

N e r v e I m p u s e s

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Electronic Integrated Arts
Master of Fine Arts

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Without their excellent help and kindness, I couldn't complete my thesis book and exhibition successfully.

Nerve Soup

Prepare a salad and toss images into it and cut up and boil videos into a soup. Mix up subjective experiences as an unusual way to examine the past. My past includes a childhood and a more distant past across many generations. By personifying my cultural past and mixing that past as an ingredient into the present, my work starts from nerve impulses that are fuel, mysterious connections, and intuitions.

Video production, printmaking, virtual reality, sonic compositions, and live performance are part of my working process. These forms of manipulation of electronic waves are the closest processes to nerve impulses of the body.



Self-exposed Odyssey

When you are walking with your non-art background friends in contemporary art galleries, you must be a nice and patient tour guide by coping with plenty of their questions. “I do not get it from this painting, tell me about it. Why is it so precious?”, “Don’t you think these installations are so simple to be exhibited here?”, “How to understand this intricate sentence of the artistic statement?”, “The prints are so beautiful, why does the artist prefer black rather than other colors?”, “Is there only a bubble in this video?” etc. Unfortunately, I am not a typical guide to answer all their questions in an expected way. Instead, more questions are raised by me. I trust that more profound and far-sighted questions are worthier than regular and opinionated answers like a Buddhist believes samsara. Hence, I keep doubting and questioning myself.

Why am I following my heart and immersing into an esthetic world? A simple reply is that “Is it due to only the words that sound engaging or noble?” these alone cannot push me to stay hungry in this world. Artists are supposed to share either innovative ideas and visual forms or concerns and the worries about our present society. These sharing things are like an invisible duty for artists. Planting their flowers in the garden, artists not only please themselves but also let the fragrance comfort observers and passersby. The seeds of happiness, anxiety, fear, anger, worry, uncertainty, dignity, illusion, imagination, hope, abandon, and power will grow into blooming beautiful tulips. Like the Chinese saying, “sharing happiness with someone will make two people happy, and sharing the pain with someone will ease half of the pain.” I can represent some of these groups of people to show our lives in my works and to announce different voices and aspirations. What else can I do? I don’t reject to function as an inconspicuous alarm clock in society. I don’t mind to tell people the time if they ask. Nevertheless, I intend to remind them of something good and bad as well, I insist. It is possible that some people are sensitive enough to notice a change in their life. In fact, more folks including myself from the past, have been swallowed up by their regular lives or by this accelerating developing era. Indeed, there is no need to make everyone able to understand my artwork. Confused and sober, I won’t leave another me alone in the desert. If being an artist allows me to anatomize myself, I won’t be the one that sits on the fence.

Being perfect is a brilliant strategy for an individual artist, which encourages one to be earnest and patient in their works. Notwithstanding, Perfection is hard and untouchable. I wonder if being imperfect suits me more considering that Imperfection might keep me arable in future years.

Why is the phrase “nerve impulses” close to my heart and yet even closer to my thesis exhibition?

A melody is on the way to an odyssey.
It dances in a cheerful orange sky.
It runs through the green carefree forests and bushes.
It walks passing the desperate yellow desert.
It swims across a profound blue ocean.
When the sound reaches the window of my room, it is suddenly turned into a fearless white feather.
Then the feather lands on the balcony of my room.
Every morning, I take a look at it;
Every night, I dream about it.
I wonder if one day there will appear a gust of the wind to blow it away or a bird to take it away.
If the feather disappears someday,
Please let me know,
How it comes.

Nerve systems play an essential role in our thinking, innovation, expression, arrangement, and movement. It collects the information from the outside world and replies in many different methods. The eyes, mouth, nose, ears, hands, feet and other parts of the human body work as input and output. Body parts are controlled by nerve systems to act or to react. When it comes to nerve impulses, they are known as electrical signals that travel along an axon. These waves of electrical activity can code information then issue orders to the body, which has various speeds in the process. From my perspective, “Nerve impulses” carries the sense of actuation, indulging, and madness but along with enthusiasm, creativity, and courage. What’s more, it is the very beginning of my every artwork. Gratefully and excitedly, I am waiting for a flash of inspiration to hit me at any time. There are similar scenes to the motions of nerves electrical waves while I am doing my art projects via the digital process. I give the order to the computer, and simultaneously it decodes the input to present something I want to see. Most of my artworks I made involved in the process of computing. Videos and digital prints, what a coincidence? They marvelously embrace the nerve impulses and the digital coding waves in a thoughtful way.

How to deal with my wandering mind and the childhood leftover? Can the congenital impulses offer help? It seems that I can sense the flow of energy, the communication of thoughts and the unexpectedness of touch within my body, provided that it is my unknown impulses. These pulses can be triggered at any moment consciously and unconsciously. On the one hand, they are my cells, which possess some latent memories from the sperm and egg, here they are supposed to be deliberate and sensitive like they were from many hundred years ago. On the other hand, this is a live video looping that does not obey the regulation of 100% repetition and time controls in the history. I wish it were a never-ending story. Like a naughty child, Barbie dolls, mini cars as well as kites are my valuable childhood properties, at least I used to think so. They opened a new door for me to walk in and hence, I got an entirely different view of the world. Since I was not only able to choose the distinct color and texture of the clothes for my slim Barbies, I also knew how to power my mini cars to be dynamic. I made my kites fly higher than me since I want to be a kite runner and a dream hunter. These toys triggered the impetus to my art creation. Childhood is now far away from me, but it left the impulses and memories that light up my world. I wonder, didn't all these childhood goods and related experiences develop into an ambiguous artistic book for a beginner finally?

A simple joke pirated from the archived recesses of the Borscht Belt humorists of the 1950s: "I went to see a psychiatrist. He said, "Tell me everything." I did, and now he's doing my act."¹

¹Walker Art Center." Richard Prince — Collections — Walker Art Center. Accessed April 30, 2017. <http://www.walkerart.org/collections/artists/richard-prince>.



Hairs to Toes

Contemplation, culture, experience, mental space, and virtual world.

