

A
WORD
BOOK

MY VOICE

故事是怎么开始的呢？

你说你想做个房子给你和你的动物们。

那么，谁是你的动物们？

那房子又是什么模样？

你和你的动物们，还有房子，

又是怎样的关系呢？

你觉得凡此种种，都是你与世界联系的方式。

你相信事物们、乃至词语都有着自己的灵气，

这些存在在你眼中都是有着性格的角色，或者说，是动物。

你相信他们都在发声，

但你不愿打扰他们，也不想妄议他们，

你只是想靠近他们，一块儿待着，聆听你们之间的声音。

房子是容器。

相聚又相散，

它是记录这些痕迹的方式。

它也是传递感情的方式，

传递你和他们在一起时所感受到的心情，

希望别人也可以在这个空间里感受到你所感受到的。

十一月 November

How is the start of your story?

You said you want to make a house for you and your animals.

But who are your animals?

What is the house?

And what is the relationship between you,

your animals, and the house?

You think all these questions are related to how you

connected to this world.

You believe every objects, as well as words,

has their own spirit.

All these exists in your eyes are vivid characters,

in other words, animals.

You believe they are all making a sound.

But you don't want to judge what they're talking about,

All you want is just come close to them, staying together.

If only to listen together

silently to the sounds of the moment.

The house is a container.

We gather and leave,

it's the way to document these traces.

It's also the way to transform my mood,

my careness to these animals,

and my feeling when I hear the sound of them.

I wish through this space, others can hear me,

can hear the sound of the animals,

can hear the sound between us.

I want to make a farmhouse for myself,
together with a cat (or two, maybe three),
~~a dog (a big one),~~
~~a cow,~~
~~a hen (maybe a rooster as well),~~
and plants.

I think the beginning
is from the wax staffs I played with in previous semester.
When they meet each other,
scales come, as well as stories.

I like these ingenious meets, so I'm thinking
if I can join these meets, what will happen then?

When our animals meet together in a space,
with different scale,
how will the body effect the space?
how will the space give the feedback?
and how will the space for each meets the other spaces?
I'm curious about it.

The first initialtive at the beginning of my pre-diploma

March

It's a rainy day before the beginning of spring.
We go on a hiking in Lista.
Snows start to melt;
the black color of the mountain start to appear.
After a short walk,
a lovely small wooden ladder comes into my sight.
It's a part of the main route, to help crossing the metal fence.
When went over the fence,
go through a gap between the big rocks,
I enter an open ground surrounded with black rocks.

At the entrance, there is a tree,
I believe it's a tree that will have beautiful flowers in spring.
A tiny lovely mailbox is hanging on the tree,
together with a guest book.

They said, once upon a time, there was a farmhouse.

We can still find the old stone foundation at the corner,
and a cave for storage potatoes.

I stand at the center of the space,
There're lots of blueberry bushes on the ground.

I feel excited,
maybe it's like connecting with a new channel.

Without thinking it, I start to have a daydream,

When I meet the site at Lista

meet in February,
the words in Chinese comes out in March,
this text comes in April.

a dream about,
to have my farmhouse here.

If my farm is here,
maybe I will put my farmhouse on the origin stone foundation,
with a stair leading to the threshold.

I can sit down here, together with my cats and dog,
reading a book,
or being in a daze.

The flower tree will be closed by,
so when summer is coming we can sit here,
watching the blossom drop,
watching the clouds running,
and every bright existence.

A big roof will embrace us under the shadows,
as in a theater box.

When rain comes, we can listen to the rain,
maybe some wild friends will like to take a shelter and join this concert.

It's not a short journey from the roadway,
I don't know if the cow could come as well.

But it must be fine for the hen.

She can have a small house under the big roof, with a foyer,
which can block draughts around door and windows.

Maybe there will have a secret entrance to the kitchen,
then she can easily come and get some peels and leaves,
if she wants.

Cats will have the upper space, while dog the under part.

A space for napping is always needed in the shelf.

It'll be nice to have a cat bridge in the upper side,
maybe will end or begin with a entrance to the roof.

Under the desk a big space will be offered for the dog,
also a comfortable cushion next to fireplace.

A small wooden bench will be put close to the bed,
In case he wants to sleep in the bed during winter time.

If I have a cow, and the cow can come here as well,
she may have the space between our living room and the surrounded rocks.

A small window will connect us at night.

Her room will have an entrance directly to the ground,
she can go out in the sunny day to have some fresh grass.

When sunshine glared, rain is so heavy, or snow comes,
She can join us to rest under the roof,
have a nap or a daze.

Blueberry bushed will keep growing at where they were.

When the late summer comes, I will grab a basket to pick some of them.

As to the other part, I can plant some other plants, or potato.

And when meets a harvest, I can store them in the cave as well.

The orchard will be a short walking distance from here,
at a triangle shaped space face to the fjord.

I'll hide my studio behind the fruit trees,
back to the mountain, face to the fjord.

Its roof will have a comfortable slope to lie down.
And I want to lie on the roof to watch stars at night,
or waiting for the sunset.
A big stone is in front of the studio,
like what we have where we live at Lista.
With its help I can easily climb on the roof,
and put my legs on it.
Cats can join me, but the dog needs to wait downstairs.
Maybe he can lie against the stone.

