

Dialogue Projects

Fujui WANG

TING Chaong-Wen

Hyojun HYUN

Fujui WANG (Taiwan, 1969-)

Head of the Trans-Sonic Lab for Art and Technology Center, Taipei National University of the Arts, specialises in sound Art and Interactive Art. Fujui Wang is the pioneer of Sound Art in Taiwan, who established the first experimental sound zine/label NOISE/Taiwan in 1993. In 2000, Wang joined ETAT and initiated BIAS Sound Art Exhibition and Sound Art Prize as official Digital Art Awards Taipei. Dedicated to making and promoting Sound and Digital art, Wang has curated The Digital Art Festival Taipei and TranSonic sound art festivals since 2007. His own work has been widely exhibited in museums and festivals in Taiwan and abroad. He is currently an assistant professor of the Taipei National University of the Arts.

TING Chaong-Wen (Taiwan, 1979-)

was born in Kaohsiung, Taiwan in 1979. He graduated from the Tainan National University of the Arts in 2006, and currently lives and works in Tainan. TING specializes in mixed media installation incorporated with images and objects. Drawing inspiration from his personal experience, his works often reveal specific historical narratives created by embedding readymades in specific exhibition contexts. With surprising and innovative attempts, the artist deconstructs, extends and re-interprets the collective history while examining material culture, historic conflicts, collective memory and transnational phenomena and problems. His works have been extensively exhibited in numerous art museums and biennials, among which are Asian Art Biennial (National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung; 2019); High Tide 17—Fremantle Biennale (Artsource, Fremantle; 2017); Nakanojo Biennale 2017 (Former Hirozakari Brewery, Gunma, Japan; 2017); Citation from Craft (The 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa; 2017); Taipei Biennial (Taipei Fine Art Museum; 2016).

Hyojun HYUN (South Korea, 1983-)

is a typical representative of significant group of artists of his generation. The group, which is characteristic for its nomadic lifestyle by cruising through the contemporary art centres, when studying abroad is followed by moving into the cities, where accumulates creative energy and from daily reality pulling foreign residency. Hyojun's painting is (although unintentionally) quite atypically direct part of author's unceasing migration for inspiration. In his paintings he deals with capturing of already obscured parts of the past, which are mainly found in "brownfield" areas, that is, in parts of cities that are temporarily forgotten by themselves. It is remarkable that the visual attraction by cracked walls, rusty gates, sprayed plasters and torn down posters, was equally irresistible for the Czech cult artist—Vladimír Boudník. Boudník mostly found his inspiration around factory ČKD Vysočany, that is, in a direct distance of PRÁM Studio, where Hyojun apparently totally intuitively moved in to work there for a month.

Text by Chun-Chi WANG

IDOLON GALLERY is happy to announce its participation at NADA Miami 2019, booth #P19, with the project 'Dialogues Project' with Fujui WANG and TING Chaong-Wen and Hyojun HYUN.

Dialogues Project, evokes that tittering sense of balance regards a state of existence or actuality, Such fine lines or instances are addressed by the works of Wang Fujui (b. 1969, Taiwan), Ting Chaong-Wen (b. 1979, Taiwan), Hyojun Hyun (b. 1983, South Korea), which beyond responding to a sense of spatial and temporal oscillation, demonstrate that a sense of passing, as well as assignation of value to the negligible, is a universal phenomenon, extending beyond borders and conditions.

In this interview, each artist introduces an ongoing project. At NADA, Fujui WANG and TING Chaong-Wen and Hyojun HYUN enter a dialogue established through a selection of individual works.

IDOLON GALLERY is production platform, research site, and resource for the dissemination of knowledge. IDOLON GALLERY's approach focuses on long-term and close collaborations with artists to articulate the stakes in their practice.

Fujui WANG

01 *Sound Disc, Computer Hard Drives, Electric Sensor, Acrylic, 22 x 28 x 6, 2009*

02 *Sound Disc, Computer Hard Drives, Electric Sensor, Acrylic, 22 x 28 x 6, 2009*

03 *Moving Sound Forest, Installation View, 2015*

In an interview, you talked about how your art-making related to an uncertain state that fascinates you. Why do you choose sound as your artistic medium? For you, what are the features of sound art that can open up certain specific creative dimensions?

