of my moment in relation to the question of being, perception and image. Secondly I ask myself what the aesthetic value of this kind of image would be. Is there a relationship between the digital images and technology and everything I do as an artist? This would mean that we engage with images by means of certain criteria. The value in either art or images is not traditional. My work is a kind of research in the field of art by participating in a new image culture. I am doing what Cézanne was doing when he painted in the moment, experimenting with new experiences of time and modality that would be represented by Impressionists in an attempt to record the passage of time. Then came a kind of cinematic time in terms of images.

Christine Buci-Glucksmann's description of a flux-image helped me to situate myself as an artist in relation to time and image. In Cézanne's time, the Impressionist artists pursued instantaneity. He had to do something to make sense of that, rather than simply depicting endless changes and sensations; so he attempted to make something that was solid, but also true to the new modernist consciousness. I am not living in the same era as Cézanne, but I am in my own time, which is the time of flux-image. I use my artistic projects to try to make sense of image and time in the present time of the flux-image. I am aware of living with and using the same digital technology, but I am not merely repeating the sense of a flux-image. I interrupt it with different notions of time-images and movement-images. So, what is the role of aesthetics? The aestheticism in my work relates to time, scale, and viewers' experience of it. I invite them to experience fluidity from another angle, by watching time and seeing the seeing. I am not asking them to repeatedly stand in the same position again and again. I am not offering something that resembles their existing experience of daily life with selected, enlarged, twisted, beautified images of mimesis of the flux-image culture. If I did this, my work would become part of the no-name group within the wide expanse of online

networks. The speed of the online networks makes it hard to determine the real identity and name of the author of images. There is also less copyright because anyone can forward a video or a photo with one click. People can even remake photos and issue them as a new source. I neither can nor want to join that race; I do not want to become faster and faster. I am not documenting, noticing, representing and showing current phenomena or just adding some digital effects to make them look like artworks; neither do I want to be someone who makes work to warn the world of the so-called chaos of the digital age. I merely want to invite the viewer to spend some time with me to intervene and analyse culture with a different path, pace and perception from the very fundamental point in order to re-perceive a world that is inhabited by flux-images.

Part V The Matrixial Gaze and Metramorphosis

The expanded meaning and knowledge of a prosthesis in linguistics and cultural studies were addressed in Part I, while Part II contained a study of the contributions of Merleau-Ponty and Paul Cézanne to the question: can art (i.e. painting) tell/teach us about being-in-the world? The aim of this chapter was to resonate the ‘perception’ in the title of the thesis. Receiving/transforming/remembering things from the external world was the focus of Part III, in which Gilles Deleuze’s cinematic images were introduced: movement-image and time-image. The theme of this chapter was ‘imagination’. The contemporary theory about digitalised image was discussed in Part IV, when it was explained that Christine Buci-Glucksmann’s flux-image is not a kind of ‘representation’. In flux-image time, the circular flow of an image does not represent something; the image is the image itself. However, while these theories provided me with words, they did not match what I do in my artistic research.

The beginning of my process of making artwork is seeing. The first motive for my artistic research was also seeing, and some typical models have been developed in this field. When asking a simple question, such as what happens when we look? there are several notions to think about, as follows;

xi. Physical sight: we have eyes; how do they work?

xii. Psychological perception: what happens when we look at the world? Although I know my eyes are working, I might still know something more than what I can see by looking because I have memories from when I looked before.

xiii. Phenomenological philosophy: who am I in the world when I am seeing or being seen?

xiv. Psychoanalysis: we look at the world because we are interested in it, and this interest involves investing in eroticism, desire and fantasy.

These models refer to a sense of ‘self’; when ‘I’ am looking, who or what am ‘I’? As an artist, there is something a bit different. Artists not only need to ask ‘what happens when I am seeing?’, but they also need to consider ‘what happens when I create something for other people to look at?’. What is the particular language artists can use to refer to this kind of looking for something more than ‘myself’?

This leads to the purpose of this final section, which is to introduce an artist’s vocabulary to help to approach the core issue of artistic seeing. Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger is an Israeli-born artist, philosopher, psychoanalyst, and writer. She intervenes

in psychoanalytical seeing and creates words to explain her works and thinking. So, how does she decide to deal with being an artist, psychoanalyst, and writer?

In the beginning I painted, then I thought I should not make a profession from that which is most hidden, the most non-social and the most non-institutional. I had to hide it, not make art my professional work, and study something else. So I studied and worked as a clinical psychologist. But what I pushed underground and left behind continually haunted me. When I came to Paris, I left everything of my life in Tel Aviv and my work in a psychiatric hospital in order to paint. I painted and I stopped being a psychologist. But then again, slowly, what I left behind haunted me. I was first painting, and then not painting. Then I started painting again, until began to integrate the notes and the thinking, painting and life, this work and that profession, psychoanalytical theory and practice, writing and painting. It took me years to understand that this was all part of an artistic oeuvre that is mine.¹⁴⁷

I would like to extract two of Bracha Ettinger's contributions to art, one of which is *The Matrixial Gaze*: something that happens between perception and viewing, another way of looking. The other is *Metramorphosis*: the process of artwork. According to Alison Rowley, Bracha Ettinger's theory of the *Matrixial Gaze* is a shift from 'Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytical thought about the function of aesthetic activity' and is also 'informed by Merleau-Ponty's work on the ontological status of aesthetic practice'.¹⁴⁸ Rowley offers readers two levels of analysis about 'seeing' with Merleau-Ponty, Freud, and Lacan: one relates to the 'subject' and the other, the 'painting'.

The Subject and the Seeing

'The subject' is connected to the world through the body: the eyes are the means of seeing to see the world. Alison Rowley mentions Merleau-Ponty's notion of 'flesh', '...as a chiasmic consciousness producing relation between human subject and world. Merleau-Ponty's concept retains the sense of generalised all-over relations.' As for Freud, 'the points of contact between the body and the world are specifically located as the actual openings of the body.' For Freud, the eyes are 'erotogenic zones'. They are not just something for looking; they become an erotic organ associated with desire.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ Bracha L Ettinger, 'Working Through: A Conversation between Craigie Horsfield and Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger' in Catherine de Zegher and Brian Massumi, (eds), Bracha L Ettinger: The Eurydice Series, Drawing Papers no.24, New York; The Drawing Center, 2001), p. 43.

¹⁴⁸ Rowley, *Helen Frankenthaler*, p.61

¹⁴⁹ Rowley, *Helen Frankenthaler*, p.61- 63

In *The Matrixial Gaze*, Bracha Ettinger refers to Lacan's theory of the 'Gaze' as 'object a'. In Lacan's theory, looking is located as follows;

According to Lacan's late 'theory of phantasy', subjectivity is not only the effect of basic separations which instigate the subject to desire unconsciously both the lost part-object—the lost archaic real Other (mother)—and the unreachable symbolic Other. Thus, subjectivity is fatally intermingled with "holes" in the Real, in the Imaginary and in the Symbolic, with psychic objects as lacks.¹⁵⁰

Lacan theorises this aspect of subjectivity in the scopic field 'the gaze'. The gaze is not my looking or the looking of others. It is not a matter of sight or seeing. The gaze refers to that which, in the field of vision, the subject feels it has lost; as a lost object it institutes a sense of lack in the subject, and hence initiates desire directed towards 'a non-thing' in the field of vision. Ettinger explains,

The gaze is the object a—cause of desire in the scopic field. It is a primal lost trace, a "nothing related to originally repression, with no substitute, no compensation, no relief. We look for the gaze, we are longing for it, desiring to be looked at by the gaze, but the gaze is hidden from us."¹⁵¹

For Lacan, the gaze can refer to our endless search for what will make the lacking subject whole. The gaze is part of the psyche. The explanation why people need to listen to music and look at paintings, may lie in this search outside ourselves in the fields of sound or vision for some imagined other than might repair the imagined lack. We are unconsciously looking for the missing pieces in our relationship with the world. For Lacan art falls into this area of loss and reparation.

Can art (i.e. painting) tell us something else about our relationship to the world? What is the gaze for Bracha Ettinger?

The Painting and the Seeing

According to Alison Rowley,

For Merleau-Ponty painting is a manifestation and extension of the intertwining of subject/world in a relation of unity at a distance and difference within the same. Painting is 'fleshy' consciousness materialised. For Lacan, on the other hand, painting as a function of the gaze is an indicator of something missing in any visual representation of the subject/world relation.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger, *The Matrixial Gaze* (Leeds: Feminist Arts and Histories Network, 1995), pp. 1

¹⁵¹ Ettinger, *The Matrixial Gaze*, p. 1

¹⁵² Rowley, *Helen Frankenthaler*, p.64

Artists like me, like Bracha Ettinger, are repetitively and continuously looking. The process is completely intangible and hardly articulated. It may only be explained using some forms of psychoanalytical language. Bracha Ettinger's theory of the Matrix is an 'expansion of (not a replacement for) the Lacanian phallic symbolic.'¹⁵³

When I transferred my artistic experience with pigment, dust, colour, ash, lines and grains to my theoretical knowledge and practice, I wrote in a psychoanalytical language, because it was the only language I had, the only theoretical world at my disposition. At the same time, I discovered with anguish its poverty in the domains of art and of the feminine. What came from my art allowed me to understand what goes on with my patients, but something also began to work the other way around.

However, it is not my intention to dig deeply into the complex psychoanalytical field. It is not within my capacity to explain the psychoanalytical foundation of *The Matrixial Gaze*; however, I can learn from the extraction of Ettinger's artistic working process and theory. Although it is based on psychoanalytical language, her theory is not purely psychoanalytical; it is made and mixed with her artistic experience so that it becomes a kind of aesthetics. In terms of what I can learn from her, there are two relevant concepts: '*Metramorphosis*' and '*The Matrixial Gaze*'.

What does Bracha Ettinger mean by *Metramorphosis* and *The Matrixial Gaze*? Can a theory invented by a painter and based on a painting process help me to think about my research? I know I am walking into a complex field and feeling anxious but a paragraph written by Griselda Pollock introduces Ettinger's book *The Matrixial Gaze* to readers:

Listen to the process of unfolding thought, tune in and out, taking what makes sense and allowing the argument to travel its pathways which will arrive at places that suddenly make sense of things, that in some ways, many feel they had already intuited, known in some as yet unspoken way.

¹⁵⁴

In her preface to *The Matrixial Gaze*, Griselda Pollock gives people some wise advice to think in an indirect way when encountering artwork, history and aesthetics. If we turn the position to a 'producer' from a 'product', for example, artist and artwork, it seems that we can think about how an artist deals with the unfolding, still travelling and

¹⁵³ Rowley, *Helen Frankenthaler*, p.71

¹⁵⁴ Griselda Pollock, 'Preface' to *The Matrixial Gaze* (Leeds, UK: Feminist Arts and Histories Network, Dept. of Fine Art, U of Leeds, 1995), pp. ii.

unspoken, apart from the practical process of making artworks or thinking in the brain. How can the 'in between-ness' that can be touched in aesthetic practice be theorised using language that works with a binary order of difference? What I am doing is hearing an artist, who is trying to paint something she thinks can consolidate her relationship with the world, particularly by the process she uses. Is this not the same as I am asking or doing with a digital prosthesis?

The Matrixial Gaze and Metramorphosis

Bracha Lichtenberg Ettinger makes an intervention into aesthetics with her concepts of the *Matrixial Gaze* and the *Metramorphosis*. In the phallogentric order meaning is produced by metaphors and metonymy (substitutions and displacement). In the matrixial sphere, Bracha Ettinger proposes another 'figure' by which meaning is produced. *Metramorphosis* looks similar to Metamorphosis, but they are quite different. Metamorphosis means changing shape, but Ettinger uses 'Metra' not 'Meta' because it refers to a process of change that happens 'with' and 'between' more than one element. Alison Rowley explains,

In a zone of continual spatial adjustment (which by definition can never be a total separation) between I and non I – an 'encounter between the most intimate and the most distanced unknown' (modelled on the late intra-uterine relation) there never arises a thing as a whole thing, that is to say, the psychoanalytic object in the matrix is a partial object, felt as an almost painful/almost pleasurable, almost presence of an almost absence. The 'almost' in this linguistic attempt at catching a sense of the matrixial object a, it's never quite rhetorical figure, is a *movement*, the process of co-emerging-co-fading Lichtenberg Ettinger calls *metramorphosis*.¹⁵⁵

Bracha Ettinger uses the 'womb' – metra=Matrix – to describe a *structure or domain of subjectivity* where several elements share a borderspace between something that is the co-emerging pair of 'becoming infant/becoming mother'. The Matrix is a structure that has more than one, but it is not like 'two: this and that'; it concerns the *several* and what these co-becoming elements share is a *borderspace*. *The Matrixial Gaze* is what Bracha Ettinger can offer me as a partial way of explaining a sort of seeing: the change of prepositions and the change of a sense of placement. Normally we would say 'I am looking at the world'. The 'at' gives a sense of distance, which implies two opposite positions: subject and object. If we think in Bracha Ettinger's way, we would say, 'I am looking *with* the world'. The '*with*' implies 'more than one', otherness and a relationship, what she names relations without relating. Her redefinition of 'the

¹⁵⁵ Rowley, *Helen Frankenthaler*, pp. 69

late intra-uterine relation' provides a chance to think about how a borderspace shared by 'more than one' exists in the process of making art and the process of experiencing (with) an artwork.