My studio will have a long long window,
in front will be a long long working desk.
Under the desk, there will be a small window for my dog;
maybe he can see the fjord through it as well.
Under the fruit trees, there will be a bench, or a stone that can sit.
When I need a break during the work,
I can go out to have a breath.
A space for ladder and basket is also needed,
and then I can pick the fruits in autumn.

Every day I can have a walk or two with my dog,
from our farm to the valley down the hill.
I still remember the moment we walk in the drizzly valley,
A thousand of fresh green colors come out from winter sage green.
Stay with nature, is such a precious moment.



In May I took my second visit to Lista (Tjortemyra).
When I arrived the mountain with my heavy bag,
The sun already waited there bursting through the clouds.
As rain just fallen, the air is cooler.
The whole area was covered with little white flowers,
Like cotton-tails, bright and white.
Without thinking, I occupied a big stone immediately,
sitting on it and enjoying myself in this space.
Before my eyes was the glistening sea, contained in a big bowl.
Thereafter, I always stayed on that rock.
When cloud floated by, I would read a book or wrote some words,
When sun came out,
I just closed my eyes and dreamed (sometimes it'll change to a nap).
I feel I am in the arms of a behemoth,
The rock is one of its paws.
I lay on the paw and watched the sea.
The sea is in a bowl.
When architecture comes,
it can find a comfortable place as I found my paw.
And also, it will be taken cared in the arms of this big animal,
Together with animals, flowers, plants and me.

Second visit to my site

visit from 28-30 May,

the words in Chinese comes out at the beginning of August,

this text comes at the end of August.

Several days before my second trip to the site, I think of an old movie, Stand by Me. I have seen it several years ago, and after it, to meet a deer in the woods become one of my dreams.

I lived in my big animal's arms for three days. It was the second day; this dream has come true.

I woke up very early in that morning,
and I felt the mountain is more secluded while the birds are singing.
I put up my tent close to the stone foundation at the corner.
When I came out from the tent,
sunlight poured down high from the rocks behind.
We were under the shadow, but the whole field in front was warm and bright.

I went through the shadow to the bright field.
when stood among the white flowers,
I saw a deer,
skittered into the woods at the other side.
I couldn't move, stood there for a while even she was already disappeared.

But the story doesn't stop.
It's cloudy in the afternoon, I sit on the paw, and read the book.
Suddenly the sun comes out, I close my eyes under this strong sunlight.
I don't know when did I fall asleep, but I still remember it was the rustle of tree that wake me up. When I open my eyes, I saw the deer eating leaves in front of the big rock. I was instantly awake suddenly.

I sat there, very, very still.

After a while, she also noticed me.

She seemed surprised too, and started trying to hide her head down for several times. But her eyes fixed on me, always and same as I did.

Then she also stood still. We just looked at each other,
for a not short time.

Then she turned and continued eating some leaves,
and slowly walked off to the woods.

I sat still and looked for a while, with a delight blank mind.

I don't know when did I pick up my book again.

I was reading Woolf's The Common Reader at that time. I like the way she describes Jane Austen:

"...she had not, like Emily Brontë, merely to open the door to make herself felt. Humbly and gaily she collected the twigs and straws out of which the nest was to be made and placed them neatly together. The twigs and straws were a little dry and a little dusty in themselves."

The sky slowly darkened, deep and dull mutterings coming from afar. I was about to come back to my tent.

When I looked back to the field,

I saw her again, lingering among the white flowers.

We seemed to have a tacit understanding. She was on her way to the place I saw her in the morning (close to potato cave), and I went ahead to my tent (in the other side of the site). We walked together among the flowers, two or three meters apart, looked at each other every few steps. And separated in two directions.

Before the rain came, I stood at a rock next to the stone foundation, looking at the changed color of the sky and feeling the strong wind. I saw her stand halfway up the hill, looking at my direction.

Above her there is another cave, not scary like the potato cave. While looking at the deer, I was thinking, what about put a comfortable little stair at the gap between the rocks, and make that space a place to stay as well.

I'm also collecting the twigs and straws for my nest. And she, the deer (not "a deer", but "the deer") is the first animal I meet here. And before this trip, I just think about Stand by Me and my small wish. I think this connection is serendipity.

During pre-diploma, Rolf lend me a book called SAFETY GEAR for SMALL ANIMALS by Bill Burns. While I read it, I feel security and warm by the tiny things he made for animals, but also sad about the hostile environment the animals are facing. And later I know there is another Bill Burns, who was famous because he was found beating his donkey. I think this connection is also miraculous.

I don't know how to talking about these connections. But there is a picture keeps in my mind for the whole summer. It's at an afternoon when I take a walk in a temple in Chengdu. I see some dried flower carefully tied to the twig with red thread. And at that moment, I'm thinking of these connections.





“We are all on a journey through the great space of nature, and if you are capable of revealing your temperament, the space will find you and keep you there.”

I feel very touched when I see this sentence from a text about villa busk by Fehn.

As I come close to the site, things come and leave, connect or disconnect with each other in their own way. I feel a net is waving itself constantly. I don't know if it is a continue of my staffs' network, or a relative but new one, or one with different gene. But I know something is already there, in my mind, in the attempts to close to the site, or somewhere else, the house is already there, and we're already inside there. Later Rolf calls it "the big Architecture".

Once noticed the existence of this big A, I feel rich and enjoy myself being with it. I can feel every piece of it, but I don't see how it looks. This unclarity makes it wonderful, and the absence of scale makes me feel close to it, as well as the animals. But meantime I feel a little sad, I'm afraid the house I want to make, the “small” architecture, could never catch up with the big one.

