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Offerings for a ghost film: From fragmented work to cosmic assemblages

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OFFERINGS FOR A GHOST FILM:
FROM FRAGMENTED WORK TO COSMIC ASSEMBLAGES

George Clark

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the University of Westminster
for degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This thesis takes as its starting point an unfinished film. The short history of cinema has been dominated by notions of what constitutes a film and what does not. While the establishment of technical standards enabled cinema to become one of the most pervasive global art forms, this curtailed many elements of the fragmented practice of making, showing and discussing cinema. This leaves us with many gaps in the ways we address the life of cinema; the entangled processes of production and exhibition as well as the many branches into other disciplines and areas of thoughts. With the thesis I propose an expanded notion of moving image practice moving from fragmented work to a model of assemblage taking into account several forms of writing, filmmaking and exhibition practice. I will draw on the concept of archipelagic thought to map the strategies employed by a cast of writers, artists, photographers and filmmakers, to make visible phantom and occluded histories. In approaching cinema as a site of potential I will explore how film practice can address political ruptures and nomadic lives. Through the project I attempt to elucidate an open model of cosmic assemblage sited at the intersection of a broad range of ideas, cultures and histories.

The particular details I will focus on unfold around a few weeks in November 1995 in north of Taiwan. At this time the Chilean filmmaker Raúl Ruiz (1941-2011) travelled from Paris to Taiwan with his producer, cinematographer and editor to shoot the film *The Comedy of Shadows* based on his script with a local cast and crew. The project was shot but never completed leaving scarce references to its production, a brief synopsis and notes starting it awaits post-production. Assembling new research into this lost film and the surrounding social, cultural and political history, the thesis will work through this material in relation the development of my new body of work proposing a different way of thinking of cinema, questioning the notion of an unfinished film and using the model of open assemblage to explore the diverse means by which Ruiz's ghost film prompts new thought and new creation.

The thesis is structured in four thematic chapters (*Fragment*, *Projection*, *Cemetery* and *Constellation*) employing a range of modes of writing and strategies of assembly. The practice elements are focused around the series of film works and exhibitions centred around my film *Double Ghosts*. This film is part of a body of work presented in international series of iterations spanning outdoor screenings with Temple projectionists, workshops and performances and series of exhibitions documented as part of the thesis. With emphasis on three key presentations of *Double Ghosts* at AV Festival (UK, 2018), Taiwan Biennale (Taiwan, 2018-19) and Berwick Media Arts Festival (UK, 2019). Together the text and films seek to find a way to move beyond fragmentation and displacement to a model of assemblage across space and time drawing of Glissant's concept of relation and Deleuze and Guattari's model of rhizome.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

In its own way, this text consists of many texts, but two above all.

The text is typeset in one of two ways to distinguish between the two main voices that are integrated in the pages to follow. These voices are entangled but I took the opportunity to shift voice and writing style to better address the concerns of the text. The two voices are, on the one hand the thesis proper and on the other my personal production diary. The production diary addresses the development of the project both the films and exhibitions I produced as well as my life during this process. To distinguish between these two texts I have employed two formats as follows:

The text of the thesis is set in Arial Unicode MS like this.

The text of the production diary is indented in Times, like this.

Throughout I have sought to include original Chinese names for people and works. These in most cases are written in Traditional Chinese characters (not simplified) in line with standard usage in Taiwan.

It is suggested you read the text from beginning to end but if you wanted to follow the diary and ignore the rest here is how to read it in chronological order:

2016

- Friday 20 May 2016, Madou *85*
- Wednesday 8 June 2016, Taipei, *206*
- Friday 10 June 2016, Taipei *207*
- Tuesday 9 August 2016, Wellington *13*

2017

- Wednesday 27 September 2017, Jatiwangi *106*
- Monday 2 October 2017, Taipei *110*
- Wednesday 4 October 2017, Taipei *110*
- Thursday 5 October 2017, Taipei *123*
- Saturday 7 October 2017, Manila, *202*
- Sunday 29 October 2017, Lisbon, *134*

- Thursday 2 November 2017, Lisbon, *134*
- Monday 20 November 2017, London, *134*
- Tuesday 21 November 2017, Buenos Aires, *165*
- Thursday 23 November 2017, Buenos Aires, *165*
- Friday 24 November 2017, Buenos Aires, *167*
- Sunday 26 November 2017, Buenos Aires, *168*
- Monday 27 November 2017, Santiago, *169*
- Wednesday 13 December 2017, Santiago, *187*
- Friday 15 December 2017, Viña del Mar *188*
- Saturday 16 December 2017, Valparaíso *195*
- Tuesday 26 December 2017, Marsden, *261*

2018

- Tuesday 7 August 2018, Taipei *262*
- Friday 10 August 2018, Taipei *263*
- Saturday 11 August 2018, Taipei *265*
- Friday 17 August 2018, Taipei *267*
- Sunday 19 August 2018, Taipei *267*
- Monday 20 August 2018, Taipei *273*
- Tuesday 21 August 2018, Taipei *274*

2019

- Thursday 3 January 2019, Singapore, *252*
- Wednesday 16 January 2019, London, *226*
- Friday 15 February 2019, London *226*
- Friday 22 February 2019, London *227*
- Thursday 11 April 2019, London *7*
- Monday 15 April 2019, Chesham *9*
- Tuesday 14 May 2019, London *306*

ACCOMPANYING MATERIAL

EXHIBITION: George Clark: Double Ghosts

Berwick Visual Arts & Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival, Berwick-upon-Tweed, UK,
Sept-Oct 2019

Taiwan Biennial 'Wild Rhizome', National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art, Taichung, Taiwan,
Sept 2018-Feb 2019



Illustration 0.1: *Double Ghosts*, Taiwan Biennial Installation view

Double Ghosts is a multi-part film project which traverses the Pacific drawing on historical fragments, traces and ghosts from the coasts of Chile to a mountain cemetery in Taiwan. Exploring the status and potential of unrealised and fragmented histories, the exhibition draws together new 35mm film works, sound recordings, script fragments, photography and archival material filmed and gathered in Chile, France and Taiwan.

The project draws on research into temple film projectionists and an unfinished film made in Taiwan by prolific filmmaker Raúl Ruiz (1941–2011) who made most of his films nomadically after his political exile from Chile in 1973. Considering issues from cultural displacement, exile and the changing nature of cinema as the hiatus between the real and the unreal *Double Ghosts* employs an open model of production and exhibition to activate divergent cultural, social and geographical contexts. *Double Ghosts* has been shown as an installation with new 35mm films works, photographs and archival material as well as selected paintings connected to Raúl Ruiz by Yu Peng and new painting commissioned from Karsiu Lee.

The project has been developed through with presentations and performances at MAVI Santiago (Chile, Dec 2017), AV Festival (Newcastle-upon-Tweed, UK March 2018), TCAC Taipei (Taiwan, August 2018), Taiwan Biennial (Taiwan, Sept 2018-Feb 2019), Courtisane (Belgium, April 2019) and Berwick Film and Media Art Festival (UK, Sept-Oct 2019).

FILMS

DOUBLE GHOSTS / 雙影

2018, Taiwan/France/UK, 35mm, sound, colour, 31 min

Double Ghosts takes as its starting point an unfinished film shot by Raúl Ruiz in Taiwan in 1995. The incompleteness of Ruiz's film is the starting point for *Double Ghosts*, that considers the echoes of this unrealized project to explore cinematic and political phantoms. Drawing on research and collaborations with filmmakers Valeria Sarmiento and Niles Atallah as well as Chilote fishermen, the film is staged as a series of actions seeking to reactivate this lost film. Filmed on 35mm film in Chile and Taiwan, *Double Ghosts* follows traces across the Pacific from Ruiz's birthplace in Puerto Montt to the mountain cemetery in Taiwan.



Illustration 0.2: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement



Illustration 0.3: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement

INNER SAGE / OUTER KING / 內聖 / 外王

EL SABIO ESCONDIDO Y EL REY APARENTE

LE SAGE NOCTURNE ET LE ROI SOLAIRE

2019, Taiwan/France/UK, 35mm, sound, colour, 14 min

Gathering interviews, readings and research material exploring Ruiz's unfinished film, *Inner Sage / Outer King* was made with collaborators in Paris and Taiwan including painter Karsiu Lee, poet Waldo Rojas, musician Jorge Arriagada and indigenous Taiwanese filmmaker Laha Mebow.



Illustration 0.4: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2019) 35mm frame enlargement

A MOUNTAIN INSIDE A CAVE / 山洞裡有山

2019, Taiwan/UK, 35mm, sound, colour, 15 min

Documentation of the ceremonial projection of *Double Ghosts* in Taiwan's Chin Pao San cemetery on 19th August 2018. Ruiz's unfinished film was originally commissioned by the cemetery as part of their arts programme. This projection was held on the anniversary of Raul's death (19 August 2011).



Illustration 0.5: *A Mountain Inside A Cave* (George Clark, 2019) 35mm frame enlargement

DIARIOS 1995 BY RAÚL RUIZ READ BY WALDO ROJAS ON 25 JULY 2018, BELLEVILLE, PARIS
2018, two channel video, sound, variable duration

Diarios is a reading of 24 entries selected from the diaries of Raul Ruiz (1941-2011) written throughout 1995 connected to the production of film *The Comedy of Shadows*. Recorded on 25 July 2018 on the anniversary of Ruiz's birth, the diaries are read by the Chilean poet Waldo Rojas, a close friend and collaborator of Ruiz's in their original Spanish and accompanied on two monitors that display text translations into English and Mandarin.



Illustration 0.6: *Diarios 1995* by Raúl Ruiz read by Waldo Rojas on 25 July 2018, Belleville, Paris (George Clark, 2018) video still

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I have many people to acknowledge as this project would not have been possible without the generosity and kindness of numerous individuals to whom I am deeply indebted for their help, friendship and inspiration throughout the process.

First I want to acknowledge the often unheralded and saintly work of translators and interpreters without whom there would be no project. Thank you: Huiying Chen/陳慧盈, Yuling Chou/周郁齡, Pei-hua Chung/鍾佩樺, Jaime Grijalba, Wen Hsu/許耀文, Adrian Martin, Nouch Papazian, Erica Sheu/徐璐, Miguel Ribeiro, Sarah Jessica Rinland, Wei Hsuan Sung/宋微暄, Shr-tzung Tsai/蔡世宗, Phoebe Weston-Evans and Tzuan Wu/吳梓安.

I am also deeply indebted to many artists, filmmakers and writers who are credited and threaded throughout the text and my work in ways I attempt to untangle and won't list here. But I want to acknowledge the inspiration of two principal figures whose work, life and passion continues to inspire me in particular how their collaboration has continued against adversity and even beyond the threshold of death. Thank you Raúl Ruiz and Veronica Sarimento. Un abrazo.

I must also acknowledge the contribution of the many artists with whom I have had the privilege of working with in some form during this project. Thank you for your openness and collaborations Jorge Arriagada, Niles Atallah, Tanatchai Bandasak, Martin Baus, Alex Bonney, Sheryl Cheung, Fernando Godoy M, Karsiu Lee, Cristóbal León, Xia Lin, Laha Mebow/陳潔瑤, Yu Peng, Waldo Rojas, Rodrigo Saquel, Shireen Seno and John Torres.

Thank you to Shun-Ji Xu/許順吉, and Mr. Lin/林源樹 for sharing your experience and knowledge with me. As film projectionists their work is often invisible and unacknowledged but without them there would be no cinema.

For their many insights into the production of *The Comedy of Shadows* I want to thank all the people who shared their experiences and memories with me. In particular I want to acknowledge Cheung Chin, Laha Mebow and Cami Yeh who shared archival material (documents, photographs, films) which have been an incomparable resource. In addition I want to thank Bruno Cuneo and Veronica Sarimento for supplying valuable research material in Chile.

For help with the documentation of the project I want to thank, in particular, Yito Yang/楊唯多, Ko Chun-Yao/柯泓宇 and Erika Stevenson for their excellent photographic records.

The project has been nurtured and supported by many curators, in particular Yuling Chou/周郁齡 who has been a long term and patient champion of my work, an inspiring researcher and generous friend. I want to acknowledge the crucial role of the following curators who have believed in my project while I was still figuring it out: Huiying Chen/陳慧盈, Ben Cook, Jow-Jiun Gong, Carolina Castro Jorquera, Peter Taylor, Rebecca Shatwell, Wood Lin/林木材. I was fortunate not only to exhibit my work but also benefit from the generosity and openness of the following institutions who worked with me to support the development of my work: Museo de Artes Visuales MAVI, AV Festival (Rebecca Shatwell), Chin Pao San/金寶山, TCAC Taipei Contemporary Art Centre (Bo chun Hsiao/蕭伯均, Shih-yu Hsu/徐詩雨, Yu Cheng-Ta/余政達), National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Treasure Hill Artist Village, Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival and LUX.

I started the Phd when the world and my life looked very different and am grateful for the unwavering support and belief from May Adadol Ingwanij who has helped marshal my many wanderings and bring critical and compassionate attention to every aspect of the process. I am grateful of the research environment I have been involved in at CREAM at the University of Westminster despite my itinerancy and in particular the support from Lucy Reynolds and Roshini Kempadoo.

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The many people who helped me on the films, who I have missed here, I have thanked and acknowledged directly in the credit for the respective works.

GC, London, January 2021

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that all the material contained in this thesis is my own work.

OFFERINGS FOR A GHOST FILM:
FROM FRAGMENTED WORK TO COSMIC ASSEMBLAGES

George Clark

0.1 Initial offerings

This thesis takes as its starting point an unfinished film. The short history of cinema has been governed by limiting notions of what constitutes a film and what does not. The establishment of conceptual and technical standards enabled cinema to become one of the most pervasive globally distributed art forms. Yet the accompanying definitions have curtailed understanding of the fragmented practice of making, showing and discussing cinema. This leaves us with many gaps in how we address the life of cinema, its processes of production and exhibition and its many branches into other disciplines. In the following pages I will establish a topography to propose particular and specific responses to the question of what can constitute a film.

The particular history I will focus on revolves around a few weeks in November 1995 in the north of Taiwan. At this time the Chilean filmmaker Raúl Ruiz (1941-2011) travelled from Paris to Taiwan with his producer, cinematographer and editor to shoot the film *The Comedy of Shadows* with a local cast and crew. The project was shot but never completed, leaving only a few scarce fragments in its wake; a brief synopsis and a note stating it awaits post-production. The following chapters will work through the scattered fragments of this unresolved production, grounded by this project I will trace the development of my own body of new works. In doing so I aim to propose a different way of thinking of cinema, questioning the notion of what constitutes a film (finished or unfinished), exploring the diverse means by which Ruiz's ghost film exists and can in turn inspire new thought and new creation. One of my central questions is: What are the means by which a film we cannot see exists? And how can one work in relation to such a film? Moving out from this particular history I will explore how we can learn from art works that exist in a variety of different states, asking what is it that constitutes a work and what is the critical potential that can be found in these other modes of being.

The questions raised by my investigation of Ruiz's film and means by which to approach it, form the centre of the thesis that follows. The text presents an approach to practice drawing on ideas of displacement, assemblage and entanglement as productive strategies. The journey of the project has taken into account a range of activities from writing to moving image works, performances, artist talks and exhibitions alongside various curatorial interventions. The writing aims to explore the confluence of meetings and encounters opened up by the cultural histories of this unfinished film. Rather than seeking to reclaim or remake *The Comedy of Shadows*, the project takes it as a starting point.

Through the text I will map the methods developed through the practice proposing an original response to questions of how fragmentation, assemblage and projection can be means to generate new knowledge. The

project and thesis are developed according to modes of assemblage informed by the notion of *Nomad Thought* and propose new means of working in relation to other artists' practice and fragmented histories.

Presence and absence are central themes of the project as the two sides of displacement. I am working with the idea of displacement as both a historical and geographic condition but also as a strategy by which experiences, images or histories that are lost, incomplete or suppressed can be addressed despite not being present or visible. As such the project aims to contribute new means by which absences are understood through the prism of potentiality and as generative models for new works. I will address artists' strategies of political practice with moving image in the context of life under martial law in Chile and Taiwan in order to develop means by which to respond to the representational deficit of colonialist and military regimes that seek to occlude or make invisible select experiences.

To respond to the governing representations of historical experience in these charged political contexts, I will look at the methods developed by artists who have worked with these restrictions as material in their practices. Studying how such artists have worked provides means by which to address occluded histories and multiple subjectivities. To look at these issues I intend to follow the traces of Ruiz's film in order to develop a new body of work informed by a metaphysical understanding of presence and absence. Central to this is a consideration of the fragmented and often invisible work of research as a crucial element in art practice. I intend to explore how we can recuperate fragmented and dispersed labour through the relational practice of assemblage.¹ An assemblage is a 'fragmentary whole,'² a multiplicity, made up of interrelated organs, which can be added to, subtracted or multiplied. 'In a multiplicity,' as Deleuze argues, 'what counts are not terms of the elements, but what is 'between' them, the in-between, a set of relations.'³

Rather than working from a script the project will explore alternative methods for generating art works in relation to a range of geographic, political and cultural constellations. Deleuze's theories of the fragment, in particular of assemblage and rhizome, provides a starting point for this approach. Following Deleuze and Ruiz, the project will seek to be 'open and connectable in all dimensions'⁴ constructing new works and models of practice through a series of connected iterations, films, performances, screenings and interventions.

1 Various commentators have pointed out (see: DeLanda, Manuel. *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity*. Continuum, 2006) that Deleuze and Guattari never formally outlined their theory of *assemblage* but as Thomas Nail argues they did advance it in the form and approach of their works *What is Philosophy? And A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1988). See Nail, Thomas, 'What is an Assemblage?' *SubStance*, vol. 46 no. 1, 2017, pp21-37

2 Deleuze, Gilles, and Guattari, Félix, *What Is Philosophy?* Verso, 1994. p16

3 Deleuze, Gilles and Parnet, Claire. *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, New York, Columbia, 1987. pviii

4 Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Felix, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988. p12

Responding to the legacy of Ruiz the project *Double Ghosts* has unfolded through a series of public presentations including new film works, performances, lectures and exhibitions (see *Accompanying Material* p.vii). The exhibitions I will discuss reflect on how to work in relation to other artists, considering broader issues from the history and legacy of politics and art, cultural displacement, exile and the changing nature of cinema as the hiatus between the real and the unreal. To address these discontinuities, with the project I will propose an archeological method for considering the legacy of lost works, taking inspiration from the ideas of the fragment, potentiality and relation in work of Gilles Deleuze, Giorgio Agamben, Édouard Glissant and David Der-wei Wang as well as writers on border of theory and biography such as Maggie Nelson and Chris Kraus.

My films, exhibitions and presentations explored the status of the fragment in marginalised histories drawing on the cinematic work in exile of Raúl Ruiz, Chilean avant-garde and connections to Latin American art and literature, histories of Taiwanese cinema, contemporary art and tradition of the temple projectionists. Through three distinct iterations I will explore how relations can be established between fragmented labour and cosmic assemblages. Drawing on a range of artists' work to shore up my project I will seek to explore shared histories of occupation, colonisation and international intervention in Chile and Taiwan. Central to my approach is the question of how to become entangled, reflecting on the post-colonial discourse of the global south in particular the writings of Édouard Glissant, his concept of relation to *archipelagic thinking*. The model of assemblage in the text, exhibitions and films, is a way to address relation and entanglement, looking at territories and experiences beyond that of the nation state. Through consideration of issues of indigeneity the project will move beyond territories defined by the national entities of Taiwan and Chile to consider them as part of geographies across the Pacific linked through migration, ecology and colonisation. Through the project I have developed what could be understood as a *nomadic* methodology with archipelagic thinking following Glissant and Deleuze that is 'oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real.'⁵

In the opening chapter *1. Fragment* I will explore the methodology and responses to the work and writing of Raúl Ruiz, in particular the notions of the open work and the art of combination. The conceptualisation of the project is informed by Deleuze's notion of rhizome, Glissant's concept of relation and Giorgio Agamben's notion of potentiality as a way to approach the status of the fragment. The project aims to explore the means by which knowledge can be developed through the production of images to open fragments into generating new works and new knowledge.

5 Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Felix, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988. p12.

In the second chapter on theme of *2. Projection* I will explore how these comparative elements provide a reflection on artistic practice in Taiwan and Chile. Seeking to avoid grand national narratives I will instead reflect on the lived and fluid experience of distinct aspects of each place. Through the assembly of the texts, I will draw on a range of sources exploring means to narrate phantom and fragmented histories drawing as much from discourse on ghosts in Chinese literature to Teshome H. Gabriel's notion of the 'ruin'.⁶ Through this I aim to shift this dichotomy of finished / unfinished and think about forms of work aligned to potentiality, a form that is critical of the notion of complete or fixed work. By producing work across distinct contexts, structured by the ruins of Ruiz's film, the research seeks to contribute a new mode of entangled practice.

In the third chapter *3. Cemetery*, I will explore how rhizomic notions of site as place of mediation, cultural entanglement and displacement were developed to produce my new works *Double Ghosts*, *Inner Sage / Outer King* and *A Mountain Inside A Cave*. These works seek a means of 'shattering lived perceptions'⁷ to address occluded, incomplete and fragmented histories. The concept of the open work draws on the theories of Ruiz and the art of combination, and Agamben's discussion on the nature of the apparatus as a 'set of practices, bodies of knowledge, measures and institutions that aim to manage, govern, control, and orient [...] the behaviours, gestures, and thoughts of human beings'.⁸ The concept of the open work enables, as Agamben argues 'the possibility of knowing being as such, by constructing a world'.⁹ In the project I aim to apply this open mode of being as a critical methodology.

In the fourth and final chapter, *4. Constellation*, I will reflect on my exhibition practice to explore how it sits within a wider assemblage of ideas and histories. Through these iterations I will explore the political and metaphysical legacies of moving image, the strategies and ethics of rehabilitation and cosmic models of historical reflection. By documenting the exhibition iterations of the multipart project *Double Ghosts*, I will explore how my dialogues with cultural histories developed in relation to a broader constellation of work. The iterations operated, following Deleuze's term, as *fabulations*,¹⁰ works for 'the people to come and the new earth'.¹¹ The final chapter will explore the projects' attempts to connect across time and space through a series of disjunctive actions that seek to collapse the intervals and absences at centre of the project. In this

6 Gabriele, Teshome H.. 'Ruin and The Other: Towards a Language Of Memory'. In: Naficy, Hamid and Gabriel, Teshome H. Eds., *Otherness and the media: The Ethnography of the Imagines and the Imaged*, Langhorne, Pennsylvania: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1993. p211-220

7 Deleuze, Gilles, and Guattari. Félix, *What Is Philosophy?* Verso, 1994. p171

8 Agamben, Giorgio. *What Is an Apparatus?: And Other Essays*. Stanford University Press, 2009. p12

9 Ibid. p16

10 'Creative *fabulation* has nothing to do with a memory, however exaggerated, or with a fantasy. In fact, the artist, including the novelist, goes beyond perceptual states and affective transitions of the lived. The artists is a seer, becoming.' Deleuze, Gilles, and Guattari, Félix. *What Is Philosophy?* Verso, 1994. p171

11 'The creation of concepts in itself calls for a future form, for a new earth and people that do not yet exist. Europeanization does not constitute a becoming but merely the history of capitalism, which prevents the becoming of subjected peoples. Art and philosophy converge at this point: the constitution of an earth and a people that are lacking s the correlate of creation. [...] Becoming is always double, and it is this double becoming that constitutes the people to come and the new earth.- Ibid. pp108-109

way I seek to understand how the ghost of Ruiz's film is one of many ghosts entangled with the project with whom I have sought to create a new body of works seeking and from whom I have sought ways of navigating rupture, fragmentation and displacement.

0.2 On the carriers of fictions: Note on assemblage

Central to the project is the development and use of methods of assemblage. This method will be employed in the text itself as I seek to integrate montage strategies to tackle my central questions. As such throughout the text there will be a range of voices and writing styles – these are important to put into practice compositional methods for creating new knowledge rooted in a critical collapsing of different modes of address and different registers of experience. This montage will draw on not only my writing but the writing of others and perform various juxtapositions between different styles as well as different times and places. The voices fall into two key categories – theoretical text and production diary. These texts represent different subjectivities and together operate as ways to manifest the contingent nature of the project and theory of assemblage I am pursuing (see *Author's Note* for details on layout of these entangled texts p.v).

The assembled texts are designed to create an openness about artistic practice, to reflect candidly the material parameters and personal conditions around making work as well as seeking to operate as a critique on totalising constructions of knowledge. The text then seeks to explore its subjects as well as tell the narrative of my practice as it has unfolded over the last four years, taking into account interactions with many works, artists and people as well as my own evolving work and life. As well as texts the montage also draws on a range of images, illustrations and documentation of the project. These have been carefully selected and integrated to create relationships between text and image that can open up new meanings and connections outside of those that I directly narrate.

Since I began the working on this project in March 2016 I have lived for part of the time in London as well as Wellington (New Zealand), Taipei (Taiwan), Marsden (UK), Santiago (Chile), Jatiwangi (Indonesia), New York (USA), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Manila (Philippines), Zagreb (Croatia), Lisbon (Portugal), Stockholm (Sweden), Toronto (Canada), Seoul (South Korea), Gent (Brussels), Rotterdam (Netherlands), Pamplona (Spain) and Kabelvåg (Norway), looked after numerous cats (Maggie, Amerigo, Fish, Barry, Fallulah), been separated from my wife, made four films, shown my work at numerous festivals and exhibitions and participated in one art biennial.

0.3 Thursday 11 April 2019, London

[L]ived experience does not mean sensible qualities, it means "intensification," it requires an "I feel that..." "I feel that" means that something is happening inside me, which I am living intensely, and the intensity is not the same thing as sensible qualities; in fact it's quite different. – Gilles Deleuze¹²

Today I started reading *In Patagonia* by Bruce Chatwin, I brought the book second hand few weeks ago in Stockholm. The bookseller who had a candle burning on his desk made a comment to me in Swedish, when I looked non-plussed, he repeated himself in English, 'It's a terrific book'. Reading it I am reminded of my time to Chile in winter 2017. Chatwin's descriptions feel uncanny, but more so his mode of writing, and mode of traveling feel prophetic but out of time, especially the way his search for traces of his grandmother's cousin Charley Milward is open to detours, asides, accidents and recollections. Organised into 97 short sections, the book's various searches start with the skin on a brontosaurus sent back by Milward, is itself a series of distributed fragments or dispatches. Assembled in parody of *Wonder Voyage* where, as Chatwin explained in a 1977 letter, 'the narrator goes to a far country in search of a strange animal: on his way he lands in strange situations, people or other books tell him strange stories which add up to form a message.'¹³

In chapter 8 and 9 he recalls one such strange story, that of the Kingdom of Araucania and Patagonia established by enigmatic French man Orélie-Antoine de Tounens. It is this elusive history that is expanded and interrogated by Nils Atallah's in his 2017 film *Rey*. Working with fragments Attalah created his own archive of material from which to reimagine the Kingdom and life of Orélie-Antoine de Tounens. Niles was the first person I met in Chile and became crucial part of my time there introducing me to many people, places and even supplying film stock for my shoot. Originally published in 1977, over 40 years ago, many of the descriptions echo experiences from my time in Chile. In one I was immediately transported to meeting with fishermen in Chiloé:

We walked up to the orchard where Dino's father had strung the carcass to an apple tree and his dog was eating the purple bunch of intestines in the grass. He took his knife to the neck and the head came away in his hand. There the carcass swung on the branch, He steadied it and cut off a leg, which he handed to Bill.¹⁴

The registering of movement, memory, time and chance within Chatwin's writings encourages us to think about experience as a composite of different realities, shattering the dichotomy of fiction / non-fiction to understand how texts contain and intermingle many voices and many selves, many pasts, presents and futures. Chatwin's own life and death was threading in-between different modes of being, his death in 1988 was reported largely as result of rare fungal infection rather than his contraction of AIDS in 1986, a fact he 'went to absurd lengths to conceal.'¹⁵ This has led some people to question the veracity of his work. Yet this risks falling into an all too simple relationship between life and creative production, missing the contradictions,

12 Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Félix interview with Vittorio Marchetti and Caroline Larne, 'Capitalism and Schizophrenia.' Translated by Jarred Becker from the Italian. *Tempi Moderni*, No. 12, 1972. In: Guattari, Félix. *Chaosophy: Texts and Interviews 1972-1977*. Semiotext(e), 2008. p62

13 Chatwin, Elizabeth, *Under the Sun: The Letters of Bruce Chatwin*, Random House, 2010, p271

14 Chatwin, Bruce. *In Patagonia*. Summit Books, 1977. p14-15

15 'Books: Was He a Genuine Article?' The Independent, 3 April 1999. <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books-was-he-a-genuine-article-1084808.html>.

denials, betrayals and failures which are fundamental to work. As Maggie Nelson argues in *The Art of Cruelty*, 'it does not help to wish the complexity of our responses away, to punish ourselves for them, to fail to make distinctions between them or to dream of coming back uncorrupted from them.'¹⁶ Representations are violent, she argues, and it's not for artists to patrol the borders or hope to keep everything untarnished, as Joseph Beuys said 'a lifetime is not so long. You cannot wait for a tool without blood on it.'¹⁷

While in London I visited the Whitechapel Gallery to see a show by Sophia Al Maria, marking the culmination of her time as writer in residence. Al Maria presented two video works related to creation myths; one historic originating in the Wayuu tribe of northern Colombia, the second speculative, created in collaboration with artist Victoria Sin¹⁸. Both films draw on the work of Ursula K. Le Guin, in particular her 1986 essay *The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction*. Drawing on anthropological studies countering male theories of evolution, Elizabeth Fisher proposed the Carrier Bag Theory of Human evolution, arguing 'many theorists feel that the earliest cultural interventions must have been a container to hold gathered products'¹⁹ rather than oft-touted tool or weapon, perpetuating the 'killer story.'²⁰

The novel, as Le Guin argues, is a fundamentally unheroic kind of story, yet it has frequently been overtaken by heroes who as part of their 'imperial nature' have subjected storytelling to linear narrative models based on the arrow or the spear – from here to there – and centrally concerned with conflict. To counter this conflict model Le Guin argues a more fitting shape for the novel, rather than a spear, would be that of a sack or bag. 'A book holds words, Words hold things. They bear meanings. A novel is a medicine bundle holding things in a particular, powerful relation to one another and to us.'²¹ (This reminds me of Raúl Ruiz and his argument against central conflict theory). What I want to draw on is how this approach, be it to a novel, or a film, or an art work, or an exhibition, can be both a critical but also relational tool, building on the notion of carrying rather than conflict. Works are containers for meaning, paradox and contradiction attentive to complexity and intensities of lived experience. As Le Guin elaborates:

Science fiction properly conceived, like all serious fiction, however funny, is a way of trying to describe what is in fact going on, what people actually do and feel, how people relate to everything else in this vast sack, this belly of the universe, this womb of things to be and the tomb of things that were.²²

In her 2018 text *We Share the Same Tears* (2018), Sophia Al-Maria follows Le Guin's model stating '[f]or me, this text is a bag. It will be a weeping receptacle, a sort of spittoon for projectile tears, a sling for carrying bad blood. When it is full up I will study this swirl of sadness and the history of heartbreak it tells.'²³ In the face of the heartbreak, her embrace of Le Guin's notion of narrative as a feminist project is to imagine a different, more hopeful future is a means to think about survival and care rather than conflict. I realise this hope is what I need

16 Nelson, Maggie. *The Art of Cruelty: A Reckoning*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2011. p98

17 Ibid. p98

18 *Sophia Al-Maria: BCE*, Whitechapel Gallery, London, 15 January – 28 April 2019, included the video works *Wayuu Creation Myth* (2018) and *BCE* (with Victoria Sin, 2019)

19 Fisher, Elizabeth. *Woman's Creation: Sexual Evolution and the Shaping of Society*. Anchor Press, 1979. p59

20 Le Guin, Ursula K. 'The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction'. In: Le Guin, Ursula K. Ed., *Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places*. New York: Grove Press, 1989. p152

21 Ibid. p153

22 Ibid. p154

23 'Writer in Residence: Sophia Al-Maria – Whitechapel Gallery', *Whitechapel Gallery* (blog), accessed 19 January 2021, <https://www.whitechapelgallery.org/about/blog/we-share-the-same-tears/>.

and vow with my writing to follow these strategies of care, looking after fragments, assembling various voices and lives weaving them together. The carriers of these fictions will be a range of voices and texts by myself and others in various guises – from the diary to the theoretical essay, from correspondence to interviews.

I look over Ruiz's dairy and find the following passage written on April 11 in 1995 following a meeting with his friend Mario Berrios who was terminally ill with cancer at the time. After recounting their meeting, he reflects on the stories that will make up his new film project *Three Lives and Only One Death* and writes:

[O]ne thing is to live the life and another thing is to represent it. The representation is brief and in it converge all the real and possible facts. As soon as one ends another one starts in which the facts of life are recomposed, another representation of a new immortal story.²⁴

Monday 15 April 2019, Chesham

Staying at May and Richard's. Looking after Barry their cat. He never likes to be in the house at the same time as a human (or maybe it's just me). We keep having awkward encounters in the kitchen. Been reading bits and pieces of their library and past copies of London Review of Books. In my hopscotch way I came across a Bertolt Brecht poem, seems to frame the relationship I've been struggling to articulate between different realities inherent in a work, that we can never be outside of the world as we are always a part of it, repeated and echoed.

Your spectator is sitting not only
In your theatre, but also
In the world.²⁵

In his review of the new publication of *The Collected Poems of Bertolt Brecht*, Michael Wood opens with this quote before shifting into Brecht's statement of 'living in dark times,' times marked not by external terrible events but our implication in them, his and by turn our complicity.

But they will not say: the times were dark
But rather: why were their poets silent?

This shifting and implication is figured throughout his poems that take many forms from statements, diary entries, aphorisms and epigrams performing fascinating reversals and echoes such as the following:

In the dark times
Will there be singing?
There will be singing
Of the dark times.

24 Ruiz Diaries, translated by Jaime Grijalba. TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <http://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/Tuesday-April-11th-1995>

25 Brecht, Bertolt, 'The representation of past and present in one,' In. *The Collected Poems of Bertolt Brecht*. Liveright Publishing, 2018, p616

The original poem quoted above is the last part of a page long poem called *The representation of past and present in one* written in 1937, most likely referring to the Copenhagen premiere of *Señora Carrar's Rifles*. The one act play from 1937 was written with Margarete Steffin and relocates John Millington Synge's play *Riders to the Sea* (1904) to the Spanish Civil War. Writing in response to the performance, the poem is as part of a body of theatre poems and can be read alongside his well known poem *On Everyday Theatre*

You artists who perform plays
In great houses under electric suns
Before the hushed crowd, pay a visit some time
To that theatre whose setting is the street.
The everyday, thousandfold, fameless
But vivid, earthy theatre fed by the daily human contact
Which takes place in the street.

Later in the poem Brecht recounts ways that people perform seeking to improve their lives, with a scene of a women demonstrating against her landlord's attempt to evade repairing a burst water pipe:

But you, do not say: that man
Is not an artist. By setting up such a barrier
Between yourselves and the world, you simply
Expel yourselves from the world. If you thought him
No artist he might think you
Not human, and that
Would be a worse reproach.

To be not human is the subject of Le Guin's essay, her attempt to locate herself in an evolutionary history and counter the Freudian notion of civilisation figured her only as lack, '[w]anting to be human too, I sought for evidence that I was; but if that's what it took, to make a weapon and kill with it, then evidently I was either extremely defective as a human being, or not human at all.'²⁶ Brecht's poem *The representation of past and present in one* (c. 1937) explores the barrier and boundary, urging us to remember the human over the artist. This is not a dichotomy but rather an equivalence to understand both actor and performer on street as part of same frame of human.

Brecht's notion of 'one-after-another-ness' seeks to allow the spectator to experience the complexity of the particular time and place at the same time as recognising that 'Now' is always at the intersection of other times and spaces. This complex Now, open and contingent, aware and conscious of its contingency, its created-ness but also its connections to its iterations, echoes and repetitions as well as the parallel Now's taking place elsewhere is the Now of cinema I am most interested in.

With my project of *Double Ghosts*, I attempt to map several of these *presents* to figure them in as part of contingent reality, of pasts and futures realised and not realised that are situated in the world. The work seeks to position itself as carrier of multiple, paradoxical, co-existent times and places. A model of narrative not in conflict with the world but part of it, a carrier for it.

26 Le Guin, Ursula K. 'The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction'. In: Le Guin, Ursula K. Ed., *Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Places*. New York: Grove Press, 1989. p154

Your spectator is sitting not only
In your theatre, but also
In the world.²⁷

The works, ideas and methods I will explore look at these various intersections, assemblages and systems of relation that bring together a range of different *presents*, of modes of imaging, to create and reflect complex realities. The following text will attempt to tease out some of these points of intersection, of co-creation and parallelisms across divergent art practices and notions of art and political history. I am proposing four modes under which the research can be framed. These four modes caption movements across the thesis and act as prisms to reflect on the research and artistic processes. The three modes of image we will move through are *1. Fragment*, *2. Projection*, *3. Cemetery* and *4. Constellation*.

I intend these framing terms to act as carriers for the texts and range of reflections, hypothesis and my practice. The text itself will follow model of carrier, containing various voices, tenses, types of writing. Seeking to follow the research in the method of writing, I approach knowledge as a field of relation rather than field of conflict. These assembled texts will provide various lines of enquiry, various voices, to illuminate an increasing rich constellation.

²⁷ Brecht, Bertolt, 'The representation of past and present in one,' In. *The Collected Poems of Bertolt Brecht*. Liveright Publishing, 2018, p616

1: FRAGMENT

1.1 Tuesday 9 August 2016, Wellington



Illustration 1.1: *Untitled (Eyemo roll #50)*, George Clark, 14-19 August 2014, New Town, Wellington

We returned to Wellington today and move into Bolton Street Cottage. It is winter and the cottage is very cold. Preserved and encased in the park, it's a strange lens on the city, a remnant of the settler period. All around the city has been rebuilt and developed, the cottage is isolated amidst high rises and the motorway that brutally dissects the cemetery just few yards north. Walk south you get to the parliament buildings and waterfront, walk north you get parks and residential streets lining the hills. Despite the cold the light is often brilliant with vivid blue skies; it remind me of Los Angeles.

Joanna Margaret Paul lived near the Bolton Street cemetery in the hilltop neighbourhood of Thorndon. In 1975 she made a film at her home there. Silent and just 4 minutes long, it shows the city as a series of dissected spaces, houses glimpses in the gaps between buildings, reflections in windows, cranes dividing the sky constructing the new town we are now living amidst. A few years prior to this film Margaret Paul wrote the following untitled poem:

I cannot write a sonnet
 that opens from rooms to measured
 rooms with windows partitioned into
 panes
 but
 only
 another
 poem
 called
 CAVE
 centre
 hollowed from the
 ever earth
 no lights or limestone ornaments
 but space
 hollowed by the shape
 of its
 inhabitant¹

I am drawn to the work of Joanna Margaret Paul, her studies of the spaces and fragments of her life are often oblique and elusive, yet still they open up territory for me. They are the type of home movies I have been looking for; her intimate films are studies of habitation attuned to how spaces carry the impression of their inhabitants and the oddness of the New Zealand landscapes, terraformed and brutalised by 150 years of European colonisation. Ian Wedde argues her work presents 'a sense of order or form that resists foreclosure.'²

While living in the cottage I settle on title for my film programme for a festival in Zagreb built around selected 35mm film rolls I have been shooting with my Eyemo camera since 2011. The programme will place my film fragments in dialogue with other artists work. I decide to call it '*Films in place of places*.' This will be the first showing of material I have shot over the last decade in all the places I have lived – Los Angeles, Mexico City, Bangkok, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Philippines and New Zealand. I find a quote to accompany the programme from Joanna Margaret Paul:

When my work is all laid out together the jigsaw puzzle of my life will show itself, I think... It's oblique, but it's all there.³

1 Paul, Joanna Margaret, 'Untitled poem', In. Hall, Bernadette, Ed., *Like Love: Joanna Margaret Paul*, Victoria University Press, Wellington, 2006. p34

2 Wedde, Ian, *Wanganui Works: Resisting Foreclosure*, Sarjeant Gallery, Wanganui, 1989, n.p. Republished in Wedde, Ian, *How to be Nowhere, Essays and Texts 1971-1994*, Victoria University Press, Wellington, 1995.

3 Trevelyan, Jill and Treadwell, Sarah, *Joanna Margaret Paul: Drawing*, Auckland University Press and Mahara Gallery, Auckland, 2006

1.2 Animist ecologies

Today, it seems interesting to me to go back to what I would call an animist conception of subjectivity, if need be through neurotic phenomena, religious rituals, or aesthetic phenomena. How does subjectivity locate on the side of the subject and on the side of the object? How can it simultaneously singularize an individual, a group of individuals, and also be assembled to space, architecture and all other cosmic assemblages? - Félix Guattari⁴

Félix Guattari's question is a guide for this chapter that attempts to look at the foundations of my project and approach to concept of assemblage. Assemblage here is understood as an ecological model, a gathering together of human and nonhuman actors understood through an animist framework of relationality.⁵ The operative use of ecology draws on Guattari's usage, as a term not to think of nature separate from man, but a term that 'questions the whole of subjectivity and capitalistic power formations, whose sweeping progress cannot be guaranteed to continue as it has for the last decade.'⁶ This proposition changes the notion of objects and their projected material value. This is an ecology following the collapse of the ontological tradition separating mind from matter and nature from society. In his text *Three Ecologies* he outlines social, mental and environmental ecologies not as distinct territories but rather as lenses, as sites of intensity inviting 'new productive assemblages.'⁷ Ecology is a means to understand both historic relationships as well as to build new assemblages.

The shift to an animist concept of subjectivity follows work on the notion of assemblage as part of the rethinking of ontology, looking at models of relation that are rhizomic, entangled and networked. This concept of ecology shares an understanding with the work of Bruno Latour, and actor-network theory, in rethinking networks of relation, to use his term, *propositions*. This conceptual shift allows us to consider the position and relation of a wide range of actors whose contacts are articulated and deepened as part of rhizomic transdisciplinary assemblages, created as new and expanding relationships are articulated. 'Propositions do

4 Guattari, Félix, 'Assemblages: Félix Guattari and Machinic Animism – Journal #36 July 2012 – e-Flux'. Accessed 18 April 2019. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/36/61259/assemblages-felix-guattari-and-machinic-animism/>.

5 The departure point for concept of animism it is the re-evaluation of the term in field of contemporary art and theory as means to address concepts of relationality between human and nonhuman as I will discuss later with reference to Guattari, Deleuze and Latour. For a succinct reframing see Anselm Franke's writing on the exhibition project *Animism* (2010-14) in which he proposes '[a] de-colonized understanding of animism does not present itself as a question of belief or of the spiritual, nor as a psychological borderline condition and matter of 'projection', but rather as a question of 'relationality' and non-objectivist materialism. While objectivist 'knowledge' is not part of a *relation*, animism accounts for knowledge as a relation that shapes both the knower and the known. Animism can be seen as the anti-thesis to a modern stance that distilled nature into its objectified material properties alone, uncontaminated by symbolic meanings or social relations. However, a de-colonized notion of animism also resists the exclusion of things, of 'nonhuman' agents, from that realm of social relationality, which is symptomatic of postmodernism.' - Franke, Anselm. 'Animism – Announcements – e-Flux'. Accessed 14 May 2020. <https://www.e-flux.com/announcements/36883/animism/>.

6 Guattari, Félix. *The Three Ecologies*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2005. p52

7 Ibid, p49

not have the fixed boundaries of objects' as Latour argues, instead they 'are surprising events in the histories of other entities. The more articulation there is, the better.'⁸

Following animistic concepts I want to draw on an expanded notion of the *actors* that constitute such an assemblage, and outline in this chapter my project's aims of working with de-centred, plural and polyphonic subjectivities across time and space. The re-examination of the notion of animism in the field of visual art, exhibition making, art and cinema history, follows the work of Deleuze and Guattari in expanding ideas of subjectivity to broader understandings of the relationship among things.

When discussing his own authorship and that of Félix Guattari, Deleuze told his Japanese translator Kuniichi Uno: 'What is enunciated does not refer to a subject. There is no enunciating subject, only assemblages. This means that, in any assemblage, there are "processes of subjectification" which will assign various subjects, some as images and others as signs.'⁹ The multiplicity of subjectivities and notions of authorship opens up ways of thinking which will be developed throughout the thesis drawing on concepts from Édouard Glissant's ideas of relation to Bruno Latour's notion of circulating reference. The project's subjectivities are located on a line between Chile and Taiwan, regarded as geographical terrains but also as their own assemblages; fields of knowledge, experience, history and culture that challenge European notions of subjectivity. By locating itself on the line between these fields, the project seeks to establish new assemblages that stands in critical relationship to European conceptions of the world and entrenched power relations. As Anselm Franke has argued, the notion of animism poses a challenge to Western epistemologies leading to various *defense-reactions*, in particular he gives the example of Freud's notion of the *uncanny* 'in which something is either more alive than it should be, or exposed as 'merely' mechanical. In both cases we reassert the 'proper' boundary between self and world.'¹⁰ In the field of plural subjectivities, it is exactly this 'proper' boundary that we seek to rethink.

Central to the model of assemblage I will develop will be modes of composition or montage drawn from Raúl Ruiz's work and his arguments for an art of combinations. Ruiz's strategies are means of composition but also of multiplication; means to explore co-creation and fracturing of conceptions of assemblage. Ruiz's approach to this will be discussed in this following sections framed by models of historical materialism and legacies of critical and anti-colonial writing. Benedict Anderson described his book *Under Three Flags*, also known as *The Age of Globalization: Anarchists and the Anticolonial Imagination*, as an experiment in history

8 Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*, Harvard University Press, 1999, p143

9 Guattari, Félix. *Chaosophy: Texts and Interviews 1972-1977*. Semiotext(e), 2008. p11

10 Franke, Anselm, 'Animism: Notes on an Exhibition – Journal #36 July 2012 – e-Flux'. Accessed 18 April 2019. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/36/61258/animism-notes-on-an-exhibition/>.

writing taking the form of a 'combinative narrative'¹¹ drawing equally on Einsteinian montage and tradition of *roman-feuilleton* to 'map the gravitational force of anarchism [...] on opposite sides of the planet.'¹² The book follows his earlier work creating links between Europe and the Americas with Cuba, China and Japan by following the work of two Filipinos; the political novelist José Rizal and the pioneering folklorist Isabelo de los Reyes. The story is told with its conclusion just beyond the horizon. Decentered narrative as outlined by Anderson are crucial inspiration for my own assemblages drawing connections between Taiwan and Chile. The thesis will follow such combinative trajectory, investigating ways to make absence visible, map the movement and relation of the constituting elements and the revelation of new horizons to discern constellations of histories, works and lives.

This chapter will move through various localities and ecologies. The first section will draw on writings of Ruiz and trace his method of *ars combinatoria*, seeing how his work employs and experiments with this. As we delve into his writing and work, it is my proposition to explore this method not only as a means to play with modes of assemblage but as a strategy to address and understand historical rupture and fragmentation, and like Anderson to narrate other lines of decentred geopolitical thought. To explore this fragmentation I will also seek to understand how this relates to broader image regimes and understand fragmentation not as a marker of loss and a funerary procession, but as a structure of potential following Giorgio Agamben. Here I will also begin introducing elements from Ruiz's unfinished film and unpack some of its central motifs, in particular the image of the shadow in his work and move from this to argue for an ecological understanding of images. The thesis, as I have outlined in the introduction, will not only seek to explore these methods from a distance but also seek to put them into play by combining various disparate points of reference, styles of writing, and leaps in space and time.

Accompanying me across these leaps are various actors lead by Raúl Ruiz but joined at times by Taiwanese artist Chen Chieh-jen, Chilean collective CADA and writers David Der Wei Wang, Maggie Nelson, Chris Kraus, Édouard Glissant, Bruno Latour, Johanna Margaret Paul, Benedict Anderson and Chuang Tzu. These leaps across geography and history seek to find new constellations of meaning. The chapter concludes with a leap into the past to reflect on photographers of Green Island, the former home of Taiwan's notorious political prison. This shift attempts to open up what is at stake in my method of assemblage as a means to figure historical rupture and open notions of how and for whom images exist as actors in the world.

11 Anderson, Benedict, *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*. Verso, 2005. p5

12 Ibid, p2

1.3 Method in fragments

Poems are not made out of words. They're made out of emotional absences, rips and tears. That's the incomplete true fabric of the text. - Eileen Myles¹³

From Joanna Margaret Paul's jigsaw puzzle to Ursula Le Guin's carrier bag of fiction, I am drawn to works that provide new connections between desperate sources, assembled despite, or perhaps because of their absences. A way into this field of combinations is provided by the films and writings of Raúl Ruiz. His work stands for a mode of creation built of fragments rather than totalities, to do this he draws from the tradition of *ars combinatoria*. By paying attention to the fragment as a mode of assemblage, he shifts the dominant logic for how a work can be made and can be viewed. The process of working with and toward the fragment will be explored as a method to unpack some of my key concerns and ways of working drawing on Ruiz alongside connected concepts, artistic methodologies, poetic models, metaphysics ruminations and postcolonialist positions attentive to the fragment.

Ghosting these investigations will be reflection and speculation on Ruiz's unfinished film *The Comedy of Shadows*, exploring its phantom state. Following Eileen Myers I will explore how we can encounter the *true fabric* of the work through its 'absences, rips and tears.'¹⁴ This first chapter will explore what then constitutes this phantom work and some of the ground I will cover, preparing the experimental means to approach it. To do this I will need to situate the project and will work through discussions of Ruiz in the context of Chile; the political and social context in which he made his early work and the traces of his exile following the 1973 military coup. Within the text there are illustrated discussions that consider singular works by Ruiz in relation to his aesthetic strategies and the divergent melding of a range of texts, images, histories and other fragments.

Through these reflections I will begin to outline the methodologies and stylistic strategies developed over the course of my own project; how I have drawn on the work of Ruiz, ideas of cultural entanglement, fragment as form and the experience working and living between places, geographies and histories. To talk to fragmentation it is also important to situate myself within this field which I approach as part of subaltern discourse that Deleuze refers to as *nomad thought*. I will return to the question of my situatedness throughout the text, as it is a mutable and evolving process of relation, which as Glissant reminds us, is an ongoing task.

¹³ Myles, Eileen 'Painted Clear, Patined Black', *Evening Will Come*, Issue 29, May 2013, Accessed 22 February 2019. <http://www.thevolta.org/ewc29-emyles-p1.html>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

But before we continue it is important to address my interest in fragment and displacement. Whereas Ruiz and other figures I will address worked in the context of forced displacement or exile leading to his distinctive focus on the fragment, the question stands – what does it mean to draw on these works from more situated positions? Throughout the text I will attempt to identify a body of work and lineage of practice aligned to works marked by rupture and displacement. As Deleuze states ‘the nomad is not necessarily someone who moves around: some journeys take place in the same place, they’re journeys in intensity, and even historically speaking, nomads don’t move around like migrants. On the contrary, nomads are motionless, and the nomadic adventure begins when they seek to stay in the same place by escaping the codes.’¹⁵ It is this desire to *escape the codes* that connects many of the artists and theorists I will address and where I seek to situate my own practice.

Working with fragments is a means of joining a discourse which can be understood as ‘the opposite of a history,’¹⁶ a method of thinking and working in relation to critical projects which understands history as multiple, an ongoing assembly. To illustrate his model of *Nomad Thought*, Deleuze gives the example of Franz Kafka, whom he claims ‘builds a war-machine in German against German.’¹⁷ Through his work Kafka breaks the *codes* of language, and in turn those of the State and History. This, Deleuze argues, is ‘what style as politics means.’¹⁸ My question is; how can such examples of style as politics be approached now and in the field of images? Glissant advances this discourse when he declares that ‘the entire world is becoming an archipelago.’¹⁹ In this vision of the world – plural, shared, networked – we find a more generative model for thought, built not as one of settlers verses nomads, but a new mapping of the world beyond that of logic of State or History. Glissant elaborates this model as *archipelagic thinking*, as follows: ‘With continental thinking, the mind runs with audacity, but we then believe that we see the world as a block, or at large, or at once, as a kind of imposing synthesis, just as we can, by way of general aerial views, see the configurations of landscapes and mountainous areas as they pass by. With archipelagic thinking, we get to know the rocks in the rivers, assuredly the smallest rocks and rivers.’²⁰

15 Deleuze, Gilles. ‘Nomad Thought’ in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*. Semiotext(e), 2004. p259-260

16 Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Félix (1988). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, p23

17 Deleuze, Gilles. ‘Nomad Thought’ in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*. Semiotext(e), 2004. p254

18 Ibid p254. We can understand this example within a history of anti-colonial literature and thought which has used colonial languages to imagine alternative potential futures from the work of multilingual cosmopolitan intellectuals as Jose Rizal in Philippines to writings of Aimé Césaire and Édouard Glissant in the Caribbean among many others. Benedict Anderson discusses such examples at length in his canonical study of postcolonial struggle *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso 1991 and the previously mentioned text *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*. Verso, 2005.

19 Glissant, Édouard, *Traité du tout-monde*. Gallimard, 1997. p 194

20 Glissant, Édouard, *Philosophie de la relation: poésie en étendue*, Paris, Gallimard, 2009, p. 45. Translation by TRANS

1.4 Ruiz and ars combinatoria

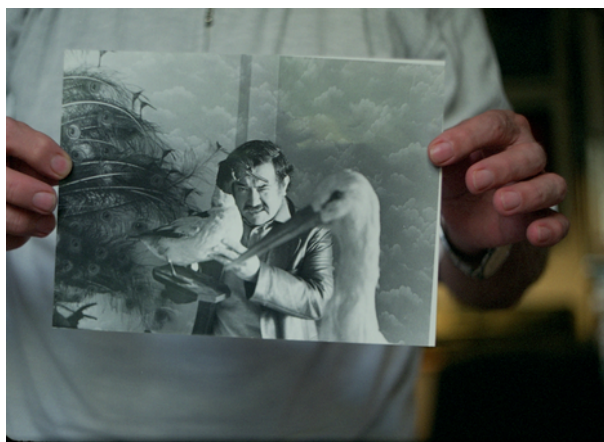


Illustration 1.2: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2018)
35mm frame enlargement. Waldo Rojas holding photo of Raúl Ruiz

Insofar as story structure is concerned I should like propose an open structure based on *ars combinatori*. A system of multiple stories, overlapping according to certain established rules. This process is capable of generating new stories. - Raúl Ruiz²¹

Raúl Ernesto Ruiz Pino (aka Raoul Ruiz) was born 26 July 1941 in Puerto Montt in the south of Chile and died in Paris on 19 August 2011. His work spans a range of media and contexts from feature films, documentaries, short films, experimental projects, pedagogical film exercises, installations and a range of writing projects including experimental novels, plays and books of lectures.²² Of growing importance over the course of my research has been Ruiz's own diaries, compiled, transcribed, and edited by poet Bruno Cuneo and first published in 2017 as *Diarios: notas, recuerdos y secuencias de cosas vistas*²³. The two volumes of over 600 pages include the vast majority of Ruiz's diaries. He began them on 21 November 1993 with the following opening entry:

Cafe de la Bastilla. Yesterday I finished writing my first letter in 20 years. Today I start this film diary, the first in 52 years of life. Reasons? None. Something unlocked (*Gallicism*) in my head. Curiosity to see what happens when one goes back in a moment of day and to a calendar (*Milanese verb*) hour by hour.²⁴

21 Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1*. Dis Voir Editions, Paris, 1995. p88

22 Such as: Ruiz, Raúl. *Le livre des disparitions/The Book of Disappearance & The Book of the Traction*, Dis Voir Editions, Paris, 1990; Ruiz, Raúl. *'In Pursuit of Treasure Island'* Dis Voir, Paris, 2008; Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1*. Dis Voir Editions, Paris, 1995.

23 Ruiz, Raúl. *Diario: notas, recuerdos y secuencias de cosas vistas*. Ediciones Universidad Diego Portales, 2017.

24 Ruiz, Raúl. *Ruiz Diaries*, translated by Jaime Grijalba. TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <http://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/>

Began as a self-reflective project, Ruiz's diaries operate as a personal calendar to explore various constellations of his thought. Starting on 27 February 2018 the diaries have been translated day by day into English and shared through email with various Ruiz followers by Chilean writer and film programmer Jaime Grijalba, a task of ground level scholarship which has allowed for a rich parallelism to emerge between my own project and the day to day translations²⁵

One of the most salient features of Ruiz's body of work is his entanglement in various cultural contexts, leading to the production of films in countries ranging from Chile, Mexico, USA, France, Portugal, England, The Netherlands, Taiwan, Austria, Tunisia, Japan and Costa Rica, and in languages from English, French, Mandarin, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Italian and Arabic among others. After an early career in theatre he began filmmaking in the 1960s, completing his first feature film *Tres Tristes Tigres/Three Sad Tigers* in 1969. In 1970 the socialist Unidad Popular alliance led Salvador Allende won Chile's elections and Ruiz became head of the UP film office. This short lived but influential tenure was abruptly halted by Augusto Pinochet's military coup d'état in 1973 that sent Ruiz into exile in Europe. Ruiz maintained various reasons for his relocation seeking to complicate the direct narrative of exile and in process reclaim agency in his displacement. He worked across Europe during the 1970s with projects for Italian and German television,²⁶ but eventually settled in Paris where he established himself as a prolific and flexible filmmaker working with a wide range of contexts and budgets until his death in 2014.

Ruiz produced a series of works reflecting in oblique ways the legacy of the interrupted collective project of Allende's government. Ranging from *La Expropiación/The Expropriation* (1974) largely filmed in Chile but completed in Europe concerning the social reallocation of land, to *El cuerpo repartido y el mundo al revés/The Scattered Body and the World Upside Down/Utopia* (1975), developed in Chile to be filmed in Peru but eventually made in Honduras that followed the search for a fragmented body that leads protagonists to encounter different models of utopia socialism. One of his earliest films in France is the episodic and deadpan *Dialogos de Exilados/Dialogues of Exiles* (1974) produced in Paris depicting fellow Chilean exiles. As Michel Goddard has commented, '[w]hile it would be ludicrous to contest the radical nature of this break, it is worth examining in more detail what exactly its effects were on Ruiz's cinematic practice.'²⁷ Goddard goes on to argue that 'any demarcation between a political or militant Chilean cinema

<https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/sunday-november-21st-1993-hello-everyone>

25 As of 15 January 2021 a total of 594 entries have been translated bringing us up to March 18th, 2000. For the archive of translations see: TinyLetter. Accessed 15 January 2021. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/archive>

26 'Ruiz claims he has just decided to leave Chile, when he received invitation from his friend Peter Lilienthal, to come to Germany to make this film [El cuerpo repartido y el mundo al revés/Utopia/The Scattered Body and the World Upside Down/Utopia, 1975] for ZDF. Ruiz's departure from Chile, therefore took place relatively undramatically, although even if he had not been arrested, there is no way he could have continued his cinematic activities in Chile' - Goddard, Michael. *The Cinema of Raúl Ruiz: Impossible Cartographies*. Columbia University Press, 2013. p32

27 Goddard, Michael. *The Cinema of Raúl Ruiz: Impossible Cartographies*. Columbia University Press, 2013. p9

and an aestheticist European art cinema in Ruiz's work is highly an unstable distinction.²⁸ The completion of these films in the limbo of political exile shifted Ruiz's practice, yet his work has always been heavily intertextual. This can be seen in his loose adaptation of Max Beerbohm's story *Enoch Soames* (1919) for *Nadie Dijo Nada/Nobody Said Anything* (1971) or his adaption of Franz Kafka *In The Penal Colony* (1919) to reflect on politics as a commodity in Latin America in *La Colonia Penal/The Penal Colony* (1970).

Ruiz's work draws on and combines aesthetics and philosophical practices entwined with the material properties and the pragmatics of film production. As he stated in a 1991 interview while in New York shooting *The Golden Boat* (1990):

To find a system of my own, as a commercial director, I started with the American B-movie and *Commedia dell'arte* in Italy, which are equivalent. *Commedia dell'arte* worked in the same way as Shakespeare, Calderon, Lope de Vega, using a mixture of luxury and poverty. It's what I like about the B-movie, an expensive look with no money at all, in the manner of Ford Beebe, who made those Flash Gordon films. Beebe didn't have any idea about what was happening until he was shooting so he wrote the first thing that came to his mind. Without knowing it, he was making the ready made, automatic writing, *objet trouve*, using all the techniques of the Surrealists and of modern painting of the '20s and '30s.²⁹

The search for new systems of creation is a central tenet of Ruiz's practice. As he states, he was 'always trying to make this connection between different ways of producing: film, theatre, installations, and videos.'³⁰ Utilising strategies derived from the history of mathematics and aesthetics, Ruiz proposed various methods for developing films outside of dominant paradigms of authorial expression or conflict based models paralleling Le Guin's argument for the multiple form (carrier bag) over the singular (the spear). A key inspiration for Ruiz's method was the work of the Majorcan writer, philosopher, logician, and mystic Ramon Llull.

In 1305, Ramon Llull published his influential text *Ars Magna*, proposing a means for combining religious and

28 Ibid.

29 'Well, let's say very simply, that money is not everything, as you know. If you are not inside the industry you can have all these people help you, although it is not always that easy. There are things that everybody says sometimes. I can tell what is being said at this moment ... one million dollars is perfect, five million dollars is not enough, ten million dollars is really poor, fifty million dollars is good again, but with some problems! It is not true exactly in terms of the mathematics, but this game exists and there are many parallel games about: \$25,000 with a group of friends is fantastic, \$100,000 is not enough, and etc. it becomes good again at one million.' - Klonarides, Carole Ann, 'Raúl Ruiz by Carole Ann Klonarides' *BOMB Magazine*. Issue 34, 1 Jan 1991. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://bombmagazine.org/articles/Raúl-ruiz/>.