Metramorphosis arises from Bracha Ettinger's process of painting. It is not a process of changing shape. Her paintings produce processes for meanings and effect through her labour of layers and layers of work. She thinks that painting involves *Metramorphosis*, rather than making a representation of something or something that looks similar to something else. The keywords of her process are co-emerging, co-becoming, a sense of sharing and co-affecting. Alison Rowley, also a painter, makes the following comment;

Difficult to think and difficult to write, I have absolutely no problem understanding the concept of the matrix and its operational mode metramorphosis from experience with the materials and processes of painting. I have argued that the technical procedures and processes of painting are inextricably caught up in the binary logic of fort/ da. That is to say, painting can only proceed as a temporal/spatial play of the material there/not thereness, mark/no mark, form/no form, of the figure/ground relation. Yet also fundamental to painting as the articulation of material substance is its instability. At the most obvious level there is the capacity of paint and canvas to flip between a presence as material, and material by means of which an image of something in the world, or from the imagination, is transmitted.¹⁵⁶

Painting is neither just a bunch of materials nor a representation of the world. It is associated with a relationship between the world, the painter, and the viewer. Artwork can sometimes float in between spaces creating a borderspace. The artist, the viewer and the world are very close, but also distant in a paradoxical relationship. Artists do not expect the world or every viewer to totally perceive the same things. For example, artists like me stand against representation and expression. I am creating an event related to 'seeing', not telling a story or providing a manual about seeing directly. Different things would happen to viewers. They are not directly given something they can understand; they need to spend time waiting for the vibration as they slowly tune in to 'erotised aeriols of the psyche', where the artist makes some rhythm. Bracha Ettinger is explaining something that is 'almost'; floating, moving, and non-stopping, held in between. What Bracha Ettinger contributes to contemporary art goes beyond painting. She offers me a way to express something that seems to be paradoxical, but which artists know intuitively; how movement, rhythm, pleasure, duration and sensibility

¹⁵⁶ Rowley, *Helen Frankenthaler*, pp. 70

happen in a way that is invisible or does not involve looking, but is actually presented by means of visual art. She names this process *fascinace*.

Conclusion

My work is not what I see with my naked eyes. It is also not a vision purely made by the camera. It also cannot be simplified as a combination of my vision plus that of the camera. My work is generated by the between-ness and passing of spectators' eyes. Spectators are also partial subjects of the works because they see, feel, and are moved by them. The thinking goes beyond simply saying that how the artist sees or how the camera sees or how they cooperate makes this work. The vision is paradoxical: between distance and closeness, relation and non-relation. As an artist, I am caught up in the objects I photograph, but this does not mean that I form a relationship with rice, apples or blinds. As spectators, they may be caught up in my works, but they have the will and freedom to tune in/out and avoid being devoured or overwhelmed. When my work involves closeness, some extremely close-up scenes bring a sense of strangeness and uncanniness; they are too close to recognise familiar characteristics. I cannot do this on my own; I need unknown spectators' eyes. With regard to the process of making and looking at art, art emerges from both the work or input of makers and viewers. These two factors need to co-emerge, to be present together, to accompany each other. The spectators do not need to fuse with the artist; they do not need to lose themselves. They just need to be there in the process of making art. Even when they are not really present, I imagine the presence of spectators. I always pretend that I am the first spectator when I finish a work because I need to ask 'how will my work affect the spectators or myself?'

When someone's work appears in an exhibition, the questions asked by viewers are not those that require a precise answer, such as, 'What is it?' 'What is this a presentation of?' and 'Can it fit into any group?' They are more likely to be along the lines of, 'how is it going?' 'How did it come to this?' When spectators see themselves as partial subjects of the works, they may be more concerned with the process than the result. My works are not designed to give a vision of something, neither are they designed to teach the public anything. They cannot be precisely classified as video artworks or moving images or documentaries or installations or animations or paintings; these are all characteristics of my works, but they are not the essence of them. I do not intentionally aim to protest against art classification and I am not suggesting that classifications should be eliminated. I am simply offering the chance to cross these

boundaries, so I need the existence of the ‘labels’ I mentioned. Having learned the sense from Bracha Ettinger’s term, ‘differentiation-in-co-emergence’, I can see my works emerging from various differences generated by some existing genres. Just take your time waiting and seeing before fixing a label to my work; it generally takes shape from standing between the gaps of difference, between the artist and spectators, and between perception, representation and imagination.

My purpose has been to explore theoretical resources, to examine their concepts and assess the relationship between such concepts and the core questions and processes of my practice. I have avoided the ‘application’ of any theory by choosing to think with those philosophers and cultural theories that are most attuned to ‘*Artworking*’¹⁵⁷ (Ettinger), which in itself is a means of thinking. I have aimed to establish formal thoughts and thinking by making a constructive dialogue.

¹⁵⁷ Bracha L. Ettinger, *Artworking 1985-1999* (Brussels: Palais des Beaux Arts and Gent : Ludion, 2000). For a fuller explanation of ‘artworking’ as the aesthetic extension of Freud’s concept of the economy of the psyche: dream-working, the work of mourning and working-through, see Griselda Pollock, ‘Introduction: Trauma and Artworking’, *After-Affects I After-Images; Trauma and Aesthetic Transformation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), pp. 1-33.

CHAPTER 3

Introduction

Chapter 1 contained an account of my own practice, while I attempted to situate my research questions in philosophical and theoretical conversations in Chapter 2 in order to develop a vocabulary of concepts related to my practice as a research. I intend to use this chapter to discuss a selection of works by contemporary artists, who provide the context for my practice as an artist working with moving images. The foremost discussion relates to works that use moving images as their primary form. The key issue I want to investigate is the point of contact with viewers in an exhibition, namely, installation. I also would like refer to the online dossier and Chapter 1 to see my different experiments in installation.

Artists' moving image artworks have been widely exhibited in local galleries or international exhibition venues since the first decade of the twenty first century. However, there are no clear 'trends' or 'schools' typical of an older art history and movements, e.g. Romanticism, Futurism, Expressionism, etc. Artists' moving image artworks have an ambiguous 'partnership' with movies, documentaries, music, television, videos, fiction, narratives, animation and advertising. They share the same external development means using technology and equipment and their targeted viewers also sometimes overlap. Sometimes they share the same materials/sources of interest/inspiration; for example, some artists may create works using documentary or narrative forms. They may be just as interested in historical events as some directors, producers or animators. There are no specific aesthetic claims or statements made by a group of moving image artists to stand together and say 'we are a school' and in fact, this may be a good thing. Based on the shared form of medium, which is still being developed, expanded and advanced, the aesthetics of current moving images need to be capable of both maintaining the pace of change and the study of art/non-art moving images. In other words, some artists who are not currently working with easily categorised or well-recognised types may need to try to create their own context. However, since there is no 'school' in moving-image art, I am completely free to explore this phenomenon in this chapter. A key question for my practice has been the form of its presentation. Is it like a installation of painting, sculpture or cinema? I have selected three artists whose work may help me to think this question.

The first is Pipilotti Rist aged 53 (b.1962), Hilary Lloyd aged 51 (b.1964), and Elizabeth Price aged 49 (b.1966). These three artists were born in the 1960s within two years of each other, so why did I choose them? Firstly, their age is an issue. I acknowledge the fact there are a great many outstanding emerging moving image artists, so why have I chosen three rather mature ones? It is well known that video art was founded by Nam June Paik (1932–2006) around 1963; therefore, these three artists entered the art practice field when video art had been developing for some years. Writing in 2009, Michel Newman noted that ‘Work using moving image since the 1990s has been extremely diverse—the result of a confluence of sources, varied technical possibilities, and different contexts of production’.¹⁵⁸ According to the list of their exhibitions, beginning around 1990, the first digital commercial camera was introduced to the market at about the same time as these artists were in the early stage of their professional careers. They were not born in the digital generation; rather, they are inbetweeners, which means that they must have experienced the transition of display and shooting equipment and technological culture. Furthermore, they have achieved international success in their careers so that they have a better capacity to earn or be awarded more resources, opportunities and funding than emerging artists to produce iconic solo exhibitions with expertise. The quality, power and atmosphere of moving image artwork can sometimes be enhanced or reduced by the installation. As a viewer of these mature artists, I can firstly focus on the aestheticism of their work, rather than being distracted by the compromises caused by the quality of the technical equipment, the disturbance from other artists’ works, and the over-low budget from time to time. Secondly, following the first point, the works I am going to discuss relied on a very accurate arrangement of the installation because the atmosphere they created was somewhere between a sensory experience and objecthood. I would like to use several sections to analyse the three artists’ works in order to point out more specific issues to create a unique context.

¹⁵⁸ Michael Newman, ‘Moving image in the gallery since the 1990s’, in Stuart Comer (eds.) *Film and Video Art* (London: Tate, 2009) p. 88

Part I Pipilotti Rist

Biography

Life and Career

Pipilotti Rist (3.1) was born Elisabeth Charlotte Rist¹⁵⁹ in Grabs in the Swiss Rhine Valley in 1962. She lives and works in Zurich and among the mountains of Switzerland as an internationally-renowned artist who works with video, film and moving image installations with giant immersive projections. Rist was not educated in the traditional fine art direction. She studied commercial art, illustration, and photography at the University of Applied Arts Vienna from 1982 to 1986 before going on to study video and animation at the School of Design (Schule für Gestaltung) in Basel, from 1986 to 1988. She played diverse



3.1
Pipilotti Rist,
Portrait
7 November 2011
Source: Vittorio
Zunino
Celotto/Getty
Images Europe

roles and was interested in many different areas in overlapping periods; for instance, in terms of music, she was a member of the band and performance group *Les Reines Prochaines* between 1988 and 1994, and then she focused on freestyle video/audio works and installation during her education after 1986. From 1987 to 1994, Rist worked as a freelance graphic computer operator in different video studios, and exhibited at the Venice Biennial in 1997. Rist was invited to the UCLA, Los Angeles, as a visiting professor from 2002 to 2003, and she spent four years from 2005 to 2009 working on her first feature film, 'Pepperminta'. Pipilotti Rist is now one of the most renowned and recognisable contemporary artists.

¹⁵⁹ 'Lotti' has been her nickname since childhood. Before Rist entered the University of Applied Arts in Vienna in 1982, she adopted the 'Pipi' from Pippi Longstocking, a figure she had loved since childhood in a series of children's books by the Swedish author, Astrid Lindgren, combined it with Lotti to create 'Pipilotti'.

Works

Rist acquired her inspiration from life, nature, art, social issues, pop music, MTV, advertising and cultural consciousness, etc., and this tendency also appears in her works. According to her New York representative gallery, Luhring Augustine's website, the reason why she makes videos and moving image is, 'Her focus is video/audio installations because there is room in them for everything (painting, technology, language, drowsy music, movement, flowing pictures, poetry, commotion, premonition of death, sex and friendliness) - like in a compact handbag'.¹⁶⁰ Rist's best known current installation works consist of giant projections on a shape-structured wall or two adjacent walls with a corner, providing the viewer with an environment of immersive atmosphere structured by giant, colourful, dreamy, fantasy moving image projections, accompanied by drowsy soundtracks and relaxed physical interior decorations.

Rist's earlier work can be seen to contain some central concerns, visual effects and filming techniques that are still evident in her work today. Overall, Rist's work can roughly be divided into two types with years, techniques and presentations. Before the 1990s, when Rist was still a student, she worked with Super 8 Films to make single-channel videos, which generally only lasted for a few minutes. While Rist was studying at University



3.2

Pipilotti Rist
I'm Not the Girl Who Misses Much 1986, Video Still, monitor, colour and sound, Overall display dimension variable duration: 5 min., 2 sec, Tate, London.
 Copyright Pipilotti Rist, Courtesy the artist, Hauser & Wirth and Luhring Augustine, New York.

of Applied Arts Vienna in Vienna and School of Design (Schule für Gestaltung) in Basel, experimental films from 60's-70's by Norman McLaren (1914-1987), Peter Fischli (1952-) and David Weiss (1946-2012) influenced Rist deeply. It is also important to note that Rist was influenced by early video art (60's-80's) made by Ulrike Rosenbach (1943-), Joan Jonas (1936-), and Nam June Paik (1932-2006). Rist's interest in electronic media production/post-production situated her works into the wave of video installation in the 1990's. The most important

¹⁶⁰ Pipilotti Rist, 'Artist Bio', *Luhring Augustine*, 2010, <<http://www.luhringaugustine.com/artists/pipilotti-rist/>> (accessed 30 May 2015)

example from her student period is *I'm Not the Girl Who Misses Much* (1986) (3.2), which is a collection at Tate Modern, London. This video work was originally designed to be shown on a domestic monitor. It initially gives an impression of MTV, but it is a 'twisted' MTV. It looks as if the equipment is having some technical problems. The 'singer's image is blurred but we can sense that her body is relaxed. She is dancing and wearing a black dress that exposes her breast. Her voice has lost its normal tone and speed. The colour and texture of the video have been post-edited and altered. Rist's earlier works contain a more direct intention to explore issues such as gender and sexuality. She uses intense visual effects and vibrant bodily actions to make an impact on the thoughts of her viewers.