Or maybe I don't need to compare them, my small a is the path to come close to my big A.

有很长一段时间，我不相信语言。

唐诺说，极限的思索，让人晓得自己其实可以更好。
可是越来越多与自己的对话，让自己变得更疑惑。

老夫三十年前看山水，山是山，水是水，
三十年之后看山水，山不是山，水不是水，
再过三十年看山水，山还是山，水还是水。
可是三十年在我却如一瞬，种种，反反复复在是与不是间徘徊。

语言不同于自然中的任何一种存在，它由我们自己发明，诞生于我们发声的欲望，与沟通的渴求。可是我们怎么能确定，它传达的就是我们真正所想？更别论这个世界上有那么多不同的语言，在转译的过程中，又有多少内容会丢失与误解。

我的朋友名南是一个翻译者，在我快要溺毙于这种不信任的时候，她的话成为了我的触板。她告诉我，对她来说，真正的书和作品都是声音，有些声音迷人到让人有了想听到它在中文里回响的冲动。不同的语言好像不同的乐器，各自鲜活地存在，无法一马平川。但它们之间存在的不是隔阂，差异才有容器。不可尽译的部分，正是最迷人的部分，各自都有存在的道理。无限靠近，但不可替代，相异而共鸣。

差异是容器，相异而共鸣。

“相较于音乐（始生于人心，顺应着人心的自然流动起伏，如黑格尔说的那是文字到达不了的。又、人类使用音乐早于使用文字几百万年之久），文字书写，尤其小说，仍是“人造物”，发明在人类思维已充分成熟并厚实积累的近世，有着诸多概念性的理性抽空设计，这是外于人的。如此外于人、让人逃离开自己有其重大的意义和企图，也被赋予了种种特殊的期待，但终究，这样也就不再能够那么贴紧人心了，人的情感因距离关系显得冷漠，至少不那么稠密微妙了。”（唐诺，代序：那一刻一个现场目击者的记忆和说明，《漫游者》）

For a long time, I didn't trust words.

One of my favorite writer Tang Nuo wrote, the ultimate thinking, can let one know he could be better. But with more and more dialogs with myself happened, I become more and more confused.

Hundreds of years ago, a monk said:

"Thirty years ago, when I looked at the landscape, the mountain is mountain, the river is river;

Thirty years after when I looked at the landscape, the mountain is not mountain, the river is not river;

Another thirty years passed when I looked at the landscape, the mountain is mountain, the river is river."

But for me, thirty years is like a moment, such instance, hovering between "is" and "is not" time after time.

Words is different from any other existence in the nature. They're invention from us, coming because our desire to phonate to communicate. But how can we know they are transform the same thoughts as we have? Let along in this world there are such many different languages. During the translation, how much will be lost and how much will be misunderstood.

My friend Mingnan is a translator, her words become my sampan when I close to drown in this distrust. She told me that for her the real book and works are voice, some voice is so charming that made her has a strong desire to hear them resound in Chinese. Different languages and words are like different instruments, each exists as a vivid individual, cannot be the boundless plain. But what between them is not estrangement or misunderstanding, the container comes after difference. The untranslatable part is just the

有没有这种可能，文字并没有天然的优越或残疾，它只是一条路，走的人如果谦卑、真实，会展开自身不可思议的可能性；它只是一种乐器，是我们发声的方式。

在跟朋友 F 聊到在做的事情的时候，他介绍了 animism 给我认识。我觉得它说出了好多在我脑中混沌未生的想法。我相信，词语是有灵气的，所有的物件都在发声，所以不敢也不忍带着任何评判，而只是想靠近它们，一起待着。

“……便觉得他的生命似乎已与宇宙合一了。

在冥想中她的意识不断扩大，扩大，扩大到弥漫充满了整个宇宙。她与宇宙等大，于她之外别无一物，连别无一物的概念也没有。于是不再因为找不到方向而彷徨，因为所有的方向都在她之内，自己就是一切的边境，所以不再有流浪。”（朱少麟《伤心咖啡店之歌》）

我开始相信它们，语言也好，动物也好，房子也好。

虽然，是借我的手，它们出现在这里，

但是我们是平等的，

或者说，

是互相融合的。

十二月五日 5th December

most fascinating part, both have a strong reason to exist. Infinite approach but never can replace, different but resonate.

The difference is a container, different but resonate.

"Compared with music (originated in human heart, it conforms to the natural flow of the heart, as Hegel said where words cannot reach. In addition, humans start to use music millions of years earlier than words), the written word, especially the novel is still a "artificial object". The invention is in the modern world where human thinking is fully mature and accumulated. There are many conceptual rational designs, which are outside people. Such being outside and letting people escaped from oneself, that has its' great significance and attempts. And also, was endowed with various particular expectations. But after all, this will no longer be so close to the people, people's emotions seem indifferent because of distance. At least not that dense and subtle." (Tang Nuo, foreword to Zhu Tianxin's novel ROVER)

Is it possible, that words don't have a natural superiority or disability. It's just a road, if one walks it humbly and truly, that will open up one's incredible possibility; it's just an instrument, that is the we make our sound.

When talking about my works with Fredrik, he introduced “animism” to me. I like this new friend, and I think it says a lot, which also exists in my mind but hide in the mist. I believe words have spirit, all the objects are making sounds. Therefore I don't dare and cannot bear to take judgement and evaluation to come close, but only want to stay with them, being together for a while.