30 Ibid.

philosophical ideas using a system of letters and revolving wheels inspired by techniques and charts used by Arab astrologers. Written while resident on the island of Majorca where Christian, Jewish and Arab cultures intersected, Lull sought to create a system for a universal language which was called Lull's *Art*. Utilising a mathematics of combinations Lull's developed one of the earliest computational models to synthesise all fields of knowledge. As Umberto Eco has commented Lull's '*art* was universal not merely in that it was designed to serve all peoples, but also in that it used letters and figures in a way (allegedly) comprehensible even to illiterates of any language.'³¹

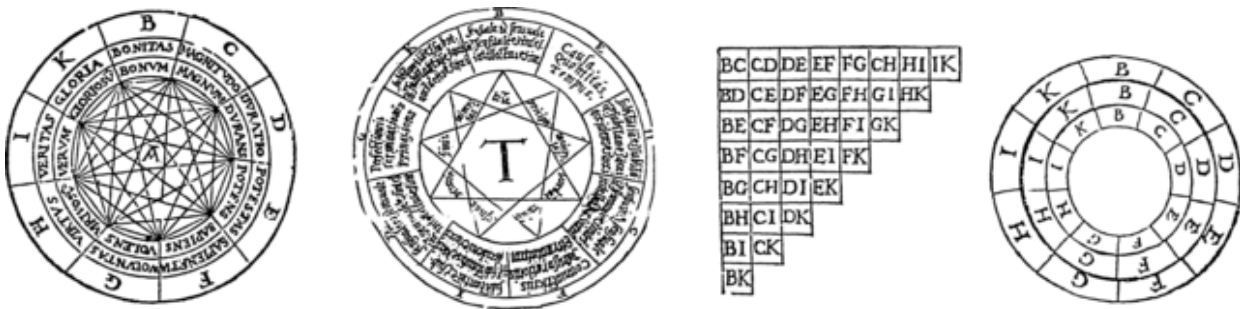


Illustration 1.3: The four algorithms of Ramon Llull *Ars Magna*

Lull's ideas were incredibly influential and inspired figures from René Descartes to the rationalist Gottfried Leibniz³² who gave Lull's idea the name '*ars combinatoria*' and developed and promoted it with his influential 1666 text *Dissertatio de arte combinatoria*/*Dissertation on the Art of Combinations*. The theory would become instrumental in computational theory but also was embraced by the literary avant-garde from Stéphane Mallarmé to Oulipo authors such as Raymond Queneau and Georges Perec, and can be seen in William Burroughs cut-up techniques. Musicians and visual artists ranging from John Cage (influenced principally by the most ancient example of '*ars combinatoria*' *I Ching*) to On Kawara, Mel Bochner, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris and Emmet Williams all drew on combinatory systems in their work. Lull has had a fundamental influence on early systems and game based work parallel, as Italo Calvino argued, to the emergence of cybernetics³³. In surveying these other permutational practices Janet Zweig brings up the central question 'Does the art work reside in the machine or what the machine generates?'³⁴

31 Eco, Umberto *The Search for the Perfect Language*, translated by James Fentress, Blackwell. Oxford, 1995, pp 53-4.

32 'It is not an exaggeration to say that the European search for method, the root of European achievement, began with Ramon Llull' - Yates, Francis A. *Lull & Bruno*. Routledge, 2013. p7

33 'Cybernetics and Ghosts' was originally delivered as a lecture in Turin in 1967 with the subtitle 'notes on narrative as a combinatory process.' in which he posed the following challenge: 'The game can work as a challenge to understand the world or as a dissuasion from understanding it. Literature can work in a critical vein or to confirm things as they are and as we know them to be. The boundary is not always clearly marked, and I would say that on this score the spirit in which one reads is decisive: it is up to the reader to see to it that literature exerts its critical force, and this can occur independently of the author's control.' - Calvino, Italo, *The Uses of Literature*. San Diego, New York, London. Harcourt Brace & Company, 1986. p24

34 Zweig, Janet. 'Ars Combinatoria: Mystical Systems, Procedural Art, and the Computer,' *Art Journal*, issue 3, volume 56 1997, p21.

In developing methodologies for his work Ruiz draws on these early systems for processing knowledge, but as Calvino suggests, these strategies also require a different form of viewing. Ruiz explains one means to apply a combinatory approach to film as follows: 'For instance, ten themes or designs (like designs in a Persian carpet), story lines which are both dramas and vectors. These themes can be considered either as "bridges" or schemas. They may be simple stories, fables, or sequences from daily life, numbered from zero to nine. At first they are exposed in order, then combined in pairs thus number ten is a combination of number zero and number one, number eighty-three is a combination of number eight and number three, etc. This is not just a way of writing, but a way of filming.'³⁵

Ruiz's proposal for a combinatory *way of filming* shows how we can shift from closed models of art and film, to models aligned to strategies of assemblage as means of creation; *archipelagic thinking* in images. These methods of combination are means for materials (that Latour would call *actors*), to be articulated through a pragmatic and materialist method of assemblage. The utilisation of these systems is a means for working with contingent elements and finite resources that can lead to multitude of combinations. The conditions defining these elements are contingent – governed by parameters of film production and available resources (hence important example of B-Movies as limited production model). Film equipment brings parameters that define the elements which can enter into combinations – in analogue film for me this would be available film stock, amount of equipment I carry with me and the constraints of equipment – but also factors such as access and contact with collaborators (be they people or locations). These are all elements within the combinatory system which bring with them their own conditions, allegiances and limits.

Central to this method then are systems by which these resources can be combined to create new alliances and assemblages. 'Such systems are always hermetic: the system must be closed so that it can be exhaustive in its iterative testing of combinatorial possibilities in the production of different meanings.'³⁶

Francesca Hughes reminds us the reduction delivered by the combinatory system 'is not simply a response to archival exigencies but also key to reactivating knowledge.'³⁷

The assemblages I am trying to describe are based on working with defined resources. It's a model of creation aligned not to the invention of objects but to the articulation of connections. This opens a way of thinking with images that, like the law of matter, can neither be created nor destroyed, rather the *images* are *actors* which can be combined in space and time to create new formations. This game, like others, is

35 Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1*. Dis Voi Editions, 1995. p88

36 Hughes, Francesca, 'Truth Is in the Tower – Journal #84 September 2017 – e-Flux'. Accessed 28 May 2019. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/84/149170/truth-is-in-the-tower/>.

37 Ibid.

possible when it hews to material conditions rather than expressive models of unfettered creation. My interest in Ruiz's method is that it provides a way to reconfigure models of creative practice based on material conditions, play and assemblage. We can understand this network of actors through Latour's exploration of the work of microbiologist Louis Pasteur and his work on fermentation. As Latour argues 'the more *Pasteur* works, the more *independent* is the substance on which he works.'³⁸

What we are talking about then are assemblages of the human and the non-human, the visible and the non-visible as co-authors. The ferment Pasteur identified began as a 'barely visible entity and takes on more and more competences and attributes until it ends up as a full-fledged substance! We do not simply want to say that the ferment is constructed and real as all artefacts are, but that it is *more* real *after* being transformed.'³⁹ The combinatory system provides a means not of discovery but transformation by which material can be made more *real*. It is not surprising then that Ruiz uses the same phrase as Latour to describe the active element of a ghost as something which is *barely visible*⁴⁰. The work of Ruiz and Pasteur then can be understood as models not of creation or discovery but models to make the *barely visible* more *real*.

This tension is not lost on Ruiz. Such computational systems are facilitated by abstraction and have routes in attempts to create universal languages – leading to computation as a deadly method as well as a limited terrain of semiotics. What is most interesting for me is the way these systems can be opened to contingent factors in the realms of production. It is this tension between abstraction and material contingency which makes these systems compelling. To understand images as assemblages is to pull back from a semantic to a materialist mode of practice. This shift takes images as complex assemblages *already*, existing not only in visual field but as living objects that exist in relationship to economic and material factors as part of an expansive field. Ruiz hints at this when describing the difference between writing and filming:

These combinations work better if they arise during the shoot. Ideally, in this system, there is no difference between writing a script and writing a film. I will not go into all the possibilities which this system provides, but I ought to highlight the difference between what I am suggesting and cold or saturated combinations like those of Georges Perec. The simple juxtaposition of two *obsessional elements* necessarily generates a brand-new situation.⁴¹

38 Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*, Harvard University Press, 1999, p138

39 Ibid.

40 'The moment we see a ghost it stops being a ghost: a ghost is only a ghost if it is barely visible.' - Bandis, Helen, McDonald, Grant, Martin, Adrian, Eds., *Raúl Ruiz: Images of Passage*. Rouge Press, 2004. pp33-34

41 Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1*. Dis Voir Editions, 1995. p89. [Authors italics] We will return to this in later discussion of Pierre Klossowski and his own notion of *obsessional elements* in later chapters.

As mentioned in relation to Le Guin, Ruiz's method needs to be understood as part of his critique of the limits of the central conflict theory, as he states:

In daily life's subtle tissue of purposeful but inconsequential actions, unconscious decisions, and accidents, I fear that central conflict theory is not much more than what epistemology describes as "a predatory theory": a system of ideas which devours and enslaves any other ideas that might restrain its activity.⁴²

Through Ruiz's methodology we can seek to avoid such 'predatory theories' that restrain ideas and activity. Instead of over-determining frames it is my intention to focus on 'inconsequential actions, unconscious decisions, and accidents'⁴³ as central events within the field of combinations. The imposition of the logic of central conflict theory inhibits aesthetic as well as political and philosophical ways of viewing the world. Similar to the 'pervasive atmosphere' of *capitalist realism*⁴⁴, central conflict theory is pervasive due to what Ruiz terms its 'philosophical fictions', as he describes:

One is Maine de Biran's *realisme volitif*, or willful realism, in which the world is constructed by collisions that affect the subject of knowledge, such that the world is no more than the sum of its collisions – which is like describing one's holidays as a series of car accidents (though I'm sure that if this system were modified along the lines of Leibniz's reforms of Descartes' dynamics, the results would be stunning). The other philosophical fiction implicit in central conflict theory reminds me of Engels' *Dialectic of Nature*, according to which the world, even a peaceful landscape or a dead leaf, is a sort of battlefield. A flower is a battlefield where thesis and antithesis fight, looking for a common synthesis. I would say that both these theories share the same thrust, which one might call "a presumption of hostility." Different kinds of hostility. The principle of constant hostility in film stories results in another difficulty: it makes us take sides. The exercise of this kind of fiction leads often to a kind of ontological vacuum. Secondary objects and events (but why call them secondary?) are ignored. All attention is focused on the combat of the protagonists.⁴⁵

The utilisation of this 'philosophical fiction' is not limited to theory but actively informs practice. Ruiz argues it 'has become a normative system. The products which comply with this norm have not only invaded the world but have also imposed their rules on most of the centres of audiovisual production across the planet.'⁴⁶ The

42 Ibid, p14

43 Ibid, p14

44 Fisher, Mark, *Capitalist Realism: Is there no Alternative?* Zero, Winchester, UK; Washington D.C, 2009. p.16

45 Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1.* Dis Voir Editions, 1995. pp14-15

46 Ibid, p15

methodologies developed by Ruiz and seen within his body of work constitute a rich critique of the normative systems that govern film, art as well as modes of political thought and historical construction. Ruiz's archipelagic practice provides a foundation for a critical combinatory model, which is distributed, multiple and related to a host of parameters providing the means of thinking in, with and through images. Ruiz proposition that 'any gesture or image can be the departure point for a film'⁴⁷ manifests this way of working.

Before we move to explore this further I want to give a concrete example of Ruiz's utilisation of the combinatory system in his work. I will do this looking at his film *Combat d'amour en songe/Love Torn in Dream* (2000), which was shot within the confines of the Quinta da Regaleira garden in Sintra. Here we can find Ruiz's most explicit utilisation of the *ars combinatoria*. One of Llull's diagrams, presented in the opening sequence of the film, sets off a chain of combinations that proliferate throughout. Before any image appears we hear a carefully edited sequence of sounds, a kind of *musique concrete* – fly buzzing, fire crackle, heavy breathing, crystal glass, echoey voice, dripping water, swords drawn, distant screams, clangs in ceramic bowl, computer beeps, birdsong, running water and finally parade music. This sequence of sound motifs announces the first of many elements open to the unfolding series of combinations to follow.⁴⁸

The film begins in black and white where we are introduced to the actors in the Royal town of Sintra in Portugal. The voice-over narration introduces a representative of the Ministry of Culture⁴⁹ who welcomes the assembled cast and crew and the principle backers before stating 'during this time of struggle and despair, in these terrible post-war times when we are all hoping to see Europe reborn, as the Phoenix is reborn from the ashes, only Art, only a work of art can give us hope.'⁵⁰ This grand welcome is at odds with the location and threadbare assembled crew and is further estranged by the references to an unspecified war questioning what time we are amidst. After this a representative of the filmmaker proceeds to explain in French the structure of the film's many stories which I will quote in detail here as it elucidates in most explicit fashion Ruiz's implementation of his *ars combinatoria*:

There are nine stories which come together according to Raymond Llull's techniques for combining art. We can get to a total of 12 stories. There is a combination and this combination is very simple.

There are 9 letters. And each letter is a story.⁵¹

47 Ibid, p112

48 The full sequence of sound motifs is as follows: 1. Fly buzz and fire crackle, 2. Heavy breathing, 3. Sound of crystal glass, 4. Man and woman voice echo, 5. Water drips, 6. Sword drawn and fight, 7. Distant screams, 8. Items dropped in ceramic bowl, 9. Computer beeping, 10. Bird song, 11. Running water, 12. Parade music

49 Played by João Bénard da Costa the renowned director of the Cinemateca Portuguesa from 1991-2009

50 Script for *Combat d'amour en songe/Love Torn in Dream* (France, Portugal, Chile, 2000) written by Raúl Ruiz. English subtitle translation from the original Portuguese.

51 Ibid.

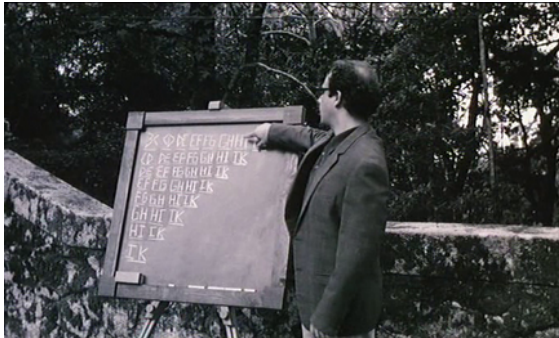


Illustration 1.4: *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still

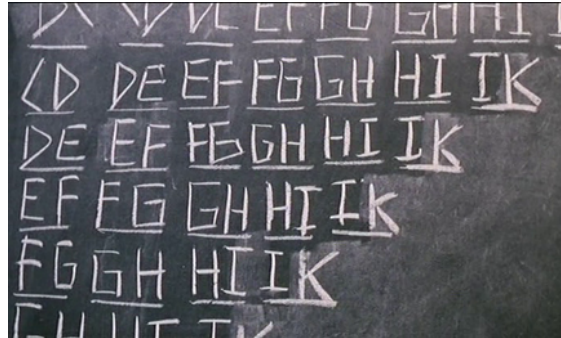


Illustration 1.5: *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still

The representative displays a blackboard (Illustration 1.4 & 1.5) with drawing of Llull's 'Third Figure' (also known as his 'adjacency matrix of absolute and relative combinations' from the *Ars Brevis*), a graph organised in pairs 8 rows across by 8 rows down (as seen in Illustration 1.3). As he introduces the principle stories the film shifts to colour and we see the actors who will play the principle characters for each story. Already at this stage the combinations begin to proliferate as actors appear multiple times in guise of different characters as the stories are introduced.



Illustration 1.6: Character for 1st story, *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still



Illustration 1.7: Characters for 2nd story, *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still

The representative of the director continues:

The first story tells of the angst of a theology student at University of Coimbra, who discovers, on his twentieth birthday, that he has lost his faith in the senses after reading Descartes' first meditation. The second story tells the adventures of a thief who, when doing a robbery, finds a robber mirror which makes everything it reflects disappear.⁵²

⁵² Ibid.



Illustration 1.8: Character for 3rd story, *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still



Illustration 1.9 Character for 4th story, *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still

The third story tells of the emotions and anguish of the owners of a painting that has the power to cure rheumatism, acne and stomach pains but which, in exchange for this, spreads concupiscence all around it. The fourth story tells of the quest for 22 ring and a Maltese cross which, when they are joined together, permit the possessor to live in various worlds at the same time.⁵³

Midway through a woman's voice takes over from the man's to introduce the remaining stories.



Illustration 1.10: One of the twin characters for 5th story, *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still



Illustration 1.11: The other twin character for 5th story, *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still

The fifth story tells of the dilemma of two twin brothers, theologians, who spend all of their time discussing free will and predetermination.⁵⁴

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.



Illustration 1.12 Character for 6th story, *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still



Illustration 1.13: Character for 7th story, *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still

The sixth story tells of the adventures of two pirate ghosts who are searching for a treasure that they themselves had hidden safely two centuries before. The seventh story is a story of anticipation. In this story, a student discovers an Internet site where there is someone who relates in detail, a day before, the ups and downs of daily life.⁵⁵



Illustration 1.14: Character for 8th story, *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still



Illustration 1.15: Character for 9th story, *Combat d'amour en songe* (Raúl Ruiz, 2000) film still

The second last story is a story of love. Two lovers who have never met in real life, meet every night in a dream. In the last story, a very Catholic man discovers he is Jewish on the day his father is kidnapped by three lost souls.⁵⁶

Within the first five minutes Ruiz set's up his 'simple' system, but as can be seen in the combination of actors, sounds and stories, the various elements are already overlapping and the combinations are

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

multiplying exponentially.⁵⁷ As can clearly be seen above the same actors appear in various roles, we see Elsa Zylberstein in three stories, whereas Melvil Poupaud also appears in three but also plays both twins in the fifth story (these roles are not counting the initial appearance of the actors as themselves in the opening scene). As Michael Goddard notes '[w]hat is clear is that Ruiz is making a direct connection between the alchemical properties of Lull's art and the art of cinema, something that is referred to more and more explicitly as the multiple stories that make up the film continue to intersect in ever more complex patterns.'⁵⁸

As the film progresses we move deeper into the rings of Lull's levels of combinations giving way to increasingly vertiginous combinations, shifting the fixed set of parameters and alluding to increasingly metaphysical and mystical variations. The film also integrates a range of other sources from literary and cinematic references, cutting between black and white and colour, from 35mm film to digital video, allusions to myth, classical painting and European and non-European cultures. The tension of this system is between the abstraction of its fixed elements and the multiple natures of each reality which is due to be combined. Reality is always and already multiple. Ruiz's stories bleed and blur into each other, actors reappear in different scenes and as they are combined they begin to cross-pollinate and borders between stories collapse. The lines between life and death are blurred, characters die in one story only to return in another, the future is predicted or predetermined on the internet, objects shift and are exchanged between characters across stories and histories. This combinatory approach has echoes of Deleuze's *rhizome*, each element is 'open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification.'⁵⁹

Ruiz's method can be understood as both aesthetic and political. The conception of cinema central to my project is of a heterogeneous form, a meeting place between different disciplines, cultures, traditions, philosophies and politics. To explore this method I will look at how a film can 'facilitate the coexistence of several films in a single construct of images.'⁶⁰ This is a type of image that, after Brecht that, sites the spectator 'not only in the theatre, but also in the world.'⁶¹ This image is part of a notion of cinema as the intersection of music, narration, painting, architecture, performance, poetry and philosophy. In his foreword to

57 Janet Zweig argues in mathematics there are three types of combinatorial systems 'permutation, combination, and variation. Each begins with a limited number of items, a set of things. In permutations, the positions of these things are shuffled within the whole set, as in an anagram. For combinations, one can take out any number of elements from the set and put them together in a smaller group. Variations are permutations with repetitions allowed: in variations, one can permute to infinity.' - Zweig, Janet. 'Ars Combinatoria: Mystical Systems, Procedural Art, and the Computer,' *Art Journal*, issue 3, volume 56 1997, p20. As should be clear Ruiz is playing with these structures and models to challenge narrative structure rather than pursuing an exact rigid system.

58 Goddard, Michael. *The Cinema of Raúl Ruiz: Impossible Cartographies*. Columbia University Press, 2013. p129

59 Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Félix, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988. p12

60 Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1*. Dis Voir Editions, Paris, 1995. p112

61 Brecht, Bertolt, 'The representation of past and present in one,' In. *The Collected Poems of Bertolt Brecht*. Liveright Publishing, 2018, p616

the second book in his series *Poetics of Cinema*, Ruiz develops the idea of the art of combination calling cinema the 'mother-art'⁶².

In its own way, the activity of cinematography found in the many artistic disciplines' encounters and collisions, an operation of the spirit that in many ways resembled the religious practice that Chinese culture calls *Chang*: the art of manipulating religions. Buddhism via Chang, that is, by means of a game of mediations, interactions and reflections, is able to bring Taoism into its own perspective, and were one to remain perplexed, once could then have recourse to Confucianism. In the art of cinematography, painting – echoing the events of the world – reinvents theatre; the spirit of dance inspires and encourages new forms of expression, using three thousand or so facial expressions the human face can create and convey.⁶³

Ruiz collapses divergent texts to develop the combinatory method here, drawing on the encyclopedia *Compendium of the Five Agents* written by the Chinese scholar Chiao Yi in the sixth century A.D. In this compendia the universe is constructed according to a set of rules by which five elements (wood, fire, earth, metal and water) can be combined. These elements fold in the real world and the created world, collapsing the separation between reality and its representation, showing that 'the world is nothing more than an image of the world.'⁶⁴.

Ruiz illustrates this collapse with examples drawn from Chinese literature; in one an artist paints a waterfall so realistic that it disturbs the commissioner's sleep or in another a painter dooms a horse to a life of pain by making an error in the original painting from which the animal was conjured. The telescoping of the world and its representations is one way in which the combinatory systems collapse the gap between art and life.

The act of filming at this intersection I am trying to identify can be approached through example of the seemingly direct work of American 16mm filmmakers such as Chick Strand and Peter Hutton. The act of filming is the instance of encounter between the parameters of their camera and the observed world. Both filmmakers travelled extensively but frugally, approaching place as a field of combinations. Their work is conditioned by available material and resources and based on contact between these materials and environments they encounter, a combination allowing new images to emerge. Their models are based on the elective restriction of equipment and available resources, models in their way of minor cinema, built from

62 A usage that for a baker like me echoes that of the mother-dough, the natural yeast developed and nurtured from water and flour used by bakers before Pasteur's intervention and the production of industrial ferments in form of yeast.

63 Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 2*. Éditions Dis Voir, Paris, 2007. p9

64 Ibid, p34

what is available or can be gleaned rather than what can be fabricated. As Peter Hutton has argued, 'cinema tends to be this additive thing, it gets more complicated technologically.'⁶⁵ His work follows a method of reducing the parameters to be more open to new possible combinations. As he continues, 'I wanted to do it alone, keep it personal and private. Almost like making sketchbooks. The more I kept it simple the more I could work... It's not about the pyrotechnics, it's about something else – being inventive with limitations.'⁶⁶

The systems I have outlined above and utilised by filmmakers such as Ruiz as well as minor cinema practitioners such as Hutton and Strand, are distinct ways of working against prevailing conditions in the expansive field of moving images.

Finally, following these combinations, I want to emphasis the material parameters of the practice of cinema as they are central to aligning the project to a politics of the act of filming. A way to approach the 'contact with the real'⁶⁷ articulated by Deleuze and Guattari. I will approach this through conceptual and materialist practice attuned to economic and practical parameters of media and equipment. Attending to these conditions will be one way to approach and make clear the logic of production that underpins work outside of commercial production models. A logic related to a deeper reflection on other ways of living and working. Contingency, and in particular, relation become central elements, as Ruiz reflected 'money is not everything, as you know. If you are not in the industry you can have all these people help you.'⁶⁸ As with the expanded the notion of assemblage, this model of filmmaking recruits all manner of support from a wide range of human and nonhuman actors, each given autonomy and freedom as co-authors to help articulate the expanding fields of connection. The question I seek to explore in the following section then is how to orientate the methods and parameters of filming to the conceptual concerns of the project.

65 Aldredge, Michelle, 'Filmmaker Peter Hutton: It's Not About the Pyrotechnics, It's About Limitations', Gwarlingo, 6 April 2012 <http://www.gwarlingo.com/2012/filmmaker-peter-hutton/>

66 Ibid.

67 Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Felix, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988. p12.

68 Klonarides, Carole Ann, 'Raúl Ruiz by Carole Ann Klonarides' *BOMB Magazine*. Issue 34, 1 Jan 1991. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://bombmagazine.org/articles/Raúl-ruiz/>.

1.5 Working with the unfinished: The Comedy of Shadows

Let's go back to the idea of dream and awakening. Imagine the moment of the film at the confluence of all the hypnotic distractions: the point where we spectators begin to fall asleep, really or metaphorically; the point where we begin to lose the thread of the story, and yet do not feel ready to leave the room for disinterest, quite to the contrary. It is at this point that we can finally say that we are in the film. - Raúl Ruiz⁶⁹

The initial departure point for this project is a phantom film by Raúl Ruiz, a prompt to ask what constitutes a film. For Ruiz, as we've seen, the idea of a film is built up of fragments suggesting multiple potential films. Each fragment suggests another film in an expanding archipelago. Following this model the issue is not how to sever these potential films but how to inhabit them and understand their relation as part of an assemblage. To assemble these fragments I will draw on montage strategies and the unfolding structure of *roman-feuilleton* to address the episodes in an ongoing narrative of relation. As Glissant reminds us: 'Relation is movement.'⁷⁰ To begin I will set out here the initial materials. As we'll see, the notion of the complete, absolute or whole work is anathema to a practice that embraces the confluence of distractions and potential films which exist and are entangled within each element. As such the 'incompleteness' of *The Comedy of Shadows/La comédie des ombres* does not detract from our ability to enter the film; as we'll see the film itself is also that which haunts the fragments, tales and myths around its creation. Here we will begin to encounter some of these ghosts and explore ways in which they can be articulated, inhabited, and built upon.

The earliest published account of the *The Comedy of Shadows* in English is from an annotated biography from 1997 in which Raúl Ruiz briefly described the film as follows:

It's in Mandarin, made in a cemetery, based on a story by Taoist philosopher Chuang Tzu, the title translates as *Wandering on the Way*. A filmmaker has to make a film about a sculpture but really wants to make Pirandello's Six Characters in search of an author. He has a sneezing fit in his car, crashes and dies. The dead filmmaker is still thinking about the film he didn't make. And then other dead people arrive, who are looking for someone to make a film about them.⁷¹

Reflections on the nature of images and reality are central components of Ruiz's theoretical work and they are fundamental to this uncompleted project which was inspired by the writings of Chinese philosopher

69 Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1*. Dis Voir Editions, Paris, 1995. p119

70 Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997, p171

71 Smith, Gavin & McElhatten, Mark, Eds., 'Ruiz on Ruiz: a filmography', *Film Comment*, 33:1 Jan/Feb 1997, p22

Chuang Tzu/Zhuang Zhou/莊周 (c. 369 – c. 286 B.C.). Chuang Tzu, reputed to have lived during the 4th Century BC during the Warring States period, is one of the founders of Taoism together with Laozi/老子. The *Zhangzi/Chuang Tzu/莊子* text for which he is famous, is attributed to him but thought to have been written by various authors (prefiguring notions of multiple authorial voice inherent in *ars combinatoria* and *assemblage*). The text features stories, fables, allegories and anecdotes related to the life of Chuang Tzu. The use of allegory and paradox in these stories has long fascinated Ruiz and he explicitly drew on the text and its rhetorical logic for his screen play for *The Comedy of Shadows*.

The script of *The Comedy of Shadows* was translated into English from French by Adrian Martin and published as an extract in *Raúl Ruiz: Images of Passage*⁷² to accompany the retrospective of Ruiz's work at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2004. During the retrospective I met and interviewed Ruiz about his work but not about this unfinished project.⁷³ The script fragments outline the principle characters in the film, six in total, who we are told meet in a cemetery. The characters are listed simply as follows:

1. A Young Man
2. A Young Woman
3. An Old Man
4. To, A Man in his Forties
5. Another Young Woman
6. Ki, The Film Director

An essential detail of the characters is that they 'are all dead.'⁷⁴ The script fragments set out the basic scenario of the film in which the characters come to the realisation firstly that they are dead and secondly that they have the opportunity to make a film together. When discussing what type of film they should make, one character proposes 'a film from beyond the grave must teach us to die well.'⁷⁵

From the characters' discussions it becomes apparent they have different ideas of what constitutes the present. In the script it is clear that they died at different periods as one says: 'At the time of my death there

72 Bandis, Helen, McDonald, Grant, Martin, Adrian, Eds., *Raúl Ruiz: Images of Passage*. Rouge Press, 2004. pp. 75-85. While researching the project I got access to the complete original French language script written by Ruiz in 1995. Phoebe Weston-Evans provided additional translation in 2018 to complete and update the translation originally done by Adrian Martin (unpublished). In addition to this there is a Chinese language script translated from the French by 陳傳興/Chen Chuan-xing which was provided to me by the producer Cheung Chin.

73 Clark, George. 'Raúl Ruiz: Hypothesis and Enigma'. *Vertigo* 2, no. 7, Autumn-Winter, 2004

74 Bandis, Helen, McDonald, Grant, Martin, Adrian, Eds., *Raúl Ruiz: Images of Passage*. Rouge Press, 2004. p75

75 References to the script will be to the complete but unpublished translation. Ruiz, Raúl. *The Comedy of Shadows*, translated by Adrian Martin (2004) with additional translation by Phoebe Weston-Evans (2018), unpublished, p8

was no cinema.⁷⁶ The characters hold different ideas about the world across the river from the cemetery, the land of the living which they were exiled. Here is a further discussion:

CHARACTER 1 (A YOUNG MAN): Are you the film director?
 KI: Yes, I am.
 CHARACTER 2 (A YOUNG WOMAN): What kind of films do you make?
 KI: That's difficult to say.
 CHARACTER 1: Action films?
 KI: No, I don't believe that action is any good.
 CHARACTER 2: Romantic films?
 KI: In a certain way.
 CHARACTER 3: But they do deal with the problems of our time.
 KI: Which time?
 CHARACTER 3: Our time! We live in troubled times. There's a war on.
 CHARACTER 2: You're talking about your time. Not mine. Our times don't meet.⁷⁷

The layerings of various presents in the script prompts us to ask what is the time of the afterlife. And also what is the time of cinema... and maybe it suggests they are one and the same. It appears that the afterlife in Ruiz's film is a place outside of time, where people from different epochs exist in parallel to each other without ageing. His vision of the afterlife is akin to cinema itself. The sensations expressed by the characters who question the where but also the when of this place suggest the experience of an exile, someone who is out of space and time. On his first return to Chile in 1983, ten years after the military coup, Ruiz observed the following:

I returned for the first time to Chile, and I found a country which had 'relapsed' to a period far earlier than when I had left ten years before: a Chile of the 30s, with street vendors that no longer existed by the time I went away.⁷⁸

Chile from the perspective of an exile, remained for Ruiz 'a country of melancholy, like a prenatal memory.'⁷⁹ In the following script fragment it also becomes apparent that within the cemetery the characters have a

⁷⁶ Ibid, p6

⁷⁷ Ibid, p7

⁷⁸ Ruiz, Raoul, 'Mes dates clés,' par Raoul Ruiz, Libération, No.6860. 4 June 2003, p.4

⁷⁹ Ibid, p.4

different experiences of the passing of time, opening up reflections on the time or times of cinema as a limbo state:

NARRATOR: The next day, they started filming.

A VOICE: Hold on! There's no tomorrow in the kingdom of shadows.

NARRATOR: You're wrong. In territories of wind and water, there are only tomorrows. Everything that we have accomplished during our years here becomes the future in a veritable world of illusions. I could say that everything is only an electric shadow

A VOICE: What good is it to fabricate these electric shadows called films, in a world where all skin is transparent?

NARRATOR: To give floating creatures the illusion of a past which is only a future, and the hope of a future which is only a fait accompli.⁸⁰

The practicalities of film production become elements within the script as the characters have to negotiate the material and logistical problems of producing a film or *electric shadows* (a direct translation of the Chinese characters for cinema 電影) in the afterlife. When looking for a laboratory to develop the film, Ki the director is told by Character 4 'There's no lab, master. Here the wind serves as a developer along with the water in the stream.'⁸¹ The film is developed in the air and in the stream (literally by Feng Shui/風水, Wind and Water) but it loses its sound and becomes silent. The director states that it won't be a problem as they can post-synch the sound, but one character exclaims: 'I'm not so sure. I have already forgotten my lines.'⁸² These contingencies continue to affect the film in progress as the characters struggle to capture their reality. Characters critique their performances, are surprised as the film changes and also question the very attempt to capture reality: 'Does a tree resemble another tree? Does a tree resemble even itself a few seconds later?'⁸³ When they start to project the film they realise that it contains scenes they never shot, the film begins to impose itself on their memory and lives, working on them like a displaced feedback mechanism between what they thought they were and what the film presents them to be.⁸⁴

80 Ruiz, Raúl. *The Comedy of Shadows*, translated by Adrian Martin (2004) with additional translation by Phoebe Weston-Evans (2018), unpublished, p9

81 Ibid, p12

82 Ibid, p13

83 Ibid, p12

84 This is a motif which occurs in other works of Ruiz, where the film's reality threatens that of the characters caught within it, this is central to many of his works in the 1980s such as his adaptation of Calderon *Life is a Dream* (1986) or *The Brown Owl* (1987) but also present in his early film *The Penal Colony* (1970) among other works.

The elements exposed by these fragments seem to prefigure the film's own status as a phantom work plagued by production problems. The fiction has bled into the film's own production history. Further fragments of cultural and biographical histories inform the way of reading the known components of the unfinished film – from Ruiz, to the local cast and crew to the philosophy of Chuang Tzu. These fragments constitute a series of islands. It is my intention to follow Glissant's conception and approach them as an archipelago connected through movements that collapse the hiatus between art and life.

In the introduction to his 1964 English translation of *Chuang Tzu*, Burton Watson explores its position within Chinese thought and the problems surrounding understanding its author in the light of scarce biographical details. When speaking of Chuang Tzu, Watson states: 'I am referring not to a specific individual known to us through history, but to a mind or group of minds, revealed to us in a text called *Chuang Tzu*.'⁸⁵ Known to be a native of a place called Meng who once served as 'an official in the lacquer garden' and had personal name of Chou according to the brief note in *Shih Chi/史記/Records of the Historian*⁸⁶. Watson makes the hypothesis drawing on these scarce biographical fragments, that Chuang Tzu may have been a native of the state of Sung in Eastern Honan. A minor state, the Sung nevertheless managed to survive the Chou dynasty until 286 b.c. before being overthrown by its neighbours. As Watson continues:

[I]t is natural to suppose that not only the ruling house, but many of the citizens of Sung as well, were descended from the Shang people, and that they preserved to some extent the rites, customs and ways of thought that had been characteristic of the Shang culture. [...] All the facts of Sung life – the preservation of the legends and religious beliefs of the Shang people, the political and social oppression, the despair born of weakness and strife – may go far to elucidate the background from which Chuang Tzu's thought sprang, and to explain why, in its skepticism and mystical detachment, it differs so radically from Confucianism.⁸⁷

Watson's positioning of Chuang Tzu as a philosopher of exile and displacement further informs his argument that the central theme of his writings, and in turn that of Taoism/道家, is the concept of freedom. Distinct from the philosophies put forward by Confucianism/儒家, Moism/墨家, and Legalism/法家 each based on actions designed to reform the individual, society and the world, Chuang Tzu's text are mystical in nature and 'grounded upon a wholly different type of thinking.'⁸⁸ Watson argues that Chuang Tzu's answer to the question of how man is to live in a world dominated by suffering and chaos is simple; 'free yourself from the

85 Watson, Burton. *Chuang Tzu: Basic Writings*, Columbia University Press, 1964, p3

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid, p2

88 Ibid, p3

world.⁸⁹ In describing the strategies utilised in Chuang Tzu to 'awaken the reader to the essential meaninglessness of conventional values,⁹⁰ he illuminates many elements that are present in Ruiz's cinema and the rhetorical devices they both employ.

As Watson elaborates:

One device he uses to great effect is the pointed or paradoxical anecdote, the *non sequitur* or apparently nonsensical remark that jolts the mind into awareness of a truth outside the pale of ordinary logic [...] The other device most common in his writings is the pseudo-logical discussion or debate that starts sounding completely rational and sober, and ends by reducing language into a gibbering inanity.⁹¹

Various examples of these strategies can be found across Ruiz's work and in the script for *The Comedy of Shadows* which draws liberally from *Chuang Tzu*. One example is the arrival of the filmmaker Ki. When the other characters realise he is a director they plead with him to make a film about their lives, yet the director is keen to complete his own film version of Pirandello's self-reflective play *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. Disappointed, the characters protest cry out 'We want to film our story our way!' to which the director responds: 'Dear friends! It comes down to the same thing!'⁹²

One story from Chang Tzu's *Three Dialogues* narrates a roadside meeting between the author and a human skull. He asks the skull a series of questions seeking to understand what led to the man's demise. At midnight that evening Chaung Tzu is visited in his dreams by the skull who addresses him as follows:

"All that you said to me – your glib, commonplace chatter – is just what I should expect from a live man, showing as it does in every phrase a mind hampered by trammels from which the dead are entirely free. Would you like to hear a word or two about the dead?"

"I certainly would," said Chuang Tzu

"Among the dead," said the skull, "none is king, none is subject. There is no division of the seasons: for us the whole world is spring, the whole world is autumn. No monarch on his throne has joy greater than ours."

Chuang Tzu did not believe this. "Suppose," he said, "I could get the Clerk of Destinies to make your frame anew, to clothe your bones once more with flesh and skin, send you back to father

89 Ibid.

90 Ibid, p5

91 Ibid.

92 Bandis, Helen, McDonald, Grant, Martin, Adrian, Eds., *Raúl Ruiz: Images of Passage*. Rouge Press, 2004. p78

and mother, wife and child, friend and home, I do not think you would refuse.”

A deep frown furrowed the skeleton's brow. “How can you imagine,” it asked, “that I would cast away joy greater than that of any king upon his throne, only to go back to the toils of the living world?”⁹³

Throughout Chuang Tzu's writing is a central debate between different notions of the world setting up a dialectic between life and death. Death is rendered in this story as a free state of being. The skull in Chuang Tzu's story describes an afterlife that also brings a change of perception, describing a world free of kings and subjects and without desire for worldly relationships. Freedom in Chuang Tzu's mystical writings is often pivoted on the balance between life and death as a means to explore meaning and meaninglessness. The slippage between these states talks to the absurdity of existence while always maintaining the notion of difference. The limbo world evoked here is that which is inhabited by the characters in *The Comedy of Shadows* (as the director Ki says: ‘I have looked deeply into what is called the past, that lost sorrow. I can only see murkiness’⁹⁴). Yet rather than being free, the characters in the cemetery still haven't overcome their worldly desires and still long to return to the world of the living. The restless dead in here provide a prism of the absurdities and ironies of existence and a vision of the afterlife that is as equally burdened as that of the world of the living.

The issue of fragmentation and the unfinished work is a recurrent element across artists' moving image practice, from traditions of essay film as exemplified by John Akomfrah, Trinh T Minh. Ha and Jean-Pierre Gorin to archeological film projects from to John Torres' *People Power Bombshell: Diary of a Vietnam Rose* (2016) to Valeria Sarmiento's own work to complete various of Ruiz's unfinished films *La telenovela errante/The Wandering Soap Opera* (1990/2017) and *El tango del viudo y su espejo deformante/The Tango of the Widower and its Distorting Mirror* (1967/2020). The importance of Ruiz and the singularity of his practice, I would argue, is the way he has integrated these into a method of working, drawing heavily on literature and other art forms and the particular transnational context of his career and model of production. We can look to other filmmakers from Peter Watkins to Chantal Akerman, Trinh T. Minh Ha to Ulrike Ottinger and contemporary moving image artists from Miko Reverezza to Aurélien Froment as other examples of transnational practice working across distinct terrains. Each combines and blends not only cultural contexts they find themselves in but also modes of production from documentary to fictional travelogue, essay film to home movie.

93 Birch, Cyril, and Keene, Donald. *Anthology of Chinese literature*, Grove Press, New York, 1965. p83

94 Ruiz, Raúl. *Comedy of Shadows* script, English translation by Adrian Martin (2004) and Phoebe Weston-Evans (2018) unpublished, p5

But what is distinct in the case of Ruiz is the means by which he has been able to employ the political context of his displacement as a central method of his production, enabling a defiant and rich body of work arguably liberated by the very condition of his displacement. As he has commented:

In Chile I have an accent, I have the accent of my class, my social class, middle class, with a little bit of peasant accent. And the accent makes you feel like an invisible man [...] in France because my accent comes simply from Spain, or from Chile through Spain and that was for me a form of liberty in some way. There was no presumptions about myself, no social presumptions. But sooner or later you have to accept the situation where you will never be in your home. So to react you have to invent fictions, where in fact you don't have a home, the idea of home doesn't exist.⁹⁵

In looking back at Ruiz's early films made in Chile, we can see he has already been employing many of the strategies and preempting in certain regards the political calamity of the military coup (as seen in *Penal Colony* for example or *Socialist Realism as One of the Fine Arts*). His ability to situate his practice in such an expansive assemblage is rooted in his work to establish an open model of production traversing global north and south discourses, colonised and coloniser positions. In 1985 Ruiz was appointed as the co-director of Maison de la Culture in Le Havre and worked to create new conditions for other filmmakers and artists to produce work, an ambitious plan combining aspects of workshop with B-Movie studio.⁹⁶ His work on production models shows a desire to work in relation to others through articulation of new assemblages. An assemblage does not negate production, but rather sees the recruitment of human and nonhuman actors as fundamental to new types of articulation.

⁹⁵ Interview in documentary 'Exiles: Raoul Ruiz Chilean Film Director' (Dir. Jill Evans, 1988) originally broadcast on BBC 20 May 1988 as part of series of six documentaries artists in exile, other episodes featured Erich Fried, Josef Skvorecky, Miriam Makeba, Edward Said & Abbas Kiarostami

⁹⁶ Christie, Ian, *Raúl Ruiz and the House of Culture*, Sight and Sound; Spring 1987. p56

1.6: Shadow as image



Illustration 1.16: Raúl Ruiz, *Ombres chinoises/Chinese Shadows* (1982) video still

Central to *The Comedy of Shadows* and other works by Ruiz is the idea of the shadow and its special mode of being.⁹⁷ These reflections on the nature of an image will form a central thread I will return to and expand upon throughout the text. I want to start here by looking at shadows, in particular the discourses of shadow image/佛影 which has its origins in Chinese philosophy. Ruiz has drawn on the debates on the nature of reality connected to representations of Buddha and in particular the influential lore of the 'Shadow Cave.' Allegedly located in the region of Nagarahara, the story began circulating in China around 400 c.e during the Northern Wei/魏 Dynasty. As is recounted by various scholars the 'interior wall of the hillside grotto was said to display [Śākyamuni] Buddha's shadow image/佛影 or reflection, visible from a distance and invisible upon closer look.'⁹⁸ As Eugene Wang explains, the *shadow image* in Chinese discourse 'has two inextricably linked properties. It resides in both the physical medium of the painting on the wall and the mind's eye of the beholder. It is both a physical trace and a mental image, visible and invisible.'⁹⁹

Long fascinated by the philosophical discourses on the nature of reality, Ruiz's work has sought to explore the presence of shadows in distinct cultural contexts drawing on Platonic ideas as well as Buddhist and Taoist philosophy. These investigations are paralleled by his explorations of the visible and non-visible and the traces left by things which are no longer present. These themes are addressed in his central work *The*

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98 Eugene Wang, 'The Shadow Image in the Cave Discourse on Icons', In. Swartz, Wendy; Company, Robert; Lu, Yang; Choo, Jessey. *Early Medieval China: A Sourcebook*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2014. p405

99 Variations on this story proliferate with different tales, one of the most predominate is of the monk Bodhidharma who meditated in a cave near Sholin for nine consecutive years which led to the immortalisation of his shadow on the stone wall of the cave. See, Ibid, pp405-428

Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting/L'hypothèse du tableau volé (1978) made in collaboration with philosopher of phantoms and simulacra Pierre Klossowski. One of Ruiz's recurring obsessions is Diego Velázquez's lost painting *The Expulsion of the Moriscos*, that inspired his work with Klossowski and his 1990 exhibition. The painting from 1627 was destroyed by the 1734 fire at the Real Alcázar in Madrid.¹⁰⁰ For Ruiz and Klossowski, art history should be constructed equally from works which are visible as well as those forgotten, lost, destroyed or incomplete. The multiple ways in which images exist across Ruiz's work relate to his combinatory approach to reality. As Christine Buci-Glucksmann has commented, one of the central visual paradox's of Ruiz's cinema is the question of how to show phantoms and in particular 'those phantoms which haunt, as if repressed, the Latin American imaginary?'¹⁰¹ Yet as Ruiz has commented, 'as soon as something becomes visual it ceases to be fantastic. The moment we see a ghost it stops being a ghost: a ghost is only a ghost if it is barely visible.'¹⁰² Buci-Glucksmann proposes the following definition of Ruiz's aesthetic:

This invisible edge, this non-visual, almost unreal aspect of the image where the visible must figure the invisible, immediately connects with this ontology of 'reality's lack of reality' which is close to the Baroque elegy to nothingness, with its redundant, proliferating elaborations.¹⁰³

Similar to Buddha's shadow or a territory yet to be mapped, the paradox of the ghost is that to depict it is also to destroy it. In this tension of representation, where to depict or to map something also means to destroy it, we find 'the Calderonian metaphor where seeing gives death and vice versa.'¹⁰⁴ But as we have seen, thanks to Louis Pasteur by way of Latour, there are other ways to work with the *barely visible*, means to create images without dooming the subject to obliteration. This moves us closer to the ontology at stake in the special being of an image.

His short television work *Ombres chinoises/Chinese Shadows*¹⁰⁵ (1982) runs through a combination of shadow images based on 36 dramatic situations by Georges Polti, the shadows play games of presence and appearance. Such use of shadow play was further elaborated in *Berenice* (1983), freely based on the Racine play, that utilised the range of compositional options explored in *Ombres Chinoises* and inspired by haunted house genre in early Hollywood cinema. *Berenice* is a play of presences and a dialogue between characters both alive and dead separated between time and space. In her study of Chilean cinema in exile, Zuzana M.

¹⁰⁰The exhibition was followed by the publication *The Book of Disappearances/The Book of Transactions*, Dis Voir Éditions Paris, 2005

¹⁰¹Buci-Glucksmann, Christine 1987, 'The Baroque Eye of the Camera' reprinted with permission of Dis Voir Éditions, In Bandis, Helen, McDonald, Grant, Martin, Adrian, Eds., *Raúl Ruiz: Images of Passage*. Rouge Press, 2004. pp33-34

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

¹⁰⁵Produced for the French TV magazine *Juste une Image*, a monthly show which lasted for three years and a featured range of audiovisual experiments. Ruiz was invited by INA to contribute to the April 1982 programme.

Pick has argued that Ruiz's 'most interesting films are those that unveil his own tortured work where he is torn between his cultural origins and the empty cosmopolitanism of forced exile.'¹⁰⁶ She understands this separation as articulated in his play of visible and non-visible, the use of distorting lenses, painted mirrors and other strategies to show an 'entangled world where coherence and order are destroyed in the cacophonous noise of multiple languages.'¹⁰⁷

Often in Ruiz's work we are introduced to characters first by their shadow. His cinema is a cinema of fractured appearances and disappearances that we can understand as a strategy resistant to visualisation. I will give a discrete example of such staging of the barely visible in a sequence towards the end of *Le Toit De La Baleine/On Top Of The Whale* (1981). Ruiz's allegory of displacement was filmed in the outskirts of Rotterdam pretending to be Patagonia. The film follows an anthropologist in search of a lost language who becomes embroiled in a complex dance of translations as I will introduce below.



Illustration 1.17: *Het dak van de Walvis / On Top of the Whale* (Raúl Ruiz, 1981) film still sequence (1) (2) (3)

Before the anthropologist, Luis (played by Jean Badin), enters the study filled with books and plants, we first see his shadow on the back wall (1). As the camera moves from left to right he enters the frame (2) before the camera glides past him to rest on his shadow now on the wall in front (3). Then his wife Eva's shadow enters from the right wearing a similar hat to his (4), her shadow temporarily merges with his shadow (5) at which point a third figure, Narciso, the communist millionaire who financed their trip (played by Fernando Bordeu), enters the frame (6) and says 'He doesn't believe we are happy.'

¹⁰⁶Pick, Zuzana M., 'Chilean cinema: ten years of exile (1973-83), *Jump Cut*, no. 32, April 1987, pp66-70

¹⁰⁷Ibid.



Illustration 1.18: *Het dak van de Walvis / On Top of the Whale* (Raúl Ruiz, 1981) film still sequence (4) (5) (6)

Narciso leaves the frame and Eva's shadow reappears centre frame (7), the camera follows her shadow until she appears against the wall (8) and exits frame right, followed by Luis who appears and exits on the right (9). In this continuous shot that lasts just over one minute, we see a complex choreography of appearances and couplings, between the characters but also between their refracted images and merging shadows.



Illustration 1.19: *Het dak van de Walvis / On Top of the Whale* (Raúl Ruiz, 1981) film still sequence (7) (8) (9)

On Top of the Whale explicitly addresses the colonial project of ethnography and legacy of cultural imperialism. Ruiz employs a range of film tricks to conjure Tierra del Fuego, a region we are told is now ruled by U.N. mandate after a war between Chile and Argentina. In the film a French anthropologist attempts to engage the last surviving members of a tribe of Patagonian Indians in order to retrieve their lost language. Through their interactions he fails to realise that they are not teaching him their language but instead mirroring what they learn from him. Resistance in Ruiz's work often takes the form of absurdity, a failure to acknowledge the expected importance of what is being stated. His 'stubborn shadows' resist often through wilful incomprehension or through self-deprecating humour. This is a strategy Gilbert Adair observed on a visit to the set of *On Top of the Whale*: 'I suspect that the very peculiar tone of Ruiz's later work can be ascribed to this submerged ripple of self-deflation.'¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸Adair, Gilbert, 'The Rubicon and the Rubik Cube: Exile, Paradox and Raúl Ruiz.' *Sight & Sound*, Winter 1981/82. pp40-44.

The opacity of Ruiz's work stems from repetition, and miscommunication, it is not surprising that the majority of his works start at the point of adaptation, drawing on existing texts which are brought into new assemblages and transformed in the process. In the final exchange of the film the anthropologist has finally learnt the only way to speak with the Patagonian Indians is to follow their method; they no longer have a language of their own but rather speak in a combination of other languages. In a combination of English and German, they ask him: 'Now that you speak our language a little bit better and I understand you better what will you do with what I know and what you said? What more than all those others we talked about, all the other men and women we talked about did. Are you going to do something with it?' Their final remark to the anthropologist conflation the words 'With them' and transforms it into 'Wisdom.' In the face of this impossible situation and unable to resolve his own project as his encounter has been mirrored back to him, he responds simply by getting up and leaving.

The film stages such encounters with opacity. Here the anthropologist faces a Babelian language which cannot be resolved, cannot be reduced to one position. Earlier in the film we watch the anthropologist's daughter change her sex while looking into a mirror, a play on Lacan's *mirror stage*, theory becomes reality. The realm entered by the characters is not a space to be conquered but a place of ruins, fragments and resistant shadows to borrow Glissant's phrase. It is a resistant place, an in-between place, it is both Rotterdam and Tierra del Fuego, a place of perseverance and endurance. This rendering of place may explain the subtitle for the 'Een film over overleven/A film about survival'.

We can start to understand then how, in Ruiz's work, concealment or refusal can be strategies of resistance. Often Ruiz's work is characterised as having a wilful desire for obscurity. I think his dramas of appearances should rather be understood as part of a commitment and interest in resistant images. Rather than obscurity we can understand Ruiz's strategies through Édouard Glissant's notion of *opacity*. In his work on difference and creolization Glissant addresses cultural production in the post-colonial Caribbean and broader context in what he referred to as 'the Other America.'¹⁰⁹ Glissant argues that '[b]anging away incessantly at the main ideas will perhaps lead to exposing the space they occupy in us. Repetition of these ideas does not clarify their expression; on the contrary, it perhaps leads to obscurity. We need those stubborn shadows where repetition leads to perpetual concealment, which is our form of resistance.'¹¹⁰

In reflecting on Ruiz's contemporary, the Chilean painter Enrique Zañartu's fractured depiction of Andes

109 '(the other) America' is 'the America of Juarez, Bolivar, Marti. The America of Neruda. But especially of the Indian people. The notion of the Other America is not 'Latin'; one can imagine this term will gradually disappear.' - Glissant, Édouard. *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*. University Press of Virginia, 1992. p260

110 Ibid, p4

mountains, Glissant states that here 'we are forced to recognize what we have been so long *severed from*: the tremendous swirl of dead people through whom the hope of the peoples around us stubbornly endures.'¹¹¹

Such abstraction needs to be understood within this context of hiatus and separation. As Glissant clarifies '[t]he opaque is not the obscure, though it is possible for it to be so and be accepted as such. [The opaque] is that which cannot be reduced.'¹¹² In their singularity Ruiz's films can be understood as seeking images as 'stubborn shadows,' finding ways to image that which can not be visualised or reduced. These opaque images do not negate engagement but rather create new combinations to figure the barely visible, as Glissant argues such images are 'the most perennial guarantee of participation and confluence.'¹¹³

In the following section I will go further into this *Other America* and explore Ruiz's reflection on land and territory and means by this grounded model of imagining I have begun to discuss here.

111 Glissant is discussing the paintings of the Chilean artist Enrique Zanartu (1921-2000). 'Here we are forced to recognize what we have been so long *severed from*: the tremendous swirl of dead people through whom the hope of the peoples around us stubbornly endures. [...] I remember (here in this land with the surging sea all around) the shadows cut into the night, disincarnate and wraithlike forms, the broken blossoms that have always haunted the canvases of Zanartu. Perhaps a future continuously postponed; but a despair unceasingly defied. That is what the present state of this America rekindles in our hearts.' - Ibid, p114

112 Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. p191

113 Ibid.

1.7 Circulating land and territory

Before anything I must clarify that I make my films as a team and that, therefore, I should always speak about it in the plural. Making a film as a team does not mean submitting to the parliamentary system, where the camera position is decided by vote. But it is a fact that I work collaboratively because I take facts from everyday life that the people who work with me know better than I do. In this sense, evidently there is teamwork. There are times, then, that I operate as a mere witness.-

Raúl Ruiz¹¹⁴



Illustration 1.20: *Ahora te vamos a llamar hermano* (Raúl Ruiz, 1971) film still



Illustration 1.21: *Le Expropiación* (Raúl Ruiz, 1974) film still

Shortly after Salvador Allende was democratically elected as the first Socialist president in Latin America on 3 November 1973, Ruiz made the short documentary *Ahora te vamos a llamar hermano* / *Now We Are Going To Call You Brother* (1971). The film documents the reaction to one of Allende's first directives which granted the Mapuche indigenous peoples full citizenship and civil rights.¹¹⁵ The film was shot during the large peasant march in Temuco, south of Chile on 28th March 1971 when the bill was approved. The film pioneered the use of direct sound and is one the first works to feature the Mapuche/Mapudungun language spoken in interviews with the farmers. This indigenous language is contrasted with the political cadences of Allende in his speech.¹¹⁶

The issue of land rights, indigenous culture, language, politics and aesthetics of cartography, come up in different forms across Ruiz's work. In contrast to this early documentary, *Le expropiación* takes a distinct

¹¹⁴ Ruiz, Raúl. *Primer Plano Magazine*, nº4, Spring 1972. Translated by Sarah Jessica Rinland

¹¹⁵ The conceptual artist Francisca Benítez developed project *Oro Dulce*, an installation series exploring Chilean land reform during the Popular Unity period and worked with Ruiz's film as part of his research. <http://href.li/?http://franciscabenitez.org/works/oro-dulce/>

¹¹⁶ We stress how Ruiz's critical portrayal of the encounter between the President and this indigenous population contributes to a questioning and renewal of what was understood as 'the popular' within revolutionary art'. - González, Laura Jordán and Habash, Nicolas Lema. *Raúl Ruiz's Now We're Gonna Call You Brother and the 255 problem of the people's sonic representation*, In Cox, Geoffrey, Ed.. *Soundings: Documentary Film and the Listening Experience*. Huddersfield: Huddersfield University Press, pp255-278

approach to the attempts to create equality among native people, workers and landowners. Shot in 1972 before the coup, the film was completed after the coup in Germany with the surviving fragments Ruiz was able to get out of Chile.¹¹⁷ The film emerged from an encounter with a member of the Agrarian Reform Commission who told Ruiz the following story:

A landlord had decided to give up his lands without hope of getting paid for it, thus leaving 80 hectares of cultivated lands and the house that legally belonged to him. The tenant farmers decided to support their landlord and openly confronted the CORA officials that came to seize the lands, arguing that they were too ignorant to work them properly. He told me also that they lost control over some of them who refused to obey the directives of their groups and the CORA. They took possession of small lots that couldn't be cultivated and paralysed their actions. Around then, the right wing party organized demonstrations and terrorist actions. Meanwhile, Popular Unity focused its activities and defended itself against its enemies, trying to create the image of a peaceful and pluralist country.¹¹⁸

In these early works on issues of land rights and indigenous peoples in the *Other America*, Ruiz began a reflection on place, origin and belonging that is to haunt his subsequent works. These hauntings are often read as allegories of his exile, but crucially they encompass broader memories, dreams and desires for unrealised futures from the Spanish colonisation to the military coup.

Le expropiación follows a land reform agent who realises he went to college with the landowner. Later that night, as Ruiz continues, 'a dance is held in his honour which is attended by the landowner's ancestors, a parade of ghosts who have died in defence of their property: farmers, landlords, priests, soldiers. Just then the land reform agent discovers the skull of one of his dead colleagues from Alessandri's time, when they were trying to enact the agrarian reform of the "maceteros." There, in front of the corpse, in Shakespearean style, the agronomist adopts the same political tactics as President Allende. Like him, he falls back on sophism, using the intrigues invested by the bourgeoisie against the bourgeoisie itself.'¹¹⁹ After the peasants occupy the estate the land agent approaches them, at which point Ruiz tells us '[t]he film turns to realism, to a denunciation: the peasants tell the viewer that the owner has hidden the machines.'¹²⁰

117 The lost footage was signalled by black sequences at the start of *Le Expropiación*, showing the absence rather than masking it.

118 'In 4 days and 4 nights, we shot this film in order to sum up this political moment in a way that was not so far from our doubts and our beliefs.' - Raúl Ruiz, directors statement 'Le Expropiación', Quinzaine des réalisateurs, Cannes, 1974 http://www.quinzaine-realisateur.com/qz_film/la-expropiacion/

119 Ruiz, Raúl, interview with Francesco Bolzoni, english translation published in 'Ruiz Filmography', *Afterimage*, Fall 1981, pp118-119

120 The discussion with the peasant in the film is a real one, an indication of the grievances in the fictional framework of the film. This strategy is similar to that Ruiz deployed in *El Realismo socialista*, a fusing of agitprop, documentary and fiction. Ibid. pp118-119

Like other films of this period, such as *El Realismo socialista*, Ruiz stages contradictions within the revolutionary process, opening the film itself to occupations and inviting farmers or workers to discuss their action, to explore the aims of Popular Unity following the 'self-criticism style'.¹²¹ The film ends with the peasants resisting the expropriation and deciding to kill the agent, inspired by a Chinese postcard Ruiz had seen that showed 'the peasants occupying the streets'.¹²² The reaction to the restitution projects of Popular Unity can be seen as reaction to the entrenched social positions in many former colonised countries: the process of decolonisation and restorative justice can't be solved overnight.

Already here we can see Ruiz's complex reflection on the processes of liberation and de-colonial struggles faced by Popular Unity and the haunting of the present by the past, by the spectres of the bourgeoisie and landed gentry as well as international echoes of other points of resistance and the socialist revolution in China. A figure who would become central to navigating these various spectres would be the film director and editor Valeria Sarmiento. Sarmiento was Ruiz's partner, sharing their life and work together since meeting in Chile in the late 1960s. Throughout their career they worked alongside each other and Sarmiento continues to work with Ruiz, completing various of his unfinished films while continuing to direct herself.

When I met with Valeria Sarmiento, I asked her about the origins of Ruiz's interest in China and she told me 'When he was living in Chile his first travel to China was in a delegation of the socialist party. He was very young, 29, 30 years in the time of the Unidad Popular. This was his first travel to China and he was very impressed and he wrote a lot of scripts'.¹²³ As such Ruiz has a different understanding of China, distinct from that of his contemporaries in France, both from his first hand experience of China as well as his involvement in the socialist government of Chile. As Régis Debray tells us 'all the Columbuses of modernity thought that behind Godard they were discovering China in Paris, when in fact they were landing in California. Their sails were filled by the West wind, but they were steering by the "Little Red Book", which said the opposite, like explorers equipped with Ptolemy's "Geography". Chairman Mao never seemed so infallible to his European disciples as he did at the exact moment in history when, in Europe, the West wind began to prevail over the East wind'.¹²⁴

Here we find Ruiz, the son of a sea captain from land 'discovered' by Columbus, working on the border between different worlds and perspectives. This gap, this rupture in Ruiz's life and career, had a marked

121 Ibid.

122 Ibid.

123 Valeria Sarmiento interview with author, 2 November 2017, Lisbon. Interview conducted in Spanish with English translation by Miguel Ribeiro, unpublished.

124 Debray, Régis. 'A Modest Contribution to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Tenth Anniversary', trans John Howe, *New Left Review*, 115, May – June 1979. pp45-65. Originally published in: Debray, Régis, 'Modeste contribution aux discours et cérémonies officielles du dixième anniversaire', François Maspero, Paris, 1978. pp35-36

impact on his politics and approach to filmmaking. The complex combinations his films experiment with are heightened by the reality of his political exile. Forcefully separated and divorced from his land, Ruiz's body of work since his departure from Chile exist between places, haunted not only by memories and hopes for political change, but with a new haunting, a melancholia and longing for a land he can't return to and whose reality he was already questioning in the 1960s. Growing up fascinated by oceans, tales of seafaring and pirates, Ruiz was acutely aware of the wider world of the Pacific beyond the borders of Chile. The constellation mapped by his displacement is not that of heroic voyage or colonial conquest but that of ghost ship adrift and unable to find a port in which to dock.

With his departure Ruiz was separated from the new context in Chile. In the midst of the military regime, the artist collective CADA began their practice that, in order to navigate the restrictions in the country, created a distinct model of conceptual art. The non-object orientation of conceptual art was increasingly hard to monitor by the regime as there were no films to ban, plays to cancel, paintings or books to censor, but instead a series of distributed actions which didn't look like art allowed the group to practice in this period. Alice Nelson cites the work of CADA as part of a new development in art history in Chile. As members of CADA made clear in a 1982 statement: 'Certain art practices that were in vogue in the urban centres ten years ago, such as body and land art, as well as performance... constitute in our cultural landscape utterly immediate realities, regardless of their status as forms of art.'¹²⁵ These developments were thus distinct to other models of conceptual art which stemmed from art theory and history, instead these forms emerged as a 'direct engagement with the precarious and painful elements of our social context and with the vulnerability of concrete lives.'¹²⁶

Assembled from group of artists, activists, poets and architects, CADA were dedicated to collective actions. CADA stands for Colectivo Acciones de Arte/Art Actions Collective and members included Diamela Eltit, Raúl Zurita, Lotty Rosenfeld, Juan Castillo and Fernando Balcells. Their early project *Para no morir de hambre/Not to Die of Hunger in Art*, was produced by the group in October 1979 and incorporated a range of activities drawing on direct action, video, publications and other forms of distribution. To address the suppression during the military regime and widespread poverty of the time, CADA's project used milk as a metaphor for this unrepresented issue, to critique the Pinochet regime by subversively evoking one of Allende's campaign pledges to give *half litre of milk per child per day*, through distributing one hundred half-litre bags of milk to deprived neighbourhoods in Santiago.¹²⁷

¹²⁵Original statement by CADA members given in 1982 from: Nelson, Alice A. *Political Bodies: Gender, History, and the Struggle for Narrative Power in Recent Chilean Literature*. Bucknell University Press, 2002. p154.

¹²⁶Ibid.

¹²⁷The leftover bags were collected and given to 100 artists and intellectuals to produce works for exhibition in the Centro Imagen gallery along with an acrylic box in which milk was left to decompose during the exhibition. On the box the phrase was written: 'Para



Illustration 1.22: *Inversión de escena*, photographic documentation of action by CADA, Santiago, Chile 1979

These actions were accompanied by a procession of ten milk trucks through Santiago leading to the Museo de Bellas Artes/Museum of Fine Arts, which was covered with large white awning temporarily closing the museum. The action, called *Inversión de escena/Scene Inversion*, blocked the museum entrance. When I look at it I can't help but be reminded of a projection screen, in particular the screenings erected at temple entrances by projectionists in Taiwan that I will discuss in detail in subsequent chapters.