The title is the first line of the lyrics from the Beatles' song, '*Happiness is a Warm Gun*', recorded in 1968. The female figure, the artist herself, repeatedly sings the phrase in the video. Rist explains the origin of her motivation and passion for art in the following quotation from '*I rist, you rist, she rists, he rists, we rist, you rist, they rist, tourist: Hans Ulrich Obrist in conversation with Pipilotti Rist*'¹⁶¹;

In my village in Switzerland I had a small window on the art world through the mass media; through John Lennon/Yoko Ono I moved from pop music to contemporary art. In return, I will always be grateful to popular culture.

Rist is especially influenced by Yoko Ono. According to Rachel Taylor, '...this work can in some ways be seen as an homage to Ono, whose video and sculptural work was an early influence on Rist.' Rist uses her own body and voice to project a human state between anxiety and ecstasy. The singing of *I'm Not The Girl Who Misses Much* recalls Yoko Ono's performance and the work illustrates one of Rist's preference of 'object – photographed', in this case, the human body. The intense colour is also a remarkable characteristic of Rist's work, which is a mixture of anxious, brave, and blunt. The clearest aspect of Rist's early work was her response to the wave of video art/MTV by the appropriation of pop music and the use of her camera to challenge pop culture and its sexuality with the nude body. In *Sexy Sad I* (1987) Rist used a cut-and-paste remix of The Beatles' *Sexy Sadie*, and she adapted other singers' songs in *You Called Me Jacky* (1990), *I'm A*

¹⁶¹ Hans Ulrich Obrist, 'I rist, you rist, she rists, he rists, we rist, you rist, they rist, tourist: Hans Ulrich Obrist in conversation with Pipilotti Rist', in Peggy Phelan, Elizabeth Bronfen, *Pipilotti Rist* (London : Phaidon, 2001), p. 16

Victim Of This Song (1995) and *Sip My Ocean* (1996) (3.3). Rist also adapted other singers' songs. Rist's contribution is marked by her exploration of pop culture, human desire, and the creation of fantasy to furnish the eyes and minds of viewers with an extraordinary experience. I will not continue to analyse Risten works here because I am not concerned with desire, sexuality and gender. Since my interest lies in the perception evoked by her exhibitions and works, I would like to focus more on her current works and the development of her current installations.

Rist's installations are strongly associated with the relationship between people, as well as the relationship between a person and the world. I can learn the sense of being-in-the-world from Rist. What is, the way in which she embodies her concerns? Although Rist once explained why she chose videos rather than movies; – 'I opted video because I can perform all the steps myself, from the camera work to online editing, and that suits me. I can work all by myself or in a small team.'¹⁶², – her ambition to transcend the frame of so-called 'video art' is evident. I can also learn from what she achieved, particularly in terms of installation. The scale, degree of complexity and richness of her work have continued to expand and advance since the 1990s, demonstrating the improvement of her installations and her central concern about humans and being-in-the world. Rist's works convey an eagerness to connect with her viewers.

¹⁶² Obrist, 'I rist, you rist, she rists, he rists, we rist, you rist, they rist, tourist: Hans Ulrich Obrist in conversation with Pipilotti Rist', p.10



3.3

Pipilotti Rist, *Sip My Ocean* (1996), Audio-video installation, Installation View, Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, 2000, Copyright Pipilotti Rist, Courtesy the artist, Hauser & Wirth and Luhring Augustine, New York.



3.4

Pipilotti Rist, *Das Zimmer (The Room)* 1994/2000, Installation View, FACT, Liverpool, 2008, Copyright Pipilotti Rist, Courtesy the artist, Hauser & Wirth and Luhring Augustine, New York. Photo: Brian Slater



3.5

Pipilotti Rist, *Homo sapiens sapiens* 2005, Installation View, Audio-video installation, San Stae Church, Venice, Copyright Pipilotti Rist, Courtesy the artist, Hauser & Wirth and Luhring Augustine, New York. Photo: A. Burger

Contribution: Outside the Conventional Monitor

When examining Rist's archived installation works, there is a hint that they gradually seemed to come alive and run outside the conventional monitor. Her earlier highlighted works, *I'm Not the Girl Who Misses Much* (1986) (3.2) and *Pickelporno* (1992) were originally set for a single channel display, e.g. played on a monitor or single projector, similar to television and cinema. The work and the viewer were opposite entities. Over the next ten years, Rist created her own aesthetic of setting videos bit by bit. The installation of *Sip My Ocean* (1996)¹⁶³ (3.3) consisted of mirror images projected onto two perpendicular walls with the two sides forming a corner. At this moment, viewers are facing what looks like arms that are gradually reaching out to them, while the corner projects a sense of spatial comfort.

Ever Is Over All (1997), a near-narrative video, also adopted the same way of making a corner, whereas *Himalaya Goldsteins Stube* (*Himalaya Goldsteinaya Goldsteins*) (1999) and *Das Zimmer* (*The Room*) (1994/2000) (3.4) were near whole installation works. Video played a very small role within a living room size television in *Das Zimmer* (*The Room*) (1994/2000) (3.4), but the red sofa, remote control and lamp were much larger than normal size. Viewers could sit on the giant sofa and use the remote to see the video. This setting illustrates that Rist was beginning to create an environment for a singular viewing experience. The perception of this video installation not only depends on viewers' eyes, but also their body. Ironically, the television was a normal size, but the viewers' vision still focused on the small object even though they were sitting on rather larger furniture. This may reflect our everyday habits at home, as well as reminding us that the primary video installation and viewing experiences in our lives are generated in our own homes. According to Catherine Elwes, 'By the 1960s, the general population of the UK was watching a potential eleven hours of broadcast television per day.' She goes on to say, 'At home, the television displaced the hearth as the focus of family life.'¹⁶⁴ When we are watching a video, programme, movie, or playing a game, our surroundings affect our perception. Rist expanded her concern for the human body from the inside of her works to the outside. She seems to be inside the video, reaching out and expecting to connect with her viewers. She provided pillows for viewers to lie on in the exhibition, *Supersubjektiv* (2001). In addition, Rist's video

¹⁶³ Pipilotti Rist, '*Sip My Ocean*' (1996), Youtube, 4 December 2009, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJhgIcbSEeM>> (accessed 30 May 2015)

¹⁶⁴ Catherine Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015) Location No. 6579, [Kindle version].



3.6

Pipilotti Rist, *Mercy Garden* 2014, Installation View, Hauser & Wirth London, Copyright Pipilotti Rist, Courtesy the artist, Hauser & Wirth and Luhring Augustine, New York. Photo: Alex Delfanne

began to work and intertwine with architectures as her installation of *A Liberty Statue for Lööndön* (2005). Her work, *Homo sapiens sapiens* (2005) (3.5) was displayed in San Stae Church in Venice and viewers officially became an important element of Rist's works. Nude bodies that looked like grown angels or a reference to the image of Goodness were projected onto the ceiling and viewers could lie on oval pads and feel that the projection was the sky. The viewers' dressed bodies formed an interesting contrast with the virtual nude bodies in fantasy colours. This work broke the conventional viewing experience and introduced the concept of the 'convivial' installations.¹⁶⁵ Not only did Rist form a unique way of setting her viewers, she also introduced the concept of organism into her artworks. Her preference for filming objects is almost all organic. She frequently uses various natural objects in her film and presents them as giant wall projection.

For example, in her work, *Mercy Garden* (2014) (3.6) in the solo show '*Worry Will Vanish*' at Hauser & Wirth, London, she uses many close-up images of creases in human skin and a floating body as the main elements of her moving image pattern. The corporeal images are interwoven with some fragments from nature, such as flora, grass, and the nests of spiders. Rist is renowned for overlapping moving images and blurring the boundaries of sharp digital images with bright colours to explore the relationship between the internal and external. It looks as if the vessels in the human body are connected to the veins of leaves and flowers, the blood is mixed with the juice of fruit, the floating body is as if in a dream, when the figure is immersed in the water. Rist conveys a kind of fantasy universe with a montage of corporal reality. The human body seems to lose its identity and function. Skin and blood and bodily images are linked with other organisms to become another form of life. The projection is far too gigantic for viewers to think it is a virtual thing. The moving image is coming closer and closer to their eyes; the coloured lights are continually reflected on their faces; the perspective seems to be under water and the waves seduce them until they ignore their breathing and become immersed in a flora and water universe.

From my observation of Pipilotti Rist's giant projection-installation-based exhibitions: *Homo sapiens sapiens* (2005) (3.5), *Pour Your Body Out (7354 Cubic Meters)* (2008), *Lungenflügel* (2009), *Partit amistós – sentiments electrònics* (2010) and *Mercy Garden* (2014), the 'reaching arm' now almost surrounds the viewer's body and even tries to pervade their consciousness and perception. The large-scale projections in these exhibitions contain the fantasy of an organism that reminds me of being in an aquarium. Giant marine animals, such as Rhincodon Typus, can be seen swimming

¹⁶⁵ Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, Location No. 202, [Kindle version].

behind thick transparent glass and the whole environment is tinged with dark blue to create a sense of continuous space, as if the visitors are also in the sea. Rist's works usually contains the bodies of female swimmers and water, which implies an association with amniotic fluid for a sense of life; furthermore, the world is known to have originated from a body of water. Therefore, her work contains a strong double meaning; the perception related to being-in-the-world and the symbolic meaning of the origin of the world. Her video is like the other side of transparent glass, but if the scene is turned inside out, the viewers can be seen as another kind of organism. They lie together, changing their gestures, relaxing their legs, and even leaning on their friends. The pillows are the stones on the grasslands. The viewers do not behave in the way they would normally do in public exhibitions. They look like a group of animals occupying the 'stones' and inhabiting in the exhibition. In this way, the women and the frequently-appearing giant eye in the video become the viewers; in other words, it seems that Rist wants to create a hybrid kind of organism that crosses the actual, the virtual and the fantasy.

Part II Hilary Lloyd

Biography

Life and Career

Hilary Lloyd (3.7) was born in 1964 in Halifax, West Yorkshire. She graduated from Newcastle upon Tyne Polytechnic in 1987 and now lives and works in London. Lloyd claims that she is not a filmmaker; rather, she works with moving images and installations. She is best-known for installations that not only show moving images, but are also presented with monitors, projectors, stands, and cabling, as a sort of sculpture.



3.7

Hilary Lloyd, Portrait, 5 December 2011
Source: BBC News Entertainment & Arts

Lloyd's works have been internationally exhibited in numerous solo and group shows, such as Sadie Coles HQ, London (2015), Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel (2012), Artists Space, New York (NY), USA (2011), Raven Row, London (2010), Tramway, Glasgow (2010), Le Consortium, Dijon (2009), Kunstverein Munich (2006), Venice Biennial (2003), Gwangju Biennial (2002), Steirischer Herbst (2001), and Tate Triennial, London (2000). Her solo show at Raven Row, London (2010) was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2011.

Works

According to her own research statement on the Chelsea College of Arts website, Hilary Lloyd does not think of moving images as a separate issue. In other words, she cannot be regarded as being a pure filmmaker in the sense of video, film or cinema,

Hilary Lloyd's work is derived from her observation of people, objects, and spaces. All of her work illustrates her motif as isolated. Sometimes her compositions seem as if they were posed, and some of her other works look like she was at a great distance observing and recording. Her

work is entangled with the idea of repetitive movement and minimal materiality. Lloyd makes images using video, slides and photography. She includes the equipment used to show these still and moving images as part of the work, which consequently inhabits space like sculpture.¹⁶⁶

I became aware of Lloyd when she was nominated for the Turner Prize in 2011. I had had no opportunity to see her previous solo exhibitions in person at that time, but I have since collected information of her works from significant sources, including exhibition reviews and interviews from the Internet, to compensate for this deficiency. Lloyd's newest solo show, '*Balfour*' (02 June – 04 July 2015) at Sadie Coles HQ in London seems to be a considerable departure from her former methods of installation, which requires another newer discourse; therefore, I have decided to exclude it from this discussion.

