

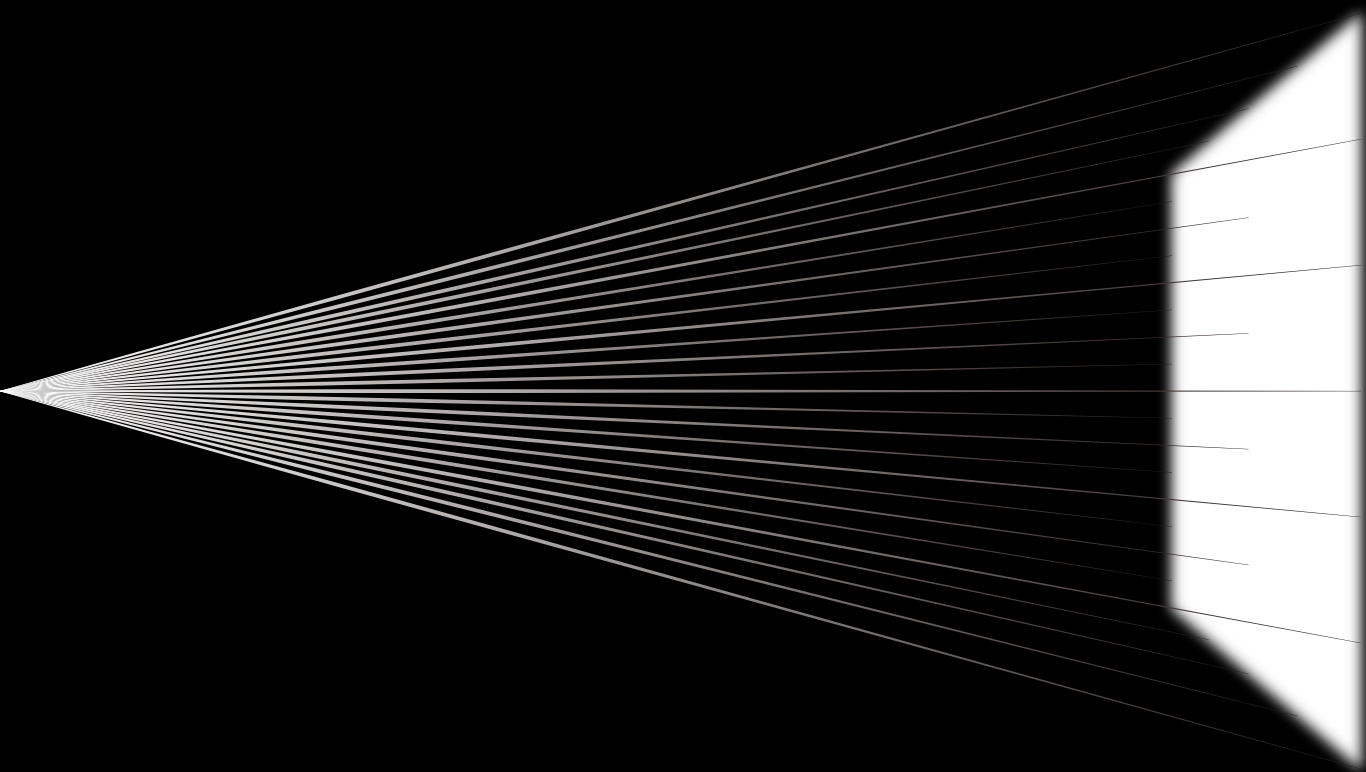
华 语 独 立 影 像 观 察

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华语独立影像资料馆
Chinese
Independent Film
Archive

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LAYOUT DESIGNER 版面设计

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PUBLISHED BY CHINESE INDEPENDENT FILM ARCHIVE, NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY, UK

华语独立影像资料馆出版，纽卡斯尔大学，英国



华语独立影像资料馆
Chinese
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Archive

Media Archaeology and Obsolescence

媒介考古学与淘汰性

Executive Editor 执行主编
Ann Lyuwenyu ZHANG 张吕文煜

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Locating Media Archaeology in Chinese Independent Cinema

Ann Lyuwenyu ZHANG 张吕文煜

What is Chinese independent media archaeology? Or rather, how can we critically engage with media archaeology as a method in the Chinese context, considering the history and practice of Chinese independent cinema? This is the central question guiding the 7th issue of the *Chinese Independent Cinema Observer*. Popularized by authors like Jussi Parikka, Thomas Elsaesser, and Wolfgang Ernst in the past decade or so, media archaeology has become a generative method for media scholars and artists alike to engage with past materials in order to better understand the present and the future (Parikka 2012, p. 2). Emphasizing the cultural and theoretical potential of technologies and archival findings, media archaeology is often characterized by the dynamics between the new and the old (Parikka 2012; Elsaesser 2016; Strauven 2021). This dialectical relationship is particularly resonant in the Chinese context, as it not only references the rapid cycles of new technologies since the introduction of the digital, but it also coincides with the early history of Chinese independent cinema during the economic reform and opening up in the late 1980s, a period when new ideas replace, renew, and negotiate with the old. However, the current discussion around media archaeology largely stems from a technologically-oriented and Euro-American perspective that sidesteps non-Western culture. To fill in this lacuna, this issue introduces scholarship and practices rooted in Chinese independent moving and still images to tease out the possibility of a localized point of view. The content of this issue builds on the history of Chinese independent cinema in the traditional sense but also expands its point of view to include multitudes of media materials ranging from imaging technologies like cameras and recording devices to found and remediated footage and photography, as well as archiving practices related to independent image-making culture.

Tracing the history of Chinese independent cinema, its early development is inevitably tied to the introduction of the handheld DV camera and other portable technologies in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Berry et al. 2010; Robinson 2013; Zhang & Zito 2015). Evidently, DV camera is not the only site of Chinese media archaeology found in independent filmmaking in the past thirty or so years. In fact, by examining various materials using media archaeology as a method, this issue reveals many hidden sites and intersections—for example, the repurposing of obsolete technologies seen in Cong Feng 丛峰's article —that gesture towards a renewed understanding of the history and culture of Chinese independent image-making. Up until today, Chinese independent cinema and image cultures have existed across multiple mediums, from celluloid to video cassettes like VHS and DV, and then to various computer-based digital formats prevalent today. Filmmakers, photographers, archivists, and curators have witnessed the transformation of media formats from analogue to digital, and experienced the democratization of filmmaking tools along with the proliferation of individually made images on smartphones and pocket-sized cameras. While there is a plethora of scholarship on the history and content of Chinese independent cinema, little concerns the production, preservation, and afterlives of these materials.¹ To fill in this gap, this issue foregrounds the history of the tools as an essential part of the history of the works.

It is important to note that, while it is tempting to write a genealogy of media materials in Chinese independ-

ent image culture, this issue goes beyond a simple historical overview. Historical accounts no doubt play important roles in the following articles, but the main goal of this issue is to—using Jussi Parikka’s words—offer ‘insight into *how to think media archaeologically* in contemporary culture’² (2012, p. 2). As such, many of the articles in this issue engage with past materials from a current standpoint to demonstrate the possibilities of reconsidering, destabilizing, and even disrupting the linear historical timeline, especially official narratives formulated after 1989, and direct our attention to examine the increasingly reduced public space for independent culture.³

This challenge to linear temporality is established in this issue through the key concept of obsolescence. It encompasses objects, technologies, and ideas that were left behind by the so-called ‘progress’, where the official image politics prioritizes a highly curated and technologically advanced Chinese visibility while suppressing the rest. As a result, the concept of obsolescence is particularly worth elucidating in the Chinese context because independent film practices often actively engage with obsolete materials like found footage and older technologies in stark comparison to the clean-cut high-definition mainstream visual culture.⁴ Characterized by opposing tendencies of ‘persistence’ and ‘suppression’, obsolescence foregrounds the material remains after the format is outdated and challenges the idea that the new often overpowers the old (Tischleder & Wasserman 2015, p. 2). Thus, obsolescence directs our attention to the clashing temporal energies in Chinese media cultures, especially how film technologies, materials, spaces, and ideas are reappearing and even resisting becoming obsolete.

What’s more, obsolescence is the key to understanding what Thomas Elsaesser calls ‘the initial impulse[s] of media archaeology’, which is to ‘make the past strange again rather than all too familiar’ (2016, p. 334). When a format is replaced by a newer update through the planned obsolescence of consumerism, the obsolete yet still present media/medium then become alternative routes to reconstruct memories fragmented and oppressed by the hegemony of the new and ‘good’ media. Engaging with obsolete materials stirs up dirt and resists the sedimentation of the past and asks: what is at stake when we salvage media materials that are no longer useful in the acceleration of Chinese modernity? In other words, this issue also proposes to view media archaeology as a form of social reimagination, and not just a way to elucidate the relationship between new and old media. Through this localized perspective, we can better understand *how* independent images⁵ are complicated by the cycles of obsolescence, and *how* media archaeology as a method can decentralize Chinese image politics.

While this introduction has been trying to map media archaeology onto the history and culture of Chinese independent cinema, it certainly is not trying to fit past objects into any concrete narratives or frames. What’s more, it also acknowledges the debates surrounding media archaeology’s tendency towards technological determinism, thus downplaying the social structure of the topics in question (Skågeby & Rahm 2018). To steer away from such a tendency, this issue joins the stratagem introduced in Jörgen Skågeby and Lina Rahm’s ‘What is Feminist Media Archaeology?’ to keep on asking ‘other’ questions while engaging with media archaeology: ‘Who is winning and who is losing? Who made the rules? And what story do we tell the losers to get them to want to continue playing?’ (Skågeby & Rahm 2018, p. 14). Many of these questions ring true for the discussion of media archaeology in Chinese independent image culture in this issue. We may also add questions like: Why do independent filmmakers intentionally use outdated technologies? Who benefits from constantly updating not-yet-useless media? At its core, Chinese independent media archaeology is a method-

ology that is at once technical and social.

Going back to the question posed at the beginning, framing this introduction with the question ‘What is Chinese independent media archaeology?’ follows the mode of engagement through which many authors write about media archaeology, emphasizing the multiplicity and openness of the field.⁶ Importantly, this open-ended question also signifies that this issue is in no way trying to present a comprehensive overview of the landscape of media archaeology and related practices in Chinese independent cinema; rather, we aim to pose questions and explore the diverse ways to apply media archaeological thoughts on materials, archives, technologies and concepts to offer new ways of seeing, and by extension, new ways of resisting capitalist progress. In other words, this issue of CICO tries to present and analyse sites of media archaeology found in the Chinese context, ranging from archiving family images and tracing diasporic video works to discussing 1980s television technologies, with perspectives from academics, archivists, artists, and filmmakers. What’s more, as a journal published by the Chinese Independent Film Archive (CIFA), the following articles join the diverse materials preserved at CIFA to become a site of media archaeology itself. By bringing together diverse narratives and examples, this issue strives to broaden the fields of both media archaeology and Chinese independent cinema to create meaningful intersections.

This issue of CICO is categorized into four sections.

Following the introduction, the first section, titled ‘Decentralizing Archives’, consists of academic and interview articles concerning the state of the moving image archives in contemporary China. As an important concept and often the basis for conducting media archaeology, the archive must be situated in the Chinese context, especially in relation to independent efforts of archiving. Writing as an archivist and an academic, Yizhou Wei 韦怡舟 gestures toward the possibility of a decentralized film preservation system using examples connecting Tainan National University of the Arts (TNNUA) and Xiamen University (XMU). From an artist’s perspective, Gu Xue’s 顾雪 interview focuses on her endeavour in founding the FamilyLens Film Archive 家庭影像馆, a community-oriented organization that aims to promote the preservation of family images in China and encourage everyone to document their family stories. Together, this section offers a glimpse of the moving image archiving practices in contemporary China to establish the base for the discussion of media archaeology in the following sections.

The second section, titled ‘Broadening Media Archaeology’, offers two academic case studies employing media archaeology as the method in Chinese and diasporic Chinese filmmaking. Lynette Qiuyang Shen 沈秋阳 explores the use of ‘bad images’ as generative aesthetic devices in the experimental filmmaking of two diasporic artists—Yin Chi-Jang 殷子静 and Ouyang Peixuan 欧阳霏萱—to disrupt the definition of authenticity and ‘Chineseness’ while expanding the parameter of Chinese independent cinema. Similarly talking about the aesthetic devices of moving images, Désirée Marianini’s article offers a theoretically-oriented textual analysis of Lei Lei’s 雷磊 *Breathless Animals* 动物方言 (2019) where the filmmaker reuses and reshapes found materials and archival recordings. Both articles engage with their subjects of analysis through perspectives informed by media archaeology and obsolescence, and demonstrate diverse ways to think media-archaeologically about Chinese independent image culture.

The third section, ‘Renew and Recycle: Voices from the Artists’, is formed under the generous personal ac-

counts of the artists themselves. Among the four articles, two are in the form of director's notes and two are group interviews. Director Cong Feng 丛峰 writes about his long-term filmmaking practice of 'techno-scavenging' using old technologies and found footage, and how this practice offers 'a freedom available only at the margins'. Animator and director Lei Lei zooms in on a much-neglected aspect of independent filmmaking—the voice-over 画外音—to think through the conceptual and physical implications of sound and images. The interview with the four members of the SWYC (Structure. Wave. Youth. Cinema) Working Group—Shi Jian 时间, Chen Jue 陈爵, Wang Zijun 王子军, and Kuang Yang 邝杨—goes back to the early days of Chinese independent cinema and provides never-before-seen accounts of the history of technologies in Chinese television stations and discusses the group's composition of the *Manifesto of the New Documentary Movement* 新纪录片运动宣言 in 1991. The last interview in this section with Li Wei 李维 and Liang Chen 梁晨 centres around the artist duo's ruin photography work, *Dust and Scratches* 蒙尘与划痕, and their multi-media approach to reactivating found family photos and videos in the half-demolished living spaces in Wuhan. Overall, this section hopes to provide a diverse range of examples from artists working in different media and different time periods.

Lastly, this issue of CICO is excited to introduce a new section, 'New Research on Chinese Independent Cinema', which showcases timely research and findings on Chinese independent cinema that do not necessarily align with the current theme of the issue. In this issue, the authors engage with different aspects of Chinese independent cinema through academic case studies of two prominent filmmakers. In Pang Hong's 庞鸿 article, she uses Wang Bing's 王兵 film *Three Sisters* (三姊妹 2013) as a point of entry into the painterliness of Wang's oeuvre with an art historical point of view. In the last article of the issue, Wendy Sun 孙晓雪 explores digital video activism and Queer Marxism in Cui Zi'en's *Withered in a Blooming Season* (少年花草黄 2005).

Following the various possibilities discussed in this introduction, I want to end with yet another question borrowed from Thomas Elsaesser's 'Media Archaeology as Symptom' and ask: 'What is cinema (good) for?' (Elsaesser 2016, p. 188). This question appears after Elsaesser delineates the possibility of media archaeology as 'crisis management' and highlights the current loss of faith in modern progress which led to 'the *crisis in history and causality*, which has amplified into a *crisis in memory and recall*, reflected in turn in the *crisis of narrative and storytelling* (Elsaesser 2016, p. 188).⁷ Granted these crises can be found in arguably every region across the world but it particularly rings true in the post-socialist and post-pandemic China, where histories, memories, and (grand-)narratives have long been intertwined and served pre-mediated. So what can we gain by asking 'What is cinema (good) for?' in relation to the sites of media archaeology presented in this issue? In the context of the increasingly diminishing space of the independent image culture in China, this issue on media archaeology and obsolescence is just an initial attempt to localize this methodology to gesture towards a socio-technologically informed, historically conscious, and reimaginable future of the study and practice of Chinese independent cinema.

Acknowledgement

This issue of the *Chinese Independent Cinema Observer* has benefited greatly from the kindness and the advice of the general editors, Sabrina Qiong Yu 余琼 and Luke Robinson, who have spared no effort in the editing process to ensure the quality of each article. I would also like to extend the gratitude towards this issue's layout designer, Wei Yizhou, who worked tirelessly and patiently during the formatting process.

Lastly, I wish to thank the scholars, artists, archivists, and filmmakers who contributed so generously for this issue. Your hard work is what made this issue special.

Notes

- 1 One example of scholarships on Chinese media archaeology can be found in the 5th issue of the Non-fiction Journal published in 2023 by Open City Documentary Festival and edited by Pan Lu and Bo Wang. See link: <https://opencitylondon.com/non-fiction/non-fiction-05-the-obsolete-and-the-resurrected-archaeological-cinema-in-asia/the-obsolete-and-the-resurrected-archaeological-cinema-in-asia/>.
- 2 Italicization from the original author.
- 3 The crackdown on Chinese independent film culture has been happening since mid-2010 with the forced disappearance of festivals and institutions like Beijing Independent Film Festival 北京独立影像展 and Li Xianting Film Fund 栗宪庭电影基金 and many more. The most recent example is perhaps the closure of Unicorn Image 独角放送室 in Guangzhou on March 2nd 2025. Unicorn Image is a local screening space for independent directors and an event space for film enthusiasts in Guangzhou. See their Instagram post about its closure: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DGck6Z2x7Jj/>
- 4 See Qiuyang Shen's article, 'Bad Images as Diasporic Homes: Exploring Media Obsolescence in Chinese Diasporic Filmmaking' in the second section of this issue; and Cong Feng's essay, 'Acceleration, Surplus, Technological Scavenging, and Moving Image Recycling' in the third section of this issue.
- 5 As briefly mentioned earlier, this issue tries to expand the parameter of Chinese independent cinema to encompass more than just the film text. Using examples from this issue, the definition of 'independent images' can be seen as the savaging of old photographs in residential ruins in Li Wei and Liang Chen's interview, or the filmic manipulation of family images in Lynette Qiuyang Shen's article, just to name a few.
- 6 See Jussi Parikka, *What is Media Archaeology?* (2012); and Jörgen Skågeby and Lina Rahm, 'What is Feminist Media Archaeology?' in communication +1 Volume 7 (2018). These two works also demonstrate the progression of the field from a general evaluation of digital media to focusing on important sub-fields like feminist media archaeology.
- 7 Italicization from the original author.

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媒介考古学在华语独立影像中的定位

张吕文煜

何谓华语独立媒介考古学？换言之，我们如何在华语语境中批判性地运用媒介考古学这一方法，并结合中国独立电影的历史与实践进行思考？这正是《华语独立影像观察》第七期探讨的核心问题。过去十余年，在尤西·帕里卡 (Jussi Parikka)、托马斯·埃尔塞瑟 (Thomas Elsaesser) 和沃尔夫冈·恩斯特 (Wolfgang Ernst) 等学者的推广下，媒介考古学已成为媒介研究者与艺术家回溯旧有材料、以更好理解当下与未来的富有成效的方法 (Parikka 2012, p. 2)。媒介考古学强调技术与档案发现的文化和理论潜能，通常以“新”与“旧”的动态互动为特征 (Parikka 2012; Elsaesser 2016; Strauven 2021)。在华语语境中，这一辩证关系尤其引人共鸣：它不仅呼应了数字化以来技术迭代的高速循环，也与上世纪八十年代末经济改革开放时期中国独立电影的诞生相互契合——彼时新观念不断取代、更新并与旧观念相博弈。然而，当前关于媒介考古学的讨论更多源自技术为主导的欧美视角，对非西方文化的关注尤为不足。为弥补此空缺，本期期刊从动态与静态的华语独立影像出发，引介相关学术研究与实践，探索一条本土化的观察路径。本期既立足于传统意义上的中国独立电影史，也将视野扩展至各类媒介材料：从摄录设备等成像技术，到拾得与再媒介化的影像、摄影作品，再到独立影像文化中的档案实践。

回溯中国独立电影史，其早期发展与上世纪 1980 年代末至 1990 年代初手持 DV 摄像机等便携技术的引入密不可分 (Berry et al. 2010; Robinson 2013; Zhang & Zito 2015)。显然，DV 摄像机并非过去三十余年中国独立影像创作中唯一可供媒介考古的场域。通过媒介考古学方法检视各种材料，本期期刊揭示了诸多隐藏的媒介场域与交叉点——例如丛峰的文谈中提到的对过时技术的再利用——这些案例指向了重新理解华语独立影像历史与文化的可能性。迄今为止，华语独立电影与影像文化跨越了赛璐璐胶片、VHS 及 DV 磁带，再到当下盛行的多种数字格式。电影人、摄影师、档案工作者与策展人共同见证了媒介由模拟向数字的转变，也经历了影像制作工具的民主化，以及智能手机和袖珍相机带来的个人影像的激增。尽管已有大量研究关注华语独立影像的历史与文本，但对其材料的生产、保存及影像“后生命”的讨论却付之阙如¹。为填补这一空白，本期特意将“工具史”凸显为作品历史不可或缺的重要组成部分。

虽然为华语独立影像文化编织一条传统意义上的媒介材料的谱系颇具吸引力，但本期并不满足于简单的历史回溯。历史叙述固然在各篇文章中占据重要位置，但本期的主要目标是——借用帕里卡的话——为“在当代文化中如何进行媒介考古式思考”提供洞见 (2012, p. 2)。因此，本期的多篇论文以当下视角介入既往材料，展示了重新思考、动摇乃至打断线性历史时间轴的可能性，尤其是 1989 年后建构的官方叙事；它们也引导我们关注独立文化日益缩减的公共空间²。

本期通过“淘汰” (obsolescence) 这一关键概念来挑战线性时间叙事。所谓淘汰，是指在“进步”逻辑中被遗弃的物件、技术与思想；而此“进步”基于官方影像政治优先展现高度策划的、技术先进的中国视觉性，而压制其余部分。因此，在华语语境中阐释“淘汰”尤显重要：独立影像实践经常主动使用拾得素材和老旧技术，与高清的主流视觉文化形成了鲜明的对比³。“淘汰”呈现出“存续”与“压抑”两种对立倾向，它凸显格式过时后的物质残余，并挑战“新事物”必然压倒“旧事物”的观念 (Tischleder & Wasserman 2015, p. 2)。由此，“淘汰”引导我们关注华语媒介文化中彼

此冲突的时间能量，尤其是影像技术、材料、空间与观念如何复现，并抵抗被淘汰。

此外，“淘汰”亦是理解埃尔塞瑟所称“媒介考古学最初冲动”的关键：即“让过去重新变得陌生，而非过于熟悉”（2016, p. 334）。当某一媒介格式因消费主义的计划性淘汰而被替换，仍然存在的过时媒介便成为重构被“新”、“优”媒介霸权所碎片化并压抑的记忆的替代路径。与过时材料的互动搅动尘埃，拒绝过去的沉积，并发问：当我们打捞在中国现代化加速度中被弃置的媒介材料时，究竟利害何在？换言之，本期亦提议将媒介考古学视为一种社会再想象，而不仅仅是阐释新旧媒介关系的方法。通过这种本土化视角，我们得以更好理解独立影像如何被淘汰循环复杂化⁴，以及媒介考古学作为一种方法论是如何将华语影像政治去中心化。

尽管本引言试图将媒介考古学映射到华语独立影像的历史与文化之中，它并不意欲将过去对象纳入任何固定的叙事或框架。同时，本文也意识到媒介考古学易于倾向技术决定论、从而弱化社会结构问题（Skågeby & Rahm 2018）。为避免此倾向，本期呼应斯科格比（Skågeby）与拉姆（Rahm）在《什么是女性主义媒介考古学？》中提出的策略：在进行媒介考古时持续追问那些“他者”问题——“谁在赢，谁在输？谁制定了规则？我们告诉失败者什么故事，让他们愿意继续参与？”（Skågeby & Rahm 2018, p. 14）。这些问题同样适用于本期华语独立影像文化中的媒介考古讨论。我们还应追问：为何独立影像创作者要有意使用过时技术？持续升级尚未报废的媒介格式究竟让谁受益？从根本上说，华语独立影像语境中的媒介考古学是一种兼具技术与社会维度的方法论。

回到开篇提出的问题，以“什么是华语独立媒介考古学？”来架构本序言的论述，正沿袭了众多学者撰写媒介考古学时的探讨方式，并突出该领域的多元性与开放性⁵。更重要的是，这一开放式提问标示着：本期并无意对华语独立影像中的媒介考古及相关实践勾勒一幅穷尽全貌的地图。相反，我们旨在提出问题，并探索将媒介考古思维应用于材料、档案、技术与观念的多样路径，开辟新的观看方式，进而孕育抵抗资本主义进步叙事的新方法。换言之，本期《华语独立影像观察》力图呈现并分析华语语境中的媒介考古现场——从家庭影像的档案化、追踪华语离散影像作品、到探讨 20 世纪 80 年代的电视技术——汇聚学者、档案员、艺术家与电影人的多重视角。作为华语独立影像资料馆（CIFA）主办的刊物，以下文章亦与 CIFA 丰富的馆藏一起，成为一处媒介考古现场。通过汇聚多元叙事与案例，本期旨在拓宽媒介考古学与华语独立影像两大领域，促成二者之间更具意义的交叉与对话。

本期《华语独立影像观察》（CICO）共分为四个板块。

引言之后的第一版块题为“档案去中心化”，收录了两篇学术文章与访谈，聚焦当代华语影像档案的现状。作为媒介考古学的重要概念及方法论基础，“档案”必须在华语语境中被重新定位，尤其要联系到民间与独立的建档实践。身兼档案员与学者身份的韦怡舟以台南艺术大学（TNNUA）与厦门大学（XMU）的案例为例，提出建立去中心化电影保存体系的可能路径。艺术家顾雪则在访谈中详述她创立“家庭影像馆 FamilyLens”的初衷——这一社区导向型机构旨在推动家庭影像的保存，并鼓励大众记录自己的家族故事。两篇文本共同呈现了当代华语影像档案实践的一隅，为后续的媒介考古学讨论奠定基础。

第二版块“拓展媒介考古学”包含两篇以媒介考古学为方法的案例研究，关注中国及离散华人的影像创作。沈秋阳（Lynette Qiuyang Shen）探讨了两位离散艺术家殷子静与欧阳霏萱在其实验电影中将“坏影像”（bad images）作为生成性的美学手段，以此冲击“真实性”与“中国性”的界定，

并拓宽华语独立电影的范畴。伊莲（Désirée Marianini）的文章则通过理论取向的文本细读，分析雷磊的影片《动物方言》（2019）如何再利用与重塑拾得素材及档案录音，建构其独特的影像诗学。两篇论文在媒介考古学与“淘汰”理论的视角下展开，展示了对华语独立影像文化进行媒介考古式思考的多样路径。

第三个板块“更新与再循环：艺术家之声”由艺术家们的亲身叙述构成，其中两篇为导演手记，两篇为群体访谈。导演丛峰回顾自己以老旧技术与拾得素材进行“技术拾荒”的长期创作实践，并阐释这种方法带来的“只有边缘性的存在才可能有的自由”。动画导演雷磊聚焦独立影像创作中常被忽视的“画外音”，思考声音与影像在概念和物质层面的互动关系。SWYC（结构·浪潮·青年·电影）工作小组成员时间、陈爵、王子军与邝杨的访谈带我们回到中国独立电影初期，首次详述中国电视台技术史的亲历经验，并讨论他们于1991年撰写《新纪录片运动宣言》的过程。李维与梁晨的访谈则围绕二人的废墟摄影项目《蒙尘与划痕》展开，探讨他们如何在武汉的半拆迁居住空间中以多媒介的形式重新激活拾得的家庭照片与影像。本版块展示了跨媒介、跨时代的多元艺术实践。

最后，本期还特别设置了“华语独立影像新研究”这一版块，展示当期主题之外的最新研究成果。本期的两篇学术个案研究切入华语独立电影的不同面向：庞鸿以王兵的《三姊妹》（2013）为切入口，从艺术史视角探讨其作品的绘画性；孙晓雪则在“影像行动”与酷儿马克思主义框架下，分析崔子恩影片《少年花草黄》（2005）的数字视频行动主义实践。

在本引言中探讨了种种可能性之后，我想借用托马斯·埃尔塞瑟在《媒介考古学作为症候》中提出的另一个问题作为结语：“电影（究竟）有何用？”（Elsaesser 2016, p. 188）。埃尔塞瑟在阐述媒介考古学可能充当“危机管理”工具后提出此问，并指出人们对现代进步的信仰正逐渐丧失，由此引发了“历史与因果的危机，这又被放大为记忆与回忆的危机，进而反映为叙事与讲述的危机”（Elsaesser 2016, p. 188）。这些危机几乎在世界各地均可见，但在后社会主义、后疫情的中国尤为深刻——历史、记忆与宏大叙事早已纠缠并被预设。将“电影（究竟）有何用？”置于本期呈现的媒介考古现场，我们能获得何种启示？在中国独立影像文化生存空间日益缩减的背景下，本期对媒介考古学与“淘汰”问题的探讨，仅是将这一方法本土化的初步尝试，旨在指向一个兼具社会技术意识、历史自觉与再想象潜能的华语独立影像研究与实践未来。

致谢

本期《华语独立影像观察》的顺利出版，得益于主编余琼（Sabrina Qiong Yu）与卢克·罗宾逊（Luke Robinson）的悉心指导与慷慨帮助；他们在编辑过程中不遗余力，确保了每篇文章的学术品质。我还要向本期的排版设计师韦怡舟表达感谢，他在整个排版过程中始终不辞辛劳、耐心工作。最后，我衷心感谢为本期贡献智慧与创意的学者、艺术家、档案工作者和电影人——正是你们的辛勤付出，成就了这一别具意义的专题。

注释

1 关于中国媒介考古学的研究，可参见开放城市纪录片节（Open City Documentary Festival）于2023年出版、潘律与王博主编的《Non-fiction》期刊第五期。链接：<https://opencitylondon.com/non-fiction/non-fiction-05-the-obsolete-and-the-resurrected-archaeological-cinema-in-asia/the-obsolete-and-the-resurrected-archaeological-cinema-in-asia/>

2 自2010年中期起，中国独立影像文化持续遭遇打压，北京独立影像展、栗宪庭电影基金等影展与机构相继被迫消失。最近的例子或为2025年3月2日广州“独角放送室 Unicorn Image”的关闭——该空间一

直是本地独立导演放映及影迷活动的重要场所。关闭声明见 Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DGck6Z2x7Tj/>

3 相关讨论可参阅本期第二板块沈秋阳的文章《坏影像作为离散家园：华语离散影像中的媒介淘汰探究》，以及第三板块丛峰的论文《加速，过剩，技术拾荒与影像回收》。

4 如前文所述，本期尝试将“华语独立电影”的界定扩展到影片文本之外。例如，在李维与梁晨的访谈中，“独立影像”体现在对居住废墟中旧照片的打捞；在沈秋阳的文章里，则呈现为对家庭影像的电影式操演，等等。

5 可参见 Jussi Parikka 的《What is Media Archaeology?》(2012)，以及 Jörgen Skågeby 与 Lina Rahm 发表在《communication +1》第 7 卷 (2018) 的《What is Feminist Media Archaeology?》。这两部著作亦展示了该领域从总体评估数字媒介演进到聚焦诸如女性主义媒介考古等重要子领域的发展路径。

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DECENTRALIZING ARCHIVES 去中心化的档案

The Educational Film Archive in the Sinophone World: Conceptual Migration and the Exploration of a Decentralized Film Preservation Approach

教育型电影档案馆在华语地区的理念迁移与去中心化电影保存路径的探索

Author: WEI Yizhou 韦怡舟

‘Home Movies and Archives Offer Diverse Narrative Samples for Understanding Our Era’ — A Conversation with Director Gu Xue on the FamilyLens Film Archive

“家庭影像和档案给理解这个时代提供了丰富多元的故事样本”：与顾雪导演谈家庭影像馆

Interviewer: Ann Lyuwenyu ZHANG 张吕文煜

The Educational Film Archive in the Sinophone World: Conceptual Migration and the Exploration of a Decentralized Film Preservation

WEI Yizhou 韦怡舟

Abstract

This article investigates the concept of the educational film archive by examining its migration from Tainan National University of the Arts 国立台南艺术大学 (TNNUA) to Xiamen University 厦门大学 (XMU), using this case as a lens to explore the prospects for developing a decentralized model of film preservation in the Sinophone world. The article begins by tracing the historical development of film preservation institutions on a global scale and then analyzes the centralized preservation system in mainland China, highlighting how its state-led structure and politicized institutional framework have constrained both public access and the diversification of preservation practices. On this basis, the article turns to TNNUA, where an educational film archive took shape within the context of democratization and social movements in the late 1980s. Through this process, three interrelated paradigms—technical, cultural, and pedagogical—were formed, illustrating a dual trajectory combining social intervention via documentary filmmaking and historical reconstruction through film preservation. Furthermore, the article examines the conceptual migration of this model to the Film Archive Studies Center 音像文献中心 at XMU, revealing a shift in focus from a culturally driven paradigm to a more technocentric orientation. Additionally, the article explores how informal networks of private collectors offer a subtle form of resistance to the state's archival monopoly. Overall, the article contends that while centralized control continues to dominate film preservation in mainland China, preservation efforts led by educational institutions may open up alternative pathways, anchored in cultural empowerment and social participation, to envision a more pluralistic and decentralized archival future in the Sinophone context.

Keywords: Decentralized Film Preservation; Educational Film Archive; Cultural Paradigm and Technical Practice

Introduction

In the field of film preservation, most institutions operate under a centralized model, where decisions regarding the collection, preservation, and restoration of films are primarily overseen by state cultural authorities. This tendency is closely linked to the early development of film preservation initiatives and shaped by each country's specific political, economic, and cultural conditions. Within the Sinophone world, such centralization is particularly evident. Building on the concept of a decentralized preservation model proposed by Oxtoby (2017), this article uses the migration of the educational film archive concept from Tainan National University of the Arts to Xiamen University as a case study to examine how decentralized film preservation is currently being explored and challenged in mainland China.

The article begins by outlining the historical trajectory of film preservation institutions globally, offering essential context for a topic that remains relatively unfamiliar to many readers. It then analyzes the institutional evolution of film preservation in mainland China and unpacks the underlying logic of its centralized system, providing a comparative backdrop for discussing decentralized alternatives. Finally, the

article focuses on the migration of the educational film archive model from TNNUA to XMU, examining the sociopolitical context that enabled its formation in Taiwan, the development of its three core paradigms—technical, cultural, and pedagogical—and the reasons why this model could not fully take root at XMU’s Film Archive Studies Center. The article also provides a preliminary assessment of emerging grassroots film preservation efforts in mainland China that operate outside the formal state apparatus.

The article opens with an overview of the global development of film preservation institutions, establishing the necessary foundation for a subject that may be relatively unfamiliar to readers. It then critically examines the institutional dynamics underpinning film preservation in mainland China, shedding light on the structural logic of its centralized system and setting the stage for a discussion of decentralized preservation models. The focus then shifts to the case of the educational film archive, tracing its conceptual migration from TNNUA to XMU. This section examines the sociopolitical factors that shaped the emergence of the educational film archive in Taiwan, explains the three foundational paradigms of this model (technical, cultural, and pedagogical), and analyzes the reasons that hindered its full realization at XMU’s Film Archive Studies Center. In addition, the article offers an initial exploration of the nascent, grassroots film preservation efforts taking shape in mainland China, which operate independently of the state’s formal archival system.

The Historical Trajectory of Film Preservation Institutions



Figure 1. Paper Print
Source: <https://blogs.loc.gov/now-see-hear/2014/05/where-it-all-began-the-paper-print-collection/>

In its earliest form, film was regarded as a novelty—a spectacle often found at fairs and exhibitions, occupying a cultural space not unlike that of stage magic (Radner, 2010). In 1895, the French inventor Lumière acquired and improved upon a patent originally held by Léon Bouly for the Cinématographe, creating a device capable of producing clearer moving images than Thomas Edison’s earlier Kinetoscope (Usai, 2000, p.9). This innovation effectively marked the official ‘invention’ of cinema. However, for a considerable period afterward, film was largely dismissed by governments, educational institutions, and commercial interests. As Horak (2007, p.106) notes, ‘mainstream cultural institutions and governments considered the cinema a crass commercial enterprise, a form of communication not worthy of serious intellectual consideration’. Because film had what Roland Barthes has called ‘bad object’ status, it was mistreated by governments, institutions of education, and commercial interests alike. It took many years for film to evolve from this marginal, fairground attraction into a medium recognized for its aesthetic and artistic legitimacy—worthy of systematic preservation.

In 1894, William Dickson, who had assisted Thomas Edison in designing the Kinetoscope—an early motion picture camera—was among the first to consider the possibility of preserving films for posterity. He believed that, in contrast to the frequent exaggerations and distortions found in written records, film offered vivid and authentic representations of reality. Acting on this belief, he deposited a number of early Edison films in the Library of Congress. However, this act of preservation was driven less by cultural foresight than by strategic concerns: registering these films with the Library of Congress allowed Edison to secure copyright protection, thereby gaining a competitive edge in the commercial market. Shortly thereafter, Edison began reproducing 35mm films onto paper, preserving them in the form of so-called ‘paper prints’.

In 1899, the Polish photographer Boleslaw Matuszewski was among the first to recognize the historical significance of motion pictures and to advocate for their systematic preservation. He argued that film, like traditional archival materials, possessed the authority to record history and therefore deserved priority in preservation efforts. To institutionalize this vision, he proposed the creation of a Cinematographic Museum or Depository in Paris, ideally attached to an existing institution such as the Bibliothèque nationale de France (Binder, 2015, p.9; Chapman, 2013, pp.73–75; Houston, 1994, p.11). Matuszewski had previously worked for the Lumière company and, in 1897, was commissioned by Tsar Nicholas II to film the official visit of French President Félix Faure to Saint Petersburg. After the visit, Faure was accused of a breach of diplomatic protocol for allegedly failing to remove his hat during a military inspection. Matuszewski's footage, however, refuted the allegation, demonstrating the capacity of film to serve as compelling visual evidence (Houston, 1994, p.12). This episode likely shaped his awareness of film's documentary potential. Anticipating its broader role, Matuszewski predicted that 'cinematographic photographers' curiosity [would move] from merely entertaining or whimsical scenes to actions and spectacles of a documentary interest, and from humorous slices of life to slices of public and national life"—a shift that would ultimately make film an indispensable resource for historical inquiry (Matuszewski, 1898/2014, p.520).

Matuszewski's prediction about the expanding thematic scope of film was soon borne out. In 1916, British photographers Geoffrey Malins and John McDowell produced the United Kingdom's first war documentary, *The Battle of the Somme*, which captured scenes from the British Army's campaign along the Somme River during World War I. Distinct from conventional print journalism, the film's immediacy and realism had a powerful public impact, drawing unprecedented attention and selling over 20 million tickets. Its reception not only demonstrated the persuasive force of moving images but also rekindled calls for a dedicated institution tasked with the preservation of films (Binder, 2015, pp.12–14; Houston, 1994, p.12). The film was eventually archived at the Imperial War Museum, affirming its status as both historical record and cultural artifact.

The necessity of establishing film preservation institutions stemmed not only from the growing recognition of its cultural and historical value, but also from the material vulnerabilities inherent to the medium itself. Prior to the 1950s, nitrate film stock—widely used at the time—was chemically unstable and highly flammable under normal conditions, posing serious challenges for long-term preservation. These practical difficulties underscored the need for an institution capable of coordinating resources and expertise to effectively carry out the mission of safeguarding film heritage. As Matuszewski had once envisioned, such an institution came to be known as the film archive. The world's first widely recognized film archive was founded in 1933 in Stockholm by Bengt Idestam Almqvist (Kula, 2002). Throughout the 1930s, a wave of archival initiatives emerged across Europe and the United States. Among the most prominent were the Reichsfilmarchiv (1935, Berlin), the Film Library at the Museum of Modern Art (1935, New York), the National Film Library (1935, London), and the Cinémathèque Française (1936, Paris) (Leab, 2000).

It is worth noting that the earliest film archives primarily focused on the collection and curation of films. At the time, there was a shared understanding among these institutions of the importance of building communication channels and systems of film exchange. This understanding facilitated the transnational circulation of prints between Europe and the United States, allowing each region to respond more effectively to the viewing demands of its own audiences. A notable example is the 1937 exchange of films between the Cinémathèque Française and the Film Library at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), coordinated by Henri

Langlois and Iris Barry (Dupin, 2013). This successful collaboration laid the groundwork for the realization of another vision first proposed by Matuszewski: the creation of a global network of film archives. In 1938, the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) was founded, an organization that today encompasses 150 member archives from 77 countries (Leab, 2000; Nagorska, 2012).

The Establishment and Logic of Film Preservation in Mainland China

In mainland China, institutionalized film preservation did not formally begin until the establishment of the China Film Archive 中国电影资料馆 in 1958. However, the very concept of film preservation had already entered the country around the same time that preservation institutions were being founded in Europe and the United States.

During the nitrate film era, fires caused by improper storage were frequently reported in newspapers. *Electroacoustic Weekly*¹ 电声周刊, founded in 1932, recorded multiple incidents of film-related fires, with headlines such as: ‘Negligence in educational film projection at Wuwei Minjiao Hall 无为民教馆’ and ‘Unattended fire breaks out—Tianyi Port Factory 天一港厂 mishandles film again, destroying two years of Shao Zuiweng’s 邵醉翁 work’. The journal also introduced advancements in film preservation abroad, including technical innovations such as a report from 1939 on a new aluminum-based opaque film developed by a U.S. film stock company, which was ‘significantly less flammable than conventional nitrate film’ (Anonymous, 1939). In addition, it addressed long-term preservation challenges, noting, for instance, that ‘preserving film is not as simple as many imagine... film has a unique tendency to shrink—every foot of film may contract by one-twelfth of an inch’. It also featured international examples such as the film vault at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, which aimed to ensure that ‘a hundred years from now, people will still be able to view today’s films’ (Anonymous, 1938).

Regrettably, despite the fact that the importance of film preservation had already been acknowledged by some in the Chinese film community as early as the 1930s, no substantial preservation efforts were undertaken on the mainland. Owing to years of war and political turmoil, the only national-level film institution at the time—the National Film Institute 国立电影馆²—failed to carry out any work related to the preservation of cinema. Unlike the cultural artifacts of the Palace Museum 故宫 that were evacuated to the south for safekeeping, films were not afforded the same institutional protection. According to historical records, the establishment of FIAF in 1938, along with the actions of its member institutions, helped safeguard over 5,000 film materials from destruction during World War II (Chen & Jiang, 1993, p. 5). In contrast, film heritage in the Sinophone world suffered from both underdeveloped preservation practices and the prolonged devastation of war, resulting in widespread loss. On March 1, 1982, *China Times* 中国时报 published an article titled ‘Who Will Lament When the Chronicles Turn to Ashes?’ lamenting the disappearance of early Chinese films (Anonymous, 1992). It was, in many ways, a shared tragedy for both sides of the Taiwan Strait. Specifically, prior to 1949, over 1,500 films were produced on the Chinese mainland. Yet by 1992—despite nearly three decades of effort by the China Film Archive since its founding in 1958—only about 15% of those films had survived (Chen Jingliang & Jiang Hongtao, 1993, p. 5).

As previously discussed, the establishment of film archives in Europe and North America during the 1930s was primarily driven by the recognition of film’s historical documentary value and the practical need for international film exchange. By contrast, the growing attention to film preservation in the Sinophone

world was fundamentally rooted in the ruling authorities' perception of film as a crucial ideological tool. More specifically, it was through the medium's strategic deployment for both political control and public enlightenment that film preservation gradually became institutionalized as an integral component of state-managed film administration.

Chiang Kai-shek (1953/1984, p. 249) once asserted that 'the development of audiovisual education must be undertaken by the state, with particular attention paid to enriching the content and improving the quality of films and radio programs, in order to maintain and enhance the psychological well-being of the people'. Years earlier, in 1936, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had already established the Yan'an Film Troupe 延安电影团 under the General Political Department of the Eighth Route Army. In April 1949, the Central Film Administration 中央电影管理局 was formally established, operating under the leadership of the CCP's Central Propaganda Department, with the mandate to oversee national film policy and operations. That August, as the Party reflected on its revolutionary achievements,³ it concluded that 'film, with its broad mass appeal and wide-ranging propagandistic effectiveness, must be strengthened as a medium in order to more effectively support our Party's promotion of the New Democratic Revolution and national reconstruction, both domestically and internationally' (Cheng, 1963, pp. 341, 401–402). Indeed, these perspectives were not unique to China but reflected a broader alignment with Soviet cultural policy, which emphasized film's potential as an ideological and educational instrument. In addition to Lenin's well-known declaration that 'of all the arts, for us the film is the most important,' his emphasis on film can be attributed to two key rationales. First, the content of film served clear instrumental purposes: scientific and educational films could disseminate advanced agricultural and industrial knowledge rapidly to underdeveloped regions, aiding economic development. Newsreels, on the other hand, could embed ideological messaging into visual narratives, delivering highly politicized messages in the form of dramatized political discourse. Second, as a relatively novel medium, film had not yet reached saturation in many areas. Lenin noted that 'in the countryside and in the East, where film remain a novelty, our propaganda efforts will be especially successful' (Central Film Bureau Art Committee, 1939/1951, pp. 36, 47–51).

In the domain of film preservation, the CCP explicitly modeled its approach on the Soviet system, particularly emphasizing state-led control⁴ over archival materials. In September 1955, Luo Guangda 罗光达, then General Manager of the China Film Distribution Corporation 中国电影发行公司, was appointed to attend the 11th annual congress of FIAF in Poland as an observer. The following February, under the leadership of Wang Hui, the Preparatory Office for the China Film Archive was established. It drafted a foundational policy and operational plan that declared: 'Films and other film-related materials of historical, artistic, and cultural significance should be centrally preserved by the China Film Archive'. From that point onward, the archive began actively collecting pre-1949 films and related materials, marking the inception of institutionalized film preservation in mainland China (Shao, 1999, p. 3; Zhang, 2011, p. 15; Chen & Jiang, 1993, pp. 3–4). On September 30, 1958, the China Film Archive⁵ was formally established in Beijing.

Under a state-led framework, the collection of film archives in China was enforced through compulsory measures⁶—an approach that, from an objective standpoint, has contributed to the construction of a relatively comprehensive national film archive. As Zhang Jin (2020, p. 137), a scholar at the China Film Archive, notes, 'The state-centered system of film collection has ensured the complete and systematic preservation of domestically produced films—something that many Western film archives can only dream of attaining.'

However, from a different perspective, the centralized governance and strict control over film gave rise to consequences that, in many respects, were entirely foreseeable. A key manifestation of this system was the emergence of a highly class-based and exceptional mode of film circulation, known as ‘Internal Reference Films’ 内参片, which primarily featured imported titles and were screened exclusively for privileged sectors of society. These screenings were confined to select audiences within government offices, military compounds, and cultural or educational institutions (Zhang, 2018, p. 1). Moreover, in this authoritarian context, the management of film archives was accompanied by selective deletion practices,⁷ which were integral to the systematized curation process. According to scholar Chen Shan, after the founding of the PRC, there were at least two state-organized campaigns aimed at destroying pre-1949 films, resulting in the permanent loss of many works that did not conform to leftist ideologies (Zhang, 2005, pp. 155-156).

To this day, film archiving in China remains a highly politicized endeavor. It is formally embedded within the national archival system, with the state emphasizing that ‘adherence to political principles is a fundamental requirement; a clear political stance must be maintained, always aligning with the will of the Party and the state, playing an active role in ideological guidance and education, and ensuring the political security of film archive utilization’ (Zhao, 2005, p. 41). Consequently, the China Film Archive has long been regarded as one of the least accessible film institutions in the country (Berry, 2021, p. 97). In September 2018, the archive was administratively reassigned from the National Radio and Television Administration 国家广播电影电视总局 to the Publicity Department of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party 中共中央宣传部, further underscoring its central role within the state’s ideological apparatus.

The Development of the Educational Film Archive in Taiwan and the Migration of Its Conceptual Framework

Oxtoby (2017) characterizes the American approach to film preservation as a ‘decentralized model’. Instead of establishing a single centralized national film archive, the United States developed a diverse preservation ecosystem comprising governmental agencies, museums, universities, archives, libraries, associations, Hollywood studios, independent filmmakers, film distributors, and copyright holders. The effective functioning of this decentralized system has been supported by institutional coordination through the National Film Preservation Board and relevant legislation, most notably the National Film Preservation Act. In contrast, such decentralized preservation models have been largely absent from the Sinophone world. It was not until recent decades that a more mature model of preservation education began to take shape at Tainan National University of the Arts (TNNUA). In my master’s thesis, *A Study on the Concept and Practice of the Educational Film Archive* (Wei, 2021), I proposed the following definition of the TNNUA model:

An educational film archive is defined as an institution that focuses on the collection and preservation of non-mainstream materials. It is grounded in both physical and digital restoration practices and treats preservation actions as a pedagogical scaffold. Educational activities are designed around specific collections, enabling students to acquire restoration skills through hands-on engagement. At the same time, the archive emphasizes the cultural and emancipatory potential of audiovisual materials, ultimately fostering a form of social care underpinned by leftist ideological commitments.

Sociopolitical Context of the Educational Film Archive in Taiwan

The establishment of the educational film archive in Taiwan was deeply embedded in a distinct historical moment and marked by an explicit ambition to engage with social transformation. On July 15, 1987, President Chiang Ching-kuo officially lifted the *Taiwan Provincial Martial Law* 台湾省戒严令, which had restricted political freedoms for 38 years. This event marked the beginning of Taiwan's gradual democratization. In the early post-martial law period, amid rapid societal change, the island witnessed a surge in documentary filmmaking. As Kuei-fen Chiu (2003, pp. 153–154) has observed, this proliferation stemmed from two main factors: first, the advent of lightweight video equipment significantly lowered the barriers to production; and second, documentary's educational function was embraced as a means to cultivate civic literacy in a democratic society. As a result, documentaries produced during this period emphasized themes of resistance and social realism (Chen, 2014). This broader wave of democratic transition exerted a profound influence on TNNUA's documentary education and its development of the educational film archive. From its founding in 1996, TNNUA's vision for film education was centered on documentary practice, with a pedagogical commitment to 'engaging with social change through documentation'.⁸

One of the most notable examples of documentary production from this period is the corpus of political news footage produced by the Green Team 绿色小组, a collective spearheaded by Wang Chih-chang 王智章 and others. Their first recorded activity was the October 1986 election for Members of the Legislative Yuan 立法委员. Using lightweight ENG (Electronic News Gathering) cameras, they documented the electoral process in an effort to challenge the state-controlled media apparatus and resist the suppression of opposition parties by official broadcasters (Chen, 2020, p. 105). In September 1987, the Green Team compiled a selection of edited footage covering oppositional movements, human rights campaigns, Indigenous activism, student protests, and environmental struggles. This compilation was distributed through the *Democratic Progressive Weekly* 民进周刊 under the title *Taiwan Grew Up This Way* 台湾就是这样长大的 (Jiing, 2013, p. 24). It is thus clear that, during Taiwan's democratic transition, the Green Team—positioned in direct opposition to the establishment and operating outside the mainstream 'Three Main Networks' 老三台⁹—emerged as a powerful alternative media force. By the end of 1990, however, the group had disbanded due to sluggish video sales and distribution challenges (Lin, 2020, p. 72). This dissolution raised a pressing question: how could the roughly 4,000 hours of footage documenting Taiwan's social transformation be preserved to ensure its availability as a historical record for future generations?

Public discussion about preserving the Green Team's footage first appeared in *United Daily News* 联合报. A 1994 opinion piece in its 'Public Forum' section, titled 'The Film Archive's Collection Must Be Strengthened: Equal Attention Should Be Given to Endangered Materials and Contemporary Works', asserted that 'alternative media productions such as those by the "Green Team" and "Third Vision" are also valuable historical materials and should be properly collected' (Chi, 1994). Although there had initially been hope that the Taiwan Film Archive 国影中心—then the National Film Archive of Taiwan 国家电影资料馆—would preserve these materials, its focus on feature films and chronic budgetary constraints meant that preserving such alternative footage remained beyond its capacity.¹⁰ Between 1993 and 1998, the Green Team's videotapes circulated through various hands. In 1996, Yng-ruey Jiing 井迎瑞, founding dean of the College of Sound and Image Arts at TNNUA, proposed that TNNUA take responsibility for preserving the tapes. Due to Jiing's ideological alignment¹¹ and his professional background as the director of the Taiwan Film Archive from 1989 to 1996, he gained the trust of the Green Team's members. In 1998, the collection was formally

transferred to TNNUA's archive. In 2006, with the support of Deputy Minister of Education Sun-lu Fan 范巽绿, TNNUA secured funding for digitizing the footage (Lin, 2016, p. 271). The project, titled *TNNUA's Restoration and Open Access Program for Historical Footage from 1986–1997*, eventually led to the online release of the Green Team's social movement documentaries in 2013. Reflecting on the project, Professor Jiing noted in an interview that the Green Team represented not only a record of Taiwan's social movements during the transitional era but also a collective—a modest spirit that symbolized the youthful pursuit of change in Taiwan (Lin, 2020, p. 72). After the lifting of martial law, the project of 'rewriting history' became a major endeavor within Taiwanese society and culture (Chiu Kuei-fen, 2003, p. 151). Unlike pre-democratization documentaries, which largely echoed the state's ideological stance, post-democratization documentary filmmaking increasingly focused on subaltern voices and everyday life, establishing a new focal point for Taiwan's documentary movement (Xiao, 2014, pp. 28–29).



Figure 2. Professor Jiing receiving the Audiovisual Heritage Preservation Contribution Award from the Taiwan Film and Audiovisual Institute in 2021.

Proactively seeking to collect newsreel footage—epitomized by the Green Team's social movement documentaries—and constructing a history of newsreel in Taiwan was the path chosen by TNNUA's educational film archive during the island's period of social transformation. This approach diverged from the national film archive's emphasis on preserving narrative films and reflected TNNUA's commitment to the broader project of "rewriting history". Subsequent expansions of the archive's collection, including Taiwan Television's newsreels, the *Southward Expansion into Taiwan* 南进台湾 series, and more recent explorations of videotape-based home movies, have all extended this trajectory. These efforts share a common feature: distancing themselves from the National Film Archive's model of systematic collection and preservation of feature films, and instead focusing on documentaries and newsreels that have been overlooked by dominant narratives but possess profound historical significance. In this process, a preliminary operational definition of a decentralized approach to film preservation was established, particularly in terms of its value orientation.



Figure 3. Newsreels from the Green Team archived at Tainan National University of the Arts
Source: <https://greenteam.tnnua.edu.tw/>

Technical, Cultural, and Pedagogical Paradigms in TNNUA's Educational Film Archive

As of 2021, the educational film archive 教育型电影档案馆 at TNNUA has worked with film materials from three principal sources. The first consists of large-scale collections proactively acquired by the archive, including TTV News Documentaries, CMPC News Features, Green Team Social Movement Documentaries, Japanese Colonial Propaganda Films, as well as individual works such as *Liu Pi-Chia* 刘必稼 (dir. Yao-Chi Chen 陈耀圻, 1967), *Sayon's Bell* 沙鸯之钟 (dir. Hiroshi Shimizu 清水宏, 1943), and Taiwan's first Hoklo-language feature film, *Xue Pinggui and Wang Baochuan* 薛平贵与王宝钏 (dir. Ji-Ming He 何基明, 1956), uncovered through field research. The second category includes audiovisual materials generated through action research, in which researchers actively documented or collected footage to construct thematic archives. Notable examples include the Lo-Sheng Image Archive 乐生影像资料库 (Ping, 2010), Anti-enforcement Action Image Database 反迫迁行动影像资料库 (Weng, 2019), Home Movie Archive 家庭电影资料库 (Wu, 2016; Hsieh, 2018), and the Indigenous Image Archive 原住民影像资料库 (Wu, 2015; Pan, 2020). The third category includes projects commissioned for restoration. These include the digitization of President Chiang Kai-shek's Instructional Audiotapes for the Republic of China Military Academy 蒋中正总统训示录音磁带, the restoration of *Peony Pavilion* 我的美丽与哀愁 (dir. Kuo-Fu Chen, 陈国富 1995) and *Stranger in the City* 在陌生城市 (dir. Chi Yin, 尹祺 1994) in collaboration with the Central Motion Picture Corporation 台湾中影, and the restoration of *A Husband's Secret* 丈夫的秘密 (dir. Tuan-Chiu Lin 林抃秋, 1960; originally titled *Mistaken Love* 错恋) with the Taiwan Film and Audiovisual Institute 国家电影及视听文化中心.

Through its work in preserving and researching these film materials, the Educational Film Archive at TNNUA has developed three distinct educational paradigms: technical, cultural, and pedagogical.

The 'technical paradigm' established by the Educational Film Archive emphasizes a distinctive philosophy of preservation and a practice-oriented approach to technology. It encompasses efforts such as preserving film processing laboratories, developing low-cost workflows for digital restoration, and exploring methods for videotape repair and digitization. Rather than attempting to rival state-level professional institutions in technical sophistication, this paradigm is rooted in educational objectives and seeks to cultivate a practical, context-sensitive technical system. First, TNNUA has advocated for the preservation of film laboratories, emphasizing the enduring significance of analog-era imaging technologies that have largely been phased out. This approach also responds to growing concerns over the 'unreliability of the digital'. In 2011 and

2014, TNNUA acquired film processing equipment from Dah-Du Laboratory 大都影业 (1963–2011) and Taipei Film Laboratory 台北影业 (est. 1980), respectively. Subsequently, graduate students Kuo (2018) and Liao (2021) catalogued and reassembled the donated machines—including film developing units, cleaning devices, and printing machines from Dah-Du, as well as a 16mm Allen black-and-white film processor from Taipei Film Laboratory, manufactured in 1976. These efforts enabled TNNUA to independently carry out photochemical film processing. Second, in its digital restoration workflows, the Educational Film Archive has sought to balance pedagogical value with financial limitations. For instance, Tsao (2024), in her thesis *Reproduction and Tracing of Moving Images: A Case Study of Frame-by-Frame Shooting and Preservation of Film Reels from Taipei Prefecture Taipei Industrial Institute during the Japanese Colonial Period*, employed a ‘manual frame-by-frame shooting’ method to digitize and preserve a 16mm black-and-white silent reversal film shot in 1930s Taiwan by Japanese architect Chijiwa Suketaro 千千岩助太郎. Finally, in recent years, the archive has turned its attention to videotapes—a format widely used by amateur filmmakers and for home movies—focusing on stabilization, repair, and digitization as a way to recover grassroots memory and non-professional filmmaking embedded in the medium.¹²

Unlike traditional film archives that prioritize technical application as a means to achieve high-end film restoration, the Educational Film Archive at TNNUA regards ‘technology’ as just one component within a broader pedagogical framework, rather than as the ultimate goal of preservation. Within this framework, cultural production, cultural preservation, and cultural interpretation are positioned as the archive’s ultimate objectives. Film is thus not merely an object of preservation but a medium for constructing social discourse, reviving collective memory, and facilitating historical dialogue. In terms of cultural production, the archive views the construction of image databases as an alternative to conventional documentary filmmaking. Whereas documentary narratives often present a unidirectional flow of information, databases facilitate the longitudinal accumulation of materials, enabling multi-layered interpretations to emerge over time. This approach gradually displaces the authority of historical narration and collective memory from the state toward more decentralized and pluralistic modes of knowledge production (Jiing, 2010). At the level of cultural preservation, the archive frames the restoration of Indigenous audiovisual materials as an act of cultural reconstruction. For example, Pan (2020) restored home movies filmed by tribal elders in the 1990s and established the Katratipulr Audiovisual Documentation Archive 卡大地音像纪录资料库. These materials not only document rituals and everyday life within the community but also possess a high degree of cultural credibility owing to their internally situated perspective. By reviving memory from within, such preservation practices imbue archiving with cultural-political meaning, directly aligning with the goals of transitional justice and the affirmation of Indigenous subjectivity. Regarding cultural interpretation, the archive adopts a strategy of ‘revisiting the image’, whereby historical footage is reintroduced into its original social context, enabling contemporary audiences to critically reengage with the past. A representative case is the ‘Revisit Musha’¹³ 重返雾社 project centered on *Sayon’s Bell*, a colonial propaganda film produced by the Japanese Government-General in Taiwan. Led by Professor Jiing, the TNNUA team undertook three successive returns to Musha: beginning with community screenings and intergenerational dialogues, continuing with documentation of present-day village life, and culminating in the creative reuse of archival footage to explore contemporary Indigenous conditions. Through this multilayered process, the restoration of *Sayon’s Bell* evolved into a complex and polyvocal cultural archive that bridges history and the present.

Finally, the educational paradigm of TNNUA’s film archive is reflected in its distinctive pedagogical

philosophy and practices, which center on two key components: a practice-oriented ‘learning by doing’ model and a critical pedagogy inspired by Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Together, these elements constitute the core of TNNUA’s approach to film archive education. The ‘learning by doing’ concept, rooted in John Dewey’s theory of experiential learning, posits that students acquire genuine and profound understanding through active engagement. At TNNUA, this is realized by involving students¹⁴ in every stage of archival work—from field investigation and rescue to restoration, preservation, and cataloging—thereby enabling them to grasp the entire lifecycle of film objects through hands-on labor. This action-oriented model not only fosters technical proficiency but also establishes ethical relationships between students and the materials they work with. Initially implemented in TNNUA’s documentary curriculum, this model evolved into a pedagogical framework defined by an ‘aesthetics of process’ and ‘instrumental theory’ through the introduction of action research. It later became foundational to the archive’s broader educational practices, including industry-academia collaboration, database development, and media restoration. In parallel, the archive’s pedagogical orientation is deeply influenced by Paulo Freire’s philosophy, which views education as a means of empowerment—enabling the oppressed to recognize their conditions and take action to transform them. A representative case is the Rescuing Family Memories Workshop 抢救家庭记忆大作战, which centers on repairing home movies to recover the lived experiences of ordinary people. In this context, the act of restoration itself foregrounds perspectives marginalized by mainstream media. By reanimating these grassroots narratives, the workshop enables participants to reclaim personal subjectivity and resist long-standing cultural erasure (Hsieh, 2018).

Through an analysis of its technical, cultural, and educational paradigms, it becomes evident that the educational film archive has developed a distinctive operational logic in the practice of film preservation. These three paradigms not only illustrate the archive’s multifaceted positioning in terms of technological application, cultural engagement, and educational methodology but also form the core components of a decentralized model of film preservation. Unlike the state-led, centralized systems of preservation, this approach—anchored in educational institutions and driven by practical engagement—emphasizes local action and community participation, reflecting the openness and cultural dynamism of preservation work. Its formative logic is profoundly influenced by Taiwan’s unique socio-cultural context and the personal philosophies of key practitioners. It is precisely within this framework that the educational film archive emerges as a critical node in the decentralized preservation landscape, presenting a distinctive contribution to the broader film preservation landscape across the Sinophone world.

Through an analysis of its technical, cultural, and educational paradigms, it becomes clear that the educational film archive has developed a distinctive operational logic in the practice of film preservation. These three paradigms reflect the archive’s multifaceted positioning in terms of technological application, cultural engagement, and pedagogical methodology, and together form the foundation of a decentralized model of preservation. Unlike state-led and centralized systems, this model is rooted in educational institutions and based on practical engagement. It emphasizes local initiatives and community participation, embodying the openness and cultural vitality of preservation work. Its formation has been shaped by Taiwan’s specific socio-cultural context as well as the personal philosophies of key practitioners. Within this framework, the educational film archive serves as a critical node in the decentralized preservation landscape and offers a distinctive contribution to the broader development of film preservation across the Sinophone world.

The Migration and Adaptation of the Educational Film Archive Model

The theories and practices developed by the educational film archive at TNNUA migrated to mainland China through a fortuitous and rather legendary event.¹⁵ In 2009, during fieldwork in Yunnan, Professor Jiing from TNNUA came into possession of more than 1,000 abandoned 35mm film reels from the Guizhou People's Theater 贵州人民剧院. These reels, which consisted mainly of newsreels, educational films, and narrative features produced in the 1970s (Xiong, 2019), were divided between the two institutions. Approximately 500 reels were shipped to TNNUA for educational purposes, while the remaining reels were eventually transferred to Xiamen University (XMU) through Jiing's active coordination. In 2015, XMU formally approved the establishment of the Film Archive Studies Center, making it the first university in mainland China to systematically engage in film preservation and restoration.

Following the establishment of the Film Archive Studies Center, its initial phase of work focused on expanding the collection to meet the scale expected of a professional film archive. The early team was led by three core members: Yng-ruey Jiing, Li Xiaohong 李晓红, and Zhang Aigong 张艾弓. Beginning in July 2014, they conducted site visits to institutions including Pearl River Film Group 珠江电影集团, Western Film Group 西部电影集团, the Xi'an branch of the China Film Archive 中国电影资料馆西安电影资料库, Xiaoxiang Film Group 潇湘电影集团, Beijing Film Printing Factory 北京电影洗印厂, and Guangxi Film Group 广西电影集团. These visits pursued two objectives: first, to survey the preservation and distribution status of film reels across China; and second, to negotiate the potential deposit or donation of reels that could not be adequately preserved by their current holders. At present, the Film Archive Studies Center at Xiamen University holds a substantial collection, including film copies from the Guizhou Provincial Film Company 贵州省电影公司, entrusted materials from the Fujian Provincial Film Company 福建省电影公司, and copies from both the Xiamen City 厦门市电影公司 and Fuzhou City Film Companies 福州市电影公司. It also houses reels from the Xiamen Cultural Work Station under the Political Department of the Nanjing Military Region 原南京军区政治部厦门文化工作站, as well as a complete film processing line—comprising a developing machine, inspection machine, printing machine, and multiple rewinding machines—acquired from the Beijing Film Printing Branch of the China Film Group 中国电影集团北京电影洗印分公司.



Figure 4. The team of the Film Archive Studies Center inventorying film reels in the storage room of the Fuzhou City Film Distribution and Screening Company on May 28, 2020

In November 2015, the Film Archive Studies Center held its inaugural exhibition titled *New Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains: A Special Exhibition on Cross-Strait Images, Media, and Historical Memory*. The exhibition's title was inspired by the Yuan Dynasty painter Huang Gongwang's *Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains* 富春山居图, as the two surviving sections of the painting—*The Remaining Mountain Scroll* 剩山图 and *The Master Wuyong's Scroll* 无用师卷—are housed separately in the Zhejiang Provincial Museum 浙江省博物馆 and the National Palace Museum in Taipei and were famously exhibited together in June 2011. Drawing on this analogy, Professor Jiing hoped that the reels from Guizhou, divided across the Taiwan Strait, might one day be exhibited together through collaborative restoration efforts by faculty and students from both institutions. As previously discussed, the 'Taiwan experience' embodied by the educational film archive is not merely about replicating the technical model of a standard film archive. Instead, its core lies in the cultural actions and social care achieved through the very practices of archival work and film preservation. The 2015 inaugural curation vividly illustrated the cultural foundations upon which the XMU Film Archive Studies Center's initial conception as an educational film archive was grounded. From the outset of discussions with XMU about the necessity of establishing the center, Jiing envisioned its cultural aspirations as focused on cross-Strait exchange and dialogue. He sought to leverage Xiamen's geographic proximity to Taiwan to preserve audiovisual heritage from both sides of the Strait, employing film as a medium for historical reflection and cross-Strait dialogue.¹⁶ However, upon closer examination, this strategy reveals a dual dimension. On the one hand, within the political climate of mainland China, positioning the archive's mission in relation to cross-Strait relations and Taiwan studies aligned with the broader objectives of the state's united front strategy, thereby providing a pragmatic and politically resonant rationale for securing institutional endorsement and material support. On the other hand, as a second-generation waishengren (外省人, or 'Mainlander'—referring to those who migrated from mainland China to Taiwan around 1949 and their descendants), Professor Jiing genuinely hoped to replace confrontation with sustained dialogue across the Strait, fostering mutual understanding among younger generations.¹⁷ Yet with the deterioration of cross-Strait relations since 2019 and a sharp decline in cultural exchange, this vision of a shared cultural framework has, to a large extent, become an 'empty signifier'.



Figure 5. Film Archive Studies Center, XMU

To a certain extent, the possibility of conducting culturally significant research with transformative potential in historical and social contexts on the basis of audiovisual archives, without interference from dominant ideological discourses, depends on the degree of societal openness and the ruling class's tolerance of the public sphere. In Taiwan, both the preservation practices promoted by decision-makers at TNNUA's

educational film archive, which are shaped by personal convictions, and the ‘learning-by-doing’ pedagogical model it has adopted are closely tied to values consolidated through democratization. These practices benefit from the relatively open cultural space afforded by democratic institutions, where alternative perspectives are accommodated rather than suppressed. By contrast, the cultural domain in mainland China remains tightly constrained by a dominant political ideology, making it not only difficult to replicate TNNUA’s counter-hegemonic academic trajectory, but also challenging for scholarly inquiry to independently address certain sensitive socio-cultural issues. Academic efforts in this context often face a binary predicament: they are either absorbed into the prevailing ideological framework or marginalized—and in some cases suppressed—as subversive. As a result, interpretive authority over social and cultural matters frequently lies not with individual scholars, but with overarching political structures. Therefore, even scholars who merely seek to articulate an independent position in cultural interpretation may be compelled to adopt esoteric modes¹⁸ of expression or resort to self-censorship and so-called ‘ideological self-castration’ in order to avoid co-optation or political reprisal. For this reason, members of the XMU Film Archive Studies Center have generally viewed Taiwan’s institutional and cultural landscape as more conducive to advancing the educational mission of a film archive and articulating its political significance. Confronted with these structural differences, XMU has inevitably faced institutional limitations in transplanting the Taiwanese model and has gradually shifted toward a depoliticized, technology-centered approach to film preservation. This reflects a broader tendency within the Sinophone world: Western thought is often received through an emphasis on conceptual intricacy and empty jargon, while its historical contingencies and emancipatory political agency are downplayed—precisely because such agency is perceived as politically unsettling.

In December 2020, the Film Archive Studies Center at XMU partnered with iQIYI 爱奇艺 to establish the Joint Film Restoration Laboratory 电影修复联合实验室. As a major online video platform, iQIYI has long aimed to offer viewers access to high-resolution, licensed versions of films. Previously, many older films available on streaming platforms were transferred using analog telecine technology—from optical film to magnetic tape—which now falls short of meeting contemporary viewing standards. From iQIYI’s perspective, directly digitizing and restoring original film elements would yield significantly improved image quality and better meet audience expectations. For the Film Archive Studies Center, a relatively young preservation institution with a growing collection of film materials but limited funding, the collaboration provided a timely opportunity to pursue further research and pedagogical activities. In this sense, the partnership proved mutually beneficial.

To date, the two parties have signed three contracts, resulting in the restoration of nine films: *Little Soldier Zhang Ga* 小兵张嘎 (dir. Cui Wei 崔嵬, 1965), *The East Is Red* 东方红 (dir. Wang Ping & Li Enjie 王苹、李恩杰, 1965), *Li Shuangshuang* 李双双 (dir. Lu Ren 鲁韧, 1962), *Mu Guiying Takes Command* 穆桂英挂帅 (dir. Xu Suling 徐苏灵, 1958), *Woman Sesame Oil Maker* 香魂女 (dir. Xie Fei 谢飞, 1993), *The Spring River Flows East* 一江春水向东流 (dir. Cai Chusheng & Zheng Junli 蔡楚生、郑君里, 1947), *A Mongolian Tale* 黑骏马 (dir. Xie Fei, 1995), *Liu Qiao’er* 刘巧儿 (dir. Yi Lin 伊琳, 1956), and *The Battle of Triangle Hill* 上甘岭 (dir. Sha Meng & Lin Shan 沙蒙、林杉, 1956). Specifically, the Film Archive Studies Center provides the original film materials—primarily projection prints collected from private sources—and is responsible for cleaning and physical repair. The films are then scanned using a film scanner to generate digital files. These digital files undergo AI-based restoration using iQIYI’s proprietary Zoom AI technology, followed by meticulous manual refinements and color correction carried out by restoration technicians at the

Film Archive Studies Center, utilizing PF Clean and DaVinci Resolve. Throughout the collaboration, iQIYI offers financial support, retains the right to select titles for restoration and define final approval standards, and holds exclusive online distribution rights for the restored films. XMU, in turn, holds the right to conduct educational and scholarly screenings, as well as to receive institutional attribution in all restoration-related materials.

This technology-centered development trajectory marks a clear departure from the philosophy and practices of the educational film archive model as it has evolved in Taiwan—an evolution that has raised concerns¹⁹ for Professor Jiing. He argues that transplanting Taiwan's technical model without its broader historical and cultural context risks drifting away from the founding principles of the archive. As a result, the Film Archive Studies Center at XMU appears to have experienced a role reversal, gradually shifting into a purely technology-driven institution. Though regrettable, this shift seems to reflect the institutional compromises inevitably involved in localizing alternative archival models.

Despite this shift toward a more technical orientation, the XMU Film Archive Studies Center has continued to explore the academic potential of film preservation within the constraints of its institutional environment. Notably, it became the first university-based archive in mainland China to actively promote film preservation as an emerging academic field. Between 2019 and 2023, the center organized four national forums on film preservation and restoration, addressing underexplored topics such as restoration methodologies, curatorial practice, and film technology. These events provided a regular, in-person platform for domestic preservation specialists, museum curators, and filmmakers to exchange insights and engage with new developments in the field. By fostering dialogue among public institutions, industry professionals, and the academic community, the forums sought to encourage cross-sector collaboration and contribute to the gradual advancement of film preservation and restoration in China (Wei & Zhang, 2023).

In addition, the Film Archive Studies Center at XMU organized four forums on film preservation and restoration in 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2023. These events positioned film preservation as an academic inquiry, addressing topics such as restoration, curation, and film technology—areas that remain relatively underdeveloped in China. The forums also served as a regular in-person platform for domestic professionals, museum curators, and filmmakers to exchange insights and explore emerging issues in preservation, restoration, and industry development. By fostering dialogue among public institutions, industry stakeholders, and academia, the forums aimed to encourage cross-sector collaboration and promote the advancement of China's film preservation and restoration field (Wei & Zhang, 2023).

4. The Trajectory of Private Film Preservation in Mainland China

Slide (1992, pp. 45–60) outlined the vital yet nuanced relationship between private collectors and preservation institutions in the American film heritage movement. Private collectors often contributed valuable holdings, and fostering engagement with them significantly advanced the preservation of national cinematic heritage. In Mainland China, the dispersed nature of private film collections today is largely a legacy of state film management policies from the celluloid era.

Due to the material characteristics of film, once production was completed, screening prints had to be produced from the original negatives through duplication and processing at specialized film laboratories.

These prints were then distributed to provincial and municipal film distribution and exhibition companies, forming a nationwide projection network. As early as 1954, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) recognized the scarcity of projection units and the limited access to films in rural areas. The Party responded by formulating targeted policies aimed at strengthening support for projectionists and improving rural access to films (Li, 2023, p.45). Projectionists were to become ‘outstanding propagandists among the masses’ (Anonymous, 1954). Cultural authorities were also instructed to conduct thorough inspections of projection activities and implement centralized, planned management (Anonymous, 1955). These efforts proved effective. In 1985, Henan Province alone had 11,259 rural projection teams; in 1986, the average rural resident in Henan watched 34.7 films (Zhan & Chen, 2011, p. 102). By 1992, China had 3,000 distribution institutions at or above the county level, with 140,000 projection units and a workforce of 500,000 involved in film circulation (Hu & Chen, 2011, p. 418).

As noted earlier, since its establishment in 1958, the China Film Archive has served as the national repository for Chinese cinema. Over time, it acquired legal authority to collect, organize, preserve, and utilize film-related materials. This included mandatory provisions requiring film production units to deposit designated archival elements with the archive within three months of obtaining a public screening license (State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, 2010). Therefore, after a film completed its nationwide distribution cycle, the China Film Archive was legally entitled to acquire its original negatives, sound elements, and other essential, high-quality archival materials.²⁰ Meanwhile, the screening prints used during circulation were to be reclaimed by the production studios or by provincial and municipal film distribution and exhibition companies. However, since the 1990s, as reforms in China’s film industry deepened, the functions of these studios and local distribution companies have steadily declined, and their institutional status has become largely nominal. Consequently, many of the film prints in their possession gradually fell out of the state preservation system and into the hands of private collectors.



Figure 6. *Cinematic Guerrillas* (2023), by Professor Li Jie, Harvard University.

It is also worth noting that in China, narrative films and newsreels are preserved by two separate institutions: the former is managed by the China Film Archive, while the latter is held by the Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio 中央新闻纪录电影制片厂. Together, these institutions effectively monopolize access to the country’s moving image resources, and to this day, neither has shown any willingness to make these materials accessible to the public.²¹ This ‘divided monopoly’ system significantly impedes both the integrative study of film archives and their public use.

By contrast, although privately held films are often scattered and unsystematic, they have, in some cases, preserved more complete fragments of historical memory. More importantly, these collections exist outside official institutional control, offering a structural opportunity to promote open access to audiovisual materials. In this light, efforts to collect film archives dispersed among private hands constitute not only a form of cultural preservation but also a subtle challenge to the state’s monopoly over cinematic archival resources.

Currently, the Film Archive Studies Center at Xiamen University has established relationships with several

private film collectors in China and launched initial collaborations, primarily centered on the exchange of newsreels. By preserving and restoring these materials, the center seeks to reveal diverse historical perspectives on twentieth-century China—particularly the 1960s and 1970s—and to explore their value as alternative sources for historical research.



Figure 7. Private Film Collector and Their Film Copy Archive (Example)

5. Conclusion

This study examines the concept of the educational film archive by tracing its development in Taiwan and its subsequent migration to mainland China, thereby investigating the potential for a decentralized model of film preservation within the Sinophone world. Through case studies, it analyzes the issue from multiple dimensions—including social context, institutional philosophy, and practical pathways—highlighting both the structural possibilities and institutional constraints that educational film archives face under divergent political and cultural conditions.

Firstly, the social liberalization and democratic transition following the lifting of martial law in Taiwan provided a crucial foundation for the emergence of the educational film archive. Within this context, documentary education became a vital tool for engaging with social change and laid the groundwork for a preservation philosophy rooted in civic responsibility. From documenting social movements to safeguarding collective memory, TNNUA gradually developed a triadic model of ‘documentation–preservation–education’, recasting film preservation not as a purely technical or managerial task, but as a practice imbued with cultural significance and social commitment.

Secondly, the transfer and adaptation of the educational film archive concept from TNNUA to Xiamen University illuminate the stark contrasts in institutional structures and cultural environments between Taiwan and mainland China. Taiwan’s relatively open political and academic landscape has allowed TNNUA greater autonomy in cultural interpretation and social engagement. By contrast, the development of educational film archives in mainland China has been shaped by the state’s tight control over film resources and ideological discourse. Nevertheless, the Film Archive Studies Center at Xiamen University has sought to establish independent preservation practices outside the official framework, with its focus on newsreels representing a

subtle challenge to the centralized monopoly of national archival resources.

Lastly, within mainland China's long-standing centralized film management system, independent preservation efforts by private individuals have become increasingly valuable. While national archival institutions retain control over most high-quality film materials through formalized structures, the system of 'divided monopolies' has significantly restricted public access and academic research. In contrast, scattered private collections—particularly of newsreels—not only preserve rich historical details but also allow greater flexibility for open access beyond the constraints of the official system. In recent years, the Film Archive Studies Center at Xiamen University has collaborated with several private collectors to preserve and restore these materials using digital technologies, thereby highlighting the cultural significance and social value of decentralized film preservation practices.

In summary, the concept of the educational film archive presents an alternative trajectory for film preservation in the Sinophone world—one that moves beyond state-dominated frameworks and underscores the deep entanglement between preservation practices and their broader socio-cultural contexts. Against the dominance of state-centered models, the efforts of educational institutions and independent actors—though still modest in scale—are gradually fostering a more open, pluralistic, and critically engaged field of film preservation.

Notes

1 *Electroacoustic Weekly*, founded in 1932 and described at the time as 'the only national film weekly', documented multiple incidents of nitrate film fires.

2 The National Film Institute was established with a government appropriation of 60,000 yuan, administered by the China Film Education Association 中国电影教育会, and was dedicated to screening standard films focused on education and cultural development (Anonymous, 1935).

3 During the Second Sino-Japanese War, Mao Zedong undertook a systematic reflection on the relationship between art and revolution, stating that 'literature and art must become an integral part of the entire revolutionary machine' (Mao, 1942/1991, p. 848).

4 'It was only after we arrived at the International Federation of Film Archives that we realized the concept of a film archive was not quite what we had originally imagined. Our understanding of a film archive was essentially modeled on those in the Soviet socialist countries—state-run institutions, large in scale, heavily staffed, and operating with an imposing institutional presence' (Gong & Chen, 2011, pp. 324–325).

5 At the time, films with historical documentary value and their associated materials had not yet been conceptually elevated to the status of 'archives', nor was the work of collecting and preserving them explicitly linked to archival practice (Zhao, 2005, p. 37). This conceptual gap explains why the national institution for film preservation was named a 'ziliaoguan' (资料馆, literally 'data or documentation center') rather than an 'archives' in the formal sense.

6 According to Yi Ming 伊明, a former senior official at the China Film Archive, '[Later on, I felt that the effort put into film collection was insufficient—nothing like the sheer forcefulness of the Cultural Revolution period. Back then, film collection was backed by directives from Premier Zhou and had Jiang Qing's attention as well (though she was later labeled a counterrevolutionary, at the time she was a core member of the "Gang of Four" and held unchallenged authority in the film sector). Who would dare refuse? Of course, people were still reluctant to hand things over, but not as openly dismissive as they are now.]' (Yi & Chen, 2008/2011, p. 51).

7 While restoring *The Spring River Flows East* (1947), Xiamen University discovered that the version edited and re-released in 1956 as part of the China Film Corporation's 'Re-screening of Representative Outstanding Films since the May Fourth Movement' initiative had been shortened from its original seven-hour runtime to just three hours. Further

examination revealed alterations and deletions in the audio track, such as the replacement of the line ‘in the Chongqing government’ with ‘working in a rescue team’ (approx. 51:44 mark).

8 ‘As the documentaries produced in the past have become historical images to be preserved today, so too will the documentaries made today serve as the historical records of tomorrow. The preservation of images and the production of audiovisual records are thus two sides of the same coin—together forming the foundation for constructing historical perspectives and cultivating critical insight’ (Statement of Educational Purpose, Graduate Institute of Audiovisual Documentary Studies, 2020).

9 The ‘Three Main Networks’ (老三台 or 三台) refers to the first three television networks established in Taiwan: Taiwan Television (TTV), launched on October 10, 1962; China Television (CTV), launched on October 31, 1969; and Chinese Television System (CTS), launched on October 31, 1971.

10 At the time, the Taiwan Film Archive primarily preserved motion pictures on film stock, whereas the Green Team’s audiovisual materials existed in a variety of formats—including Beta, VHS, Betacam, and Hi8—most of which were consumer-grade. While these formats had the advantages of being inexpensive and portable, their diversity also posed significant challenges for long-term preservation.

11 During the 1980s, Professor Jiing pursued his studies in the United States, where he encountered and subsequently introduced the concept of Third Cinema to Taiwan. Writing under the pseudonym Li Zaixing 李再行, he published an article titled ‘Third Cinema Against Hollywood’ in *Taiwan Ideology* 台湾思潮 (1983, p. 92), an overseas journal produced by Taiwanese students. In this piece, he sought to bring to Taiwan the core tenets of Third Cinema theory—namely, the notion of film as a weapon and filmmaking as a political act. Upon concluding his eight-year tenure (1989–1996) as director of the Taiwan Film Archive, Jiing reflected in an interview: ‘What I’ve always wanted is to document the transformation of Taiwanese society, to help those living in Taiwan develop a sense of history, and to present the development and evolution of Taiwanese society through the medium of film’ (Hsiao, 1996).

12 As Professor Jiing remarked in an interview with the author: ‘At TNNUA, our mission is education—but we have neither funding nor personnel. I often say we’re like a roadside stall. Still, we want to make it an exceptional one. That means taking a path the Taiwan Film and Audiovisual Institute wouldn’t pursue—a path rooted in grassroots materials and news footage. Every videotape is a text, capturing family events that are deeply entwined with society. Through home videos, we are composing a modern history of Taiwan’ (Wei, 2021).

13 This case laid the foundation for the core value orientation of the ‘educational film archive’. As Jiing (2015, pp. 2–3) writes: ‘Film archives in Third World countries exist to express memory, identity, and resistance. Their purpose is to reconstruct subjectivity, positioning them within a broader decolonization project. In this context, we refer to such institutions as “film archives in a postcolonial context”—that is, archives whose very existence serves the aims of decolonization. In contrast, film archives in First World countries are oriented toward expressing glory, celebrating pleasure, and exercising governance. Their function lies in the perpetuation of the status quo’.

14 For example, in the project to rescue and preserve TTV news footage, instructors explicitly stated that only students who had personally participated in the preservation work were qualified to further utilize the materials for research purposes.

15 For a more detailed discussion of this experience, see *A Study on the Concept and Practice of the Educational Film Archive* (Wei, 2021).

16 From Jiing’s personal narration in his self-produced film about the migration of film reels from Guizhou: ‘Faculty and students from both institutions are now jointly engaged in the restoration, in the hope that the films might one day be exhibited together—and ultimately return to Guizhou to recount their remarkable journey. This endeavor is not simply about “treasure hunting”, but about rescuing memory and transforming what is decayed into something transcendent. What we uncover from these materials is secondary; what we seek to teach our students is not market logic, but a sense of depth, an attitude, and a way of relating to history’.

17 From the author’s interview with Yng-ruey Jiing: ‘The generation before us had an unquestioned emotional attachment to China—they simply longed to return to their ancestral homeland. The generation after us, in contrast, identifies emotionally with Taiwan; for them, China is a distant concept. As for our generation, we have inherited

the historical and cultural traditions of China from our parents, yet we have also spent three or four decades living in Taiwan. I feel compelled to embrace both legacies—and, more importantly, to find a way to integrate them’ (Wei, 2021).

18 From the author’s interview with Professor Zhang Aigong: ‘I’ve developed a method that students can only grasp through intuition—it’s difficult to articulate and somewhat abstract. Those who understand will naturally understand... For example, in film history, I might speak at length about the trajectory from Caligari to Hitler. From an academic perspective, nothing is off-limits’ (Wei, 2021).

19 From the author’s interview with Yng-ruey Jiing: ‘What XMU transplanted was the experience of TNNUA, but it lacked the historical development and intellectual grounding that had preceded it. As a result, the foundation was unstable and the roots shallow, leading to significant gaps in understanding. At times, things felt abrupt or incongruous. Without that earlier groundwork—and given that I hadn’t spent extended time cultivating the program—what emerged felt fragmented. Taiwan’s prior experience couldn’t be systematically discussed or conveyed. As a result, when one concept was introduced, it often led to something entirely different. It felt somewhat disjointed—almost like forcing seedlings to grow before they’re ready’ (Wei, 2021).

20 ‘The Film Archive... dispatched personnel nationwide to collect prints. We visited provincial film companies to select the best materials to retain, including raw footage’ (Tian & Chen, 2011, p. 165).

21 ‘Among the archived films are numerous titles produced by the “Manchukuo Film Association” and the collaborationist Wang regime 汪伪 during the Japanese occupation. These materials possess both a distinctive historical context and ongoing relevance, rendering them exceptionally significant. For decades, Japan has spared no effort—and employed every possible means—to collect these films in order to promote the militarist ideology of the so-called “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere” and to obscure the historical reality of its war of aggression against China. Premier Zhou Enlai explicitly ordered that such highly classified archival films must be safeguarded with the utmost security’ (Zhang, 2013, p. 1).