These actions and interventions into the cityscape were means to address the negative and non-visible aspects of society. This imaging of absence through action became a central aspect of CADA's work and came to be seen as a model for how art practice could function under the military regime. The focus on performative actions links these works with the international emergence of conceptual practice, new networks of relation and new models of art echoed in conceptual works across Latin America (such as work by Argentine artist David Lamelas and Brazilian artists connected to Tropicália, who were also displaced and forced to practice in exile) or the emergence of correspondence and mail art in Soviet countries. These understandings of art practice and the expanded and networked notions of audiences, action and site, are all

permanecer hasta que nuestro pueblo acceda a sus consumos básicos de alimentos. Para permanecer como el negativo de un cuerpo carente, invertido y plural' [Translated as: 'To remain here until our people gain access to basic food for consumption. To remain as the negative of the suffering, inverted and plural body.']

elements which would also become crucial to my emerging project *Double Ghosts*.

As CADA stated, these strategies were not developed in dialogue with art history, but with concrete reality. These works and actions have remapped understandings of what can constitute art practice and the importance of distribution and site specificity in art discourse. Work exists not in a vacuum but within networks of relation. Meaning is created not by binary processes of substitution, but through networked and evolving processes of translation. It is this model of networked practice that I am seeking to identify as a distinct model of assemblage; images in relation. It is with this in mind that I will attempt a final leap in this opening chapter to connect with a further network of relations to show how the context of Chile and Taiwan, while distinct, have provided me with a model of thinking with and through images.

Following these reflections on Ruiz's work, moving through his theory of *ars combinatoria*, the fragments of *The Comedy of Shadows*, the position of the shadow image and opacity as strategy, I want to shift the frame of reference and conclude by looking at a distinct moment of political history. To conclude the opening discussion I will take us from Ruiz's world to Taiwan to explore resistant images and the way artists have tackled fragmentation and shadows across generations of struggle to image the political history of the territory. I will look at the life and work of two photographers, Ouyang Wen/歐陽文 and Chen Meng-he/陳孟和.

1.8 A boat shaking in the moonlight: Approaching Taiwan's penal colony

This green island, is like a boat meandering through the moonlight.
 Darling, you are floating in the ocean of my heart.
 Let the melody of my song follow the breeze, blowing through your curtains.
 Let my love go with the flowing water, serenading you.
 The coconut tree's long shadow cannot hide my gentle love.
 The clear bright moonlight brightens my heart.
 This green island night appears so peaceful.
 Darling, why are you still silent?

- *Green Island Serenade*/紫薇-綠島小夜曲, 1954¹²⁸

The artist Ouyang Wen/歐陽文 (1924-2012) was a student of the painter Chen Cheng-bo/陳澄波 (1895-1947) who was shot in Chiayi City, Taiwan during what is known as the February 28 incident. During the popular uprising in 1947 Ouyang joined the local militia resisting the Kuomintang (KMT) administration¹²⁹ that culminated in a stand-off at the airport in Chiayi. When they tried to participate in peace negotiations most of the resistance fighters were arrested and Chen Cheng-po with other leaders was executed in front of the Chiayi Railway Station without trial. Fleeing to Tainan City, Ouyang was eventually arrested in 1950 due to his participation in the anti-KMT resistance sparked by the killing of his former teacher. The 28 year old Ouyang Wen was sentenced to 12 years in penal colony known as Green Island.

Located off the east coast of Taiwan, the small volcanic island Ludao/綠島, known as Green Island, served as a place of exile for political prisoners during the martial law period. The majority of prisoners were held there between 1949-1980 in re-education facilities called the Oasis Village/綠洲山莊 and the New Life Correction Centre/新生訓導處. The Garrison Command, an extra-constitutional institution affiliated to the National Security Council, identified individuals posing a threat to the KMT government, as well as those who could be charged with the Sedition Law, who were sentenced to imprisonment and re-education. Green Island was the most infamous prison in Taiwan where 'the political prisoners were routinely being subjected

128 The 'Green Island Serenade' is a classic Mandarin song composed in 1954 by Zhou Lanping/周藍萍, first performed by Zi Wei/紫薇 and recorded by her in 1958 and again in 1961. The song first became popular in the Philippines and then Taiwan in the early 1960s as it was covered by various artists. The origin of the song is disputed with two people claimed to have written it: Pan Yingjie/潘英傑 and Gao Yutang.

129 The Kuomintang (KMT)/國民黨 were formed in 1919 and was the sole ruling party of the Republic of China from 1928-2000. Founded shortly after the 1911 overthrow of the Qing Dynasty, the party was founded by Song Jiaoren and Sun Yat-sen. After the loss of the Chinese Civil War (1945-1949) to the Communist Party of China, the KMT retreated to Taiwan where it governed as a one party system until 1986 when president Chiang Ching-kuo, son of former KMT leader Chiang Kai-shek, began process of political reform leading to end of martial law in 1987.

to psychological therapies, re-education, and forced composition of confessional letters.¹³⁰ Ouyang's wife, who was left to look after her family, was fired from her job for being married to a *communist thief*.

When the first inmates arrived on Green Island on 17 May 1951, the prison was still under construction and without walls. Slowly the inmates constructed the buildings themselves from stones collected from the coast. Locals were ordered never to interact with prisoners and if they did, they could face charges of colluding with 'communists'. The conditions were harsh on the island for both inmates and officials. Throughout their time there, prisoners had to plant and cultivate their own food.¹³¹

Many of the prisoners were from educated backgrounds. At its height, the prison population reached 2,000, more than two-thirds of the island's whole population. As such the inmates began to contribute to the local infrastructure and communities on the island. They established a temporary clinic to treat prisoners, officials and island residents, staged theatre performances in Swallow Cave on the sea shore and taught at the elementary school. Ahead of a visit by politician Chiang Ching-kuo/蔣經國, Ouyang improvised a way to develop and print photographs in order to give Ching-kuo a memento from his visit. There was no electricity or photographic equipment, so Ouyang constructed a simple dark room in the prison and used chemicals shipped by the administration's information office in Taipei and natural light through a hole he created in the wall to expose photographic paper.

Photographs produced on Green Island were released to national and international press to show the Republic of China's anti-communist activities as well as to expose the penal colony internally, demonstrating the KMT's measures to reform *communist bandits* and display the consequences of dissent through the administration's press monopoly as part of their broader propaganda policies. As Ketty W. Chen has commented, the KMT 'utilized the printing press as another tool for them to enact the Party's propaganda machine. By the year 1958, the KMT has already jump-started 28 newspapers and 498 journals and magazines while Article 23 of the National General Mobilization Law prevented others to publish.'¹³²

130 Chen, Ketty W., 'Disciplining Taiwan: The Kuomintang's Methods of Control during the White Terror Era (1947-1987)' *Taiwan International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 4, USA, Winter 2008. p195

131 'After eating moldy [sic] food shipped from Taiwan for more than a year, the officials could not take it anymore. They ordered prisoners who had doctorates in agriculture to form a team and take charge of growing tomatoes, pumpkins, water spinach and other vegetables, while raising turkeys, pigs and sheep at the same time. They also exchanged vegetables with fish from the local fishermen. The "Green Island" soybean sauce that the island continues to sell to this day was originally produced by then-prisoner Huang Chung-hua/黃仲華.' - Hsieh Wen-hua, 'Remembering The White Terror: Political prisoners enriched lives of island residents', Taipei Times, 16 July 2009. Accessed: 20 May 2019: <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2009/07/16/2003448816>

132 Chen, Ketty W., 'Disciplining Taiwan: The Kuomintang's Methods of Control during the White Terror Era (1947-1987)' *Taiwan International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No. 4, USA, Winter 2008. p202. Art historian Kuo Lihsin has commented how the 'media and arts policy of the Nationalist government has its special historical background. After Chiang Kai-Shek and his KMT regime lost the civil war with the Chinese Communist Party in mainland China, they blamed their defeat on inferior propaganda and ideological work. Thus, after fleeing to Taiwan, the Chiang regime imposed strict control over the operation of media and censored all forms of art and education that could stimulate thinking and criticism.' - Kuo Lihsin/郭力昕, 'No Sound for the Greatest Music, No Shape for

The press photographs released internationally emphasise the 'pedagogical' nature of the prison camps, showing the processes of reform through education. The mental and physical routines practiced were embedded in the New Life rhetoric of the KMT. One of the most prominent photographs from Green Island, which is now widely displayed in the current Human Rights Museum on the island, shows the inmates sat orderly in a classroom being lectured by a uniformed official. A note accompanying this photograph from the United Press Photo, New York Bureau, dated 29 May 1954, describes the scene as follows:

RE-EDUCATING THE REDS

FORMOSA: Close-cropped political prisoners of Nationalist China attend “counter-brainwashing” classes in a detention camp on a tiny island off Formosa. Some 1,450 prisoners, all communists, Red suspects or sympathizers, are being “re-educated” in the compound, known as “Home of the Reborn.” About 1,000 others have completed their terms of sentence, which range from three years up, and gone back to the Mainland of Formosa. No one has ever escaped from the compound, which was built by the prisoners, and none are ever allowed to leave until they have renounced communism.¹³³

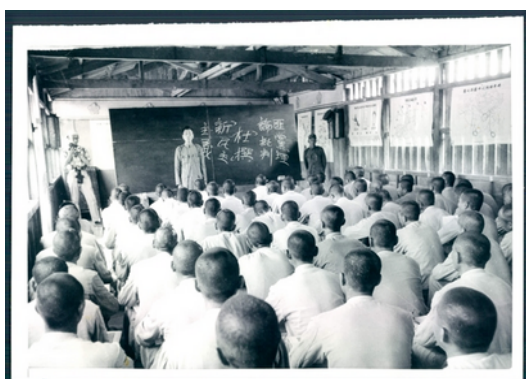


Illustration 1.23: United Press Photo, New York Bureau, photographer unknown, May 1954 (Front)

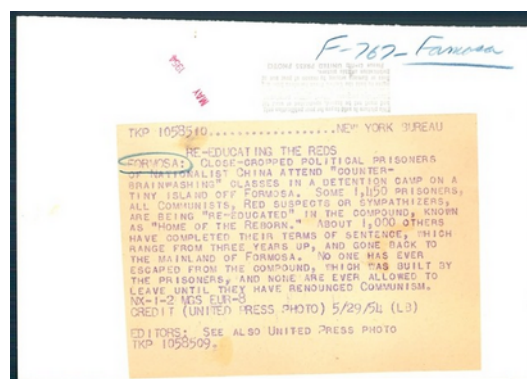


Illustration 1.24: United Press Photo, New York Bureau, photographer unknown, May 1954 (Back)

As well as taking official photographs, Ouyang secretly documented villagers and the islands other inhabitants. The negatives for these illicit photographs were kept secret for 40 years. Only after the election of Chen Shui-bian/陳水扁 as major of Taipei in 1994, a key figure in the DDP (and future prime minister) who was himself a political prisoner jailed for libel as the editor of the pro-democracy magazine *Neo-Formosa*, did

the Greatest Appearance – Chang Chao-Tang's Photographic Art and Life Scenery/大音希聲，大象無形-論張照堂的攝影藝術與生命風景' In: Chang, Chao-Tang, and Yu, Sharleen, Eds.. *Time: The Images of Chang Chao-Tang, 1959-2013*. Taipei, Taiwan: Taipei Fine Art Museum, 2013. p17

¹³³United Press Photo, New York Bureau, photographer unknown, May 1954, see Illustration 1.22 & 1.23

Ouyang feel safe to finally make the photographs public.¹³⁴ The theft of negatives as well as secretly taking photographs was highly illegal and endangered his life in the camp and afterwards. Nevertheless he found a way to hide his negatives by hollowing out a cardboard picture frame and inserting them in order to get through the monthly inspections in the prison.¹³⁵

Ouyang Wen recalled that the inmates 'saw topless women when we went ashore, so we thought they were Aborigines.'¹³⁶ They later learned that the women had come to the island from Little Liuchiu in Pingtung County and China's Fujian Province. They were so impoverished they were unable to buy clothes, as Ouyang recalls '[t]hey could only take the red clothes offered by fishermen at the Guanyi Temple after a big haul of fish and with the god's permission through divination blocks to cover the lower part of their bodies.'¹³⁷

Theatre performances were mandatory aspects of re-education on Green Island, with new arrivals ordered to act and watch the mainly anti-communist dramas in the New Life Correction Centre. The dramas were performed in the Centre but also held in an area known locally as Swallow Cave near the tombs of 13th Squadron. The performances there offered a way to interact with islanders and took on other meanings for prisoners. As Yang Guo-Yu, a political prisoner, has said '[i]f life is like a dream, then acting on the stage is not just a drama to those imprisoned, but a thirst for normal life, while the truth of being put into jail may be the real nightmare to them.'¹³⁸

Chen Meng-he/陳孟和 was another artist imprisoned who was able, through his ingenuity, to create paintings, construct violins and guitars from local materials and take photographs using the prisons' improvised darkroom for the administration as well as for local residents. Some of these photos entered official records and were distributed internationally through various press agencies. Other images he took, similar to Ouyang, were only made public after many years. Now the photos of these two prisoners stand as some of the most valuable testaments to the non-visible experience within the prisons and the conditions at the extreme end of the policies of martial law. But more than this, these images of 'everyday life' of the inmates and villagers hold potent political power as testaments to lives produced in defiance of those created

134 Taicheng, Lu/盧太城, '綠島政治犯歐陽文 冒死留下珍貴人文照片' [Green Island political prisoner Ouyang Wen risked his death to leave precious humanistic photos] Epoch Times, Taiwan, 16 October 2006. Accessed 20 May 2019: <http://www.epochtimes.com/b5/6/10/16/n1489084.htm>

135 As well as his photographic work Ouyang was a prolific painter. In 2007 he also produced and directed the documentary *'The 228 Incident: 60 Years On'* for the San Li Television Company, Taipei.

136 Hsieh Wen-hua, *Remembering The White Terror: Political prisoners enriched lives of island residents*, Taipei Times, 16 July 2009. Accessed: 20 May 2019: <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2009/07/16/2003448816>

137 Ibid

138 Text is part of the Green Island Human Rights Museum display, at the former house of New Life Correction Centre, 2016.

by the authoritarian government. In 2010 the Green Island Township Office secretary Tien Hueihung/田輝鴻 recalls the photographic studio established in the prison:

I remember that when I was a kid, we were normally not allowed to go into the prison camp [...] On some holidays, such as the Lunar New Year holidays, however, we residents could go into the New Life Correction Center to have our family photos taken by Chen Mengho.¹³⁹



Illustration 1.25 Chen Meng-he/陳孟和 taking photos on Green Island c.1950s, photographer unknown



Illustration 1.26: Ouyang Wen 綠島系列/Green Island Series, c.1952-60



Illustration 1.27: Ouyang Wen '二婦女與小孩/Two women and children, 1951

The images taken by inmates of life on Green Island, outside of those staged for press or propaganda, present lives made non-visible by martial law. In presenting the people who lived, worked and raised families there, as well as the geology of the island, the photographs of Ouyang Wen and Chen Meng-ho subvert the KMT's programmes of re-education and the representational regime of the authoritarian government. In preserving records of the environment and lived experience of families marked by extreme poverty, the images show the islanders who were largely without the social or educational advantages of many of the prisoners. These images are both records and testaments of defiance. To borrow from the artist Chen Chieh-jen, whose work I will explore in more detail in the following chapter, we can understand these photographs as demonstrating the power of people to 'deliberately misinterpret'¹⁴⁰ received information and in turn challenge power relationships and representational regimes. They are resistant images.

¹³⁹ Los-kin, Loa, 'Green Island visit revives memories' Taipei Times, 1 June 2010. Accessed 20 May 2019: <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2010/06/01/2003474397>

¹⁴⁰ Chieh-jen, Chen, 'Chen Chieh-jen On Bitai Thoan.' *ArtAsiaPacific*, Issue 98, May/June 2016. Accessed February 14, 2017. <http://artasiapacific.com/Magazine/98/ChenChiehjenOnBitaiThoan>

The stories of arrest, re-education and incarceration of the thousands of victims of White Terror in Taiwan or the disappeared or those forced into exile during the military regime in Chile¹⁴¹ have appeared in cinema, literature, art and in recent public monuments and museums.¹⁴² The presence of these stories of unreconciled history brought me to realise that the pressing issues within my research are not the particulars of a singular artist, family or personal experience but rather the structures and image regimes they bore. On returning to Chile in 1996 Ruiz reflected in his diary 'Chile is not a country, it's a military camp.'¹⁴³ It is through understanding of these images as part of relation that I can start to approach them. Resistant images are complex, performing and presenting multiple and unreconciled realities. These images exist in relation to absence. We can find echoes in the relationship of the visible and non-visible in these ostensible documentary images of Green island in Ruiz's fictional structures or CADA's subversive gestures. Across these distinct approaches visibility exists in relation to shadows, the ghosts of that which is barely visible.

In creating images of the natural environment and local residents, Ouyang Wen and Chen Meng-ho put their own experience and the experiences of Taiwan's historical trauma into a distinct relationship, refusing their own status as victim of the military image regime. In CADA we find analogous strategies of negation as means to confront the occluded experiences of those made non-visible by Pinochet's regime. And in Ruiz we find these negations pushed into further opacity in the fictional realms he establishes to obliquely illuminate the multiple traumas of exile and displacement. It is through unpacking of these layers and types of visibility that we can start to understand the way these images work, holding multiple positions as unreconciled assemblages. It is in their resistance, their stubbornness, that pushes us to understand these layers of visibility. Where I wish to locate the stubbornness and opacity is in the refusal for an image to exist in isolation; the linkage between these resistant images is how they all operate in relation and in their contractions and their complexity which resists foreclosure.

The song *Green Island Serenade* is a classic Mandarin song composed in 1954 by Zhou Lanping/周藍萍, first performed by Zi Wei/紫薇 and recorded by her in 1958 and again in 1961.¹⁴⁴ The origin of the song is

141 'Of the 1,100 people officially registered as disappeared, only 104 have been found. The victims' families have blamed successive governments for showing a lack of interest, and say that nothing has changed since Chile's conservative president, Sebastian Piñera, assumed office 18 months ago. "I think this government ... not only isn't interested, but is actively boycotting any advances in this regard," said Lorena Pizarro, the president of a group of families of disappeared prisoners whose father, Waldo Pizarro, went missing in 1976. Before handing over power to Piñera, the former Socialist president Michelle Bachelet – now the UN high commissioner for human rights and who was herself tortured during the dictatorship – launched a programme at the end of 2017 to find out what happened to the missing people, with the results expected in 2021.' Abramovich, Paulina, 'Where "Where are they?": families search for Chile's disappeared prisoners' *The Guardian*, 14 August 2019. Accessed 15 January 2021. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/14/where-are-they-families-search-for-chile-disappeared-prisoners>

142 Including the National Human Rights Museum and Cultural Park est. 2007 in the former political prisons on Green Island.

143 Ruiz, Raúl. *Ruiz Diaries*, Sunday, April 14th, 1996, translated by Jaime Grijalba. TinyLetter. Accessed: 20 January 2021. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/sunday-april-14th-1996>

144 The song first became popular in the Philippines and then Taiwan in the early 1960s as it was covered by various artists, opening up interesting connections across South East Asia

disputed with two people claiming to have written it. Pan Yingjie/潘英傑 who claims to have written it has said that the Green Island it refers to is a stand in for the whole of Taiwan. Another writer, Gao Yutang who was imprisoned in the penal colony on Green Island, claimed the lyrics he wrote reflect his incarceration. Given the song's political connotations, its performance was prohibited by the KMT administration. It is not my interest to establish which version of this song is true. 'A boat meandering through the moonlight' is a vivid image of this ambiguous and unreconciled political history. The desire to establish a definitive reading of the song and set in conflict these two accounts would follow the singular narrative model of the spear rather than the carrier as championed by Le Guin. The project I am interested in understands reality as a complex assemblage that can maintain such multiple and potentially contradictory elements.

In the next chapter I will explore how the fragments discussed here can function and move out from Taiwan as I will explore them in relation to the act of projection – how images are transmitted and received, creating complex realities and new power relations, as well as how they start to describe an absent presence remembering that the act of projection originates in the dark. The central absent presence I will explore in the following chapter will be that of the ghosts.

2: PROJECTION

2.1 Projections and ghosts

To live among ruins, then, is to exhibit a particular kind of identity, a particular kind of subjectivity – to recognize that we are various forms of subjectivities – that we never reach the 'ends' of the subject, the end of our path: we are more like nomads. This subjectivity among the ruins and on the margins entails a sensitivity to the invisible, the ephemeral, to the spirits of one's past, to the ghosts of one's own memory. - Teshome H. Gabriel¹

To expand on the process of assemblage I have discussed in the previous chapter, here I will outline two movements within the project. On the one hand I will pull back to further explore the ghosts and entanglement with them. Secondly I will start to address the means of working with and addressing these ghosts through the act of projection. Projection, as a fundamental means of address, is approached as a concept rather than merely a model of exhibition. As I will discuss, the expanded concept of the projection is central to the methodology of my project and the production and exhibition of my three films *Double Ghosts*, *Inner Sage / Outer King* and *A Mountain Inside A Cave*. I will pay attention to cartography of absences and explore how this can be figured through the act of projection.

The origins of cinematic projection lie in the intermittent transmission of light. Enabled by the *marvellous obstacle* of the shutter, the projection of images is built on this central interruption, creating the phantoms we have come to know as cinema. The entanglement of light and its absence are fundamental to cinema and perception of movement. Projection is equally about the presence and absence of images. The absent images, shadows and ghosts are the 'poetic support' of cinema as Ruiz argued, 'it is this shadow – or rather, obscurity – that allows it to build (rather in the manner of a puzzle) an edifice, mental palace or labyrinth.'²

In January 2014 I attended the International Film Festival Rotterdam and immersed myself in their extensive Raúl Ruiz retrospective. During the festival I was able to interview Ruiz and ask him about the echoes of the Chilean coup in his work. He responded first by saying '[w]ell I make films with everything I can, so by definition everything that has happened to me is there'³ (echoes of Joanna Margaret Paul's oblique figuration of her life in her work). He then elaborated on how he came to understand this historic rupture:

¹ Gabriel, Teshome H., 1993. 'Ruin and The Other: Towards a Language Of Memory'. In: Naficy, Hamid and Teshome, H. Gabriel, Ed., *Otherness and the media: The Ethnography of the Imagines and the Imaged*, Langhorne, Pennsylvania: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1993, p217

² This is from transcript of speech *Cinema is Another Life*, given by Raúl Ruiz on November, 18th, 2005 on the occasion of receiving an Honorary Doctorate from the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Lyon. Ruiz, Raúl, 'Cinema Is Another Life'. Translated by Adrian Martin, *LOLA*, Issue 2: Devils, 2012. Accessed 20 May 2020. http://www.lolajournal.com/2/cinema_another_life.html.

³ Clark, George, *Raúl Ruiz: Hypothesis and Enigma*, Vertigo, Volume 2, Issue 7, Autumn-Winter 2004, pp41-42

Chile is a country with an earthquake and sometimes, when you are in the middle of an earthquake, you say it should be an earthquake somewhere else; you never believe you are in the centre. I realised a little later that, with this political earthquake, I was in the centre. At the beginning it was almost like an epi-phenomenon. I didn't realize the importance and that this has happened often. It happened to me, happened to many people, but you only realise little by little.⁴

Ruiz's experience is an example of what Gabriel call's *subjectivity among ruins*.⁵ Historic rupture is only understood incrementally, its impact and resonance projected throughout a life and in turn these ruins conditions a way of being in the world. Prior to researching Ruiz's film in Taiwan, I had been gathering and developing a project connected to my extended family in Taiwan at the time, which brought up many issues and challenges in the ways I could access, discuss, image and project such a history. In this chapter I will trace the ghosts encountered through my work in Taiwan, as well as the traces of Ruiz's film and my research into the means by which history and fragmented experience can be figured through the three films and their exhibition which would come to constitute the *Double Ghosts* project. The chapter will move through my personal encounters into my investigations and reflections on Ruiz's lost film. The issues brought up by historical rupture will bring a reflection on Ruiz's connection to Chile and his struggle to return, putting into a new light the problems posed by national discourse, totalising depictions of history and other means of constructing the world from fragments as explored in the first chapter. These reflections will introduce ways to think comparatively about Chile and Taiwan, the means by which their occluded histories can be imaged and reimagined – asking how to approach territories whose potential futures were dramatically derailed.

Both territories pose problems for discourses of national culture and cinema; such as the bifurcated history of cinema in Taiwan split by the Japanese colonial period, leaving works to be read neither as part of Japanese, Chinese or Taiwanese cinema and in this process creating a host of ghost cinemas and orphan works. In Chile we find a similar problem. The country represented a unique phenomenon in Latin American cinema where in the 'dozen years since the 1973 military coup, Chilean exile filmmakers made over 250 feature films and documentaries – far more than were produced in Chile itself up to 1973.'⁶ Looking at cinema in the ruins we can explore how, 'for exiles, and for exile filmmakers, solidarity became a way of

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Gabriel, Teshome H, 1993. 'Ruin and The Other: Towards a Language Of Memory'. In: Naficy, Hamid and Teshome, H. Gabriel, Ed., *Otherness and the media: The Ethnography of the Imagines and the Imaged*, Langhorne, Pennsylvania: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1993, p217

⁶ Naficy, Hamid 'Cinema in Exile and the Diaspora,' *Springerin*. Issue 1/2002. Accessed 28 May 2019. <https://www.springerin.at/en/2002/1/kino-im-exil-und-in-der-diaspora/>. Various writers have explored this phenomenon and how so many films were produced in these circumstances. See Peña, Richard. 1987. 'Images of Exile: Two Films by Raoul Ruiz' In: Fusco, Coco, Eds., *Reviewing Histories: Selection From New Latin American Cinema*, Hallwalls, Buffalo NY, 1987. pp136-45. and Pick, Zuzana M. *Chilean cinema: Ten years of exile (1973-83)* Jump Cut, no. 32, April 1987. pp66-70

being in the world,⁷ a model of entanglement combining disparate social, aesthetic and political ecologies. Following these trans-national networks we can start to explore the diverse range of production outside of nationalist or commercial structures of cinema, located in pockets of what I call *trans-local* solidarity. It is these modes of production – contingent, networked and entangled – that will be increasingly important in this chapter as I begin to map other territories of cinema and resistant means of making and projecting images as well as the contemporary trans-local networks that I seek to inhabit.

It should be noted that Ruiz held a somewhat contentious position in the context of Chilean culture in exile. His work was seen by some to go against the international revolutionary struggle and showed a *poor image* of his compatriots. With the passing of time we can see these poor images in a different light. As Hito Steyerl has argued, the history of political cinema is marked by ‘an image that remains unresolved—puzzling and inconclusive because of neglect or political denial, because of a lack of technology or funding, or because of hasty and incomplete recordings captured under risky circumstances.’⁸ I understand these poor images as a model of political cinema – fractured and fragmented, haunted by buried pasts, and geographically dispersed – a means of image production and exhibition strategy that is resistant to totalising declarations. This will be further expanded in the subsequent chapter in which I will map a topography for Ruiz’s lost film and absent images focused around the limbo site of the cemetery. Before that, to understand the method I developed drawing on Ruiz’s work, I will focus on his particular understanding of what is enabled by exile through discussion of the notion of the *exote*. Finally, the chapter will bring us directly to contemporary Taiwan, recounting the discoveries around *The Comedy of Shadows* and the unfolding cast of actors animated by the search for this project. Adding to and expanding the existing fragments discussed in chapter one, we will encounter new materials, traces and phantoms of this project and shift to understanding of the ways in which the film exists without being seen.

⁷ Palacios, José Miguel ‘Resistance vs. Exile: The Political Rhetoric of Chilean Exile Cinema in the 1970s’ *Jumpcut*, No. 57, Fall 2016. Accessed 28 May 2019. <https://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc57.2016/-PalaciosChile/index.html>.

⁸ Steyerl, Hito, and Berardi, Franco. *The Wretched of the Screen*. Sternberg Press, 2012. p155

2.2 Mountains and rivers of home



Illustration 2.1: 故鄉山水情/*Mountains and Rivers of Home* (George Clark, 2017) 35mm frame enlargement

What had gone seemed more lucid than what had remained.

– *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques*⁹

In the front room of the house where I used to live in Los Angeles – above a fireplace that was never needed in the desert climate – hung a large ink painting featuring a mountainous landscape. Evoking the mystical mountain ranges of ancient China, the painting called 故鄉山水情/*Reminiscence of the Mountains and Rivers of Home*, existed outside of the place and time in which it hung. A remnant from a different life, the left-behind painting showed an inaccessible country separated by history, war and politics; a landscape far removed from the arid deserts and suburban sprawl of Southern California.

Developed out of this confluence of images and places, I developed a film work and installation project to address some of the social history of this painting, the home in which it hung and my relation to its family history. The project drew on material gathered over several years as I sought to understand my own relationship to home, family and landscape. The house where I lived in Los Angeles belonged to my grandparents in law at the time. Born in mainland China, they emigrated to Taiwan (Republic of China) in the late 1940s during the height of the Chinese Civil War, and later in the mid-1980s they emigrated to the suburb of Sylmar in Los Angeles, California. After a long period spent in California living near their son but far removed

⁹ *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques*/Letter from a Filmmaker, or The Return of a Library Lover (1983) written and directed by Raúl Ruiz

from the rest of their family back in Taiwan and Hong Kong, they decided to move back to Taiwan in 2010. At this time I began living in their old house in California with my former partner.

Before we moved in we lived with the grandparents for a month. One of my strongest memories I have of them during this period was watching my grandfather-in-law hastily remove black and white photographs from various family albums, and adding them to a mass of images in his suitcase. These images would constituted the bulk of his luggage. The collected photos stemmed from his early life in mainland China and the beginning of his own family after his settlement in Taiwan and the birth of his children and grandchildren. These were the first images I saw from this family history. After the grandparents left we lived amongst their belongings which were either too big to move or that didn't have sufficient importance for them to take with them. Apart from furniture, books and clothes, the grandparents had also left behind various large paintings, some of which were painted by my grandfather-in-law, and the collection of bulky photo albums largely stripped of their photos. Within these ruined albums, various photographs were left behind leaving a fragmented record of their life. Living among these personal effects I became fascinated by the objects and images they chose to bring and those they chose to leave behind.

I began a process of researching and discussing these histories and experiences with extended family members, finding more about the images and stories I had been finding in the house. But the initial openness with which my questions were received was tempered when it became clear I wanted to use the material in a film that would go beyond the private arena. I realised that my naive notion of private and public was in stark contrast to that of various family members who carry with historic trauma about public exposure and its possible ramifications. Despite the public debates and compensation made to victims of the martial law in Taiwan, this apprehension around private and public is part of a longer historical process that is still unreconciled.

Shortly after my first attempt to realise this project collapsed, I met with the Taiwanese artist Chen Chieh-jen at his studio in Taipei, in 2016¹⁰. His work and explorations of suppressed histories had been central to my understanding and navigating the assemblages of images I encountered in Taiwan. I showed him a previous film I had made responding to his work and confessed to him I was at a dead-end with my new project. As we discussed this seemingly insurmountable barrier, he suggested potential routes out with the example of the three types of image in Chinese thought. Firstly, there is an image which presents the appearance of something; secondly an image that shows the reputation or impact of something such as an icon, and finally

¹⁰ I met with Chen to show his my recently completed film *Sea of Clouds* (2016) while I was based at Kuandu Museum in Taipei as part of their 2016 Kuandu Residency programme from 20 May – 17 April 2016 where I was preparing my exhibition *A Planters Art* for Soulangh Cultural Park, Tainan City, 18 June – 31 July 2016

the third type is the image left when something is removed. This third type of image Chen illustrated with a famous anecdote, mentioned in the previous chapter, of Buddha's shadow on the cave wall. Chen told me the story but emphasised one particular exchange between Buddha and the mountain. Following his long period of meditation when the Buddha left the cave, the mountain asked why he didn't leave anything behind? The Buddha turned and replied to the mountain that he indeed had left something behind: his shadow.

These discourses on modes of imaging provided other means by which the visible or non-visible can be pointed to by an image. Furthermore, in Chen's telling, I understood a distinct relationship between the human and nonhuman, in particular that landscape is not that which is seen at a distance or something which we extract or profit from but something we past through. But as Chen explained with reference to tradition of Shan shui/山水 painting, the importance is not the vista but the way the painting records the time, movement through, and exchange with place. Shan Shui then is an art of walking. The mountain and water are actors working alongside the artists in creating the image. The final image, Chen told me, the image that is left, the absence projected, would become central to my work.

2.3 Island cemetery



Illustration 2.2: 永遠的歸宿/Tombs in Anping by 張才/Chang Tsai, 1946-1947, 40.6 x 50.8 cm. Collection of The Taipei Fine Arts Museum.

In 1971 the People's Republic of China (PROC) replaced the Republic of China (ROC) in the United Nations, assuming membership as the only lawful China in international politics.¹¹ This effectively left Taiwan without a voice on the international stage, leading it to struggle to establish nation-to-nation co-operation and threw the country into existential crisis. The treatment of Taiwan as a spectral domain became prevalent in this period, Chia-rong Wu argues, marked by the return of the term 'Ghost Island (鬼島/guǐdǎo)'¹² back into the popular lexicon. With Taiwan now viewed as 'a politically marginalised island in face of a hegemonic China'¹³ this derogatory projection, with its origins in the Japanese colonial period¹⁴, returned to describe the island marked by government corruption and economic deficiency in this period of turmoil.

A literary genre sought to use this term in a different context. *Ghost island literature/鬼島文學* extends the scope of traditional Chinese *zhiguai* genre that, since the late Ming dynasty,¹⁵ has been used for stories of

¹¹ United Nations, *The Yearbook of the United Nations*, New York, 1971. pp126-127. Accessed 20 January 2021: <https://www.unmultimedia.org/searchers/yearbook/page.jsp?volume=1971&bookpage=126>

¹² Wu, Chia-rong, *Supernatural Sinophone Taiwan and Beyond*. Cambria Press, 2016. p23

¹³ Ibid. p23

¹⁴ 'The term ghost island originates from the Japanese folklore Momotaro (Peach Boy), in which Onigashima (Ghost Island) is the living place of demons. Taiwan was not associated with this negative term in the very beginning. However, the Japanese settlers later labeled Taiwan as a "ghost island" (鬼界ヶ島) during the colonial period because it was plagued [by] severe epidemic problems like malaria and cholera. This unfavourable moniker stayed on even after Japan's colonial rule of Taiwan was terminated at the end of World War II.' - Wu, Chia-rong. *Supernatural Sinophone Taiwan and Beyond*. Cambria Press, 2016. p23

¹⁵ Zhiguai xiaoshuo/志怪小说, translated as 'tales of the miraculous', 'tales of the strange', or 'records of anomalies', is a type of Chinese literature which appeared during the Han dynasty. See: Company, Robert Ford. *Strange Writing: Anomaly Accounts in Early Medieval China*. SUNY Press, 1996. pp151-152

anomalous events, a genre named after a passage in Chuang Tzu's story *Free and Easy Wandering* in the *Zhuangzi*. This genre has been used as a means to address historical disjuncture. As Wu argues, the 'ghost-island narrative of Taiwan focuses on the cultural loss and ethnic conflicts.'¹⁶

The presence of ghosts and haunting is part of a broader tradition in Chinese culture, a means to reflect and analyse turbulent history. As David Der-wei Wang has argued, "[t]he continued reappearance of ghosts in Chinese literature is then a reminder of the incessant calamities of Chinese history. Across corporeal and temporal-spatial barriers, ghosts reappear like vanishing memories and perished relations, 'disembodying' the hiatus between the dead and the living, the unreal and the real, the unthinkable and the admissible."¹⁷

Wang explores the idea of a ghost as 'that which returns' tracing the relationship between premodern Chinese ghost fiction and that of the work of fin-de-siècle writers at the end of the 20th Century, understanding the haunting as a ghost of history, return of repressed memories.¹⁸ The haunting evoked by Wang, in particular the 'spectrality of the return,' is tied in with the idea of homecoming and complex anxiety around Chinese unification, the fractured history and ongoing tension between Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and mainland China. These hauntings then are linked to struggle over the divided, distributed and abused body.

Pointing out the paradoxical adoption of the notion of rehabilitation through labor espoused by both Communist Leader Mao Zedong and Republican Leader Chiang Kai-shek, Wang argues that 'behind the call for bodily strength lies a call for spiritual transformation.'¹⁹ The call for rejuvenation was a key tenet of the New Life Movement/新生活運動 launched by Chiang Kai-shek and his followers, as he stated in a 1934 speech, he believed 'modern Chinese life is one full of filth, decadence, laziness and despondency; this is not a life of humanity and it can only be called "a ghostly life."²⁰ The fascistic impulse that linked these antagonistic movements led to a politicisation of the body in the 1930s, and what Wang argues was the 'fall of the sublime tradition.'²¹ This heralded a shift to exploring the materiality of incorporeal things in late 20th century Chinese culture, as writers were left 'roaming the ruins of history.'²² It is not surprising that these phantom bodies would resurface in various forms in Taiwan. Phantasms, as Foucault argues, 'function at the

¹⁶ Wu, Chia-rong, *Supernatural Sinophone Taiwan and Beyond*. Cambria Press, 2016. p26

¹⁷ Wang, David Der-Wei. *The Monster That Is History: History, Violence, and Fictional Writing in Twentieth-Century China*. University of California Press, 2004. p263

¹⁸ Such hauntings have found new theoretical currency under rubric of Hauntology, see Fisher, Mark. *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures*. John Hunt Publishing, UK, 2014.

¹⁹ Wang, David Der-Wei. *The Monster That Is History: History, Violence, and Fictional Writing in Twentieth-Century China*. University of California Press, 2004. p280

²⁰ Ibid. pp279-80

²¹ Ibid. p280

²² Ibid.

limits of bodies.²³ In Taiwan the ROCs New Life Movement established many of the central tenets of the ruling government and directly informed the brutal re-education regimes of the KMT, in particular the notorious New Life Correction Centre/新生訓導處 that operated on Green Island between 1951-1965, a concentrated instance of the wider regime of rehabilitation.

As discussed in the previous chapter, we can see this regime of rehabilitation as part of an ecology of imaging which was resisted by the stubborn images of political prisoners such as Ouyang Wen/歐陽文 and Chen Cheng-bo/陳澄波. Now I want to introduce another two connected photographers to reflect on other aspects of these island ghosts. The ghost, as Avery F. Gordon argues, 'is not simply a dead or missing person, but a social figure'²⁴ a fundamental component of the fabric of social life. Under the KMT government the social and cultural life was strongly restricted, preventing many forms of assembly and independent artistic work. One key exception in this history was the group associated with *Theatre Quarterly*/劇場, a journal founded in 1965 that pioneered experimental models of assembly drawing on the concept and space of theatre to organise performances, temporary exhibitions and experimental film screenings. The magazine holds a pivotal role in the history of the avant-garde in Asia; helping to introduce various theories on art and cinema and expanding the debate on modernism in Taiwan to take into account design, performance and actions as well as literature and painting.²⁵

Some of the iconic images from this period come from the work of Chang Chao-Tang/張照堂, whose early experimental photographs were featured in the journal (alongside the only surviving fragments his early experimental film *Diary*, 1967). He also created a photographic installation for the Modern Poetry Exhibition held in 1966 and documented the proto-happening in 8mm film. His early experimental photographs were provocative deconstructions of the body, strikingly distorted and dismembered, such as his iconic headless self-portrait (*Being I*, 1962, see illustration 2.3), leading some to read his work as a reflection on the 'psychosis of suppression and anxiety' of Taiwanese society.²⁶ But in describing his own work Chao-Tang stated the following:

²³ Foucault, Michel 'Theatrum Philosophicum,' In *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1981. pp169-170.

²⁴ Gordon, Avery. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. U of Minnesota Press, 1997. p8

²⁵ Theatre Quarterly was founded in Taipei in 1965 with members involved in art, photography, poetry, theatre and design including Kang-Chien Chiu/邱剛健, Ying-Zhen Chen/陳映真, Lin Chuang/莊靈 and Hua-Cheng Huang/黃華成 and Chao Tang/張照堂. Nine issues of the periodical were published between 1 January 1965 – 15 January 1968. As Lin Chuang, a key member and early independent filmmaker, argued they wanted 'to start a revolution against Chinese cinema, in both content and techniques.' (Yang, The Study on the Works of HUANG, Hua-Cheng (1935-1996), as quoted in Ming-Yu Lee, 'Diary Film in America and in Taiwan: Narrative, Temporality, and Changing Technology' doctoral thesis, University of Glasgow, 2015, p87). The artists associated with Theatre have also been linked to groups such as Hi Red Centre and Zero Dimension in Japan, early happenings and performances in South Korea by Choi Boonghyun and Jeong Gangja in the touring exhibition and publication *Great Crescent: Art and Agitation in the 1960s – Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan*, Parasite, Hong Kong, Nov 2013 – Feb 2014, organised by Parasite, Hong Kong..

²⁶ Liu, Mia Yinxing, 'The Surrealist and the Documentary in Chang Chao-tang's Photography', *Art in Translation*, Vol. 11 Issue. 1, 2019 p84

Fields, wastelands, ruins, secret chambers, or quiet paths are my main subjects. They emerge in the scene like a ghost during high noon or twilight ... while reminding me of the living ambience of the time, the light and the taste of those instances.²⁷



Illustration 2.3: Chang Chao-Tang, 'Being I', photograph 1962, 56x38cm. Collection of Taipei National Fine Art Museum



Illustration 2.4: Chang Chao-Tang, 'Being VII', photograph, c.1960s, 39x65.5cm. Collection of Taipei National Fine Art Museum

We can understand these photos then not as direct corollaries of this period of alienation but, to follow Avery Gordon, we can see in them the ghosts which informed the social life of this period. For Gordon, '[b]eing haunted draws us affectively, sometimes against our will and always a bit magically into the structure of feeling of a reality we come to experience, not as cold knowledge, but as a transformative recognition.'²⁸ To be haunted is to be reminded of our own corporal existence, the *light and taste* of being.

As well as his own practice Chang Chao-Tang is an influential teacher and curator and was responsible for editing the publication on senior photographer Chang Tsai/張才(1916-1995). Chang Tsai's work brings us to deeper hauntings on the island. To understand Chang Tsai's photographic proposition is to return to 'the ecology and atmosphere of art and cultural development during the Japanese occupation.'²⁹ Born in Taipei, Tsai travelled to study photography in Japan, and with his brother opened a small art space in Taipei called the 'Shadow Studio' in 1936. It had a literature library, gramophone records and shared space that hosted

²⁷ Chang, Chao-tang, 觀 . 點: 台灣現代攝影家觀看的刺點/*Beyond the Frame*, 2017, Origin Press, p100

²⁸ Gordon, Avery. *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*. U of Minnesota Press, 1997. p8

²⁹ Yong-bin, Jian/簡永彬, 'The Passing Shadow – Image Map of Chang Tsai's work/逝影流光——張才一生作品的意象地圖', written 2008.8.20 revised and published online 2010.01.14

readings with members of the Taiwanese New Literature Movement/台灣新文學運動³⁰. Following the Chinese Civil War, he opened a new studio called *Shadow of Heart* /影心寫場 in his home, and became busy producing portraits and passport photos to fulfill demands of new administration. Later he was able to dedicate himself to photography, travelling extensively in the interior of Taiwan to produce some of his most important work, visiting indigenous groups with anthropologists from the National Taiwan University. When he died in 1994, at the age of 79, he left behind over 10,000 negatives.

One of his most famous photographs depicts a site which will become increasingly important for me as I develop *Double Ghosts*, as a space of a diverse range of projection. The site in question is that of the cemetery. In Tsai's famous photograph *The Perpetual Peace*/永遠的歸宿 we see the cascading tombs on a hillside near Anping Old Fort, Tainan, in the south of Taiwan. It was produced in 1946-47, the crucial period of transition in Taiwan, following the final days of the Japanese occupation after the end of World War II and the establishment of the provisional ROC capital in Taipei in 1949.³¹ The image shows a cemetery in one of the oldest settlements in Taiwan and former capital Anping. A variety of burial methods for different religious beliefs are evident here, and the image has been read as a testament to over 400 years of life on the island. A more direct translation of the title would be *Home Forever*, which connects to the Chinese concept of *hsiang chou*/鄉愁, a distinct quality of nostalgia or homesickness, or more appropriately *home sadness*; an articulation of longing and displacement.

The photograph is particularly interesting to me for its strange nocturnal atmosphere. Above the graves is a large glowing moon hanging over the scene, casting it in an uncanny light. This, though, is not the moon and it was not created in the darkroom as Chang Tsai has stressed, but rather it is a natural effect resulting from the poor quality film he was using at the time. This is a photographic haunting, the assertion of the material into the image. The reality of the material of the photograph is making itself apparent even if not clearly understood. Such material impositions will become increasingly important in later discussion. This ghost in Tsai's work emerged from the photographic support, a latent and expressive ruin in the material of film itself.

In 2001, after a long campaign by human rights groups, the former prisons on Lüdao island were opened as Green Island Human Rights Culture Park/綠島人權文化園區 to commemorate victims of White Terror. While

³⁰ Active under Japanese rule throughout the 1920s the group were inspired by socialist and anti-colonial struggle including the May Fourth Movement in Beijing. The intellectual group were engaged in non-violent struggle for liberation through of cultural and political resistance. With the outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese War in 1937 the Japanese government tighten its colonial policy instituted the 'National Spirit General Mobilization', which formally commenced the colonial governments Japanization policy halting the art and cultural movement.

³¹ Between the Japanese surrender of Taiwan in 1945 and April 25, 1946, the ROC forces repatriated 90% of the Japanese living in Taiwan to Japan. In 1938 about 309,000 Japanese had lived in Taiwan. Between August-November 1948 and December 1949 an averaging of 50-60 planes flew supplies from China to Taiwan. On 1 October 1949 the People's Republic of China was founded in mainland China leading the KMT to declare they were a government in exile in Taiwan

the museum is the culmination of a long historical struggle to make apparent a history which has been strategically obscured, there remains a question about the ability of such museological structures to perform the reversal of the abuse of power to which they are aimed. Historical sites or monuments are faced with a tension between different modes of memory. From Teshome H. Gabriel we can understand this as the tension between *official history* and *popular memory*,³² and the struggle to render the past itself as a political issue. As Gabriel has argued, 'narratives are subject to ever-changing articulations and meanings, they too are always nomadic and transient. The issue here is therefore how narratives are transformed and how they become "set." And when a narrative becomes "set," when it is "preserved," the question becomes: whose story is being preserved and whose is being erased?'³³

From these hauntings and attempts to address the ghosts of history, I want to bring us back to Raúl Ruiz and his return to Chile. After a decade of absence following the military coup, he returned to encounter a transformed country. Ruiz noted the complex issues facing any address to the obscured and sedimentary history of the country and the dangers of the imperatives projected onto people's struggle, echoing that of Gabriel's notion of official history.

I think there is a version of the 'official art' attitude which sets out to make 'history' exist. They start with the history of Latin America, which is a history of massacres and betrayals and of imperialism, the massacres are mostly hidden and the record of the peasants' and people's movements is equally unknown. So there is an obvious point in revealing this secret history [...] But this is more difficult to accept when it becomes an imperative duty to follow the political line, showing even more massacres and creating a vast funeral ceremony.³⁴

³² Gabriel, Teshome H. 'Third Cinema as Guardian of Popular Memory: Towards a Third Aesthetics' In. Pines Jim and Willemen, Paul, Eds. *Questions of Third Cinema*, London: British Film Institute, UK, 1989. 53-64

³³ Teshome, Gabriel, H. 'Ruin and The Other: Towards a Language Of Memory', In. Naficy, Hamid and Gabriel, Teshome H., Eds., *Otherness and the media: The Ethnography of the Imagines and he Imaged*, Langhorne, Penn, Harwood Academic Publishers, 1993. pp211-19

³⁴ Ruiz, Raúl cited in King: pp181-182, quoted in Goddard, Michael. *The Cinema of Raúl Ruiz: Impossible Cartographies*. Columbia University Press, 2013, p33



Illustration 2.5: Lyell Cemetery, New Zealand, *Untitled (Eyemo roll #124)* (George Clark, 2016) 35mm frame enlargement



Illustration 2.6: Green Island 13th Squadron Burial site, *Untitled (Eyemo roll #91)*, (George Clark, 2016) 35mm frame enlargement

Approaching such occluded histories then requires a different methodology sensitive to history of projections and ghosts, a sedimentary amalgamation which is not there to be mourned but approached as a fragmented and distributed body requiring work of assemblage and relation, not totalising narratives. To ground this process the first task becomes that of finding landscapes of ruins, not human monuments, sites of memory with multiple possible entries and exits. As Glissant argues in his *Caribbean Discourses*, '[o]ur landscape is its own monument; its meaning can only be traced on the underside. It is all history.'³⁵ We begin moving towards a model of nomadic history, a history against that of the state. As Gabriel argues, the 'nomadic intervention' attempts to shift 'towards that silent space of ruin where various narratives encounter other narratives, where a marginal narrative can rewrite a dominant narrative.... The ruin is thus revealed to be that site of discourse where multifarious identities, memories, nostalgias, stories and experiences reside. These were once a source of personal sustenance, but now they disappear, like ghosts, into the mythic other as forms of personal and social imaginaries. Thus, ruin is best understood, as a field of mediation, that is, as a metaphor for an expedition into memory.'³⁶

The cemetery is be one of the crucial sites in the social imaginaries, a place to remember the dead while bearing marks of ideological and cultural practice, treatment of land and territory as well representing the way the dead are remembered by the living. The cemetery is a complex site, organised and orientated in starkly different ways and, as we will explore, governed by conceptual parameters dictating where and how houses of the dead are constructed. In their memorialising of the dead, cemeteries project an image of a totality but the dead they remember is always selective. In this way they speak to shadow images, the dead who are not buried in their structures, the vast history of the occluded, displaced and disappeared. To

³⁵ Glissant, Edouard. *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*. University Press of Virginia, 1992. p11

³⁶ Teshome, Gabriel, H. 'Ruin and The Other: Towards a Language Of Memory', In. Naficy, Hamid and Gabriel, Teshome H., Eds., *Otherness and the media: The Ethnography of the Imagines and he Imaged*, Langhorne, Penn, Harwood Academic Publishers, 1993. pp211–19

consider the cemetery as such a site follows a more literal approach to the historical, but as I will argue, to consider this site as a place of mediation we also need to rethink how to define the cemetery itself, and the cultural forms and social imaginaries connected to it. I want to propose an approach to the concept of cemetery through the notion of the ruin as a place of mediation and projection between human and nonhuman.

In 2016 I visited Green Island and the Human Rights Museum myself. The original prison and rehabilitation buildings have been maintained and opened up to the public. They are largely empty, the majority of the spaces are not annotated and left open, the vegetation is slowly reclaiming the buildings. From the compound you can look out towards the surrounding mountains and coastline, from each view are the remains of characters painted onto the exposed cliffs. There are faded but still visible political slogans calling for punishment of Chinese Bandits and for a strong future of the Republic of China. The history of Green Island is infused with suppressed and buried histories, phantasms and projections. Among these histories is that of the 13th Squadron/中隊 which is the term used by inmates and wardens on the island to refer to political prisoners who died on the island from disease, hard labour or suicide. The burial site for these inmates is down a dirt road from the prison near to the bay and the Swallow Caves. The burial site has about forty gravestones for both inmates and prison workers whose relatives could not be contacted or who were too fearful of association to claim the body. The site is largely unmarked or sign-posted and is distant to the principal sites of the island's Human Rights Museum.

Here is a complex site of mediation; a cemetery itself on the verge of disappearing and being forgotten, but in this way it opens out to rich discontinuous histories. Filming at such sites is means to encounter and inhabit specific assemblages, filming and projection as twinned actions reflecting on the phantoms and *undersides* of history, seeking a 'subjectivity among the ruins' which, Gabriel argues, 'entails a sensitivity to the invisible.'³⁷ Projection is not of the natural transmission of information but an active mediation which transforms that which it encounters. 'Mediators' as Latour defines them are 'actors endowed with the capacity to translate what they transport, to redefine it, redeploy it, and also to betray it.'³⁸ With this concept we can understand the projection at these sites as a process of assemblage, the creation of links across space and time.

As I have developed my project I have filmed at cemeteries in various countries, finding ways to work with

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Harvard University Press, 2012. p81

them and expand my project through the connection to these complex sites.³⁹ These locations have ranged from the cemetery of the 13th Squadron/中隊 on Green Island mentioned above, to Lyell Cemetery in New Zealand, an abandoned settler cemetery for gold prospectors in the South Island, and the Cementerio Católico Recoleta in Santiago, a location used in various of Ruiz's films. The cemetery is a central aspect of claims on land, attesting to colonial settlements, class division as well as ancestral territory, and in their aesthetic we can find models for metaphysical projection and offering. The material, environment and qualities of these places asserts themselves on my projections onto them and in turn my way of filming; from the haze of the ocean spray that obscures the political slogans painted onto the rocks in Green Island to the silence at midday when visitors avoid the high heat of Cementerio Católico Recoleta.

To unpack some of the other actors at this site I want to go deeper into the context of the cemetery. In Taiwan there is a rich tradition of theological and metaphysical activity where the cemetery would stand as a site of rituals and gathering as well as acting as setting for various dramas stemming back to ancient Chinese texts such as Chuang Tzu's metaphysical dialogues. In the second half of the 20th century the cemeteries have become a site of literal film projection as part of ancestral worship. The temple and cemetery are commonly visited sites governed by various rituals such as Ghost Month/鬼月, when displaced ghosts roam looking for hosts, to Tomb-sweeping Day/清明节 or Double Ninth Festival/Chong Yang Festival/重陽節/重阳节.⁴⁰ The unique history of film exhibition in such sites of ancestral offering became prevalent in Taiwan as a means to repay ancestors, when people became rich through business deals or gambling. This made the projection of films in temples a lucrative business for itinerant projectionists throughout the 1970s and 1980s, which I will explore in the following section.

Cementerio Católico Recoleta, with its ornate mausoleums and Babesque towers of stacked tombs, became background for Ruiz's mediation on the brutal history of disappearances during the military

³⁹ Illustration 2.15 and 2.16 show a cemetery in New Zealand and one in Taiwan where I have filmed during development of the project exploring this central location in Ruiz's films. As part of my research I filmed a study of the Bolton Street cemetery in Wellington, the oldest one in Wellington dating back the 1840 and was closed for burials in 1892. Now maintained by the cities botanical gardens, the cemetery has a complex history from the heated debates about its establishment as non-denominational burial ground to protests in the 1960s when a motorway extension was announced which would bisect the cemetery requiring the exhumation and reburial of over 3,700 graves as chronicled in Alington, Margaret Hilda *Unquiet Earth: A History of the Bolton Street Cemetery*. Wellington City Council, 1978. The cemetery is noted now for its extensive collection of heritage roses dating from the early colonial period. As such the site stands as a microcosm of issues and debates within New Zealand and across the Pacific.

⁴⁰ These various Chinese holidays are followed across China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Vietnam following dates in lunar calendar with parallels in Japan and Korea following origins of festivals in Buddhist and Daoist texts. Double Ninth Festival is derived from I Ching and takes place on ninth day of ninth lunar month. To protect against danger it is customary to climb high mountain, drink chrysanthemum liquor and wear Zhuyu plant, it has become common to visit graves and pay respect to ancestors. Tomb-sweeping day held on 15th day of spring equinox during which day families visit tombs to clean grave sites, pray and make ritual offerings. (In Taiwan the day used to be held on 5 April to honour death of Chiang Kai-shek but it has not been followed as his popularity has waned). Distinct from these two festivals Ghost Festival held on 15th night of seventh month is distinct as rather than paying respect to ancestors, during Ghost Festival it is believed the deceased visit the living as such many of the rituals including elaborate food offerings and burning of various items from clothes to fine goods to protect the living from the dead. Some festivals include offerings of paper boats or lanterns to help give direction to lost ghosts and spirits to find their way home

dictatorship in Chile, of displacement and exile that he rendered through his infernal allegory in *A TV Dante*. Here Ruiz presents Santiago as a vast cemetery where the living and the dead are pitted against each other, fighting both to enter and to escape.⁴¹ In his later scenario for *The Comedy of Shadows*, the characters are stranded in the cemetery, lost and unable to find peace as they live outside of time. The territory of the cemetery in Ruiz's Taiwan is figured as an infernal zone similar to his depictions of post-coup Chile. A metaphysical place between states of being, at the intersection of projections and histories, a site of layered states of being. In this way we can start to understand cinema itself as such a non-space, an in-between space like the cemetery, that is mediated through the act of projection. To address the dislocation of the dead then requires offerings and actions to overcome the hiatus between presence and absence.

The cinema has been theorised as a place of the dead, a cave or womb where people gather to watch projections, unsure which is more real; the ghostly audience or the projected images. Apichatpong Weerasethakul recounts a tale of an itinerant projectionist, in his short story based on real life (what else can stories be based on I wonder?), who is hired to show a film in a cemetery in Udon Thani province, Thailand, for an audience he later realised were all ghosts. With this story Weerasethakul eloquently proposes cinema as a home for the dead, describing this dark habitat as follows:

The cinema itself is like a coffin with bodies, sitting still, as if under a spell. The moving images on the screen are camera records of events that have already taken place; they are remains of the past, strung together and called a film. In this hall of darkness, ghosts are watching ghosts⁴²

If cinema is 'ghosts watching ghosts' then how does this change the status of Ruiz's lost film? Is there a way to understand its absence not as a hindrance but an opportunity? In the following section I'll explore some of the context of this model of phantom cinema in Taiwan, looking at ways film has existed within this ghost territory, starting with an investigation of the act of projection itself.

⁴¹ Following his death on 19 August 2011 the remains of where returned to Chile following his wishes and he was buried in the private cemetery Parque del Recuerdo cemetery next to the remains of his mother. The day of his funeral Nuestra Señora de la Divina Providencia church in Santiago and day of national mourning was declared by the ministry of culture on Friday, August 26. radio.uchile.cl, 'Remains of Raúl Ruiz Were Dismissed between Emotion and Desire to Massify His Work' *Diario y Radio U Chile*, 26 August 2011. Accessed 30 May 2020. <https://radio.uchile.cl/2011/08/26/restos-de-raul-ruiz-fueron-despedidos-entre-la-emocion-y-el-deseo-por-masificar-su-obra/>

⁴² Weerasethakul Apichatpong in: Quandt, James. *Apichatpong Weerasethakul*. Synema – Ges. für Film und Medien, Vienne, 2009. p113

2.4 Rituals of projection



Illustration 2.7: Chen Chieh-jen 'Confession 25/告白 25' 1984 is one of his early underground actions against conditions of martial law



Illustration 2.8: *Voices of Orchid Island/蘭嶼觀點* (Hu Tai-Li, Taiwan, 1993) Hu Tai-li's ethnographic films often incorporate screenings for communities with whom she has worked to create commentary and interpretation from people she depicts. Here she screens film for indigenous group on Orchid Island

The cemetery or temple as place of assembly and offering should not be regarded as a foreign place for projection but as the home for interaction of living and the dead; it is in many ways a deeply cinematic place. Film exhibition as a space of metaphysical dialogue has numerous examples, from projection performances of Kidlat Tahimik, to Sky Hopinka's exploration of ancestral language, to the posthumous work of Raúl Ruiz or the various site specific 'states' of Morgan Fisher *Screening Room* (1968).⁴³ We can find particular contemporary explorations of this in Thailand as seen in the work of artists Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Korakrit Arunanondchai that extend a long tradition researched by scholars May Adadol Ingawanij and Richard MacDonald.⁴⁴ When projecting images of the dead why should we only show them to the living? The cemetery is the primary site for thinking of the metaphysical mediation of cinema itself. The question ahead of us then is, what are the means by which we make and construct cinema for this mediated metaphysical space?

⁴³ 'Screening Room is the point of view of the person who shot it, a real person, who unlike a fictional character will die. And by implication it's also the point of view of people who are watching it, and they will all die too.' - Fisher, Morgan In: Gronlund, Melissa 'Morgan Fisher: the man who wasn't there' *Sight & Sound*, 2010. Assessed January 2021 <https://www2.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/interviews/morgan-fisher-man-who-wasnt-there>

⁴⁴ For writing on traditions of ritual projection in Thailand see: MacDonald, Richard, 'Projecting Films to Spirits: On Shrines as Conjunctural Space and the Ritual Economy of Outdoor Cinema in Bangkok,' *Visual Anthropology Review*, 33(2): pp152-63; Ingawanij, May Adadol, 'Itinerant Cinematic Practices in and around Thailand During the Cold War,' *Southeast of Now: Directions in Modern and Contemporary Art in Asia*, 2(1): 2018 pp9-41. Weerasethakul, Apichatpong, *Ghosts in the Darkness*, In: Quandt, James. *Apichatpong Weerasethakul*. Synema – Ges. für Film und Medien, Vienne, 2009. pp104-116; Korakrit Arunanondchai's project connected to myth and offerings for Naga serpent *No history in a room filled with people with funny names 5* (2018)

To explore this I will look back at performative instances of projection to propose a different understanding of how and for whom films are sited. The history of film exhibition has been obscured by the power, commerce and colonial structures which have made invisible many modes of film exhibition around the world – both in terms of popular models of exhibition which were strategically filtered out in the establishment of film as an art⁴⁵ as well as subaltern film cultures whose mode of exhibition differed from standardised models connected to other cultural practices. One key history of performative exhibition which has had attention, often as an exemption, is that of the Japanese Benshi.

The Benshi needs to be considered as part of a rich and varied subaltern history of exhibition. Whereas the tradition of the Benshi in Japanese cinema has been studied and appreciated as a distinct part of silent film culture, the proliferation of this mode of film performance across Asia far beyond the silent period is not as well known. The continuation of the traditions of Benshi and similar models of filmic performance into the sound period was an expedient mode of making films accessible to language groups without means to make their own films or to dub them into local languages. The continuation of such performative traditions should not be understood only as an economic necessity but as a creative practice in itself that goes hand in hand with an appreciation of the performative rituals of cinema. Indeed in such practices we can find resistant models of standardisation and a form of projection sensitive to site, location and audience (issues later adapted in fields of expanded cinema and site specific art).

Following the Second World War in Thailand, the tradition expanded, further enabled by new technology (in particular accessible 16mm projectors) that opened up new avenues of exhibition. As Ingawanij has argued, the 'mobile projector made it much easier for films and versionists to reach previously unreachable pockets of the country, such as remote villages, islands, districts, and small towns.'⁴⁶ With this model of itinerant projection, a new figure, the 'versionist' emerged as Ingawanij describes. 'From the 1950s a greater number of people could make a living being a versionist. There emerged the phenomenon of the regional star versionist, and significantly more women came into the profession.'⁴⁷

⁴⁵ For study of the advent of one of the most influential institutions dedicated to cinema as art form see Wasson, Haidee. *Museum Movies: The Museum of Modern Art and the Birth of Art Cinema*. University of California Press, 2005. Wasson recounts a particularly insightful moment in early years of the Film Library founded in 1935 in which the curators sought to legitimise the way people watch films. As Wasson recounts in the cinema 'film viewers engaged in shouting matches, punctuated occasional by projectile objects. Such bad behaviour occurred frequently enough that the Film Library's first curator, Irish Barry, had a slide projector permanently installed in the museum's auditorium, equipped with a slide that read: "If the disturbance in the auditorium does not cease, the showing of this film will be discontinued." - Wasson, Haidee, p2. For discussion of early cinema and way it intersected with a wide range of cultural and social practices see Gaudreault, André, *Film and Attraction: From Kinematography to Cinema* (translation of *Cinéma et attraction* 2008 by Timothy Barnard). Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011

⁴⁶ Ingawanij, May Adadol, 'Figures of Plebeian Modernity: Film Projection as Performance in Siam/Thailand,' Southeast Asia Program Bulletin, Cornell University, Fall 2014. Accessed 20 January 2021: <http://seap.einaudi.cornell.edu/publication/2014-fall-bulletin>

⁴⁷ Ibid.