"...she feels that her life seems to have been one with the universe.

In meditation her consciousness is constantly expanding, expanding, and expanding to the fullness of the universe. She is as big as the universe, and there's nothing else, even no notion of else. Thereupon she is no longer a loss due to the loss of direction, because every direction is inside herself, herself is the limitation of everything, so there's no more roams about.

...The meaning of life is not in the pursuit of answers, the answer is just a new question to another answer, life lies inexperience and insights, no matter where you've been..." (Zhu Shaolin, CAFE TRISTE)

I start to trust them, words, animals, or architecture.
Notwithstanding that they come out by my hands,
we are equal,
or to say,
we are merging.

You want to make a house for you and your animals.
You want to know what animals mean to you.
Your cats, the deer, some unknown visitors,
and the objects you made.
They are all equal to you, they have spirits, they have identities.
They're characters acting in the space.
Meanwhile, you meet the site in Lista,
You want it to be the site the moment you were there.
Like the way you want to be together with the animals.
So, you stayed there for three days with tent in May.
Some story happened, some new characters appear.
They greeting with each other, merge with each other.
Your house becomes animal, your site as well.
And the stories between you, become landscape, or environment.
They are making sounds.
They are acting and collective.
The process you try to find the architecture becomes a moving architecture itself.
Some objects you made, become animals, they are finished at their moment in their
world, and some becomes the environment, the landscape, the container, the archive.
Me, animals, house, together with distance, stories, scales, things that waving us
together...All of them become a big architecture already, in your mind, reveal itself in the
story or somewhere else.
Some wish to stop at a certain page.
Some continues its' walk to the end of the book.
But no matter whether they left or stay, they're part of this big architecture. The
architecture for you becomes a container, an instrument, an archive, a nature, a
landscape, an environment...
You have found lots of houses in the way you looking for the house. Some house are

A dialog with myself

one day in December

animals, some are fillers/containers. You don't like some sometimes, but at the end you like all of them. You wonder, maybe you already found the house, at the moment you meet the site, at the moment you enrolled in the stories, at the moment the objects appeared...

The architecture you are searching for, is already there again and again, in different way, with different voice, floating, uncertain, while precise and specified. Maybe, it's because there is always a specified spirit there, the spirit of this house.

You just try to see it with continuous acting, and it makes sounds in different instrument.

You don't know if you find the house at this time.

But it seems like you've realized how you would like to wave with others, talk with others, connect to this world, maybe.

ANIMALS' VOICE



When I just came back home this summer, I prefer to read Ye Qing's poem with the widely opened window at midnight. It was a little bit chill at night, wind came in, together with the hubbub from the street, and the light from the other windows. Two cats seemed to feel the telepathic connections, woke up from somewhere we don't know, curiously jumped to the window sill by turn and looked out for a long long time.

My cats are living in a huge reinforced concrete box with redundant access control system, only dare to roll on the stair hall at the dead of night, and ran back home whenever noticed any small sound.

And they all like window sill, all the cats I meet like this place. My cats were all stray cats before, so they're very sensitive and afraid of strangers. Even I know is hard for them to live as stray cats in the city, I feel a little sad that we limit their freedom to explore this world. And I feel sorry that we occupied and changed to much spaces in this world, that severely impacted the life of the other animals.

But I'm pleased that they still find some comfort space in this environment which is already exist. This room come first, then my cats and me. We share this room and find our comfort way to use this space.

I

A piece of wood I find in woods is the site in this world.
Rock becomes a white cat sleep at the wood, face to the sea.
We can settle down in its arm.
But two animals already find a space to stay.

II

In this world a cat like to occupy the site.
Or the site is a big cat.
Or the architectures was there before, but a tornado came, and
they disappeared.

The house has a big roof, a beam of sunlight will pass through it,
above the big rocks, through the window on the roof,
and finally reaches the stairs.

A house with a staircase.

Light is space,
and space is solid.

One day someone rotates it,
the window becomes door, door becomes another window.
I find it very beautiful, and kept it here,
stands on the stump I found on the street in September.

In this world, the unfinished big roof stands on a stone from Lista.
The column is made by four small columns.
I imagine this column will be in a comfort size,
my back will have wish to lean on it;
book will have eager to stay at the gap between small columns;
cats will want to sharpen their claws and climb on it;
some shy animals will like to hide in the structures under the roof,
maybe they will also meet some bird neighbors nesting there.

One crossbar protrudes from the roof a little bit,
a dried mushroom wants to be hanged there like a tool.
And I start to imagine,
when some other curious objects want to come close.

The story is like a landscape,
the landscape is like a studio,
the studio maybe is a cube, a stone, or something else.

I want to make a house,
I start with a column.

The column wants to stand somewhere, so he asked me if I can cut a slot for him on another piece of wood. And then he grows like a tree, some branches wait for the roof, roof wants the window, window greets to a bed, bed needs floor, floor needs a ladder to reach, and floor connects column and wall, wall needs a base to stand, the base feels like to be a bench...

Some characters in the story want to appear, so a story comes here as well, maybe old, maybe new. And when they want to stop, there will be a pause. But I don't know how long is a pause here in this world.

I imagine the part of this room is also animals or "others" than "me". So, except the wall and ground, I looked at my collections of wood pieces, and picked out some to bring in this room.

The one under the big table with a pride tail looks like a wolf. Its mouth is a little higher than the other who hunched over like a worm. The table board cut a groove at one corner, to keep balance between these two characters.