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教育型电影档案馆在华语地区的理念迁移 与去中心化电影保存路径的探索

韦怡舟

概要

本文从教育型电影档案馆这一理念入手，以该理念从台南艺术大学迁移至厦门大学这一个案作为具体切入点，探讨在华语地区发展“去中心化”电影保存模式的可能。文章首先回顾了电影保存机构在全球范围内的发展脉络，在此基础上分析中国大陆电影保存的“中心化”模式所体现的国家主导特征与其建立的内在逻辑，指出其高度政治性的制度背景对档案开放与多元保存路径的限制。接着，文章聚焦于台南艺术大学教育型电影档案馆，分析其在 20 世纪 80 年代末以来民主转型与社会运动背景下所形成的技术、文化与教学三大典范，展现了以纪录片拍摄介入社会变革和以电影保存行动建构历史的双重文化路径。最后，文章通过厦门大学音像文献中心的创建过程，审视教育型电影档案馆在大陆从文化典范转向技术导向的理念嬗变，并初步分析民间电影档案网络对国家档案垄断格局的潜在抵抗。本文主张，在目前大陆地区“中心式”电影保存体制占主导地位的前提下，以教育机构为主体的保存实践或可为华语世界探索更多元的电影保存模式，提供一种富有社会关怀与文化能动性的替代路径。

关键词：去中心化、电影保存、教育型电影档案馆、文化典范与技术实践

引言

在电影保存实践中，大多数电影保存机构都遵循一种“中心式”的保存模式，即与电影收集、保存、修复相关的决策过程均由国家文化部门主导。这种现象不仅与早期电影保存活动的发轫方式密切相关，也深受各国政治、经济与文化传统的影响。在华语地区，这种“中心化”的倾向尤为显著。本文借用奥克斯托比在探讨美国电影保存体制时提出的“去中心”化保存模式概念（Oxtoby, 2017），透过教育型电影档案馆从台南艺术大学迁移至厦门大学的案例，探讨中国大陆当前在去中心化电影保存实践中的现状与挑战。

具体而言，本文首先回顾了电影保存机构的发展历程，为探讨这一读者相对陌生的领域奠定背景。接着，本文深入分析了中国大陆地区电影保存机构的发展脉络，并揭示了其中心化模式的内在逻辑，为后续讨论去中心化电影保存模式提供了参照。最后，本文重点聚焦于教育型电影档案馆从台南艺术大学迁移至厦门大学的案例，详细探讨了该模式在厦大的发展，内容具体包括：教育型电影档案馆在台湾得以建立的社会脉络、教育型电影档案馆所创造的三大典范（包括技术典范、文化典范与教学典范）、厦门大学音像文献中心的建立背景及其对教育型电影档案馆理念未能充分发展的原因分析，以及对目前大陆地区其他民间电影档案遗存进行初步分析。

一 电影保存机构的发展历程

早期的电影被当成一种新奇之物，常见于集市和展览，享有与魔术不相上下的地位（Radner, 2010）。1895 年，法国人卢米埃尔（Lumière）获取了原本属于雷昂·布利（Léon Bouly）关于 Cinématographe 的专利，并加以改进，使其相比于托马斯·爱迪生（Thomas Edison）所发明的 Kinetoscope 能产生更为清晰的活动影像（Usai, 2000, p.9），电影被发明的具体时间也因此被确

定。但在其后的相当一段时间中，主流文化机构和政府常常将其视为一种“粗俗的盈利性企业”和“无任何价值的知识传播形式”，正如罗兰·巴特（Roland Barthes）所称的“劣质对象”（bad object）（Horak, 2007, p.106）。可以说，电影从这种不入流的杂耍把戏，到后来被人们确定为一种新的美学与艺术形式并加以妥善保存，经历了相当长时间的发展。



图一 纸电影

来源: <https://blogs.loc.gov/now-see-hear/2014/05/where-it-all-began-the-paper-print-collection/>

1894 年，曾帮助爱迪生设计电影摄影机的威廉·迪克森（William Dickson）最先开始思考将电影保存以流传后世的可能，他认为“相比于文字记录常常出现的夸张与误导性叙述，电影提供的则是生动而真实的图景”，并将一些早期的 Edison 电影存进了国会图书馆（Library of Congress），但这一行为背后的主要动因是为了使电影的版权得到保护，以此在商业竞争中占得先机。不久，爱迪生首次将 35 毫米胶片复制在纸上，以纸电影（Paper Prints）的形式将之保存。

1899 年，波兰摄影师博莱斯瓦夫·马图舍夫斯基（Boleslaw Matuszewski）是首位明确指出电影具有历史见证价值，并提出建立电影博物馆以收集与保存影像资料的电影人。他认为电影和其他传统上被视为档案的东西一样具有记录历史的权威性，且应该得到优先保存，进而提出应该在巴黎成立电影博物馆或电影的专门存放处（Cinematographic Museum or Depository），而这个机构则可附属为一个现存的机构，比如法国国家图书馆等（Binder, 2015, p.9; Chapman, 2013, pp.73-75; Houston, 1994, p.11）。马图舍夫斯基曾是卢米埃尔公司的雇员，并在 1897 年受雇于俄皇尼古拉斯二世（Nicholas II），用电影记录了时任法国总统费利克斯福尔（Félix Faure）对圣彼得堡的正式访问。访问结束后，总统费利克斯·福尔被指出在访问时曾作出一个极不礼貌的行为，即没有检阅仪仗队时脱帽。这一外交指控后来则被马图舍夫斯基的纪录片证明是子虚乌有（Houston, 1994, p.12），电影的证据性由此可见一斑。或许得益于这段经历，马图舍夫斯基已经敏锐地意识到，“电影所描绘的主题必将从单纯的娱乐场景转向更具纪实意义的行动和场面，从幽默的生活片段转向公共与国家视域”，而这种潜力必将使电影成为人类发掘历史时的一种新的资料来源（Matuszewski, 1898/2014）。

马图舍夫斯基对电影主题将会扩展的预言很快成真。1916 年，两位英国摄影师杰弗里马林斯（Geoffrey Malins）和约翰·麦克道威尔（John McDowell）拍摄了英国第一部战争记录片《索姆河战役》（The Battle of the Somme），影片记录了第一次世界大战中英军在索姆河的战役，并以其异于传统文字报道的生动与真实性引起轰动，大卖 2000 万张票。影片最终被保存在帝国战争博物馆，同时也再一次将“建立一个专门负责保存与收藏电影的机构”这一问题推到台前（Binder, 2015, pp.12-14; Houston, 1994, p.12）。

建立电影保存机构的必要性除了电影本身的价值逐步被认可之外，也和这种媒体本身的特殊性有关，即其自身所具有的物理与化学性质。1950 年代之前广泛使用的硝酸胶片在常温下极易燃烧，这为保存带来了极大困难。因此，电影保存在实践层面的诸多困难意味着必须有一个机构来统协各方资源，方能更好完成这项使命。这个机构如马图舍夫斯基当初预言的一样，后来被人们称为电影档案馆（Film Archive）。世所公认的第一个电影档案馆由本特·伊德斯塔姆·阿尔姆奎斯特（Bengt Idestam Almquist）于 1933 年在瑞典斯德哥尔摩创立（Kula, 2002），此后的整个 30 年代，欧美地区兴起了建立电影档案馆的风潮，帝国电影资料馆（1935，柏林）、附设于现代美术馆的电影图书馆

(1935, 纽约)、英国国家电影资料馆(1935, 伦敦)和法国电影资料馆(1936, 巴黎)渐次成立(Leab, 2000)。

需要被指出的是,第一批成立的电影档案馆其工作重心在于电影的收藏与放映,建立彼此之间联络和交换电影拷贝的通道是当时的共识,由此欧洲与美国的电影可以相互流转,以满足各自地区受众的观影需求。1937年由亨利·朗格卢瓦(Henri Langlois)和艾丽斯·巴里(Iris Barry)主导,法国电影资料馆和纽约现代美术馆电影图书馆(Film Library, MoMA)的影片交换即为一个很好的例证(Dupin, 2013)。在这样成功合作的基础上,马图舍夫斯基的另一设想——建立一个“世界性的档案馆网络”也很快被实现。1938年,国际电影档案馆联盟(FIAF)成立,该机构今天已经容纳了77个国家的150个电影资料馆(Leab, 2000; Nagorska, 2012)。

二 中国大陆电影保存模式的奠定及其内在逻辑

在中国大陆,尽管机构化的电影保存实践直到1958年中国电影资料馆的建立才得以开展,但电影保存的概念几乎在欧美等国建立电影保存机构的同时便已传入。

在硝酸片时代,因保存措施不当所导致电影仓库或电影院发生火灾的情况屡见报端。1932年创刊的《电声周刊》¹便多次记载了影片起火的事件,其记载的话语诸如:“无为民教馆,放映教育电影失慎”²“屋中无人竟会起火,天一港厂再度失慎,邵醉翁两年来的心血化为乌有”等等。《电声周刊》同时也引介了西方国家在电影保存领域进行的实践,其中包括技术层面的讯息,譬如对研究新型胶片材质以防止火灾的报导:“美国软片公司近日发明一种铝制不透明影片……它并不像平常的赛璐珞影片一样的容易起火”(佚名,1939)。同时也分析了影片长久保存所面临的问题:“保藏影片并不像一般人想像的那么容易……电影胶片是有著一种特殊收缩性,每一英呎胶片要收缩十二分之一英吋的面积”,也介绍了“纽约现代艺术博物院中保藏世界名作的电影保藏楼”³如何通过保存手段让“一百年后的人有机会看到现在的影片”(佚名,1938)。

但令人颇感惋惜的是,虽然电影保存的重要性在30年代已经被大陆地区电影界所关注,端因此后战火不断,两岸分治之前,大陆地区唯一的国家层级电影机构“国立电影馆”⁴并未进行与电影保存有关的工作,电影并未像南迁的故宫文物一样得到妥善的保存。根据文献纪录,1938年成立的国际电影档案馆联合会及其下辖成员国的电影保存机构使5000多部影片资料免于被二战战火损毁(陈景亮、姜鸿涛,1993,页5)。华语地区则因电影文化资产保存的实践较为滞后及多年战乱,影片遭到了极大的破坏。1982年3月1日《中国时报》以“谁怜‘青史’尽成灰”为标题痛陈旧影片消逝的状况令人深感惋惜(佚名,1992),实为两岸电影保存事业共同的悲歌。具体来看,1949年之前,大陆地区共拍摄了1500多部影片,经过1958年成立的中国电影资料馆近三十年的努力,1992年时仅留存15%(陈景亮、姜鸿涛,1993,页5)。

如前所述,20世纪30年代欧美电影档案馆的建立,源于人们对电影作为历史记录媒介的重视,以及国际间影片交流的实际需求。而在华语地区,电影保存之所以逐渐受到重视,根本原因在于统治者将电影视为重要的意识形态工具。在这一媒介被积极运用于政治宣传和社会教化的过程中,电影保存作为电影管理体系的一部分,才逐步被纳入制度化建设之中。

蒋中正(1953/1984,页249)曾提出:“电化教育事业必须先要由国家经营,更要特别重视电影的内容与广播的节目,充实其内容,提高其品质,以达成保持与增进国民心理康乐的目的”。而中共早在1936年就成立了附设在八路军总政治部的延安电影团,后于1949年4月成立了中央电影管理

局，收归于中国共产党中央委员会宣传部的领导，担负领导全国电影工作的任务。1949年8月，中共在总结革命胜利经验⁵时认为：“电影艺术具有最广大的群众性与最普遍的宣传效果，必须加强这一事业，以利在全国范围内，及在国际上更有利的进行我党及新民主主义革命和建设事业的宣传工作”（程季华，1963，页341、页401-402）。上述理念在某种程度上体现出苏联文艺思想对中国的影响，除了“在所有的艺术中，电影对于我们是最重要的”这句著名论断，苏俄革命家 Lenin 对电影尤为重视的原因可分两点进行叙述。首先是电影内容的功能，科教片可以让落后地区的人民以最快的速度学习到先进的农业与工业生产知识，从而服务于经济发展；而新闻片又可以将国家机器所要传达的意识形态缝合进影像媒介中，以一种适当的形式（政治性强烈的形象化政论）传递给民众。其次，电影作为一种新媒介，在很多地区都是新鲜事物，尚未形成饱和传播。因此，列宁认为“乡村中和东方的影院组织，在那些地方，电影院还是新鲜事物，我们的宣传在那里将会特别成功”。（中央电影局艺术委员会，1939/1951，页36、页47-51）

具体到电影保存领域，中共依旧师法苏联，其最主要的特点即为国家主导对档案进行管控⁶。1955年9月，中国电影发行公司总公司经理罗光达奉命以观察员身份出席了在波兰举行的国际电影档案馆联盟第11届年会。次年2月，以王辉为主任的中国电影资料馆筹备处成立，拟定了方针和工作大纲，提出：“具有一定历史、艺术和文化意义的影片和其他电影资料，应集中由中国电影资料馆保存”。资料馆自此开始广泛搜集1949年之前的影片与图文资料，开中国大陆电影保存的风气之先（邵功游，1999，页3；张锦，2011，页15；陈景亮、姜鸿涛，1993，页3-4）。1958年9月30日，中国电影资料馆⁷在北京正式成立。

在国家主导之下，档案搜集具有强制性⁸，从客观上看这有利于更完整档案库的建制。正如中国电影资料馆学者张锦（2020，页137）所指出：“电影收藏的国家体制确保了国产影片的完整、全面收藏，这是众多西方电影资料馆梦寐以求的权利。”然而，从另一角度看，国家对电影统制管理一方面一方面催生“内参片”这一极具阶级属性的非常态电影传播模式，即主要为特权阶层提供的内部观摩的以进口影片为主的电影，其传播范围比较狭窄，主要集中在政府、军队大院以及文艺、教学机构（张伟，2018，页1）。另一方面，在绝对权力主导下的电影档案整理，选择性删除始终伴随其中⁹，构成了制度性整理的一部分。据学者陈山回忆，解放后中国曾两次集中销毁解放前的电影资料，致使大量非左翼立场的影片自此湮没于世（张献民，2005，页155至156）。

直到今日，电影档案工作在中国依然被视为高度政治性的事务。国家将其明确纳入国家档案体系之中，并强调：“讲政治是必须要坚持的一项基本原则，要有鲜明的政治观点，始终服从党和国家的意志，在意识形态中发挥积极的引导和教育作用，保证电影艺术档案利用上的政治安全”（赵童生，2005，页41）。正因如此，中国电影资料馆也长期被认为是中国各大电影机构中最难获得访问权限的单位（裴开瑞，2021，页97）。2018年9月，该馆由原隶属于国家广播电影电视总局转隶至中共中央宣传部，进一步凸显了其在国家意识形态管理体系中的特殊地位。

三 教育型电影档案馆在台湾的发展及其理念转移

奥克斯托比（Oxtoby，2017）曾将美国电影保存模式概括为“去中心”（decentralized model）模式。美国并未建立统一集中的国家电影档案馆，而是由政府机构、博物馆、大学、档案馆、图书馆、社团、好莱坞、独立制片公司、电影发行商和版权拥有者共同构成一个多元的电影保存生态体系。上述去中心化模式的良好运作则通过政府设立的专责机构（国家电影保存委员会，National Film Preservation Board）与相关立法（国家电影保存法案，National Film Preservation Act）加以协调与维护。然而长期以来，这种去中心化的电影保存模式在包括中国大陆在内的整个华语地区并

不多见。直至近年来，台南艺术大学的电影保存教育逐渐走向成熟，笔者曾在题为《教育型电影档案馆理念与实践之研究》（韦怡舟，2021）的硕士论文中对台南艺术大学所建立的教育型电影档案馆进行过如下定义：“教育型电影档案馆着眼于对民间影像资料的搜集与保存，以影像的物理与数字修复手段作为支撑，影像保存行动作为鹰架，针对不同的影像档案设计相应的教育活动，借由教育活动传授影像修复技艺的同时，强调发挥影像档案的文化与启蒙意义，最终落脚于以左翼思想为底色的社会关怀。”

（一）教育型电影档案馆在台湾的社会脉络

教育型电影档案馆在台湾的建立有着极其鲜明的时代色彩与介入社会变革的企图心。1987年7月15日，蒋经国宣布解除禁锢台湾社会长达38年的《台湾省戒严令》，台湾自此开始逐步迈向民主化历程。在解严伊始、社会急剧变革的过程钟，台湾开始出现了大量的纪录片作品。邱贵芬（2003，页153-154）曾将此时期台湾纪录片涌现的原因归结为两点：一方面，轻巧录影设备的出现使得影片拍摄的困难度大大降低；另一方面，借助纪录片的教育功能可以培育民主社会中的公民素养。也因此，此时期台湾生产的纪录片非常强调影片的抗争与纪实意涵（陈品君，2014）。这股时代变革的浪潮同样深刻影响了南艺大的纪录片教育及其教育型电影档案馆的发展。南艺大1996年建校时所希望发展的电影教育便是以纪录片为核心，希望践行“以纪录介入社会变革”这一教学理念¹⁰。

此时期纪录影像的重要代表便是王智章等人发起的“绿色小组”所累积的新闻纪录片。绿色小组所记录的首场活动即为1986年10月的台湾立法委员选举¹¹，他们用轻便的电子摄影机（ENG）来记录选举过程，希望寻求颠覆由党国体制牢牢控制的官方媒体，反抗官媒对反对党的打压（陈世宏，2020，页105）。1987年9月，绿色小组将一套涵盖反对运动、人权运动、原住民运动、学生运动、环保运动的剪辑完成带，委托《民进周刊》杂志社发行，取名“台湾就是这样长大的”（井迎瑞，2013，页24）。由此我们不难看出，在民主化转型的过程中，以绿色小组为代表、有别于老三台¹²的另类媒体选择站在建制派的对立面，在当时发挥了强大的社会效应。1990年年底，由于录影带滞销、发行困难等原因，绿色小组主干成员四散（林丽云，2020，页72）。随之而来的问题是，这一批时长约4000小时纪录台湾社会变迁的影像，应该如何保存，才能为后代留下这些历史的纪录呢？

关于绿色小组影像保存问题的公开探讨最早来自台湾《联合报》。1994年，《联合报》民意论坛版块有一篇以《电影资料馆收藏待加强：濒危史料、最近影片都该并重》为题的投书，认为“像‘绿色小组’、‘第三映像’等另类媒体的作品，亦是重要史料，也应该设法收藏”（迟延奇，1994）。虽然曾寄希望于国家机构，但由于国家电影资料馆首重剧情片，还时常面临经费预算不足的情况，对于这些另类影像的保存，自然也是有心无力¹³。1993至1998这六年，绿色小组录影带几经流转。1996年，台南艺术大学音像学院创校院长井迎瑞开始提议由南艺大来保存这批影片。最终，由于井迎瑞个人的思想特质¹⁴及其曾任职于国家电影资料馆的专业履历深受绿色小组成员信任¹⁵，1998年，这批绿色小组录影带终于落户南艺大的片库。2006年，南艺大在范巽绿教育部次长任上申请到了将录影带进行数字化的经费（林信谊，2016，页271），最终在“国立台南艺术大学典藏1986—1997年历史影像修复与开放使用计划”的支持下，绿色小组社会运动纪录片于2013年透过网络公诸于世。井迎瑞在访谈时曾表示，“‘绿色小组’对他而言不仅是一个台湾解严前后社会运动的记录者，更是一个集体，一种朴素的精神面貌，代表了台湾追寻改变的年少时期”（林丽云，2020，页72）。解严之后，“历史重建”成为台湾社会和文化的一大工程（邱贵芬，2003，页151），异于解严前大多数纪录片都只反映官方立场的情况，庶民的声音与身影成为解严后台湾纪录片发展重心（萧智帆，2014，页28-29）。



图二 井迎瑞于 2021 年获颁台湾国影中心影视听遗产保存贡献奖

主动寻求以绿色小组社会运动纪录片为代表的新闻纪录影片，以此建构台湾的新闻电影史，这条馆藏发展路线是南艺大在社会转型期建立教育型电影档案馆的选择。一方面异于国家电影档案馆首重剧情片的影像保存路线，另一方面也代表了教育型电影档案馆为“历史重建”所做的努力。随后的馆藏拓展，包括台视新闻片、《南进台湾》系列，以及近年来对以录像带为载体的家庭影像的探索，皆延续此一方向。其共同特征在于与国家电影档案馆以整理、保存剧情片为核心的模式形成区隔，转而关注那些被主流叙事忽视、但具有深层历史意义的纪录片与新闻影片，旨在建构一个完整的“台湾历史影像资料库”。在此过程中，一种“去中心化”的电影保存价值取向也由此初步确立。



图三 馆藏于台南艺术大学的“绿色小组”新闻片
来源：<https://greenteam.tnnua.edu.tw/>

（二）教育型电影档案馆所形成的技术、文化与教学典范

截至 2021 年，南艺大教育型电影档案馆所处理的电影档案依来源可分为以下三种：第一种为档案馆主动搜集所得的成批次的电影档案，如“台视新闻纪录片”、“台影公司新闻专辑”、“绿色小组社会运动纪录片”、“日治时期政令宣传片”、纪录片《刘必稼》（陈耀圻，1967）、《沙鹭之钟》（清水宏，1943），也包括在田野调查中挖掘得到的首部台语片《薛平贵与王宝钏》（何基明，1956）。第二种则是研究人员通过行动研究的方法主动拍摄或搜集的影片，并在此基础上积累建立的影片资料库，如“乐生影像资料库”（平烈浩，2010）、“反迫迁行动影像资料库”（翁倩文，2019）、“家庭电影资料库”（吴怡葶，2016；Hsieh, 2018）和原住民影像资料库（吴心苹，2015；潘昱帆，2020）等等。第三种则为透过计划委托的形式获得的修复案，如受台湾陆军官校委托的“蒋中正总统训示录音磁带”、与台湾中影合作修复的《我的美丽与哀愁》（1995，陈国富）、《在陌生城市》（1994，尹祺）以及与国影中心合作修复的《丈夫的秘密》（1960，林抃秋，原名《错恋》）等等。

在保存与研究上述电影物件的实践过程中，南艺大教育型电影档案馆形成了三种与教育有关的典范，分别为技术典范、文化典范与教学典范。

教育型电影档案馆所建构的“技术典范”，主要体现在其独特的保存理念与技术实践上，涵盖了对电影冲印厂的保存、建立胶片数字修复的低成本流程，以及录影带修复与数字化转制方法的探索。这一典范并非试图在技术层面与国家级专业机构相媲美，而是从教育出发，发展出具有自身特色的、面向实践的技术体系。

首先，南艺大提出了要对胶片洗印厂进行保存，强调已经被淘汰的模拟时代的影像技术在当代仍具意义，可以以此为“数字不可靠”这一议题提供解方。具体来看，南艺大分别于2011和2014年接收了大都影业（1963-2011）和台北影业（1980-）的部分冲印设备。其后，研究生郭荣平（2018）和廖国宏（2021）分别借由硕士研究项目的机会，重组了大都冲印厂赠与南艺大的洗片机、清洁机和印片机，以及台北影业的一台生产于1976年的Allen 16mm黑白胶片冲洗机，让南艺大具备了胶片自主冲印的能力。其次，在胶片的数字修复流程上，教育型电影档案馆在资源有限的条件下，力图同时兼顾教育功能与低成本运作。例如曹静宜（2024）在《影像的再制与追寻：以日治时期台北工业学校电影胶卷之逐格拍摄与保存为例》的硕士论文¹⁶中，就以“人工逐格拍摄”这一极不寻常的扫描方式，转制与保存了日据时期台北工学校（今台北科技大学）建筑师千千岩助太郎于1930年代在台湾拍摄的16毫米黑白无声反转片。最后，教育型电影档案馆近年来着眼于录像带这一常用于家庭电影和业余影片创作者受众的媒介，通过对录像带的整饬、保存修复¹⁷，来恢复承载于录像带中的民间记忆和业余电影。

相较于将技术应用作为核心的传统档案机构，南艺大的教育型电影档案馆在实践中仅将“技术”视为众多教育内容中的一个环节，而非保存工作的主要手段。在此架构下，教育型电影档案馆将“文化生产、文化保存与文化诠释”作为电影档案馆工作的最终目标，强调影像不仅是需要被保存的对象，更是一种建构社会论述、复振族群记忆与推动历史对话的媒介。在文化生产方面，南艺大以影像资料库的建设作为纪录片拍摄的替代性路径，认为相较于纪录片这样一个单方面的资讯提供方式，建构资料库可以在影片的不断累积中反映多元的阶段性观点，避免单一诠释力的出现，逐步将集体记忆与对历史的诠释权从国家机器手中夺回（井迎瑞，2010，页80-83）。在文化保存层面，教育型电影档案馆通过保存原住民历史影像，将电影修复工作提升至文化复建的高度。如潘昱帆（2020）曾整理与修复1990年代部落耆老所拍摄的家庭电影，并建立“卡大地音像纪录资料库”，这些影像不仅见证了部落祭典与生活方式，更因其内在视角而获得极高的文化可信度。透过影像保存重建族群记忆，为电影档案保存注入文化政治意义，也回应了转型正义与原住民主体性建立的时代诉求。在文化诠释方面，教育型电影档案馆通过“影像重返”策略，将历史影像带回原始语境，引导当代观众重新理解历史。最具代表性的案例为“重返雾社”活动¹⁸，围绕日本总督府1943年在雾社拍摄的殖民宣传片《沙鸞之钟》，井迎瑞及其团队历经三阶段重返雾社：从最初的影像放映和与耆老对话，到纪录当下村落生活，再到透过旧田野影像的再利用探讨当代原住民的生活处境。在此过程中，《沙鸞之钟》的修复活动因“重返”而逐渐累积为一个多层次的文化档案库，成为连接历史与当代的重要桥梁。

最后，教育型电影档案馆的“教学典范”体现在其独特的教育理念与教学实践中，主要可分为两大面向：一是强调实践导向的“做中学”教学方法，二是以“受压迫者教育学”为理念支撑的批判性教育策略，两者共同构成了南艺大在电影档案保存教育上的核心教育哲学。“做中学”源自美国哲学家约翰·杜威（John Dewey）提出的经验主义教育思想，强调学生通过参与实际行动获得真实而

深刻的学习经验。在南艺大的教学语境中，这一理念被具体落实为学生必须参与¹⁹影像田野、抢救、修复、保存及典藏等完整流程，借由亲身劳动获得对影像生命历程的全面理解。这种强调行动优先的教育模式不仅是一种能力培养的路径，更是学生与档案之间建立伦理连结的重要环节。“做中学”的理念早期在南艺大的纪录片教学中实践，并随着“行动研究”的引入，逐步发展为“过程的美学”与“工具论”的教育结构。这一理念随后扩展到档案馆教学中，成为推动产学合作、资料库建构、媒材修复等行动的核心方法论。另一方面，教育型电影档案馆的教学也深受巴西教育家保罗·弗雷勒（Paulo Freire）提出的“受压迫者教育学”这一理念的影响。这一理念主张教育应成为解放的工具，帮助受压迫者意识到自身处境，并通过行动改变社会结构。如在“抢救家庭记忆大作战”这个以修复普通民众记忆为主要目的的录影带修复工作坊中，家庭电影所反映的不同于主流媒体的观点借由影片修复行动本身被展现，这些庶民观点与记忆的重生让工作坊的参与者逐渐体悟到自己作为普通人的重要性，长久以来主流媒体对普通人的边缘化与压迫得以被解放，个人的主体性在这样的转化过程中得以建立（Hsieh, 2018）。

通过对技术典范、文化典范与教学典范的分析，可以看出教育型电影档案馆在电影保存实践中逐步发展出一套独具特色的运作逻辑。这三种典范不仅反映了该机构在技术应用、文化实践与教育方法上的多重定位，更构成了去中心化电影保存模式的核心内容。与国家主导、集中化的保存体系不同，这种以教育机构为主体、以实践为路径的保存方式，强调在地行动与社会参与，展现出保存工作的开放性与文化能动性，其生成逻辑深受台湾特殊的社会语境与关键实践者个人理念的影响。正是在这种脉络下，教育型电影档案馆得以成为去中心化保存模式中的关键节点，也使其在华语地区的电影保存图景中呈现出与众不同的面貌。

（三）教育型电影档案馆理念与实践的转移

南艺大教育型电影档案馆所积累的理论与实践借由一种极富传奇色彩的经历转移到了中国大陆²⁰。2009年，南艺大井迎瑞老师在云南做田野期间，偶然获捐了1000余本被遗弃在贵州人民剧院的35毫米胶片拷贝，其内容涵盖新闻简报、科教片、剧情片等等（Xiong, 2019），生产年代大都为20世纪70年代。其中500本胶片通过海运运抵南艺大，作为教学用途；其余一半在井迎瑞的积极协调下，最终由厦门大学接收。2015年，厦大校方批准了音像文献中心的成立，厦大由此成为大陆地区第一所开始在电影保存与修复领域进行深耕的高校。

音像文献中心成立后第一阶段的工作是想方设法充实馆藏，以达到一个电影档案馆应有的体量。初期团队的主要成员为井迎瑞、李晓红和张艾弓三位老师。2014年7月起，他们依次拜访了珠江电影集团、西部电影集团、中国电影资料馆西安电影资料库、潇湘电影集团、北京电影洗印厂和广西电影集团。此次走访的目标一方面是普查电影胶片拷贝在中国的保存和分布情况，另一方面也积极游说，希望能够让一些无法被妥善保存的胶片，能够寄存或者捐赠于厦大²¹。目前厦大的音像文献中心的主要馆藏包括贵州省电影公司拷贝、福建省电影公司委托馆藏电影资料、厦门市电影公司拷贝、福州市电影公司拷贝、原南京军区政治部厦门文化工作站拷贝和从中国电影集团北京电影洗印分公司购得的影胶片洗印生产线一条（含胶片洗印机、鉴定机、印片机、多台倒片机等）。



图四 2020 年 5 月 28 日音像文献中心团队在福州市电影放映发行公司清点库房胶片

2015 年 11 月，文献中心举办了机构成立以来第一次展览，题为“新富春山居图：两岸影像·媒介与历史记忆特展”。此次展览的名称灵感来自于元代画家黄公望的《富春山居图》，由于此画的两部分《剩山图》与《无用师卷》分别典藏于浙江省博物馆和国立故宫博物院，且曾于 2011 年 6 月在台北合璧展出。井迎瑞以此为喻，希望分隔两地的贵州影片也能在两校师生的合作修复下，有朝一日合璧展出。

结合前文描述，我们可以看出，教育型电影档案馆所体现出的“台湾经验”，最重要的部分并不是在技术上如何复刻一个标准的电影档案馆，而是借由电影档案馆中的工作、电影保存的行动本身所达成的文化行动与社会关怀。2015 年的首次策展生动地体现了厦大音像文献中心在初步被构想为教育型电影档案馆时，其文化典范所立足的价值基础。在厦大音像文献中心成立之始，井迎瑞与厦大洽谈有关音像文献中心的必要性时，就认为这个机构一旦成立，其文化企图心应该着眼于两岸的交流与沟通，希望结合厦门位居两岸要津的地缘特色，维护并保存海峡两岸的音像文献，以视听语言书写中华历史²²。如果我们对这种策略进一步加以审视可以发现，一方面，在目前中国大陆官方的政治氛围下，将两岸关系、对台研究与文献中心的建设相联结，的确足以成为关说校方对档案馆予以支持之坚强理由。另一方面，作为台湾外省人第二代，希望两岸彼此之间能持续地从对抗走向对话，年轻一代相互了解并摒弃敌意，也确乎出于井迎瑞的本心²³。但实际上，随着两岸的政治情势在 2019 年后逐渐走向紧张，交流互访活动大幅减少，建立上述文化典范的理想很大程度上成为了一种“空洞的能指”²⁴。



图五 厦门大学音像文献中心

在一定程度上,能否以影像档案为基础,在不受主流意识形态话语干扰的前提下,开展具有文化与社会阐释意义的研究,取决于社会的开放程度以及统治阶层对公共领域的容忍度。从台湾的经验来看,无论是南艺大教育型电影档案馆决策者基于个人理念所推动的保存实践,还是其所建构的“做中学”式教学典范,都与民主化所确立的价值取向密切相关,并得益于民主制度所提供的相对宽松的文化空间。简言之,这种“宽松”体现在对异于主流意识形态观点的包容。相较之下,中国大陆的文化场域受制于其强大的主体性政治力量,不仅难以效仿南艺大所代表的、具有反主流意识形态色彩的学术路径,即便是在学术领域中对一些较为敏感的社会与文化现象进行独立阐释,其结果也往往陷入一种二元结构之中:要么被纳入主体政治力量的轨道,成为其意识形态体系的延伸;要么被视为对立势力而遭到边缘化乃至压制。在这样的环境中,阐释社会与文化的权力往往并不掌握在个体研究者手中,而是受到宏观政治结构的规训与限定。因此,即便只是试图在文化诠释中提出一家之言,学者有时也需借助“秘传式”²⁵的言说策略加以表达;或通过不断的自我审查与意识形态上的“安全阉割”,以避免落入“被收编”或“被清除”的困境。正因如此,厦大音像文献中心的成员普遍认为,台湾的制度环境与文化氛围更有利于教育型电影档案馆推行其教育理念,乃至表达其潜在的政治立场²⁶。正是由于这种文化空间上的差异,厦大在尝试移植台湾经验时,不得不面临制度性掣肘,并最终倾向于采取去政治化的策略,最终迈向一种以技术为导向的电影保存发展进度路。

2020年12月,音像文献中心与爱奇艺合作成立“电影修复联合实验室”。爱奇艺作为网络视频平台,一直以提供高清正版的影片为目标。就影片的质量来说,此前流媒体平台上可观看到的老电影多为早期使用胶转磁技术得到的画面,其解析度已无法满足现今观众的需求。因此从爱奇艺的角度出发,如果能以老影片的胶片介质为基础,直接对胶片进行数位化并修复,可以获得更高质量的影片解析度,满足当下观众的要求。而音像文献中心作为刚刚建立的电影保存机构,已经具备了一定程度的胶片馆藏规模,但苦于没有经费支援,无力开展进一步的研究与教育活动。从这个角度上,双方的合作一拍即合。迄今为止,双方已签订了三期合约,共修复了包括《小兵张嘎》(崔嵬,1965)、《东方红》(王苹、李恩杰,1965)、《李双双》(鲁韧,1962)、《穆桂英挂帅》(徐苏灵,1958)、《香魂女》(1993,谢飞)、《一江春水向东流》(蔡楚生、郑君里,1947)、《黑骏马》(谢飞,1995)、《刘巧儿》(伊琳,1956)和《上甘岭》(沙蒙、林杉,1956)在内的九部影片。具体来说,胶片的原始素材由音像文献中心负责提供,同时负责胶片的清洁与物理修复,接著通过胶片扫描仪对其进行数字化,所得到的数字文件首先由爱奇艺公司研发的Zoom AI工具进行人工智能修复,再由音像文献中心修复师利用PF Clean与Davinci Resolve软件进行人工精修及色彩的校对。在整个合作过程中,爱奇艺对修复提供资金支持,并具有选定具体修复片目和确定最终验收标准的权利,同时也拥有修复成品的线上播映权,厦大一方则拥有冠名与学术放映的权利。

上述以技术发展为先的发展路径其实与教育型电影档案馆在台湾的发展理念与实践方式并不一样,这一度令井迎瑞颇感担忧²⁷,他认为只注重技术典范的移植与学习就欠缺了对台湾经验的全观性思考,这样的移植或许会导致机构的发展逐渐偏离原本设立时所订定的方向。由此,厦大音像文献中心目前的发展显得有些主客易位,变成了纯粹技术导向型的电影档案馆,虽然这也是一种无可奈何之举²⁸。

此外,厦大音像文献中心曾分别在2019年、2020年、2021年和2023年举办过四次与电影保存及修复相关的论坛。论坛将电影保存作为一个学术命题进行研讨,具体内容涉及电影修复、影片策展、胶片技术等在国内电影保存修复领域尚未发展成熟的议题,同时也为国内电影修复从业者、博物馆策展人、电影创作者提供了一个能够定期交流的线下平台,借此讨论电影保存修复和产业发展中的新兴与前沿问题,促进该领域内公共机构、产业界与学界的三方合作,汇合三重不同视角相互启发,

共同促进中国电影保存修复事业与产业的发展（韦怡舟、张艾弓，2023）。

四 大陆民间的电影保存脉络

斯莱德（Slide,1992,pp.45-60）曾为我们勾勒出美国电影文化资产保存运动中，民间藏家与电影收藏机构重要但又微妙的互动关系：民间藏家可以为电影收藏机构提供丰富的馆藏来源，尽可能去接触多的民间电影收藏家对保存本国电影文化资产大有裨益。目前大陆地区散落于民间的电影馆藏，很大程度上与胶片电影时代国家对电影的管理政策有关。

由于电影媒材的特殊性，当一部电影制作完成后，须以原始底片为基础，经由洗印厂的复制和洗印得到若干放映拷贝，这些拷贝会配发全国各省、市级电影发行放映公司，进入到全国各地的电影放映发行网络²⁹。早在1954年，中共就对电影放映单位较少，很多地方的民众无法看到电影的现象深有体察，开始从政策上进行介入，责令主管机关应该加强对放映员的帮助与照顾，尽快健全全国、尤其是农村地区的放映网络（Li,2023,p.45），使放映员成为民众中的“优秀宣传员”（佚名，1954）³⁰。文化主管部门也须对于电影放映工作切实进行检查和监督，进行统一的有计划的管理（佚名，1955）。对电影放映的重视也的确取得了成效。举例来说，1985年，仅河南一省就有11259个农村放映队；1986年，河南农民人均看电影34.7次（詹沙浪、陈墨，2011，页102）；截至1992年，中国全国建立了县以上的发行机构3000个，放映单位14万个，全国的发行、放映从业人员达到了50万（胡健、陈墨，2011，页418）。



图六 哈佛大学 Li Jie 于 2023 年发表的专著

前文已述，中国电影资料馆作为国家档案机构，自1958年成立起就开始著手收集中国的电影档案，后续也逐步出台各项法规，赋予中国电影资料馆依法收集、整理、保管和利用电影艺术档案的权力。即采强制手段，规定电影摄制单位应在影片取得电影公映许可证后三个月内向中国电影资料馆移交其所规定的各项电影档案与资料（国家广播电影电视总局，2010）。因此，当一部电影在全国范围内完成其流通过程后，中国电影资料馆会依法接收该影片的原始底片、声片等关键且优质的档案材料³¹，而其他用于放映的拷贝则由制片厂或各省、市级电影发行放映公司负责回收。然而，自20世纪90年代以来，随着电影产业化改革的深入推进，这些制片厂及地方发行放映公司的职能逐步弱化，机构地位日益虚置，其馆藏的大量电影拷贝也在此过程中逐步脱离体制，流散至民间。

此外值得注意的是，中国的剧情片与新闻片分别由两个机构保管：前者归属于中国电影资料馆，后者则归于中央新闻纪录电影制片厂。两者共同构成了对中国大陆影像资源的事实性垄断，且迄今为止均未表现出对公众开放获取的意愿³²。这种“分别垄断”的体制格局，在很大程度上阻碍了电影档案的整合性研究与公共利用。

相较之下，尽管民间所保留的影片呈现出零散、不系统的特点，但在某些情况下反而保留了更为完整的历史片段。更重要的是，民间馆藏不受官方体制的管控，从制度层面为推动影像资料的开放获取提供了现实可能。从这个意义上看，针对流散于民间的电影档案的搜集行动，不仅是一种文化保存实践，也可视为对国家电影档案资源垄断现状的温和反抗³³。

目前，厦门大学音像文献中心已与国内多个私人电影藏家建立联系并展开初步合作，彼此间以新闻

片交流为主。该中心试图通过保存与修复这些影片，揭示二十世纪六至七十年代中国历史影像的多元面貌，并探索其作为历史书写新来源的可能性。



图七 民间电影藏家及其电影拷贝库

五 结论

本研究以教育型电影档案馆为核心概念，尝试梳理其在台湾发展成熟并迁移至中国大陆的过程，进而探讨“去中心化”电影保存模式在华语世界中的可能性。在个案研究的基础上，本文从社会背景、机构理念与实践路径等多个维度展开分析，呈现出教育型电影档案馆在不同政治与文化语境中所面临的结构性机遇与制度性张力。

首先，台湾解除戒严后所带来的社会解放与民主转型，构成了教育型电影档案馆得以发展的重要社会背景。在此背景下，纪录片教育成为介入社会变革的重要手段，亦成为电影保存理念建构的基础。从纪录社会运动到保存民众记忆，南艺大逐渐建立起一种“纪录—保存—教育”三位一体的实践路径，使得电影保存不再仅是技术操作或文献管理，而是被赋予了深刻的文化关怀与社会责任。

其次，教育型电影档案馆理念在南艺大与厦门大学之间的迁移与转化，也揭示出两地在制度结构与文化环境上的深层差异。台湾相对开放的政治与学术空间，使南艺大能在文化诠释与社会参与层面发挥更大能动性；而在中国大陆，教育型电影档案馆的发展则受限于国家对电影资源的高度统制管理与意识形态规训。尽管如此，厦门大学音像文献中心仍试图在官方体制之外开展自主的保存实践，其对新闻片的重点关注，也构成了对国家档案资源垄断格局的一种象征性突围。

最后，在国家长期实行电影集中管理体制的背景下，中国大陆民间的电影保存实践愈显珍贵。虽然国家档案机构通过制度化手段掌控了大部分高质量的影片资源，但“分别垄断”的结构性安排也限制了公众获取与研究的可能性。反观散落民间的影像资料，尤其是新闻片，不仅呈现出丰富的历史细节，更在体制之外提供了更灵活的开放获取潜能。厦门大学音像文献中心近年来与多位私人藏家展开合作，借助技术手段保存与修复这些影片，初步展现出一种去中心化路径下电影保存工作的社会价值与文化意义。

综上所述，教育型电影档案馆的理念不仅为华语地区的电影保存提供了超越国家主导路径的另一种可能，也揭示了电影保存工作与社会文化之间更为紧密的互动关系。在国家中心主义仍占主导地位的背景下，虽然来自教育机构与民间的保存实践力量尚显薄弱，但它们正在逐步勾勒出一个更开放、多元且富有批判意识的影像保存图景。

注释

- 1 当时被誉为“全国唯一电影周刊”
- 2 孔颖达所编《五经正义》中有云：“宫正于宫中特宜慎火，故修火禁”，后即以失慎为失火。
- 3 即我们所熟知的 MOMA's Film Library，“保藏”应当是对 preservation 或 archive 一词的翻译，相当具有时代特色。目前香港仍然使用“保育”一词来作为 film preservation 的翻译，与“保藏”颇为类似。
- 4 国立电影馆由中国电影教育会接受中央拨款六万元设立，专演教育、文化建设标准电影（佚名，1935）。
- 5 毛泽东在抗战时期就曾系统性地盘点了文艺工作与革命的关系，并指出：“要使文艺很好地成为整个革命机器的一个组成部分”（毛泽东，1942/1991，页 848）。
- 6 “我们到了国际电影资料馆联合会才知道，资料馆的概念不完全像我们原来的想像。我们理解的电影资料馆基本上就是，像苏联社会主义国家的，都是国家办的，规模大，人也多，摆开架势干。”（龚澹、陈墨，2011，页 324-325）
- 7 当时人们还没有把具有历史纪录价值的影片及其相关资料提升到档案的高度来认识，没有将专门从事收集和保管影片及其相关资料的工作与档案工作相联系（赵童生，2005，页 37），这便是为何当时这样一个国家电影档案机构被命名为“资料馆”而非“档案馆”的原因。
- 8 据曾任中国电影资料馆主要负责人的伊明回忆：“后来我感觉（收集影片的）力度不够，不像在“文化大革命”时期收集的那么痛快。“文革”时期，这个收集的事情一是有总理批示，而是江青也重视（江青虽是反革命，但那时她是“四人帮”主要成员，在电影界“说一不二”），谁敢不给？当然人家也不愿意给，但不像现在这么明目张胆地敷衍你。”（伊明、陈墨，2008/2011，页 51）。
- 9 厦门大学在修复影片《一江春水向东流》时发现，这部上映于 1947 年的影片经由 1956 年中影公司“重映‘五四’以来有代表性的优秀影片”活动而得到整理及复映之后，时长从原本的七小时被剪为三小时。经进一步对比考证发现，被整理后的影片音轨存在替换或删除状况，如张老爹的儿子由“在重庆政府”被替换为“做救护工作”（见影片第 51 分 44 秒左右）。
- 10 “过去所拍摄的纪录片，正是现在要保存的历史影像，而现在所拍摄的纪录片，也将成为未来历史影像的凭借……影像维护之于音像纪录，实为一体之两面，更是建构历史视野与批判观点的重要基础”。（音像纪录研究所教育宗旨，2020）
- 11 当时的名称为“动员戡乱时期自由地区增额中央民意代表选举”（李三冲，2020，页 49）
- 12 老三台（或三台）指的是台湾最早创办的 3 家电视台，分别是台湾电视公司（1962 年 10 月 10 日开播）、中国电视公司（1969 年 10 月 31 日开播）以及中华电视公司（1971 年 10 月 31 日开播），
- 13 当时国家电影资料馆保存的影像介质以胶片为主，而绿色小组影像的媒材格式多样，包括了 Beta、VHS、Betacam、Hi8 等等，多属家庭规格，虽然有价格低廉、方便携带之优点，但繁多的媒材种类也为保存带来了相当大的问题。
- 14 1980 年代井迎瑞曾在美国留学，在此期间他将第三电影的概念引入台湾。在台湾留学生 1980 年代出版的海外刊物《台湾思潮》中，他曾以李再行（1983，页 92）为笔名发表题为《反好莱坞的第三电影》的文章，希望将第三电影理论中“把电影看成一种武器，把拍电影看成一种政治行动”之理念引介回台湾。1996 年，井迎瑞结束在国家电影资料馆担任馆长的八年任期（1989-1996）时曾接受采访并表示：“其实我一直想记录台湾社会的变迁，让生活在台湾的民众拥有历史感，用影像来呈现台湾社会的发展和过程……我记得在我念书的时候，要找国片是很难的一件事，如果要找高达（戈达尔）的资料，却多的不得了。或许这正是第三世界国家的困境，被殖民的文化，总是拾人牙慧，没有属于自己文化的价值体系（萧菊贞，1996）。”
- 15 1996 年国立台南艺术大学成立以后，“音像记录研究所”所长井迎瑞建议我们把录影带搬过去。我们本来对公家机关都不太放心，一直都是这样，但是因为信任老井，我们去看了片库以后，感觉收藏空间非常专业、片库种种设备都好，南艺大又是新学校，比较没有包袱，我们就同意了（王智章，2016，页 67）。
- 16 脆弱的胶卷片基已无法透过机械带动的方式数位化，因而必须采用“人工逐格拍摄”的方式进行影像的转制与保存。面临无可参考之人工逐格拍摄技术前例及无经费支援等困境，本研究仍尝试结合研究者在校所学及过去工作经验，分别以数位（数位单眼相机）和类比（使用传统底片相机及电影中间负片）二种方式进行人工逐格拍摄，其目的在于探讨活动影像的永续保存，以及找出更多关于保存的可能性。
- 17 来自笔者对井迎瑞的访谈：“南艺就要做教育，我们没有钱啊，我们没有人啊。我常讲我们是路边摊，可是呢，我们虽然是路边摊，可是我们要做到让人家觉得这是一个了不起的路边摊，那我们就要走另外一条国影

中心不会走的路，就是民间以及新闻。”“每一部录影带就是一个文本，在家庭发生跟社会有关系的一些家庭事件，用家庭电影写的台湾近代史。”（韦怡舟，2021）

18 这一案例奠定了“教育型电影档案馆”最核心的价值取向：“第三世界国家所建构的电影资料馆是表达一种记忆 memory、一种认同 identity、一种抵抗 resistance，其存在的目的是为了重建主体 reconstruct of subjectivity，所以第三世界国家的电影资料馆是为了推展其去殖民 de-colonization 工程，这时我们的提法是：“在后殖民语境中的电影资料馆”，或是这样说：在后殖民语境中的电影资料馆，其存在的目的是为了推展去殖民工作。第一世界国家所建构的电影资料馆是表达一种荣耀 glory、是一种欢庆 pleasure、是一种治理 governance，因此它存在的目的是为了“维系建制”perpetuation of status quo。（井迎瑞，2015，页 2-3）”

19 例如，在抢救台视新闻影片的实践中，教师明确指出，只有亲身参与抢救与保存工作的学生，才有资格进一步使用这些素材从事研究。

20 这段经历的具体内容请酌参《教育型电影档案馆理念与实践之研究》（韦怡舟，2021）。

21 来自笔者对张艾弓的访谈：“其实这个初衷很简单，就是抢救，救亡。因为经过井老师的描述，我们连续走访了一些机构，确实觉得有一种紧迫感，当时就是叫抢救，跟时间赛跑啊，要把各个电影发行放映公司，还有民间的即将流失的、被当做垃圾处理的这些胶片拷贝，赶快给他拉回来，抢救回来。”（韦怡舟，2021）

22 来自井迎瑞自制影片中关于贵州影片迁徙故事部分的个人旁白：目前两校师生正合力进行修复，希望有一天能合璧展出，更希望有一天能让它们回到贵州，讲述它们的奇幻旅程。所以我们的行动不是简单的淘宝，而是一种抢救记忆、化腐朽为神奇的再生过程。我们能从中淘出多少宝都是其次，因为我们要教学生的不是市场的概念，而是一种高度，一种态度，一种与历史相处的方法。

23 来自笔者对井迎瑞的访谈：“我们（的）上一代，对于中国情怀他（们）是毫无悬念的，他（们）就是要回老家。那我们下一代呢？那就是台湾的情怀，他也毫无悬念，中国对他们来说是相当遥远的。那我们这一代呢？我们承袭了上一代（带来的）中国的传统历史文化，但是我们又有自己在台湾生长的三、四十年的生活经验，所以这两个元素我都必须要接受、继承，同时呢要让他们融合在一块儿。”（韦怡舟，2021）

24 但井迎瑞并没有放弃这种理想，在《音像文献学学科建设与电影研究：以〈微影片中的大历史——“学甲上白礁”祭典〉为例》一文中，他将《学甲慈济宫上白礁祭典》相关影像的修复与保存作为典型案例，试图以此搭建福建漳州白礁慈济宫与台湾学甲慈济宫之间的文化联结。（井迎瑞，2023）

25 来自笔者对张艾弓的访谈：“我现在练就一种战法，学生只可意会，无法言传，比较抽象。懂的人自然会懂……比如电影史，多讲讲从卡里加里到希特勒，从学术上说，百无禁忌”（韦怡舟，2021）

26 来自笔者对张艾弓的访谈：“嗯……怎么说呢，就是井老师，他们所处的那种状况，那种制度，那种文化，它是非常有益于（施行自己的教育理想），非常不同于我们，其实从我们的角度我们更愿意的是去意识形态化，去政治化，我更多的是把它看做的是一个中性的东西。我现在不愿意跟任何……就是在大陆这个语境里面……不跟任何左……他妈的……左在一起，我觉得真正的左派就是永远是批判的”（韦怡舟，2021）

27 来自笔者对井迎瑞的访谈：“厦大是移植（南艺大的经验），欠缺的是前面发展的历史，思想的脉络，所以基础不牢，根基不深，造成了很多理解上的落差。甚至有的时候（令人）感觉到，有一些突兀。因为他没有先前的这一段根基，我又因为不是长时间的在那里耕耘，所以有一点就是说，差三落四的，导致过去这一段台湾发展的经验无法系统性地被讨论、被诉说、被叙述，导致于听到一个概念，又发展出另外一些东西，这个有点有一点突兀，而且有一点点揠苗助长。”（韦怡舟，2021）

28 来自笔者对张艾弓的访谈：“我们这是纯粹没有办法的办法，否则（经费）就是零，知道吗？那对于同学来说，学了一门技艺，开设了一门课程，那相应的我们也给一些津贴，让大家长一些见识啊，不管怎么著也算是有利好吧。”（韦怡舟，2021）

29 “如果最优秀的影片不实际地有组织地深入到群众中去，那么，它也就不能够达到应有的教育效果，每部苏维埃影片都应适时地在我国每一个地区里放映。”（刘竞，1950）

30 露天电影曾是中国几代人观看电影的主要方式。1964 年曾有歌颂露天电影放映员的小诗：“是谁身披彩霞踏朝霞 / 斗志昂扬上征途 / 越岭翻山又跨渡 / 请问欲往何处 / 我是人民的放映员 / 奔赴深山密林处 / 为了银幕光辉遍地明 / 足迹儿印满千村万户 / 不达险峰不止步。”（李道新，2006，页 100）

31 “电影资料馆……派人到各处收集拷贝……我们到省（电影）公司挑最好的，留下来，包括素材。”（田云汗、陈墨，2011，页 165）

32 “库存影片中有大量日伪时期‘满映’和‘汪伪’拍摄的影片，这批影片具有特殊的历史背景和现实用途，

极为重要。所以，日本多少年来始终千方百计、不择手段的收集这批影片，以宣扬‘大东亚共荣’的军国主义思想，抹杀侵华战争的历史事实。周恩来总理明确指示，对此类绝密资料影片一定要确保其绝对安全。”（张静，2013，页1）

33 来自笔者对张艾弓的访谈：“用正面表达，我们是叫做补充啊，用不客气一点的表达呢，我们也不能叫反抗，我们叫突围啊。突破垄断啊，突破这种资料的狭窄的这种单一来源……我们更多的是想利用民间的这种海量的这种资源，形成一个网络啊，将来能不能建立一数据库啊，我们从这里面去挖掘这种资料、研究物件。”（韦怡舟，2021）

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‘Home Movies and Archives Offer Diverse Narrative Samples for Understanding Our Era’

— A Conversation with Director Gu Xue on the FamilyLens Archive

Interviewer: Ann Lyuwenyu ZHANG 张吕文煜

Author’s Note: On February 17th, 2025, I conducted an interview with director Gu Xue 顾雪 regarding FamilyLens Film Archive 家庭影像馆, a family image archive located in Songzhuang, Beijing. During our conversation, Gu Xue spoke about the founding intentions behind the archive, her reflections on family images, her creative practices, and the afterlives of archives. This article presents a curated selection of content from that interview.



Gu Xue at Songzhuang in 2025

‘Family is not an easy topic to discuss. It is private and complex, often obscured by memory and veiled by emotion. As a medium of recording and expression, moving image has the capacity to inadvertently capture traces of the home, allowing feelings that are overlooked or difficult to articulate to slowly emerge. This emergence relates not only to personal experience but also to the spectator’s present moment. The act of gazing an image serves as an opportunity to rediscover one’s own identity and circumstances.

Home video possesses a dual nature: it is at once an old archive concerning the past and a new archive continuously generated through viewing and reinterpretation. When we look at an old photograph or a segment of a home video, we are, in fact, engaging in a conversation with the past using a present perspective. This form of viewing is not a static retrospection, but a dynamic act of re-creation—inadvertently, we are weaving our own archive through this act.

Therefore, FamilyLens Archive is a site for storing memory, but also a space where images and reality

can be reconnected. Here, we collect, organize, and present home videos; more importantly, we strive to keep these images in a state of movement and emergence. They collide with present-day experiences—not necessarily forming a complete narrative arc—but they acquire a generative and enduring vitality in being continuously viewed, interpreted, and re-created.’

— Gu Xue, Founder of FamilyLens

Zhang Lyuwenyu (hereafter referred to as Zhang): For the first question, I’d like to ask Director Gu Xue to briefly talk about the founding intention behind the FamilyLens Film Archive. What kinds of moving image do you collect and what curatorial activities have been carried out over the past few years?

Gu Xue (hereafter referred to as Gu): To talk about the FamilyLens archive, we have to go back to why I became interested in the topic of family in the first place, which is related to my role as a director. I’m a documentary filmmaker. When I first started looking for subjects to work on, I went through a process of exploration. Later on, I gradually began to focus on family. For example, *The Choice* 家庭会议 (2019) was about other people’s family dynamics, and by *Nothing News* 庚子新年 (2020), I started filming my own family. On one hand, I was pondering the meaning and definition of family moving images. In the past, people often talked about the privacy of home movies, but I think beyond that, I observed that the family itself or family relationships are also a microcosm of contemporary life. So while I was working on those documentaries, I felt this microcosm through the questions that people asked, and in the follow-up interviews to the documentaries as well—I suddenly realized that family is not simply about familial or personal relationships; it also has a layer that connects to the present moment.

On the other hand, when I started filming my own family, I realized that the camera as a medium made me stand behind it and gaze upon my subjects with new perspectives. The filming process required me to be close to them, to observe, to discover. Even though my relationship with some family members was at times still distant, the process of filming meant that, to some degree, I had to live with them and feel with them. I came to recognize something special about the medium itself, and compared with filming other subjects, filming one’s own family brings different kinds of insight into one’s family members.

So later, I initiated FamilyLens Archive. ‘Lens’ refers to the focal length of the camera lens, but here it also refers to looking at one’s relationship with the world through the lens of ‘family’ and different perspectives. After launching FamilyLens, we began organizing the FamilyLens International Film Festival, returning to my roots in filmmaking. During the process, we saw that many creators also began their filmmaking journey by filming their own families. Later on, we also started running Family Filmmaking Workshops, in order to encourage everyone to film their own families. This is a form of practice—what I just mentioned about the camera as a medium enabling communication and discovery—it’s a form of self-expression. After doing these two projects, we received very positive feedback, and began to consider whether we should create a physical space. Since I’ve always lived in Songzhuang, we thought: why not build a family film archive here? That was probably the beginning of FamilyLens. It cannot be separated from why I became interested in family, and how I came to understand family moving images. While we were doing this work, some scholars came to us, and they also gave us a lot of ideas.

The original intention in founding FamilyLens Archive was to do archival collecting and organizing. This came from my understanding that the family is connected to history and to society. When we read grand narratives of history, we're often reading heroes' stories or state-written histories. What we really hope to collect are personal histories, personal family archives. For example, if someone wants to understand what China was like in 2024, there might be many people who wrote about that year, but what I'm hoping for is the opportunity to describe one's own history—to record one's experience as an individual during this time period. If we go even further back, our grandparents' generation lived through the founding of the People's Republic of China. So when we try to understand history, we might start from our own families and engage in self-writing. In the future, what we may see is a perspective rooted in individual families, rather than a history written by others. We don't write about someone because they are heroes, and I don't write because I'm a researcher, but because I am a family member doing the writing. This is first and foremost a shift in perspective.

Another reason is that if these family images can be archived and organized, maybe in the future a clearer pattern will emerge. We may be able to find photos from the 1950s and 1960s and come to understand how people lived at that time. What I hope for the future of FamilyLens Archive is that it can become a network, connecting people even across different regions. Secondly, it is also a space for sharing and communication. Here, we organize public talks—for example, the recent family archive talk that you participated in. One thing to address here is: why is family a topic worth discussing in the present? I just talked about the historical part, but when it comes to specific families, the speed of changes in China has been incredibly fast. This has created a situation where, for example, my mother's generation and mine—or hers and the generation before hers—have very different values and ways of thinking, due to rapid social transformation. So when we try to understand family, some often still use outdated concepts or frameworks. What the FamilyLens Archive wants to do is explore whether we can find new viewpoints and ways of seeing in the present. That's why, in the public talk series, I wanted to invite people from different art fields who are thinking about the concept of 'family' to come and share their views.

During the National Day holiday last year, we did a series titled 'What Makes a Home?' 何以为家. We invited Thomas Sauvin, who's a foreigner—how does someone from abroad view Chinese family archives? What perspectives does he find in those archives? How does he approach issues of temporality or historicity? These were the topics we discussed. We also invited the artist Wu Gaozhong 吴高钟, whose work is all related to 'home'. He spoke about the emotional connections of home under present conditions—a very fragile state. We wanted to bring in people from different backgrounds to share their perspectives on 'home' and to put forward their emotional responses and feelings about it.

We also organize workshops. I think what's important here is the connection to the general public, which is related to our topic today. The workshops are about creating—discussing how to present old family objects such as photos, videos, and other items, as well as the emotions attached to them—in artistic ways in the present. Whether we're collecting or repurposing, we're always engaged in exploring, recalling, weaving, and expressing emotional connections related to the family. I think real relationships emerge through processes. So in a way, the workshops create a process; we give people a pathway to look back. For example, in archival workshop, participants had to start thinking about which photos to scan, and that initiated a process of sorting and reflection. We've also done a paper-cutting workshop: how do you cut out the emotions of 'home'?

We weren't cutting a specific shape—we were cutting fluid emotions, perhaps returning to a certain situation, feeling something, and cutting out that feeling. We also did a workshop on reusing old items, with artist Zhao Yuzhong 赵玉中. She explored how to repurpose old household items—bottles, jars—using discarded fabric or newspapers to reshape them and give them new vitality. Through workshops like these, we want to bring people back to a particular scene of the home, and then invite them to think, and to create and express.

Then there's film screening. Since we're working with family images, moving image is our point of origin—it is inherently shareable and empathetic. When you watch a film, you naturally make associations. So the FamilyLens Archive occasionally organizes screenings. For example, we've curated a series of screenings on the theme of family. Past themes have included 'mother', and also intergenerational relationships, women, relationship, generational gaps, self-portraits, self-expression—all grouped into different units to help viewers explore these ideas. So at the moment, the main components of FamilyLens are: the FamilyLens archive, FamilyLens International Film Festival, filmmaking workshops, and creative production. In terms of education and production, we've been running workshops since 2022, encouraging everyone to create films about their own families. We're about to reach 100 student films. These are very important, and are also part of our archive's collection. Each one of these films searches for a family story from the perspective of the author, the first person 'I'. Within these works, there are many shared themes, but also many differences. These films together form a viewpoint for exploring emotional relationships with family in the present, and that is a very important part of our archive.

Zhang: My next question is about the forgetting or discarding of family images. Family images are different from other kinds of images because they are highly personal, even intimate. The process of searching for and organizing family images is also a process of self-discovery and re-understanding one's own family, or even history—it is an experience of rediscovery, and also an exploration of the afterlife of images. I think the FamilyLens Archive plays a very important role in this process. Could you talk about your thoughts on this and how you position the FamilyLens Archive in this regard, as well as your reflections on forgotten family images?

Gu: Last time, during Zhao Shuting's 赵姝婷 talk on how family images can become archives, there was an audience member named Ah Zhong who came all the way from Shanghai to attend. He shared that he does family photography work for other people. He once encountered a family where the elderly person had passed away, and all of his belongings were about to be thrown away. The family believed these things were no longer useful, so they just discarded them. He found that many people—perhaps because their relationship with their grandparents wasn't that close—would throw everything out without a second thought. That's one situation: where things are discarded, destroyed. Another forgotten image situation is like some of the photos I have—I can't tell who's who in them anymore, but my mother still knows. Or if my grandparents were still alive, they might still know the contents of those photos. But by the time it gets to my mother's generation, some of that knowledge is already lost. And by the time it gets to me, even more so. So the information and emotion contained in those existing images also gradually disappears along with memory. The entire category of family images is in a state of disappearance.

This year, the theme of our FamilyLens International Film Festival 家庭影像展 is 'Reconstructing Family Memory' 重构家庭记忆, which is a good response to the question you just raised. Those things from the

past—if we don't look back at them—they will simply vanish. So the first concept of reconstruction is about seeing: allowing things that were destroyed or have faded away to be discussed again, to be seen again. The second concept of reconstruction, in my view, is about telling these stories using new methods and from a present-day perspective, so that they form a connection with the present moment. That is our theme this year. So the process of rediscovery and of the afterlife of images, which you just mentioned, requires the viewer to be actively looking at those materials. But more importantly, the afterlife of an archive depends on whether it can establish a connection—whether now or in the future—between the viewer and the archived content. Otherwise, its life may be short. And I think this kind of connection, most importantly, is an emotional one. So in our work on family moving images, one point I've always emphasized is that the act of filmmaking is actually secondary. What comes first is that through this action, this gesture, you are continually approaching that thing—you are coming to understand that emotional connection. That is one of the key aspects of what we're doing with family images.

In addition, we hope that through family moving images, we can generate more understandings and perspectives about the concept of 'home', and create new ways of thinking. This is something that is also always changing. For example, in the present, a person and a cat might constitute a family; the same goes for same-sex couples, or even just a person on their own—these can all be families. I think these ideas are still developing and need to be discussed, so we hope to start from this small point to look back and expand upon the meaning of 'home'.

Zhang: What you've said actually resonates a lot with current academic thinking on media archaeology. Another interesting point, in my view, concerns the nature of family images, which can also be divided into two categories: one is the already-existing family images you find; the other is when you create new family images as a way to form an emotional connection with certain family members, using moving image as a medium to express that connection. I think these are two distinct categories, and both are very interesting. I wonder if you have more thoughts on this?

Gu: I think that's a very good summary. One category is the pre-existing images—photos or archives that already exist. Whether they're about to disappear or be forgotten, they might be seen as the raw materials or the image-object of the family archive. Then there's what we create in the present—new family images that may have some connection to the past. This is a kind of re-creation. Compared to older photographs or other found records, these new images represent the creator's own reflections on familial relationships. So when we think about the presence of the camera in this process, we're also considering *your* role in the film. This is different from other types of filmmaking, where we're more like observers. But in the creation of family films, you are both the director and a family member. So when you watch these films, it's necessarily filled with emotion, and it carries your reflections on the present moment, on family, and on relationships. Once this kind of image is preserved, it will become an archive in the future. And this kind of archival image will express a specific perspective, rather than being isolated or fragmented.

Zhang: My next question is about how to think about the distance between the self and the family archive. When we collect or organize family archives—or even when we are filming family images—it's often a very intimate process. That intimacy is the core of many family films, and also a key motivation for organizing family archives. So how do you think about the director's own position when making family images? Should

one embrace this intimacy, or is it sometimes important to maintain a certain distance from the archive?

Gu: I think this is a really good question, and it goes back to the issue of one's role in the process of creating family images. Because when we first begin making family films, to some degree, it's often driven by an intimate emotion—a kind of impulse. When you pick up the camera, the first thing you do is watch, observe, approach, explore. This process, in a certain sense, is definitely one of closeness. You are approaching the archive, approaching history. But the next stage of filmmaking is editing. And you'll find that in different phases, you play different roles. When you're editing, I believe you need to look at the material with a certain distance. That distance comes from what you discovered during the process of observing, watching, and feeling—and what kind of editing method can make a fleeting thought more concrete. That's why we always say that in the creation of family images, the process itself is very important. It's not like other documentaries, where you begin with a topic or a certain conclusion and then try to capture the subject. On the contrary, the openness of family image-making lies in the creative process itself. You have to heighten your sensitivity, and that process of sensing may also be the process of thinking through the images, thus this phase requires a certain distance. For example, when I look at my mother's photos, when I view them and ask her questions, I'm very close to the images. But when I want to make an art piece—like the one I'm currently making at the FamilyLens Archive. In this project, I chose twenty of her ID photos, from when she was sixteen to when she is nearly seventy years old. In those twenty ID photos, I found the changing appearance of a woman across her life. In the process of making this piece, I needed to take a step back, to observe with a sense of distance, to find a thread of understanding through my own reflection. So in that moment, a certain distance emerges—a distance that carries your thinking and self-reflection. So even though the creative process is one of closeness, it also necessarily involves a certain degree of distance.

Zhang: I know that the FamilyLens Archive has now collected close to one hundred student family films. Among them, there must be many works related to the materiality of moving images—such as analog film, cameras, or DV-format home videos. From this perspective, could I ask you to speak from both a teaching and curatorial standpoint about your understanding of medium specificity and its importance? This is, in fact, also a question related to media archaeology.

Gu: Looking back now, this actually comes up quite frequently in family films. First, there are works that explore one's own family history—family lineage, or personal history. For these kinds of films, old photographs are especially important. When we speak of history, we need some kind of contextual reference or informational foundation, and at those moments we rely on photographs—they provide a certain degree of information for questions like: When was my grandfather born? Where did he work? What did he look like when he got married? And old images offer crucial archival support.

Secondly, for example, in our filmmaking workshop just last week, one student made a film about something very specific: before his parents got married, his mother had a former husband, who later passed away, and they had a child together. The mother, the former husband, and his biological father all worked as miners, and the three of them had a very good relationship. The child from that first marriage is this student's older half-brother. Is that clear?

Zhang: Yes.

Gu: So what is this student's film about? It's about searching for the image of his deceased 'father'. And how did he do research? One route was through old photographs. He discovered that his father and mother had a very good relationship with his mother's first husband, the deceased father of his half-brother. How did he discover this? Because in their group photos, there were instances where similar photographs were taken in the same setting. For example, they were holding violins—clearly posed shots—but you can guess that these two photos were taken in the same scene, one taken by his father, and one taken by the first husband. Just from these old photographs, you can infer that they were close friends. So images can sometimes preserve subtle clues that allow you to imagine past relationships. In this sense, they are not only sources of information, but also provide tangible traces that help us understand family relationships. I find this particularly interesting: using old photographs to explore relationships. So the first function of old materials is to provide archival information; the second is to offer emotional clues that stimulate imagination about the past and lead us to connect the dots.

What's more, often, the number of negatives a family possesses exceeds the number of photos that were actually printed. We typically only print a small portion of them. Some negatives, due to time or financial limitations, were never developed. And the information contained in those undeveloped negatives can be quite fascinating. Thomas Sauvin once shared an example: he acquired a roll of undeveloped film that contained images of a girl's birthday party. One can imagine that in her household, the camera only came out on her birthday. So film, as a visual medium, does more than just record—it also returns us to the emotional and lived states of the people being filmed, of those operating the camera, and of those viewing the images.

Another kind of materiality related to moving images appears when, in the present, one looks back at older images and forms a contemporary connection to the past through the physical medium. For example, we have a student in this year's workshop who studies anthropology at UCL. She wanted to make a film about her mother. She told me her mother had filmed a great deal of video footage of her since birth. I said, 'That's incredibly valuable'. In one of our classes, we asked participants to collect old photos or videos from their past. In addition to those images, this student also had a diary her mother kept, starting from when she was a child.

She said she wanted to make a documentary about her mother, but didn't know what to film next, and asked for my advice. I asked, 'What are your feelings for your mother?' She said that reading the diary made her realize that after giving birth to her, her mother had given up many personal choices. She felt a sense of guilt and deeply hoped that her mother could live for herself. I suggested to the student: all those old videos her mother took were of her, weren't they? So I said, select moments from those videos. Maybe there's something in them about your growth, or about everyday life. Then combine those images with the diary, where her mother's attention is constantly focused on her—often to the exclusion of other possibilities. I said: now it's your turn to pick up the camera and film your mother. You can also write about it. Describe what you see in your mother, and how much you hope she can live as her own person. That way, the moving image becomes twofold: one part from the mother's perspective watching the child, and the other from the daughter watching the mother. The old footage suddenly assumes a very important role: It's not just archival—it becomes an emotional medium, even intertextual. This is where it turns into a form of creative work.

Zhang: That's really fascinating. From this angle, any preserved material—especially visual material—car-

ries a kind of gaze. There's always an act of looking, and that's really important. The act of looking matters.

Gu: I think what you said is exactly right. When we look at archival materials, the act of looking and being looked at exists within familial relationships. The archive takes on a new role within that relational gaze. But there's also something else: nowadays, image production and record-keeping are overly abundant—it's become too easy. An archive only becomes meaningful if someone goes through the process of organizing, of building an archive. Without that, its value remains hidden.

Zhang: That's absolutely true. In fact, that leads right into what I wanted to ask next. Often when people hear the word 'archive', they think of something lifeless—something that's stored away and only retrieved when needed. But I think your positioning of the FamilyLens Archive, and your definition of the archival materials, is quite different. It's an active archive, one that has vitality. Could you expand on your view of this kind of archive? Why do you think family films must remain living, constantly in motion?

Gu: This ties back to what you mentioned earlier about rediscovery and afterlives. If an archive exists only as an archive, and cannot form any connection with the present, then it has no vitality. So archives should be situated in the present. For example, a scholar might arrive with a research question, and upon seeing these archives, could develop a project that relates to the present. That's the direction we should pursue. Of course, this is just an academic example—it could also be an exhibition, or a piece of writing that prompts further discussion. These archives might still be around a century from now, and when someone looks at them, they may be able to find a connection from their own perspective. If that connection to the present doesn't occur, then the archive belongs only to the past.

So when we collect archives, we also need to think about how to create pathways—how to allow people, in the process of collecting or archiving, to also form ways of looking at the past. That's what extends the life of an archive. The challenge lies in how to build these pathways—during collection, documentation, or re-examination—so that more people can become aware of their own relationship to the archive.

Zhang: I think pondering the relationship between family films/home movies and independent cinema is also a very important topic. Since you are also an independent filmmaker, and given that the academic field today defines Chinese-language independent cinema in multiple ways, I'd like to ask: how do you see the relationship between family films and independent cinema? How should we think about their differences and points of connection?

Gu: As you just mentioned, there are many different understandings of independent film. When I first arrived in Songzhuang and began encountering independent cinema, I didn't try to define it. What struck me most was its personal and free nature. It's a form of individual expression, and it's a kind of free expression—that's something very valuable today, because it allows us to hear different voices. So from that perspective, independent cinema is certainly not made for commercial purposes; it comes from personal feeling, sincere emotion, or a particular stance. That's how I understand independent cinema.

As for family images, I think they are in fact the freest form of image-making. When someone creates family images, they are definitely not doing it for commercial reasons—their focus is on the familial emotions.

Within those emotions are personal feelings, and the form of expression is very free. It can be whimsical, it can connect past, present, and future, because it's a subjective process. That subjectivity and individuality connects directly with independent film. Family films also have a very particular feature: in most independent documentaries, to some extent, we're still aiming toward a certain resolve, a certain form of expression of opinion. But the thinking and searching that happens within independent filmmaking, in family films, takes the form of a process. It's not driven by a clear end goal.

That's why in my teaching, there's always mutual learning. Many of the participants have made films before. Some of them have told me that when they were making other films, they felt very tense, worried they'd miss a topic or a scene. But when filming their own families, they felt relaxed, because they were always paying attention to their own feelings. If they missed a shot, that simply meant it hadn't moved them. So for many people, filming family is more relaxed and more free—and that feeling is very precious. The creation of family films is really about perspectives. Often, we look at others from a certain viewpoint. But in family filmmaking, we are turning inward and looking at ourselves. I think that perspective is quite unique within the broader landscape of filmmaking.

Returning to what I said earlier about why we created the FamilyLens Archive: when we look back at grand historical narratives, in a context where expression tends to be concentrated and uniform, I think this kind of diverse, expressive, and personal expression—these stories from individual life experience—form the core of what independent film is. It offers a completely different path from centralized power. It's more individual, more varied. In that sense, family films unquestionably offer rich and diverse narrative samples for understanding this era and this society.

Zhang: I agree—that's definitely a topic worth discussing. Just as you said, every filmmaker approaches a subject with certain reflections; there's always a reason for choosing a topic. For family films, I think there are two types. One might be a film made by a filmmaker who wants to understand their own family—so they film with that intention. But there are also older forms of family video, like DV recordings, where the intention and thinking behind the act of filming were very different. Those are more about a simple desire to preserve memories. So I want to return the question to you—does this kind of difference change the relationship between family films and independent cinema?

Gu: Independent cinema and family films don't exist in a relationship of one belonging to the other. They may not be entirely separate either. Whether family films or home videos belong within the category of independent film—I think they do, at least in the sense of being a form of personal, independent expression. Some people say that independent film means self-produced, not made by big studios. In that sense, family images also belong to independent cinema.

That said, many people associate independent cinema with social critique, political themes, or rebelliousness. If that's your definition, I would still say many family films contain those elements—some arise from reflection on family relationships, or from a critical depiction of them. Of course, there are also family films that are simply personal records. As you just mentioned, some DV home videos are more like records of family life. If such images are not shaped by the creator's active reflection or conceptual engagement, they may not fall under a broad definition of independent cinema.

Family films also come in many forms. But their underlying spirit is connected to that of independent cinema—I do think there's a link. At the same time, we can't say all family films are independent films—that would be too expansive a claim.

Zhang: Then for my final question, I'd like to ask about the future work of the FamilyLens Archive—or current projects that are underway. Could you share a bit about that?

Gu: The FamilyLens Archive will continue to host offline thematic events. We're about to begin a public lecture on archival images and documentary creation, as well as a workshop on handmade books. For this year's FamilyLens International Film Festival, I'm considering whether to organize an open call for submissions. In previous years, we invited finished works by established creators. Last year, we focused on works from across Asia. Lately, people have been leaving messages in our inbox asking about submitting their own films. So we're thinking about switching to an open call model, and organizing different units based on different themes. The goal of film is not only the film itself—we hope to combine stories about family with current realities in society to spark discussion. I'm planning some curated sections of the festival. One idea is to collaborate with Professor Liu Yonghao 刘永皓 from Taiwan—he curated a 'cat film festival', which I found very interesting. Since cats are now family members for many people, that section could expand the meaning of 'home'.

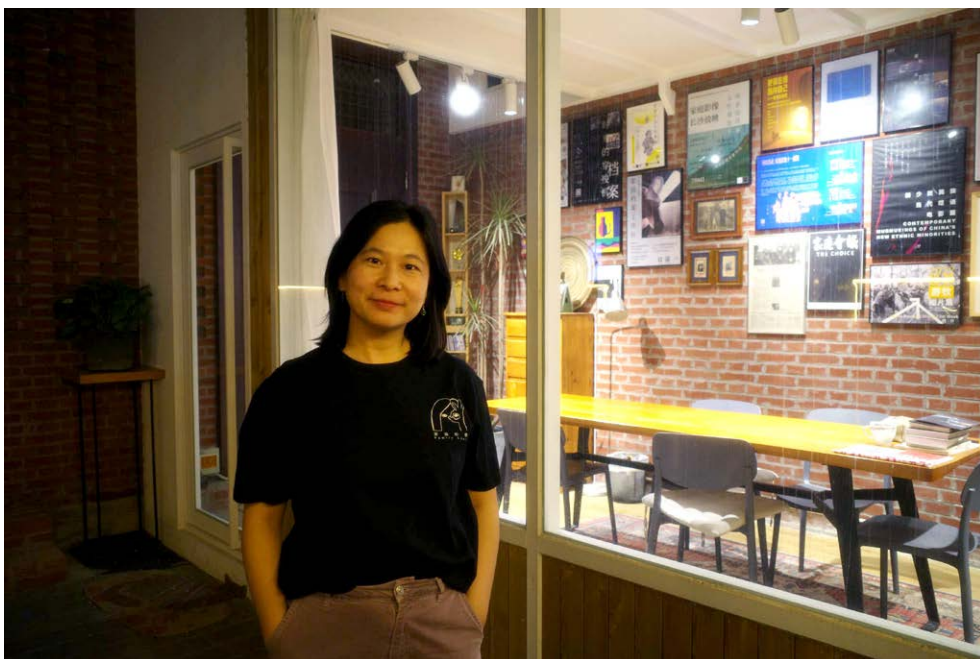
In our workshops, aside from family filmmaking, we're also exploring nonfiction writing about family—how to record the many stories within a family through writing. We're also thinking about family photography—how to express family through photographs. For example, how can a family photobook rearrange old images in new ways to create a new form of expression? So our courses focus on creative practices—how creative work can strengthen one's connection to the family. I'm also increasingly interested in the therapeutic potential of moving images, and we might explore that more through future workshops—exploring what moving images can do.

In terms of film production, we're currently supporting two projects that emerged from the family filmmaking workshops. After the workshops, I'm acting as an executive producer, helping participants develop their short films into feature-length projects. Neither of the two directors studied film, but their personal stories are especially compelling. So this continues our core mission—that anyone can film their own family story, and that the camera can transform relationships during the filmmaking process. That's the direction we're headed to at the FamilyLens Archive.

“家庭影像和档案给理解这个时代提供了丰富多元的故事样本” ——与顾雪导演谈家庭影像馆

采访者: 张吕文煜

作者注: 2025 年 2 月 17 日, 我与顾雪导演做了一次关于位于北京宋庄的家庭影像馆 FamilyLens 的访谈。其中顾雪导演谈到了影像馆成立的初衷, 她对于家庭影像的思考、自己的创作、以及档案的后生命等话题。本文整理了本次采访的相关内容。



顾雪 2025 年于宋庄

“家庭, 不是一件容易谈论的事。它是私人且复杂的, 时常被记忆模糊, 被情感遮蔽。影像, 作为一种记录与表达的方式, 会在不经意间捕捉到家的痕迹, 使那些被忽略或难以言说的感情缓慢浮现。这种浮现, 既关乎个人经验, 也关乎观看者的当下, 凝视影像的过程, 也许是一次重新发现自我身份与处境的机会。”

家庭影像具有双重属性: 既是关于过去的老档案, 同时也是在观看和重新使用过程中不断生成的新档案。当我们观看一张老照片、一段家庭录像时, 实际上是在用当下的视角与过往展开对话, 这种观看并非静态的回溯, 而是充满活力的再创造——我们也在不知不觉编织自己的档案。

因此, 家庭影像馆是存放记忆的场所, 也是促使影像与现实重新发生关联的空间。我们在这里收集、整理、呈现家庭影像, 但更重要的是, 让这些影像始终处于流动和生成的状态, 使它们与当下的经验发生碰撞, 也许未必有完整的故事线, 但它们因不断地被观看、被理解、被再创作, 而获得了一种持续生长的力量。”

——顾雪 家庭影像馆创始人

张吕文煜（以下简称煜）：第一个问题，我想请顾雪导演简单讲讲家庭影像馆成立的初衷，这几年都进行了哪些影像或者策展的活动呢？

顾雪（以下简称雪）：做家庭影像馆，得回到为什么开始对家庭感兴趣，就是跟我作为导演的身份有关。我本身是一个纪录片导演，我最开始去寻找自己的创作题材的时候，也经历了一个探索的过程。后来慢慢的，开始聚焦于家庭，比如说《家庭会议》是拍别人的家庭，到《庚子新年》开始拍自己的家庭。一方面是考虑到家庭影像的意义，过去总是说影像的私密性，但是我觉得除了私密性之外，观察发现家庭本身或者家庭关系，也是当下生活的缩影，所以在做这些纪录片的时候就会感受到大家问的问题，包括在延展出来的采访里，突然发现家庭不是一个简单的家庭关系或个人关系，它有一层跟当下的关联。

第二个就是当我在拍自己家庭的时候，开始意识到摄影机作为一个媒介本身，它会让我站在其背后去重新凝视我的拍摄对象，并且拍摄的过程是需要我跟他去贴近，去观察，去发现。虽然有的时候跟家庭的关系还比较疏远，但是当我拍纪录片的时候，我某种程度上就是要跟他们一起共处去感受。我是发现了媒介本身的特殊性，还有就是相比较我拍摄别人，比如其他的题材，拍摄家庭对于了解我自己的家人是有不一样的收获的。

所以我后来发起 FamilyLens, Lens 是镜头的焦距，在这里想说的是通过“家庭”的“视角”来看自己和世界的关系。发起 FamilyLens 之后，我们又开始做家庭影像展，回到电影创作的源头，看到很多创作者一开始也是拍摄自己的家庭。之后，我们又开始做家庭影像工作坊，是为了鼓励人人都去拍摄自己的家庭，这里面是实践，就是我刚才说的相机作为媒介的存在带来的沟通和发现，是一种自我表达。做完这两个之后，很多人给我们非常好的反馈，我们就考虑说要不要做一个实体的空间。因为我一直生活在宋庄，于是就在宋庄，我们就想着要不要做一个家庭影像馆。这可能是家庭影像馆开始的前因。这离不开我为什么对家庭感兴趣，以及是怎么认识家庭影像的。我们在做这件事的时候，有一些研究者过来找到我们，这些也都给了我们很多想法。

最开始做家庭影像馆的初心是很想做档案的收藏和整理。这一部分是因为我感受到了家庭跟时代和社会的一种联系，包括在阅读大历史的情况下，有的时候我们看到的都是英雄史，或者是国家撰写的历史。所以在这里我们非常希望收集个人史、个人的家庭档案。比如说，一个人想了解 2024 年的中国是什么样的，可能有很多人写了关于这一年的内容，但是我期待在这里边有自己去描述自己的历史，作为个体的在这个时间段的经历。如果我们再往前倒，像我们这一代的爷爷奶奶、姥姥姥爷，都经历了新中国成立的阶段。所以你在了解历史的时候，也许可以通过了解自己的家庭，去自我书写历史。未来我们看到的将是个体家庭的视角，而不是他者书写的历史。不是因为他是一个英雄我们就去书写他，也不是因为我是一个研究者就去书写他，而是我作为一个家庭成员来书写，这首先是一个视角的转换。

还有一个原因是，如果能够把这些家庭档案整理出来，也许未来能有一个脉络，我们能找到 50 年代、60 年代的照片，及了解大家的生活状态。我期待未来的家庭影像馆是可以成为一个连接人们的网络的，甚至包括了不同的地区。第二，它也是一个分享交流的空间，我们在这里做公共讲座，包括上次邀请张吕你来做的家庭影像展。在这里需要谈到的还有一点，为什么家庭在当下是值得被讨论的？刚才讲的是历史的那一部分，但是讲到具体的家庭，中国整个的变化太快了，造成了比如说我跟我妈那代，我妈那代跟她上面那一代，因为时代的更替太快而造成的价值观各方面都很不一样，所以

在了解家庭的时候，有的时候还在用过去的家庭观念或者秩序来讨论。那么家庭影像馆想做的，是讨论在当下能不能探索新的观点和发掘不同的观看视角。所以公共讲座这部分，我就想邀请在不同艺术领域里思考“家庭”这个概念的人来分享。

去年十一的时候，做了“何以为家”系列，邀请了苏文（Thomas Sauvin）。一个外国人是怎么看中国的家庭档案，在档案里他发现了哪些视角，怎么去讨论时间性或者说历史性，这是我们的主题。包括我们邀请艺术家吴高钟，他的作品都跟“家”有关，他讲当下环境下家的情感连接是什么样的，非常脆弱的一种状态。我们通过不同背景的人群来去分享他们视角下的“家”和提出对于“家”的一些具体的情感和感受。

我们还会做工坊，这一块，我认为很重要的地方是跟大众的连接，跟我们今天谈的主题是有关的。工坊是通过创作，讨论如何把自己家庭的旧物，比如照片、影像、物件及与之相关的情感，如何通过创作在当下以一种艺术化的方式呈现出来。无论我们在收集还是在重新组合的过程中，都带着一种对家庭情感关联的探索、回望、编织、与表达。我认为真正的关系是存在于过程当中的，所以工作坊某种程度上是创造了一个过程，给了你一种路径，让你去回看。比如说你做的档案的工作坊，大家就要开始整理思考我扫描哪张照片，就开始要去看。我们还做过剪纸工作坊，怎么剪出自己认为的家的情绪，我们不是在剪一个具体的形状，是剪一种流动的情感，可能回到一个情境，你感受到了什么，你就把它剪出来。我们还做了旧物利用，邀请了赵玉中艺术家，她讨论的是怎么把自己家里的旧物，比如瓶瓶罐罐，通过用废弃的衣料或者报纸，重新造型，获得新的生命力。我们想通过这种工作坊的方式，先让你回到家的某一个情景，然后再去思考，因为你要去创作和表达。

再就是电影放映。电影放映，因为我们本来就是做家庭影像的，所以影像是原点，它是具有分享性和共情性的。当看一个电影的时候，你会不自觉地产生联想，所以家庭影像馆会不定期做放映。比如说我们策划了一系列以家庭为主题的放映，过去的主题有妈妈，再比如说代际、女性、关系、代沟、自画像、自我表达，都是通过一个个单元带大家去了解。所以家庭影像馆，目前我们大概是这几个板块：家庭影像馆、家庭影像展、家庭影像教育和制作。教育和制作方面，我们从2022年开始做家庭影像工作坊，鼓励每一个人去创造跟自己家庭有关的影片，现在马上要100部了。这些其实是非常重要的，也是我们档案收藏的一部分。因为每一部都是从“我”的视角里寻找自己的家庭故事，这里面有很多共性，也有很多不一样的内容。这些作品能够形成一个视角，探讨我们在当下与家庭的情感关系，这个是我们档案里面很重要的一部分。

煜：我的下一个问题是关于家庭影像的遗忘或者淘汰。家庭影像和其他影像是不同的，因为它非常个人化，甚至可以说是非常亲密的。而寻找和整理家庭影像的过程，是个人的自我发现和重新认识自己家庭甚至历史的一个过程，是一个“再发现”的经历，也是在延续影像的“后生命”。我觉得家庭影像馆在这个过程中起到了非常重要的作用，能否讲讲你对这方面的见解和对家庭影像馆的定位，以及对被遗忘的家庭影像的思考？

雪：上次赵姝婷在做家庭影像如何成为档案的讲座时，有一个叫阿钟的观众，从上海特别过来参加。他就讲，他是帮别人做家庭摄影的，遇到了一户人家，老人家去世了，他所有的东西要扔掉，这些东西家人认为没有用了，就直接扔了。他发现很多人，比如说因为跟祖辈的关系没有那么密切，就把他们的东西不假思索地全部扔了。这是一种，就是说它是被丢弃的、被毁灭的。还有一种，像我有一些照片，我已经讲不出来这是谁，那是谁，但是我妈妈知道。或者如果我姥姥姥爷还在，可能还知道原来照片的内容，但是到我妈这一代她就不知道了，到我这一代就更不知道了。所以说那些

存在的影像，它里边的信息和情感也在随着记忆消失。整个家庭影像都是在消失的一个状态。

我们今年家庭影像展的主题叫“重构家庭记忆”，是对于你刚才提的这个问题一个很好的回应，就是过去的那些东西，如果我们不去回看，它就在消逝。所以重构的第一个概念是看到，让那些毁灭的或者消逝的东西，能够重新被谈论，重新被看到。重构的第二个概念在于，在我看来，是以一种新的方法，以当下的视角去讲述，让它产生一个跟当下时间的关联，这是我们今年的主题。所以你刚才谈到的再发现的过程和后生命的过程，需要观者去主动地重新看到那些东西。但更重要的是，档案的后生命在于它是否能够在当下和未来的语境下，让观者跟那些曾经的档案、那些内容产生关联，否则它的生命可能就是短暂的。而这种关联性，我认为最重要的是一种情感关联。所以关于制作家庭影像，我一直在强调的一点是，电影的创作它其实是放在第二位的，第一位是你通过这个行动，这个举动，去不断地靠近那个东西，去了解那个情感关联，这是我们在做家庭影像的一个重点。

除此之外，我们希望通过家庭影像，去产生对“家”更多的理解和角度，创造更多的想法，它也是不断变化的。比如说在当下，一个人跟一个猫猫，可能就是一个家庭；包括同性，或者是我自己一个人也可以是一个家庭。我觉得这些东西都是要发展的，要讨论的，所以也希望从这个小小的点去回望和去拓展新的含义。

煜：其实你说的这些和现在一些学术研究上面对于媒介考古学的思考很像。还有一个有意思的地方是家庭影像的本质，在我看来也可以分为两类：一种是就是你找到的既定存在的家庭影像，还有一些是你为了和家人产生情感上的联系，而用影像作为一个媒介去表达这个联系，我觉得这两个是不同的，两种都非常有意思。不知道你在这方面有没有更多想说的？

雪：这个我觉得总结得很好，一个是已有的影像，已有的照片或档案，无论是它即将消失，或者被人遗忘，这可能是家庭影像里的原材料或者说是影像本体。那么我们在当下，其实是在创造新的家庭影像，这个影像里可能跟过去是有关联的，是种再创造，相比较过去的照片或者其他拾得的记录，它更有创作者本身对于家庭关系的一种思考。所以当我们在这个过程中去考虑摄影机的存在的时候，其实我们也在考虑“你”在电影里的角色。这跟我们拍摄其他电影不一样，在其他电影里我们是一个相对旁观的人。但是在家庭影像的创造过程中，你既是导演又是家人，所以你在看这个影像的时候，它一定是饱含情感的，而且饱含你对于当下的、对于家庭和关系的一个思考。这个部分被保存下来，它未来就会成为档案，而这样的影像记录档案，它就会有特定视角的表达，而不是孤立的、零星的。

煜：下面这个问题是关于如何看待自我与家庭档案的距离的。在我们收藏或者是整理家庭档案的时候，甚至在拍摄家庭影像的时候，其实它是一个很亲密的过程，这个亲密度甚至是很多家庭影像的核心，也是我们整理家庭档案的一个动力。所以你是怎么看待在制作家庭影像的时候对自我的定位？是否是应该拥抱亲密度，还是说有的时候应该保有与档案的距离？

雪：我觉得这个问题特别好，也回到了在制作家庭影像的时候自己的角色。因为我们最开始要制作家庭影像，某种程度上是由于一种很亲密的情感，一种冲动。你拿起摄影机的时候，首先你是去观看、观察、走近、去探索，这个过程某种程度上一定是靠近的。你在靠近这个档案，这个历史。电影创作的下一个阶段是剪辑，然后你会发现在不同环节里，你充当的角色是不一样的。当你在剪辑的时候，我认为你是要带着一种距离去看的，这种距离来自于我在我的观察、观看、感受当中，发现了什么，有什么剪辑方法能让我曾经的一个念头变得更具体。所以我们一直都说，在家庭影像的创作里，过程很重要。它不像我们有的时候拍一些纪录片，是带了一个议题，或者带了一个结论去捕捉。相反的，

家庭影像它的开放性就在于这个创作过程，你必须提高自己的感受，感受的过程可能就是思考影像的过程。所以这个阶段是带有距离的。比如说我在看我妈妈那些照片的时候，观看、询问她的时候是很贴近的。但是当我想做一个作品的时候，比如说我现在在家庭影像馆里面，我做的一个作品，就是找了20张她的证件照，从她16岁到将近70岁，在这20张证件照里找到了一个女人一生的模样的变化。这个作品的制作过程里，我要往后靠，要有距离感的去观察，带着我的思考兴趣找到一个理解的脉络。所以这种时候，它就会产生一定的距离感，这种距离感带有你的思考性和反思性。所以创作的过程中是一个靠近，但它其实也需要有一定的距离。

煜：我知道影像馆现在收藏的学员家庭电影已经近百部了，这其中肯定也有很多作品与影像物质有关，比如胶片、摄影机还有原来的DV家庭影像，从这个角度来讲，能否请顾雪导演从教课还有策展的方向聊一聊你对影像介质的理解和它的重要性，这其实也算是一个媒介考古学的问题。

雪：现在想起来，这个其实在家庭影像里还是出现的比较多的。第一，有一些家庭影像的作品是关于自己的家庭历史，比如说家族史，或者是个人史。对这些作品来说，老照片就是非常重要的，因为我们在讲历史的时候，它需要一个情景的依据，或者说信息的依据，这个时候我们会依靠照片，利用照片提供某种程度的信息。比如说我姥爷出生在什么时候，他在哪儿上班，他结婚的时候是什么样的，影像是一个非常重要的档案支撑。第二，比如说我们上周刚刚上家庭影像课，有一个同学拍摄的是什么呢？他的父母在结婚之前，妈妈是有一个前老公的，前老公后来去世了，但是他们有一个孩子。然后他的爸爸妈妈和前老公都是下矿的工人，他们当时关系非常好，他妈妈在第一段婚姻里有一个儿子，那也就是现在这个同学的哥哥，这个关系能捋清吗？

煜：没问题。

雪：他这个片子讲的是什么呢？就是他去寻找关于去世的爸爸的形象，他怎么去寻找？有一个路径就是去看照片。他发现那个男人和他的妈妈爸爸关系非常好。怎么发现的？因为在他们的合照里，有的时候是在同一个场景下拍出了类似的照片，比如说他们都拿个小提琴，虽然是摆拍。但是你就会猜测出来，这两张照片，他们应该是在同一个情景下拍摄的，只不过是我给你拍了一张，你给我拍了一张。单从这个老照片里边，就证明了他们是比较亲密的朋友关系。所以影像有的时候能留下蛛丝马迹，让你对曾经的关系产生了一种想象，所以它不仅仅是信息，它还提供了一些实质的线索，让你去了解家庭关系，这个是我觉得很有意思的一点，就是通过老照片探索关系。第一种是提供档案信息，第二种是有一些情感线索，让你对过去产生想象，然后寻找联系。

还有一种，比如说很多时候，家里的底片数量其实是多于洗出的照片的。我们只会洗出一部分照片。那么有一些底片因为时间或者经济原因是没有洗出来的，没洗的那些所包含的信息可能也很有意思。苏文曾讲过一个例子：他收了一卷没有被洗出来的底片，里边都是一个女孩过生日的情景，可以想到他们家过去只有在她过生日的时候才拿出相机拍照。所以胶片作为影像介质，在提供纪录信息之外，其实是回到了被拍摄者、使用摄影机的人、和观看胶片的人的一些生活状态和情感的状态。

还有一种与影像相关的物质性是，在当下回看过去的影像的时候，自己通过物质影像跟过去产生了一种当下的关联。比如说现在有一个在UCL读人类学的学生，是我们这次工作坊的一个同学，她想拍的是什么呢？她妈妈。她说她妈妈从她刚刚出生起，就给她拍了很多的录像。我说那真是太宝贵了。我们在课上有一节是让大家去收集自己过去的照片、影像。除了影像，这个同学还有她妈妈写的一本日记，从她小时候开始的。然后，她说她想拍一个关于妈妈的纪录片，但她不知道拍什么，

问我接下来应该怎么拍。我就问她，你对妈妈的情感是怎样的？她说她看日记的时候发现，她妈妈生了她之后，放弃了很多个人的选择；她觉得自己很负罪，她特别希望她妈妈能做她自己。我给她的建议是什么呢？就是她妈妈拍摄的那些老影像不都是她嘛？所以我说你在这里面去选取，可能这里边有你的成长，或者有生活的瞬间，配上日记里妈妈不间断地把关注点都放在你身上，为此她有放弃一些选项。我说你现在需要做的是，你也同样拿摄影机去记录你的妈妈，你可以在旁边写，你看到的妈妈是什么样的，你多希望她做自己。所以这个影像会形成两部分，然后这里面很重要的地方是视角，就是她妈妈在看他，她对孩子的期待；和女儿同样看着妈妈，她对于妈妈的期待。这个老的影像一下就承担了一个非常重要的角色，而不仅仅是档案资料，它是一种情感，还有一种互文，这就走向了一种创作。

煜：这个太有意思了，而且从这种角度上来看留存下来的任何物质资料，尤其是影像资料，它带有一种凝视，它带有一种看的动作，这个非常重要，看的过程很重要。

雪：我觉得你说的这个特别对，所以当我们看一些档案性的东西的时候，这种看与被看的过程是一个家庭关系里的看与被看，档案在这个里边又充当了一种新的角色。但是这里有一点，因为现在的影像和记录保留太泛滥了，它变得特别容易，所以档案只有你去梳理，去建档，它才可能成为留存下来的东西，要不然它的价值你是看不到的。

煜：太对了，其实这也进入我想问的下一个点了，就是很多时候我们一提到档案，大家都觉得是一个死气沉沉的东西，是一个存放在档案馆里，需要的时候才会去寻找的东西。但是我觉得你对于家庭影像馆的定位，还有包括对于家庭影像馆所收藏的档案的定义是不一样的，它是一个活动的，一个有生命力的档案。对于这种定义，想让顾雪导演再拓展讲一下，比如为什么你觉得家庭影像一定要成为活着的，一直有流动性的档案？

雪：这就是你谈到的再发现和后生命。如果它只是档案，它跟当下产生不了关联，它就没有生命力。所以档案应该是放在当下的，比如说一个学者带着研究课题来了，看到这些档案，她能够从研究的角度发展出一个和当下相关联的东西，我们应该从这个角度上来去研发。当然这只是一个学术的例子，它也可能是一个展览，或者是我们写的一个东西，能够促进大家去讨论。这些档案可能放到下一个世纪，别人看到的时候，也能从自己的视角里去找到跟档案的关系。如果这种连接不产生，这些档案就只属于过去。所以档案的收集，以及如何创造路径，让大家在收集的过程中，或者在存档的过程中，也能建立一种回看，这样就是在延续档案的生命。如何在收集、建档、和重新审视的过程中，创造一种路径，让更多的人去意识到自己跟档案的关系，这是难点。

煜：我觉得思考家庭影像和独立影像的关系也是一个挺重要的课题。因为你也是独立电影导演，现在学界对华语独立电影的定义也是多层次的。我想问的是，在你看来家庭影像和独立影像的关系是什么样子的？我们要怎么去思考它们的不同和相同之处？

雪：你刚刚说的独立电影，其实有很多的理解。从我到宋庄，刚开始接触独立电影的时候，我就没有去定义，谈它的最大感受是个人性和自由性。它要有个人的表达，是有一种自由的表达，这在当下是很宝贵的，因为你能听到不同人的声音。所以从这点上来讲，独立电影一定不是为了一个商业目的来做一些什么，它一定是出于自我感受，真切的一种情感，或者立场来表达，这是我对于独立电影的感受。

那么回到家庭影像，我认为它其实是最自由的影像。当每个人在创作家庭影像的时候，他 / 她一定不是出于商业化目的来拍摄的，重点还是情感。在情感里边融合了自己的情绪，它的表达方式是很自由的，可以天马行空，可以把历史、现在或未来结合起来，因为它是一个主观的东西。这种主观性和个人性，这个跟独立电影是一脉相承的。家庭影像还有一个非常独特的地方是什么呢？就是我们拍摄独立纪录片某种程度上都还是希望有一种结果，一种表达，但是我觉得这种独立影像中的思考和寻找，在家庭影像里，它更像是一个过程，并不是奔着一个目的去的。所以我在教学里面，一定是教学相长，有很多来参与的人，他们做过很多自己的片子。他们就说在拍其他片子的时候，觉得自己很紧张，因为很怕错过一些话题，但是拍自己家庭的时候，他们是放松的，因为一直在关注自己的感受，如果错过了一个画面，那就是它没有激发我的感受。所以很多人在拍摄家庭影像的时候，更加自由自在的，这种感觉是非常宝贵。在家庭影像的创作中，这是一个视角问题，有时候我们经常带着一个观点来去看别人，但是在家庭里面，我们创作的时候是从内在审视自我，所以我觉得这个角度在影像创作的多视角语境下，它是很独特的。

回到我刚才说为什么要做家庭影像馆，那就是当我们回看大的历史的时候，在一个集中表达的大环境下，这种多元、丰富和个人的表达，个人生命经历里的故事，我觉得这个是独立电影里的核心，是与集中权力的东西完全不同的另外一个路径，它会更个体，更丰富。在这一点上，家庭影像无疑是给理解这个时代，或者这个社会，提供了丰富多元的故事样本。

煜：我觉得是非常值得深入思考的一个问题，包括就像你刚才说的，因为拍摄者拍摄任何一种影像的时候，都是带着一定的思考去的，拍摄这个题材是有原因的。家庭影像这边，其实我能想到有两种不同类型，一种可能是作为影像创作者，去做一个关于家庭的影片，这个是带有我想要去了解我的家庭，所以去拍摄的一个意向。但是还有一些曾经的，比如 DV 的家庭影片，其实它这种的意向，拍摄的目的，或者是拍摄的思考就不太相同，它单纯的就是家人对于记录时光的一种执着。我再把问题抛还给你，想问你从这点来看它是不是和独立影像的关系又不同了昵？

雪：因为独立电影和家庭影像，不是一个谁属于谁的关系。它们也许不是完全分开的，家庭影像不属于独立电影的范畴，我觉得是属于的，就是从个人的，独立的表达形式来讲，是属于的。有人说，独立电影是自我制片，不是大公司的制片。在这一点上来说，家庭影像它也是属于独立电影的。可能我们谈一些独立电影，都认为独立电影里面应该具有那种社会性，或者议题性，或者反叛性，如果你要是这么去理解，我认为家庭电影里边很多部分也是有的，有的部分是源于他们对于家庭关系的思考，或者是说一种批判性的展现。当然在这里边，也有一些家庭电影，它就是一个家庭记录。比如你刚才说的 DV 那种更像家庭记录，这种影像，它们没有带有主观创作者的一种深入思考和创作概念的话，它可能就不能成为一个广泛定义的独立电影。家庭电影它也分很多种，但它的精神内核跟独立电影是有关联的，我认为是有的。但你也不能说所有的家庭电影都是独立电影，这个就太宽泛了。

煜：那么我最后的问题是关于家庭影像馆未来的一些工作，或者现在正在进行的工作，希望导演可以简单的讲一讲。

雪：家庭影像馆会持续做线下的主题活动，我们即将开始一个关于档案影像与纪录片创作的公开课，还有一个手工书的工作坊。今年的家庭影像展，我在想要不要做征片。前几年是邀片，邀成熟作者的作品，去年是亚洲范围内的作品，后台经常有人给我留言想要投稿。所有我们在考虑变成征片，然后可以根据不同的主题，设置不同的单元。电影最终的走向不仅仅是电影本身，我们可能会结合

一些家庭的关系，与社会当下的现实产生一种讨论。我想策划一些单元。目前有个想法是和台湾的刘永皓老师一起做个单元，他有个猫咪影展，我感觉很有趣，因为现在猫咪是很多人的家庭成员，这个单元可以拓展家的含义。

家庭影像工作坊，除了家庭影像的创作，我们也会思考家庭的非虚构写作，就是家庭里有很多故事，我们怎么通过写作记录下来？还有一些想法是关于家庭的摄影，就是怎么通过摄影来表达。比如说家庭的影像书，怎么把老照片以一种新的方式排列组合，从而创造一种新的表达？所以在课程上我们是围绕着创作本身，怎么通过创作让你跟家庭产生联系。另外影像的疗愈功能也是我最近比较感兴趣的，也许会通过工作坊的方式，去探索影像的更多可能。

电影制作上，我们现在有扶持两部家庭影像工作坊出来的片子，就是工作坊结束之后，我担任监制的角色，来帮他们一起把它从一个短片孵化成一个长片。两个导演都没有学过电影，但是他们自己的故事特别精彩，所以我们还是在实践人人可以拍摄自己的家庭故事，以及摄影机在拍摄过程中带来关系变化的可能性。这是家庭影像馆现在的一些想法。

BROADENING MEDIA ARCHAEOLOGY 拓展媒介考古学

Bad Images as Diasporic Homes: Exploring Media Obsolescence in Chinese Diasporic Filmmaking

坏影像作为离散家园：华语离散影像中的媒介淘汰探究

Author: Lynette Qiuyang SHEN 沈秋阳

Fragmenting to Recompose: The Pieces of The Past in *Breathless Animals* (2019)

碎片化到重构：《动物方言》（2019）中关于过去的碎片

Author: Désirée MARIANINI 伊莲

Bad Images as Diasporic Homes: Exploring Media Obsolescence in Chinese Diasporic Filmmaking

Lynette Qiuyang Shen 沈秋阳

Abstract

This paper examines how bad images – characterised by poor quality and often produced by obsolete media, low-tech equipment, or machinery malfunction – serve as critical aesthetic devices in Chinese diasporic films and videos. Moving beyond discourses on media obsolescence as a systemic condition of technological capitalism, this paper reveals how substandard images and obsolete media are reclaimed as diasporic visual practices shaped by the political economy of images within specific sociopolitical conditions. Bridging cinema and media studies with art history, this paper focuses on two experimental films by women filmmakers originally from mainland China and now residing in the U.S.: Yin Chi-Jang's 殷子静 *Another Clapping* (2001) and Ouyang Peixuan's 欧阳霏萱 *The ____ World* (2021). While they each address their diasporic realities at distinct historical junctures, with Yin making films in the post-Cultural Revolution era and Ouyang during the COVID-19 pandemic, this paper demonstrates that they both mobilise bad images to disrupt notions of 'origin' and 'authenticity', which are ideologically and affectively coded in diasporic discourses and entangled with the vexed concepts of 'China' and 'Chineseness'. The blurry, glitchy, and faulty images in their works do not signify a lack in diasporic displacement from an authentic origin. Instead, they re-enchant the digital surface, transforming it into a critical space where diasporic women interrogate these notions in their ideological, racialised, and gendered framings. Ultimately, this paper argues that the creative reclamation of bad images cultivates emergent modes of diasporic belonging and intimacy, rooted in a radical rejection of the prescribed terms of authenticity and Chineseness.