The history of such live performances and versioning can find parallel in the tradition of shooting different language versions of Hollywood films. With the advent of sound, Hollywood studios often employed Spanish crew and actors to create phantom versions of films for release in South America (as well as making films for French, German and Jewish audiences among other language groups). Rather than dubbing films in different languages, various films were shot cheaply at night on the same sets with Spanish speaking actors and crew.⁴⁸ When Ruiz and his contemporaries encountered Hollywood films in Santiago, we can wonder which version they watched. When they encountered *Dracula*, was it Bela Lugosi in the iconic role or Carlos Villarías in the Spanish version directed by George Melford on the sets and with same costumes as Tod Brownings' take?

Such histories of film exhibition, mobile and performative, versioned and multilingual, are products of economic necessity, means to reach audiences foregoing the quality of primary versions⁴⁹ often with reduced production values. It is worth remembering that the standardisation of cinema, 35mm film and running time under two hours, is a similar product of economic thinking rather than artistic vision. Rather than seeing these versions and performative models as diminished simulacra, I want to explore them as rich fragments of parallel and unrealised cinemas, ghosts projected into the limbo of film history. In these subaltern models the object of film is not static but a living entity remade through each projection. Projection is not just an exhibition mechanism but a crucial element in the production of a work and central to understanding how cinema forms part of cultural, social, political and spiritual life.

From its origins in the colonial context of early 1900s, Taiwan saw the emergence of distinct approaches to film projection remaking cinema for local contexts and providing a model for subaltern invention and, as we will later see, resistance. As Daw-Ming has observed '[t]here was no theatre dedicated specifically for showing films until the 1910s. Film exhibitions held by traveling projectionist when no theatre was available,

⁴⁸ Subtitling was a technically demanding and while in silent films new title cards were made for different language territories this was much more complex process for sound cinema. It is worth noting that cinema as a subaltern art form was accessible to wide range of people of different ages and levels of education. The Taiwanese projectionist Shun-Ji Xu in my interview recalled how film provided him a means to become literate. He started working in film projection as a 12 year old in 1963 after he had left elementary school in 2nd grade. 'I admit I was illiterate [...] People told me, "The screening tonight was a Japanese film," or "they were screening American film this time." I didn't understand those words and couldn't read them either. As a result, I tried to read a word from its radicals [characters]. If the word did not have a radical, I would read from the middle. After reading like this, I became able to read. I also asked around. In the early days, I spoke with a microphone about what the story is when I projected the film. There are people talking on the stage. When they talked, I listened and realized, "Ah! Now I got what that word is! I finally can read it!" This is how I learned to read.' - Interview with Shun-Ji Xu recorded after event *Mosquito Cinema: Journey to the West*, 14 May 2016, Tsung-yeh Artists Village, Madou, Taiwan. English translation by Erica Sheu, 2020

⁴⁹ 'In 1930, the founder of Universal Studios, Carl Laemmle, mistakenly watched a Spanish version instead of the original English movie. He was shocked by what he saw: the original version had strong lights provided by electric light while in the Spanish version only candles provided some dim light. Seeing this huge difference, Laemmle was very upset and from that moment he decided to have the same producer supervising both the American and the Spanish version of the same film.' - Lénárt, András. 'Hispanic Hollywood. Spanish-Language American Films in the 1920s and 1930s.' *Americana*. E-Journal of American Studies in Hungary. Vol. IX., No. 2. Fall 2013 (<http://americanajournal.hu/vol9no2/lenart>)

usually took place in makeshift tents or on stages in front of Taoist or Buddhist temples, or even in big empty lots in front of houses in rural areas.⁵⁰

During these early years various exhibition strategies developed to serve which local Taiwanese audiences who were 'attracted to theatres not only for the films that were being shown, but also for specific Benshi/辯士 narrator who sat or stood on stage next to the screen providing live narration, sound effects and sometimes even commenting on the silent films.'⁵¹ The growing influence and fame of Benshi performers led the Japanese colonial government in 1927 to begin issuing licenses to control their behaviour, recognising their importance and influence beyond the film being screened. With the arrival and popularity of talkies and sound films in Taiwan in 1929, Benshi performers began to disappear from cinemas. However this mainly affected cinemas catering to Japanese speaking audiences, as the Benshi continued to perform for Taiwanese audiences into the 1950s, as the languages of imported films was not understood by the majority of local citizens.⁵²

The Japanese administration, which had censored and monitored film production and exhibition since the mid-1910s, brought the practice into law with the 1926 Motion Pictures Film Inspection Rule, established to monitor all film production and exhibition on the island that would continue into the KMT rule. In the 1920s, Chinese films, largely produced in Shanghai, began to be exhibited in Taiwan. The first Chinese film known to be imported was *The Widow Wants to Remarry*/古井重波記 (Dan Duyu/朱瘦菊, 1923) distributed by a Tainan native who brought second hand prints from Luzon in the Philippines. It is interesting that the first wave of Chinese films shown in Taiwan came through South-East Asia. Direct imports had been prevented by the Japanese colonial government until 1925, in an effort to minimise the influence of mainland China. Later in 1937 the Government-General Office banned films from mainland China outright after Imperial Japan declared war with the Nationalist government of China and tightened control and inspection of all film production beginning at script stage and even requiring registration system for film professionals.

Prior to this clampdown a remarkable culture emerged that utilised the existing conditions of exhibition and found ways to circumvent the restrictions imposed by the colonial administration. The Taiwanese Cultural Association, which operated between 1921-1931, was led by figures involved in the anti-colonial resistance movement including the educators Lu Ping-ting/盧丙丁 and Chiang Wei-shui/蔣渭水. They were responsible for an influential yet short lived initiative called the *Beautiful Taiwan Society/Bitai Thoan*/美台團, active

⁵⁰ Lee, Daw-Ming. *Historical Dictionary of Taiwan Cinema*. Scarecrow Press, 2012., p5

⁵¹ Ibid, p8

⁵² "[t]his was mainly due to the unfamiliarity of Taiwanese audiences with the languages used in most films, whether Japanese, Chinese Mandarin, English or other European languages." - Daw-Ming Lee, Ibid, p11

between 1925-1927. I first heard about this when I met the contemporary artist Chen Chieh-jen in April 2014 and interviewed him for my film *Sea of Clouds* (2016). To describe his practice he told me the story of Bitai Thoan and has acknowledged this initiative as a major influence and inspiration of his own work.

Chen published an article in which he describes this remarkable initiative as follows:

During those colonial years, it was common for Japanese policemen or firemen to chaperone all movie showings at cinemas operated by local Taiwanese. Always seated in the very last row of the theatre, these Japanese officers—who knew some basic Chinese or were accompanied by translators—would monitor the silent-film narrators (辯士 or *benzi*), ensuring that there were no anti-colonial sentiments expressed or embedded in their explanation or narration. However, the narrators of Bitai Thoan would employ a host of slang, idioms or Taiwanese dialect in their delivery, using phrases and expressions that only the local audience would understand to deliberately impose anti-colonial readings onto innocuous, apolitical plot-lines. In response to such mis-interpretations, the audience would laugh, applaud, whistle and even cheer. Though the activities of Bitai Thoan lasted only two years, its legacy became an early prototype for effective strategies of cultural protest or art-based resistance.⁵³

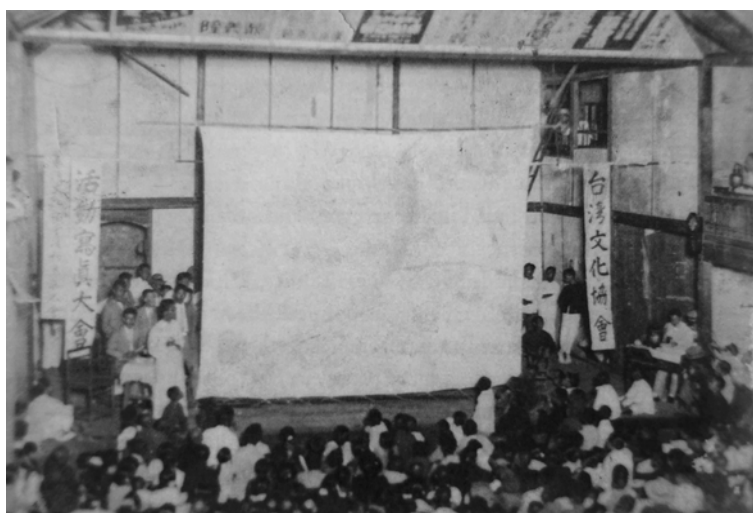


Illustration 2.9: *Beautiful Taiwan Society* / *Bitai Thoan*/美台團, photographer unknown, c. 1925-27

⁵³ Chieh-jen, Chen, 'Chen Chieh-jen On Bitai Thoan.' *ArtAsiaPacific*, Issue 98, May/June 2016. Accessed February 14, 2017. <http://artasiapacific.com/Magazine/98/ChenChiehjenOnBitaiThoan>

For Chen Chieh-jen this history of film exhibition is 'far beyond just moving image – it was practically a performance.'⁵⁴ Here we find a root connecting back across generations and administrations showing the resistant practice of projection. To understand resistant models of projection we need to look not just at the history of film production but equally to performance, art, social movements and cultural protest as sites of exchange of power. As Chen states, the 'space in which the silent film was screened became the site of a power exchange between the oppressor and the oppressed, as well as a site where sound, dialogue, theatre and other forms of cultural expression would collide.'⁵⁵ The scarcity of opportunities to work with film independently or to produce local films during periods of oppressive governance, such as that of Japanese occupation or the period of martial law under KMT, means that the history of cinema needs to take into account such inventive models of projection, exhibition and crucially, interpretation. As Chen continues, 'just as the colonizers made moving-image propaganda in order to 'educate' and 'enlighten' the colonized, the people had the power to deliberately misinterpret it.'⁵⁶

Projection is part of a series of social relations, where the absence of images, or the creation of resistant images and their interpretation, allows for 'rumours to ferment, magnify and disseminate.'⁵⁷ The rituals and operation of cinema can be made through an expansive array of means. As Chen argues, by simply utilising a 'dash of imagination,'⁵⁸ this group were able to upend the power dynamics and shift the notion of observation. In turn they shifted the cinema into a site of action and resistance rather than place of propaganda and oppression.⁵⁹

Michael Taussig has explored how rites and rituals have been used by national states to mythologise their power across Latin America. In *The Magic of the State* he explores parallels between practices of spirit possession, national politics and policing, showing how the state has borrowed and appropriated elements from South American Indigenous cultures. As Chen has recounted in the context of transformative projection in Taiwan, such utilisation of magic and rituals by the State also opens them to counter-measures. As Taussig goes on to argue that 'the very same powers of confusion and illusion can be turned against the

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ The project *Realm of Reverberations* (2015) was made as part of a series of works with former residents of Taipei's Losheng Sanatorium, which was founded in 1930 to house and quarantine sufferers of leprosy. The site became focus for Losheng Preservation Movement in early 2000s which was campaign to protect residents still living in the historical site against governments plans to tear down the building for the extension of MTR line. Chen was interested in what happened after the movement which had managed to get the government to agree to preserve the site following large protests in 2007. He followed the residents and people left behind after the campaign and press had left creating films with them and screening them back at the original site as you see documented in the still in Illustration 2.10.

state and used by ordinary people.⁶⁰ It is these strategies of counter use that I am most interested in, and which bridge contexts from South East Asia to Latin America, where artists utilise ritual as means to misinterpret codes of colonial or national authority. I will explore this shared misuse through work of CADA/Colectivo de Acciones de Arte and Ruiz in following sections. But first will focus on my own encounter and beginning of work with these traditions of projection in Taiwan.



Illustration 2.10: *Realm of Reverberations — The Ritual of Film Screening/殘響世界—放映儀式*, 2015. Chen Chieh-jen projected back his films for Losheng residents and family. Photo Chen Chieh-jen

⁶⁰ Taussig, Michael T. *The Magic of the State*. Psychology Press, 1997. p123

2.5 Mosquito cinema



Illustration 2.11: Madou plants from *Mountains and Rivers of Home* (George Clark, 35mm, 2017) 35mm frame enlargement

Friday 20 May 2016, Madou

I have spent three months in living in Madou in the south of Taiwan as part of the Tainan Artist In Residence programme. I was due to be staying in the artists' accommodation in the village of Jiali adjacent to old sugar warehouses established by the Jiali Sugar Factory in 1906. They had been re-opened as the Soulangh Cultural Park in 2005. I had arrived early in the day on a direct flight from Hong Kong at Tainan airport. The small airport is housed in a former military base which had shed little of its former purpose. Jiali was rainy and cold in early March in stark contrast to Manila where I had spent the previous month, a welcome warm sanctuary full of energy and companionship. We stayed in Kiri Dalena's flat, part of Kidlat Tahimik's compound in Quezon City, as guests of Zi Yun Lam who was doing residency with Green Papaya, but living in more spacious conditions with the ever welcoming John Torres and Shireen Seno. That evening I was joined by another artist from Italy called Giacomo and we both spent an uneasy night in the artist accommodation. A large old garage next to the building had been destroyed that day and the smashed roof tiles, unmistakable made from asbestos, lay in large pile next to our accommodation.

Giacomo woke me the following morning with his suitcase packed saying he couldn't and I shouldn't stay. He'd been up all night googling asbestos dust and talking with his parents. Overcoming my initial impulse to grin and bare it, and my happiness to be in Taiwan with a place to stay for next few months, I joined Giacomo to meet with the residency staff to discuss the inhospitality of the accommodation. Later that day, after a short drive we moved into our replacement accommodation in the Tsung-Yeh cultural park in nearby village of Madou (home of an old cinema which was featured in a short film by Hou Hsiao Hsien/侯孝賢 I later

discovered). We move into our new home which are former offices of the Meji Sugar Cooperation, a stark contrast to the toxic dorms of Jiali.

This was my first official residency, an opportunity to develop a solo exhibition and focus on the project I have been inching along since 2011 when I first started travelling to Taiwan and filming in the house we occupied in Sylmar California. Buoyed by the opportunity and my good luck in finding a place at late notice, nevertheless I was nervous and anxious, trying to manage my feeling of being an imposer and figure out how to be artist (whatever that meant) after many years passing as a curator. I had completed the application very quickly while sleeping on an inflatable mattress (enjoyed by previous guest Peter Kubelka no less) on the top floor of Mark and Maria's house, on a strange return trip to London to present a series on Japanese Expanded Cinema at Tate Modern with Go and Julian, after my exit only a few months previously. This was my second false exit from London. My previous attempt to leave London for Los Angeles in 2010 was followed only a month later when I returned to secure my journalist visa.

My anxious energy and trepidation was also a foreshadowing of my sadness that this was only going to be a temporary life as the experience was idyllic in so many ways. The rainy first few weeks were filled with bike journeys into the village to find seeds and start growing a garden. The garden bridged my London hiatus to continue the garden I first began in Sylmar. The old rusty bikes squeaked on the increasingly warm journeys into the village to buy fruit and vegetables in the market, more garden supplies and stops at the beautifully positioned traditional tea stall next to a Filipino store on the outskirts of town. The bike ride back and forth was enlivened by the many tableaux of plants potted in everything from old tires to paint cans, assembled as rich still lives all along the street. The shifting sounds of insects as you cycled from the village and past the rice fields, the sweet smell of flowering pomelo, the warm familiar sounds of Tagalog that could be heard from communing nurses, bringing back the memories of new friends in Manila and a reminder of the proximity of Taiwan to other regions in the South.

During a short one month residency in Taipei at the Kuandu Museum, the calm respite from family issues was broken. My naïve faith in what I could talk about and include from family history in the project was starkly revoked. The sanctuary we thought we had found was shattered and we were violently reminded of the damage that had been done to our family relationships. As frustrated as I was with myself for putting us back in this position of conflict, I also realised the depths of trauma I was naively exposing. I wanted desperately to return to Madou's sense of freedom, to my garden and sense of life rather than death. I realised that my false exits from London now found a mirror in false exits from family fall-out. Defeated and deflated I emailed Soulangh to tell them we needed to destroy the flyers we had printed and we had to change the title for my exhibition.

To prolong the life of cut flowers, it is best to trim the stem underwater at an angle, this has dual function of avoiding air bubbles entering the stem as well as maximising the mineral intake of the flower. A clean cut is not necessarily a direct cut. The path to prolong life can often be oblique. The false start and spectre of creating a failed project (subconsciously doomed to fail?) brought up concern that in my wilfulness and arrogance hid

many frustrations from my struggle with all forms of authority, as well as fear of my claim to be an artist. Fear of being exposed had been deflected through years of acting in drag as curator or writer (with the thrill that I was woefully inexperienced and undereducated for both roles). The project I had been working on maybe always had a backstop which would make it unrealisable. A gesture of self-sabotage maybe locked in to challenge myself, a prohibitor to foreshadow my own inability to take on and reposition myself? Worry about what would happen when my outside passions could take centre ground. Would I still be able to focus on them or would I be looking again for exits? In the midst of this collapsing and second guessing, the memory of Ruiz's Taiwan project came back to me. Was I unconsciously making my own unfinished film? Seeking to create something with the evocative status and as tantalising a description as Ruiz's apocryphal Taiwanese production? All my claims to be contrary belie an internal subterfuge. Had I, in my vanity, self-sabotaged my own project?

In the confusion of these feelings came both the realisation of the entanglement I had been fascinated by and drawn to, but which I experienced as a spectator. To be fascinated by fragments was entirely different to the heartbreak of having your life collapse. The fall out and humiliation of the unrealised is entirely different to the armchair speculations or paper architecture I had been entertaining. This collapse was a point of becoming, a realisation of fragility, the struggle to shed protections of professional appendages I had adopted, the challenges of making something, the many doubts about how things can exist and how to make them exist in a fuller way. I was beginning to realise these issues are much more involved in making a film than many of my other experiences. I had to find a way to shift the focus of my project and find a way to move ahead without the material I had previously been wedded to.

When I returning to the exhibition I found new ways, new conditions to re-align the material. The unseen is another form of being, another way of showing. The shift made me think back to Ruiz's aborted project and realise how its state of non-being can also be productive, that it could provide new conditions and new forms to make something. As Gilles Deleuze argues '[t]he aim of philosophy is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced.'⁶¹ The conditions for this becoming, this model of production are ways to approach temporal phenomena, to think about time is to think about movement not about eternal matters. The fragment, the temporal are part of the conditions for new thought.

These experiences brought Ruiz's project vividly into my mind. As I moved ahead with reforming my work for the exhibition under the new title *A Planter's Art*, I started to assemble material and lay foundations to move towards a new project in the orbit of Ruiz's lost film, to bring it from the periphery of my attention to the centre as means to work out of the blockages I had confronted. While in Tainan I have an interview for the PhD programme at Westminster and received the news in the early spring that I had been offered a place and scholarship to start in October, despite the fact that I had given what I felt was the worst interview in my life when proposing the project. The unfinished, I started to realise, is an opening, an invitation to produce.

⁶¹ Deleuze, Gilles and Parnet, Claire, *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, New York, Columbia, 1987, pvii



Illustration 2.12: *Untitled (Eyemo roll #86)* (George Clark, 2016)
35mm frame enlargement. Archive and shine of temple film
projectionist Shun-Ji Xu in Pingtung

While in Taiwan in 2016 I conducted various research trips to explore the history of ceremonial film projection that traditionally takes place outside of temples, in cemeteries or other places of worship or ancestral tribute as. Foundational to this research was a meeting in the southern town of Pingtung in south of Taiwan. Together with curator Yuling Chou we visited Shun-Ji Xu/許順吉, a film projectionist specialising in showing films as part of ancestral worship, where the act of film exhibition is integrated with offerings to gods and ancestors.⁶² Here I will let him explain in his own words how he began working as a projectionist:

My name is Xu, Shun-Ji Xu, and I live in Southern Pingtung. Maybe some parts of my story only make sense to older people. The most important industry of this society has shifted from agriculture to manufacturing, then from manufacturing to IT. I started to work as a projectionist in 1963 (I was 12 then) and at this time nobody wants to study for higher education: to study was to waste your life! I was illiterate and all I could do was learn a skill to earn a living. [...] You see, I was 12 at that time, and my brother was in the army he had been learning how to screen movies, and he was already a professional projectionist in 1963. [...]

From 1963 to 1968, no matter if it is romantic film or martial art (*Wu-Xia*) film, the industry was very prosperous. At the time, United International Pictures, Shaw Brothers Pictures, Golden Harvest Pictures, Always Good Film Co, Cinema City Company Limited, etc. I can't name it all. There were

⁶² See May Adadol Ingawanij's work on itinerant projectionists and versionists in Thailand and Richard MacDonald's *Film Projection and the Sacred Geography of Site-Specific Cinema in Contemporary Thailand*. In: Virginia Crisp and Gabriel Menotti, eds. *Practices of Projection*. Oxford University Press (Forthcoming)

too many. Look at all those films. Isn't that Polly Kuan acting in... *Dragon Inn*. See! At that time, I was close to become a master. A ticket to the outdoor cinema is one dollar and 50 cent (Taiwan Dollar) See! Fully seated. Even the art film. It was because people had nowhere else to go (at the time). What would you do at home? You worked so hard in the day. Okay.. okay. Let's go out to take a walk. But where to? Or you just ended up listen to radio. There is only radio in that era.⁶³

Shun-Ji Xu maintained a large collection of vintage film projectors and an informal archive of 35mm films that he had accumulated through his life of work starting as boy in the 1960s when his first job was couriering film reels by bicycle from temple to temple during Chinese New Year so the same film print would be shared between temples by staggering the start times. Prized among his collection of equipment were various Japanese projectors (and their Taiwanese copies) and his still operating carbon fibre projector. In his small garage his film collection is held with a shrine and numerous spare parts. Shun-Ji Xu explained that the projection of films at Temples, as an extension of the custom of ancestral worship, follows distinct protocols in terms of the placement of the screen (in direct alignment with the temple entrance) and modes of presentation. The screen itself has distinct red border to match that of the entrance to the temple. In particular Shun-Ji Xu would also performs special ceremonial form of vocal address when presenting and announcing screenings for the Gods and sees this as much a part of his job as the projection of films.

The tradition of screenings in temples became increasingly popular in the 1980s in Taiwan which has been linked to the rise of lottery called 大家樂/Da Jia Le (literally translates as *Everybody's Happy*) for which gamblers would go to temples, and even cemeteries, to ask ancestral ghosts for good luck.⁶⁴ As such the screenings organised at temples functioned as a means by which people would replay debts after winning in the lottery. Other forms of entertainment for ancestors regularly featured music as well as firework displays, puppet shows and also strip tease and poll dancing. On special occasions there may be a host of forms presented in parallel or overlapping. Shun-Ji Xu described how in the 1990s it 'was trendy that the public theaters were all out there. Even the Taiwanese opera or puppetry show were all in the public outdoor theater. However, later on the outdoor theater closed one by one. There is not one left now...'⁶⁵

⁶³ Interview with Shun-Ji Xu recorded after event Mosquito Cinema: Journey to the West, 14 May 2016, Tsung-yeh Artists Village, Madou, Taiwan. English translation by Erica Sheu, 2020

⁶⁴ 'At that time, many more gamblers began to worship ghosts to seek winning lottery numbers. They worshipped ghosts rather than gods because their request was not one that gods in community temples would answer, since it would be against traditional moral principles. However, in Chinese religious culture ghosts, in contrast to ancestors, are the spirits of people who have died without having descendants, or who for some reason broke the link with their lineages and social groups. In other words, ghosts are unidentifiable and regarded as the manifestation of anomaly in the family system. As such, nobody has an obligation to take care of them after they die, and ghosts are therefore homeless and miserable, wandering in the living world and haunting people for a better lot.' - Shih, Fang-Long, Asia Research Centre. 'Death Betting Not a Part of Taiwanese Culture.', 25 January 2013. Accessed February 22, 2017. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/researchAndExpertise/units/TaiwanProgramme/Statements/Death-Betting-Not-a-Part-of-Taiwanese-Culture.aspx>.

⁶⁵ Interview with Shun-Ji Xu recorded after event Mosquito Cinema: Journey to the West, 14 May 2016, Tsung-yeh Artists Village,



Illustration 2.13: *Untitled (Eyemo roll #86)*, George Clark, 2016, 35mm frame enlargement. Visit to workshop of temple film projectionist Shun-Ji Xu in Pingtung



Illustration 2.14: 'Mosquito Cinema: Journey to the West', event at Tsung-Yeh Arts and Cultural Centre, organised by George Clark and The Other Cinema Collective, May 2016

As well as visiting and interviewing Shun-Ji Xu, we invited him work with us and project a film outside of the site of my temporary studio during my residency in Madou. The screening in May 2016 was held for the local community and organised with Taipei based curatorial group called The Other Cinema collective/另一種影像記事. Using the traditional name of such outdoor screenings 'Mosquito Cinema,' the event consisted of an evening of screenings selected from Shun-Ji Xu's print collection. The screening started with the short devotional film *Drunken Eight Immortals*/醉八仙, which is a popular Chinese opera filmed as through looking through the entrance of a temple up into the heavens (complete with red pillars on each side of the screen). Such films are shown as offerings both ancestral, religious and national. As Shun-Ji Xu stated 'I'm still doing projection for Gods' birthday. When Taiwan Television shot the *Yang Li-hua Taiwanese Opera Group* show, *bàn xiān* (wizard in Chinese mythology), they kept the performance till today. If you are observant, you would feel the changes. They also released one called "Long Live Republic of China" later, right? Those were shot in the 1950s (60s in RoC year). I think I've been using these that were shot in the 1950s my whole life, even till today.'⁶⁶

Shun-Ji Xu acted as the compère for the evening and introduced each film, presenting the short, fragment of black and white Japanese film and the feature presentation of *New Pilgrims to the West*/新西遊記 (1982), a popular retelling of classic *Journey to the West*/西遊記. This event entangled the performative models of film projection I was increasingly interested in and my own emergent film and exhibition practice. This connection proved prophetic, laying the foundation for a new approach to developing and thinking about cinema in an expanded field of actions and material, which would be central to the conception and development of the

Madou, Taiwan. English translation by Erica Sheu, 2020

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Double Ghosts project. In compressing the gap between production and exhibition in cinema, the site specific event was a way to explore how a projector could be temporarily planted in the same way as a camera can be placed without taking root. In this model of itinerant projection I was also beginning to locate a model of exhibition making as bridge between states of being, addressing both the living and dead. This action which leaves no trace but its shadow provided a crucial model for putting into play a chain of connections and model of assemblage I would develop over the course of the project. These experiences would be brought to reflect on projections for a lost film as well as shadows and echoes of Chilean history, Ruiz's displacement and interrupted futures. Before I go into the shadows left by Ruiz's lost film, I will take some time to look at movement and displacement in his work and the notion of the return, the *exote* and horror.

2.6 On returning

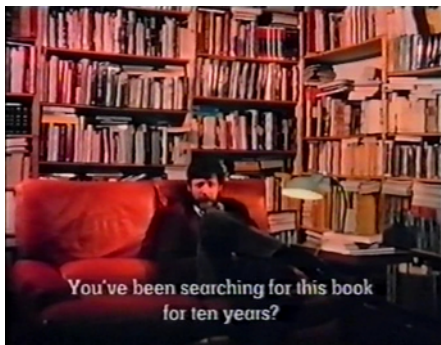


Illustration 2.15: *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (Raúl Ruiz, 1983)

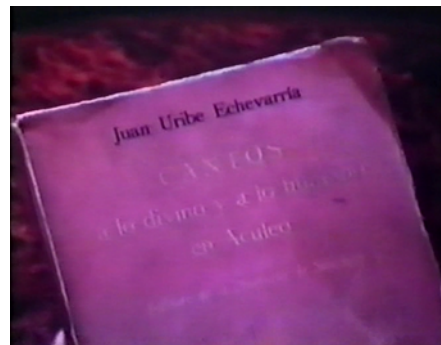


Illustration 2.16: *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (Raúl Ruiz, 1983)

In 1982 when Ruiz had the first opportunity to return to Chile after the coup, he was struck by the contradictions and multiple occupations of the country following his departure. On his return he made the short super 8 film *Letter from a Filmmaker, or The Return of a Library Lover/Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (1983). As Charles Tesson has written, the film depicts a survivor who 'returns to the land of the dead and comes across his doppelgänger and phantom friends.'⁶⁷ Using the modest structure of a documentary, the film operates as a subversive home movie.

It is one of Ruiz's most personal films, guiding us through his former homes in Santiago and Vin del Mar, streets and neighbourhood, of his past life populated with motifs from his films. The film's dramatic voice-over describes the protagonist's attempts to reclaim his memory of 10 September 1973, the eve of Pinochet's coup. As he states 'I had lost my memories of that night, yet I was still attached to them.'⁶⁸ In surveying his library in his home in Chile the protagonist realises there is something wrong with this world, a pink book is absent. Ruiz uses the logic of a library as a representation of the world from which the absent memory becomes increasingly troublesome. As Alberto Manguel has commented 'entering a library, I am always struck by the way in which a certain vision of the world is imposed upon the reader through its categories and its order.'⁶⁹ Here the disorder of the world is hinted at by this absent book, this colour, that is missing from his memory. Without the book the narrator 'would never rediscover my country's true colours.'⁷⁰

With this search Ruiz brings real friends into his fiction, in the same way he brings in streets and homes from

⁶⁷ Tesson, Charles, 1983, reprinted in *Intentional Film Festival Rotterdam catalogue*, 2004.

⁶⁸ From the dialogue from *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (Raúl Ruiz, 1983)

⁶⁹ Manguel, Alberto, *The Library at Night*. Yale University Press, 2008. p47

⁷⁰ From the dialogue from *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (Raúl Ruiz, 1983)

his past. At various points in the narration the voice credits the ancient Mayans from whom he learnt habits such as changing his library every five years, to the ability to sleep without interrupting his journey, and changing his childhood home 'as one changes his native country'.⁷¹ After a meeting with a bookseller who describes the global economic entanglement of Chile and China, he loses his desire to search for the book and decides to 'simply wander around the country'.⁷² He resumes the hunt only when he meets an old friend whom he is shocked to see as he has been dead for ten years. When the ghost of his friend finally leaves he discovers the book on his chair. The *famous pink book* is a copy of Juan Uribe Echevarría's *Cantos a lo divino y a lo humano en Aculeo: folklore de la provincia de Santiago*⁷³, an anthology of lyrics and commentary on the folk ballads of Chile. In the book he finds the key to what happened on the night of Pinochet's coup in an obscure poem from his childhood. He has never managed to learn the poem by heart, and he tells us, in the final moments of the film, that he never will.

The trauma and rupture of the military coup are subversively present in Ruiz's darkly humorous return expedition. The real history is folded into a series of performances which exaggerate the projections onto the elusive subject of the past. Under the guise of a personal travelogue Ruiz instead presents a play of stubborn shadows and resistant poetic objects. Ruiz's method we can understand, as Adrian Martin argues, as 'the attempt to find a connection, in the course of creating a work, between elements that are not evidently connected at the outset'.⁷⁴ In its search for one truth the film unravels more fictions. The desire for an absent aspect of a personal experience is resisted throughout. As an exiled filmmaker Ruiz worked to escape the restrictions of being a transparent heroic compatriot or a victim of political calamity. Throughout this work he shifted the terms and refused to play either of these roles or be subjected to a simplified political condition.

In his refusal of transparency we can see his work in terms of Glissant's notion of opacity⁷⁵. Here Ruiz resists his commission's obligation to be subjected to the terms of his exile. Under the guise of revealing the experience of the coup, he instead shows how the personal is another layer in a series of fictions. In this way he asserts his right, and that of his co-conspirators to project and perform their own realities.

The references to Mayan traditions as well as the traditions of folk music both point to aspects of culture on the periphery of national discourse in Chile, pointing toward the pre-colonial culture and the unschooled and

⁷¹ The presence of Mayan culture also accompanied Robert Smithson on his travels in the Yucatan which will be discussed in more detail in following chapter in connection with his essay *Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan*, Artforum, September 1969

⁷² From the dialogue from *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (Dir. Raúl Ruiz, 1983)

⁷³ Echevarría, Juan Uribe. *Cantos a lo divino y a lo humano en Aculeo: folklore de la provincia de Santiago*. Santiago: Universitaria, 1962

⁷⁴ Martin, Adrian, 'A Ghost at Noon', 20 August 2011, <http://girishshambu.blogspot.co.nz/2011/08/ghost-at-noon-by-adrian-martin.html>

⁷⁵ Glissant, Édouard. 'For Opacity' In *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. pp189-194

subversive world of popular folk ballads. These fields are part of a South America constellation made up of stubborn shadows, fragments and ghosts, the multiple interrupted futures from the suppression of indigenous culture to the collapse of the socialist movement under Allende. To paraphrase the title of Ruiz's 1975 film, these fragments are *the scattered body of the world turned upside down*.

While I was in Santiago I visited Ruiz's former apartment to meet with Veronica Sarmiento, the sister of Ruiz's partner Valeria. She gave me a copy of the original French language script for *The Comedy of Shadows*. The full script has a prologue and introduction I have never seen before. After I returned to London I ask Phoebe Weston-Evans to translate the script and compare it with the published 'Fragments of a screenplay' translated by Adrian Martin in *Raúl Ruiz: Images of Passage*.⁷⁶ It quickly becomes apparent that the material published in the book is not a fragment of a script which is whole elsewhere, but rather the fragment is the form of the script. The only missing parts (except for a few lines) are the opening prose sections. Fragment is the form.

The prose sections in the script have two titles, one typed and one written, as follows: *Allegories* (typed) / *Synopsis* (written) followed by *Introduction* (typed) / *Scenario* (written). The two page Allegories/Synopsis tells story of the five characters presenting them as representatives of the five elements in Chinese cosmology drawing on Buddhist teaching.⁷⁷ The Allegories/Synopsis section takes the form of a fantastical fable in the style of Chang Tzu and other Taoist writings about the entanglement of the elements. Ruiz has his own variations of the elements of Chinese cosmology giving them as Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and fifth element variously as Void or Wind. This would suggest a combination of elements from the 5 Phases /Wuxing/五行 (Fire/火 huǒ, Water/水 shuǐ, Wood/木 mù, Metal/金 jīn, and Earth /土 tǔ) and the 8 Trigrams or Bagua/八卦 of I Ching and Taoist cosmology (Heaven/乾 Qián/☰, Earth/坤 Kūn/☷, Thunder/震 Zhèn/☳, Water/坎 Kǎn/☵, Mountain/艮 Gèn/☶, Wind/巽 Xùn/☴, Flame/離 Lí/☲, Lake/兌 Duì/☱).

⁷⁶ Bandis, Helen, McDonald, Grant, Martin, Adrian, Eds., *Raúl Ruiz: Images of Passage*. Rouge Press, 2004. pp75-85

⁷⁷ The text makes passing reference to the *traité de cinq éléments* which could be reference to Miyamoto Musashi's *Treaty of Five Rings* a classic text on martial arts written by Japanese swordsman around 1645 with one book for each element.

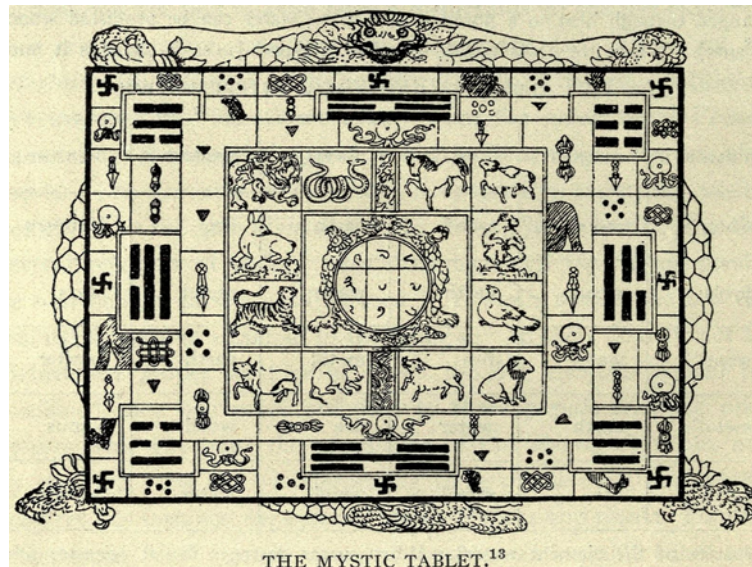


Illustration 2.17: *The Mystic Tablet* (unknown Tibetan artist) reproduced in Waddell, 'The Buddhism of Tibet: Or Lamaism, With Its Mystic Cults, Symbolism And Mythology, And In Its Relation To Indian Buddhism' (1895), p. 453. The luoshu magic square can be seen on back of small turtle in the centre surrounded by animals of Chinese zodiac and the The Eight Trigrams all of which appear on the back on large turtle

The Allegories/Synopsis presents various stories behind the characters we later encounter. The fables discuss relation across generations and in particular between different forms of knowledge. The last story recounts how Character 1 knows the world only through his central truth he knows so totally he is unable to learn new knowledge. He eventually is able to transfer his one truth to a tortoise. The gaze, shell and belly of the tortoise come to represent the world. At the end of his life he turns into a tortoise himself only to be stolen for money and dropped on the head of character 4. The passage concludes with the cliff hanger stating that 'Yes, character 4 also has a story to tell' that we never hear. There are echoes here of the Chinese creation myths and origins of the Eight Trigrams central to *I Ching*/易經. In ancient China a divine tortoise is said to have originally revealed the Eight Trigrams to Fu Xi /伏羲 and the Luoshu magic square to Emperor Yu/夏禹 in the unusual markings on its shell which became the foundation for Chinese divination and the art of geomancy, Feng Shui/風水. In these systems and charts we can see parallel to the Lullian combinatory systems Ruiz was inspired by.

These allegories show how we should understand the fragments of the script not in terms of absences but as a form themselves. These fables reflect on the process of filmmaking and the status of fragments. As one passage recounts the encounter of Character 3 with a man who knew everything:

Any time they encountered a piece of knowledge, a book or a thought that was difficult to comprehend, his wife would cut away a piece of his body. After these successive amputations, he was eventually left without a body. In the end, an eye was all that remained of him. The woman buried the eye at the foot of a tree next to the river. The river stones became eyes that could be used to reveal the images imprinted on film. Every time the woman removed a piece of his body, he would exclaim: this fragment is a child of our love!⁷⁸

The combinatory approach to knowledge, film and fragmentation is central to the film as the opening *Introduction/Synopsis* makes even clearer. Here we are introduced to the character of Ki, a celebrated documentary filmmaker from Keelung (town on northern coast of Taiwan near to Chin Pao San cemetery) whose work and ambitions are recounted in his shooting diary found following his death:

Exactly one year ago, I was looking for funding for a film, an adaptation of Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. A producer in Tokyo and another in Switzerland were interested in the project. The only thing was that both of them wanted to sit with it for a few months to think about it and I needed to work straight away.

A friend came to the rescue. He was a sculptor and had recently received a sizeable commission for a series of sculptures to stand in the park of one of the island's largest cemeteries. I decided to use the time given to me by my potential producers by making a documentary about my friend's work.

The original idea was, as is often the case with my films, very simple. It consisted of following the stone on its journey from the moment it is found by the sea or in the mountains, to the moment when, transformed, it is absorbed into the cemetery. For me, this journey held a metaphor for life. It was clear that this idea, the irony of which thinly masked its pretension, would only irritate the commissioners of the film. However, they were very judicious and concealed their disappointment with elegance and resignation. Shooting started in utmost secrecy one dismal November day. It rained and the forecast was for a particularly cold and stormy month.⁷⁹

Here we can see how Ruiz has combined his various readings and fictions with the real life and fictional circumstances of film production. The project folds in his own ambitions through various ciphers and stand-ins, echoes and shadows present throughout his work. We will see later that this collapsing of fictional and

⁷⁸ Ruiz, Raúl. *The Comedy of Shadows*, translated by Adrian Martin (2004) with additional translation by Phoebe Weston-Evans (2018), unpublished, p3

⁷⁹ Ibid, p2.

non-fictional elements is central to rethinking work with fragments outside of a binary dichotomies. The sculptor, filmmaker and cemetery itself, as we will see, have real world parallels. The producers interested in the adaptation of Pirandello is an invention of the scenario but would not be surprising if Ruiz himself was in negotiations with producers for such a project. When I met with Valeria Sarmiento to talk about *The Comedy of Shadows* in November 2017, she reminded me that this is just one of three projects he hoped to realise in China. We will come back to these fragments later on, but first will look at the allegories suggested in the scenario and explore the importance of ghosts and the figure of the *exote*.

2.7 The exote and the ghost

Rien n'est vrai, tout est vivant / Nothing is true, everything is Alive

- Inscription on grave of Édouard Glissant in Martinique⁸⁰

We had been out of Chile for 10 years and we started going from time to time since 1984 to see the family, hiding out. And let me tell you, they rang our doorbell in the middle of the night to tell us, “We know you’re here.” So we came to see the family, and we had observed how Chile had turned into a country with a savage capitalism—terrible. Everyone was talking about hidden tombs that had been found. And all of those elements appeared in Ruiz’s fictions. He had a good nose—that was important. - Valeria Sarmiento, 2018⁸¹

Sarmiento and Ruiz began returning to Chile in the late 1980s. Following the 1988 referendum, which led to the end of martial law on 11 March 1990, they both begin producing work in Chile once more. One of Ruiz’s first projects was *La telenovela errante/The Wandering Soap Opera*, which was developed during a short workshop in 1990 with a cast of actors including some past collaborators ‘playing as if all of Chile was a telenovela – reality literally becomes Baudrillard’s idea of simulacra.’⁸² His vision of Chilean reality, though, was not to be seen until after his death when it was finally completed by Sarmiento in 2017. On returning to Chile Ruiz adopted the attitude ‘of an *exote*. I tried to show how strange Chile has become to me.’⁸³ An *exote*, as Ruiz defines it, is ‘someone who finds that the most exotic country is the country where they were born.’⁸⁴

This concept is derived from the work of French poet and Sinologist Victor Segalen (1878-1919), and in particular his unfinished text *Essai sur l'exotisme*.⁸⁵ In its fragmented form, the text offered an influential defence of difference, of the *diverse*, not as novelty but an impenetrable otherness essential to poetic thought, resistant to expression or translation. His championing of this resistant opacity is a key defence of

⁸⁰ For detailed reflection on Glissant’s grave and the place of such sites in his writing see Loichot, Valérie. ‘Édouard Glissant’s Graves’ *Callaloo*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2013, pp. 1014–1032. *JSTOR*. Accessed 21 May 2020: www.jstor.org/stable/24264962

⁸¹ Film Comment. ‘Interview: Valeria Sarmiento’, 8 February 2018. <https://www.filmcomment.com/blog/interview-valeria-sarmiento/>

⁸² Raúl Ruiz from interview with newspaper La Época, November 1990, republished in Cuneo, Bruno. *Ruiz: entrevistas escogidas, filmografía comentada*. Ediciones Universidad Diego Portales, 2013. This is also the origin of the rumour that Ruiz shot the film in 6 days which Valeria dismissed as a fiction in her 2018 interview saying: ‘A fiction had to be made for the fiction to come alive.’ - Grijalba, Jaime ‘Interview: Valeria Sarmiento’, *Film Comment* 8 February 2018. Accessed January 22, 2021 <https://www.filmcomment.com/blog/interview-valeria-sarmiento/>

⁸³ Ruiz, Raúl ‘Ruiz on Ruiz: a filmography’, In. Gavin Smith and Mark McElhatten, Eds. *Film Comment* 33:1 Jan/Feb 1997, p26

⁸⁴ Ruiz made the short film *L'Exote* (40 min, Switzerland, 1991) at the FEMIS film school inspired by this idea, see *Ibid*, p25

⁸⁵ Segalen is reputed to have worked on the text for over a decade but it was not published during his lifetime. Selections from the notes were published in 1955; a full version of the text appeared in 1978 in Segalen, Victor, *Essai sur l'exotisme: une esthétique du divers*. Éditions Fata Morgana, 1978. English version translated and edited by Yaël Rachel Schlick, *Essay on Exoticism: An Aesthetics of Diversity*. Duke University Press, 2002.

the fragment as a poetic form. His work in all its fractured form is marked by a questioning self-reflectivity, as James Clifford has observed. In his work, Segalen and his avatars encounter 'doubles and reflections, but the mirrors are never perfect.'⁸⁶ Throughout his work a 'displacement occurs. By the end of his career the self, not the other, has become exotic. It is this opening of a fissure in the subject, however slight – a passage in time, a surprising angle of vision-that constitutes "le Divers."⁸⁷ In his uncertainty Segalen identifies the projections colouring his writing; the 'imagined *reality* confuses the dominant historical category'⁸⁸ of the European (male heterosexual) observer. This reversal and displacement of the self fascinated Ruiz.

Édouard Glissant referred to Segalen as 'one of the first poets of Relation'⁸⁹ for his work on cultural diversity which resists universalisation, which Glissant developed in his famous call for the right to opacity as a defence of difference⁹⁰. As he has argued '[o]ne cannot be a historian unwittingly, or work on language, and yet isolate oneself from the drama of the relationship that the poet Segalen clearly identified when he tried to contrast diversity of the world to the spread of a dominate sameness.'⁹¹ Segalen was a complex and somewhat tragic figure whose distinct approach to the concept of difference was also mirrored in his cultural alienation which in turn led Glissant to distance himself from him in his later work. As Charles Forsdick has noted, Segalen 'is cited to illustrate the harmful effects of the loss of dialectics [...] Glissant sees this failure as the logical outcome of a relativist system (such as Segalen's exoticism) which accepts the relativity of all other theories except its own.'⁹²

Ruiz's notion of the exote is derived from this contradictory state of being between cultures. In Glissant's *Poetics of Relation* he addresses the early death of Segalen, whose body was found in mysterious circumstances in a forest in Brittany with *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* opened to *Hamlet* beside him. Glissant argues that '[l]ike every European of his day, he was marked with a substantial, even if unconscious, dose of ethnocentrism. But he was also possessed, more than any of his contemporaries, by this absolute and incomplete generosity that drove him to realize himself elsewhere. He suffered from this accursed contradiction. Unable to know that a transfer into transparency ran counter to his project and that, on the contrary, respect for mutual forms of opacity would have accomplished it, he was heroically consumed

⁸⁶ Clifford, James. *The Predicament of Culture*. Harvard University Press, 1988. p161

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p162

⁸⁹ Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. p27

⁹⁰ "Whatever happens elsewhere has immediate repercussions here. [...] today the individual, without having to go anywhere, can be directly touched by things elsewhere, sometimes even before his community, family, social group, or nation has been enriched by the same effect. This immediate and fragmentary repercussion on individuals, as individuals, permitted the premonitions of Victor Segalen or Raymond Roussel or the Douanier Rousseau-the first poets of Relation." - Édouard Glissant, Ibid, pp26-27

⁹¹ Glissant, Édouard, *Caribbean Discourse*, trans. J. Michael Dash, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999, p70

⁹² Forsdick, Charles. *Victor Segalen and the Aesthetics of Diversity: Journeys between Cultures*. OUP Oxford, 2000. p96

in the impossibility of being Other. Death is the outcome of the opacities, and this is why the idea of death never leaves us.⁹³

In this section I will try to bridge between Glissant and Ruiz through the figure of Segalen, who as an *exote* or wanderer, provided a model for Glissant's concept of relation. The *l'errant* (translated as *wanderer*) was a central figure in Glissant's work, described by Celia Britton as one who 'explores the world, aspires to know it in its totality, but realizes that he never will.'⁹⁴ The encounter with this unknowability leads to the 'infinitely open-ended, uncontainable aspect of Relation.'⁹⁵ For both Glissant and Ruiz, Segalen's desire and longing presented a fascinating model of being and a warning, his desire to realise himself elsewhere led him to deterritorialize himself to such a degree that he disappeared. Death, which Glissant has referred to as the 'supreme errantry',⁹⁶ will be key a factor in the following discussion as I aim to explore Relation in terms of culture, memory and the dead. Through reading of Ruiz's work we can see how his figuring of absence gives a distinct model to address memory and death, which I will frame with reflection on Glissant's writing around issues of displacement, relation and opacity.

Segalen's position of looking and longing provided Ruiz a lens to explore the reality of Chile and its transformations after the period of his exile, and to peruse it with a relational perspective to see his 'own' culture from the outside. The *exote* provided a means to understand his home country's *strangeness* filtered through field of images and narratives. In early 1990s he accepted a television commission to adapt Dante's Cantos 9-14, a series of ten minute segments for broadcast on Channel 4 in the UK. Ruiz was one of the directors invited to respond to a new translation by Tom Philips (Cantos 1-8 where completed by Peter Greenaway and later Cantos were to be directed by Terry Gilliam, Zbig Rybczynski, and Nagisa Oshima but were never produced). Ruiz used the opportunity to reflect on the political cataclysm of the military coup and its aftermath, casting Santiago as Hell and adapting the cantos in a style combining B-movie and agitprop third cinema aesthetics. It is an apt fate that the film would later be released on video with the new title *Diablo Chile*.

Ruiz's method of combinations is more than intertextuality, each element that is combined influences its neighbour. The processes of combination constitutes a distinct form of assemblage, the layering of fictions, theories and cultures, each element is combined and in turn permeates and influences the other. For Ruiz texts are always transformed during the process. Such combinations are what fascinated and disturbed him

⁹³ Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. p193-194

⁹⁴ Britton, Celia. *Edouard Glissant and Postcolonial Theory: Strategies of Language and Resistance*. University of Virginia Press, 1999. p13

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. p16

on his return to Chile as he recorded in the synopsis for a parallel yet uncompleted film *Basta La Palabra/Your Word is Enough* (1992):

The nature of some houses in Chile can change so fast that they are practically magic houses. I found one that started out as a conservatory, built by Wagnerians organizing against Italian opera, which they felt was destroying Chile, then became an Italian restaurant called Verdi. Then it was the political police's house of torture, filled with screaming – a different kind of singing, more modern. After that it became a normal house, then a hotel, then a brothel, etc. I used it as a metaphor for approaching the new Chilean situation – the mental chaos and capitalist acceleration, which is not accumulation but simply one thing or another and its opposite.⁹⁷

The concept of combination Ruiz employed on returning to Chile followed the assumption that 'Chilean reality does not exist... the political and economic problems are immersed in a fictional jelly.'⁹⁸ Fiction for Ruiz is a container and prism to approach reality. For his Dante adaptation Ruiz combines various fictional regimes from legacy of political cinema during Unidad Popular/Popular Unity and across Latin America during 1960s and 1970s, the hugely popular genre of telenovela, and European high culture drawing on aesthetic strategies from various periods of his own work⁹⁹.

As Richard Lansing and Teodolinda Barolini have argued, Ruiz's choice of Chile as a location was a way to consider Dante as an exile navigating his way through Hell in the form of contemporary Santiago. In their reading they misinterpret Ruiz's strategy as framing Dante's text 'in order to promote a decidedly Marxist ideology focused on issues of class struggle and the oppression of the proletariat.'¹⁰⁰ This argument, superficially reads the film as intertextual, misses the subversive combinatory strategy that Ruiz employs,

⁹⁷ Ruiz, Raúl "Ruiz on Ruiz: a filmography", Gavin Smith and Mark McElhatten, Eds. *Film Comment* 33:1 Jan/Feb 1997, p25

⁹⁸ Ruiz, Raúl, undated quote, from *Dossier for The Wandering Soap Opera*, Poetastos Films, 2017, n.p.

⁹⁹ As Adrian Martin has observed the 'conceptual territory of *A TV Dante* is strung out between, at one end, its symbolist *mise en scène* of motifs from Dante (which Ruiz compares to the kitsch imagery of '50s horror movies) and, at the other end, almost *cinéma-vérité* shots of Chilean street life and folklore (which he describes as a pastiche of '60s political documentary).' - Martin, Adrian, 'A TV Dante.' *Rouge*. Accessed February 14, 2017: <http://www.rouge.com.au/2/tvdante.html>.

¹⁰⁰ 'He creates an urban Hell on Earth by recording the journey of the pilgrim and his guide against the everyday reality of the inhabitants of Santiago. The landscape is barren, sparse, and threatening, and the pilgrims (Dante clad in jacket and tie with a copy of the *Codex civilis* in one hand, and Virgil in a camel's-hair coat) traverse this landscape in virtual silence. Against a background narration spoken by John Gielgud and Bob Peck, they move from an antechamber (canto 9) to the City of Dis; the Furies are presented as three interwoven women with a huge spider writhing in front of them, and the celestial messenger as a faceless businessman. The claustrophobic hellish city, a great desert-like necropolis (canto 10), is figured as a series of contemporary modern images from everyday life in Santiago – Farinata appears as a relaxed figure sipping a drink in a huge funeral urn. This gives way to Virgil's explanation of the lower circles (canto 11), where the violent are seen sharpening bloody implements in the context of images of suspended carcasses of slaughtered animals, followed by a set of images of slaughtered humans. The violent against their neighbors are represented, in a basement chamber, by mutilated body parts into which are inserted various country flags (canto 12); the suicides by a forest of human trees surrounding people celebrating the joys of life (canto 13); and the blasphemers by a pan of eyeballs frying in hot [oil and masa] (canto 14).' - Lansing, Richard H. and Barolini, Teodolinda, *The Dante Encyclopedia*, Taylor & Francis, 2000. pp284-285

enhanced by the notion of the exote. Ruiz encourages us to approach Dante not just as an exile but through the model of wandering exote. As Glissant argues, 'one who is errant (who is no longer traveler, discoverer, or conqueror) strives to know the totality of the world yet already knows he will never accomplish this-and knows that is precisely where the threatened beauty of the world resides.'¹⁰¹

The surrealist nature of Ruiz's art of combination is a vision of promiscuous creation more than the analytical strategies of comparative or intertextual analysis. The film, like his other works *City of Pirates/La Ville des pirates* (1983) or *Voyages d'une main/Journey of a Hand* (1984), operates on the level of a poetics of the absurd. The grotesque parodies of horror, desire and repulsion are encounters with an unknowable reality. The living and the dead, the fictional and quotidian, are suspended in the palimpsest reality of post-coup Chile. Ruiz's projection onto Chilean reality was much better received at home than outside. As he commented, 'Chileans immediately accepted that Chile is Hell, of course. They are real patriots. At the same time we are supporters of our inferno!'¹⁰² Such a contradictory position can be seen in a scene of protest at the cemetery gates in which Ruiz sought to 'a parody of political Latin American films of the 1960s and instead of putting in the red flags I'll put in crosses and people screaming "Viva la muerte!/Long live the dead!"'¹⁰³



Illustration 2.18: Protest at gates, flags replaced with crosses in *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, Chile/UK, 1991), *Cantos 10*



Illustration 2.19: Quotidian street scenes, passersby playing for the camera *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, Chile/UK, 1991), *Cantos 9*

By entangling Dante's Hell with contemporary Chile, the film imposes its hellish narrative directly into scenes filmed on the streets of Santiago, as the narrator states 'the dreadful city of despair we can enter now by

¹⁰¹ Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. p20

¹⁰² Comments made during panel discussion with Ian Christie at retrospective during at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, 2004.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

force alone.¹⁰⁴ The actors are inserted into these environments whose informal nature is signalled at various points when people respond to the camera, wave or gesture as they see it passing, breaking the coherence of the singular fictional world. The actors who play Dante and Virgil also appear in character in *La telenovela errante*, they wander from one fiction to another. Throughout *A TV Dante* Ruiz maintains a tension between the poetics of the narration, dramatic staged scenes and interventions into observed 'reality' picked up across the city from political marches and street scenes to community gatherings. Rather than editing out the contingent elements of these different realities to present a singular filmic world, Ruiz lets them rub up and combine with each other creating further fictions within fictions. These layers of imagery and narration create a sedimentary reality, this world is not singularity but multiple. The fictions are layered on top of each other as projections onto a screen. Projection and fiction are not about totality but about relation, temporary and in constant movement. This is a depiction of Chile layered with horrors and occupations as was the house that inspired *Basta La Palabra*. This strategy enables the discrete elements to be both themselves and stand-in for other realities. The B-movie aesthetic and play with artifice is a means of creating this multiplicity and tension between the place as it is and the projections onto it.



Illustration 2. 20: punishment by slit throat results in circular consumption *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, Chile/UK, 1991), *Cantos 9*

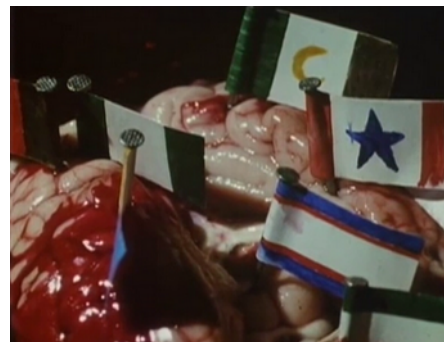


Illustration 2.21: Nationalism in the underworld and unconscious *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, Chile/UK, 1991), *Cantos 12*

During their decent into the circles of the underworld, the two travellers move through a series of tombs and cemeteries. The dialogues in *Cantos 10* are staged within a cemetery, inside we find various unquiet souls, Chileans of various political leanings still preoccupied with conflicts from their past life. Ghosts are always out of time for Ruiz. As Dante notes 'though they were driven out of their own land, they still came back.'¹⁰⁵ As we descend deeper in *Cantos 11*, we come to the rings of violence which is divided into three layers; for violence that can be done to God, violence to one's self, and violence to one's neighbour. Over this sequence we hear romantic Chilean troubadour music with a mordant tone that has the central refrain of 'Life is a dream.' The lyrics describe the futile nature of existence and lure of the afterlife, with the chorus 'Come

¹⁰⁴ From dialogue for *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, Chile/UK, 1991)

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

along, we're all going' is repeated by figures gathered together in the film.

As in *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques*, Ruiz uses popular Chilean songs to counterpoint the action. The blend of melancholia and poetics in the songs and the space between their energetic delivery and their lyrics creates a distinct tension. Many of the songs deal with death, desire and longing, showing an entanglement of romance and trauma, the commingling of the living and the dead. The last episode ends when Dante's character asks why they have not completed their journey, to which Virgil responds 'You know this place is circular in form.'¹⁰⁶ The journey they are taking is a return, a loop coming back round again and again. As Virgil stoically advises 'if, therefore, strange, new things appear, your face need hardly register surprise.'¹⁰⁷

The looping return and the commingling of life and death in Ruiz's poetics is exemplified by the phenomenon of the 'noonday ghost' that reoccurs across his films and writing. It is even a noonday ghost that concludes *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques*. Adrian Martin recalls that Ruiz:

would retell this typical, iterative tale with the utmost conviction and sincerity: walking in a Chilean street, he would see an old friend from 40 years ago. They would speak of banalities: the traffic light not working, the rising price of milk, the hole in the nearby bridge. Then they would saunter apart – with Raúl realising, some minutes later, that his friend had been dead for some long time already. This is the noonday ghost, Raúl explained: nothing like the Gothic ghost of shadows who avenges wrongs, returns the repressed or haunts the living with a malign force. The noonday ghost looks just like you or me, in the bright daylight, and is just as boring.¹⁰⁸

The importance of Segalen's work can be seen in its opposition to ethnographic projects seeking transparency. His immersion didn't demand transparency of his subject but acknowledged difference. As Glissant has argued, 'the attempt to approach a reality so often hidden from view cannot be organized in terms of a series of clarifications.'¹⁰⁹ Reality is not a static or transparent. 'One of the most terrible implications of the ethnographic approach' Glissant continues 'is the insistence on fixing the object of scrutiny in static time, thereby removing the tangled nature of lived experience and promoting the idea of uncontaminated survival.'¹¹⁰ The setting of the *A TV Dante*, and its depiction of Chile as a purgatory, are

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Martin, Adrian, "A Ghost at Noon" by Adrian Martin, 20 August 2011, <http://girishshambu.blogspot.co.nz/2011/08/ghost-at-noon-by-adrian-martin.html>

¹⁰⁹ Glissant, Édouard, *Caribbean Discourse*, trans. J. Michael Dash, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999. p2

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p14

means to reframe political history and the compounded traumas of exile, occupation and displacement in metaphysical terms. As Glissant has argued in his writing on trauma and memory in regard to the Atlantic slave trade, the 'experience of the abyss can now be said to be the best element of exchange. For us, and without exception, and no matter how much distance we may keep, the abyss is also a projection of and perspective into the unknown.'¹¹¹ The abyss is the shared site of knowledge for the trauma and memory of the living and the dead. The abyss then becomes the site of relation which as Glissant comments 'is not made up of things that are foreign but of shared knowledge.'¹¹²

The setting for Ruiz's *The Comedy of Shadows*, as I have noted above, is the cemetery, a location that allows movements through time and space between historical material, between the dead and the living, a site of occupation as much as relation. Through the notion of the exote we can see how such sites of conflicting ideology, displacement and alienation can be reconfigured. The cemetery is perhaps the emblematic space of the exote; a site of extreme encounter that signals that culture and difference are not just about space and land but about time. The cemetery, more than the prison or school, is a locus connecting ideologies and ritual, specific contexts and localities, legacies of occupation, colonialism and belief. The ghost for Ruiz, as Martin has argued, is a key to his dialectics and 'the interplay of mystery and ministry, as he described it – sublime things that inevitably become dead ordinary, and ordinary things that become suddenly, strangely sublime.'¹¹³ The cemetery is a site of relation both as an everyday space and metaphysical site of stubborn shadows. On behalf of those whose reality has been obscured by processes of erasure and terror Glissant made his influential declaration 'We demand the right to obscurity. Through which our anxiety to have a full existence becomes part of the universal drama of cultural transformation: the creativity of marginalized peoples who today confront the ideal of transparent universality.'¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. p8

¹¹² Ibid, p8

¹¹³ Martin, Adrian, "A Ghost at Noon" by Adrian Martin, 20 August 2011, <http://girishshambu.blogspot.co.nz/2011/08/ghost-at-noon-by-adrian-martin.html>

¹¹⁴ Glissant, Édouard, *Caribbean Discourse*, trans. J. Michael Dash, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999. p2

2.8 Does a tree resemble another tree?

The postcolony encloses multiple *durées* made up of discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another, and envelope one another: an entanglement.

- Achille Mbembé¹¹⁵

In this final parts of this chapter I will return our focus to *The Comedy of Shadows*. Here I will narrate my search for the traces and lay out the components of Ruiz's production along the way. This will begin the process of articulating these traces and exploring my entanglement with them. I will shift between different times and different places, juxtaposing a range of voices and images to map the shift from the fragmented work of research to the construction of new assemblages. Inspired by the photomontage of Bruno Latour, these sections, assembled in the calm of my studio, discern new patterns and combinations I was not able to identify in the field. To illustrate his concept of *circulating reference*, Latour charted the process by which a team of botanists and soil scientists were able to displace a forest from the Amazon to their laboratory in order to articulate the many elements they gathered in the field. The displacement allowed the assembled traces to be formed into new combinations they were unable to articulate in the field. 'In the forest, in the same world but with all of its trees, plants, roots, soil, and worms, the botanist could not calmly arrange the pieces of her jigsaw puzzle on her card table. Scattered through time and space, these leaves would never have met without her redistributing their traits into new combinations.'¹¹⁶ The processes I will unpack here mark the links entangling research and filmmaking 'allowing for travel in both directions.'¹¹⁷

Wednesday 27 September 2017, Jatiwangi

Shr-tzung Tsai/蔡世宗 (who I had met at Jihlava Documentary Festival) sent me message today on Facebook. He found a one page article in City Entertainment Magazine/電影雙週刊, a Hong Kong film magazine about Raúl Ruiz and his shoot in Taiwan. The article, written by Alge Cheung/張國翔, contains three photos, two showing Raúl in Taiwan on the film shoot. This is the first trace that confirms Raúl actually shot the film. First proof that he actually came to Taiwan rather than just told stories about it.