See You When I See You





See You When I See You
Digital Print on Watercolor Paper
88 x 44"
2017





See You When I See You
Digital Print on Watercolor Paper
88 x 44"
2017





See You When I See You
Digital Print on Watercolor Paper
88 x 44"
2017

I learned about Sanxingdui, which is one of the lost civilizations in China, from my junior high textbook. The Sanxingdui is regarded as one of the most significant discoveries of the 20th century and also is a state protect site in China.² I wasn't so surprised until I first came to Sanxingdui Museum. There were dozens of fine artifacts like ancient masks and jade that are so unique compared the traditional Chinese ones. Sanxingdui site was an ancient capital city of Shu culture located now in the southwest of China. The land I stand is the place of ancestors to live, work and sleep. Growing up in this area, I never had such a strong feeling as well as connection with my local culture like that moment. These mysterious, strange, interesting, and historical relics lead me to a distant present. The weird masks, unique crafts, and sites seemed so unfamiliar to me that are also found amazing by other local visitors. Indeed, there are hundreds of years in the gap which is enough to separate the connection of ancestors and current residents. Is this a gap that cannot be filled? Although the discoveries of Sanxingdui are a gift to local inhabitants who have no idea about its very old timeline as well as a cryptic past, that doesn't mean people are willing to inherit this local culture. We are living in an age that has the issue in the absonant development of material construction and cultural construction in China. People living in towns and cities can afford many expensive goods and enjoy different kinds of costly foods. Trace back to just forty years ago, some people in China were struggling to buy scarves, not to mention plenty of valuable articles needed for daily use. Nowadays, the vast abundance of material conditions, perhaps makes people's spiritual world more empty and dispossessed. Sanxingdui is supposed to be a place for residents to rely on and trust, yet people here may be more influenced by global culture rather than the local traditions. I am not the one who reject foreign cultures. On the contrary, this is my pleasure to see the diversity in cultures in my hometown. Notwithstanding, these are based on the respect as well as possessing our local cultural traditions.

About 12000 kilometers physical distance does make a difference in my mind. Living in America, I can jump out of the circle to exam the issue which is the sense of loss. Distinct histories, customs, languages, and experiences create many inspirations and values on initial culture perception. Only when realizing your difference and specialty can you step on the path to be a holonomic person. Although I start this project to underline my cultural and historical background, the artwork presents the respect for everyone's unique background and life. The distant cultural past and a very distant geographical present mixed to create an experiential complexity.

² Sanxingdui Museum· accessed May 03 2017 <http://sxd.cn/en/>



See You When I See You
Digital Print on Watercolor Paper
24 x 18"
2016



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Digital Print on Watercolor Paper
24 x 18"
2016

Why do I choose these art forms to express personal concerns? Prints carriers are paper, and that in itself has a very long history. Meanwhile, I belong to a generation who live with technology, especially computers and smartphones. In my perspective, digital prints can be a real media to show what I want, due to its combination of traditional media form and the current conversant technological culture. Plus, where I am staying now is a place with a long winter in America. The cold weather here likely has the power to freeze my worries, concerns as well as imaginations. Hence, I make a decision to create some digital prints to freeze all thoughts and keep them fresh.

The process for these digital prints makes a lot of sense to my inviting intention. I took several photos about my hometown including buildings and people. These pictures are used to be the digital prints' foundation layers since they indicate the current world where I lived. The compositions of these photos promote more images to be created. Every print I set up has ancient crafts' figures. The colors, shapes, dimensions, numbers and some functions of Sanxingdui artifacts encounter the changing in my prints. For example, from one of my prints, there is a bubble machine on which is an ancient bird icon. This icon was the picture I took from Sanxingdui Museum. Frankly, I have no idea about this figure which originally was a statue in the museum, and yet here it now becomes a signifier of my bubble machine image. The bird's icon dark green color converses into dark red without much details as is on that sculptural figures. These differences are the products of my reimaginings concerning the rambling historical story of Sanxingdui. What's more, food is another stuff which has a high frequency of occurrence in the prints. They are shown in different ways. Sometimes they are drawn in a clear way and sometimes they just show a bit of their body. In my opinion, food is that closest link to one region where I live and grow. Here's to the food I eat, here's to the energy that serves, here's to the memory I gain.

How come there are green and blue creatures displaying in every print? As an Asian young women, I try to figure out my own identity. When I am far away from home, it is more clear for an "outsider" to obtain objective and subjective views to look at. The outsider means that I am far away from my hometown and leaves the familiar zone. In my imagination world, there is not a gender difference. Even though the green creature looks more like a female figure and the blue being is easily regarded as a man, they are both my symbols. I learned from Diana Thater ³ that one color can be such diverse and meaningful.

³ Lynne Cooke (Editor), Christine Y Kim (Editor), Lisa Gabrielle Mark (Editor), Giuliana Bruno (Contributor), Michael Govan (Contributor), Jason E. Smith (Contributor), Patti Podesta (Contributor), Diana Thater: The Sympathetic Imagination (Prestel Publishing, 2015)

Maybe one color would assist me to display the complicated feelings, I believe. The color of the green beings origins are from the weathering bronze statues in Sanxingdui. The green woman refers to the objectivity, past, the love, outside, imagining, local culture, and the relationship with my hometown. She is special as well as mysterious but emotionless. My personal preferred color must be blue which is calm, soft and profound. In addition, I read a small, lyrical, portable and philosophical book called *Bluets* by Maggie Nelson.⁴ Through blue colors she described her life suffering and love experiences and life explorations. The blue being in the prints relates to subjectivity, the present, to be loved, inside, real and the culture I am experiencing. He is passionate and powerful yet sensitive. Furthermore, the noticeable feature of these two creatures are those strange long eyes. The inspiration for this is from plenty of unique famous Sanxingdui masks. I imagine that these ancient masters were eager to see more, maybe hundreds of miles, thousands of years or an integrated metallic world. Plus, these two significant characters in my prints have no interaction. This phenomenon, to be honest, is a result of my ambivalence. They may be in the same space and dimension, or not at all. On the prints, their relationships are actually ambiguous and uncertain. Therefore, I picked the name “I See You When I See You.”