What I would like to say about Lloyd and what I can learn from her is the well-known sculptural concept of displaying equipment by spontaneously playing the role of a displayer. Lorena Muñoz-Alonso describes her use of digital technology as an 'utter embrace'. According to Muñoz-Alonso's review of Lloyd's solo show at Raven Row, it makes Lloyd's equipment detailedly reappear in details:

...she not only plays with digital projectors. Huge plasma screens, dvd players, speakers and even the poles that hold them in place are all exquisitely choreographed in groups of slightly menacing art-machines. The apparatus are so important and specifically chosen that they are enumerated in the description of the works. For Lloyd even the cables – whose exhibiting fate usually involves being obliterated and hidden under wall-matching gaffer tape – are also worthy material: they are painstakingly arranged in geometrical and very visible lines crossing the ceiling and forming strict patterns that would probably overwhelm fellow cable-lover artists like Alberto Tadiello.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶ Hilary Lloyd, 'Research Statement', *University of The Arts London*, <<http://www.arts.ac.uk/research/research-staff/a-z/hilary-lloyd/>> (accessed 10 June 2015)

¹⁶⁷ Lorena Muñoz-Alonso, 'Rosa Barba & Hilary Lloyd: dance with projector', *SelfSelector*, 13th December 2010; <<http://selfselector.co.uk/2010/12/13/rosa-barba-hilary-lloyd-dance-with-projector/>> (accessed 10 June 2015)



3.8
 Hilary Lloyd, 1999, Installation view
 Chisenhale Gallery

According to Lloyd's biography, this kind of installation characteristic first appeared in her early exhibition at the Chisenhale Gallery, London (1999) (3.8). The difference is that she used video cube monitors, not projectors or plasma screens, and they stood on the floor, not poles. Then, the main equipment was changed to slide projectors for the show at Kunstverein München, Munich, Germany in 2006. Assuming that the change was facilitated by the development of technology, Lloyd employed a considerable number of digital projectors from the show at Sadie Coles HQ, London, in 2008 to three shows in 2009 at Le Consortium, Dijon, France; Studio #2, Frieze Art Fair, London; Tramway Glasgow, respectively. Huge plasma screens were used as part of the installation equipment for the show at Raven Row (2010), London and then, in 2011, they also appeared in shows at Artist Space, New York, *The Turner Prize* at BALTIC, Gateshead; at Sadie Coles HQ, London; at Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel (2012).

How does Lloyd describe herself and her way of making art? In the very beginning of an online video entitled ‘TateShots: Turner Prize 2011, Hilary Lloyd’¹⁶⁸ she said gently, but with determination;

I am not a filmmaker, but I do use video and film. I use it in a very straight forward way; in a way that you might use a pencil or a pair of scissors. All the works I made are like with a singular situation, I am not an afterwards editor just said se a pencil or a pair of scissors. All the works I made are like with a singular situation, I am not an afterwards editor just said “That’s it.” So what is filmed is what you see.

The solo show at Raven Row, London (2010) consisted of five works, *Motorway*, *Man* (2010) (3.9), *Tunnel*, *Trouser*, and *Crane*, each of which was precisely arranged for different rooms. Lloyd spent three years preparing the solo show when the exhibition venue was still a construction site. Her installation seemed to reflect a sense of rough industrial construction or an extension of the human body. Viewers may have seen the hanging projectors and poles first rather than the projections. The projectors were like human eyes ‘seeing’ the moving image and the long poles resembled arms and legs. The projectors were hung at a height near that of normal viewers, so that when they stood in the exhibition, they would be surrounded by the machine, and their skins and noses would more or less feel the hot air discharged from the fan of the projectors. Viewers would also need to ‘find’ a suitable angle to see the projections on the wall. In other words, the force of the sculptural equipment overwhelmed the 2D moving images, some of which actually looked like still photographs projected by the projectors, while others vibrated with a kind of repetitive rhythm on the huge plasma screens. The thinness of the former, such as *Man*, served to give prominence to the thickness of the machine, while later work, such as *Tunnel* (2010),¹⁶⁹ (3.10) was a like a creature floating inside the machine’s womb and sharing the rhythm of a beating heart. Lloyd prefers to focus on a single object or thing in her work; there is no narrative or story or dramatic movement. The contents are everyday objects and occurrences. *Trouser* and *Man* consists of photographs from magazines. Her aesthetic of imagery is to make almost minimal and monotonous images with repeated low sounds, tempo, and movement without an emphasis on colours, even black and white.

¹⁶⁸ Hilary Lloyd, ‘TateShots: Turner Prize 2011, *Tate*, 10 November 2011 <<http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/video/tateshots-turner-prize-2011-hilary-lloyd>> (accessed 13 June 2015)

¹⁶⁹ Hilary Lloyd, ‘HL_Tunnel_Raven Row’, *Vimeo*, 27 May 2015, <<https://vimeo.com/128984334>> (accessed 26 June 2015)



3.9

Hilary Lloyd, *Man*, 2010, Installation View, 6 Sanyo PLC-XP100 Projector, 6 Pioneer DVD-V7300D Players, 12 Unicol Suspension Unit. Photograph by Marcus J. Leith. Courtesy of Raven Row. Photo: Marcus J. Leith

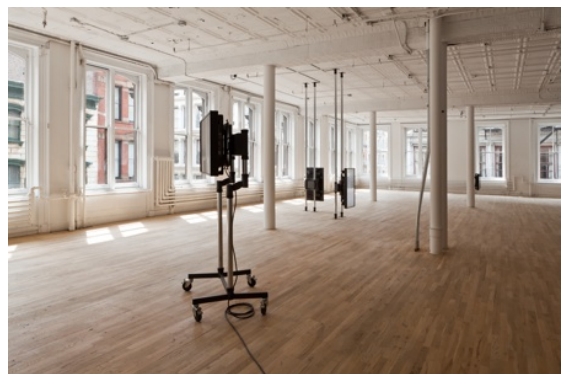


3.10

Hilary Lloyd, *Tunnel*, 2010, Installation View
JVC LCD 47" Monitor, Western Digital HD Media Player, Unicol Twin Column Mount, Photograph by Marcus J. Leith



3.11
 Hilary Lloyd, *Moon*, 2011
 Installation View
 BALTIC presents Turner Prize 2011
 Copyright BALTIC & the artist
 Photo: Colin Davison



3.12
 Hilary Lloyd
 Installation View, 2011
 Artist Space, New York
 Photo: Daniel Pérez

The exhibition space can be seen as a palace for worshipping machines and the image served as a contrast to the ritual atmosphere. Lloyd minimises everything that may disturb the holiness, prestige, and sublime quality of the object. I wonder what Lloyd thinks about the relationship between these enhanced machines, the minimised image, and the unexpected viewers. If her intention was to focus on materiality, why is the image still necessary? Or is the materiality of the equipment her strategy to deal with the issue of a virtual online gallery and museum? Does the image stay alive with the equipment for thinking about the question of prosthetic seeing? Lloyd took a risk with her show at Raven Row in 2010 to deliver a fresh perspective of the issue of situating video art in galleries and almost stopped treating the moving image itself as an individual artwork.

The slightly serious, sullen and stuffy tone of Raven Row would be respectively relieved visually and discursively with the exhibition environmental conditions at *The Turner Prize show* at BALTIC (3.11), Artist Space (3.12), New York and the Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel. The common predominant feature of these three exhibition venues is spatial openness created by many large windows. BALTIC especially has a magnificent riverside view and, although exhibition spaces near windows with adequate natural light may not be suitable for wall projection, they are good for LCD monitors. The LCD monitor poles were hung directly from ceiling to floor, drawing two virtual lines to visually break the symmetric frame of the windows. In the image, *Moon* (2011), several round white beating images were slightly wriggling in different 'cells' (frames) accompanying the natural landscape from the outside, and these monotonous and monochrome images seemed to inject a bit of vitality. In an interview¹⁷⁰ with Stuart Comer (Curator of Film, Tate Modern) about the Turner Prize 2011 at BALTIC, Lloyd had this to say;

I might say that this show here started with *Moon*, which you could argue is a version of *Woman of Water* where you've got all these moons, 42 of them, sort of moving in different ways and kind of creating some kind of particular rhythm which then extended out to the whole show, which was based, this one here, which one of the different rhythms I'm trying to adapt to something particular.

Although the equipment plays a more important role in Lloyd's works, her image aesthetics are not totally without strengths. In my opinion, her images are simply

¹⁷⁰ Hilary Lloyd, 'Hilary Lloyd: Turner Prize 2011 Artist Talks', *BALTIC*, 25th October 2013, <<https://vimeo.com/77778481>> (accessed 9 June 2015)

beautiful, with geometric shapes that match the coldness of the equipment. The cable is like a kind of vein, and the image and the LCD monitor look like a kind of symbiont. Lloyd's installation works may face a contradiction of conditions of the exhibition venue. While they have a great capacity to converse with natural landscapes (such as *Moon* (2011) with the riverside view) or industrial landscapes (*Tunnel*, *Motorway* with architectural windows and street view). However, the possibility of the discourse may be different at different exhibition venues.¹⁷¹ Lloyd avoids identifying herself with so-called video artists/filmmakers because her extraordinary contribution means that she does not fit any classification. The curator, Stuart Comer, made the following footnote for Lloyd, which is also a translation of an artist's intuition into language;

You really ask us to look at the world afresh, and all of us, every day, are consuming media images, commercials, films, television programmes that are telling us how to look at the world. And you're taking exactly that machinery, that equipment, those devices and you're refusing that control. You're basically saying, "No, I want to look at the world on my terms," and again, I think very generally you offer that experience to the viewer and say, "This is a world that you can reinvent in your head, through this space, through these images."¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ Ling-Ching Chiang, 'Turner Prize nominees series No.3: Returning to the machine matrix through moving image', *ARTIST-MAGAZINE* December (2011)

¹⁷² Hilary Lloyd, 'Hilary Lloyd: Turner Prize 2011 Artist Talks', *BALTIC*, 25th October 2013, <<https://vimeo.com/77778481>> (accessed 9 June 2015)

Part III Elizabeth Price

Biography

Life and Career

Elizabeth Price (3.13) is an artist who mainly works with contemporary moving images, archives, sound and installation. Price was born in 1966 in Bradford, West Yorkshire. She spent her childhood in Luton and attended Putteridge High School. Price studied fine art at the Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford, from 1985 to 1988. She was a member of the indie pop bands, *Talulah Gosh* and *The Carousel*, in 1986. Her interest in music is evident in her later artworks. After studying fine art at the Royal College of Art, London, from 1989 to 1991, Price returned to



3.13
Elizabeth Price, Portrait
4 December 2012
Photograph: David Levene
Source: Guardian

West Yorkshire and completed a PhD in the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds, in 1999, and she was awarded the Jerwood Artists Platform Prize in 2004. She was a Research Fellow in Fine Art at the London Metropolitan University between 2004 and 2006, and she was awarded the Stanley Picker Fellowship at Kingston University in 2007. Elizabeth Price usually creates installations with moving images that contain historical films, photographic archives, her own shootings, words and music. Price has been the recipient of numerous prizes in recent years; for instance, she was commissioned by Frieze Films in 2010 and her work, *The Tent* (2012), was the result. Price was awarded the Arts Council England Helen Chadwick Fellowship from 2010 to 2011 because her work, *User Group Disco* (2009), was exhibited in the 7th British Art Show in 2010. She received the FLAMIN Award in 2011 and the Paul Hamlyn Award in 2012. Most importantly, in the same year, Price won the Turner Prize with *The Woolworth's Choir of 1979* (2012) in her solo exhibition

'Here' at the BALTIC, Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, United Kingdom, and this was followed by the Annual Award of the Contemporary Art Society in 2013.

Works

What do contemporary art historians think of Elizabeth Price? According to Catherine Elwes;

Montage and discontinuity went on to dominate the formal strategies of experimental film and video in the 1960s and 1970s and can still be witnessed today in the work of artists such as Elizabeth Price whose gallery installations juxtapose archival footage with the persuasive iconography of advertising and computer graphics.¹⁷³

Price's works can be divided into two types with subtle differences. One involves assembling archives to virtualise another space to create other meanings, while the other involves focusing on objects. Shooting selected objects is also a process to digitalise materials. This type of work addresses the relationship between perception, obsession, and man-made objects. In the first type, Price is an expert at creating narrative moving images merged with different digitalised elements: remade architectural archives, newspaper clippings, advertisements, popular music videos and other literary material. The way she combines these 'fragments' by applying moving images, sound art, and the integration of digital compression technology. Although her works address the relationship between people and material culture, Price does not directly film people, so how does she deal with this issue? The artist does not show people's behaviour in her works, but she offers a virtual space/event/ritual to inspire or stimulate viewers to think about the interaction between the objects and the people and then to further think how is the human beings are affected by objects made by humans (almost artefacts). Whenever people mention Elizabeth Price, one of her best known achievements is the winning of the Turner Prize in 2012, which she won because of *The Woolworth's Choir of 1979* (2012) which was described as a 'seductive and immersive' video installation.¹⁷⁴ According to David Morris, 'The film reconstructs a reconstruction: alongside BBC eyewitness footage, it documents an attempt to recreate the material conditions of the 1979 fire in Manchester.'¹⁷⁵ However, Price does not emphasise the tragedy of the fire in which ten people died. She collects the materials she thinks are necessary for the work, but not

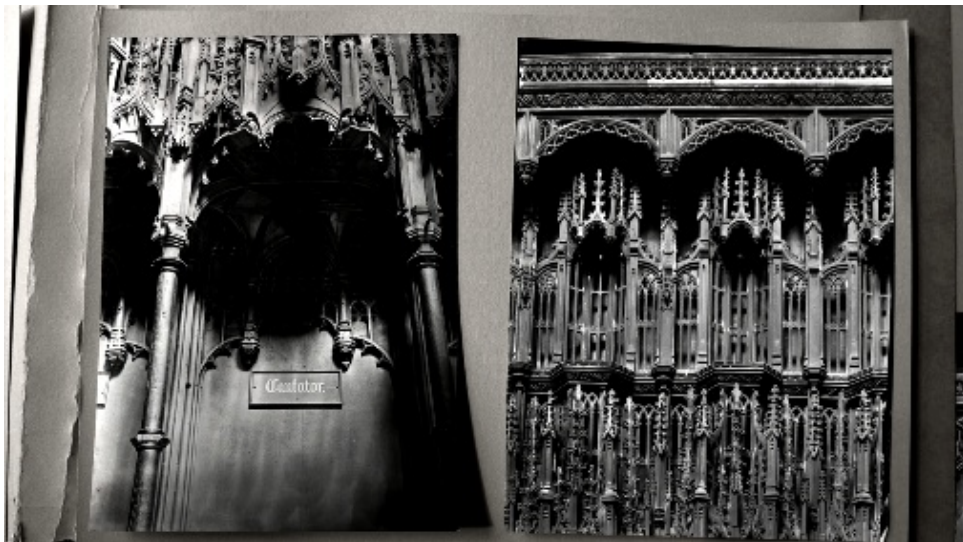
¹⁷³ Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, Location No. 2637, [Kindle version].