A window appears at the back wall, it's an opening to greet with the plant behind. But I cut it big like a door, so a wood stone stands there to form this window.

Some woods with hook face gather at a corner. They prefer to leave a gap makes one want to enter. I guess later some animal will like to hide inside.

This studio doesn't have roof, and with one wall still not glued with the other. Maybe in this world unfinished is finished, ready for the one is yet to come.

I feel bad in this world.

The wall can feel it, the table also,
the puddle on the roof, and the absent of the window.

But there is a fox, stands on the roof,
trying hard to keep balance with the puddle.

Someone has been to the other world before.
Someone wants to have a studio like theirs.

Someone is not good at making,
whereupon nothing is precise or matched in this studio.

But someone is fascinated by this imprecision
and fall in love with the distance between each character.

A distance to let light across.

A distance to let someone take a breath.

Lamp is a room.

The trace from acorn and buckeye seed remains on the ground,
but they went out.

Only one acorn get stuck in gypsum has to stay there, with its
shell gradually opened.

They said, who says it can't be a lamp?

If a candle enters this room,
I'm going to swing you around on a string
just as if you were a lamp.

Do you know that every starlight we saw has taken a journey of
thousands of years in the universe before it came to our eyes.
These moments of flash in the sky are the illuminating of hundreds
of millions of stars for hundreds of millions of years.

In this room we need a window for the star.

I find this window becomes a ticket.

It draws an opening like a sharp blade, easily opens some past
pieces in the mind.

It's like finding a favorite toy on the shelf at storage, covered with
dust and maybe a spider web.

The connection makes me feel relieved, in a room with such a
window.

And a room starts to appear in my mind,

Only the corner with window is visible, the rest is in the mist.

But I feel this room is already entire and complete.

They are all bodies, the building, the animals, structure, chair, stone... They just rest their bodies on the ground. Dialogs happened between them.

It's growing continuously, together with the people and animals living inside or acting outside. An animal is inside a man. A house is also a village. A house is also an animal.

SOME OTHER VOICE

Foreword to:

WAX BOOK

What it does for me?

At the beginning, when we are asked to choose an initiative to start, I immediately have an answer in my mind. Not knowing why is it, nor have a very strong eager to do something with it, I started my journey with wax this semester.

I start to play (observe) with it in the kitchen. Without thinking too much, I start with a familiar way: melt the candle, and drop it into cold water, into sink with opened tap. And by some unknown coincidence, I drop the extra melt wax into the pot for melting the candle, and the wax suddenly disappeared into the boiling water. I leave it at there and go to do other things, but when I come back, I found a beautiful white moon in the pot.

I don't know how it happened, disappeared wax get together again, floating on the surface, became a pure round plate. I'm curious about it, then I tried it again and again; just want to observe what had happened. I want to see something, but don't know how it will show me. During the new attempt I see something, and was fascinated by this process from liquid to solid. I see mountains, river and sea; I see the reflection of sky and myself. I hear the wind, and see it as well, on the wavy surface.

A thought starts to remain in my mind, how to keep this process?

What I can do with it?

At the same time, I enjoy my process of playing with wax. Once I start to melt the candle, the rest things just happened continuously. I dropped it into everything; plastic bag, eggshell, and orange pile. During the melting process, I found the remaining candle piece

is very beautiful, as well as some other mistake (or broken) part during my actions.

I collect all of them; I collect lots of things in the daily life, just like I have a lot of memories in the mind. I collect 7 stones, 3 drift wood pieces and some sea glasses from Lista, as well as the old collection of wood pieces from workshop's tarbush bin. I try to enroll them into my playing with wax, and I don't need to worry about their position, once they get involved, they know how to connect with wax and others.

I'm totally release myself through this process. What I need to do is just go on my life, reading, cooking, watching movies, wandering, observing the outside world, while wax becomes a big net, bring the new staffs from the outside world in, and let them have actions with themselves or each other (like the solid wax in the plastic bag one day become a cat ghost). Even though some works not using wax at all, they're a group, and contentious growing themselves.

What it is/becomes?

At the same time, my curious also let something goes on. Not only put it into water, I also tried to mix wax with oil, plaster or something else. The previous thought finally become reality, I called it time machine, which can let me observing the process from solid wax to liquid, and liquid to solid. And something else coming out, the melting was become their constructive column as well; the broken pieces become dinosaur and rabbit.

Everything just keeps going, they're lost control, but I enjoy it and just let it lose. And suddenly when I look back, they already become a lot of things.

What it becomes for me/others?

I don't know what it becomes for me and haven't thinking about this question yet. Rolf says it makes him remaining of alchemy. I like this association a lot. Western alchemist search for gold but find porcelain, Chinese Taoist looking for elixir of life but find gunpowder. I'm the lazy alchemist just want to play with wax, but I find a lots.

It remains me of a paragraph in Alice's Adventure in Wonderland, which is also one of my favorite parts, when Alice meets the Cheshire cat:

Alice: Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?

The Cheshire Cat: That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.

Alice: I don't much care where.

The Cheshire Cat: Then it doesn't much matter which way you go.

Alice: ...So long as I get somewhere.

The Cheshire Cat: Oh, you're sure to do that, if only you walk long enough.

As for others, I don't know what it becomes for them, but at least, they smiled when they saw the staffs on my desk. As for myself, I just keep walk long, and I'll get to somewhere, I think.