My friend reads the article to me in a rough translation from the Chinese. From it I can glean the first few details and begin tracking people involved in the production. The article gives us a crucial key, the title of the

¹¹⁵ Mbembé, Achille. *On the Postcolony*. University of California Press, 2001. p14

¹¹⁶ Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*, Harvard University Press, 1999, p38. In his essay 'Circulating Reference: Sampling the Soil in the Amazon Forest' pp24-79, Latour outlines process by which empirical evidence if turned into text through a reversible process he calls circulating reference. As he traces the scientists referencing of Boa Vista he argues 'we will be able to go from her written report to the names of the plants, from these names to the dried and classified specimens. And if there is ever a dispute, we will, with the help of her notebook, be able to go back from these specimens to the marked-out site from which she started' - Ibid. p34

¹¹⁷ Ibid. p69

film in Chinese 影子喜劇. From the article I could glimpse some new details but it is cryptic, describing the project as ‘like finding a mountain inside a cave and then finding another mountain inside the cave, in which there is another mountain.’¹¹⁸ But there are many insights nevertheless, in particular there is mentioned of sculptor called Shiau Jon-Jen/蕭蕭長正 and the article describes the key location, a place my friend tells me is called the Golden Mountain.

The article states the film presents footage from the fictional director Ki's unfinished 1973 film and is narrated with excerpts from his diary which is quoted in the text. Shaiu is Ki's friend and invites him to produce a documentary as he undertakes a big commission to make a series of sculptures to adorn the grounds of a large cemetery. Shiau's work we are told combines “Western techniques and Eastern spirit representing the confluence of different cultures of the world and incorporating both avant-garde artistic concepts and classical beauty.”

The article provides the following synopsis for *The Comedy of Shadows*:

On his travels, KI chances upon a Taiwanese sculptor Hsiao Changyu at Chin Pao Shan and decides to make a film featuring Hsiao's sculpture works and the beautiful views at Chin Pao Shan. Later, a friend who is very knowledgeable about architectural art and environmental studies tells KI about the science of the Chinese idea of feng shui, which inspires great admiration for Eastern culture in KI, who comes to realize that there are many commonalities between Eastern and Western cultures.

The sculptures of Hsiao Changyu combine Western techniques and Eastern spirit, representing the confluence of different cultures of the world and incorporating both avant-garde artistic concepts and classical beauty.

KI thinks that at Chin Pao Shan, one can feel a sense of the tremendous respect that Eastern people have for their ancestors and their deep appreciation for the natural environment, both of which KI finds extremely touching. After finishing his film, he chooses to stay at the cemetery where Hsiao Chanyu works and continue to contemplate the philosophical significance of life.¹¹⁹

I google the Chinese title for the film and get a few hits, find other people asking in forums about the film without much luck but then find a few direct mentions of the project and some names start to emerge. We find an interview from 2016 in which the filmmaker Laha Mebow/陳潔瑤, who recalls working on the film as a student – her first experience of a film shoot:

The first time I was a sophomore, a France-based Chilean, Raoul Ruiz came to Taiwan to film. The lead actor was Leon Dai, the film was called ‘Shadow Comedy.’ It tells of a group of ghosts who don't know they are dead who want to make a movie. The scripts at the time were translated and faxed each day. The teacher asked us to apply to be actors. In fact, I wanted to follow the film production. It was filmed at Jin bao shan. I remember that the director was very calm. When he was filmed, he would drink red wine and walk around the corner thinking about things. But the movie was not cut in the end.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Cheung, Alge/張國翔. *Trailer / 影子喜劇*, City Entertainment Magazine/電影雙週刊, Hong Kong, 1996, Volume 1, N. 405, p26. Translated by Dub & Ko Language Services, unpublished, September 2018

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Zhijun, Zeng/曾芷筠 ‘電影特寫：從都市到原鄉，從台灣到第三世界 —— 《只要我長大》導演陳潔瑤 / Laha Mebo 的尋根旅程 - 放映週報/ Funscreen, No.548, 18 March 2016. [Google translation] Accessed 13 February 2019.

From this interview we can confirm Leon Dai /戴立忍 – a well known film actor my friend tells me – acted in the film as one of his first roles. Also the actor Shiwei Huang /黃士偉 mentions the project in his CV. We also find a profile article on the acclaimed writer Shu Kuo-chih /舒國治 recalling his career that mentions this project.



Illustration 2.22: Shu Kuo-chih on set with Ruiz during shooting of *The Comedy of Shadows*. Press photo by Liu Hong-wen, from *People* magazine, 1996

Shu Kuo-chih is a fascinating literary figure known for his itinerancy. He has a reputation as a bohemian writer well known for his nostalgic recollections of Taipei in the 1970s. Whereas some frame him as an old-style Chinese literati figure, producing travel writings in classical Chinese, others see him as a writer of everyday life for his stories of browsing bookshops, guides to best dumplings or coffee in Taipei as well as reflections on American rock and folk music and explorations of old Taipei. The profile also describes how he was 'dragged by friends' to play roles in various films from *Moonlight boy* /月光少年 (Wei-Yen Yu, Taiwan, 1993) to Edward Yang's *A Brighter Summer Day* /牯嶺街少年殺人事件 (Taiwan, 1991) and *Yi Yi* /一一 (Taiwan, 2000). Edward Yang also used Shu Kuo-chih's apartment as a location for the couple in his film *Mahjong* /麻將 (1996).

Here is how the article summarises Ruiz's project:

Chilean-born French director Raúl Ruiz came to Taiwan to film a "Shadow Comedy" (tentative title, based on Pirandello's *Six characters in search of an author*) two years before filming "Time Regained" (released in Taiwan as 追憶似水年華). In the Taiwanese film of Shu Guozhi was given one of the roles and asked him to play an obscure hermit-like character.¹²¹

Our run of luck continues and we find the film listed in credits for cinematographer Cami Yeh /葉斯光. The film is listed as a 1997 production so there is still some uncertainty around when the film might have been shot but pieces are starting to come together. I ask Shr-tzung Tsai if he can help with contacts for any of the actors or crew. He provides emails for Laha Mebow /陳潔瑤, Cami Yeh, Leon Dai /戴立忍 and Shu Kuo-chih /舒國治. He doesn't have contact for the actor Shiwei Huang /黃士偉 but reveals another clue nevertheless "Sorry, I don't have that for 黃士偉. He is rather a theatre actor. We don't have much connection."

http://www.funscreen.com.tw/feature.asp?FE_NO=1543

¹²¹ Zhang, Beiwen /張貝雯, '晃蕩人文的徒步者—舒國治' / Shu Kuo-chih wrote in the "Ideal afternoon" 明日報 / Tomorrow Times, December 12, 2000. Accessed 11 June 2019. <https://www.ylib.com/author/su/file.htm>. [google translation]



Illustration 2.23: Production report
'Trailer' published in City Entertainment
Magazine/電影雙週刊, 1996



Illustration 2.24: Detail from 'Trailer'
production report published in City
Entertainment Magazine/電影雙週刊, 1996

The set report became the first new fragment of the project and the first real testament to the actual production of the film. All the previous material – script fragments, interviews, synopsis – pointed towards a production but without any evidence to confirm if the production went ahead and if anything was actually shot. The article recounts the synopsis of the film, as a set report there are some slippages of meaning but not surprising in such a self-reflective project which is evocatively described as follows:

The director of *The Comedy of Shadows* has created another director inside the film: the French director traveled from France to Taiwan to make a film about a fictitious French director making a film in a mysterious place in Taiwan called Golden Mountain (Chin Pao Shan). The real director adopted the method of documentary filmmaking to document how the fictitious director makes a documentary film. It is like finding a mountain inside a cave and then finding another mountain inside the cave, in which there is another mountain...¹²²

Later the article includes a brief fragment of an interview with Ruiz in which he discusses the subject of death in cinema, 'Bruce Lee and Marilyn Monroe became even more famous after death, living in the hearts of everyone forever. 'Death' is not an end. It is a process of transitioning to another form of life.'¹²³

¹²² Cheung, Alge/張國翔, 'Trailer "影子喜劇"' City Entertainment Magazine/電影雙週刊, Hong Kong, 1996, volume 1, N. 405, p26. Translated by Dub & Ko Language Services, unpublished, September 2018

¹²³ Ibid.

Monday 2 October 2017, Taipei

Once I arrive in Taipei I follow up on actor and crew contacts. I send Shiwei Huang/黃士偉 a message in Chinese on facebook. He responds and Yuling translates: 'He says since it was long time ago, he couldn't recall much, he is afraid that you can't get much from him.'

Nevertheless I ask Yuling to write to him and ask if we can meet and say even if he can only recall a little it will be a great help. Confirm with him to meet on 5 October. Yuling should be able to join to help with translations. Find out that most of his work is in comedy theatre. Look forward to seeing how he got involved in the project.

Wednesday 4 October 2017, Taipei

Meeting with Laha Mebow this afternoon. Wen Hsu has contacted her and arranged the meeting. He will come along to help translate. Rainy day in Taipei. We meet at corner coffee shop Dante's (No. 25, Section 3, Jinan Road, Da'an District, Taipei City, Taiwan 106) near Zhongxiao Xinsheng Station. Wen has told me that Laha is important figure in Taiwan as there are not many female film directors and even fewer who have indigenous roots. She is warm and welcoming, excited to talk about the project and apologetic about her bad English. She recently returned from Paris where she has been working on a new project looking at dialogue between indigenous groups across the Pacific islands and Taiwan. She is moved to remember her first experience on a film shoot with this filmmaker from Paris.



Illustration 2.25: Meeting with Laha Mebow, 4 October 2017, Dante Cafe, Taipei

She has brought a few albums of photographs and over the next few hours as she talks through them she gives me invaluable insights into this project but also her work, the formative years of her own practice with her moving memories of this time. I realise that she never heard about the film after the shoot, it is something of an interrupted memory. She was a film student at the time and worked on the set with various friends from Shih Hsin University. They lived in the cemetery during the shoot and entertained themselves in the evenings with some film screenings and games.

As can be seen in her beautiful photos which capture the work but also play on set, the experience was a lot of

fun for her and her friends. She couldn't really recall much of what the film was about, and said she was very shy at the time. She barely spoke with Raúl. She was happy to spend time and observe the cinematographer Laurent working and was fascinated by some of the camera tricks he employed including use of mirrors and special filters. She mentioned that the producer Chao Ching was from Hong Kong and was very vocal helping to direct actors in Chinese and communicating with Raúl in French. So on set there was mix of languages from Mandarin, Cantonese, French and bits of English.

She talked through her photographs, giving me many details and names of people involved by pointing out the actors and the crew. One of her strongest memories was one time in the midst of shooting suddenly they were told to come and help record sounds. By a small river (or maybe it was a lake?) they stood in a line and each dropped stones of different sizes into the water. Such attention to unusual details stayed with her over the years especially as she didn't know why Raúl was interested in scenes like this or how they could fit into a film.

Laha explained that the mythical Golden Mountain is a real place, it is a very famous cemetery north of Taipei called Chin Pao San on a mountain overlooking the coast. The whole shoot took place there – some of the crew didn't like to be there at nighttime and came back to Taipei but she enjoyed the atmosphere and has many fond memories of her time there.



Illustration 2.26: Leha Mebow photo albums from *The Comedy of Shadows* shoot



Illustration 2.27: Leha Mebow photo albums from *The Comedy of Shadows* shoot

When we finished talking Laha asked me a final question, why was the film never finished? Was Raúl unhappy

with it? I tell her I don't think that was the issue and tell her actually from Raúl's work it is one of the lost films he was most fond of, talking about his experience and even publishing the script. I tell her I think it was a special project for him, the closest he got to his long held ambition to make a work connected to Chinese culture and philosophy. I can see that Laha is touched and somewhat relieved to hear it was a good experience for him.

After our meeting Laha shares photos from the shoot on Facebook and writes the following:

For the first time in my life I had an experience in the film industry, it was 1995.
But my heart is split.
I would be delighted to be able to brag about it.

Raoul Ruiz was the director.
He was a French Director of Chilean nationality famous for a surrealistic style.

We were just a couple of college kids, you know, following our teacher.
He encouraged us to join this film production together.
We went for two crazy weeks.
But I didn't know anything about the film.

A friend of mine has just got in touch as he wanted to know about this movie.
It's was 22 years ago...
For the first time, I had the feeling of old age.

It's a wonderful history.
In my memories, there are many things from my life.
There's a bond.
And the miracle is that I'm still in this business.

From the photographs from Laha I start to populate the production team and put names to faces building up a picture of the production informed by my interviews. These names, photos and impressions it made on Laha and others give an insight into the atmosphere of the shoot. I am moved by the way Laha has carried it in her mind since that time. There are more stories and memories leading off in new directions. Many of the details are elusive and the accounts of the production emphasised different elements and experiences of those involved coloured by their own experiences. When I asked Shu Kuo-Chih about the scenario which states that all the characters were dead he responded saying that maybe the characters are not from this world, but that they didn't play spirits. They were just like people walking here and there.¹²⁴

Laha lent me her photo albums to scan in October 2017 and later in August 2018 she brought the original

¹²⁴ Authors notes from conversation with Shu Kuo-Chih/國治, Taipei, 6th October 2017

negatives including some images she didn't have printed before. With these I have been able to assemble cast and crew for the film which I present below followed by a selection of Laha's photographs with annotations drawn from interviews, conversations and research assembling references to give these fragments the contours of project, as well as the many lives and histories with which it is entangled.

CAST



Actor 1: 戴立忍
Leon Dai



Actor 2: 舒國治
Shu Kuo-chih



Actor 3: 黃士偉
Huang Shiwei



Actor 4: 楊貴美
Guey-meei Yang



Actor 5: 張潛
Cheung Chin



Actor 6: 于彭
Yu Peng (artist)



Actor 7: 小柱子/ Xiao
Zhuzi (Yu Peng's son)



Actor 8: 鄭在東/
Cheng Tsai-tung
(artist)

Illustration 2.28: The principle cast of the film here, from the script there are 6 principle characters. Leon Dai played role of the director Ki. The other actors roles are unconfirmed. During the shooting it is most likely that Ruiz adapted his script to the available actors. But all accounts and the artist Yu Peng and Cheng Tsai-Tung who came to visit the set were cast along with Yu Peng's son in a scene with Shu Kuo-chih.

CREW



Director: Raúl Ruiz



Producer: 張潛 /
Cheung Chin



Cinematographer:
Laurent Machuel



Valeria Sarmiento



Art advisor: 蕭蕭長
Shiao Jon-Jen



Script (Trans.): 陳傳
興 / Chen Chuan-xing



Camera assistant:
葉斯光 / Cami yeh



Camera assistant:
陳潔瑤 / Laha Mebow



Camera assistant:
貝大丰



Sound crew: 謝春璋 /
Hsieh Chun-chang



Sound crew: 孟麒良 /
Meng Yuliang



Sound crew:
許政高



Misc crew:
胡美光



Misc crew:
Michelle



Actor: 賈孝國 / Chia
Hsiao-Kuo (no role)



Misc crew: 許書毓
(photographer)

Illustration 2.29: Crew identified from interviews with Laha Mebow, Cami Yeh and others interviews.

Laha Mebow Production Photos



Illustration 2.30: Ruiz with camera crew high in the cemetery, in distance is the central Golden Pagoda designed by temple master architect Li Chung-Yueh



Illustration 2.31: Crew shooting in the open air studio of artist Shiao Jon-Jen filming maquette of his mother and child statue. In the crowd is artist and filmmaker Chen Chuan-xing who translated the script



Illustration 2.32: Laha Mebow posing with the Arri 35mm camera. The label on the magazine reads 'Golden Mountain' and lists the Fuji F-125 8531 film stock and gives date 23/11



Illustration 2.33: French DOP Laurent Machuel who had previously worked with Ruiz on 'Three Lives and Only One Death' (1996). Behind him can be seen the plants whose distinct appearance is sign of the autumn.



Illustration 2.34: Sound recordist 孟麒良/Meng Yuliang who worked with Hou Hsiao Hsien on 'The Puppet Master' (1993) among other films. Here recording sound with a Negra.



Illustration 2.35: 謝春璋/Hsieh Chun-chang technician on set beside tracks to move camera. Shu Kuo-chih described how the camera was always moving during filming using tracks like the one visible here



Illustration 2.36: Taiwan artistic circles joined the shoot. From L-R writer Shu Kuo-chih, centre painter Yu Pong (with his son) and right painter Cheng Tsai-tung



Illustration 2.37: Interior scene with Huang Shiwei shooting in the accommodation provided on site by Chin Pao San



Illustration 2.38: One of the few shots of the assembled cast which could be seen as a still from the film with actors in character



Illustration 2.39: Television actor Chia Hsiao-Kuo [L] told me he didn't recall acting in the film but did visit the set. He was friends with other actors as they studied together at the Taipei National University of the Arts in Guandu



Illustration 2.40: Lead actor Leon Dai preparing to film in the car. In the synopsis Dai's character the director Ki dies after having a sneezing fit in his car



Illustration 2.41: Shooting scene on road through the cemetery, this could well be the scene of the car-crash described in the synopsis

Shiau Jon-Jen/蕭蕭長正



Illustration 2.42: Artist 蕭蕭長正/ Shiao Jon-Jen in middle in cap with Raul Ruiz on left and Leon Dai, who played role of the film director Ki on his right at Chin Pao San. Production photo by Chung Chin, 29 Nov 1995.

The sculptor Shiao Jon-Jen, a friend of the producer Chuang Chin, was a crucial figure in the production for several reasons. As the resident artist and art advisor to the cemetery he was behind the initial invitation to Chin and Ruiz to shoot at Chin Pao San. At the cemetery he had his own studio and produced many works in stone and wood there. His workshop and sculptures also become key elements of *The Comedy of Shadows*. They were utilised extensively for staging the fictions and also for the documentary film within a film being made by the fictional director Ki (played by Leon Dai). Shiao Jon-Jen himself and his work were the ostensible subject of the documentary Ki was working on prior to his untimely death, as he recounts in his production diary featured in the script. While waiting on a decision from his producers, Ki writes:

A friend came to the rescue. He was a sculptor and had recently received a sizeable commission for a series of sculptures to stand in the park of one of the island's largest cemeteries. I decided to use the time given to me by my potential producers by making a documentary about my friend's work.

As can be seen in the production photos below, Shiao's large sculptural work *五行大地/Five Elements of Earth* near the entrance to Chin Pao San, a dramatic staging of the elements of Gold, Wood, Water, Fire and Earth on top of a chess board, provided a striking environment for sequence shot in the film. Shiao's studio and workshop were also used for various scenes in the film.



Illustration 2.43: Artist 蕭蕭長正/ Shiao Jon-Jen in middle in cap. Standing here near his sculpture using red brick and gold paint '百美林/Baimei Lin' at Chin Pao San



Illustration 2.44: Here the crew set up a circular track on the checkered floor of 蕭蕭長正/Shiao Jon-Jen's sculpture '五行大地/Five Elements of the Earth', at Chin Pao San



Illustration 2.45: Shiao Jon Jen sculpture '百美林/Baimei Lin' Photo Chin Pao San, 2019



Illustration 2.46: Shiao Jon Jen sculpture 五行大地/Five Elements of the Earth', Photo Chin Pao San, 2019



Illustration 2.47: Leon Dai with Shiao Jon Jen in his studio. Production photo Cheung Chin, 28 Nov 1995



Illustration 2.48: Ruiz shooting in Shiao Jon Jen's studio. Production photo Cheung Chin, 28 Nov 1995



Illustration 2.49: Image from the Hong Kong Entertainment magazine shows actors Leon Dai (left) with producer Chao Ching (as actor, right) in scene. In the scene the characters attempt to listen for the lost sound washed away from the film while processing it in the water. At the bottom of the frame Raúl Ruiz can be glimpsed in blue raincoat directing and on the far right side is Valeria Sarmiento taking a photograph.

CHARACTER 4: Master, something has happened. The sound has disappeared! The images are silent!

KI: We can always post-sync it later.

CHARACTER 2: I'm not so sure. I've already forgotten my lines.

KI: But where did you get your lines from in the first place?

CHARACTER 2: I don't know. It's as if someone breathed them into me.

CHARACTER 4: That happens all the time. That's why all films are alike – it's the same person breathing.

KI: In any case, there's no sound.

CHARACTER 4: Wait!

KI plunges his head into the water.

CHARACTER 4: I think it's there.

KI lifts his head from the water

KI: I hear something. But I can't make out the words.

CHARACTER 4: That's normal. The sound has turned inside out. We'll have to rebuild the stream.

KI: Easier said than done!

CHARACTER 4: I have an idea! With the images, we'll build a dam. That way, it will be washed with the film's sound. Then we'll put it back under water, with the current, and the sound will return to where it was!

KI: Let's do it!

NARRATOR: So they did. But in the beyond/hereafter, things never happen quite like they do here. When they looked at the film's images, the sound was incomprehensible.

*[The Comedy of Shadows, script fragment']*¹²⁵



Illustration 2.50: Raul Ruiz reading through script on set of *The Comedy of Shadows*.
Production photo, 28 Nov 1995 by Cheung Chin

¹²⁵ Ruiz, Raúl. *The Comedy of Shadows*, translated by Adrian Martin (2004) with additional translation by Phoebe Weston-Evans (2018), unpublished, p13



Illustration 2.51: Cast and volunteer members of the crew clouding for camera in front of high promenade where various scenes were shot



Illustration 2.52: Laha Mebow and fellow student volunteers in Shiao Jon-Jen sculpture studio



Illustration 2.53: Production photo from *'The Comedy of Shadows'* provided by Cami Yeh. Featuring [L-R] Laurent Machuel, unknown camera assistant, Raúl Ruiz, Laha Mebow



Illustration 2.54: Crew assembled under ornate pagoda and heavy clouds preparing to shoot on track. Behind Ruiz can be seen Valeria on set taking photograph



Illustration 2.55: Laha Mebow with her university friends who volunteered on the production

Does a tree resemble another tree? Does a tree resemble even itself a few seconds later?
Is suffering always the same? - Ki, *The Comedy of Shadows*¹²⁶

This prominent old tree in Chin Pao San was a location of scenes in the film. When I met with Patty Tsai, representative to the Director of Chin Pao San, in August 2017, I enquired about this tree as I had not been able to find it. She told me that this old tree with its distinct form was a favourite of the Chin Pao San president and founder Tsao Ryh-chang/曹日章 but no longer on the grounds.



Illustration 2.56: A prominent old tree in Chin Pao San was location of various scenes. Patty Tsai mentioned the tree was a favourite of the Chin Pao San founder but no longer on the grounds

¹²⁶ Ruiz, Raúl. *The Comedy of Shadows*, translated by Adrian Martin (2004) with additional translation by Phoebe Weston-Evans (2018), unpublished, p12



Illustration 2.57: Cami Yeh/葉斯光 (Left) & Huang Shiwei/黃士 (Right), interview 5 October 2017

Thursday 5 October 2017, Taipei

Have meeting with Shiwei Huang/黃士偉 and Cami Yeh/葉斯光 at Spot Huishan cafe at 6pm. Wei Hsuan Sung agrees to join and help with translating. Yuling, Wen and Hsu all end up joining and listen with me to memories with Shiwei and Cami. Cami is joined by his wife and enjoys remembering the production with Shiwei, good to have them together to prompt each other. Cami has very different theory to Laha about why the film wasn't finished, he felt it wasn't completed as there were too many mistakes in the production. He was young but had worked on other projects and he remembered thinking this was a very unprofessional way to make a film, starting late filming for a few hours then long lunch and stop at four and Raúl would always have glass of red wine in his hand. In other projects he worked on, there were always long days using every available minute. But then later on Cami tells me maybe his theory is informed by his own experience and struggle to make his own film, that he eventually abandoned. All the memories I have been gathering, I realise, are filtered through the life and subsequent struggles or success of each participant.

I vow to go to Chin Pao San. I am even more intrigued now despite not knowing how to get there and not being able to find anyone to come with me. Back at the Taipei Artist Village in Treasure Hill, I search for directions and find passing mention of a 'worship car' on the Chin Pao San website. It appears to be a coach for people to visit the cemetery. Sounds perfect. In panic I call all the numbers listed on the website and finally talk to a phone operator. He only speaks Chinese.... try bits and pieces but no use. Hang up and call Yuling and tell her about car. She calls the same number then responds telling me I can take the car, but I need to arrive at Minquan East Road, Chinbao shuen 金寶軒 before 8.30 am the next morning. It'll cost 300NT for trip.

Friday 6 October 2017, Taipei

Wake up at dawn and head to Chin Pao San office on Minquan East Road in Zhongshan District near the Xingtian Temple station. Hope to make my way onto the worship bus and get ride to Cemetery. Arrive early and walk in neighbourhood looking for coffee. Office opens and talk with receptionist. Tell them I am filmmaker from UK come to visit cemetery. They look confused and don't have a reservation for me for bus. I

give them Yuling's number and tell them she was in touch. Try to force them to accommodate me (manipulate my politeness in front of a foreigner). They speak with Bonnie Lin, one of the executives and she says it is ok. I board small bus with other passengers, I am carrying my camera, they are carrying flowers and other offerings to leave at their ancestors tombs.

Bus takes route through winding elevated highways through mountains, typical industrial outcrops and bleak commutator villages before mountains give way to ocean view. At top of Taiwan, sky over cast and grey but ocean is welcome sight. Yuling tells me they are sorry but they don't have an English guide for me so I will have to tour myself. They also say 'Don't film/photo indoor, you can film/photo outdoor.'

Bonnie Lin is a secretary in the director's office. She is away in China but helps remotely. When I arrive in Chin Pao San people are expecting me, message has been passed. A young women accompanies me half monitoring my strange activity and showing where I shouldn't go. Not surprising they want to give me a chaperone, I did turn up out of the blue. Talk with her and she shows me around a bit, don't think she knows what to do with me. Spend some time filming a fish pond and recording sound, she looks bored, a good sign as I think she realises I am no threat, just some weirdo who wants to film ponds in a cemetery and workers having lunch. Seems to be a good strategy as she eventually leaves me alone, feel more relaxed to be able to film and explore on my own.

Chin Pao San, is huge and surrounded by ominous grey clouds. Very strange to be in here, I thought it was a fictional place when read about it in the Hong Kong magazine article a week ago. I am still surprised it is real. Find small parts I glimpses in the article's images and photos from Cami and Laha, the fake stone bridge, some of the buildings where the filmmakers stayed, the decorated railings, large ceramic pot where Leon Dai and Cheung Chin listen for sound with bamboo and of course the towering over the cemetery, the huge golden pagoda.

Wonder which house Raul and Valeria stayed in? Laha described it as Japanese style. Also wonder where Laha watched films in evening? She said Cami Yeh chose a film, an erotic thriller but he didn't remember anything about it. Said it was a building with a piano. I get so carried away filming and exploring I miss the complimentary lunch and the return bus. The fog eventually comes in as I am filming my final roll, I shot 4 rolls, and rewound and double exposed two of them. One I keep to take to Chile. A woman appears from the main house and says she is sorry I missed my lunch. I tell her it is ok, I am happy to be filming. Later I see her again as she leaves and she asks how I will get home, I say I will try and find a bus. She tells me it is complicated and pauses for a moment then offers me a lift as I am friend of Bonnie, her boss. She usually stays in the local area but her daughter is in Taipei so she drives me home. Feel blessed with good luck.

That evening I had arranged a final meeting with Shu Kuo-chih/舒國治, a well respected writer and intellectual. Have excellent discussion, he is very articulate and knew all the relationships on the production. I realise that he is generation older than everyone else I meet and so has a totally different perspective. I ask him about his work as an actor as he also appeared in films by Edward Yang, he tells me he is not an actor just 'a movable prop.' He explains the artistic and literary connections are because Chin is a gourmet and enjoyed fine wine, as did Raul, and most of artists involved were drinking friends of Chin's.

After the interview Pei and Wei Hsuan give a relieved expression. Why I ask? And they finally tell me that Shu Kuo-chih has a high reputation but also can be very difficult, particularly in relation to questions of Taiwanese

sovereignty as he is known for pro Chinese position now but is very careful about it as there are many divisions amongst intellectual circles. Leon Dai for example has lost a lot of work for his pro-independence stance and even faked break-up with his girlfriend so she could work easily in China. No wonder he was reluctant to speculate on any politician questions or echoes between Chile and Taiwan which brought the meeting to a close. Nevertheless I'm feeling elated and excited after the meeting. The intrigue and complexity of relationships of those involved in the project is now part of material to draw on and exciting in its own way to encounter first hand.

I try to write to Leon Dai but no response. I even give his Facebook page a go but I get a reply saying that 'We are just fans, sorry.' I keep pushing Yuling to try and meet with Leon Dai, so excited by week of discoveries I get bit carried away. Finally she responds 'To be honest it is too rushed.'

Realise she is right, and I should relax and reflect on everything unearthed this week.

2.9 Borrowed from the mountains



Illustration 2.58: Chin Pao San cemetery promotional video, captured from website March 2018: <http://www.memory.com.tw/> Accessed 22 January 2019

Chin Pao San/金寶山 cemetery is located in Jinshan, about 35km north of Taipei on the northern coast. The private cemetery was founded in 1977 by Tsao Ryh-chang/曹日章. It is renowned for its Feng Shui sitting high on the mountain side with views of the East China Sea. Such harmonious characteristics has seen it become one of the most prized cemeteries in Taiwan, attracting many famous and wealthy families. The founder Tsao Ryh-chang is a compelling figure and patron of the arts who commissioned many artists to work on the construction of the cemetery and its extensive sculpture garden. In 1998 he held the first 'Cross-Strait International Art and Sculpture Workshop' in Guilin to promote co-operation and exchange between Taiwan and China.¹²⁷ This led to the establishment of the 600 hectare sculpture park Guilin Yuzi Paradise/愚自乐园 in Southern China that opened in April 2004¹²⁸ and the Yuehu Sculpture Park in Shanghai that opened in May 2005.

At the heart of Chin Pao San is the iconic Golden Pagoda designed by master architect Li Chung-Yueh/李學忠.¹²⁹ The Pagoda is first of the major building projects at Chin Pao San and when it opened in 1987 it was the first privately owned necropolis in the country and was awarded the Architecture Design Award of the

¹²⁷ Chin Pao San, 'Historical Milestones.' ChinPaoSan Group. Accessed May 1, 2018. <http://www.memory.com.tw/en/about-history.php>

¹²⁸ Williams, Ruth, 'Art Meets Nature in the Hills of Guilin', *South China Morning Post*, 18 August 2006. Accessed 22 January 2019 <https://www.scmp.com/article/560640/art-meets-nature-hills-guilin>

¹²⁹ Tseng Li-ling, 'Architect As Preservationist', *Free China Review*, 38(12) December 1988, p48-53. Republished online in Taiwan Today. Accessed 22 January 2019. <https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?post=22531&unit=12.20.29.33.35.45&unitname=Taiwan-Review&postname=Architect-As-Preservationist>

ROC. In 1993 the sculpture Ju Ming/朱銘 worked with team of 25 artists on *Thousand Buddha Grotto*/千佛石窟 to recreate the Mogao Grottoes sculptures in Tunhuang which was formally opened in 2015. In 1995 they established the 'Celebrity Monument Area' for the numerous dignitaries buried in the grounds.¹³⁰ Prominent among the celebrity monuments are those dedicated to the singer Teresa Teng/鄧麗君, including a large functioning piano and golden statue designed by Shiao Jon-Jen/蕭長正.



Illustration 2.59: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement, Teresa Teng's grave. According to interviews there was a photo published in newspaper from the period of the shoot showing Ruiz smoking a cigarette at the grave and paying his respects to the recently deceased singer.



Illustration 2.60: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement, Teresa Teng's monument by Shiao Jon Jen. Shu Kuo-chih believed it was to see his friends sculpture not to pay respect to musician unknown to him that Ruiz visited the grave.

From my cast and crew interviews it became apparent, particularly in the conversation with Shu Kuo-chih/舒國治, that the cemetery was not only the principle location for the film. It was also the principle backer of the project. Shu Kuo-chih, who has a nuanced understanding of the mechanisms behind the scenes of the production, told me that Chin Pao San funded the film and the travel of the core crew, facilitated by the producer Cheung Chin/張潛, a long time friend of Ruiz. Chin was based between Paris and Hong Kong, and through his contacts in artistic circles and friendship with the sculpture Shiao Jon-Jen he was able to propose a film to the cemetery to be directed by Ruiz. The script, that according to Shu Kuo-chih consisted of surrealistic dialogues, was translated from the original French by the renowned professor, Francophone semiologist, photographer and documentary filmmaker Chen Chuanxing/陳傳興.¹³¹ In several of the photos

¹³⁰ There are many prominent figures from arts and culture as well as leading business owners buried in Chin Pao San. Significantly Cheng Nan-jung/鄭南榕/Nylon Deng (1947-1989), the pro-democracy activist and founder of Freedom Era Weekly is buried in Chin Pao San. He was a key advocate for freedom of speech. In 1989 he was charged with insurrection for printing a proposed constitution for the Republic of Taiwan, he refused to appear in court and on 7 April when police came to arrest him he committed suicide by self-immolation. Each year gatherings are held at Chin Pao San in his memory and in 2016 the Executive Yuan announced that 7 April would be designated Freedom of Expression day in his memory. See: Wei-han, Chen, 'Executive Yuan Declares Freedom of Expression Day,' *Taipei Times*, 23 December 2016. Accessed 22 January 2019: <https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2016/12/23/2003661773>.

¹³¹ Authors notes from conversation with Shu Kuo-Chih/國治, Taipei, 6th October 2017

by Laha Mebow you can see the actors holding the curled pages of the script, faxed to them that day.

Tsao Ryh-chang supported the film production, providing a modest feature film budget and accommodation in the cemetery for Raúl, his wife Valeria Sarmiento, Cheung Chin and the French cinematographer Laurent Machuel. The remainder of the cast and crew were recruited in Taiwan. The cast for the film was quite unique, a combination of young actors with theatre backgrounds¹³² together with artists and intellectuals drawn from the social circle of Cheung Chin and Shiao Jon Jen. Shu Kuo-chih told me that the cast were largely made up of acquaintances and drinking friends who were francophone cinephiles and would work for small fee and Raul also performed a small role in which he speaks a few languages – German, Italian, French – at the same time.¹³³



Illustration 2.61: Meal hosted by Tsao Ryh-chang (centre) founder of Chin Pao San for production, 30 November 1995. Photo by Cheung Chin

The photographs taken by Laha Mebow/陳潔瑤 and Cami Yeh/葉斯光 provide visual insights into the production and some of the recurrent motifs and locations where filming took place. (These would be supplemented later in January 2019 when Cheung Chin shared his photos from the shoot.) Together with the interviews I could piece together impressions of the film which would continue over the following years, gaining insights into how it was filmed, where it was staged and some of the human and nonhuman actors. As the photos were from the production, rather than traditional promotional film stills, they emphasised material work and the relations behind the construction of images.

¹³² For example the actors Leon Dai, Huang Shiwei and Guey-meei Yang were all connected to the Department of Theatre Arts of the National College of Arts (the predecessor of the Taipei National University of the Arts.)

¹³³ Authors notes from conversation with Shu Kuo-Chih/國治, Taipei, 6th October 2017

My first trip to Chin Pao San in October 2017 was an experience entangled and populated with fresh stories, images, projections and reflections from my meetings, interviews and the emerging assemblages informing how I look and what I would film myself. After returning from the trip the layers of the project continued to grow. As I looked at the photographs and footage in the quiet of the studio I could start to make new combinations, articulate new bridges between the production in 1995, the cemetery, the host of Taiwanese and Chilean images, Ruiz's body of work and expanding network of interlocutors. I noticed new details in photos; from the small Koi fish pond with ornate footbridge glimpsed behind various actors to the lake described by Laha that was used to record the sound of rocks falling into water and the model sculptures filmed in Shiao's studio now realised full size.



Illustration 4.62 Raúl Ruiz, Laurent Machuel, and Cami Yeh on set of *The Comedy of Shadows* filming Shiao Jon-Jen's sculptural maquette, photo provided by Cami Yeh



Illustration 4.63: Research photo by George Clark, Chin Pao San, Oct 2017

The layers I had started to build up, projections from past to present, were compounded by further photos, interviews and articles that would add to my understanding of my own images and informing my return visits. An article for *People* magazine by critic Hong-wen Liu/劉佳音 described the origins of Ruiz's fascination with Chinese culture ('studying Mandarin is also one of his dreams'¹³⁴), and its entanglement with Chile:

When Raúl Ruiz was still living in Latin America, he heard people talking about the tragic story of "selling pigs (Chinese coolies)." In the past, Chile was involved in the slave trade. Some Chilean human traffickers were pirates who would ship overseas Chinese workers to high seas and kill them after taking away their possessions. This inspired the empathic Raúl Ruiz to tell stories about the Chinese.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Liu, Hong-wen/劉佳音, '中國的影子羅爾路易斯的喜劇/The "shadow" of China, the "comedy" of Raúl Ruiz', *People Magazine*, Taiwan, No. 37, January 1996, p114

¹³⁵ Ibid

These fragments are the traces, roots and tendrils providing and multiplying entry points and exits in the assemblages of the project. The unfolding timelines show the entanglement between my own research, the multiple projections of those involved and the traces of Ruiz's original film shoot.

During my trip to Chile in November-December 2017, I was able to meet with the poet Bruno Cuneo¹³⁶ who directs the Ruiz-Sarmiento Archive at Universidad Católica de Valparaíso and edited Ruiz's collected diaries. The diaries began in 1993, trace the period of the production of the film in Taiwan and also a prior trip that the producer Cheung Chin made to Chile with Raúl and Valeria in February 1994. In them I could confirm various details and flesh out associations from the time, adding new actors into the expanding constellation of the project. From the diaries I could confirm that Ruiz set out for Taiwan on Thursday, November 9th, 1995, 'Four of us are traveling: Chin (the producer), Laurent Machuel (cinematography), Valeria and me'¹³⁷ and Chin Pao San supported the project for the entire project and offer a bonus of NT\$3 million if there was any festival prize.¹³⁸ The rest of the crew and cast they would assemble in Taiwan drawing on the network and associations of Chin.¹³⁹



Illustration 2.64: *A Mountain inside a Cave* (George Clark, 2019), 35mm frame enlargement. Statue of Chin Pao San founder Tsao Ryh-chang

¹³⁶ During my trip to Chile in November/Dec 2017 I was able to visit and interview Bruno Cuneo in person and talk about his work compiling Ruiz's diary. He also provided the unedited diary from the year 1995 in which Raul recounts his trips and production in Taiwan. This material provided source for the work *Diarios 1995 by Raúl Ruiz read by Waldo Rojas on 25 July 2018, Belleville, Paris* (George Clark, 2018, two channel video, sound, variable duration) and was translated into English and Chinese for that work.

¹³⁷ Ruiz Diaries, 'Thursday, November 9th, 1995'. Translated by Jaime Grijalba, TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/Thursday-November-9th-1995>

¹³⁸ The article in *People* magazine gives the budget as NT\$10 million and contrasts this with his other ongoing projects, a 'French film starred by Marcello Mastroianni and his next project, the US \$10-million American film arranged by Jim Jarmusch.' - Liu, Hong-wen/劉佳音, '中國的影子羅爾路易斯的喜劇/The "shadow" of China, the "comedy" of Raúl Ruiz', *People Magazine*, Taiwan, No. 37, January 1996, p115

¹³⁹ Ruiz Diaries, 'Thursday, November 9th, 1995'. Translated by Jaime Grijalba, TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/Thursday-November-9th-1995>



Illustration 2.65: Raul Ruiz with Laurent Machuel filming the cemetery gardeners in the rain. 28 November 1995. Production photo courtesy of Cheung Chin



Illustration 2.66: Lead Actor 戴立忍 / Leon Dai holding faxed script pages on set of *The Comedy of Shadows*. Set photo by Leha Mebow, 1995



Illustration 2.67: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement. Buildings and garden of Chin Pao San in 2017.



Illustration 2.68: Production photo from '*The Comedy of Shadows*' by Laha Mebow, 1995



Illustration 2.69: *A Mountain Inside A Cave* (George Clark, 2019) 35mm frame enlargement. Detail of Chin Pao San ornate walls.



Illustration 2.71: Production photo from *'The Comedy of Shadows'* by Laha Mebow, 1995 by lake used for scenes in film



Illustration 2.70: Research photo by George Clark during trip to Chin Pao San, October 2017, same lake now drained revealing old tree trunks



Illustration 2.73: Laha Mebow standing in front of the residence building in Chin Pao San



Illustration 2.72: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement, last shot of film of the residence building in Chin Pao San



Illustration 2.75: Cheung Chin production photo high in the cemetery, 30 November 1995



Illustration 2.74: *A Mountain Inside A Cave* (George Clark, 2019) 35mm frame enlargement, 19 August 2018

As I look over the footage I find new echoes and further entanglements. One brief sequence of double exposures comes together in a prophetic manner. In 1993 Chin Pao San founder opened a private gallery to support sculptural work in Taiwan, the name was Jeh-San Tang Gallery/惜山堂, taken from the Chinese phrase '*borrowed from the mountains*'.¹⁴⁰ This concept is echoed in the scenario for the film within a film: the fictional director Ki is preparing to document the work of sculptor. In the scenario he states:

I want to follow the journey of a stone from being discovered at the seashore to being transformed into a sculpture that is absorbed into the landscape of the cemetery. I am trying to draw an analogy between the journey of stones and that of human.¹⁴¹



Illustration 4.76: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) frame enlargement (3 sequential frames)

¹⁴⁰ The gallery Jeh-San Tang Gallery/惜山堂 based in the North of Taipei was open during the 1990s and was one of first contemporary galleries to support sculptural work and gave early show to Shiao Jon-jen China (Taiwan), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of. 'Rejuvenation of a Legacy'. Website. Taiwan Today. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China (Taiwan), 1 January 1993. <https://taiwantoday.tw/news.php?unit=20&post=25173>.

¹⁴¹ Cheung, Alge/張國翔, 'Trailer "影子喜劇" City Entertainment Magazine/電影雙週刊, Hong Kong, 1996, volume 1, N. 405, p26. Translated by Dub & Ko Language Services, September 2018

Sunday 29 October 2017, Lisbon

I am due to return to London but postpone (why go back anyway?). I wrote to Valeria to ask if I could visit her and she responds to say she will be in Lisbon for a shoot. Perfect I say I am already in Lisbon showing my films at DocLisboa so we arrange to meet at beginning of November when she arrives. I welcome the time and space to be alone in city, to walk the many hills. Very easy to drink in Lisbon's cafes and bars. I visit the cinematheque and see that Shabazz Palaces are playing in next day. Shocked tickets are still available so book to go see them. Can't remember the last time I went to see gig on my own. Panda Bear (Animal Collective member lives here, of course) is supporting with DJ set.

Thursday 2 November 2017, Lisbon

Meet with Valeria in her apartment in the morning. She is in Lisbon preparing shoot for adaptation Camilo Castelo Branco novel *Livro Negro de Padre Dinis*. We meet early, it's rainy and Miguel joins us to translate. We talk for about an hour. She has the publication of Raúl's diaries in her study. Valeria is generous, warm and direct, asking about my project and what she can do to help. Her career as an editor and director can be seen in her interest getting to the point as well as entertaining Raúl on his many flights of fancy. She is clearly touched by memories of time in Taiwan and wears a jade bracelet. She is enthused by the idea of returning to Taiwan in the future. She tells me the script for the film is with her sister in Chile but she should be able to retrieve it. I tell her I will be going to Chile in November. So that settles it she says with a clap of her hands, I should call her sister when I arrive and she can give me the script directly. Touched and moved by our meeting and her confidence in me... not sure where it has come from but I leave feeling elated by it nevertheless.

Return to London in time to teach again but mainly focus on preparing for the trip ahead amidst talking with friends trying to understand my collapsing love life.

Monday 20 November 2017, London

After meeting with Valeria I write to Cheung Chin on 14 November. Chin was responsible for producing *Le Comedie des ombres*. I am hopeful to meet and interview him. First I need to see where he lives as Valeria is unsure, somewhere between Paris and Hong Kong. Today I get his response:

Dear George Clark
 Glad U are interested by La comédie des ombres.
 But, unfortunately we can't find the négative anymore.
 I have a working copy, with separated sound track.
 Please let me know if this would help you in your research.
 I will go to China for 1 week, as you may know that Gmail can't be reach in this country.
 Better to communicate after my return to HK early december.
 All the best,
 Cheung Chin¹⁴²

¹⁴² Email correspondence with the author, from Cheung Chin, 20 November 2017

With the contact established I am hopeful about the working copy and learning more from Chin. I agree to pick up the correspondence when he is back from China and when I am back from Chile. I leave for Buenos Aires and then Chile the following day.



Illustration 2.77: Leon Dai and Cheung Chin, listen for the lost sound of the film they try to produce in the afterlife in *The Comedy of Shadows*. Production photo from Hong Kong Entertainment article, pub. 1996



Illustration 2.78: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement. The ornate bowl at Chin Pao San. The painting is faded and it was drained of water when I filmed in October 2017. Maybe echos can still be heard from the lost film for those who care to listen.

3: CEMETERY

3.1 Silence and Displacement

Our landscape is its own monument: its meaning can only be traced on the underside. It is all history.

- Édouard Glissant¹

A film is most of the time for us an encounter with a place. When all these elements, the place (space), theatre (fiction), life (experiences) come together, a film is born (time) - Danièle Huillet²

My aim for this chapter is two fold: to outline my approach to thinking about place as means to map complex histories and situate assemblages, and on other hand to document a series of actions and sites which informed and were the locus for my practice and central to the production of my film *Double Ghosts* and subsequent works *Inner Sage / Outer King* and *A Mountain Inside a Cave*. The central site for these works and reflections on place is the cemetery; a complex site of metaphysical mediation and transmission that I will approach in expanded field of associations.

Place is central to my practice drawing on methods of assembly explored in first chapter of *Fragments*. Building on the themes of *Projection* in the last Chapter, I want to explore landscapes as place of history and follow Glissant's poetic provocation to approach landscape as its *own monument*. In the terrains of non-visible, places marked by occluded histories, landscape Glissant proposes is never empty but filled with witnesses, traces, memories, ghosts and shadows waiting to be read. '[H]istory is spread out beneath this surface, from the mountains to the sea, from north to south, from the forest to the beaches.'³ Landscapes contain multiple pasts and futures, and in the absence of official histories everything can be read under the surface, as he argues 'it is all history.'⁴

I will be paying particular attention to sites of mediation and how place is entangled and enmeshed in processes of projection. This approach to topography opens up a means of production attentive to material conditions and new combinations acknowledging lived experience, contingency and the dead. My approach to place is informed by various from the work of post-minimalist artists to the advent of site specific practice, from debates about public realm in art to relational aesthetics,⁵ which inform my approach to the practice of film production. Places bring their own limits and conditions for how images and sounds can be made. The

¹ Glissant, Édouard, *Caribbean Discourse*, trans. J. Michael Dash (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), p11

² Straub, Jean-Marie, and Danièle Huillet. *Danièle Huillet, Jean-Marie Straub*. Sequence Press, 2016. p. 394

³ Glissant, Édouard, *Caribbean Discourse*, trans. J. Michael Dash (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), p11

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ See: Doherty, Claire. *Public Art (Now): Out of Time, Out of Place*. Art / Books, 2015; Dean, Tacita, and Millar, Jeremy,. *Place*. Thames & Hudson, 2005; Coles, Alex, ed., *Site-Specificity: The Ethnographic Turn*, Black Dog Press, 2000

encounter with place is a crucial element in my practice, the following commentary explores the means to understand, structure and expand this encounter.

The cinema of Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub's is often seen as an emblem of a materialist approach to film practice. Throughout their work they paid rigorous attention to specifics of each component through which they construct their films from their detailed work with existing texts to focus on filming outdoors in specific locations despite potential interruptions. In their work with non-professional performers and insistence on direct sound their films record and register contingent aspects of the processes of filmmaking. This approach does not negate fiction or invention, it stresses instead an attentive creativity based on material elements which are assembled in the act of filming.

Such a contingent and materialist approach to filmmaking can also lead into other forms of performance, which Apichatpong Weerasethakul has explored through his concept of cinema as a womb, a place between material states of being. In his stage performance *Fever Room* he explicitly rethinks the role of the audience within the realities of his work. 'Maybe the audience will be part of this, almost a character and viewer at the same time.'⁶ These reflections build on his previous film *Cemetery of Splendour*, which revolves around the 'idea of dreaming and sleeping, because sometimes you're just in and out of the experience—it's a shifting perspective.'⁷ Within Weerasethakul's poetics, the place created in *Cemetery of Splendour* can be understood as the place of cinema itself, a world of dreams and ghosts, of carnal longing and desire of bodies we cannot touch.

It is my intention in this chapter to explore how such an approach to cinema can bridge the materialism of Straub/Huillet and the dreamstates of Weerasethakul. Both of these practices are intimately entangled with notions of performance, multiplicity of reality and the actions of filmmaking itself. They are equally informed by means of habitation and contingency as they are by phantoms, shadows and projections. The model for this place for meeting of the living and the dead, this imagined cinema, will be the cemetery itself.

⁶ Lucca, Violet, 'Dream State: Cemetery of Splendor | Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Film Comment, March-April 2016'. Accessed 28 August 2020. <https://www.filmcomment.com/article/apichatpong-weerasethakul-cemetery-of-splendor/>.

⁷ Ibid.

3.2 Names on a letter: Where I am writing from



Illustration 3.1: *Mountains and Rivers of Home* (George Clark, 2016) 35mm frame enlargement. Names removed from letter to preserve anonymity.

While living in Sylmar, California we received mail for my then grand-parents in-law which we forwarded onto them. In addition to their mail we received letters addressed to another person whose name my partner didn't recognise. When she asked her uncle about this name he was surprised she didn't know that it was in fact her grandfather's original name.

The letters were written by old friends from mainland China still using the grandfather's name before he changed it in order to settle in Taiwan at the end of the Chinese civil war. Due to the high-standing of his wife's family, who held good position in the local government, her family were allowed to migrate to Taiwan as the ROC retreated. Despite being married my grandfather-in-law did not have permission to emigrate with her. Following the escalation of the Chinese Civil war, they made the decision to leave China for Taiwan while University students. In order to gain permission to emigrate my grandfather-in-law decided to change his name so as to appear as his wife's brother rather than her husband.

The change of his name opened up other stories. Due to suspicion about their migration to Taiwan, their route through Hong Kong and the fact that they studied at what had become a communist controlled university in mainland China, they were arrested shortly after arriving in Taiwan by KMT government officials.

They were required to spend three years in a re-education camp with other suspected “bandit spies/匪諜”⁸ during the anti-communist purges in the early period of White Terror. These stories were not discussed and only partially known to my partner at the time. It was through living in their old house in Los Angeles that we started to piece together this traumatic part of their life from photos left behind and other fragments. The next time we were in Taiwan, with help from cousins I conducted a long interview in which my grandfather-in-law told stories of his migration from mainland China and difficult settlement in Taiwan. Within the privacy of the family he openly told the story of his treatment and incarceration by the KMT Nationalist Government, processes of re-education (which he dismissed as routine brainwashing) as well as the way he managed to overcome this and build a career and life against widespread prejudice and discrimination of people who had gone through so called re-education.

In 1998 a foundation was established in Taiwan to ‘compensate for improper sedition and spying charges during the martial law period’ and received 10,067 applications over 15 years of operation.⁹ The applications represent only a partial number of the tens of thousands of people who are believed to have been arrested on anti-government charges, or some of the 1,200 people who were executed or killed during the February 28 incident (1947-1948) and period of White Terror (1949-1987).¹⁰ It has been argued that ‘[a]lthough compensation was made for losses of life and freedom, albeit stingily, the wrongdoers were never prosecuted or even named.’¹¹ Documents and records related to the extensive history of incarceration, observation and execution in Taiwan under Nationalist rule were inaccessible and routinely destroyed until 2002 when Taiwan’s Archive Act prohibited such actions and begun preserving the records.

While my life has been entangled in different ways in the histories described here and in the two previous chapters, there arises the question of my situatedness within these frames. As Betsy Wing, the key translator of Glissant’s work, observes, his focus on the work Relation is connected to his broader discourse of perception and attempt to reorientate means of understanding and perceiving the world. As Wing elaborates the ‘French word for understanding, *comprendre*, like its English cognate, is formed on the basis of the Latin word, *comprehendere*, “to seize”... Glissant contrasts this form of understanding – appropriative, almost

⁸ The term ‘Bandit Spies/匪諜’ was used by KMT to described the Chinese Communist Part and was widely used for suspected communists, sympathisers or others who opposed the Republic of China governance. In 1950 the government began arresting on mass suspected Bandit Spies/匪諜, often based on secret reports. The martial law government also used this power to arrest wide range of political dissidents from supporters of freedom of speech, oppositional party members, supporters of Taiwanese independence movement and indigenous groups. Many other people were tarnished with this designation, often unfounded and open to corrupt accusations which would severely limit opportunities and social acceptance throughout their life despite having undergone reeducation

⁹ Central News Agency (Sabine Cheng and Lilian Wu) ‘Dossiers on political prisoners to be opened to public’ Taiwan News, 17 November 2014. Accessed 22 January 2021 <http://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/2621837>

¹⁰ Wu, Naiteh ‘Transition without Justice, or Justice without History: Transitional Justice in Taiwan’, *Taiwan Journal of Democracy* 1, 1, July 2005. p11

¹¹ Ibid, p12

rapacious – with the understanding upon which Relation must be based: *donner-avec*. *Donner* (to give) is meant as a generosity of perception. (In French *donner* can mean “to look out toward.”)¹² My own learning about these distant family histories, as well as these experiences of artists and friends, and my understanding of oppressive, ruptured histories, has gone in parallel with my attempts to produce my own work, finding and refilming a range of landscapes in Taiwan and Los Angeles as well as archival photographs. These were all attempts to build a way of *looking out toward*; exploring constellations of meanings across various image regimes, dispersed fragments of memory and passed on experiences as a means to understand and navigate the world in relation beyond my own experience.

Entangled with Glissant’s central concept of *Relation*, is its antithesis in the *Abyss*; the unending trauma of the Atlantic passage and legacy of enslavement. The far reaching scope of Glissant’s writing is rooted in the cultural reckoning with the nonworld of the abyss, its through the concept of Relation that he addresses the re-worlding that emerging out of the displacement of slavery, forced labour, colonialism and war. The Abyss represents a movement into a terrifying domain “What kind of river, then has no middle? Is there nothing there but straight ahead? Is this boat sailing into eternity toward the edges of a nonworld that no ancestors will haunt?”¹³ The violence of the abyss is in its unending, “this continuous/discontinuous thing”¹⁴ is so outside of Relation it is not even accessible to ghosts. Among other writers, artists and political thinkers, Glissant provides tools and strategies for re-worlding, an act that is multiple, generous and open; “Beyond its chasm we gamble on the unknown. We take sides in this game of the world.... We know ourselves as part and as crowd, in an unknown that does not terrify. We cry our cry of poetry. Our boats are open, and we sail them for everyone.”¹⁵

Since 2011 starting in the house in Sylmar and expanding outward I have filmed in places I have lived and spent time documenting changes to these locations over the years as attempt to work alongside others and understand my situatedness within these broader histories and expanding archipelago of my life. Filming has taken me through sites in Taiwan from the Green Island political prison to visiting the temple projectionist Mr. Hsu’s studio in Pingtung. It has also connected me constellations of artists and filmmakers from visiting John Torres and Shireen Seno’s house in Manila, Kidlat Tahimik’s construction of a new cinema in Bagio and Gym Lamberra’s ancestral home and family on shores of Lake Taal. From filming remnants of modernist architecture from 1968 olympics in volcanic parkland in the south Mexico City to coastlines stretching from southern California to Chile, botanical gardens in Buenos Aires and former tile factories now home to the

¹² Wing, Betsy, ‘Translators Introduction’, Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. p. xiv

¹³ Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. p.7

¹⁴ Ibid. p.7

¹⁵ Ibid. p.9

embedded community practice of Jatiwangi art Factory in Indonesia.

While filming in this improvised and hopscotch method I also began a series of gardens, first in the backyard of the house in Sylmar in 2013. The garden became an integral part of my life and habitation. In 2016 as artist in residency in Tainan in the south of Taiwan I began a second garden and developed my installation to feature plants grown from seed, and in 2017 in Jatiwangi we made a suspended garden as a framework for showing works from the collectives archive. Now in 2020 as I am writing this text in my friends flat in South London (she is stranded in Japan due to the Covid-19) I have discovered she had a wild overgrown garden that I have been taming and replanting in her absence to grow vegetables and claim some sanctuary. These gardens have been my islands spanning this project, this confluence of fragmented points of habitation has been shored up by a network of artists, friends and places of work forming my personal archipelago, the place where I am writing from.

In 1974 Deleuze wrote a short text called *A Planter's Art* which he distributed at the door of the theatre Quarter Latin in defence of Hugo Santiago's film *Les Autres* (1974), which had caused a scandal at the Cannes Film Festival in 1974. The was Santiago's second film written with Jorge Luis Borges and Adolfo Bioy-Casares following his debut *Invasion* (1968). In the text Deleuze describes a way of working derived from this film produced in Paris by a team from Argentina. Deleuze argues that the film exists between two places, two temporalities, employing a method of placing the camera that he describes as a 'way of planting. Not burying the camera on its feet, but rapidly planting it, just below the surface of the soil or terrain, and then carrying it elsewhere to plant it over again.¹⁶ In the exhibition at the end of my residency in Tainan in 2016 I called the exhibition *A Planter's Art*¹⁷ acknowledging this as a method in my work, a way of filming as way to understand uprooted lives, ways of being and working between places and times, not 'taking root, just stabs.'¹⁸

In the film itself, the camera, the crew and the director will pop up suddenly right next to the couple making love: this is not a "literary" effect, nor a reflection of the film-making process in the film; rather, the camera is seen because it was planted here, stabbed there, to be immediately picked up and planted elsewhere. The film, everything which the film shows, follows this procedure without the least artifice.¹⁹

¹⁶ Deleuze, Gilles. *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*. Semiotext(e), 2004, p289

¹⁷ George Clark, *A Planter's Art / 種植者的藝術*, Soulangh Cultural Park, Tainan City, Taiwan (R.O.C.), 18 June –31 July 2016

¹⁸ Deleuze, Gilles. *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*. Semiotext(e), 2004, p289

¹⁹ Ibid, p289

Illustration 3.2: *Les Autres* (Hugo Santiago, 1974)Illustration 3.3: *Les Autres* (Hugo Santiago, 1974)

This method of filming, of planting of the camera and its attendant movement has been a guiding element of way of working and living, seeking to build linkages across constellation of people and places. To film and live between places is to remain nimble, to be able to burrow down into detail but also to make leaps to new places, new islands creating links and assemblages. 'With archipelagic thinking' Glissant argues in contrast to seeing the world as a singular unit, 'we get to know the rocks in the rivers, assuredly the smallest rocks and rivers.'²⁰

These movements are not designed to negate synthesis in favour of specificity. They seek to create linkages and means of relation on an intimate scale; to think about lives lived under the same stars but with different way to read the constellations. As Deleuze describes in *Les Autres* the story is precisely shared by the two worlds, a city fragment and a pampas fragment, each of which is quite mobile; the one is stuck in the other and carries it away. What appears continuous in the one would be dis-continuous in the other, and vice versa.'²¹

In 1978 Theresa Hak Kyung Cha created mail art project called *Audience Distant Relative* featuring seven sheets folded into cards. One of the cards contained the following address:

you are the audience
 you are my distant audience
 i address you
 as i would a distant relative

²⁰ Glissant, Édouard, *Philosophie de la relation : poésie en étendue*, Paris, Gallimard, 2009, p. 45. Translation by TRANS

²¹ Ibid, p289

as if a distant relative
 seen only heard only through someone else's description
 neither you nor i
 are visible to each other
 i can only assume that you can hear me
 i can only hope that you hear me²²

The correspondence is emblematic form of conceptual art which Cha reconfigured to address disconnected histories and people. The audience she is addressing is informed by legacies of erasure and silence as her novel *Dictée* explores, through its melding of real and fictional characters, as well as untranslated sections in French, Korean and Chinese. A later correspondence project would result in the publication *Apparatus* with contributions for various filmmakers, artists and theorists elicited by mail. The original letters, which are held at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, include three letters and one envelope addressed to Cha from Danièle Huillet, sent between 25 January 1981 and 1 April 1981²³. These were all written in a period of limbo in the production of the film Danièle Huillet was making with Jean-Marie Straub that would become *Trop tôt/Trop tard/Too Early, Too Late* (1981). Huillet wrote the letters following the completion of filming in France and while waiting funds to be able complete the second part in Egypt in May.²⁴

In the second letter dated 21 March 1981, Huillet responds to a proposal from Cha to include material on their film in production, stating that she and Straub 'don't like to have anything published upon a film which still doesn't exist (call it superstition...), and since only the first part of TOO EARLY TOO LATE has been made until now, please let us wait to be sure that we arrive at the end of the second part in May. As it is too late for your book we prefer to renounce.'²⁵ This rebuff was only part of their distance audience response as they eventually agreed to contribute and supplied script and material from their short adaptation of Mallarmé's poem *Un Coup de dés/Every Revolution is a Throw of the Dice*.

In describing these linkages I am seeking to illuminate trans-local networks of solidarity and artistic dialogue alongside which I intend to situate my own work. The linkages from Deleuze to Santiago to Borges, or from Cha to Huillet to Mallarmé, map lines of solidarity and relation across practices geographically distant yet

²² 'Audience Distant Relative' is a mail art project and artist book by Theresa Hak Kyung Cha. The mail art project was exhibited at Galerie Loa, Haarlem, Holland. 1978.

²³ Following her untimely death in November 5, 1982 her estate has been maintained by the Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Memorial Foundation and many items were gifted to the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive in 1992.

²⁴ Letter dated 25/01/1981, University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive; Gift of the Theresa Hak Kyung Cha Memorial Foundation

²⁵ Ibid.

linked in their interest in the revolutionary potential of their work. The works are chance operations directed to the future linked by belief in the potential of audience. Cha's statement 'i can only hope that you hear me' is itself a testament to the optimistic possibility of relation.



Illustration 3.4: Letter (front) to Theresa Hak Kyung Cha from Danièle Huillet regarding the Apparatus publication, original held at Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, 1981



Illustration 3.5: Letter (back) to Theresa Hak Kyung Cha from Danièle Huillet regarding the Apparatus publication, original held at Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, 1981

The story told through the works which make up the constellation of the *Double Ghosts* project in its ongoing iterations, are hopeful addresses to distant audiences. Composed of fragments and chance operations, my works are enmeshed in discrete geographies while also moving across thresholds of being and non-being, bridging the often invisible, superstitious limbo between states of becoming. The combining of these fragments follows Glissant as operations of relation, striving for means of being multiple in order to approach the unknown with others.

3.3 The scattered body and the world upside down



Illustration 3.6: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement

When the present is seen from outside the present, it becomes a place onto which past and future spirits can be projected. - Franco Fortini²⁶

Some day God didn't know what else to do so He stood up on his hands and created the Upside Down World. – *La Recta Provincia*²⁷

The first film I completed in this project is the 35mm film *Double Ghosts*. The 31 minute film is structured in seven sections with an epilogue. Each section follows a set of conditions connected to a place of mediation designed to allow references to proliferate across a distributed topography entangled with shadows and projections. The film was shot in selected locations in Chile corresponding to the seven mirrors from a Chilote myth (I will discuss later) and the final section filmed at Chin Pao San I described in the previous chapter. These locations correspond to a topography of mediated sites constituting a distributed body with elements from Raúl Ruiz's work and life, traces of the phantom film *The Comedy of Shadows*, fragments of occluded histories and interrupted futures.