¹⁷⁴ Anita Singh, 'Turner Prize 2012: Elizabeth Price is surprise winner', *The Telegraph*, 3 December 2012, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/turner-prize/9719910/Turner-Prize-2012-Elizabeth-Price-is-surprise-winner.html>> (accessed 8 June 2015)

¹⁷⁵ David Morris, 'Elizabeth Price', *Frieze*, 7 June 2012, <<http://www.frieze.com/shows/review/elizabeth-price/>> (accessed 8 June 2015)

truly related to the fire, and then she employs aesthetic digital techniques to lighten the forlorn historical archived truth and sublimate the despair of death. James Pickford described it as ‘a "rhythmic and ritualistic" film linking Gothic architecture, a 1960s girl group and a tragic fire at a Woolworths store.’¹⁷⁶ This sentence reveals three ‘dissonant’¹⁷⁷ elements that Price used to make a montage: digitalised historical architectural photographs, 1970s television pop shows downloaded from YouTube, and digitalised archives of a past event. These three elements respectively established three parts establish a past event. ‘The Choir’ is the central concept referring to a virtual action/ritual which is associated with all the materials of the three parts.

Part one is about the virtual space: The Auditorium (3.14).



3.14

Elizabeth Price, *The Woolworth's Choir of 1979* (2012), HD Video Installation, 18 min., Video Still, Courtesy of the artist and MOT International, London & Brussels.

Price narratively virtualised the construction of an auditorium in this video by using 20th century archived data in the form of 19th century black and white photographs of a 14th century cathedral and its interior decorations in order to illustrate ecclesiastical architecture and the choir stalls. According to her artist lecture at the Guang Dong Times Museum,¹⁷⁸ these photographs were alternated with clapping and finger-flicking with a sort of rhythm and the last photograph was a twisted posed sculpture on a coffin

¹⁷⁶ James Pickford, ‘Elizabeth Price scoops Turner Prize’ *FT.com*, 3 December 2012, <<http://0-search.proquest.com.wam.leeds.ac.uk/docview/1221923482?accountid=14664>> (accessed 8 June 2015)

¹⁷⁷ Elwes, *Installation and the Moving Image*, Location No. 2637, [Kindle version].

¹⁷⁸ Elizabeth Price, ‘Moving Pictures: Artists’ Films from the Film London Jarman Award: Artist Lecture—Elizabeth Price’, *Guang Dong Times Museum*, 4th April 2015, <<http://www.art-ba-ba.com/main/main.art?threadId=84139&forumId=8>> (accessed 1 June 2015)

(3.15). The twisted gesture is not only a connection point but also a sign that guides viewers to the next part.



3.15
Elizabeth Price, *The Woolworth's Choir of 1979* (2012), HD
Video Installation, 18 min., Video Still, Courtesy of the artist and
MOT International, London & Brussels.

Part two: The Chorus from The Internet

A 1965 performance by the Shangri-La musical performance was downloaded and adapted from YouTube. The bodies of the singers and dancers were also a sort of twisted gesture. For the audio part, Price assembled different kinds of pop music to remix a unique soundtrack. She regards pop music as a sort of 'historical artefact' that can address a public space, even if it is a virtual one.¹⁷⁹ Price frequently used a finger-flicking and clapping effect to punctuate silent footage in order to stimulate viewers' perception and desire to join her narrative.

Part three: The fire

Price used archived sources again in this part, including inquests, photography, and scientific reconstructions. The witnesses had been silenced and accompanied by inputting text with no emotional expression on the screen. The footage showed a staff member waving through the fire to seek help, which could be seen as a third twisted gesture. From Part one's twisted sculpture, part two's dancers' twisted bodies to part

¹⁷⁹ Price, Artist Lecture, < <http://www.art-ba-ba.com/main/main.art?threadId=84139&forumId=8>>

three's waving gesture before death, it seems that Price wanted to create a cycle of narrative and marking a sort of 'resonance' about death, departure and despair.



3.16

Elizabeth Price, *The Woolworth's Choir of 1979* (2012), HD Video Installation, 18 min., Video Still, Courtesy of the artist and MOT International, London & Brussels.

The Ghost of Digitalisation

Price employs many archives and documents in her work. She is obsessed with the techniques of conversion and conservation within digitisation and the process of extending the existence of historical documents.¹⁸⁰ This is the action of assembling the ghosts of history and disturbing the order of the absent from the past in the present. These ghosts are drifting through the Internet and every digital database. The volume of resources is continuously expanding with new-born ghosts, and the artist becomes a sort of psychic who summons different kinds of fluxing souls from the Internet to create a ritual/space/event to deliver a new meaning in the present. The end of the work is the words 'We are chorus'. The chorus is linked with the resonance of death, which is not only the re-mixed soundtrack made of different kinds of pop music, but also meant to feature an event that is happening in the assembly of digitalised ghostly history.

¹⁸⁰ Price, Artist Lecture, < <http://www.art-ba-ba.com/main/main.art?threadId=84139&forumId=8>>



3.17

Elizabeth Price, *At The House of MR X* (2007), BluRay, HD Digital file installation, 20 min., Colour, Sound, Video Still, Courtesy of the artist and MOT International, London & Brussels.

The second type of Price's work is about objecthood. I would specifically like to talk about *At The House of MR X* (2007), which I saw in a group show, *The Objects*, at Glasgow Sculpture Studio in 2013. The group show assembled artists who who 'created "portraits" or vignettes featuring inanimate sculptural objects using film and video'.¹⁸¹ The exhibiting artists were Ulla von Brandenburg, Runa Islam, Mark Leckey, Liliana Porter, Elizabeth Price, and Jessica Warboys. This group show afforded me a chance to see different ways of installing video artworks and enabled me to look at objects in a new way. I am more interested in the work that contains more of her own filming. The main 'object' filmed is the home of an anonymous art collector, which is delicately designed and well-arranged with the owner. Viewers pay a visit to the house, guided by Price it to the static moving images. This is like a slide show with long intervals to prolong the time to look at the objects in the house. There seems to be a hand behind the scenes manipulating the pace, urging viewers to follow the narrative instructions given by crisp finger-flicking, forthright text, and harmonious human vocal music. As time passes, the camera captures different kinds of textures and surfaces from the furniture and sculptures as if making another kind of collection.

¹⁸¹ 'The Objects', *Glasgow Sculpture Studio*, 16 February – 6 April 2013, <<http://www.glasgowsculpturestudios.org/2013/07/10/the-objects/>> (accessed 10 June 2015)

The virtual tour by unknown viewers is a way of intervening in the original privacy, silence and stillness. The work also enables viewers to think about the relationship between human desire and objects. The house was inhabited very briefly. The whole appearance and arrangement remains in the original setting in the video. The whole house has become a spatial memorial artefact in which smaller artefacts are preserved and a human being's desire and taste shape are reflected. Although the house and the interior are like a well-preserved small museum, the collection is actually at risk of slowly fading away with an unrecognisable pace. Price uses film to expose, digitalise and archive the physical and mortal existence into another dimension of archive. She clips images from the physical world and pastes them onto a virtual screen. This type of Price's work is also a montage. There is no person in the film. The choice of the collection and the setting of the furniture in this legacy house suggest that the owner is absent. The action of making this film is not only a way to make sense of the owner's resurrection, but also inject fresh air into the dejected house and interrupt the incident. The filming itself can be seen as a process of archaeological excavation.

One of the issues that distinguish Price's work from that of Lloyd and Rist is the use of words, which is clearly an important element; however, I was not able to decipher the words while I was watching the works. Words appear on the screen in *At The House of MR X* (2007). I tend to watch videos without searching for a description in advance. I had not read the informational text placed in the exhibition space by the curator that provided some clues to the image and phrases;

... ..taken from various documents relating to the house and its owner – a businessman who generated his wealth from the cosmetic brands of Mary Quant and Outdoor Girl. The descriptions of cosmetics are acutely similar to those used to describe the furniture and objects displayed in the house. The link between the façade of beauty created using make-up and that of interior design, 'curating' and the juxtaposition of objects is made explicit.¹⁸²

¹⁸² 'The Objects', <<http://www.glasgowsculpturestudios.org/2013/07/10/the-objects/>>



3.18
 Elizabeth Price
The Woolworth's Choir of 1979, 2012
 Photo: Colin Davison
 Installation View, Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead,
 UK



3.19
 Elizabeth Price
Sunlight, 2013
 Installation View, Focal Point Gallery, Southend-On-Sea,
 UK

Although I was not really affected by not knowing the references for these phrases while I was watching, the lack of intelligibility caused by the cultural context could reduce the thickness created by the montage of phrases and images. This point prompts me to question the issue of 'regional' text, intercultural and the use of language in Price's works. For example, when I saw Price's *The Woolworth's Choir of 1979* at the BALTIC, Centre for Contemporary Art, as I am not a native English speaker, I repeatedly saw the work many times just to be sure that I had not missed too many words. I did not know what 'Woolworth' was. I did not know that the music was a collage from 1960s Western pop music. I realised that afterwards. What I could sense while I was watching was the digital virtuality and the montage of archives. The specific English-Western regional cultural and sub-cultural materials created a distance between me and the work, but the description filled the gap. However, was it right to have the knowledge given by the description before watching the work itself? This question may be a cliché, but should this kind of work be regarded as another text? Does it not risk reducing the impact on viewers? Do artists need to predict the background of viewers? Do viewers need to acquire some relevant knowledge before encountering artworks?

In the lecture at the Guang Dong Times Museum in the spring of 2015, Price mentioned that she focuses on building a unique spatial atmosphere for viewing because spaces need people to occupy and use them. However, based on my viewing experience and resources from the Internet, although she does pay some attention to this element, it is not very much in an obvious and outstanding way, and before 2012, she had not shown much extraordinary embodiment. I saw her works twice in person, once at the Glasgow Sculpture Studio to see *At The House of MR X (2007) in 2013*. The installation did not surprise me as she also used a bench.

The second time was at BALTIC to see her solo show 'Here' (2012). The display room was very dark while the video was playing, and it was hard to find the seats. After sitting down, I tried to find out what kind of seat she used by touching them. I guessed the material might be wood or PVC and the type of seating seemed to be benches. The setting of the seats did not surprise me because most contemporary video installations use the same way. The power of the works relatively weakened the installation issue. I found out that the seats had been red afterwards when I found the installation view (3.18) on the Internet, I had not noticed this in the exhibition because

the exhibition room was not as bright as the photo. I also found that she might have intended to use relevant colours to connect the seat and the video. For example, many images in the work *SUNLIGHT* (2013) (3.19) in the installation at Focal Point Gallery, Southend-On-Sea, were a strong yellow colour and the seat for the work was set with the same tone of yellow. I assumed the red seat was linked to the Woolworth fire and the yellow was involved with sunlight. I further searched for some other exhibition installation views from the MOTINTERNATIONAL website to match her words in the lecture to some installation views after 2012. A significant example is the commissioned work, *The Tent* (2012) (3.20). Price built an open ‘tent’ with a triangular shape, similar to a ‘standing’ book. The viewers can sit in the ‘tent’ made by the imaginary book shape accompanied by a video, and Price had added some coloured lighting in the interior space. Unlike the degree of concern of Rist and Lloyd about installation, Price’s strength is more compelling on her videos because her videos are capable of guiding viewers to experience the process of confusing, thinking and reflecting with seeing. However, as she suggested in the lecture and the actual example, perhaps Price tended to pay more attention to the physical installation setting and the sensational atmosphere than before when she made the unique space of the commissioned work, *The Tent* (2012).