I'm fascinated by "uncertainty" mainly because, at the beginning of the creative process, there's no clear purpose or concept which lead us to accomplish the work step by step. To a large extent, my art does not come from formal school training but rather from friends in related fields. It's almost like gradually learning by myself through experience, from feeling to comprehension and realization, bit by bit. Or say that I think and create in unconventional ways. There's no limits set by definite theory of music or other theories. Everything comes from life experience and by feeling all kinds of sound encountered in life. Perhaps I didn't learn any instrument or conventional composition, but I create my own ideas and ways about sound through intuitive and incessant experiments.

My early works revolved mainly sound. Noise music and some experimental sounds were my concerns. Performances with high volumes and harsh noise indeed made me more audacious to make experiments. Some exquisite pieces of experimental sounds also shocked me on the levels of hearing and spirit. "Noise marked my debut where I had absolutely nothing", the phrase explains my



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abundant uses of sound modulations to seek possibilities of sound. Since 2000, given the limits of pure sound art, I've started to try different media or forms of installations. A new creative phase unfolded and such diversity allows me to find new source of inspiration out of uncertainty.

Rather than art education, experience and feeling are the drives behind my art. For me, sound art-making has been swaying between experimental music and contemporary art; the distinction lies in your perspective of them. I make sound the core of my art rather than just a medium. This might be closer to American sound artist Alvin

Lucier's notion, "No ideas but in things." "Ideas" are thoughts while "things" are materials (sounds). The value of artistic creation comes from itself, more than remaining a concept.

As a pioneer in sound art in Taiwan with more than 20 years of experience, how do you describe shifts in your long career? Toward which concepts or directions will your art be evolved?

My art is motivated by a vague drive, like a journey of endless pursuit. I explore the milieu I'm in through the sense of hearing. When you want to explore the reason to incessantly rearrange abstract sounds, the process might largely be in vain. But oftentimes, you feel something incredible suddenly that shocks you from within. I try my best to maintain in the purest state so that results of the experimental process can be expressed properly. Regarding human perception, our sense of hearing is not as sharp as that of sight. Too many creative factors and ideas are relatively distracting. How to possess and make innovative ideas and realizations? I'm still searching.

Regarding creative elements, I mostly use quite simple sounds such as microphones without external sound source, small speakers' feedback, white noise, etc. I try to deploy unconventional ideas about sound organizations to explore connections of sounds and spaces.

As for future development and orientation, I think they are not that clear for the moment but full of challenges. Art-making is a process where you keep on advancing, learning and accumulating. When you feel stagnant, you have to leave constraints aside and return to a naïve state.

Please talk about the motivation, idea and representation of Sound disc shown in the NADA project this time.

In line with my previous work titled *Sound bulb*, *Sound disk* mainly explores possible volumes of sound rather than in the conventional way of creating sound works through the pitch. Briefly speaking, for the sounds in *Sound disk*, I want to use sound volume in a way similar to the brightness and dimness of light. I use microchips and digital resistors to randomly divide sound into different volumes. The sound source is produced by putting small microphones close to the voice coil on a hard disk of a computer. Cycles composed of incessant sound inputs and outputs generate feedbacks from the hard disc. Feedback sounds of diverse volumes come to randomly generate sounds which sound like natural cries of insects despite the digital approach of sound-making.

The sound installation *Sound disk* consists in feedbacks made by random,

intermittent and diverse volumes through microphones and the voice coil on the computer hard disk. It corresponds to our current over-dependence on computers and a sense of loss for damaged memories in the hard disk, expressing a grasp of and regret for past reminiscence. If we imagine concrete music to be composed of countless notes, *Sound disk* comprises innumerable sound dots of different volumes, like the rapid and heavy information traffic in the digital era made of simple forms of 0 and 1. And the abundant random sound dots here echo with the imagery that is wide yet seemingly static, with myriads of dots within.



TING Chaong-Wen

Your work through various media revolves around issues of identity, foreignness and their constructedness. What motivated you to take such orientation? How does your life abroad contribute to such creative practice and related reflections?

