

Rethink and Contemplation

I was invited as a writer in residency in Can Serrat, with a preliminary plan for my new fiction. However, inspired by the environment and communication with fellow artists, I redesign my plan and change it into an interdisciplinary project of writing and painting.

Original Plan

By reviewing the history of Hong Kong for the past 40 years, my fiction targets on revealing the power struggle on 'who to write the history'. The rivalry for dominance is inherent in a two-fold narratives structure of the story.

Inspirations during Residency

- 1) The old walls in Can Serrat and El Bruc enlivened my perception of history. With layers and layers of marks over one another, dents and bricks exposed from underneath, old walls seemed to be a vivid display of history to me. This echoed with my ideas in the fiction.



Wall with cracks and different textures exposed from underneath, El Bruc



Wall with different textures, along the highway outside Can Serrat



Closeup of bricks with different colors and texture, Can Serrat

- 2) Conversations and discussions with fellow artists in residency were in-depth and inspirational. The idea of employing old walls as a metaphor for history emerged. Sound Collage was also examined as an additional medium of expression for the layering texture of history.
- 3) Research was carried out on sociology of history and the concept of 'Symbolic Universes' caught my attention. It denotes a set of beliefs "everybody knows" that aims at making the institutionalized structure plausible and acceptable for the individual. The concept provides academic foundation for the notion of several possible versions of history, some of which are past events actually happened while others are products of political statements and discourse.

New Design: An Interdisciplinary Project

Writing and painting, a combination of text and visual medium is the new way to approach the notion of 'histories'. It seeks to focus on the layering texture of history, enabling me to uncover different layers of emotions and unpack layers of facts.

The Fiction

The story kicks off with a tale of a street in perfect circle. With no beginning and end, no one could come out of the street.

- 1) Different layers of 'histories' are displayed through numerous narrative perspectives. In the story, several crucial phrases will be created which permit divergent interpretations under different contexts.
- 2) The original story plot depicting how a nobody technician rose to power is kept. Four narrative points of view are employed and go round and round to tell the story. This aims to build up an onion-peeling structure, imitating the process of finding for truth through layers of facts.
- 3) Paradox of history is addressed through the design of a 'mistaken story'. The circle street is the basis of the story, as a given historical situation. Yet, it's a fallacious tale.

The Paintings

Paintings of old walls will be incorporated into the project, some of which will be included in the book as illustrations. A separate exhibition is planned for the old walls paintings, with sound collage on crucial phrases excerpted from the fiction.

- 1) Marks and stains patterns on the walls will be arranged to look like a phrase or slogan, barely readable as if eroded in the long course of history. Several important political slogans will be chosen, like 'Hong Kong people ruling Hong Kong', 'High degree of autonomy', etc. Patterns on some paintings will be arranged to look like human faces or other objects.
- 2) The marks and stains patterns are actually composed of another phrase, in tiny characters and repeated many times. To show the paradox of history, these phrases are of no meaning at all, randomly chosen from newspaper.

The Sound Collage

Collaboration with sound artists. Assemblage of diverse sound elements is to highlight the layering trait of 'histories'. Several political slogans will be chosen to compose the collage.

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