The space shown in prints is more like a game space than a real world. In my memory, video games made a deep impression on me when I was young. Using the game spaces somehow offers an easy way for me to present my imagination, after all video games indeed brought me many happy and relaxed hours. The reason why sometimes I will crop or show the base layer photos in the prints is that I unconsciously bury the boundary between the mythological and the real world. In addition, the bright color and cartoon stylish imageries are obvious in the prints, which creates a strange whole image. Why am I present in this method? Is it not right, that in children minds, everything is attractive and lovely?

⁴ Maggie Nelson, *Bluets* (Wave Books, 2009), 7.



See You When I See You
Digital Print on Watercolor Paper
24 x 18"
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Redemption I



Sanxingdui represents my local ancient culture, and the site was an ancient city, state and covers 12 square kilometers with a city of four square kilometers in the center. In 1988, the state council designated the Sanxingdui site as one of the most valuable cultural relics. Sanxingdui Museum located in the southwest of China displays abundant artifacts. I was surprised when I first visited Sanxingdui Museum. The extraordinary remains have their unique forms and styles, which gave me the impulse to do prints. I did my prints to present my concern about the vulnerable local culture and our relationship with it. Also, I feel helpless and powerless on these issues. With an overwhelming sense of guilt, I feel I must process my imagination in another way. In my opinion, compared to the static printed art form, the video provides us with a dynamic perspective to look at my attitude and imagination. In the prints, there are presented two separated and no-communication characters who, specifically, are full of the sense of loss and indifference. Based on the background story of those prints and inspired by Matthew Barney's *Cremaster*,⁵ I intend to make a video which has a redemptive narrative for my ambivalence. Since those ancient figures are very distant, they are, at first, experienced as frozen symbols, emptied of real meaning. I intend to feed new energy into these frozen symbols, to inject them with the energies of subjective illusion and desire.

⁵ DOMAWEcom. "Matthew Barney - *Cremaster 1* (1995)." YouTube. May 11, 2012. Accessed April 30, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0eHHJzk1uo>.



Redemption I

Three channel video

1920 x 1080

9 mins 10s loop

2016

How does the “redemption” stand in the right place in the video? Our brains are heavy and sophisticated components of the body. The mind contains over a billion neurons which are essential elements of the brain as well as the spinal cord. As long as we are alive, those nerve cells would never stop working for us. When we are suffering physical pain, our brain will shut off the pain somehow. The damaged tissues sent painful signals to the brain which has the power to decide whether to let these signals get in and be processed. Sometimes the mind can close a gate and block the pain signals by releasing endorphins that are natural demulcents. Equally, When I feel helpless, powerless, and other the unpleasant feelings, my brain will start to produce its other “endorphins,” that is a redemptive imagination. In the process of the creating a vision, even though I struggle with some cold hard truth, it seems that I can catch more mitigated moments. What suits this fantasy well, is the powerful video by its moving images and inviting sound. The video is a method of preservation that retains the recorded material in a state of permanent availability and manipulability.⁶ The sentence means that it is possible for me to edit and modify the video continuously and leave more time to recover. Each frame of the image only lasts 0.1s to show up so as to guarantee consistent actions. By combining all, the continuous images act like waves of thinking and awareness.

⁶ Sylvia Martin, Video Art(Taschen, 2006),6



Additionally, the sound opens up another space for my imagination to exist. Moving images and sound in the editing program are from two independent tracks, also, in reality, they are perceived by different sensory organs, so they seem to be two fields for people to wander.

This video is a three-channel piece so there are more opportunities offered to extend more angles and spaces. The dynamic art form needs long hours to watch, think, select, edit, organize, and review. Through the whole process, I can sense many aspects of “redemption” and block bad thoughts and real problems for a while.

There are four parts in the Redemption video. There is a sentence that pops up on the black background in the threshold of the video. It says “when I love my culture, it is like stirring the dehydrated seaweed with raw eggs.”, Which is my strange and convoluted method of pouring out my love? Then it changes to redesigned Sanxingdui ancient figures from my prints and copious dotted lines that show the connection between this video with previous prints. A man is watching a dry corn scene, and he will appear again in the end. The next minute displays the moving images of peeling an apple and tearing a sheet of paper and then the blue figure is covered with a tablecloth, which indicates the appearance of two protagonists. Music for this part is more mysterious than soft.



Redemption I

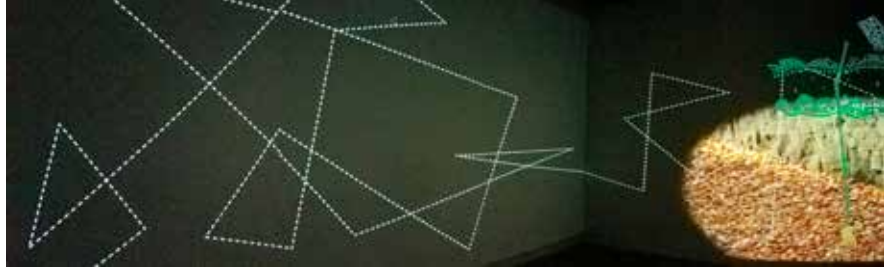
Three channel video

1920 x 1080

9 mins 10s loop

2016

The second part of video alters the music into fast and light side drum beats. Meanwhile, the two protagonists show up and dance; they have no gender since they express several meanings. The blue relating to subjectivity, the present, to be loved, inside, real and the culture that I am experiencing. The green one, refers to the objectivity, past, the love, outside, imagining, local culture, and the relationship with my hometown. They dance in an actual space with paper prints hanging on the ceiling or standing on the ground. But the scene here is regarded as my imagery space. Most of the goods displayed in these frames come from my prints *See You When I See You*. At the beginning of the second part, some interactions are happening instead of the indifference between these two protagonists. The random dance reveals their weird form of communication. My rough editing cuts and two characters' performance are inspired by Japanese Butoh dance. The crude and rude gestures and movements belong to special Japanese cultural sign of Butoh dance. Two protagonists dance slowly, but with my shortcuts within the video editing program, their dance matches the fast musical beats. After the random dance, the green being paints the chest of the blue beings in black color with its hands. Then there emerges a black substance that is the results of these characters' touching and interactions and their associations with secrets, magic forces, and powers as well. Poking a pillow and being forced to drink, the blue protagonist makes an attempt to process and to abreact the mental pain.