[STAFF(STUFF) INFORMATION]

Stuff 1,2,3

melt wax into cold water/running water from tap/oil

I found inverted mountain beneath the water, or among clouds, or maybe a mountain of cloud.

Stuff 4 [Moon]

melt wax into hot water (80-100°C)

They disappeared, only left thousands of small bubble. When my dead small lotus germinated at first, the bubbles filled in the container is just the same, like a hint for a birth.

And I found a moon (staff 1).

Stuff 5,6

melt wax into hot water (80-100°C)

Became fascinated with the process from liquid wax to solid.

The round plate as the result is made up from canyon.

Stuff 7 [Ghost Cat]

melt wax into a plastic bag

Later, I give it a face; it becomes a cat ghost (staff 2).

Stuff 8

melt wax into egg shell

Later, it get married with stuff 9.1.4. (staff 15).

Stuff 9

collections from Lista

stuff 9.1.1~9.1.9 stones

stuff 9.2.1~9.2.3 drift woods

stuff 9.3 sea glasses

stuff 9.4 a broken shell

Stuff 10

casting with wax and stuff3/9.1.8/9.1.9/9.2.1/9.4.

Looks different (weird) with my imagination.

Stuff 11[A fake mandarin]

melt yellow wax into mandarin pile

I got a fake mandarin without pile, but keeps smell of mandarin.

Stuff 12

wax with plaster

extra material from Staff 3

Stuff 13

wooden circle with wax and a plaster piece

Stuff 14

2 wax pieces survived from melting

Stuff 15 [a pleasant mistake]

yogurt cup, candle and an oven in 85°C .

The first action after I swift my working place from kitchen to school. Using the unsuitable

container to melt candle, but I also like the remaining piece. The words on the yogurt cup became very small but still readable.

Stuff 16

wax with a broken stone and a broken shell
a copy of Kintsukuroi

Stuff 17

a blue wax circle

Stuff 18

wax and color drawing on MDF board

Stuff 19

wooden piece with beautiful pattern.
has one or more (broken) red circle inside

Staff 1 [Moon]

wax, pure white wax

Staff 2 [Ghost Cat]

wax with black modellermasse

Staff 3

melt wax with plaster, with an unfit frame to protect
extra material remained in the cup (stuff 12)
Some strange mushroom shaped wax pieces come to the surface. I think alien will like to live in.

Staff 4

melt wax with plaster, remove the wax
Prefer to be together with stuff 9.1.2 and 9.1.5.

Staff 5 [A garden]

casting with wax and dried plants, copper wire
A memory of a garden or two.
When light comes, the shadow is beautiful, and dramatic.

Staff 6 [Lista coner]

casting with plaster and staff 9.1.1, copper wire, aluminum sheet
A memory of Lista, maybe.

Staff 7,8,9

repeat the birth of staff 2 (the cat ghost),
more ghosts come as well

Staff 10 [Time Machine 1.0]

casting with plaster and wax, copper wire, wick, (match or lighter)
first attempt for observing the [solid-liquid-solid] process
I found it has miracle, I can't take my eyes off it once start to observing. It's like time machine, that makes a second having the thickness. By watching it, surroundings became invisible; my mind is high speed running and a lot of things coming out. I think I got the key to their network.
Besides, the new structure the wax made is interesting.

Staff 11 [broken body of Time Machine 2.0]

casting with wax, copper wire, wick, (match or lighter)

Forget to put out the fire, time machine 2.0 collapse into 3 pieces, one is broken body of time machine 2.0, one is a rabbit (staff 12), and one is a dinosaur (staff 13).

Staff 14 [Time Machine 3.0]

casting with plaster and wax, copper wire, wick, (match or lighter)

New generation with new color, this time we got a hole as well.

Staff 15

stuff 8 + stuff 9.1.4.

Staff 16

casting wax from the bird column of my neighbor[Fredrik's Bird house]

Found nice place for staff 15.

Staff 17[Time Machine 4.0]

casting with plaster and wax, copper wire, wick, (match or lighter)

This time wax column can support it self as well.

Staff 18[Pirate Cat]

wood curving

I like the scar very much. It used to be a triangular prism piece of wood in the trash box.

Staff 19[Cloak Cat]

wood curving

Staff 20

casting with wax and plaster, wood

a gap for animals

Staff 21

casting with wax and plaster, wood

another gap for animals

Staff 22[Moby Dick]

wood, copper wire

Unfinished

Staff 23

wax casting, oven with 45°C

When wax get tired.

Staff 24

wooden piece, sanded

copy of Magnus' piece

Staff 25 [Robot]

wood

Staff 26 [Fox]

wooden fox after children's drawing

***A Yellow Envelope**

an envelope from American embassy, then become my folder

contains my sketches and former layout

***Elephant Ear in a glass jar**

I bought this glass jar at the begging of this semester, for planting my small lotus.

Unfortunately my small lotus died after I came back from New York's study trip.

And then I got this elephant ear from Joel, and I'm happy it goes well in the jar.

It stays at the corner of my desk for long time, along with all my stuff and staffs, so I think it may already become a member of them.

***A Shelf**

wood, glue, screws

At the end of semester I want to make/have a shelf or something else, which can offer a white cube for my staffs.

I tried one. But when it finished both my staffs and me don't like it, and at the end I throw it away.

I realize that actually the staffs don't need a stage, because their story already exists in the book, the relationship between things already showed in the photos when they meet each other.