Keywords: Chinese diasporic filmmaking, Experimental Film, Glitch, Media Obsolescence, Feminist, Chinese American

Introduction

Trembling violently, the grainy footage of a 16mm Bolex captures a sentimental view of a distant cityscape. An error message flashes on a computer interface, followed by an Asian woman's portrait plagued by flickering glitches. A childhood family photograph dissolves into large patches of pixels as it endlessly buffers. These images – shaky, glitched, pixelated, deteriorated, at times chemically damaged or digitally distorted – form a recurring visual trope in Chinese diasporic filmmaking, appearing in works from the 1980s to the present across Hong Kong, Taiwan, the U.S., and beyond. Produced by independent filmmakers and artists – many of them women or queer – working across experimental cinema, video art, and museum installation, these films share a deliberate engagement with obsolete media and degraded image quality. Some, like U.S.-based filmmakers Simon Liu 廖沛毅 and Yin Chi-Jang and Taiwanese artist Lin Yi-Chi 林羿绮, experiment with darkroom processes, old film cameras, and analog family photographs found in personal archives or military village ruins. Others, such as Hong Kong video artist Ellen Pau 鲍蔼伦, U.S.-based filmmaker Ouyang Peixuan, and Taiwanese media artist Betty Apple 郑宜苹, embrace digital noise and glitches as the raw material of their moving images.

This paper examines the persistent infatuation with what I term ‘bad images’ in Chinese diasporic filmmaking, which are images marked by poor quality and degradation, often produced by obsolete media, low-tech equipment, or malfunctioning devices. These suboptimal images stand in stark contrast to the contemporary visual economy, where clarity, resolution, and seamlessness are valued as markers of authenticity, technological progress, and commercial value. Yet, over the past four decades, amid the rise of China as a global power, the China-US trade war, the COVID-19 pandemic, and political upheavals and escalating tensions in Hong Kong and Taiwan, Chinese diasporic artists and filmmakers have continually turned to low-quality images to address their diasporic reality. This paper focuses on two such filmmakers, Yin Chi-Jang and Ouyang Peixuan, both originally from mainland China and now residing in the United States. Each of them employs pixelation and glitches at distinct historical moments – Yin in the post-Cultural Revolution era while Ouyang during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through an analysis of Yin’s *Another Clapping* (2001) and Ouyang’s *The___World* (2021), this paper investigates why bad images have become critical aesthetic devices for Chinese diasporic filmmakers, particularly in an era when poor-quality images are often dismissed as unfavorable and worthless.

The hierarchy of resolution could not be more evident in our time: high-resolution images are consistently commodified and stratified, from tiered streaming subscriptions to high-end camera technologies. They are aestheticised, through the metallic sheen of 4K K-pop music videos, the sleeky design of Apple products, the dictate of Dolby Vision in theatres, and the ultra-HD, hyperreal, futuristic visuals of television shows like *Black Mirror*. Together, good images reinforce a future-oriented visual economy that equates hyper-visibility with authenticity. In contrast, poor-quality images, typified by pirated films and deep-fried memes, often indicate reproduction, deterioration, and obsolescence – in Hito Steyerl’s descriptions, the ‘illicit fifth-generation bastard of an original image’, ‘the debris of audiovisual production’, and ‘the trash that washes up on the digital economies’ shores’ (2009, p. 1). At times, they signify low bandwidth, outmoded devices, and malfunction due to lack of maintenance. They suggest memory loss, dystopic chaos, and nuclear fallouts. They constitute the subgenre of analog horror, channeling the media of VHS, camcorders, and deteriorated files with an ominous sense of obscurity, haunting, and death. Unlike the smooth, effortless consumption of high-res images, bad images demand laborious engagement from their viewers to wait, squint, scrutinise, and reconstruct. They therefore represent the opposite of the visual economy’s ideal – the masked, the distorted, the ghostly, the outdated, and hence, the inauthentic.

This ‘class society of images’ (Steyerl 2009, p. 2) both emerges from and sustains the ideological framework of media obsolescence. While the discourse on media obsolescence offers insights into how obsolete media reinforce or disrupt the teleological narratives of technological progress and the capitalist condition of media infrastructure, it often centers on the technological, material, and economic dimension without fully accounting for the complex sociopolitical conditions behind the rendering of obsolescence and suboptimal images. Moreover, they overlook the bad images’ function as diasporic visual strategies, in their negotiations with ‘origin’ and ‘authenticity’ as terms also coded in discourses on immigration and diaspora. Thus, this paper intends to shift the conversation towards diasporic filmmaking. Treating bad images as an analytical lens for understanding diasporic subjectivities, I ask: How do we understand the ideology of authenticity in diasporic contexts? How does the repurposing of bad images cultivate an alternative, affective understanding of authenticity? In what ways can bad images and obsolete media mediate dislocation and historical trauma, challenging dominant narratives that frame diaspora as a departure from home and an imperative to return?

By thinking through these questions, this paper also reframes the history of Chinese independent filmmaking through the lens of bad images. Unlike their predecessors who were trained in state film schools, the Chinese diasporic filmmakers that I am interested in are often educated in art schools, navigating video art, experimental film, photography, and performance, among other practices alongside traditional filmmaking. They are also imbricated in a shifting media economy shaped by digital technology, internet culture, and neoliberal media economies defined by rapid obsolescence and technological replacement. To fully grasp this history, it is therefore essential to bring in an art historical perspective – a context not foregrounded enough in studies of Chinese independent filmmaking – and to consider how media obsolescence influences diasporic filmmaking. What obsolete media offers, I suggest, is not simply a degraded aesthetic but a heightened sensitivity to temporality, memory, and the unstable notion of origin and authenticity. Ultimately, this paper argues that bad images in the works of Chinese diasporic filmmakers, as exemplified by Yin and Ouyang, enable emergent modes of diasporic belongings, intimacies, and subjectivities.

Media obsolescence in grains, pixels, and glitches

The concept of media obsolescence has garnered significant traction within cinema and media studies over the past decade, particularly within the framework of media archaeology. Resummoned and advanced by scholars such as Thomas Elsaesser and Jussi Parikka, media archaeology as a historiographical method interrogates the ideological forces that have shaped media history and challenges the dominant technological teleology (Elsaesser 2016; Parikka 2012). For media archaeologists, media obsolescence is not a natural progression of technology but a structural condition of technological capitalism. Parikka, in particular, theorises planned media obsolescence as a mechanism through which capitalist infrastructures dictate the lifespan of media technologies, via cycles of forced upgrading, replacement, and disposal (Hertz and Parikka 2012, pp. 425-426).

Under this framework, the competition of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ images emerges as both a symptom and complicit rhetoric of planned obsolescence. Bad images, as the substandard evil twin, hold a flattering mirror to their counterpart. They gain their rhetorical power by existing as the inferior, the left-behind, while reflecting what good images uphold – the future, the authentic, with the illusion of total mastery of space and time. At times, in grainy film stocks and VHS interface, they harbor a paradoxical temporality, in which ‘present and past are both integral and palpable’ (Elsaesser 2014, p. 95). Other times, in forms of bootleg films, bad signals, low bandwidth, and unofficial film exhibition on small screens, bad images obscure the racialised and gendered labour exploitation in media infrastructure and the uneven cultural hierarchy that stipulates the value of images (Larkin 2008; Lobato 2012; Parks and Starosielski 2015; Neves 2020).

But what happens when bad images are claimed, repurposed, and aestheticised? Film Scholars such as Elsaesser and Erica Balsom, among others, observe that the term ‘obsolescence’ has recently reappeared as a practice in experimental cinema and the art world (Balsom 2009; Nardelli 2009; Knowles 2011; Elsaesser 2016). Elsaesser aptly points out a positive shift in the cultural meaning of obsolescence, describing it as ‘heroic resistance to relentless acceleration’ and even as a ‘badge of honor of the no longer useful’. He suggests that obsolescence might become the ‘new gold standard of authenticity or even... as our own fidelity to the event’ (2016, p. 335). This alternative notion of authenticity can be further understood as giving rise to new affects and subjectivities. In her influential essay on the ‘poor image’, Steyerl argues that as the poor image moves away from the ‘origin’ and hence becomes the inauthentic copy, it cultivates a new ‘visual bond’,

connecting alternative communities through shared affects toward degraded images (Steyerl 2009, pp. 5-6). More recently, art historian Shane Denson also theorises what he calls ‘disrelated images’, which destabilise the conventional relation between the image and reality, thereby representing ‘a transitional reconfiguration of affective embodiment itself’ and giving rise to new subjectivities (Denson 2020, p. 23). Taken together, these scholars demonstrate how bad images can move beyond their initial status as outdated, degraded, or signs of malfunction and become generative and critical vehicles for new affects and subjectivities, with an underlying concern about authenticity and the increasingly tenuous link between image and reality.

While discussions on media obsolescence and its creative reclaim in the past decade provided valuable frameworks for understanding bad images as a systemic capitalist condition, they often remain centered on technological teleology, digital capitalism, media history, and cinematic ontology (Balsom 2009; Elsaesser 2016; Betancourt 2016). What these discussions tend to overlook are the broader sociopolitical structures of visibility and exclusion that shape the political economy of images and neglect the following questions: Whose images are deemed worthy of preservation and aesthetic value, while whose images have been historically considered ‘bad’ or ‘obsolete’? What conditions allow some degraded images to be reframed as vintage, chic, aesthetic, or ‘too bad to be good,’ while others are dismissed as pirated, inauthentic, ethnographic, or irrelevant to history? Who needs bad images to re-narrate memories, navigate displacement, and shake assumptions of notions like ‘authenticity’ and ‘origin’? Who claims bad images to reject legibility? I argue that we need to go beyond the current discourse to understand the hierarchy of good/bad images as shaped by racialised, gendered, colonial, and political regimes that inscribe value onto images, which map onto structures of cultural legitimacy and erasure.

Furthermore, I intervene by expanding the discussion of the bad image into the realm of diasporic film and art practices, where notions like ‘origin’ and ‘authenticity’ carry heavy affective and ideological weight that were previously seldom foregrounded. The materiality of bad images naturally lends itself to a diasporic metaphor: Fragmentation, blur, and deterioration mirror the conditions of estrangement, dislocation, and loss. From fading family photographs to glitchy video chat calls, bad images index the frictions of transnational movement and the departure from the original home. They evoke temporal dissonance (jet lag, sleep-deprivation, time-zone confusion, and the sleepy traveler), linguistic fragmentation (the gradual invasion of a foreign language as a testament to ‘inauthenticity’), and epistemic disorientation.¹ As such, we need to understand bad images as affective carriers of diasporic time, space, and sensation. They are also strategies to resist linear narratives of displacement, which posits the diasporic subject as inauthentic, amnesiac, and strange while calling for a return to ‘home’.

This paper thus argues for a dual intervention in the discourse on media obsolescence: first, by foregrounding the sociopolitical conditions in which the logic of obsolescence and bad images operate, and second, by highlighting how bad images are mobilised as diasporic visual practices. I will demonstrate that through home archives, domestic objects, pirated media, found footage, and simulated landscapes, Chinese diasporic filmmakers and artists forge alternative diasporic visualities that resist the dominant visual economy. These filmmakers have demonstrated a sensitivity to the politics of visibility and obscurity, and how different obsolete media may variously afford resistance to what is stipulated as ‘good’, ‘authentic’, ‘original’, ‘legible’, and ‘real’. Through their negotiation with these terms, their practices extend the discourse of media obsolescence into the realm of affect, imagination, and new ways of relating to space, memory, and history.

With this framework in mind, the following section turns to the specific context of Chinese diasporic films and videos and considers what image economy these filmmakers respond to.

Contextualising Chinese diasporic films and videos

The 1990s marked a pivotal shift in the landscape of Chinese contemporary art and cinema, coinciding with China's post-socialist reforms, rapid urbanisation, and increased global visibility. During this period, the term 'The New Documentary Film Movement 新纪录片运动' gained traction, marking a move away from state-sanctioned filmmaking toward independent modes of production. Dominant narratives on Chinese independent filmmaking in this period highlight the pervasive use of home digital video cameras in the late 1990s, the common style of *xianchang* (or 'on the spot') that emphasises documentary authenticity, and shared focuses on subjects of socially marginalised communities (Pickowicz and Zhang 2006; Berry et al. 2025). These discussions often emphasise films' role in capturing social change and shifting political landscapes. Concurrently, Chinese video art also emerged, which is often construed as a documenting tool of performance or critique of mass media (Minsheng Xiandai Meishuguan 2011). As a result, within both film studies and art history, the focus on video cameras as tools for direct documentation and social commentary has overshadowed the aesthetic and experimental dimensions of these moving images, which are more commonly associated with European and American avant-garde practices from the early to late 20th century.

At the same time, the category of Chinese contemporary art was gaining visibility overseas, particularly through exhibitions in the USA such as *Inside Out: New Chinese Art* (1998, curated by Gao Minglu 高名潞) and *Transience: Chinese Experimental Art at the End of the Twentieth Century* (1999, curated by Wu Hung 巫鸿). These exhibitions primarily foregrounded painting, installation, and material-based art with some legibility as 'Chinese'. Within the narrative of this part of art history, the marginalisation of Chinese diasporic experimental filmmakers and video artists in the USA can be attributed to two factors. First, the field of art history has maintained an object-oriented focus in the past decade, prioritising material objects while falsely relegating films and videos to the realm of the immaterial. Second, more importantly, it is because the Western discourse on Chinese contemporary art has remained rooted in a multiculturalist framework since the 1990s. This framework privileges artists whose works stage a dynamics between legible Chineseness and avant-garde aesthetics, often through the trope of 'cultural synthesis' of 'Eastern' and 'Western' symbolism, synthesizing cultural, post-socialist, and contemporary experimental elements (Davidson 2020). Such a trope is exemplified in works such as Xu Bing's 徐冰 *Book from the Sky* 天书 (1987-91) and Wenda Gu's 谷文达 *United Nations Series: Temple of Heaven (China Monument)* (1997).

In contrast, the diasporic filmmakers that I am interested – both are women filmmakers in the case studies discussed here – engage in more complex relations with China, Chineseness, and the notion of homeland. As I will demonstrate below, their works do not readily conform to the dominant narratives of Chinese diasporic identity, nor do they fit neatly within the Western impression of Chinese contemporary art. Instead, the works of Yin Chi-Jang and Ouyang Peixuan illustrate how bad images may serve as a critical aesthetic device in diasporic filmmaking, which allows the filmmakers to negotiate with vexed notions of authenticity, home, and intimacy.

Another Clapping: the wound of the photograph

Born in 1973 in mainland China, Yin Chi-Jang moved to Canada with her mother at a young age and later

received training in both art and film production in the USA. Shot with a hand-held DV, *Another Clapping* (00:24:00) is an experimental documentary in which Yin explores the ambivalent relationship between herself and her mother, and the entangled trauma of domestic and state histories as a haunting presence in the diasporic lives. The film tells the story of a mother who fled China, her home country, after 1976 when the Cultural Revolution ended and immigrated to Canada with her five-year-old daughter. This escape is simultaneously an escape from her abusive husband, whom she divorced before leaving the country, and from a patriarchal state plagued with violence.

The film opens with a departure scene that immediately reveals Yin's fascination with the gritty texture of digital image surfaces. The plane takes off when the camera guides our gaze beyond the window from the interior of a plane, and as the aircraft plunges into the clouds, the moving images begin to morph into frozen stills. As the stills alternate and increasingly fixate upon the clouds, their outline gradually fades, ultimately yielding to an indistinct grey haze on the screen, compelling us to scrutinise the shifting pixels and the varying shades of grey that blend into a textured mosaic (Figure 1). Setting the stage with an allegory of the displacement of reality into the digital surface, the story then unfolds in a solemn tone, as the daughter faces the camera mouthing words that confess her inability to recall her mother's experience of violence in the past, and that any recollection of hers is shaped through her mother's storytelling:

'Mom, I really don't remember, what had happened to you that night.
You said my father beat you, you said I was four and we lived in China at that time.
You said it was the first time he beat you.
You said that night he suddenly woke you up, when we were going to sleep, he beat you without warning.
You said since that night he started to beat you occasionally at night.
You said every time when I saw my father beat you, I cried so hard.
I screamed, you said, but there was one night, I stopped crying.
You said you still didn't understand why I wouldn't cry.
You said I might have felt unafraid, after I saw him beat you so many nights.
Mom, since you told me this story so many times, I have started to remember it clearly now.'

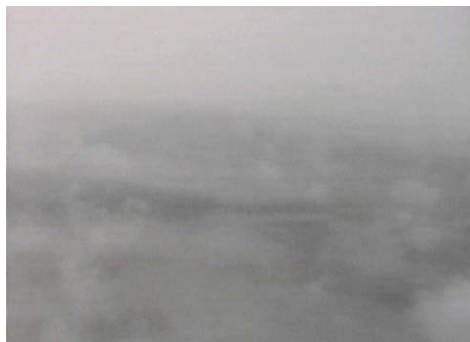


Figure 1 Still from *Another Clapping* (00:01:14)

As the film unfolds, this forgetting and recollecting through mediation becomes a thread, weaving its way through the intersection of domestic violence and political trauma. The daughter's inability to remember becomes a new form of violence, deepening the mother's sense of alienation. The second half of the film then witnesses the mother's struggle to reconnect with her daughter, who runs away from home. Through voice-

mails, the mother's distant voice repeatedly pleads, 'How can I find you? You've changed so much that I feel so far from you.' The film culminates as we follow the daughter's melancholic fixation on her mother, who is immersed in singing an old familiar tune—an echo of a past both shared and lost.

For the interest of this paper, I draw attention to the part (0:08:44) where the daughter recalls seeing her mother cutting out her father's image from their family photographs. In contrast to her amnesia at the beginning of the film, she remembers the photo memorabilia and the meticulous manipulation performed upon them. The recount of her memory unfolds with Yin's performance – shooting from below, the camera captures Yin pressing her face against a glass surface with a tissue paper. Tearing up a rectangular window into the tissue paper, she peeps through the paper window as if casting a gaze into a distant past (Figure 2). In the next scene, against a black background, we are shown the cut photographs exhibited as palpable reminders of intentional erasure. The figure is strangely positioned at the border of the photograph, accentuating the conspicuous absence of the excised segment. The child tilts her head in a whimsical smile, with the border of the photograph abruptly forming a tangent line, silently denying the intimate existence of another individual (Figure 3). As the camera zooms in, we are invited to scrutinise the texture of the cut borders and the surface of the image (Figure 4). At times manifested as a deliberate curve and at others a sharp incision, the edge of the cut photograph bears a resemblance to a scabbed wound, testifying to a past trauma while simultaneously preventing those memories from seeping through. The zoomed-in photograph and its poor quality thus confirm a sense of impenetrability, as the enlarged pixels dissolve into a grey blob, announcing its incapability of holding the details of the past. The gaze of the young girl in the photographs (Figure 5) meets ours, yet the blurred details of her eyes convey detachment rather than offering a window into the past. The camera methodically surveys the details of her eyes, then her hand, her shoe, before drifting to the surface of the image, where insignificant pixels dominate, obscuring any meaningful content.



Figure 2 Still from *Another Clapping* (00:09:38)



Figure 3 Still from *Another Clapping* (00:09:51)



Figure 4 Still from *Another Clapping* (00:09:53)



Figure 5 Still from *Another Clapping* (00:12:45)

The bad image here, which manifests as opaque pixels, rejects the photograph's presumed indexicality and transforms it into an ethical practice of forgetting and remembering. The flatness of the photographs and the intimate proximity between the surface of the photograph and the beholder evokes a paradoxical distance, in which the cut-out photograph fails miserably at its promise to faithfully provide a return to its indexical past, to a moment when the daughter can testify to the mother's pain. Instead, the obscurity of the image fabricates the photograph to be the new object of aura, re-enanted through aesthetic de-familiarisation and deliberate revelation of its imperfection. It evokes what Laura Marks would call the haptic visuality, turning the eye into a 'touching organ' that seeks to extend its touch to the decontextualised image (Marks 1999, p. 128). As the camera glances over the surface, what seems more interesting to Yin is the cut and the pixels as well as the toggling between different resolution levels, rather than the photograph as a memory signifier.

In this maneuver of the digital gaze through remediation of the screen and scrutiny of the wound of the cut-out, Yin prompts a question about what it means to forget and to remember as she navigates her mother's traumatic past as a diasporic foreigner. The answer for her is to turn the screen into a performative field, which allows her to playfully assemble, transform, and extend the cut-out (Figure 6). As she narrates her memory of standing on her father's hand, she fills in a line drawing of a man's arm supporting the little girl in a cut-out photograph. Similarly, she depicts a pair of hands holding her arms as she spins in circles. This process transforms the screen into a virtual realm where she invites the affective gaze at the wounded photograph while establishing a tangible connection with the violent past in her creative re-telling of the past. Far from seeking a mere 'recovery' of the 'real' past, Yin's practice challenges the imperative of authentic representations of the 'historical truth.' The pixelated, decontextualised photographs disrupt the illusion of a faithful return promised by clear, stable historical photographs, which are images that claim to offer an unmediated connection to the past. Instead, these blurry, fragmented images question the value placed on legibility and fidelity. Through her performative engagement with these photo objects, Yin does not attempt to reconstruct a coherent past for her audience, but rather positions herself within the fractured, reimagined narratives of the past.

It is crucial to put Yin's work into the larger art historical context in the late 1990s in order to understand the way she addresses the trauma of the Cultural Revolution as a Chinese woman in diaspora. As previously noted, the 1990s witnessed the emergence of Chinese contemporary art. As curator Gao Minglu points out, finding themselves within a new cultural and postcolonial context, the emerging Chinese artists who participated in the international art scene had to operate in what Homi Bhabha calls the third space, and were compelled to 'rethink their origin and how on the one hand it can function in such ex-



Figure 6 Still from *Another Clapping* (00:02:50)

changes as well as function in the "mainstream culture" as a way of representing their origin performatively' (Bhabha 1990; Gao 1998, p. 33). In other words, these artists in the late 80s and early 90s had to incorporate Chineseness as part of their branding while making it legible and interesting for international attention. Aside from referencing traditional Chinese visual forms like calligraphy and fireworks, one of the major tropes in this period tied post-socialist Chineseness with a retrospective critique of the Cultural Revolution. Typified by Zhang Xiaogang's 张晓刚 *Bloodline: The Big Family No.2* 血缘—大家庭：全家福 2 号 (1995) and

Fang Lijun's 方力钧 *Series 2: No.2* 系列二 (之二) (1992), these works are often portraits characterised by uniform clothing and expressionless or exaggerated, distorted faces, reflecting how the oppressive collectivism of that period subsumes the individual identity. However, these works also inadvertently transform the trauma of the Cultural Revolution into a consumable aesthetic spectacle, perpetuating an uncritical binary opposition between the collective and the individual in Western expectations.

By comparison, Chinese and Chinese American women artists in the same period, while each working separately, took up a different route to address their relation to the haunting history of the Cultural Revolution as well as Chineseness, which is a notion that either excluded or exploited them.² Through an engagement with family photographs, self-portraits, performances, and found home objects, artists such as Yin Xiuzhen 尹秀珍, Hung Liu 劉虹, and Patty Chang 張怡, who are contemporaries or predecessors to Yin Chi-Jang, explored their Chinese/Chinese American identity by looking at personal histories, immigrant policies, state biopolitical control, and the racialisation and sexualisation of Asian women (Gouma-Peterson, Liu, Zurko, & Bryson 1998; Davidson 2020, pp. 53-88). Rather than exploiting Chinese political symbolism as a form of branding, these women artists critically engaged with the ideological, racialised, and gendered framing of their intersectional identity as Chinese immigrant women, thereby giving rise to distinct artistic approaches with focuses on domesticity, familial tension, and political memories.

Coming back to *Another Clapping*, it is within this historical context that Yin made the video work. I suggest that it is Yin's positionality as a Chinese woman in diaspora that attunes her to the aesthetic valence of bad images. By fabricating the cut family photograph into a re-enchanted low-quality image, Yin intentionally obscures the shape of the traumatic history of the Cultural Revolution that constitutes the major trope in the genre of Chinese contemporary art of her time. Instead, the pixelated surface allows her to direct attention to the opacity of state violence - no matter domestic or political - inflicted on the female body, and to its haunting and unspeakable presence in the diasporan lives. It reminds one of Saidiya Hartman's notion of 'critical fabulation', in terms of the practice of refusing the totalising historical visibility (Hartman 2019). Rather than reproducing trauma in a way that renders it consumable, Yin's bad images call into question what counts as a 'correct' representation of history and interrogate the relationship between visibility and truthfulness. Or else, who owns the visibility to represent history, while who doesn't, or chooses not to? In embracing the obscurity of bad images, Yin therefore shifts the terms of representation altogether. Rather than seeking resolution, her images pose some poignant questions: how should Chinese women keep on living in another world with the inscribed violent history within the body? How does historical trauma constitute a diasporic subject?

The ____ World (2021): faulty images and simulated realities

While the generation of Chinese diasporic women filmmakers active in the 1990s was haunted by Chineseness as an ideological, exoticised, racialised, and gendered category in the post-Cold War context, the generation that Ouyang belongs to experienced Chineseness in diaspora in a drastically different manner. Born in the 80s and 90s, this generation of filmmakers and artists witnessed the rapid development of China's market economy as it rose to be the epicenter of globalisation. Different from Yin's generation, scholars note that this younger generation tends to 'display a sense of cosmopolitan "worldliness"' (Pollack 2018, p. 5). They do not necessarily respond to the question of Chineseness as an ethnic or ideological category per se, but are more interested in the question of how to situate themselves in a global, diasporic context, against the backdrop of China's rising power, the growing nationalism, and exacerbated Sinophobia abroad (Bao 2022,

p. 10). As we shall see in this section, *The ____ World* deploys bad images to demonstrate how contemporary diasporic subjects and feelings of belonging are embedded in a media infrastructure that bears utopic and yet ultimately failed promises of neoliberal globalism; instead, it proposes an alternative, digitally mediated form of intimacy.

Composed during the COVID-19 pandemic, *The ____ World* (0:17:53) is an essay film about disconnection in a world under the promise of globalisation. The film transports us between the replica model of New York City in Window of the World in Shenzhen, China, and the simulation of New York City on Google Earth, and is woven together through Ouyang's monologue about dreams, childhood memories, and text conversations with her mother. The film begins with Ouyang telling the audience in English about a bizarre dream of her mother, in which she spent the entire night wandering in foreign streets looking for her daughter, who, having turned into an alien that shapeshifted, hid in a lamp, and didn't recognise her mother. A text message appears on the screen with a buzz, lamenting the impossibility of bridging two realities ('I don't know if there's even a way to show you what I saw here. All I have is this deceptive medium.'). Then, narrated in Chinese, she sketches out a nostalgic story of her childhood visit to Window of the World and an imagined road trip with her parents in a second dream, in which she saw a huge statue of liberty made of plastic with blurry contours.

As Ouyang narrates in a sentimental tone, the film invites us into a world of images riddled with pixels, glitches, and obsolescence. The camera lingers on the worn-down surface of the miniaturised New York City replica in Window of the World (Figure 7), suggesting its status as an outdated simulation – a once-utopian fantasy of global connectivity. This footage is followed by the photographs of Ouyang's family trip to Window of the World in the early 2000s, which are rendered as large patches of pixels squeezed through slow buffering, never reaching its end (Figure 8). The film then transitions to Google Earth's simulation images, where flaws and glitches persist. As the camera navigates a glitch-ridden, low-resolution Manhattan in drone view, it penetrates the pixelated facades of buildings, revealing the fragmented and unstable nature of this virtual geography (Figure 9).

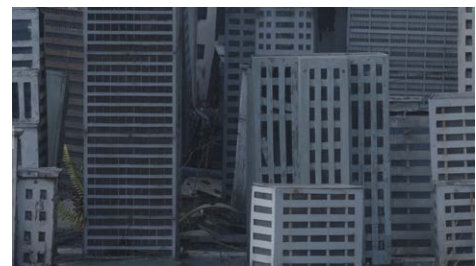


Figure 7 Still from *The ____ World* (00:01:37)



Figure 8 Still from *The ____ World* (00:10:38)

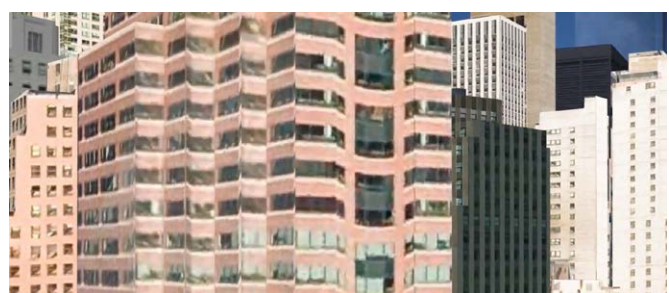


Figure 9 Still from *The ____ World* (00:14:05)

Like *Another Clapping*, Ouyang's *The ____ World*, made two decades later, shares a fascination with the creative productivity of bad images and the digital surface. The unencumbered traversal across virtual realms, through pixels and errors, dreams and invented memories, must be understood in the claustrophobic context of the pandemic, which imposed new and precarious meanings onto Chineseness and home for Chinese women in diaspora. Made during Ouyang's residency in Chicago, the film reflects a time when Chinese dias-

porans in the USA were cast as pathological threats – targets of xenophobia, gendered violence, and Trump-era deportation threats – amid rising racial tensions and the George Floyd protests.³ The domestic sphere thus was a home space that one was forced to stay within and at peril of eviction with the revoked visa documents. Meanwhile, in China, the zero-COVID campaign framed the virus as foreign, justifying extreme surveillance and restricted resources on targeted populations including overseas Chinese, women in the country, and ethnic minorities, which are proved expendable in the name of national security (Hou 2020; Yeung, Xiong, & Gan, 2022; Chan and Lee 2024).

While diasporic Chinese faced forced immobility, the pandemic-born *The ____ World* translates such immobility into a curious form of adventure – across a Chinese simulation theme park, childhood photographs, and a glitch-ridden Google Earth rendering of New York City. Yet, this mobility does not grant the freedom of a *flâneur*, who, as Charles Baudelaire describes, is ‘away from home and yet to feel everywhere at home’ (Baudelaire 1995, p. 9). Instead, *The ____ World* presents a subject never fully ‘at home’, traversing surfaces that expose the instability of its realities. Both the obsolete replica and the glitchy simulation function as a virtual construction that once sustained a 1990s fantasy of a globalised, accessible, homogeneous world through images; their surface, nevertheless, marks the failure of such a dream. Opened in 1994 in Shenzhen – the hub of electronics manufacturing and counterfeiting – Window of the World was a place-making project that not only fostered its visitors’ imagination of the world but also reimagined China’s position within the world (Braun 2022). Now on the verge of obsolescence, the surface of the replica has been worn, crooked, and faded in color. The interstices between the skyscrapers are re-occupied by lush weeds. Reminiscent of the unsettling paper constructions built and photographed by German photographer Thomas Demand, a close-up of the paper model renders it at once convincingly real and uncannily artificial, encapsulating a world teetering on collapse. In a similar vein, once used as a popular tool for vicarious exploration of the world, Google Earth in Ouyang’s work now reveals its own instability as a digital space. As the camera navigates the glitching surface of the Statue of Liberty in Google Earth, it exposes how the surface of the simulated model is stitched together by geometric shapes and disconnected lines with occasional failure when it is not entirely loaded (Figure 10). In this glitchy, fragmented world made up of flimsy dioramas and wonky digital simulation, Ouyang stages her family photographs in pixelation, with the ceaseless loading of the blurry pictures testifying to the fuzziness of her home memory.

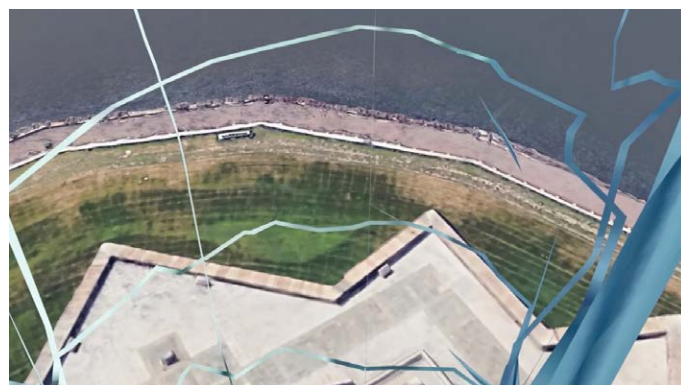


Figure 10 Still from *The ____ World* (00:15:31)

Evoking what Denson calls ‘disrelated images’, these faulty images therefore serve as poignant reminders of simulacra’s unfulfilled promise to replicate reality, revealing a fundamental shift of the relationship between the subjects and the objects of perception in the algorithmic age (Denson 2020, p. 1). ‘How can I

ever show you what I see here? How can I ever reach you on the other side of the screen?' The flimsy tie between the faulty images and reality resonates with the disconnection and estrangement evident in Ouyang's mother's dream and their text conversation. Yet, it is precisely this shakiness that grants Ouyang the ability to traverse binaries – past and present, dream and reality, virtuality and actuality, moment and eternity – through the digital screen. Rather than reinforcing fixed hierarchies, these faulty images become pathways between these realms. Fixating on digital flaws and imperfections, Ouyang transforms them into an experimental space where she negotiates these boundaries and reimagines intimacy – not dependent on proximity, clarity, or seamless presence, but on opacity, failures, and digital mediation. Bad images, then, are no longer merely a symptom of media obsolescence; instead, they become a method of survival and an affective strategy for navigating displacement and distance.

Conclusion

This digitally mediated intimacy in Ouyang's *The _____ World* evokes Russian-American cultural theorist Svetlana Boym's notion of diasporic intimacy, which suggests an alternative understanding of intimacy that is not defined by proximity or unmediation to an essential, unchanging 'innermost nature' or 'home' but takes mediation as an integral part, and thus is 'not opposed to uprootedness and defamiliarization but constituted by it' (Boym 1998, p. 499). As she states, '[i]n contrast to the utopian images of intimacy as transparency, authenticity, and ultimate belonging, diasporic intimacy is...rooted in the suspicion of a single home' (pp. 499-500). It does not promise a comforting recovery of identity and postulates a necessary distance from 'home'. In other words, diasporic intimacy deconstructs the notion of home as the one and single place of origin that demands a return in order to achieve intimacy, and allows 'home' to grow in multiplicities, be produced through the immigrant's creative processes, and rest in the 'fragile coziness of a foreign home' (p. 501). Just like bad images that are always subject to collapse but also find themselves in incessant production and affectionate practices by immigrants, the diasporic 'home' is similarly tenuous and contingent and calls upon immigrants to constantly negotiate with that transience. Boym therefore argues for the unapologetic nature of diaspora, which entails departure from the homeland and a leap into the unknown and the 'furtive pleasures of exile', which precisely derives from the failed promise of returning home (p. 502).

For Chinese women filmmakers and artists in diaspora, bad images become the site of diasporic intimacy. Instead of fulfilling the promise to seamlessly bridge the 'authentic' home that one longs to return to, poor-quality images, with their glitches, blurriness, and fragmentation, compel the immigrant to learn to reconcile with foreignness, trauma, and estrangement while caressing and inhabiting the surface of images. Just like how Yin's fixation on the indistinguishable patches of grey in the wounded family photographs and Ouyang's obsession with the glitches in Google Earth simulation, bad images harbor the diasporic longing and memories and reenchant itself into a haptic, performative, and affective field. They therefore develop an ethics of intimacy and of home as a critical praxis of relating the Chinese diasporic women to the past, to others, and to reality, that rejects a utopic image of the 'origin', the 'authenticity', and 'Chineseness' in ethnic oneness and national solidarity, opening them up into multiplicities of home that exist beyond nationalist, racial, and gendered narratives. The surface of bad images thus becomes a diasporic home for Chinese women to dwell in.

What emerges from a bad image thus is an unruly diasporic existence and subjectivity always in fluctuation. It demonstrates that diaspora is a dynamic process. It is a matter of nomadic mobility and deterritorialisation,

in which one is uprooted and learns to negotiate with distances. It is a distinct mode of epistemology that is always caught in the flux of collapse and rebuild. It is lived through in moving images and on screen, in reminiscence, imagination, and simulation. It is performed through storytelling when the narrator redefines the past and the listener learns an ethics of remembering and forgetting. It is always accompanied by a sentimental sense of lack and yet also summons an exilic pleasure. It therefore opens up a larger project that calls for an examination of the larger body of work made by Chinese diasporic filmmakers through the lens of bad images and asks the question: what diasporic becoming are they calling for?

Notes

- 1 Hence, it is no coincidence that bad images are also employed in films and videos made by émigrés and immigrants beyond the Sinophone world. Notable examples include Shigeko Kubota's Self-Portrait (1970-1971), Theresa Hak Kyung Cha's Mouth to Mouth (1975), Mona Hatoum's Measures of Distance (1988), Rea Tajiri's History and Memory: For Akiko and Takashige (1991), and Tran T. Kim-Trang, Ekleipsis (1998). The connection between blurry images and diasporic cinema has been partially addressed by Laura Marks in her discussion of intercultural cinema. Her interest lies in the physical, bodily engagement in viewing intercultural cinema as a way to convey cultural experience and memories (Marks 2000).
- 2 'Chineseness' as a racialised and ethnic category was discussed by Rey Chow very early on (Chow 1998). More recently, Sasha Su-Ling Welland discusses the intersection of Chineseness, feminism, and Chinese women artists in the context of late 1990s to early 2000s Beijing (Welland 2018).
- 3 See post-screening Q&A: http://ff1895.com/post.show?post_id=2399

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坏影像作为离散家园：华语离散影像中的媒介淘汰探究

沈秋阳

概要

本文探讨了坏影像 (bad images) 如何作为关键的美学手法，运用于华人离散电影与影像创作中。这些低质量图像通常呈现出品质劣化的特征，多由淘汰的媒介、低技术设备或故障机器所产生。本文的讨论超越了关于媒介淘汰作为技术资本主义体系性条件的既有论述，转而揭示低质量图像与废弃媒介如何被重新挪用为一种离散的视觉实践，并受到特定社会政治条件下的图像政治经济学的塑形。本文结合电影与媒介研究以及艺术史领域，聚焦于两部由女性电影创作者拍摄的实验性影像作品，她们均来自中国大陆，目前居住于美国：殷子静的《再鼓掌》*Another Clapping* (2001) 和欧阳霏莹的《世界 ____》*The ____ World* (2021)。尽管她们各自在不同的历史节点关注离散经验——殷子静在后文革时期创作，欧阳霏莹则在新冠疫情期间——但本文指出，两位创作者皆借助低质量图像的动员，挑战了关于“根源” (origin) 与“真实性” (authenticity) 的观念。这些观念在离散论述中充满意识形态与情感编码，并与复杂纠结的“中国”及“中国性”概念紧密交织。她们作品中那些模糊、错乱与失真的图像，并非象征着离散主体缺失了某种纯粹本源；相反地，这些图像重新赋予了数字表面以魅力，将之转化为女性离散主体批判性介入的空间，以质疑这些观念背后的意识形态、种族化与性别化的框架。本文最终提出，通过对低质量图像的创造性再利用，这些影像实践能培育出新的离散归属感与亲密模式，其根基在于对“真实性”与“中国性”这些既定话语的激进拒绝。

关键词：华人离散电影、实验电影、图像故障、媒介淘汰、女性主义、华裔美国人

引言

16 毫米 Bolex 摄影机拍摄的颗粒感影像剧烈颤抖，呈现出一幅遥远城市的感伤景象。紧接着，电脑界面闪现错误信息，一位亚洲女性的肖像随即出现，却不断被闪烁的故障所侵扰。一张童年的家庭照片在缓冲过程中不断消融，画面被大面积像素化遮蔽。这些颤抖、故障、像素化、退化，乃至化学损伤或数字扭曲的画面，构成了华语离散影像创作中的核心视觉风格——从上世纪八十年代至今，无论在香港、台湾，还是美国及其他地区，都可见其身影。由众多独立电影人和艺术家（其中不乏女性或酷儿艺术家）创作，他们活跃于实验电影、录像艺术与展览装置领域，并刻意与过时媒介及坏影像展开对话。有的创作者，如旅美电影人廖沛毅 (Simon Liu) 与殷子静，以及台湾艺术家林羿绮，尝试利用暗房工艺、老式胶片机与个人档案或眷村废墟中发现的家庭照片；另一些人，如香港录像艺术家鲍蔼伦 (Ellen Pau)、旅美导演欧阳霏莹，以及台湾媒体艺术家郑宜苹 (Betty Apple)，则将数字噪点与画面故障视为活动影像的原生素材。

本文探讨了华语离散影像创作对“坏影像” (bad images) 的持续迷恋——这些由过时的媒介、低端设备或故障装置生产的低质量的、退化的影像。此类影像与当下视觉经济中强调清晰度、高分辨率与流畅性的主流审美形成鲜明对比：在主流话语里，画面清晰即意味着真实性、技术进步与商业价值。然而，过去四十年间，伴随中国崛起、中美贸易摩擦、新冠疫情，以及香港和台湾的政治动荡与紧张局势，华语离散创作者频频转向低质量影像，以反映自身的离散境遇。本文聚焦两位居住在美国的华裔导演——殷子静与欧阳霏莹——并考察她们分别在后文化大革命时代与新冠疫情期间，如何将像素化与画面故障运用于各自作品：《再鼓掌》(2001) 与《世界 ____》(2021)。通过对

二者作品的分析，本文旨在揭示为何在一个往往将坏影像视为不利的、无价值的时代，华语离散导演仍将其作为重要的美学手法。

在我们所处的时代，分辨率等级的层次化再明显不过：高分辨率图像不断被商品化和分级，从流媒体服务分级订阅到高端摄影器材皆如此。它们被高度美学化，从4K画质的K-pop音乐视频的金属质感，到苹果产品的流畅设计，从影院里杜比视界（Dolby Vision）的主宰地位，再到电视剧《黑镜》（*Black Mirror*）中超高清、超真实且充满未来感的视觉效果。这些“好图像”共同强化了一种面向未来的视觉经济，将超清晰可见性等同于真实性。相较之下，以盗版电影和“包浆表情包”（deep-fried memes）为代表的低质量图像往往象征着复制、劣化与媒介淘汰——希托·史泰耶尔（Hito Steyerl）的描述中称之为“原始图像第五代的非法私生子”、“视听生产的碎屑”以及“数字经济海岸上冲刷上来的垃圾”（Steyerl 2009, p. 1）。有时，它们标志着低带宽、过时设备以及因缺乏维护而导致的机器故障。它们暗示着记忆丧失、反乌托邦式的混乱与核灾难的后果。它们构成了“模拟恐怖”（analog horror）这一亚类型，通过录像带（VHS）、摄像机与损坏文件等媒介，营造出一种令人不安的模糊感、幽灵感与死亡感。与高分辨率图像平滑且轻松的消费体验不同，低质量图像要求观者费力地投入：等待、眯眼细看、仔细审视并重新构建。因此，它们代表了视觉经济理想的反面——被遮蔽的、扭曲的、幽灵般的、过时的，因而被视为不真实的。

这种“图像的阶级社会”（Steyerl 2009, p.2）既产生于也维持着媒介淘汰（media obsolescence）的意识形态框架。尽管有关媒介淘汰的论述提供了一种视角，可以洞察淘汰的媒介如何强化或颠覆有关技术进步的目的论叙事及资本主义媒介基础设施的状况，但这类论述往往集中在技术、物质与经济层面，而未能充分考虑到淘汰与坏影像的形成背后的复杂社会政治条件。此外，这些论述忽略了坏影像作为离散视觉策略的功能，即它们如何与被移民与离散论述所编码的“根源”（origin）与“真实性”（authenticity）观念进行协商。因此，本文意在将讨论转向离散电影制作。通过将坏影像视为分析离散主体性的一种视角，我提出以下问题：在离散语境中，我们如何理解“真实性”的意识形态？对低质量图像的再利用，如何培养出一种与众不同且充满情感的真实性的认知？低质量图像和淘汰媒介又如何调解性地（mediate）呈现离散与历史创伤，进而挑战将离散视为背井离乡并亟待回归的这一主流叙述？

通过思考上述问题，本文也借低质量图像这一视角重新审视华语独立电影的历史。与曾受训于官方电影学院的前辈不同，我所关注的华人离散电影创作者通常接受的是艺术学院教育。在传统电影制作之外，他们同时涉猎录像艺术、实验电影、摄影、表演等多种创作形式，他们也深深卷入了一个由数字技术、互联网文化以及由快速淘汰与技术更替所定义的新自由主义媒介经济所形塑的媒介环境。为了充分理解这一历史，将艺术史视角引入此研究是至关重要的，而这一维度过去在华人独立电影研究中未得到足够凸显；同时，我们必须思考媒介淘汰如何影响离散电影创作。我认为，淘汰的媒介所提供的不只是劣化的美学，更是一种对时间性、记忆，以及对“根源”和“真实性”等不稳定概念的敏锐感知。最终，本文主张，以殷子静与欧阳霏萱的作品为例，坏影像使得中国语境下的离散电影人得以发展出新的离散归属感、亲密关系与主体性模式。

媒介淘汰：颗粒、像素与图像故障

在过去十年间，“媒介淘汰”这一概念在电影和媒介研究领域获得了广泛关注，尤其是在媒介考古学（media archaeology）的框架下更是如此。由托马斯·艾尔赛瑟（Thomas Elsaesser）和尤西·帕里卡（Jussi Parikka）等学者重新唤起并推进的媒介考古学，作为一种历史书写方法，审视了塑造媒介历史的意识形态力量，并挑战占据主导地位的技术目的论叙述（Elsaesser 2016; Parikka

2012)。对于媒介考古学家而言，媒介淘汰并非技术发展的自然进程，而是技术资本主义的一种结构性条件。帕里卡尤其将“计划废止制”（planned obsolescence）理论化为资本主义的基础设施控制媒介技术生命周期的一种机制，通过强制升级、替代与废弃的周期得以实现（Hertz and Parikka 2012, pp. 425-426）。

在这一理论框架下，“好”与“坏”图像之间的竞争同时表现为计划性废止的症状与共谋修辞。坏影像作为不达标的“邪恶双胞胎”，以示弱的姿态衬托着其对立面，正是作为低劣和被抛弃之物，才赋予其强大的修辞力量：它们折射出好图像所推崇的未来性、真实性及掌控时空的假象。有时，在颗粒粗糙的胶片和 VHS 的画面中，它们保有一种悖论式的时间性，“现在与过去同时共存且皆可触及”（Elsaesser 2014, p. 95）。在另一些时候，在盗版电影、信号劣化、低带宽以及非正式的小屏幕放映活动中所出现的坏影像，则掩盖了媒介基础设施中种族化与性别化的劳动力剥削，以及决定图像价值的不均衡文化等级结构（Larkin 2008; Lobato 2012; Parks and Starosielski 2015; Neves 2020）。

然而，当坏影像被重新挪用并赋予美学价值时，又会发生什么？艾尔赛瑟和埃丽卡·巴尔索姆（Erica Balsom）等电影学者指出，“淘汰”一词近年来在实验电影与艺术领域被重新作为一种实践方式使用（Balsom 2009; Nardelli 2009; Knowles 2011; Elsaesser 2016）。艾尔赛瑟敏锐地注意到淘汰概念的文化意义出现了积极转变，将之描述为“对无情加速的一种英雄式抵抗”，甚至成为“不再实用之物的荣耀勋章”。他进一步指出，淘汰可能成为一种“真实性的新金标准”，甚至代表“我们自身对事件的忠诚”（2016, p. 335）。这种对真实性的另类理解进一步催生了新的情感与主体性。史泰耶尔在她具有影响力的关于“低质量图像”（poor image）的文章中指出，当低质量图像逐渐远离“根源”而成为不真实的复制品时，它却培养出一种新的“视觉纽带”，借助人们对劣化图像的共同情感连接起另类社群（Steyerl 2009, pp. 5-6）。近来，艺术史学者肖恩·登森（Shane Denson）也提出了他所谓的“失协图像”（discorrelated images），这些图像动摇了传统图像与现实的关系，代表着“情感具身性的过渡性重组”，并催生了新的主体性（Denson 2020, p. 23）。综合而言，这些学者展现了坏影像如何超越最初陈旧、劣化或故障符号的地位，而成为培育新情感与主体性的生成性批判工具，其背后是对真实性以及图像与现实日益脆弱关系的深刻关注。

尽管过去十年间有关媒介淘汰及其创造性再利用的讨论，为理解坏影像作为资本主义体系条件提供了宝贵的框架，但它们常常集中于技术目的论、数字资本主义、媒介历史和电影本体论（Balsom 2009; Elsaesser 2016; Betancourt 2016）。这些讨论往往忽略了塑造图像政治经济的更广泛的社会政治结构，且其未能回答以下问题：哪些图像被视为值得保存和具有审美价值的，而哪些图像在历史上被归类为“坏”或“过时的”？什么条件使得某些坏影像能被重新定义为复古、时尚、美学的或“烂到极致”，而另一些却被视为盗版、不真实的、民族志或历史上无关紧要的？谁需要坏影像来重新叙述记忆、导航离散、动摇“真实性”与“根源”等观念？谁又利用坏影像拒绝可读性？我主张，我们需要超越现有话语，将好/坏影像的等级理解为受种族化、性别化、殖民及政治体制所影响，且被其赋予价值，映射为文化合法性与抹除结构的一部分。

更进一步，我将对坏影像的讨论扩展到离散电影与艺术实践领域，而在这些领域，“根源”与“真实性”等概念承载着此前较少被突显的沉重情感与意识形态意义。坏影像的物质性本身天然契合离散的隐喻：破碎、模糊与退化反映了疏离、错位与失落的状态。从褪色的家庭照片到视频通话的图像干扰，坏影像标志着跨国流动的摩擦及远离原生家园。它们唤起时间的失谐（时差、失眠、时区混乱、旅途倦意）、语言的碎片化（外语逐渐入侵象征着“不真实”）与认知的迷失¹。因此，我们需将坏影

像理解为离散时空与感觉的情感载体，也作为抵抗线性离散叙事的策略，这种线性叙事倾向于将离散主体描述为不真实的、失忆的、陌生的，并号召其返回所谓的“家园”。

因此，本文提出对媒介淘汰的讨论的双重介入：一方面，凸显决定媒介淘汰与坏影像逻辑运作的社会政治条件；另一方面，则强调坏影像如何被动员为离散视觉实践。我将论证，通过家庭档案、家居物件、盗版媒介、拾得影像以及模拟景观等手法，华人离散电影人及艺术家创造出另类的离散视觉经验，以抵抗主流视觉经济。这些创作者表现出对视觉性与模糊性政治的敏锐感知，以及不同被淘汰的媒介如何以各种方式抵抗被定义为“好”、“真实”、“原初”、“可读”与“真实”的主流标准。经由与上述术语的不断协商，他们的创作实践将媒介淘汰的论述延伸至情感、想象力以及空间、记忆与历史的新型关系模式之中。

在此框架基础上，下一部分将聚焦于华人离散电影与影像的具体语境，并考察这些电影人所回应的图像经济形态。

华人离散电影与录像的语境化

1990年代标志着中国当代艺术与电影领域关键的转型时期，同时也伴随了中国后社会主义改革、快速城市化和全球可见度的显著提升。在此期间，“新纪录片运动”这一术语开始流行，标志着电影创作模式从官方体制向独立制作转移。有关这一时期中国独立电影制作的主流叙述，常强调20世纪90年代末家庭数字摄像机的广泛使用、强调纪实真实性的“现场”风格，以及对社会边缘群体的共同关注（Pickowicz and Zhang 2006; Berry et al. 2025）。这些讨论通常凸显电影在捕捉社会变迁和政治环境转型方面所发挥的作用。与此同时，中国录像艺术也逐渐兴起，但往往被视为行为艺术的记录工具，或对大众媒体进行批判的手段（民生现代美术馆 2011）。因此，无论是在电影研究领域还是艺术史领域，录像摄像机作为直接记录与社会评论工具的作用掩盖了这些动态影像在美学与实验性层面的探索，而这类探索往往被归入20世纪早期到晚期的欧美前卫艺术的范畴。

与此同时，“中国当代艺术”这一范畴在海外的可见度也有所提升，特别是通过于美国举办的展览，如1998年高名潞策展的“Inside Out: 新中国艺术”与1999年巫鸿策展的“Transience: 20世纪末的中国实验艺术”。这些展览主要强调绘画、装置与基于物质媒介的艺术，这些形式带有一定易读的“中国性”。在这一艺术史叙述中，美国境内华人离散实验电影创作者和录像艺术家的边缘化可归结于两个因素。首先，艺术史领域在过去十年中一直保持着以物质为导向的关注，优先考虑物质对象，而错误地将电影和录像归入非物质领域。其次，也是更重要的是，西方关于中国当代艺术的论述自1990年代起便根植于一种多元文化框架，这一框架优先关注那些能够体现明确“中国性”与先锋美学互动的艺术家，常通过“东方”与“西方”符号的“文化融合”这一修辞形式，将文化、后社会主义与当代实验元素综合在一起（Davidson 2020）。徐冰的《天书》（1987-91）与谷文达的《联合国系列：中国纪念碑：天坛》（1997）即为这一修辞的典型案列。

与之相对，我所关注的华人离散电影创作者——本文案例研究中的两位女性电影人——与中国、中国性及故乡的概念有着更加复杂的关联。正如下文所示，她们的作品既无法简单地符合有关华人离散身份的主流叙述，也不轻易适合西方对中国当代艺术的固有认知。相反地，殷子静与欧阳霏萱的作品说明了坏影像如何在离散电影创作中发挥关键的美学作用，让创作者得以与“真实性”、“家园”和“亲密关系”等纠结难解的观念展开深刻的协商与对话。

《再鼓掌》：照片上的伤口

殷子静于 1973 年出生于中国大陆，年幼时随母亲移居加拿大，后来在美国接受了艺术与电影制作的训练。《再鼓掌》（时长 24 分钟）是一部使用手持 DV 拍摄的实验纪录片，殷子静在片中探讨了自己与母亲之间充满矛盾的关系，以及交织在家庭暴力与国家历史创伤之间的记忆，这种记忆在她们的离散生活中如幽灵般挥之不去。影片讲述了一位母亲在 1976 年文化大革命结束后逃离中国、带着五岁的女儿移民加拿大的故事。这次逃离既是逃避家暴的丈夫（她在离开前已经离婚），同时也是逃离一个充满暴力的父权国家。

影片开场即是一个离开的场景，直接揭示了殷子静对数码影像粗糙质感的兴趣。镜头从飞机内部引导观众的目光穿过舷窗向外望去，飞机穿入云层，动态影像逐渐凝固为静止画面。当这些静止画面不断交替并聚焦于云朵时，其轮廓逐渐淡化，最终化为屏幕上一片模糊的灰色雾状图像，我们被迫仔细观察不断变化的像素与不同深浅的灰色，它们混合成一幅质感丰富的马赛克图像（图 1）。随着现实被置换到数码表面的寓言式开场，故事以严肃的语调展开：女儿面对镜头，无声地述说她无法回忆起母亲过去遭受的暴力，她所有的记忆仅来自于母亲的讲述：

“妈妈，我真的不记得，那晚你身上到底发生了什么事。
你说我父亲打了你，你说那时我四岁，我们还住在中国。
你说那是他第一次打你。
你说那晚我们准备睡觉时，他毫无征兆地把你打醒了。
你说从那晚之后，他开始偶尔在晚上打你。
你说每次我看到父亲打你，都哭得很厉害。
你说我总是尖叫，但有一晚，我却突然不哭了。
你说你到现在也无法理解为什么那晚我不哭了。
你说也许是我看到太多次，不再害怕了。
妈妈，因为这个故事你讲了太多遍，现在我清楚地记住了。”

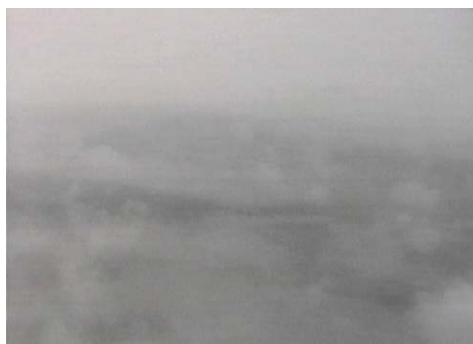


图 1 《再鼓掌》截图 (00:01:14)

随着影片推进，这种通过媒介产生的遗忘与记忆逐渐成为贯穿始终的线索，串联起家庭暴力与政治创伤。女儿的无法记忆本身成为一种新的暴力，加深了母亲的疏离感。在影片后半段，母亲试图与离家出走的女儿重新建立联系。母亲通过语音留言不断恳求：“我该怎么找到你呢？你变了那么多，我感觉与你越来越远。”影片最后以女儿忧伤地凝视着母亲、唱着一首熟悉老歌的场景收尾，仿佛回响着既共享又失落的往昔。

本文尤其关注片中（0:08:44 起）女儿回忆起母亲将父亲的形象从家庭合照中剪除的段落。与影片开头的失忆形成对比，她清楚地记得这些照片和对其精细的修剪行为。这段回忆从殷子静的表演展开：

镜头从下方拍摄，捕捉到殷子静用纸巾将脸紧贴在玻璃表面，她在纸巾上撕开一个矩形的窗口，透过窗口仿佛在凝视着遥远的过去（图2）。下一幕中，在黑色背景下，被剪去的照片明确展现了刻意抹除的痕迹。照片中的人物被怪异地定位在边缘处，突出剪裁所造成的明显缺失。一名孩童歪着头微笑，照片的边界突兀地与她形成切线，默默否定了另一位个体的亲密的存在（图3）。随着镜头拉近，我们被引导仔细观察照片的裁剪边缘与影像表面（图4）。这些边缘时而呈现平滑的曲线，时而呈现锐利的切口，仿佛结痂的伤口，既证明了过去创伤，也阻止记忆再次渗透。放大的低质量图像确认了记忆的不可穿透性，像素化为灰色的团块，宣告其无法承载过往的细节。照片中女孩的目光（图5）与我们的目光相遇，但模糊的眼睛细节并未打开通往过去的窗口，反而传达出疏离之感。镜头有序地扫描她的眼睛、手、鞋子，最终停留在被微不足道的像素占据的图像表面，遮蔽了所有意义。



图2 《再鼓掌》截图 (00:09:38)



图3 《再鼓掌》截图 (00:09:51)



图4 《再鼓掌》截图 (00:09:53)



图5 《再鼓掌》截图 (00:12:45)

这里的坏影像以不透明的像素拒绝了照片原本被认为具有的指示性（indexicality），将其转化为一种伦理性的遗忘与记忆实践。照片的平面性与观看者亲密的接近反而产生了一种悖论式的距离，剪裁的照片未能忠实地返回过往那个见证母亲痛苦的时刻。相反，这种模糊性赋予了照片一种新的灵光（aura），通过美学的陌生化与刻意暴露的不完美重新赋予其魅力。它唤起了劳拉·马克斯（Laura Marks）所称的“触觉视觉性”（haptic visuality），将眼睛转化为一种试图触摸去语境化（decontextualised）图像的“触摸器官”（Marks 1999, p.128）。镜头滑过表面，殷子静真正感兴趣的，似乎并不是照片作为记忆符号，而是被裁剪的伤口和像素，以及不同分辨率之间的切换。

通过这种数码凝视的转化与对照片伤口的审视，殷子静提出了一个问题：作为离散者面对她母亲创伤的过去，记忆与遗忘意味着什么？对她而言，答案在于将屏幕转化为一个表演场域，使她得以以游戏般的方式重组、变形并延展那一剪裁片段（图6）。当她叙述自己站在父亲手心的记忆时，她在剪裁照片的空白处填补了一幅线描——一只男性的手臂托举着小女孩。同样，她又用线条描摹出一双双手，扶持着旋转中的自己。此过程将屏幕变为一片虚拟领域：在这里，她邀请观者以情感性的

凝视直面那张受创的照片，同时通过创造性地“再讲述”与暴力过往建立起有形联结。殷子静并非旨在“复原”所谓“真实”的过去，而是挑战对“历史真相”的真实再现的急迫要求。那些像素化、去语境化的照片打破了清晰、稳定的历史图像所承诺的“忠实回归”幻像——后者自诩能够提供一种未被中介干预的与过去的连接。相反，这些模糊而支离破碎的影像质疑了对“可读性”与“忠实度”的单一价值评判。通过与这些照片对象的表演式互动，殷子静并不试图为观众重构一段连贯的过去，而是将自身置于一个破碎而再造的历史叙事之中。

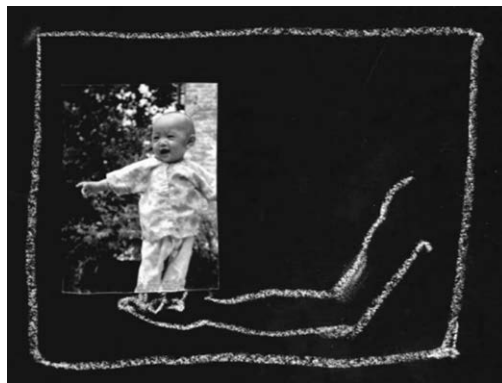


图6 《再鼓掌》截图 (00:02:50)

要理解殷子静如何作为一名离散华人女性来回应文化大革命的创伤，关键在于将她的创作置于1990年代末的更广泛的艺术史语境中。如前所述，1990年代见证了“中国当代艺术”的崛起。策展人高名潞指出，面对新的文化与后殖民语境，参与国际艺术场域的中国新兴艺术家必须在霍米·巴巴所称的“第三空间”中运作，并被迫“重新思考自身的起源，以及这一‘起源’如何既能在跨文化交流中发挥作用，又能在‘主流文化’中以表演性的方式再现自身”（Bhabha 1990; Gao 1998, 第33页）。换言之，上世纪80年代末至90年代初，这些艺术家必须将“中国性”纳入他们的品牌建构，使之对国际观众而言既可读又具有吸引力。除了借用书法、烟花等传统中国视觉元素外，该时期主流的修辞之一便是将后社会主义语境下的“中国性”与对文化大革命的回顾式批判相结合。以张晓刚的《血缘—大家庭：全家福2号》（1995）和方力钧的《系列二（之二）》（1992）为代表的作品，常描绘着统一服饰、面无表情或面容夸张扭曲的人物形象，反映出当时压抑性的集体主义如何淹没个体身份。然而，这些作品也不可避免地将文化大革命的创伤转化为一种可供消费的审美景观，并在西方的想象中不断生产集体与个体的简单二元对立。

相比之下，同期的华人或华裔美国女性艺术家则以不同路径回应文化大革命的历史幽灵及“中国性”这一既排斥又利用她们的概念²。尹秀珍、刘虹、张怡等与殷子静同时期或稍早涉足艺术实践的女性创作者，通过家庭照片、自画像、行为表演与拾得的家居物件等手段，探讨个人历史、移民政策、国家生物政治控制，以及亚洲女性的种族化与性化经验（Gouma-Peterson et al. 1998; Davidson 2020, 第53–88页）。她们并未将中国政治符号简化为个人品牌，而是批判性地介入作为华人移民女性的交叉身份所受的意识形态、种族化与性别化框架，从而催生出以家庭性、亲密张力与政治记忆为核心的独特艺术表达。

回到《再鼓掌》，正是在这一历史语境中，殷子静完成了这部影像作品。我认为，正是她作为离散华人女性的主体位置，使其尤为敏感于坏影像所蕴含的美学张力。通过将剪裁后的家庭照片再现为一种“重新赋魅”的低质量影像，她有意遮蔽了当时中国当代艺术中常见的、以文化大革命创伤为主题的清晰叙事。相反，像素化的表面使她能够将视线引向国家暴力——无论源于家庭还是政治——对女性身体的侵袭，以及这种暴力在离散生活中的幽灵般存在。此举让人联想到萨伊迪亚·哈特曼（Saidiya Hartman）提出的“批判性虚构”（critical fabulation），即对全景式历史可见性的拒斥（Hartman 2019）。殷子静的“坏影像”并非将创伤转化为可消费的再现，而是质疑何为“正确”的历史表述，并反思可见性与真实性之间的关系：谁拥有历史表述的可见性？谁又不具此权利，或主动放弃此权利？通过拥抱图像的模糊性，殷子静从根本上重塑了再现的条件。她的影像不在于提供一个明确的结论，而是提出诸多发人深省的问题：华人女性带着身体深处铭刻着的暴力历史，如何在异国他乡继续生存？历史创伤又如何构筑离散主体？

《世界 ____》：故障图像与模拟现实

活跃于1990年代的华人女性离散电影人那一代，在冷战后语境中常被“中国性”这一意识形态异域化、种族化且性别化的范畴所纠缠。与之迥异的是，欧阳霏萱所隶属的这一代人，在离散情境下对“中国性”的体验呈现出截然不同的面貌。生于20世纪80-90年代的他们，目睹了中国市场经济的迅猛发展及其成为全球化中心的历程。学者指出，这一更年轻的群体不同于殷子静那一代，更倾向于“展现一种世界主义的‘全球感’”（Pollack 2018, p. 5）。他们并不必然将“中国性”视作种族或意识形态范畴来回应，更关心的是在中国崛起、民族主义上升以及海外恐华情绪加剧的背景下（Bao 2022, p. 10），自己如何在全球离散语境中定位。正如本节将要展示的，《世界 ____》通过“坏影像”的运用，呈现了当代离散主体及其归属感如何嵌入一种承担着新自由主义全球化乌托邦、却最终破产的媒介基础设施之中；相反，影片提出了一种由数字媒介促成的替代性亲密形式。

《世界 ____》（时长 0:17:53）创作于 COVID-19 大流行期间，是一部关于在全球化承诺下“断联”状态的散文电影。影片在深圳“世界之窗”主题公园内的纽约城市模型与谷歌地球（Google Earth）中的纽约虚拟城景之间来回穿梭，并由欧阳关于梦境、童年记忆以及与母亲的文字聊天贯穿。影片以英文旁白开场，欧阳讲述了母亲做过的一个离奇梦境：整夜在异国街头四处寻找已化身为会变形的外星人、躲进灯具、且认不出母亲的女儿。屏幕随即震动弹出一条短信，哀叹连接两种现实的不可能性——“我甚至不知道是否有办法把我在這裡看到的東西展示給你。我所擁有的只是這種欺騙性的媒介。”随后，欧阳以中文叙述，勾勒出一段童年游览“世界之窗”的怀旧故事，以及另一场想象中的与父母公路旅行的梦境；在梦中，她看到一座轮廓模糊、塑料材质的巨型自由女神像。

伴随着欧阳富于情感的叙述，影片将观众带入一个充斥着像素、闪烁与过时痕迹的影像世界。摄影机在深圳“世界之窗”主题公园中的迷你纽约模型磨损的表面上久久停驻（图 7），暗示其作为过时模拟——昔日全球相连的乌托邦幻想——的身份。随后，影片插入欧阳一家于2000年代初在“世界之窗”旅行的照片，它们在慢速缓冲中被挤压成大片像素，始终无法完全加载（图 8）。接下来，影片转至谷歌地球的模拟图像，同样布满缺陷与故障。当摄影机以“无人机视角”游走于一个故障频出、低分辨率的曼哈顿时，它穿透建筑物的像素化外墙，展现了这片虚拟地理碎裂而不稳定的本质（图 9）。

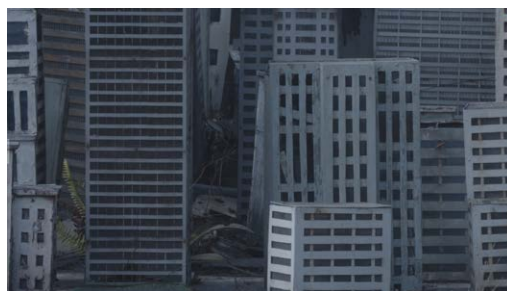


图 7 《世界 ____》截图 (00:01:37)



图 8 《世界 ____》(00:10:38)



图 9 《世界 ____》(00:14:05)

与二十年前的《再鼓掌》相似，欧阳的《世界 ____》同样沉迷于坏影像及数字表面的创造性生产力。影片在虚拟领域之间——经由像素与错误、梦境与臆造记忆——的无阻穿行，须置于疫情期间压迫

性的背景下理解；这场疫情为离散华人女性赋予了新的、摇摇欲坠的“中国性”与“家”的含义。影片拍摄于欧阳在芝加哥驻地期间，反映了一个历史性时刻：在加剧的种族紧张与“乔治·弗洛伊德”抗议浪潮之中，美国华人离散群体被塑造成病态威胁，成为排外、性别暴力及特朗普时代遣返威胁的靶子³。家庭空间因此成为必须困守却又随签证撤销而可能遭驱逐的场所。与此同时，在中国，疫情清零政策将病毒表述为外来的，进而合理化对包括海外华人、国内女性及少数民族在内的特定群体实施的极端监控和资源限制，以国家安全的名义使他们被证明为可牺牲之物（Hou 2020；Yeung, Xiong & Gan 2022；Chan & Lee 2024）。

在被迫静止的现实中，诞生于疫情的《世界 ____》却将这种静止转译为一种奇特的冒险——穿梭于中国的模拟主题公园、童年照片以及充满故障的谷歌地球纽约城市图像。然而，这种移动并未赋予影片主体作为波德莱尔所言“离家而又处处在家”的漫游者（flâneur）那般的自由（Baudelaire 1995, p. 9）。相反，影片呈现的是一个从未真正“在家”的主体——它在各种表面之间游走，而这些表面无不暴露其所依托现实的不稳定性。废弃的复制品与故障频出的仿真共同构成了一种虚拟建筑，这些虚拟建筑曾为 1990 年代通过影像畅想的全球化、可实现且同质化的世界提供支撑；它们的表面却标记着此类梦想的破灭。“世界之窗”主题公园于 1994 年在深圳——电子原件制造与山寨之都——开幕，它既塑造了游客对世界的想象，也重新塑造了中国在世界中的位置（Braun 2022）。如今濒临报废，其建筑模型表面磨损、扭曲且颜色褪去，高楼之间的缝隙重新被繁茂杂草占据。镜头对纸质模型的特写令人联想起德国摄影师托马斯·德曼（Thomas Demand）所拍摄的令人不安的纸质构造，使其在逼真与怪诞之间摇摆，凝结成了一个濒临坍塌的世界。同样，曾是“云端”环游世界的热门工具的谷歌地球，如今在欧阳的作品中也显露出其作为数字空间的脆弱。当摄影机在谷歌地球的自由女神像故障的表面游走时，它揭示了这一模拟模型的表皮如何由几何形状与断裂线条拼贴而成，并在未完全加载时偶尔失效（图 10）。在这个由脆弱的微缩景观和摇晃的数字模拟构筑的、故障丛生的碎片化世界中，欧阳将家族照片置于像素化的展现之内，那些永无止境的模糊加载见证了她关于“家”的记忆的虚焦。

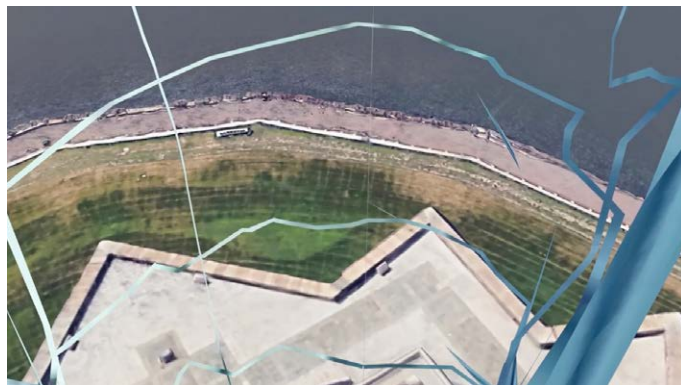


图 10 《世界 ____》(00:15:31)

借用登森(Denson)所称的“不相关影像”(disrelated images)概念,这些故障影像成为对“拟像”(simulacra)未能实现复制现实的承诺的辛辣提醒,揭示了算法时代感知主体与客体关系的根本转变(Denson 2020, p. 1)。“我如何才能让你看到我在这里所见?我如何才能跨越屏幕与你相会?”故障影像与现实之间脆弱的关联,与欧阳母亲的梦境及她们的文字对话中显现的断裂与疏离相互呼应。然而,正是这种不稳定性,使欧阳得以通过数字屏幕穿梭于过去与现在、梦境与现实、虚拟与真实、瞬间与永恒等二元之间。这些不稳定的影像并非加固既定等级,而是构成了连接诸层面的通路。欧阳专注于数字缺陷与瑕疵,将其转化为实验场域,在其中重新协商这些边界并重新想象亲密——这种亲密不依赖于接近、清晰或无缝存在,而依赖于不透明、失败与数字中介。于是,坏影像不再

只是媒介淘汰的症候；它们转化为一种生存方法，亦是一种在位移与距离中航行的情感策略。

结论

欧阳霏萱的《世界 ____》中这种经由数字媒介生成的亲密感，让人想起俄裔美籍文化理论家斯维特兰娜·博伊姆（Svetlana Boym）提出的“离散亲密”（diasporic intimacy）概念；该概念指向一种不同于将亲密界定为对某种本质且恒定的“内在自然”或“家园”的近距离、无中介接触的理解，而是将“中介”视为亲密的内在要素，因此“并非与连根拔起和去熟悉化相对立，而是由此得以确立”（Boym 1998, p. 499）。正如她所言，“与把‘亲密’乌托邦式地想象为透明、真实和终极归属的图景相反，‘离散亲密’……根植于对单一家园的怀疑。”（pp. 499–500）它并不许诺一个可慰藉的身份复归，而是预设与“家园”的必要距离。换言之，离散亲密解构了“家园”作为唯一原点、惟有返归方能达成亲密的观念，使“家园”得以在多重性中生长，通过移民的创造性实践被生产，并安放于“异乡脆弱的温馨”之中（p. 501）。正如劣质影像随时可能崩解，却又在移民者不断的生产与情感实践中顽强繁衍，离散的“家园”同样脆弱而偶然，召唤移民者持续与这转瞬即逝的状态协商。博伊姆因而为离散的“毫不歉疚”辩护——离散意味着离开故土、跃入未知，以及“流亡的隐秘乐趣”，而这种乐趣恰恰源于返乡承诺的无法实现（p. 502）。

对在外华人女性电影人和艺术家而言，坏影像成为了离散亲密的场域。粗劣的影像质量——故障、模糊与碎裂——并未兑现无缝连接所向往的“真实”家园的承诺；相反，它们迫使移民者在抚触并栖居于影像表面的同时，与异质、创伤和疏离和解。正如殷子静对受损家庭照片中难以分辨的灰色块面的执着，以及欧阳对谷歌地球仿真中的故障的痴迷，劣质影像承载着离散的乡愁与记忆，并将自身魅化为一个触觉化、表演化、情动化的场域，于是发展出关于亲密与家园的伦理，将其作为批判性实践，把华人离散女性与过去、他者及现实连结起来；它拒绝将“起源”、“真实性”和“中国性”锁定于族裔同一与民族团结的乌托邦图像，而是打开超越国家、种族与性别叙事的多元家园。坏影像的表面，遂成为华人女性得以栖居的离散家园。

坏影像所显现的，是一种始终游离、动荡不羁的离散存在与主体性；它揭示了离散过程的动态性：一种游牧式流动与去地域化状态，个体被连根拔起并学会与距离协商；一种总在崩塌与重建之间体验的独特认识模式；一种在流动影像与屏幕、在回忆、想象与模拟之中得以生活的状态；一种借由讲述故事而被践行的存在——讲述者重塑过去，聆听者学习记忆与遗忘的伦理；一种始终伴随感伤的缺失感却也召唤着流亡快感的情感结构。因此，这开启了一个更宏大的研究计划：以坏影像为视角，审视华人离散电影人的更广泛作品，并追问——他们在呼唤怎样的离散生成？

注释

1 因此，劣质影像被汉语圈之外的侨居者和移民所创作的电影与录像广泛运用，并非偶然。显著案例包括：久保田成子（Shigeko Kubota）的《自画像》（Self-Portrait, 1970–1971）、车学庆（Theresa Hak Kyung Cha）的《口对口》（Mouth to Mouth, 1975）、莫娜·哈图姆（Mona Hatoum）的《距离的量度》（Measures of Distance, 1988）、瑞亚·田尻（Rea Tajiri）的《历史与记忆：献给秋子与高重》（History and Memory: For Akiko and Takashige, 1991），以及陈金庄（Tran T. Kim-Trang）的《失明》（Ekleipsis, 1998）。模糊影像与离散电影之间的关联，曾在劳拉·马克斯（Laura Marks）关于“跨文化电影”（intercultural cinema）的讨论中得到部分阐述。马克斯关注观众在观看跨文化电影时的身体性参与，认为这种身体经验能够传递文化体验与记忆（Marks 2000）。

2 “中华性”作为一种被种族化和族裔化的范畴，最早由周蕾（Rey Chow）加以讨论（Chow 1998）。近期，萨莎·苏凌·韦兰德（Sasha Su-Ling Welland）进一步探讨了 1990 年代末至 2000 年代初北京语境中，“中华

性”、女性主义与中国女性艺术家的交汇 (Welland 2018)。

3 参见映后问答: http://ff1895.com/post.show?post_id=2399

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Fragmenting to Recompose: The Pieces of The Past in *Breathless Animals* (2019)

Désirée Marianini

Abstract

After the 1980s, what Lyotard calls the grand narratives came to an end; progress, history, science, and political ideologies lost credibility, giving way to local, subjective and often contradictory micro-narratives. This paper focuses on a textual analysis of *Breathless Animals* 动物方言 (2019) by director Lei Lei 雷磊 (b.1985), taking as its starting point of a reflection on how new digital technologies applied to cinema affect the narrative and viewer experience. Archival material and found footage reshaped, reiterated, and reimagined by the director triggers a meta-reflection on both the audiovisual medium and the traumas of the past which, far from being processed, hide in the interstices of old photographs and old film.

Keywords: found footage, archival material, personal documentary, Chinese contemporary documentary.

Introduction

The evolution of digital technologies for documenting reality, its elaboration and the preservation of footage, has changed the methods of filmmaking, but it has also implied a theoretical-methodological reflection regarding the reuse of pre-existing images for the creation of new visual narratives drawn from different media archives. The term ‘found footage’ refers both to the physical medium (the film or a part thereof) and to the retrieval process; material can be found either accidentally (old second-hand markets are often a valuable source for old films) or in media and digital archives officially established for the cataloguing, preservation and fruition of audiovisual material (Bertozi 2012, p. 13). The extensive use of found footage and visual narratives created entirely from re-cycled material have often been considered to belong exclusively to experimental or avant-garde cinema (Wees 1999). But nowadays, many documentary filmmakers use archival material (old photographs, family footage, newsreels) juxtaposed with other audiovisual languages closely related to the profound transformations of technological apparatuses, without necessarily being labeled as directors of experimental cinema.

The interaction of this plurality of languages and the manipulation of the processes of signification of images leads the viewer to experience a past and a present explorable through an intertextual narrative formula, allowing the viewer to entertain ‘new aesthetic, social and psychic relationships with images’ (Catanese & Ravesi 2021, p. 11). Building on these insights, this paper, the result of a series of meetings and exchanges with the director, will focus on the narrative strategies, particularly the repetition of the frame and sequences, looping, and the use of black frame, enacted by the director Lei Lei in his documentary *Breathless Animals* (2019), where all the images featured are audiovisual fragments recovered from different types of archives and re-edited by the director according to his personal and poetic intention. The origin of the materials and techniques employed, and thus the practice of retrieval and reproduction, also determine the experience of these works as well as the viewer’s understanding of the archive, investigating and lifting the different layers of which it is composed (Habib 2014, p. 102). What are the peculiarities and potentials of cinema composed of archival material? What relationship does the filmmaker have with the material he uses? How does the ar-

chival material act on the viewer? These questions are particularly significant in a context such as contemporary China, where the grand official narrative relegates personal and private stories to the margins, and where the culture of remembrance also survives thanks to the strenuous work of independent cultural practitioners.

Breathless Animals: 6 Parts, 1 Epilogue and Thousands of Fragments.

A black-and-white photograph: in the centre, a little girl plays with a small toy phone, behind her a cathode ray tube television. Two other photographs overlay mingled bodies of young people doing gymnastics against a backdrop of architectural forms. Vehicles pass, delay, and then speed up. Bicycles, buses, traffic circles, and busy streets. Brightly-coloured images: red and green chairs frame a small brown table in a garden, and then reiterate details of the chair: red back, red seat, and metal frame. Recurring images of suitcases, giant bonsai trees and pirouetting young women with raised fists are part of the same scene, thanks to the compositing technique. The split screen marks the roof and chimney of an anonymous grey apartment building. Lastly, prolonged black frames, with and without a soundtrack in the background. These are just a few examples of visual motifs and narrative techniques that Lei Lei employs in his documentary *Breathless Animals*.



Figure 1. Furniture product catalogue found by Lei Lei and screenshots from the official documentary, printed on A4 paper and then scanned.

Lei Lei, born in 1985, trained in Fine Arts at Tsinghua University in Beijing and taught at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) in Los Angeles. He is a multifaceted artist who employs animation techniques, collage, use of found footage and disparate archival material, creating a visual language that challenges the temporal linearity of traditional narrative and acting. In the incipit of his biography, he first emphasizes that his works ‘are based on the organization and research of ready-made and found images, combined with digital shooting and parody, weaving together abandoned images, oral histories, fragmented online videos, official documentaries, commercial product catalogs, myths or legends, etc., to create visual poetry and prose.’ Lei Lei’s visual research provides material transcend the taxonomy between fictional cinema, documentary and animated film and project us into a craft-work that reveals theoretical-philosophical horizons that seem to abandon the presumed representability of the real.

His documentaries explore the theme of individual and collective memory, the evolution of contemporary society and the role of the individual in the midst of complex changes. Lei Lei’s films have screened at prestigious international film festivals, including Berlinale Film Festival, Rotterdam Film Festival, Hong Kong International Film Festival, and the First International Film Festival in Xining, China. Among his documentaries, it is worth mentioning *Silver Bird and Rainbow Fish* 第二个和第三个妈妈 (2022) in which the story

of his family between the 1950s and the late 1970s is elaborated by a complex layering of archival material and the use of stop-motion animation with plasticine, and *A Bright Summer Diary* 公园日记 (2020), in which the simple photo of his family's trip to Lushan Mountain juxtaposed with various archival material, is a pretext for a narrative of society in the early 1980s.

Breathless Animals also operates through a process of juxtaposition and remodulation conducted by careful editing and compositing that aim to fragment, break down, and excise different visual elements of reality drawn from China of the recent past. It is divided into seven parts, each marked expressly by a title. The first four are devoted to four animals: White Horse, The Cat, Sparrow, The Red Rooster, while the fifth part is entitled The Other Things, and the sixth, People From The Real Life. The conclusion is given in the Epilogue. Despite specific references to different wildlife species, the visual narrative proceeds by non-narrative matching shots typical of discontinuous editing, paired with the voice-over dialogue between mother and son (the son being Lei Lei). Their conversation will takes us back to specific historical moments, which, however, have nothing to do with grand history, but rather with the small events of family micro-history in the dark decades of the 1960s and 1970s. The events of historiography are relegated to the background, composed of audiovisual fragments that a sensitive eye manages to intercept and freeze. Instead, in the foreground, through the director's questions to the mother, the woman's personal account emerges, consisting of details: her nightmares, the family's separations, and the vicissitudes of the filmmaker's uncle, a young *xiao liumang* 小流氓 (little hoodlum) from the 1970s. In the foreground we have the figurative motifs that constitute everyday life, so common that it so often goes unnoticed, but which more than anything else characterizes our identity in a specific time: photographs of different furniture, beds, closets, chairs, suitcases, bicycles and means of locomotion. Thus, fragments of a recent past emerge, transcending pure historical facts and unfolding through personal experience, tending toward the universal.

Lei Lei's visual sources range from furniture magazine clippings to Chinese art catalogues from the early 1980s to newsreels from the 1950s and late 1970s.¹ Even the repeated use of the black screen seems to become a *medium* of the narrative and signifier, since it accompanies the vision of the entire documentary from the beginning until the end. Black is entrusted with the theoretical and practical principle of subtraction, often in relation to facts about death (Cecchi, 2016, p. 191). Despite being a purely extra-diegetic manifestation of a latent presence that becomes visible on certain occasions, it manages to have a multiple structural function: it separates, unites and connects simultaneously (Misek, 2016). But it is not only the quantity and heterogeneity of the components of the audiovisual text as much as the creative reuse of the aforementioned material that makes Lei Lei an exception in the landscape of art documentary cinema in contemporary China. With the rise of the auteur documentary of the 1990s, the observational approach of *jishizhuyi* 纪实主义 'a specific brand of film realism that has widely informed the independent film scene of mainland China' (Bertozzi 2014, p. 79), pursued the utopian search for objectivity: the camera did not intervene and the filmmaker did not explain what was happening on the scene. Filmmakers were engaged in shifting their own point of view and relating to social actors in an ontologically new way: the filmmaker, no longer omniscient, was becoming an operator of audiovisual culture and questioning him/herself by placing himself/herself on the same level as the social actor, recording a complex, marginal, and subjective reality of contemporary China. Thus, the non-mainstream documentary cinema of the time was bringing to light the fragments of what was now being dismantled – socialism - by focusing on the different types of marginality in post-socialist society.² The social and political context of post-1990s China brought the professionally trained auteur and the film amateur (with

no or little training) closer together, both driven by the desire to empathetically narrate their views of reality (Wang 2005, p. 18). Amateurism becomes an aesthetic, personal, and subversive choice by providing a micro-view of contemporary China that unravels in family histories, moves from below, and is recorded and preserved in the testimonies of those who, until then, had not had the opportunity to have their voices heard (Yu 2019, p.65). New digital tools (handheld video cameras, mobile editing stations, direct and sync sound) contributed to the creation of works outside the official system, but although the same tools provided great opportunity for creative experimentation from a formal point of view, independent documentary filmmakers at the time seem not to have followed this direction.

Although this is not the place to analyze in detail the aesthetic influences on contemporary independent Chinese documentary filmmaking, we note that Flora Lichaa argues that the greatest innovation at the time was being able to manage shooting time differently: ‘By favoring long periods of observation, many filmmakers feel that they get as close as possible to the subjects of the footage. According to them, this closeness is a prerequisite for the accuracy of the captured realities’ (Lichaa 2017, p. 305). Lei Lei, in his documentary films, weaves the threads of the past and reconnects with the present. He retrieves old newsreels, home movies and family photographs from various physical and medial archives. From a formal point of view, he reframes the concept of time. He delays, superimposes, recomposes or freezes the time flowing through the frames of archival footage, excluding, in the documentary we will detail shortly, live shooting footage and intervening exclusively in the timeline of the editing station—in short, challenging the predominant theoretical and practical tradition of post-90’s documentary style: ‘on-the-spot’ realism.

Fragmenting the Imagery of The Audiovisual Text

Lei Lei’s visual research propels us into a craftwork that reveals theoretical-philosophical horizons that seem to abandon the assumed representability of reality. In one of the foundational texts on found-footage practices, *Recycled Images: The Art and Politics of Found Footage Films*, Wees points out how the art of montage in the reuse practice of collage has the greatest potential to critique and challenge the power of produced images:

Unlike postmodernist appropriations of found footage, in which the media as the source of images are taken for granted (indeed are more or less explicitly celebrated for their image producing powers), the collage film subjects its fragments of media-reality to some form of deconstruction, or at the very least to a recontextualizing that prevents an unreflective reception of representations as reality (as presumed by the compilation film), as well as an indifferent or cynical reception encouraged by postmodernist appropriation (Wees 1993, p. 47).

The fragmentation of reality, heightened by techniques of alternate and/or discontinuous montage, stop-motion animation, and digital collage, as employed by Lei Lei, acts as a catalyst for reflection on the nature of the medium and its intertextuality. This cinematic language allow us to explore the past through bold associations and daring leaps, where the order of narration is subverted and the rules governing linear time can be altered. Jaimie Baron, a scholar of Film and Media Studies and an expert on the signification of archival images, clarifies the connection between the practices of creative reuse of archival material from different sources and New Historicism and deconstruction. On the one hand, the search for eccentric and enigmatic figurative anecdotes opens up plural meanings, overturning the grand narrative of history; on the other hand,

the very reflection on the audiovisual text questions the constituent elements of cinematic language. To paraphrase the scholar, each fragment offers a ‘point of entry’ into an experience of the inscrutability of history through something that is ‘out of place’, altering a pre-established and univocal interpretation of grand history (Baron 2014, p. 162).

We will now analyze in detail sequences from *Breathless Animals* located in the first part of the documentary (at 14’ and 26’), in the central part, and the film’s epilogue, which operate through delay and the re-presentation of the same frame. At the beginning of the documentary some black-and-white photographs portray young men and women posing and smiling in parks or in front of monuments. The extradiegetic sound recalls the click of slides or an analog camera. Through alternate montage, the film cuts from their poses to a total black screen lasting several seconds, which advances with an inconsistent rhythm, returning us to a sonic dimension rather than figurative imaginary. The spectator has time to wonder who these faces are, to whom these smiles belong. Then, the footage converges into a single concluding moment in which the reproduction of the previous archival material enhances the movement of men and women, dressed in white, riding bicycles (the association is immediate with the title *Baima* 白马 - White Horse - in which the sequence is embedded; cf. previous paragraph) as they cycle in a roundabout. The process of repetition and return to the same frame manages to extend the photographic image, generating additional time for the spectator to reflect on induced associations, via visual or sonic references, but also on individual interpretations and fantasies drawn from their own private and personal experience.