I believe that 'knowing where the artist is (I am)' is an important thing. I believe in speaking from your own perspective, and never speak as others. So yes, I do think that being a Taiwanese living in Europe for a decade definitely shaped who I am in some ways, and that shaped the works I made. It doesn't mean that I can only talk about my personal experiences, instead, it's 'talking about anything I want from my own perspective'.

Meanwhile, I also see my works transformed based on the change of my position in the society. For example, *GODISAWOMAN*, a project of mine made in 2012, is a book revisiting my memory of being detained at Gatwick Airport in London, which is a very personal story that happened to me, as an immigrant. In 2014-15, another project of mine, *How to get out of London in 30 days*, was made during the time I was painfully waiting for my British visa. It discusses the love-and-hate relationship between immigrants and the country they live in, through humor and sarcasm. And then in 2017, I was the artist in residence at Stuart Hall Library at Iniva, London. In the project I made, *On the Desert*

04 *Mount Mihara Monogatari*, VHS Tape (Film: Ring 1998), 320 x 125 cm, 2018

05 *Turnstile-Plastic Surgery*, 75 x 50 cm, 2017

06 *Turnstile-Plastic Surgery #03*, Digital fabric, 75 x 50 cm, 2019



Island, I applied the audio archive of the library, the radio show Desert Island Disc in which professor Hall was a guest, to form an audio/physical walk/journey for the audience. In the work, audiences/listeners/participants are asked to imagine to be cast on a desert island, looking for the answers to where this island is and who they are. At the end, it was realised that those were not the questions at stake.

With the three different projects in mind, I feel that the foreignness/outsiderness in the projects are fading away, being replaced with a growing sense of localness. I know it's hard to imagine or feel it through just the texts here. Furthermore, I am spending more time in Asia, especially Taiwan, these couple years. I had a residency at MMCA, Seoul, and I am currently having a residency at Taitung Art Museum. I feel that my positions are also different in the projects I made here. It doesn't mean that I am changing my interest or direction, just that the perspectives are different.

You made several residency projects around the world; the sites range from Sapporo, Seoul to Paris with their distinct geographies, characteristics and cultures. As an artist in residency, how do you approach foreign localities and search out methods of investigation and artistic practice? And please talk about the residency experiences that cast strong impacts on you.

Due to cultural differences and language barriers, when an artist takes on a residency

overseas, his or her identity as an “other” is more similar to that of a “prehistoric man” hidden in ordinary life. To a certain extent, for me, this relies largely on the primitive instinct to carry out tasks of exploration, collecting, understanding and creation in different cities or regions. Yet, meanwhile, the artist in residency is also an anthropologist making field research and interviews, especially work about archive archaeology. Archive is seen as a place of the past, containing traces of collective memories of a country, a people or a group. Through archive, an artist can also understand the relations that affect our past, present and future. Archive is not only the record, reflection or icons of an event; it also forms the event itself and thus influences the present and the future.

Let me take my residencies in Sapporo and Seoul as examples to discuss artistic practice. Both projects in the two cities involve the idea of “place”. My residency project in Sapporo was in wintertime. At the beginning, I got to understand the place through Hokkaido’s natural history, geology, ethnology, archeology or traces of recent times. Hokkaido is situated in the north of Japan. Compared to the culture of Japan’s largest island, the region’s history is more connected to culture of the north-eastern region, pre-modern

Eurasia culture, Jomon culture, Okhotsk culture or Aynu culture. Art arguably influences culture most directly. When an artist from a subtropical country stays in Hokkaido and sees the pure white snow, he or she comes to understand the dreamlike fantasy such a white sphere brings to tourists. However, for Sapporo residents, this means cruel reality. Far from some romantic imagination, snow puts trials to all beings. In confronting local history, one finds stories hidden in Aynu, the Republic of Ezo or the Sakhalin region during the Second World War. That’s why an artist has to reside personally at some place and try to become an “insider” from an “other”.