3.20

Elizabeth Price, *The Tent*, 2012.
 HD video installation 12:00 min
 Installation View,
 Bloomberg Space, London, UK

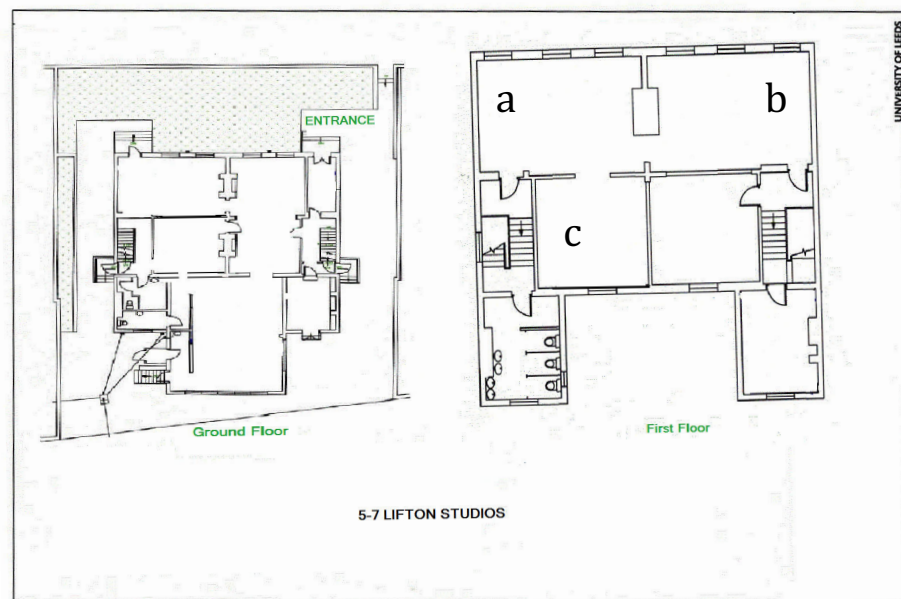
Part IV Moving Images as an Installation

What is the other possibility for the type of installation I saw? What might the viewer experience? In the first part of this paper, I explained how Pipilotti Rist's interest in installation lies in creating an immersive environment in which a relationship can be developed between the sensorial human body and the world, whereas Hilary Lloyd strives to establish a much more minimalist encounter in her installations by using the projection and display technology itself to create a sense of sculpture. Elizabeth Price introduces her viewers to a particular cultural and political memory in her installations by means of a virtual space that includes elements of sound, archives and language, which evokes an experience beyond bodily sensation. After analysing the work of these three very different artists, I would like to explain how they influence my own practice and choice of installation by discussing my plan for creating the final show. This will illustrate that, in addition to making a work, I also understand that I have to determine the mode of viewing it and deal with spectatorship. How can I make my work different from that of other video artists? What are my main concerns about the installation from the aspect of the viewers? The final show, entitled '*See The Seeing*', took place in Lifton studios in the University of Leeds from the 13th to the 16th July 2015. I used this opportunity to produce a practical installation plan and actualised it as an ideal model of my view of installation at the current stage of my career as an artist.

The Space: Lifton Studios

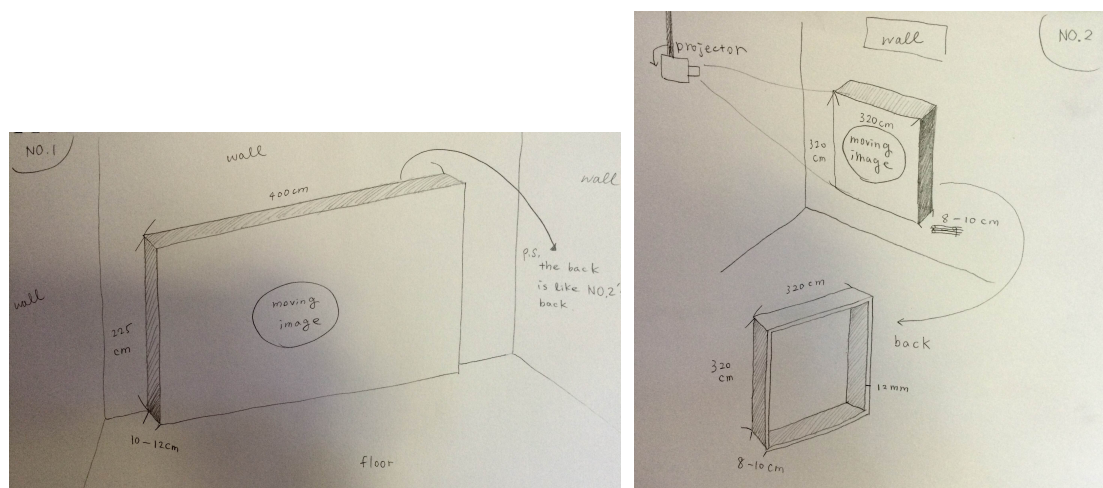
Lifton Studios, which is a two-storey building, is located on the campus of the University of Leeds. According to my Co-Supervisor, the building was originally two Georgian houses (semi-detached) which were converted into a single building by the University of Leeds, most likely in the early 1980s and used as the Staff Social Club. Being estimated by the condition of the building that it was possibly built in the early 19th century. I assume it was once a dwelling space, since the rooms contain fire places. I chose the first floor as my exhibition venue because the ground floor has a high ceiling from which is hard to hang projectors and drill in the necessary brackets. The walls (a, b, c) that I think are more suitable for projections are fairly uninterrupted, and since projectors require sufficient space to throw their images, walls a and b would be larger projections. However, there is a slight problem with the walls on the first floor. Water

filled radiators have been installed on walls a, b and c, and these are irrelevant objects in my imaginary show plan.



3.21
The Plan of Lifton Studios

The Wall, the Projection and the Equipment



3.22
The Draft of Installation of the PhD Final Show

I plan to exhibit three works in the show. I made a large wooden board, measuring 400 cm x 225 cm for wall a and project *Rice* (2014) onto it. My original idea of making a wooden board was to create a sense of a 'moving painting'. Projecting an image on an object generates a very different quality from only using the wall; therefore, projecting onto the wooden board was an improved installation method. I had projected a moving

image on canvas in the group show, *'Pieces of Eight'*, in 2012, when I used scratched canvas. The process of scratching the canvas was a lengthy one and the veins of the canvas were not entirely suitable for my works. Subsequently, I tried to speed up the process by making a pure wood board and plastering the wood to obtain a smooth surface. I did some small experiments and the result was better than using canvas. I made the wooden board with sufficient thickness to create a sense of quantity for my digital moving image.

The ratio of the video is 16:9 so it is a horizontal rectangle. I did not want to put a similar rectangle shape beside the rectangular water-filled radiator, albeit with a different scale, because I think this would have caused a visually aesthetic problem. Therefore, I decided to make a large wooden board, which will completely cover the radiator, and stand it against the wall like an object. I will make a square site-specific work for wall b because this will not be visually similar to a rectangle. A square wooden board will be hung on the wall like a painting. As for wall c, I will make a wooden board with a long string shape.

I hired two projectors from Lumen Leeds for walls a and b works. The reason for hiring high-quality projectors is to prevent the room from being too dark. I wanted to create a sort of 'moving painting', and if the room is totally dark, viewers would not be able to sense its meaning. My chosen projectors are Christie LHD700 and Panasonic PT DZ770EK, both of which have 7000 lumens, which is capable of making the projection clear in natural lighting or a half dark room. I also rented some Sanyo LNS W31A 1.3 - 1.8:1 Short Throw Zoom Lens to adjust the projectors to the best scale and resolution, as well as two Panasonic DMP-BD30 Blu-ray Players to provide better resources. In addition, I hired a technician from Lumen to help me to install/uninstall this expensive equipment, and I used my own projector (EPSON EH-TW550) with 3000 lumens and a LG BP240 Blu-ray/DVD player.

Volume of Expenditure and the Viewing Experience

Financial issues are unavoidable when preparing a solo show. The total cost of hiring the equipment for one week is about £2577, plus an additional fee of about £250 for hiring the staff. This means that I cannot afford to make the show longer; in fact, the actual show will only be for four days because I need to use 2-3 days to prepare the installation and this cannot be done without the projectors. I also need to make the wooden structures before the projectors arrive so that I can project the precise size of image onto them.

So, why am I willing to spend such a huge amount of money on a four-day show? Basically, it is because I am eager to seize the opportunity to actualise my ideal installation method. It is also an opportunity for me to decide most of the elements independently without having to deal with other artists, galleries or curators. It is not only for the PhD VIVA, but also to make a solid response to the question of ‘How could Hui’s artworks be shown and to what extent?’ It is not only to show videos in an ideal scale and quality as a negative response to so-called virtual galleries, which many contemporary institutions or organisations are gradually adopting, such as ‘the LUX video collection, which contains over 4000 films and videos by over 1000 international artists, ranging from the 1920s to the present.’¹⁸³ While I agree that this kind of collection can be a useful archive database, I cannot accept it as a replacement of presenting works.

The atmosphere created by Pipilotti Rist, the materiality of Hilary Lloyd and the narrative of Elizabeth Price are vital paradigms of contemporary moving image works. In a virtual exhibition format, viewers cannot sense the sensational atmosphere created by the unique setting of an installation and cannot sense the solid materiality surrounding them; they cannot be vibrated by the beats and melody of surround sounds; they cannot control the rhythm of the narrator (pause, forward, backward, repeat) as when they are watching the works online.

I regard video as a kind of resource for my work. As I said above, I would like to present a form of ‘moving painting’, which indicates that I am not a pure filmmaker like Hilary Lloyd. My works are not best seen on a laptop, YouTube or Vimeo; in fact, if people see my work via these platforms, I would say that they are just seeing part of it. They are seeing a resource rather than a complete work. As I see my work as a way of painting, I try to avoid making the room dark, which is a common way to install video works. The lumens of projectors is the key element to make the projection in a room half dark or with natural light, and projectors with higher lumens are very expensive. While finances are an important issue when presenting a solo moving image installation exhibition, this is relatively the most crucial element for artists who emphasise the quality and texture of the video resolution. However, the preparation is always unpredictable. Unexpected complications can appear as the works are actually being installed. I cannot ensure that the exhibition will be in a half dark or light room because it will depend on the actual working process.

¹⁸³ ‘Collection/Introduction’, *LUX artists’ moving*, 2013 <<http://www.lux.org.uk/collection/introduction>> (accessed 10 June 2015)

The Seating

When discussing the seating issue of Elizabeth Price with my Supervisor, she suggested that I might want to think about this element in my installation. If I want to present my video works as a kind of painting, should I provide seats for the viewers? If I do want to provide seating, what kind of seat would be suitable for my works? I regard my work as being somewhere between video artwork and painting,



3.23

The Seat, Inflatable Transparent Pouffe, of The PhD Final Show

especially in terms of installation; therefore, a normal exhibition seat like a wooden bench would become another irrelevant object (like the water-filled radiators). Also, I do not want to employ pillows like Pipilotti Rist used to create a relaxing, fantasy and organic atmosphere because this is not what my works offer to viewers. I will try to use the minimum number of objects in the show, but viewers will require some sort of seat because my works usually remain for a long time. I have decided to use 35cm x 70cm ‘inflatable transparent pouffes’. I would like to provide viewers with a single seat and they can carry it wherever they are in the show. The reasons for choosing transparent inflatable seats are their features of mobility, shape and transparency. I can easily pack the seats if I have another exhibition. The shape corresponds with the objects I have photographed: rice and water droplets, and the transparency reflects the betweenness of my work. The seat is not a form in the traditional sense and the transparency can also lighten the sense of the object. Ideally, I would like to have arranged 20-30 seats in a pattern as I did in *Rice* (2014), but I can only afford 5 seats due to financial constraints.

The PhD Final Show: *See the Seeing* (3.24)

I would like to invite viewers of the final show, ‘*See The Seeing*’, to spend time with the works. I made the show based on my own encounter and viewing of other artists’ installations. With the combination of physical materials, intelligent thoughts and perceptive experience, the show sought to present the sense of betweenness of the actual and the virtual, the seeing and the thinking, and the still and the moving. My work explores the concept of digital imagery as a prosthesis of human vision, imagination,

perception, and transformation. Using digital media in a manner that is suggestive of painting, the work explores everyday encounters in ways that reveal humans' vision and perception and its objects are transformed by the mediation of the digital moving image.



3.24
The flyer of The PhD
Final Show '*See the
Seeing*'

CONCLUSION

The practiced-led research concluded with final show *See the Seeing* (July 2015) at Lifton Studios in University of Leeds. It is not only a final level of my PhD practice-led research but it was also an embodiment of my research question. Through the whole process of making the show, I encountered various unexpected challenges related to management, measurement, physical conditions and technical difficulties. The installation team¹⁸⁴ aimed to actualise my original idea and helped me to conquer the practical matters. The result was successful and very similar to my expectation due to support from my supervisors and Studio & Exhibitions Technicians. In this section, I shall examine the process with several key aspects and see if the result could response to my questioning step by step: Can the moving image operate between perception, representation and imagination? Can the moving image engage its viewers in a manner similar to painting? What forms of installation can correspond to these research questions?