Cinema and photography have always had a privileged relationship with time; the recording of an image that allows for its preservation can be compared to the unconscious memory belonging to a lost event, argues Laura Mulvey, Professor of Film and Media Studies at the University of London. The tool through which the spectator finds a space for processing is entrusted, the scholar emphasizes, to the ‘aesthetic of delay’, where the image is frozen or subjected to repetition or return (Mulvey 2006, p. 144). This also occurs in the second long sequence (26’), included in the section titled ‘The Cat’ 猫. There, the obsession with the movement of vehicles, buses and bicycles, continuously re-presented, takes on a disturbing dimension that merges with the director’s mother’s account of a nightmare: a voice-over recounts that a cat suddenly ran out from alley and collides with her bicycle; its spine is broken, and it moves convulsively without being able to die. In this case, the technique used by the director to create the back-and-forth movement of the men and women on bicycles was achieved by applying a mathematical formula of two frames forward and one backward, following this pattern: 1-2-1, 1-2-3-4-3-2, 2-3-4-5-6-5-4-3, 3-4-5-6-7-8-7-6-5-4... This method ensures the effect of convulsive back-and-forth movement.



Figure 2. Archival material (source unknown)

The process of deconstructing and reassembling images into different frames and their re-presentation signifies for Mulvey the locus of metonymy (Mulvey 2006, p. 81), where hidden meanings can be found, opening up infinite possibilities for the poetic, dreamlike, and imaginative dimension that breaks free from reality. The emphasis placed on the fragment is present from the beginning to the end of the film. In another sequence, while we listen to the mother's joyful account of successfully entering university in 1978, we see a full-screen image of a giant bonsai, where a combination of digital collage and stop-motion animation integrates repeated figurative elements of different sizes (figures of women pirouetting, suitcases rotating, large buses perched on enormous rocks). These images move slowly, like the gradual unfolding of a Chinese scroll painting, before closing the sequence with a black and white photograph of a woman next to an enormous bonsai. In conclusion, the director primarily works with techniques of discontinuous montage, stop-motion animation, and digital collage, associating shapes and colors with visual and sonic suggestions that chase each other throughout the film's duration.



Figure 3. Digital collage



Figure 4. Archival material (source unknown)

Finally, Lei Lei is not afraid to courageously challenge the didactic dynamic between sound and image. In the epilogue of *Breathless Animals*, the mother's sonic narrative touches upon memories of her as a child, with her tired but happy father taking the children on bicycle rides, while the black and white photographic material re-presents the exact same image: happy young people cycling on a large meadow.

Conclusion: The Recomposition of Fragments

Following Lei Lei's work is a complex journey. One often fears getting lost in the nooks and crannies or the entry points that he proposes. The figurative and sonic elements mentioned in this brief article do not do justice to the multifaceted nature of the techniques employed by the director;³ however, it can be understood as a preliminary study that could be expanded through specific research on the archival material used and the methods of its collection and cataloging. The etymology of the term 'archive', as stated by Pan Lu 潘律 in the introduction to the essay 'The (Im)possibility of Art Archives: Theories and Experience in/from Asia' (2024), speaks both to the necessity for order and the idea of commencing a new experience. It is therefore evident that the archive is not a neutral and discrete instrument in which knowledge is preserved, but rather, from a Foucauldian perspective, a *dispositif* in which dynamics of power and hierarchy are at play (Foucault [1969] 2013), a place where hypothetical realities can be reconstructed, a space imbued with plurality and discursive potential.

In the landscape of documentary cinema, Lei Lei departs from the search for a truth associated with *xian-*

chang and delves into the culture of personal memory, modulating practices drawn from analog cinema to new media, working with the time and rhythm of the narrative. It is no coincidence that the French New Wave, especially Varda's short film *Ulysses* (1982) and Jia Zhangke's 贾樟柯 *Pickpocket* 小武 (1997), had a significant impact on the director's formation, as did various directors, including Edward Yang 杨德昌, Hou Hsiao-hsien 侯孝贤, and Tsai Ming-liang 蔡明亮. However, that same process of opening up the epistemological space that engages the viewer is the cornerstone of personal documentary cinema from the early 1990s. In these narrative spaces, directors chose to abandon screenwriting, favoring narrative through images, the recording of ambient sound, and the use of digital video cameras. But above all, they acted by exercising their critical, subjective, personal, and creative thinking. Qi Wang points out that

Personal documentary not only aims at presenting a different interpretation of the past or an alternative aspect of the present, but also exercises critical thinking on representation itself [...] reminding us of the epistemological and ethical consequences that documentary, as a mode of representation specifically launched from the present, has on how the past might be remembered and how the future might be envisioned (Wang 2014, p. 135).

Within this grand tour through time and space, yesterday and today, the personal and the collective, how are the different fragments that the author arranges on the timeline recomposed? On the one hand, reiteration, slowing down, and re-presentation of images, as Mulvey suggests, act upon the spectator by expanding the space for reflection; on the other hand, it is characteristic of found footage itself to operate across multiple temporalities, triggering an additional interpretive space in which the viewer navigates. Roger Odin, a French semiologist who proposed the semi-pragmatic model of communication, defines the communicative space as the locus where the actants (Emitter and Receiver) engage in processes of discursive communication. The text and its meaning do not always remain the same in the passage between Emitter and Receiver. In conclusion to this article, it seems useful to refer to Odin in relation to the communication space of familial memory, where the intimate mode of internal discourse acts through the operators of memory, which, on the one hand, nourish the memory of the past, while on the other hand lead, through a chain reaction, to a textual production that can sometimes deviate entirely from the original (Odin 2011, p. 97). Borrowing two terms from Odin, Lei Lei's documentary film appears to be a *tale of surfacing*, where archival materials are not so much vehicles of memory as they are its stimulators.

Notes

1 The primary sources from which the film's archival materials are taken are located in the credits; I reproduce them in footnotes for the reader's interest and convenience: Photographic reference: *1700 Poses of Human Gesture*, Jilin Fine Arts Press, 1988; *1500 Postures in Movement*, Hong Kong Deli Bookstore, 1985; *Furniture Products Exhibition Album*, Privately Owned, 1988; *Potted Landscape Art Exhibition*, Bonsai Art Exhibition Office, 1979; *Tianjin Furniture*, China National Arts and Crafts Imp. Exp. Corp Tientsin Branch, 1979. Film reference: *Forever Young*, 1955 Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio; *An inch of time, an inch of gold*, 1959 Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio; *New look of the motherland and members of a new home*, 1978.

2 The topic has been widely covered by many scholars including Chris Berry (2004), Zhang Zhen (2007), Paul G. Pickowicz (2012), and Qi Wang (2014).

3 Lei Lei's artworks are many and include animated films, installations and documentary films: *Break no. 1 & Break no. 2* 休息一下 (2024), *That Day, On the River* 发光的河 (2023), *Silver Bird and Rainbow Fish* 第二个和第三个妈

妈 (2022), *A Bright Summer Diary* 公园日记 (2020), *Breathless Animals* 动物方言 (2019); *Installations: From Fragment to Fragment* 从片段, 到片段 (2023), *Romance in Lushan Cinema* 庐山恋影院 (2019); *Weekend* 周末 (2018), *Hand-Colored* 手工上色照片 (2015), *Books on Books* 书上的书 (2013—2016), *Recycled* 照片回收 (2012), *One-person Animation Film Studio* 一个人的美术电影制片厂 (2009—2016); *Animation: I Don't Like the Comics You Drew* 不喜欢你画的漫画 (2017), *Missing One Player* 三缺一 (2015), *This is Not Time to Lie* 这不是一个可以说谎的时刻 (2014), *Animafest Zagreb Festival Trailer* (2014), *Big hands oh big hands, Let it be bigger and bigger* 大手啊大手, 越大越好 (2013), *My...My...* 我的, 我的 (2011), *This is LOVE* 这个念头是爱 (2010), *Hululu Honglonglong Hualala* 呼噜噜, 轰隆隆, 哗啦啦 (2010), *Magic Cube and Ping-Pong* 彩色魔方与乒乓球 (2009), *Pears or Aliens* 鸭梨还是外星人 (2008).

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碎片化到重构：《动物方言》(2019) 中 关于过去的碎片

伊莲 Désirée Marianini

概要

1980 年代以后，利奥塔所称的大叙事走向终结；进步、历史、科学及政治意识形态失去公信力，取而代之的是局部化、主观化且常常自相矛盾的微叙事。本文聚焦于导演雷磊（1985 年生）的作品《动物方言》（2019），从新数字技术在电影中的应用如何影响叙事结构与观众体验的角度入手进行文本分析。导演对档案素材与拾得影像的重新塑造、重复呈现与再想象，引发了对视听媒介本身及尚未被消解的历史创伤的元反思——这些创伤并未被处理，而是隐藏在旧照片与旧胶片的缝隙之中。

关键词：拾得影像、档案素材、个人纪录片、中国当代纪录片

引言

数字技术在记录现实以及影像的精细加工与保存方面的演进，不仅改变了电影创作的方法，也促使人们对如何利用既存影像、从不同媒介档案中挖掘素材以构建新的视觉叙事进行理论与方法论层面的反思。“拾得影像”（found footage）一词既指影像的载体本身（比如胶片或其中片段），也指拾得的过程：这些素材或在二手旧货市场中偶然获得（旧胶片往往可通过此类渠道寻得），或在为了编目、保护与使用视听资料而设立的官方媒体与数字档案中被提取（Bertozzi 2012，第 13 页）。长期以来，大量使用拾得影像并完全以“再循环”素材创造视觉叙事的实践，常被视为实验或先锋电影的专属领域（Wees 1999）。然而，当代许多纪录片导演也会将档案素材（比如老照片、家庭影像、新闻片段）与呼应技术装置深刻变革的其他视听语言并置使用，却未必会因此被贴上“实验电影导演”的标签。

多重语言的交互与影像能指过程的操控，引导观众在互文性的叙事结构中体验可供探究的过去与当下，从而与影像建立“新的审美、社会与心理关联”（Catanese & Ravesi 2021，第 11 页）。基于上述认识，本文在与导演多次会谈与交流的基础上，聚焦雷磊导演的纪录片《动物方言》（2019）中所采用的叙事策略，尤其是画面与镜头段落的重复、循环以及黑帧的运用。该片中所有影像均为导演从不同类型档案中提取的视听碎片，并按其个人诗性意图重新剪辑。素材来源与所用技术，以及由此产生的检索与再度呈现的实践，不仅决定了作品的观看体验，也影响观众对“档案”这一概念的理解，进而揭示其所蕴含的多重层次（Habib 2014，第 102 页）。以此为出发点，本文试图回答：由档案素材构成的电影具有什么特殊性与潜能？电影创作者与其所使用素材之间形成了何种关系？档案素材如何作用于观者？在当代中国这一官方“大叙事”将个人与私密故事边缘化、而独立文化实践者的艰辛努力又使记忆文化得以存续的语境中，这些问题显得尤为重要。

《动物方言》：六个部分、一个尾声与数千个碎片

一张黑白照片：中央是一位小女孩，手握小巧的玩具电话，身后是一台阴极射线管电视。两张其他照片叠加在一起，展现年轻人群在不同形态的建筑前做体操的交错身影。车辆缓行、停滞，又疾驰而过：自行车、公交车、环岛、还有繁忙的街道。彩色画面：红绿相间的椅子环绕着花园中一张棕色小桌，镜头随后重复展现椅子的细节——红色靠背、红色座面与金属椅架。反复出现的行李箱、巨型盆景与举着拳头旋转的年轻女子，皆因合成技术而同处一景。分屏镜头标示出一栋灰色公寓楼

的屋顶与烟囱。最后，长时间的黑屏，有时伴随背景音，有时全然静默。以上仅为雷磊在其纪录片《动物方言》中所运用的视觉母题与叙事手法的部分示例。



图 1. 雷磊拾得的家具产品目录及官方纪录片截屏，先打印于 A4 纸上，后进行扫描。

雷磊，1985 年生，毕业于北京清华大学美术学院，并曾在洛杉矶的加州艺术学院（CalArts）任教。他是一位多面向艺术家，擅长动画技术、拼贴、拾得影像与异质档案素材的运用，创造出挑战传统叙事时间线的视觉语言。在其个人简介的开篇，雷磊即强调其作品“基于现成影像与拾得素材的组织与研究，结合数字拍摄与戏仿，将废弃影像、口述史、零散网络视频、官方纪录片、商用产品画册、神话或传说等编织成视觉诗与散文”。他的视觉探索超越了虚构电影、纪录片与动画之间的分类，将观众投射于一种揭示理论 - 哲学视野的新型手工艺创作之中，似乎放弃了对“真实”这一概念的可表征性的既定假设。

雷磊的纪录片作品聚焦于个体与集体记忆、当代社会演进以及个体在剧变中的角色。他的作品曾入围柏林影展、鹿特丹影展、香港国际电影节及中国西宁 First 青年电影展等多个国际影展，其代表作包括通过档案素材与橡皮泥定格动画分层叙述家族 1950 年代至 1970 年代末故事的《第二个和第三个妈妈》（2022），以及以全家人庐山之行的相片为叙事引子，结合多种档案素材，折射 1980 年代初社会风貌的《公园日记》（2020）。

《动物方言》同样通过精心剪辑与合成的并置与再调制，对来自近代中国的现实影像元素进行碎片化、解构与剔除。影片分为七个带有明确标题的部分：前四部分分别聚焦“白马”、“猫”、“麻雀”与“红公鸡”，第五部分题为“其他事物”，第六部分为“现实生活的人们”，结尾以“尾声”收束。尽管标题明确指向不同野生物种，视觉叙事却依赖非连续剪辑的无叙事式镜头组接，并辅以母子对话（雷磊是其中的儿子）的画外旁白。对话将我们拉回特定的历史时刻，但这些瞬间并非宏大叙事中的节点，而是 1960–70 年代家族微史中的细小事件。大史记事被置于背景，由敏感的视角捕捉并凝固的视听碎片构成；而在前景中，通过导演对母亲的提问，这位女性的个人叙述浮现：她的梦魇、家族的分离以及导演的叔叔——一位 1970 年代的流氓——的命运。前景呈现的是日常生活的具象母题，如各式家具、床铺、衣柜、椅子、行李箱、自行车及交通工具等，这些常被忽视却最能标示特定时代的身份符号。由此，近代片段穿透纯粹史实，通过个人体验向普遍性的方向展开。

雷磊的视觉素材来源广泛，从家具画册剪报到 1980 年代初的中国艺术目录，再到 1950 年代与 1970 年代末的新闻片段¹。即使重复运用的黑屏，也成为叙事的媒介与能指，自始至终伴随全片。黑色承载着减法的理论与实践原则，常与有关死亡的事实相关联（Cecchi 2016，第 191 页）。作为一

种纯粹的剧情外显现，它在特定时刻可见，却具备多重结构功能：既分隔，又联合且连接（Misek 2016）。然而，使雷磊在当代中国艺术纪录片景观中独树一帜的，不仅是视听文本成分的数量与异质性，更在于对上述素材的创造性再利用。上世纪九十年代作者纪录片兴起之时，纪实主义，“一种对中国大陆独立影像现场影响深远的特定电影现实主义流派”（Bertozzi 2014，第 79 页），主张乌托邦式的客观寻求：摄像机不介入，电影人也不阐释现场实况。电影作者们致力于转变自身的观察视角，并以一种本体论上全新的方式与社会行动者建立关系：导演不再扮演全知的角色，而是成为一种视听文化的操作者，通过将自身置于与社会行动者同一立场上，自我拷问，并记录当代中国复杂、边缘化且带有主观色彩的现实。由此，当时的非主流纪录片电影通过聚焦后社会主义社会中各种形式的边缘性，揭示了正在被拆解的社会主义的碎片化面貌²。后九十年代的中国社会政治语境，使受过专业训练的作者与没有或略受训练的业余影像制作者走得更近，共同被同理心且想讲述现实的意愿所驱动（Wang 2005，第 18 页）。业余主义成为一种审美的、个人的、颠覆性的选择，为从家庭史出发、自下而上展开的当代中国微观图像提供了可能，并通过那些此前未有发声机会者的见证得以保存（Yu 2019，第 65 页）。尽管新数字工具（手持摄像机、移动剪辑站、同步录音）为体系外创作带来形式实验的机遇，但当时的独立纪录片导演并未沿此方向进行充分拓展。

虽然本文无法详论当代中国独立纪录片的审美影响，但是李风华（Flora Lichaa）曾指出，九十年代最大的创新在于对拍摄时间的全新管理：“通过偏爱长时间的观察，许多导演认为他们能尽可能贴近影像主体，而这种贴近性是捕捉现实准确性的先决条件”（Lichaa 2017，第 305 页）。在雷磊的纪录片中，他编织过去与当下的线索，从各类实物与媒介档案中检索旧新闻片、家庭影像与照片；从形式上重塑时间概念，通过延迟、叠加、重构或凝固档案画面的流动，仅在剪辑的时间线上进行干预——并无现场拍摄的镜头——从而挑战了九十年代之后纪录片创作中占据主导的“现场”写实风格。

视听文本影像的碎片化

雷磊的视觉研究将我们引入一种手工艺式的创作，揭示出似乎放弃了“现实可表征性”假设的理论哲学视野。在关于拾得影像实践的基础性著作《再循环影像：拾得影像电影的艺术与政治》中，威廉·C·韦斯（William C. Wees）指出，蒙太奇艺术在拼贴式再利用影像中的批判潜能最为强大：

与那种将媒介本身视为理所当然（甚至显性颂扬其造像能力）的后现代式拾得影像挪用不同，拼贴电影对媒体—现实的片段进行某种解构，或至少进行再情境化，从而阻止观众不加反思地将再编影片视为现实（即‘汇编影片’所假定的情况），也阻止他们在后现代挪用中所鼓励的冷漠或愤世嫉俗的接受态度。（Wees 1993，第 47 页）

雷磊所采用的交替／非连续蒙太奇、定格动画和数字拼贴等手法，强化了对现实的碎片化处理，成为反思媒介本质及其互文性的催化剂。这一影像语言通过大胆的联想与跳跃，颠覆叙事秩序，重塑线性时间规则，使我们得以在“错位”中探索过去。电影与媒体研究学者、档案影像能指专家杰米·巴伦（Jaimie Baron）阐明了不同来源档案素材创造性再利用实践与新历史主义以及解构主义之间的关联。一方面，对离奇隐秘影像逸事的发掘打开了多元意义，颠覆了历史大叙事；另一方面，对视听文本的反思质疑了电影语言的构成要素。正如巴伦所言，每一个片段都提供了一个“进入点”，使观众通过“错置之物”体验历史的不可解读性，从而改变对大历史的既定、单一的解读（Baron 2014，第 162 页）。

接下来，我们将详细分析《动物方言》的第一部分（14'及 26'处）、中段及尾声中的片段，这些段

落通过“延迟”与同一画面的再呈现来运作。影片开端，几张黑白照片呈现公园或纪念碑前青年男女的摆拍与微笑，画外音模拟幻灯片切换或模拟相机快门的“咔嚓”声。通过交替蒙太奇，画面突然切入数秒的全黑屏，以不规则节奏推演，将观众的关注从具象转向声音维度，留给观众时间去思索这都是谁的面孔与笑容。随后，素材汇聚于一个终结瞬间：先前的档案影像被再次呈现，放大了身着白衣骑行于环岛的男女动作（与“白马”单元标题的联想随之而来），重复与回归同一画面，延展了摄影影像的时长，让观众在视觉或听觉提示下、以及在个人经验的联想与想象中，留下了更多反思空间。

电影、摄影与时间的关系历来特殊。伦敦大学电影与媒体研究教授劳拉穆尔维(Laura Mulvey)认为，影像的记录与保存如同对逝去事件的无意识记忆。观众在“延迟美学”中获得处理空间——既影像被凝固、重复或回归(Mulvey 2006, 第 144 页)。在影片中的第二段长序列中(26'处, “猫”单元)也同样体现了这一点: 导演母亲对一场噩梦的叙述(一只猫突然从小巷窜出, 与她的自行车相撞, 脊椎断裂却无法即死)与车辆、自行车图像持续反复呈现的痴迷画面交融, 营造出冰冷惊悚的氛围。此处, 导演通过“前进两帧、后退一帧”(1-2-1; 1-2-3-4-3-2; 2-3-4-5-6-5-4-3; 3-4-5-6-7-8-7-6-5-4……)的数学剪辑公式, 实现了骑行者在前后摆动中近乎痉挛的动感。



图 2. 影片中的档案资料(来源不明)

将影像解构并重新组装到不同画面中再度呈现的过程, 在穆尔维看来标示了转喻的场域(Mulvey 2006, 第 81 页), 于此可发掘隐藏的意义, 为诗意、梦幻与想象的维度开启无限可能, 从而对现实束缚的突破。影片自始至终均强调对“碎片”这一要素的关注。在另一段序列中, 当我们聆听母亲欢快地述说她于 1978 年顺利考入大学的经历时, 画面切换为一幅巨型盆景的全屏影像——数字拼贴与定格动画相结合, 将不同尺寸的具象元素反复整合(旋转的女性身影、旋转的行李箱、停驻于巨石上的大型巴士等)。这些画面缓缓流动, 宛如一副中国山水长卷似的徐徐展开, 最终以一张黑白照片收束: 一位女性立于巨大盆景旁。简言之, 导演主要运用非连续蒙太奇、定格动画与数字拼贴等手法, 让形状与色彩在贯穿全片的视觉与听觉暗示中相互追逐, 营造出独具特色的观影体验。



图 3. 数字拼贴



图 4. 影片中的档案资料(来源不明)

最后，雷磊无所畏惧地大胆挑战传统声画之间的说教性动态。在《动物方言》的尾声中，母亲的声音叙事唤起了她童年的记忆：疲惫却开心的父亲骑车带着孩子们游玩。与此同时，黑白摄影素材则再现了完全相同的画面——一群年轻人在广阔的草地上快乐地骑行。

结论：碎片的重构

追随雷磊的创作是一段复杂的旅程，人们常担心会在他所提供的各个切入点与缝隙中迷失。本文所提及的图象与听觉要素，虽难以全面诠释导演所采用的多种技法³，但可视为对其档案素材来源及其收集、编目方法的初步考察。正如潘律在《艺术档案（库）的可能与不可能：亚洲的理论经验》（2024）一文引言中所述，“档案”一词的词源既彰显了秩序的必要性，也蕴含了开启新体验的观念。因此显而易见，档案并非一个中立且孤立的知识保存工具，而是从福柯视角出发的一个话语配置（Foucault [1969] 2013），其中权力与等级动态相互作用；它既可重建假定的现实，也可成为一个充满多元性与话语潜能的场域。

在纪录片领域，雷磊不再追逐与“现场”相连的真理，而是深入个人记忆文化，将源自模拟影像的实践调制于新媒介之中，驾驭叙事的时间与节奏。他对法国新浪潮（尤其是瓦尔达的短片《尤利西斯》（1982））、贾樟柯的《小武》（1997），以及杨德昌、侯孝贤、蔡明亮等导演的借鉴并非偶然，也为其导演风格的形成带来深远影响。同时，也正是九十年代初以来个人纪录片开放观影者认知空间的进程，奠定了此类创作的基石。在这些叙事空间中，导演们摒弃剧本书写，以影像叙事、环境声记录与数字摄像为主要手段，但更重要的是他们通过批判性、主观性与个人创造性思考来实现创作。

正如王琦所指出：

个人纪录片不仅旨在呈现对过去的另类诠释或对当下的另类视角，也对“表现”本身进行批判性思考……它提醒我们：纪录片作为一种从当下出发的表现模式，在如何记忆过去与如何想象未来上，具有深刻的认识论与伦理后果。（Wang 2014，第 135 页）

在这场跨越时空、昨日与今日、个人与集体的“盛大巡礼”中，作者如何在时间轴上重构那些碎片？一方面，正如穆尔维所言，画面的重复、延缓与再现扩展了观众的反思空间；另一方面，拾得影像本身即在多重时态间流动，激发额外的解读空间，使观众得以在其中自主导航。法国符号学家罗杰·奥丹（Roger Odin）提出的“交际空间”模型，将发话者与受话者置于话语交流的现场，强调文本及其意义在双方传递过程中并不恒定。本文结语借鉴奥丹的观点，将“家族记忆的交际空间”视为一种内部话语的亲密模式：记忆的运营者一方面滋养过去的回忆，另一方面又通过连锁反应生成文本，而这些文本有时甚至会彻底偏离原初的意图（Odin 2011，第 97 页）。借用奥丹的两处术语，雷磊的纪录片可被视作一则“浮现的故事”（tale of surfacing）：档案素材不再仅是记忆的载体，而是记忆的触发者与激发者。

注释

1 档案素材主要来源（见片尾字幕，以下为方便读者整理的脚注）。摄影资料：《1700 个人体姿势》（吉林美术出版社，1988）；《1500 种动态姿势》（香港大利书店，1985）；《家具产品展览画册》（私藏，1988）；《盆景艺术展览》（盆景艺术展办公室，1979）；《天津家具》（中国工艺美术进出口公司天津分公司，1979）。影像资料：《永远年轻》（中央新闻纪录电影制片厂，1955）；《一寸光阴一寸金》（中央新闻纪录电影制片厂，1959）；《祖国新貌与新家庭成员》（中央新闻纪录电影制片厂，1978）。

- 2 相关学术研究：本议题已被多位学者广泛论及，包括 Chris Berry (2004)、Zhang Zhen (2007)、Paul G. Pickowicz (2012) 及 Qi Wang (2014)。
- 3 以下为雷磊主要的艺术创作。纪录片：《动物方言》(2019)、《公园日记》(2020)、《第二个和第三个妈妈》(2022)。动画短片：《不喜欢你画的漫画》(2017)、《三缺一》(2015)、《这不是一个可以说谎的时刻》(2014)、《呼噜噜，轰隆隆，哗啦啦》(2010)、《彩色魔方与乒乓球》(2009)。装置艺术：《从片段，到片段》(2023)、《庐山恋影院》(2019)、《周末》(2018)、《照片手工上色》(2015)、《书上的书》(2013-2016)。个展作品：《休息一下》(2024)、《发光的河》(2023)。以上整理旨在为读者提供对影片所用档案来源与相关背景的便捷参考。

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RENEW AND RECYCLE: VOICES FROM THE ARTISTS

更新与再循环: 来自艺术家的声音

Acceleration, Excess, Techno-Scavenging, and Moving Image Reclamation

加速, 过剩, 技术拾荒与影像回收

Author: CONG Feng 丛峰

Voice-Over

画外音

Author: LEI Lei 雷磊

The Eve of Chinese Documentary: A Conversation with the SWYC Working Group

中国纪录片的前夜: 对话 SWYC 工作小组

Interviewees: SHI Jian 时间, CHEN Jue 陈爵, WANG Zijun 王子军, KUANG Yang 邝杨

Interviewer: Ann Lyuwenyu ZHANG 张吕文煜

Searching for Dust-Covered Images in Ruined Spaces: A Conversation with Li Wei and Liang Chen on the Art of Found Images

在废墟空间寻找蒙尘的影像——与李维、梁晨探讨拾得影像艺术

Interviewer: Ann Lyuwenyu ZHANG 张吕文煜

Acceleration, Excess, Techno-Scavenging, and Moving Image Reclamation

CONG Feng 丛峰

Acceleration and the Disjunction of Technology: Material Technology and Social Technology

We are accelerating toward a historical inflection point, an epoch unfamiliar to existing human experience—no one can say for certain when or where this turning point will arrive. The acceleration is comprehensive: technological innovation, the pressures and anxieties of daily life, the incessant outbreak of conflicts and catastrophic events, and an increasingly turbulent and polarized world... The climate crisis, too, is a consequence of acceleration—human impact is approaching the limits of Gaia’s capacity for regulation in both speed and scale.

Among all these forms of acceleration, the rapid advancement and replacement of technology plays a pivotal role. New technologies bring convenience in areas such as transportation (high-speed trains), communication (social media), intellectual labor (AI), and material provision (commerce logistics), along with an ever-increasing array of spectacular visual experiences... Yet at the same time, the everyday temporality remains tense and compressed. Compared to today’s many conveniences, people in the era of inconvenience actually possessed more free time, more opportunities for direct, face-to-face interaction. On one hand, convenience seems to reduce time consumption; yet to enjoy these conveniences, we must invest even more time. Theoretically ‘liberated’ by new technologies, our time has instead become the very resource those technologies further exploit. Accelerated time has displaced the spaces once held within slower time, but the key issue is this: it has not led to liberation, only to more tasks, and to a deeper, more unfillable void. The preconditions of freedom and liberation are autonomy and subjectivity—neither of which can be attained within a passive structure of existence, unless alongside material innovation we also pursue innovation in ‘social technology’, so that human beings may become the main body, rather than being devalued and manipulated by technology.

Acceleration fragments time and makes time inorganic. As time is besieged by acceleration, ‘collisions’ and ‘accidents’ become more frequent. An accelerated system demands ever greater systemic stability to maintain normal operations, yet the ‘social technologies’ that undergird society lag far behind material technologies themselves.

Space—whether physical, social, or psychological—is likewise undergoing accelerated ruination and destruction. This process of ruination signals the fracturing and dissolution of the foundational bases of social order. Excavators have replaced cumbersome wrecking balls, more efficiently demolishing residential neighborhoods. The scourge of capital and political regime accelerates on two fronts. Even after a decade or two of acceleration, it shows no sign of halting. More and more brand-new real estate developments rise up—in city centers, along desolate railways—while many of these buildings stand unlit at night, their rooms empty. Surplus does not curb the driving force of capital; in fact, the accelerated production of ruins serves to justify its operations: where there are ruins, there is reason to build—and in the name of building, one can manufacture even more ruins, in endless repetition. These acts of ‘construction’ cause ever more areas to become unnecessarily ruined, even when those places are home to vibrant lives closely interwoven with their surroundings.

Cities have become outward expressions of technology—permanently in a state of ‘renewal’ under various pretexts (nowhere is more zealous about ‘renewal’ than the city that I currently live in). They become unvaryingly legible, monotonous, filled with tall structures sheathed in glass—visible, yet untouchable. Flatness seems to serve merely as the backdrop to these vertical projections; verticality, in turn, conceals the poverty and arrogance of flatness. Beneath this verticality, within the planar realm, disappointment spreads subconsciously—this is a ruin in a dual sense: the physical destruction of space, and the ruination of historical depth. Behind it all lies a brutal, barbaric will—one that commands everything in the way of ‘progress’ to prematurely perish, in order to serve the short-term interests and delusions that arise in the minds of a few.

On an already uneven road, acceleration leads to further loss of control. The engine of production has lost its brakes, continuing to churn unstoppably. Everything is marked by a limited lifespan. Continuous change is required—forcing people to adapt to the new and abandon the old—so that new technologies can have room to develop. But humans do not inherently need such a space. The speed of technological progress has vastly outpaced social progress, yet it appears to have become the ultimate measure and focal point of that progress. Compared with technological ‘innovation’, the frequency of social innovation is several orders of magnitude lower.

We do not understand the meaning of this acceleration. It merely signifies the accelerated consumption and squandering of people and resources. Because of the deep disjunction between technological development and social progress, and under the mandates of social governance, the promise of new technology to benefit ‘everyone’ is nothing more than an illusory ideal. It opens up a seemingly new direction by perfunctorily addressing old problems, while leaving the substantive issues of society untouched. The logic of obsolescence–renewal–accelerationism attempts to divert attention from urgent questions of life and society by steering the vehicle into an uninhabited wasteland. Meanwhile, the development of ‘social technologies’ that might solve those problems is deliberately set aside.

Acceleration molds us into delivery couriers cornered by time itself. The very structure of the system ensures that the delivery persons cannot be winners. Only with sufficient expendable physical strength can they survive in such a high-speed regime. The tasks are endless—no tasks, no survival $\Leftrightarrow$ more tasks to secure your survival $\Leftrightarrow$ but too many tasks deplete your survival $\Leftrightarrow$ your survival exists for more tasks $\Leftrightarrow$... Overload drives people to exhaustion, draining them completely. Only by stepping outside this system, away from its oppressions, might one live with relative autonomy and freedom. The courier’s conquest of time and space does not truly liberate *you*—the consumer—from your own state of temporal oppression. You reside in another subsystem of the larger temporal oppression system, while the courier belongs to yet another. Acceleration intensifies the sense of defeat, though it offers some small rewards as compensation.

Acceleration has corrupted time. In our youth, we once experienced a more relaxed, less externally pressured temporality. That slower time often gave rise to a more acute sense of self. One might also say that this so-called ‘natural time’ was merely a relatively stagnant stage of development, when forward momentum and resources were insufficient—objectively producing a less interrupted condition. Today’s time is increasingly artificial: the night is no longer for rest but for overtime work. This is an industrialized time that has been visibly accelerated and compressed, no longer resonant with human biological rhythms, but rather dictated by production and commerce, sustained by a process that engulfs everyone in its ongoing churn. Time and

growth have lost their composure. Things and processes that depend on long-term, stable environments and soil—such as cultural accumulation—struggle to take root. They sprout repeatedly, only to wither just as quickly.

The pervasive anxiety generated by acceleration cannot be compensated for by new technologies. Or more precisely, it calls for a kind of social technology that can address societal problems and the issues caused by material technologies—rather than relying on yet another material technology to solve social problems, reducing social issues to merely technical ones.

Acceleration leads to overproduction and indigestion. Accelerated, excessive production results in excessive consumption. It does not enrich us; rather, it hollows us out, making everything cheap and impoverished, devoid of substance, lacking in real connection to life. It undermines essence through the proliferation of quantity, rendering it ineffective, pushing us into a polarized state of excess and scarcity: the more excess, the more impoverishment. This inner sense of emptiness further accelerates production, leading to even greater excess and even deeper lack. It does not genuinely add anything from within—only hastens the swallowing of junk food by a famished world. Indigestion may appear as food congestion in the stomach, but it also manifests as the condition of a gutless state—a stomach ever expanding and insatiable, yet lacking the intestinal system to absorb nourishment. What it pursues is a colonial desire for expansion and conquest, without regard for what substantive content might fill the space thus forced open—merely an empty void. This polarized state of excess and poverty, like other black-and-white or left-right polarizations, results in the destruction of the middle ground, deepening division rather than fostering unity.

Promise, Obsolescence, and Struggle

Within the cyclical orbit of the accelerator that entraps everyone, there exists only one linear trajectory: ‘forward’. The blindness of this ‘forward’ momentum lies in how our imagination of the future has been completely technologized and abstracted. This seemingly depoliticized vision of the future—grounded solely in technological advancement—is, paradoxically, the most political of all: it encodes a technocratic monopoly intimately aligned with the structures of power. Technological innovation does not occur in a vacuum; it is governed by the existing order of social domination, just as society is increasingly controlled by technological oligarchs. These tech oligarchs—such as Elon Musk—often function as counter-forces to true social progress. While new technologies theoretically offer democratic possibilities, they simultaneously make people increasingly susceptible to technological control.

The beautiful promises made by new technologies, once refracted through the lens of existing power structures, often become distorted and manifest as bleak realities. They fail to solve the very problems they generate—because these problems are not purely technical in nature. Instead, they attempt to bypass and ignore old issues through relentless updates, moving forward destructively while leaving a trail of wreckage behind—yet still waving the flag of progress. What is absent here is an organic interaction between technology and society. Technology is often made to serve the requirements of the ruling order—such as facial recognition technologies and surveillance systems.

New technologies often promise that ‘anyone can use them’, that they are immediately accessible. But democracy is not so easily attained. Technological innovation prioritizes outcome and efficiency, outsourcing

and streamlining the complex and often arduous processes between origin and result—thereby rendering them invisible. This is one of the dangers of technology: it invites faith in the illusion that what you see is what you get, that mediation is transparent. Technology becomes increasingly abstract, detaching from material mediums. As it intermediates and substitutes for us, we become passive, indolent, and surrender our subjectivity—an abdication for which we will one day pay the price. New technology has a tendency to homogenize that which it mediates, erasing distinctive qualities. This in turn allows it to become ever more industrialized and standardized, facilitating centralized control.

In the realm of moving image technology, current trends lean toward simulation, mimicry, automation, and spectacle. Images are rendered increasingly smooth, just as high-speed rail flattens the space between locations into a linear, rapid journey, stripped of twists and discomforts. New technology continually seeks to eliminate roughness, friction, and discontinuity, pushing us to forget the medium itself (as in the disembodiment caused by digitization)—a tendency that often runs counter to the demands, textures, and tactility of both art and reality. Technology does too much on our behalf. While it has expelled inconvenience, slowness, and clumsiness, in a parallel world these qualities may hold greater value. Older technologies, with their challenges, often elicited greater initiative and subjectivity from their users. In contrast, new technology nurtures laziness in facing reality, habituating us to smooth spectacles and effects. It has bred legions of enthusiasts wielding Leica cameras and large telephoto lenses, producing nothing more than mundane landscape shots. Their reverence for technology and eagle-eyed discernment of technical specifications has not prevented the further dulling of their sensitivity to reality. Equipped with everything, they have nonetheless lost both their goals and the ability to reach them. This is the alienation of the human by technology.

Has pure technological progress brought more happiness? If it had, society should be increasingly content, and spiritual depression increasingly rare. Today should surely be more joyful than a decade ago—yet the reality may be quite the opposite. In an irrational social structure ruled by overwhelming societal problems, technology becomes the bannerman of progressivism, but this flag of progressivism's real function is to obscure the essential issues at stake, seizing the stage from them. These spectacular technologies function more like decorative embellishments and do not in fact enhance human well-being or social welfare. Even if they possess such potential, their realization is subject to how equitably the conditions of technological implementation are distributed in society. Humanity, while accelerating the production of new technologies, also accelerates the production of new problems—problems that entangle with longstanding, unaddressed problems, engulfing the world.

Given the fundamentally double-edged nature of technology, it demands contestation rather than submission. As a moving image practitioner, I have benefited more from the smartphone than from advances in imaging technology per se. The smartphone has brought considerable convenience to my work, allowing me to film, record audio, and capture fleeting ideas at any time. Yet it also devours the user's time, forcibly embeds itself in everyday life, and increasingly assumes the role of life's central actor—displacing the human subject. When the phone is not at hand, or is lost, one feels transformed—anxious, disconnected from the world, cut off from many relationships. The convenience provided by technology fosters deep dependence, and this dependence continues to intensify. In the process, we become more fragile, ever more tethered to our devices. Face-to-face communication—something that neither social media nor video calls can truly replace—is increasingly rare, both in opportunity and in desire. In this accelerated, unstable, and uncertain world, people

subconsciously seek something to cling to, a placebo. New technologies undoubtedly offer such comfort—and this too becomes a kind of addiction. New technologies inherently possess addictive tendencies: by providing comfort and satisfaction, they engender strong dependence, ultimately exerting control. Their power is not acquired through coercion, but through offering ever more comfort, satisfaction, and means to ‘kill time’—thus achieving submission. In the end, it is not we who use technology, but technology that uses or governs us.

With the emergence of instant messaging platforms like WeChat, people have indeed found it easier to connect and communicate. Yet at the same time, more and more people stare at their phones alone at gatherings. The phone has ceased to be a point of connection and has instead become a tool of isolation. It is harder to escape a pleasurable form of slavery than a tormenting one. The intermediary has not merely assisted us in accomplishing our tasks—it has become the task itself. We are drawn into the phone, bound to the nodes of the digital network—‘offline’ life feels less real. But this network is not built on collective will, communicative desire, or ordinary solidarity—it is still a technological network. We must employ social technologies to transform this network into a genuinely social one.

By raising the threshold of satisfaction and treating this threshold as an irrevocable standard of life, most people have become unwilling to look back, unable to accept the lower standards of the past. During the era of VCDs and VHS tapes, no one complained about image clarity; people were not distracted by technical specifications and instead focused on content. But once we enter a more advanced technological phase, we seem unable to tolerate the relative roughness of the past. This subconscious shift further entrenches our submission to the so-called benefits of new technology. Yet in retrospect—at least in terms of cinema—how many films today can truly surpass *Battleship Potemkin*, *Man with a Movie Camera*, or *Metropolis*, all made over a century ago? These films connect far more closely with today’s reality than most contemporary productions. They have already prophesied today’s prototypical reality. Artistic standards do not follow the simplistic logic of linear progress.

Technological upgrades have implicitly raised the threshold for image-making as personal practice, such that only work meeting certain technical standards is deemed fit to enter the film industry’s circulation system. I still clearly remember my return to Gulang, Gansu, in 2005 to shoot a documentary, and what happened afterward in Beijing. At that time, I knew nothing about equipment or technology. Someone who worked in film gear and tech told me: ‘The built-in mic on a Sony PD150 camera can’t be used to shoot a documentary.’ Time has already proven that assertion entirely false.

What drives technological obsolescence? Is it rooted in actual necessity, or is it propelled by the demands of capital acceleration? Technological turnover can very well be a manufactured need—because innovation is the fuel that keeps capital in motion. The logic of capitalism is to accelerate the satisfaction of the present while deferring problems to the future, to distant, out-of-sight horizons—until one day, both future and distance arrive at the doorstep. Most media forms and technologies that are ‘eliminated’ have not reached the point of decrepitude; some are in their prime, yet are retired early or abruptly rendered obsolete. Nevertheless, the non-inevitability of obsolescence and supersession is always presented as inevitability, as superiority, urgency, and as an unstoppable trend—justifying itself through this performance of necessity.

Against Obsolescence: Techno-Scavenging (—as a Form of Social Technology)

When technology becomes excessively elevated, some will inevitably move against the tide—because the new technology may not be what they need, may bear no essential relevance to their lives, and may even degrade their way of life. To return to simpler, even more rudimentary technologies, to cherish their characteristics and employ them in service of more tactile expressions of reality—this is a form of ‘close-contact technology’. Most work does not require the most cutting-edge media, equipment, or software versions; rather, it requires technological appropriateness. Earlier technologies still carry the momentum of previous use—their productivity does not cease abruptly. Obsolescence produces vast surpluses. In fact, these devices and technologies—now sidelined in the capitalist economy but still in their prime—fall into the hands of us, the techno-image scavengers, as a kind of gift. They offer substantial possibilities for reappropriation at low cost. This is, truly, a golden age.

Cut-out tapes, outlet shoes, bulk-packaged clothing, secondhand iPhones costing just a few hundred yuan... these are all recycled items deemed obsolete by the industry, yet retaining full use value. Digital music has never fully replaced embodied forms of music—vinyl, cassette, CD—nor are these formats interchangeable among themselves. The coexistence of mediums is more conducive to a diverse technological ecology than mutual negation. Similarly, digital photography cannot replace analogue film. Sometimes, it is precisely the materiality of a medium that sustains its vitality—its ability to undergo transformation over time, thus affecting the very images it carries and bringing about changes in them. Such phenomena do not occur in digital media. One defining trait of digital media is its refusal of error and deviation—its drive to maintain a constant state. In the realm of video, standard definition (SD)—which was long since superseded by high definition (HD)—cannot be replaced in every respect; this is something I have experienced directly. In my short film *On the Passage of a Few Persons Through a Rather Brief Unity of Time* 关于在短时间内的某几个人的经过 (2020), the footage largely comes from material I shot over a decade ago on a Sony PD-50 DVCAM SD camera. It captures, in real time, the full process of the moon and drifting clouds entering and leaving the camera’s frame during one summer evening. I compared it with footage of the moon shot using an HD camera. There is no question that the SD material, shot under low-light conditions, had a mysterious, film-like graininess—far superior to the plastic sheen presented by HD video. Sometimes, the shortcomings of older technologies—relative to newer ones—can dialectically turn into advantages. Much like many early photographs, the mysterious quality of the world at the moment of its first filmic representation—strongly material, deeply evocative—has all but disappeared in today’s overabundance of technologized images.

In my film *Stratum 2: The Asthenosphere* 地层 2: 软流层 (2021), I used a large quantity of internet-sourced video as the base layer for my visual composition. These videos are mostly low in resolution, rough, and fierce—although amateurish by professional standards, this does not diminish their intrinsic power; on the contrary, it may enhance it. In some cases, I deliberately lowered the resolution of certain downloaded clips—clear, but not too clear. This aligns with the film’s broader handling of materials: for instance, removing all diegetic sound from online footage to maintain distance from the specific context of the scenes—not to feign presence, not to induce a sense of immediacy, but to highlight the viewer’s separation from each scene and reality. The aim is to resist immersion in the logic of certain isolated incidents, and instead guide the viewer toward the film’s overarching expression. The visual limitations and obstructions posed by low-resolution footage undoubtedly help establish this necessary sense of distance.

Since the summer before last, during my filming in Gulang, Gansu, I began experimenting with MiniDisc (MD), an old audio format once eliminated by CD technology, as a supplementary tool for field recording. MDs deliver excellent sound quality, yet were ultimately replaced by CDs due to considerations of cost and convenience. My intention was to reuse a once-expensive medium I could not previously afford. MD is portable, offers high sound quality, and is easy to store and use. As a tangible medium, it also allows for straightforward archiving and retrieval—well-suited to the demands of fieldwork. Once a recording is complete, a visible, touchable original record remains. In contrast, digital audio files are more abstract, more likely to be lost in the vast sea of data. Because MD was phased out early while stock remained abundant, the players and discs are now extremely affordable. I had also experimented with cassette recorders as supplementary field equipment, but compared to MD, they are less convenient and harder to operate.

When I first began working in film, DV tapes were the primary medium for recording video. Later, this shifted to digital hard drive camcorders. After footage was captured, it was copied to external hard drives, and the camera's hard drive was cleared to shoot new material. Two of my external drives failed, and I lost important footage during the transfer and backup process. In contrast, all my DV tape material has remained intact. The tapes themselves serve as original backups, and are easy to locate. I have begun to consider returning to DV tape under suitable circumstances—just as I reconsidered audio formats. Purely digital data is far more prone to disappearance than data stored on material mediums. 'Outdated', 'backward', and 'obsolete' media have not lost their specific technological capacities. Precisely because they have been abandoned by the market and are no longer subject to forced upgrades, they may possess a freedom available only at the margins.

In my more than twenty years of moving image documentation of Gulang, I have used various media formats across different periods: DV tape, digital hard drive cameras, and—more recently—my preferred medium of mobile phone video. I have also taken still photographs since 2000: black-and-white and color film, and then digital images. These diverse materials—especially the stark differences in image ratio and texture between DV's SD and HD video—must be used together without hesitation. Their individual characteristics become visual markers of the historical stages in which they were once popular. The materials I shot in the 'standard definition period' (2005–2011) capture the roughness and simplicity of local agrarian life before the era of acceleration. The local acceleration began around 2013, when the county town began to radiate the optimism of a newly urbanizing small city and new residential complexes sprang up en masse. It was around this time that I began using compact HD camcorders as a matter of habit. In the following years, the area underwent radical transformation: the mountainous regions disappeared; mountain residents relocated to new settlement zones; last year, even a high-speed rail line reached Gulang... This is already version 2.0 of life in the accelerated local development. Amid such rapid change, I grew increasingly fond of the iPhone as an intimate tool: portable, immediate, ideally suited for my often guerrilla-style filmmaking. Moreover, mobile phone footage can be backed up online—this is a potential brought by new technology. What matters is not the age of the technology, but the need for a de-institutionalized, non-conformist form of technology.

The Earth—Gaia—is itself an ancient and vast apparatus of recycling and regeneration. Human waste, excrement, and other 'garbage' have never been completely excluded from Earth's life processes. On the contrary, through complex and delicate natural mechanisms, their constituent elements are broken down and reintroduced into the cycle of life—becoming new organic matter, new building blocks, and actors in the network of agency. In the same way, technology-medium must also participate in cycles of regeneration and decom-

position within human society, rather than being simply discarded or replaced. It is precisely this process—of decomposition, reclamation, and absorption—that is ignored and omitted by the logic of accelerationism.

Deceleration: Snapshots and Slow Shots (—as a Form of Social Technology)

When acceleration becomes an end in itself, perhaps slowing down—fully utilizing and recycling the possibilities of existing technologies—is the more practical choice.

In recent days, I've found myself tinkering again with my old mechanical cameras. One of them is a Japanese Semi Leotax, a Leica-style 120 (medium format) bellows camera with a rangefinder. It does not have a focusing mechanism nor a light meter, and the film advance system is somewhat faulty. As a result, I've had to slow down in order to test and use it: I meter the light using a phone app, estimate the distance using the split image focus, and I fashioned a crude replacement part from a piece of iron wire to fix the slipping film advance spool. Compared to the immediacy and predictability of digital photography, this archaic, primitive, and sluggish method of image-making requires far more time and engagement at each stage—thus decreasing the rate at which images are captured and produced. (In addition, the cost of film naturally makes one more cautious before pressing the shutter.) In this way, photography becomes a practice not of the 'snapshot' but of the 'slow shot'. On the other hand, this primitive process inherently contains greater uncertainty—every stage of its output is imbued with unpredictability. And this very uncertainty seems to align more closely with the qualities of living things.

I have also gradually come to understand why I find myself increasingly disenchanted with contemporary photojournalism, especially prizewinning entries from various competitions, which are filled with images taken using wide-angle lenses—in other words, images that attempt to cram as much as possible of a scene or subject into a single flat frame, compressing it as though compacting trash in a landfill. The artificial, plastic-like quality of much photojournalism stems from this compression. These images are mostly about the event; the people within them are merely ancillary, like coat racks propped up in the background. Photojournalism follows the logic of the snapshot. It invites comparison with the slow photography of the analogue film era: heavy, primitive equipment used to create an image; the use of shallow focal lengths to accentuate an individual from their background; the time spent with that person in order to make the photo—either to adjust their pose, or because the film's ISO (light sensitivity) required the subject to hold still for a moment. This is slow photography.

This approach does not signify a stylistic gesture of 'retro' or 'nostalgia', but rather a rethinking of the relationship between humans, machines, technology, and time. In slowness, one must invest more initiative—and one becomes more alert to the accelerated, ever smoother and more refined new media and processes. Whether still or moving images, obtaining them today is an easy task—and this easiness devalues time, a devaluation that cannot be compensated for by the sheer accumulation of quantity.

Through deceleration, we counter acceleration—and return to our own proper tempo.

Countering the Philosophy of the Disposable and Recycling History (—as a Form of Social Technology)

The belief in relentless obsolescence stems from a 'philosophy of disposability'. This philosophy holds that

certain things are produced only to be rapidly discarded—like single-use lunch boxes. People show little concern for where these containers ultimately end up; once they disappear from sight, the matter is considered resolved. This ‘disposability’ philosophy extends into the domain of history: time that has just passed—along with the events and realities it contained—is swiftly eliminated, as if it were a single-use lunch box just thrown away. The philosophy of disposability believes history itself is disposable, and thus it is fundamentally anti-history, thoroughly atheistic. For such a philosophy, both history and the past are burdens. Old news is overwritten, and today’s news becomes old news almost immediately—as if, by this rotation, historical problems are somehow resolved. Disposability implies a frivolous techno-optimism and a utopian progressivism—believing the future is endless and ‘the future must be better than the present’, and that acceleration is necessary to escape or overcome the imperfections of today.

The philosophy of disposability cheers for the passage of time. Time becomes an inexhaustible resource, continuously consumed—allowing many traces of what has happened to be erased, thereby escaping the entanglements of history, which is undoubtedly an obstacle to this kind of brute acceleration. ‘Eliminating the old to introduce the new’ becomes a goal in itself, depriving people of the time to digest both ongoing life and the life that has just passed. Life itself becomes a shaky, unstable colloid—unable to solidify. As a promise and a lure, the ‘new’ arrives overwhelmingly, like a sweeping hurricane that fragments everything, rendering everything indistinct. Through endless scrolling on their phones, people continuously deliver the ‘new’ into their immediate surroundings—most of it illusory and ephemeral, vanishing in an instant. This ‘new’ lives for a mere moment before immediately perishing.

Just like how a new apartment is promised to an individual to justify the demolition of their old dwelling space—technology sees houses merely as houses, and space and time as inorganic containers that can be substituted at will without any loss. It ignores the fact that a house is a spatial form that concretizes time, filled with triggers that activate the rich memories of its residents and users. Therefore, space existing in a given historical moment cannot be equated with any other; each space is unique. What the homogenizing tendency of technology erases is precisely this incommensurable personal dimension.

As time passes, history does not become the past. On the contrary, our present time coexists and intermingles with history—it is built upon it. History is constantly seeking answers from us. Severing ties with the past inevitably renders the present lifeless and impoverishes the historical soil. We must find an organic way to decompose historical materials, rather than treating the past as inorganic waste and cutting off its inner connection with the present. Otherwise, the present will suffer and lose its vitality. History is not the permanent burial of former realities, nor is it a specimen in a museum; it remains active, continuously placing itself in dialogue with the present. History possesses multiple lives, and the space of the future must be opened by digesting the past. The ghosts of history are always present—what disappears is merely the body they once borrowed. Like a virus, they can awaken once again through the living—like the specter of Dr Mabuse. The realities embedded in the news do not recede simply because the news has ‘expired’—reality itself remains unmoved, while news is merely the shifting appearance it casts and disperses.

In the face of fragmented reality, we must restore our capacity to understand it. Splicing, assembling, and reorganizing history and reality is an indispensable effort in repairing today’s world. Re-chemicalizing history, time, reality, and the world is not about inert reassembly, but about exploring the internal relationships

between fragments—allowing history to re-crystallize. The restoration of history can only be crystalized: a chemical process akin to history developing for the first time in a darkroom.

We cannot allow the present to slip simply and unexamined into the past—to become secret, to become void. Hence the need for Archae (now) logy—an archaeology of the present (see my earlier article ‘The Task of Impoverished Cinema’ 贫乏电影的任务 for further elaboration)—to resist the accelerated destruction of contemporary history. This is an urgent salvage operation at the very moment of history’s presence. It means reusing the ‘reclaimed water’ of time—treating time and history not as disposable consumables, but as reusable resources. Those who salvage and recycle history seek to reconnect the severed banks of the river—past and future—with history as the indispensable bridge between them. The problem is far more complex than ‘breaking the old world to build a new one’. The old world must be meticulously recycled and decomposed to construct the new. The new must be essential, not merely superficial. One cannot overcome history by discarding or ignoring it; that only leads to endless cycles within the same old world.

In all my works to date, *Stratum 1: The Visitors* 地层 1: 来客 (2012) is the first to explicitly attempt the salvage and ‘recycling’ of history and ruins—the old world. The film is composed of two parts. In part A, a vast urban ruin, a residential area on the verge of complete demolition, becomes the nighttime stage and theater for reenacting the ‘pre-history’ of the ruin. I asked two friends to wander through this ‘stage’, recalling events and feelings from their childhoods and hometowns—reconstructing a sense of ‘home’ through memory and language. At the same time, the stage they occupy is, in reality, being dramatically destroyed and disassembled—these two opposing temporal trajectories create a powerful tension. Part B is no longer about staging and reenactment, but about presenting the real process of the ruin’s demolition. One sequence shows a group of professional scavengers at work on the site, filmed from within an abandoned building. They used highly specialized equipment—including metal detectors—to excavate materials such as steel bars buried in the rubble of demolished buildings. While filming them, I too was a scavenger—an image scavenger. This act of scavenging took place not only on a literal ruin, but also upon the ruins of history.

Stratum 2: The Asthenosphere carried out an extensive scavenging, salvage, and recycling operation across the field of media. The film was composed and constructed from thousands of online videos. These served as its visual canvas. But much time and effort was required to create meaningful interrelations between these found materials and with other texts—from historical footage, to classical cinema, to various kinds of writings from disparate sources—so that they might form an intentional, robust, and emotionally charged discourse. The subsequent work *What is Cinema: A Commentary on Stratum 2* 电影是什么: 地层 2 评论 (2019) reused the real-time audio recordings of a group of friends discussing the film after an internal screening. From that material, I developed a new work—one sparked by *Stratum 2*, diverging from its style and content, but possessing a unique character of its own.

This practice of recycling—and self-recycling—actually began earlier, during the making of *Room with Mao’s Images* 有毛的房间 (2015), the fourth film in my Gulang, Gansu series. The material for this film consisted of off-cuts and leftover fragments from the production of the previous three works—mostly unrelated to their respective themes (though some footage had appeared before, it was now approached with different intentions). These were materials that had no predetermined purpose. After finishing the three previous films, I still felt unsatisfied—aware that so much of the richness and complexity of this reality had not yet been

expressed. Many things, people, and places from that time had already vanished or changed significantly, becoming almost unrecognizable. So even though these old fragments were scattered and disconnected, I still attempted to organize them into a new film by tracing a single shared visual motif running through them all.

The Media Field and Archaeology of the Present (Archae-now-logy) (—as a Form of Social Technology)

Once a new technology is born, it becomes a ready-made object—impossible to ignore. To reject it in advance may be irrational; to submit to it is equally irrational. Engaging in a contest with technology is the best way to transform it into a weapon. Alexander Sokurov's *Fairytale* (2022) exceeded all my previous conceptions about the possible relationship between AI and cinema, yet the film also confirmed that AI is a tool—not the subject of creative action. The only entity capable of elevating technology into art is the human being. For artists, expressers, and creators, just as new technologies does not consider or adapt to the internal needs of every single individual, so too are artists under no obligation to engage with every new technology. Between artist and technology, there can only ever be the relationship of an encounter. Whether technology brings us closer to reality, or instead overwhelms us with illusion and causes us to lose our sense of the real, depends on our own will, capacities, and judgment. Technology is a newly born monster: in its infancy, the consequences it may bring are difficult to foresee. It requires careful calibration in order to be subdued. Technology can be used by us—but we can also be alienated by it. The key lies in extracting social technology from material technology, so that it may serve the intrinsic needs of society.

Although the development of photographic technology itself has not brought me much emotional or creative stimulation, other forms of technology have had significant impacts on my work. For example, today we are immersed in and enveloped by social media and the digital sphere. Real-life fragments are being continuously produced online—these are the historical archives of today, the moving images of contemporary history: non-decaying, non-fading. In a sense, history has become a permanent present—always in attendance. The development and widespread use of internet and social media technologies have created new relationships with moving images, and made possible the emergence of the 'media field'—we no longer live solely in physical space or the field of anthropology; we now spend increasing amounts of time in a mediated space-time. This virtual anthropological field, formed by new moving image materials and media technologies, is what I refer to as the media field (for further elaboration on this concept, see my earlier essay 'Sympathetic Geology: A Comparative Observation of Spatial Transformations in Gulang and Beijing' 交感地质学: 古浪—北京两地空间变动的比较观察).

Within the media field, anyone can become a subject on equal footing; anyone can become a contributor and user of materials, a presenter of reality, a revealer of its structures, a leading investigator, and one who holds undeniable discursive authority over specific segments of reality. This also makes possible a 'symmetrical anthropology' (to use Bruno Latour's term)—an anthropology grounded in symmetrical and equitable interpretive power. Those who were previously 'reflected' and 'recorded' passively can now become active participants of expression. Everyone can potentially become an anthropologist—reversing their imposed status as the Other, and generating their own history from an internal perspective. These two modes of inquiry—internal and external—are not mutually exclusive; they complement and verify each other.

The media field is open, populated by image hunters and gatherers, image scavengers. It is a land of abun-

dance—indeed, of overabundance—but only through active awareness and a keen sensibility can one unearth treasures from this endless production of media. The media field contains layers of varying depth that await excavation and study. In the face of the random and ceaseless proliferation of near-infinite image materials—before these productions are degraded and reabsorbed by the ‘soil’ of the media field—the unstable, precarious contemporary history must be urgently salvaged. The pace of its burial has vastly accelerated, far surpassing that of previous centuries. Before we even understand, let alone reflect on, our lives and our histories, they are already accelerating toward extinction. This condition renders the archaeology of the present a deep-seated necessity—its purpose is to respond to the accelerated destruction of history.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, more than any technological innovation, has exerted the most significant impact on my work. More than ever, it underscored the critical value of the media field. The pervasive anxiety throughout society, the surge of micro-historical materials that might disappear the next moment, the extreme restrictions on individual mobility—all of these further compelled me to rely heavily on found online video materials. At that moment, the media field offered more accessible resources than the real-world field. The pandemic led me to decide that, alongside my longer-term and more expansive film projects, I would also begin pursuing more flexible, short-term projects—creating short films akin to Dziga Vertov’s *Kino-Pravda*, offering rapid responses and reflections on unfolding realities and events. This archae-now-logical effort differs markedly in character and approach from my earlier, years-long production cycles.

Between 2020 and 2023, I produced several short films, including *On the Passage of a Few Persons Through a Rather Brief Unity of Time* 关于在短时间内的某几个人的经过 (a title that diverges from Guy Debord’s work of the same name), *The Bright Volcanos* 千高原: 明亮的火山 (2022), *Nothing to Fear* 没什么可怕的 (2022), *The Listeners* 倾听者 (2022), *Hwarenheit 911: A Chinese Style 911* 华式 911 (2023), *Archaeology of the Future: A Fragment* 未来考古学: 一个片段 (2019), and others. These works were uploaded and circulated through my still-active WeChat public platform, returning them to the media field from which their materials were sourced—with the hope of offering my own perspective for understanding contemporary reality.

The formation of the media field has also enabled a new mode of inquiry, which I call the social compound eye. The internet made participatory co-perception possible: materials contributed by individuals can be compared, supplemented, and verified against one another, in order to correct, complete, and deepen our understanding of collective facts. This gives rise to a kind of composite, compound-eye-style social imaging (for more on the concept of the social compound eye, see my earlier essay ‘On the Social Compound Eye’ 论社会复眼).

The Social Compound Eye and Social Imaging (—as a Form of Social Technology)

The social compound eye is a preliminary tool for social memory. It must intervene in our ‘social memory’ behaviors, undertaking the acquisition, verification, and discrimination of materials—organizing and producing ‘social vision’ organically, rather than surrendering our gaze to artificial social eyes. The compound eye is no longer a solitary or individual gaze; it is a gaze organized and unified through the aggregation of multiple unitary, independent viewpoints. The micro-materials provided by each unit of the social compound eye (not limited to moving or still images, including text and sound) correct and enrich our present understanding and memory of history. Only materials that have been collected and authenticated through the social compound eye can become trustworthy sources for

memory. Otherwise, our memory would be constructed from deformed and inauthentic fragments.

The social compound eye is a relay of vision—a collective gaze that magnifies individual acts of observation and documentation into a societal-scale perspective. It produces a ‘candid view’ of social reality and history: a perspective that integrates fact and truth, capable of revealing. Without the relay and convergence of vision—without collective cooperation between uploaders and viewers—the compound eye cannot take shape. It depends on, and ultimately helps constitute, the neural center of society.

The formation of the social compound eye follows a Gaian logic: it is composed of countless equal visual contributions, ultimately creating a cybernetic system of autonomous regulation and focusing. Compared to the inorganic artificial eyes of society, the social compound eye is a living visual organ—one capable of examining itself and prompting society to become aware of its own presence.

Every public incident, every disaster today affirms the importance of the ‘social compound eye’ formed jointly by anonymous ‘camera-bearing witnesses’ and the rest of us who are watching. Anyone can become a unit of the social compound eye.

— From ‘On the Social Compound Eye’

The ceaseless, convenient, and nearly universal production and circulation of moving images is itself a vivid symptom of technological acceleration and capital circulation. All acceleration, excess, and scarcity ultimately manifest as symptoms within the image. The chaotic impressions that flash quickly across society’s retina are washed farther and farther away by new waves of content, until they disappear completely. Yet the realities embedded in them—most of which we have only discussed superficially—need to be rapidly summoned back into presence (*archae-now-logy*), to be interconnected, examined, and understood. The social compound eye—a revived and evolved kino-eye—carries forward the kino-eye’s legacy of constructing the world and social reality. At the same time, the social compound eye disassembles and transforms the singular, heroic, modernist, and centralized perspective of Vertov’s kino-eye into a mosaic of multiple perspectives. It gathers and synthesizes not one but many kinds of vision.

The world has already been filmed. Using materials and perspectives contributed by countless people, the social compound eye can weave a larger (and neural) network and salvage more reality. These fragmentary materials, like the skin flakes that peel from history’s body, may not contain all—but contain most—of history’s genetic code, and can be studied to understand its traits. By integrating and juxtaposing views from diverse individuals and social corners, we can reconstruct the real in a revelatory way, yielding broader, more panoramic knowledge. The relay and synthesis of vision may enable the gathering and consolidation of those ephemeral, mayfly-like fragments—uniting disparate perspectives and merging individual observations of interconnected realities into crystalline images. This return of vision to the public sphere is entirely possible—though as public space continues to collapse and slip from our grasp, it becomes ever more difficult.

Let us expand the meaning of ‘imaging’. Beyond its technical sense, it can also mean the unveiling and disclosure of social reality—an *imaging of the social*. This dynamic process unfolds constantly in the social

field. Yet the images it produces are continually obscured and distorted by the unending struggles between different social forces.

Though many of my recent works have been built upon found online materials, I have not abandoned the practice of filming myself. These two approaches are not mutually exclusive. In fact, using found footage created by others sometimes feels like a form of liberation—from so-called cinematography, from the tedious binary of ‘professional’ versus ‘amateur’ technical standards. There’s no need to worry about framing, composition, or visual finesse—because it’s not your footage. By quoting it, you place it within invisible quotation marks, both drawing upon its power and maintaining critical distance. The technical imperfections in these materials—shaky hands, jittery movements, vertical framing, ambient noise—become visceral, tangible, and embodied annotations of reality. Like intercepted frontline telegrams, they transmit the urgency and suffocation of the present. Just like working with low-tech equipment, such imperfection can sometimes bring us closer to reality—offering a more tactile and authentic sensation.

Another key point is this: when faced with an immense reality, an individual’s capacity is extremely limited. So, in addition to traditional filming habits, why not mobilize more public resources, more potential ‘camera-bearers’, more readily-available found footage, to serve the same purpose? Why not resurrect Vertov’s kino-eye in the plural form—as compound eyes, social compound eyes? Today, everyone is a potential ‘person with a movie camera’—and what extraordinary work these camera-bearer do, offering micro-perspectives so different from grand, polished narratives!

The social compound eye marks a shift—from cinema’s original emphasis on new technical possibilities of seeing, toward a more concentrated mode of social seeing. In this way, material technology must ultimately transform into social technology. Media itself does not die—only its modes of usage die, and that depends on the attitudes and intentions of those who use it.

My most recent feature-length film, *Another Part of the World: Ghosts and Their Shadows* 世界的另一部分: 幽灵及其重影 (completed in 2024), also represents an effort to construct a ‘montage of the world’ through the collection, scavenging, and salvage of numerous materials from the media field. The final shot of the film returns to the iconic pupil close-up in Vertov’s *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), bringing the social compound eye and the kino-eye into resonance across a century.



Screenshot from *Another Part of the World: Ghosts and Their Shadows*

一 加速与技术脱节——物质性技术与社会性技术

我们正加速逼近一个历史拐点, 一个对既有人类经验显得陌生的纪元, 没有人能说清这个拐点将在何时何处到来。加速是全方位的——技术的更新, 生活的紧张压迫, 每日爆发的冲突与灾难性事件, 越发动荡与极化的整个世界 气候危机也是由加速造成的, 人类影响的速度与规模在逼近盖娅能够调节的速度和尺度。

技术的加速更新在所有加速中扮演了关键角色。新技术带给人们诸如交通(高铁), 通讯(社交媒体), 智力劳动(AI), 物资(物流)等方面的方便, 带来了更多奇观式的视觉体验 与此同时, 日常时间却依然是紧张的, 被挤压的。与今日的种种方便相比, 不方便的时代人们却拥有更多自由时间, 更多直接面对面的交流。方便一方面似乎使我们减少了时间的消耗, 但为了享受这些方便, 我们不得不投入了更多的时间, 理论上由新技术“解放”出来的时间, 反过来成了压榨我们时间的助推器; 加速的时间释放了之前慢速时间中的空间, 但关键问题是, 它并没有带来解放, 只是带来了更多的任务, 更多难以填补的空虚。自由和解放的前提是自主性与主体性, 它们无法在被动的生存秩序中获得, 除非我们在物质层面技术革新的同时也革新“社会技术”, 使人成为主体而不是被技术所贬斥与摆布。

加速使时间变的碎片化, 无机化。由于时间被加速围剿, 因而, “撞车”, “事故”更加频发。加速的系统需要以更高的系统稳定性为基础, 来支撑其正常运转, 然而维系社会基础的“社会技术”却远远落后于物质技术本身。

空间——无论物理空间还是社会精神空间——也在加速废墟化, 加速毁灭, 这一废墟化进程代表了社会秩序原有根基的碎裂解体。钩机取代了笨重的大铁球, 更高效地撞击和摧毁了居民区, 资本秩序与统治秩序的扫荡在双重加速, 尽管已经加速了十年, 二十年, 仍没有停止迹象。更多的崭新地产树立起来, 在城市中心, 在萧条的铁路沿线, 与此同时, 很多楼房晚上大量房间都没有亮灯。过剩不会阻止资本的驱动力本身, 加速制造废墟甚至还为它的举动正名: 有了废墟, 就需要建造, 就可以以建造之名制造更多的废墟, 如此循环往复 这些“建造”使越来越多的区域不必要地成为废墟, 尽管那些区域中存在着与环境结合紧密的活生生的生活。城市成了技术的外在体现, 以各种名义处于永久的“更新状态”中的城市(没有哪个城市像我所在的这个城市如此热心于“更新”), 变得一览无余, 乏善可陈, 高耸的全部由玻璃外墙构成的建筑物, 可望而不可及——似乎平坦只是为这一高耸的突出物而预留的背景, 高耸是为了掩饰平坦的贫乏与傲慢。在高耸的一切之下, 在平坦之中, 失望在下意识中蔓延——这是双重意义的废墟: 物质层面上的空间毁灭, 与历史层面的废墟化, 背后是一种粗暴野蛮的意志, 命令阻拦在“前进”道路上的一切非自然地提前走向死亡, 为一些人大脑中浮现的短期利益和妄想服务。

在本就不平坦的道路上, 加速导致了更多的失控。生产的发动机已经刹车失灵, 无法停止地生产下去。任何事物都标明了使用寿命。必须不断变化, 让人不断适应新的, 抛弃旧的, 如此, 新技术才有发展空间, 但人并不是必然地需要这样的空间。技术进步的速度大大超出了社会进步的速度, 然而它似乎成了社会进步的最大指标和关注点。比起技术“革新”, 社会革新的频率低了几个量级。

我们不明白这种加速的意义何在。它仅仅意味着人和资源的加速消耗，加速浪费。由于技术发展与社会进步之间的严重脱节，由于社会统治秩序的律令，新技术承诺的造福“所有人”只是一个虚无缥缈的承诺，它通过敷衍旧问题来向人打开一个似乎崭新的方向，但社会的实质问题岿然不动。淘汰-更新-加速主义试图通过把车头转向一片无人的荒野，来让人忘掉生活中和社会中真正攸关的问题，而开发解决这些问题的“社会技术”被刻意搁置了。

加速使我们像被时间围追堵截的外卖快递员，这一系统的基本设定就决定了他们不会成为赢家，必须有足够的可供消耗的体力，才能在这一加速系统中生存。任务是不断的——没有任务没法生存，更多的任务才能确保你的生存，但过多的任务消耗你的生存，你的生存是为了更多的任务，……过载使人疲于奔命，被系统耗尽。唯有离开这个系统，脱离其压迫，才可能有相对自主、自由的生活。外卖快递员对时间空间的加速征服，也并没能真正地帮助作为顾客的你从同样的时间被压迫状态中解脱出来。你在另一个时间压迫系统里，你和快递员分别属于最大的那个时间压迫系统中的两个不同的子系统——加速强化了挫败感，虽然用一些甜头做了补偿。

加速败坏了时间——我们青少年时期曾体验过那种相对松弛有度，外在压迫较少的时间，那种缓慢的时间常常使人具有更强烈的自我意识；也可以说，这种所谓的“自然时间”不过是发展的相对停滞阶段，没有足够的向前的动力和资源，客观上形成了较少受到干扰的状态。今日的时间越来越成为人工时间——夜晚不是为了休息，而是为了加班——明显加速和挤压过的工业化时间，不再与人的生理节律相呼应，而要适应生产、业务，要维系某种席卷了所有人的进程的始终运转。时间和生长丧失了从容，依赖于长期稳固环境与土壤的诸多事物和进程——比如文化积淀——难以形成，于是不断萌芽，又迅速夭折。

由加速产生的四处弥漫的惶惶然，是新技术所无力抵偿的——或者说，需要一种适用的社会技术，来解决社会问题，解决物质性技术带来的问题；而不是用一种物质性技术来解决社会问题，把社会问题归结为物质性的技术问题。

加速导致了过剩与消化不良。加速的、过度的生产带来过度的消耗。加速没能丰富我们，相反，它掏空我们，使一切变得廉价和贫乏，缺乏实质，缺乏与生活的真实关联，用无实质的数量来贬损本质，使其失效，进入两极化的过剩-贫乏状态：越过剩，就越贫乏，这种内在的空虚感继续加速生产，导致更高程度的过剩和更高程度的贫乏，它没能真正地内在地增加什么，只是让饥渴的世界之胃加速吞咽垃圾食品。消化不良一方面可能是食物在胃部拥堵造成的症状，另一方面却又呈现为无肠国的效果——胃口不断膨胀，不知餍足，然而缺乏吸收营养所需的肠道系统。它在意的是一种扩张殖民式的征服欲望，但是并不理会在这新撑出来的空间中要填充何种实质，仅仅是一片虚空。过剩-贫乏这种极化状态，与其他非黑即白的、左右先行的极化状态一样，导致了中间地带的焚毁，后果是分裂的加深，而不是团结。

二 承诺，淘汰与博弈

在所有人卷入进来的加速器的循环轨道里，只有“向前”这一线性趋势。“向前”的盲目在于，对未来的想象完全被科技化，抽象化了，这一似乎建立在单纯科技层面的非政治化的未来图景，反过来却是最政治化的，暗含了与权力秩序结合的科技精英垄断。技术革新并不发生在一个单纯的孤立的背景下，它既被社会统治秩序所支配，社会也愈发被技术寡头所把持。这些技术寡头，比如伊隆·马斯克，时常成为社会进步的反作用力量。虽然新科技理论上提供了民主的可能，它也越发使人更为易于技术控制。

新技术作出的美好承诺，在通过社会权力结构的透镜后，时常最终变异扭曲实现为另一种阴郁的现实图景，它无法解决自身带来的问题——因为这些问题不能归结为单纯的技术问题——并徒劳地通过继续更新来忽略与跳过旧的问题，它的前进是破坏式的，身后留下一堆烂摊子，但它仍挥舞着那面旗帜。这一情形中，缺乏的是技术和社会之间的有机作用，甚至常常使技术服务于统治秩序的要求，比如人脸识别和监控。

新技术常常允诺“人人都可以”，上手就能用，然而民主并非如此轻而易举。技术更新强调的是效果和结果，从起点到结果之间的这段原本繁琐甚至艰难的过程，已经被它代理和消化，进而隐形了，这是技术危险的一面，它总是希望人相信所见即所得，中介是透明的。它变得越来越抽象，脱离实体媒介。新技术在代理和中介我们的同时，使我们变得被动、懒惰、上交主体性，这部分丧失掉的东西，有一天注定要让我们付出代价。新技术有一种使其施加的事物变得趋同、丧失特点的倾向。因而就可以变得越来越工业化，标准化，有利于集中掌控。就影像技术而言，今日技术的总体趋向是拟真，仿真，自动化，以及壮观。并且，让影像变得更为平滑，就像高铁让地点与地点之间变得平坦，提供的是线性而非曲折煎熬的迅速旅程。新技术总是向着克服粗糙、磕绊、不连贯而前进和努力，越来越企图让人忘掉媒介本身（数字化带来的丧失肉身），这反倒不时与艺术和现实的真正要求、质感与肌理相违背。新技术代替人做的太多了，尽管它驱逐了“不方便”，“耗时”，“笨拙”，但在另一个平行的世界里，这些品质也许更有价值。老旧技术对人的挑战，经常更多地调动了人的积极性与主体性。而新技术培养了人面对现实时的懒惰，令其习惯于光滑的奇观与效果。这些的技术培养了大量手拿徕卡或长枪短炮，拍出来却不过一张普通风景照的发烧友们。他们对技术的臣服，对技术指标差异的火眼金睛，丝毫没能阻止他们现实感受力的进一步钝化，万事齐备，却丧失了目标以及抵达目标的真正能力。这是技术对人的异化。

单纯的技术进步带来了更多幸福吗？果真如此，社会就该越来越满足，社会的精神抑郁就该越来越少，今天就必定比十年前更欢欣鼓舞，而现实或许正好相反。在不合理的社会构造中，在压倒性的社会问题统治的社会中，技术成了挥舞进步主义大旗的旗手，但这个旗子的实际效果在于成功地遮住了攸关的本质问题，夺取了其舞台。这些景观化的技术更像是添头，并不带来人生幸福感和社会福利方面的提升，即使理论上具有这样的可能，它仍旧受制于实现这些技术的可能条件如何在社会中进行分配。人类在加速生产新技术，也加速生产新问题，与岿然不动的旧问题进一步混合在一起，包围这个世界。

由于技术的永恒双面性，就要求人与之博弈，而非臣服。作为影像工作者，智能手机为我带来的好处，远大于摄影技术的进展。它的确为我的工作带来了不少便利，使随时拍摄视频，录音或着迅速记下瞬间产生的稍纵即逝的想法大为便捷。然而它也吞噬使用者的时间，在生活中强势植入了自己的必要性，使自己越发成为生活的主体，与人的主体身份置换了。手机不在身边，或是丢失手机，人会感觉自己变成了另外一种状态，焦虑，感到与世界脱节，失去很多联络；技术提供的方便使我们对它们产生了高度的依赖，而依赖的程度还在继续提高，这时它反而使人变得更为脆弱，使人需要无时无刻不围绕在它周围，人们面对面的交流——这是社交网络和网络视频会议所完全无法取代的——的机会和意愿都越来越少。在加速的、越来越不稳固的、不确定的世界里，人们下意识地需要依附什么，寻找安慰剂，新技术无疑提供了这种安慰剂，这同样是一种瘾。新技术本质上带有成瘾倾向——通过给人舒适满足，使人产生强烈的依赖，进而无法脱离，来对人施加控制。它的权力不是通过恐吓来获得的，而只需提供进一步的舒适，满足，杀时间，就能使人臣服。最终，不是人在使用技术，而是技术在使用／统治人。

微信等即时社交媒体的出现，更方便地把人联系起来了，提供了人们间更多交流的可能；与此同时，聚会时独自看手机的人更多了。手机不再是连接人们的节点，倒成了人彼此隔离的工具。摆脱一种带来享乐的奴役，比摆脱一种折磨人的奴役要困难。中介物取代了我们希望它帮我们做的事情，而成为这件事情本身。我们被手机牢牢吸入进去，被绑缚在网络空间的节点——“未接入”的生活仿佛就不是生活。但这不是由共同意志、交流欲望、普通团结形成的网络，它仍旧是技术网络，还需要我们使用社会技术来使之成为更社会性的网络。

通过提高满足的门槛 - 阈值，把这门槛视作生活中一个不可降低的标准，大多数人已经不屑于回头，无法再接受过去的低标准。只有 VCD、录像带的时期，没有人抱怨画面不清晰，人们不会受技术指标的影响，专注于内容。而一旦进阶到一个更高的技术阶段，似乎就不再能忍受过去的相对粗糙，这在下意识中进一步推动了对于新技术福利的臣服。然而，回过头看，就电影而言，有几部电影能够超越一百年前的《战舰波将金号》《持摄影机的人》《大都会》？这些电影与今日的现实性关联，远胜于今日制作的大部分电影。它们已经高度预言了今日的原型现实。艺术的标准并不遵从简单线性的进步主义。

技术的更新在平行的意义上暗示，个人实践的影像技术门槛似乎也必须提高，只有达到足够高的技术指标才能进入影视工业流通体系。我还清晰地记得 2005 年我第一次回到甘肃古浪拍摄纪录片后，回到北京后的一次经历。那时我对器材和技术一窍不通，一个搞影视器材与技术的人告诉我：索尼 PD150 摄像机自带的话筒是拍不了纪录片的 事实已经证明这个说法完全错误。

技术淘汰的内在动力是什么？是出于内在需求，还是资本加速的需要？技术更替完全可以是一种被制造出来的需要，因为创新是维系资本运转的动力。资本主义的发展逻辑是加快满足现在，把问题丢给未来，丢给视野之外的远方——直到有一天未来和远方都迫近在眼前。大多被淘汰的媒介形式与技术都没有到达垂危的程度，甚至正值壮年，就被提前退休，突然赐死。然而淘汰与过时的非必然性，总是表现为必然性、优越性、迫切性，以及作为趋势的不可阻挡，以此来证明自身的合理性。

三 非淘汰：技术拾荒（——作为一种社会技术）

当技术过于高蹈的时候，必然有人逆流而动——因为这新技术可能并非他们需要的新技术，和他们的生活没有本质关联，甚至可能败坏生活——回到更朴实乃至更简陋的技术中，珍视其特点，服务于更具触感的现实表达，这是更“贴身的技术”。工作大多数并不需要最前沿最新的媒介、设备、版本，需要的是技术的恰如其分。前一技术仍旧携带着之前的惯性，其生产力不会戛然而止。淘汰导致了大量的过剩，实际上，让这些已经处于资本主义经济边缘的、但仍在壮年的器材与技术，跌入了我们这些技术 - 影像拾荒者的网里，成为一种馈赠，提供了重新廉价应用的大大可能，这真是一个黄金时代。

打口磁带、打口鞋、打包衣，几百块钱的苹果手机 循环了被工业淘汰却仍旧具有完好使用价值的物品。数字音乐始终无法彻底淘汰具有肉身的音乐形式，如黑胶，磁带，cd，而这几种格式间也无法相互取代。媒介的共存比相互否定更有利于一种富有差异性的技术生态。与此类似，数码照片无法代替胶片，媒介的物质性有时恰恰是其生命力所在，允许它在时间中发生变化，进而影响到它承载的影像本身，使它也发生某种改变，这样的状况在数字媒介中是不存在的。数字媒介的特点之一就是拒绝错误和偏差，始终保持一个状态。在视频媒介方面，早已被高清淘汰的标清格式，并非在所有方面都可以被高清替代，这是我的亲身感受。在短片《关于在短时间内的某几个人的经过》里，画面主要是十多年前用索尼 PD-50 标清 DVCAM 摄像机拍摄的一段素材，记录了某个夏天晚间月亮

与浮云进入摄影机的视野又最终离开的全过程，我用它和高清摄像机拍的月亮做过对比，毫无疑问，这段低照度下拍摄的标清素材具有近似于胶片的神秘颗粒质感，远胜于高清摄像机影像呈现出的塑料感。有时，旧技术相对新技术的残缺，却常常能辨证地再次转变为优势，这就如同许多早期摄影作品一样，世界最初显影时的那种带有强烈物质性的神秘感，在今日新技术为人们普及了的过剩状态中荡然无存。

在电影《地层 2：软流层》中，我使用了大量网络视频材料作为写作的图像底层。网络视频大多清晰度不高，粗糙，暴烈，尽管拍摄录制都属于专业技术人员眼中的业余状态，这丝毫无损、甚至增强了其中蕴含的本能力量。在一些场合下，我刻意降低了某些网络材料的下载分辨率，让它比较清晰，但又没那么清晰——这和这个电影里其他处理材料的总体原则一致：比如，去除每个网络视频材料的现场声音，以便与那个具体的现场保持间离，不是装作自己在这场，不是让观众感觉亲临现场，而是让观众意识到与每个现场 - 现实的距离，不陷入某个局部事件中的逻辑，而跟从总体的表达。低分辨率视频在视觉上造成的障碍与隔绝，无疑帮助了这种必要距离感的确立。

前年夏天开始，我在甘肃古浪拍摄期间，尝试用古老的被 CD 淘汰的介质格式——MD——作为录音的辅助。MD 本身音质卓越，但出于成本、方便等多方面因素最终被 cd 格式所取代淘汰，而我想重新利用这种原来昂贵用不起的媒介，考虑的是它便携、音质好、存储与使用都方便，而且是实体介质，最终归档与查找都简单直观，适合田野工作需要，录制完成后，就可以有一份看的见摸得着的原始档案保存在那里。相比之下，数码录音文件更抽象，更易于淹没在数据海洋中。MD 由于早早就被淘汰，而存量众多，现在它的机器和碟片都很便宜，完全能负担得起。此前我也尝试过使用磁带录音机作为田野录音的辅助设备，但比起 MD，它的便捷性更差，操作也更麻烦。

我刚开始电影工作的时候，DV 带是视频的拍摄存储介质，后来换成了数码硬盘摄像机，素材拍摄完就拷贝到独立的硬盘里，而摄像机的硬盘随后清空以拍摄新的内容。用于存储素材的硬盘坏过两块，在倒腾和备份素材的过程中还丢过重要的素材，反观使用 DV 带时期拍摄的素材，带子始终都完好地保存了下来，自身就是一个原始备份，也易于查找。我开始考虑在合适的情境下重新用 DV 带拍摄，因为和对录音介质的考量一样，单纯的数字信息比起具有物质性载体的数据总是更容易消失。“过时的”、“落后的”、被淘汰了的技术媒介，并没有失去其特定的技术能力，由于不再被市场关心，不再被迫更新，或许因此有了只有边缘性的存在才可能有的自由。

在我对甘肃古浪迄今逾二十年的动态影像考察中，在不同时期使用过数种媒介格式：DV 磁带，数码硬盘摄影机，到如今我偏爱的手机影像。除此之外，还有从 2000 年至今拍摄的静态影像：从黑白及彩色胶片影像，到数码照片。这些混杂的特点带有明显差异的媒介材料（尤其是 DV 标清素材与高清素材间从画面比例到影像质感之间的明显差异），是需要毫不犹豫地使用在一起的，它们各自的特点恰恰成了这些媒介流行的历史阶段的视觉标识。我的标清时期（2005-2011）的材料展现的是一个加速之前的地方农耕小社会生活的粗糙，质朴；而本地变化的加速大概是从 2013 年前后开始的，那时整个县城都洋溢着一个新兴小城市的乐观气息，新的住宅小区一片片挺立起来，我也几乎正是从这时起开始习惯使用小高清摄像机。之后数年，本地发生了剧变，山区消失，山区农民都去了移民点，去年古浪还通了高铁 这已经是本地生活加速之后的 2.0 版本。在这个变化迅猛的现实中，我逐渐偏爱起苹果手机这一贴身的工具，它便携，即时，对于我的常常游击式的拍摄考察最为方便。而且手机素材可以上传网络备份，这就是新技术带来的可能——关键不在于技术的新旧，而是需要一种反体制化的技术，不趋同的技术。

大地 - 盖娅自身是一个古老的、巨大的回收 - 再循环装置——人类废弃物、排泄物等“垃圾”并未被彻底排除在地球生命进程之外，相反，通过特定的复杂微妙的自然进程，其中的各种成分被降解，重新进入生命循环，成为新的生命质料与建造基石，以及行动者网络中的成员。同样，技术 - 媒介在人类社会中也需参与循环与降解之中，而非简单抛弃／淘汰。加速主义过程无视的、缺失的正是这一降解 - 回收 - 吸收的技术和过程。

四 减速：快照与慢照（——作为一种社会技术）

当加速成了目的本身，或许减速、充分利用、回收已有技术的可能，才是更切实的选择。

近些天来我重又鼓捣起自己的老机械相机，其中有一台日本 Semi Leotax 仿莱卡的老皮腔 120 相机，旁轴取景，不带测距，不带测光，卷片系统也有点问题，我不得不放慢速度来测试和使用它：测光用手机软件，测距用上面的黄斑 + 手动估焦，又用一截铁丝做了一个相当拙劣的零件来解决卷片轴脱扣的问题。比起所见即所得的数码影像拍摄，这种古老原始迟缓的拍摄方式让人不得不花更多时间投入每个环节，从而降低影像抓取 - 生产的速率（此外，介质本身的成本也会令你在按快门前变得谨慎起来）——这样，拍照成了与“快照”相对的“慢照”；另一方面，这种原始的方式自身内含了更多不确定性，它的产出的每个环节都带有不确定性，而不确定性似乎更接近有生命之物的特征。

另外，我也慢慢意识到为什么自己越来越不喜欢今天的新闻摄影照片，尤其是各类竞赛获奖作品，其中充斥着广角镜头摄取的画面——也就是说，把眼前的事物与场景尽可能多地塞入一个平面框架内，将其压扁，仿佛在填埋场给垃圾打包。新闻照片的塑料味大多来自于这种压紧，它里面大多只有事件，而人只是事件的附属品，作为一个衣服架子陪衬其中。新闻照片是快照，令我再次拿它与慢速胶片时代的摄影作对比：以笨重、原始的器材和方式成像，以将一个具体的人从背景中凸显出来的镜头焦距来拍摄，为了拍这个人，还要与其相处一段时间：或者为了摆弄造型，或是因为胶片感光度不够而不得不使这个人花点时间来保持不动——而这也是慢照。这种方式并不意味着风格意义上的“复古”、“怀旧”，而是重新思考人与机器、技术、时间的关系。在“慢”中，一个人需要注入更多主动性，也更会对加速的、越发光滑精致的新媒介与进程保持警惕。无论静态还是动态影像，其获得在今天都是一件易事，这种容易也让时间贬值，而且无法通过数量的堆积来补偿。

以减速对治加速，以此回归自己的速度。

五 反击“一次性”哲学，与回收历史（——作为一种社会技术）

对一刻不停的淘汰的信奉，来自一种“一次性哲学”。这种哲学认为某些东西生产出来就是为了迅速抛弃和淘汰，比如一次性餐盒；人并不关心这些餐盒最终去了什么地方，从视野中消失就意味着一切业已解决。这种“一次性”哲学也延伸到历史层面：刚逝的时间——连同其中的事件 - 现实——被迅速淘汰，如同它们是刚用完的一次性餐盒；“一次性”哲学相信历史也是一次性的，因而本质上是反历史的，完全无神论的。对这种哲学来说，历史与过去都是羁绊。旧闻被覆盖，新闻又立刻成为旧闻，似乎这样一来历史问题就被解决了。一次性哲学暗含着轻浮的技术乐观主义和空想进步主义，相信人的未来没有尽头，“未来必然好于现在”，因而必须通过加速来逃离与克服今日的不完美。

一次性哲学欢呼时间的消逝。时间不过是源源不断永不枯竭的耗材，这样就可以抹除许多发生过的痕迹，摆脱历史的纠缠，因为历史对于这种野蛮加速无疑是一种障碍。“推陈出新”成为目的本身，使人们越来越没有时间消化正在发生的生活与刚刚过去的生活，生活本身成了一种摇摇晃晃、不定

性的胶体，来不及稳定和凝固下来。作为一种允诺，一种吸引，“新”铺天盖地而来，席卷四野的飓风让一切都成为碎片，彼此间没有区别。通过不停地刷手机，人们将“新”不停地接生到本地，这些大多是幻影和蜉蝣的“新”，转瞬便成为旧，只活一个瞬间就立刻丧命。

如同通过允诺一套新房子来推倒一片旧房子——技术把房子仅仅视作房子，把空间和时间都视为无机的容器，可以任意替代而不造成任何损失——它无视房屋是时间的具体化的空间形态，其中隐藏着触发居住者、空间使用者的丰富生命记忆的机关，因而一段特定历史时间中的空间不可能等同于别的空间，每个空间都独一无二，但技术所代表的同质化倾向正在抹除的，恰恰是不可通约的个人部分。

随着时间的过去，历史并没有成为历史，相反，我们当下的时间和历史共存，建基于历史之上，又与历史相互混杂。历史永恒地向我们寻求答案。砍掉与过去的历史连接，注定使今天丧失生机，使历史土壤贫瘠。要找到一种有机地降解历史材料的方式，而非将历史 - 过去视作无机的垃圾，斩断它与今日的内在关联，那样，今天就会受到伤害，并且失去动力。历史不是既往现实的永久埋葬，也不是博物馆中的标本陈列，它始终具有活性，随时与今天的历史进行对照。历史具有多重生命，未来的空间需要通过消化历史来释放。历史的鬼魂始终在场，远去的只是它借用的躯壳，它可以如同病毒一样再次通过活人苏醒——如同马布斯博士的幽灵。新闻中的现实并没有因为新闻的“过时”而远离我们——现实本身岿然不动，而新闻不过是其不断出发、散射出的表象。

面对碎片化的现实，需要重理解现实的能力。拼接，组合，重整这些历史与现实，是修复今日世界的一种必不可少的努力。历史、时间、现实、世界的再度化学化，不是无机化的拼凑，而是探索碎片与碎片之间的内在关联，以此使历史再次结晶——对历史的还原只能是结晶式的，这一化学过程，犹如历史在暗房中的首次显影。

我们无法让眼前的现实就这样简单地、未加审视研究地就成为过去，成为秘密，成为虚无 于是需要考现学 (Archae (now) logy) (注：关于考现学的阐述可参考我之前的文章《贫乏电影的任务》) 来对抗今日历史的加速毁灭，这是历史在场刻的打捞抢救。对时间之流的“中水”进行再度利用，视时间 - 历史为可以重复利用、而非一次性消耗的资源。打捞与回收历史的人想要连接割裂的两岸——过去和未来——历史是这两岸的必要桥梁。问题远远不是“打破／抛弃一个旧世界，建立一个新世界”这般简单。旧世界必须被精心地回收／降解，用于建造新世界——这个新必须是本质上的而不是外观上的。人从未能通过抛弃和无视历史而克服历史，那不过导致了同一个旧世界的循环往复。

在我目前的所有作品中，由两部分构成的《地层 1：来客》首先尝试了对历史和废墟（旧世界）进行打捞与“回收”。在影片 A 部分中，一大片即将被拆除干净的居民区废墟成为搬演废墟“前史”的夜间舞台和剧场，我让两位朋友在这“舞台”的不同地点不断回忆（打捞）和自己的童年与家乡有关的种种事件，感受，这是在记忆和语言中对于“家园”的重建；与此同时，他们两人所在的舞台此刻却正戏剧化地走向毁灭与解体，这两个方向相反的进程之间形成了强烈反差；影片 B 部分不再是舞台与搬演，而是展现这座废墟现实中的拆除过程，其中一段是我在废弃楼房上拍摄的一批在废墟中作业的职业拾荒者，他们使用相当专业的设备，包括金属探测仪，挖掘捡拾楼房拆除后废墟空地下埋的钢筋等物资。拍摄这些拾荒者的时候，我也是拾荒者——影像拾荒者，这一拾荒行为不但是在具体的废墟上展开的，也是在历史的废墟上展开的。

《地层 2：软流层》则在媒介田野中实施了大规模拾荒、打捞与回收作业，主体内容是以数千个网络

视频为基础构成和创作的，它们只是电影的画布，还需要花费大量的时间和精力，让这些现成的拾得材料之间，以及与历史影像、经典电影影像和各种来源不一的文本之间，发生有机关联，有力地结合为一种高强度的、带有充沛感性的论述。之后完成的《电影是什么：地层2评论》，则回收了一次朋友们内部观看这部影片的现场同步交流录音作为基础材料，发展出一部由《地层2》引发，由它的风格与内容发散开去，但又具有自身独一无二特点的作品。

这种回收与自我回收的实践，实际在之前制作甘肃古浪系列的第四部作品《有毛的房间》时就已开始。构成这部影片的材料是我在古浪拍摄前三部作品时遗留下来的边角料，大多数和之前的内容主题都没有关联（也有部分材料之前影片中已使用，但出发点和目的不同），是些没有明确预设目的的材料。做完那三部影片之后，我仍有种不满足，感觉这里现实里的更多更丰富层面还有很多没有展现出来。时间已经过去很久，当年的许多事物、人和地点都已经消逝了，大异于从前，于是很多旧材料尽管是东一块西一块散落的碎片，我仍旧尝试通过所有材料中一个相同的视觉线索，来把这些材料组织起来，构成一部后发的作品。

六 媒介田野与考现学（——作为一种社会技术）

新技术一旦诞生，就成为一种现成之物，无法视而不见。提前拒绝一种新技术可能是非理性的，屈服于新技术也是非理性的，与技术博弈才是将其转化为武器的最佳方式。索科洛夫的《童话》完全超乎我原本对AI与电影的可能关系的想象，但这部电影也同样证明AI是工具，不是创造行为的主体。具有把技术升华为艺术的能力的主体只能是人。对于艺术家、表达者、创作者来说，正如一项新技术不会考虑和适应每一个人的内在需求，艺术家也没有义务对任何新技术都要进行实践，他们和技术间只可能存在相遇的关系。技术使我们更为贴近现实，还是令我们为幻觉所倾倒，丧失现实感，取决于我们自己的意志，能力与判断。技术是新降生的怪兽，在其幼年阶段尚难以判断它可能带来的后果，需要精心调制将其降伏。技术可以被我们利用，我们也可以被技术异化。问题在于要从物质性技术中萃取出社会性技术，使其服务于社会的内在需要。

虽然摄影技术本身的发展并没有给我带来太多的触动和可能，但另外的技术则给我的工作带来了重要影响。比如，我们今天被社交媒体和网络空间所浸透和包裹，网络中的现实片段在源源不断地生产出来，这就是今天的历史档案，今天的历史影像，不腐朽也不褪色。在某种意义上，历史已经成为永远的现在时，永久在场。网络与社交媒体技术的发展与普及，带来了新的影像关系，也使得“媒介田野”成为可能——我们不仅生活在真实的物理空间和人类学田野中，还消耗越来越多的时间生活在媒介时空中，这个由新的影像材料与媒介手段造就的虚拟人类学田野，就是媒介田野。（关于媒介田野，还可参考我之前的《交感地质学：古浪 - 北京两地空间变动的比较观察》。）

在媒介田野中，任何人都有可能成为平等的主体，都可以成为材料的贡献者和使用者，现实的呈现者，揭示者，考察的主导者，拥有对于局部现实的不可否认的发言权。这也使得“对称性人类学”（拉图尔语）——阐释权力的对称与平等——成为可能，之前只能被被动地“反映”与“记录”的人，现在可以重新成为表达的主体。人人都有成为人类学家的可能，他们逆转了自己被置于的他者地位，从内部视角出发，进行自我历史生产。这两种考察——内部的和外部的——并不意味着对立，它们相互补充与验证。

媒介田野是开放的，其中游荡着影像的狩猎 - 采集者，影像的拾荒者。这里的物产是丰富的，简直是过剩的，但需要人的主动意识和灵敏嗅觉，才能从媒介源源不断的产出中找到自己中意的珍宝。媒介田野中深浅不一的土层，需要开掘和考察。在随机的、随时随地产生的几乎是无限的影像材料

面前，在我们倾倒在媒介田野中的产出物被“土层”降解回收前，不稳定的、岌岌可危的当代史亟待抢救，因为它被填埋的速度极大地加快了，远远超过了前面的世纪。在我们不知道和没有思考清楚我们的生活、我们的历史之前，它就在加速走向灭绝。这种状况使得考现学考察成为一种内在需要，它的目的就是应对历史毁灭的这一加速。

疫情的到来，也许比任何技术的革新给我的工作给来的影响都更为巨大，也比任何时候都凸显出媒介田野存在的重要意义。社会中弥漫的浓重的焦虑不安，大量涌现的可能下一秒就会消失的微观历史资料片段，个人出行的高度受限……这些都进一步促使我大量使用现成的网络视频材料，因为此时媒介田野比起现实中的田野来要更易于获得材料。疫情的到来使我决定，在长期的更大更完整的电影计划之外，要同时开展一些更灵活机动的短期计划，制作一些短片，类似于维尔托夫的电影真理报，对正在发生的现实 - 事件等做出快速的思考与反应——这种考现学努力，性质与特点都不同于之前更习惯的时间周期长达数年的工作方式。从2020年到2023年，我制作了数部短片，包括《关于在短时间内的某几个人的经过》（片名异轨德波的同名作品），《千高原：明亮的火山》，《没什么可怕的》，《倾听者》，《华式911》，《未来考古学：一个片段》等，这些作品通过当时尚存的个人公共号，上传和回馈到了它们的材料来自的媒介田野之中，希望提供理解现实的自己的视角。

媒介田野的建立，也使一种考察成为可能：我称之为社会复眼——网络提供了参与式的共同认知的可能，每个个体提供的现实材料通过与其他材料进行比对、互补，来对总体事实进行验证、补充与修正，以进行一种综合了的、复眼式的“社会成像”（关于社会复眼，还可参考我之前的文章《论社会复眼》）。

七 社会复眼与社会成像（——作为一种社会技术）

社会复眼是社会记忆的前级工具，要对我们的“社会记忆”行为加以干预，进行材料的获取、验证和甄别，对“社会观看”加以有机地组织和生产，而不是把目光交给社会假眼。复眼，已经不是个体的、单一的观看，它是由众多单元性的、独立的观看组织和统一起来的观看。各个社会复眼单元提供的微观材料（不限于影像 - 图像，也可能是文本，声音），修正并丰富了当下的历史认知与记忆。经过社会复眼获取与鉴别的材料，才能成为可信的记忆材料来源，否则我们的记忆只能由变形的非本真的材料构成……

社会复眼是观看的接力，目光的联合，将个体的初级观看与记录逐级放大，最终形成社会尺度的观看，形成一种可以信赖的关于社会现实与历史的“正见”，一种复合了事实与真相的具有揭示性的观点。没有目光的联合，只有单一的碎片式的生成，复眼仍无法形成，它依赖于发布者 - 观看者的接力与密切合作——复眼依赖于、并且最终促成社会神经中枢的形成……

社会复眼本身的生成方式是盖娅式的：它由无数平等的视觉参与构成，最终形成控制论式的自主调节 - 对焦。和无机化的社会假眼相比，社会复眼是生命体视觉，会审视自身，使社会觉察到自身的存在……

今天的每一起公共事件，每一个灾难，都在证明普通的拿着手机的“持摄像机的无名者”与其他同样在看的“我们”之间共同形成的“社会复眼”的重要性。人人可以成为社会复眼的一个单元……

——《论社会复眼》

源源不断的、便捷的、几乎所有人参与其中的影像生产与传播，本身就是技术加速与资本运转的突

出表征，一切加速与过剩 - 贫乏最终都作为影像症状表现出来。匆促地掠过社会视网膜的纷乱印象，被新的洪水推搡着冲刷得离我们越来越远，最终消失不见，然而其中蕴含的大多数现实我们不过以非常浅薄表面的方式谈论过，有必要将它们迅速招魂回到当下的在场（考现学），将它们相互关联，加以考察理解。社会复眼——复活并进化了的电影眼——继承了电影眼对于世界和社会现实的建构，同时，它也从维尔托夫的君临世界的现代主义英雄式单点透视建构，打散、转化为多点透视、马赛克式拼图，它汇聚整合的不仅是一种观看，而是许多种。

世界已被拍摄——利用无数人贡献的材料与观看，社会复眼可以编织一张更大尺度的（神经）网络，打捞起更多现实。这些碎片式的材料，仿佛历史躯体上随时掉落的皮屑，但其中即使不是包含全部、也包含了大部分现实与历史的基因，可以用来研究其性状表现。通过综合来自于各个不同社会个体、角落的视角与观看，进行具有揭示性的重构，最终产生具有更广泛更全景化的认知。目光的接力综合，有可能把那些昼生夜死的蜉蝣般的单独材料“团结”／凝聚起来，把不同人的诉求归并聚合，把各自的对于同一相互关联的现实的观察结合起来，进行结晶成像。这种目光的反馈 - 返回公共场域，完全是可能的，虽然随着公共空间的日益坍塌，失手，而变得愈加困难。

让我们扩展“成像”这个词的意涵，不局限于技术层面，它还可以意味着对于社会现实的揭示与显露、去蔽——这是社会之成像。这一动态进程在社会场域中一刻不停地进行着，而所成之像被不断地遮蔽和扭曲，源于不同社会力量间的不间断的搏斗。

尽管这几年来为数部作品都以现成的网络材料作为基础，但我并没放弃主动地拍摄的方式，它们和使用现成材料并行不悖。不过，相比自己拍摄，使用现成的他人拍摄的网络材料有时会感到一种解放，从所谓的摄影术中解放出来，从对于摄影 - 技术指标的专业／业余与否的无聊判断中解放出来，不必再考虑取景、画面等等元素——因为那是别人拍的，你似乎通过引用它们，通过一个看不见的“引号”而跳脱出来，既拥有了这些材料的力量，又保持了合理的距离。这些材料在技术上经常性的不完美，比如抖动，哆哆嗦嗦，竖屏，杂音，都成为了现实的更有触感、更肉身化更扎实的注脚，仿佛被截获的前线电报，现场的紧张窒息得以真切传递出来。与使用低科技器材类似，技术上的不完美有时恰恰有助于通往更真实的现实感触。

要点还在于，当一个人面对一个庞大的现实，他／她的个人能力是极其有限的，所以，除了以传统的方式去亲自拍摄之外，为何不同时调动更多的公共资源，调动更多潜在的“持摄影机的人”，调动更多可以使用的现成材料，来服务于同一个目的，将维尔托夫的电影眼从单数复活为复数，复眼，社会复眼，因为今天人人都是一个潜在的持摄影机的人，在让我们获得不同于冠冕堂皇叙事的微观视角方面，这些“持摄影机的人”做的是多么出色！

社会复眼从电影眼强调的首先由电影技术自身发展带来的观看的可能，向社会观看的更集约化的层面过渡与拓展——物质技术最终必须向社会技术转化。媒介自身不会死亡，只有使用它的方式会走向死亡，这由使用者自身的态度与目的所决定。

2024年完成的最新长片《世界的另一部分：幽灵及其重影》，也是通过在媒介田野中采集、拾荒、打捞的众多材料，运用社会复眼来建构“世界的蒙太奇”的努力。片尾镜头回到了维尔托夫《持摄影机的人》中那个大大的瞳孔特写，社会复眼与电影眼跨越一个世纪呼应在一起。



《世界的另一部分：幽灵及其重影》截图

Voice-Over

LEI Lei 雷磊

Whether in narrative films, documentaries, essay films, or experimental works, in what ways can voice-over be employed? What kinds of relationships can it establish with the image? And what textures or structural elements does voice-over itself bring to cinema?