When it comes to the third part of the video, more close-up scenes occur. The first channel present unclear shots of the green being and clear 3D triangular cones, which are the contrast of the dimensions and pixels as well as the motions. The green being looks around with its extensional eyes in the third channel. Simultaneously, the blue being is squeezing clay through a stainless steel pan with many holes on it. Three different channels in some sense hold three separate spaces and times. Those moves contribute to getting rid of terrible feeling by refining and shifting clay into plentiful bar shapes. I insert my dialect and sound into the video to correspond with the blue protagonist's mouse performances. The background trumpet music and the electronic voice are based on behalf of present and experience. The story climax arrives in the final part of the video, and it is for the sake of the wild and crazy music. The shakes and flashes of those moving images are of a higher frequency.



Redemption I

Three channel video

1920 x 1080

9 mins 10s loop

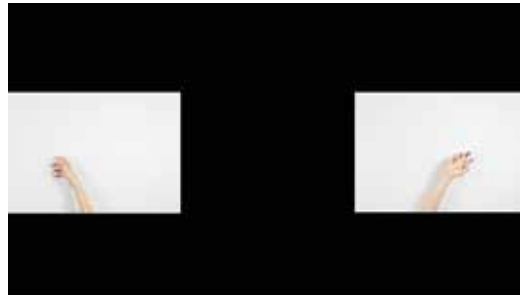
2016

In the following section, there are the shadows of these two major characters, who play with lights and move slowly. The zoom-out and zoom-in of the plexus patterns represent my brain's nervous system which is essential to the world of my imagination. At last, the same printed figure of a man shows up and pounds the dry corn photo into several pieces. The broken sound is used to drag us back to reality. This man represents the mental connection between the blue and green beings.

The video style is consistent with the *See You When I See You* print series which consist of the two creatures with strange eyes, artifacts, similar choice of color and their mysterious vibes.

Playful Hatred

Playful Hatred is a video series including several videos with different forms. All these videos come from whims and intuitions, made by simple editing techniques. I have a habit of periodic introspection and summary. This video series is regarded as an exploratory journal, which hasn't been finished yet. I keep updating and developing it. So far I have completed twelve videos, and each one is short as several seconds to less than five minutes. These short videos won't demand too much patience from viewers and consume hours of time. Therefore, I also call them "fast-food" video pieces. We live in a fast-paced society, eat in fast-food restaurants and see the fast-read news and messages. Anyway, we can lose or gain things in a quicker method. This piece somehow matches nowadays "rhythm" of diverse people and reflects my real life pace. *Playful Hatred* provides me with a useful way to think about and explore philosophical and social questions. The purpose of this piece is to propose and experience questions instead of finding the appropriate answers since I want to leave more freedom for me or other audiences to be involved in the issues.



Knock The Wall, Three channel video, 1920 x 1080, 42s loop, 2016

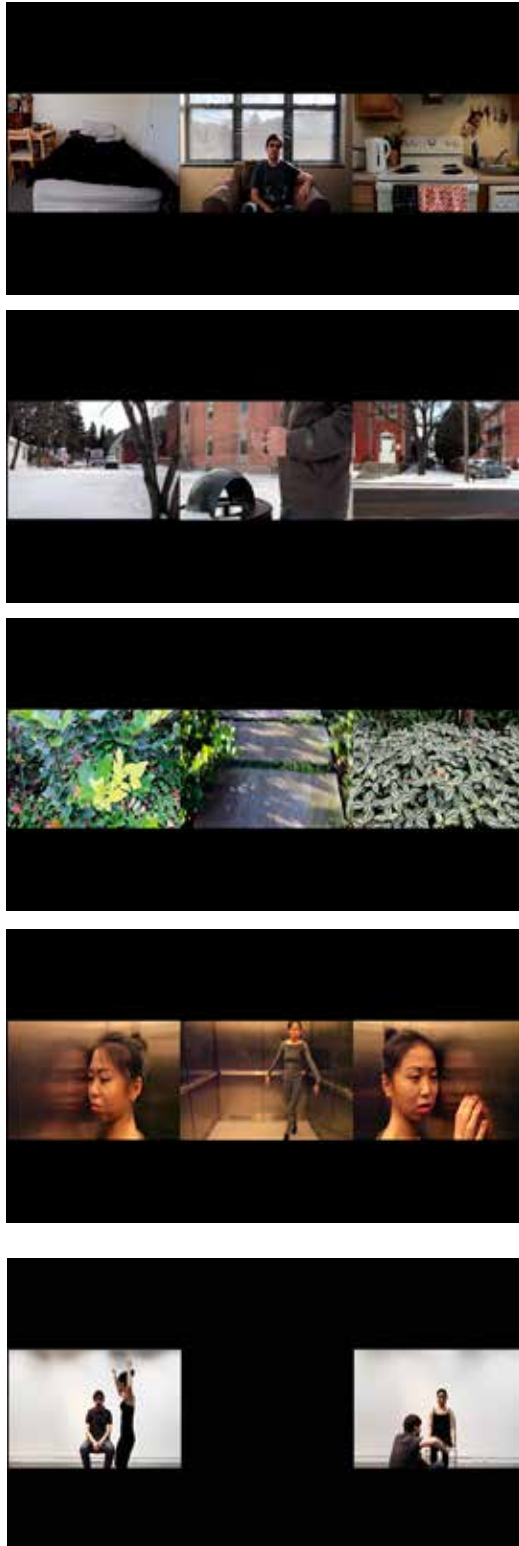
The first one in the series is called *Knock The Wall* which recalls a memory of when I identified parts of my consciousness. After reading Sigmund Freud's theory,⁶ I wondered when I would be able to figure out my "Ego" and perceive who was the real "me" here. This video is a three-channel piece with the original knocking sound. In the video, my two hands knock on the wall many times in various frequencies and intensities, which stands for the process of recalling. Then my childhood images show up, and the faces of those children move slightly. The appearance and disappearance of images depend on the knocking beats from those two hands. My choice of this plain white wall is due to the purity of my childhood.