Rather than working from a script or treatment I devised a map which would act as a tool to navigate the labyrinth of references and associations gathered through my research. The key question for my approach

²⁶ Franco Fortini, *A Note for Jean-Marie Straub*, 1978, In: *The Dogs of the Sinai* [1967] trans. Alberto Toscano, London, New York, Calcutta, Seagull Books, 2013. pp74-82

²⁷ Dialogue from *Le Recta Provincia* (Raúl Ruiz, 2007)

was how to work in relation to others? How to produce images that exists in dialogue with the shadows and projects I have been describing and in relation to the cast of actors I have been introducing? How to develop a method of filming drawing of Ruiz's work while at same time acknowledging differences of time and place? The methodological question is how to work in relation without being overwhelmed or alienated in the process? To put it in more metaphysical terms, how to work with ghosts without being possessed?

Rather than seeking to discover, remake or replace *The Comedy of Shadows*, I went to Chile to find a way to create new images in relation to this yet to be seen film. From my time in Taiwan it was clear the film existed but in a state of non-being, in fragments and unresolved potential images the film persisted, in the memories, experiences and landscapes but just couldn't be seen. By foregrounding the act of filming in specific landscape as an active part of research, I wanted to bring the decision making processes involved into producing images into the heart of the film itself and ground this materially. Embracing this materiality is to approach different register of images such as the poor images Hito Steyerl defines as those 'wrecked by violence and history.'²⁸ To work in relation would involve foregrounding fragments and unresolved images, contingent images situated in particular places, investigating what can and cannot be made visible. This rhizomic model of image creation would follow Deleuze and the 'very specific genre of description' in which the image 'instead of being concerned with a supposedly distinct object constantly both absorbs and creates its own object.'²⁹

The mode of practice is underpinned by a concept of research understood within the archipelagic, de-centred spheres I have been discussing. Research is a method of filming, an ongoing investigation following Deleuze and Guattari that has to function as a collective 'experimentation in contact with the real.'³⁰ The topography I would develop for *Double Ghosts* then would be means to structure an experimentation, that 'fosters connections between fields.'³¹ Fundamental to this is a deeper reflection on the nature of images and reality, drawing on the models of being of the fragment, the shadow and the projection as entangled elements that make up the real.

I approach landscape as site of mediation, existing as sedimentary layers of history above and below the earth, formed in relation to what is projected from and onto their surface. My topography is a confluence of these assemblages, determined as much by the materials of place as the materials by which it is perceived. As such as well as defining my topography I want to introduce the tools that will mediate and explore it. My

²⁸ Steyerl, Hito, and Berardi, Franco. *The Wretched of the Screen*. Sternberg Press, 2012. p155

²⁹ Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema II: The Time-Image*. A&C Black, 2013. p68

³⁰ Deleuze, Gilles. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. University of Minnesota Press, 1987. p12

³¹ Ibid.

equipment, and in particular the camera, are key determining factors conditioning the material choices behind how and what I can film, connected to particular histories and technologies of image production.

I made the decision to travel to Chile with my 35mm Bell & Howell Eyemo film camera. I had already began filming with this camera while in Taiwan and it felt appropriate to create sister images with this camera to parallel the use of 35mm film on the shoot of *The Comedy of Shadows* (although at a much more modest scale). First manufactured in 1925 the Eyemo camera it is one of the most compact 35mm film cameras produced. Historically it was popular as a newsreel and combat camera, later adopted for its compact size and rugged design as a 'crash-cam' to help film dangerous stunts. As it is non-reflex it was superseded by the German made handheld Arriflex camera in 1937, as the key handheld camera in this period³². The Eyemo is spring powered meaning I don't need to carry batteries, making it a very useful camera for shooting alone and on location. The camera has capacity for single 100ft rolls of film (approximately 70 seconds of footage). The wind-up motor allows you to shoot continuously for only 30 seconds (about 50 ft of film) before the motor has to be rewound. This gave me a key determining factor in the production, a limit to the type of images I could film. The conditions set by the camera would also give me freedom to work within these parameters, a frame for my blind hypotheses.



Illustration 3.7: Filming with Eyemo Camera in Santiago, December 2017. Photo by Niles Atallah



Illustration 3.8: Repairing my Eyemo camera during residency in Madou, Taiwan June 2016. Photo George Clark

³² Both cameras were used extensively to film during combat and in particular WWII. The earlier model Eyemo was used in combat including being used by the photographer Robert Capra in the Spanish civil war. The Arriflex 35 camera was introduced in 1937. Models captured by US army were brought back to America and were used in (and helped to contribute to the new level of realism of film noir, Delmer Daves *Dark Passage* (1947) is credited as first American feature to use the camera. The noisy camera was used extensively for non-synchronise filming and movement, a favourite camera of filmmakers from Werner Herzog, Pier Paolo Pasolini and Stanley Kubrick and adapted for Steadicam use as well as being adapted and widely used internationally in host of new wave cinemas starting with Italian neorealism. See: Fauer, Jon. 'The History of ARRI in a Century of Cinema', 12 September 2017, <https://www.arri.com/en/company/arri-news/news-stories/2017/the-history-of-arri-in-a-century-of-cinema>.

The camera is non-reflex, meaning you can only focus by measurement and by using a parallel viewfinder. In addition to the delay between filming and processing the footage, this lack of reflex viewfinder is a further blindness in the camera and technology creating an additional hiatus between the act of filming and the viewing of the material. In these ways the camera itself acts with a distinct degree of autonomy, capturing images based on its own proclivities.

The two subsequent films I produced as part of this project, the *Inner Sage / Outer King* and *A Mountain Inside a Cave*, were shot with the Eyemo camera, but also additional material was filmed by my Arriflex IIB 35mm camera. This camera is reflex and runs with a motor so can be adaptively focused and also allows longer shooting times and up to 400ft of film in one magazine. I used this camera primarily in Taipei in August 2018 for shooting photographs in my improvised studio for *Inner Sage / Outer King*. Both cameras were used for *A Mountain Inside a Cave* which was filmed during a one off single day event so the two cameras together allowed me to document the event in a more comprehensive fashion. I mention this as the strategies I will focus on, related to the Eyemo camera, are central to *Double Ghosts*, informing both my methodology and approach to filming which was carried over to the different camera in the filming for these subsequent works.



Illustration 9: Studio shooting with Arriflex IIB camera, Taipei Artist Village, Aug 2018



Illustration 10: Shooting with Arriflex IIB camera, Chin Pao San, 19 August 2018. Photo Vito Yang.

I have worked with Eyemo camera since 2011 and the Arriflex since 2013, making me familiar with its limits and conditions. The crudeness and simplicity of the camera is an important frame for shifting my focus from the camera to the place in which I choose to bring it and use it. The limits in terms of lenses dictate a range of factors from camera position, proximity and focal field and the limits in film rolls dictate length of shoots. These conditions are crucial in forcing me to make explicit decisions, the blind hypothesis of shooting,

informed as much as possible by my experience and research but with ample space for contingency. These material conditions are not invisible but there are other actors in the topography determining what and how I can film.

After the camera the second factor conditioning what I could film would be the 35mm film stock. This material is limited by what I could afford and what I could carry. I had recently purchased some Kodak Vision 2 50D³³ film stock from the Liaison of Independent Filmmakers in Toronto which I knew was good quality and supplemented this with bits and pieces of older colour stock (250D, 500D and 800T colour stock) that I had kept in my fridge. I had sourced the old stock from various locations so the quality I could be less certain of. When I arrived in Chile I settled on the structure and selection of seven locations and calculated how much I could film at each one. I had brought a little under 2000ft with me and had shoot 100ft in Buenos Aires. I calculated this would leave just 200ft per location (just over 2 minutes). The Chilean filmmaker Niles Atallah generously gave me additional 250D and 50D Kodak stock that allowed me to allocate 3-4 rolls (300-400 ft) for each of the seven locations.



Illustration 3.11: Nile Atallah spare film stock, Nov 2017. Photo Niles Atallah



Illustration 3.12: Film cans of rolls shot in Chile Nov-Dec 2017 for *Double Ghosts*

The third factor I want to introduce is series of decisions determining how to use the camera and how to use the film stock. With the limited amount of stock I also made the decision to shoot in a manner which would not waste any film. This is a two-fold decision, it is a commitment to film in a deliberate way already thinking about rhythm and sequence of images and secondly a commitment to live with whatever it is I would film. The film that exists then is a record of the actions and responses to the locations I visited. I worked on this project with a very low shooting ratio of raw footage to my final film as part of a strategy to create *documents* that would contain traces of the actions and place without being over-determined or re-organised by editing.

³³ The Kodak 5201 Vision2 50D is colour stock introduced in 2005 and discontinued in 2012.

This means that the majority of the footage in *Double Ghosts* was edited in camera, as in the sequence and pacing of images was established at the point of shooting for each of the 100ft rolls, leading to further traces imposed in relation to each site. In the end I shot 28 rolls of 100ft during trip (approximately 29 minutes). In the final film I used all the footage except 1 roll I shot at an additional location in Chiloé with the additional 300ft rolls I had shot in Taiwan.

Working with these limitations the method of filming I have been developing is both an aesthetic strategy and a politics of practice, a commitment to the act of filming as a contingent action which provides points of reference in a network of relation. The act of filming is contingent and entangled with an expansive assemblage, each instance of filming is entangled with a host of shadow images, phantoms and projections. When I film I seek to situate myself within these assemblages and produce images from within this entangled space. Images exist in dialogue with other images, not in the form of a linear reference but each gesture is informed and reflective of images shoring up the decisions made when and what to film. Each image I film is a response to this assemblage and a continuity of it. These are inhabited processes, built up from immersion in rhizomic assemblages is to act in a fluid way, to act in relation.



Illustration 3.13: Marking the film emulsion at beginning of roll of film in Santiago Dec 2017. Photo Niles Atallah.



Illustration 3.14: With the lens removed and gate open can mark emulsion with cross to indicates the frame size. Photo Niles Atallah, Dec 2017

The strategies are further compounded by a process of double exposure. For the Eyemo camera this means marking the frames at the start of each reel so after shooting the first exposure I can rewind the film in the dark and reload it ensuring the frame lines match ready for second exposure (or third or forth). This marking is essential as the film has four sprocket holes per frame so if loaded incorrectly the second exposed frames will not aligned with those of first exposure. With the camera there is always a chance these alignments may slip if the film is caught or jumps a sprocket but this only goes to add in another layer of chance to the

process. I had shot and double exposed the initial footage in this way at Chin Pao San and had even brought one roll with me to be double exposed in Chile, entangling images of Taiwan and Chile irrecoverably on one roll of film.

In addition to the camera and the film stock, the other central material in this combination is sound. In other projects I have experimented with synchronous and non-synchronous sound linking the audio directly to the image in process of entanglement similar to double exposures where whatever was heard and seen would have to stay together in the films' final assembly.³⁴ This synchronous method requires additional crew to help with sound recording. Also the Eyemo camera is non-synchronise, as it is not silent when filming and doesn't run at precise frame rate required for synch. As such with this camera I usually record 'wild track' or MOS sound, recording on location but not when the camera is rolling. This is then later roughly synched with the image. For these films I focused on recording wild sound at each location, but given my limited time I was often restricted. As I could only spend 1 or 2 days at each location I wasn't always about to spend as much time as I would have wanted recording sound. In some locations I was aided by fellow filmmakers such as Niles Atallah and Cristóbal León who helped to record location sound, including one sequence that was recorded in synch at Cerro San Cristóbal. I recorded sound on location with Zoom H5 digital audio recorder using an Audio-Technica BP4029 microphone in M/S configuration with a Wendt X3 field mixer.



Illustration 3.15: *Jatiwangi* (George Clark, 2018). 35mm frame enlargement. Tedi En recording synch sound with Audio-technica microphone in sound blimp, zoom and field mixer.



Illustration 3.16: Recording Waldo Rojas reading Raúl Ruiz diaries with Zoom digital audio recorder, 25 July 2018

Sound is one of the central means to bring together an array of actors, composited and combining a wider range of sources. In the project I pushed the separation of sound and image further with the interval of sound recordings being made minutes or months later or even sometimes years before. The map I created became

³⁴ This was the principal strategy of my film *Jatiwangi* (2018) which I filmed in August/September 2017 prior to filming in Taiwan and Chile for *Double Ghosts*.

a key tool to help in assembling these sounds and used to give detailed instructions to my sound collaborator Martin Baus, who made additional wild track recordings in Chile after I had left, which I worked with in addition to field recordings made by Fernando Godoy.³⁵ The final film was constructed in two principle iterations, one early version was assembled for presentation at the Star and Shadow Cinema in March 2018 and a final sound mix was finished in August 2018 that I will on expand on in the following chapter.

With the camera, film stock, shooting and sound recording methods outlined I want to now address the approach to production. In particular I want to expand the notion of topographical cinema I am proposing. This idea draws on work of various filmmakers from Chantal Akerman to Peter Hutton, but in principally Jean-Marie Straub's idea of *telluric cinema*, a model of filming attentive to the earth, rooted in place as a site of projection.

My initial idea was to film a preparatory study in Chile, an exploration of locations for a potential future film. But shortly into the trip I realised that the open form I was interested in could be contained within this topographical approach. The landscapes were not being scouted for a future film but would be source for these histories themselves and propose other potential films. Filming in these places would connect histories above and below the ground. 'History' as Deleuze argues, 'is inseparable from the earth [terre], struggle is underground [sous terre], and, if we want to grasp an event, we must not show it, we must not pass along the event, but plunge into it, go through all the geological layers that are its internal history.'³⁶ Echoing Glissant, he is pointing us to history as told in the earth.

Deleuze is referring to the telluric cinema of Jean-Marie Straub and Danielle Huillet. He calls their work the *second age of the talkies*, noting that silence only entered cinema after the invention of sound. In their films a 'new sense of "readable" appears for the visual image.'³⁷ When the separation between sound and image is freely approached it brings new aesthetics and politics into cinema. As he argues 'music made things visible by imposing an irreversible orientation on the eye. It is no longer the same now, in this second stage of the talkie. It is the opposite because the heard speech ceases to make seen and be seen; it is because it becomes independent of the visual image, that the visual image attains to the new readability of things on its

³⁵ When I approached Fernando to ask if he could help with some location recordings in Valparaíso where he is based he pointed me to this online project Audiomapa (<https://www.audiomapa.org/>) which is an open source application allowing field recordings to be embedded on a map and shared freely among sound artists under the creative commons licence. The platform is dedicated to sharing, exploring, and archiving the soundscape of Latin America but has become increasingly international resource. Here I was able to find recordings from various locations in Valparaíso as well as Chiloé and other locations to supplement recordings by myself and Martin Baus.

³⁶ Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema II: The Time-Image*. A&C Black, 2013. pp254-255

³⁷ Ibid, p246

own account, and becomes an archaeological or rather stratigraphic section which must be read.³⁸ The becoming independent of the sound and image, is fundamental to topographical method, a materialist model of cinema built on assemblage of independent and autonomous elements.

Across their work Straub/Huillet their camera traces 'the abstract curve of what has happened, and where the earth stands for what is buried in it.'³⁹ This notion is perhaps best illustrated in sequences from the film *Fortini/Canì* in which we see images the Apuan Alps, Italian villages are seen and heard from a distance as Fortini reads from his text outlining the Nazi atrocities committed there against partisans. Crucially these assemblages do not direct or situate the texts, the readings overlap with sounds of the place (sometimes just the sounds of birds, other times singers in a church) and give way to a long sequence with only direct sound from the locations as the camera pans across the landscapes. These images are often described as 'empty' but this is to apply a reductive understanding of function of an image, to image something can also be to render the potential of that which is not seen. As Fortini himself commented, the films images 'openly allude to a past that could also be a future *if someone will come to want it* (the pacified mountains, the blossoming oleander, the view of Florence, the hills of the ending), there is a continual exchange between "renunciation" and "promise". Renunciation, *Entsagung*, is also converted into promise. The absence of man, where it is most absolute (because the voice too goes quiet, as in the sequence of the Apuan Alps) affirms the enormous presence of the dead.'⁴⁰

The topography of Chile I am seeking to assemble is one populated by works from Ruiz's filmography as well as his biography and writings, but also my own encounters, allegiances, experiences and reflections which would need to be figured if I was to avoid getting lost. To address palimpsest reality of Chile and the hiatus of the period of martial law, Ruiz adopted various strategies to be able to image Chile in his work – as home movie (*Return of Library Lover*), as travelogue (*Las Soledades*) as television soap opera (*The Wandering Telenovela*) or as infernal terrain (*A TV Dante*). In his work in exile he continued to figure Chile from lost expats in Paris (*Dialogue of Exiles*), as a besieged citadel (*The Suspended Vocation*), through sailor stories (*Three Crowns of a Sailor*) and as a ghost archipelago (*City of Pirates*).

³⁸ Ibid, p245

³⁹ Ibid. p244. Jean-Marie Straub proposed *telluric cinema* when commenting on *Fortini/Canì*. 'Fortini quotes every massacre, every village, but while he didn't go there we returned several times to each of these villages. It is topographic and telluric cinema, with the Apuan Alps, these mountains of marble, as eternal as indifferent, implacable, exterior to this suffering and yet the theatre of class struggle. And this is Fortini's Marxist definition of communism.' - Straub, Jean-Marie in. Hobein, Maren, and Matos Cabo, Ricardo, eds., *The Films of Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet*, Goethe Institut, London 2019, p23

⁴⁰ Franco Fortini, *A Note for Jean-Marie Straub*, 1978, *The Dogs of the Sinai* [1967] trans. Alberto Toscano, London, New York, Calcutta, Seagull Books, 2013. pp74-82

Below are two maps constructed to help pinpoint the principle sites for the film, clustered around three areas: Santiago, Valparaíso and Chiloé.

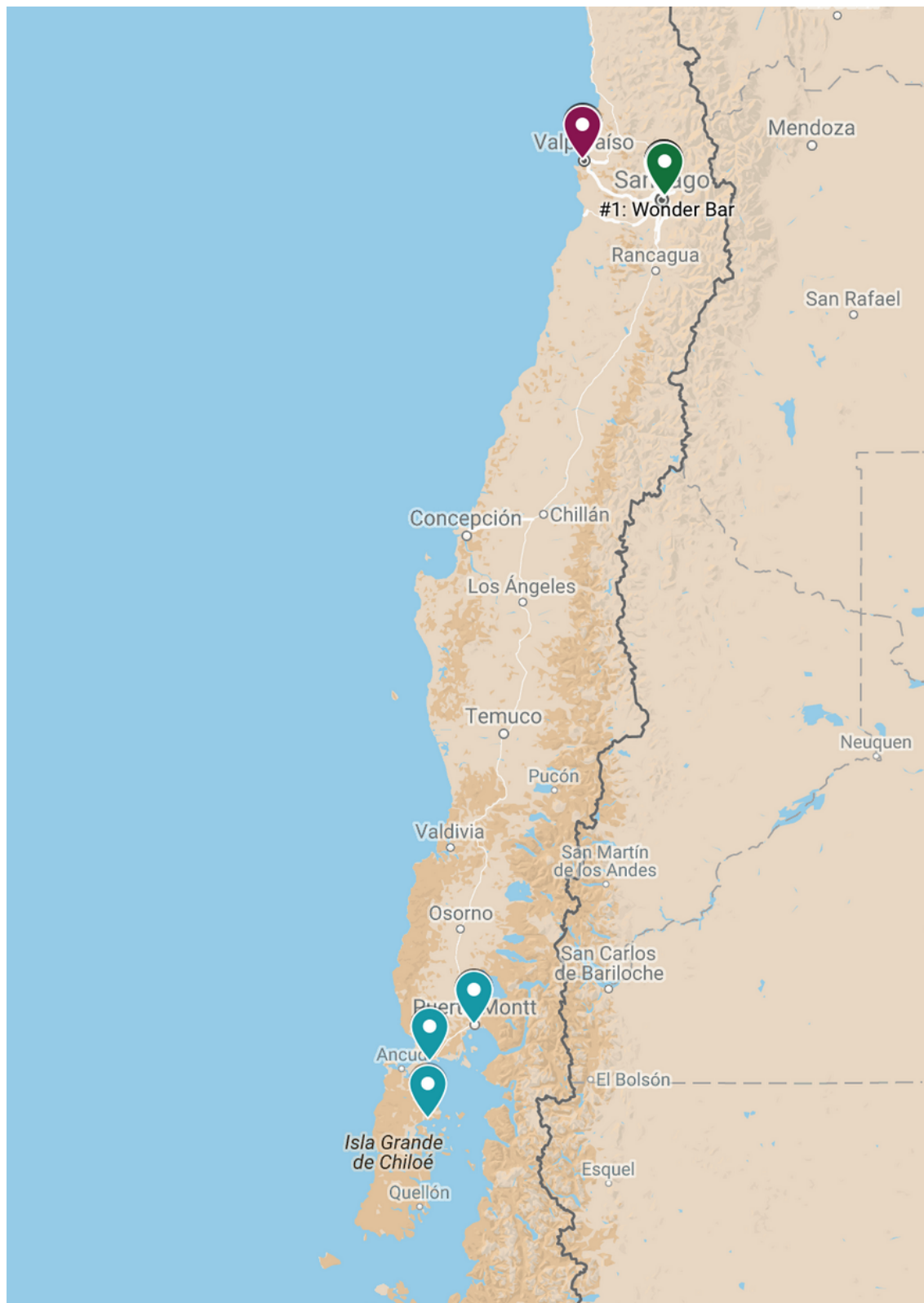


Illustration 3.17: Location map for principle filming sites in Chile, Nov 2017

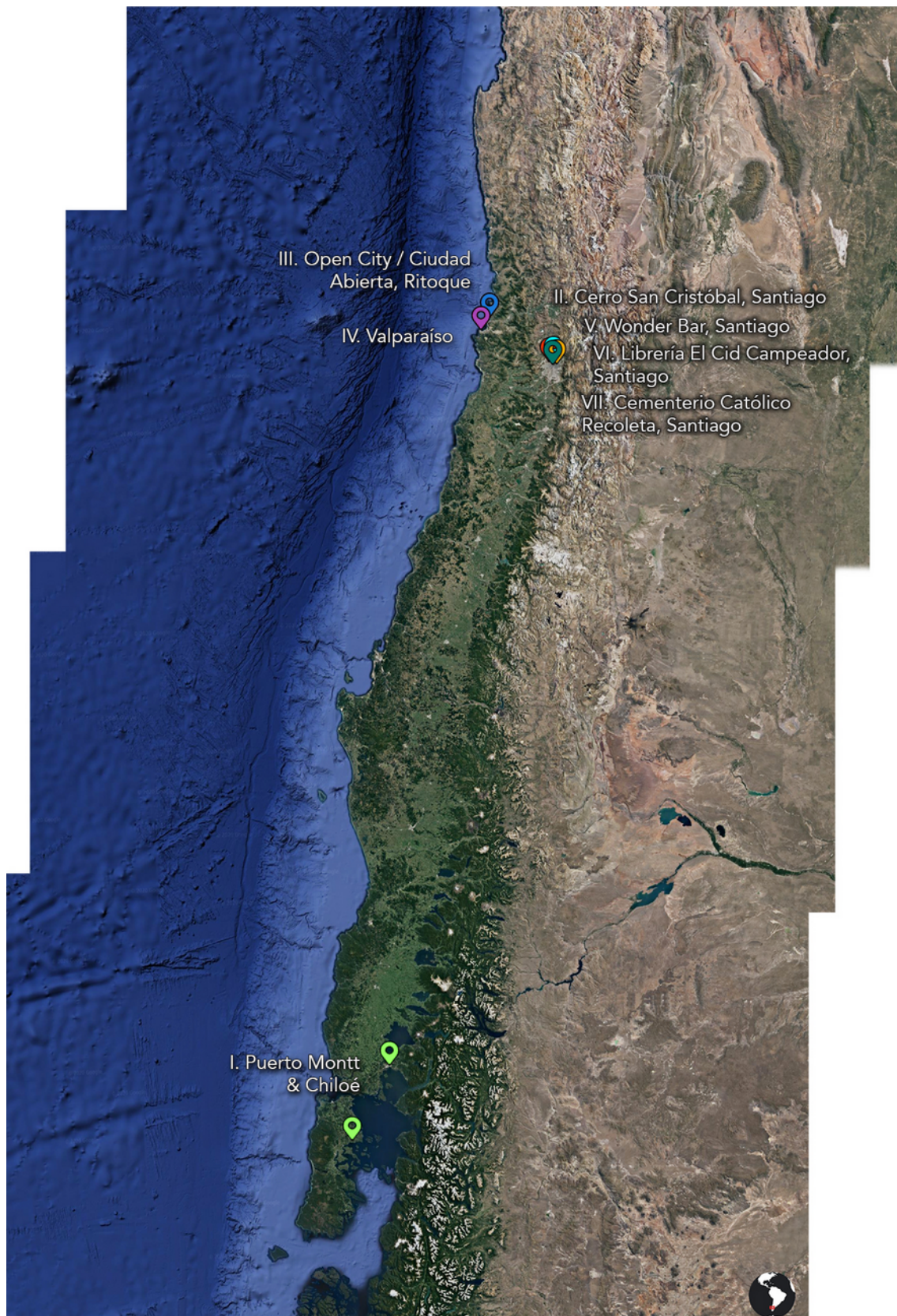


Illustration 3.18: Topographical map from Google Earth for principle filming sites in Chile

These linear maps would be supplemented by further layers drawing on the works of other artists, filmmakers and collectives among growing ensemble of actors I mentioned above, who open new social, historical and geographical topographies. As we will see in the following discussion the work of CADA (Colectivo Acciones de Arte/Art Actions Collective) became instrumental in thinking about the means of representation, especially issues of visibility during the military regime that offered a counterpoint to work produced in Taiwan during their military dictatorship and the discussion of ghost island images in the first chapter. The work of architect Alberto Cruz and the Open City project became another element and insight into artistic conditions during the period of the military regime. In the following sections I will attempt to lay out the threads of these entanglement topographies.

3.4 The mirror and special being

First of all, the image is not a substance but an accident that is found in the mirror, not as in a place but as in a subject. [...] For medieval philosophers, being in a subject is the mode of being assumed by what is without substance, that is, what exists not in itself but in something other than itself.

- Giorgio Agamben⁴¹

I am interested in the idea of images generated by other images and the logic that's involved. I'm not a surrealist.... but I am interested in surrealism on the level at which its technique can be used to examine different levels of consciousness.

- Raúl Ruiz⁴²

When I visited Valeria Sarimento in Lisbon in November 2017, we discussed her memory and experiences with Raúl in Taiwan and my own intentions for my new film. I told her I planned to make a response to Ruiz's unfinished film, not to pursue a remake or attempt a restoration as the existence of film elements was still in doubt. The project would start from the position of relation; to produce new works informed and entangled with Ruiz's ghost film. To give a sense of how I would approach this I described the tradition of temple projectionists in Taiwan who show films to communicate with the dead as part of ancestral worship. It is with the temple projectionists in mind that I wanted to make my film. The films the projections show are made for visible and non-visible audiences. This mode of address to the non-visible, to the dead would be a central way to work with the rhizomic, ghostly assemblages of Ruiz and his phantom film.

When I described this tradition of projection as link to celestial sphere, Sarimento responded with enthusiasm and said, well of course all 'film is a ghost' and 'to communicate with the dead through film is something very good.'⁴³ *Double Ghosts* and my subsequent films are attempts to address ghosts and the dead through actions and projections. Displacement is central to the concept of the cinematic image. Deleuze put this in Bergsonian terms describing cinema as the 'formation of an image with two sides, actual and virtual. It is as if an image in a mirror, a photo or a postcard came to life, assumed independence and passed into the actual, even if this meant that the actual image returned into the mirror and resumed its place in the postcard or photo, following a double movement of liberation and capture.'⁴⁴

⁴¹ Agamben, Giorgio. *Profanations*. Zone Books, 2015, p55

⁴² Ehrenstein, David. *Film: The Front Line, 1984*. Arden Press, Inc., 1984.

⁴³ From the authors interview with Valeria Sarimento in Lisbon on 2 November 2017. Conducted in Spanish with English interpretation by Miguel Ribeiro.

⁴⁴ '[W]e can say that the actual image itself has a virtual image which corresponds to it like a double or a reflection. In Bergsonian terms, the real object is reflected in a mirror-image as in the virtual object which, from its side and simultaneously, envelops or

Opening these movements of liberation and capture, is central to the imagining strategy I would employ in the connective site of the cemetery and through the cinematic concept of mirror images. These projections create linkages, or what Deleuze would call circuits, in an expanding series of connections where images both constantly absorb and create their own images. The mirror image, as Agamben reminds us, is 'generated at every moment according to the movement or the presence of the one who contemplates it.'⁴⁵



Illustration 3.19: *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, 1991) video still

The strategies employed in *Double Ghosts* attempt to find means to collapse the interval – between the past and present, between Taiwan and Chile, between the fragments of *The Comedy of Shadows* and its potential form, between the mirror and its image, between my life and life of others – through a series of what I will call *actions*. The actions are manifold projections seeking to create bridges across states of being. In bridging these states and absences I am seeking to create assemblages. Such bridges can be generated through Agamben's notion of profane actions, actions seeking to restore 'things, places, animals or people'⁴⁶

reflects the real: there is "coalescence" between the two.' - Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema II: The Time-Image*. A&C Black, 2013. p68.

⁴⁵ Agamben, Giorgio. *Profanations*. Zone Books, 2015. p56. In his essay *Special Being*, Agamben asks '[w]hat is the being, or rather the nonbeing, of these images? Are they bodies or nonbodies, substances or accidents? Should they be identified with colours, with light, or with shadow?' The question of the nature of images in a mirror has fascinated thinkers from Medieval European and Taoist philosophers to early optical pioneers such as Athanasius Kircher and Leon Battista Alberti to 20th Century filmmakers and artists such as Jean Cocteau and Maya Deren, Orson Welles as well as contemporary artists as diverse as Robert Smithson and Yayoi Kusma, to Olafur Eliasson, Monir Farmanfarmaian and Zhang Pelli. The development of the modern clear glass mirror perfected in the 16th Century belies the long history of mirrors from those found in surface of water, polished materials such as the ancient obsidian mirrors made in Anatolia from 6,000 B.C., polished copper mirrors of Mesopotamia from 4,000 BC and Egypt from 3,000 BC and the bronze mirrors of Ancient China from around 2,000 BC. The refinement of the production of glass lead to the advent of modern mirrors with coatings of tin in the 16th century followed in the 17th Century when the first silvered-glass mirrors were produced leading to the wider availability and affordability of mirrors as we understand them now. The developments in the manufacturing of glass, and subsequently mirrors, enabled the optical innovations that lay the foundations for the advent of photography and cinema. These new technologies of imaging built on traditions and theories of illusion and apparition developed through science and theatre that utilised mirrors as part of the first first instances of projection technology.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p74

to common use, to remove them from the scared sphere or the sphere of Law and the Nation state. The series of *actions* that structure *Double Ghosts* are profane gestures forging new points of relation, in which what 'has been ritually separated can also be restored.'⁴⁷

Fundamental to this process and the material conditions described above is the issue of *play*. Games originate from the liberation of ritual from the sacred field to common use. Play is a means by which rites are separated from the myths they enforce. In this way play is a wilful misuse of ritual, returning to common use things separated through spheres of religion, law, war or economics (spheres that Glissant describes as belonging to *continental* thinking). For Agamben play opens 'a new dimension of use, which children and philosophers give to humanity.'⁴⁸ This brings us back to the shift of power dynamic Chen Cheih-jen identified when the heavily monitored situation of film projection was subverted through play, detouring codes of projection to new use when people utilised their 'power to deliberately misinterpret.'⁴⁹

The process of restoration I am interested in is the return of the non-visible to common use. To do this I will proceed through a series of displacements that seek to create playful disjunction or what Smithson refers to as 'cosmic rupture.'⁵⁰ I will go into more detail on the specific actions, but in identifying play as a central element it is also important to note that these actions begin with the act of filming itself. These processes of *filming*, in Agamben words, are 'the counter-apparatus that restores to common use what sacrifice has separated and divided.'⁵¹

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p76

⁴⁹ Chieh-jen, Chen, 'Chen Chieh-jen On Bitai Thoan.' *ArtAsiaPacific*, Issue 98, May/June 2016. Accessed February 14, 2017. <http://artasiapacific.com/Magazine/98/ChenChiehjenOnBitaiThoan>

⁵⁰ Smithson, Robert. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. University of California Press, 1996. p85

⁵¹ Agamben, Giorgio. *What Is an Apparatus?: And Other Essays*. Stanford University Press, 2009. p19

3.5 Incidents of travel



Illustration 3.20: *Yucatan Mirror Displacement (1-9)* 1969, Robert Smithson, Nine chromogenic prints from chromogenic slides (126 format), 61x61cm each. Collection of Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

In *Yucatan Mirror Displacement (1-9)* (1969), the American artist Robert Smithson produced a series of nine colour photographs taken of twelve 12-inch square mirrors arranged in sites across the Yucatan region of Mexico. The photographs were published with the essay *Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan* in *Artforum* in September 1969.⁵² This pivotal work of post-minimalist art was an extension of debates between Smithson and contemporaries Dan Graham, Nancy Holt and Gordon Matta-Clark proposing a new framework for art, manifesting a critical relationship to ethnography and adding a cosmic dimension to the debates that had been originally situated in the edgelands of New York and New Jersey.

The nine mirror displacements are narrated in the essay, tracing his itinerary through the Yucatan region. He begins with a reflection on the abstraction inherent in any map. “All those guidebooks are of no use” said Tezcatlipoca. “You must travel at random, like the first Mayans; you risk getting lost in the thickets, but that is

⁵² *Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan* was written amidst Smithson's critique of science of Natural History, in particular the abstraction of the idea of nature. His journey follows and deconstructs John Lloyd Stephens's *Incidents of Travel in Yucatán*, an account of an 1841 anthropological and archeological expedition from which hundreds of artifacts were collected for the American Museum of Natural History. *Yucatán Mirror Displacements* stands as a refutation of the principles underpinning the project of Natural History and the anthropological methods of order and control.

the only way to make art.”⁵³ Tezcatlopoça, the God of the Smoking Mirror (or Obsidian Mirror) in Aztec religion was ‘one of the most important and complex deities of Mesoamerica [...] the god of the nocturnal sky, of ancestral memory, of time, and the deity of the North.’⁵⁴

Yucatán Mirror Displacements is a journey about visual and temporal perception and ways of making art.⁵⁵ To give context to his journey Smithson reverts again and again to the notion of the shore, the bank or rivers edge: ‘Let us give passing shape to the unconsolidated views that surround the work of art, and develop a type of “anti-vision” or negative seeing. The river shored up clay, loess, and similar matter, that shored up the slope, that shored up the mirrors. The mind shored up thoughts and memories, that shored up points of view, that shored up the swaying glances of the eyes. Sight consisted of knotted reflections bouncing off and on the mirrors and the eyes.’⁵⁶ The series of mutual supports, the sedimentary layers and shores he describes in this passage show how his discussion is far from being a binary, site and nonsite are actually open to many layers or degrees, a multiplicity of co-dependent supports.⁵⁷

The idea of the *shore* rather than frame speaks to notions of proximity and co-dependence, establishing a complex series of relations where each element is interconnected. It is this notion of cascading shores that is inherent in the *Double Ghosts* project. Rather than seeking a single frame, the three films, through their openness and play, aim to multiply supports and points of access. The negative space that shores up the work, displacements and ruptures that animate the project, the series of allusions, shadows and projections are embodiments of adjacent, past and future frames that *shore it up*, that give it shape and inform its interpretation. The work aims to exist in relation to Ruiz, to find points of entanglement between different times and geographies, between different art works and positions adopted to vision. The observer is an agent ‘actively shaping reality.’⁵⁸ It is my aim to address the agent of observation to look at the ways the

⁵³ Smithson, Robert, *Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan*, Artforum, September 1969. New York. In discussing the art of getting lost, Rebecca Solnit charts the value of those unmapped and unmappable regions. ‘Science is how capitalism knows the world, a friend remarks to me, and the distinctions and details these maps marked out were first of all for merchants and military expeditions. What was marked “terra incognita” was also what remained unvanquished.’ – Solnit, Rebecca. *A Field Guide To Getting Lost*. Canongate Books, 2010. p169

⁵⁴ Humboldt, Alexander von; Poynter, J. Ryan, Altamirano Rayo, Giorleny D; and Kraft, Tobias. *Views of the Cordilleras and Monuments of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas: A Critical Edition*. University of Chicago Press, 2013.

⁵⁵ Central to Smithson’s practice is an investigation of the frame, explored through his attention to the site and the non-site as well as the status and redundancy of the museum and other instruments such as the camera or map that attempt to control reality. See: ‘There is something abominable about cameras, because they possess the power to invent many worlds’ – Art Through The Camera’s Eye, c.1971, in Smithson, Robert. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. University of California Press, 1996. p371

⁵⁶ Ibid, p130

⁵⁷ For a contemporary exploration of the notion of support, see Condorelli, Céline, and Wade, Gavin, eds., *Support Structures*. Sternberg Press, 2009. *Supports Structures* are those which ‘bears, sustains, props, and holds up. It is a manual for those things that encourage, give comfort, approval, and solace; that care for and provide consolation and the necessities of life. It is a manual for that which assists corroborates, advocates, articulates, substantiates, champions, and endorses; for what stands behind, underpins, frames, presents, maintains, and strengthens.’

⁵⁸ As Hito Steyerl has argued in her writing on entanglement and superposition, one of the main contributions of quantum theory to understand art is acknowledging the influence of act of observation. ‘The act of observation breaks the state of indeterminacy. In

observer shapes reality and through this identify fields of openness and potentiality.

Drawing on George Bataille's *Death and Sensuality*, Smithson describes his desire to create a disjunction through 'the sacrifice of matter' in his work, not as a religious or living sacrifice but an action or an instance 'that releases a certain kind of awareness.'⁵⁹ In working with contingent matter, on site and outside of the museum or gallery, Smithson sought to bring new dynamics into play, to explore means of creating open works, informed by processes of creation and its twin; entropy. These are means of working in relation – to forces of gravity, chance, entropy and dispersal. To explore potential through contingent methods of production means responding to sites as they are encountered informed by research as much as play and to be open to what is found.



Illustration 3.21: *Asphalt Rundown*, Robert Smithson, 1969, Cava dei Selce, Rome, Italy, Asphalt, earth, Sculptural Event. Photo by Robert Smithson

When asked how he chooses sites for his work, Smithson said in reference to *Double Nonsite* (1968):

I want to make clear the point that it's not preconceived. That things turn up as I go along. In other words, the piece is contingent on the availability of great amounts of homogenous matter... and one has, in this particular piece, the idea of the outer and the inner, or the duplicity within the site involves the dialogue between inner and outer, you know, or center and edge.⁶⁰

quantum physics, observation is an active procedure. By taking measure and identifying, it interferes and engages with its object.' - Steyerl, Hito, and Berardi, Franco. *The Wretched of the Screen*. Sternberg Press, 2012. p. 139

⁵⁹ Smithson, Robert. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. University of California Press, 1996. p85

⁶⁰ Ibid. p218. Smithson expands on this as follows: 'There's a disjunction in terms of the two sites. In other words, it's one site

This method of superimposition is one of the strategies I employ in the trilogy of films; the sedimentary layering of different times and places, of different languages and voices, of texts and artworks brought together in new assemblages. Smithson's subjective experience functions as a counterpoint to the 'boundaries of a state.'⁶¹ Such official measurements and means of governance are what Agamben has described as *apparatus* (*dispositif* in French).⁶² Through the series of displacements, Smithson's *anti-expedition* sought, through actions, to create disjunction between the place and its representation, between the territory and its map.⁶³

Smithson's *Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan* ends with underlining the impermanence of his actions, the traces of play are often temporal. 'If you visit the sites (a doubtful probability) you find nothing but memory traces, for the mirror displacements were dismantled right after there were photographed. The mirrors are somewhere in New York. The reflected light has been erased. Remembrances are but numbers on a map, vacant memories constellating the intangible terrains in deleted vicinities. It is the dimension of absence that remains to be found. The expunged color that remains to be seen. The fictive voices of the totems have exhausted their arguments, Yucatan is elsewhere.'⁶⁴ As I begin my own journey into South America, following traces and playing with array of images and new relations, I will begin to explore for myself where this *elsewhere* might be and how to approach it.

superimposed over another site, I'm taking two landmasses that aren't following preconceived boundaries. It's not like taking the boundaries of a state and using that. I'm establishing my own boundaries in terms of my own psychic scanning, or my own mental experience.' - p218

⁶¹ Ibid, p218.

⁶² For Agamben *apparatus* is 'anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviours, opinions, or discourses of living beings.' Agamben, Giorgio. *What Is an Apparatus?: And Other Essays*. Stanford University Press, 2009. p14

⁶³ For Smithson his travel was 'an anti-expedition... its like the thinking behind the nonsite. Once again the nonsite is a kind of equivalent of antimatter, the negative world.' - Smithson, Robert. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. University of California Press, 1996. p371

⁶⁴ Ibid.

3.6 A model city



Illustration 3.22: Xul Solar 'Ciudad y abismos/City and Abysses' 1946. Tempera and gouache on paper mounted on cardboard, 35x50cm. Collection of MALBA, Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires

I enter my city without knowing how, sometimes on other nights I go out to the streets and houses and I know that it isn't my city, I know my city by a crouching expectation, sometimes that isn't yet fear but which has its shape and its dog and when it is my city I know that first there'll be the market place with doorways and fruit stands, the shimmering rails of a streetcar that is lost in a direction where I was young but not in my city, a district like El Once in Buenos Aires, a smell of school, peaceful walls and a white cenotaph, the Calle Veinticuatro de Noviembre perhaps, where there are no cenotaphs but which is in my city when its time is night. - Julio Cortázar⁶⁵

Tuesday 21 November 2017, Buenos Aires

Depart for Chile. Long flight to Buenos Aires first, cheapest route is though Toronto, it's a long way down, I will arrive the following day. Spend most of the flight writing a letter to a lover I will never send. Good to write it. Feels cathartic. Arrive in summer, satisfying to pass the equator and slip out of winter into the warmth of Buenos Aires. Andrés Denegri meets me that evening and takes me to Parrilla Pena, for traditional Argentine BBQ. The menu has diagram of cow to help with ordering. The steaks are huge.

Thursday 23 November 2017, Buenos Aires

Only in city for a few days but feel energised by it. Feels familiar but on grander scale – people talk about the architecture and buildings as being European in style. But as with Taiwan where Chinese culture has been through series of transformations in the passage and displacement across the ocean, the city feels familiar but built on larger scale. Maybe in the architects memory European cities are this grand.

⁶⁵ Cortázar, Julio. 62: *A Model Kit*. New Directions, 2000. p29

I visit Cementerio de la Recoleta, built in 1822. The Catholic cemetery is famous for its ornate mausoleums built in Gothic Baroque style. Find the tomb for the Bioy-Casares family, austere and minimal compared to many of the flamboyant tombs. Walk to Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes (reminds me of the national gallery in Philippines, landscapes of early settler artists trained in European styles who see the land as empty) and onto MALBA/Museo de Arte Latinoamericano. Great collection and fantastic museum, showing shifts in contemporary art and modes of curation to reflect their geographic position, glad to find museum showing Buenos Aires is not in Europe.

In the museum Joaquín Torres García (1874-1949) book *Universalismo constructivo* (1944) is held open on the page with his famous inverted diagram of South America. In his polemical text *Escuela del sur* (*School of the South*) in 1935 he called for artists to invert the traditional hierarchy of art by placing South America before Europe. Published by Editorial Poseidón of Buenos Aires, the book draws on lectures given by Torres García between 1934 and 1943, accompanied by the reproduction of 253 drawings seeking to 'contribute to the unification of art and culture of America.'⁶⁶

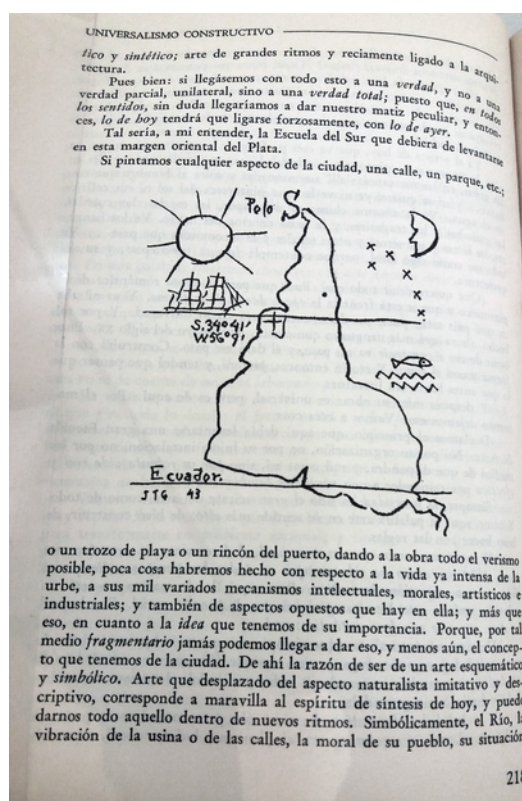


Illustration 3.23: Joaquín Torres García, *Universalismo constructivo* (1944), detail from book. Photo by George Clark, 23 Nov 2017

⁶⁶ 'The more the person drawing has a spirit of synthesis, the more of a constructed image he will give us. The drawings of all primitive peoples—black, Aztec, etc., as well as Egyptian, Chaldean, etc.—are great examples. This spirit of synthesis, I believe, is what leads to the construction of the whole painting, and of sculpture, and to the determining of the proportions of architecture. This spirit alone allows the work to be seen in its totality as a single order, a unity. What wonders this rule has created across the ages! Why has it been overlooked?' - Torres-García, Joaquín, 'Vouloir construire', *Cercle et Carré*, no. 1, March 15, 1930. p2

Two years prior to the publication of this monumental work, in an interview with Juan Carlos Onetti in 1939, Torres-García said:

I then thought of extending Constructive art across all America, going back to the pre-Columbian art forms. And not just because I thought that that is our art, but because the cataclysm that threatens Europe will sweep away what remains of its culture. And American artists would thus have no foreign models to copy. Which, undoubtedly, would be very serious. I thought, then, that the fate of America was that of constituting a refuge for culture in danger. But this idea needs to be properly understood: it is not a matter of building a gigantic museum here, but rather, of starting a new culture with new blood, another stage, in a word.⁶⁷

In another work *Una milla de cruces sobre el pavimento/A Mile of Crosses on Pavement* (1979), an early video intervention by Lotty Rosenfeld, the artist adds horizontal white lines to stretch of road creating a huge land art work by her simple modification. Made in Santiago de Chile the work parallels her political interventions as part of CADA. She describes the work as follows:

In November 1979, the social conditions and its evolution that demarcate our routines, became the material support of my creative interventions. For this, I used as a primordial analog model a traffic sign – the white lines that divide the tracks of vehicular traffic – which I modified materially, generating as a result another sign: the + sign. This sign produced through the interweaving of two lines, the first imposed by a code of social regulation and the second proposed by art as a critical question, alters a section of the daily circulation calling attention to the relationship between communication systems, techniques of reproduction of the social order and uniformation of docile subjects.⁶⁸

In the collection I also spot Alejandro Xul Solar's *Ciudad y abismos* (1946). I know this painting as the cover for my copy of the Julio Cortázar's novel *62: A Model Kit*. Federico Windhausen sent me a google map with pins for recommended restaurants, buildings and museums across Buenos Aires. It leads me to Ña Serapia a small cafe overlooking a park nearby. On the wall is photo of the restaurant owner Héctor with a knife stabbed in his heart. Reportedly a work by Mexican artist Marcos López, a regular. I have a bowl of Lorca, a famous dish associated with the *Día de la Patria*, the holiday to commemorate the May revolution of 1810. The dish is from the indigenous *Cuyo* tribe of the Northern Andes and chosen to mark this day as it is distinctly Argentine rather than Spanish. Watch buses pass outside before walking home.

Sunday 24 November 2017, Buenos Aires

Spend day with Andrés Denegri who I had met in Jakarta in the summer we walk around the city and tour various film hangouts he takes me to the city's private film school which doubles as production house for many of the Argentine new wave directors. They have small 16mm film lab, processing film when we visit.

⁶⁷ Torres-García, Joaquín, *Testamento artístico*, Montevideo: Biblioteca de Marcha, 1974. p3. First published in the journal *Marcha*, June 23, 1939

⁶⁸ 'Una Milla de Cruces Sobre El Pavimento, de Lotty Rosenfeld'. *Centex - Ministerio de Las Culturas, Las Artes y El Patrimonio* (blog), Accessed: 18 April 2018. <http://centex.cl/una-milla-de-cruces-sobre-el-pavimento-de-lotty-rosenfeld/>. [Google Translation]



Illustration 3.24: Buenos Aires, home film lab, photo George Clark, 24 Nov 2017

After meat heavy lunch at El Pobre Luis we head to the small flat of a local filmmaker who will bring his 35mm projector to the museum to show my films. His flat is a shrine to celluloid, with disembodied cameras and projectors filling every available space, film strips hung over the bath to dry, his table is occupied with a jerry-rigged home telecine machines. It's wonderful.

For the screening *Es oblicuo pero está todo ahí/It's oblique but it's all there* I present a new iteration of my Eyemo project.⁶⁹ Apichatpong's film is replaced by Tanatchai Bandasak's *Left to Run to Seed* (2016), film of incidental flora and fauna filmed in downtime while helping another filmmaker with his project. The projectionist Azucena Losana is a filmmaker from Mexico but lives in Buenos Aires. She is also preparing to go to Valparaíso later in the summer to take part in sound festival. After projecting Chick Strand's *Guacamole* (1976) she asks if choice was especially for her?

Sunday 26 November 2017, Buenos Aires

Fly to Santiago. Before leaving I find the large scale relief by Marta Minujin *Rompecabezas filosofico* (1987) in the airport. The terminal has developed around it squashing it in a corner it can only be seen now from stark angels.

The gold letters on the front of my passport have rubbed off leaving just the deep red cover. When I land in Santiago the security guard mistakes my passport for a Chilean one and starts speaking to me in Spanish. I'm

⁶⁹ Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Argentina, 24 November 2017

flattered and happy to be mistaken, maybe I can slip away and move to Santiago after all. I am sad to leave busy Buenos Aires and the easy way people analyse each other within minutes of meeting.

Arrive on Plaza de Armas late at night, the historical city centre is lined with huge buildings and promenades with large archways that give shelter to many people. In-between garbage trucks I see man getting a blow-job. Lively city. Pangs of worry hit me as I consider what happens if my host doesn't arrive and I'm stuck here with no phone or back up contacts. Only person I know is Carolina who is due to have her baby any day. Pangs turn to excitement – come to me oblivion!

Monday 27 November 2017, Santiago

Walk past a long cues of people surrounding a few city blocks. Later I find out these are migrants seeking to register for housing. Chile is becoming home for people across South America and attracting many people for its' (currently) more stable political climate and work opportunities. Later that day I walk to nearby Cerro Santa Lucia. Called 'Huelito o heutrecan' in pre-colonial times, it was renamed to commemorate the day the hill was conquered by Pedro de Valdivia on December 13, 1540 to celebrate Santa Lucía. There is a small Jardín Japonés opened in 1958 on side of the park. Niles Atallah later tells me the hill marked the trading point between Aztec and Mapuche traders in pre-colonial times.

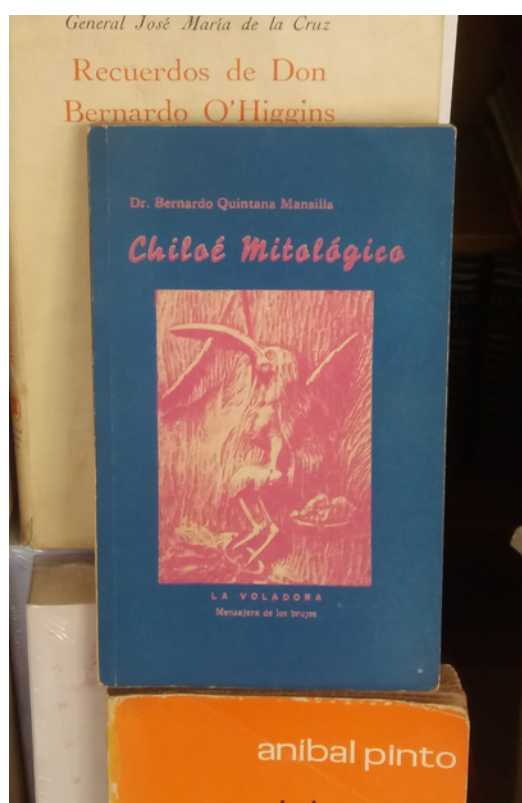


Illustration 3.25: *Chiloé Mitológica* in window of Librería El Cid Campeador, Santiago. Photo George Clark, 29 Nov 2017

In window of Librería El Cid Campeador, I see a copy of Dr. Bernado Quintana Mansilla's classic text *Chiloé Mitologica* that collects folklore from the Chiloé archipelgo where Ruiz was raised. Struck by the two tone

cover design, pink text on blue background with woodcut illustration, pink monochrome on white. On the cover is a depiction of La Voladora, known as the *Mensajera de los brujos/messenger of the Brujos*. Under spell of the Brujos (male witches) the woman, selected from daughters of the conclave of witches, would be admitted to the circle of witchcraft (albeit to the lowest stratum given her gender). When required she would ingest a concoction made from juice of Natri (*Solanum ligustrinum* aka Tomatillo) mixed with wolf oil and proceed to vomit her guts and organs into a wooden bowl, then bending her body, she would sprout thick ashen features from her back to form wings, from her feet would emerge huge eagle claws and her mouth would elongate to resemble the beak of a mosquito.

As Quintana Mansilla writes ‘[a]s soon as her body is magically transformed into a wader bird, called Bauda (*Nycticorax nycticorax* or Night Raven), she takes off in flight to fulfil her mission, cutting the shadows of the night with her unpleasant and overwhelming cries, which betray her presence and announce more than one misfortune.’⁷⁰ After her mission the bird returns and ingests her viscera in order to retake her human form before dawn. On the coast lines of Chiloé at dusk the Bauda bird can be seen looking for food, folklore warns us that some of the birds could be Voladora looking for their viscera to return to human form, ‘[b]ecause of this impossibility to distinguish them, all baudas are suspect, feared and hated.’⁷¹

⁷⁰ Quintana Mansilla, Bernardo. *Chiloé Mitológico. Mitos – Pájaro Agoreros – Ceremonias Mágicas de La Provincia de Chiloé*. Chile: Published by Impr. y Editorial San Francisco, Padre Las Casas, 1972. (Extracts from the book have been made available by the authors family on dedicated website: <http://Chiloémitologico.cl/>)

⁷¹ Ibid.

3.7 Journeys for a lost film



Illustration 3.26: Raúl Ruiz and friends gathered in Puerto Montt, Chile on trip with Cheung Chin, 11 February 1994. Photo by Cheung Chin

Arrival after an oppressive flight and departure almost immediately towards the south (1.016 kms.) by land. At the airport my parents, Luis, Mora and Chin, who arrived a day earlier and who comically was trying to read *El Mercurio*, were waiting for me. Meetings with friends, underground tension and evident camaraderie[...] Nevertheless, a little bit thanks to Chin I see things with other eyes. In the trip we stop at Chillán and Chin discovers my picture in the front page of a newspaper. Sad ending going through Osorno and Valdivia on ruined roads. Chin snores and sighs. Suddenly anguish has overcome him. He looks at us with distrust. I tell him: "You have the explorer's syndrome: to ask yourself suddenly, what am I doing here!". Chin laughs and the ice is broken. - Raúl Ruiz, February 16th, 1994⁷²

When I met with Cheung Chin in January 2019, he told me about a trip he made with Raúl and Valeria in 1994 in Chile. The trip took him to southern point of continental Chile and the town of Puerto Montt where Ruiz was born on 25 July 1941. Ruiz was heading there to receive title as 'Illustrious Son' from the major. 'I'm bringing' Ruiz reflected 'some twenty films of mine. They're copied on magnetic tape, to prove that I exist.'⁷³ At the age of two the Ruiz family moved to the nearby island of Chiloé where Raúl was raised. His father was a sea captain, who worked ferrying ships in the complex straits and estuaries around Chiloé and surrounding islands. This relocation brought Raúl into contact with the rich folk culture of Chiloé, that he

⁷² Ruiz Diaries, 'Wednesday, February 16th, 1994'. Translated by Jaime Grijalba, TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/wednesday-february-16th-1994>

⁷³ Ibid.

strongly identified with and drew from throughout his life, describing Chiloé as his 'native land'⁷⁴.

In 2017 I started filming in Puerto Montt. After flying there from Santiago I spent one day and night in the city before moving onto Chiloé. Ruiz in his diary reminds us that travel is different when you travel with others, 'thanks to Chin I see things with other eyes.'⁷⁵ Ruiz's return to his home town, immersed him in various intrigues and unresolved relationships from his past and he was confronted with the contradictions that made up contemporary Chile. These tensions were epitomised by the ceremony in his honour where he found himself '[s]urrounded by military receiving a trophy from a socialist mayor.'⁷⁶

I invoke these reflections and correspondence as my own travel to Chile was accompanied by such shadows, echoes, fragments and projections. The places I chose to visit were all possessed to host of fellow travellers, gathered together under the pretence of search for a lost film. The absent film is the excuse to bring together, animate and respond to the ghosts inhabiting each site and those I brought with me. A film is more than the images captured on a stripe of celluloid, its a host of interlinked connections and relations, a means of movement without moving. As Glissant puts it so eloquently in his early text: 'The poem offers the readers a space that satisfies their desire to move, to exit the self, to travel through a new earth, where they will not feel like strangers.'⁷⁷

It was clear I would not discover the film material for *The Comedy of Shadows* in Chile, but what I could encounter there would be host of shadows to help bring the lost film into a different, less isolated state of being. The challenge would be how to bring these actors into relation, to articulate them without becoming lost or overwhelmed in the process. Before his trip with Chin (and before he began his diaries) Ruiz came to Chiloé in 1992 to make a film for British television, *Las Soledades*, inspired by the famous baroque poem by Luis de Góngora composed in 1613.⁷⁸ The film traces sites of his early childhood and even features his parents in brief cameos. Through this semi-autobiographical film I was able to locate elements from Ruiz's biography as my starting point, in particular the houses on Ancud street where he used to live. Such locations are marked by successive intervals; between my filming in 2017, Ruiz's filming in 1992, and his upbringing in Puerto Montt 50 years before in the early 1940s.

⁷⁴ Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1*. Dis Voir Editions, Paris, 1995. p64

⁷⁵ Ruiz Diaries, 'Wednesday, February 16th, 1994'. Translated by Jaime Grijalba, TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/wednesday-february-16th-1994>

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Édouard Glissant, *Sun of Consciousness*, Nightboat Books, 2020, p39

⁷⁸ Góngora, Luis de, *The Solitudes*, Translated by Edith Grossman, New York: Penguin Books, 2011. Originally composed in 1613, the poem was intended to consist of four parts 'Soledad de los campos/Solitude of the fields', 'Soledad de las riberas/Solitude of the riverbanks', 'Soledad de las selvas/Solitude of the forests', and 'Soledad del yermo/Solitude of the wasteland.' Góngora only completed first Solitude and 'dedicatoria al Duque de Béjar.' The second Solitude would remain unfinished and the other two were never published.



Illustration 3.27: *Las Soledades* (Raúl Ruiz, 1992), Ancud street in Puerto Montt in 1992



Illustration 3.28: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) Ancud street in Puerto Montt, location of Ruiz's upbringing, in 2017

For *Las Soledades* Ruiz decided to show Chile through other eyes, by following the compositional principles of Chinese painter Shih-T'ao⁷⁹ active during the early Qing Dynasty. As Ruiz stated '[i]t is not immediately evident that something from Chile has anything to do with Chinese painting. But what happens in the landscape of my country, the south of Chile where I was born, the first thing it provokes in me is fear. It is a crazy landscape. But in crazy landscapes you can have very reasonable people talking, and that makes it more crazy.'⁸⁰ Shih-T'ao's treatise on painting had long fascinated Ruiz, especially the series of rules for composition. In 1995 he would cast Cheung Chin to provide the voice of the painter in his short film *Wind Water*. The application of the principles of Shih T'ao in *Las Soledades* have been discussed by Fernando Pérez Villalón⁸¹, but as he notes they are not clearly determined or identifiable in the finished work. The combinatory method for Ruiz we need to remember is a machine, a tool, to produce new combinations not necessarily one by which we can read the final work. The way Ruiz returned home with Shin T'ao I am travelling to Chile with Ruiz.

The film itself had a fraught production, as the producer has recounted, a third of the negatives were exposed and ruined on way to lab in France.⁸² Ruiz filmed additional scenes to account for this loss in Paris, but then these negatives were misplaced for eight years. The producer was due to work with Sarmiento on a project but they had a falling out and now he protects the film in a conspiratorial manner, on the one hand seeking to protect it from co-option by oppositional parties and on the other regarding it as too good to be

⁷⁹ Coleman, Earle J. *Philosophy of Painting by Shih-T'ao: A Translation and Exposition of His Hua-P'u (Treatise on the Philosophy of Painting)*. Walter de Gruyter, 1978.

⁸⁰ Ruiz, Raúl, Martin, Adrian 'Las Soledades (Raúl Ruiz)', 1993, adapted from an interview in *Cinema Papers* no. 91. Accessed 8 June 2020. <http://www.rouge.com.au/2/solitudes.html>.

⁸¹ For detailed discussion of this work and its relation to Shih T'ao as well as other depictions of Chiloé see: Villalón, Fernando Perez, *La imagen inquieta. Juan Downey y Raúl Ruiz en contrapunto*, Catálogo libros: Chile, 2017

⁸² 'Las Soledades (Raúl Ruiz).' Accessed May 1, 2018. <http://lassoledades.blogspot.com/>.

relegated to shorts programme (despite being short), both of which give him licence to obfuscate its exhibition. While the film could be a guide a prompt its troubled production history was also an omen. In his work on the mapping and following traces, the mathematician Pierre Rosenstiehl reminds us that '[i]t is the traveller and his myopia who makes the labyrinth, not the architect and his perspectives'⁸³ The labyrinth, in opposition to the maze, is a space in which our perception is what gets us lost, not the architecture. In distinguishing the labyrinth, from the maze and rhizome⁸⁴, Umberto Eco notes the labyrinth '[s]tructurally speaking, it is simpler than a tree: it is a skein, and, as one unwinds a skein, one obtains a continuous line. In this kind of labyrinth the Ariadne thread is useless, since one cannot get lost: the labyrinth itself itself is an Ariadne thread.'⁸⁵

The structural inevitability of the labyrinth, unnoticed by those within it, is made fascinating by the death waiting at its centre, as Pierre Rosentiehl comments 'seduction permeates all labyrinths.'⁸⁶ In my search for Ruiz's lost film I was aware of the death and destruction lingering at the centre and needed to find a method to resist this linearity. The labyrinth is all inside, it is a structure which denies global vision. To overcome this I would need to establish tools for protection and self-preservation as well as means to open the structure and multiply the points of entry and exit.

Central among the beliefs on Chiloé is the presence of ancestors or dead friends who appear in form of what Ruiz refers too as noonday ghosts.⁸⁷ Even though these ghosts are often benign, they are identifiable as they are as boring as the living. Similar to ghosts in Taiwanese folklore, these ancestors long for a body and the material world. They will do many things to get close to the living as such in Taiwan it is said you should not leave your clothes outside overnight or call your friends name after dark as these would be openings to allow ghosts to posses and enter your life.