In February 2023, my new film *That Day, on the River* 发光的河 (2023) was selected for the Berlinale Forum. That same year, I was invited by Berlinale programmer James Lattimer to write on the theme of ‘voice-over’, titled ‘Short Text on Voiceover for Berlinale Forum’ and published on the festival’s website. Ten fellow directors—including Radu Jude, Vincent Dieutre, and Burak Çevik—also contributed. The website’s introduction describes the project thus:

Many films in our programmes explore the possibilities of the voiceover. We asked filmmakers who screened at recent editions of the Forum and Forum Expanded to write about this cinematographic technique, with their answers running the full gamut from the analytical to the personal, from the general to the specific and from the lyrical to the concrete – each text the product of a unique voice.

Although all ten texts circle the theme of ‘voice-over’, their collective shape is neither an anthology of essays nor a rational, hierarchical argument. As I read each piece, I envisioned a pick-up-sticks 挑竹签游戏 structure—an abstract pattern reminiscent of Wassily Kandinsky’s paintings. If ‘voice-over’ is a slice of buttercream cake, each director wields a fruit knife at a different angle: some cuts are sharp, some gentle, and some barely brush the surface to lift a smear of cream. It is precisely through these varied slices that we can more effectively discuss the complexity of voice-over as a cinematic technique. This article’s aim, then, is to weave together these distinct voices and propositions, inviting further dialogue from readers.

I

We can begin our discussion of voice-over with Burak Çevik’s contribution. In the opening paragraph of his ‘Short Text on Voiceover’, Çevik writes:

The separation of sound from image is an important cinematographic idea, says Deleuze. He then gives an example from one of Straub-Huillet’s films. For the eyes which see it, a plain is just an empty space. But when a voice from above describes the dead lying beneath the plain, the meaning of the landscape changes dramatically.

Çevik goes on to explain that he first read these words ten years ago, at a time when he neither understood Deleuze’s philosophy nor had seen the Straub-Huillet film in question. Yet the idea of separating sound from image sparked something profound in this young filmmaker. In an age when DV cameras and modern digital recorders render synched sound the default, the deliberate uncoupling of sound and image still holds the power to transform. ‘I was wondering what a cinematographic idea even was’, Çevik admits.

Çevik's decade-old wonder provides a fitting point of departure for our own inquiry: what binds sound and image so tightly in cinema today? In the silent era, an audience might hear the projector's mechanical whir, the halting accompaniment of a live band, or the intertitles read aloud by a *benshi*—none truly synchronized (or at best simulating sync). As technology advanced, synchronous sound became both an aesthetic ideal and a technical standard—though some filmmakers even resisted the advent of sound altogether. This standard emerged alongside the growth, even the bloat, of the film industry: 'No longer may audiences languish,' the new 'cinema' seemed to declare; 'I'm no longer a circus attraction or mechanical racket—behold the magician, the sorcerer! Worship this illusion in earnest!'

Vincent Dieutre echoes this dynamic in his essay:

For a long time, I wondered what a clapperboard was for. In the era of analogue film, where I first discovered shooting and then editing film (still on a cutting table in those days) back in film school, I realised that the sacrosanct clapperboard was a guarantee of synchronised sound and image, a sort of fetish of verisimilitude, as well as a summary command issued to the viewer: to accept the veracity of the filmic representation, to go along with the fiction, to believe in it.

Dieutre refers to the pre-digital era of filmmaking, where the illusion of synchronised sound and image was sacrosanct, even able to 'command' the audience. One can imagine that, for viewers at the time, cinema's reproduction of reality must have been a spectacle of desire, a 'fetish of verisimilitude' or 'worship of authenticity', which certain directors or the film industry were all too happy to exploit and to perpetuate. Like sorcerers, they wove their ghost stories around a bonfire, using massive projections, dense herbal smoke, and the clash of bones to plant an emotion, a narrative, into the audience's mind. Because of sync sound and image, cinema audiences danced around that bonfire of 'worship of authenticity' as if entranced.

It is worth noting that the terms 'worship' or 'fetish' are not used here pejoratively, nor do they carry positive or negative value judgments. In fact, this is Dieutre's reflection on the relationship between cinema and its spectators in a bygone era. In a time of scarce images, people were mesmerised by cinema's capacity to reproduce the world, and they were eager to believe—or at least to understand more easily—the information cinema conveyed.

I also mentioned an example in my 'Short Text on Voiceover':

In the early years of the People's Republic of China, rural projectionists would bring educational films on agricultural techniques or newsreel footage to the countryside. Before screening the film, the projectionist would show static lantern slides while performing *kuaiban* 快板 rhythm storytelling to explain the slide content. On the one hand, the *kuaiban* narration greatly enhanced the propaganda's impact; on the other hand, the off-screen voiceover conferred a sense of 'authority' or 'discursive power', guiding viewers to interpret the images—and even prescribing the emotional response appropriate to those images (*kuaiban* and other Chinese folk art forms made dry, dull educational slides feel lively and engaging).

My passage here, alongside Dieutre's 'sacrosanct clapperboard', both discuss how, in the pre-digital era, cinema used sync sound and image to establish a certain authority. The 'veracity of cinematic representation' built the stage for narrative, and through spectacle and illusion, voiceover completed the story.

II

In the foregoing, we have emphasized people's fascination with spectacle and their acquiescence to cinema's 'veracity'. Of course, the movie theater is not a simple visual model. Returning to Dieutre's words, he says:

But the sound re-recording process (as systematically practised by auteurs like Bresson) used for 'international versions' and dubbed commercial movies posed a challenge to this willing suspension of disbelief. The elements of sound captured in passing in direct cinema, *cinéma vérité* and underground films and the advent of video (which is synchronised by definition) all conspired to relegate sync sound to the rank of an outmoded special effect.

It is fascinating that Dieutre points out that, with technological development, the collapse of a certain 'spectacle' has sparked a revolt against that 'willing suspension'. As eras changed, the power of illusion weakened—or simply ceased to work. Dieutre then refers to Philippe Garrel's 1985 film *She Spent So Many Hours Under the Sun Lamps*, asking: with its ambient noise, indistinct dialogue, and jarring close-ups, do we still believe in cinema's wonder? Perhaps, as Dieutre says: 'Believing... Deep down, nobody believed anymore. The world had already been filmed.'

Indeed, today the world is saturated with images—Erik Kessels's renowned project *24HRS in Photos* has already reminded us of this. We can glimpse that, in the 1980s, the emergence of video and television dealt a massive blow to cinema's authority, or its 'hegemonic illusion.' Audiences no longer needed to go to theatres to indulge in 'worship of veracity'; they could stay home, switch on the TV, insert a videotape. The consumption of images became effortless, and authenticity readily at hand. It must also be noted that, beyond technological upheaval, the spirit of the era—people's defiance of authority and their fervent desire for freedom of expression—was even more intense.

So, in this context, can cinema remain untouched? Radical artists likewise raised their cameras like clenched fists, rebelling against stale modes of expression and avidly tearing apart the 'illusion' woven by sound and image. Dieutre then highlights several directors' contributions to this process: Marguerite Duras and Chantal Akerman, who boldly posed the question: '[This process]...had already ushered in a far more open-ended narrative relationship between image and sound, between what is said (or left unsaid) and what is shown.' And Burak Çevik—whom Deleuze inspired earlier—emphasizes his own pursuit in the 'Short Text on Voiceover': the convergence and divergence of image and sound. He writes: 'In my films, the sound sometimes rises to the sky, sometimes goes underground, sometimes surrenders itself to silence.' To my mind, voiceover's peregrinations—the rupturing and the open narrative relationships—transform cinema from a flat tale or a sorcerer's campfire projection into a three-dimensional edifice, a courtyard or a castle through which audiences truly stroll.

By coincidence, in 2023, after returning to Beijing from Berlin, the China Film Archive hosted a Chantal Akerman retrospective. I watched Akerman's *News from Home* (1976) on the big screen for the first time—an

outstanding experience (previously, I had dozed off watching it on a small monitor). The cityscapes of New York, the grain of the film stock, the intertitles drawn from Akerman's mother's letters, the subway's low rumble, the whispers and clamour of pedestrians—all floated like scattered beams suspended in the theatre, building and assembling into a volumetric narrative space. Especially in the film's latter half, when the mother's voice-over is entirely drowned by New York's street noise—voice-over disappears! It surrenders itself to silence. Yet for audiences, this poses no issue: we remain buoyant in the director's constructed, dimensional narrative world.

The disappearance of voice-over—or the interruption of the mother's 'voice-over'—I employed a similar treatment in my 2019 feature *Breathless Animals* 动物方言 . I wrote in my 'Short Text on Voiceover':

The narration in *Breathless Animals* is a dialogue between my mother and me. In the course of making the film, I edited the interview recordings to be extremely discontinuous—fragmented, choppy. The voice-over often cannot complete a full narrative, lacking complete dialogue, replaced instead by words or short phrases. Or at certain moments, a nascent narrative logic established by the voice-over is interrupted by noise... 'Tedious family chatter seems rather pointless'; 'Don't trust everything you hear in the film.'

In truth, when I wrote these words, there was no disrespect toward my mother. On the contrary, I delight in her ramblings, and I am pleased to have invited her into my film. The question is: do I have the right to immerse everyone in such private emotion? Each person has their own family, their own stories, their own endless conversations with relatives. As a director, do I possess the privilege to project private feeling to the scale of the screen, forcing this emotion's particularity and demanding audience empathy? I imagine viewers' response to the voice-over would be something like: 'Tedious family chatter seems rather pointless.'

So, what might be engaging and interesting?

Cinema—ah, let us not forget that we are watching a film. I believe those discontinuous, choppy voice-overs aim to free the audience from mawkish, superficial sentiment. Seated in theatre seats, facing the screen, we realize: ah, we are indeed watching a movie. This brings to mind Jean-Luc Godard's *Sauve qui peut (la vie)* (1980): when the young heroine pedals toward the camera along a mountain path, the lilting music and postcard-perfect scenery easily sweep audiences into a clichéd emotion—one rooted in our lived experience or endlessly reinforced. Yet Godard will not let this pass: his constant use of freeze-frames, slow motion, reverse motion, and frame-by-frame shots shatters the film's 'illusion', forcing the audience back into their seats, reminding them: 'Hey, you are watching a movie!'

I can picture a curious scene: sitting shoulder to shoulder with Godard in a rural village in the early People's Republic China, watching an agricultural science-education film. The French speaker understands no Chinese, and we're too lazy to translate, so we stand and wander: peering at the farmers' crops, hearing cicadas, watching fireflies. The educational film becomes a glowing rectangle in the distance; then the projectionist's kuaiban narration crackles to life, and we are drawn—staggering—back to that rectangle. In this process, voice-over vanishes, the illusion dissolves—but the cinema remains beautiful, does it not?

III

Dieutre writes, ‘Forget the explanatory commentary, the use of the voiceover as an extra narrative tool in documentaries.’ Echoing this, I wrote in my ‘Short Text on Voiceover’:

It seems that I would prefer to make the audience question the content of the voiceover and eliminate the authority or discourse it brings. On the one hand, our access to spectacle is too straightforward in our daily life and on social media, and the audience does not need a voiceover as a guide to help understand these images.

Similar to the narration in *News from Home*, Dieutre describes his approach in *Bonne Nouvelle* (2001):

To film my titular neighbourhood in Paris in *Bonne Nouvelle* and populate it with people I’d met or loved, with stories told by my voice – and sometimes contradicted by the voices of two others, friends. The point is not to cheat, but to strive for a kind of truthfulness.

Here, Dieutre strengthens the open narrative relationship between the film image and the film sound. Impromptu voiceovers and contradictory stories miraculously generate a certain truthfulness. I love this idea: it marks a stage in the people’s revolt against the earlier ‘worship of veracity’. This means that truth no longer arises from cinema’s ‘illusion’ but from each viewer’s independent reflection. Seated in a theatre, pushed back into their seats by the split of sound and image, the hum of the air conditioner, the projector’s roar, and even the coughs of their neighbours—while also reading their own life backgrounds and private memories—viewers arrive, at a certain moment during the screening, at an awareness of truthfulness, thus pulling the magician off their pedestal.

As Dieutre says:

I now know that this art of collage, these multi-layered films, invite viewers to embark on a sort of archaeological dig, to dig deep into their own experience, beneath the shots and the words. And I know that they’ll be able to relate to this strange exercise in freedom, which is denied them by most mainstream movies.

I have quoted Dieutre at length (perhaps too much) because we both cherish the art of collage as directors or artists—we find freedom and liberation in it. At the entrance to the Tate’s Collage Gallery, a wall text reads, ‘Combining everyday objects and materials became a new technique for twentieth-century artists... Some continue to use this approach to create moments of poetic surprise. For others, collage is a way to analyse the images in advertising and mass media that surround us.’ When filmmakers splice together materials from diverse sources, the audience—like visitors wandering a gallery—lingers over the torn edges of collage works, the images partially covered or ripped away, the wrinkles and scratches of ready-made objects, even the dust on the frames or the patterned tiles of the gallery floor. Viewers ask themselves: what does that newspaper clipping, candy wrapper, sheet music, or torn advertisement fragment mean? How did a discarded food wrapper end up framed as art? In this process of ‘digging deep’, genuine dialogue and resonance emerge.

Moreover, Dieutre’s phrase ‘this art of collage, these multi-layered films’ highlights a method fundamentally

unlike mainstream cinema: there are no fixed stages of preproduction, production, and postproduction; everything unfolds like fragmented musical movements, or the shuffled letters in *Hill of Freedom*, with the director leaping and looping along the timeline. For example, regarding Dieutre's film *This Is the End* (2023), he writes: 'Producing drafts of a script one day at a time, we edited it, chopped it up and scattered the pieces all over the City of Angels. A definitive version wasn't recorded till the end, between the editing and the sound mixing.' Such a vivid process must be dangerous, improvised, teetering on chaos, driving one mad—and yet capable of producing a unique form of 'pure contemporary poetry. I thought of a conversation a few months ago with film scholar Yu Tianqi 余天琦 about her new book *Essay Film and Narrative Techniques*.¹ When she asked me about the 'improvisational' element in *Breathless Animals*, whether this seemingly free-flowing narrative contained the director's self-expression, I replied:

My process had no clear purpose or fixed plan; I only had a vague direction. As materials emerged, I continually reshaped the work or introduced new elements. The process was improvised and casual, full of surprises. The surprises lay in the layering and collage of materials: these often produced a kind of chemical effect, the distance between materials creating space for interpretation or moments of poetry. And these are precisely the most wonderful parts of cinema.

I do not want the director to monopolize discursive power, to endlessly guide the audience and keep them immersed in the 'illusion' (though for some commercial films, the illusion is indeed necessary). On the contrary, I hope director and audience engage in an equal dialogue, with randomness, uncontrollable overlaps, and collages laid bare before both. On this improvisational journey, viewers can discuss the meaning of the images alongside the director, forming their own independent views and insights.

Thus, within the cinema—this fleeting contemporary community—Dieutre's contemporary poetry takes effect, because neither side is hypnotized nor triumphant. Instead, a public discussion of the image unfolds, echoing the classical 'piazza', where people speak freely and listen. We step out of the 'black mirror' of electronic screens, shed narcissism or self-pity, share, converse, coexist, and share time. This may be the most wonderful moment in the contemporary cinema.

IV

The essay so far seems to have become a utopian journey through cinema. I must remind myself that we have been emphasizing the separation of sound and image—and the ambiguous beauty it brings—but might we now be plunging into another kind of void?

If the illusion of synchronised sound and image utterly collapses, and the elements on the editing timeline scatter like a hundred marbles on the floor—bouncing, colliding, rolling, hiding at random—does that alone yield truthfulness? Will it provoke audience interaction, rolling up their sleeves for an archaeological dig? Or might viewers feel the director is even more arrogant, merely posturing? Sometimes the surprise and poetry of collage blur into incoherence and disarray. If we slip to the other end of the scale, we face the same embarrassment of a director talking only to himself and rationalizing his own choices.

In response, Romanian director Radu Jude responds in his 'Short Text on Voiceover' with two quotations.

The first, from Jacques Rivette (1973): ‘I think that’s the basis for everything: to treat the text as material which plays a role exactly similar to the other materials in the film: the actors’ faces, their gestures, the photographic texture.’ The second, from Hito Steyerl (2011): ‘The essay films now look amazingly similar [...] to a zapping spree with a voiceover, or maybe just to a Sunday afternoon remix contest on YouTube.’ Placed side by side, these wry remarks float like the devil and angel on a character’s shoulders, reminding us to re-think the topic of ‘voice-over’.

I sometimes fall into simplistic binaries—‘compliance’, ‘resistance’, ‘turning’, ‘sacrosanct’ (perhaps an artifact of translation software)—terms that reduce complexity, linearize cinema’s history, and pigeonhole different directors’ rich explorations into a taxonomic chart. Clearly, this is crude. In ‘Short Text on Voiceover’, each filmmaker speaks from their feeling; their words are a single drop of rain, a spoonful of water against the ocean of cinema. There is no universal formula or essay that applies everywhere. In filmmaking and through each technical revolution, we constantly encounter new questions and challenges.

At the end of his entry, Jude writes:

I think that the space between these two quotations contains all the problems we have regarding the use of voiceover in the cinema of today. I cannot add anything more, I don’t know what else to add, I prefer to let you reflect on them. (And if anyone feels this is not enough, they can just imagine I added 4’33” by John Cage to the text instead of my voiceover.)

Jude’s silence—his invocation of 4’33”—brings to mind James Benning’s new film *Allensworth* (2023), screened in the Berlinale Forum this year. Benning, my colleague at CalArts’s Film & Video School, composes his films from long static shots—*Ten Skies* (2004) or *13 Lakes* (2006). As the *Artforum* website notes: ‘For fifty years, Benning has documented U.S. hegemony and resistance through a masterful manipulation of light and time, giving unconventional form to histories of colonization, racial violence, land use, and alienation.’ It is known that Benning’s films are almost entirely voice-over free; we hear only wind, highway noise, insects, or the faint rustle of leaves.

We won’t delve into academic studies of his work here; I mention him because watching his films is a uniquely ‘fun’ experience. Years ago at L.A.’s REDCAT theatre, during a screening of *Ten Skies*, roughly an hour in, a student could no longer contain himself and shouted, ‘This is the same damn cloud!’ before storming out. Only at the end did Benning slowly approach the screen and croak, ‘Okay, it isn’t the same cloud.’ The audience roared with laughter—perhaps the only voice-over of that screening. This year I also watched *Allensworth* at Berlinale. If Benning’s film addresses colonial issues or racial violence, it does so through silence and duration. In that theatre (with horribly uncomfortable seats), we were forced to stare at a few buildings in *Allensworth* for tens of minutes, unable to leave without climbing over dozens of people. I did not feel Dieutre’s ‘invitation to an archaeological dig’, but rather a near-violent nailing of us to our seats. Perhaps this most coercive mode of cinematic viewing precisely embodies Benning’s filmic vision.

V

Whether it’s Radu Jude’s quotations, John Cage’s 4’33”, or James Benning’s *Ten Skies*, filmmakers—like historians or scientists—can of course forge new insights and tell new stories. Yet in my practice I often

engage in self-reflection (as Jude tells us: ‘reflect on them yourselves!’) and remain wary that directing is a profession armed with ‘dangerous weapons.’ Cinema—this art medium—carries a strong gene of ‘sorcery’, or the ‘illusion’ we mentioned at the essay’s outset. When sound and image lock in sync, the theatre environment can confer a performative authenticity that leads audiences to readily accept certain viewpoints or claims. We can be moved to tears, elated, or overwhelmed with emotion in a cinema, and thus all too easily believe in those so-called ‘director’s expressions’—a form of violence that frightens me.

On one hand, technological revolutions and shifting media have caused the theatre’s spectacle to begin collapsing; on the other, as noted above, audiences have begun resisting that ‘willing suspension’. Contemporary cinema is nothing like its analogue predecessor. Hence, in my filmmaking I strive not to present conclusions but to pose questions, ultimately handing over to viewers the right to find answers and to imagine. A director cannot—and should not—supplant the audience’s own thinking.

Here, I quote Dieutre once more:

We discovered that we could regain control over the infinite power of cinema, renegotiate the willing suspension of disbelief with the audience, although I still had to find my voice... Poetry, literature, the so-called fine arts had long since jumped on the bandwagon, but the commercial interests at stake and the movie industry’s enormous machinery for spectacle were not about to take it lying down. We had to sneak in and find the cracks. At the time, we spoke of Third cinema or creative documentaries. But our lethal weapon was the voice. My voice.

‘My voice’—these two words slow me as I read. I suddenly realize that whenever we watch a film (especially when reading intertitles), there is always a ‘my voice’ echoing in our skulls—a narrator inside us, sometimes incessant, even luring us into dreams. Yet in the face of the movie industry’s grand spectacle machine, our voice is silenced, covered over. (A wordplay: is this the commercial ‘loss of self’ effect in cinema—to forget ‘my voice’, to ‘forget my off-screen voice’, or to be left ‘speechless’ by a film’s effects and AI imagery? The voiceover’s mouth leads to the voiceover’s speechlessness.)

Perhaps my emphasis on ‘my own voice’ misreads Dieutre’s manifesto-like words, his sloganic force; his original intent springs from the director’s creative act. Yet this ambiguity also feels fitting. I care little whether a filmmaker forms new insights or tells new stories, because each screening is new, each voice different (*Ten Skies* offers a different feeling every time—no two clouds are alike). ‘My voice’ does not appear in the technical process of modern voice-over production, for it transcends a film’s runtime and the theatre’s space—yet undeniably it exists in every viewer’s mind (right now, as you read). Just as in Akerman’s *News from Home*, when off-screen narration falls silent, ‘my voice’ seems to emerge, and Akerman’s story becomes ours.

Could we then say that cinema is ‘our story’? Dieutre’s ‘Short Text on Voiceover’ bears the title *THIS IS THE END: Finding Your Voice Again*. Perhaps these very words should serve as our conclusion: ultimately, may each of us reclaim our own voice through film.

Notes

1 Interview with Yu Tianqi on *Essay Film and Narrative Techniques*, August 21, 2023, via email.

画外音

雷磊

无论是在剧情片、纪录片、散文电影、还是实验电影中，画外音在电影中的应用方式有哪些？画外音与影像之间能够建立怎样的关系？画外音本身能够为电影带来哪些纹理 / 结构元素？

2023 年 2 月，我的新电影《发光的河》入选柏林电影节论坛单元。当年，我受柏林电影节策展人詹姆斯·拉蒂默邀请，以“画外音”为主题撰写文章，即柏林电影节论坛《画外音短文》并发表在电影节网站上。同时收到邀请的导演包括哈都·裘德，文森特·迪厄特，布拉克·切维克等十位导演。网站上的引言如此描述《画外音短文》的主题：“在我们的选片中，有许多影片都探索了画外音的可能性。我们邀请最近几届论坛及论坛外展映单元中放映的导演撰写关于画外音这种电影技巧的文章。在他们的文章中，从学术分析到个人创作，从普遍情况到具体案例，从抽象到具像，无所不包，每篇文章都是独特声音的产物。”

十篇导演的短文虽都围绕着画外音主题展开，但整体呈现的状态并不是论文的集合，或是理性的树状结构。我在一篇一篇阅读后，脑海中出现了类似“挑竹签游戏”的结构图形，像是康定斯基的抽象画。如果说画外音这种电影技巧是一块奶油蛋糕，那么《画外音短文》中的每位导演如同持着水果刀从不同角度切入：某些角度锋利，某些角度温柔，某些角度只是非常克制地蹭下一抹奶油。但如此不同角度的切片，却使我们可以更有效地讨论画外音这样一个复杂的话题，而本文的目的也在于串联不同的导演的话语及主张，期待引起读者们更多的回应。

一

我们可以从布拉克·切维克的文字开始画外音的讨论，布拉克·切维克在《画外音短文》的第一段提到：“德勒兹说，‘声音与影像的分离是一个重要的电影理念。’”德勒兹接着举了施特劳布·惠勒的一部电影中的镜头作为例子。对于影片的视觉方面，平原只是一个空旷的空间。但当一个声音从屏幕的高处传来，描述躺在平原下的死者时，风景的意义就发生了巨大的变化。

布拉克随后提到，他读到这段话是在十年之前，当时的他并不了解德勒兹的哲学思想，也没有看过施特劳布·惠勒的这部电影。但是，声音与图像分离的方法给予这位年轻的电影人很大的启发，DV 摄影机或是如今数码相机拍摄的视频已经让声画同步变得理所当然，声音与影像的分离却能带来新的变化，布拉克说：“我很想知道什么是电影的理念。”

布拉克导演十年前的困惑，正好可以作为今天我们话题讨论的起点。是什么让电影中的声音与影像紧紧捆绑在一起呢？如果在默片时代，也许观众可以在放映现场听到放映机规律的机械噪音，或是现场乐队的整脚的演奏，再或是默片解说员的台词，而这些都是不能说是同步的（或者说是在模拟声画同步）。随着技术的发展，音画同步成为了某种美学追求或是技术标准（虽然也有人拒绝有声电影）。而这种美学标准一定是随着电影工业的成长甚至膨胀而产生的，那便是：观众不能再那么散漫啦，别再像进入马戏团一般看待电影，也别去听放映机轰鸣的噪音了，“电影”说，我已经不再杂耍了，我如今是魔法师，巫师！老老实实在地“崇拜”眼前的幻觉吧！

文森特·迪厄特在文章中也回应了这一点：“很长时间以来，我一直想知道拍板是做什么用的。在模拟电影时代，我在电影学院第一次发现了拍摄和剪辑电影胶片（当时还是在剪辑台上），我意识到

神圣不可侵犯的拍板是声音和图像同步的保证，是一种真实性的迷信，也是向观众发出的总结性的命令：接受电影表现的真实性的，顺从虚构，相信它。”文森特提到的是前数字时代的电影拍摄方法，声音和画面同步的幻觉，是神圣的，甚至可以“命令”观众。可以想象，电影对于现实的复制在当时对于观众来说一定是欲望中的某种奇观，“真实性的迷信”或是“真实性的崇拜”，而某些导演或是电影工业非常善于利用此“崇拜”，并乐于不断发展此“迷信”。如同巫师一般，他/她的鬼怪故事需要一团篝火，在篝火前利用巨大的投影，草药的浓浓烟雾和骨头碰撞的声响，在观众脑中植入一个情绪，一个叙事。因为声音和画面的同步，电影院的观众如同在篝火前舞蹈的人们一样，陷入这场“真实性的崇拜”的情境之中。

值得提醒的是，我们在此谈论到的“崇拜”或是“迷信”并不是一个贬义词，并不带有积极或消极的价值。事实上，这是文森特对于过去时代电影和观众关系的描述，也是某种反思。在图像匮乏的时代，人们着迷于对于世界的复制，电影所带来的奇观确实让人着迷，在此奇观中，人们也愿意相信（或是更容易理解）电影中的信息。

我在《画外音短文》中也提到了一个例子：“在中国建国初期，农村放映员会把关于农业种植的科教片，或是新闻简报的电影胶片带到农村放映。在电影胶片放映前，放映员会投影一些静态幻灯片，并且一边打快板一边讲解幻灯中的内容。一方面，快板旁白的形式大大加强了宣传力度，另一方面，画外音带来一种权威或是话语权，指导观众去理解图像，甚至指导观众理解图像时所应有的情绪（快板等中国民间艺术形式，让枯燥乏味的科教幻灯片看起来轻松活跃）。”我的这部分文字和文森特提到的“神圣的拍板”的说法，都是在谈论前数码时期电影是如何使用声音及画面制造的某种权威，“电影表现的真实性的”是为了搭建叙事的舞台，在奇观与幻觉中，画外音发生作用，电影完成叙事。

二

上文中我们只是强调了人们对于奇观的迷恋，以及人们对于电影中真实性的服从。当然，电影院并不是一个简单的视觉模型。回到文森特的文字，他说：“但是，国际版和配音商业电影中使用的声音重新录制过程（布列松等电影大师系统地采用了这一过程）对这种‘心甘情愿’的态度提出了挑战。直接电影、真实电影和地下电影中顺带捕捉到的声音元素，以及录像带（顾名思义就是同步的）的出现，共同将同步声音降级为过时的特效。”非常有意思的是，文森特指出随着技术的发展，某种“奇观”的坍塌，人们对于“心甘情愿”的反抗。在时代的变化中，幻觉的效力减弱，或者干脆不再奏效了。随后，文森特在文章中提到了导演菲利普·加雷尔1985年的电影《她在太阳灯下度过了无数个小时》，电影中的那些噪音，无法分辨的对话，及特写镜头。我们是否依然相信电影的奇观呢？也许正如文森特所说：“相信……在内心深处，没有人再相信了。世界已经被拍成了电影。”

是的，如今，世界已经被图像覆盖了，生活在阿姆斯特丹荷兰艺术家艾里克的著名作品《二十四小时图像》已经提醒了我们这一点。我们可以窥见，在上世纪八十年代，录像及电视的出现，对于电影的权威，或是“幻觉霸权”带来了巨大冲击，人们不再去电影院享受某种“真实性的崇拜”，而是可以在家打开电视机，播放录像带，图像的消费变得轻而易举，真实性也唾手可得。同时必须要提到的是，相比技术带来的变革，那个时代的气氛，人们对于权威的反抗，对于自由的表达更加热烈。

那么，在这种语境中，电影还能独善其身吗？那些激进的艺术家们也纷纷举起摄影机（拳头），反抗那些迂腐的表达，并积极撕裂那些声音与画面所带来的“幻觉”。文森特随后提到了几位导演在此过程中所带来的贡献：比如玛格丽特·杜拉斯和尚塔尔·阿克曼勇敢地提出质疑，“在图像和声音

之间、在说了什么（或没说什么）和表达了什么之间开创了一种更为开放的叙事关系”；而前文中被德勒兹所启发的布拉克，也在《画外音短文》中强调了自己在电影工作的追求，即图像与声音的交汇或分离：“在我的电影中，声音时而升入天空，时而潜入地下，时而归于寂静。”在我看来，画外音的游走，撕裂与开放的叙事关系，让电影从扁平的叙事，从巫师的篝火投影，转化成为立体的建筑，一座庭院或是一座城堡，让观众真正踱步于其中。

非常凑巧的是，2023 年我从柏林回到北京之后，电影资料馆举办了尚塔尔 - 阿克曼的电影回顾展，我第一次在大荧幕观看阿克曼导演的电影《家乡的消息》（1976），那是一次极好的观影体验（之前我在小屏幕上观看这部电影，总是昏昏欲睡）。电影中纽约的城市景观，胶片表面的颗粒，阿克曼母亲信中的文字片段，地铁中的低沉的噪音，还有街头人们的耳语与喧哗，如同悬浮在影院中的几根缘木，它们互相搭建，拼装，组合成为立体的叙事空间。尤其是在电影的后半段，母亲来信的画外音完全被纽约街道交通的噪音所掩盖时，“画外音”消失啦！“归于寂静”啦！但对于观众来说，丝毫没有问题，我们依然漂浮于导演虚构的，立体的叙事空间中。

“画外音”的消失，或者打断妈妈的“画外音”——我在自己 2019 年的电影长片《动物方言》中也有类似的处理方法。我在《画外音短文》中提到：“电影《动物方言》的旁白是我和母亲的对话，我制作这部电影的过程中，将采访录音剪辑得非常不连贯，断断续续。画外音经常无法完成完整的叙事，没有完整的对话，取而代之的是词，或是短句。或者在某些时刻，画外音刚刚建立的叙事逻辑会被噪音打断……‘乏味的家庭对话好像也没什么意思’，‘别太相信电影里他 / 她所说的话。’”

其实，我写下这段话时，并没有对我妈妈的不尊敬，相反，我非常乐于听她的闲谈，我也很高兴在我的电影制作中可以邀请我的妈妈成为了其中的角色。问题是，我是否有权利让所有人都陷入这样私人的情绪？每个人都有自己的家庭，自己的故事，每个人都有亲人间无尽的谈话。作为导演，我是否就有某种特权，把私人情绪投影为屏幕的尺寸，强迫这种情绪的特殊性并要求观众与我共情呢？我想象观众对画外音的反馈是：“乏味的家庭对话好像也没什么意思。”

那么，什么会有意思呢？

电影，电影啊……我们别忘了我们在看电影。我以为，那些不连贯，断断续续的画外音正是希望将观众从滥情的、轻浮的情绪中解脱出来，坐在电影院的座椅上，面对屏幕，啊，原来，我们正在看电影啊。我联想到了法国新浪潮导演让 - 吕克·戈达尔的电影《各自逃生》中，当年轻的女主角在山间小道上骑自行车向镜头而来时，悠扬的音乐加上这如同明信片一般美好场景，让观众非常容易陷入某种经典的、刻板的情绪中。这类情绪来自我们的现实生活经验，或者是不断被强调的生活经验，它在电影院很奏效。然而，戈达尔不会让这一切发生，他在电影中不断使用的定格，慢放，倒放，逐帧播放等手段，打破某种电影的“幻觉”，硬是把观众从廉价的情绪中推出来，推到座椅上，不时地提醒观众，喂，你在看电影啊！

我想到一个非常有趣的场景：我们和戈达尔肩并肩坐在中国建国初期的乡村，观看一场农业种植的科教片。这个说法语的家伙完全听不懂中文，我们也懒得帮他翻译，于是我们只好站起来，四处走一走，俯身看看农民种植的农作物，听见蝉鸣或看见萤火虫。这时科教片变成远处发光的一个矩形方块，而当放映员的快板声响起，我们又被响动吸引，跌跌撞撞回到矩形方块前……这个过程中画外音消失了，幻觉消失了，但是电影依然很美，不是吗？

三

文森特在文章中提到：“忘掉解说词，忘掉在纪录片中使用画外音作为额外的叙事工具。”与之呼应，我在《画外音短文》中写道：“我似乎更感兴趣让观众去质疑画外音的内容，消除画外音所带来的权威或是话语权……我们在生活中，在社交媒体中，太容易获得图像的‘奇观’，观众不需要画外音来指导自己理解图像。”

和《家乡来信》的画外音的出现方法类似，文森特在他的电影《好消息》(2001)中也是如此工作的：“拍摄我在巴黎居住过的街区，用我的声音讲述我遇到过或爱过的人的故事，有时也会与另外两位朋友的声音相矛盾。这样做的目的不是为了欺骗，而是为了追求某一种真实。”文森特强调电影中图像和声音之间开放的叙事关系。突如其来的画外音及矛盾的故事奇妙地带来了某一种真实。我非常喜欢这个想法，如此一来，前文中人们对于“真实性的崇拜”的反抗已经有了阶段性成果。这意味着，“真实”的定义并不来自于电影的“幻觉”，而是来自于每一位观众的独立思考，观众被分离的声音和画面推向电影院的座椅，阅读着图像与画外音，影院空调的白噪音，放映机的轰鸣以及邻座的咳嗽声，当然也阅读着自己的生活背景和私人记忆。在电影放映的当下，在某个时刻，产生了真实的意识。从此，巫师被拉下了神坛。

正如文森特所说：“我现在知道，这种拼贴艺术，这些多层次的电影，邀请观众开始一种考古挖掘，在镜头和文字之下，深入挖掘自己的经历。我知道，他们会对这种奇特的实践产生共鸣，而大多数主流电影都剥夺了他们的这种自由。”

我引用了很多（可能太多）文森特的话，原因是我们都非常喜欢拼贴这种工作方法，作为导演或是艺术家，我想我们在其中得到了自由和解放。关于拼贴，我们可以参考伦敦泰特美术馆的 collage 展厅门口的字卡：“将日常物品和材料组合在一起成为二十世纪艺术家的一种新技法……有些人继续使用这种方法来创造诗意的惊喜时刻，对另一些人来说，拼贴是分析我们身边的广告和大众媒体图像的一种方式。”电影中，当导演把不同来源的材料拼贴在一起，观众如同观众游走在泰特美术馆展厅，品味那些拼贴画作边缘裁切的痕迹，那些被覆盖的图像那些被撕去一部分的图像，那些现成品的褶皱和划痕，甚至画框上的灰尘，美术馆地板的花砖。观众会想：拼贴材料中的报纸、糖纸包装、乐谱、广告海报碎片意味着什么，自己平时扔进垃圾桶的食品包装袋怎么被艺术家装裱进画框的。如此，深入挖掘的过程确实会带来对话和共鸣。

另外，文森特的表述——“拼贴艺术，多层次电影”也说明他与主流电影完全不同的工作方法：不会有前期草稿、中期制作和电影后期的明确步骤，一切应该像是切碎乐章，或是电影《自由之丘》中顺序错乱的信件，导演在时间线上飞速地跳跃、折返跑。比如关于文森特的电影《这就是结局》(2023)工作中，他写道：“我们逐日撰写剧本草稿，边剪辑边将其肢解，碎片般撒遍天使之城的每个角落。最终版本直到剪辑与混音交接之际才尘埃落定。如此生动的工作方法，一定是危险的，是即兴的，在失控边缘的，让人疯狂的，但是却能创造出一种独特的‘纯粹当代诗歌’。”我想到几个月前，我和电影学者余天琦围绕她关于散文电影研究新书《散文电影与叙事技巧》的对谈时，我分享了自己类似的工作过程¹。当问及《动物方言》这部电影时，余天琦问我如何看待这部电影中的“即兴”成分，这种看似自由流动的叙事中是否存在导演的自我表达。我当时回答：“我的创作中似乎没有明确的目的性，也没有一个固定的计划，我只是有一个模糊的方向，根据材料的搜集情况，不断改变作品的形态，或者引入新的材料。这个创作过程很即兴，也非常随意，其中伴有惊喜。所谓惊喜是在于：材料与材料之间的叠加与拼贴，往往会带来某种化学效应，材料与材料之间距离会带来解读的空间，或是诗意。而这些正是电影最美妙的部分。”

“我不希望导演过于掌握话语权，不断地引导观众，让观众始终沉浸在幻觉中（当然对于某些商业电影，幻觉是非常必要的）。恰恰相反，我希望导演和观众是平等对话的，在电影放映的过程中，一切随机，不可控，叠加与拼贴都呈现在导演和观众面前。在即兴的旅程中，观众可以和导演一同讨论图像的含义，观众也可以有自我独立的看法与见解。”

就这样，在电影院里，在这个短暂的共同体里，文森特的当代诗歌正在发生作用，因为没有一方被催眠，而另一方洋洋得意。取而代之的是对于图像的公共讨论，如此和谐的场景似乎回到了古典的“广场”，人们自由发表演讲和聆听。人们走出“黑镜”一般的电子屏幕，不再自恋或是自哀，互相分享，交流、相处，共享时间。这可能是当代电影院最美妙的时刻。

四

文章写到这里，似乎变成了一场电影的乌托邦之旅。我不得不提醒自己，我们似乎在前文中一直强调电影中声音画面的分离和其所带来的暧昧的美感，但是，如此是否又将陷入到另外一种虚无之中呢？

声音与画面的幻觉彻底瓦解，那些剪辑线上的元素如同百枚散落在地面的弹珠，它们无规则地弹跳，相互碰撞、滚动，任意地躲藏。如此是否就可以带来真实？就能够引起观众互动，也挽起袖子开始一种考古挖掘呢？观众是否会觉得导演更加傲慢、虚张声势呢？有时候，拼贴所带来的惊喜与诗意，和不知所云，思维错乱之间并没有明确的界限。当我们滑落到天平的另一端，同样会面临导演自说自话，自圆其说的尴尬处境。

对此，罗马尼亚导演哈都·裘德在《画外音短文》中用两段引语给出了回应，第一段来自雅克·里维特，写于1973年：“我认为这是一切的基础：将文本视为一种材料，它的作用与电影中的其他材料完全相似：演员的脸庞、他们的姿态、照片的质感。”

第二段来自希托·施泰尔，写于2011年：“现在的散文电影看起来惊人地相似，就像一场带有画外音的狂轰滥炸，或许只是周日下午在YouTube上进行的混音比赛。”这两段表述并置在一起非常幽默有趣，如同漫画中漂浮在主角左右肩膀的恶魔与天使，提醒我们重新思考画外音这个话题。

我时不时会陷入某一种简单的思维中，“顺从”、“反抗”、“转向”、“不可侵犯”（这可能也是由于翻译软件带来的困扰）这些词汇将复杂的事物简单化，将电影这门艺术语言的历史线性化，将不同导演复杂的探索/丰富的实践进行类似动物图谱般的归纳。显而易见，这是非常粗暴的。在《画外音短文》中，几位导演只能非常感性地谈论自己的电影创作，他们的表达如同一滴雨、一匙水，而面对电影创作的海洋，并没有一条公式，或一篇论文可以作为放之四海而皆准。我们会在电影的制作中，在技术的革命中不断地遇到新的问题和挑战。

哈都·裘德也在文末提到：“我认为，这两段话之间的空隙包含了我们在当今电影中使用画外音的所有问题。我不能再补充什么了，我也不知道还能补充什么，我宁愿让你们自己去反思。（如果有人觉得这还不够，可以想象我在文本中加入了约翰·凯奇的《4' 33"》，而不是我的画外音。）”

哈都·裘德文字的留白是《4' 33"》，这我不禁联想到今年（2023年）在柏林电影节论坛单元放映的詹姆斯·班宁的新电影《阿伦沃斯》（2023）。詹姆斯·班宁是我在加州艺术学院电影与录像学院的同事，他的电影以漫长的静态镜头组成，比如著名的《十面天》（2004）或是《十三湖》（2006）。

Artforum 网站评论：“五十年来，班宁通过对光线和时间的专业操纵，记述美国的霸权和反霸权，给予殖民、种族暴力、土地使用和无归属感历史以非常规的形态。”众所皆知，班宁的电影几乎都是没有画外音的，人们只能听见风声、高速公路的噪音、虫鸣或是树叶间细微的杂音。

关于班宁电影的学术研究在此我们并不展开，我提到班宁是因为观看他的电影是非常有趣的经历。多年前，我在洛杉矶的 Red Cat 剧场有一次参与他的影片放映的经历，可能就是前文提到的《十面天》。在放映开始大约一小时后，一位学生实在按耐不住，大声怒吼：“这就是同一片云！”然后愤然离去。直到放映结束，班宁才缓缓到电影荧幕前，用他沙哑的嗓音说道：“好吧，这不是同一片云。”随之，现场观众哄堂大笑。也许，这个有趣的对话成为了这次放映仅有的画外音。今年我也参加了《阿伦沃斯》在柏林电影节论坛单元的放映。如果，班宁的电影是关于“殖民问题”，或是“种族暴力”的表达，那么这种表达完全是通过无画外音、以及静态镜头来实现的。在电影院里（座椅非常不舒服）我们被迫凝视阿伦沃斯的几座建筑长达数十分钟，其间完全不方便离场（观众坐得很满，离场需要跨越数十人）。在观影过程中我并不能体会到之前文森特所说的：“被邀请开始一种考古挖掘”，而是非常不适地，被强迫钉在影院的座椅上。我想，也许这种最暴力的电影院观影方式，恰恰表达了班宁的电影观念。

五

无论是哈都·裘德的引用，约翰·凯奇的《4' 33"》，还是詹姆斯·班宁《十面天》。在电影中，相对于某种虚无，电影导演当然可以形成新的认知，及新的故事讲述，在这方面电影导演和历史学家，科学家没有什么分别和界限。但是，在创作中，我经常自我反省（哈都裘德说：你们自己去反思！）——需要警惕的是，电影导演是一个拥有“危险武器”的职业。电影作为一种艺术媒介，具有很强的巫术基因，或者是，我们在文章开头中提到的幻觉。当电影中的声音画面同步，可能在影院环境中带来某种表现的真实性，在幻觉中让观众轻易相信某种观点或主张。我们很容易在电影院里落泪，喜悦或是情绪激动。从而我们很容易去相信那些所谓的导演的表达，并坚信不疑，这非常暴力，而且让我觉得恐惧。

一方面，随着技术的革命，媒介的变化，电影院的奇观已经开始坍塌；另一方面，是在前文中所提到，人们开始对于“心甘情愿”的反抗。当代的电影院已经和模拟电影时代完全不同。所以，我在面对电影创作时希望自己不要轻易在作品中得出结论，而是尽量提出问题，而最终将获取答案、获得想象力的权利交给观众。我想，导演不能也不应该替代观众自我的思考。

在此，我愿意再一次引用文森特的文字：“我们发现，我们可以重新掌控电影的无穷力量，与观众重新谈判，让他们心甘情愿地悬置不信，尽管我仍然需要找到自己的声音。……诗歌、文学和所谓的艺术早已加入了这一行列，但商业利益和电影业庞大的奇观机器并不打算就此罢休。我们必须潜入其中，找到缝隙。当下，我们谈论的是第三电影或创意纪录片。但我们的致命武器是声音。我的声音。”

“我的声音”……在阅读时，这四个字一字一顿，我放慢了语速。我突然联想到，在我们观看电影（尤其是阅读字卡的时候）脑海里难道不是总会有一个“我的声音”（你们一定听到过）参与叙事吗？这个声音在我们的颅腔内共鸣，有时喋喋不休，甚至带我们走进梦境，而在那些“电影工业庞大的奇观机器”面前，我们的声音却完全隐去了，悄无声息了，被覆盖了？（一个文字游戏：这是不是商业电影所谓“忘我”的观影效果，即是“忘记我的声音”，“忘记我的画外音”，或者被电影中的特效，人工智能图像惊到“目瞪口呆”，画外音的口，“画外音的呆住”）。

也许，我提到的“我自己的声音”曲解了文森特如同宣言一般的文字，口号般的力量，我想文森特的原意还是从导演的创作出发……但这个“歧义”似乎也挺合理的，我并不关心电影导演“形成新的认知及新的故事讲述”，因为每一次放映都是新的，每一次声音都不同（班宁的《十面天》每次放映都有不同的观感，每一片云都不同）。“我的声音”没有出现在现代电影画外音制作的技术环节中，因为它超越了一部电影的时间，也超越了电影院的空间，而不可否认的是，它真实存在于每个观众的脑海里（此时此刻这个声音就在阅读）。如同我在前文中提到阿克曼导演的电影《家乡的消息》，当画外音消失时，“我的声音”似乎出现了，阿克曼导演的故事变成了我们的故事。

是不是可以说电影是“我们的故事”？文森特的《画外音短文》的标题是：“重新找回自己的声音”，也许正好可以作为本文的结尾，到最后，希望在电影中，所有人可以重新找回我们自己的声音。

注释

1 采访：与余天琦就《Essay Film and Narrative Techniques》的采访。2023年8月21日，通过电子邮件。

The Eve of Chinese Documentary: A Conversation with the SWYC Working Group

Interviewer: Ann Lyuwenyu Zhang 张吕文煜

Author's Note: On January 11th, 2025, through Director Shi Jian's 时间 introduction, I had the honor to meet three esteemed filmmakers: Chen Jue 陈爵, Wang Zijun 王子军, and Kuang Yang 邝杨. I subsequently conducted an interview with all four directors. In our conversation, the four of them reflected on the founding of the SWYC (Structure. Wave. Youth. Cinema) Working Group 结构·浪潮·青年·电影工作小组 in 1989, their modes of working within official television stations during the early years of the Reform and Opening period, and their engagement with and reflections on early television technologies. As witnesses to the New Chinese Documentary Movement, they also discussed their 1991 composition of the Manifesto of the New Documentary Movement 新纪录片运动宣言. This article presents selected extracts from that interview.



From left to right: Shi Jian, Wang Zijun, Kuang Yang, Chen Jue

Zhang Lyuwenyu (hereafter referred to as Zhang): First, I would like to ask the directors about how you met, the early work of the group, and what your working conditions were like at the time.

Chen Jue: Before the group was officially formed, Wang Zijun and I collaborated on two projects — one was a documentary, and the other was a television drama. The documentary was commissioned by a Japanese peace organization and focused on historical reflections on the war and the Nanjing Massacre. We approached the subject from both the Japanese and Chinese perspectives. Before that, we had also worked together on a drama series. At that time, Wang Zijun assisted me significantly on the production side of things.

Before the forming of our group, Kuang Yang had participated in two documentary projects. One of them focused on the social ecology and cultural life of towns and villages in the Huanghuaihai region — it was a project concerning the historical fate of the region. That was when we first became acquainted. Later, we collaborated again on an environmental-themed film — a project commissioned by the National Ministry of Environmental Protection for Earth Day 1990, intended for submission to the United Nations. That collaboration was another step in our working relationship.

Later, I worked with Director Shi Jian on *Tiananmen* 天安门 . At that time, Wang Zijun was already working on his documentary projects at Beijing Television Station. So, from 1988 onward, the three of us conducted wide-ranging research, filming, and interviews focused on the life, society, and individuals in the Beijing area. Our working conditions, creative approaches, conceptual orientations, and production processes all developed in tandem. In this way, we naturally came together as a group — as a kind of alliance.

Wang Zijun: Yes, that's right. Shi Jian, Chen Jue, and I were classmates. In college, we spent the first two years attending large lectures — by which I mean that all students in the humanities were in the same classroom, with nearly all courses shared across the four years. We cheated and copied from each other all together. Birds of a feather flock together, and so we naturally gravitated toward each other for long conversations and exchanges.

Back then it was still called the Broadcasting Institute 广播学院 [Guangyuan 广院 , currently Communication University of China 中国传媒大学] and a defining feature of the place was that students influenced each other far more than teachers influenced students. At least, that was the case at Guangyuan; I can't speak for other schools. Those years were ones in which a single ideology could bring down a professor. New ideas and concepts came rushing in all the time. When Jean-Paul Sartre was popular, the entire campus was reading him. When absurdist theatre became popular, everyone watched it — even the science majors. This atmosphere, and the discussions among students, played a crucial role in the formation of our group.

Originally, it was just the three of us. Kuang joined later through his collaborations with Chen Jue and Shi Jian. When Shi Jian was working on *Tiananmen* — it was originally titled *Legends Along the Central Axis* 中轴线上的传说 — its content overlapped somewhat with what I was filming at the time. So during the shoots, we encountered each other. Their equipment was vastly superior to ours — after all, they were the national station, while we at local stations had extremely modest gear. That's how our collaboration began. Later, we started preparing for joint work. Since our ideas and perspectives — particularly our views on society — were aligned, we decided to explore together. The goal of that exploration was to avoid loneliness. Working alone is always isolating.

Kuang Yang: I wasn't originally trained in media production. When I first met them, I was at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences 中国社会科学院 , mainly studying sociology and political science. I discovered that their documentary work was about observing Chinese society, and people's experiences, lives, and fates — which fascinated me. I met Chen Jue in 1988. When they were working on *Tiananmen*, they had already collected a large amount of footage. As they prepared to shape it into a TV documentary series, I was introduced to Shi Jian and joined to help with writing the script— primarily drafting narration and contributing to

broader discussions. That's how I came to know them.

Wang Zijun lived near me, and we often talked. As he just said, our ideas were similar. At that time, we all hoped to do something innovative through media. I was very interested in that — I also felt that media played an important role in social transformation. They were practitioners on the front lines, exploring new possibilities. That deeply attracted me. So I joined them, and we often had long conversations together.

Shi Jian: Let me add something. Our transition to more formal activity — the official establishment of the group — came not only from the personal affinities and shared values we just described, but also from our hope to unite in a more organized fashion. We wanted our interactions to carry a sense of purpose and direction. That's why we decided to form the SWYC group — in the spring of 1989. We had a strong consensus on documentary exploration and the spirit of documenting, and we shared values in what we hoped to convey through our work. We wanted to produce something more influential. At the same time, we also wanted to overcome the loneliness and isolation of working alone. So we initiated this group together.

When we were students, technical changes in equipment were ongoing. I remember very clearly that after I began working, ENG [Electronic News Gathering — camera and recording in one] equipment only then came into use. In the early 1980s, when we were still in school, the technology was far from developed. I remember using film cameras — not 35mm, but 16mm — at work. You had to fill out a form to use the camera, specifying how many days you needed it, for both the pre- and post-production phases. Later, the equipment shifted fully to video formats, but the film cameras were still available to individuals. You could still shoot supplemental footage on film, and there were no strict limits on the amount of film used. You could hold the camera and shoot freely, and film stock was plentiful.

Chen Jue: Let me interject here — that was the exact opposite of the film studios. In the studios, film stock was strictly rationed and subject to scene-by-scene calculations. In the television stations, it was the reverse.

Zhang: At the film studios back then, were they using 16mm or 35mm?

Shi Jian: They used 35mm. But by then, film wasn't the dominant format anymore — it had become supplementary. Our main footage was still shot on video, but some individual shots — like landscapes — could be captured on film. For major documentaries or high-priority projects, a dedicated sound recordist would be present. The microphone on the camera wasn't reliable enough for quality sound, so we needed boom mics and skilled audio workers. But this was only possible on big-budget productions. Usually, there was just a camera operator and a director. The director would hold a camera-mounted mic and record sound that way.

For major projects, however, we needed a dedicated recordist with a boom mic. To prevent audio loss, they also carried a NAGRA open-reel recorder. So the audio would be recorded in two places: one directly on the video tape, and another from the camera to the NAGRA recorder. That way, we'd have both sound recordings. Later, we'd often transfer the sound from the audio tape back to the video tape, to ensure preservation across both media. But only major, well-funded projects could afford this setup.

I heard that before videotape — when news was shot on film — recording sound was even more complicated. A single reel of film was only three minutes, and a typical news segment was about one minute. So using one reel gave you a 3:1 shooting ratio, but on location it could go as high as 10:1. There was pressure to maintain that ratio. At the same time, you needed synchronized sound. Without it — if the subject wasn't speaking on camera — the footage felt dull and inauthentic. To enhance realism, back then reporters would have subjects read aloud from big-character posters. But if the subject stared in just one direction, their gaze looked stiff. So they'd make two identical posters — one for the left side of the camera, one for the right — so the subject's eyes would move as they read, creating a more natural effect. Our former deputy director, Chen Hanyuan 陈汉元, told me this — it was a method created by the journalist Kong Lingduo 孔令铎. When I heard about it, I realized how hard our predecessors worked to solve even small technical problems.

We entered the industry just as ENG systems emerged — which meant sound and image were captured simultaneously. That's what television really is: the integration of sound and image. But if you didn't make an effort, the camera's built-in mic just wasn't good enough. If you cared about your work, you needed better microphones — but we as directors didn't have them. Our station's sound department did, so if you wanted good mics, you had to bring a sound recordist. That meant you also had to factor their fees and travel costs into your budget. So we became increasingly aware of the importance of sound. I now believe that the defining feature of the new documentary is its use of synchronous sound. Of course, today it's standard, but when we first started, our TV programs and documentaries didn't use it — even though it was technically possible. Instead, they just used music and narration.

We collaborated with Kuang Yang precisely because his writing matched the images. His narration complemented the visuals — it grew out of what was seen on screen. It wasn't like *River Elegy* 河殇, where the visuals could be removed and the narration would still stand alone as a literary piece. In our films, if you removed the images, the piece would fall apart. That's the kind of alignment we shared with Kuang Yang in terms of documentary expression.

I've lived through the transformation of TV media technologies. When we filmed *Tiananmen*, we used top-tier equipment specially allocated by the station, because it was a key project intended to air for the 40th anniversary of the PRC. The video format we used was a high-end open-reel video system known as '1-inch portable'. Unlike regular tapes, this tape looked more like an audio reel. Our station only had four units — usually reserved for TV drama production, which required the highest quality.

Zhang: Talking about the transformation of filming technologies, some of you have mentioned in previous interviews that synchronous sound had a significant impact on the style of documentaries in your time. Could you speak more about your experiences with synchronous sound, or with the broader technological transitions in cinematography at the time?

Shi Jian: For me, synchronous sound had two main applications. First was in recording people's activities in everyday settings — tracking events in progress. Without synchronous sound, this process feels hollow and overly subjective. Adding music becomes merely lyrical, lacking the feeling of documentation. What we call a sense of documentation — that feeling of recording — comes precisely from synchronous sound. It allows us to capture the actual progression of a person's actions or the unfolding of an event. That process, recorded

as it happens, is a defining characteristic of documentary film.

The second use of synchronous sound is in interviews. Many documentaries rely on interviews, and the feelings and expressions of the interviewee are part of the authentic expression of documentary. Synchronous sound makes the moving image more truthful. One of the people who really encouraged us in this direction was Professor Zhou Chuanj 周传基. He taught sound recording in the film department, but he was also a gifted editor. We are directors who deeply respect our subjects. Our work is premised on that respect — for those we interview and those we film. The interviews in *Tiananmen* carried considerable weight. In earlier formats, interviews were just like what you see in television news today — as long as the subject delivered the response the producer wanted, it was done. The interviewee was merely a tool.

But when I showed our film to classmates, they were deeply moved. They had never seen such extended dialogue, nor seen ordinary people speak in such captivating, compelling ways. It was exhilarating for them. But when we screened the same footage for our deputy director in charge of publicity in our TV station, Hong Minsheng 洪民生, his response was: ‘Your interviews are way too long — I had to fast-forward through them.’ That moment stuck with me. It showed how people’s values and aesthetics can be so different.

Wang Zijun: As Shi Jian just said, synchronous sound combined with long takes became a key technical feature in early documentary experimentation. But we never saw it as just a technical development. When Professor Zhou Chuanji advocated for synchronous sound, he put it rather strongly — saying that people in TV news must have the right to speak for themselves. Our initial thinking was more aesthetic: we felt that once you added synchronous sound, the realistic qualities of the film were complete. It became a statement of realism.

Socially speaking, people at that time had no understanding of camera technology — it was entirely new. You placed a camera somewhere, and local officials were terrified, because the camera recorded indiscriminately. Whatever they said, however they looked — it all got recorded. These were professional tools that were not commonly seen. Once, we set up a camera near a group of old courtyard houses to film. A crowd of residents gathered, asking, ‘When is the demolition happening?’ They assumed our camera belonged to the city planning bureau. ‘Are you from the bureau? Tell us the truth — when is the demolition?’ They surrounded us. This sort of thing happened a lot.

Unlike today, when someone filming with a phone can easily be told to stop, back then our equipment carried a certain authority. Once our cameras arrived, it was like having a bureau-level official on site. Everyone took it seriously — sometimes even fearfully. That made our documentary making process quite different. We were among the first to truly explore the full potential of the video camera. Long takes with synchronous sound allowed us to fully utilize the equipment’s function and purpose.

There was a technological evolution in the cameras we used. I can still recite many of the model numbers. The professional models used by field technicians in various organizations were represented by the M3 series — it’s a backpack unit connected by cable to the camera. In television stations, we used ‘broadcast-level’ models: the Sony 300P, the higher-end 330, and even the SK97, which was still in use when I joined. These were standard across China’s TV stations, until Betacam arrived.

Before Betacam, one major problem in these cameras was white balance adjustment. When you moved the camera or encountered mixed light sources, the image would show what we called *lamao* (color banding or flickering). Many 1980s TV dramas had that issue. Some people even damaged their cameras by pointing them directly at the sun to calibrate white balance — a rookie mistake that happened often.

When Betacam came along, that problem disappeared. It felt incredibly advanced. You didn't have to manually adjust white balance anymore. The sensor used line-based signal processing instead of light bulbs or vacuum tubes. The Beta series was seen as very promising at the time, though it didn't last that long.

Back to synchronous sound — at the time, basic television programming was built around narration and music. Every TV station had professional music editors. They'd watch your footage and, if your narration wasn't ready, they'd add stock music — so-called 'cure-all music'. The most famous of these tracks was invented by the newsreel team at the Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio 中央新闻纪录电影制片厂, and it spread widely across stations. The music for documentaries can't be like those in the TV dramas, but scoring documentary was still a new thing back then.

To this day, many stations still make the same 'cure-all' mistakes with music. Another problem was 'language-first' editing. At Beijing TV 北京台, one director even developed a method where he would fully write and record the narration for a 30-minute piece *before* adding any images. That violates the principles of documentary. It's not like the way Mr. Kuang worked — he integrated narration with image, making them work together seamlessly. That 'cure-all' method became especially common in celebratory or commemorative programs like those about the 16th National Party Congress.

What is the importance of sound? First of all, there's a technical point: using sound as an editing marker in postproduction. I often say that a sound edit point is like a relative clause — the more edit points you have, the more it reflects a sophisticated understanding and articulation of the moving image. But in today's TV programs, that's all gone. Everything is just hard cuts — and it costs quite a bit; the equipment today is far more advanced.

There's a program on Beijing TV called *Beautiful Beijing* 大美北京. I've watched it dozens of times. Why so many times? Because I was waiting for COVID press briefings. The briefings from Beijing's health authorities were never on time, so the station used *Beautiful Beijing* as filler. Watching it, I could see that the editing had already regressed to an amateur level from the 1980s. Beautiful shots — and yet, how could they be cut together so poorly? There's no logic to it. The technical equipment is excellent, but the editing mindset is so rudimentary — the contrast is striking. That's the problem we're seeing now.

Kuang Yang: Technically speaking, they're far more experienced than I am — they work directly as directors, handling both the planning and the integration of image and sound. When I worked on *Tiananmen*, I knew I would face challenges. We didn't begin with a written narration. Instead, they organized a rough structure of the footage—some sequences had sound, others didn't — and I was given the overall framework. From there, I searched for textual material to support the visuals: memoirs, historical writings, that sort of thing.

Let me give you an example. In one piece of historical footage, there's a scene where Puyi was released from his detention. It had no sound. To reconstruct the context, I read *From Emperor to Citizen* 我的前半生, Puyi's 溥仪 autobiography, and located the relevant passage: a representative from the Supreme People's Court read from a document — 'Puyi... is hereby granted release.' That was taken word for word from the book to form the narration. There's another part, where he's riding a train and says, 'I have returned to the people'. That, too, came from the text. I tried to supplement historical footage with textual authenticity to enhance the sense of being present.

I have a deep respect for footage captured on location — for example, there's a long take of a residential courtyard in episode two of *Tiananmen*. It's several minutes long, with no dialog. I didn't add any narration, because it didn't need it — the footage speaks for itself. When I write narration, I try to respect the original sound and imagery, and write complementary text. If I can't find exact historical documents, I'll turn to describing the social context or mood of the period, or add some observational language — just enough to carry the tone of the era.

If you transcribe all those narrations I wrote, you'll find that they're often fragmented — each line corresponds directly to a visual. Structurally, I still tried to ensure cohesion — how one section transitions to the next — and used simple phrasing to guide the rhythm. It was a real challenge for me at the time. Maybe someone today could try stripping out all my narration and experimenting with new pairings — there might be other possibilities. Here's another example. For a scene about the grand opening of the Wangfujing Department Store 王府井百货, we had only a photo — no sound. I asked Shi Jian to dig up that day's *People's Daily* 人民日报, the newspaper. I then reconstructed the event based on what was reported, restoring a bit of its atmosphere through historical documents.

Let me expand on this a bit: today's technologies are increasingly convenient. I now carry a small video camera when I go out, and smartphones make filming even easier. They can instantly capture and transmit footage. We've all seen this during the pandemic — people filmed and uploaded scenes from their own lives, sometimes sparking controversy. These videos could differ from official reports and thus created competing narratives. At the same time, new technologies also bring new forms of social control. For instance, if a video is deleted online, it disappears. So technology shapes what can and cannot appear — that's social control. From a sociological perspective, it's quite complex and interesting.

Chen Jue: I'll add a few points. First, during the early years of the Reform and Opening period, most of China's television documentary equipment came from Japan — and much of it was gifted to China. The first wave went to China Central Television (CCTV) 中央电视台, to replace outdated gear that wasn't suitable for large-scale location shooting. The second wave reached the provincial level. This process continued until even county-level stations were equipped.

The equipment itself was tiered in quality. National-level and provincial broadcasters — like CCTV and the major metropolitan stations — used broadcast-grade gear. The second tier, called professional-grade, was distributed more widely to institutions that needed it: central ministries, state-owned enterprises, universities, research institutes, intelligence agencies, military cultural troupes, and social organizations with newly established audiovisual or propaganda departments. This also included the nationwide educational television

networks and cable TV systems. Finally, there was the consumer level. Japanese consumer gear was well-developed, but in China it was rare. So here's a curious phenomenon: within all those thousands of audiovisual and publicity offices in lower-tier institutions, you'd often find mostly Japanese *consumer*-grade equipment. Isn't that interesting?

There are really two layers to this equipment discussion. First, the recording stage: capturing and preserving footage on tape. Then, the postproduction stage, which required matching systems to the recording stage. Back then we did linear editing — editing from Machine A (raw footage) to Machine B (a rough cut or working master). You'd assemble something coherent from the chaotic footage on A, laying it down on B. That became the rough version. Then we'd refine it. Since sound and image were recorded separately, they had to be recombined. You had to mix the narration, music, ambient sound — even dialogue if present — into a final master tape. The finished tape typically had two audio channels. One was a clean international track — no speech, just ambient sound and music — meant for versions in Tibetan, minority languages, English, French, Spanish, etc. And the other channel was for domestic broadcast.

That entire workflow was deeply material. Here's a fun example. When Shi Jian and I made *Tiananmen*, we could edit non-linearly — like editing film. You could edit scene two or six first, then splice them together. But during the linear era — which lasted until the mid-1990s — you had to edit in order. You'd load Tape 1, Tape 8, Tape 9, and so on into Machine A, then assemble the desired sequence onto Tape B. Later, during final compositing, the multiple sound sources and finalized images had to be layered in, strictly following that same linear sequence. Linear editing meant that every narration, music cue, or sound effect had to sync precisely with the timeline. If we had to revise a project, we often had to start from scratch.

Why didn't early television programs have location sound? Because good, clean, beautiful audio could only be recorded in a studio. In film, TV drama, and feature reporting, that was the norm. Dialogues were dubbed later. Ambient effects might come from a sound library, or leftovers from another shoot. Sometimes they were the personal archive of a sound recordist.

Then came nonlinear editing. In the mid-1990s, CCTV was the first to adopt it. Shi Jian's team used it for large-scale projects. So did we in television drama. It eventually spread to provincial and local stations. Nonlinear editing returned to the flexibility of film — you could start the editing process from the ending, or the climax, or any key scene. That creative freedom was remarkable. In nonlinear work, audio became more manipulable too. In sound studios, using digital waveforms, you could see the volume and shape of the sound. It was a very enjoyable process. Nonlinear editing later expanded beyond the broadcast system — it became common in civilian use.

Let me end by tying back to what Wang and Shi said about synchronous sound and long takes. It all depends on how you see moving images. If you treat them as a one-way transmission of information, then sound doesn't matter. Like some news segment just want to disseminate the information, just my views to you. In this situation, you don't need the subject's voice, just your own message. Historically, news segments, even 'real life' segments — labor scenes, people studying Mao Zedong thought, drinking water in the fields — were all staged. They had to show that life was meaningful and joyful; life was full of hope. This was partly ideological, partly technical. Because film stock was rationed under the planned economy. Every shoot had

strict limits, so image-making was shaped both by propaganda needs and material scarcity.

What changed in documentary? As Wang and Shi emphasized: the subject became important. The question shifted from *what do I want to tell you* to *who are you, why are you acting certain ways, what's happening around you*. The camera had to wait — to follow. Long takes became essential because life was unfolding, and we couldn't interrupt or direct it. To ordinary viewers, seeing a single shot last that long — tracking a real-life event — was shocking. 'Why film something like this?' But we knew: to convey life's real texture, you must record it faithfully. And how do you do that? Synchronous sound. That's what sound cinema taught us.

Hollywood used synchronous recording from the very start of the sound era. Initially, it was just for reference — to guide post-dubbing. But in documentary, when we launched *Tiananmen* and Wang's *Notes from Beijing* 京城散记, we knew that the sound of real events was as precious as the image itself — something to be respected and presented. And that required recording sound on site.

Zhang: The next question is related to DV as a recording device. DV, a machine that has become symbolic in the history of Chinese-language independent cinema — what kind of role did it play in your individual work or in the work of your group?

Wang Zijun: In 1997, China saw its first television program that used DV as its main mode of production. It was called *Home of the People* 百姓家园, and it premiered on April 27th of that year. Panasonic approached CCTV, saying they had a consumer-grade DV camera. We were shocked — a small consumer model, just this big, and they told us it records digital video. They gave us 20 units, and we had the idea: 'Let's give them to the ordinary people and let them shoot for themselves.'

But how would ordinary people edit their footage? We'd do the editing, then have the people add the voice-over, and then broadcast it — hence the name *Home of the People*. Initially, before *Home of the People*, it was probably the economics news station at CCTV that started to let the people film for themselves. But the content was mostly light-hearted — a child falling down, a duck doing something cute — everyday tidbits that ran a few dozen seconds, much like today's short videos.

What we did in *Home of the People*, by contrast, were longer pieces, ten to twenty minutes long — ordinary people filming their families and lives. After this aired, a large number of grassroots contributors wanted to get involved. We then formed a non-governmental DV association. But an association had to be overseen by an official body. We couldn't find a host unit. The municipal publicity department wouldn't take us on. So the association existed, but without an official attachment — it was essentially attached to our TV station. But the director of the station didn't want to take responsibility either. In the end, the DV association dissolved on its own.

The program aired for over two years, centered on subject-generated content — entirely filmed by the people themselves. In 1998, at the academic awards of the China Documentary Research Society 中国纪录片学会, entries came in from across the country. Chen Hanyuan and Zhu Jinghe 朱景和 proposed creating a special prize for works by ordinary people. We submitted two pieces, which ended up receiving 'encouragement

awards’. You couldn’t lump them in with the professionals — these were entirely amateur. That stirred up a hornet’s nest. Many TV stations protested the awards: ‘Our professionally made documentaries didn’t even get shortlisted, and yet these works by ordinary people won?’

At the time, the documentary field was enamored with the ‘authentic’ or ‘original’ style — influenced by Frederick Wiseman, who had even visited China in 1997. During that wave, there emerged a tendency: as long as your work captured something raw and unmediated, you would win an award. As a result, some works by professionals were deemed less valuable than what ordinary people were shooting. So Zhu Jinghe and Chen Hanyuan proposed the encouragement award — and things went off the rails. By the next year, it was gone.

So the rise of DV went through a process like this. After our program, *Home of the People* launched, we invited many experts to watch. Professor Situ Zhaodun 司徒兆敦 from the Film Academy 北京电影学院 made a heartfelt comment: ‘You guys are doing this ahead of our time.’ I really understood what he meant. Today’s short videos on platforms like Douyin are a product of technological development.

Back in 1997, I once said in an interview, ‘In the future, everyone will be a documentary filmmaker.’ Now everyone *is* a documentary filmmaker — much sooner than I had expected. I thought I wouldn’t live to see it. But within just a few years, it happened. People today ask members of the documentary community and the China Documentary Research Society: ‘Look at what the ordinary people are filming — the creativity of the masses is incredible, they’re filming everything.’ But the documentary world is much calmer today — not like when the Society gave that prize to *Home of the People*. Why is that? Because everyone can write, right? Anyone can write a short piece — so why do we still have the Mao Dun Literary Prize? *Avenue of Stars* 星光大道 is a reality show where anyone can sing a few lines — so why do professional singers still exist? Many things we pursue have now been taken up by the general public, and we welcome that. But they cannot replace us.

Kuang Yang: What Director Wang just said — about ordinary people filming their own lives — reminded me of something else. In contemporary ethnographic film, lightweight equipment is often handed to members of the community being studied. Once they’ve mastered the technology, they can film for themselves. They film the social issues, behaviors, and environments that matter to *them*. You might notice that if you’re an outside observer, you approach another culture with your own theoretical frameworks. But with portable equipment, these communities can now observe and speak for themselves. This introduces something new into anthropology. They film from their own perspective, with their own aesthetic sensibilities and narrative styles. This opens up new possibilities in ethnographic film.

Chen Jue: Let me add a few words on this topic. The arrival of the DV era in China came with an important historical precondition: the New Documentary Movement and, later, director Shi Jian’s *Oriental Horizon* 东方时空 had strongly promoted stories of the ordinary people. That helped society broadly accept and value this type of content. It also awakened people’s inner desire to film their own stories — and thereby created a market for DV equipment in China. We shouldn’t overlook how this process began, or how it was pioneered. As director Kuang mentioned, DV turned a technical action into a mass behavior. This process was not only technical — it also became a form of cultural self-expression. This moving image culture wasn’t monopo-

lized by the state. It belonged to *us* too. That is what we call image democracy.

Zhang: My next question relates to what happens after filming — the archiving of works. It concerns how moving images are preserved and their ‘afterlife’. Around these issues, I’d like to ask how you all view the archiving and preservation of television and film, or how you would define a film archive. Because nowadays, the archive is quite an important topic for Chinese-language moving images. Many parts of history are already disappearing. If they are not recorded or preserved, they’ll simply be gone.

Shi Jian: As for the question of archiving and preservation — if we’re speaking from a personal standpoint, it’s also a question of how valuable the material is. It has a lot to do with personal interests and preferences. Some people love collecting, and take their past experiences very seriously. My father was a photojournalist. He kept a lot of photographs, negatives, and diaries. In his later years, he didn’t live with me. I once asked him why. He said, ‘What if my materials go missing?’ I said, ‘Are you worried someone might steal them? Are there really thieves who steal documents?’ My personality is the opposite of his — I don’t keep things. So I think this really comes down to people’s habits and interests.

I was among those who filmed the most footage during June Fourth Incident among Chinese television journalists — but where all that material went, I don’t know. I consider that a great loss. I remember handing everything over to the TV station. I trusted their archive management. But at some point, they decided to digitize everything — to transfer all the tape material to files, to hard drives, for data storage. That’s when my footage vanished. We used to have a footage library. I could store my footage there, and it would be properly labeled with who shot what. If you needed it later, you could retrieve it. But by the time I went back to get it, the whole library was gone.

Our station’s archiving protocol is like this: anything that was broadcasted is stored. A couple of years ago, I could still retrieve pieces I had shot in the 1980s. But personally archiving things is not a great solution. It should really be managed by a social institution. If you store things privately, no matter how much you keep, the volume just isn’t enough — the scale isn’t there — and it’s hard to say whether it has much value, unless you had very specific experiences. For example, during the pandemic, if you shot a lot of material, maybe one day you could compile something meaningful out of it.

Kuang Yang: Whether we’re talking about still images or moving images, it all involves the recording behavior of a people. Beyond individual works, archives are also a form of recording. The earliest records we have are in writing — official histories, unofficial accounts, personal notes and diaries. These are textual archives. Moving images are the same. Filming is a broad form of documentation, but only once something is archived can it be categorized and indexed in various ways.

Only then can future generations look back at this history — and at how people lived — and begin to reflect on it. So what you’re talking about is indeed very important, but it needs to be led by an institution. It’s not easy for an individual to take this on. There’s also the question of reinterpreting and excavating archives. The China Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio holds a lot of old footage. We know much of it was shot for propaganda, from the earliest days in Yan’an all the way through wartime. During the later periods of war and construction, if these archives were to be reorganized and re-examined — reinterpreted through a

different discourse — they could be reactivated. Otherwise, these archives remain under the control of a particular ideological system.

If the archives were made more open to the public, with space for multiple interpretations, that would be very meaningful — but I suspect that's difficult. The China Central Newsreel and Documentary Film Studio holds a massive collection of moving images. Back when we go to the cinema, before the main feature film, there would always be a short segment — news briefs, used for propaganda. As image records, those are valuable. It's just a matter of how they are interpreted. To reinterpret them, you need to return to the historical context.

There's also the question of personal materials embedded within institutional archives, and materials about China stored in foreign institutions. These moving images also need to be excavated by dedicated organizations. Once we call something an 'archive', there has to be a system. If these materials could be unearthed — for example, how Westerners documented China, what they recorded, what they were interested in — that would be meaningful. Think of Antonioni, or the missionaries: there are photographs, and there's moving image footage. And if we're talking about historical archives, they don't only involve moving images — still images are just as important.

Wang Zijun: Most of the archives controlled by official institutions are still in their hands. But let me tell you — the amount of archival material collected by the individual collectors in China likely far exceeds our estimates. Why? Around 2005 or 2006, someone reached out to me — I believe it was through a recommendation by Cui Yongyuan 崔永元 — asking if I wanted any archival material from the China Central Documentary and Newsreel Studio. He gave me a catalogue — a booklet this thick. I had a similar catalog myself. I compared the two. He had virtually everything. This happened during the post-Cultural Revolution years and early Reform era — a time when a massive amount of material was lost to the public. I asked him where he got it. He said he was from Sichuan. The Sichuan Film Distribution Company 四川省电影发行公司 had gone bankrupt, and the reels were sold off — five yuan per reel, ten minutes per reel — so he bought them.

During the massive wave of bankruptcies, all of these materials flew into private hands. The volume is enormous — whatever you want, he has it. He has everything from the China Central Documentary and Newsreel Studio — whether feature films or anything else. I also met someone like that in Beijing. He took me to his film archive. His reels were also five yuan each. After buying them, he piled them up so high they became a mountain. I climbed to the top and nearly slipped off. What did these people used to do? They were collectors. The one I know in Beijing was a collector whose interests had grown to include not just ancient artifacts but also revolutionary relics.

The China Central Documentary and Newsreel Studio once had a project called the 'Leftover Footage Movement' 编余片运动 — an attempt to initiate a China Image History Project 中国影像史工程. That project aimed to reuse and re-develop found archival footage. But it never got off the ground. A major reason was lack of support from higher authorities. Within the studio, there are many types of footage, one of which is unused material — called *bianyu pian*, or 'edited-out footage' 编余片. The project aimed to encourage people to make films using this leftover footage — to reuse it. But such a movement would require a major loosening of restrictions, a major political opening. Only then would it be possible. Because current review standards aren't very different from what they used to be. What leftover footage can or cannot be used still

depends on those standards. So right now is not yet the time for such footage to be widely used.

Chen Jue: Why do we preserve archives? The need to archive is a precondition. During the era when even personal histories were deliberately destroyed, there was no perceived need to archive. If, within our entire discursive and evaluative system, we regard archiving as unnecessary — or even dangerous — then the definition of a ‘truthful archive’ becomes problematic.

Second: who archives? Who do we trust to preserve our archives? Only under that premise can we begin to examine the current state of archives. Another foundational point — or framework for thinking about this — is that moving images emerged in the industrial age not so long ago. So up to now, the entities that directly preserve moving image materials have all been industrial production institutions — or institutions that evaluate industrial standards, like film festivals or film archives — because they need to record the history of moving image products. So whether archives are preserved by the state, by society, or by individuals depends on whether there is a perceived need. It is this need — as a guiding force or motivation — that generates archiving behavior, re-use, and preservation. As technologies are invented, innovated, applied, replaced, and eliminated, the content they create also enters a state of flux. Whether completed works have value depends on how we view them. Have they inherited what is most valuable in film history? Are they important to the history of film exhibition? For example, the first movie theaters in the United States or China are historically significant for the industry — so we preserve them. Or we preserve the first reels that were ever screened. That’s how archiving takes place.

Following that logic, we must consider: which things now hold public value? Which images hold only personal value? This creates different levels — from state, to social institutions, to individuals — and whether archiving takes place depends on which of these values is present. Personal value will always exist — like family photo albums. Why do those exist in the home, but not necessarily in institutional archives? Because families want to know their own lineage. Social institutions, by contrast, are constantly changing. Historical materials will be destroyed unless the institution has a specific interest or need to retain them. So in the question of archiving, preservation, and retention, different needs are present.

Today why do we need the moving images of the past? Because as this nation develops and grows stronger, there emerged a need to look back — to remember. That is our memory. Personal moving images depend on how each family evaluates those images. So archiving behavior is realized or regulated — or erased — based on different needs. It’s a dynamic process. For example, how does the state concretize certain images? Which ones are never to be destroyed? Which ones, if they destabilize the legitimacy of the state, must be destroyed? It’s the same for social institutions. What represents the needs of a particular class or group — when moving images serve as evidence, memory, or record — must be preserved. What doesn’t serve the group’s interests may be deleted or altered. It’s the same for individuals and families. When we reconfigure a family, which memories must be altered, must be hidden? Archiving is also this kind of dynamic process — inevitably, many truths will disappear. But at the same time, many new truths will emerge.

Zhang: This final question concerns the *Manifesto of the New Documentary Movement* that SWYC working group issued in 1991. I understand that the original document may no longer exist, but I’d like to invite you to recall the event and share your memories of that meeting.

Shi Jian: Yes, it happened in November 1991.

Chen Jue: I remember the idea started to take shape in 1991.

Shi Jian: It was related to our desire, after forming the group, to promote a national-level conversation about documentary. So later we gave it the name ‘New Documentary Movement’ 新纪录片运动, which was directly tied to the mission of our group. By the late 1980s, the number of new-style documentaries had grown significantly. We knew of seven or eight works already. We wanted to gather these works for a screening and stir up a wave of discussion in society. At the same time, we invited faculty from the university, as well as peers and media — it was a very mission-oriented activity. Our guiding idea was clear: we hoped to organize an influential event, and we chose our alma mater — Beijing Broadcasting Institute — as the venue. The event was initiated, advocated, and organized by our group. I was the one who read the manifesto aloud on behalf of the group, and it was drafted by Chen Jue. He should speak to the content — I’ve forgotten most of it.

We poured a great deal of effort into preparing the event. It was entirely self-organized, with help from classmates and teachers. The response at the time was very strong. Within the school, we were considered at the forefront of documentary exploration. But I remember there were also major disagreements after the screenings. Many teachers were dissatisfied with what we had done — they weren’t prepared for it, and found the works difficult to accept. We screened eight films, including *Looking Toward the Great Wall* 望长城, *Convoy Soldiers* 押运兵, *Ka Nasi Lake* 喀纳斯湖, and *A Documentary Record of Tibetan Society in the 1950s* 西藏50年代社会纪实 — works that had been broadcast on television and were officially recognized.

There were also more personal, independently made works, such as He Jianjun’s 何建军 *Self-Portrait* 自画像, as well as *Bumming in Beijing: The Last Dreamers* 流浪北京, *Notes from Beijing*, and *Tiananmen*. To this day, we continue to look back on those efforts. When we speak now of the movement, we can say that we played a role in initiating and promoting it. The documentary style and purpose we advocated back then — the value of viewing society through sincere and truthful thought — is still needed today. Even though today we have a broader range of recording tools and more variety in production conditions, the rise of new media and short videos has in some ways harmed or deviated from the core spirit of documentary. That’s why we feel the need to look back to that era, to encourage creators to reflect on the detours of recent years — the excessive commercialization, the excessive praising, the neglect or abandonment of the attention to the underclass and the fates of the times, of real lives. Today’s society — with its commercialized, fragmented, jokey, and self-mocking tendencies — gives us real concern. That’s why we’re returning to what we did then. I believe that those of us born in the 1970s should revisit our original intentions. As documentary makers, we must reflect sincerely on why we began.

Chen Jue: What Shi Jian just said was very on point, because it touches on the era we were in — which came shortly after a major historical event. *Tiananmen* was a work that stretched from 1988 through a very somber and painful period, a time when that great trauma (of the Tian’anmen Incident) had not yet healed. We were situated right at a major historical turning point. So our documentation in *Tiananmen*, as well as in *Notes from Beijing*, carried a sense of historical pain — we felt it deeply. From that perspective, we understood just how necessary and important our documentation was for China — how crucial it was to face

reality head-on. When I drafted the manifesto, I worked with Kuang Yang. We discussed it and organized the structure at his home, and I wrote it out. After writing, we spent a long time discussing it. We began by revisiting *Tiananmen*, then *Notes from Beijing*, the challenges Wang Zijun had faced, the dilemmas we had all encountered. We reviewed the major transformation of society we had all witnessed. It was both a major setback in our documentary work as a group, and a major national-level setback. After such a blow, the act of recording became even more essential.