⁷ "Sigmund Freud and Child Development." Child & Adolescent Development: Overview. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Apr. 2017.



Ears, Two channel video, 1920 x 1080, 30s loop, 2016

The second video, called *Ears*, explores the original and extended function of our sensory organ – “ears”. Not everyone’s ears can be maneuvered and move. I admire one of my cousins because he can move his ears without any effort. Does this additional function of a sensory organ bring people more sensational experience similar to when they were infants? In this two-channel video, two individuals make their ears “act”, following the murmuring sound of an infant to process my question.



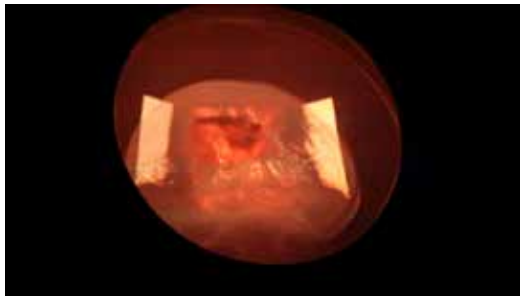
Tell Me Your Dream, Three channel video, 1920 x 1080, 4mins 52s loop, 2016

When it comes to the third video, it deals with gender issues named *Tell Me Your Dream*. This is a story in which a woman shares her dreams with others. In the beginning, she identifies herself as a man and starts to talk about the weird dream experience. Lighting a cigarette, searching for a job as well as buying Powerball lottery tickets are the protagonists' past experiences, which means those things are real but reappear in the dream. When she talks about walking into an unknown place, that means she walks into her subconscious arena. Then she dreams that she is dancing in different spaces and at that moment her male identity gradually switches to a female one. She lies to the listener that she has no idea about what is going on next. Actually, in that scene, she watches the interaction between these two gender identities, but she refuses to describe it. In the next scene where she opens a door walking out and tries to light a cigarette like before. The images shift to the reality where a woman finishes talking about her dream. I am curious about how people cope with their gender identities and how this may have a connection with the subconscious. So, I made up this story and narrated it in my approach.



Gender Fluidity, One channel video, 1920 x 1080, 1min 47s loop, 2016

The next video, *Gender Fluidity*, develops from the video *Tell Me Your Dream*. In *Gender fluidity*, I want to study and probe this new term. What is gender fluidity? The poses in this video have their different meanings and metaphors. Crossing the arms of two characters means the mix of two genders. Another scene is in the top view of two people. This angle shows an illusion of a man's penis due to the collage of the man's nose and the woman's nose. The image turns to two portraits of people, which mimics a scanner's effect. There is a scene where the female character is sitting, and the male character uses his head to interrupt our view of her head, which is also a visual illusion. Then I have a low-level angle shot of these two people. The combination of their faces becomes just like one person's face, and the sight of the woman's back with the man's hands creates a strange human figure in the following frames. The sound of a computer, electricity, and machines is utilized in the video since this new term- "gender fluidity" indeed born with features of this time - living with technology.



Nonsense, One channel video, 1920 x 1080, 1min 2s loop, 2015

Nonsense, the fifth video, has toilet shots. First, I projected a video on the toilet. Then I shot the video about the projected toilet. In the projected video, I was whispering without speaking plain words. The person on the projection keeps talking until I flushed the toilet. This piece comes from my thinking about where the water goes. Even when we whisper or talk nonsense, that message will flow away due to our internet and surveillance systems, like that disappearing water.



Eating, One channel video, 1920 x 1080, 1min 30s loop, 2016

The sixth video is *Eating*, a three-channel video. The first video image is about a disabled chicken eating its food. The second video channel displays a person's eating, and the third one shows a mouse stealing and eating the food for a goldfish. The combination of these three videos contrasts human beings and animals. I try to rethink the differences and similarities among human beings and animals. Also, I am asking what the meaning of a human's life is.



Anonymity, One channel video, 1920 x 1080, 1min 30s loop, 2015

Anonymity is the seventh piece of this series. There is a simulation of anonymous online text chatting in the video. I want to visualize this phenomenon and explore it. The protagonist changes his or her voice to tell secrets and covers his or her head and body with a paper bag as well as a black cloth. So, viewers find it hard to distinguish this person via the voice or to look, which is how anonymous online chatting works.



Origin, One channel video, 1920 x 1080, 3mins 25s loop, 2017

The name of next piece is called *Origin* which has a lively music like the one come from video games. I wonder where I come from and not just me but also every person who lives on the planet wants to know their origin. It is evident that we have no answers to this question nowadays. But that does not stop me from thinking about and exploring it. The video source is my footage of a traditional meal that my family will prepare every Spring Festival. This meal includes the leg meat of the hog and one kind of traditional bamboo. It requires boiling for almost a whole day. I have four copies of the same videos and stitch together to create the final effect. The images in the video look like a woman's vagina, and it changes its shape with the rhythm of the music.



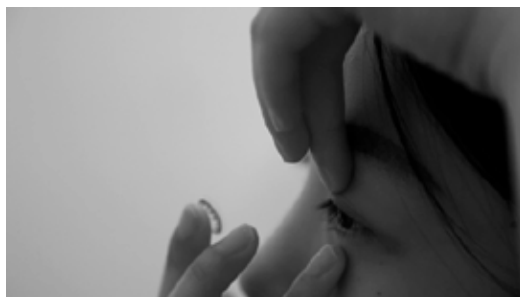
Mother's Nap, One channel video, 1920 x 1080, 1min 11s loop, 2016

The number nine video is *Mother's Nap*. I am curious what hasn't changed after we grow up. In this way, I decided to shoot a video while my mother was having her nice nap. The music is *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* which refers to childhood times. Without any particular consciousness, she moves her legs like the old days.