In *Las Soledades* Ruiz performs a ritual on the island to protect himself from the welcoming ghosts of his ancestors. This ritual would become a tool and structuring principle for *Double Ghosts*, a means of protecting myself in the labyrinthine, a means of restoring chain of reference and resit entropy. Ruiz describes the ritual

⁸³ Quoted in: Damisch, Hubert. *Skyline: The Narcissistic City*. Stanford University Press, 2001. p31

⁸⁴ 'The best image of a net is provided by the vegetable metaphor of the rhizome suggested by Deleuze and Guattari' - Eco, Umberto. *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984. p81

⁸⁵ Eco, Umberto. *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984. p80

⁸⁶ Rosenstiehl, Pierre, 'Les mots du labyrinthe' In: Rivière, Jean-Loup, Ed., *Cartes et figures de la terre*, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, 1980, pp94–103. Ruiz was commissioned by France 2 to produce a film to accompany this Pompidou exhibition on cartography, his film *Zig-Zag, Snakes and Ladders (A didactic fiction about cartography)* (Raúl Ruiz 1980) draws heavily on material from the exhibition and its catalogue which is reframed as a game of *Le jeu de l'oie* (french equivalent of Snakes and Ladders) which is played out over increasing terrain from outskirts of Paris, to the whole city, to France and eventually the cosmos. The film draws on the work and writing of Pierre Rosenstiehl and explores his theory of labyrinth destruction.

⁸⁷ Martin, Adrian, 'A Ghost at Noon', 20 August 2011, <http://girishshambu.blogspot.co.nz/2011/08/ghost-at-noon-by-adrianmartin.html>

he performed upon arriving in Chiloé as follows:

I spent the first day visiting dead relatives. My impending death made them all cheerful and they performed an ethereal and acrobatic welcome dance. I spent most of the morning watching them fly from one cloud to another. I smashed the seven mirrors which shut off the flying souls from the world. And in so doing I unleashed a cheerful avalanche of smiling and healthy mirrors.⁸⁸



Illustration 3.29: *Las Soledades* (Raúl Ruiz, 1992) 'the projections of the sun in little mirrors simply represented the presence of the warlocks' – Ruiz, Raúl. *Diaries*, 26 November 1993.

The mirror is a portal, a route between the celestial and the carnal dimension. The braking of the mirror, a profane act restoring something to common use as Agamben argues, would become a central tool for me to fracture the image and the totality of place.. This action is a means to collapse the myopic space of the inside and outside, to break the hiatus between shadows of Taiwan's displaced ghosts and the political phantoms of the Chilean Left. This action of smashing seven mirrors I decided on after arriving in Chile, it would be the structuring principle of the film, an action ritually distributed across the topography of Chile.

⁸⁸ Ruiz, Raúl, script for *Las Soledades*, 1992, unpublished, transcribed from the film by the author. Ruiz reflects on the development of the visual device of the mirror in his diaries while shooting *Fado Major and Minor* in 1993: 'A "characterization" idea. Pierre "sees" and writes in a little calligraphy notebook phrases like: "then it was true that consciousness is impenetrable" or "it rains, but I don't believe it", constantly changing his glasses (I think I wrote that somewhere else). Once again, an effect has found its sense in three films – and in less than a year:- from *The Solitudes*, in which the projections of the sun in little mirrors simply represented the presence of the warlocks, all the way through *Miroirs de Tunis*, in which the reflections of reflections in little mirrors put, in cachette, in a Tunisian patio, represented the vision that a sick child has of the djinn, until the reflections that wake up Pierre [in *Fado Major and Minor*] and that remind him of the letters never sent. Remembrance of the evolution in *Chinese Shadows*, from the simple dramatic effect (*On Top of the Whale*) until *Bérénice*, in which they are turned into the central device.' - Ruiz, Raúl. Friday, November 26th, 1993. *Ruiz Diaries*, translated by Jaime Grijalba. TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019: <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/friday-november-26th-1993>

The special being of the image in a mirror as we have discussed marks instance of present absence, 'generated at every moment according to the movement or the presence of the one who contemplates it.'⁸⁹ Traces and shadows are given a special being by such processes of imaging, as Agamben has argued 'the image is not a substance but an accident that is found in the mirror'⁹⁰ The mirror introduces into the visual field something which otherwise would not be visible. The mode of blind imaging employed in *Double Ghosts* is a means both to map a rhizomic net and to open points of potential at each site and in the work itself. Potential here is located in visualising non-being, recruiting the non-visible as an actor in the project. As Agamben has argued 'potentiality is no simple non-Being, simple privation, but rather *the existence of non-Being*, the presence of an absence; that is what we call "faculty" or "power."⁹¹ The special being of the mirror, the power of the non-visible, resides in their potentiality. The mirror becomes key tool to explore the existence of non-Being, the non-Being of Ruiz and his film, the non-Being of the interrupted socialist government, the non-Being of Taiwan.



Illustration 3.30: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement

Chiloé is the largest island of the archipelago off the southern coast of Chile. The name *Chiloé* is derived from the Mapuche word *chillwe*, meaning 'seagull place' or 'place of brown-hooded gull.'⁹² The long history of witchcraft on the archipelago is optimised by the Recta Provincia, a society of sorcerers which dates back to the early colonial era. The society, as Ruiz describes it, copied 'the structures of the Inquisition and the Spanish Empire, and combines them with the regulations and the rituals of passage of Galician medicine

⁸⁹ Agamben, Giorgio. *Profanations*. Zone Books, 2015. p56

⁹⁰ Ibid. p55

⁹¹ Agamben, Giorgio, Ed. & translated Daniel Heller-Roazen. *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*. Stanford University Press, 1999. p179

⁹² Mapuche people are an indigenous group in present-day south-central Chile and southwestern Argentina. Their name in Mapuche language (an Araucanian language related to Huilliche) comes from from words: mapu 'land' and che 'people.'

men, *meigos*, and the organisation of Machi and Huilliche shamans as well as hierarchical orders of a Republican origin.⁹³ According to popular legend during a Spanish expedition in 1786, Jose Manuel de Moraleda challenged the Machi Chillpila to a magical competition near Delcahue in Chiloé⁹⁴. Chillpila won the contest and took possession of the magical book known as *El Levisterio* or *Revisorio* (sometimes referred to as the *Art Book*) leading to the formation of province of sorcerers or Brujos that existed in public on the island up to the witch trails of 1880 led by governor Martiniano Rodríguez who sought to outlaw the Recta Provincia as an illicit association.

The often brutal nature of the largely unsanitised folklore is a testament to the twin horrors of the Spanish colonisation and rampant piracy. The myths are means for the islanders to account for the horrors of the violence inflicted upon them. Raúl was raised with the island stories from his Chiloté grandfather and recalls one such story from his childhood:

As a child in Chiloé, a land of monsters and mythic creatures, I heard the story of a monster. And what made him a monster was that he could not be described, not because his form was constantly mutating but precisely because he had no form of any kind. A monster without qualities. Or rather only one, but a big one: his size. In fact, his name meant 'big': Buta. He was so big he was invisible. He was only big. That's all he was.

This monster is a *hyperobject*, to borrow from Timothy Morton⁹⁵, almost beyond comprehension. It bares similarity with the Taowu, a monster from ancient China that is known for its constant reinvention and power to see the past and future. As David Der-wei Wang has argued Taowu has come to be an emblem of history

⁹³ Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema*. Vol. 1. Dis Voir Editions, 1995. p97. In 2007 Ruiz produced a four-part mini-series for Chilean TV called *La Recta Provincia* (2007)

⁹⁴ 'The Indians seem less bad than the Chileans, but shorter in stature; Their character is the general of all of their caste, both in this America and in the North, that is, inclined to idolatry, very superstitious... especially in relation to diseases and other misfortunes that are common to us, in the same death, which is almost always attributed by the Indians, and many times by the Spaniards, to a curse, what they try to find out and remedy by consulting the machis (that's what they call healers, so-called fortune-tellers), who, after many mysterious gestures ridiculous jesticulations, horrid imprecations in their arbitrary barbarian language, sometimes accompanied by violent contortions and raging howls, make predictions of the disease and its cause, leaving the idiot audience very satisfied with their successes. - Moraleda, José de 'Geographical explorations carried out by Don José de Moraleda i Montero, second lieutenant of the frigate and first pilot of the navy'. Hydrographic Yearbook of the Chilean Navy, Valparaíso., 1887. pp429-430.

⁹⁵ Hyperobjects is a term used by Timothy Morton to describe concepts that are so massive and distributed they transcend spatiotemporal specificity, concepts such as global warming but also 'products such as Styrofoam and plutonium that exist on almost unthinkable timescales. Like the strange stranger these materials confound our limited, fixated, self-orientated frameworks.' - Morton, Timothy. *The Ecological Thought*. Harvard University Press, 2012. p19. Ruiz debates the philosophical nature of the Buta monster as an indescribable concept challenging our notion of space and time. 'This monster raised a question as old as philosophy itself: can space be an object? In other words, can we conceive of plural space, each part of which is both a transcendental category, a plaything, and a crossroads? Scott of Erigen's solution to this conundrum is: 'If space were an object, there would be as many different spaces as there are objects'; and I would add, as there are relations between objects, which is just what interests us in virtual space.' - Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema*. Vol. 1. Dis Voir Editions, 1995. p89

itself, as writers adopted it to chronicle atrocities to avoid them happening again in the future.⁹⁶ But as Wang has stated 'Taowu is such an amorphous creature whose appearance is always undergoing changes, we have no way actually to predict whatever kind of evil will pop up in the next round of human experience.'⁹⁷

The reflection between myth, historical experience and monstrous representations is a recurrent element in Ruiz's work. Horror is figured in a particular way *A TV Dante*, there are grotesque allusions to the legacy of torture and the brutal regime of the Pinochet years but seen through the absurdity of B-movie conventions as an endless cycle. The link then between horror, monstrosity and history lies, as Wang argues, in their banality on the one hand and the cyclical nature on the other. In *A TV Dante* cycles of consumption are shown as absurd rituals, both horrific and banal, from the monster with a cut throat destined to consume wine in an endless cycle to the cannibalistic cooking of eyeballs and other human body parts (see Illustration 3.31 & 3.32).



Illustration 3.31: *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, 1991) cycle of horror, man drinking wine that is refilled from whole in neck



Illustration 3.32: *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, 1991) disembodied hands dismembering



Illustration 3.33: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) butchering of lamb in preparation for the Inmaculada Concepción/Feast of the Immaculate Conception held on 8 December, Chiloé

The problems of historical representation is a central to the horror in cinema – from *Godzilla's* function in the popular imagination as an embodiment of the treat of nuclear destruction to the intimation of European fascism in *The Black Cat* (Edgar G. Ulmer, 1934). Throughout *A TV Dante* and early Chilean works, quotidian life has a remarkable presence, horror is presented as banal part of everyday life often without consequence or comment. Here reality, the world that is created, is seen through the combination and layering of space with lived life, the observers are both within the fiction and outside of it looking in.

The contemporary Malpuche filmmaker René Ballesteros showing a contrasting picture of horror and

⁹⁶ Wang, David Der-Wei. *The Monster That Is History: History, Violence, and Fictional Writing in Twentieth-Century China*. University of California Press, 2004.

⁹⁷ Potier, Beth, 'Wang Trains a Literary Lens on History.' *Harvard Gazette* (blog), November 4, 2004. Accessed 24 January 2021 <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2004/11/wang-trains-a-literary-lens-on-history/>.

imprisonment in *Dreams of the Castle/Los sueños del castillo* (2018), inspired by his own experiences working as a psychologist in juvenile prisons. The film speaks to the intergenerational unrest of the predominately Mapuche inmates tortured by their dreams which connect them to ancestral trauma. In his planned follow up *El pelo vivo/Living Hair* he intends to draw on a figure from Mapuche culture that 'lives in stagnant water and seeks out human hosts in which to live and take revenge for ancient slights.'⁹⁸ But as he states 'the real horror is in the institution, the adults and their network of silence.'⁹⁹ After I returned from Chile I heard about visit of Pope Francis to Santiago where he spoke with inmates at San Joaquín women's prison and told them 'losing our freedom does not mean losing our dreams and hopes. Losing our freedom is not the same as losing our dignity.'¹⁰⁰ This justification of imprisonment speaks to the *real horror* of colonial Catholicism and continual denial of indigenous rights.¹⁰¹



Illustration 3.34: *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, 1991) people observing film shoot



Illustration 3.35: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) people observing film shoot, Chilote fishermen Leonel Bahamonde and Ivan Ulloa and family

The Chilote archipelago has important role in Chile for its resistance of colonial enslavement, fighting Dutch, British and Spanish colonialists. As a final note on Chiloé, I want to return to the Brujos and the site chosen

⁹⁸ Ballesteros, René *René Ballesteros Dossier*, 2018

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Harris, Elise 'Bars don't stop your ability to dream, Pope says at Chilean women's prison' CNA/Catholic News Agency, January 2018. Accessed 20 January 2020: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/bars-dont-stop-your-ability-to-dream-pope-says-at-chilean-womens-prison-83888>

¹⁰¹ The land rights campaigner and *machi* (shaman) Celestino Cordova, who was imprisoned in February 2014 for burning down a farmhouse in Temuco, marked the Pope's visit with a hunger strike stating "The government practices and respects Catholicism but it discriminates against Mapuche spiritual beliefs [...] The Mapuche have been impoverished spiritually, culturally and economically by Chile." - Youkee, Mat. 'Indigenous Chileans Defend Their Land against Loggers with Radical Tactics'. The Guardian, 14 June 2018. Accessed 21 January 2020: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jun/14/chile-mapuche-indigenous-arson-radical-environmental-protest>. The government of Salvador Allende (1970–73) passed an *Indigenous Law* beginning a process to restore Mapuche communal lands. This was reversed under the Pinochet's dictatorship which called for the 'division of the reserves and the liquidation of the Indian communities' leading to brutal suppression of these communities. During Pinochet's regime, Mapuches land was reduced from 10 million hectares to 400,000 and his regime lay foundation for the ongoing criminalisation of campaigners for land reform using counter-terrorism laws (which give anonymity to those testifying and allows Mapuche to be held in pre-trial for months) which have continued to be enforced by democratically elected governments despite promised to reform this law.

in *Double Ghosts* to break the first mirror. The mirror, which had been held by Chiloté fishermen as they took me out to see their mussel farms, is one of strategies for the multiplication of space alongside double exposure. The final instance of the mirror occurs beside Cascadas de Tocoihue, a waterfall near the village of Quicavi on the main Island of Chiloé. The waterfall itself is never directly filmed, we hear it out of frame and see it only in the mirror.

The final action occurs here for the importance of water as the most ancient mirror, but also the site is central to the mythology of Chiloé and the islands history of resistance. One of the initiation rites for those who wish to enter the society of Brujos is to stand under this waterfall near Quicavi for 30 days in order to wash away the Christian baptism, to shed the colonial veil, to allow them to enter the pre-colonial order of Brujos. The planting of the actions in such mediated places aim to accrue for them accumulative combinatory meanings. The point is not that the action has intrinsic meaning but that the action can be articulated, shored up, by its context and circuits of reference and relation. The writing around it is a further means of articulation not with aim of a definitive reading but to provide additional layers of relation. The history of this site stands as a place of profanation, a place where that which had been removed from can be restored to use. The terms of this use we will explore in following sections as the action gains further articulations.



Illustration 3.36: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement. First mirror at foot of waterfall in Quicavi, Chiloé.

3.8 Views from above



Illustration 3.37: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement. Lookout area on Cerro San Cristóbal, Santiago

In Raúl Ruiz's first feature film *Tres tristes tigres* (1968) the protagonists visit the San Cristóbal Hill overlooking Santiago. Ruiz sought to make a film 'in which Chileans could recognise themselves.'¹⁰² What is it that we recognise about ourselves in our cities? Cities poses a constant challenge to cartography, through their evolution, their disputed central points and their vast interiors not visible from the outside. How do we see the city when it exists as a myopic labyrinth of insides? How do we render the shadows of a city, its pasts, multiple presents and potential futures?

Ruiz adapted his film from a play by Alejandro Sievking set amidst the petit bourgeois society of Santiago. The climax of the play revolved around a brother selling his sister as a prostitute. Ruiz sought to 'put the melodrama in the background and give a possible scale of values to this act, converting it into an interconnected chain of events (even if this is not apparent), so that this act would appear as the result of a social milieu constantly on the move.'¹⁰³ Largely restricted to claustrophobic interiors, one of the rare scenes outside is a visit to San Cristóbal mountain. But we only see the vista briefly as the camera pans between characters discussing where to go for dinner.

¹⁰² Ruiz, Raúl, Christie, Ian, 'Ruiz filmography', *Afterimage*, 1981 Fall, pp116-117

¹⁰³ Ibid.



Illustration 3.38: *Tres tristes tigres* (Raúl Ruiz, 1968) traveling through Santiago



Illustration 3.39: *Tres tristes tigres* (Raúl Ruiz, 1968) at Cerro San Cristóbal lookout



Illustration 3.40: *Tres tristes tigres* (Raúl Ruiz, 1968) looking down on Santiago

The San Cristóbal Hill in the centre of Santiago is a key vantage point of the city. From here the surrounding basin, in which Santiago sits, is clearly visible. San Cristóbal is to the north of Santiago but as the city has grown it has spread out and filled up the basin all around it. Named by the Spanish conquistadors after St. Christopher, the patron saint of travellers to mark the importance of the hill for navigation. The indigenous name of the hill in Quechua is *Tupahue* which means *Place of God*. In 1903 the Mills Observatory was the first building built here (now known as the Manuel Foster Observatory). The observatory was installed by University of California as a twin in the southern hemisphere to the Lick Observatory in California.



Illustration 3.41: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) San Cristóbal Hill - vantage point looking north



Illustration 3.42: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) San Cristóbal Hill - vantage point looking south

Tres tristes tigres reveals the city as a claustrophobic network of rooms, apartments, bars, taxi cabs, filled with rolling cast of characters and barely any open or empty space. This staging relegates the city to a fleeting presence, glimpsed in passing through windows. The opening scene gives a slice of the city from taxi window in the early morning narrated by one of the protagonists who gives explicit directions on which roads to take maintaining a geographic validity to the real city. Despite largely avoiding showing the outside, the film does however provide a compelling mapping of the city from this myopic vantage, shooting close to the actors with a handheld camera in real locations captures many details lost during the social and political changes in the coming decade.

In the mirror break for section II. Cerra San Cristóbal in *Double Ghosts* I designed the shot to layer two prospects of city. Shattering the older southern view, the break reveals new developments in the north, central to which is the Gran Torre Santiago (Great Santiago Tower aka Constanera Centre Terre 2), the tallest building in Latin American when it was completed in 2013. This break is the only one with sound recorded in synch. Prior to it we also hear the preparation for filming the shot and conversation between myself and Cristóbal León who helped me during this shoot. The doubling of vantage points creates a rupture in the image, collapsing opposing vantage sides of the city.



Illustration 3.43: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) San Cristóbal Hill, reflected view to south



Illustration 3.44: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) San Cristóbal Hill, view broken



Illustration 3.45: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) San Cristóbal Hill, view to north revealed

The city seen in close quarters in *Tres tristes tigres* can be contrasted with the ways that Ruiz later filmed Santiago. In *A TV Dante* (1991) the city is shown from a wide vantage point shrouded in thick smog. The city is seen from San Cristóbal looking south, we seen the Mapocho River and the mountains in the distance. Over these images we hear the words of from Dante: 'This marsh, that breathes out a potent stench surrounds the dreadful city in despair'¹⁰⁴ Here we are given time to look at the city, but it is obscured still by the smog that marks the city's modernity.



Illustration 3.46: *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, 1991) view south over Rio Mapocho from San Cristóbal Hill



Illustration 3.47: *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, 1991)

¹⁰⁴ From narration of *A TV Dante* (Dir. Raúl Ruiz, 1991)

A final vantage point I want to address is provided by CADA (Colectivo Acciones de Arte) a conceptual art group using performance to critique the Pinochet dictatorship. Made in 1981 during martial law, their work *¡Ay Sudamérica!/O, South America!* sits in the gap between the two Ruiz works discussed above. The group originally consisted of the artists Lotty Rosenfeld and Juan Castillo, sociologist Fernando Balcells, poet Raúl Zurita and the novelist Diamela Eltit. Their works provided a new way to see and think about the city. They described the action as follow

On July, 12th, 1981, six small airplanes, flying in perfect formation over Santiago, dropped 400,000 flyers discussing the relationship between art and society. This action referenced the bombardment of the House of Government (La Moneda), which marked the fall of Salvador Allende's democratic government and the beginning of Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile. Through this 'acción sobre arte y política', CADA reconstructed the political trauma of 1973, while proposing a new critical political perspective. The flyers contained a message that simultaneously upheld each person's right to a decent standard of living and proposed that the general public was capable of instating an entirely new concept of art – one that could overcome traditional, elite boundaries and become part of public life.¹⁰⁵



Illustration 3.48: *¡Ay Sudamérica!/O, South America!* (CADA, 1981) video still



Illustration 3.49: *¡Ay Sudamérica!/O, South America!* (CADA, 1981), video still

While seeking to subvert the trauma of the infamous bombardment of La Moneda, CADA repurposed aeroplanes to drop leaflets over the city asserting the right of each citizen, calling for unity cross South America and proposing a new concept of art central part of public discourse. The planes that bombed La Moneda where two Hawker Hunter transonic jet-powered fighter aircrafts. Developed by the British Royal Air

¹⁰⁵ Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, 'Ay Sudamérica (1981)' Accessed April 5, 2018. <http://hemisphericinstitute.org/hemi/hidvl-profiles/item/503-cada-ay-sudamerica?lang=en>.

Force and sold to Chile by British government between 1966-1973. The sound of aircraft is one of the traumatic memories recalled by witnesses of the military coup, as the planes flew over the city and made rocket attacks on the presidential palace in order to overthrow Salvador Allende's government. The strike occurred shortly after Allende called Radio Magallanes to give his last speech at 9.10 am on 11 September 1973.¹⁰⁶ In the opening of Patrizio Guzman's film *La Batalla de Chile: La insurrección de la burguesía/The Battle of Chile: Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie* (1975) we hear the sound of the fighter planes flying over Santiago. This traumatic sound precedes the first images we are see that show La Moneda, smoking and on fire marking the end of socialist governance.



Illustration 3.50: *La Batalla de Chile: La insurrección de la burguesía/The Battle of Chile: Insurrection of the Bourgeoisie* (Patricio Guzmán, 1975) film still

These vantage points on the city span seven decades showing the shifting aspects its figuration. CADA employ détournement across their work as means of shifting political paradigms and representations, from the aircrafts redeployed in to the use of art gallery for distribution of milk in previously discussed action *Para no morir de hambre* (1979). Their strategies provide a way to reconfigure the projections onto a city, ways of shifting power through interpretation and translation, providing new perspective to help decipher the city and reveal its histories and potential futures.

Across his writing the Argentine author Julio Cortázar explores again and again the composite nature of cities and the trauma of displacement. *62: A Model Kit* follows and expands on his previous novel *Hopscotch* whose chapters could be read in several orders. Taking prompt from one of his own characters, Cortázar said he wrote *62: A Model Kit* to 'see if it is possible to write a novel that rejects psychological behaviour, the

¹⁰⁶ Rights, Salvador Allende Topics: Human, Labor, Movements, and Strategy Places: Chile. "Last Words [Últimas Palabras]." *MR Online* (blog), September 11, 2006. <https://mronline.org/2006/09/11/allende110906-html/>.

law of causality that determines the different interactions between individuals based on their feelings.¹⁰⁷

The city in 62 is not singular but multiple, layered temporarily and spatially, the city is a rhizome where each facet can be broken and reattached, with multiple points of entry and exit. The novel revolves around an event which is always outside, it is both a particular instance but also the place itself, which haunts the protagonist. Attempting to come to terms with the proliferating vantage points, the narrator states that '[t]he most I can do is try to repeat what took place in a different zone in mental terms, trying to distinguish between what made up a part of that sudden conglomeration in its own right and what other associations might have become incorporated into it parasitically. But beneath it all I know that everything is false, that I'm already far away from what just happened to me and that, as on so many other occasions, it comes down to this useless desire to understand, missing, perhaps, the obscure call or signal of the thing itself, the uneasiness I'm left with, the instantaneous display of another order where memories, potentials, and signals break out to form a flash of unity which breaks up at the very instant it drags and pulls me out of myself. Now this has left me with just one kind of curiosity – the old human topic: deciphering.'¹⁰⁸



Illustration 3.51: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 35mm frame enlargement, North of Santiago.

¹⁰⁷ Cortázar, Julio. *Julio Cortázar: New Readings*. Cambridge University Press, 1998. p61

¹⁰⁸ Cortázar, Julio, *62: A Model Kit* (c.1968), English translation by Gregory Rabassa, New Directions, 2000. p12

3.9 Travesía and the beach as a bridge



Illustration 3.52: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018), 35mm frame enlargement. Pacific ocean caught in mirror shard on Ritoque beach

Wednesday 13 December 2017, Santiago

Planning to try go to Ciudad Abierta/Open City in Ritoque, the commune established by Alberto Cruz. Cristóbal Leon, whose father is an architect, offered to call them to see if he can arrange a visit. He gets back to me today with bad news – the person who answered said visits are only on Wednesdays and they won't take more visits until January. The next day he sends me another message saying 'George, I told my friend what they told us and she gave me this kind long answer...' which he forwarded to me:

[13:03, 12/13/2017] OK, well let me give you a tip
 It is possible to sneak in.
 He can always say that he didn't realize you needed permission
 The front gate on the highway is usually open. There is one part for cars which is locked, but they told me that the other door is open to walk through. You need to reach in and unlatch it
 Further down the highway, on the way to Sol y Mar there is another small gate. In fact, he could park at the hotel and then walk just a little ways to access that part
 I went in that way last Wednesday morning. There was actually a lock on the gate, but I was able to climb through the fence. Then he has to go up over the dunes to get into the main part
 But in some ways, it would be more innocent if he were to just walk through the front door

Cristóbal signs off with an apology 'Again, I'm sorry I'm not enough inside the cult yet to help more.'

Friday 15 December 2017, Viña del Mar

Niles invited me to screening of his friend René Ballesteros's film *Dreams of the Castle* as part of documentary festival. It's a rough cut, but René says it pretty much complete. After I catch bus to Viña del Mar and then take taxi to find entrance Cristóbal's friend told me about to get into Open City. I arrive and the main gate is open so walk right in.

I had been corresponding with my new friend Elsa and her boyfriend. They have been staying at top of Ritoque beach and we'd discussed meeting together at Open City. Her boyfriend is an architect. Very patchy phone signal so not sure if I'll be able to meet them. Once inside I load my camera to prepare to film, while I have my hands in the changing bag I see them. I send a photo of Elsa and her boyfriend inside Open City to Cristóbal, caption 'I met some cult members.' He responds 'Kill them!'

We wander tentatively around the buildings, all fascinatingly constructed, twisted and turned in ways that defy perspective. Amongst dunes there are various remains, rusted or left to age and fall back into the landscape, residue of various uncompleted projects. A boy and his dog come to play outside. We say hello and meet his dad, a composer who invites us to see inside of his house and offers us water. He has lived here a few years already. The building inside is beautiful, remarkably designed, we are struck with envy¹⁰⁹. I reload my camera away from the sand. We say goodbye and head over the road to the upper gully where the Open Cities cemetery is located. Together with the Chapel and Amphitheatre, it is built into the landscape to ease the dispersion of seasonal floods. I film the *Palacio del Alba y el Ocaso/Palace of Sun and Twilight*, a series of interlocking concave red brick walls, which buttress sounds and create pockets of silence enclosed areas with compacted earth, filtering out the sound of sea and road, creating tranquil spaces where wild flowers flourish.¹¹⁰



Illustration 3.53: Entrance to Ciudad Abierta



Illustration 3.54: Road into Ciudad Abierta managed by the Corporacion cultural Amereida. Visible here are the Hospedería de la Entrada (L) and the Entry Plaza (R)

¹⁰⁹ The building is called *Hospedería de los Diseños*, built in 1977 by Fabio Cruz (Architect), Ricardo Lang (Designer) and Grupo CA

¹¹⁰ *Palacio del Alba y el Ocaso/Palace of Sun and Twilight* was constructed in 1982 built by Alberto Cruz, Jorge Sánchez and Grupo CA. The cemetery was built and designed by Juan Ignacio Baixas, Jorge Sanchez and Juan Purcell between 1976 and 2002 and houses tombs of members of the Corporacion Amereida. *Palacio del Alba y el Ocaso* was conceived as an open work and constructed in stages, it was declared complete in a poetic act by Godofredo Iommi in 1982. As the Corporacion Amereida states the 'name of the work is related to the gesture of light, to the pivotal condition offered by its appearance and disappearance thanks to the pattern of curved modules that structure the work. The structure has a symmetry that reveals to us the relationship of a double orientation between land-sea, east-west and which is confirmed by the furrows that cross the work, marking its association with water.' Accessed 20 January 2021: https://wiki.ead.pucv.cl/Estudio_del_gesto:_Palacio_del_Alba_y_el_Ocaso

Exile is a state of deprivation based on the illumination of movement, effecting those who leave but also those who remain. This duality is at the root of the metaphysical nature of exile, a death without means of mourning, it is a deprivation and denial of relation. The region of Ritoque, north of Valparaíso, is a strip of land along the Pacific coast known for its surfing beaches, large dune fields and wetland conservation area. The coastline is traversed by train tracks. This stretch of land has a complex historical and political topography, as Ana Maria Leon explains, '[i]n the early 1970s, a school of architecture and a concentration camp appeared at the Ritoque beach, just north of Valparaíso, Chile. Situated three miles apart, they never acknowledged each other's presence. Nonetheless, their occupants formed communities that used a similar repertoire of games, events, and performances to create real and imaginary spaces.'¹¹¹

During the government of Salvador Allende in the late 1960s, cabins were built on the beach as 'popular spas,' creating holiday environments for workers and their families.¹¹² These same cabins were repurposed in 1974-75 by the military government of Augusto Pinochet to operate as a concentration camp for political prisoners administered by the Chilean Air Force and Carabineros de Chile.

The *Ciudad Abierta/Open City* was founded in 1971, and has been studied as a utopian model for their multi-disciplinary approach to architecture and arts pedagogy. The political context of the founding of the Open City and its development in the 1970s has been largely neglected by scholarship, yet María León argues 'the school's detachment implied a removal, a voluntary imprisonment, which should be understood in the context of the political turmoil of 1970s Chile, which saw the short-lived presidency of socialist Salvador Allende (1970–1973) and the subsequent military dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet (1974–1990).'¹¹³ The Open City operated as a mode of internal exile.

The Open City emerged from the work of the influential architect Alberto Cruz (1917-2013) who together with the Argentine poet Godofredo Iommi (1917-2001) sought a radical shift 'by removing architecture from its doctrine, buried in mathematics and formalisms, and re-centering it in the poetic word.'¹¹⁴ Drawing on traditions of modernism and pedagogy linked to Bauhaus ideals, the architectural faculty led by Cruz established an alternative model connected to poetry and craft to inform their ideas around South American architecture drawing on vernacular practices. In 1952 Cruz was invited to teach at the Pontificia Universidad

¹¹¹ León, Ana María, 'Prisoners of Ritoque: The Open City and the Ritoque Concentration Camp', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 66:1, 2012. p84

¹¹² During Popular Unidad the Ministry of Housing built 17 resorts with communal facilities owned by the Central Unica de Trabajadores (CUT, or Worker's Center). Designed for low-income groups, especially young families, they were used in rotation for a total of 300,000 tourists per season. Several of these sites, like those in Ritoque, were converted into concentration camps under Pinochet.

¹¹³ León, Ana María, 'Prisoners of Ritoque: The Open City and the Ritoque Concentration Camp', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 66:1, 2012. p84

¹¹⁴ Pendleton-Jullian, Ann M. 'Autopoietic architecture: The Open City, Ritoque, Chile' In. Read, Alan, ed., *Architecturally Speaking: Practices of Art, Architecture and the Everyday*. Routledge, 2002. p267

Católica de Valparaíso (PUCV) following a change of leadership. Cruz agreed to join the school on condition they hire the multi-disciplinary group of poets, artists, philosophers and musicians. Together with Iommi they founded the influential New School of Architecture. Their negotiations with the school allowed a broader faculty to be employed, working at a reduced salary the group pooled resources and shared living conditions to make their collective model sustainable and build the Open City. Involving students as direct participants in their projects, the teachers sought a critical position to that of 'professional' practice maintained by other faculty members. 'Their particular practice of Catholicism' as María León explains 'reinforced ideas about communal living, equality, and a culture of poverty that translated into their architectural production as an appreciation for rustic or reused materials, and programs related to collective spiritual experience.'¹¹⁵

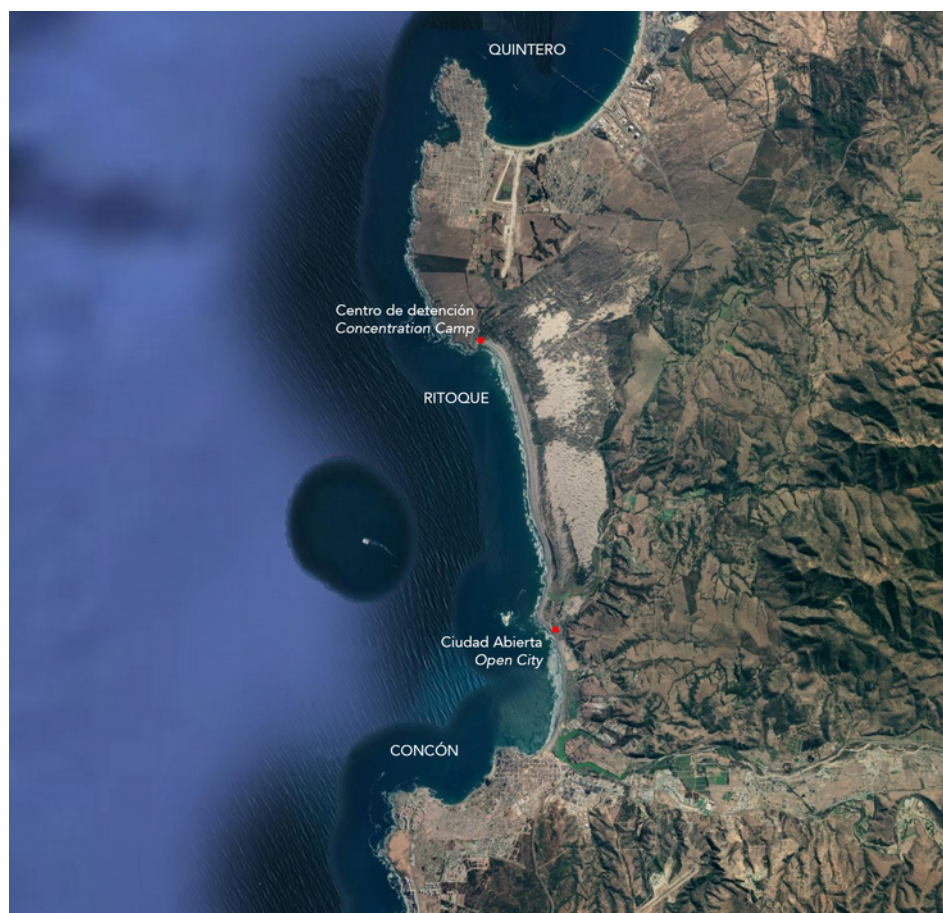


Illustration 3.55: Map of Ritoque beach showing the proximity of Ciudad Abierta to the former site of the Centro de detención/Concentration Camp

Seeking to discover a new relationship to their continent, and break the cultural reliance on Europe, in the mid-1960s Iommi embarked on a *travesía*, a geo-poetic journey or crossing seeking to reforge the

¹¹⁵ León, Ana María, 'Prisoners of Ritoque: The Open City and the Ritoque Concentration Camp', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 66:1, 2012. p86

connection to the land. As Maria Berríos states, they 'wanted to poetically found America through the very experience of the expedition, finding en route a language of its own that would reveal and establish a new word: *Amereida*, an *Aeneid* (Spanish *Eneida*) for America.'¹¹⁶ In 1967 Iommi published a poem inspired by the trip with the name *Amereida*. Drawing on these various initiatives and seeking a means to create a space to integrate life, work and study, the group established Amereida as a non-profit cooperative, and in 1971 purchased 275 hectares of land on the southern stretch of Ritoque beach and inaugurated it as site for the Open City.¹¹⁷ Funded in part by the PUCV, the city operates as a living laboratory functioning with autonomy on the open model of collaborative construction, 'an integrated effort of architecture and poetry.'¹¹⁸ The Open City was established during the martial law when many other artists and intellectuals had left.

The site is dedicated to the model of the open work; a means of construction and design completed in parts without anticipating the final form. Many of the works are still in processes of becoming as they are lived in and used. Central to the founding ethos is the concept *travesía*, a term used by the group to designate poetic crossings or 'voyages of unveiling,'¹¹⁹ means of addressing experience of place avoiding political frontiers or qualitative assessments associated with other terms for psycho-geographic journeys. *Travesía* is a bridge between disciplines. Works are conditioned by parameters both poetic and topographical which determine the improvisational approach to making and marking space. The site of Ritoque is marked by boundaries of material; the shifting sands of the dunes, the flow of water from the coastline, the seasonal flooding of the Aconcagua River. These elements are all integrated into their structures.



Illustration 3.56: *City of Pirates / La Ville des pirates* (Raúl Ruiz, 1983)

¹¹⁶ Berríos, María. 'Invisible Architecture and the Poetry of Action' In: Lagnado, Lisette Ed., *Drifts and derivations: Experiences, journeys and morphologies*, MNCARS, Madrid, 2010. p72

¹¹⁷ In 1998 the Amereida Cultural Corporation a non-profit organisation which reconstituted from the 'Amereida Professional Services Cooperative' created in 1969.

¹¹⁸ Pendleton-Jullian, Ann M. 'Autopoetic architecture: The Open City, Ritoque, Chile' In. Read, Alan, Eds., *Architecturally Speaking: Practices of Art, Architecture and the Everyday*. Routledge, 2002. p273

¹¹⁹ Mercado, Alvaro. 'Unveiling Latin American Territories; The Travesías of the Valparaíso School as a Critical Practice of the Planetary Urbanization.' In. *On Reproduction: Re-Imagining The Political Ecology Of Urbanism. U&U Proceeding – 9th International PhD Seminar in Urbanism and Urbanization*, Ghent University, 2018, p30

The ocean is a liminal space, a place of passage and wandering. In their *travesía* they designate the vast continent as the 'interior sea' (mar interior) across which they could traverse, creating new means of relation to the territory. The topography of Ritoque is defined by these shifting conditions of the landscape. Shortly after Ruiz's first return to Chile he made *City of Pirates/La Ville des pirates* (1983) filmed in Baleal on the Portuguese coast. Michael Goddard has argued that Portugal functions as a 'displaced Chile'¹²⁰ for Ruiz, leading him to ask in his 2009 interview if there is 'a connection for you between Portugal and Chile?' to which Ruiz responded in the affirmative:

As a bridge. Because for a long time I was divided between Chilean memories and nostalgias and all that and reality which was Europe, France. And Portugal was between. I started making a bridge there with *City of Pirates*. It was made at Baleal, on the coast. At Sintra I made *The Territory* and *Love Torn in Dream*. Portugal has that idea of the secret which I always connect with cinema, in cinema you have a secret film inside a film, and you have to keep that secret. This is about cryptesthesia. How to keep a secret somewhere is the motor of film emotion.¹²¹

For Ruiz we can see how the coast of Baleal provides a site of *travesía*, a place of poetic crossing, a bridge. In his exile Ruiz figures Chile in *City of Pirates* as an elsewhere, a secret or a 'distorted reflection' as Adrian Martin puts it.¹²² Governed by poetic logic, this bridge is a means to counter political defeat, conditions of exile and imagine other possible futures. Centrally here and where I want to make the connection between *Open City* and *Double Ghosts*, the potential found in these poetic gestures resides in the depiction of place as site of relation. Cruz and Iommi argued that *Open City* is not a utopia. Rather than being a 'no-lugar' (no place), their intent is to create a 'sin-lugar' (without place). The *Open City* instead was designed as an apparition.¹²³ This *sin-lugar*, this apparition, 'is a real presence with a less-than-real dimension, like the mirage in the desert that makes the oasis visible.'¹²⁴

On the Pacific coast, the unseen correlation between the architecture of the *Open City*, the architecture of Allende's workers homes and their rewriting as Pinochet's political prisons, are as key to the topography as are the shifting sand of the dunes or crashing waves of the ocean. These elements are a part with the confluences of images, references and the parameters of filmmaking, which all inform the possibilities of improvisation and creation on site.

¹²⁰ Goddard, Michael. *The Cinema of Raúl Ruiz: Impossible Cartographies*. Columbia University Press, 2013. p77

¹²¹ Ibid, p182. The Raúl Ruiz interview was conducted in Paris on November 2009

¹²² McDonald, Grant, Raúl Ruiz, and Rouge Press. *Raúl Ruiz: Images of Passage*. Rouge Press, 2004. p48-49

¹²³ Godofredo Iommi M., Alberto Cruz C, 'La Ciudad Abierta: De la Utopía al Espejismo', University Magazine N°9, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago 1983, p17-25

¹²⁴ Pendleton-Jullian, Ann M. 'Autopoetic architecture: The Open City, Ritoque, Chile' In. Read, Alan, Eds., *Architecturally Speaking: Practices of Art, Architecture and the Everyday*. Routledge, 2002. p286

In the same way that the Open City proposed a model of construction embedded in the ecology and topography of the Ritoque dunes and the living and working conditions of its members, the approach to production I want to manifest is one embedded in the topography of these landscapes and my own material means to work with place to help make other possible futures visible. This approach can be summed up through Iommi's concept of a *travesía* as a poetic model for 'creating something on the site.'¹²⁵ Following this it was important for me to find a way of filming without over inscription; filming as an act of relation.



Illustration 3.57: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018)
Entry plaza of Open City seen from inside as camera pans not framed as totalising 'view'



Illustration 3.58: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018)
Open City as site of play and ruins as both remnants of actions and sites of future action

Andreea Mihalache has called the method of the Open City the 'fluid form... destabilizing inertias and prefabrication, placing the relationships considered stable under a question mark.'¹²⁶ Such models can seem purely speculative, as the possible configurations are seemingly endless. But the model of the open work I am interested in is not one which negates relation or the production of images in face of this proliferation but the opposite, a model of producing images invested in the material at hand, to respond and question place as it is unravelling, working against entropy and inertia to make decisions from within the site rather than just following a prefabricated plan. Many of the works at Open City are centred around instances of entry and exit, modes of passing through. The absence of windows in many of the buildings seems to oppose this but, as Pendleton-Jullian argues, the 'site is not something to be seen through the commodification of natural amenities such as view, but through a more profound understanding of its rhythms and phenomena. The denial of the view allows them to replace the actual image of the ocean with a memory of the ocean, with the sounds and light of the sea, with narratives or stories about going out to sea. It is about the ocean as storyteller, peacemaker, enemy, foil, ocean as beginning and end.'¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Ibid, p274

¹²⁶ Mihalache, Andreea. 'Footprints of Open City', *ARQ magazine*, n. 64 Chile Inside and Outside, Santiago, December, 2006, pp24-27

¹²⁷ Pendleton-Jullian, Ann M. 'Autopoetic architecture: The Open City, Ritoque, Chile' In. Read, Alan, Eds., *Architecturally Speaking: Practices of Art, Architecture and the Everyday*. Routledge, 2002. p255



Illustration 3.59: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) broken mirror on Ritoque beach on Pacific coast. 35mm frame enlargement

3.10 The past that had not yet emerged as history



Illustration 3.60: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018)
Valparaíso seen from the harbour. 35mm frame enlargement

Saturday 16 December 2017, Valparaíso

I wake up early and go out for walk, buy coffee and climb a huge dune and have breakfast looking over the bay to Valparaíso. Veronica Sarmiento picks me and drives me along coast to Viña del Mar. She tells me she used to live here with her ex-husband who was an English man. On the way down the coast we pass a rocky outcrop. She tells me this is where her sister, Valeria Sarmiento filmed *Amelia López O'Neill* in early 1990s.

I meet Bruno Cuneo at the art school. A Georgian style house. I tell him I visited Open City and he says that both Ruiz and Alberto Cruz were at the Catholic University of Valparaíso in late 1960s, predecessors of his current position. But they didn't get on, 'Ruiz was on the left and Cruz on the right'. He says he believes I wrote to him and apologies for not responding, he is poor at emails and to make up for it offers to buy me lunch and show me Valparaíso. I ask if I can record our interview and declines saying his english is too poor and better for us to talk more freely. He is full of energy and very candid so I think it will be more fun to go with his suggestion.

After we talk he shows me the Ruiz-Sarmiento library of collected writings, references, publications and papers on and by both filmmakers. There is Super8 camera Raúl's farther gave to him as a boy.

We catch a small bus together into the city, he tells me how he loves the shambolic cubist array of houses as we pass into the hills. He grew up in Valparaíso, says it is rare to have city like this in Chile. It is the city with the most Latin American character, he tells me, but people read that as it being the most dangerous.

We go for lunch in an old bar and we discussion the connections between poetry and the avant-garde. He tells me that Raúl befriended him as he was keen to connect with a new generation of people in Chile. His writing and diaries were a vehicle for his poetry and in his later life Ruiz attempted to frame his work in this arena, the most important and respected in Chile. Poetry was one of the key art forms that was able to continue during the dictatorship. Even though there is a small readership for poetry, Bruno tells me it is read intensely. In the

1980s Chileans were fascinated with the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (as seen in the influential exhibitions *Hegemony and Visuality* (Visuala, 1987), *Gramsci Symposium* (ICAL, 1987) and by coincidence Gramsci was the subject of conference I attended week before at Museo de la Solidaridad Salvador Allende in Santiago). Gramsci was a means to elevate poetry to level of political critique while also protecting poets through the density of allusion that characterised his work.

Bruno leaves and I spend the evening around the docks. I take a boat out into the bay and film. I have a beer and fish empanadas on the balcony of Resterant Bote Salvavidas (to support Lifeboat services) overlooking the harbour. I reload camera and film a few final shots at dusk. I realise from this point I can see back over the bay to the huge dune in Concon where I had breakfast that morning. Shot reverse-shot. I walk back to the hotel to return my camera then head out for evening. I decide to visit Restaurant Cinzano which has live music tonight. Bruno told me this was a favourite spot of Valeria and Raúl. I can see why. I sit at the bar with my back to the stage. A large mirror hangs from the ceiling above the bar reflecting the surroundings. The walls are adorning with maritime paraphernalia and photos of balladeers. The singers and band are all old, dressed in suit and tie, romantic and glamorous, out of time and enchanting like the city.

Stay at Hostal Residencia en el Cerro, they have a cat. As I walk up the hill at night, I notice one hill is in total darkness with not one light. I realise this is Panteón Hill which houses the cities dead.



Illustration 3.61: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) ferry crossing channel to Chiloé

Ports such as Valparaíso enable new modes of thought. Valparaíso has been projected around the world on the sides of shipping containers giving the city a unique place in the popular imagination. It was the most important port on the Pacific coast of South America prior to the opening of the Panama canal in 1914. The broadcast of the name outward is matched by the inward circulation of goods and crucially people. As Maria Leon reminds us, Valparaíso is at the centre of introducing new thought and culture from emigres as well as displaced people.¹²⁸ Ports are central conduits for

¹²⁸ 'On September 1939 the SS Winnipeg, a ship chartered by Chilean poet Pablo Neruda to transport approximately 2,200 refugees from the Spanish Civil War, arrived in Valparaíso. Many artists and intellectuals were aboard the ship, including Spanish art historian and playwright José Ricardo Morales, whose work would be influential in the development of a discourse for modern

imagining other worlds, sites passage and of unparalleled potential. Throughout his life Ruiz was fascinated by the sea and in particular the transnational movement of pirates. 'Ruiz's pirate films' argues Michael Goddard 'express the search for an outside, a space of passage, beyond both European and Latin American traditions and cultural objects.'¹²⁹ For Ruiz, like his former colleagues Cruz and Iommi at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, the sea represented an open space of possibility which they sought to bring to bare on their respective cartographical projects.

When Albert Cruz and Godofredo Iommi relocated to Viña del Mar in 1952 it was the city of Valparaíso which became key site for their work. They saw the city itself as a laboratory.¹³⁰ Pendleton-Jullian attributes the city's unique spatial presence as a key influence on the adaptive form of the Open City. As she elaborates the city 'occupies a site whose topography is emphatic and an unmitigated challenge to the right-angle posture of human occupation of space.'¹³¹ Made up of 42 hills, it is an example of fluid and adaptive open form, a unique combination of architectural styles and responses to material and topographical necessity.¹³²



Illustration 3.62 The architectural observation in the hills of Valparaíso, 1952. From The Historical Archives courtesy J.V.A. of The Valparaíso School.



Illustration 3.63: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) observing Valparaíso from Panteón Hill.

Cruz and Iommi took their students out of the classroom and into the city to practice what they called 'architectural observation,' a means of exploring the lived experience of the city. This practice aimed to

architecture. This Spanish diaspora tied the development of modernity in Chile to the Spanish avant-garde, which had a strong Surrealist component, and was characterized by collaborations among poets, architects, and theater performers.' - León, Ana María, 'Prisoners of Ritoque: The Open City and the Ritoque Concentration Camp', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 66:1, 2012. p86

¹²⁹ Goddard, Michael. *The Cinema of Raúl Ruiz: Impossible Cartographies*. Columbia University Press, 2013. p64

¹³⁰ See: Pendleton-Jullian, Ann M., and Conover, Roger. *The Road That Is Not a Road and the Open City, Ritoque, Chile*. Graham Foundation for Advanced Study in the Fine Arts, 1996.

¹³¹ Pendleton-Jullian, Ann M. 'Autopoietic architecture: The Open City, Ritoque, Chile' In. Read, Alan, Eds., *Architecturally Speaking: Practices of Art, Architecture and the Everyday*. Routledge, 2002. p271-72

¹³² This aspect of the city link it more than other to sprawling metropolis in Latin America and the tradition of autoconstrucción which has inspired range of architects such as Cruz as well as contemporary artists such as the Mexican artist Abraham Cruzvillegas. See Cruzvillegas, Abraham. *The Logic of Disorder: The Art and Writing of Abraham Cruzvillegas*, Cultural Agents Initiative at Harvard University, 2015

understand the city as an evolving environment, to observe it and read it from a particular vantage point at a particular moment. I want to draw on this example to think about my approach to cities and their complex composite realities from my work on site at Ritoque to the dense topographies of cities I've filmed from Valparaíso to Santiago, Paris to Taipei.

Before I expand the frame I want to address a black hole at the heart of Valparaíso. Out of all the hills that construct the city only one is dark at night, that is the Panteón Hill. The hill houses the city's principal cemeteries and is unlit after dark. At the top of the hill you can find Cemetery No.1 created in 1825 by Catholic Church, the Dissidents Cemetery (built by British emigres) for those not of Catholic faith, and Cemetery No. 2. created in 1848. The tombs, like the city, have been reconfigured by the earthquakes that contribute to Valparaíso's distinct layout as it is constantly being reassembled. This hill provides a central lens within the city and point of juxtaposition between the city and the port. In *Double Ghosts* I used double exposures to layer images from these different plains, to collapse the city and the port, to compress the openings and closings of the city, to figure the internal and external movement through the prism of the cemetery.

I completed two versions of *Double Ghosts*, I made first version and a 35mm print for the AV Festival in March 2018, only 3 months after filming. I felt confident in the assembly and the film, but the laboratory made a mistake in the print and offered to produce a new print for me. This extra time afforded me an opportunity to rework the film audio – the image needed to remain the same but the lab agreed to add new soundtrack giving me time to work further on the mix. One of the major additions to the final version I finished in July 2018 was the additional of various voices. Rather than operate as a written narration, these were all drawn from existing recordings, from edited extracts of my interview with Valeria Sarmiento to Whatsapp voice messages recorded from filmmaker Niles Atallah (a first one offering me film stock and second recommending his friend Rodrigo as host in Chiloé) and crucially two messages about the preparation for my trip to Chile left by the curator Carolina Castro Jorquera. These messages about the arrangements for my talk at the museum are filled with details from Carolina's life. We hear her messages over the layered images of Valparaíso, adding further compression as she discusses the logistics of managing meetings across time zones. As we see images from the cemetery she describes her impatience as she waits for the birth of her first child due in less than a week.

I choose to use her messages over the telescoped images and double exposures, to add other layers to the compression of space and time. The messages were left before my trip so discuss a future visit which from the footage we see has already somewhat happened. The addition of these messages creates a composited

timeline and new series of spatio-temporal connections. These combinations are further means of figuring distance, marking time and separation between image and sound, between my visit to Chile and Ruiz's life there. My topography, like the mode 'architectural observation,' aims to render the city as a rhizomic space of lived experience connected across different terrains, latitudes, altitudes and temporalities.



Illustration 3.64: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) view up from from harbour double exposed with view down from the hills

These mappings would be further extended in material I filmed in subsequent cities after returning from Chile. For the second film in the project *Inner Sage / Outer King*, I filmed in Paris in June and Taipei in July/August 2018. I worked with the material and traces I had gathered – from documents, places, experiences and collaborators – seeking to articulate them through this new assemblage. The film proposes a model for the assembly and exhibition of these traces, to allow these various fragments to articulate and stand for themselves, to illuminate the dispersed body that constitutes the expanded constellation of the project. Rather than displaying these objects inanimately in an exhibition, this film seeks to animate, perform and articulate them in the networks.

The original script for *The Comedy of Shadows* is not just presented but read and performed, collaborators of Ruiz's are not just interviewed but cast in my film performing versions of themselves. Images from Ruiz's production are assembled into a new drama and combined with sound outtakes. Paris is a stand-in for Taipei. The Dante Cafe becomes a place to meet ghosts from the production glimpsed in photos and memories of Laha Mebow. Through such performative articulations it is my aim to expand the network of connections as a living open form, to push the expanding field of the project and follow connections across territories.



Illustration 3.65: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2019)
a shop window in Belleville, natural superimposition from the
windows reflection

In Paris I cast Ruiz's fellow compatriots Waldo Rojas and Jorge Arriagada as his stand-ins, to read from his diary. I worked with the painter Karsiu Lee to read from the script as stand-in for the director Ki. Karsiu Lee's own life is marked by exile and displacement which brought him to Paris from China, via Hong Kong and London. These figures provided new ports within a widening network. Scenes I shot in Paris reflected on these composited cities and the blurring line between localities as we shift from shadows on Paris streets, to yellow umbrellas in Taipei. The windows of the Chinese businesses in Belleville, where Ruiz lived, provided natural superimpositions, layering their displays with reflections of passersby on the street outside.

The collapsing of space was further amplified with additional double exposures and combinatory layers. In a similar way on the soundtrack, rather than explain the materials I sought to allow the fragments to play themselves, adding performative layers of fiction to help articulate these materials. In *Inner Sage / Outer King*, Karsiu Lee reads the synopsis of the film and passages from the fictional director Ki. Karsiu Lee is cast on multiple levels, as an artist in his studio preparing a new painting I would feature in my exhibition, as a collaborator of Ruiz's and as a stand-in fictional the Taiwanese director Ki. His reading of the original French script in the film introduces these entangled and fractured histories of the many actors and material it assembles.

The ability of film to create such linkages between spaces and times, to collapse distance within an image as well as through cuts, is one of the fantastic possibilities of cinema and its ontological capacity to speak to relation. This blurring of time frames and places is a way to approach a non-totalising model of history, histories of rupture and displacement. Glissant has argued that the duty of artists facing dislocated and

ruptured histories is to explore 'the past which has not yet emerged as history'¹³³ but which is obsessively present. As Glissant elaborates:

This exploration is therefore related neither to a schematic chronology nor to a nostalgic lament. It leads to the identification of a painful notion of time and its full projection forward into the future, without the help of those plateaus in time from which the West has benefited, without the help of that collective density that is the primary value of an ancestral cultural heartland. That is what I call a *prophetic vision of the past*.¹³⁴



Illustration 3.66: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) tombs in the cemeteries of Panteón hill.

¹³³ Glissant, Édouard, *Caribbean Discourse*, trans. J. Michael Dash, University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1999. p63

¹³⁴ Ibid, p64. [My italics]

3.11 Secret City



Illustration 3.67: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) double exposure between Santiago and Manila

Saturday 7 October 2017, Manila

I spent the weekend in Manila on route from Taipei to Jakarta. Third time I have visited and stayed with John and Shireen in Quezon City. Arrive to find everyone I knew either making a baby or making a movie. Or in the case of Shireen and Kiri Dalena doing both at once. Making new realities through all avenues, refusing the nihilism and death of new political regime. Shireen and John are editing together in their house. Kira back in Kidlat's flat where we stayed on our first visit to Manila, is surrounded by friends feverishly editing while preparing for upcoming trips despite her heavy pregnancy.

Merv is teased by John about his love life, looks handsome with black bandage on his arm from a bike accident. Kiri is further on in her pregnancy but in typical fashion she didn't know she was pregnant till after Shireen. She is about to fly to USA and then Colombia to work in solidarity with anti-Duterte and anti-narco war protestors before retuning via Jakarta for the biennial. I'm reminded of Kiri's excellent exhibition on Lumod tribe in the south¹³⁵ now mixed in my mind with Jessica Hagedorn's *Dream Jungle* that I just finished, the fabrication of authenticity as political tool, the manipulation and betrayals of cinema, and real people, real lives and real deaths behind them. John had a film about the Angel's Breath Flower which one can be drink in order to forget. Get airplane back to Jakarta. Few days in Manila full of energy, makes me feel lazy despite my busy summer. I made few films but no babies.

Prior to this trip I have visited Manila twice before, first for long stay in February 2016 and then again in June 2016. The first trip was utterly transformative and came at turning point in my life. While struggling to get out of a difficult family situation in Hong Kong and waiting for response to residency application in Taiwan, the artist Zi Yun Lam suggested we come to Manila and join her on her residency with Los Otros and Green Papaya. Staying with John and Shireen, meeting Merv, Peewee, Jippy, Kiri, Timmy, Enzo, Yason, Poklong and many other artists in Manila's art and film scenes gave me a new model for thinking about how to make art

¹³⁵ *There is Another Sky*, curated by Kiri Delena, 1335MABINI, Manila, April 21 – June 2016.

together and with others. We travelled up to Baguio to visit Kidlat and his son Kawayan de Guia and also south to meet with Gym Lumbera. Both trips provided roots for thinking about new ways of making work.

The second trip was in midst of difficult period in Taiwan after I cancelled first iteration of my exhibition. We had to make a break to renew visas and decided to return to Manila. We arrived to find friends gathered in the yard of Los Otros being consoled with song by a friend. Duterte had been elected since we were last in Philippines. The optimism of our previous trip evaporated as reality of his plans starting to unfold ahead of his assuming of office.

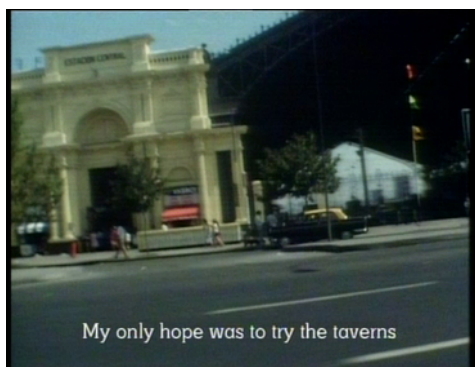


Illustration 3.68: *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (Raúl Ruiz, 1983) view of Estación Central from Av Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins



Illustration 3.69: *Google Maps Street view* of Estación Central from Av Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins, accessed 12 May 2019

One of the few largely unchanged tabernas located in central Santiago is called Wonder Bar, Santiago near the old Estación Mapocho. The bar was recommended by Niles and Cristóbal. I had visited the decadent Bar Berri in Belles Artes which is adorned with large mirrors in a neo-classical style but when I took my camera out to try film I was immediately stopped by one of the waiters who said the owner forbids it (or at least only allows it with financial agreement). Wonder Bar in contrast said it was fine to film and even when we smashed a mirror on our table no one blinked an eye.



Illustration 3.70: *Tres tristes tigres* (Raúl Ruiz, 1968) man using mirror in bar to spy on other table



Illustration 3.71: *Tres tristes tigres* (Raúl Ruiz, 1968)

The archetypal sites of Santiago's intelligentsia and cultural world were the cities many aged taverns, bars and canteens.¹³⁶ The dreamlike meandering, the blighted optimism found in the bars captured in Ruiz's early films depict a world before the military coup which no longer exists. This lost nocturnal Santiago is evoked by Ruiz's close friend the poet Waldo Rojas:

The nocturnal Santiago, with its sordid mysteries, its flat perspectives, semi-dim, viciously unlit; with its ill-restrained, unconcealed violence, compensated for all the gray appearance of the daytime Santiago. That secret city always opened on the other side of the glaucous transparency of a bar mirror. From there we returned to dawn, drunk more with words than with wine, to fall on both feet in the midst of traditionally real reality. She seemed to us, nevertheless, the original datum, the only one humanly possible, on the condition of preparing the migratory flight of the imagination. Everyday life, its massive opacity, was the inexhaustible data. And its ontological legitimacy consisted above all in imitating art. Our nocturnal forays were an evidentiary rite, officiated every night by those intended reincarnations of an impossible Leopold Bloom from both banks of the Mapocho. - Waldo Rojas¹³⁷

Are there traces in the drunken reveries that speak to a country on verge of social transformation and Leftist optimism signalled by Allende? When I had the footage I shot in the bar processed the lab told me there was a big mistake with one roll as people were upside down and backwards. When I finally saw the material I realised I had double exposed the footage by accident. Usually to create my double exposures I mark the first film frames with a cross so when I rewind and then reload it I can ensure the second exposures match the framelines of the first exposure.

With the roll I filmed in the Wonder Bar chance took over as I accidentally re-exposed a roll previously filmed in July 2017 with John and Shireen in Manila while they were editing *Nervous Translation*. Only when the film was processed did I realise that I must have not labelled the film roll and instead brought it with me from Manila and unknowingly loaded the film without rewinding it or aligning the frames. As I didn't intend to double expose this roll the film was loaded at the tail end rather than the head. The second exposure is not only out of frame alignment but also it is upside down and runs backwards to the shots filmed in Manila.

¹³⁶ Illustration 3.68 & 3.69 show view of old Estación Central as seen from Av Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins as Ruiz's narrator states it is time to search the local Taverns in order to locate his friends and find the missing book in *Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (1982). The Avenue is popularly known as La Alameda – meaning road lined with poplar trees – but its original name is in acknowledgement of Bernardo O'Higgins (1778–1842) the Chilean independence figure of Spanish and Irish descent who liberated Chile from Spanish Rule during the Chilean War of Independence and considered one of Chile's founding fathers.