When I set out to draft the text, we discussed and revisited *Tiananmen*, the founding of the SWYC group, and why we needed to organize such a conference — the 1991 Beijing New Documentary Symposium 北京新纪录片研讨会. *Tiananmen* had started as a fully institutional project, but by the end of our filming and postproduction, it had evolved into something personal — an independent project. It became a work made outside the system, but with resources borrowed from within it. What kind of symposium were we trying to organize? Clearly, one that aimed to push toward a new beginning. This was the collective judgment we reached after the four of us had talked it through: this documentary spirit needed to move forward. Shi Jian led the organizing work, and we all found ways to contribute. In fact, it was the night before the conference that we all felt that there needed to be a manifesto — so we went ahead with it.

What I can now recall is that the manifesto was divided into three or four parts. Shi Jian read it aloud on behalf of our group, since he was the first speaker. He essentially foregrounded the purpose of the symposium. So the manifesto was also the conference manifesto — the founding declaration of China's New Documentary Movement. We had to approach its writing with that in mind. The structure roughly went like this: part one talks about what kind of era are we living in? We talked about this era carrying the following sentiment: How should individual lives confront history — including the past? Our act of recording must respect history and reality — not destroy, alter, or distort it, not castrate or obliterate our present. Therefore, the documentary spirit must come onto the stage in this era, as a key tool for witnessing both this time and ourselves.

Part two focused on the act of documenting in this era, and who we are. We did not speak from any official identity, but from our identity as citizens. Only at that level could the discussion of recording avoid becoming propaganda. This section on documentary is split into two parts. The first is documentary moving images — those that exist because of our filming, and which serve as testimony. These images represent our motivation and purpose, our judgment of and anger at reality, our love for it — subjective experience and documentary realism together form a kind of truth, our concept of truth. The second part was even more detailed. We discussed first, the identity of the filmmaker; second, our modes of filming. This naturally included some aesthetics — our definitions of image and sound — such as our earlier discussions of long takes and synchronous sound.

Part Three echoed part one's discussion of the era and part two's 'who we are' and 'what we film'. We concluded that action must begin now. Action is our primary directive — our only choice.

Kuang Yang: Let me add one point. When Shi Jian read the manifesto aloud on our behalf, many of the teachers were stunned. How could they have been pleased with the speech? What we said was not part of what they had taught their students — it was a completely different discourse. Later, at the post-screening symposium, Shi Jian even clashed with one of the so-called authoritative scholar — it was very interesting.

Also present were figures we now associate with the later New Documentary Movement — Jiang Yue 蒋樾 came, Wu Wenguang 吴文光 was also there.

I remember He Jianjun said something quite striking in his symposium remarks. He said: ‘If we’re going to make documentaries, then let’s not tell lies.’ That was the first shot fired: *‘If we’re going to make documentaries, then let’s not tell lies’*. We can always debate what counts as ‘truth’ in a documentary — how to achieve it, how many types of truth there are. We can debate the aesthetics, the technology. But at the very least, we must reject the false. We must reject fabrication. We must not erase people’s lived experiences — including their pain. Even if truth has many facets, we must still begin by refusing the fake. So this symposium really did have an influence on later independent documentaries — and even on some academic faculty. At the time, it was a cultural event. And this event happened in 1991. What kind of year was 1991? It was the eve of a new phase in China’s Reform and Opening era. Deng Xiaoping’s Southern Tour in 1992 would soon mark the beginning of that phase. In 1991, we were still insisting on doing something with documentary. In 1991, if you wanted to make documentaries, you needed persistence. That’s why we did what we did. That’s why, even now, we still talk about it — when we get together, we still revisit that time. Like Shi Jian said: we must return to that moment, and reflect again on the spirit of documentary.

Wang Zijun: Let me just say something simple. What was the documentary movement back then? It planted a seed. That’s important. In the midst of tight controls, it found — or cut open — a small crack. And that crack grew wider and wider, to the point that it could no longer be sealed. Today it’s even harder to seal. From several angles — socially and aesthetically — I think the documentary movement was directly connected to the broader spread of documentary and recording practices that followed. What we made back then isn’t the same thing as today’s short videos or family videos, but it created a technical rupture. At the very least, we widened the crack.

中国纪录片的前夜: 对话 SWYC 工作小组

采访者: 张吕文煜

注: 2025 年 1 月 11 日, 我有幸在时间导演的引荐下认识了陈爵、王子军、邝杨三位老师, 并对他们四人进行了采访。其中四位导演谈到了他们于 1989 年成立的 SWYC (结构·浪潮·青年·电影) 工作小组, 和四人在改革开放初期在电视台的工作方式以及对早期电视技术的运用和思考。作为中国纪录片运动的见证者, 四人也谈到了他们于 1991 年创作的《新纪录片运动宣言》。本文整理了此次采访中的相关内容。



照片从左到右: 时间, 王子军, 邝杨, 陈爵

张吕文煜 (以下简称煜): 首先我想请大家讲一讲认识的契机、小组的早期工作, 以及当时工作状态。

陈爵: 我和王子军在小组成立之前合作过两个作品, 其中一个纪录片, 另一个是电视剧。纪录片是我们为一个日本的和平组织做的, 有关战争和南京大屠杀的历史反思, 也是站在日本人和中国人的角度, 做了这么一个片子。在这之前, 由于我拍一个电视剧, 我和王子军老师也有过合作, 当时他帮助我在制片方面做了很多工作。邝杨老师在小组成立之前, 参加过两部纪录片的创作, 其中一部是关于黄淮海地区乡村城镇的社会生态与人文风情的观察, 是关注地区历史命运的一个片子。我们在那个时候相识, 后来又一起做了一个关于生态主题片子, 是当时国家环保局给 1990 年世界地球日, 给联合国提供的一个片子。为那个片子, 当时我和邝杨老师又进行了合作, 这大致是我们关系的前史。后来是我和时间老师做《天安门》。时间老师就邀请我过来, 在这个阶段王子军导演已经在北京电视台开启他的纪录片项目。于是我们从 1988 年开始, 围绕北京地区的生活、社会、人物展开了涵盖面很广的调研、拍摄、采访等等的工作, 这样就形成了在那个时候的创作状态、创作思路、观念, 包括制片过程都是同步的一个状态, 所以很奇妙地就组成了这样的一个团体、一个同盟。

王子军：是这样，我、时间、陈爵都是同学。我们在学校的时候，头两年全都是上大课，所谓大课就是文科班的所有学生在一个课堂里，四个学年几乎大部分的课程全都是一块上的，作弊、互相抄也都

在一块。人以群分，物以类聚，我们就聚在一起开始长期地聊天、交流。广院当时叫广播学院，广播学院的一个重要的特点就是学生与学生之间的影响力远远超过了教师对学生的影响力。在那个时候，反正广院是这个情况，其他的学校我不清楚。那个年代是一个主义就打倒一个教授的年代，经常新的东西、新的理念扑面而来，流行萨特（Jean-Paul Sartre），全校都在看。流行个荒诞剧，全校也都在看，连理科班的都在看，这样的气氛和学生之间的讨论，对我们小组成立起到了巨大的作用。

本来只是我们三个人，老邝是通过和陈爵、时间合作的片子，这么合在一起了。时间做《天安门》，那时候叫《中轴线上的传说》，跟我当时做的片子内容有些重合，所以拍摄的时候就碰上他们了。看到他们的设备比我们高出一大块，国家台嘛，我们地方台用的设备非常简陋。这就是我们一起工作的契机。后来我们几个人就开始准备，在理念统一、以及视角和对社会的态度基本都统一的情况下，就准备进行一下探索。这个探索的目的就是为了不孤独，单打独斗毕竟是孤单的。

邝杨：我自己原来不是学媒体的，我认识他们的时候在中国社会科学院，主要研究社会学和政治学。我发现他们做纪录片是在观察中国社会的进程和各种人的生活经历、体验和命运，就很感兴趣。我在 1988 年认识陈爵，后来他们做《天安门》的时候，前期他们已经做了很多素材，之后要做片子的时候，我认识了时间老师，我就进来做一些文字性的工作，主要是解说词的撰稿，还有其他一些讨论，我就这么和他们认识了。王子军他和我住得很近。我们经常聊天。刚刚王子军也说了，大家理念相近，那时候也想在媒体上做些创新突破，我对这件事很感兴趣，所以就加入进来。我也觉得媒体在一个社会的变迁中是很重要的。他们是亲身的实践者，正在进行各种创新性的探索，这个对我有吸引力，所以我就和他们走在一块，大家就经常在一块聊。

时间：我补充一下，我们比较正式的进入活动的状态，正式成立小组，除了我们刚才讲的相识、相遇、志同道合之外，也因为我们希望能够联合起来，带有一定的组织状态，这样我们的交流与交往更有任务感，更有行动感，所以我们就决定成立一个 SWYC 小组。那个时候是在 1989 年的春季，因为我们的交流，对纪录片的探索及共同的认知，对纪录片记录的精神也好，我们传递的价值观也好，是高度共识，希望能够组织起来做出更有影响力的事情。一方面也解决我们彼此之间的这种孤独感、孤立感，所以大家共同发起成立这么一个小组。之前我们在上学的时候，技术条件的变革还不成熟，不完备，我印象特别清晰我参加工作之后 ENG（也就是电视摄录一体）这样的设备才开始用，之前在 80 年代初我们上学的时候技术还不是很完善。我记得我工作的时候还有摄影机，就是用胶片拍摄的摄影机，我们没有 35 毫米，都是 16 毫米的。但摄影机使用起来需要填表，要很明确的写上你用几天，你的前期、后期的使用。再后来设备就都是电视化的录像带了，但是摄影机是可以给个人，你补充的影像的拍摄可以用胶片。胶片也没有限制数量，就是说摄影机拿在自己手里随使用，胶片的数量也很宽裕。

陈爵：我插一句，这个和电影厂刚好相反，电影厂是限量，要有片比，电视台正好相反。

煜：电影厂那时候用的是 16 毫米，还是 35？

时间：是 35。那个时候胶片已经不是主打的手段了，它是辅助的。我们大概主体的影像还是要用录像机，但是个别的画面可以用摄影的风光、风景什么的。所以我们印象当中，就是大的纪录片、重

点的项目是专门有录音师跟着。因为摄像机本身的录音设备不能保证它的品质，还要有专门的话筒，要吊杆话筒录音，声音的质量才能得到保证。这样就得有一个专门的录音师跟着，但是这仅限于大制作的节目，或者是重点的项目。一般来讲，有一个摄像和一个导演，导演自己就举着机头话筒，就可以录了。但是重点项目是要专门专职的录音师跟着，他可以给你挑杆。另外，为了保证声音的数据不丢失，还背着专门的录音机，那个叫 NAGRA，开盘带。所以一方面我们是录像机的录音，但是还有一个，它一个话筒一根线接在录像机上，另外录像机再出一根线接在它的录音机上，这样保险，它既有录像带的录音，也有录音机的工作，就是另外一个录音带上，所以等将来，我们经常会把录音带上的声音复制到录像带上，以便于两个条件下录音的保存，当然只是所谓大制作，或者是投入成本高一些的节目才能有这样的条件。

我听说以前没有录像带、用胶片拍新闻的时候，声音的录制更繁琐与复杂。胶片拍新闻，一盒是3分钟，我们的新闻差不多1分钟，如果你用一盒就是3:1的比例，但是现场可能要到10:1，三四盒胶片，这样有片比，也强调片比。在片比的压力下，就怕被采访者说错，又要用同期声。因为没有同期声的话，没有录音，不张嘴就不活跃不真实。为了增加真实感，强调这个效果，就得让被采访者说话，但是说话又有片比的压力，怕说错，怎么办呢？就让被采访者念大字报。大字报，被采访者如果只盯着一个地方看，眼神又不够活泛，于是就一种大字报抄两份，一模一样的文字，让对方念就不错错了。然后为了让被采访者眼神活泛，抄上两份，摄影机的左边挂一张，右边挂一张，这样看完左边那句，再到右边再看一句，再说出来。这是我们老副台长陈汉元讲给我的，说这是发生在新闻记者孔令铎身上的事，孔令铎探索的。当时我听了就觉得前辈也不容易，为了这点技术上的探索，也绞尽脑汁了。

我们参加工作就赶上摄录一体的 ENG，它是声画结合的。什么叫电视？电视就是声画结合——当你拍下这个画面的时候，声音也被录了下来。可是，你如果不下功夫，机头话筒声音录得就不行。你要看重自己的作品，就得专门找好的话筒，但是这种好话筒，我们手里也没有。我们台有个录音科，他们手里有好话筒。你要想用好话筒，你得把录音师带上。你要把录音师带上，录音师的花费、差旅，你就得计算到你的成本里。所以慢慢我们就非常重视声音。我现在的观点就是，新纪录片就是以同期声使用与否为标志。当然现在都司空见惯了，但是我们刚参加工作的时候，我们的片和节目都没有同期声，虽然能录下来，但是也不用，就配音乐和解说。我们跟邝杨老师合作，就是因为他的文字是跟画面结合的。他的解说词强调了画面，是一种辅助说明，是因为画面产生了这样的联想，才能有这样文字的表达，不是听话插图，像《河殇》那样。《河殇》把画面拿掉照样成立，它就是一篇自成一体的文章。而我们的片子把画面拿掉就不成立了，就是断断续续的。所以我们跟邝杨老师在纪录片表达的理念上是一致的。

我经历了技术手段的变革。拍《天安门》的时候，我们的设备是电视台特批的，因为是为了40年大庆要播的一个纪录片，是一个重点项目。我们用的是最高级的设备，叫一寸便携，一寸带，就是比一般的磁带要高级，它的录像带不是盒式的，是像录音带似的，开盘的。我们台就四个，平时用来拍电视剧，拍电视剧的设备是最讲究的。

煜：说到拍摄技术的变革，各位老师之前的一些采访里也提过，同期声这件事情在这个时代，对纪录片风格其实有特别大的影响。所以想听各位老师讲一讲当时拍摄时一些跟同期声、或者跟摄像技术更新换代有关的经历。

时间：对我来说，同期声主要体现在两个方面，一是生活场景人物活动跟踪，是过程的记录，如果没有声音，这个过程会很空洞，特别主观情绪化，上音乐就是一种抒情，没有记录感。所谓记录感

就是同期声，就是记录人物活动、事件发生发展的过程，这个过程需要实况，这是纪录片最有代表性的一种品质标志。

另外一个使用同期声的地方是采访。很多片子靠采访，采访对象的感受、情绪就是一种真实的材料，所以同期声使影像更真实。对我们鼓励比较大的是周传基老师，他是电影学院教录音的，但他的剪辑也很好。我们是尊重人的导演，我们的工作是在对被采访对象、被拍摄主人公高度尊重的前提下。当时《天安门》的采访是比较够分量的。以前的采访跟现在新闻里面的一样，你回答了我要的内容就完了，被采访对象是一个工具。当我把我们的片子拿给我的同学们看的时候，他们很激动，因为从来没见过这么长的谈话，而且没见过老百姓表达起来这么让人看着津津有味，很令人兴奋。但同样的内容请我们主管宣传的副台长洪民生看，他说你的采访太长了，我是快进着看的。对同样的事物，人们的价值观、审美观上是不一样的，这个是我到现在都忘不了的一个细节。

王子军：正如时间所讲，同期声长镜头是早期纪录片探索的一个主要的技术特征，而且我们认为它不仅仅是个技术问题。周传基老师当时倡导同期声的时候，说得比较绝对，他说要让电视新闻里的人物有说话的权利。但我们最初的想法还是从美学角度，加上同期声以后，写实的特征就全了，就变成了一种现实的态度。从社会性来讲，当初人们对摄影机的技术是完全不明白的，是非常新鲜的。你拿一个摄影机摆在那儿，领导们都害怕，因为摄影机不管三七二十一，说什么全都给你录下来，声音录下来，神态也录下来。当时很少有这样的专业机器。比如当我们把机器架在了一片民房那儿准备拍旧的房子，围上来一大群老百姓问我们，我们这儿什么时候拆迁？把我们的摄影机当成了规划局测量用的机器，上来就问你们是规划局的，得告诉我们真话，到底什么时候拆迁，把我们围在那里边。这种事也经常会有。

那个时候不像现在，你拿摄影机、拿手机拍，让你关了就关了。那个时候我们很有特权，我们的机器到了现场，基本上就像局级以上干部来视察差不多，大家都会害怕。这种东西跟普通纪录片拍摄有很大的区别，而我们率先将真正摄影机的功能挖掘得比较深入，必须要使同期声长镜头，这样设备的功能和目的就更容易被达到。当时我们使用摄影机有一个演变的过程，我现在能背下来的机器型号非常多。下面各单位的录像师用的叫专业型，我们用的是广播型，专业型机器就以 M3 为代表的，一个背包，一个线连在摄影机上那一种。到了电视台基本上就是 300P，索尼的，最好的是 330，在我进台的时候还有 SK97。全国电视台都是这几种机型，到后来就出现了 Betacam 机器。

Betacam 机器之前的摄影机都有一个大的问题，就是调白平衡的问题，就是拍摄灯和其他光源的时候，一动镜头，就有拉毛（频闪 Color Banding）。我们记得 80 年代的大量电视剧都有拉毛。有的外行对着太阳去调白平衡，结果把机器给弄坏了，这种笑话多得是。到了 Betacam 时代，就没有拉毛了，我们觉得就相当先进了，因为不用调白平衡，摄像的感应是线路，不是灯泡，不是电子管了。所以 Beta 系列刚出来的时候，很多人说这是有前途的，但其实没有维持多少年。

回头来谈同期声的重要性。当时所有电视台的基本节目的技术情况就是解说加音乐，电视台都有专业的配乐，他们认真看了片子以后，说你解说词没上来之前，我只能给你一些万金油音乐，什么情况下都可以往上配的。著名的万金油音乐是新影发明的，在电视台流传甚广。音乐能不能像电视剧里面那样配，在纪录片和专题片方面几乎没有概念。至今，电视台还在犯万金油似的错误。再有一个就是语言领先。我们北京电视台有一位导演创作了一种工作方法，编一个 30 分钟片子，在没有编画面之前先把解说配好，再加画面，这就违背了纪录片的原则。不像老邝那样的工作方式，解说要跟画面融为一体，和画面完全地搭配起来。那种万金油方法尤其用在庆祝和纪念中共十六大这样

的片子上。

声音的重要性是什么？首先一个技术要点，以声音作为后期的剪辑点。我说声音剪辑点就相当于定语从句，你要多几个剪辑点，说明你对影像的理解和表达有了很高的一个水准。而现在没有，全硬切，花钱还挺多，技术设备现在好多了。北京台有一个《大美北京》，我看了数十遍。我为什么看数十遍，因为我等疫情报告，北京疫情的记者发布会老不准时。因为不准时，就拿《大美北京》填空。我一看切的镜头已经退回到 80 年代业余水平。很好的镜头，你怎么这么接？没有任何逻辑。技术设备那么好，剪辑观念那么业余，形成了巨大的反差。现在就有这样一个问题。

邱杨：在技术方面，他们比我专业得多，因为他们是直接做导演，从前面的运筹到后面整体上的影像、声音的安排都会兼顾。我做《天安门》的时候，就知道我会遇到挑战。我们不是先有解说稿的，没有的，他们整理好，这一集大概是这些影像，带声音的，或者是有些没带声音的，整个大结构我知道，这时候我就会找资料去用，比如回忆录，或者其他文字性的东西。

我举个例，比如说在历史影像里面溥仪宣布被释放的那一段，当时没声音的，但是我为了尽量还原当时的一些真实场景，就去读溥仪的书《我的前半生》，然后找到这一段话，最高人民法院的代表，拿出一张纸来念到“溥仪什么什么，现在予以释放”，完全从这书里面找来的。还有他坐火车回去，说“我重新回到人民中间”，也是从这书里找来的，我尽量地在历史影像方面去配合，增加更多的现场感。

我很尊重现场拍摄的影像，比如有些长镜头。第二集里拍平房，好几分钟长镜头，一句解说词都没有，因为我觉得不需要，这些能说明问题，我就不会写那些东西。我写解说词的时候尽量尊重原来的声音与图像，找到相应的配合文字，如果找不到历史文献，我就会把当时的社会状况、大概的氛围环境，或者有些带着观察视点的文字，作为一些解说词写一点，也把时代感的东西配合进来。

所以那些解说词，你现在把它全部扒下来以后，每一集，一般你是不理解的，它都是断断续续的，要配合画面来。但是在结构上，我也会照顾，承上启下怎么转合，在结构上会用一些简单的语句，所以我觉得那时候来做这个工作对我自己是一个挑战。也许今天的人还可以试验，比如说把上面的声音，就是我的解说全部拿掉以后，还可能有什么方法来配上这些解说，别的可能性还是有。我再讲个简单的例子，王府井开业，有张照片，但是肯定没声音对不对？我就和时间老师说，你把开张那一天的《人民日报》找来，我就根据《人民日报》上写的怎么开张、什么情况，尽量从文献上恢复当时的一些现场感。

如果我稍微再扩展讲一下，今天的技术越来越方便，比如说我有自己的小型摄像机，就会出去拍东西，到现在的智能手机就更方便，它能够现场记录东西，而且它的储存和播出方式，我们看到会很快的，比如拍完之后马上上传了。技术的变化对的人的记录行为和记录表达的欲望都会有影响。比如说我们在疫情期间，看见不同人在拍他们身边的事情上传，上传之后就带来好多争议性，也许就和一些政策及我们看见的那些官方报道是不一样的，所以带来了话语的竞争。当然同时这种技术的变化也会带来对技术的社会控制。技术社会控制是什么？就说我让你在什么时候，你可能出现，你不可能出现。最简单，比如说删掉视频，不让它再传播。所以由技术带来的问题和社会行为，以及说社会控制都是相关的。所以它很有趣的，是个比较复杂的问题。我从社会学角度想这个东西是这样的。

陈爵：我补充几个的信息。第一，改革开放初期大部分中国电视纪录片的装备都是日本人带来的，

而且多数是赠予的。第一批是为了满足中央台的需求，为了更换过去那些不便于大量外景拍摄和移动拍摄的老旧设备。第二批到了省一级，日本这批设备，包括陆续开始采购进来的后续设备一直到达了县一级，所以有这么一个过程。我再告诉你，它还有技术质量的分级，对于国家电视台和各省，就是中央电视台和省级控制的电视台、大都会电视台，都是使用的广播级设备。第二个部分就是专业级，专业级提供给中国当时大规模需要设备的，比如所有省部委国家机关、企事业单位、大专院校、科研院所和情报部门、各大军兵种及其文艺团体、各大社会组织当中，普遍新设的声像、录像部门和电视宣传机构，以及全国和各省市的电教系统和电教系统中的有线电视传播网使用，这是一个系统。还有个系统是民用级，当时民用级设备日本也很发达，但是中国几乎没有。所以当时中国非常好玩儿又绝对壮观的一个情景是，上面说到的所有这些第一等级机构的所有下级单位，包括所有省部级以下各单位团体里几乎是成千上万个声像机构或者宣传部门里，装备的居然大多数都是日本的家用级设备，好玩儿吧？

实际上设备是分两个层面来讨论，第一个层面是拍摄下来，并且留存在磁带上，这是前期过程。还有一个是后期过程，后期设备系统都是相匹配的，有几个环节。当时我们还干过对编，从 A 机（A 里边有很多素材）编到 B 机，B 是完成片，也许不是完成片，只是完成片的基础，或者草稿。把 A 机中乱七八糟的影像编成一个差不多有意思的、开始有完整叙事的影像，编到 B 磁带上。但这只是完成了的草稿，真正的合成时，我们还要对它进行修改。由于声音和画面分别采录，因此要组合在一起，要把语言合成进来，还要把音乐合成进来，让这三种声音，或者四种声音，如果还有对白，那就是五六种声音，最后完成在一个声道上，叫完成带。完成带上通常有两个声道，一个声道是去掉所有语言的，只有音响和音乐的声道叫做国际声道。另一个声道使用藏语、少数民族语言和英语、法语、西班牙语等等，一般这是第二声道。第一声道上是直接供播出的。

这个生产方式中，物质的这一部分是非常重要的。我跟你讲一个非常好玩的例子。我和时间老师一起做《天安门》的时候，特别奇妙的就是你可以直接对编，也就是从 A 机到 B，两个盘，就像录音一样去剪辑，也像胶片一样去剪辑。胶片的好处是什么呢？我故事的第二场可以先剪，故事的第六场可以先剪，最后把我分别剪好的东西粘在一起。但是线性制作时期的时候，也就是我们刚刚入台的早期，一直到 90 年代中期，一直是线性工作，就是必须从第一分钟开始编辑。因此 A 机上会放入第一盘磁带、第八盘磁带、第九盘磁带、第十盘磁带，所以 B 机上这盘磁带是要把所有这些东西根据我的需要挑出来，剪辑到我的 B 这盘磁带上。最后合成，要把来自不同方面的声音和最终定稿的图像因素，按照线性原则合成在一起。

线性工作，你要考虑到旁白的录音、音乐的录音、音响的配置，大致也必须是和整个画面的线性过程、和这 10 分钟完全同步，才能做到。当我录对白的时候，就得从一开始一点点往前走。所以每次当我们一起制作的节目被要求修改的时候，就要从头来过。

为什么过去的电视内容，没有外景录音呢？因为好的、安静的、干净漂亮的声音，只有通过演播室、或者是摄影棚内采录获得。所以当时电影、电视剧，包括电视专题片制作的方法，就是在没有真实环境音的情况下，把影棚内干干净净的声音录下来以后，再添加到另一个声道上。音乐也是单独录的，所有的现场对白都是后期配的，最多加配一段特殊场景效果类似的环境音响资料，它或者来源于电影录音部门的声音资料库，或者是跟组录音师在别的片子里没有用上的环境音，甚至这些完全是这个录音师自己的环境声效积累。就是这样的工艺过程。

再和你讲讲非线性。非线性从 90 年代中期也是中央台首先使用，最早的一批设备也是配给中央电视

台。像时间老师他们那边做重要的大型电视节目，就使用非线性逻辑进行剪辑。同时我们电视剧这边也使用。到后来才逐渐过渡到省一级，才再往下走地区级电视台。使用非线性以后，产生比较大的变化，其实又回归到了像电影一样的剪辑方式了。我可以从结尾开始剪，或从中间高潮部分剪，也可以从关键的地方剪。你想想这带来的自由——在创作上可以根据你的愿望进行剪辑。同时是非线性的工作里，声音的调整自由也出现了。声音变成在声音工作室里，在声音工作站上工作，你可以直接看波形，声音的高低看得出来，所以这个过程非常有意思。进入非线性以后，除了广播电视系统，也扩散到民间，现在民间非线性编辑很常见。

我最后补充一点，就是有关于刚才王老师和时老师提到的同期声和长镜头的问题。这是取决于我们把影像看作什么。当我们把影像认为是我对你输出信息这样一个过程的时候，声音就不重要。比如说像新闻只要直接输出新闻内容，是我想告诉你的说法。在这样的情况下，我不需要你的声音，我只要把我的诉求直接化为语言传递出来。这个是声音部分。再说说影像。从前的新闻全都是扮演，就连新闻简报拍出的劳动的场面，一起学习毛著的场面，快乐的工作，在地头喝水等等，都是需要排练的。因为要效果，要体现出劳动的生活是有意义的、快乐的，生活是有希望的，要创造这样一种氛围。第二个原因是技术性的，片比在这儿。每一次出去拍摄都会分配胶片，因为那时是计划经济，也是困难时期，物资包括胶片都很缺乏。所以过去的影像表述是受宣传的需要和物质条件制约的。

然后纪录片发生了什么重大变化呢？刚才时老师和王老师都说了很根本的问题，就是对象变得重要了。问题不在于我想告诉你什么，问题在于你是什么，你为什么这样，你怎样了，因此我的镜头必须等待，并且跟踪下去。长镜头的重要意义在于当你记录生活事实的时候，它是如此之重要，你就不能停机，你也不能规定它。这样一个过程对于普通百姓的观看者来说是很恐怖的一件事情，他们第一次看到一个镜头，竟然用这么长的时间跟踪这样一件事情。为什么要拍这样的东西？因为我们必须给这样的影像提供真实的生活气息，使影像充满活力。这种生活气息靠什么获得呢？有声电影已经教会我们——你必须同期录音。

好莱坞从有声电影出现以后，就有同期录音。只不过那是参考声时代，用它来作为参考，为重新配音提供最重要的技术指南。但是对于纪录片创作来说，在我们同时推出《天安门》和王老师的《京城散记》的时候，我们已经明确地知道，我们记录的事物的声音，正如影像一样是宝贵的，是必须值得尊重和呈现的。声音的呈现必须现场录音。

煜：下面这个问题和 DV 作为摄影器材有关，想问问各位老师，像 DV 这种在华语独立电影历史里已经符号化的机器，在您个人以及小组的工作中是一个怎样的存在？

王子军：1997 年，中国出现了第一个以 DV 为手段的栏目，叫做《百姓家园》，那年 4 月 27 号开播。松下公司找到中央电视台，说他们有民用的 DV 机器，我们都懵了，民用小机器，就这么大一点，告诉我们是数字摄影的。他们给了我们 20 台，我们就有一个创意叫“发给老百姓，让老百姓自己拍”。老百姓没有剪辑的设备怎么办呢？我们来剪，剪完了以后由他们来配音，然后播出，所以叫《百姓家园》。首先做这个事的大概是中央电视台经济部，但是他们的内容，基本上就是好玩的内容，孩子摔一跤，小鸭子如何如何了，都是生活小事的几十秒，如同现在的短视频。我们做的是长达十几分钟、二十分钟的，就是老百姓拍自己的家庭，拍自己的生活。这个出来以后，引来了大量的老百姓作者想干这件事。当时我们成立了一个民间的 DV 协会，但是协会必须要由官方来领导，我们找不着挂靠的单位，市委宣传部不予挂靠。协会一直存在着，但是不予挂靠，就等于挂靠到我们电视台了，电视台总编也不敢负责任，最后就自行消亡了。这个节目播了两年多，就是以老百姓

栏目为核心，全是老百姓自己拍的。1998年，中国纪录片学会的学术奖，全国的片子都来参赛，陈汉元和朱景和提出来专门为老百姓设个奖。我们去送评，结果两个片子获了鼓励奖，你不能掺和专业人员的奖，完全业余的人员获了鼓励奖。这下捅了马蜂窝了，很多电视台对纪学会这一次的设奖提出了抗议：“我们专业人员拍的都没入围，老百姓拍的怎么就获奖了？”当初纪录片正在流行原生态的拍摄方法，受怀斯曼（Frederick Wiseman）的影响，怀斯曼1997年还来了中国。当时流行原生态的时候出现了一种倾向，简单地说就是只要把握住原生态，你就获奖了。在原生态的影响下，有很多专业人员拍的东西还不如老百姓拍的。所以朱景和和陈汉元提出设个鼓励奖，结果就乱套了，第二年就没有了。

所以DV的诞生有过这么一个过程，我们的栏目出来以后，请了很多专家来看，当时电影学院的司徒兆敦老师说了一句肺腑之言，说你们这事干早了。我非常理解司徒的话。现在抖音上出现的短视频是技术发展的产物，我在1997年接受采访的时候说过一句话，我说未来的发展，就是人人都是纪录片导演。现在人人都是纪录片导演了，我没想到那么快，我当时觉得这是我有生之年看不到的，没想到几年它就出来了。那么就有人问纪学会的人，也问纪录片界的人，你看老百姓拍的东西，人民群众的创造力多强，拍的什么样的都有。但是纪录片界非常淡定，不像以前了，不像纪学会评老百姓奖的时候。为什么呢？文学谁都会写了，谁都拽两篇，那为什么还要设茅盾奖呢？《星光大道》（中国大型民间选秀节目）谁都能唱两句，那为什么专业歌手还在唱呢？我们所追求的很多东西老百姓都在用了，我们喜闻乐见，但是他们取代不了我们。

邝杨：刚才王子军老师讲的，就是说老百姓自己拍，这让我联想到另外一个东西，就是现在人类学电影中，利用便携式设备，把这个设备教给那些民族的自己人掌握技术以后，他们自己去拍，他们会拍自己关注的社会焦点、行为、及环境。你可能会发现，如果你是一个外部的观察者，你会带着自己的一套理论系统去观察其他民族的生活方式。这些民族由于这种便携式机器的到来，他们可以自己观察，自己言说，这又带来另外的东西，就是人类学。他们可以从自身的角度，自身的美学观点及言谈方式，按自己的关注方式来拍，所以这带来了人类学电影中的一些新的空间。

陈爵：正好就这个话题，我补充一点。DV时代在中国呼啸而来还有一个很重要的历史性前提，就是新纪录运动和后来时间老师的《东方时空》，强力推进了百姓的故事，带动社会对这种内容的普遍接受和肯定，激发了老百姓拍摄自己故事的内在需求，同时也让DV设备在中国形成了一个市场。这个过程不能忽略它是如何启动的，如何开创出来的，像邝杨老师提到的，它如何使技术行为成为民众的普遍行为。这种过程既是技术的，也形成了一种文化自我表达。这个影像文化不是官方所垄断的，也是属于我们的，这就是影像民主。

煜：下面这个问题是和拍摄后的影片档案化有关系，是一个关于影像归档、保护以及“后生命”的问题。围绕这些，想问问老师们如何看待这些电视和电影的档案化和保护，或者您怎么去定义电影档案？因为档案现在对于华语影像来说，是一个蛮重要的题目，很多历史真的是在消亡，如果不记录下来，不保存下来，就没有了。

时间：档案的保存问题，如果就个人的角度，它有多大价值，这也是个疑问，跟个人的兴趣爱好有极大的关系，有的人喜欢收藏，有的人把过去的经历看得特别重。我父亲是一个摄影记者出身，自己留了很多的照片，也留了底片，留了日记。他晚年不跟我生活在一起，我就问他为什么？他说他那些资料丢了怎么办。我说是怕小偷来偷你资料吗？还有偷资料的小偷？我这性格就跟他相反，我就不攒东西，所以我觉得这可能跟人的习惯、爱好、兴趣有很大的关系。我是中国电视台里或者影

像记者里面，六四期间拍摄最多的，但是那些资料都哪去了，我也不知道，我觉得是特别大的损失。我记得当时的都交给电视台了，我还挺放心它的资料管理的，可是电视台突然有一次要数字化，要把所有的磁带素材存成文件，存在硬盘，数据存档，我那些东西就不知道哪去了。原来我们有素材库，我可以存我的东西，谁谁谁存的，都给记录好。你将来需要，还可以再去取。可等我再去取的时候，那个库也没了。

我们的电视台存档是这样，就凡播出过的都可以存着，我前两年把我 80 年代拍的片子也能找出来。我觉得个人存不是一个好办法，应该由社会机构来张罗这件事。你个人存，存再多也没什么量，量不够，规模不够，很难说它有啥价值，除非你有特别的经历。像疫情期间，如果你拍了很多，可能将来能编出一个东西。

邝杨：不管我们说的是静止影像，还是活动影像，实际上都涉及到一个民族的记录行为。除了单个作品以外，档案也是记录行为。我们最早的记录行为是文字，有正史、野史，有个人的笔记、日记，这都是文字上的档案。影像也是，具体的拍摄属于广义的记录行为，但只有存档以后，才可以开始在里面分类，做出各种各样的索引。当后世的人回顾这些历史，及历史中人的生活状态等东西的时候，才会有思考。所以你说的这东西是很重要的，但是需要有个机构牵头来做，个人做这事是不太容易的。

还有一个，比如说档案的重新解释和开掘。中央新闻纪录电影制片厂就有过去拍摄的很多东西，这些影像我们也知道当时是为了搞宣传所用，从最早的延安时期一直到战争。在后面的战争过程中，在生产建设中，如果那些档案被重新收集整理，重新加以观照，用不同的话语来重新解释，就会把原来记录的东西再次激活，否则这种档案还会停在某种话语系统的控制之下。如果让它成为一种开放性的，能够有一些竞争性的解释出现，就很重要，但是我估计很难。中央新闻纪录电影制片厂有大量的这些活动影像。包括我们以前看电影之前，放正片故事片之前都要放段东西，即新闻简报，用来宣传的。那些东西作为影像记录是有价值的，只是解释的问题，重新去解释要回到时代语境下面。

另外，在官方机构的资料中的个人资料，及在外国存档的中国资料，这些活动影像可能也需要专门的机构去发掘。既然要叫档案，就要系统化。如果这些东西能够发掘出来，比如说西方人是怎么记录中国的，记录了些什么，他们的视角是什么，他们感兴趣的東西是什么？像安东尼奥尼，还有传教士那些，有照片，也有活动影像的。如果说讲到历史性档案，也不止于活动影像方面，我觉得有些静态影像也很重要。

王子军：大部分正规地掌握在官方机构手里的档案，基本上都在那儿。我跟你说一下中国民间收集的档案，可能远超过我们的估计。为什么呢？2005、2006 年的时候，有一个人找到我，还是崔永元推荐的，问我要不要新影的档案资料。他给了我一个片单，那么厚一本片单给我传过来了，我手里边同样有新影的片单，也那么厚。俩对照了一下，基本上他都有。那么这就是在文革之后、改革开放初期有一个大的流失。我问他从哪儿弄来的，他说他是四川人，四川省电影发行公司倒闭了，那些胶片 5 块钱一本，一本 10 分钟，他买下来的。就整个在大倒闭潮的时候，全部流失在民间，量非常巨大，要什么有什么。新影的他都有，无论是故事片，还是什么片，他全有。在北京我也见到这么一个人，他带我去看了他的胶片库，他的胶片也是五块钱左右一本，买来了以后堆成了山，我爬到上边差点滑下来。这些人原来都是干什么的？都是收藏家。我认识北京的那个是收藏家，他收藏的范围从古代的文物已经扩展到革命文物。

新影有一个叫编余片运动，要做一个中国影像史工程。中国影像史工程就是重新利用，重新开发编余资料，但是没有搞起来，这跟上级支不支持有很大的关系。厂里边存的有很多种片种，其中一种是用不上素材叫做编余片。这个工程就是号召大家尽量采用编余片来编片子，重新利用。但是这种运动必须有一个大的解禁，有政治上大的开放，才有可能实现。因为我们现在的审片标准跟当年的标准差不了多少，编余片哪些能用哪些不能用，在标准上可能跟当年也差不了多少，所以现在还不是编余片大量使用的年代。

陈爵：为什么留档？存档的需要是前提。我们个人史的记录都不惜销毁的那个年代，并没有存档的需要。假如在我们的整个的话语体系和判断系统里面，认为所有的存档是不必要的，甚至是危险的，真实的存档就成为了问题。第二，谁来存？我们能够有谁留下我们的档案？在这个前提下，我们才能够观察今天的档案状态是怎么一回事。

第二点也是可以作为前提，或者说思考这个问题的框架。实际上活动影像是工业化时代才出现的。因此到目前为止，直接留存影像物质的都是工业生产机构，还有就是工业化标准评定机构，比如电影节或者是资料馆，因为它们需要记录有关影像产品的历史。因此国家存档、社会存档，乃至个人存档的必要性取决于它的需要。以需要为指导、为动机才能够产生存档行为和档案的再次使用，以及保护。随着技术的发明、创新、使用、迭代、淘汰，创造出来的内容也处在流变之中。已经完成了的作品是否有价值，取决于我们如何看待它：它是否继承了电影史本身中最高价值的东西？它对于电影放映史来说重要吗？比如在美国或是中国的第一家影院对于这个产业本身有历史性价值，所以我们要留下它；又比如我们也要留下第一次放映的胶片，这样存档行为就出现了。

在这样的逻辑下，我们看看现在哪些东西具有这样的公共价值，哪些影像只具有个人价值，这就出现了不同的层面，从国家到社会机构到公民个体是否存档，取决于这几种价值是否存在。个人的价值将永远存在，正如家庭的照片册一样，它为什么能够存在于家庭而在社会机构中不必要存在？因为家庭要知道自己的来历。社会机构不断地变动，史料将被销毁，除非它们有特定的兴趣，需要这些档案留下来。在留档、存档和保留问题上呈现了不同方面的需要。

我们今天为什么需要过去的影像？因为在这个国家发生、发展、壮大起来以后我们历史回顾的需要，这是我们的记忆。个人影像则取决于各个家庭对于这些影像的评价系统。所以存档的行为将通过不同的需要来实现或是规范，或是销毁。这是一个动态的状态。比如说国家的影像怎样固定下来？哪些是不会被销毁的，哪些使它的合法性产生了颠覆，因而必须销毁？对社会机构也是如此。哪些东西是代表着某个社会阶层或者族群的需要，以影像作为证据、记忆、记载的时候，需要存下来。对于族群的利益不重要的，可能会被删掉和修改。对于个人家庭来说也是如此。当我们重组家庭的时候，哪些过去的家庭记忆必须修改，必须隐瞒等等。因此存档行为也是这样一个动态的过程，必然出现了大量的真相的消失，当然同时也有大量新的真相出现。

煜：最后这个问题是关于小组在 1991 年的时候，发表过一个新纪录片运动的宣言，我知道原本的东西可能已经没了，但是想让老师们回忆一下，讲讲关于当时会议的事。

时间：对，发生在 1991 年的 11 月。

陈爵：我记得从 1991 年开始孕育的。

时间：这个跟我们的小组成立，之后想推动全国性的对纪录片的讨论有关。所以后来我们把它定名叫新纪录片运动，跟我们小组的使命有直接的关系。因为在 80 年代末拍摄的新纪录片，有了比较大的体量，我们知道的已经有七八部作品，我们想把这些作品集中起来，做一个展映，在社会上掀起一个思潮，同时我们请了学校的老师、还有同行来观摩，同时我们还邀请了媒体，是挺有目的性的一个活动。我们的指导思想也很明确，就是希望成为有一定影响的活动，地点就选择了我们的母校——北京广播学院。这个活动是我们小组推动、倡导、倡议、发起的，宣言是我代表大家，代表我们小组给念出来的，是陈爵起草的。主要的内容由他来讲，我都忘了。

我们花了很多心血筹备这个活动，因为整个都是我们自己组织，有同学与老师的帮助。这个活动当时的反响很强烈的，在学校对于纪录片的探索方面应该比较前沿，但是我记得观后分歧也很大。很多的老师对我们的这些行为表示不满，因为他们没有心理准备，这些纪录片他们接受起来有难度。我们放了八部作品，像《望长城》、《押运兵》、《喀纳斯湖》、《西藏 50 年代社会纪实》，是在电视台播过的，官方能够认可的。

还有一些带有个性化色彩的独立制作，像何建军的《自画像》、《流浪北京》、《京城散记》、《天安门》。我们到今天还在回忆过去的努力。今天谈到当年的运动，我们算是起到了一个推动的、带动的作用。我们当时所倡导的记录的风格与目的，我们所追求的用真实的思想去看待社会等价值观仍然是今天需要的。现在虽然我们在记录手段上越来越丰富，在记录的条件上越来越自如，但是新媒体与短视频的出现，对记录的精神实质还是有一定伤害的，或者是偏离的。所以我们也希望能够重新回看那个年代，带动创作者们反思我们这些年的弯路，比如说我们过度的商业化，过度的甜美化、歌颂式，对底层人民的关注及对时代命运、真实命运等的忽略，或者是放弃。今天这个社会，它的商业化的，或者是碎片式的、玩笑化的、自嘲式的方向，让我们觉得挺担心的，所以才再次讨论我们当年做的事。其实我觉得 70 后有必要再回溯一下我们的初衷，我们作为纪录片创作者，也要发自内心，重新审视我们的初心。

陈爵：刚才时间老师说特别中肯，因为这个涉及到当时我们所处的年代，刚好是重大事件发生不久。《天安门》这部作品从 1988 年跨越到那个事件之后一个相当沉闷和痛苦的、重大创伤尚未疗愈的时期，我们处在这样一个重大历史转折的现场。因此，我们《天安门》的记录，包括《京城散记》的记录，都带有我们感同身受的一种时代创痛的体验。由此出发，我们知道我们所进行的这场记录，对于中国是多么的需要和重要，对于直面现实是多么重要。我起草宣言的时候，是和邝杨老师一起讨论，在他家里进行整理的，由我执笔来写。写完了以后，我们进行了很长时间的讨论，先从《天安门》开始回顾，又回顾《京城散记》的创作过程，王子军老师所面临过的问题，以及我们一起共同面临的困境，回顾我们所遭遇的一个重大的时代转变。它既是我们小组记录过程之中的重大挫折，同时也是国家的。经过这样一场重击，记录的行为变得愈发重要。

当时我来起草的时候，是先讨论、重温我们这部作品《天安门》，成立我们 SWYC 小组的契机，以及为什么要推动举行这样一场会议，也就是 1991 年的北京新纪录片研讨会。由于《天安门》开始的时候是完全官方体制下的作品，到晚期拍摄、后期制作时逐渐变成了个人的、相当于独立的作品了，还有就是体制外的个人的，借助于体制的资源所创作的个人作品等等。把这样的力量集合在一起，我们要做的是一场什么研讨会呢？显然是想推动某种新的开始。这是经过我们四个人的共同议论后的一种总体上的考虑，就是这件事情必须往前走。我们讨论之后，整个的推动是由时间来做的，然后各种配合什么的，大家一起想办法。实际上是到举办这次会议的前夜，大家都觉得有一个宣言，所以就干了这件事情。

目前我能够回忆起来的宣言大致分了3个或4个部分，由时间代表我们小组来宣读，由于他是第一个发言的，实际上他是陈述了这次会议的主旨。因此这个宣言也就是会议的宣言，也就是中国新纪录运动的启动宣言，所以我们必须从这样的立意上来考虑宣言该怎么样起草。大致分的内容，第一个是我们处在一个什么样的时代？我们带着以下的心情来理解我们所处的时代：个体生命在这样一个时代之中应该如何面对这段历史，包括过去；我们的记录要尊重历史与现实，而不是摧残、修改、篡改历史，也不是阉割、粉碎我们的现实。因此记录行为在这个时代必须出场，成为见证这个时代以及我们自己的重要工具。这是第一部分。

第二部分重点讨论了这个时代的记录行为，涉及到我们是谁，就是彻底不讨论我们的官方身份，而是讨论我们的公民身份，在这个层面里讨论记录才有可能，否则仍然是宣传性的。讨论纪录片的方面分成两个部分。第一是纪录影像，即由于我们的拍摄而产生的影像事实，由于我们的拍摄而成为见证的影像。这些影像代表着我们拍摄行为的动机和初衷，以及我们对现实的判断，我们对现实的看法和愤怒，我们对现实的爱等等，因此这个主观的层面和影像纪实的层面共同构成某种真实，也是我们的真实观。第二部分分得比较细，第一涉及到拍摄者身份的问题，第二就涉及到我们的拍摄行为问题，里面当然也涉及到一些美学，对影像、声音的定义，这个是刚才我们讨论过的，比如长镜头和同期声的问题。

第三部分呼应着第一部分关于时代的问题，同时也呼应着第二部分我们是谁和我们拍的东西是什么等问题。我们必须从现在开始行动，行动是我们的第一要义，是我们唯一的选择。

邝杨：我补充一点。当时时间代表我们把这个东西宣读出来，底下好多老师都晕菜了，他们怎么可能高兴呢？他们教给学生的东西里没有这个，这完全是另一套。所以时间还曾在放映之后的研讨会上和当时所谓权威的教员发生了冲突，非常有意思。当时在场的还有我们今天说的中国新纪录片运动后面的一些人，他们也在场，比如蒋樾来了，吴文光也在场。

我记得研讨会发言中何建军说得比较有意思，他说大家都搞纪录片的，搞纪录片就不要说假话。第一炮就这么轰出来的：我们搞纪录片就不要说假话。我们永远可以讨论纪录片中什么是真实、怎么去做到真实。但是有一点，拒绝杜撰历史，拒绝掩盖人生活中的各种体验，包括人的创伤。尽管真实可以有很多种，从美学的角度、技术的角度，可以讨论很多。但起码拒绝假的，拒绝杜撰，这个可以是明确的。所以这个研讨会确实影响到了后来民间那些纪录片，还有一些学院的老师，在当时就是个文化事件。而且这个事件就在1991年。1991年是什么年代？正处于中国改革开放一个新时期的前夜，邓小平1992年南巡标志着新时期的开启。也就是说1991年，我们还在坚持着想做些事。1991年的时候，可能搞纪录片的更需要一种韧性，我们才会去做这么一件事情。所以直到今天我们还在谈，我们碰在一块儿还在聊这件事。就像时间老师说的，我们要重新回到那时候，重新思考我们的记录精神。

王子军：我就特别简单地说一下。当年的纪录片运动等于是什么呢？是留下了一个种子。这很重要。也就是说在严密的封锁当中找到了一片缝隙，或者是划开了一片缝隙，使得这个缝隙越来越大，根本堵不上了。现在更堵不上了。从几个方面来说，一个是社会性，一个是美学的探索，这两者我觉得和后来记录行为的普及是连着的。虽然我们当初做的东西跟现在的短视频、各种家庭的视频，不是一个东西，不是一样的。但是在技术上，我们最起码捅开了一条裂缝。

Searching for Dust-Covered Images in Ruined Spaces: A Conversation with Li Wei and Liang Chen on the Art of Found Images

Interviewer: Ann Lyuwenyu Zhang 张吕文煜

Note: On April 25, 2025, I conducted a conversation with the artist duo Li Wei 李维 and Liang Chen 梁晨 on the topic of Found Footage. We discussed their ongoing ruin photography project *Dust and Scratches* (Figure 1), as well as their reflections on the relationship between spaces undergoing demolition in Wuhan and the abandoned family photos. The conversation also touched on the role of photographs as consumer goods within planned obsolescence in the Chinese context, and the transformation of image technologies from the analogue to the digital era. This article presents selected conversations from that interview.



Liang Chen (left); Li Wei (right)



Figure 1. *Dust and Scratches* 蒙尘与划痕 (partial)

Ann Lyuwenyu Zhang (hereafter referred to as Zhang): To begin, could Li Wei and Liang Chen briefly introduce yourselves and talk about what first drew you to ruins and found footage art, as well as your current working status?

Li Wei: I am a designer, photographer, and a collector of image-based media objects.

Liang Chen: I work in visual design and currently teach in the School of Design at Wuhan University of Communication. I am also an enthusiast of field observation and modernology.

Li Wei: ‘Ruins’ constitute a classic subcultural category, with a traceable lineage in the field of art history, and are closely tied to photographic culture. A categorization I find compelling divides ruin spaces into four types: cultural, industrial, public, and residential. *Dust and Scratches* focuses on residential ruins that are distinctly localized in the Chinese context, with ‘demolition’ 拆迁 at their core. This is tied to the land system in mainland China and the development of the real estate economy, and it intersects with the formative experiences of Liang Chen’s and my generation. I was born and raised in Beijing, a city with an expansive, historically rich old town area. As the capital and a central city in multiple senses, it underwent multiple waves of demolition and reconstruction during its rapid modernization. This process unfolded throughout the 1990s and early 2000s—looking back now, I realize how belatedly I became aware of it.

Liang Chen: When people observe something, they often unconsciously project their own experiences onto it, generating empathy. I have a persistent attachment to the spaces I lived in as a child. My hometown, Shiyan 十堰, is a mountain city in Hubei Province, developed as a migrant city through the Third Front Movement 三线工程. The spatial range of my daily life during childhood was very small—my home, my grandmother’s home, my father’s workplace, my kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, and the shopping mall and theater that I frequented—all were within a ten-minute walk.

Around 2010, redevelopment began in my community at Liuyan Mountain 六堰山, and half of the mountain was carved away. All the spaces I had lived in and played in as a child—including my own home, my grandmother’s home, my friends’ homes—were wiped out. The spatial environment of my hometown, like my childhood, became irretrievable. At that time, I found demolition to be a slow and melancholic process, and in high school I began photographing the interior of my grandmother’s home before her relocation, along with various demolition sites, using the flip phone and compact digital camera I had at the time. In fact, I began photographing ruins much earlier than Li Wei.

What I regret the most is that I wasn’t involved in either of the two moves of my own family and of my grandmother’s home, and I didn’t even know about them right away. My parents may have thought it unnecessary to trouble a child with such matters. At the time I was away at university in another city, and I was only informed afterwards that the home had been moved. By the time I returned, it was already the ‘new home’. I never saw what those spaces looked like in the end, and no one in the family had taken any parting photographs to commemorate it. This is one reason why I am especially interested in the type of residential ruins that Li Wei mentioned—those that bear traces of life.

Most of the ruins we explore in Wuhan are similar to the work unit family housing and early commercial

apartment blocks where my family and my grandmother lived. At the time, renovation options were limited, so one finds many similar interior layouts, furniture arrangements, and household items. I often saw terrazzo floors identical to my grandmother's, green-painted wall skirts identical to those of her apartment; curtains, bedsheets, TV doilies just like the ones in my childhood home; and children's height marks, doodles, stickers, award certificates, timetables, and celebrity posters on the walls. These spatial samples are reflections of the lifestyle of a particular era.

As our exploration deepened, my feelings began to shift. I had always assumed that every home was unique, but as these spaces revealed themselves one by one in cross-section, the sheer number of similarities became apparent. It turns out that many objects and experiences were shared by people. Knowing that, past regrets gave way to a kind of acceptance, and I found myself asking: what exactly is it that I'm nostalgic for?

Li Wei: I moved three times while growing up, so I strongly identify with Liang Chen's account. Even though Beijing and Wuhan are a thousand kilometers apart, I've often encountered spaces in Wuhan's ruins that resemble my grandmother's and maternal grandmother's homes—these spaces that were abandoned due to demolition are reminiscent of my childhood. These are no longer 'homes' but familiar-yet-strange spaces of recollection.

As a first-tier city, Wuhan is still undergoing large-scale demolition and construction, whereas cities like Beijing and Shanghai are already in a 'completed' stage. In the past two years, we've explored twenty to thirty demolition zones across Wuhan's three towns. One key factor that gave us this 'window of opportunity' may have been the Covid-19 pandemic. This enormous force majeure slowed or even suspended demolition processes in many areas. Some neighborhoods were half-demolished, and some former residents had yet to move out, leaving entry points intact—though often concealed.

Liang Chen: These ruin spaces changes over time, bearing overlapping tracks left by demolition workers and scavengers. Wooden furniture is smashed, wiring is stripped from the walls, salvageable household appliances are collected, and even mattress springs are pulled out for recycling. But items such as clothing and personal belongings are rarely touched—they're no longer of use. This includes photographs, negatives, and albums (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Found images by Liang Chen and Li Wei

In a recent outing, I was examining scattered photographs in a room when a woman walked in. At first, she assumed I was a fellow scavenger. But as we talked and she realized I was looking for photographs, she asked, puzzled, ‘What use is that?’ Afterward, we each searched and took what we needed—she made several trips to carry away anything that could be sold.

Li Wei: As Liang Chen described, demolition is a process of resource reclamation and reuse—from wooden furniture and copper wiring in rooms, to the steel and bricks in buildings, and ultimately the most valuable asset in urban redevelopment: land.

Ruin spaces are extremely messy. Sometimes, finding a single photograph prompts us to look more closely, and often we’ll discover others nearby. Some photographs or albums may be buried under surrounding debris. Many households do not seem to have had a specific place to store image-based materials. We often find photos, albums, negatives, and envelopes for the negatives mixed with documents—and even with buttons, sewing supplies, stationery, and charging cables—all stuffed into a single drawer. When demolition workers or scavengers arrive, the wooden furniture itself is more valuable than these scattered contents, so they pull out the drawers and dump everything onto the floor. Once the wood of the furniture is taken, the photographs are left behind. By the time a building is about to be torn down, most spaces have already been stripped bare, yet if you look carefully, you can still find photographs—waiting to be pulverized along with the building as the final layer of waste.

Liang Chen: In a way, both of us are ‘scavengers’. Li Wei does film photography in the ruins—what we might call ‘image scavenging’. I pick up specific kinds of objects as well. Besides photographs, I have several themes—keys are one of them. From a practical perspective, old keys are useless to a house that has been relocated—many of these houses don’t even have doors anymore—but they function as metaphors with rich interpretive and metaphorical potential. I’ve collected about 1,500 keys so far. I also collect toys, especially kid’s meal toys from McDonald’s and KFC. These are well made and usually stamped with their year of production. I once discussed with Li Wei how going to McDonald’s or KFC was a reward from our parents when we were little, and those toys were something we longed for. For example, the Colonel Sanders handheld game console, or McDonald’s Snoopy series—it’s heartbreaking to see them abandoned in ruins. Recently I also discovered a type of old hollow brick, often split in half amid the rubble. They’re instantly recognizable because they bear anthropomorphic distressed and comical facial expressions—which is very cute. Though they’re quite heavy, we picked up a few and gave them a name: ‘Zhake-berger’ 渣克伯格 (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Keys, ‘Zhake-berger’, toys

Li Wei: We also pay attention to the anthropological dimensions of ruin spaces. As Liang Chen just mentioned, we speak with residents who haven't yet moved out, with demolition workers and scavengers, observing how they navigate and inhabit the ruins. In some cases, we've discovered secret gathering spots for slingshot and air rifle enthusiasts. All of these are worthy of further investigation. The 'ruin' is a pluralistic site, and our exploration is equally plural. Found footage art is one of the more developed and mature threads within it.

Zhang: This brings us directly to my second question. Unlike many other artists working with found footage, the images that you focus on are directly connected to the spaces in which they are located—both physically and emotionally. Could you elaborate on this relationship between space and image in your practice, and also reflect on the verb 'found' as it pertains to found footage art?

Liang Chen: In our work, space and image are directly linked. Once, we found a video tape in a room that had been nearly stripped bare and was covered in dust. Upon digitizing the tape, we discovered it recorded a wedding ceremony. The only object in the room that still retained traces of its past appearance was a chandelier. We browsed through the footage and located that very chandelier in the frame, confirming that this was the same house where the wedding took place. We then looked more closely at the details in the video and noticed a portrait of the bride once hung on the wall. In the corresponding spot within the ruin, the wall bore a faint imprint where the picture had long hung, a residue left by dust. Following this clue, we searched among the debris and dead leaves on the floor nearby and managed to find the bride's portrait. It was thickly coated in dust and barely legible in the dim light of the room unless lit directly (Figure 4). Starting with a piece of abandoned home footage, we uncovered mutually confirming evidence within the very space where the image had been recorded. It was an indescribably moving experience, and it reminded me of the Finish documentary *Iceberg Shadow* (2009).

A segment of video and a single photograph—these are like fleeting fragments of the space's past life and memory. The neighboring building was already under demolition. How much longer would this one remain? Perhaps it has already been torn down as we speak. We don't know whether the owners of these images saved any digital copies before discarding them. Or perhaps these images had already ceased to matter? Have the memories they carried also vanished along with them?



Figure 4. Video tapes found in ruins and digitized version brought back to the site

Li Wei: The central subject of *Dust and Scratches* is the material medium of abandoned images within abandoned spaces. As Liang Chen just mentioned, videotapes are relatively rare among our finds. More common-

ly, we come across large wedding portraits. These may have been left behind simply because of their large size and the inconvenience of transporting them, leading to their abandonment during the actual logistics of moving. The accumulated wear and tear in the ruins accelerates their deterioration—frames fall apart (Figure 10), photos shift or fall out of their frames, and in extreme cases the images are completely destroyed, leaving only empty frames. From the outside, the most striking visual feature of a ruined building is its window openings—no glass, no light inside—so from afar the structure appears as a grid of dark rectangles. I find those empty rectangles strikingly similar to the empty photo frames.

This visual intertextuality points to the two key terms in the series title: ‘dust’ 蒙尘 and ‘scratches’ 划痕. ‘Dust’ refers to being covered in dust—that is, being set aside and becoming obsolete. ‘Scratch’ refers to wear and abrasion—that is, the depletion of its utility. Both conditions result in the object’s fate as a commodity: abandonment. On this level, *Dust and Scratches* functions as a kind of death portrait for these spaces and things.

Liang Chen: Every time I encounter family images in a ruin, I can’t help but feel nostalgia and a sense of cherishing—but more than that, I feel confusion: why weren’t these photos taken along when they moved? If I were moving, I would definitely bring them. At first, I thought it was an isolated phenomenon, but the more we explored, the more common it turned out to be. A large number of family photographs are left behind in ruins. So why is it that I don’t feel particularly sorry when I see abandoned furniture or clothing, but I feel deeply saddened when I see family photos?

Approaching the question from a designer perspective, we considered the concept of ‘planned obsolescence’: the idea that a product’s usable life is deliberately limited at the design stage, so that after a certain period its function fails, its style becomes outdated, and it must be scrapped and replaced. When coupled with advertising, consumers develop a desire for new products and a perceived need to purchase them. Clothes, appliances, furniture, even home fixtures and real estate itself, all fall within this system of obsolescence. Image production is embedded in this same logic: photographs are tethered to physical prints, and those prints, together with cameras, film, and photo processing services, constitute an ecosystem that is also subject to planned obsolescence. When we were children, Kodak advertisements told us: every moment of life is precious, it should be photographed, and only with photographs can memory be preserved and transmitted. This narrative resembles the marketing strategies used for fine jewelry: every family ought to take photographs, and those photographs ought to be treasured.

But reality does not live up to this ideal. Photos age: they fade, warp, mold, and tear. People grow tired of the old and seek the new. The emotional value that photos once held also wears out, becomes obsolete, accumulates dust. What distinguishes them from other items is their deeply personal nature. A photograph reveals that someone was once here. It makes the passage of time palpable. Even when mixed in with clothing and random household items, photos are visually arresting and emotionally affecting.

Li Wei: Liang Chen’s account weaves people and memory into the relationship between space and image. I want to switch to a microscopic perspective and talk about how we observe dust. Dust is a minute yet ubiquitous presence in every space. I’ve become increasingly interested in it through our ruin explorations.

Textually speaking, the title of this photography series comes from a filter in Photoshop. I was struck by the translation of ‘dust’ as ‘蒙尘’ in the phrase ‘dust and scratches’. While *dust* may be directly rendered as 灰尘 in Chinese, ‘蒙尘’ carries poetic overtones. In classical Chinese, the phrase originally referred to emperors in exile, fleeing through wind and dust; it later came to refer more generally to beautiful things that have been neglected or buried. The character 尘 itself is nuanced—it is composed of ‘small’ 小 and ‘earth’ 土, appearing simple but rich in connotation. A whole set of expressions with 尘 in them connects dust, earth, and the human world: ‘mortal world’ 尘世, ‘red dust’ 红尘, ‘trials of life’ 风尘, ‘former life’ 前尘, ‘posterity’ 后尘, ‘speed to transcend’ 绝尘, ‘to be sealed in dust’ 尘封. I find that 蒙尘 encapsulates the condition of family photographs in ruins with remarkable precision (Figure 5).

Demolition, as part of the modernization process, replaces work unit family housing with high-rise housing. Cleanliness has become a key trait of contemporary living spaces: sealed windows, air conditioning, purifiers, vacuum cleaners, robotic floor cleaners, professional janitorial services—all these systems work to prevent the accumulation of dust indoors. But unless one lives in a surgical or laboratory-grade environment, even the cleanest homes contain blind spots: the upper edge of a picture frame, or the narrow crevice between two pieces of furniture. Dust is inevitable. When a residence becomes a ruin, it is no longer enclosed or maintained, and all cleaning systems cease to function. Construction dust from demolition in adjacent buildings seeps in, and dust accumulates freely throughout the ruin. This reminds me of Mary Douglas’s classic anthropological work *Purity and Danger*, in which she argues that dirt threatens order. In this sense, demolition sites are temporary and unstable corners of modern urban space.



Figure 5. Dust-covered family photo found in ruins

Visually, dust is extraordinarily expressive. I pay special attention to a certain type of scene: in the past, writing desks were prized pieces of furniture. To protect their surfaces from scratches, people would often place a glass panel on top. Between the glass and the desktop, they would insert photographs, letters, business cards, receipts—the desktop thus functioned both as a memo board and a display. As one worked at the desk, these items under the glass remained in one’s view. After a household is vacated, these items are often left behind, and over time, dust accumulates on the glass. The images beneath are only faintly visible. I find that photo-

graphing such a scene is particularly resonant with the notion of ‘dust’ 蒙尘 in *Dust and Scratches*.

Liang Chen: I would like to add one more point, which could be considered part of the broader relationship between image and space. When found images is both discovered and exhibited in the same city, its local embeddedness becomes unexpectedly pronounced during the creative process. *Dust and Scratches* was included in an exhibition in Wuhan. To complement the wall-mounted photographs, we recreated the ‘desk-top photo display’ 书桌展示照片 scenario that Li Wei mentioned earlier as part of the exhibition setup. We purchased an old writing desk, had a custom glass panel made for it, and placed some of the photographs we had found into the space beneath the glass. On the final day of the exhibition, one of the photos was unexpectedly recognized by a visitor—he saw members of his own family and relatives in the image.

Later, we carefully reviewed the rest of that family’s photographs and albums and found one that was particularly commemorative: the family had once taken a picture on the rooftop platform of their apartment building, with Wuhan’s landmark television tower visible in the background. The photo had been taken in the 1980s, when the tower was still under construction. We returned to that very spot on the rooftop with the image and took a photograph of the photograph (Figure 15). About half a year later, that building was demolished.

Zhang: I know that both of you also frequently visit flea markets and antique markets to purchase and collect abandoned images. This process differs slightly from finding images in ruins, because the images in markets are clearly priced—meaning their nature has shifted. Could you discuss this experience in more detail, and share your reflections on the images that ended up in the marketplace?

Li Wei: In the Chinese domestic antiques trade system, old photographs are categorized as ‘miscellaneous items’ 杂项, and they are often mixed with letters, documents, tickets, and other so-called ‘nostalgic’ everyday objects. Their market volume does not compare to the major categories of mainstream antiques. However, old photographs are ubiquitous. They can be found across all levels of the market—from auction houses, to major antique markets in various cities, to flea markets and makeshift ghost markets in alleyways. Through our explorations in these venues, I found that their system of valuation operates in a top-down logic: images from the Republic of China period and ‘red images’ from after 1949 are the most prized. The family photographs we discover in ruins mainly originate from the 1980s and 1990s, the period when image commercialization in China was becoming widespread, and they exist in massive quantities. In a market that prizes scarcity and so-called ‘vintage aura’, these photographs are of extremely low monetary value—often sold at just a few dozen yuan for several hundred prints. In some upstream distribution channels, they are sometimes even sold by weight.

Liang Chen: If we gather together all the photographs that we have collected, we can piece together the life trajectories of people born in several different decades. Our parents were born in the 1960s; members of their generation married and had children at roughly the same stage of their lives, and their children—like us—are part of the post-1990s generation. Our growing up coincided with the arrival of color photo development networks in China—photo shops operated by Kodak, Fujifilm, and other global imaging giants. In large and medium-sized cities, consumer photographic products gradually became popular. Countless snapshots of family life were taken and developed, then stored in small photo albums often provided free of charge by the

processing shops. At the same time, studio portraits became widespread—wedding photos, family portraits, one-year-old commemorative photos, personal photo shoots—and large-format prints were mounted and prominently displayed in people’s homes. These found photographs are traces of the development of visual consumer culture. They resonate deeply with us, personally and emotionally, but their value has yet to be recognized in the collectors’ market.

Li Wei: I once purchased a set of Kodak EasyShare CCD digital cameras from an online vintage camera shop (Figure 6). This product represents a transitional phase between analogue and digital imaging technologies. In the early 2000s, digital cameras were on the rise, but due to limitations in display technology, physical prints remained the mainstream format. The EasyShare cameras came with a printer dock, allowing users to print photos at home. I bought the set specifically because it contained photographs taken by its previous owner—I had never before encountered born-digital found images. The package also included an unopened box of photo paper, and I was particularly struck by the tagline printed on it: ‘Brilliant Color Photo That Last Over 100 Years’. An asterisk followed: ‘*Under typical home display conditions...’ The phrase ‘100 years’ was clearly a marketing slogan, although perhaps Kodak could justify it through its R&D and quality testing standards. But even assuming a photograph could technically last ‘100 years’, how many photos are actually being preserved and cherished for a full century?



Figure 6. A collection of Kodak EasyShare camera, photo paper, and printer

People believe that cameras faithfully record what is seen, and that images can preserve emotion and memory. But the human mind is like the Ship of Theseus—sailing down the river of time, we drift ever further from our past selves. The planks of feeling and memory are continually worn down, discarded, and replaced. Once a plank has been swapped out, it no longer seems important. The image associated with it also loses its value, and it becomes easier to understand why these photographs are eventually abandoned in ruins or circulated through secondhand markets.

Liang Chen: Typically, a photograph is interpreted from three perspectives: the photographer, the subject, and the viewer. But if we consider the photograph as an object, there is a fourth perspective—that of the ‘possessor’ 隶属者, the one who owns the image and holds the rights to edit or dispose of it. For a family photograph, this implicates the internal relationships within the family, including the question of how memory inheritance is handled. Times of decluttering, moving, or family upheaval often become the turning points in the fate of these domestic images. The ultimate destination of a photograph is often determined by its possessor. As Li Wei just mentioned, and as we’ve been emphasizing all along, the dispersal of images evokes a sense of melancholy and sadness. This is one possible interpretation. But photography is a reproducible technology—negatives can be retained, images can be rephotographed or scanned, and the physical object can

be discarded without necessarily losing the image; these brings out another set of possibilities. What we see in ruins and secondhand markets is the end result of a process, but when we attempt to trace it backward, the causes of disposal remain largely unknown—there’s a great deal of speculation involved.

In the antique market, the merchant becomes the photograph’s possessor, which introduces additional unknown variables. On several occasions, we came across family photo albums whose contents—people, time periods when they were taken—lacked any internal consistency. We began to wonder: were these really the photographs of a single family? Later, we learned that if a photo album had any blank spaces, sellers would sometimes insert old photographs of a similar age into the gaps to make the album appear complete—this, according to their standards, improves the item’s visual appeal. We discussed this phenomenon with a photography collector, who confirmed that he had developed techniques to identify such ‘collage albums’ and had accumulated experience in negotiating with vendors over these practices.

Zhang: My next question builds on this. In contemporary Chinese image-based art, there has been a growing number of works based on found materials—for example, those by Lei Lei or Thomas Sauvin. As participants in this phenomenon, I’d like to hear your thoughts on its emergence in the context of contemporary China. Is the fascination with found footage related to our broader historical environment, or perhaps to the trajectory of image-based art in China?

Liang Chen: Among domestic works that use found footage as the base material, *Beijing Silvermine* 北京银矿 is indeed a landmark project. For Li Wei and me, both born in the 1990s, viewing it feels like flipping through our own family photo albums—it’s very familiar. For example, McDonald’s and KFC entered the mainland market in the late 1980s, and consuming ‘Western fast food’ became fashionable at the time. Many people took photos with the Ronald McDonald sculpture on the bench outside McDonald’s restaurants—Li Wei and I both took such photos as children (Figure 7). So when we found similar images in ruins, we were thrilled. Later, we began looking for them in secondhand markets, but for a long time we found only one. In the image archive of *Beijing Silvermine*, however, there are nearly 200 such portraits, which illustrates how widespread the practice was. It has become part of our public memory. This may explain why the project is referred to as a ‘silvermine’—a vast visual cultural archive, where the accumulation of quantity opens up artistic possibilities that go beyond photography studies.



Figure 7. Li Wei (left) and Liang Chen (middle) and a found image example (right) of posing with Ronald McDonald sculptures

Li Wei: With today’s faster information exchange, and the diversification of photographic subjects and vocabularies, found footage art has become a prominent and even popular practice. It holds significant potential: oscillating between the private and the public, the individual and the collective, memory and history, am-

ateur and professional. Its meanings shift across these oppositions, and this complexity has attracted attention from both artists and scholars. The works, research, and methods it inspires have generated responses across photography, film, anthropology, sociology, and history. One essay that greatly inspired me is ‘A Farewell to the Family Album? (And Case Study on the Cultural History of Wedding Photography)’, by Mette Sandbye, included in *The Routledge Companion to Photography and Visual Culture*, edited by Moritz Neumüller. It offers a comprehensive overview of how family photos have been used in found footage art in works overseas. And I am particularly interested in one genre that artists exploring their own family and then extend to personal image-making concerning intimacy and identity. One recent example I encountered is Su Yuezhao’s 苏月斫 photobook *Guangming Building* 光明楼.

If we consider the broader context, nostalgia has become a prevailing theme in popular culture. As imaging technologies have shifted from analogue to digital, this transformation has brought a sense of estrangement and unfamiliarity—this distance creates a certain beauty.

For our project, we are indeed operating within time limits imposed by several processes. Analog imaging technologies are founded on film and paper, and these media are currently being phased out — perhaps in another twenty or thirty years, once the long tail of technological iterations has run its course, there will no longer be opportunities to come across paper photographs and film. At the same time, urban demolition constitutes another temporal constraint: when we spoke with second-hand market vendors, they indicated that peaks in the acquisition of image materials often coincide with large-scale demolition and reconstruction in a city. Such demolition triggers mass relocations across many neighborhoods; numerous family images are thrown away or sold as scrap, and ultimately disperse into the market.

This reminds me of *Pictures from the Street* (Bilder von der Straße), a series of work by German artist Joachim Schmid (Figure 8). Beginning in 1982, he collected photographs discarded on the streets around the world and systematically categorized them into a found footage archive. The artist continued this project for 30 years, terminating it in 2012. In a lecture, he explained the reason: it had become nearly impossible to find photographs on the street, because image consumption had shifted to digital media.

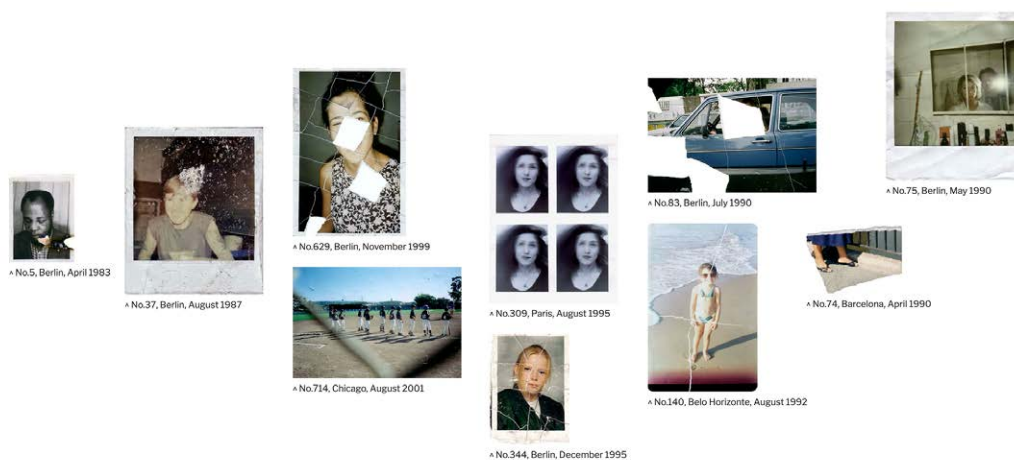


Figure 8. *Pictures from the Street* (<https://www.lumpenfotografie.de/2006/01/01/bilder-von-der-strasse-1982-2012/>)

Liang Chen: Joachim Schmid is now creating works based on born-digital found footage. Searching for such images in mobile phones, computer hard drives, social media platforms, and short video apps might call for an entirely different creative method.

I work at a university and often talk with students born in the 2000s or later. I can deeply relate to what Li Wei just said about the sense of estrangement created by the analogue to digital transition. For those born in the digital era, analogue imaging technologies are not outdated—on the contrary, they are novel. Because they never used these formats growing up, these ‘images from the past’ feel new and interesting. For an artist like Thomas Sauvin, these ‘images from the past’ may offer an anthropological or micro-historical perspective on the lifestyles of the people living in Beijing from the 1980s to the early 2000s. For us, as post-90s individuals, these images resonate as memories of our own childhood. For post-2000s youth, however, these outdated photographic technologies present a fresh, playful, and trendy visual language. This past graduation season, many students took graduation photos not just with phones, but with film cameras, CCD cameras, and instant film cameras. For them, this is a newly meaningful ritualistic experience.

Li Wei: Returning to the topic of ruins, speaking specifically about Wuhan, I feel a strong sense of urgency. The stagnation during the pandemic has gradually faded, and the pace of demolition is accelerating. In many places, once a demolition crew arrives, they flatten the buildings very quickly, leaving no opportunity for detailed exploration. Many photos are simply buried in the ruins.

Every city has its own process of development. I once zoomed in on other nearby cities—like Hangzhou—using satellite imagery and found that they don’t have as many large-scale demolition areas as Wuhan. Many cities have already moved beyond the large-scale demolition phase and have become modular, modernized cities with few remaining old districts. Two or three years from now, the twenty or thirty neighborhoods we currently explore might be gone. At that point, our project might come to an end.

Earlier, Liang Chen noted that these spaces often resemble each other. But every region and city still has its own particularities—for example, Wuhan’s characteristic bamboo beds and *diaozi* 吊子 (a type of clay pot). One day, when new commercial housing complexes rise, when road signs are changed, and when satellite maps are updated, these histories may be gradually forgotten. They are too micro, perhaps even unworthy of being called history—just a record of the material and spatial memories of a single neighborhood in a specific time.

Liang Chen: The English term ‘found image’ reminds me of an everyday phrase: ‘lost and found’. When we pick up photographs in ruins or search for them in secondhand markets, we become their new possessors. Although we may use our experience, research, and speculation to piece together their significance, the original memories and meanings have already been lost. They cannot be fully recovered. This is a process of being found, yet still lost. Our act of ‘finding’ thus confers a new meaning—it results in new stories, relationships, and connections.

For many found image artworks, the artist’s work begins after the ‘finding’. As designers, we pay closer attention to the circulation of material objects and the shifting value of images as commodities. The meaning of these images is open, plural, and full of possibility—whether in terms of the creator’s expression or the

viewer's interpretation, there is no single answer.

Zhang: For the final question, I'd like to ask both of you to talk about your current artistic projects and what kinds of works you hope to realize in the future.

Li Wei: Recently, I've been interested in creating a visual typology of dust. As I mentioned earlier, the accumulation of dust is temporal in nature. By observing the thickness and form of dust in different spaces, we can relate it to the length of time that the space has been abandoned—one year, two years, ten years. Dust is compositionally very complex. At a more micro level, I'd like to examine its material content—what exactly is it made of? This would fall within the realm of photomicrography. At a macro level, I'm interested in the dust generated by demolition and its dispersal patterns. I want to understand certain characteristics of dust formation: why does dust, over time, curl into little rolls? Since it's also a desiccant, it absorbs moisture—under what conditions does it begin to adhere to photographs or to the surface of glass?

Some of the found photographs we've collected from ruins couldn't be photographed on the spot due to lighting conditions or other constraints, so I carried them home flat in my hands to shoot them there. In exploring the relationship between the layer of dust and the image beneath it, I've experimented with different lighting angles. Using side lighting, you can see only the dust; the image underneath is completely obscured. But with front lighting, the outline of the subject in the photographs beneath faintly emerges. There is so much latent potential in dust—it's a layer full of possibilities.

Another project relates to the writing desks and glass panels we discussed earlier. The desk surface forms a large picture frame, which reminds me of the widgets on a computer or a smartphone. Many people set images of their family as the background of chat apps or as their screensaver. In the pre-screen era, placing photos on one's desk beneath glass ensured they were visible every day—these were cherished images. But from the perspective of professional image preservation, placing a photo in direct contact with glass is a mistake. When the gelatin layer on the photographic paper absorbs moisture, it bonds with the structure of the glass. I've encountered many cases where the photo was stuck to the glass. The current professional method involves cold mounting the photographs, and when framing, a mat board is added to keep the glass elevated, preventing contact with the photographic surface. On one occasion, we found an entire glass panel embedded in a ruin, and we took it to a glass shop to have it cut. In this case, the 'found object' was not only the images but also the glass surface to which they adhered to. I want to create a series of works based on photographs that have become fused with glass—where both elements are found and preserved together.

Liang Chen: Li Wei focuses more on the thematic and visual language of photography. For me, when I see these photographs in ruins, I'm often reminded of the disorganized and unreflective way my own family's images were managed. It makes me want to organize my family archive. When I was little, my mother was the one who arranged our family albums. We have quite a few albums, well-preserved, and also a large number of negatives. Recently I collected all of those negatives from home. Although they were preserved, I have no idea when many of them were taken. While reviewing them, I realized that the albums only represent a small selection—they're curated collections. Photos that are pasted together in an album might not even belong to the same event. They could be years apart, but their proximity in the album leads one to believe the scenes happened around the same time. So by organizing these negatives, I might rediscover forgotten child-

hood memories or ‘re-find’ visual traces of spaces that no longer exist. I’m really looking forward to doing that, though the workload will be enormous.

Li Wei: Our exploration of ruins and interest in found images has actually led to a new project. It all started when we discovered a hand-colored wedding portrait in a ruin. Based on other materials the family had left behind in that space, we were able to deduce that their child was around the same age as the two of us—a fellow member of the post-90s generation. Their parents were about the same age as our own, and had married around the same time. That struck an empathetic chord with me. So we are thinking of reprinting a hand-colored photograph from the original negative and returning it to the family. Originating from this idea of hand-colored photographs, we also hope to explore the declining state of the once-thriving state-owned photo studio industry, the community of colorists, and the craft of hand-coloring photography.

Liang Chen: In *Amélie* (2001), a film we both love, there’s a scene in which the protagonist, Amélie, finds a small box hidden in the bathroom tiles of her home (Figure 9). That discovery sets her on a journey to return the box to its original owner. she eventually succeeds and finds love along the way. I think objects really can create connections between people. For us, this whole undertaking has many possible forms of presentation. No single work is the endpoint—it’s the sustained experience and process of thinking that matters most.



Figure 9. Screenshots from *Amélie* (2001)

Details of *Dust and Scratches*



Figure 10. *Dust and Scratches*: a photo dislocated from the frame.



Figure 11. *Dust and Scratches*: the inside of a ruined home; sometimes the ceiling is halfway demolished and one can see the 'home' from a God-like perspective



Figure 12. *Dust and Scratches*: almost all of the ruined building have no glass over the windows; all the windows look like darkened squares from afar.

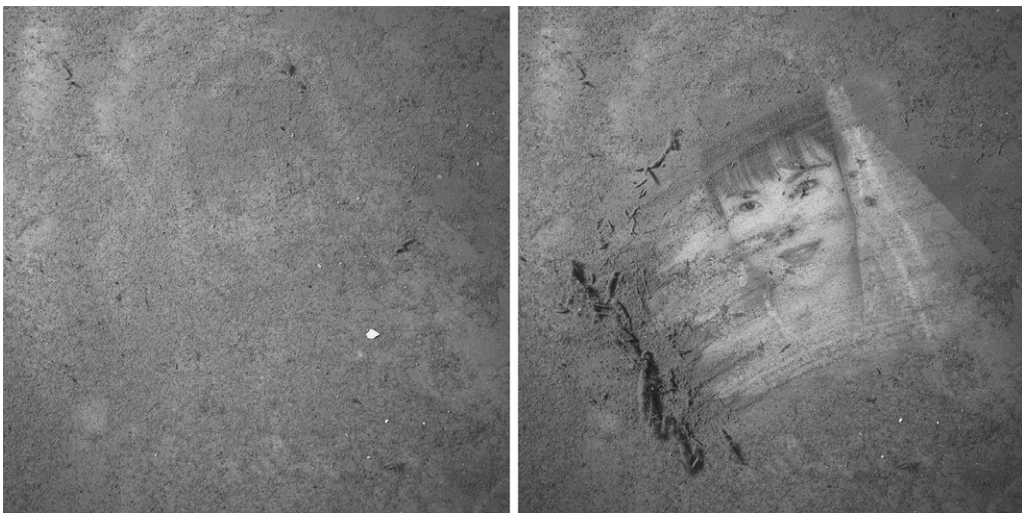


Figure 13. *Dust and Scratches*: a photo of a bride discovered through a video tape found in the ruin.



Figure 14. *Dust and Scratches*: family photos pressed under the glass desktop.



Figure 15. *Dust and Scratches*: a found photo brought back to the ruin where it was found; the tower in the back is the Wuhan Tortoise Mountain TV Tower, finished in June 1986.