Exhibition Overview and Reflection

The plan of the final show is to present three works with different sizes on different walls: *Rice* (2014), *Quinoa & Wheat* (2015) and *Winter Rice* (2015). My plan was to project moving-image on custom wood screens for creating a betweenness of ‘moving image’ and ‘painting’. The idea had been in my mind since the first year of PhD. I had presented three projections on canvases in the group show *Pieces of Eight* (April 2012). The sizes of canvases were not large. In this final show, I had the opportunity to increase the projection scale to enlarge the subtle elements in my works.

i. Space & Positioning

I chose the first floor of Lifton Studios to be the exhibition venue. The first floor has a symmetrical shape, which contains four chambers: two are larger and two are smaller. Each of the two larger rooms has three windows and each of the two smaller rooms has one window. Due to the consideration of the architectural structure and projectors’ throw distance; I decided to relocate the positions of projectors and

¹⁸⁴ Peter Morton & David Sowerby (Studio & Exhibitions Technician), Jimmy Islip (Technician from Lumen), my partner and I.

projections from my original plan to the new plan¹⁸⁵ like the illustration shows. With the odd number of my works and the exact symmetry of the building, the setting of the positions was designed to break the symmetry. I assumed the two larger rooms would be brighter than the smaller room. I placed two larger works in the spaces with windows and put the smallest one in a room with a blocked window. *Rice* and *Quinoa & Wheat* are with more complicated images. They required longer viewing distance, larger presenting space and projectors with higher quality to display the visual strengths. *Winter Rice* is with simpler elements so it was with my own projector in a smaller room.

ii. Dimension and Projection

*Rice*¹⁸⁶

The wall for *Rice* is with a radiator and it cannot be moved. Therefore I decided to construct a larger screen (400cm X 225cm X 17cm) to cover the radiator and the screen was standing on the floor. The dimension was based on the throw distance of projector.(Christie LHD700) with the Sanyo LNS W31A 1.3 - 1.8:1 Short Throw Zoom Lens. Although the setting reduced the sense of ‘painting’, it increased a degree of diversity for the whole exhibition instead. The result of the projection with this kind scale successfully achieved my expectation. What I would like to present was to let the close-up images of subtle grains be transformed into a kind of extraordinary scale.

*Quinoa & Wheat*¹⁸⁷

This work was the second large work in the show. The setting was similar to hang a square painting on the wall. The square shape was designed to avoid repeating the rectangle of *Rice*.

Owing to some unexpected challenges that occurred between the technical elements (projectors and lens), the throw distance and the physical support (wood screens), the installation team spent more time and effort to reconstruct the screens and to adjust the projector for *Quinoa & Wheat*. The final outcome was satisfactory after several discussions, reconstruction and alignment. The final dimension was 186cm X

¹⁸⁵ Exhibition Plan

<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/_/rsrc/1437844916534/home/list/year4/see-the-seeing/Exhibition%20plan.jpg>

¹⁸⁶ *Rice* installation View <<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year4/see-the-seeing/Rice>>

¹⁸⁷ *Quinoa & Wheat* Installation View

<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year4/see-the-seeing/quinoawheat>>

186cm X 12cm. The equipment was the projector (Christie LHD700) with the Sanyo LNS W31A 1.3 - 1.8:1 Short Throw Zoom Lens and a Sony speaker.

What I learned from these challenges is the need for project management: to pay more attention to coordinating the issues of technical construction, infrastructures and aesthetics. What I gained was the experience of translating the virtual plan from my imagination to the reality. Experiments and communication with all elements of the before the installation started will in future facilitate the realization without the unexpected issues that arose in this installation, even though they were ultimately resolved to create the effects I had imagined.

*Winter Rice*¹⁸⁸

I originally planned to create a work with long string shape and install it in the corner of the space for creating diversity. After deciding *Rice*'s dimension/setting, and considering the sounds of *Quinoa & Wheat*, I would like to maintain a work to fully fulfill my very original concept—a manner of painting without sounds. The protruding wall in the small room was just suitable for creating 'a painting'. The chosen wall was with approximate width 200cm and height 300cm. For the vision of viewers, I installed a screen with 135cm X 135cm X 8cm on the lower centre of the wall. I used my own projector EPSON EH-TW550 with LG BP240 Blu-Ray player. During installing this work, what I learnt was to care about the condition of exhibition venue and improve the stability of the setting of equipment.

iii. Lighting

Lighting is a delicate element of video installations and it requires careful treatment. I had some experiences with dealing with this issue in former exhibitions/installations. Most video installations normally require totally dark spaces. In my case, I hoped create a sense between moving image and painting. I wanted, therefore, to make the space only semi-dark. The thickness of the wood screens needed to be sensed. If the space were entirely dark, the sense of objecthood would vanish. That was the reason I hired two projectors with 7000 lumens. The brightness of natural light in summer during the exhibition week exceeded, however, my expectation. Although I bought fabrics twice to block windows with double layers curtains, the natural light was still very bright during 1:00–5:00 pm. The effect of projection was weakened by such brightness.

¹⁸⁸ *Winter Rice* Installation View,
<<https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/home/list/year4/see-the-seeing/winterrice>>

After several observations I found that after 5:00 pm, the effect was better; 7:00 pm was the best timing for viewing the installation with naked eyes; 8:00 pm was the best time for documenting. During the period before sunset, the natural light was soft and magic. The movement of summer evening natural light became a layer of veil for my works; sometimes the veil would slightly cover the projection and then an unknown ‘breathing’ helped reveal the veil. I worked with natural light and desk lamp to create a sense of duration in the three works. When the works were pulled out of the hard drive, they were encountering the true time, light and movement. The internal and external movement of time and light would be entangled in the installation.

iv. Documenting

The lighting also taught me a lesson in documenting. I planned to shoot an installation view and I hoped catch the sense of ‘moving painting’. It meant that I needed to catch both the projection and the screen. It sounded easy but actually the process was a race with light and against time. The lighting made the documenting tricky. As I wanted to document both the objectness and projection, I cannot shoot them when the light was all gone. The effect of projection might be good but it would lose the meaning that I would like to create. Under the condition of weak evening natural light, I could see both the thickness of screen and the projection with my naked eyes but it was difficult to catch both the two points with digital camera. It was not the problem of focus but the problem of brightness/darkness.

What I saw was different from what I documented. If I were to focus on the projection with a digital camera, the brightness of projection and natural light would overwhelm the brightness of the rest. If I were to emphasise the thickness of the screen, the brightness of projection would be relatively weakened but it would cause the image to lose its original quality. I felt the documenting result of *Quinoa & Wheat* was not very successful although I had tried my best to maintain the balance between the two points. I concluded that the main factor was the background of this work was a kind of ivory which was very bright. While I focused on the projection, the brightness of the image would increase the degree of the contrast, which led the volume of screen almost disappear.

I had some earlier experience of documenting my own installation tests. They were not too bad because the tone of my former works was rather gentle and even. The result of documenting *Quinoa & Wheat* made me recall a similar situation in the group show *Pieces of Eight* (April 2012). The photographer seemed to encounter the same

problem; the result was, therefore, unacceptable.¹⁸⁹The images were even not seen as the photographer chose to emphasise the screens' thickness.

The illustration¹⁹⁰ shows the difference between two results. The left was shot when the space was dark; the right one was shot about 8:30pm. On the right one, I tried to make a balance but the quality of projection was comprised. I also tried another angle of shooting to include more objectness. I decided to use both two kind of results.

This point prompted me to think if I should improve the way of presentating/documenting for *Quinoa & Wheat* and other works with bright background. In addition, I will reinforce my skill in photography. I normally work with Macro Lens with tiny objects in my room. The environment I create for shooting was with very small field and with relatively stable and controllable conditions. I would also use the experiences of working with natural light, time, large 3D objects and architecture in my future projects.

v. Sound

In the show, only *Quinoa & Wheat* has sounds. I had also used sounds in earlier works but the sounds were almost synchronously recorded from the environment. The sounds were added into the work after *Quinoa & Wheat* was made. I had no plan to make it with sounds, as the other two works are mute and I assumed they could create an atmosphere of vacuum. I am actually not a big fan of listening to music and not very keen on using sounds. I am very picky and easily feel bored and annoyed with music. If there were no comfortable music,¹⁹¹ I would rather choose not to listen to any music or just attend live music performance. That was why I was more interested in the environmental sounds. The regular noises contain a sense of air and machines. They would make me calm and not get bored.

I repeatedly watched the 'finished' work and oddly I 'heard' a kind of internal sound from the inside of myself. I also found I would unconsciously slightly nod my head, shrug my one shoulder or squeeze my fingers with the tempo of the appearance of the grains. There was a form of rhythm, beat and movement. The body reaction recalled to me some moments when I heard some beats or effects from some songs. What

¹⁸⁹ *Pieces of Eight* Installation View by other photographer, <
https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/_/rsrc/1437949188879/home/list/year1/pieces-of-eight/IMG_8467.JPG>

¹⁹⁰ A Comparison of Documenting,
 <https://sites.google.com/a/huihsuanhsu.com/dossier/_/rsrc/1437949770513/home/list/year4/see-the-seeing/quinoawheat/lighting%20study.jpg>

¹⁹¹ 'Comfortable music' does not mean soft, gentle or dreamy music. I cannot tell the type exactly.

intrigued and moved me was not the whole melody but the very short period of a beat. The kind of beat can swiftly drill into my body and generate a kind of echo, resonance or vibration physically, perceptually and emotionally. This kind of beat was from some experimental electric music. I prefer this kind of music because it creates a kind of crispy and clean sense. I found the new work might be suitable to go with this kind of sound. The texture of beat would also suit with the moving image of particle (grains) in *Quinoa & Wheat*. I tried to extract extreme short beats from some songs I like to listen. I also tried to avoid the recognizable attributes. The sounds were added with every moment when a grain appeared or disappeared and when the focus of lens was rolled forward/backward.

The original plan was to install the sound using Bluetooth wireless headphones. However, I could not find suitable Bluetooth sources within the equipment I used, so I had to use a speaker. The change might be a defect. I originally wanted to create a private field for the viewer who was wearing the wireless headphone. One concern was that the sounds would closely hit the viewer's eardrum and immediately interweave with the viewer's (assumed) internal echo and create a new rhythm privately. Another concern was the way of presenting sound would not affect other two works. The result of the presentation of sounds was not too bad but it indeed became an issue. One viewer responded that when she watched *Rice* but with the sounds of *Quinoa & Wheat*, the situation caused her a sense of disorder and interference in essences. After the experience of working with sounds and installation, I would in future deepen research into sound in my future projects. I would also determine to use the most ideal equipment in the future exhibitions.

Examination

Can the moving image operate between perception, representation and imagination? Can the moving image engage its viewers in a manner similar to painting? What forms of installation can correspond to these research questions?

Firstly, I would make a statement that it would be best to view my moving image in a complete installation not via a laptop or online sources. With this premise, I can firmly respond that the moving image can generate a betweenness within the triangle of perception, representation and imagination. The betweenness would form a platform for viewers to confuse, to ponder, to review, to examine my works. The betweenness is not only about the meanings but also the direct reaction to seeing my works in relation to an

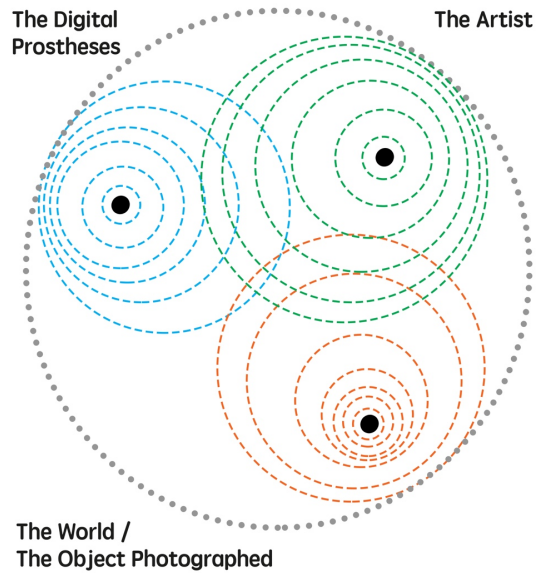
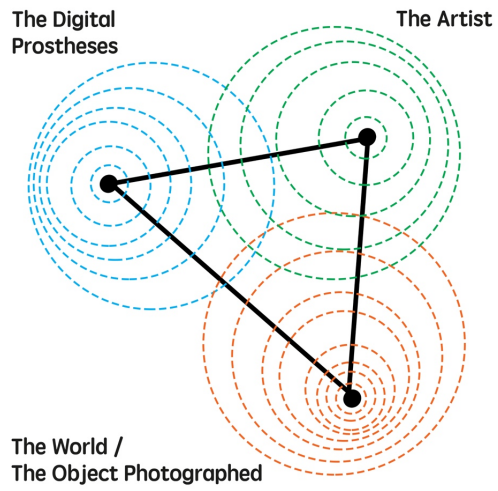
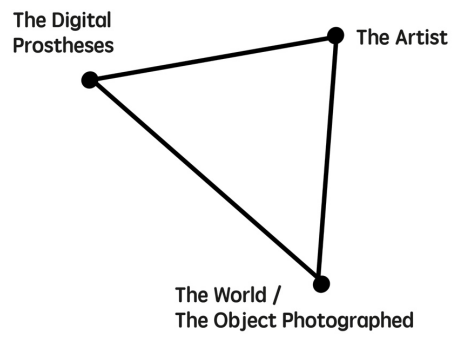
idea of painting. The paradoxical feeling is between moving image and painting. My works are not purely video work but also not pure paintings as a representation of something. They do not offer enough information to share like most video works and not like true paintings because the time is moving on the surface. What I want to offer to my viewers is a sense of perceptual uncertainty, a platform for travelling in the brain, a gap for thinking and a borderspace for co-existing/co-affecting/co-emerging in the words of Bracha Ettinger. It is also my way of intervening in the flow of flux-image. I prefer to see my works without a proper classification and without a fixed label. Before other methods will be found, I think the concept of the digital moving image is what I can use to sustain the status of consciously vacillating, flowing, proliferation and vibrating with the aspect of vision, perception, imagination, and affection (I am using the Deleuzian concept of affection).