As for Seoul, it embodies a sample of urban life that is faster than real-time. City is a kind of relic of modern life. Spectacles of consumer culture are omnipresent in the entire city of Seoul. I picked up wastes around the industrial area where the artist village in Seoul was situated. Through a modernologic way, I dug out objects with cultural symbolic meanings, such as military boots of the Korean Army and plastic tea tables printed with patterns of Mother-Of-Pearl Lacquer. I juxtaposed them with the volcano rocks I picked up on Ulleung-do. The icons respectively represent a certain subjectivity of

Korea. I moved the objects encountered by chance or obtained spontaneously objects from the streets outside into the studio. Through recombination and alteration and by means of affectional and spiritual levels hidden within materials, the whole process is an attempt to reveal the “identity” of a place and how it influences local residents. In short, I’d like to represent how contemporary art gets closely related to the production of reality.

Please talk about *Turnstile* and *Mount Mihara Monogatari* shown in the NADA project.

Turnstile series was made during my residency in the Art Space in Seoul, Korea in 2015. It symbolizes a series of changes in psychology and thinking. The environment and experience of individual desire are incarnated through metaphors of images, sculptures and films, both emotionally and aesthetically. Motifs on the computer-generated fabric respectively represent a kind of Korean subjectivity. The fabric materials are made through an “imitation” of commodity advertising. Advertising media shape collective fevers. Our desires in the consumption era are mastered by images of commodities. The images are reassembled and edited, revealing how to arrive at some remote unconsciousness from the reality and reflect sensational and spiritual hidden within



certain cultures. Like Korea's dolmen culture which represents prehistoric humans' ambition of challenging nature, if collective memories can be stored in our veins, the current trend of cosmetic surgery in Korea represents alteration and breaking of the principle of naturalness.

Mount Mihara Monogatari project was done between 2016 and 2017. Originating from my four field trips and surveys in Mount Mihara, Japan, its first part of the begins with images of women living on the volcanic island Izu Ōshima. Since time immemorial, the island women carried the heavy load of family livelihood. In traditional kimonos and their waist-length hair combed into buns, they carried charcoal on their heads, transporting materials to the destinations along steep and crooked stairs around fishing ports. They were generally called "Anko". As time went by, images of "Anko" became sightseeing ambassadors greeting tourists by the ports. Both "Anko" and the volcano are like incarnations of Izu Ōshima. This incited me to further explore and extend our geographic imaginations, the re-insertion into cultural production system and visualization process, and reflect on how to transform emotion, metaphors and personal histories through images. In the original novel adapted into the

horror film *Ring* (1998), the female protagonist Sadako Yamamura's hometown is on Izu Ōshima. The story's background involves Sadako's mother who committed suicide by jumping into the volcano of Mount Mihara. In fact, the mountain has become a famous place for suicide—as the Japanese call it—since Shōwa era; a college girl graduated from Jissen Joshi Gakuen Senior High School chose to commit suicide by jumping into the mountain following friends' suggestion. Similarly, at the ending of *Godzilla* film series (1984), the monster was introduced to the volcano of Mount Mihara and fell into its wild flames. The stories penetrate our daily life by way of cultures through communication. They also inspired me to create *Darkness Equation: From the Corner of the Eye*.

“What is more, each thing moves to its own place”, wrote Aristotle in the Book IV of *Physics*. Place is about knowledge of space. It is also abstract, immaterial and conceptual. Both the two works take particular “places” as protagonists; historic contexts and political meanings within the spaces are formed and transformed into signs of visual culture in the society. Also, de-objectification and deterritorialization of place itself make it difficult to experience and understand it

physically. I try to further explore and trace the mutation of “place” in the process of cultural production, and evoke a “sense of place” through the sensible experience in the material culture. When the viewer echoes with the works, the works come to re-affirm new places.



Hyojun HYUN

Your painting represents urban impressions blending the figurative and the implicit, often expressed through traces or crevices observed in urban scenes. From where come your interest on such subject and the option for this way of expression?

I see things that interest me in my daily life. I have been living in Berlin since 2015, so urban landscape or part of it become my subject matter naturally. This is also extended from my project *Anonymous Leftovers* which I started in 2013 when I was at the Jan Van Eyck Academie in Maastricht. At that time, I was more interested in faded graffiti on the walls or abandoned areas in the city. But since I moved to Berlin, I focused more on torn posters on the walls. You can see them everywhere here in the city of Berlin. I found interesting compositions on torn posters; you are not sure who made them and their purpose. I am fascinated by its contingency and anonymity. I try to translate these into my pictorial language.