在废墟空间寻找蒙尘的影像 ——与李维、梁晨探讨拾得影像艺术

采访者：张吕文煜

注：2025年4月25日，我与艺术家组合李维和梁晨进行了一场关于拾得影像的对话。我们探讨了他们正在进行的废墟摄影作品《蒙尘与划痕》（图1），以及他们对于武汉正在拆迁的空间和被遗弃的家庭影像的关系的思考。也谈到了中国语境下，照片作为消费品在有序的废止制中扮演的角色，以及从模拟到数字时代影像技术的变迁。本文整理了本次采访的相关内容。



梁晨（左）和李维（右）



图1：《蒙尘与划痕》系列（部分）

张吕文煜（以下简称煜）：先请李维和梁晨自我介绍一下，谈谈你们开始对废墟和“拾得”影像感兴趣的契机，以及现在的工作状态。

李维：我是一名设计师、摄影师，以及影像媒介物的收集者。

梁晨：我从事视觉设计工作，目前在武汉传媒学院的设计学院任教，也是路上观察和考现学的爱好者。

李维：“废墟”是一种经典的亚文化，在艺术史中有其脉络，也与摄影文化有密切关联。我比较认可的方法是将废墟空间分为四种类型：文化、工业、公共、居民。《蒙尘与划痕》聚焦的居民废墟有中国在地化的特点，其核心是“拆迁”，这与中国大陆的土地制度和房地产经济的发展相关，也勾连了我和梁晨这代人的成长经验。我出生、成长的城市北京，有着历史丰富、面积庞大的老城区，作为首都和各种意义上的中心，它在高速现代化的发展中经历了大拆大建。这个进程在我成长的 90 至 00 年代初发生，如今回望感到后知后觉。

梁晨：人们在看待事物时，会不自觉地代入自身经历并产生共情，我对小时候居住过的空间有一种执念。我的家乡十堰是湖北的山城，也是因三线工程发展起来的移民城市。我小时候的生活范围很小，我家，外婆家，我爸爸上班的地方，我的幼儿园、小学、中学，还有常去的商场、剧院全都步行十几分钟可达。

2010 年左右，我所在的六堰山社区开发，一整座山被挖掉一半，我小时候所有居住过的、玩耍过的空间——包括我自己家、外婆家、朋友家——我们的生活痕迹都被挖掉了，所以故乡的空间就像童年一样是回不去的。那时我觉得拆迁是件既漫长又伤感的事，于是在中学阶段我就开始用当时的翻盖手机和卡片相机，拍了很多我外婆家搬家前的样子，以及各种拆迁工地。所以其实我比李维拍摄废墟要早很多。

而最让我遗憾的是，我自己家和我外婆家的两次搬家我都没有参与，甚至并未在第一时间知晓。可能因为父母觉得小朋友不用操心这些事情，当时我在外地上大学，事后才被告知家搬了，然后再回家就已经是“新家”。所以我没有看到这些空间最后的样子，家人也没有给它们拍下临别的纪念照。这也是为什么我会对李维所说的居民类型的、有生活痕迹的废墟更感兴趣。

我们在武汉探索的大部分废墟是和我家、我外婆家相似的单位家属院和早期的商品楼。那时装修选择很少，所以能看到很多空间装潢、家具陈设、生活物件雷同的居住空间。我很多次看到跟我外婆家一样的水磨石地面、一样的绿色油漆卫生墙裙；和我小时候家一样的窗帘、床单、电视搭巾；还有墙上小朋友的身高标记、涂鸦、贴画、奖状、课表、明星海报等。这些空间样本都是一个时代生活面貌的反映。

而随着我们的探索深入，我的感受也有所转变，之前总以为每个家是不同的，但当一个个空间剖面式的呈现在眼前，看到了如此多的相似之处，原来很多事物大家都拥有过、经历过，以前的遗憾反而释怀了，也在思考自己到底在怀念什么？

李维：我在成长中经历了三次搬家，对梁晨的叙述感同身受。即使北京和武汉相隔千里，我在武汉探索废墟的过程中，也多次遇见了我奶奶家、姥姥家，这些因拆迁而搬家形成的空间和我童年生活过的家似曾相识，但已都不再是“家”，而是一种熟悉又陌生的追忆空间。

武汉作为一线城市，相比北京、上海的“完成时”，目前还在大拆大建的“进行时”中。在近两年的时间里，我们在武汉三镇探索了二、三十个拆迁片区。而给我们提供“窗口期”的一个重要因素或许是疫情，巨大的不可抗力让这些区域的拆迁进程都放缓，甚至暂停了。很多片区拆得零零散散的，还有一些原来的居民没有搬走，所以进出通道还在，只是可能会比较隐蔽。

梁晨：这些废墟空间会随时间而变化，拆迁工人和拾荒者的痕迹在此交叠，他们拆碎木质家具、剥离墙中电线、收集成色尚可的旧家电、甚至连床垫里的弹簧都被取出来回收了。但像衣物和庞杂的私人物品则鲜有人问津，它们很难再有利用价值了，这其中就包括照片、底片、相册（图 2）。



图 2：在废墟拾得的家庭影像

近期的一次探索，当时我正在一个房间里观看散落的照片，突然进来一位阿姨，起初她以为我是搞资源回收的同行，但谈话间她了解到我要捡的是照片，就不解地问“那有啥用？”，而后我们各自翻找、各取所需，她分几次把屋里能卖钱的东西都运走了。

李维：像梁晨所说，拆迁是一种资源回收并再利用的过程，从房间中的木质家具和铜质电线、到构筑楼宇的钢筋和砖石、再到城市更新中最最重要的资源——土地。

废墟非常凌乱，有时发现一张照片，我们会继续仔细观察、翻找，往往会在周围发现更多，那些照片、相册可能就掩埋在附近的杂物之下。或许很多家庭对于影像类物品并没有明确的收纳空间。我们发现照片、相册、底片、相袋往往是和各类证件，甚至和扣子、针线、文具、充电线等物品混着放在一个抽屉里的。当拆迁工人或拾荒者来时，柜子、桌子的木料价值要大于里面这些零零杂杂的物品，他们会把抽屉全都抽出来，东西倒在地上。后续木料被运走了，这些照片就被遗弃在那里。到临拆除前，很多空间已经“家徒四壁”了，但仔细找还能发现照片，它们作为最后的垃圾，等待着和建筑一起被粉碎。

梁晨：我俩其实都是“拾荒者”，李维用胶片拍摄废墟，进行“影像拾荒”；而我会捡拾一些特定物品，除了照片之外还有几个主题，钥匙便是其中之一。从实用层面，旧钥匙对于搬迁的家来说已无用，甚至很多家连门都没有了，但它可以作为一种具有丰富解读可能的喻体。我目前捡到的钥匙数量大概有 1500 把左右；同时我也收集玩具，特别是麦当劳、肯德基的联名玩具，它们质量很好，都有标有生产年份。我之前和李维聊到小时候相似的经历：去麦当劳、肯德基是家长对小朋友的奖励，所

以那些玩具是小时候非常渴望拥有的。比如肯德基爷爷的游戏机、麦当劳的史奴比系列，看它们被遗弃在废墟里，实在不忍心；另外，我最近还发现了一种老式空心砖，它碎成一半躺在遍地的瓦砾中，一眼就能看见，因为它们有着又囧又惊慌的表情，很可爱。虽然非常重，我们也捡了几个，并给它起了一个名字叫做“渣颧伯格”（图3）。



图3：在废墟中发现的钥匙、渣颧伯格、玩具

李维：同时我们也会从人类学角度关注废墟空间，像刚才梁晨提到的，我们会与尚未搬走的居民、拆迁工人、拾荒者聊天，观察他们如何在废墟空间中活动。我们还在一些废墟里发现了弹弓、气枪爱好者的秘密聚点。这些都是值得挖掘的主题。“废墟”是一个多元的场域，我们的探索也是多元的，拾得影像是其中一条发展相对丰富、成熟的线索。

煜：这正好就过渡到我的第二个问题。与很多其他的拾得影像艺术家不同，你们所关注的影像和其所处的空间是有直接联系的，这种联系既是物理上的也是情感上的。能否联系你们的创作，来谈谈空间与影像的关系，以及对“拾得”这个动词的思考？

梁晨：在我们的创作中，空间与影像是直接关联的。有一次我们在一个几近被拆空且积满灰尘的房间里捡到一盘录像带，转录其中视频后发现它记录了一场婚礼。这个房间里仅存的能看出旧日模样的物件是一盏吊灯，我们检索录像，在画面中找到了这盏灯，确认这里就是当年那间婚房。我们再去关注录像中的细节，发现屋中曾挂着一张新娘的肖像，而废墟中同样位置的墙上有一个常年挂画落灰形成的印记。顺着这个线索，我们就在附近地上的杂物和枯叶之中寻觅到了那张新娘的照片，它已经落满厚厚的灰尘，在昏暗的屋内，不打光已几乎很难辨认出是一张照片（图4）。我们从一段被遗弃的家庭影像开始，在曾经拍摄这段影像的空间中找到互证的线索，这让我感到难以名状的悸动，也联想到芬兰纪录片《冰山阴影》(2009)。

一段影像和一张照片，像是这个空间前世记忆的掠影。邻近的楼已经在拆除中，不知道这栋楼还能存续多久？或者可能在咱们谈话之时，它已经被拆了。也不知道这些影像的主人在扔掉它们之前有没有留存电子文件？或者说这些影像已经不再重要？而它们所承载的记忆是否也一起逝去了呢？



图 4：废墟拾得录像带，数字化后将它带回现场

李维：《蒙尘与划痕》的核心拍摄对象是废弃空间中的废弃影像物质载体。像刚才梁晨说到的录像带，我们目前找到的比较少，多的是大幅的结婚照，这些照片或许因为体积太大，不方便携带，从搬家实操层面被抛弃在了旧屋中。在废墟中日积月累的磨损和侵蚀让它们的装裱老化，照片从相框中错位或脱落（图 10），更有甚者照片已彻底损坏，只剩一个空相框。而废墟楼宇从外部观察最显著的视觉特征是没有玻璃的窗口，里面没有灯光，远远看去一栋楼全是一个个漆黑的格子，我觉得这些格子和那些空相框很像。

这二者之间的互文指向了这个系列标题中的两个词：“蒙尘”指物品落满灰尘，即被闲置；而“划痕”指物品被磨损，即耗尽使用寿命。这两种情况都导致了作为商品的物的宿命，即被废弃。在这个层面上，《蒙尘与划痕》是这些空间和物的“遗照”。

梁晨：我每次看到废墟中的家庭影像时，都难以抑制心中怀旧、惜物的情感，但更多的还有困惑：这些照片为什么不带走？要是我搬家肯定带走。起初以为只是个别现象，但探索多了，发现很普遍，有大量家庭影像被遗弃在废墟中。那为什么看到这些空间里的家具、衣服，我不觉得可惜，而看到这些家庭影像觉得非常可惜呢？

我们尝试从设计师的角度思考时，想到了“有计划的商品废止制”的概念，即一件产品在设计时就会被限定使用寿命，使其经过一定年限后，功能失效、样式过时，需要报废更新，再配合广告营销，消费者会产生对新产品的消费欲望和购买需求。这些衣服、电器、家具，甚至是家装硬件和房屋建筑本身，其实都在这种废止制之中。影像附着在实体照片之上，而照片和相机、胶卷、冲扩服务共同构成的生态，也在这种废止制之中。我们小时候看到的柯达广告，它会告诉你：生活的点滴瞬间都是珍贵的，它们需要被拍摄下来，而有照片才能让这段记忆不被忘却、一直流传。这个叙事像是珠宝首饰的营销策略一般：一个家庭需要拍照，并应该将照片珍藏。

但实际情况并非如此理想，照片会衰老：褪色、受潮、弯折、划痕；人们也会喜新厌旧，它所提供的情绪价值也会磨损折旧、日渐蒙尘。只是相比其他物品，照片的个人属性更强，你会从上面看到一个人曾在此，感受到时间的流逝。即使它们和衣服、杂物混在一起，也是醒目而触动人心的。

李维：梁晨的叙述将人与记忆纳入空间与影像的关系，我想切换到微观视角去讲如何观察灰尘。灰尘是每个空间微小但又普遍的存在，我在探索废墟的过程中对它产生了很大兴趣。

从文本层面，我选择 Photoshop 中一个杂色滤镜的名字作为这个系列摄影创作的标题，是受到翻译时“蒙尘”这个用词的触动，“蒙尘与划痕”原文是 dust and scratches，其中 dust 可以很直白地译为“灰尘”，但“蒙尘”一词在中文语境里是一种极富诗意的表达。在文言文中它指帝王失位，落难逃亡在外时蒙受风尘，后引申为美好事物遭到埋没。“尘”这个字本身也很微妙，它写作“小土”，看似简单直白，而在词中的表意很深刻。与之相关的一系列表述是将尘埃、土地与人世关联起来：尘世、红尘、风尘、前尘、后尘、绝尘、尘封等。我认为“蒙尘”所带的微妙意涵对废墟中家庭影像的状态是一种恰如其分的诠释（图 5）。

拆迁作为现代化更新的进程，将老式宿舍楼更新为现代高层住宅，而清洁成了当代居住空间的重要特征：门窗封闭，有空调、空气净化器、吸尘器、扫地机等设备，还配有专业的保洁人员，这样一整套系统防止灰尘在室内堆积。但除非是手术室、实验室等极端空间，再干净的居住空间，只要仔细观察总能发现死角，比如相框边框的上缘、或是两间家具的窄缝，灰尘在居住空间中总难以避免。而当居住空间变成废墟时，它不再是封闭空间也无人照料，所有清洁机制都失效了。同时拆迁片区中其他建筑拆除时产生的大量烟尘会落入相邻的建筑中，灰尘在废墟中肆意累积。这让我联想到经典人类学著作《洁净与危险》（玛丽·道格拉斯）中污垢对秩序产生威胁的论述。而拆迁废墟也正是现代化的城市空间中临时的、不稳定的角落。



图 5：废墟中发现“蒙尘”的全家福照片

从拍摄层面，灰尘极富视觉表现力。我特意在废墟中关注一类场景：以前的写字台是家中珍贵的大件家具，为防止其表面划伤，通常会放一块玻璃板作为保护。人们会把照片、信件、名片、小票等物品放入桌面和玻璃板之间形成的夹层中，既作为备忘录，又作为展示框，伏案工作随时可以看到。搬迁后人去楼空，照片因为种种原因没有带走，随着时间推移玻璃板上积满灰尘，下层的照片隐约可见。我会觉得拍摄这个场景的作品是“蒙尘”的切题之作。

梁晨：我还想补充一点，可算作影像和广义的空间的关系。当拾得影像的发现和展出同在一座城市时，在地性会在创作过程中以一种意外的方式凸显：《蒙尘与划痕》在武汉参加了一次展览，为了配合上墙的摄影作品的展示，我们复刻了李维前面说的“书桌展示照片”的场景作为作品展陈的一部分。我们买到一个老书桌，为它定做了玻璃板，并把一些捡到的照片放入夹层中。在展览的最后一天，

其中一张照片竟然被前来看展的观众认出来了，他看到了自己的家人和亲戚。

后来我们仔细翻看了这家人的其他照片、相册，在其中找到一张很有纪念意义的照片：这家人曾在自己所住楼的顶层平台拍照，背景中有武汉的地标电视塔，照片拍摄时间在八十年代，当时塔还在建设中。我们带着那张照片回到同样位置，给照片拍了一张照片（图 15），大约半年后，那栋楼就拆了。

煜：我知道两位也经常去跳蚤市场和古董市场购买和收集被遗弃的影像，这个过程和在废墟中拾得影像的性质略有不同，因为市场里的影像被明码标价了，影像的性质发生了变化。想请你们详细讲一讲这方面的经历，和对失落在市场的影像的看法。

李维：老照片在国内古玩体系中属于“杂项”，常与信件、证件、票据，以及所谓“怀旧”的日常物品混在一起，其市场体量和主流的古董大项不在一个层次。但老照片的存在非常普遍，上至拍卖行、中至各大城市的古玩市场、下至跳蚤市场和巷尾临时的鬼市中，都有其身影。在古董市场探索的过程中，我发现其价值评判体系是自上而下的。民国时期的影像、49 年之后的“红色影像”受到推崇。而我们在废墟中发现的家庭影像主要是 80、90 年代影像商业化普及时期的产物，存世量极大。在这个看中稀缺性和所谓“年代感”的市场上，这些照片的价值是非常低微的，往往是几百张才几十块钱，更甚者在一些上游的渠道里，它们是称重出售的。

梁晨：把我们捡的照片汇聚起来，其中能拼凑出几个年代生人的生活轨迹：我们的父母是 60 后，他们这代人结婚生子的年龄大致相仿，小朋友也和我们是同龄的 90 后。我们的成长伴随着柯达、富士等影像巨头的彩扩网络引进中国，影像消费在大、中城市逐渐流行，大量家庭生活的快照被拍摄、冲扩，收纳进彩扩店附赠的小相册里；还有台式影楼的兴起，婚纱照、全家福、周岁照、个人写真，大幅照片被装裱、陈列在家中显眼的位置。这些拾得影是影像消费文化发展的见证，对于我们个人来讲很共情、很感触，但它们在收藏市场上的价值尚未被重视。

李维：我曾在一家线上中古相机店买到一套柯达 EasyShare 系列的 CCD 相机（图 6）。这是一个在模拟和数码技术转型时期的过渡性产品。00 年代初数码相机兴起，但受限于屏幕显示技术，实体照片仍是主流。EasyShare 相机配有打印机底座，让用户可以自己打印照片。我买这套相机是冲着其内存中有前主人拍摄的照片，之前我还未遇到过数码拾得影像。买到的相机套装中有一包未拆封的相纸，其包装上的宣传语让我印象深刻：“Brilliant Color Photo That Last Over 100 Years”（照片的鲜活色彩，100 年不褪），并附有一个星号注释：“Under typical home display conditions.....”（在通常家庭展示条件下）。“100 年”显然是营销话术，或许可以从柯达的研发和质检的标准上自圆其说。纵然有“100 年”的品质，但又有多少照片会被人保存并珍视 100 年呢？



图 6：实物收藏：一套柯达 EasyShare 的相机、相纸与打印机

人们相信相机能忠实记录所见，影像可以保存情感和记忆。但人的思绪仿若“忒修斯之船”，在时间之河中航行，我们渐渐远离昨日的自我，情感和记忆的木板不断磨损、淘汰、更新。被替换下来的木板已不再重要，相应的，缺乏认同感的影像不再被珍视，最终被遗弃在废墟或出售到二手市场或许也就没那么难以理解了。

梁晨：通常解读一张照片，有拍摄者、被拍摄者和观看者三种视角。而如果引入物的层面，还有一个“隶属者”的视角，即拥有照片并对其有编辑、处置权的人。例如安妮·埃尔诺在《超8岁月》(2022)里描述的夫妻之间的“分工”：平常一直是丈夫负责拍摄家庭影像，离婚时丈夫带走了摄影机，把旧影片留给了妻子。清理旧物、搬迁、家庭变故，往往是家庭影像命运的转折点，这其中涉及家庭成员之间的关系，他们通过默契或协商达成的共识，最终决定了这些记忆遗产能否得到保存和传承。前面我们一直强调的，对于家庭影像的离散抱有感伤和悲观的基调，或许也只是一类可能性，因为摄影是可机械复制的技术：翻拍、扫描保留电子版；通过底片制作新版，这些都可能导致一份旧的家庭影像被废弃。我们看到的是结果，但倒推其原因，还有很多不确定因素。

在古玩市场，商人成了这些影像的隶属者，这会造成更复杂的情况：几次我们在市场上翻看家庭相册，同一本相册里照片的年代、其中的人物毫无连贯性，我们会疑惑这到底是不是一家人？后来我们了解到如果一本相册有空缺，卖家会找一些年代相仿的老照片放进去以填满相册，在他们的标准上，满本的相册更具卖相。这个现象在我们和一个影像收藏家交流时他也有提到，他已有识别拼贴相册、和商人博弈的经验了。

煜：下一个问题想问李维和梁晨，在中国当代影像艺术中，越来越多的出现了以拾得影像为基础的作品，比如雷磊，比如苏文。作为这个现象的参与者，想请二位聊聊你们关于这个现象出现在当代中国语境里的思考。对拾得影像的着迷是否与我们的历史大环境有关，或者和当代中国的影像艺术的历程有关？

梁晨：在国内以拾得影像为媒介材料的创作中，《北京银矿》确实是一个标志性作品。对于我和李维两个90后来说，像是在看自己的家庭相册，感到很亲切。比如麦当劳和肯德基在80年代末进入大陆市场，消费“洋快餐”成为当时的时髦。在麦当劳餐厅门口，坐在长椅上与麦当劳叔叔雕塑合影留念，这样的照片我和李维小时候都拍过（图7），所以当我们在废墟里捡到同款照片时感到很惊喜。后来在二手市场上特意留意，很长一段时间也只觅得一张。而在《北京银矿》的图库里这类合影有近200张，由此可以看出这个纪念行为的普遍性，它已是公共记忆的一部分。这或许就是《北京银矿》之所以称为“矿”的原因，一个体量庞大的视觉文化档案库，量变引发了超越摄影研究的可能。



图7：李维（左）梁晨（中）小时候与麦当劳叔叔的合影，拾得影像（右）

李维：现在知识和信息的流通渠道更为顺畅，影像艺术的主题和语汇愈发多样，有多元背景的创作者和研究者，把拾得影像作为探索的方向，使其成为显学。拾得影像蕴含很大的潜力：私密与公共、

个人与集体、记忆与历史、业余与专业，其意涵在诸多矛盾对立间游移、辗转。这种复杂性被艺术家与学者发掘，围绕其产生的创作、研究在摄影、电影、人类学、社会学、历史学等领域里引发回响。《摄影与视觉文化导论》（莫里茨·纽穆勒）里的一篇综述型文章《告别家庭影像》（梅特·桑德拜）对我很有启发，它全面地梳理了家庭影像与拾得影像交集的作品体系；而私影像创作方向让我很感兴趣，创作者面向自己的家庭，进而探讨亲密关系、身份认同等主题，例如我最近看到并很喜欢的一个作品是苏月斫的摄影书《光明楼》。

如果说“大环境”，我认为是怀旧在很多方面成为了流行文化。去回望那些模拟影像技术及其产物，如同去回忆城市的老街旧巷中那间儿时的房间。当一类技术和事物被淘汰、退出实用品的范畴，并经历一段时间后，疏离感和陌生感激发了审美的可能，所谓“距离产生美”。

对于我们的项目，确实在一些进程的时限之内。模拟影像技术是以胶片和纸作为基础的，这类媒介物正在被淘汰的过程中，可能再过 20、30 年，迭代的长尾完成了，就不会再有机会捡到纸质照片和胶片了；同时拆迁也构成了一种时限，我们在和二手市场商贩沟通时，他们表示收购影像制品的高峰期往往与一个城市大拆大建的进程相重合，拆迁造成了众多街区大规模的搬家，很多家庭影像被扔掉、卖废品，最终流散到了市场。

这让我联想到德国艺术家阿希姆·施密特（Joachim Schmid）的作品《街头照片》（图 8）。他从 1982 年开始，在世界各地的街头巷尾捡照片，并对它们进行系统地整理，由此构建了一个拾得影像档案库，这个项目艺术家持续了 30 年，最终在 2012 年停止了。艺术家在一次讲座上解释了原因：在街头很难再捡到照片了，因为影像消费已完全转向数码了。

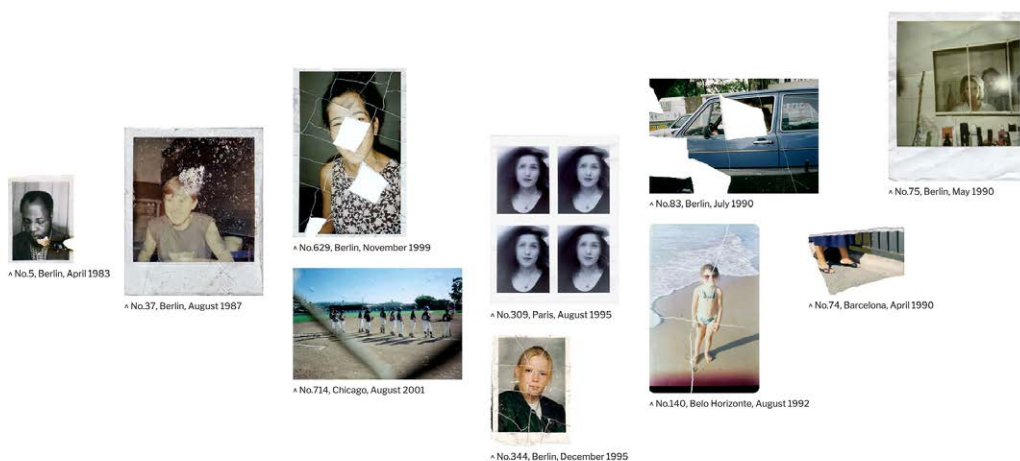


图 8：《街头照片》

（来源 <https://www.lumpenfotografie.de/2006/01/01/bilder-von-der-strasse-1982-2012/>）

梁晨：阿希姆·施密特现在仍在持续创作数码拾得影像的作品。主要从手机和电脑的硬盘里、社交媒体和短视频平台上搜集拾得影像，想见会是非常不同的方法。

我对李维所说的“陌生感”有很真切的体会，我在高校工作，和 00、05 后大学生交流，他们生于数码时代，在成长经历中几乎没有使用过模拟影像技，对于他们来说这些技术不是过时的，反而是新鲜的。比如看到《北京银矿》中的照片，对于 90 后来说是共鸣；但对于 00 后来说，是一种好玩、时髦的视觉风格。毕业季中很多同学拍照留念，不只用手机和相机，还会用胶片、拍立得、CCD 相机，甚至还有 2010 年发售的 iPhone 4 手机，现在怀旧是一种仪式感，也是一种流行文化。

李维：回到废墟的话题，对于探索武汉，我会觉得有紧迫感。疫情造成的停滞已逐渐消失，很多拆迁片区的进程加速，挖掘机进场，很快就把没有拆完的楼全都移平了，还没等我们去仔细探索，很多家庭影像就已经掩埋在瓦砾里了。

拆迁和一个城市的经济发展进程相关，我之前在卫星地图上放大查看相邻的城市，比如杭州就没有像武汉有这么多的老城区和拆迁片区。它已经过了这个阶段，成为了一个网格化、模块化的城市了。或许两三年后，我们探索的这二、三十片区域都消失了，我们的项目也就随之停止了。

在采访开始梁晨提到这些废墟空间的同质化，但每个地域和城市也有其特点，比如竹床和吊子（一种砂锅）就是武汉独属的，在我们去过的废墟空间中高频出现。当有一天商品楼盘拔地而起、路标更名、卫星地图刷新，这些人、物、空间的痕迹就被抹去了，它太微观了，微观到很难被纳入历史。

梁晨：拾得影像的英文原文 found footage，让我联想到一个常用表述，lost and found，既是失物招领，也是失而复得。我们在废墟中捡照片、在二手市场淘照片，成为这些影像新的隶属者。虽然我们可以去推测、探访，但其原本承载的记忆和意义在丢失后就无法追回了，这是一个得而复失（found but still lost）的过程。而我们“拾得”这个动作会和这些影像间产生新的关系、连接，进而寻得新的意义。

很多拾得影像作品，艺术家的工作开始于“拾得”之后。对于我和李维，“拾得”的过程也是重要的，我们作为设计师更多关注的是物的流动，以及影像作为商品的价值变迁。但这些影像的意义是开放、多元，不同的创作者和观者的表达与感受会是丰富多样的。

煜：最后一个问题，想请两位讲一讲现在进行的艺术工作，和未来有哪些作品想要实现？

李维：我试图拍摄灰尘的视觉谱系，前面说到灰尘的时间性，我们去到不同的空间，观察灰尘累积的形态和厚度，可以关联到这个空间被废弃的时间长度：短则 1、2 年，长则 10 年。我想尽可能多的拍摄不同的视觉形态；其次是灰尘的物理特性，为什么时间长了灰尘变成一个团儿（dust bunny）？灰尘会在什么情况下粘在照片或玻璃板表面？我还想拍摄微观和宏观两极：要探究灰尘的成分非常复杂，会涉及显微摄影的范畴，而宏观层面我想拍摄楼被拆除过程中的扬尘；另外还有灰尘和光线的关系：一些蒙尘的照片在废墟里没有拍摄条件，我是把它们平端回家拍摄的。我试图探讨表层灰尘、中层玻璃与下层影像三者的关系时，会给照片打不同角度的光线：侧光看到的是灰尘的质感，人物轮廓隐隐约约；而正光更多关注的是这些人物的形象。总之，灰尘有很多值得挖掘的可能。

另一个计划是关于前面提到的写字台的“桌面相框”，这让我联想到很多人会在电脑或手机桌面（desktop）上置顶（pin）家人的照片，还有人会把重要的照片设置成壁纸或屏保。或许从前屏幕时代到现在，我们的情感诉求是相同的：希望每天都能看见自己珍视的人的影像。但从影像收藏的视角来看，“桌面相框”这种方式是错误的：照片和玻璃长期直接接触，相纸表层的明胶层吸水会和玻璃粘连，试图摘取则会损坏照片，我在废墟中看到了很多这样的情况。更合理的做法是给照片冷裱，或者更专业的装裱会给照片做一个卡纸外框，把玻璃垫起来，确保不与照片表面接触。最近一次我们将一个粘满照片的玻璃板从废墟里平端出来，拿去玻璃店切割。如此就不只是“拾得”影像了，连和它粘在一起的玻璃一起“拾得”。由此启发我想做一系列类似形式的装置作品。

梁晨：李维更多关注的是摄影的语汇，而我看到这些废墟里的照片时，会想到自己家的影像管理的混乱，这使我萌生了整理它们的计划。小时候是妈妈负责管理我家的相册，她对照片和相册的整理井井有条，但底片却未是散乱的，虽然都留着，但都已经对不上号了。最近我把家里的底片都收集起来，开始逐步扫描，在观看过程中发现，原来家里的几本相册，只是这些底片的精选，是众多影像中的一小部分而已。还有在相册里被并排贴在一起的照片，它们原来不并不是同一天的场景，可能隔了好几年，甚至更很长时间。这种在相册中对照片顺序的编辑，像是蒙太奇一般，让我的记忆会以为那些场景是一起发生的。所以通过整理底片，可能会对对应上一些已经淡忘的记忆，或“重新发现”那些再也回不去的空间的影像资料。我很期待，但工作量非常庞大。

李维：我们在废墟中寻找拾得影像，衍生出了一个新的项目：从捡到的一张损毁严重的结婚照开始，我们了解到了一种已经被淘汰的摄影工艺——黑白照片手工上色。通过整理拾得这张照片的屋中信息，我们发现这对结婚的夫妇和我们的父母年龄相仿，他们的孩子也跟我俩是同龄人，这让我们感到共情。于是我们想通过底片重制一张手工着色结婚照，找到这一家人，并将照片归还给他们。也想由此作为线索，去关注落寞的国营照相馆、着色师的群体，以及他们的手工上色技艺。

梁晨：我俩共同喜爱的电影《天使爱美丽》(2001)中有个情节(图9)，主人公艾米莉在家里的洗手间的瓷砖缝隙里，意外发现了一个藏着“珍宝”的盒子，它属于一个40年前曾住在这间屋子里的小男孩，艾米莉展开了一段寻找盒子主人的旅程，最终将其物归原主。在途中她帮助别人，也获得了帮助，并遇到自己爱的人。所以我觉得“物”是会带来人与人之间的连接。这件事对我们来说，呈现形式有多种可能，而某件作品并不是终点，持续体验和思考的过程才最重要。



图9：《天使爱美丽》电影截图

《蒙尘与划痕》作品细节



图 10: 《蒙尘与划痕》系列 从相框中脱落错位的照片



图 11: 《蒙尘与划痕》系列 废墟的内部，有时天花板会被打穿，上帝视角俯瞰“家”



图 12: 《蒙尘与划痕》系列 废墟楼宇几乎都没有了玻璃窗, 远看一栋楼全是一个个漆黑的格子

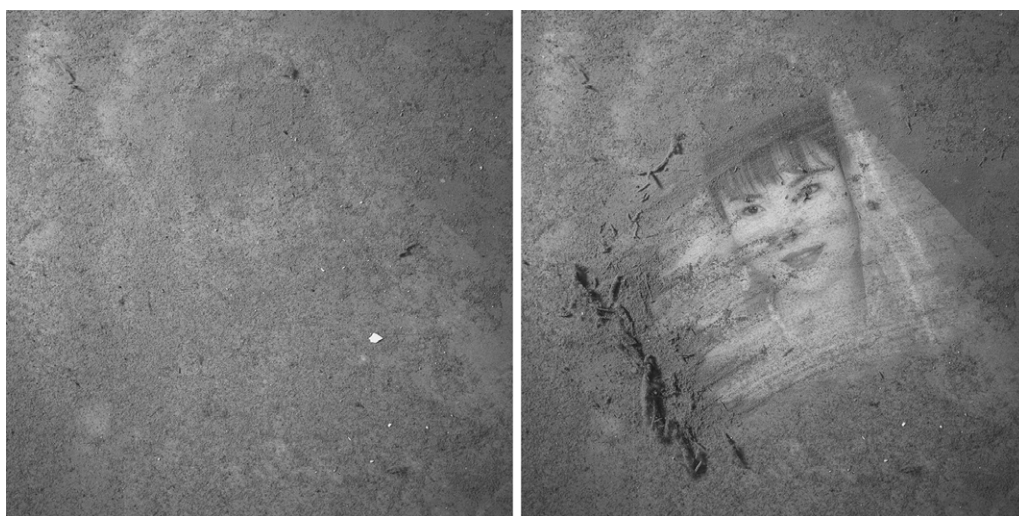


图 13: 《蒙尘与划痕》系列 通过录像带内容所发现被灰尘覆盖的新娘肖像



图 14: 《蒙尘与划痕》系列 写字台玻璃板下的家庭影像



图 15: 《蒙尘与划痕》系列 带回“原址”的拾得影像，背后的建筑物是武汉龟山电视塔，于 1986 年 6 月竣工

NEW RESEARCH ON CHINESE INDEPENDENT CINEMA

华语独立影像新研究

Contemplation and Drifting: Exploring Painterliness in Wang Bing's Works with *Three Sisters* (2012) as the Focus

静观与游弋：以《三姊妹》（2012）为中心探索王兵作品中的绘画性

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Wendy SUN 孙晓雪

Contemplation and Drifting: Exploring Painterliness in Wang Bing's Works with *Three Sisters* (2012) as the Focus

PANG Hong 庞鸿

Abstract

Wang Bing's 王兵 documentary works are often known for their coarse visual style; however, a close reading of his visual texts reveals a distinctive painterly aesthetic and formal sensibility. *Three Sisters* 三姊妹 (2012) exemplifies this: the film's use of static shots, enclosed compositions, and contrasts of light and shadow transforms the screen into a visual space with a painterly frame, producing intertextual resonances with Western naturalist painting. At the same time, through techniques such as wide shots and wide-angle lenses, the film evokes a sense of spatial flow and the aesthetic of 'distance', embodying the traditional Chinese aesthetic notion of *you* 游 (wandering). Using *Three Sisters* as a point of entry, this article examines Wang Bing's works across different periods and finds that these aesthetic characteristics recur throughout his oeuvre, forming a vital part of his authorial style. The painterly elements in his moving images attenuate realism and dissolve narrative, guiding viewers to detach from existing cognitive frameworks and, beyond narrative, to apprehend the lived states of the filmed subjects.

Keywords: documentary aesthetics; painterliness; Wang Bing; *Three Sisters*; *you* (wandering); suspension

Introduction: Exploring the Visual Aesthetics in Wang Bing's Works

In October 1999, Wang Bing brought a borrowed DV camera to Shenyang, where he spent a year and a half filming *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks* 铁西区 (2003). This documentary, which depicts the decline of an industrial region in Northeast China, brought Wang international recognition at film festivals in the early 21st century. Its nine-hour runtime sparked considerable debate around issues of documentary production, aesthetics, and reception. Since then, Wang Bing has continued to create without pause, regularly releasing new works.

Although Wang has explicitly denied in interviews that his works bear political intentions or exposé motives (Wang & Wu, 2007; Futai, 2017), the documentary form's inescapable indexical relationship to reality has led scholars to interpret his films as reflections on Chinese history and contemporary society. Elena Pollacchi, for example, categorizes Wang's films based on subject matter into two groups: 'historical themes—the Anti-Rightist Campaign', and 'contemporary themes—current politics, economics, and everyday life' (Pollacchi, 2017). Similarly, Tetsushi Marukawa attempts to understand works such as *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks* and *Fengming, a Chinese Memoir* 和凤鸣 (2007) by tracing the genealogy of 'modernity', arguing that their content is both part of China's modern history and a means of entering and reconstructing that history (Marukawa, 2008). Beyond content-based approaches, some scholars have turned their attention to the visual characteristics and documentary form of Wang's works. Yet in terms of visual texture and aesthetic significance, his films are often viewed as lacking refinement or beauty. Ayako Saito uses terms such as 'dirt, chaos, the anti-aesthetic, the ugly, the impure, or gross' (Saito, 2013, p.12) to describe Wang's films, suggesting an authorial tendency toward anti-aesthetic or de-aestheticized expression. Pollacchi likewise notes the rough and unpolished appearance of his works, attributing this to harsh shooting conditions, limited

resources, and constrained preparation time (Pollacchi, 2019).

Evaluations of Wang's 'coarseness' in form seem to indirectly support the legitimacy of interpreting his works through the lens of social reflection. However, a look at contemporaneous documentary practices reveals two distinct filmmaking strategies. Filmmakers such as Chen Weijun 陈为军 and Zhou Hao 周浩, who come from a journalism background, tend to produce works that carry a news reportage texture, emphasizing urgency and dramatic impact. In contrast, documentary directors like Wang Bing and Zhao Liang 赵亮, with backgrounds in photography, show a clear concern for artistic expression in their creative approaches. This article aims to move beyond the gravitational pull of 'grand narrative' implied in the documentary's indexical function, and instead focuses on the formal dimension of Wang Bing's work, seeking to uncover its aesthetic expressions beneath the seemingly 'rough' surface.

Pollacchi outlines Wang's creative trajectory in spatial terms, dividing it roughly into four periods—'North-east–Northwest–Southwest–East China'—which together form a counterclockwise loop on the map of China (Pollacchi, 2017). Following *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks*, Wang turned to the northwest region, producing a series of films themed around political memory in China;¹ he then moved south to Yunnan, focusing on groups such as peasants, left-behind children, psychiatric patients, laborers, and refugees; more recently, he has turned his attention to the Yangtze River Delta, portraying the living conditions of contemporary Chinese migrant workers. From an auteurist perspective, early works like *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks* represent 'a process of youth, an irrepressible impulse of life' (Wang & Zhang, 2007, p.66), and cannot yet be said to display full artistic self-awareness. During the Northwest period, Wang devoted considerable effort to his only fiction feature to date, *The Ditch* 夹边沟 (2010). After this, he largely concluded his exploration of the 'Anti-Rightist Campaign' series that had shaped his image as a dissident filmmaker,² and returned to documentary practice.³ In Yunnan, he made a deliberate decision to adjust his filming approach, organizing narrative and characters in ways that differed markedly from earlier works such as *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks*.⁴ This transformation relates to the reality that, in the digital age, filmmakers must confront and manage an overwhelming abundance of raw material, necessarily involving strategic choices in editing. From this period into his East China phase, Wang has remained committed to resisting the 'design' of story in documentary filmmaking, instead seeking the unknown within cinema (Wang, Dong, & Zhang, 2018, pp.299–300). In his recent work *Youth (Spring)* 青春：春 (2023), he adopts a narrative structure composed of several juxtaposed 20-minute segments (Wang & Yang, 2023).

Although Wang places great importance on discovering new narrative possibilities through the medium of film—and has described his considerations of visual language as 'often intuitive, or rather, random' (Wang & Chen, 2020)—image remains the core element of any moving-image work, and it signals the emergence, establishment, and evolution of formal and aesthetic strategies across his career. In this regard, *Three Sisters* (2012), Wang's first documentary filmed after leaving the long-familiar Northeast and Northwest regions for Yunnan, marks a significant turning point. Set in the high-altitude mountainous region of northeast Yunnan, the film centers on Ga Ying 茆英, Zhenzhen 真真, and Fenfen 粉粉—three sisters aged 10, 6, and 4 at the time—and documents their daily survival in a harsh environment with little parental care. In *Three Sisters*, stylistic features that had appeared sporadically in earlier works coalesce into a self-conscious formal signature, which continues into subsequent films. Through visual analysis, this article focuses on the painterly qualities embedded in Wang's imagery, examining how *Three Sisters* fuses dramatic and naturalist modes

of visual expression. Building on this, it traces the recurrence of such painterly elements in Wang's works across different creative periods and discusses how this aesthetic quality shapes viewers' understanding and recognition of the filmed subjects.

Painterly Expression in Documentary Images

The Screen as Frame: On the Possibility of a Painterly Perspective

Exploring the painterly qualities in Wang Bing's works may offer an effective avenue for understanding the aesthetics of his documentaries. In discussing the painterliness of cinematic images, Wang Hengli 王亨里 remarked: 'Nearly all cinematographers must possess some degree of painterly cultivation in order to operate behind the camera... Thus, all realist filmmakers first drew attention through the painterly quality of their images (Wang, 1989, p. 26).' This painterliness differs from the photographic quality that captures specific moments: unlike the past tense implied by the instantaneity of photographic exposure, painterliness endows the image with a sense of presence or contemporaneity.⁵ On another level, Wang Bing's deliberate blurring of the boundaries between film and installation art in his practice also encourages us to examine moving images beyond the constraints of medium and materiality. When the viewing space and formal presentation shift, the potential for the image to evoke a visceral 'shudder' in the viewer is diminished—especially when viewers are moving through space—recasting the image as an 'exhibit' rather than a 'projection'. This transformation signals a latent affinity between the cinematic screen and the picture frame.

Erik Barnouw observed that the influence of painting on documentary dates back to the 1920s, when many painters turned to filmmaking and introduced new perspectives and techniques into the medium (Barnouw, 1992). However, the painterly qualities in Wang Bing's work differ from the rhythmic and abstract elements in the early non-fiction films Barnouw described. In Wang's case, painterliness is most evident at the level of the shot itself. As Pascal Bonitzer noted, 'Comparing a filmmaker to a painter begins with the concept of the shot... The production of the shot brings the filmmaker closer to the painter, and film closer to painting' (Bonitzer, 1999, pp. 36–37). In Wang Bing's films, elements such as color and chiaroscuro rendered through long takes transform the screen into a painterly canvas. Thom Andersen has argued that the colors in *Three Sisters* resemble Giotto's frescoes (Andersen, 2012), while David D'Arcy noted in his review of *Ta'ang* 德昂 (2016) that Wang, through improvisational filming and minimal resources, evokes the intimacy found in the paintings of Georges de La Tour (D'Arcy, 2016).

These remarks point to the viability of discussing Wang Bing's images in painterly terms, though they largely remain at the level of intuitive perception. If we are to probe more deeply into the mechanisms generating these associations and viewing experiences, a straightforward hypothesis might be: the image must tend toward stillness—that is, cinematographically, camera movement should be minimized. Wang frequently employs static shots and near-motionless handheld cameras in many of his films, which both reduces interference in the filmed space and grants the image a stillness akin to that of a painting. Yet, given the inherent properties of the moving-image medium, it would be simplistic to treat the fixed shot as the sole criterion for establishing affinities between film and painting.

André Bazin famously argued that 'the picture frame is centripetal, while the screen is centrifugal' (Bazin, 1987, p. 199). Roland Barthes echoed this: 'The screen [as Bazin observed] is not a frame; it is a masking

device. Characters exiting the frame continue to act beyond it: the ‘blind field’ is the continuous repetition of partial images’ (Barthes, 2002, p. 89). In tension with this assertion, however, is the centripetal visual effect found in certain images within Wang Bing’s films.



Figure 1. *Three Sisters*, Wang Bing (2012)



Figure 2. *The Potato Eaters*, Vincent van Gogh (1885)



Figure 3. *Ta'ang*, Wang Bing (2016)



Figure 4. *The Dice Players*, Georges de La Tour (1650- 1651)

For instance, in the ensemble scenes of *Three Sisters* and *Ta'ang*, both filmed during Wang’s Yunnan period, one can find similarly structured images: characters gather around a dining table, a bonfire, or another focal object. A single, limited light source creates dramatic contrasts between light and shadow, further diminishing the realism of off-screen space and generating a sense of visual enclosure. If these scenes were juxtaposed with Vincent van Gogh’s *The Potato Eaters* (1885) and Georges de La Tour’s *The Card Players* (1650–1651), the similarity would not lie solely in their comparable chromatic palettes. In the dining scene of *Three Sisters* and in *The Potato Eaters*, dim lighting concentrates on the characters’ faces and the table, and the surrounding arrangement enhances the visual cohesion of the composition (see Figures 1–2). In *Ta'ang* and *The Dice Players*, figures are arranged in a regular pattern, and the simplicity of the composition enhances its stability and order (see Figures 3–4). Known as the ‘painter of candlelight’, La Tour was a leading exponent of tenebrism, whose paintings used single light sources to produce dramatic chiaroscuro. In *Ta'ang*, the spartan interiors of ethnic minority refugees displaced by war are similarly rendered in deep shadows by lone light sources, obscuring environmental details. As viewers’ attention is drawn toward the illuminated center or the figures gathered within, the distinction between on-screen and off-screen space becomes sharply defined.

As an observational filmmaker, Wang Bing rarely directs the behavior or postures of those in front of the camera. His painterly style emerges instead from photographic adjustments in distance and angle. Maeda Yoshitaka, a cinematographer who worked with Wang, described Wang’s instructions as follows: ‘Start with a static shot and keep filming... Even when the camera does not move, things outside the viewfinder will eventually enter the frame’ (Maeda, 2018, p. 15). This suggests that while Wang does not entirely negate the profilmic or the off-screen world, under his method of filming, the screen is not a ‘window’ in the realist

sense—it becomes more like a trap, awaiting its subjects to enter and then isolating them within. This concept of the screen provides grounds for exploring the painterly qualities in Wang’s work: namely, that the elements within the frame tend to constitute a closed system in two-dimensional space. According to Deleuze, the ‘off-screen’ possesses both a ‘relative’ and an ‘absolute’ dimension. While the former constantly gestures toward and connects with the space beyond the frame, the latter, he writes, describes ‘a closed system that opens onto the cosmos through its very closure; it is no longer a set, nor does it belong to the order of the visible’ (Deleuze, 2016, pp. 28–29). Under this framework, once the image is spatially enclosed within a two-dimensional plane, the off-screen can potentially extend into the fourth and fifth dimensions—namely, time and spirit. From this standpoint, an investigation into the painterliness of Wang Bing’s work begins with the spatial relation between what is within and beyond the frame. The screen’s borders function like the edges of a canvas, severing the image from external space. On this basis, the following section will examine how painterliness is expressed and functions in *Three Sisters* and other works by Wang Bing.

The Other Within the ‘Frame’

In 2010, while passing through Xiyangtang Village 洗羊塘 in Zhaotong 昭通市, Yunnan Province, Wang Bing encountered three sisters, all under the age of ten at the time. He later decided, under commission from the Franco-German public television network Arte, to make a documentary focused on the three girls. Using two cameras, he filmed for ten days but was forced to leave due to altitude sickness. The first two hours and ten minutes of the film’s footage was shot by Wang Bing. Subsequently, cinematographers Huang Wenhai 黄文海 and Li Peifeng 李沛峰 continued filming for six more days under Wang’s remote guidance, and their material forms the final 20 minutes of the film.

In terms of lighting and tonal quality, some scenes in *Three Sisters* exhibit the dark tonalities reminiscent of Western naturalist painting. The interior of the sisters’ home is nearly devoid of light; bright daylight entering through the doorway creates sharp contrasts between light and shadow. Fujiki Kōsuke notes that Wang Bing’s other works—such as *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks*, *Ta’ang*, and *Bitter Money* 苦钱 (2016)—also employ light-shadow contrasts, but these effects are most pronounced and dramatic in *Three Sisters* (Fujiki, 2018). In this film, the subjects inside the house are frequently enveloped in darkness, with only certain portions illuminated by strong light. The film opens with this stylized presentation of the three girls (Figure 5), establishing the audience’s initial impression of them. This technique—using light contrast to articulate the relationship between figures and space—is repeatedly deployed in subsequent interior scenes (Figures 6–7). The strong side lighting, simplified composition, and de-idealized realism evoke associations with the works of Caravaggio (Figure 8). While the sisters are not depicted in scenes as dramatic as Saint Ursula’s martyrdom at the hands of the Huns, the visual impact of their figures, silhouetted against the dark background, achieves a dramatic intensity through visual means alone, independent of narrative.



Figure 5. *Three Sisters*, Wang Bing (2012)



Figure 6. *Three Sisters*, Wang Bing (2012)



Figure 7. *Three Sisters*, Wang Bing (2012)



Figure 8. *The Martyrdom of Saint Ursula*, Caravaggio (1610)

Bill Nichols has argued that the primary function of documentary is to convey information in order to satisfy the viewer's desire for knowledge (Nichols, 1991, p.31). Yet the images in *Three Sisters* clearly depart from this function. The darkness obscures detail, making it difficult for the viewer to gather information. Jacques Rancière once described the 'painterly power' of Rineke Dijkstra's photographic series *Beach Portraits* (1992–1994)—a judgment equally applicable to the girls enshrouded in darkness in *Three Sisters*. Because the dark backgrounds dissolve contextual detail, the girls—like the Polish adolescent in Dijkstra's image, sitting on the sand and eating potatoes—become anonymous figures to the viewer. The distance and mystery that emerge from this presentation 'are very similar to the mysterious quality found in the portrait paintings that fill art museums' (Rancière, 2018a, p.140).

Seventeenth-century Spanish Baroque painter Murillo created a series of paintings on the theme of street children and beggars. On the level of surface resemblance, the ragged children in *Three Sisters*—playing, delousing—recall the subjects of Murillo's works (Figures 9–12). When Hegel discussed the 'noble soul' embodied even in genre paintings of mundane subjects, he cited Murillo's series as exemplary. In his view, 'in these half-naked, impoverished youths, there shines—both inwardly and outwardly—a kind of transcendental innocence that even mendicant monks could not attain.' These children, he argues, 'remain unbound by outward circumstances; no matter their appearance, they preserve their inner freedom, and this is precisely the realm pursued by the beauty of the ideal... They lack special interests or goals, not because they lack vitality, but on the contrary, because they are immersed in a sense of contentment and bliss no different from the gods of Olympus. Sitting on the ground, they neither act nor speak, express neither displeasure nor complaint—they simply exist as human beings' (Hegel, 1995, p.183). To draw a connection between the three sisters and Hegel's notion of ideal beauty is not only to note the visual and thematic parallels between *Three Sisters* and Murillo's paintings, but also to highlight how the painterly shots and dark, obscuring backgrounds blur the visual markers used to identify social status (Rancière, 2018a, p.152). In doing so, the girls in the frame begin to approximate the 'free individuals' portrayed in Murillo's works (Hegel, 1995, p.183). During the prolonged moments—lasting seconds or even minutes—in which such images appear on screen, the suspension of narrative and identification interrupts the viewer's existing cognition and imagination, generating a sense of estrangement. Preconceived notions shaped by power and social systems lose their efficacy, and the filmed subjects are momentarily freed from the net of meaning. At such a moment, the viewer is no longer confronting a pitiful, impoverished girl from some nameless village in China,⁶ nor—as Susan Sontag puts it—are they merely witnessing suffering that is 'too vast, too inescapable, too massive' to inspire anything but an empty, impotent sympathy (Sontag, 2006, p.73). Instead, what emerges is a concrete individual stripped of measurable scales and classifying labels. If, from the perspective of cinematic cognition, the figure of the

‘other’ is always immanent to the act of viewing,⁷ then Wang Bing’s cool, restrained depiction proposes an ‘other’ that escapes existing regimes of knowledge and power. As the three girls emerge from the shadows, their identities, circumstances, and value cannot be defined by social, cultural, or historical frameworks the viewer already possesses. Unlike the ‘other’ constructed through the viewing subject in ethnographic film, these girls are presented as more concrete, real, and free individuals; but precisely because they elude conventional frames of reference, they also remain unfamiliar—another kind of ‘other’ that cannot be explained through existing epistemologies.



Figure 9. *Three Sisters*, Wang Bing (2012)



Figure 10. *Three Sisters*, Wang Bing (2012)



Figure 11. *Boys Playing Dice*,
Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1675)



Figure 12. *The Young Beggar*,
Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1645-1650)

This examination of *Three Sisters* reveals how stylized imagery generates qualities that resonate with painting and influences the viewer’s understanding of the filmed subject. Looking across Wang Bing’s filmography, one finds that the characteristic dark backgrounds in *Three Sisters*, which separate the visual field from the off-screen ‘blind field’, had already appeared in earlier works such as *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks* and *Brutality Factory* 暴虐工厂 (2007) (Figures 13–15). In these images, darkness around the frame fully encloses the central subject, rendering them as silhouettes stripped of features and detail. The dramatic use of shadow not only estranges the subject from the realism of high-key lighting environments but also blocks the entry of off-screen elements, dampening the viewer’s imagination of what lies beyond the frame. The fixed camera reinforces this effect, sealing what is captured within a frame-isolated world. Nevertheless, such images constitute only a limited portion of those films’ total runtime. Though they form memorable moments, they do not yet define the films’ dominant visual characteristics. It is not until the recent film *Man in Black* 黑衣人 (2023) that Wang Bing extends this aesthetic across the entire work by making full use of theatrical space and shooting exclusively in low light (Figure 16). While *Man in Black* may seem stylistically distinct from Wang’s previous films—featuring uncharacteristically extensive use of music and cinematography by Caroline Champetier in which the camera actively rotates and moves around the subject—it in fact adopts a

visual strategy strikingly similar to scenes in *Three Sisters*: the use of a single light source to produce a dark background and stark contrast evokes the visual impact of chiaroscuro painting (Figure 17), granting the image dramatic force and presenting the filmed subject as an individual independent of discourse and definition. Thus, the technique of treating the edges of the screen as a pictorial frame to instill painterly qualities in the image first emerged tentatively in Wang Bing's early work, was consciously employed in *Three Sisters*, and becomes foregrounded as a fully developed stylistic device in *Man in Black*.



Figure 13. *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks*, Wang Bing(2003)



Figure 14. *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks*, Wang Bing(2003)



Figure 15. *Brutality Factory*, Wang Bing (2007)



Figure 16. *Man in Black*, Wang Bing (2023)



Figure 17. *Man in Black*, Wang Bing (2023)

The Aesthetics of *You* (Wandering)

The images in Wang Bing's work not only exhibit affinities with the visuality of Western painting but also harbor a foundation in Chinese traditional aesthetics. This article does not seek to impose a narrow nationalist reading; however, as Jean-Michel Frodon notes, when contemporary Western directors employ the long take, their methods are often closely linked to the European spiritual heritage—particularly Christianity and Western philosophical traditions—whereas the way Wang Bing constructs elements of reality and imagination bears deep connections to Chinese traditional culture and philosophy (Frodon, 2007). A similar view was expressed by Huang Wenhai, cinematographer and documentary director who has worked with Wang: 'Wang Bing's films are close to Chinese traditional aesthetics; in terms of camera movement, they emphasize *qiyun*

shengdong 气韵生动 (spiritual rhythm and vitality), and his compositions exhibit a sense of detachment... The structure and overall layout of his films are akin to traditional Chinese painting, leaving blank spaces for the audience to contemplate.’ (Huang, 2016, p. 347)

To articulate how Chinese traditional artistic forms are manifested in Wang Bing’s documentaries, this article draws on Lin Niantong’s 林年同 aesthetic concept of *you* (wandering). In the aesthetics of Chinese landscape painting, *you* is a concept deeply embedded in traditional Chinese philosophy. Jiang Jin’s 姜今 1963 essay *On the Beauty of Form* 论形式美 emphasized the importance of *you* in discussing multi-perspective composition and spatial treatment (Jiang, 1963). Influenced by Zong Baihua’s 宗白华 aesthetic thought, Lin Niantong synthesized theories grounded in Chinese classical aesthetics—Zheng Junli’s 郑君里 handscroll-style layout, Han Shangyi’s 韩尚义 ‘changing views with each step’, Jiang Jin’s ‘scattered-point perspective’, and Nie Jing’s 聂晶 ‘resonance of the frame’—to systematically develop a Chinese film aesthetic marked by the notion of *you*.

In referencing Lin’s concept of *you*, this article does not ignore its historical limitations.⁸ Lin’s aesthetics of *you* were formulated primarily in response to Chinese cinema traditions of the 1950s and 60s. Lin passed away in May 1990 and thus did not live to see the rise of Chinese independent documentary. Nonetheless, as one scholar writes, ‘Though Lin’s theory of “wandering through the frame” has flaws, it is not a rigid doctrine, but a dynamic system that continues to be enriched through historical development’ (Huang, 2021, p. 11). The aim of this article is to adopt *you* as a systematic aesthetic point of reference and to extend and elaborate it within the realm of documentary aesthetics.

Lin Niantong argued that *you* constitutes the highest aesthetic ideal in Chinese art and forms the core of Chinese aesthetic thought. Chinese traditional painting influenced by this aesthetic exhibits shifting perspectives and a non-linear visual path. This influence extends to the visual language and spatial construction of Chinese cinema. From this standpoint, Chinese film aesthetics may be understood as an aesthetics of *you*. Much attention to the aesthetics of *you* has focused on what Lin described as ‘dynamic, continuous shot composition’, emphasizing the spatial awareness produced by camera movement and the connection between horizontal tracking shots in film and the horizontal unfolding of handscroll paintings, thereby linking painterliness to motion (Wu, 2017). Building on these insights, this article analyzes how the aesthetic of ‘distance’ emerges through the use of wide shots in Wang Bing’s films, revealing the flowing spatial consciousness embedded in the theory of *you*.

In discussing ‘long shots’ and ‘panoramic views’, Lin argued that the spatial treatment in Chinese traditional art forms—including painting—is foundational for film spatial theory. Drawing on Zong Baihua’s observation that Chinese painting space ‘tends toward the distant’, Lin wrote: ‘The way Chinese filmmakers construct spatial positions has its roots in the classical tradition; it seeks to take form from the “distant”.’ (Lin, 1991, p. 78) The sense of distance presented in Wang Bing’s films is closely tied to this spatial principle of *yuan* (distance). Fujii Jinshi points out that the distinctive sense of distance between camera and subject in Wang’s films ‘is almost always a point of contention in discussions of his work’ (Fujii, 2020, p. 195)—so much so that the phrase ‘Wang Bing’s distance’ has emerged. Wang himself has stated that he prefers to use lenses with wide angles, believing that a 28mm wide-angle lens captures an image most similar to what the human eye sees.⁹ According to Wang, many of his films are shot with ultra-wide 18mm lenses.¹⁰ These wide

lenses allow the camera to capture expansive scenes even when shooting close to subjects, avoiding spatial constriction, and thereby provide a technical basis for what has come to be called ‘Wang Bing’s distance’.

At the same time, the perspective effects produced by wide-angle lenses demand particular camera height. Wang has noted that raising the camera while using a wide lens often leads to unsatisfactory results. As a result, he rarely shoulder-mounts the camera, preferring to shoot handheld at lower angles.¹¹ This low positioning causes subjects to be framed from below, often making the sky dominate the upper portion of the image, resulting in blank space and a sense of expansiveness. Such a treatment of space—reserving room for ‘heaven and earth’—is also common in traditional Chinese painting. Drawing from the *three distances* theory proposed by Northern Song landscape painters Guo Xi 郭熙 and Han Zhuo 韩拙, Lin observed that spatial creation in Chinese cinema aims for ‘effortless ease in gazing upward or downward; the spirit wanders in the profound’ (Lin, 1991, p. 99). Given the plateau environment of Yunnan, the location of *Three Sisters*, the film serves as an exemplary case of *three-distance* composition.

In *Three Sisters*, outdoor scenes are primarily structured around expansive space, with open areas left within the composition. As the girls exit the dark-toned interiors shaped by rudimentary lighting, they enter broad landscapes framed by the camera. With normal exposure, the image abandons the selective lighting constraints of tenebrist painting and presents every element in the frame, with the human figure occupying only a small portion. Cinematographer Huang Wenhui describes these depictions of exterior space as ‘constructing a stage with heaven and earth, where the person exists alone or prostrates on the land between them’ (Huang, 2016, p. 354). When Ga Ying, who is being filmed, is placed among the mountains of the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, the camera captures the girl in the foreground, a valley at mid-distance, and distant mountains and sky—all in one frame (Figure 18). The visual expanse reveals the coexistence of multiple vantage points, encompassing all three traditional Chinese distances. Just as in traditional landscape painting, what the audience sees in that moment is ‘a broad, vast, and expansive space’ (Lin, 1991, p. 99), in which ‘the three distances can converge or disperse at will’ (Lin, 1991, p. 80). Such spatial treatments are omnipresent in the film’s portrayal of Yunnan’s majestic terrain. In one scene, when the girls’ father returns to the countryside after failing to support the family through migrant labor in the city, Wang again uses an extreme wide shot to show the snowy, expansive plateau. The figure seems to appear out of the earth, wrapped in a cloak that blends into the land, and as if ready to vanish into the environment at any moment (Figure 19). In small-aperture shots, the visual path extends from the nearby ground to distant peaks. The diagonal upward movement of the figure suggests the slope’s steepness while intersecting with the horizontally extending terrain. As the character passes before the camera, it does not follow, but instead remains at a low angle, watching him ascend the hill, leaving the sky again as blank space (Figure 20). In this minute-long take filled only with wind, the image’s treatment of spatial vastness and visual blankness conveys the immensity of the natural world.



Figure 18. *Three Sisters*, Wang Bing(2012)



Figure 19. *Three Sisters*, Wang Bing(2012)



Figure 20. *Three Sisters*, Wang Bing(2012)

While the distant and fluid aesthetics in *Three Sisters* owe much to the uniqueness of the shooting environment, similar aesthetics of *you* can already be observed in Wang Bing's earlier Northwest-period films. For example, *Man with No Name* 无名者 (2009) opens with a 15-second static long take that suggests the expansive and unfolding space typical of landscape painting (Figures 21–22). The film's only character is a nameless man Wang encountered while traveling between Beijing and northwestern China to make *The Ditch* (2010). Wang later returned repeatedly to visit and film him. The man lives in a cave and remains silent throughout the film. As in *Three Sisters*, the camera refrains from revealing or detailing his life, maintaining distance and often filming him in long shots as he labors in the fields, placing the subject within wide-open spaces. Huang Wenhai comments: '*Man with No Name* shows how one survives in the vastness of heaven and earth. It presents no concrete historical or social space, but instead evokes the poetic state in Du Fu's "Thoughts on a Night Journey 旅夜书怀": "Adrift—what do I resemble? A lone seagull between sky and earth"' (Huang, 2016, p. 352).

In the recent *Youth (Homecoming)* 青春：归 (2024), Wang Bing returns to Yunnan with migrant garment workers traveling back to their hometowns. After filming a local wedding, he includes a 15-second static shot to depict the spatial environment. The winding valley and layered mountains create a deep, expansive spatial atmosphere, once again evoking the spirit of the three distances (Figure 23). Compared to the long, claustrophobic indoor scenes in the 'Youth Trilogy', this panoramic image opens a kind of breathing space, signaling that although these young people are trapped in enclosed workshops and mechanical labor, they come from a world that reveals 'the eternal vitality of the will to live' (Huang, 2016, p. 348). Deleuze argues that the long shot is a perception-image, meaning that the movement-image becomes perception in the panoramic view. From this standpoint, we may understand Wang Bing's spatial imagery expressing *yuan* (distance) and the aesthetics of *you* not as forms of subjective perception, but as a return to an objective, holistic perception integrated with the material world. Deleuze notes that cinema's 'central motility, its variability of framing, always constructs vast, decentered, and unbalanced zones', and the aesthetics of *you* enables the image 'to return to the primordial system of the movement-image, that is, universal variation, a total, objective, and indeterminate perception' (Deleuze, 2016, p. 103).



Figure 21. *Man with No Name*, Wang Bing(2009)



Figure 22. *Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains* 富春山居, Huang Gongwang 黄公望 (1350)

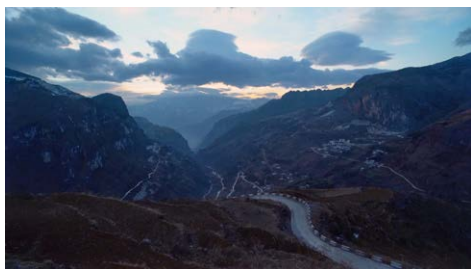


Figure 23. *Youth (Homecoming)*, Wang Bing(2024)



Figure 24. *Traveling Amid Streams and Mountains* 溪山行旅, Liu Yu 柳埭 (1680)

The Suspended Spectator

To discuss painterliness in film is not to simply equate cinema with painting. As Siegfried Kracauer cautioned, cinema should not be ‘subordinated once again to the dominion of traditional art, as experimental filmmakers tend to do’ (Kracauer, 1997, p. 192). There has been extensive discussion on the distinctions between painting and film. Walter Benjamin, from the perspective of the spectator, observed that unlike film, painting cannot be consumed synchronously by a collective audience (Benjamin, 2002). John Berger believed that oil painting possesses a kind of ‘directness’ that shortens the temporal distance between the act of creation and the viewer’s gaze—viewers can intuitively grasp the scene through the materials used by the painter (Berger, 2008, p. 31). This ‘directness’ is something that moving images clearly lack. To borrow Christian Metz’s words: ‘Characteristic of the cinema is not the imaginary that it may happen to represent, it is the imaginary that it is from the start’ (Metz, 2006, p. 41). Conversely, Mitry argued that the psychological compensation mechanisms in film might render even static images dynamic and spatially dimensional (Mitry, 1997)—a mechanism that may not apply to painting.

Nevertheless, the painterly shots in Wang Bing’s work serve a particular function. These shots are often filmed with a static camera, or depict content in which little to no motion or change occurs, tending toward stillness.¹² Static images interrupt narrative flow, making it difficult for viewers to enter the film’s story world, and hindering their ability to apply Robert Scholes’s concept of ‘narrativity’¹³ to fill in narrative gaps. Before proceeding further, it is necessary to revisit the relationship between continuous visual flow and viewer cognition.

Berger noted that the continuity of images in cinema constitutes an irreversible assertion (Berger, 2008, p. 26). This, too, is one of the differences Benjamin identified between cinema and painting. Unlike painting, which allows for associative contemplation, film disperses the viewer’s attention—just as the viewer begins to think, ‘the image on the screen has already changed’ (Benjamin, 2002, p. 124).¹⁴ In response, Roland

Barthes sought to locate the ‘third meaning’ in film—that is, what he called the obtuse meaning, ‘a signifier without a signified’. For Barthes, cinematic meaning is revealed precisely at this third level, and he advocated reading still frames, including film stills (Barthes, 2012).

While the painterly images in Wang Bing’s work are not strictly immobile, they do, to a degree, offer the possibility of uncovering what Barthes termed the ‘third meaning’. Within an extremely slow rhythm, his shots—like still frames—accentuate the ‘elements within the shot—the internal fragments’ (Barthes, 2012, p. 108).¹⁵ More significantly, just as the obtuse meaning resists narrativity,¹⁶ the shots in Wang’s films, while evoking a kinship with painting, do not submit to narrative control. They are ‘like moments of stasis within the motion of celluloid, neither integrated into the whole nor synchronized with the rhythm of narration.’ (Bonitzer, 1999, p. 40)

At this point, one might mistakenly equate ‘stillness’ with ‘anti-narrative’. And if still imagery is not unique to Wang’s films, then perhaps the distinctiveness of his auteur style is called into question. But in fact, not all static images are non-narrative. Zhao Liang’s *Petition* 上访 (2009) and *Behemoth* 悲兮魔兽 (2015) also employ static, contemplative shots, though their function differs from those in Wang Bing’s works. In *Petition*, one scene depicts a bedridden man in the ‘petitioners’ village’, who recounts how he was paralyzed by police brutality and how his brother was also injured. A ten-second close-up of the brother is followed by another ten-second shot showing the entire family in their makeshift shelter. As the four people remain largely still, the image takes on the texture of a tableau vivant. In *Behemoth*, the tendency toward prolonged stillness is even more pronounced. A sequence depicting steelworkers presents detailed close-ups of skin textures, with one laborer’s face held in frame for a full 20 seconds. These fixed, static shots resemble detailed portraiture. In another scene, a woman holds the portrait of her husband, who died of pneumoconiosis. The shot lasts for 30 seconds. As in *Three Sisters*, the background recedes into darkness, and the viewer’s gaze is drawn to the figure and the photo. However, unlike Wang Bing, Zhao Liang’s use of stillness conveys a testimonial function—these images are integrated into narrative, intended to evoke pathos. This emotional effect illustrates another possible relationship between painting and film. As Okada Atsushi observes, what cinema inherits and expands from painting are responses such as ‘pathos’ and ‘ecstasy’; this consistency in inner experience even shaped the development of montage theory (Okada, 2015).

In contrast to the evidentiary and emotional aims Zhao Liang pursues, Wang Bing’s tranquil imagery momentarily extracts the viewer from narrative, offering a space for reflection. This feature has been present since his earliest works. Patrick Smith, in analyzing *Tie Xi Qu: West of the Tracks*, remarked that Wang Bing’s films rely on pure ‘pictorial contemplation’, which may even displace narrative backgrounds (Smith, 2015, p. 186). This sense of stasis becomes increasingly pronounced in Wang’s work after *Tie Xi Qu*. Like many of his films, *Three Sisters* is composed of fragmented scenes from everyday life, alternating between interior and exterior spaces without a clear logic, which blurs the film’s temporal progression. Generally, ‘in cinema, it seems that any single image is defined by all that preceded it’ (Benjamin, 2002, p. 24). But in Wang’s films, when such continuity is broken and the screen ceases to provide narrative cues, the viewer’s process of comprehension is suspended. Fixed shots and static imagery contribute to this effect, so that time in *Three Sisters* no longer flows in a linear, discernible way, but is instead perceived in blocks, lingering in segments, resistant to being charted along a measurable axis.

The reflective response that these nearly motionless shots invite is distinct from Benjamin's notion of 'concentration'. The viewer neither enters the image, as Benjamin suggested of Chinese painters, nor 'absorbs the work of art' (Benjamin, 2002, p. 124). Rather, the viewer is suspended between these two poles—unable to sink into a predetermined narrative, and unable to advance 'narrativity' based on established habits and expectations.¹⁷ The sense of stasis in Wang's work more closely aligns with Jacques Rancière's idea of interruption produced by 'pensiveness'. Rancière argues that the nature of contemplation can overturn the traditional relationship between narrative and expression. In other words, visual logic is no longer in service of the plot but acts to interrupt it, overlapping with it instead. Painterly scenes break from the logic of classical narrative chains and construct another kind—'without beginning or end, without causality, diffused at random' (Rancière, 2018a, p. 159)—such that 'all conclusions are suspended' (Rancière, 2018a, p. 157). What was once a 'collective body' positioned within the framework of grand narrative may, through the still image, return to the nameless individual. At the same time, the spatial consciousness of *yuan* (distance) amplifies this effect of interruption. This spatial 'distance' exists not only within the frame but also between viewer and subject. Such distance recalls Byung-Chul Han's idea of 'distanced nearness', which frees things from the domination of the acting subject: 'Beauty only reveals itself to the long, contemplative gaze. Where the subject of action withdraws, where its blind compulsion to the object is broken, things are given back their otherness, their mysteriousness, their foreignness, their secret' (Han, 2019, p. 92). In this process, the image leads the viewer toward the *absolutely other*, and the three sisters appear as Hegel's 'gods on Olympus'.

The painterliness of the image, in moments when the subjects are freed from established associations, enables what Rancière calls a 'redistribution of the sensible'. The visual presentation of the image offers an aesthetic distance, within which 'all definable relations between the artist's intention, the sensuous forms presented within the artistic field, the gaze of the individual viewer, and the state of the collective are suspended' (Rancière, 2018b, p. 71). Conventionally, documentaries portraying poverty and suffering are viewed as revelations of concrete social problems; once the persecuted or oppressed appear on screen, they are assumed to embody some form of resistance. This assumption may trace back to John Grierson's famous dictum: the screen is a pulpit, and film is a hammer for social reform. Such teleological thinking presupposes an audience. In this model, every filmed subject, while becoming a symbol of accusation, is also further confined within systems of social order and power. In contrast, *Three Sisters* neither avoids nor foregrounds historical issues or social conditions. As a result, each character appears at ease. While they survive and labor in harsh environments, they are also manifestations of 'free play' and 'free appearance' (Schiller, 2012), unmarked by special treatment, intention, or narrative design. 'Man is indestructible because capable of being infinitely destroyed.'¹⁸ This is a conception of the human in a universal sense, not bound to any narrow geographic or ideological frame. In this sense, the girls on screen resist viewers with strong opinions and fixed expectations—for the meaning or value they seek may remain entirely elusive. When reflection on human universality and existential condition replaces narrowly defined agendas, any 'interventionist gaze' begins to dissolve. The three sisters no longer face any particular group of spectators, but instead the anonymous, incidental viewer—and their *detached gaze*.

Conclusion

This article has explored the painterly qualities and aesthetic expression in Wang Bing's work from the perspective of image-text and the ontology of cinema. The closed compositions and dim backgrounds in his films reject the 'blind field' beyond the screen, while simultaneously concealing the kinds of detailed infor-

mation that documentaries often strive to convey. At the same time, in shots where camera movement tends toward stillness, space unfolds as both expansive and fluid. Multiple vantage points coexist within a single frame, reducing the perception of depth and rendering the concept of *you* (wandering) in concrete visual terms. In these painterly images, the filmed subjects are no longer bound by the meanings imposed by power-knowledge structures, but instead appear before the viewer as unfamiliar and singular beings.

There remains considerable room for further inquiry into the aesthetics of *you*. For instance, this concept is also reflected in the dynamic interaction between Wang Bing's camera and the space it observes. His works often blur the paradigms of 'seeing/being seen' and 'inside/outside', achieving a state in which 'subject and object vanish, self and world are unified' (Wang, 2011, p. 97). As the camera moves fluidly through the filmed space, the cool detachment characteristic of direct cinema is softened. Furthermore, in the series of works Wang shot in Zhejiang Province following his Yunnan period, one finds a pronounced tendency toward anti-empathic ensemble portrayals and loosely structured narratives. These recall Lin Niantong's narrative aesthetics of 'separation and convergence generating continuity'. His rejection of rhythm and narrative tightness, and his presentation of characters outside of temporal sequence and causal logic, not only create intertextual resonance with the narrative structures of classical Chinese literature but also evoke the shifting viewpoints found in traditional East Asian painting. Due to constraints of length, this article has focused solely on the painterly qualities of the moving image; other questions and topics are left for future exploration.

Notes

1 Although Wang Bing also shot *Crude Oil* 原油 (2008) and *Coal Money* 煤钱 (2009) in the northwest—films less directly tied to historical-political themes—he has stated in interviews that these were by-products created during spare time while making *The Ditch* 夹边沟 (2010) (Wang, 2013).

2 Completed in 2018, *Dead Souls* 死灵魂 (2018) may reinforce the impression of Wang Bing's long-term preoccupation with the Anti-Rightist Movement; in fact, most of the footage was shot between 2005 and 2008 during interview research initially conducted for *The Ditch*. Dissatisfied with the narrative form of *The Ditch*, Wang began to consider constructing a more reality-oriented account through documentary footage. He finalized the structure of *Dead Souls* in 2014 and began re-shooting and editing in 2016 (see: 1. Video: 'Interview with Director Wang Bing on *Dead Souls*', 2024; 2. Wang & Zhang, 2019; 3. Wang & Bourdeaux, 2020). *Dead Souls* can thus be regarded as a project that emerged from *The Ditch*, spanning several years before completion in 2018. By then, Wang had shifted his creative focus from the northwest and Yunnan to East China. That same year, he traveled to Las Vegas to film the intellectual Gao Ertai 高尔泰, a survivor of the Anti-Rightist Movement, resulting in *Beauty Lives in Freedom* 美在自由 (2018), which shares a similar oral-history approach and mid-to-close-up compositions with *Fengming, A Chinese Memoir*. The natural lighting changes often discussed in *Fengming* also appear in *Beauty Lives in Freedom*. In a post-screening talk in the UK in 2019, Wang stated this may be his final film on the Anti-Rightist Movement (see: Video: Frames of Representation 2019: In Conversation with Wang Bing). The formal similarity between *Beauty Lives in Freedom* and *Fengming* may be seen as a deliberate echo.

3 Wang Bing was initially drawn to Yunnan by the novel *Divine History* 神史 (2004) by local writer Sun Shixiang 孙世祥, hoping to explore the possibility of adapting it into a narrative film. In interviews, Wang has stated that his documentary work began passively due to environmental and financial constraints—but he soon realized that documentary filmmaking allowed him to more fully immerse himself in the unknown (see: Tsuchiya & Suzuki, 2020).

4 See Wang Bing's masterclass at the 2014 Jihlava International Documentary Film Festival (Video: *Masterclass – Wang Bing*, 2017).

5 Ayako Saito, drawing on Roland Barthes' idea that photography's essence is its assertion that 'this has been', argues that Wang Bing attempts to transcend the temporal attribute of the 'past' in photography, avoiding the status of the sub-

ject as a ghost of what once was (Saito, 2013).

6 Wang Bing has stated: ‘*Three Sisters* is set in poverty, but the film is not about poverty itself; it is about the girls’ real experience of life.’ (Wang, 2013, p. 132)

7 As Metz put it: ‘At the cinema, it is always the other who is on the screen; as for me, I am there to look at him.’ (Metz, 2006, pp. 44–45)

8 Debates surrounding Lin Niantong’s theory of Chinese film aesthetics center on two issues: whether the theory itself is coherent, and whether Chinese cinema, as its object, exhibits a singular, typical style (see: Hong, 2016).

9 See interview with cinematographer Maeda Yoshitaka, who participated in the shooting of *Bitter Money* and other Wang Bing films (Maeda, 2018, p. 15).

10 Based on Wang Bing’s remarks at the 2014 Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival (Video: *Masterclass – Wang Bing*, 2017).

11 Based on Wang Bing’s remarks at the 2014 Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival (Video: *Masterclass – Wang Bing*, 2017).

12 This recalls Kracauer’s discussion of *Earth* (1930), in which he argued that Dovzhenko revealed the intrinsic beauty of objects not through dramatic movement but through states of utter stillness (Kracauer, 1997, p. 185).

13 According to Scholes, ‘narrativity’ refers to the cognitive and imaginative process by which audiences actively reconstruct narrative from the elements a text provides. That is, narrative form guides viewers to use narrativity to transform the story into a meaningful whole—a process the text typically anticipates and encourages (Scholes, 1976).

14 Roland Barthes offered a similar view: ‘Can I add anything to the image on screen?—I think not, there’s no time. Faced with the screen, I cannot close my eyes at will; if I shut them and reopen them, I cannot retrieve the same image. I must remain fully attentive. There are many other kinds of effects, but not ones conducive to reflection’ (Barthes, 2002, p. 88).

15 When writing *The Third Meaning* in the 1970s, Barthes remarked: ‘Film stills free cinema from the bondage of time—a bondage that remains a barrier to what we might call the coming-of-age of cinema’ (Barthes, 2012, p. 108). Today, digital technology enables long takes and static shots more frequently. As cinema is liberated from earlier technological constraints, Barthes’s notion of ‘filmic’ also becomes freed.

16 Barthes, citing *Ivan the Terrible* (1944), suggests that the obtuse meaning in film ‘surpasses narrative and becomes a polishing or deviation of meaning’ (Barthes, 2012, p. 105).

17 Ueno Kōji, describing his experience of watching *Tie Xi Qu*, referred to it as a state of ‘alternating between clarity and intoxication’, which may help to explain the sense of suspension discussed here (Ueno, 2011, p. 2).

18 Upon receiving the EYE Art & Film Prize in 2017, a short film introducing Wang Bing’s work was produced by the EYE Film Museum. This quote is drawn from that video’s commentary on the individuals depicted in his work (Video: *Wang Bing, Winner of the Third Eye Art & Film Prize*, 2018).

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静观与游弋：以《三姊妹》(2012) 为中心探索王兵作品中的绘画性

庞鸿

概要

王兵的纪录片作品常以粗粝的影像风格著称，然而，对其影像文本的细读揭示了其独特的绘画性风格及美学意蕴。《三姊妹》(2012) 即为一例，影片中固定镜头、封闭构图和明暗对比等元素的运用，将银幕转化为具有画幅感的视觉空间，与西方自然主义绘画产生互文。同时，影片通过大景别、广角镜头等影像语言，营造出流动的空间感和“远”的意境，体现了中国传统美学中“游”的理念。本文以《三姊妹》为切入点，观照王兵在不同时期的创作，发现这些美学特质在其多部作品中均有体现，构成其作者风格的重要组成部分。影像中的绘画性元素弱化了现实感，消解叙事性，引导观众从既有认知框架中抽离，在叙事之外体认被拍摄对象的个体生命状态。

关键词：纪录片美学、绘画性、王兵、《三姊妹》、游、悬置

引言：探析王兵作品中的视觉美学

1999 年 10 月，王兵带着借来的 DV 来到沈阳，用一年半的时间拍摄了《铁西区》(2003)。这部描绘东北工业地区衰落的纪录片使王兵在 21 世纪初的各国影展崭露头角，其 9 小时的片长为纪录片制作、美学、受容等议题带来诸多争论。此后，王兵创作的脚步从未停歇，不断推出新作。

尽管王兵在访谈中明确否认其作品具有政治意图和揭发目的(王，吴，2007；二井，2017)，但由于纪录片无可回避的对现实的指认，相关研究仍倾向于从中解读中国的历史和现状。埃琳娜·波拉奇(Elena Pollacchi) 基于作品所涉主题将王兵的电影分为“历史议题——反右斗争”和“当代议题——当下的政治、经济与人们的日常生活”两类(Pollacchi, 2017)。丸川哲史同样试图通过追溯“现代”的脉络来理解《铁西区》与《和凤鸣》(2007) 等作品，认为其内容既是中国现代史的一部分，同时也进入和重构了历史(丸川，2008)。除了基于作品内容的研究视角，也有学者关注王兵作品中的影像特性和纪录片形态。然而，就影像质感和美学意义而言，王兵的作品通常被认为缺乏精致与美感。齐藤绫子用“肮脏、混乱、反美学、丑陋、不纯、粗俗”(Saito, 2013, p.12) 等词语形容王兵的作品，认为其体现了作者反审美或去审美的偏好。波拉奇也指出，王兵作品的外观粗糙且欠雕琢，这与拍摄环境恶劣、条件艰苦以及准备时间有限有关(Pollacchi, 2019)。

关于王兵作品形式“粗粝”的评价，似乎侧面印证了以“社会反映论”视角解读其作品中折射的历史与现实的合理性。然而，回顾同时期的纪录片创作，可以发现两种不同的拍摄策略。以陈为军、周浩为代表的新闻专业出身的纪录片人，其作品往往呈现新闻纪实的质感，注重事件的突发性和冲击性。而王兵、赵亮等摄影专业出身的纪录片导演，则在创作路径上展现出对艺术表达的清晰考量。本文试图摆脱纪录片之现实指认背后“宏大叙事”的引力，聚焦于王兵作品的形式层面，在“粗糙”的表象之下探寻其美学表达。

波拉奇基于空间坐标，将王兵的创作轨迹粗略分为“东北—西北—西南—华东”四个时期，整个路径在中国版图上构成一个逆时针环形(Pollacchi, 2017)。《铁西区》之后，王兵聚焦中国西北部，创作了一系列以中国政治运动记忆为主题的作品¹；随后南下云南，关注农民、留守儿童、精神

病人、工人、难民等群体；近年来则着眼于长江下游地区，描绘当代中国农民工的生活状态。从作者论的视角来看，早期作品《铁西区》是“一个青春的过程，生命的不可抑制的那种冲动”（王，张，2007，p.66），尚难说彼时已构成艺术手法的自觉；而在西北时期，王兵将大量精力投入于他目前创作生涯中唯一的剧情长片《夹边沟》（2010）。在那之后，王兵基本结束了赋予其异见者形象的“反右斗争系列”题材的探索²，再次回到纪录片创作领域³。在云南，他决心调整拍摄方式，运用与《铁西区》等前作迥然不同的方式组织故事和人物⁴。这一转变与数字时代下电影作者必须面临和处理海量素材的现实有关，也必然涉及剪辑策略的选择。直至华东时期的创作，王兵始终致力于通过纪录片拍摄来摆脱故事的“设计性”，探索电影的未知性（王，董，张，2018，pp.299-300）。在近作《青春·春》（2023）中，他确立了一种以数个20分钟段落并置来构建影片结构的叙事模式（王，杨，2023）。

尽管王兵重视通过电影媒介来寻找不同的叙事可能性，并自陈“对镜头语言的考虑经常是感性的，或者说是随机性的”（王，陈，2020），但图像作为影像作品的核心要素，依然提示了王兵创作轨迹中形式和美学的生成、确立与演变。其中，《三姊妹》（2012）作为王兵离开长期生活的西北和东北、南下云南后拍摄的首部纪录片，具有重要的节点意义。这部影片以滇东北高海拔山区为背景，聚焦于当时分别为10岁、6岁和4岁的茺英、珍珍和粉粉三姐妹，记录了女孩们在缺少父母照料的艰苦环境下所呈现的日常生存状态。在《三姊妹》中，此前作品中零散可见的影像风格被凝练为一种自觉的形式特质，并延续至其后续作品。本文将通过影像分析，着眼于画面所蕴含的绘画性，考察其如何在《三姊妹》中融合戏剧性和自然主义的影像表达；在此基础上，观照王兵的其他作品，指出这种绘画性元素在其不同创作时期的作品中亦有体现；进而探讨这一美学特质在观众理解和认识被拍摄对象的过程中所发挥的作用和影响。

一 纪录片影像中的绘画性表达

1.1 作为画框的银幕：绘画性解读视角的可能性

探究王兵作品中绘画性，或可为理解其纪录片美学提供一个有效的途经。王亨里在论述电影画面的绘画性时指出：“几乎所有的摄影师都需具备不同程度的绘画修养才能坐在摄影机的后边……因而所有现实主义的摄影艺术家，最初无不靠电影画面的绘画性博得关注。”（王，1989，p.26）这种影像中的绘画性区别于捕捉特定瞬间的摄影性：与照片图像中由瞬间曝光所暗示的过去时态不同，绘画性赋予图像在场感或现时性⁵。另一方面，王兵在创作实践中对电影和装置艺术之边界的有意模糊，也启示我们跨越媒介和材料属性来考察影像。当观影空间与形式发生变化时，对于在屏幕前不断移动的观众而言，影像原本可能带来的“惊颤”体验被削弱，它以“展览”而非“放映”的形式，提示了银幕与画框之间的潜在相似性。

埃里克·巴尔诺（Erik Barnouw）指出，绘画对纪录片的影响可追溯至20世纪20年代。当时，许多画家投身电影制作，为这一领域注入新的视角和方法（巴尔诺，1992）。然而，王兵作品中的绘画性与巴尔诺提到的早期非剧情片中的节奏感和抽象主义元素有所不同，它主要体现于镜头本身。借博尼策尔（Pascal Bonitzer）的话来说：“将电影作者比作画家，是从镜头的概念开始的……镜头的生产使得电影作者更接近画家，让电影更像绘画。”（ボニゼール，1999，pp.36-37）在王兵作品中，以长镜头展现的色彩、明暗等要素，将银幕转化为画幅。汤姆·安德森（Thom Andersen）认为，《三姊妹》中的色彩与乔托（Giotto）的壁画相似（Andersen，2012）。大卫·达奇（David D'Arcy）在关于《德昂》（2016）的评论中提到，王兵在即兴拍摄中以最小的成本呈现出乔治·德拉·图尔（Georges de La Tour）画作中的亲密感（D'Arcy，2016）。

上述评论提示了将王兵作品中的影像与绘画并置讨论的可行性，但它们终究停留于感性认识层面。如果进一步探究这些联想和观影感受生成的原因，一个直观的推断是：影像内容需趋向静态，就拍摄手法而言，即减少摄影机的运动。王兵在许多作品中大量采用固定机位以及趋于静止的手持镜头，尽可能减少摄影机对拍摄空间的侵扰的同时，使影像获得与类似于绘画图像的静态性。然而，鉴于影像媒介的固有特性，仅以固定镜头为首要条件来判定影像与绘画之间存在直接的共性，未免失之草率。巴赞（André Bazin）认为，画框是向心的，而屏幕是离心的（巴赞，1987，p.199）。罗兰·巴特（Roland Barthes）对此表示赞同：“银幕[巴赞注意到了]不是个镜框，而是一个遮光的地方；从银幕上走出去的人物继续活动着：‘盲画面’在不停地重复着部分影像。”（巴特，2002，p.89）与之形成悖论的是，王兵作品中的部分画面呈现出向心的效果。



图1 《三姊妹》王兵（2012）



图2 《吃土豆的人》梵高（1885）



图3 《德昂》王兵（2016）



图4 《掷骰子的人》德·拉·图尔（1650-1651）

例如，在王兵于云南时期拍摄的《三姊妹》和《德昂》的群像场景中，都可以看到类似的画面结构：人物围绕餐桌、篝火等物体聚拢，有限乃至单一的光源造成的强烈明暗对比进一步削弱了银幕外空间的现实感，从而实现视觉上的封闭感。如果将其中的影像画面分别与梵高（Vincent van Gogh）的《吃土豆的人》（1885）和乔治·德·拉·图尔的《掷骰子的人》（1650-1651）并置，会发现它们之间的相似性并非仅仅源于相近的色彩构成。在《三姊妹》的聚餐场景与《吃土豆的人》中，昏暗的光线集中在人物面部和餐桌，人物围坐于餐桌旁，相似的构图方式增强了画面的凝聚力（图1-图2）。《德昂》与《掷骰子的人》的画面中，人物均呈规律性排列，简洁的构图增强了画面的稳定感和秩序感（图3-图4）。被称为“烛光画家”的德·拉·图尔是暗色调主义（tenebrism）风格的代表人物，其画作通过单一光源营造出戏剧化的光影效果。而在《德昂》中，为躲避战乱而背井离乡的少数族裔难民的简陋居住环境，也因类似的单一光源而呈现出深沉的暗色调背景，遮蔽了环境细节。当观者的视线向人物聚拢的中心或被光线照亮的区域汇聚时，银幕内外的空间便自然地与被区隔开来。

作为观察型导演，王兵鲜有可能对镜头前人物的行为、姿态进行场面调度。绘画性风格的呈现是通过摄影过程中对距离和角度的调整来实现的。曾参与王兵作品拍摄的摄影师前田佳孝如此描述王兵对拍摄的指示：“先用固定机位持续拍摄……即便摄影机不动，也会有取景器外的事物进入画面。”（前田，2018，p.15）。可见，尽管王兵作品中的画面并未绝对地否定和排斥前电影（profilmic）

元素以外的空间，但在其拍摄方式下，银幕并非那些持有现实主义电影观的理论家所认为的“窗户”，它更像一个陷阱，等待被拍摄对象进入，而后将其隔绝其中。这一拍摄理念为探讨王兵作品中的绘画性提供了依据，即画面内的要素在二维层面具有构成封闭系统的趋势。德勒兹认为“画外”具有“相对性”和“绝对性”这两种本质相异的面向，如果说前者不断提示、引导着画框外的集合，那么王兵影像的“画外”则对应后者：“这个封闭系统通过这种绝对性向宇宙整体内在绵延开放，它不再是一个集合，也不属于可见物序列。”（德勒兹，2016，pp.28-29）根据德勒兹的观点，当影像被限定在二维层面的空间封闭中时，“画外”便有可能在第四维和第五维，即时间与精神层面绵延。至此，可以说，对王兵作品中绘画性的探讨，首先是以画面内外空间的相对关系为依据——银幕的边框如画框般隔断了影像与框外空间的联系——基于这种认识，下文将考察《三姊妹》等王兵作品中的绘画性表达及其作用。

1.2 “画框”中的他者

2010年，王兵途径云南省昭通市洗羊塘村，偶遇当时未满十岁的三姐妹。之后，他受德法公共电视台（Arte）委托，决定以三个女孩为拍摄对象，制作一部纪录片。他用两台摄影机进行了十天的拍摄，后因高原反应被迫离开。影片前2小时10分钟的内容来自王兵所摄素材。之后，摄影师黄文海和李沛峰在与王兵远程沟通的情况下继续拍摄了六天，其素材构成影片最后的20分钟。

就画面明暗效果而言，《三姊妹》的一些场景呈现出与西方自然主义绘画风格相近的暗色调质感。三姐妹居住的小屋内部几乎没有光源，白天强烈的光线从门外射入屋内，形成强烈的明暗对比。藤城孝辅指出，王兵的其他作品，例如《铁西区》《德昂》《苦钱》（2016）等，均运用了光影对比的手法，然而，明暗对比效果最为强烈、最为明显的莫过于《三姊妹》（藤城，2018）。在《三姊妹》中，小屋内的被拍摄对象常常被笼罩在黑暗之中，只有局部被强光照亮。电影开篇即以这种风格化的形式呈现三个女孩（图5），以确立观众对她们的初步印象。这种通过光比反差来处理人物和空间关系的手法在其后的室内场景中亦得到反复运用（图6-图7）。画面中侧光所营造的浓重阴影、简洁的构图以及去理想化的写实风格，令人联想起卡拉瓦乔（Caravaggio）的作品（图8）。尽管三姐妹并未上演圣乌苏拉被匈奴王射杀那般惊心动魄的场面，但被黑暗背景衬托的女孩形象，如同画中人物一般，仅凭视觉而非叙事便获得了强烈的戏剧性。



图5 《三姊妹》王兵（2012）



图6 《三姊妹》王兵（2012）



图7 《三姊妹》王兵（2012）



图8 《圣乌苏拉殉道》卡拉瓦乔（1610）

比尔·尼克尔斯（Bill Nichols）认为，纪录片的核心在于提供信息以满足观众的求知欲（Nichols, 1991, p.31）。然而，《三姊妹》中的这些镜头显然背离了这一功能。黑暗的背景遮蔽了细节，使观众难以获取信息。朗西埃（Jacques Rancière）曾评价迪克斯特拉（Rineke Dijkstra）的摄影作品《海滩肖像》（1992-1994）具有“绘画性的力量”，这一论断同样适用于《三姊妹》中被黑暗笼罩的女孩们。由于黑暗背景消融了细节，如同迪克斯特拉镜头下的波兰女孩一样，坐在小屋中吃土豆的女孩对观众而言也成为了“无名之人”。由此渗出的距离感和神秘感，“与充盈在美术馆中的肖像画之神秘性十分相似”（ランシエール，2018a, p.140）。

巴洛克时期西班牙画家穆里罗（Murillo）于17世纪创作了一系列以乞讨少年为主题的绘画，就表象而言，《三姊妹》中衣衫褴褛的孩童嬉戏、捉虱子的画面，与穆里罗的画作形成了饶有趣味的呼应（图9-图12）。黑格尔（Hegel）在论及“描绘平凡之物的风俗画中仍蕴含着高贵灵魂”时，曾以穆里罗的这一系列作品为例，他认为“在这些衣不蔽体的贫困少年身上，内外都闪耀着托钵僧也难以企及的、超然物外的纯真”，他们“不拘泥于外在，无论外形如何，都能保持内心的自由，这正是理想之美所追求的境界……他们没有特别的兴趣和目标，但这并非因为缺乏活力，相反，他们沉浸在与奥林匹斯诸神无异的满足感和幸福感中，蹲坐在地上。他们既不动也不说话，既无不悦也无不满，只是作为一个人存在在那里。”（ヘーゲル，1995, p.183）将三姐妹与黑格尔所说的理想之美联系起来，不仅因为《三姊妹》的画面与穆里罗的绘画在内容和形式上存在相似之处，还因为这些具有绘画感的镜头以及画面中被黑暗遮蔽的背景，使得“用于识别社会身份的特性变得模糊”（ランシエール，2018a, p.152），进而让画面中的女孩无限趋近于穆里罗画作中所展现的“保有自由的个体”（ヘーゲル，1995, p.183）。在面对如此画面的十几秒钟乃至几分钟的时间里，由于叙事与认同作用的中断，观众远离了既有的认知与想象，产生一种陌生感。权力和社会机制预先设定的概念失去了效力，被拍摄对象得以从意义之网中逃脱。在这一时刻，观众所面对的，不再是中国某个不知名村落的某个穷困可怜的女孩⁶，不再是桑塔格（Susan Sontag）所说的“太无边无际，太难以消除，太庞大”，只会使同情心变得空泛的苦难和不幸（桑塔格，2006, p.73），而是具象的、失去衡量尺度和辨别标签的个体。如果说从电影认知机制的角度而言，“他者”始终内在于观影过程⁷，那么王兵以冷彻的描绘与克制的疏离提示了一种跳脱出既有知识—权力结构的“他者”形象。当三个女孩从黑暗中显现，她们的身份、境遇和价值无法被观众既有认知中的社会、文化、历史因素所定义。有别于民族志电影中经由观众主体而被构建的“他者”，她们被呈现为更加具象、真实、自由的个体；但同时，恰是因为摆脱了既有认知框架，对观众而言，她们仍是“陌生之物”，是无法被既有知识体系阐释的“另一种他者”。



图9 《三姊妹》王兵（2012）



图10 《三姊妹》王兵（2012）



图11 《掷骰子的孩子们》穆里罗（1675）



图12 《拾虱少年》穆里罗（1650）

对《三姊妹》的考察揭示了风格化的图像如何生成某种与绘画相通的特质，并影响对被拍摄对象的理解和认知。纵观王兵的作品群，可以发现，《三姊妹》中以黑色环绕的背景将画面与银幕外的“盲画面”隔绝开来的特征，在早期作品《铁西区》《暴虐工厂》（2007）既已出现（图13-图15）。画面四周的黑暗将位于画面中心的被拍摄对象完全包裹起来，使其成为剪影，失去特征和细节。戏剧性的暗部不仅使被拍摄对象脱离高调光场景中的现实感，从而被陌生化，同时也阻断了画框外的事物进入画面，削弱了观众对于“盲画面”中可能存在之物的想象。固定镜头进一步加强了这种效果，使银幕上被拍摄到的事物被封锁在一个与外界隔绝的、画框中的世界里。然而，这些画面在作品整体时长中所占比例仍然有限，它们确实构筑了令人难忘的场景，但尚不足以构成作品的主要影像特质。直至近作《黑衣人》（2023），王兵通过对剧场空间的利用，以低调光影像贯穿整部作品（图16）。尽管《黑衣人》易被认为有别于王兵以往作品的风格——因其罕见地大量使用音乐，且在卡洛琳尚普蒂耶（Caroline Champetier）的掌镜下，摄影机不再静止、隐匿，而是不安地围绕被拍摄对象旋转、移动——但是，《黑衣人》采用了同《三姊妹》中部分场景极为相似的影像表达，即通过单一光源所营造的黑暗背景和强烈明暗对比，来获得与暗色调绘画相通的视觉冲击力（图17），赋予画面戏剧性，以此将被拍摄者呈现为独立于话语和定义的个体。可以说，将银幕边框作为画框来赋予图像绘画性的手法，在王兵早期作品中已初露端倪，在《三姊妹》中得到有意识的运用，而在《黑衣人》中则被推至前景，成为整部作品的风格化表现手段。



图 13 《铁西区·工厂》王兵（2003）



图 14 《铁西区·艳粉街》王兵（2003）



图 15 《暴虐工厂》王兵（2007）



图 16 《黑衣人》王兵（2023）



图 17 《黑衣人》王兵（2023）

二 “游”的美学

王兵作品中的影像不仅与西方绘画的图像具有共通性，亦潜藏着中国传统美学的底蕴。本文并非意在施加某种狭隘的民族性解读，但恰如让 - 米歇尔·付东（Jean-Michel Frodon）所言，当代西方电影导演运用长镜头的手法往往与欧洲的精神遗产，尤其是基督教和西方哲学思想息息相关，而王兵的电影在构建现实和想象元素的方式上，则与中国传统文化和哲学有着密切的联系（Frodon, 2007）。曾与王兵合作的摄影师兼纪录片导演黄文海也表达过类似的观点：“王兵的电影近似中国传统美学，运镜上讲究‘气韵生动’，构图有疏离感……其影片的结构、整体上的布局如同国画，空白处留给观众思索。”（闻海，2016，p.347）

为阐释中国传统艺术形式在王兵纪录片中的体现，本文借鉴林年同提出的“游”的美学概念。在中国山水画美学中，“游”是一个结合了中国传统哲学的重要概念。姜今于1963年的《论形式美》中，在谈及散点构图和空间处理时提到了“游”的重要性（姜，1963）。受宗白华美学思想影响的林年同统合郑君里的手卷式布局、韩尚义的“移步换景”、姜今的“散点构图”、聂晶的“镜韵”等融合中国古典美学的论说，系统地提出以“游”的美学为标志的中国电影美学理论。

本文沿用“游”的概念，并非忽视林年同理论的历史局限性⁸。林年同提出“游”的美学，主要是针对20世纪50、60年代中国电影的美学传统而言。同时，林年同于1990年5月去世，未能见证中国独立纪录片在日后所掀起的浪潮。然而，“林年同的‘镜游’理论虽然有缺陷，但并不是一个铁板一块的学说，而是一个动态的、随着历史发展而不断丰富的体系。”（黄，2021，p.11）本文引入“游”的美学概念，旨在将其作为一种系统化的美学参照，并尝试在纪录片美学的层面进行拓展与阐发。

林年同认为，“游”是中国艺术的最高美学境界，是中国美学的核心思想。受这种美学思想影响的中国传统绘画，具有视点游移、无往不复的特点。这也影响了中国电影的镜头语言与空间建构。从这个角度而言，中国电影的美学可以理解为“游”的美学。许多对“游”的美学的关注集中于林年同提到的“动态连续镜头布局”，强调镜头移动所创造的寓时于空的空间意识，通过阐释中国画的手卷形制与电影中的水平横移镜头的联系，论证影像的绘画性在运动中的体现（吴，2017）。本文在认同上述考察的基础上，结合王兵作品影像文本的特点，分析大景别所带来的“远”的意识，以此验证“游”的理论背后所蕴含的流动的空间意识。

林年同在论及“远景”“全景”时提出，包括绘画在内的中国传统艺术样式中的空间处理方式，是电影空间理论的根源。他借用宗白华对中国画空间“偏向于远”的论断，提出：“中国电影艺术家对于空间位置的经营，源出于古典，正是要取象于‘远’。”（林，1991，p.78）王兵作品中呈现的距离感与这一“远”的空间观念密切相关。藤井仁子指出，王兵作品中摄影机与被拍摄对象之间独特的距离感“在讨论王兵作品时几乎都会成为争论的焦点”（藤井，2020，p.195），甚至出现了“王兵的距离”的说法。王兵本人曾表示，他喜欢使用开角较大的镜头，认为28mm广角镜头所拍摄的影像和人眼看到的画面最为接近⁹。据他所言，他的电影几乎都是用开角较大的18mm镜头拍摄的¹⁰。广角镜头的使用使摄影机在捕捉近距离人物动态的同时，能够收入较宽广的场景而不显局促，客观上为“王兵的距离”提供了技术基础。

同时，广角镜头所呈现的透视关系对摄影机的拍摄高度有所要求。据王兵所言，使用广角镜头时，若将摄影机位置提高，成像效果往往不尽如人意。因此，他很少肩扛摄影，而是通过手提摄影机进行拍摄¹¹。偏低的摄影机位使得电影中的被拍摄对象经常以仰视角度呈现。在人物全貌被完整展现的同时，天空占据了大部分的画面，形成留白和辽远的空间感。这种留出天地之位的“悠远”空间处理，在中国传统绘画中也很常见。林年同基于“三远”这一北宋山水画家郭熙、韩拙提出的中国山水画构图方式，认为中国电影中的空间创造旨在“俯仰自得，游心太玄”（林，1991，p.99）。王兵的《三姊妹》由于其拍摄所在地云南省的高原自然环境，可以说是体现“三远”的最佳例证。

影片中，室外拍摄的画面几乎都以展现旷远空间为主，构图中留有开阔的余地。当人物走出室内场景，离开简陋照明条件下所形成的暗调背景，便进入由画面所框取的广阔空间。在正常曝光下，影像取消了暗色调主义绘画中的视角限定，将画面中的所有元素悉数呈现，而人在其中仅占据有限的比例。

《三姊妹》的摄影师黄文海将这些表现室外空间的场景描述为“以天地构筑舞台，人孤独地处在天地之间或匍匐在土地上”（闻海，2016，p.354）。当被拍摄对象尔英置身于云贵高原群山之间，摄影机将近处的女孩、中间层的峡谷、远处的山脉与天空一同纳入画面（图18）。画面展现的广阔空间提示了同时存在的多个视角，从而将“三远”之视角纳入其中。正如中国传统绘画中常有的那样，观众在那一刻从银幕上看到的，是“一个宽旷的、辽阔的、延展的空间”（林，1991，p.99），在这个空间内，“既可以使三远凝聚，又可以使三远离散”（林，1991，p.80）。类似的空间表达在这部展现云南壮丽地貌的影片中俯拾皆是。在表现三姐妹的父亲无法通过在城市务工的收入维持家

庭生计而返回农村时，王兵仍选择以大全景展现积雪尚未消融的广袤高原，人物仿佛凭空出现于土地之上，他身披与地面颜色相仿的斗篷，又似乎随时会遁入环境之中（图 19）。在使用小光圈拍摄的画面中，视点由近处地面延伸至远处山峰，人物斜纵向的行动轨迹提示了垂直于画面的山坡落差，又与左右延展的地面形成交叉。当人物走过镜头前，摄影机并未跟随，转而以低角度目送人物走上山坡，再次以天空为画面留白（图 20）。在这段充斥着风声、时长 1 分钟的长镜头中，影像以悠远和留白的空间处理展现了天地之广博。