They're alive at my desk with others' work surrounded. They're alive in the photos when they meet each other. But they're died on the table for exhibition, while they're alive in the book next to them.

At the final critic sensors also suggest me to think about archive, make a box for my staffs. I did try to make one later, but I'm not sure about it at that time. I used plywood but not wood, for me I feel it's a hint that this box is not ready to come out yet. I don't like it. But I haven't continued as well.

I think the sentence that comes out at beginning for my pre-diploma have the gene of this unfinished project.

Foreword to:

Wenkai Xu

A House For Me And My Animals

“I want to make a (farm)house of my own, together with a cat or two (maybe three), a dog (a big one), a cow, a hen (maybe a rooster as well) and plants.” (Opening lines from Wenkai Xu’s diploma report booklet #1).

For that to be possible, Wenkai feels the need to “make the animals first”, or in other words, to live herself into becoming close to make, recognize and show “animal identity” - the biographies or the characters that she wants to care for in that house of her own.

Her proposed thesis work can be placed in the realm of (conceptual) works (of artists) that deal with “the self” in relation to the known or unknown “other”, and that seek to unveil issues of compassion and discrimination etc. both in the ways we look at the other (object / objecthood) and in how we organize and take care of a shared environment.

The Canadian artist Bill Burns’ renown SAFETY GEAR for SMALL ANIMALS (ÉQUIPEMENT DE SÉCURITÉ pour PETITS ANIMAUX) can serve as an example for such a work. While Burns used 10 or more years to get to (scientifically and artistically) know his tiny animals and learn how to respond to their (implied or not) safety needs by manufacturing specialized gear and infrastructure, Wenkai spent a year in the CATHARSIS studio to make what she calls her “staff and stuff”: characters of tiny animals made out of wax and wood (the staff), and small environments (the stuff) that supports or stages her staff of animals.

While Wenkai’s work is not scientific at all, it relies solely on her capacity to commemorate, construct and show identities in the things (staff and stuff) and how they, for us that view her work as an architecture, make or narrate meaningful emotive charged connections.

The main topics of her planned thesis work are three: firstly, the making and presenting of

“her staff” or animal characters that she cares for, secondly the making and presenting of “the stuff” or small environments that both serve as extensions of the animals’ character (in terms of places, events or situations that respond to behaviours or habits seen while making the animals) and that either are distinct places of isolation and retreat etc., and/or that allow for meetings and confrontations with other characters including Wenkai herself, and thirdly, the making and presenting of “the house” as the woven architectural construction that binds all the elements together with the chosen site on the Lista peninsula.

The planned thesis work is expected to be of high quality in the way it produces strong objects and strong optic as well as haptic visuality (Marks 2002) that again allows for objects and things to make sign-like connections. These expected “object relations” aim at making and showing an architecture, or house, that both responds to features of the chosen landscape / climate as well as to the identities of its dwelling members (the ones created as “staff” by Wenkai, and to herself).

The work will be possible to be assessed first of all through the way in which it is successful (or not) in building up strong visual identities and optic or haptic visual object relations. How identities are created in the objects themselves and how they further are given extensions in form of architectural environments or places that again show a form of care – or something else a relational closeness.

On a general architectural note, it will be interesting to see how Wenkai architecturally will weave the objects/identities together into a house: whether she conceptualizes the house as an architecture or framework that deals with its own issues or if she manages

to develop the house as an organism grown out of her understanding of, and the further working on, those mentioned objects and identities.

As her supervisor, I hope her work will inspire to recognize and further ponder the phenomenology of objecthood, transitional objects as well as aspects of affordance theories etc. in an architectural context. Furthermore, that her work can fuel the discourse on the role of the architect as the capacity to conduct and orchestrate the framework for everyday living prepared for “someone else”, how we look at that capacity and how that capacity is demonstrated in an optic / haptic visual work where the “someone else” is the animal, but also herself - both of which without, or just limited, English language proficiency.

Finally, I consider Wenkai an outstanding student with a high artistic and architectural sensibility for recognizing, making and presenting the issues at stake here. A unanimous sensor team from the CATHARSIS IV fall 2017 semester shares my view and recommended that her work should lead to a final thesis and the attempt to bring out a “house condition” – a visual and haptic material that makes that architectural organism out of the beforehand mentioned relational objects / environments.

Final note:

Body & Space Morphologies teaching studios are programmed and maintained in close dialogue with the artist, performer and Performance and Performance Studies scholar Julie Dind, Waseda University (2010-2016), Pratt Institute (2016-2018) and Brown University (2018-2024). Her yet unpublished papers, but also her workshops with our students, apply neurodivergent viewpoints to the curriculum and are substantially vivid in our discussion and attempt to prepare students for the development of artistic research material in the realm of studies concerned with the phenomenology of architecture.

Attached to this Foreword to Wenkai Xu's diploma report "A House for Me And My Animals" is Julie Dind's unpublished seminal paper titled "Things that move: Beyond Objecthood". Written in 2016 (edited in 2017) for Pratt Institutes Performance and Performance Studies graduate seminar class in Object Relations: Performance, Psychoanalysis, and the Object (Prof. Julia Steinmetz), this paper may demonstrate why it perhaps also in the field of architecture still today could be relevant to address the body of architecture phenomenologically, both in the making of it and in the way we see it fit for inhabitation – the further reflection within the humanities on the very act of inhabitation.