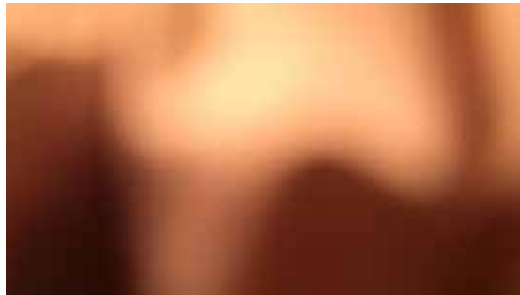
Dripping Water Painting, One channel video, 1920 x 1080, 1min 40s loop, 2016

Dripping Water Painting is another video belonging to *Playful Hatred*. The intimacy of people is a tricky thing. If you stand too close, you will hurt people easily. There is the same thing taking place in the piece. If you are dripping too much water, the face and paper will stick together, and the person can barely breathe. This video deals with where the balance of people's relationship is.



Untitled, One channel video, 1920 x 1080, 1min 37s loop, 2015

Untitled is the eleventh video which is a black and white video. After trying many times, a person puts a contact lens on her left eyeball. However, she takes it off more easily than putting it on. The whole process indicates that it takes the time to have habits and thoughts, but we abandon them easily than we get them. Is this our natural quality?



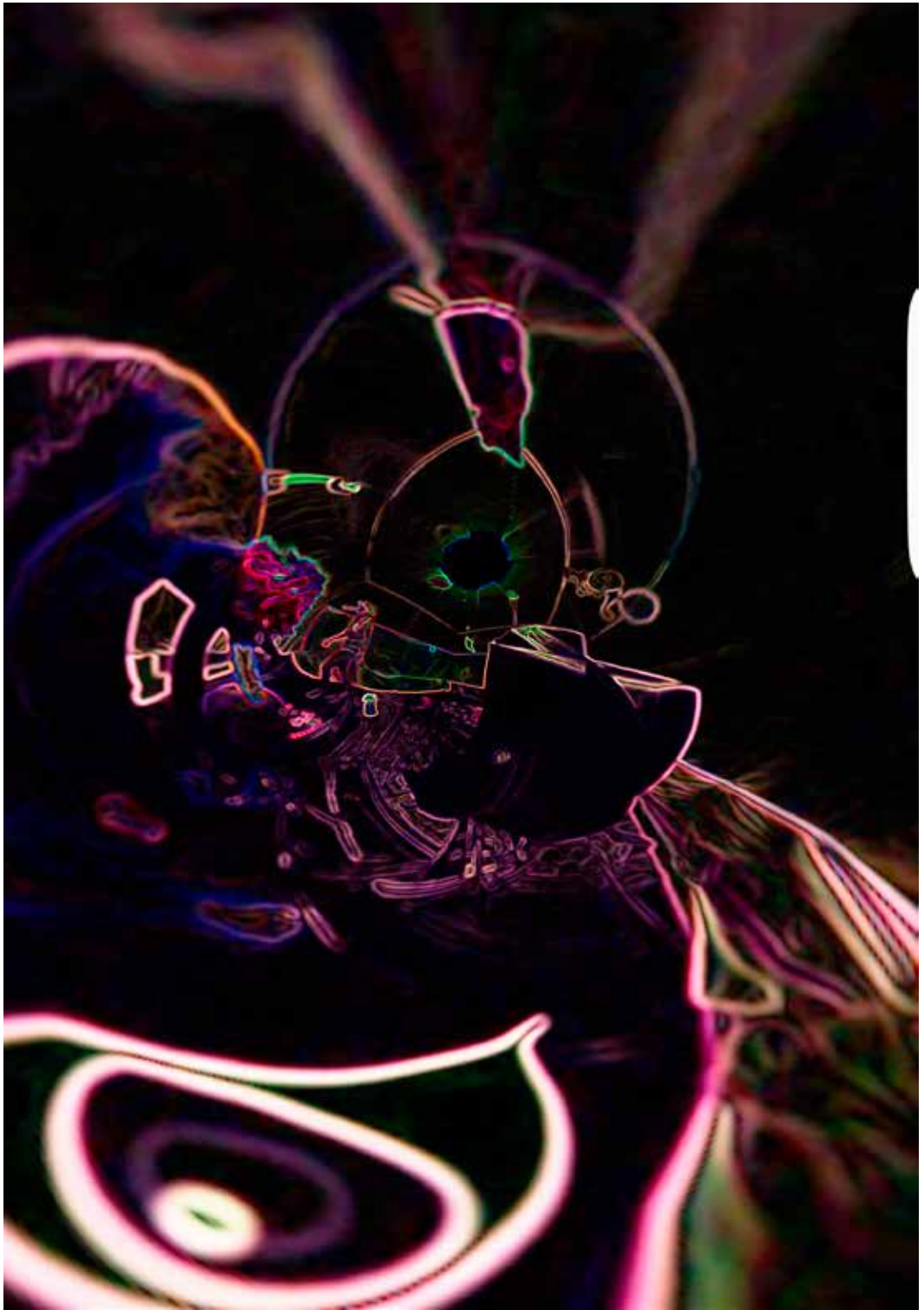
Illusion, One channel video, 1920 x 1080, 1min 27s loop, 2015

The last video is an illusion of my hands' dance, called *Illusion*. It is easy to make people think that this is a naked human body in the video. The confused images in the video make people picture something they are familiar. So does our brain fill the absence of information via our imagination?

Redemption II

When we watch the same film, the effect of the movie watched at home is different from the one in the theater. Does it have something to do with the indoor ambiance? When we watch videos on the computer monitor or television, we are less able to focus on the details of the video. But, the theater offers a more immersive space for us to appreciate, which is better for people to follow the plots of the story. Thanks to the VR headset, we can have our “home theater.” We can dive into a world of 360-degree experience, and look around via VR box. Unlike the 2D and 3D video, the 360-degree video is the reappearing of reality. If wearing the headset and VR box, we will feel like we are standing in another space or world. Because of an immersive experience, I choose a 360-degree video to develop my ideas about Redemption.