图 18 《三姊妹》王兵（2012）



图 19 《三姊妹》王兵（2012）



图 20 《三姊妹》王兵（2012）

《三姊妹》影像中体现出的与山水画之美学相通的辽远和流动性，无疑在很大程度上得益于拍摄环境的独特性。然而，在王兵西北时期作品的影像中，已可寻见类似的“游”的美学。例如，《无名者》（2009）开场即是一个 15 秒的固定长镜头，向观众提示了山水画中常见的广阔延展的空间（图 21-图 22）。这部电影中唯一的出场人物是一位身份不明的男子，王兵在制作《夹边沟》而往返于西北地区与北京之间时偶然遇到他，此后便时常探访并进行拍摄。该男子居住在洞穴中，在影片中始终保持缄默。与《三姊妹》相似，摄影机无意揭示或描绘男子的生活细节，而是与他保持距离，常以全景镜头展现其在田间劳作的场景，将人物置于开阔的空间之中。黄文海如此评价这部作品：“《无名者》呈现了天地之大以何为生，没有具体的历史空间和社会空间，展现的是杜甫《旅夜书怀》‘飘飘何所似，天地一沙鸥’一诗的意境。”（闻海，2016，p.352）

在近作《青春·归》（2024）中，王兵跟随返乡的制衣工人再次来到云南，在拍摄了一场当地婚礼后，以一段持续 15 秒的固定镜头展现空间环境。画面中蜿蜒的山谷和层次分明的山峦营造出幽深、辽阔的空间感，再次体现出“三远”的意境（图 23-图 23）。相对于“青春三部曲”中长时间的逼仄室内场景，这一全景镜头创造了某种气口，提示观众，影片中的年轻人虽然被束缚于封闭的制衣车间和不断重复的机械劳动，但他们所来自的环境却能令人“看到生命意志的亘古常在”（闻海，2016，p.348）。德勒兹认为全景镜头即是知觉 - 影像，也就是说运动 - 影像在全景中成为感知。基于这一对知觉 - 影像的论述来理解王兵作品中体现“远”之意识和“游”之美学的空间影像，可以认为，画面中流动而并存的视角并非导向某种主观知觉，相反，它回溯至与事物相融合的客观整体知觉。德勒兹指出，电影“中心的运动性、其取景的多变性总是使它构建一些无中心和不均衡的广阔区域”，

而“游”的美学则实现了使影像“回到运动 - 影像的原始体制，即普适变化，整体的、客观的和模糊的知觉”（德勒兹，2016，p.103）。



图 21 《无名者》王兵（2009）



图 22 《富春山居图（无用师）》黄公望（1350）

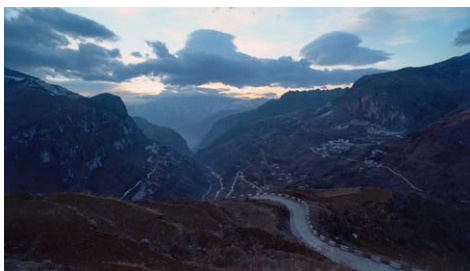


图 23 《青春·归》王兵（2024）



图 24 《溪山行旅图》柳埏（1680）

三 被悬置的观众

探讨电影的绘画性，并非简单地将绘画与电影等同起来。正如克拉考尔（Kracauer）所言，不应“像实验电影制作者那样将电影再次置于传统艺术的统治之下”（Kracauer, 1997, p.192）。关于绘画与电影的差异，已有诸多讨论。本雅明（Benjamin）从受众的角度指出，绘画无法像电影那样成为群体共时观赏的对象（本雅明，2002）。约翰·伯格（John Berger）则认为，油画具有一种缩短画家创作和观者欣赏之间时间距离的“直接性”，即观者可以通过作画的实际材料追溯画家创作时的情景（Berger, 2008, p.31）。这种“直接性”显然是影像所不具备的，借用麦茨（Metz）的话来说，电影本身就是想象性的。另一方面，米特里（Mitry）指出，电影中的心理补偿机制可能让静止的影像具有动态感和立体感（Mitry, 1997）。这一机制对绘画而言未必适用。

尽管如此，王兵作品中如绘画般的镜头仍然发挥着特定的作用。这些画面或采用固定镜头拍摄，或呈现的内容几乎不发生运动或变化，趋向静止¹²。静态影像阻断叙事流，使观众难以进入电影的故事世界，也妨碍观众利用罗伯特·斯科尔斯（Robert Scholes）提出的“叙事性”（narrativity）概念¹³来填充叙事空白。在进一步探讨之前，有必要回顾关于影像连续流动与观众思考之间关系的讨论。

伯格指出，电影中影像的连续性构成了不可逆转的陈述（Berger, 2008, p.26）。这也是本雅明认为的电影与绘画的又一区别所在。与观众在面对绘画时能够进行联想不同，电影包含着分散注意力的要素，使观众难以对画面进行深入思考，“当他意欲进行这种思索时，银幕画面就已变掉了”¹⁴（本雅明，2002，p.124）。为此，巴特试图从电影中寻找“第三意义”，即所谓“钝义”，一种“没有所指的能指”。巴特认为，电影性正是在第三意义的层面上得以显现，他主张从包括剧照在内的静止画面中进行解读（巴特，2012）。

尽管王兵作品中具有绘画感的画面并非绝对静止，但在某种程度上提供了寻找巴特所言“第三意义”的可能性。在一种高度缓慢的节奏中，其镜头与电影截图一样，强化了“‘镜头内’的元素一内部”

（巴特，2012，p.108）¹⁵。更重要的是，正如钝义是反叙事的¹⁶，王兵作品中的镜头在显露与绘画的亲近性之余，也不服从于叙事的控制，它们“如同胶片运动中的时间停滞一样，既没有融入整体，也没有融入叙事的节奏中”（ボニゼール，1999，p.40）。

至此，论述可能导向一种误解，即认为“静止”等同于“反叙事”；而若意识到趋于静止的画面并非为王兵作品独有，那么由作者风格赋予其作品的独特性似乎也就随之消解。事实上，并非所有静态影像都无法融入叙事。在赵亮的《上访》（2009）和《悲兮魔兽》（2015）中，同样出现了静止凝视镜头的运用，但这些画面所起的作用却有别于王兵的作品。《上访》中的一个场景描绘了“上访村”一位长年卧床的男子。面对镜头，他讲述了自己遭受警察暴力致瘫，以及其兄亦因警察殴打致残的经历。画面中出现了这位男子的兄长10秒钟的特写后，镜头转向住在简陋棚屋中的全家人的身影，这个镜头又持续了10秒。由于屏幕上的四个人几乎没有大幅度的动作，整个画面呈现出近乎活人画的质感。在《悲兮魔兽》中，这种让静止画面持续的倾向更加明显。在描绘钢铁厂工人劳动的序列中，摄影机通过特写镜头详细地呈现工人皮肤上的纹理，并对其中一位工人的脸部凝视了足有20秒。固定镜头呈现的静止画面犹如细节充沛的肖像画。在另一场景中，一位女性抱着因尘肺病去世的丈夫的遗像。镜头持续了30秒。与《三姊妹》类似，这个镜头中，背景环境隐没于黑暗之中，观众的视线被引导至人物和遗像上。然而，不同之处在于，在赵亮的两部纪录片中，有意让被拍摄对象保持静止的画面带有“证言”的性质，它们不仅融入叙事，而且意在引发悲怆的情感体验。这些画面带来的情感效应确实体现了绘画与电影的另一种关系。冈田温司认为，电影可以从绘画中继承并发展的是“悲怆（pathos）”和“狂喜（ecstasy）”的反应，这一内在体验的一致性甚至对蒙太奇理论的形成产生影响（冈田，2015）。

与赵亮提示的证据性影像及其试图激发的情绪性反应不同，王兵作品中的静谧画面将观众暂时抽离于叙事之外，为其提供了思索的空隙。这种特质延续自他早期的创作风格。帕特里克·史密斯（Patrick Smith）在分析《铁西区》时，曾指出王兵电影中纯粹的“图像式沉思”（pure ‘pictorial contemplation’）有可能取代叙事化的背景（Smith，2015，p.186）。这种由图像带来的停滞感在《铁西区》之后的作品中愈发显著。与王兵后来的许多作品一样，《三姊妹》整部影片由琐碎的生活片段构成，在室内和室外场景间切换的序列间缺乏明确的逻辑关联，这使得电影内部的时间进程变得模糊。一般而言，“在电影中，好像对任何单个画面的理解都是由已消逝的所有先行展现的画面所规定好了的。”（本雅明，2002，p.24）而在王兵的作品中，当这种连续性被打破，银幕上不再提供叙事信息时，观众的理解过程被阻断。可以说，固定镜头和静态画面促成了这一效果，使得《三姊妹》中的时间不再呈现线性而清晰的流逝，而是在感官上趋于块状，凝滞于各个段落之中，无法以参数化的形式沿着某种坐标延伸。

这些趋于静止的镜头所可能引发的思索，有别于本雅明所说的“凝神专注”。观众既没有像本雅明所举的中国画家那样进入画中，也没有在消遣的状态下“超然于艺术片而沉浸在自我中”（本雅明，2002，p.124）。观众被悬置在这两种状态之间，既无法沉潜入一个事先安排好的叙事之中，也无法依据既有的习惯和观念推进“叙事性”过程¹⁷。王兵作品中的停滞感更接近于郎西埃所说的“沉思”所造成的中断。朗西埃指出，沉思的性质可以颠覆叙事与表现之间的传统关系。换言之，视觉逻辑不再是为了补充情节，而是为了中断情节，与之构成重叠。具有绘画性的场景脱离经典叙事链的逻辑，构建了另一种“没有开始也没有结束、没有因果关系、随意弥散”（ランシエール，2018a，p.159）的叙事链，从而“所有结论都被悬置”（ランシエール，2018a，p.157）。银幕上原本处于宏大叙事框架下的“集体身体”，在画面静止的过程中，有可能回归为无名的个体。与此同时，画面中“远”的空间意识增强了这种“中断”的效果。“远”的关系不仅存在于画面内部，也作用于观众与被拍

摄对象之间。这种“远”的距离，令人想起韩炳哲所说的、将事物从行动主体的束缚中解放出来的“遥远的切近”：“世间美好只展现给长久而沉思的目光。当行动主体悄然隐退，当它对客体的盲目压迫被打破之时，事物才能重获其‘他性’、谜题属性、陌生感和神秘感。”（韩，2019，p.92）影像试图将观众引至“全然他者”，正是在这个过程中，三姊妹成为了黑格尔所说的“奥林匹斯山的诸神”。

镜头中的绘画性所促成的、使被拍摄对象脱离固有印象的这些瞬间，实现了朗西埃所说的“感性分配”的重新配置。画面的视觉呈现提供了一种美学距离，在这个距离中，“艺术家的意图、艺术场域中呈现的感性形式、单个观众的凝视以及群体状态之间所有可定义的关系都被中断”（ランシエール，2018b，p.71）。在传统观念中，展现贫穷和苦难的纪录片往往被视为对具体社会问题的揭露，遭受迫害和不公的人群甫一登场，便被认为意在进行某种抵抗。这种既定观念或许可以追溯至格里尔逊（Grierson）对纪录片的主张：银幕是讲坛，电影是改变社会的锤子。目的论预设了观众群体，而电影中每一个被摄体在成为控诉性符号的同时，也被更牢固地禁锢在社会秩序和权力关系之中。与之相对，在《三姊妹》中，历史问题和社会环境虽然没有被刻意回避，但也未得到着重强调。正因如此，每一个登场人物看起来都悠然自得。她们在艰苦环境中生存、劳作的同时，也是“自由戏耍（free play）”和“自由表象（free appearance）”的体现（席勒，2012），其中没有任何特殊的关照、意志与设想。“人之所以坚不可摧，是因为他能够承受无限次的毁灭”¹⁸。这是一种普遍意义上的人的概念，不再拘泥于某个狭隘的地域或意识形态。在此意义上，银幕上的女孩形象对于怀有强烈情感和观点的观众所持有的特定立场和预设期望具有一种拒斥性，因为某种被着意索求的意义和价值很可能无迹可寻。当脱离狭隘语境的、对普遍人性以及对人类生存状态的思考登场时，带有目的性的“介入式的凝视”便渐次散去，三姐妹所面对的不再是某一特定群的观众，而是偶然的、不知名的观众以及他们“超然的凝视”。

结语

本文从影像文本及电影本体层面，探索王兵作品中的绘画性及其美学表达。影片中，画面的封闭构图和幽暗背景拒斥了银幕外的“盲画面”，也隐去了通常纪录片倾向传递的细节信息。同时，在镜头运动趋于静止的画面中，空间呈现出开阔而流动的状态。不同视点共存于画面内部，弱化纵深感，将“游”的概念具象化。在具有绘画感的画面中，被拍摄对象不再受制于知识—权力结构赋予的意义，以陌生的个体姿态呈现在观众面前。

关于“游”的美学，仍有诸多值得探讨的空间。例如，这一观念亦体现在王兵的摄影机与被摄空间的互动关系中。其作品时常模糊“看/被看”“外部/内部”之范式，实现“物我两忘，主客交融”（王，2011，p.97）的境界。摄影机于拍摄空间往来穿行的过程中，直接电影中常见的冷静疏离的观察风格被弱化了。此外，王兵在云南时期之后于江浙地区拍摄的一系列作品中，尤为明显地呈现出反移情的群像描绘和松散的叙事结构，这令人联想到林年同提出的“离合引生”的叙事美学。其排斥节奏感和紧凑性的叙事风格，以及游离于时间顺序和因果关系之外的人物呈现，不仅与中国古典文学的叙事结构产生互文，更与东方传统绘画中的视角游移形成通感。受篇幅所限，本文仅就影像的绘画性展开论述，更多议题留待日后探讨。

注释

- 1 尽管王兵在西北部也拍摄了与历史政治题材关联度较低的《原油》（2008）和《煤钱》（2009）等作品，但正如他在采访中所言，这些作品是在制作《夹边沟》（2010）之余的空闲时间里拍摄的副产品（by-product）（Wang, 2013）。
- 2 完成于2018年的《死灵魂》（2018）似乎强化了王兵长年执着于“反右运动”历史题材的印象，实际上《死灵魂》的大部分素材拍摄于2005年至2008年，最初是为筹备拍摄《夹边沟》而进行的采访调查。然而，王兵对于剧情片《夹边沟》最终呈现的叙事效果并不满意，转而考虑以纪实影像来构建一种更趋近于“呈现真实”的叙述。他于2014年最终确立了《死灵魂》的结构，并于2016年开始重新拍摄和素材剪辑（参见：①视频：专访导演王兵谈纪录片《死灵魂》，2024；②王，张，2019；③ワン，ブルドー，2020）。可以说，《死灵魂》是自《夹边沟》衍生而来的项目，其制作周期跨越数年，直至2018年方告完成。其时，王兵已离开西北和云南，将创作重心转至华东地区。在《死灵魂》完成的同一年，王兵有机会赴拉斯维加斯拍摄曾经历“反右运动”的知识分子高尔泰，完成作品《美在自由》（2018）。该作品采用与《和风鸣》类似的拍摄手法，265分钟的时长中，大部分内容由口述史构成，以中景或特写镜头呈现高尔泰的形象。《和风鸣》中常被讨论的自然光线的变化，在《美在自由》中也有体现。2019年，该片于英国上映，王兵在映后谈中表示这可能是他最后一部关于反右斗争题材的作品（参见视频：Frames of Representation 2019: In Conversation with Wang Bing, 2019）。《美在自由》与《和风鸣》在手法上的相似性，可被视为一种有意识的首尾呼应。
- 3 王兵来到云南的最初动因是受到云南作家孙世祥的小说《神史》（2004）的吸引，希望在云贵高原探索将其拍摄成剧情片的可能。王兵在采访中表示，开始纪录片的创作是因为被动地受到环境和资金的限制。但是他随后意识到纪录片拍摄比剧情片更容易使创作者置身于他所追求的未知过程中（参见：土屋，鈴木，2020）。
- 4 参见王兵在2014年伊赫拉瓦国际纪录片电影节（Ji.hlava IDFF）大师班上的演讲内容（视频：Masterclass – Wang Bing, 2017）。
- 5 齐藤绫子参照罗兰·巴特（Roland Barthes）关于“摄影的真谛是‘这个存在过’”的论述，认为王兵试图超越照片中被拍摄对象所具有的“过去”的时间属性，避免其成为“曾经存在”的“幽灵”（Saito, 2013）。
- 6 王兵曾在采访中表示：“《三姊妹》的背景设定在一个贫困的环境中，但整部电影并非关于贫困本身，而是关于女孩们生存状态的真实体验。”（Wang, 2013, p.132）
- 7 恰如麦茨（Metz）所言：“在电影中，永远是他者出现在银幕上；而我，我正在那里看他。”（麦茨，2006，pp.44-45）
- 8 关于林年同之中国电影美学理论的争议主要表现在两个方面。一是理论本身是否成立，二是作为理论对象的中国电影是否具有单一的典型风格（参见：洪，2016）。
- 9 参见摄影师前田佳孝关于王兵作品拍摄的访谈，前田曾参与《苦钱》等影片的拍摄（前田，2018，p.15）。
- 10 据王兵在2014年伊赫拉瓦国际纪录片电影节（Ji.hlava IDFF）大师班上的陈述（视频：Masterclass – Wang Bing, 2017）。
- 11 据王兵在2014年伊赫拉瓦国际纪录片电影节（Ji.hlava IDFF）大师班上的陈述（视频：Masterclass – Wang Bing, 2017）
- 12 这令人联想到，克拉考尔曾以《大地》（1930）为例，指出杜甫仁科揭示物体所固有的美，并非通过令人印象深刻的运动，而是在一种彻底静止的状态中将其呈现（Kracauer, 1997, p.185）。
- 13 根据斯科尔斯的定义，“叙事性（narrativity）”是指观众利用叙事媒介提供的素材，主动完成并整合故事的思考过程与能力。也就是说，叙事形式会引导观众积极运用“叙事性”思维，将叙事文本重构为一个具有意义的整体。这种积极参与和解读的“叙事性”活动，通常是文本所期待并给予积极反馈的（Scholes, 1976）。
- 14 对此，罗兰·巴特有类似的看法：“我能往电影的图像上添加什么吗？——我想不行，来不及：面对银幕，我不能想闭眼就闭眼；闭上眼睛，再睁开就找不到原来的图像了；我必须全神贯注；这里有很多其他性质的东西，但不是思索性的。”（巴特，2002，p.88）
- 15 在20世纪70年代写作《第三意义》的时间节点，巴特认为：“电影截图解除了时间对影片的束缚，这个束缚是强烈的，它仍是我们可称之为成年电影之诞生的障碍。”（巴特，2012，p.108）今天，数字设备使长时间的电影拍摄成为可能，持续相当时间的固定镜头和静止画面越来越多地出现在电影中。当电影从过去的技

术束缚中解放出来时，巴特所言的“电影性”也同时从这种束缚中被分离出来。

16 巴特以《伊凡雷帝》(1944)为例，指出电影中的钝义“超越了故事，成为对意义的打磨和偏移”(巴特，2012，p.105)。

17 上野昂志在描述观看《铁西区》的感受时，曾言及那是一种“清醒与沉醉交替往复”的状态，或许可以说明这种悬置的体验(上野，2011，p.2)。

18 王兵于2017年获得EYE Art & Film奖之际，EYE电影博物馆制作了一部介绍其作品的短片，此句引自该片中为王兵作品中的人物的评价(视频：Wang Bing, Winner of the Third Eye Art & Film Prize, 2018)。

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Portable Images: Digital Video Activism and Queer Marxism in Cui Zi'en's *Withered in a Blooming Season*

Wendy Sun 孙晓雪

Abstract

This article analyzes Cui Zi'en's 2005 film *Withered in a Blooming Season* as a case study of queer cinematic activism in China. I argue that Cui's distinctive combination of digital video activism, Marxist critique, and queer theory presents a radical departure from both state-controlled representations and Western-dominated LGBTQ discourses. Drawing on traditional Chinese literary history, Cui reimagines same-sex intimacy and family kinship as spaces of both resistance and renewal. By examining narrative structure, visual language, and socio-political context, this article shows how Cui's film challenges conventional ethics, redefines queer identity within a Chinese framework, and contributes to a global queer Marxist imaginary. Cui's film not only critiques censorship and heteronormativity in China, but also advances queer theory toward a more localized, diverse, and politically impactful direction.

Keywords: Cui Zi'en; Chinese independent cinema; queer Marxism; digital video activism; *Withered in a Blooming Season*; family kinship; tongzhi politics; post-socialist China; queer theory; Chinese same-sex literary traditions; *tongzhi*

Independent cinema stands out through its freedom to explore cultural projects unfettered by economic constraints or sponsorship limitations. In the realm of Chinese independent cinema, Cui Zi'en's 崔子恩 queer cinematic practice transcends multidirectional boundaries. With what he refers to as his 'digital video activism' 影像行动, Cui not only challenges the Chinese nation-state's problematic censorship of and stranglehold on the queer movement but also simultaneously reconstructs a queer theory specific to the Chinese context, thereby demonstrating the uniqueness of queer connections in China.

Cui's independent queer cinema serves as both political activism and a disruption of Western-dominated queer discourse. His work urges a reevaluation of queer notions and the interplay between art, media, technology, activism, and the Chinese nation-state's identity. Cui's cinematic intervention has three principal dimensions: representing the struggle and memories of China's queer community, expanding the Western notion of queer to incorporate Chinese Marxist elements, and pioneering a new mode of digital media activism that promotes empowerment through international film festivals and cross-cultural distribution.

This paper investigates Cui's deconstruction of Western queer theory using his 2005 film *Withered in a Blooming Season* 少年花草黄 (2005) as a case study. First, I examine the historical context of same-sex relationships in China, arguing that Cui, an expert in premodern Chinese literature and the late imperial writer Li Yu 李渔 (1611–1680), mimics traditional patterns of queer love to convey uniquely Chinese sentiments in his film. This film not only forms a queer narrative but also serves as a testament to Chinese national history and cultural memory. Second, I analyze the narrative structure and cinematic techniques in *Withered in a Blooming Season*, asserting that the film represents Cui's effort to localize queer theory within the Chinese context and challenge Western notions of queerness. Cui seeks to resolve the dilemmas of queer theory in China by

developing a localized tongzhi identity, exploring connections within Chinese family kinship, and intertwining Western queer theory with Marxist theory, reflecting elements of Chinese post-socialist culture.

I conclude that Cui's cinematic practice constructs a new visual language that offers global audiences insight into intimate same-sex experiences in China while challenging existing queer theories. Cui's experimental techniques form a localized queer identity for China, mirroring the queerness of the Chinese nation-state. His independent cinema serves as a social intervention, raising awareness about the queer community in modern China and the queerness of the modern Chinese state. Cui's international success paves the way for scholars to deconstruct Western-dominated queer theory and reconstruct a localized Chinese concept of homosexuality and queer identity.

A Survey of Same-Sex Historical Context and Queer Relations in Chinese Literary Representations

Chou Wah-shan, in *Tongzhi: Politics of Same-Sex Eroticism in Chinese Societies* (2000), points out that same-sex eroticism has been a significant social, political, and scientific concern in modern China. Although premodern Confucian and Taoist thought did not treat sex as the central feature of life, and thus, there was no concept of sexual orientation as understood today, the traditional cosmology of *yin-yang* influenced gender hierarchies and attitudes toward same-sex practices.

The fluidity of gender, as represented by the constant movement between *yin* and *yang*, contributed to a more tolerant attitude toward same-sex practices in pre-modern China. Taoism viewed sexual intercourse as a cosmological and medical phenomenon that transcended mere lust and balanced the essences of *yin* and *yang*. As Robin Wang explains in *Yin-Yang: The Way of Heaven and Earth in Chinese Thought and Culture*, *yin* and *yang* are interdependent and constantly transforming into one another, embodying a dynamic balance that is crucial in understanding Chinese cosmology (2012, p.3). Sexual intercourse between men was seen as an exchange of *yang* essence, while same-sex practices between women involved the exchange of *yin* essence. This cosmological view allowed for the coexistence of diverse sexual and gender behaviors within a relatively tolerant framework.

However, Confucianism reinterpreted the ancient *yin-yang* dichotomy, associating male essence with *yang* and feminine qualities with *yin*, thus establishing a gender hierarchy where *yang* was considered superior. For nearly 2000 years, Confucian ideology dominated pre-modern Chinese society, organizing sexual and human relations into a hierarchical order regulated by the Five Relations. Sexual activities had to align with proper family kinship relationships and orthodox hierarchies. Same-sex relationships were tolerated only if they did not undermine the institution of heterosexual marriage. This tolerance primarily benefited elite males, allowing them to pursue romantic same-sex relations outside marriage while forbidding women to form such bonds outside polygamy. Michel Foucault, in his analysis of the history of sexuality, highlights how sexuality regulation is deeply connected to power structures, particularly through systems of marriage and kinship. This perspective frames the Confucian regulation of same-sex relationships as part of a broader effort to maintain social order through control over personal relationships and family structures.

In pre-modern Chinese literature, same-sex narratives often revolved around themes of lust and love, with distinct differences in the depiction of male and female same-sex relations. Male same-sex relationships

frequently consider factors such as class, age, and gender. According to Bret Hinsch's research in *Passions of the Cut Sleeve* (1990), these relationships often emphasized both emotional connections and physical desire, highlighting an intrinsic inclination and culturally cultivated taste for such relationships among men in ancient China. Wu Cuncun, in *Homoerotic Sensibilities in Late Imperial China* (2004), provides a detailed examination of male homoerotic literature, such as *Pinhua Baojian* 品花宝鉴 (late 17th century), *Hong Loumeng* 红楼梦 (1791), and *Longyang Yishi* 龍陽逸史 (mid-18th century). Wu's analysis reveals that male same-sex desire in these works was portrayed as both an innate inclination and a culturally acquired taste, often intertwining emotional and physical aspects of relationships. Matthew Sommer, in *Sex, Law, and Society in Late Imperial China* (2000), discusses how male same-sex relations were regulated and perceived within the broader context of legal and social norms. Sommer highlights the complexities of how these relationships intersected with issues of class and authority, adding another layer to the understanding of male same-sex dynamics in historical China. Giovanni Vitiello's *The Libertine's Friend* (2011) further explores the construction of homosexuality and masculinity, showing how male same-sex relations were embedded within broader social and cultural practices. Vitiello's work underscores the interplay between homoeroticism and societal norms in late imperial China.

In contrast, female same-sex desire was typically linked to themes of sexual deprivation and occasionally supernatural elements. Narratives about female same-sex relations often depicted these desires as arising from a lack of heterosexual fulfillment or influenced by otherworldly factors. This depiction highlights the societal belief in the necessity of heterosexual relationships for women. Sang Tze-lan, in *The Emerging Lesbian* (2003), points out that the regulation of female homoerotic desire reflected the anxieties men had about female sexuality. These narratives often mirrored the broader societal concerns about women's sexual autonomy in modern society. Mayfair Yang, in "From Gender Erasure to Gender Difference" (1999), discusses how modernization and increased contact with the West introduced China to concepts from Western sexuality studies and gender terminology. During the Republican period, Chinese writers integrated new Western theories of homosexuality with traditional perceptions of same-sex love. Provocative periodicals from the May Fourth Movement era often compared same-sex love between women to that between men but still associated female same-sex desire with a lack of opportunity for heterosexual practice. Sang Tze-lan notes that regulating homoerotic female desire reflected male anxiety about female sexuality in modern society.

Maoist China marked a significant shift, where discourse about sex was taboo, and homosexuality was declared non-existent in the early years of the PRC. The ideal of masculinity shifted to the physically strong worker, and women were transformed from sexual objects to laborers. Personal love and passion became linked with national political ambition, and same-sex eroticism vanished from the literary landscape for several decades.

Modern representations of same-sex relations reflect traditional depictions while incorporating elements of the changing status of women and Western influence. In post-Mao China, public discussions have centered more on gay men in metropolitan cities, while lesbian discourse remains largely invisible. The media often portrays gay men negatively, associating them with promiscuity, AIDS, and societal menace. Writers face state pressure to produce ethical representations that align with the narrative of building a communist new China, resulting in highly censored creativity.

Modern Chinese discourse on same-sex eroticism is more complex than in any previous period, intertwining economics, international influence, tradition, national political ambition, public gaze, feminism, kinship, and science. Cui Zi'en's films offer a significant exploration of these issues in contemporary Chinese society. As one of the few openly gay filmmakers in China, Cui challenges the dominant narratives by portraying the lives and struggles of LGBTQ individuals. His works, such as *Enter the Clowns* 丑角登场 (2002) and *Queer China, 'Comrade' China* 誌同志 (2009), provide a critical perspective on the ongoing marginalization and censorship faced by the LGBTQ community. By highlighting the intersections of gender, sexuality, and societal norms, Cui's films not only reflect the historical complexities discussed in the aforementioned literature but also push the boundaries of modern Chinese cinema and cultural discourse.

Scholars such as Chris Berry and Audrey Yue have extensively discussed Cui Zi'en's films, noting how they provide a critical perspective on the intersection of queer identities and state politics in China. Berry argues that Cui's work challenges the state's control over queer representation and highlights the resilience and agency of the queer community. In 'The Sacred, the Profane, and the Domestic in Cui Zi'en's Cinema', Berry discusses the interplay of sacred, profane, and domestic elements in Cui's films, contextualizing them within the broader spectrum of Chinese and global queer cinema. In 'Mobile Intimacies in the Queer Sinophone Films of Cui Zi'en', Audrey Yue addresses how Cui Zi'en's films navigate and represent queer identities and intimacies within the Sinophone context, contributing to a broader understanding of queer Sinophone cinema. Yue emphasizes that Cui's films not only critique Western-centric queer theory but also foreground the unique socio-political dynamics of queer life in China.

By examining these historical contexts and literary representations, we gain a deeper understanding of the unique trajectory of same-sex relationships and queer identities in Chinese culture, which Cui Zi'en's films seek to articulate and challenge. These scholarly insights justify the inclusion of a historical context when examining and demonstrating how Cui's films are deeply embedded within and reflective of these evolving socio-cultural dynamics. Cui Zi'en's film *Withered in a Blooming Season* (2005) offers a poignant exploration of these issues in contemporary Chinese society. As one of the few openly gay filmmakers in China, Cui challenges the dominant narratives by portraying the lives and struggles of LGBTQ individuals. *Withered in a Blooming Season* specifically highlights the enduring marginalization and censorship faced by the LGBTQ community, reflecting on themes of love, identity, and societal pressure. By drawing on both historical contexts and modern challenges, Cui's film bridges the gap between traditional literary depictions of same-sex relations and the ongoing fight for LGBTQ rights in China today.

Traditions and Modern Adaptations in *Withered in a Blooming Season*

Before Cui Zi'en became a film director, he was a scholar of premodern Chinese literature, specializing in the works of the Late Imperial novelist Li Yu. Li Yu is famous for his same-sex stories, 'A Male Mencius Mother' 男孟母教合三遷, 'The House of Gathered Refinements' 萃雅樓, and 'The Fragrant Companion' 怜香伴. Li Yu's work is significant in understanding the traditional treatment of same-sex love. In 'A Male Mencius Mother', Li Yu found a way for his characters to survive in conservative Confucian society by having the pretty boy Ruilang cross-dress. He not only disguised the gender of the pretty boy but also cross-dressed the homosexual relationship in his story to disguise it as a heterosexual marriage. This plot demonstrates that as early as the 17th century, Li Yu understood that the only way for a same-sex relationship to survive in Chinese society was to simulate heterosexual family kinship. In 'The House of Gathered Refinements', he

depicts an ideal male who embodies both beauty and refined cultural taste, reflecting the traditional belief in the fluidity of gender. In 'The Fragrant Companion', Li Yu's solution for same-sex attraction between women is to have them marry the same man and align their female same-sex desire with the heteronormative polygamous family structure.

In Cui Zi'en's film *Withered in a Blooming Season*, many elements of Li Yu's influence can be identified in the plot. The film explores the queer relations among three teenagers: Xiao Feng, his twin sister Wen Wen, and his gay best friend, Le Le. Growing up in a family marked by their parents' divorce and neglect, Xiao Feng and Wen Wen share an intimate bond. However, their relationship became strained during their last summer at home before college. Wen Wen, uncomfortable with the perception of their relationship as romantic by other people, distances herself from Xiao Feng. Meanwhile, Xiao Feng discovers that Wen Wen has developed a romantic relationship with Xiao Jun, a college student and aspiring singer. In an attempt to sabotage their relationship, Xiao Feng coerces Le Le into pretending to be Wen Wen's boyfriend. This plan fails, and Le Le uncovers that Xiao Jun is also their mother's secret lover. Despite their mother's attempts to bribe him, Le Le remains loyal to Xiao Feng and reveals the truth to Wen Wen. Heartbroken, Wen Wen decides to form a union with Xiao Feng and Le Le, and the film ends with the three walking together toward an uncertain future.

Cui's unconventional movie *Withered in a Blooming Season* raises heated discussions about same-sex relations and family kinship. It is banned in China, and the international reception has likewise been controversial. The Western media spins the story as one of brotherly love gone wrong and advertises it as a movie of incestuous love. However, the themes of incest are only an undercurrent to the film. Xiao Feng's sexuality remains undefined and ambiguous until the end. While his overly protective behaviors towards his twin sister's romantic relationship with Xiao Jun could be considered as stemming from jealousy, there is also the psychoanalytic interpretation of it arising from a fear of losing his maternal figure, considering the non-functional family structure of the twins' upbringing. With the mother being distant and selfish, Wen Wen has taken up the role of the nurturing female figure in Xiao Feng's life, which includes, at the most fundamental level, cooking his meals and caring for his needs. Xiao Jun could be interpreted as a male figure who threatens to take away the mother figure from his life and, therefore, needs to be eliminated.

The most controversial and erotic scene in the movie is when the twins' mother punishes Wen Wen for fighting for her own room to sleep in. Wen Wen refuses to eat for days and falls asleep due to weakness. Xiao Feng brings milk to his sister and feeds her mouth-to-mouth. This scene is presented by Cui Zi'en very erotically and can be read as a sexually suggestive scene. Later in the movie, Wen Wen goes to see a doctor and tells her brother that she has become pregnant. Interestingly, Xiao Feng goes to pick up a fight with Xiao Jun, but the latter tells him that he never touched Wen Wen. The film never provides viewers with any further clarification about Wen Wen's pregnancy. Xiao Feng has doubts and complains to Le Le that he does not know if Wen Wen is telling the truth or not. Cui Zi'en also does not provide an answer, and the pregnancy storyline disappears, leaving the audience wondering.

In *Withered in a Blooming Season*, Xiao Feng feeding his mother-figure Wen Wen milk suggests a reversed gender performance. Milk plays an essential role in Cui's cinematic practice. It symbolizes the act of nurturing, semen, and also indicates femininity. This scene aligns with the Chinese notion that gender can be fluid

and also agrees with the Western gender theory that gender is socially constructed and highly performative rather than an inborn characteristic.

Another possible reading of this scene is that Xiao Feng was indeed performing sexual acts with Wen Wen that night, which explains Wen Wen's pregnancy. However, Xiao Feng's frustration also implies that he probably did not even understand how sex works or should be performed. With this one scene, Cui Zi'en successfully broaches questions about the nature and nurture of gender and highlights theoretical issues such as gender performance and the fluidity of sexuality. Using the structure of the family unit, Cui Zi'en does not just content himself with combining Chinese and Western gender theory but instead starts to sort out a way of creating a localized Chinese queer theory that is attached to family kinship.

As Chou Wah-shan claims in *Tongzhi: Politics of Same-Sex Eroticism in Chinese Societies*, in Chinese societies, "family kinship, rather than an erotic object choice, is the basis of a person's identity" (2000, p. 1). By densely weaving the queer relations within one family unit, Cui Zi'en strives to articulate his own queer theory and *tongzhi* politics. As Hongwei Bao points out in *Queer Comrades: Gay Identity and Tongzhi Activism in Postsocialist China*, Cui's fiction films are challenging, particularly in terms of labels:

He is not a communist, and yet communist principles and practices feature strongly in his films, and he even speaks of building a 'communist international of queer films' (Cui and Liu 2010). He was born in China but does not believe in 'Chineseness'; he takes pride in being an international and a citizen of the world (if not the universe as his science fiction films often involve extra-terrestrials). He identifies himself as gay but is against LGBT identity politics. He describes himself as polyamorous and particularly attracted to straight men. He is often dressed in gender-neutral clothes. Most people call him 'Teacher Cui,' and his friends call him Cuizi. He challenges every definition and boundary, and in this sense, he is truly queer (Bao 2018, pp. 121-122).

In Hongwei Bao's analysis, what truly marks Cui as queer is his rejection of being labeled as either Chinese or gay. This raises questions regarding the significance of the term queer and how Cui translates his own interpretation of identity politics into the cinematic medium. While Cui rejects being labeled as Chinese, his literary production and cinematic work are all grounded in the very Chineseness that he attempts to nullify. His rejection of national identity and sexual identity positions his films as boundary-crossing manifestos and simultaneously provides a philosophy of cinema.

In *Withered in a Blooming Season*, Cui prioritizes his understanding of queer through family kinship. Sexuality is undefined or only vaguely represented. The relationship between Xiao Feng and his gay best friend, Le Le, is very ambiguous. The camera depicts the two young boys in multiple intimate settings where they lay half-naked on the same bed and discuss the problems involving Wen Wen's new romance. Cui never identifies Le Le as gay in the movie. It is only his statements 'I would also like to have a boyfriend' and 'I do not like girls' that suggest to viewers that he prefers men to women. However, bowing to pressure from Xiao Feng, Le Le agrees to form a romantic union with Wen Wen and suggests that he and she be a couple. He ensures Wen Wen that he will take responsibility for her and be kind to her. Wen Wen laughs at him and jokes that he should form a union with Xiao Feng instead because of their close friendship and patent compatibility. With this scene, Cui blurs the lines between heterosexuality and homosexuality. The queer connection

that links Xiao Feng, Wen Wen, and Le Le introduces notions of bisexuality and pansexuality. Viewers do not know if Xiao Feng and Le Le are both homosexual or possibly bisexual or pansexual. In this scene where Le Le proposes to form a union with Wen Wen to keep Xiao Feng close, Cui radically challenges the notion of the *tongzhi* identity in China and explores a new sexual identity that builds upon the expansion of Western queer theory.

In this film, sexual orientation is not the primary focus. Instead, Cui emphasizes the queering connections within the family kinship to demonstrate a queerness that challenges Western identity politics. The foregrounding of Chinese family kinship, socioeconomic structure, and cultural aspects also provides this film with an explicitly Chinese context: it is an authentic Chinese queer movie. In an interview with Fan Popo, Cui Zi'en claims that his intention in creating queer relations in *Withered in a Blooming Season* was to draw attention to 'breaking the ethics trilogy' (Fan and Cui, 2009). Cui claims that he does not believe in heterosexual or homosexual monogamy but advocates for triangles and polyamorous relations. Therefore, the film *Withered in a Blooming Season* can be considered an expression of his philosophy and queer theory in cinematic form.

Cui's belief in polyamorous relations may stem from his training in premodern literature. In premodern Chinese society, the heteronormative family structure included polygamy. Both women and men were forced into the institution of marriage. Same-sex desire between women was covered up in the family structure. Same-sex desires between men are depicted as culturally defined friendships or represented as pure admiration that transcends lust and praise for *qing*. In *Withered in a Blooming Season*, it is possible to identify traces of inheritance and influence from pre-modern Chinese literary traditions. For example, the relationship between Xiao Feng and Le Le is ambiguous and described as a friendship. Le Le risks his happiness for Xiao Feng, which crosses the ethical line of care and friendship. Xiao Feng's proposal to form a union between Le Le and Wen Wen also simulates Li Yu's solution to the survival of same-sex desire in Chinese society, which was to incorporate desire into the heterosexual family structure. Trying to persuade Wen Wen to accept Le Le, Xiao Feng gives a speech on Le Le's generous and kind personality and also focuses on the fact that Le Le has been accepted to a prestigious University and may study abroad in the US in the future. It is interesting how Cui reconstructs Li Yu's premodern ideal male with a post-socialist touch.

Xiao Feng's unethical desire toward his sister or mother figure raises questions about power relations. Cui's fiction movie *Withered in a Blooming Season* showcases many uniquely Chinese elements by simulating the traditional patterns of same-sex love stories. In combining the Chinese context with Western gender theory and sexual identity politics, Cui further explores the definition of queer and suggests that freedom can only be achieved if traditional patterns and rules of ethics are broken. The movie's ending suggests that Xiao Feng, Wen Wen, and Le Le formed an unconventional triangle that joins same-sex desire and family kinship. Just as with the ambiguity of Wen Wen's pregnancy, Cui Zi'en does not dwell on the solution to their problem but demonstrates an alternative path that leads to boundless exploration.

Sounds and Fury in Cui's Digital Video Activism

Cui Zi'en views his filmmaking as a political practice, referring to it as Digital Video Activism. As Hongwei Bao introduces in 'Digital Video Activism: Narrating History and Memory in Queer China, "Comrade" China', Cui explains that Digital Video Activism counters the advocacy and promotion of standard, refined,

and excellent films. Cui calls for ‘acting with digital videos and changing the world’, a technique that applies a soft and flexible texture to films and juxtaposes this quality with the ‘hard’ and ‘stiff’ 硬性的 world (Bao, 2018). Cui hopes to connect his films with social conflicts and drive change through this contrast.

Cui characterizes his films as ‘zero rhetoric’ 零修辞, representing ‘a radical departure from literary techniques and conventions’ (Bao, 2018). The settings in *Withered in a Blooming Season* are humble, and the soft lighting produces a gentle visual effect. The yellow tone highlighting Xiao Feng and Le Le’s half-naked bodies suggests vulnerability and nostalgia. In contrast, Cui leaves harsh natural noises in the final product, avoiding cinematic technologies to eliminate disruptive sounds. This contrast between softness and harshness aligns with Cui’s Digital Video Activism philosophy.

Bao argues that digital video films ‘provided Cuizi with a means of breaking away from established artistic conventions’, making this practice not only aesthetic but also intrinsically political (Bao, 2018). Bao quotes an interview between Cui Zi’en and K. Zhao in 2009, where Cui states:

In the past two years, I have changed my mind about film-making. I can’t think that I can create art for art’s sake anymore. Nor do I think that art can be free from politics. I have begun to relate art to politics and the liberation or suppression of certain groups of people. I have debunked the boundaries between art and politics. The best artwork should be those that can influence and liberate the oppressed instead of those displayed in museums or art galleries to satisfy the needs of the bourgeoisie and those who have time and money (Cui quoted in K. Zhao 2009, pp. 18-19).

The portable digital camera enables Cui and his crew to explore the limits of reality. The device’s lightness allows entry into the private realms of the characters’ lives and consciousness. Furthermore, the camera’s instability draws the audience out of the story’s private sphere. The ‘sounds and fury’ in *Withered in a Blooming Season* imply the coexistence of public and private spheres, breaking the private/public dichotomy to reveal the characters’ intimate connections. The dim lighting suggests the instability of the nation-state’s treatment of queer connections, reflecting an ambiguous socio-political climate regarding same-sex relations and queer identities. Cui Zi’en’s digital video practice introduces flexibility and ambiguity to mirror the Chinese nation-state’s attitude towards the queer community.

While these techniques provide independent filmmakers like Cui the agency to create narratives despite state censorship, Cui still relies on international support and film festivals. Cui views activism as an expansion of horizon and visibility, aiming ‘to have films seen by as many people as possible’ (Bao, 2018) to build a community between participants and audiences. Activism, in Cui’s view, involves legitimizing screenings in Chinese society. Engaging in local film festivals and exhibitions since 2001, Cui realized the need to package his films as ‘queer’ and associate them with Western academic discourse on gender and queer theory. His political activism is transnational, and *Withered in a Blooming Season* serves as both individual and social intervention to raise awareness about queer subjects. Cui’s work raises crucial questions about actualizing activism in China’s social context and negotiating between localizing queer identity politics and Western theoretical frameworks.

Queering Marxism and National Allegory

In *Queer Marxism in Two Chinas* (2015), Petrus Liu argues that a dilemma riddles queer theory in post-socialist China. Contrary to common beliefs, Liu posits that the development of queer culture and same-sex identity politics does not signal the end of Marxism in China. Instead, he contends that queer theory in China has been entwined with the reception of Marxism in both Mainland China and Taiwan. He claims that ‘Queer Marxism in the two Chinas provides precisely the conceptual tools to illuminate the historical connections between queer theory and liberal pluralism for the global scholarly community’ (Liu 2015, P. 31). Liu further investigates the theoretical status of queer theory in contemporary China and argues against producing sexual politics and queer theory in China by merely applying translated concepts from Western gender theory. He suggests that applying Euro-American notions to the Chinese context only serves Western cultural imperialism.

Liu highlights the commodification of queer theory in modern China through an interview with Cui Zi’en in 2012, where Cui claims:

Compared to the American “ghetto” of academic subspecialization, paradoxically, queer theory in China enjoys a much broader media presence. My queer criticisms and essays have a large readership outside academic circles, not to mention that many works by progressive queer theorists in Taiwan and Hongkong are avidly consumed in the People’s Republic. At the same time, the general climate in China is quite conservative. I am the only openly gay academic in China. With my writings being the only exception, works published in China under the rubric of ku’er lilun (queer theory) or xing yanjiu (sexuality studies) are all produced by heterosexual-identified experts outside of the literary fields: Sociologists such as Pan Suiming and Li Yinhe, or medical authorities such as Zhang Beichuan. In China, being openly identified as gay or lesbian detracts from your credibility as an expert on alternative sexuality, which is supposed to be described objectively and studied scientifically, preferably with a quantitative methodology (Cui in Liu, 2015, pp. 35-36).

Liu agrees with Cui’s analysis, noting that in mainland China, the understanding of same-sex relations itself embodies resistance to theory. Sexuality studies have become medico-scientific concepts focused on preventing AIDS rather than building a political identity and fighting social stigma. He argues that Chinese queer theory must align with Marxist critique to challenge the distribution of resources and the monopoly of sexologists and educational experts in the production of knowledge about sexual minorities (Liu 2015, p. 38). Liu suggests that the term ‘Chinese’ in Chinese queer theory is not merely geographic but also reflects the political and cultural standoff between Mainland China and Taiwan.

In Liu’s analysis, developments in queer theory and Marxism are intertwined. However, the Chinese term *tongzhi* is subsumed under the Western category of queer. . Liu states that ‘the politics of tongzhi fills a nationalist need to develop a linguistic alternative to Euro-American queer theory by insisting on the imperialism of Eastern material’ (Liu, 2015, p. 44).

Focusing on Cui Zi’en’s work, Liu argues that Cui expands the definition of ‘queer’ beyond homosexuality to include a wide range of non-normative expressions and relations. He asserts that Cui’s films are ‘complex meditations on the historical moment of their production, and they cannot be treated as subtitle images at in-

ternational film festivals with no regard for the Chinese political and intellectual contexts' (Liu, 2015, p. 49). According to Liu, Cui creates his own queer theory through his cinematic practice, imagining a potential sexual liberation that transcends same-sex desire and gender performance.

Cui's cinematic productions challenge traditional norms of sexuality and envision a non-normative society of tolerance, liberation, diversity, and pluralism. In *Withered in a Blooming Season*, the ending represents Cui's unique ideal where relations counter both state censorship and traditional aesthetics. Since Cui believes that communism represents the courage to pursue a better utopian future, the film's conclusion demonstrates his rebellion against both *tongzhi* politics and Western queer culture while celebrating an imagined future that embraces communism and socialism.

Withered in a Blooming Season can be interpreted as a political practice as well as a queer movie. The dysfunctional family structure of Wen Wen and Xiao Feng serves as a national allegory of China. Cui Zi'en represents not only the queer relations within the family but also the queerness of the Chinese nation-state itself. The relationship between the mother and her two children can be read allegorically as the conflict between Marxist communism and post-socialist desires inspired by economic growth. The camera movements, lighting, soft color tones, and the sharp contrast between private intimacy and disruptive background noise symbolize the collision between the private and public spheres, as well as the conflict between individual desires and collective narratives.

The relationship between Xiao Jun and the mother signifies individual desires in post-socialist China, where money overrides emotions and ethical care. The dysfunctional relationship between parent and child symbolizes the disconnection between the state-sponsored communist narrative and capitalistic practices. The failed romance between Wen Wen and Xiao Jun deconstructs the state's version of Marxism, and the film's ending suggests a vision of Cui's queer Marxist utopia for China. Cui Zi'en not only advocates for the same-sex community in China but also breaks the boundaries of identity politics and social relations, embodying a truly queer perspective.

Conclusion

Cui Zi'en stands as China's most iconic and controversial queer filmmaker, transcending the roles of director, scholar, novelist, essayist, and activist. Leveraging new digital media, Cui crafts a unique cinematic language and technique through his concept of Digital Video Activism, which delves into how filmmaking generates political meanings and social representations. In his 2005 film *Withered in a Blooming Season*, Cui artfully blends traditional patterns of queer love with modern reimaginings of family kinship and gender relations.

Cui Zi'en's approach does not merely adapt Western theories to Chinese contexts but instead rewrites queer theory within the framework of the Chinese Marxist tradition, thereby expanding the notion of queer. His cinematic practices serve as powerful mediums of same-sex activism while also challenging the Euro-American queer tradition. Cui's queer Marxist films provide a framework for his identity politics and serve as an allegorical reflection on the Marxist tradition within the Chinese nation-state.

Through his portable digital images, Cui urges queer theory scholarship to explore new trajectories and constructs a localized queer theory deeply rooted in China's unique history and memory. By situating his narra-

tives within the specific socio-political context of China, Cui's work offers a profound commentary on both the global and local dimensions of queer theory. He advocates for a future where diverse identities and expressions are not only accepted but celebrated, pushing the boundaries of cinematic expression and political activism.

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可携带的影像： 崔子恩《少年花草黄》中的数码影像行动与酷儿马克思主义

孙晓雪

概要

本文以崔子恩 2005 年的影片《少年花草黄》为个案，分析其作为中国酷儿电影行动主义的实践。本文主张，崔子恩将影像行动（digital video activism）、马克思主义批判与酷儿理论的独特结合，标志着一种有别于国家控制表述与西方主导 LGBTQ 话语的激进出路。崔子恩从中国传统文学史汲取资源，重新想象同性亲密与家庭亲属关系为既具抵抗性又具更新性的空间。通过对叙事结构、视觉语汇与社会政治语境的考察，本文展示了崔氏如何挑战常规伦理、在中国语境内重新界定酷儿身份，并为全球的酷儿马克思主义想象贡献新的视角。崔子恩的影像不仅批判了中国的审查与异性规范化，同时亦将酷儿理论推进到更具本土性、多样性与政治影响的方向。

关键词：崔子恩、中国独立电影、酷儿马克思主义、影像行动、《少年花草黄》、家庭亲属关系、同志政治、后社会主义中国、酷儿理论、中国同性文学传统、同志

独立电影的显著特征在于其在不受经济限制或赞助束缚的前提下，得以自由探索各类文化议题。在中国独立电影的领域中，崔子恩的酷儿影像实践突破了多重边界。借助他所称的“影像行动”，崔子恩不仅对国家对酷儿运动施加的审查与压制发起挑战，同时也重构了一种具有中国语境特性的酷儿理论，从而展现出中国酷儿联结的独特性。

崔子的独立酷儿电影既是一种政治行动，也是一种对以西方为主导的酷儿话语的干扰与重构。他的创作促使人们重新思考酷儿的概念，以及艺术、媒介、技术、行动主义与中国国家身份之间的互动关系。崔子的影像介入实践包含三个主要维度：记录中国酷儿群体的斗争与记忆；扩展西方酷儿概念，使其涵纳中国马克思主义要素；以及开创出一种新的数码媒介行动模式，通过国际影展与跨文化传播赋予群体能动性。

本文以崔子恩 2005 年作品《少年花草黄》为案例，探讨他对西方酷儿理论的解构。首先，我将考察中国同性关系的历史语境，指出崔子恩作为研究中国古典文学与晚明作家李渔（1611–1680）的专家，是如何借鉴传统的酷儿情爱模式，在影片中传达出具有中国特质的情感。这部影片不仅构建出酷儿叙事，也成为中国国家历史与文化记忆的见证。其次，我将分析《少年花草黄》的叙事结构与影像技法，指出该片体现了崔子恩试图通过发展本土化的同志身份、探索中国家庭亲属关系中的联系，并将西方酷儿理论与马克思主义理论交织融合，来回应并解决中国语境下酷儿理论所面临的困境，从而反映出后社会主义文化的诸多特质。

本文指出，崔子恩的影像实践构建出一种新的视觉语言，使全球观众得以深入理解中国亲密的同性经验，同时也对现有酷儿理论提出挑战。其实验性技法塑造出具有中国本土特征的酷儿身份，也映照出现代中国国家自身所体现出的“酷儿性”，即一种非规范性。崔子的独立影像既是一种社会介入，也唤起了人们对当代中国酷儿群体以及现代中国国家所体现出的这种“非规范性”的关注。他在国际影像界取得的成功，为学界提供了一个解构西方主导酷儿理论并重构中国本土同性恋与酷儿认同概念的可能路径。

中国文学中的同性的历史语境与酷儿关系概览

周华山 (Chou Wah-shan) 在《同志：中国社会中的同性情欲政治》(2000) 中指出，在现代中国，同性情欲一直是一个重要的社会、政治与科学议题。尽管前现代儒道思想并未将性视为人生的核心内容，因而也没有现代意义上的“性取向”概念，但传统的阴阳宇宙观却深刻影响了性别等级与同性行为的观念。

性别的流动性体现在阴阳之间的不断转化之中，进而促成了前现代中国对同性行为相对宽容的态度。道教将性交视为一种超越欲望、实现阴阳精气平衡的宇宙现象与医疗行为。如王蓉蓉 (Robin Wang) 在《阴阳：中国思想与文化中的天地之道》中所解释，阴阳是相互依存、不断转化的动态体系，是理解中国宇宙论的关键 (2012, 第 3 页)。在这一视角下，男性之间的性交被看作阳精的交换，而女性之间的同性行为则是阴精的互换。这种宇宙观为多元的性别与性行为提供了一个相对宽容的存在空间。

儒家学说重新诠释了传统的阴阳二元观念，将男性本质与“阳”联系起来，而将女性特质与“阴”相联系，从而建构了以“阳”为尊的性别等级制度。儒家意识形态主导了近两千年的前现代中国社会，将性关系与人际关系纳入由五伦规范的等级秩序之中：性行为必须符合家庭亲属关系与正统等级秩序的要求，同性关系只有在不破坏异性婚姻制度的前提下才被容许。这种宽容主要惠及男性精英阶层，他们可在婚姻之外发展同性情感关系，而女性则不被允许在一夫多妻结构之外建立此类关系。福柯 (Michel Foucault) 在其专著《性史》的分析中指出，性行为的规训与婚姻、亲属制度密切相关，体现了性与权力结构之间的深度关联。从这一角度看，儒家对同性关系的规训，正是其通过控制亲密关系与家庭结构来维护社会秩序的一部分。

在前现代中国文学中，同性叙事常以欲望与爱情为主题，且男性与女性同性关系的描写存在显著差异。男性同性关系常与阶级、年龄与性别因素交织。如韩献博 (Bret Hinsch) 在《断袖之癖：古代中国的同性恋文化》(1990) 中所述，这类关系强调情感与肉体欲望的结合，显示出一种内在倾向与文化品味的双重形成。吴存存 (Wu Cuncun) 于《晚清中国的同性恋感性》(2004) 中深入探讨了如《品花宝鉴》(17 世纪末)、《红楼梦》(1791) 与《龙阳逸史》(18 世纪中叶) 等男性同性题材文学作品。她指出，这些作品中的男男欲望既被呈现为一种天赋倾向，也是一种文化陶冶的品味，情欲与情感往往交织其中。苏成捷 (Matthew Sommer) 在《晚清中国的性、法律与社会》(2000) 中探讨了男性同性关系在法律与社会规范中的定位，指出此类关系常与阶级与权力问题紧密相连，进一步加深了对历史时期男同性关系复杂性的理解。魏濶安 (Giovanni Vitiello) 在《浪荡子的朋友》(2011) 中则从同性恋与男性气质的社会建构角度出发，分析了男性同性关系如何嵌入更广泛的社会与文化实践之中。他强调晚清社会中男男情欲与社会规范之间的张力与互动。

相较之下，女性同性欲望常被描绘为性剥夺的结果，有时亦带有神秘主义色彩。女性同性关系常被呈现为异性满足缺失所引发的结果，或受到超自然因素的影响。这一描写体现出社会对女性必须通过异性恋实现性满足的深层观念。桑梓蘭 (Sang Tze-lan) 在《浮现中的拉拉形象》(2003) 中指出，对女性同性欲望的规训反映出男性对于女性性自主的焦虑。这些叙事映射了现代社会中关于女性性自由的更广泛的社会焦虑。杨美惠 (Mayfair Yang) 在《从性别抹除到性别差异》(1999) 中讨论了现代化与西方接触如何使中国引入西方性研究与性别术语。在民国时期，中国作家开始将西方同性恋理论与传统同性情感观念结合。五四时期的一些激进刊物尝试将女性间的同性之爱与男性之间的爱进行比较，但仍将女性同性欲望视为对异性关系的替代。桑梓蘭指出，这种论述方式体现了现代社会中男性对女性性欲的持续规训。

毛泽东时代的中国则发生了重要转变，性话语成为禁忌，同性恋在中华人民共和国初期被定性为“并不存在”。男性气质理想转向体力劳动者形象，女性则从性客体转化为劳动主体。个人情感与激情被纳入国家政治抱负之中，同性情欲在几十年间几乎消失于文学话语中。

当代对同性关系的再现一方面延续了传统图式，另一方面也融入了女性地位变化与西方影响的因素。在后毛时代的中国，公众讨论更多集中于都市男性同性恋，而女性同性叙述则基本处于隐形状态。媒体常将男同性恋与纵欲、艾滋病与社会威胁联系在一起。作家面临国家要求其创作符合社会主义新中国建构叙事的压力，创作受到严格审查。

现代中国关于同性情欲的论述比以往任何时期都更为复杂，经济结构、国际影响、传统观念、国家政治目标、公共凝视、女性主义、亲属体系与科学认知等多重因素交织其中。崔子恩的影像作品正是在当代中国社会中对上述议题的重要探索。作为中国为数不多的公开出柜的导演之一，崔子恩以展现 LGBTQ 群体的生活与斗争，对主流叙事提出挑战。他的作品如《丑角登场》（2002）与《志同志》（2009），从批判角度反映 LGBTQ 群体持续面临的边缘化与审查压力。通过揭示性别、性取向与社会规范之间的交织关系，崔的影片不仅回应了上述文献所讨论的历史复杂性，也拓展了中国当代电影与文化话语的边界。

学者如裴开瑞（Chris Berry）与余燕珊（Audrey Yue）对崔子恩的影片进行了深入研究，指出其作品对中国酷儿身份与国家政治交汇点的批判性介入。裴开瑞认为，崔的作品挑战了国家对酷儿再现的控制，并强调酷儿社群的韧性与能动性。在《圣俗与家常：崔子恩电影中的空间结构》中，裴开瑞分析了其影片中的“神圣—世俗—日常”三重结构，将其放置于中国与全球酷儿电影的更广语境之中。在《酷儿华语电影中的移动亲密》中，余燕珊探讨了崔子恩作品如何在华语语境中表现酷儿身份与亲密关系，进而丰富了对酷儿华语影像的理解。余强调，崔的作品不仅对西方中心的酷儿理论提出批判，也凸显了中国酷儿生活独特的社会—政治动态。

通过对这些历史语境与文学再现的考察，我们能够更深入地理解中国文化中同性关系与酷儿身份的发展轨迹——而这正是崔子恩电影试图表述与挑战的对象。这些学术观点也为我们在分析崔子恩影像作品时纳入历史背景提供了正当性，凸显其作品深植于中国社会文化动态的事实。崔子恩的《少年花草黄》（2005）正是对这些议题的深切探讨。作为中国少数公开身份的酷儿导演之一，崔通过呈现 LGBTQ 群体的生活与斗争，对主流叙事提出挑战。《少年花草黄》特别凸显了该群体持续遭受的边缘化与审查，并探讨了爱、身份与社会压力等主题。通过将历史语境与当代困境加以交织，崔的影像建立起传统同性文学图式与今日 LGBTQ 权益斗争之间的桥梁。

《少年花草黄》中的传统再现与当代表达

在成为导演之前，崔子恩曾是一位中国古典文学研究学者，专门研究晚明小说家李渔的作品。李渔以其有关同性题材的小说而著称，如《男孟母教合三迁》、《萃雅楼》与《怜香伴》。李渔的作品对理解传统同性情感处理方式至关重要。在《男孟母教合三迁》中，李渔让美少年瑞郎女扮男装，从而使角色得以在儒家社会的保守框架中生存。他不仅掩饰了人物的性别，也将同性关系“伪装”为异性婚姻。这一情节设定表明，李渔在 17 世纪即已洞悉：同性情感在中国社会中若欲存续，唯有借助异性亲属结构的伪装。在《萃雅楼》中，他塑造了一位兼具美貌与文化修养的理想男性，反映了传统对性别流动性的认可；在《怜香伴》中，李渔通过让两位女性嫁与同一男子，使女性之间的同性吸引得以纳入异性婚姻的多妻结构之中。

在崔子恩的电影《少年花草黄》中，可识别出李渔影响的诸多情节元素。影片讲述了三位青少年之间的酷儿关系：小峰、他的双胞胎姐姐文文，以及他最亲密的同志好友乐乐。在父母离异、情感忽视的家庭环境中成长，小峰与文文之间维系着一种密切的亲密关系。然而，在他们即将升入大学的最后一个暑假，这段关系开始出现裂痕。文文因他人对他们关系的“误读”感到不适，逐渐疏远了小峰。同时，小峰发现文文与大学生、歌手梦想者小俊发展出了恋情。出于破坏目的，小峰强迫乐乐假扮文文的男朋友。这一计划失败，乐乐反而发现小俊竟是他们母亲的秘密情人。尽管母亲企图用钱贿赂他，乐乐依然忠于小峰，并将真相告知文文。心碎之余，文文决定与小峰和乐乐结成某种关系，影片最后三人一同走向不确定的未来。

崔子恩这部非典型的影片引发了关于同性关系与家庭亲属的激烈讨论。在中国被禁映的同时，国际舆论也存在争议。西方媒体将其宣传为兄妹乱伦的故事，并将其归为“禁忌之爱”。然而，“乱伦”在片中只是一种隐含的暗流。小峰的性取向始终模糊不明。其对姐姐与小俊关系的过度干涉，既可被理解为出于嫉妒，也可从精神分析角度解读为对母性缺席的恐惧。在家庭功能失调的背景下，母亲自私而冷漠，文文承担起照顾者角色，为小峰做饭、照料其生活，扮演“母亲”的象征性角色。小俊的出现，威胁到这一“母亲”角色的稳定，从而引发小峰的强烈反应。

影片中最具争议性的情色场景，是母亲因文文坚持拥有独立房间而惩罚她。文文多日绝食，虚弱昏睡，小峰用嘴将牛奶喂入姐姐口中。崔子恩将这一幕拍摄得极具情色意味，可被视为带有性暗示的情节。此后，文文去医院检查并告知小峰自己怀孕。小峰质问小俊，对方却坚称从未碰过文文。影片并未进一步交代文文是否真的怀孕，小峰也向乐乐表示困惑，不知文文是否说了实话。崔子恩未给出明确答案，这条叙事线索最终被悬置，留下观众自行解读。在该影片中，小峰将牛奶喂予扮演“母亲”角色的文文，被解读为性别角色的反转。牛奶在崔子的影像实践中具有象征意义：既指向哺育、精液，也暗示女性特质。这一场景既契合中国传统对性别流动性的理解，也呼应西方性别理论中“性别是一种社会建构的、具有高度表演性的存在”的观念。另一个可能的解读是，小峰那晚确有与文文发生性关系，从而导致她怀孕。然而，小峰的困惑也透露出他对性的理解可能非常有限。通过这一场景，崔子恩巧妙地提出关于性别本质与社会建构的理论问题，强调“性别表演”与“性欲流动性”等重要概念。借助家庭亲属结构，崔不仅融合了中西性别理论，更试图探索一种根植于家庭结构的本土酷儿理论。

正如周华山（Chou Wah-shan）在《同志》中所言，“在中国社会中，个人身份的基础并非性欲对象选择，而是家庭亲属结构。”（2000，第1页）崔子恩通过将酷儿关系密集编织于家庭内部，努力建构属于他自己的酷儿理论与同志政治。如包宏伟（Hongwei Bao）在《酷儿同志：中国后社会主义语境下的同性身份与同志行动主义》中指出，崔子的虚构电影作品在“标签”这一维度上充满挑战：

他虽然不是共产主义者，但他的影片却大量呈现共产主义的原则与实践，他甚至提出要建立一个‘酷儿电影的共产主义国际’（Cui and Liu, 2010）。他生于中国，却不认同‘中国性’，以国际主义者和世界公民自居（甚至是宇宙公民，因为他的科幻影片常常涉及外星人）。他自我认同为同性恋者，却反对 LGBT 身份政治；他描述自己为多重恋爱者，尤其偏爱异性恋男性；他常穿中性服装；多数人称他为“崔老师”，好友则称“崔子”。他挑战一切定义与边界，从这个意义上说，他是真正的酷儿。（Bao, 2018，第121-122页）

在包宏伟的分析中，崔的“酷儿性”体现在他对“中国人”与“同性恋者”这两个身份标签的拒绝。这引发了对‘酷儿’一词意义的探讨，以及崔如何将自己对身份政治的理解转化到电影媒介中的问题。

尽管崔否认“中国性”，其文学与影像创作却根植于他欲否定的“中国性”之中。他对国家与性身份的否认，使其影片成为跨越边界的宣言，也构成了一种影像哲学。

在《少年花草黄》中，崔以家庭亲属结构为基础来理解酷儿。性取向在影片中未被明确标示或仅呈现出模糊意向。小峰与乐乐的关系极为亲密，影片多次描绘他们半裸躺在一张床上，共同讨论文文的感情问题。影片从未直接说明乐乐为同性恋者，仅通过“我也想谈个男朋友”、“我不喜欢女生”两句台词暗示其性倾向。在小峰要求下，乐乐愿意与文文形成“恋人关系”，并向其承诺将照顾她、对她温柔。文文则取笑他，说他与小峰之间的关系亲密无间、明显契合，调侃他们应结成一对。通过此场景，崔模糊了异性恋与同性恋的界限，影片中的三角关系引入双性恋与泛性恋的可能。观众难以判断小峰与乐乐究竟是同性恋者，还是具有流动性倾向者。当乐乐为了留住小峰而向文文“求爱”，崔挑战了中国“同志”身份的传统理解，并探索基于西方酷儿理论延展出的新型性身份。

本片的核心不在于性取向本身，而在于家庭亲属结构中的酷儿联结。这种强调中国亲属结构、社会经济结构与文化特质的方式，赋予该片鲜明的中国语境——它是一部真正的“中国酷儿电影”。在与范坡坡的访谈中，崔子恩指出，他构建《少年花草黄》中酷儿关系的意图在于“打破伦理三角”（Fan and Cui, 2009）。他并不认同一夫一妻制的异性恋或同性恋形式，而是主张三角关系与多重恋爱。因此，这部影片可被视为其哲学理念与酷儿理论的影像表达。

崔对多重恋爱关系的主张，或许来源于其对中国古典文学的熟悉。在传统中国社会中，异性婚姻结构本就是一种一夫多妻的模式，男女多被迫进入婚姻制度之中。女性之间的同性欲望常被家庭结构所遮蔽，男性之间的欲望则以“友谊”之名呈现，或被描绘为超越情欲、追求“情”的理想式亲密关系。在《少年花草黄》中，可见许多前现代文学传统的承继。例如，小峰与乐乐之间的关系模糊而被描述为友谊；乐乐甘愿牺牲自我来成全小峰，超越了友谊与关怀的伦理界限；小峰提议文文与乐乐结合，正是李渔式“将欲望纳入异性家庭结构”的重演。为说服文文接受乐乐，小峰强调乐乐性格温厚、慷慨，且已被美国名校录取，可能赴美留学。崔在此重塑李渔所构想的“理想男性”，并赋予其后社会主义时代的语境特征。

小峰对姐姐（或“母亲”角色）所展现的伦理越界的欲望，也引发了关于权力结构的诸多问题。《少年花草黄》通过对传统同性恋叙事模式的模拟，展现了诸多具有“中国性”的影像元素。崔借助家庭亲属结构，融合西方性别理论与身份政治，进一步拓展了“酷儿”概念的定义，并指出：唯有打破传统规范与伦理结构，自由才能得以实现。影片的结尾，三人结成非典型三角结构，联结起同性欲望与亲属关系。正如文文是否怀孕这一谜团被悬置不决，崔子恩亦未提供答案，而是指向一条无限开放的探索路径。

崔子恩的“影像行动”中的声音与喧嚣

崔子恩将其电影创作视为一种政治实践，称之为“影像行动”。正如包宏伟在《影像行动：在中国“志同志”中叙述历史与记忆》一文中所介绍的，崔子恩认为影像行动是对标准化、精致化、优秀化电影主张的反动。他呼吁“用影像行动改变世界”这一创作策略强调画面风格的柔和与流动感，并将之与“硬性”的现实世界并置（Bao, 2018）。崔希望通过这种质感的对比，将其影像与社会冲突连接，从而推动变革。

崔子恩将自己的电影称为“零修辞”，意味着“对文学技法与叙事传统的彻底背离”（Bao, 2018）。在《少年花草黄》中，场景设置简朴，柔和的光线营造出温润的视觉效果。画面中小峰与乐乐半裸的身体

被黄色调渲染，暗示出一种脆弱与怀旧的情感。与之相对，崔在后期制作中保留了尖锐的自然噪音，刻意不使用电影技术去消除干扰性声响。这种柔软与粗砺的对比，正体现了他所倡导的影像行动哲学。

包宏伟认为，数码影像创作“为崔子提供了一种突破艺术规范的手段”，使得这一实践不仅是美学选择，更是内在政治行为（Bao, 2018）。他引用了崔子恩 2009 年与赵 K 的访谈内容，崔在访谈中表示：

便携式数码摄影机赋予了崔子恩及其团队探索现实边界的可能。这种设备的轻便性使其能够进入角色的私人空间与心理层面；而其不稳定性则将观众从叙事的私人领域中拉出。影片《少年花草黄》中的“声音与喧嚣”暗示出公共与私人领域的共存，打破了二者之间的二元对立，呈现出角色间亲密关系的交织。昏暗的光线象征着国家对酷儿关系处理方式的不确定性，反映了同性关系与酷儿身份所处模糊不清的社会—政治气候。崔子恩的影像行动通过引入影像语言的柔性与模糊性，回应了中国国家对酷儿社群的矛盾态度。

尽管这些影像技法为像崔子恩这样的独立导演提供了在国家审查制度下叙述的可能性，崔仍依赖国际支持与影展机制。他将“行动”理解为视野与能见度的扩展，其目的在于“让尽可能多的人看到影片”（Bao, 2018），以此在创作者与观众之间构建共同体。在崔的理解中，行动主义亦意味着在中国社会内部争取放映的合法性。自 2001 年起积极参与本土影展与展映活动后，崔意识到需要将自己的影片包装为“酷儿”电影，并与西方关于性别与酷儿理论的学术语境建立联系。他的影像政治具有跨国性质，《少年花草黄》不仅是一种个人性的，也是社会性的介入，旨在提升社会对酷儿议题的意识。崔的作品提出了两个关键问题：一是如何在中国社会语境中将行动主义变为现实；二是如何在本土化的酷儿身份政治与西方理论框架之间进行协商。

酷儿化的马克思主义与国家寓言

在《两个中国的酷儿马克思主义》（2015）一书中，劉奕德（Petrus Liu）指出，后社会主义中国的酷儿理论面临困境。与普遍观点相反，劉奕德认为酷儿文化和同性身份政治的发展，并不意味着马克思主义在中国的终结。相反，他主张，中国的酷儿理论始终与大陆和台湾两个语境中的马克思主义接受史密切纠缠。他指出：“两个中国中的酷儿马克思主义，恰恰为全球学术界提供了揭示酷儿理论与自由多元主义历史联系的理论工具”（Liu 2015，第 31 页）。他进一步批评将西方性别理论中的翻译概念直接套用于中国情境的做法，认为这不仅无法有效阐释中国语境中的性政治，反而助长了西方文化帝国主义。

刘通过 2012 年对崔子恩的访谈，揭示了当代中国酷儿理论的商品化倾向。崔在访谈中表示：

相比于美国学术细分专业的“小圈子”，中国的酷儿理论反而在媒体中拥有更广泛的影响力。我的酷儿批评与文章拥有大量非学术读者，更不用说台湾与香港进步酷儿理论家的许多著作也在中国大陆受到热烈阅读。但与此同时，中国整体氛围仍十分保守。我是唯一一位公开出柜的中国学者。除我之外，在中国以“酷儿理论”或“性研究”为名发表的著作，均出自自我认同为异性恋者的非文学领域专家：如社会学家潘绥铭、李银河，以及医学界的张北川。在中国，如果公开认同为同性恋或女同性恋，会被认为削弱了你在“另类性”研究中的权威性——这类研究被要求保持客观性与科学性，最好采用量化方法。（引自 Liu（2015），第 35–36 页）

刘认同崔的分析，并指出在大陆，同性关系的理解本身就表现出对“理论”的抵抗。性研究已被医药科学话语所接管，关注点集中于预防艾滋病，而非建构政治认同或挑战社会污名。他主张中国的

酷儿理论必须结合马克思主义批判，才能有效回应知识生产过程中性学家与教育专家对资源与话语权的垄断（Liu 2015，第 38 页）。他进一步指出，“中国性”的概念不只是地理上的，更反映出大陆与台湾之间的政治与文化对峙。在刘的分析中，酷儿理论的发展与马克思主义之间并非对立，而是紧密交织。然而，中国语境中的“同志”概念在西方“酷儿”范畴下被吞没。他指出：“‘同志政治’的存在满足了中国语境中一种民族主义的语言诉求，即提出一种有别于欧美酷儿理论的替代性语言方案，并坚持东方经验材料的权威性。”（Liu 2015，第 44 页）聚焦于崔子恩的作品，刘认为崔拓展了“酷儿”一词的定义，使其涵盖各种非规范性的表达与关系。他指出，崔的电影是对其所处历史时刻的复杂沉思，不能仅被当作国际影展中的字幕图像处理，而应理解为深嵌中国政治与思想语境的文本（Liu 2015，第 49 页）。刘认为，崔子恩透过影像实践建构出属于他自己的酷儿理论，想象出一种超越性欲与性别表演的潜在解放状态。

的确，崔的电影创作挑战了性规范的传统秩序，描绘出一个多元、宽容与解放并存的非规范社会。在《少年花草黄》中，影片的结尾展现了崔所理想的另类秩序，它不仅挑战国家审查制度，也对传统美学构成反抗。崔认为共产主义代表追求更美好乌托邦未来的勇气，因此影片结尾所呈现的，是他对“同志政治”与西方酷儿文化双重叛离的姿态，也是对共产主义和社会主义愿景的拥抱。

《少年花草黄》既可被视为酷儿电影，也是一种政治实践。文文与小峰所处的失调家庭结构象征着中国国家本身，是一种国家寓言。影片不仅呈现了家庭中的酷儿关系，也隐喻了现代中国国家自身所体现的非规范性。母亲与两个孩子之间的关系可被理解为马克思主义共产主义与在经济增长刺激下产生的后社会主义欲望之间的冲突。摄影机的运动、光影的处理、柔和的色调，以及亲密空间与干扰性背景噪音之间的剧烈对比，象征着公共领域与私人生活的碰撞，以及个体欲望与集体叙事之间的张力。母亲与小俊之间的关系代表了后社会主义中国中的个人欲望——金钱压倒情感与伦理照护。亲子关系的失调象征着国家主导的共产主义叙事与资本主义实践之间的断裂。文文与小俊之间失败的爱情瓦解了国家所建构的“马克思主义”叙事，而影片结尾则展现出一种崔子恩式的“酷儿马克思主义乌托邦”愿景。他不仅为中国同性社群发声，也打破了身份政治与社会关系的传统界限，充分体现出一种跨界、颠覆常规的酷儿视角。

结语

崔子恩是中国最具代表性且极具争议的酷儿电影人，跨越了导演、学者、小说家、散文家与行动者等多重身份。他借助数码新媒介，通过“影像行动”理念，开创了一套独特的电影语言与技法，深入探讨影像创作如何生成政治意义与社会再现。在其 2005 年作品《少年花草黄》中，崔巧妙地将传统的同性情感叙事模式与对家庭亲属和性别关系的现代重构相融合。崔子恩的创作不仅是将西方理论“本土化”，更是在中国马克思主义传统框架下对酷儿理论进行改写，从而扩展了“酷儿”这一概念的内涵。他的影像实践既是同性恋行动主义的重要媒介，也对欧美主导的酷儿传统提出挑战。崔的“酷儿马克思主义”电影为其身份政治建构出理论框架，同时也是对中国国家体制中马克思主义传统的寓言式反思。

通过他创作的可携带的数码影像，崔呼吁酷儿理论研究开拓新的理论路径，构建出一种深植于中国历史与记忆的本土酷儿理论。将其叙事置于特定的中国社会—政治语境之中，崔的作品为酷儿理论的全球与在地维度提供了深刻回应。他主张一个未来：在那个未来中，多元身份与表达不仅被接纳，更被积极庆祝；而电影表达与政治行动的边界，也将被不断推进与重绘。

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APPENDIX 附录

Biographies 个人简介

Biographies 个人简介

CHEN Jue is a director and producer of television drama and documentary, as well as a film and television project planner. He graduated in 1985 from the Television Department (TV Drama Directing) of the Beijing Broadcasting Institute (now Communication University of China). In the late 1980s, he began working in documentary and joined mainland China's first experimental filmmaking group, SWYC (Structure. Wave. Youth. Cinema), with Tian'anmen Square as a representative work. He has served as a member of the expert panel for the Movie Channel and as an international documentary juror at the Xi'an International Image Festival.

陈爵，电视剧和纪录片导演、制片人，影视项目策划人。1985年毕业于北京广播学院电视系电视剧导演专业。八十年代后期，开始参与纪录片创作并加入中国大陆第一个电影实验小组SWYC，即“结构·浪潮·青年·电影”，代表作《天安门》。曾任电影频道专家组成员及西安国际影像节纪录片国际评委。

CONG Feng is a filmmaker and writer, and serves on the editorial board of Film Auteur. His major films include *Stratum I: The Visitors*, *Stratum II: Asthenosphere*, and *Another Part of the World: Ghosts and Their After-Images*, among others. His most recent publication is a poetry collection titled *So-Called History*.

丛峰，电影作者，写作者，《电影作者》杂志编委，主要电影作品包括《地层 1: 来客》《地层 2: 软流层》《世界的另一部分：幽灵及其重影》等，最新印有诗集《所谓历史》。

GU Xue is a film director and curator. Her representative works include *The Choice and Nothing News*. In 2022 she founded the FamilyLens Film Archive, an initiative dedicated to discovering and broadening the boundaries of family images and experimenting with personal moving-image writing. Today, FamilyLens operates across several divisions: the FamilyLens Film Archive, the FamilyLens Exhibition, moving-image education, as well as film production and distribution.

顾雪，导演、策展人。电影代表作《家庭会议》、《庚子新年》。2022年创办家庭影像 FamilyLens，致力于发现和拓展家庭影像边界，探索个人影像书写记录。家庭影像 FamilyLens 目前包括家庭影像档案馆、家庭影像展、影像教育、电影制作和发行等多个板块。

KUANG Yang is a scholar of social and cultural studies and a Research Fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). A member of the SWYC (Structure. Wave. Youth. Cinema) experimental filmmaking group, he served as the narration scriptwriter for the eight-part documentary *Tian'anmen Square* (1991). He also participated in the planning of the CCTV programs *Oriental Horizon* and *Tell It Like It Is*.

邝杨，社会与文化研究学者，中国社会科学院研究员。电影实验小组SWYC（结构·浪潮·青年·电影）的成员，八集纪录片《天安门》（1991）的解说撰稿人。曾参加中央电视台《东方时空》《实话实说》的策划工作。

LEI Lei, born in 1985 in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, China, is an artist and filmmaker living in Beijing, China. His works are based on the organization and research of ready-made and found images, combined with digital shooting and parody, weaving together abandoned images, oral histories, fragmented online videos, official documentaries, commercial product catalogs, myths or legends, etc., to create visual poetry and prose. Lei Lei's art works include films, live music and drama. His video installation works have been exhibited in institutions such as the UCCA in Beijing, Shanghai OCAT Art Museum, Xi'an OCAT Art Museum, Shanghai MOCA Art Center, Tokyo TOP Museum, and Rencontres d'Arles International Photography Festival in France, and have been collected by important art institutions and art galleries. In addition, Lei Lei's film works have been selected and won awards at important international film

festivals including the Berlinale Film Festival, Rotterdam Film Festival, New York MoMA NFND, Melbourne Film Festival, and Hong Kong International Film Festival.

雷磊, 1985 年出生于中国江西省南昌市, 艺术家 & 电影导演, 现居中国北京。他作品基于现成品与拾来影像的整理及调研, 结合数字拍摄与戏仿, 将那些被遗弃的图像, 口述历史, 碎片化的网络视频, 官方纪录片, 商业产品目录, 神话或传说等材料紧密编织在一起, 酿造成为影像诗歌和散文。雷磊的作品形式包括电影、音乐现场及戏剧, 他的影像装置作品曾在北京尤伦斯当代艺术中心, 上海 OCAT 美术馆, 西安 OCAT 美术馆, 上海 MOCA 艺术中心, 东京 TOP 当代艺术中心, 法国阿尔勒国际摄影节等机构展出, 并被重要艺术机构及美术馆收藏, 除此之外, 雷磊电影作品曾入选包括柏林电影节, 鹿特丹电影节, 纽约 MoMA 现代艺术中心, 墨尔本电影节, 香港国际电影节等重要节展并获得奖项。

LIANG Chen is a lecturer at Wuhan Media and Communication College, as well as a designer, illustrator, and researcher of roadside observation and modernology.

梁晨 武汉传媒学院讲师、设计师、插画师、路上观察与考现学研究者。

LI Wei is a designer and photographer, a collector of image-media artifacts, and an urban flâneur.

李维 设计师、摄影师、影像媒介物的收藏者、城市“闲逛者”。

Désirée MARIANINI holds a MA degree in Chinese Language from Sapienza University of Rome and she is specialized in Directing and Project Development at the ZeLIG School for Documentary, Television, and New Media in Bolzano. Currently she's a PhD candidate at Sapienza University of Rome, where her research focuses on the creative reuse of family archival material in contemporary Chinese documentary cinema. She has served as an adjunct lecturer in Chinese Language (second-year level) and in Languages and Literatures of China and Southeast Asia at the University of Tuscia and LUMSA University in Rome. Additionally, she has taught Audiovisual Translation in the Second-Level Master's Program in Specialized Translation at Sapienza University of Rome. Her research interests include Chinese and international cinema, the history of film and documentary (both past and present), the evolution of traditional and digital media, and memory studies.

伊莲 (Désirée Marianini) 毕业于罗马大学中文系, 获硕士学位, 并在博尔扎诺的纪录片、电视与新媒体泽利格学院(ZeLIG School for Documentary, Television, and New Media)完成导演与项目开发专业进修。目前, 她是罗马大学的博士候选人, 研究聚焦当代中国纪录片中家庭档案素材的创造性再利用。她曾在托斯卡大学与罗马的路姆萨自由大学担任二年级中文课程及“中国与东南亚语言文学”客座讲师, 并在罗马大学高级翻译硕士项目教授视听翻译课程。她的学术兴趣涵盖中国与世界电影、(古今)纪录片与电影史、传统与数字媒介的演变, 以及记忆研究。

PANG Hong holds an M.A. in Cultural Representation Studies from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, The University of Tokyo, where she is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in the same program. Her research interests encompass documentary theory and aesthetics, the history of documentary film during the Cold War, and Chinese independent documentary cinema. Her articles have appeared in academic journals such as *Japanese Journal of Image Arts and Sciences* (Japan), *Interdisciplinary Cultural Studies* (Japan), and *Journal of Film Studies* (China).

庞鸿, 东京大学综合文化研究科表象文化论硕士, 目前于东京大学同研究科攻读博士学位。研究方向包括纪录片理论与美学、冷战时期纪录电影史、中国独立纪录片。论文曾发表于《映像学》(日本)、《超域文化科学纪要》(日本)、《电影理论研究》(中国)等学术期刊。

Lynette Qiuyang SHEN is a PhD candidate from the Department of Cinema and Media Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. Her current dissertation research explores how the concept of "bad images" reshapes understandings of Sinophone diaspora, with particular attention to gender, queerness, and visual culture. Alongside her academic work,

she has been working as an independent curator, film programmer, writer, and imagemaker.

沈秋阳，现为宾夕法尼亚大学电影与媒体研究系博士候选人。其博士论文探讨“坏影像”如何重新塑造对华语离散的理解，特别关注性别、酷儿与视觉文化等议题。除学术研究外，她还长期从事独立策展、影展节目策划、撰稿与影像创作。

SHI Jian is a documentary filmmaker and television producer, and a senior editor at China Media Group. His series *Tian'anmen Square* was selected for *One Hundred Chinese-Language Films of the Century*. He has launched dozens of television programs, including *Oriental Horizon* and *Tell It Like It Is*. Centered on pressing social realities, his documentaries also include *I Have Graduated*, *Weijia Hutong*, *Xiaomao and the Sparrows*, *The Potala Palace*, *A Foreign Land A Familiar Home*, and *My Grandfather Liu Wencai*. Shi Jian's works have screened at the International Documentary Film Festival Rotterdam, the "Forum" section of the Berlin International Film Festival, the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, and other international venues. In 2011 he chaired the International Documentary Jury at the 17th Shanghai TV Festival. He is currently Vice President of the Documentary Committee of the China Radio and Television Association.

时间，纪录片导演，电视节目制作人。中央广播电视总台高级编辑。作品《天安门》入选《百年百部华语电影》，创办《东方时空》、《实话实说》等几十个电视栏目。时间的纪录片以关注社会现实为主旨，代表作还有《我毕业了》、《魏家胡同》、《小毛与麻雀》、《布达拉宫》、《他乡故乡》、《我的爷爷刘文彩》等，作品参加过鹿特丹纪录片电影节、柏林电影节之“青年论坛”、美国 MOMA 现代艺术展等国际电影节及展览。2011 年，担任第十七届上海电视节纪录片国际评委会主席。现任中国广播电视联合会纪录片专业委员会副会长。

Wendy SUN is an Assistant Professor of German Studies at Grinnell College. Her interdisciplinary research spans German and Asian studies, with a focus on comparative literature, memory studies, gender and trauma studies, translation theory, and the environmental humanities. Her work bridges historical and literary analysis with cultural and media studies, aiming to tackle the entanglements between German and Chinese intellectual traditions. Her current book projects include *Stateless in Shanghai: Memory and Transnational Narratives of the Hongkou Jewish Ghetto* (contracted with Brill, planned for 2027-2028) and *Poppies and Memory: Darkness Spoken between Ingeborg Bachmann and Paul Celan* (forthcoming with Nanjing University Press, 2026). She teaches a range of courses on environmental humanities, literary translation, gender and migration in German and Chinese literature, as well as science fiction and graphic narratives. Her articles and book chapters on German-Chinese comparative literary studies, gender, and historical trauma have been published or are forthcoming in academic journals and edited volumes.

Beyond academia, she also writes book reviews, creative fiction, and engages actively in public humanities and digital scholarship.

孙晓雪 (Wendy Sun) 任职于美国格林内尔学院德语研究系，为终身制助理教授。她的研究涵盖亚洲研究与德国研究，重点关注中德比较文学、记忆研究、性别与创伤研究、翻译研究与环境人文学。她的跨学科研究将历史学、社会科学与文学、视觉与文化传媒研究相结合，致力于探索德中思想与记忆系统之间的交错与回响。她的主要著作运用记忆理论与社会叙事框架，探讨二战时期犹太流亡者在上海的回忆与文学叙事，跨越语言、文化与地理边界。目前她正撰写两部专著：《无国籍者在上海：来自虹口贫民区的犹太记忆》（Brill 出版社，预计 2027-2028 年出版）以及《罂粟与记忆：英格博格·巴赫曼与保罗·策兰影响研究》（南京大学出版社，预计 2026 年出版）。她教授的课程涵盖环境人文学、翻译研究、中德女性文学、跨文化科幻小说以及德国漫画及图像叙事等主题。她在中德比较文学、文化与性别研究方面已出版或即将发表多篇论文与书章。在学术之外，孙晓雪也从事文学评论与创意写作，活跃于公共学术写作与数字人文传播平台。

WANG Zijun graduated in 1985 from the Journalism Department of the then Beijing Broadcasting Institute and was assigned to Beijing Television. In 1991 he participated in initiating China's "New Documentary Movement." In 1993 he took part in the early organizational work of the Television Documentary Academic Committee of the China

Television Association. Major works from that period include: in 1986 he worked on post-production for CCTV's reform-oriented current-affairs film *Talent Challenge* 人才挑战; in 1987, at the invitation of Xinhua News Agency and the Shorinji Kempo Federation of Japan, he collaborated with Chen Jie on the Nanjing Massacre anti-war reflection film *Understanding and Choice*; from 1988 to 1991 he shot the documentary series *Scenes of the Capital* 京城散记; from 1991 to 1993 he filmed the series *Work-Study Students* 工读生; in 1994 he made the documentary *Big Red Jujube* 大红枣; and in 1995 he shot a sample film titled *Nanjing's Blood Evidence* for CCTV's reenactment segment of *Oriental Horizon* 东方时空. He worked as a program producer for more than twenty years. In 1997, at Beijing Television, he founded China's first mass-participation, citizen-shot programme *People's Homeland* 百姓家园. In 1999 he became the producer of the programme *Documentary* 纪录, at the time the only documentary slot willing to air in prime time (the drama prime-time hours on satellite TV). That same year, Beijing Television's Documentary formally signed a cooperation agreement with Fuji Television (Japan) to produce the series *Our Study-Abroad Life — Days in Japan*. His academic work includes serving as the chief coordinator for the international academic symposium of the Beijing International Television Festival for three consecutive years (1999–2001). In 2005 he shifted his research focus to narratology methodology (screenwriting theory). In 2012 he led research on a pre-evaluation method for television drama ratings at Beijing Television.

王子军, 1985 年, 毕业于原北京广播学院新闻系, 分配到北京电视台。1991 年, 参与发起组织中国早期“新纪录片运动”。1993 年, 参与中国电视家协会电视纪录片学术委员会的早期组织工作。那一时期的主要作品: 1986 年, 参与中央电视台改革政论片《人才挑战》的后期工作。1987 年, 应新华社及日本少林寺拳法联盟邀请, 与陈杰合作拍摄南京大屠杀反战反省片《理解与选择》。1988--1991 年, 拍摄纪实性系列纪录片《京城散记》。1991—1993 年, 拍摄系列纪录片《工读生》。1994 年, 拍摄纪录片《大红枣》。1995 年, 为中央电视台《东方时空》真实再现节目拍摄样片《南京的血证》。从事栏目制片人工作 20 余年: 1997 年, 在北京电视台, 创办中国第一个百姓自拍的群众映像栏目《百姓家园》。1999 年, 担任《纪录》栏目制片人, 这是当时唯一敢在黄金时间(即卫视电视剧黄金段)播出的纪录片栏目。同年, 北京电视台《纪录》栏目与日本富士电视台正式签约合作, 系列纪录片《我们的留学生活 ---- 在日本的日子》。

学术研究工作包括: 1999、2000 和 2001 年, 连续 3 年担任北京国际电视节国际学术研讨会总协调人。2005 年, 转项研究叙事学方法论(即编剧理论)。2012 年, 主导北京电视台电视剧收视率预先评估方法的研究。

WEI Yizhou holds a Master of Arts in Library and Information Science from National Taiwan University and is currently a PhD candidate at the School of Film, Xiamen University, China. Since 2017, he has been a research assistant at the Film Archive Studies Center at XMU, where he is primarily responsible for 35mm film projection and film restoration work at the XMU-iQIYI Joint Film Restoration Laboratory. He has published on the ethics of film restoration in *Contemporary Cinema*. His article in this issue is adapted from his master's thesis, *Study of Concept and Practice of Educational Film Archives*, parts of which were also presented at the 2024 SEAPAVAA Annual Conference (Yogyakarta, Indonesia) and the AMIA Annual Conference (Milwaukee, USA). In June 2024, he was selected to attend the film restoration summer school jointly organized by FIAF and the L'Immagine Ritrovata Film Restoration Laboratory in Bologna. He is currently undertaking a visiting research stay at the Chinese Independent Film Archive at Newcastle University, UK. His doctoral research focuses on a decentralized model of film preservation, aiming to move beyond a purely technical paradigm to examine how cultural significance is generated through preservation practices led by unofficial forces within the Sinophone context.

韦怡舟, 国立台湾大学文学院图书资讯学系硕士, 现为中国厦门大学电影学院博士候选人。他在本次期刊发的文章改写自硕士论文《教育型电影档案馆理念与实践之研究》, 相关内容亦曾于 2024 年在“东南亚及太平洋地区电影资料馆联合会”及“美国活动影像档案人学会”年会中发表。韦怡舟自 2017 年起加入厦门大学音像文献中心, 长期担任研究助理, 主要负责 35mm 胶片放映与“厦门大学—爱奇艺电影修复联合实验室”中的电影修复工作, 曾在《当代电影》期刊发表讨论电影修复伦理的论文。2024 年 6 月, 他入选由国际电影资料馆联合会与博洛尼亚电影修复实验室联合举办的电影修复暑期学校。他目前在英国纽卡斯尔大学华语独立影像资

料馆进行访问研究，博士论文聚焦于“去中心化”模式下的电影保存活动，旨在突破电影保存与修复的技术范式，并探讨在华语语境中，由非官方力量主导的电影保存实践如何生成文化意义。

Ann Lyuwenyu ZHANG is a PhD candidate in the department of Cinema Studies at New York University. She received her MA from the University of Southern California and her BA from Emerson College. Lyuwenyu's primary research interests center around film archives, early cinema, film preservation, and East Asian studies. She is also interested in the intersection of Deaf culture and media studies. She has published book reviews in *The Moving Image* and *Film Quarterly*.

张吕文煜，现为纽约大学电影研究系博士候选人。她先后获得南加州大学艺术硕士学位和爱默生学院文学学士学位。其主要研究领域涵盖电影档案、早期电影、影片保存与东亚研究，并关注聋人文化与媒介研究的交叉议题。她的书评曾刊登于《活动影像》和《电影季刊》。

华 语 独 立 影 像 观 察

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