1 See Wenkai Xu "diploma report booklet #1" and "diploma report booklet #2 – the wax book". The "making of the animals" refers to both finding and presenting her animals, which is the process of commemorating distinct (pet) animals from her past and presence and showing or characterizing them in text, prose and imagery for third part readability (as shown in booklet #1), but also to literally making artefacts that take on (pet) animal characters. The latter (as shown in booklet #2) are not attempting to resemble former known (pet) animals, but rather make up the "staff" of new animals with own distinct features / behaviours.

2 Safety Gear for Small Animals presents a survey of Toronto based artist Bill Burns' work over [...] 10 years. The show is "the largest producer of safety gear for small animals in the world." Bill Burns is the Director of the company which includes several divisions: safety gear prototype production, conservation and relocation, a multi-media program, a toll-free telephone service, a prosthetics program, a modest publishing house and an itinerant museum. Beneath the appeal of the miniscule safety vests, work gloves, bulletproof vests, U.V. goggles and respirators developed for our furry friends, lies a frightening warning about our stewardship of the environment. Exhibition Curator Annette Hurtig comments: "While providing sound scientific fact, the exhibition functions also as a kind of cautionary tale, as a moral fable, an apologue, if you will, and as a visual allegory, offering lessons and pragmatic advice for those interested in the plight of animals." (Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art, retrieved from <https://news.gestalten.com/news/safety-gear-small-animals>)

3 Laura U. Marks "Touch: Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media" (2002), but also other connected writings of her that make up her haptic theory (and the distinction between optical visibility and haptic

visibility), are amongst the texts that fuel the Body & Space Morphologies teaching studios. We loan or appropriate terms from Marks and others and combine them with theories and philosophies on objecthood and object relations etc. in an attempt to invert or subvert the creative process, or better, how we look at the act of creation in a process. I.e. reading Wenkai's "diploma report booklet #2 – the wax book", makes explicit that an aimless acting (aimless doing or making with wax) had created in her, but also in those neighbouring her process, the recognition of identity (or just strong resemblance) performed in crafted objects, and that this in turn can make, or make-show, new subjects or new necessities to pursue these identities and work more / connect more to the work. Another work that would have started with clear intentions, aims and articulated goals ahead of the making would maybe arguably never have had that same strength of "eroticism" as the wax work now has, simply because the word about it would already make the statement ahead of the actual experience of the erotic event. This might or might not be true also about a text written in the aftermath or during or before that aimless making, if it differs in the way a text adds to (or takes away from) the experience in the meeting with the actual visual and haptic work.

While we could enable us to discuss Marks' haptic theory in relation to Wenkai's wax work (and the aimless making that lead to it), it is perhaps more productive to just point at Marks' reference made to film makers and film critics like Eisenstein and Vertov etc. where she, like others, states that for them, film was not based on theory or theory implied, but rather that film itself (or film practice) is theory and alive – meaning theory derives from film practice. It is in here that we see Marks' haptic visibility (or eroticism) at work for our studio. But the phenomenon we recognize in object relations is in our discourse not bound to, and neither coming from, a correct reading/interpretation of Marks' haptic theory – although it is close to it.

4 "Object Relations" as used here refers loosely to general Object Relations Theory, but instead of ascribing the phenomena to psychoanalytic psychology and the discussion of childhood trauma and how this again informs an adult relationship to objects as placeholders or mnemonics that cause emphatic reactions or stress etc, we lend from the current Performance and Performance Studies field and try to see how an aimless making can make objects / objecthood or "something else" that one bodily (and/or emotionally) can connect to. Body & Space Morphologies teaching studios distribute papers and texts by Winnicot (playing and reality, 2005), Schechner (Performance studies: an introduction, 2013), Sedgwick (Touching feeling: affect, pedagogy, performativity, 2003), and various writings from Manning, Donaldson, Gibson, Ingold and Balsao etc.

5 The sensor team for that semester was Anders Abraham, architect PhD and professor at KADK; Theodor Barth, anthropologist PhD and experiential/experimental archaeologist and professor in theory at KHIO; Per Olaf Fjeld, architect and professor emeritus AHO; Rori Knudtson, independent architect, filmmaker and environmental activist.

6 “While the concept of object relations is one proper to psychoanalysis, this graduate seminar will take an expansive view of that formulation, inquiring into the role of “the object” in the scene of aesthetic encounter. We will discuss the performative ways in which art objects deploy psychic mechanisms such as projective identification, introjection, and abjection, and ask how art objects take up residence in the unconscious. Intensive consideration will be given to the uses of the art object, its capacity to act as something transitional, transformational, or simply transactional, as a placeholder for value. We will consider the materiality of objects and explore the crossed wires of aesthetic use value and exchange value. This seminar will examine the function of art institutions as containers for objects, and as potential holding and facilitating environments for performance encounters. Part-objects, fragments, lost objects, fetishes, objects fantasied, documented, desired and destroyed—all are within our purview. Each week’s reading material will pair a text from the psychoanalytic literature of object relations with a critical treatment of the art object in its various apparitions. This pairing of object relations theory with analysis of the relational functions of the art object draws out the complex relationships between the domains of aesthetics, the social, and unconscious mental life.” (Short version of the course syllabus for Object Relations: Performance, Psychoanalysis, and the Object – Prof. Julia Steinmetz, retrieved from <https://www.pratt.edu/academics/liberal-arts-and-sciences/performance-and-performance-studies/m.f.a.-in-performance-and-performance-studies/#accord814077730-0>)