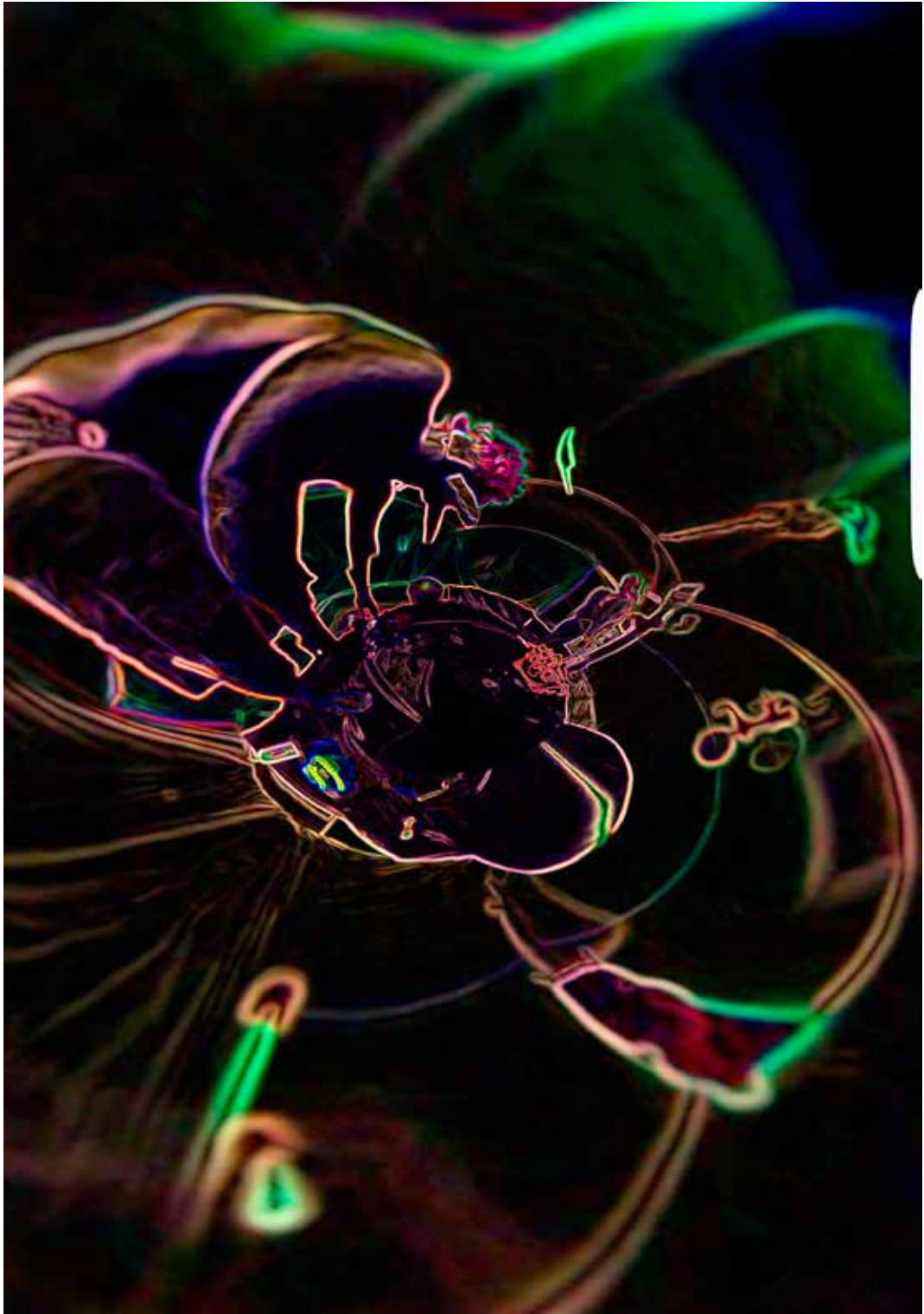
Redemption I is a three-channel video that represents endorphins for my helplessness about my local culture. For *Redemption II*, what has been developed is the ambient space and its way of presenting characters. The background of this video is black which fits my imaginary world because I treat my mind as another unknown black hole in the world. The two protagonists are shown with the neon light color. Neon lighting signage is conspicuous and bright at night. Ever since many years ago, stores, restaurants and night clubs used neon signs to attract guests in the evening. All items in the video are not to be filled with color, on the contrary, there are only neon color outlines. I don't expect the space to be so colorfully situated like in the video *Redemption I*. What my preference for this video is my imaginary space experience. *Redemption II* is the prequel story of *Redemption I*. *Redemption II* is the start of my conception for *Redemption I*.



Redemption II
360-degree video
8mins loop
2016



Redemption II
360-degree video
8mins loop
2016



Redemption II
360-degree video
8mins loop
2016

Absent Drifters

How many identities have we in a digital era? I name our identities in the virtual world as “digital identity.” I have known four identity theories: Personal identity, role identity, social identity, and collective identity. Digital identity may belong to one of them or not. For example, I can create different accounts by using distinct names on websites. The fake name provides a good way to camouflage me, not only the names but also the photos and text that I shared. It is a kind of different role playing. How much do I know about my characters? Roles serves various purposes for me to work on diverse subject matters. Indeed, role play in a digital world helps us solve problems and meet our demands in an easier way, notwithstanding, it also makes me confused about who is the real me.

The performance consists of video projections and dance. In the beginning, a video is projected on the upper body of three performers. The footage here represents the view inside of the optical fiber. The black hole projection on dancers’ forehead looks like a third eye that is visible in the virtual world. Then the image shifts to word-beams. Those words are popular keywords when people search on Google. Next, those words fly into one of the performer’s head. Afterwards, they beam onto the other two performers who dance around the one who sits down. I conceive this performance by being inspired by the bonfire ritual of the Miao minority. Then the footage shifts to an explosion scene and then three performers start to dance within UV light. After the wild dance section, dancers will change their fast, strong, and solid movements into slow, soft ones. The projection image also turns into a scene with C++ language. Finally, the three performers dress into costumes and walk out of a closed space. While they reach their regular clothes outside of the gallery, they will undress from their costumes and wear their own clothes in the ending. This movement creates meaning from the front stage behavior and the backstage behavior. Our ordinary life is a kind of performance, but this piece offers a way to restate it.

Three performers are painted a yellow color due to my intention of transfiguration and camouflage. For me, the yellow on their body lets the three figures differentiate from my natural body color tone. They are my identities in the virtual reality. I prefer to use not only color a lump but also the movements and dance to answer this question. I learned and studied the Miao minority dance and movements derive from one that we use in the digital execution. Combined by the voluntary arrangement and improvisation, the performance presents surreal effects.