And the notions of “contingency” and “leftover” are important in my painting process as well. We do not live in some period in the past and paint like past artists did, as you wish. Of course, you can still carry your own style, but at least not for me. Our art approaches always reflect the time we live. We all learned art history from the school. I always question about what painting is now. It is somehow difficult to say what it is exactly,

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Brick Patterns #03, Oil on canvas board, 10 × 15 cm, 2019

08

Composition #08, oil on canvas, 21 × 15 cm, 2018

09

Composition #09, oil on canvas, 21 × 15 cm, 2018



but I try to express through my painting. I do not want to represent sceneries from the reality like photographic images, so I need to break down something. During the process of destroying painting, I found interesting marks on the surface which I liked. They are really tactile! I think my painting process is totally connected to the history of painting, but more importantly, it relates to our senses. Painting still remains as painting and needs to be read through our senses.

A sort of reaction to contemporary urban experience, your oeuvre evokes Nouveau Réalisme. What's your view about the art movement? Are there any connections to be made between it and your artistic thinking and practice?

I do not specifically think about Nouveau Réalisme. I choose to paint what I see, then it becomes figurative which people can recognize. But if you look at my paintings closely, you would find various abstract languages which are important for me. I think the language of abstract painting is the most enjoyable process of my artmaking. Of course I do not have any problem if people say my works relate to Nouveau Réalisme. Still I am not sure though. Does this make us see the works from a narrow perspective or help to understand them?

I've heard from a writer and fellow artist about situationists in the 1940s and 1950s who



formulated concepts of psychogeography and *dérive*, which I found very similar to the process I am looking for in the city. I would say it is a good time for me to search art movements which may not be directly linked to painting. I think concepts become important to my art practice. Besides, I have started to install site-specific works in different spaces.

Please talk about the works to be shown in Idolon Gallery's booth in the Nada Art Fair and their connections to the presentation's theme about the passing, temporal and spatial oscillation and emphasis on the negligible.

The paintings I am going to show in the Nada project are *Composition #* series. Those images came from torn posters in Berlin, which I found accidentally while walking around the city. They are very temporal, which means if I go some days later, they would disappear. It is like the city landscape continuously changing. It is like my mind as well. I capture the fleeting moment when familiar things change into something special. I chose those torn posters because they showed me beautiful compositions. For me, composition means the basic elements of painting. I did not need to manipulate or change; it was just in situ. I really agree with the words by Pablo Picasso, "I do not seek, I find". For me, they looked like interesting abstracted shapes;



perhaps you never know what they mean and most people do not pay attention to them, or they just regard them as part of the landscape in Berlin which is nothing new. There is the beauty of mundane life, which is easily neglected. I am one of the artists who try to find certain aesthetics in our lives.

This time I also present *Brick Patterns #* series, which I made last summer in Amsterdam. I was there to work on projects between city and countryside in Cultureland. I stayed in the west part of Amsterdam, where there used to be Turkish and Moroccan neighbours and old classic brick buildings are preserved. I saw all different brick patterns on tops of the windows while cycling and walking every day. I heard they were initially made for practical reasons to endure weights of bricks above the windows, which also seemed like builders played with patterns. Bricks are very mundane materials and locals did not pay much attention to it when I talked to them. But it showed me somehow interesting compositions that I decided to paint on the canvas board which is very light and has no depth. These are the smallest paintings I made; I think they could be regarded as objects as well.

IDOLON GALLERY

歐亞藝術網絡藝廊

Founded in 2015 in Wanhua District, Taipei City, Taiwan. IDOLON GALLERY explores an alternative working mode specifically geared to the contemporary context. In order to operate independently from institutionalized funding, it is active both as an independent art space and as a “commercial” gallery. IDOLON GALLERY actively challenges preconceptions by merging these two traditionally opposed strategies for supporting and presenting contemporary art.

NADA

Founded in 2002, New Art Dealers Alliance (NADA) is a not-for-profit 501c(6) collective of professionals working with contemporary art. Its mission is to create an open flow of information, support, and collaboration within the arts field and to develop a stronger sense of community among its constituency. Through support and encouragement, NADA facilitates strong and meaningful relationships between its members working with new contemporary and emerging art. In addition, NADA hosts an annual art fair in Miami.

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