The Transformation of My Artistic Framework (Con.1)

Under the rubric of my main research question, at the very beginning stage of this research, I formulated as an image a triangular framework to describe the relationship in my artistic process between three points – the artist, the digital prostheses and the world (the object photographed). The ‘shape’ of the framework had to be a sharp triangle with its three distinct points. Over the four years of my research in practical and theoretical aspects, this triangular framework has been gradually transformed into a ‘moving circle’. How does it transform?

In my imagination, the three points simultaneously generate three forces, which can drive mutual interactions and generate an accompanying notion of vibration while the artistic process is in progress. The process is imagined as operating in an environment such as a body of water which has these two key characteristics: floating and moving. This vibration would be created by the three forces respectively. ‘Ripples’ would, however, be generated and flow around the three points. The ‘point’ has been expanded to become a field. The ripples from the three parties would slowly intertwine and interact together. The non-stop ripples coincide into successive circles: one and then another and another... repeatedly. The three points would become, therefore, not three opposite or different points anymore. They function as moments in these moving fields which would reconfigure constantly under their situation of connection and non-connection. The transformation of the original image or framework can show the process of breaking down the boundary that might be said to be creating a co-shared ‘borderspace’ (I am using Bracha Ettinger’s concept of ‘*The Matrixial Borderspace*’)

between the artist, the equipment and the world. Etinger's psychoanalytical theory of borderspace does not involve fusion or confusion but co-affection, co-emergence and change based on each element being a little opened while remaining itself, while each element is also acted upon by joint events. I think this subjective model can be extended to help me explain the kinds of interactions and 'events' generated by this way of working aesthetically. I can now demonstrate an alternative and a dynamic vision of my working with technology, being-in-the-world and creating artworks.



Con.1
The Transformation of Hui-Hsuan Hsu's Artistic Framework

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THE SELECTION OF INSPIRING VISITED EXHIBITIONS

Exhibition Title	Avenue	Visiting Time
James Turrell <i>Deer Shelter Skyspace</i> Open Air Exhibition	Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield, UK	September 2011
Mario Merz <i>What Is to Be Done?</i>	Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK	October 2011
Yuan Goang-Ming <i>Before Memory</i>	Tina Keng Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan	October 2011
<i>The Photographic Journey of a Maverick--HUANG, TSE-HSIU--82-Year-Young</i>	Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei, Taiwan	October 2011
Darrell Viner <i>Early Work</i>	Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK	October 2011
Shelagh Cluett <i>Drawing in Space</i> <i>GLAMOURIE</i>	Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK	December 2011
Andrea Zittel <i>Lay on My Land</i>	Project Space Leeds, Leeds, UK	January 2012
Elizabeth Price <i>Here</i>	BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle, UK	March 2012
Michael Dean <i>Government</i>	BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Newcastle, UK	March 2012
Sarah Lucas <i>Ordinary Things</i>	Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK	April 2012
Dieter Roth <i>Diaries</i>	Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK	July 2012
Edinburgh Art Festival 2012 Exhibition	The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	August 2012
Mick Peter <i>Lying and Liars</i>	Collective Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	August 2012
James Casebere <i>Home and Other Fictions</i> <i>Adaptation</i>	Stills Centre for Photography, Edinburgh, UK	September 2012
Research project initiated by Sarah Tripp with Collective	Collective Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	October 2012
Ian Hamilton Finlay <i>Twilight Remembers</i> <i>Social Documents / ECONOMY</i>	Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	October 2012
<i>Échange Écossais</i>	Stills Centre for Photography, Edinburgh, UK	January 2013
Calvin Laing	Embassy Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	February 2013
Massimo Bartolini <i>Studio Matters +1</i>	Collective Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	February 2013
<i>The Objects</i>	The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	February 2013
Simon Periton <i>The Rose Engine</i>	Glasgow Sculpture Studios, Glasgow, UK	March 2013
Tom Varley <i>Violence. Silence.</i>	The Modern Institute	March 2013
Pedro Reyes <i>Disarm</i>	Collective Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	April 2013
<i>The Magic of the State</i>	Lisson Gallery, London, UK	May 2013
Garry Fabian Miller <i>The Middle Place</i>	Lisson Gallery, London, UK	May 2013
Gabriel Orozco <i>Thinking in Circles</i> Edinburgh Art Festival Exhibition	Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	July 2013
Venice Art Biennale 2013	The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	August 2013
<i>The Encyclopedic Palace</i>	La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy	September 2013
Ângela Ferreira <i>Political Cameras</i>	Stills Centre for Photography, Edinburgh, UK	September 2013
<i>Transmitted Live: Nam June Paik Resounds</i>	Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	October 2013
Iran do Espírito Santo <i>Aside</i>	Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	November 2013
Ellsworth Kelly <i>Twelve colour prints from the artist's own collection</i>	Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	January 2014
Wael Shawky <i>Dictums</i>	Lisson Gallery, London, UK	February 2014
Simon Lewandowski & Sam Belinfante <i>The Reversing Machine</i>	The Tetley, Leeds, UK	March 2014

<i>Conversations around Marlow Moss</i> Curated by Andrew Bick and Katrina Blannin	& Model, Leeds, UK	July 2014
Ed Atkins	Serpentine Gallery, London, UK	August 2014
Lorenzo Vitturi <i>Dalston Anatomy</i>	The Photographers' Gallery, London, UK	August 2014
Shelagh Wakely <i>A View from a Window</i>	Camden Arts Centre, London, UK	September 2014
Cerith Wyn Evans	Serpentine Gallery, London, UK	September 2014
Trisha Donnelly	Serpentine Gallery, London, UK	September 2014
Yayoi Kusama <i>Bronze Pumpkins</i>	Victoria Miro, London, UK	September 2014
Nicola Samori <i>L'age Mur</i>	Rosenfeld Porcini, London, UK	October 2014
Yoshitomo Nara	Dairy Art Centre, London UK	October 2014
<i>Greetings from a Place in My Heart</i>		
Tracey Emin	White Cube, London, UK	October 2014
<i>The Last Great Adventure is You</i>		
<i>Frieze London</i>	Regent's Park, London, UK	October 2014
Anselm Kiefer	Royal Academy of Art, London, UK	October 2014
Julio Le Parc <i>A Kaleidoscopic First Major UK Solo Show</i>	Serpentine Gallery, London, UK	November 2014
Reiner Ruthenbeck <i>Orchestrator of Geometric Form</i>	Serpentine Gallery, London, UK	November 2014
Pipilotti Rist <i>Worry Will Vanish</i>	Hauser & Wirth, London, UK	December 2014
<i>Turner Prize 2014</i>	Tate Britain, London, UK	December 2014
Richard Serra <i>Backdoor Pipeline, Ramble, Dead Load and London Cross</i>	Gagosian Gallery, London, UK	December 2014
Mira Schendel <i>Monotypes</i>	Hauser & Wirth, London, UK	February 2015
Liz West <i>THROUGH</i>	& Model, Leeds, UK	March 2015
Christine Taylor <i>Patten</i>	Leyden Gallery, London, UK	March 2015
Diana Thater <i>Life is a Time-Based Medium</i>	Hauser & Wirth, London, UK	April 2015
Hilary Lloyd <i>Balfour</i>	Sadie Coles, London, UK	June 2015
Doug Aitken	Victoria Miro, London, UK	June 2015
Roni Horn <i>Butterfly Doubt</i>	Hauser & Wirth, London, UK	June 2015
Spazio Visivo <i>Beyond Sight</i>	Rosenfeld Porcini, London, UK	July 2015
Hilary Ellis <i>Pale Significance</i>	Leyden Gallery, London, UK	August 2015
Prem Sahib <i>Side On</i>	Institute of Contemporary Arts London, UK	September 2015
Hilary Lloyd <i>Robot</i>	Sadie Coles, London, UK	October 2015
Robert Irwin <i>2 x 2 x 2 x 2</i>	White Cube, London, UK	October 2015
Phyllida Barlow <i>Set</i>	The Fruitmarket Gallery, Edinburgh, UK	October 2015

EXHIBITED SHOWS AND EVENTS

Exhibition

Solo Show

- 2015 See The Seeing / Lifton Studio / Leeds, UK/ 13–16 July
 2014 Blind / Old Mining Building / Leeds, UK / 1 – 18 March
 2014 Blind / York College Gallery / York, UK / 13 January – 6 February
 2007 Écart-The Floating Inner Scenery / The graduation solo exhibition of master degree/ Department of Fine Arts gallery, NKNNU, Taiwan

Group Show

- 2015 (CON)TEMPORARY CATALOGUE LAUNCH, SCREENING, LIVE PERFORMANCES / Meinblau e.V. / Berlin, Germany / 25 May
 2015 (CON)TEMPORARY OSMOSIS - Audiovisual Media festival / tamtamART TAIPEI IPIX / Taipei, Taiwan / 22 March – 26 April
 2014 The Moving Image Project / Curated by Charlie Levine
 Sluice__ screens / The Hospital Club / London, England / 8 December 2014 – 30 January 2015
 Sluice__ screens / Brooklyn FireProof / Bushwick, New York / 23 – 26 October 2014
 / Christchurch, New Zealand / April
 / RaGa Gallery / Vadadora, India / March
 / Tokyo, Japan / March
 2013 Hanover Project Video Festival / University of Central Lancashire / 23 – 29 October
 2013 Black Cube Collective Annual Exhibition
 / The Old Ambulance Depot / Edinburgh, UK / 14-16 September
 / Whitespace / Edinburgh, UK / 14-19 September
 2013 Selected for The Lumen Online Gallery
 2013 Synthetic Zero Event / BronxArtSpace / New York, USA / 12 -15 July
 2013 Loop # 3 / tamtamART TAIPEI IPIX / Taipei, Taiwan / 19 May-08 June
 2013 The Fresh Meat Gallery Open Call 2013 / Fresh Meat Gallery / London, UK / 01 May- 01 August
 2013 Independent Short Film Evening / Glasgow Sculpture Studio Gallery / Glasgow, UK/ 4 April
 2013 Defcon Salon 1: Members' Show 2013 / Embassy Gallery / Edinburgh, UK / 25 January-03 February 2013
 2012 Synthetic Zero Event / BronxArtSpace / New York, USA / 16 November-30 November
 2012 Kiss The Future / Schwartz Gallery / London, UK / 08 November-15 December
 2012 Pieces of Eight / group exhibition of eight artists at PSL Project Space Leeds, UK / 25 April-30 June
 2007 Escape Plan from The Bottom in DogPig, 3F / DogPig Coffee Art Shop, Taiwan
 2006 One of The One Hundred Flowers / Jian Ming Basement Art Space, Taiwan
 2006 Through The Object, The Thought Is Drawn / Qing-Zhong Art Center of National Tainan University, Taiwan
 2006 The Depth of The South / Chiang Kai-Shek Travel Lodge in National Sun Yat-Sen University, Taiwan
 2006 The Homeland of Moony Dusk / Taichung City Warehouse No. 20, Taiwan
 2006 The Homeland of Spirit / Soaring Cloud Art Centre, Taiwan

Seminar / Talk / Event

- 2014 Presenter in "One Piece Art Forum" / Taichung, Taiwan / 04 September
 2013 PhD symposium for PhD students in FAHACS & Design / Leeds, UK / 15 May / Title: 'The Digital Prosthesis: between Perception, Representation and Imagination'.
 2012 Seminar speaker in:
 'Recherché: A day of performance, presentation and discussion concerning PhDs in Fine Art in the context of the exhibition 'Pieces of Eight', PSL Project Space Leeds, UK / 21 June
 'Foreign Exchange FOREX', Leeds Art Gallery and Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, UK / 25-27 April
 Both seminars were part of 'CICA: Changing Identities and Contexts in the Arts: Artistic Research as the new European Paradigm for the Arts': An EU Culture Grant Project: September 2010-July 2012.

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- 2012 'Panning for Gold: Pieces of Eight and the Question, "What Makes a Great Exhibition"?' Harker, Kerry, in: 'Artists as Researchers: a New Paradigm for Art Education in Europe', Helsinki, Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, 2013, 237pp., editors, Mika Hannula, Jan Kaila, Roger Palmer, Kimmo Sarje. (illustration on p.203).
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