Absent Drifters
Performance
21mins
2017

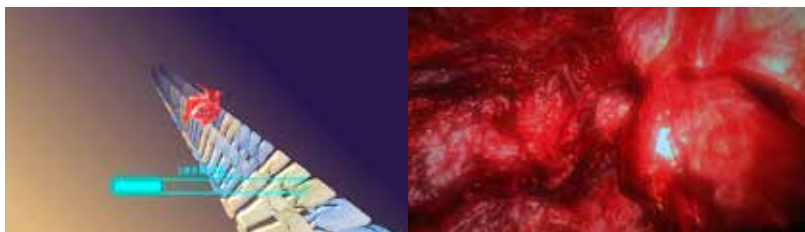
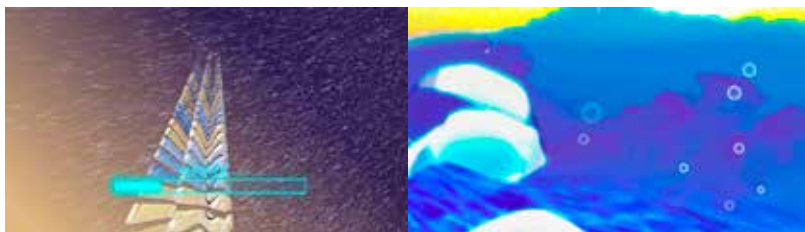
Default setting

AUJIK is an online presence of mysterious nature or tech cult.⁸ While I am working on *Default Setting*, I got the inspiration from the existence and the works of AUJIK. Plus, since I am interested in exploring the connection between the virtual world and the human body, I wonder if the virtual beings have their own “organs” in the virtual world and how they expose their “organs” to us.

Default Setting is a ten-minute trailer. This piece also is an introduction to the surreal virtual space and an endless game story. I decided to have a four-channel video to be displayed on four televisions. Four televisions lie on four pedestals in different heights.

Since I am imitating the beginning of some video games, the video starts with a loading bar. The surreal spine shows differently on the four-channel video due to the reference to each individual video. After the spine scene, a female character curls up under water. And about 20 seconds later, one voice comes out and says “I was designed to be alone, that is all I remember. My mission is to explore my organs; they are huge, even bigger than me.” In the first video, the character is supposed to climb the mountains which refer to her brain. The second video represents the lung. The protagonist dives into a river and starts her journey. The virtual being explores the belly in the third video. And the last video presents abstract vein and heart, and the terrain is a kind of cave. I invented all of the terrains in Unity. The mountains, river, hills, and caves are decorated with different colors and textures. I choose the subjective perspective to run the easy survival game, simultaneously, I screenshot it while the video game is played on Unity. As for the sound, at first it is a soft melody but later becomes loud electronic music. I regard the electronic sound as the internal sound from the virtual body.

⁸ AUJIK. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Apr. 2017.



Default Setting
 Performance
 10mins 10s loop
 2017



Back Figs

Have a comfortable position.

Focus on your inhaling and exhaling.

Feel the warmth of every breath.

Let your true eyes opening just a little wider, and you are listening to your voices.
The voices can be remembered by the alert mind albeit it is possible that they can be
retrieved by the deeper parts of yourself that subconsciousness and consciousness.

Relax. It is time to let your heavier eyelids drop down.

Relax. You can imagine that your nerve cells and muscles are becoming lighter and
relaxed.

Relax. Let it go, your watchful reality. Sense nothing that can be relied on.

You are ready to go somewhere only you know.

There can be your utopia where is full of colorful, dreamy, infinite sensations.
Zero of your alert nerve cells and muscles awakes.

Your nerve impulses are like the springs that gently moisten every inch of your inner soil.

Inch by inch,

inch by inch.

The springs spread through your puffy hair to your numb toes,

Little by little,

little by little.

You,
barefoot,
dip yourself in that warm, bright, and soft water.

You can feel the quiet energy, life, and the universe at this moment.

Fears off,
let the currents penetrate so deeply within you that it changes from nothing into something.

When you look at the springs, you can find a deeper you as a reflection, and when you look back, you can witness and observe a, higher you smiling with such contentment.

Now focus on your inhaling and exhaling.

Feel the warmth of every breath.

Count to 10 and find yourself coming back to an alertness and full awareness with complete confidence.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

Open your blinking eyes with a grateful thought and clear mind.

Technical notes

1 See You When I See You:

Canon 600D - Photos

Photoshop - Photos

Watercolor_Canon_6400 printer - Print 24x18" and 88x44" watercolor prints

2 Redemption I:

Three Panasonic HD cameras - Videos

One 4K camera - Videos

One LED light

Shooting props - Thirty yards clothes, two pieces of plywood, Wires, knife, silk, watercolor prints, apple, table cloth, body paints, pink and orange wigs, A4 paper, pot, foam, ceramic, baking paper, pillow, bowls

Photoshop - pictures

Final Cut - Visual noise reducing

Premier - Videos editing

After Effects - Element, Twitch, and Plexus effects

Audition - Sound

Music Mixer - Sound editing

3 Playful Hatred:

Canon 600D - Videos

4K camera - Videos

After Effects - Footage editing

Premier - Videos editing

Final Cut - Videos editing

LED lights

4 Redemption II:

Gear 360-degree camera - 360-degree videos
Samsung Galaxy 7 - Videos playing
Gear VR box - 360-degree videos playing
Gear VR action director - 360-degree videos editing

5 Absent Drifter:

Two projectors - Videos
Two Mac minis - The videos
Two computer monitors - Videos
After Effects - Color effects and Styles effects editing
Premier - Videos editing
Madmapper - Video maps
QuickTime - Screen shooting
Ultraviolet light

6 Default Setting:

Unity - Different terrains and space to run the Survival Game
QuickTime - Screen shooting
After Effects - Color effects and Styles effects editing
Premier - Videos editing
Photoshop - Produce PNG photo files

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Thesis Exhibition