¹³⁷ Rojas, Waldo. 'Raúl Ruiz: imágenes de paso', *Revista Enfoque* n°2, Summer-Fall, 1984. Reprinted *Cinechile* (blog): <https://cinechile.cl/archivos-de-prensa/raul-ruiz-imagenes-de-paso/>. English translation by Sarah Jessica Rinland, 2020



Illustration 3.72: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018)
Wonder Bar, Santiago



Illustration 3.73: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) Wonder Bar, Santiago reversed and backwards overlay with John and Shireen working in Manila

This accidental combination, the melding of Chile and Manila for this 100ft roll provides an unexplained point of rupture in *Double Ghosts*. The bar sign as seen in illustration 3.73 indicates this misalignment. Despite this unintended double exposure there are some strikingly aligned compositions between the two realities, where John and Shireen are framed in the rectangle of the mirror. My model of filming is to create records, to make poetic *documents*, with ruptures, tears and fragments that attempt to speak to the other realities. With Niles and Cristóbal in Santiago and John and Shireen in Manila, the sequence brings together filmmakers from across the Pacific. On the soundtrack I used a song from Ruiz's film *Palomita blanca/Little White Dove*, a delayed snapshot of Chilean youth culture filmed in 1973 presumed lost during the dictatorship and only released in 1992. Based on the successful 1971 novel by Enrique Lafourcade, Ruiz described the project to Benoit Peeters in 1987 as follows:

There was a novel whose action took place just before Allende came to power: a kind of *Romeo and Juliet* story between a boy from the rich area and a girl from the poor sector. The book, written by Enrique Lafourcade, a very right-wing novelist, had enjoyed huge success in Chile; it had sold, if I remember correctly, a million copies ... So certain members of the Socialist Party had the somewhat ridiculous idea of adapting this novel – which the entire left had criticised – to the screen, in the hope of making a film that would be a success and make money for the Revolution. It was a curious mix of bad faith and naïveté.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Raúl Ruiz and Benoit Peeters 1987, 'Palomita Blanca'. Rouge, Accessed 30 April 2019.
http://www.rouge.com.au/2/palomita_blanca.html.

The film finished shooting on Raúl's thirty second birthday on 25 July 1973, despite only having colour grading left to do, the film was not released for many years due to the military coup in September that year.¹³⁹ The film had a soundtrack by the band Los Jaivas who become famous for their progressive rock music and beach parties in Viña del Mar. Following the military coup they took refuge in Argentina and then France. Over the sequence I filmed at Wonder Bar you can hear the theme music for *Palomita blanca* complete with noise and distortion from the old copy of the film I was able to find.¹⁴⁰ The 1972 film and record were made to capture a popular youth market that never materialised, it is an insight into a secret city, a parallel interrupted reality.

Wednesday 8 June 2016, Taipei

Arrive back in Taipei from Manila to get message from Luke Fowler telling me that Peter Hutton has been undergoing chemotherapy for Lung Cancer. I'm reminded of the week we spent together in Yorkshire filming and realise I never told Peter how inspiring it was to spend that time with him and how much he has been on my mind since filming in Taiwan and Philippines. I write to him:

Despite the rain and bad weather I cherish the time we spent together filming with Luke in Yorkshire and think of that whenever I go home. I left my job at Tate at the start of the year and been focusing on my own film work. You have been in my thoughts as I've been working on project in Taiwan and traveling in South East Asia so also filming in Bangkok and Philippines and thinking about *Images of Asian Music*.¹⁴¹ I don't think my time has been as salty as your adventures here but trying to think through how to film in different landscapes and between different places.

He writes back later that day:

Oh George So good to hear from you, lucky duck, wish I was w/ you watching figures walking through the S Asian landscape, such a nice rhythm, off the grid....enjoy and absorb the different sense of time. I loved our time together, I remember being a bit frustrated with finding images and hope I was not too grumpy with you and luke. I'm really good today, started Chemo yesterday in NY at Albert Einstein Hospital, sort of the "peoples" hospital in the Bronx but w/ first class oncologist from Budapest. Just making a potato Leek soup, Amazing how blessed I feel to have so many amazing friends, really. Please stay in touch I'm so happy to hear from you and want to know more about your Eyemo, you are a real trooper George
Much love Peter

¹³⁹ 'After Pinochet came to power, the film was held up for a long time. Not really for political reasons, at least not officially, but rather because of details: some language, a bed scene...' Raúl Ruiz and Benoît Peeters 1987, 'Palomita Blanca'. Rouge, Accessed 30 April 2019. http://www.rouge.com.au/2/palomita_blanca.html.

¹⁴⁰ The music is the 'Tema de los Títulos / Title Theme' which is the first track from the LP, released in 1992

¹⁴¹ The filmmaker Peter Hutton enlisted in the merchant marines when in 1962 when he was just 18 years old. He spent the next 15 years travelling extensively laying foundation for a celebrated body of 20 silent 16mm films made around the world between 1970 to 2013. His silent 16mm film *Images of Asian Music (A Diary of Live 1973-74)* (1974) was made with a Bolex camera while he was living in Thailand working while a sailor across South East Asia.

Friday 10 June 2016, Taipei

I send Peter some images from Eyemo footage, still from shoot in Batangas in Philippines with Gym, and Zi Yun and in rice farmers in Tainan.

Oh so good to see your images George. Small increments of time and micro details are becoming so revelatory to me today. There's a cool wind blowing across the Hudson river from the west. I'm taking small steps today Please send me whatever you like. I can feel the heat and humidity in your images too, it's warming. P

Luke says signs looked good for Peter after first round of treatment but later that month news comes that Peter died on Saturday June 25, 2016 in Poughkeepsie, N.Y.



Illustration 3.74: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018)

3.12 Better things to do than search for books

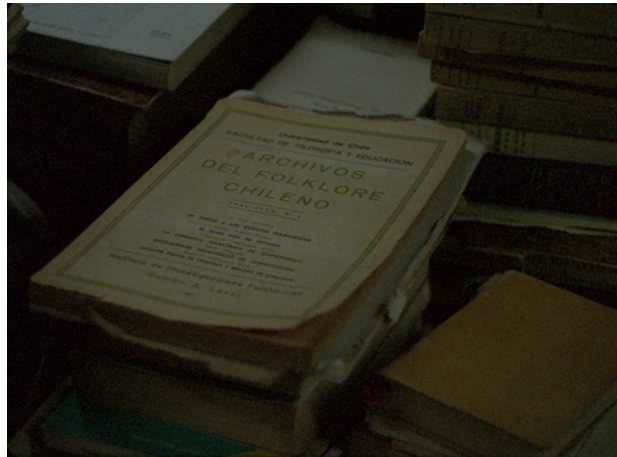


Illustration 3.75: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) scenes from Libros El Cid, glimpse of book *Archivos del Folklore Chileno* Issue. 8, Universidad de Chile, 1957.

The mirror is an instrument of travel, creating gaps between encounter and memory, giving shape to absence, it is an instrument of displacement. This means to figure absence and space once occupied enables a distinct comparative model, the ability to look at things side by side to see their difference. The sites chosen for *Double Ghosts* follow this strategy of comparison, not looking to find original sites or exact spaces from the past but rather to understand the particular images and experiences explored by means of proximity and comparison. The second hand bookshop Libros El Cid in Bellas Artes area of Santiago provided a place to find such traces of the past.



Illustration 3.76: *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (Raúl Ruiz, 1983)

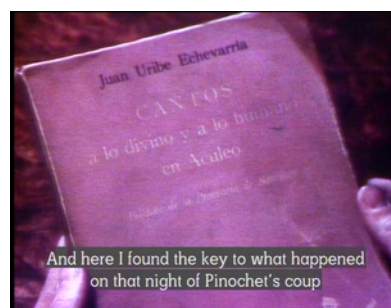


Illustration 3.77: *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (Raúl Ruiz, 1983)

Central to the search for what has been displaced in *Double Ghosts* are strategies to reclaim and understand reality as composite assemblages of images of passage, not just guides or maps but material drawn from

fictions, dreams and chance encounters. What is figured across the seven sites in *Double Ghosts* is negative space, the absence of Ruiz, of Taiwan, of *The Comedy of Shadows*, of myself, of history, of images, of socialist movements and anti-colonial struggle. These absences have a form which the strategies and modes of filming have been attempts to map. As Smithson's states at the end of *Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan*, it is now only 'the dimension of absence that remains to be found. The expunged color that remains to be seen.'¹⁴²



Illustration 3.79: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) Libros 'El Cid' Santiago



Illustration 3.78: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) 'Chiloé Mitológico' found in window of 'El Cid' bookshop

Ruiz's first return to Chile in 1983 was guided by a search an expunged colour. For Ruiz this absence was represented by a missing pink book from his shelves providing a key to understanding what happened on the night of the coup on 11 September 1973. He eventually finds the missing pink book, *Cantos a lo divino y a lo humano en Aculeo- folklore de la provincia de Santiago* an anthology of Santiago folk songs by musicologist Juan Uribe Echevarria. In following his search for a missing book I found a parallel text, the folk anthology with a prominent pink cover, Bernardo Quintana Mansilla's *Chiloé Mitológica*. The book provides a key to the mythology that has informed much of Ruiz's work. Here we have another displacement, of Santiago by Chiloé, of one pink book for another. Further journeys in series of adaptations and exchanges, of substitutions and crossed paths that have guided *Double Ghosts*. Juan Uribe Echevarria and Bernardo Quintana Mansilla's books are archives, anthologies which preserve and allow future combinations to be made as they are animated in new contexts and within new networks of relation. I will explore now how such archives – books, diaries, scripts as well as films, art works, landscapes and sites – can be articulated in new combinations, helping to fill in absences and expunged colours.

¹⁴² Smithson, Robert, 'Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan' In: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. University of California Press, 1996 p230

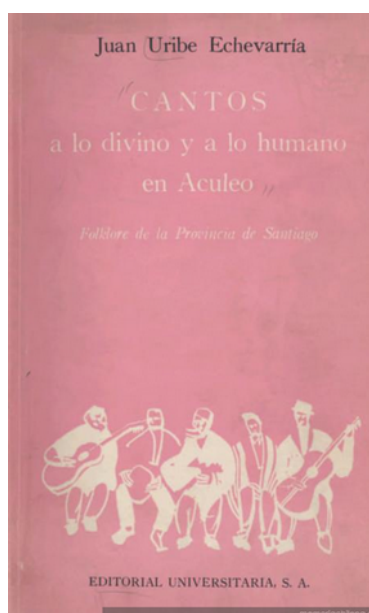


Illustration 3.80: *Cantos a lo divino y a lo humano en Aculeo - folklore de la provincia de Santiago* by Juan Uribe Echevarría, 1962

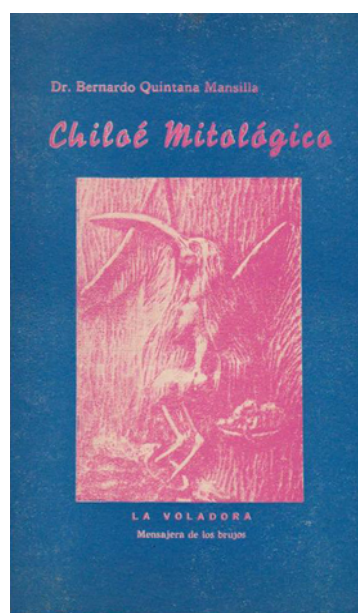


Illustration 3.81: *Chiloé Mitológico* by Dr Bernardo Quintana Mansilla, 1972

During filming in Chile I was able to fill in other gaps in my understanding of *The Comedy of Shadows* in particular with two texts; the diaries of Ruiz and the original script for the film. In Taiwan the photographs and videotape from the shoot by Laha Mebow constituted additional key archives. *Inner Sage / Outer King* draws on these archives and seeks to animate them in new combinations. The title of the film is drawn from Ruiz's diaries where he suggests it as a potential title, in various languages, for *The Comedy of Shadows*:

In one moment I fall into the expression (in English) *inner sage / outer king*. In this dichotomy the maximum aspiration would be contained (philosophy doesn't search to know, it searches for happiness). Suddenly I realize that that could be the title of the film: *The Inner Sage and the Outer King* or *The Secret Sage and the Visible King*. In French: *Le sage caché et le roi visible* or *Le sage nocturne et le roi solaire*. - Raúl Ruiz, Wednesday, March 8th, 1995¹⁴³

These nonhuman elements are cast in new combinations with human actors as means to articulate them in new assemblages, shifting between languages and states of being, from texts read out and seen on screen, to photographs rephotographed, video material transferred to 2K, and sound recordings brought into new configurations. In these articulations it was important to follow the specifics of the actors, to give them space

¹⁴³ Ruiz Diaries, 'Wednesday, February 16th, 1994'. Translated by Jaime Grijalba, TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/wednesday-march-8th-1995>

to create and forge new allegiances and connections which would be further compounded in exhibitions connected with the project which in turn would put these nonhuman actors into new relations.

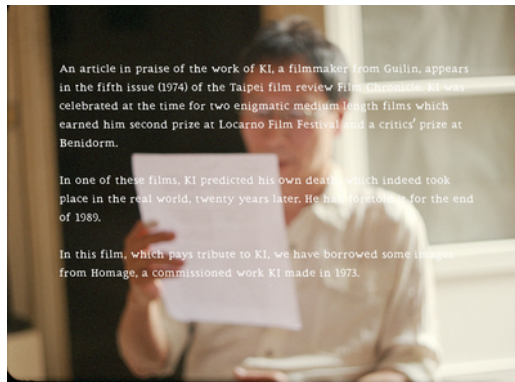


Illustration 3.82: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2019) Karsui Lee reading from the script for *The Comedy of Shadows*



Illustration 3.83: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2019) Laha Mebow with her negatives taken on set of *The Comedy of Shadows*

As well as these more familiar objects I want to consider more intangible, distributed archives and explore how the topography itself operates as an archive. The Rio Mapocho river from the Andes to the north, bisects Santiago and joins the Maipo River leading to the Pacific Ocean. It is a meeting place for distant landscapes as well as for the city's residents. The river, its banks and bridges have an important role as a public space that is open and accessible, can be traversed by numerous people as can be seen in the main cross roads of the Puente Purisima bridge or the Los Carros pedestrian bridge in the centre of Santiago.



Illustration 3.84: C.A.D.A. *NO+* (*No More*) (photography) 1983-89, Santiago, Chile, art action on side of Río Mapocho, Santiago



Illustration 3.85: C.A.D.A. *NO+* (*No More*) (video still) 1983-89, Santiago, Chile

The fast flowing river, with its rich brown water, marks the central point of Chile. It has a symbolic value and has been a site of various protests and actions. In particular the No+ movement developed throughout the 1980s in opposition to Pinochet's military government was launched through actions on the bank of the Rio

Mapocho in central Santiago. Some of the actions initiated by CADA are documented in both video and photography in the project *No+* (1983-89) as can be seen in Illustration 3.84 & 3.85.

The river is traversed by several bridges including the Los Carros pedestrian footbridge as seen in both CADA's *No +* documentation and Ruiz's *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (1983). The bridge in this film connects the centre of Santiago to a market that has since been redeveloped changing the view as seen in the Ruiz and CADA films. For *Double Ghosts* I filmed on the adjacent Puente Purisima bridge a little further east. Here on the bridge the shards of the broken mirror were thrown into the flowing river, distributing this shattered body.



Illustration 3.86: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) at Río Mapocho which divides Santiago



Illustration 3.87: *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (Raúl Ruiz, 1983)

The disposal of a broken mirror in a river is one means to diminish the bad luck. The power of broken mirrors can be traced back to the Roman period where the belief that breaking a mirror resulted in seven years bad luck is thought to originate (seven years being the amount of time Roman's believed it took the body to replenish all its cells). In Chinese folklore, the mirror has long been held with a similar superstitious reverence and symbolic power. As N.B. Dennys, the British editor of China Mail in Hong Kong 1864-1876, observed at the end of 19th Century: 'When a looking glass is broken it is an omen that the party to whom it belongs will lose his best friend. [...] This belief exists in full force in China. To break a mirror augurs a separation from one's wife by death.'¹⁴⁴

Rituals exist in many cultures for ways to mitigate the bad luck of a broken mirror. The image in the mirror is often regarded as the essence or soul of a person so to avoid damage from a broken image, there are ways to reduce or dissipate the possessive potential of the broken shards. Rituals to protect yourself from bad luck include burying the shards in the earth in the moonlight, grinding the fragments down so none of the pieces

¹⁴⁴ Dennys, N.B. 'The folklore of China,' *The China Review, Or, Notes and Queries on the Far East*. Vol. IV, July, 1875- June, 1876. p9.

can reflect or capture your image, lighting seven candles and then blowing them out in one single breath at midnight or placing the fragments upside down on gravestone so the bad luck is transferred to the soul buried below.

In China there is a belief that a mirror holds a strong connection to its owners life, leading to cases when a mirror is used to 'form the head of a sort of figure made of one of the sick man's coats which, suspended to a bamboo [pole] with the end leaves still on it, is carried about in the vicinity of the house in the hope of attracting the departing soul back to its body.'¹⁴⁵ The mirror is a talisman, which can both steal a soul, threaten mortality but also can be used to bring back those who are lost or departed.

In ancient China bronze mirrors were seen as a symbol of love, when a lover died a bronze mirror would be broken and half buried with each party until they could be reunited. Early examples of such broken mirrors have been in burial sites in Ezhou City in Hubei province dating back to the early Six Dynasties (220–589CE). This is connected to popular phrase to describe separated lovers *A Broken Mirror Joined Together/ 破鏡重圓* that is said to have derived *Stories in Verse (Ben Shi Shi)*, a collection of novellas compiled by Meng Q during the Tang Dynasty (618–907CE).¹⁴⁶ There is a famous story of husband and wife forced to part ways who were eventually reunited with a broken mirror. During the chaos of the collapse of the state of Chen a princess and her husband break a bronze mirror in two and vowed to find each other in the future using the mirror to reunite themselves. The wife is taken as a concubine and unable to be make it to a rendezvous agreed with her husband. Her husband manages to meet with her servant and writes a message on the broken mirror which is taken to his imprisoned wife. This mirror is seen as sign of their true and inseparable love and convinces her captor that he would never win her heart and he helps the couple be reunited.

The American essayist Rebecca Solnit reflects that a 'happy love is a single story, a disintegrating one is two or more competing, conflicting versions, and a disintegrating one lies at your feet like a shattered mirror, each shard reflecting a different story.'¹⁴⁷ Facing this disintegration, Solnit describes the struggle to fit such shattered fragments and stories back together. Some pieces are too broken, the body is too dispersed to be reassembled. While the whole and the absence may not be rebuilt, the assembled actors, archives, landscapes and friends can be means of reassembly.

The past may not be reconstituted but as I have tried to illuminate, the past is not a destination but a means

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Zheng, Jian. 'A Broken Mirror Joined Together (破鏡重圓)Pò Jìng Chóng Yuán', The Epoch Times, Singapore, Accessed: 11 January 2019. <https://epochtimes.today/a-broken-mirror-joined-together-破鏡重圓-po-jing-chong-yuan/>.

¹⁴⁷ Solnit, Rebecca. *A Field Guide To Getting Lost*. Canongate Books, 2010. p136

to look to and imagine possible futures. Mirrors are archives that exist in relation. As Solnit argues '[p]eople close to you become mirrors and journals in which you record your history, the instruments that help you know yourself and remember yourself and you do the same for them.'¹⁴⁸



Illustration 3.88: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) mirror fragments washed in the Rio Mapocho

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

3.13 Images of Passage: Bridging Chile and Taiwan



Illustration 3.89: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) Niles Atallah holding mirror in Cementerio Católico Recoleta, Santiago

Across the sites in *Double Ghosts* points of entry and exit are multiplied through the insertion of mirrors into the visual field. This superposition, the insertion of one image into another, figures throughout the film to introduce unresolved images, to give fragments a body by capturing the special being of mirror images. These images have a spectral quality, referring to an elsewhere, a place outside of the frame, outside of the film, outside of the living. These mirror images are displaced both in spatial terms – outside of specific locations – as well as outside in temporal terms – outside of the present moment of the film. The elsewhere I figure through such imaging strategies, seeks to comprehend the non-visible at the same time as it shows the entanglement of different states of being.

Exile as we have seen is a form of state sanctioned alienation, which is doubly violent as it affects those who leave but also those who cannot. Yet it is only possible to be in exile if there is somewhere to be exiled from. The poor images of political cinema bare the marks of trauma they at times fail to show, but as Steyerl argues, '[t]heir poverty is not a lack, but an additional layer of information, which is not about content but form.'¹⁴⁹

The final location I filmed at in Chile brings us back to one of the project's obsessional images, that of the cemetery. Ruiz filmed the majority of *A TV Dante* in and around Santiago with principle scenes taking place in a city cemetery. I had managed to identify it as the Cementerio Catolico Recoleta by talking with workers at the cities other cemeteries, after showing them pictures from the film they pointed me to Recoleta. Since

¹⁴⁹ Steyerl, Hito, and Franco Berardi. *The Wretched of the Screen*. Sternberg Press, 2012. p156

he filmed there in 1991 the cemetery has been developed and the site where Ruiz filmed has become a new private crematorium and extensively remodelled. The older parts of the cemetery still exist and traces of the architecture found in Ruiz's film can be seen.



Illustration 3.90: *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, 1991) former Cementerio Catolico Recoleta gates, now demolished



Illustration 3.91: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) Cemetery walls in Cementerio Catolico Recoleta



Illustration 3.92: *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, 1991)

Together with Niles Atallah I visited in the cemetery in December 2017, it was the beginning of summer when I filmed whereas it is clear Ruiz filmed there in the autumn as can be seen by the bare trees and fallen leaves. In the summer the cemetery is alive with flowers. Deep amongst the tombs I found an explosion of pink flowers which are on verge of overtaking one forgotten corner of the cemetery. Throughout the locations in which I filmed I was confronted with vivid reality resisting the morbid traces I thought I was looking for. The rich flowers punctuated the cemetery providing a bridge between fractured realities. Compared to the muted, poor images through which Ruiz was able to capture Chile on his return in 1983 and 1990, I was struck by the vivid light and colours I encountered, the summer heat gave the landscapes an unreal quality, from the pink or bright yellow of flowers blooming in various locations, the vivid blood red of the butchered lamb and deep blue of the waters around Chiloé. These pink flowers provided a point of rupture between the past and the present. They would provide the site for the final action, the breaking of the seventh mirror.



Illustration 3.92: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) Valparaíso cemetery flowers



Illustration 3.94: *Lettre d'un cinéaste ou Le Retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (Raúl Ruiz, 1983)



Illustration 3.95: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018)

In this final section, the separation of spaces and times, already eroded with double exposures and other layerings, gives way and the film is transported to Chin Pao San cemetery in Taiwan. The mirror here is the final portal, when broken it collapses and bridges these terrains. As we hear the sound of distant bells (sampled from *A TV Dante*) we are connected to a new reality. The final sequence of *Double Ghosts* is actually the first sequence I filmed. As the film jumps from Chile to Taiwan it brings the viewer to the very cemetery where Ruiz filmed *The Comedy of Shadows* in 1995. I will explore this shift through focusing on the evening of 19 August 2018, seven years to the day from the death of Raúl Ruiz, 37 years since my birth and the day of the world premiere of the final version of *Double Ghosts*.

On 19 August 2018 assembled in Chin Pao San in the dark is a living audience yet they are far outnumbered by the dead. Gathered in the centre of Chin Pao San is Mr. Lin/林源樹 and his son to project the 35mm print of *Double Ghosts* on a red rimmed screen suspended between under two Banyan Trees native to this Pacific island.



Illustration 3.96: *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, 1991) bell ringing, scene from where sound sample is taken



Illustration 3.97: *Double Ghosts* (George Clark, 2018) first image after leap to Chin Pao San

The living audience had been brought by coach from Taipei. They met at TCAC in the rain and drove into the night out of Taipei towards the coast in the north. Assembled around the screen after the short blessing film was projected they were shifted to Chile and only after the seven sections I have outlined above are they returned to Taiwan and the location in which they were sitting. As the images from Chin Pao San – the trees, gardens, rows of tombs and sculptures – are projected onto the screen, they are shown images made in the non-visible cemetery all around them.

In his text *Errantry, Exile*, Glissant provides a defence of movement and its narration as a central facet of his

concept of relation. The movements I have described in the making of the three films – *Double Ghosts*, *Inner Sage / Outer King* and *A Mountain Inside A Cave* – follow a model of movement in time and space against stasis, hegemony and abandonment. These are movements in relation. As Glissant elaborates '[e]rrantry, therefore, does not proceed from renunciation nor from frustration regarding a supposedly deteriorated (deterritorialized) situation of origin; it is not a resolute act of rejection or an uncontrolled impulse of abandonment. Sometimes' Glissant points out 'taking up the problems of the Other, it is possible to find oneself.'¹⁵⁰

In *A Mountain Inside a Cave* I documented a final superimposition; the preparation and projection onto the cemetery of an elsewhere. The projection of *Double Ghosts*, like the films final leap from Recoleta cemetery to Chin Pao San cemetery, connects one map, one trace, to another. *A Mountain Inside a Cave* presents the preparation for the screening, the assembly and testing of equipment, the dead time waiting for darkness, eating food and the final nocturnal images of people arriving from Taipei. The film proposes to document and reveal the event but as the film projection begins the film disappears. It has facilitated a transportation and given us a means to imagine the images to come, the place we cannot see and the ghosts all around us.

The finding of oneself that Glissant alludes too is not that of fixed or static identity but 'is very much the image of the rhizome, prompting the knowledge that identity is no longer completely within the root but also in Relation. Because the thought of errantry is also the thought of what is relative, the thing relayed as well as the thing related. The thought of errantry is a poetics, which always infers that at some moment it is told. The tale of errantry is the tale of Relation.'¹⁵¹ The only thing left for the film to do is to offer blessings on the assembled human and nonhuman bodies who have been assembled for these tales, '合境平安 / Peace for everyone and everything.'

¹⁵⁰ Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997. p18

¹⁵¹ Ibid p.18



Illustration 3.98: *A Mountain Inside A Cave* (George Clark, 2019) Projectionist Mr. Lin/林源樹 ready to project *Double Ghosts* in Chin Pao San, 19 August 2018

4: CONSTELLATION

4.1 A glittering canopy

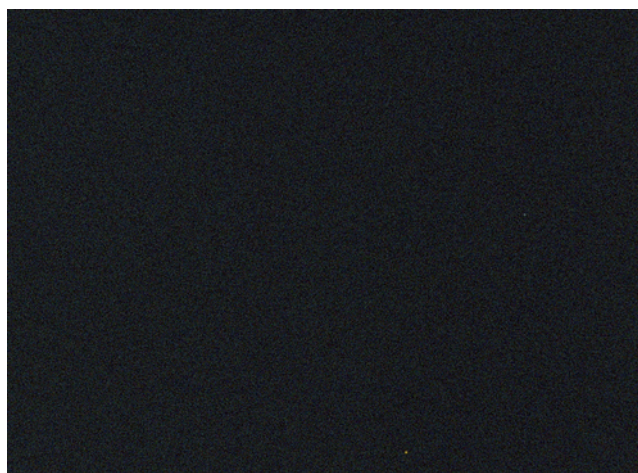


Illustration 4.1: *Eyemo Roll #105* (George Clark, May 2016). Meiling Scenic Area, Nanxi District, Taiwan. 35mm frame enlargement

Popularly described as twinkling stars in the wilderness, fireflies used to be seen in abundance across Taiwan. Their luminous presence has drastically diminished in the 21st Century due to wide spread urbanisation, habitat disturbance, artificial light and air pollution.¹ Recent years has seen attempts to reestablish the dwindling populations with some tentative success. In remote areas with cleaner air condition they can be seen especially in April and May I have attempted to film fireflies in Taiwan on several occasions, one time in Green Island and once again in Meiling mountain area near Tainan.

While processing footage at the Modern Cinema Laboratory/現代電影 in Taipei the technician told me there was one roll with no images at all. 'I must have not shot it' I thought. But later I realised this could be the firefly roll and asked them to scan it for me. There screen was almost entirely black apart from the dark swirling grain of the old 35mm film stock and occasional flash frames between shots. Watching the footage closely with the lab technician we suddenly spotted an unmistakeable floating luminescence. We were ecstatic about the sighting of a firefly in what we had thought was unexposed film. Looking back at the footage now I am unsure if I actually captured one of the twinkling stars or if it is only an aberration in the emulsion, a stray dirt particle that had scratched the old stock. There is no way to know for sure. But the footage exists in a chain of relations, visible or not this is my film of a firefly. I know where I shot it and when, I remember the thick hot air, the heavy walk up increasingly small stone steps into the mountainside, the

¹ Recent research shows this is a global trend, see: Sara M Lewis, Choong Hay Wong, Avalon C S Owens, Candace Fallon, Sarina Jepsen, Anchana Thancharoen, Chiahsiung Wu, Raphael De Cock, Martin Novák, Tania López-Palafox, Veronica Khoo, J Michael Reed, 'A Global Perspective on Firefly Extinction Threats', *BioScience*, Volume 70, Issue 2, February 2020, Pages 157–167 <https://doi.org/10.1093/biosci/biz157>

dark humid night, the smell of the forest teeming with life and the pulses of passing fireflies darting in and out of the undergrowth.

Each of the chapters has explored different relationships – the assemblage of human and non-human materials in *1: Fragment*, the echoes of history and haunting presences in *2: Projections* and the properties of space and territory in *3: Cemetery*. Using notion of *Constellation* in this final chapter I will explore the shapes created by the various iterations of the project. Constellations are instruments of perception and interpretation, shapes based on distributed elements. As such they are crucial means of seeing, not the absence of matter but chains of connections spanning vast fields of space and time.

In the memorable opening of *Under Three Flags*, Benedict Anderson introduces his book, which he called an experiment in *political astronomy*, as follows:

If one looks up at the moonless, dry-season, tropical night sky, one sees a glittering canopy of stationary stars, connected by nothing but darkness visible and the imagination. The serene beauty is so immense that it takes an effort of will to remind oneself that these stars are actually in perpetual, frantic motion, impelled hither and yon by the invisible power of the gravitational fields of which they are ineluctable, active parts.²

This image is a rich evocation of perspective aligned to the global south. Under such tropical skies Anderson goes to explore the movement of southern modernity, global networks linking anti-colonial struggles across Asia and the Americas. His phrase *darkness visible* speaks to the Yana Phuyu or 'dark cloud'³ constellations of ancient and present day Quechua people in Peru. Recorded since the ancient Inca empire, these constellations, taking animal or plant form, are drawn from the dark shapes in the star filled Milky Way formed by clouds of interstellar dust. Such constellations of *darkness visible* have been observed across the global south noted by communities from South America to Australian aboriginal populations, from sub-Saharan Africa to the Indonesian island of Java.⁴

² Anderson, Benedict. *Under Three Flags: Anarchism and the Anti-Colonial Imagination*. Verso, 2005. p1

³ 'The word *yana* is sometimes translated as "black". However in the Quechua conception of light or color [sic] classifications, yana is thought of as "dark" (or "obscure") in opposition to "light," rather than as black opposed to white.' - Urton, Gary. *At the Crossroads of the Earth and the Sky: An Andean Cosmology*. University of Texas Press, 2013 p109

⁴ As Gary Urton notes: "Dark cloud constellations have been described elsewhere in South America (Claude Lévi-Strauss 1973: 134-135 and 1978: 110-111; Nimuendajú 1948:265; Reichel-Dolmatoff 1975:155; Tasevin 1925:182, 191 and Weiss 1972:160) among Australian aboriginal populations (Maegraith 1932 and Mountford 1978:59), in Africa (Lagecrantz 1952) and in Java (Antonie Pannekoek, *A History of Astronomy*, 1929:51-55 and Stein Callenfels 1931)." - Ibid.

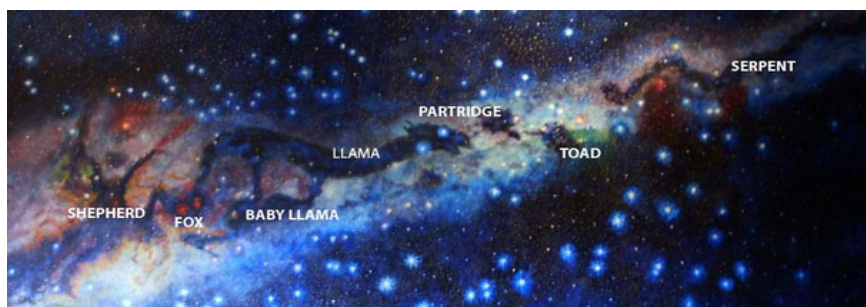


Illustration 4.2: This image shows some of the dark constellations of the 'Mayu' (Milky Way) identified by the Incas and the animal after which they were named. Image from Koricancha Sun Temple/Cusco

Constellations are fundamental to the way many people have understood their place on the earth and their navigation across it. In his first diary entry, dated 21st November 1993, Raúl Ruiz states his reasons for starting this record, to be able to 'see what happens when one goes back in a moment of day and to *calendar* (Milanese verb) hour by hour.'⁵ This reflective process is one of the ways we can start to understand relationships across space and time. The dates and places in which I filmed have become increasingly important to understanding, navigating and reflecting on my practice and my life distributed across various continents. The parallel activities of writing, reading, filming, viewing and art making all build constellations of relation, seeking to render and work with the *barely visible*.

The montage that has unfolded across this text is designed to forge series of relations, creating *circulating references* to borrow Bruno Latour's term⁶, amongst a diverse cast of elements. In this chapter I will explore how this reflective practice can be understood as part of ongoing and expanding field. To understand the cosmos we need to find ways for the world to become knowable. It's been my attempt throughout this project to explore an open model of working, in this final chapter I intend to pull back and show how I have attempted to navigate the assembled parties and avoid them collapsing in an unruly mess.

'For the world to become knowable' Latour argues 'it must become a laboratory.'⁷ The laboratory for our purposes is a construct that enables the establishment linkages, of circulating reference, chains of relation. He illustrates this through a field trip in which he observes the linkages between the soil of an Amazon forest and the Parisian lab of pedologists he has shadowed. What he observes is the process of 'articulation,' supporting the connection between human and non-human actors. Articulation, as Latour states is 'in no way

⁵ Ruiz Diaries, translated by Jaime Grijalba. TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019.
<https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/sunday-november-21st-1993-hello-everyone>

⁶ Latour, Bruno, 'Circulating Reference: Sampling the Soil in the Amazon Forest' In: *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*, Harvard University Press, 1999, pp24-79

⁷ Ibid, p43

limited to language and may be applied not only to words but also to gestures, papers, settings, instruments, sites, trials.⁸ It is through such gestures that the world can become knowable. To be knowable is to be visible, '[i]f virgin forest is to be transformed into a laboratory, the forest must be prepared to be rendered as a diagram.'⁹

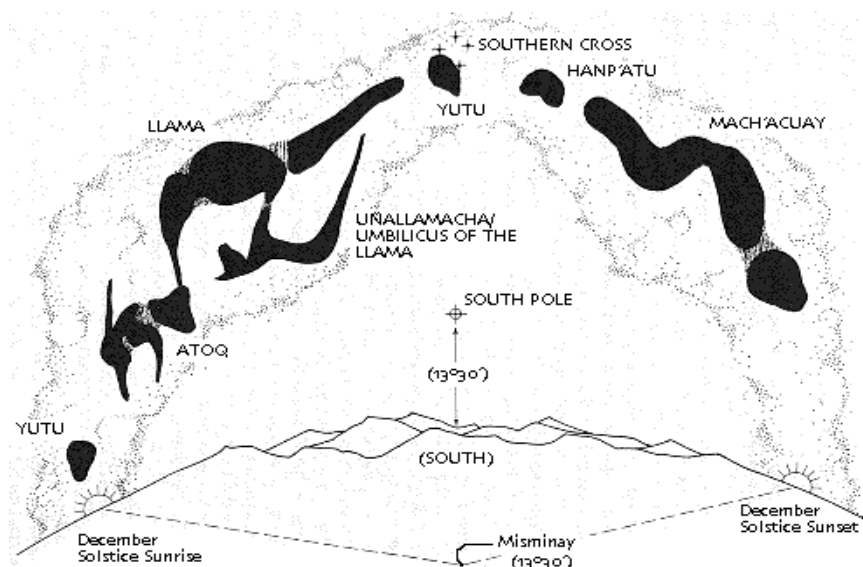


Illustration 4.3: Yana phuyu or 'dark cloud' constellation diagram. Image from wikicommons

With these tools we can explore means of articulation, of forming constellations. The collection and movement of matter from the forest to the laboratory Latour argues, facilitates the creation of previously unavailable assemblages, through montage and reference. As he elaborates, it is '[h]ardly surprising, then, that in the calm and cool office the botanist who patiently arranges the leaves is able to discern emerging patterns that no predecessor could see. The contrary would be much more surprising. Innovations in knowledge naturally emerge from the collection deployed on the table (Eisenstein 1979). In the forest, in the same world but with all of its trees, plants, roots, soil, and worms, the botanist could not calmly arrange the pieces of her jigsaw puzzle on her card table. Scattered through time and space, these leaves would never have met without her redistributing their traits into new combinations.'¹⁰

It is these *new combinations* I am interested in. Here in the final chapter I aim to bring these assembled fragments, work and material into new relief. Drawing on the various iterations of the project I intend to explore broader constellations that can be discerned. Rather than seeking a definitive a single iteration of the

⁸ Ibid, p142

⁹ Ibid, p43

¹⁰ Ibid, p38

project, the route I have perused has been to develop successive configurations which exist as part of an expanding field of articulation across space and time.

In the following section I will explore, the combinations which have informed the work on my films, performances and exhibitions. This section will move between explorations of the constellations mapped by the project, the position of the 'I' as it is figured in art and literature as well as the central movements between Chile and Taiwan. How the artist as exile is figured in the work and theories of Raúl Ruiz and Chang-ta Tzu as propositions for understanding a chaotic world. Following minor narratives proposed by the painter Karsiu Lee/李加兆 and filmmaker Laha Mebow/陳潔瑤, I will work through some of the other stories brought up by the project. The chapter will unpack some of the underlying but essential positioning, solidarities and alignments along the way.

But first a detour through autofiction and the constellations of the self. In drawing these human and nonhuman actors into new configurations, it is my intention in this chapter to outline my processes of articulation, the means of working and giving voice to a wide array of actors I have worked with. In this I hope to shift the model of practice from focus on creation or discovery to a model aligned to constellation and cosmic assemblage. As Latour argues '[w]e speak *because* the propositions of the world are themselves articulated, not the other way around.'¹¹

¹¹ Ibid, p144

4.2 Wandering on the Way

Wednesday 16 January 2019, London

Arrive back in London and stay at Grove Dwellings for a few days. Went to Prince Charles for a screening of *City of Sadness*/悲情城市 on 35mm. A Chinese student recently asked me how I can teach Taiwanese cinema without knowing the language. It's a good point but then watching this film I am reminded that Taiwan is made up than more than one language. The first thing we hear in the film is Emperor Hirohito's surrender broadcast in Japanese followed by a tapestry of languages and forms of communication from Mandarin, Shanghainese, Cantonese and Taiwanese Hokkien as well hand written letters, sign language and photography.

Before heading up to Newcastle I pick up Maggie Nelson's *Bluets*, it's sitting on top of a pile of books precariously balanced in the upturned table top in the hallway. (Maybe it's Ben's copy or maybe Phoebe's?) I start to read it on route up to Newcastle. End up using passages in the RSVP workshop led by Giles Bailey as one of 'resources' to improvise around following Anna and Lawrence Halprin's method¹². Harriet Plewis sighs when tell her I'm reading it, we are both overcoming break-ups.

On reading Sei Shōnagon ancient account of the Festival of Blue Horses, where 'twenty-one glorious gray-blue horses' are paraded for the Emperor, Nelson writes 'I feel at once the need to die and be reborn one thousand years ago, so as to see this parade for myself. But here we are in great danger – the danger of being jealous of the blues of other, or of blues of times past. For a while one may repeatedly insist that all one wants is to be satisfied and happy, the truth is that one can often find oneself clinging to samsara with a vengeance.'¹³

Samsāra is sanskrit word interpreted as 'wandering',¹⁴ in Buddhism it is linked to mode of existence of endless becoming, a cycle of aimless drifting and mundane existence. I have to be careful.

Friday 15 February 2019, London

Reading *I Love Dick*. Amidst the novels many letters and personal reflections, Kraus recounts the struggles to make her film *Gravity & Grace* (interesting parallel reading to Ruiz's production diaries). Born in USA, Kraus spent her teenage years and early adulthood in New Zealand after her parents applied for the Assisted Passage scheme. As she recently recalled, while in Auckland for a literary festival, 'my parents were having a hard time with uncovered medical expenses for my sister. And they'd always dreamed of New Zealand as a kind of social-democratic paradise. So they applied, and they were accepted. They emigrated when they were already in their 40s, which was a very brave thing, because at that time there was no going back.'¹⁵

Kraus studied at University of Victoria in Wellington and worked as a journalist before moving to New York at 21. She returned to New Zealand to film *Gravity & Grace* in the mid-1990s. I am reminded of Joanna Margaret Paul, by the fragmentation and abstraction in Kraus, the oblique strategies she employs to describe parts of her life while hiding other parts ('people always talk about *I Love Dick* being so revealing and

¹² Halprin, Lawrence, *The RSVP Cycles: Creative Processes in the Human Environment*. G. Braziller, 1970

¹³ Nelson, Maggie. *Bluets*. Random House, 2017, p49-50

¹⁴ Juergensmeyer, Mark, and Wade Clark Roof. *Encyclopedia of Global Religion*. SAGE Publications, 2011. p 271-272

¹⁵ Walker, Holly. 'Auckland Writers Festival: Holly Walker Interviews I Love Dick Author Chris Kraus'. *The Spinoff* (blog), 9 May 2017. <https://thespinoff.co.nz/books/09-05-2017/auckland-writers-festival-holly-walker-reviews-i-love-dick-author-chris-kraus/>.

confessional, but it never seemed that personal to me.’¹⁶) In her book Kraus quotes the Arabic word ‘Maktub’ which she translates as ‘it is written.’¹⁷ From this she gives the following instruction: ‘Write a narrative in which the speaker starts to understand that events, as they happen in her/his life, can be seen not as surprises but as an uncovering – the systematic revelation of fate.’¹⁸

As the book progresses it goes back again and again to New Zealand, recounting meetings with exacting detail, grounding the encounters in a reality which needs fixing, from the precise intersections where she met friends to hilltops visited in an unseasonably hot January. Fragments and reflections on Aro Street (‘“Aro” means ‘love’ in Maori”¹⁹), Taranaki Street (‘Some years guide ropes were installed downtown so that the city’s lighter residents would not be swept away: thin people in oilskin parkas floating over cars on Taranaki Street, drifting like balloons from the city to the harbor, clear across the Cook Strait to the South Island above the Picton Pier’²⁰), The Terrace overlooking Willis Street (reminds me of the route we took from Bolton Street cottage to Sunday market), Oriental Bay (‘Clerks and typists mobbed the sandy crescent beach’²¹), Paramount Cinema on Courtney Place (‘Jaffas rolling down the aisles... Because the Paramount shows “popular” films, the audience is often mixed with Maoris...’²²), etc. etc. The street and place names pepper the book – do they make it more real? Do they only make it more real because I have walked on those streets myself? Like Thom Andersen’s *Los Angeles Plays Itself*, are fictions just another way of describing places? I’m reminded of Jacques Rivette’s description of *Paris nous appartient*, ‘nothings takes place but the place’.

I can’t help but entangle the places of my own life into these autofictional maps, Kraus’s later evocations of Pasadena, driving on the 405, Eagle Rock and other names. Similar to Maggie Nelson’s descriptions of Valencia and routes in and out of CalArts, these are places I know from my past life there. I can’t help but be reminded this is where Josette is currently living and working. ‘Sitting now at my desk in my windowless office, its back wall painted pale blue in commemoration of the sky’²³ Unlike Maggie, in your windowless office you painted the walls yellow in commemoration of the sun. Each office is named after an exit on the 5 freeway. I think yours was Stevenson Ranch but maybe I’m misremembering.

Friday 22 February 2019, London

This morning I finished reading *I Love Dick*. It’s the third book I have read from my friend On Yee’s book shelves. I’ve been staying in her room as she’s away in Hong Kong visiting her mother for Chinese New Year. Her room is on the third floor in a former council block in Homerton. I am living with three women, two also working on PhDs and one musician from Paris, via China who is in London on an exchange with St Martins. I am meant to be looking after her cat Falu – one of the many London cats I’ve lived with over the last few years including Amerigo, Fish, Molly and Barry – she likes to sleep on top of my limbs in effect pinning me to one position all night. On Yee works with music and cooking, I got to know her through Cafe Oto. Above her desk are two small shelves with about 40 books – mix of art theory, nordic cook books and feminist literature – its

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Kraus, Chris. *I Love Dick*. Semiotext(e) Press, 2006. p132

¹⁸ Ibid, p132

¹⁹ Ibid, p229

²⁰ Ibid, p223

²¹ Ibid, p246

²² Ibid, p247

²³ Nelson, Maggie. *The Argonauts*. Melville House UK, 2016. p61

been good occasion to read Maggie Nelson, Chris Kraus and Rebecca Solnit (*Men Explain Things To Me* - maybe this is also tendency of the use of 'I' in text, over privileging the self before the work re: Mike Sperlinger's *Occasion Criticisms*, the challenge might be how to reveal the subjective without imposing it as a narrow lens on the world?)

I'm in the midst of two long distance relationships on different continents, one 8 hours behind falling apart one 8 hours ahead just beginning. Both maintained through instant messages. 'Embracing you & failure's changed all that cause now I know I'm no one. And there's a lot to say...' ²⁴ The messages create uncanny real-time experiences, compressing space and distance but always inverted, nighttime is morning and morning is nighttime, past and present occupying the same space and time.

Whenever I tried writing in the 1st person it sounded like some other person, or else the tritest most neurotic parts of myself... But now I think okay, that's right, there's no fixed point of self but it exists & by writing you can somehow chart that movement. That maybe 1st Person writing's just as fragmentary as more a-personal collage, its just more serious: bringing change & fragmentation closer, bringing it down to where you really are. ²⁵

Yesterday I saw Beatrice Gibson's exhibition at Camden Art Centre, I had seen *I Hope I'm Loud When I'm Dead* (2018) before in Berlin but happy to see her new film, *Deux Soeurs Qui Ne Sont Pas Soeurs (Two Sisters Who Are Not Sisters)* (2019). Structured around one page screenplay by Gertrude Stein written in 1929, the film riffs on repetition but uses Stein's structure for a series of letters – I remember during editing Bea was struggling to finish the film as she felt it missed substance at which point she set out to film letters with Ana Vaz and Diocouda Diaoune. Basma Alsharif recorded her letter as a video from Egypt. Here the 'I' is figured in addresses to a future child or in Ana Vaz case, a reflection on her father and homeland. (Adam Christensen appears in the film – I wonder why she looks to queer and transexual figures in her work now? Is this metaphor for the 'current' political crisis alluded to in the films? Is gender just a metaphor to be turned to at points of confusion? When things are calmer will we be go back to 'normal' gender roles? What about joy? What about Maggie Nelson's *Argonauts*?)

Eileen Myles, who appears in Bea's film, writes in their introduction to *I Love Dick*, 'Her living is the subject not the Dick of the title.' ²⁶ (Maybe I should have called this chapter *I believe 'it' exists but still not sure what the 'it' is.*)

At the end of *I Love Dick*, Kraus on the way to premiere of her film receives an envelope from the eponymous Dick. Inside there are two letters, one for her and one for Sylvère Lotringer. She opens and reads Sylvia's first. Then she opens the letter addressed to her only to find a photocopy of the letter to Sylvère. The ending has become famous for the erasure of Chris (her name is misspelled as Kris among other slights) but isn't it a perfect conclusion, a folding in, an ellipsis of all that has gone before? In the doubling, the projection and re-projection, she is 'bringing change & fragmentation closer, bringing it down to where you really are.' ²⁷ If it is through words that we can make 'it' or 'I' exist then they can also be the vehicle to make them not exist. In one of the early letters attributed to Sylvère he writes to Dick: 'There's no way of communicating with you in

²⁴ Kraus, Chris. *I Love Dick*. Semiotext(e) Press, 2006. p222

²⁵ Ibid, p139

²⁶ Myles, Eileen, 'What About Chris, foreword. *I Love Dick*. Semiotext(e) Press, 2006. p15

²⁷ Kraus, Chris. *I Love Dick*. Semiotext(e) Press, 2006. p139

writing, because texts, as we all know, feed upon themselves, become a game.’²⁸ Through language, intertextuality and games of combination we can construct and reconstruct realities, pasts and futures. But does the game only exist when it is being played? When Kraus receives the letter and the facsimile, the game is effectively ended by closing her out.

As Joan Hawkins proposes in the Afterword in *On Yee's* copy, ‘what’s interesting is Chris’ idea that you can somehow use Baudrillard’s notion of the hyperreal, the simulacrum, to get to Delueze and Guttari’s notion of intensification. And that perhaps is the theoretical drive behind the entire project, as the letters and the simulacrum of a passion which received little encouragement emerge as the truest and best way outside of the virtual gridlock and into Deluzian rematerialisation of experience.’²⁹

In 2015 interview on their writing process and the tension between existing and writing in real-time, Eileen Myles wrote that:

The director Carl Dreyer has some line about using artifice to strip artifice of artifice. There’s some way in which it’s all fakery. Some art critic defined postmodernity as this place in which all styles apply and the only real time is now. I feel like that’s it. It is now. We’re talking now, and later on when you’re editing this piece how will you construct that? What won’t I say? What won’t you say? It’s a new animal you make. The desire is for the thing to breathe, more than anything else.³⁰

In their introduction to *I Love Dick* Myles repeats the quote in new combination; ‘Dryer’s exhortation to use “artifice to strip artifice of artifice,” because it turns out that for Chris, marching boldly into self-abasement and self-advertisement [...] was exactly the ticket that solidified and dignified the pathos of her life’s romantic voyage.’³¹ In a letter addressed to Myles, Beatrice Gibson quotes from their text ‘*Painted Clear, Painted Black*’:

Poems are not made out of words. They’re made out of emotional absences, rips and tears. That’s the incomplete true fabric of the text.³²

How to makes these absences, rips and tears comprehensible? How to make a map of these fragments, of places and people and lived experiences without at the same time becoming overwhelmed and obliterated through such mapping? Referencing Kraus’s past as a filmmaker (despite much vaulted failures), Myles pinpoints a crucial part of Kraus’s work, ‘Chris really knows (like Bruce Chatwin knew) how to *edit*. Which is the best performance of all. To go everywhere imaginable in a single work *and* make it move.’³³

(Maybe I should have called this chapter *The edit is the unit of thought*)

Since I finished *I Love Dick*, I hdeaded out to post a USB thumb drive with the DCP of my film *Jatiwangi* to Punto de Vista, I decided to go via a few bookshops. The sun is out and sky is blue making it feel like a spring

²⁸ Ibid. p73

²⁹ Hawkins, Joan ‘Afterword: Theoretical Fictions’. *I Love Dick*. Semiotext(e) Press, 2006. p269-270

³⁰ Benjamin, Tova. ‘Rookie » Hold a Feeling: An Interview With Eileen Myles’, 30 November 2015. <https://www.rookiemag.com/2015/11/eileen-myles/2/>.

³¹ Myles, Eileen, ‘What About Chris, foreword’. *I Love Dick*. Semiotext(e) Press, 2006. p13-14

³² Myles, Eileen ‘Painted Clear, Patined Black, Evening Will come, Issue 29, May 2013, Accessed 22 February 2019. <http://www.thevolta.org/ewc29-emyles-p1.html>

³³ Myles, Eileen, ‘What About Chris, foreword’. *I Love Dick*. Semiotext(e) Press, 2006. p13-14

evening as I cycle into Stock Newington. I find a copy of *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon*, Roberto Bolano's *Nazi Literature in the Americas* and Bruce Chatwin's *What Am I Doing Here*. Before sunset I stop on a bench in Victoria Park to read one of Chatwin's short stories. I choose *The Chinese Geomancer* written in 1985 which recounts his meeting with the Feng Shui advisor for the new Hong Kong and Shanghai building designed by Norman Foster in Hong Kong. In the introduction to the book, a collection of such short stories, Chatwin writes '[t]he word "story" is intended to alert the reader to the fact that, however closely the narrative may fit the facts, the fictional process has been at work.'³⁴

Today it was announced that ruangrupa are to be the curators for Documenta 15 in 2022.

You write to me about a piece you are working on related to Weezer's *Undone – the sweater song*. You say you heard it on the back of a Hong Kong bus on the way to school, and remember 'feeling secretly blown away by it and very insecure intimidated by all the cooler older white kids sitting in the back of the bus introducing me to indie rock but I was on the front of the bus [...] I remember thinking how odd it was to hear people having a conversation in a song.' In your drawing you write out the lyrics over large letters HONG KONG 1994... one passage goes:

*If you want to destroy my sweater
Hold this thread as I walk away
watch me unravel I'll soon be naked
Lying on the floor, Lying on the floor
I've come undone*

I open Sei Shōnagon's *The Pillow Book* and flick through landing on the following passage which catches my attention:

80. Things That Have Lost Their Power

A large boat which is high and dry in a creek at ebb-tide
A woman who has taken off her false locks to comb the short hair that remains.
A large tree that has been blown down in a gale and lies on its side with its roots in the air.
The retreating figure of a *sumō* wrestler who has been defeated in a match.
A man of no importance reprimanding an attendant.
A woman, who is angry with her husband about some trifling matter, leaves home and goes somewhere to hide. She is certain that he will rush about looking for her; but he does nothing of the kind and shows the most infuriating indifference. Since she cannot stay away forever, she swallows her pride and returns.³⁵

³⁴ Chatwin, Bruce. *What Am I Doing Here?* Random House, 2014. p. xi

³⁵ Shōnagon, Sei. *The Pillow Book of Sei Shōnagon*. Columbia University Press, 2018. p145

To cheer myself up I read one more entry:

Adorable Things:

The face of a child drawn on a melon.³⁶

³⁶ Ibid. p145

4.3 The mirror and non-being

In Chinese philosophy the power of the mirror has long been linked to elemental forces. The yángsuì/陽燧 or sun-mirror was used in ancient China as a burning-mirror to concentrate sunlight and create fire. At the same time there was also the fāngzhū/方諸 or moon-mirror that was utilised at nighttime to collect dew and produce water. For early Chinese thinkers, as Carr and Ivanhoe (2000) elaborate, 'mirrors were not simply passive "reflectors" of information, they offered accurate and appropriate *responses* to whatever came before them. When placed before the sun—the ultimate yang/陽 phenomenon in the world—they respond with fire: the pure essence of *yang*. When placed before the moon—the ultimate yin/陰 phenomenon in the world—they respond with water: the pure essence of *yin*. Thus mirrors offer the paradigm for *proper responsiveness*: they reflect the true essence of the ultimate *yin* and *yang*—the alpha and omega of phenomena in early Chinese cosmology.'³⁷

The elemental power of the mirror finds parallels internationally from the smoking obsidian mirror of the Aztec God Tezcatlopoça, formed from volcanic processes to the fire-mirror that was said to have been used by Archimedes to set fire to Roman ships in Syracuse in 212 BCE. Athanasius Kircher studied mirror technology and optics in the 17th century creating images showing how the burning mirrors could have operated. In his 1646 book *Ars Magna Lucis et Umbrae* he explored the display and projection of images building on the invention of magic lantern and camera obscura. Ruiz lists Kircher as one of the inventors of cinema arguing that '[l]ike America, cinema was discovered several times: a caveman's hand pressed against a lightly coloured surface, then dusted all around with a puff of bright red powder, the very first mechanical reproduction of an image; simulators (half-transparent demons of the air, described by Hermes Trimegistus); shadows, pre and post-Platonic; the Golem; the mirror theatre of Athanasius Kircher; Highland fog which reproduces larger-than-life images of passers-by (evoked by James Hoog in the *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*); the sky above the port of Punto Arenas in Chile, which reflects reversed images of the city a half-century ago; Robertson's Fantascopie; the magic butterflies at Coney Island. All prefigure the movies.'³⁸

Central among these progenitors of the movies is the mirror, an instrument of reflection, a key tool of philosophical and metaphysical enquiry. Ruiz's *Poetics of Cinema* was written 'with an eye to those who use the cinema as a mirror, that is, as an instrument of speculation and reflection, or as a machine for travel

³⁷ Carr, Karen L. and Phillip J. Ivanhoe, *The Sense of Antirationalism: The Religious Thought of Zhuangzi and Kierkegaard*, Seven Bridges Press, New York and London, 2000 p38. For detailed study on the history of Chinese optics and in particular the influence of philosopher Mo Di/墨翟 (ca. 470–ca. 391BCE) in contrast to Euclidean epistemology that emerged a century later see: Purtle, Jennifer. 'Double Take: Chinese Optics and their Media in Postglobal Perspective.' *Ars Orientalis* 48, 2018 pp71–117.

³⁸ Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1*. Dis Voir Editions, Paris, 1995. p73

through space and time.³⁹ In Taoist philosophy and Buddhist thought, the mirror is a central metaphor for the awakened mind that reflects without attachment or projection. In Chuang Tzu/莊子's *Wandering on the Way*, the mirror is used to describe such a state of openness:

Thoroughly embody unendingness and wander in non-beginning. Thoroughly experience what you receive from heaven but do not reveal what you attain. Just be empty, that's all. The mind of the ultimate man functions like a mirror. It neither sends off nor welcomes; it responds but does not retain. Therefore, he can triumph over things without injury.⁴⁰

We can find a correlation between Taoist philosophy and the concept of the unattached wanderer and Ruiz's interest in cinema as an 'instrument of speculation and reflection'⁴¹ as well as in Smithson's interest in the open potential of the site as opposed to the closed limits of the nonsite⁴². In *Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan*, Smithson often describes temporal and ephemeral encounters, '[f]or brief moments flying butterflies were reflected; they seemed to fly through a sky of gravel,'⁴³ that are frozen in the still photographs of each of the displacements. These displaced assemblages are openings to address the special being of mirror images. The principle of superposition is alluded to in the work by allowing multiple realities to occupy the same space, mirrors as means of being both present and absent.

As Agamben notes, '[c]ertainly, the being of images must be very peculiar. If they were simply body or substance, how could they occupy the space already occupied by the body of the mirror? And if their place is the mirror, would we not also be displacing the images by displacing the mirror?'⁴⁴ The multiple mapping, the spacial and temporal registers caught in the tension between the essay and the images, between the site and its reflection is central to Smithson's probing the tension between intention or abstraction and the

³⁹ Ibid, p7

⁴⁰ Chuang Tzu, *Wandering on the Way: Early Taoist Tales and Parables of Chuang Tzu*. University of Hawaii Press, 1998. p71

⁴¹ Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1*. Dis Voir Editions, Paris, 1995. p73

⁴² 'Dialectic of Site and Nonsite:

Site	Nonsite
1. Open limits	Closed Limits
2. A series of points	An Array of matter
3. Outer coordinates	Inner coordinates
4. Subtraction	Addition
5. Indeterminate Certainty	Determinate Uncertainty
6. Scattered Information	Contained Information
7. Refection	Mirror
8. Edge	Center
9. Some place (physical)	No Place (abstract)
10. Many	One'

From: Smithson, Robert. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. University of California Press, 1996. p152-153

⁴³ Smithson, Robert, 'Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan'. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*. University of California Press, 1996. p122

⁴⁴ Agamben, Giorgio. *Profanations*. Zone Books, 2015, p55

unfolding contingency of the sites he utilising in his work. This tension is crucial to how Smithson's later work opens and exposes the museum to contingent reality, each gesture pushes up against resistance and elements outside of the artists control. The work of the artist is that of the frame, the identification of the work as an assemblage or constellation rather than an act of creation. Fundamental to this shift is breaking the hegemony and neutrality of the museum and showing how the sites of exhibition are specific places that exists in relation to other places. This contingent relationship opens the museum to the effects of entropy, this is a living site rather than the modernist notion of the frozen, neutral or preserved site.

What I am arguing for is a way for works to stand as documents in a different way. Not frozen but living beings as *poetic documents*. For the Chilean poet and architect Juan Borchers (1910–1975) the *document* should be understood in the context of colonial displacement, as an active agent, as 'the portrait of something that enables me to catch a glimpse of what was once a living object and of which something *altered*, or nothing, remains today. The ruin that it implies: something akin to what *The Iliad* is to the war. The document as a poem.'⁴⁵

Borchers consideration of the poetic as space that allows 'a glimpse of what was once living'⁴⁶ is a means to unlock the creation of documents as a process to counter displacement. With this expanded idea of the *document* as poem we can see how they function as a ruin, as matter displaced in time and space, a trace or impression that refers to something that is elsewhere. The elsewhere is both spatial and temporal. This state of elsewhere has its own special being. To follow Agamben's later work, we can understand this as *potentiality*, something that 'maintains itself in relation to its own privation. [...] To be potential means: to be ones own lack, *to be in relation to one's own incapacity*.'⁴⁷

As Maria Berrios explains, the poet 'Borchers saw the "document as a natural organism," an object that vibrates in the same way as an artefact that is dug up with a pick at an archeological site. The archive appears in Borchers' notes as a haven of potential, uncharted voyages, in which materials are the pirate maps needed to explore and find hidden treasures.'⁴⁸ Poetic documents then provide means by which to figure potential, to address absence and displacement, to stand as a site for being.

⁴⁵ Borchers, Juan, 'Libreta de viaje 10/Travel journal 10' (1948–50), Fondo documental Juan Borchers, Centro de Investigación y Documentación Sergio Larraín García Moreno, Facultad de Arquitectura, Diseño y Estudios Urbanos, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Agamben, Giorgio, Ed. & translated Daniel Heller-Roazen. *Potentialities: Collected Essays in Philosophy*. Stanford University Press, 1999. p183

⁴⁸ Berrios, María. *Invisible Architecture and the Poetry of Action*, In: Lagnado, Lisette Ed., *Drifts and derivations: Experiences, journeys and morphologies* MNCARS, Madrid, 2010. p72

These strategies of non-being, as we have seen, are critical projects (against institutions – be it museum, natural history, colonialism, or closed concepts) but fundamentally they are linked to the notion of potential. It is the idea of the living poetic documents that the three films of *Double Ghosts* aspire, to be natural organism, living documents existing in relation to their nonbeing. The resistance of totality is a critical strategy. With this in mind I am going to introduce one of the first iterations of the project, the projection of an unfinished film in an unfinished cinema.

4.4 Constellation #1: Star and Shadow Cinema, 16 March 2018

The world is a raft sailing through space with, potentially, plenty of provisions for everybody. -

George Orwell⁴⁹

The title of Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier* is a false promise, a signpost for something which doesn't exist. In the land locked industrial area, the pier was not a seaside jetty, but a coal staithe. 'I am afraid I must tell you that Wigan Pier doesn't exist' Orwell said in a 1943 interview, 'I made a journey specially to see it in 1936 and I couldn't find it. It did exist once, however, and to judge from the photographs it must have been about twenty feet long.'⁵⁰ The absent presence in his iconic novel points to his broader polemical concern expressed in the cosmic image of earth as a raft that appears in the chapter *Meanwhile What about Socialism?* This novel, and this chapter, where the focus of the AV Festival taking place in 2016 and 2018 at sites across Newcastle and Gateshead. Under the direction of Rebecca Shatwell, the festival drew on George Orwell's iconic polemic with twinned editions following the two parts of the book. The first section an observational and embodied reflection on working class life in the depressed industrial North focused on his time spent living in Wigan, Barnsley and Sheffield in 1936. The second part is a self-reflective essay charting Orwell's political awakening and asks given these abysmal conditions why are are not all socialists?

The book draws on Orwell's experience as colonial police officer in Burma in 1920s and takes aim at middle-class privilege and the colonial attitude of British ruling class and his contemporaries. The works call for an intersectional politics were reflected in the festival which sought to draw further alliances across generations and cultures exploring Orwell's central question in the present climate. The opening of the aforementioned chapter is sadly prescient: 'It hardly needs pointing out that at this moment we are in a very serious mess, so

⁴⁹ Orwell, George. *The Road to Wigan Pier*. Penguin UK, 2001. p159. The cosmic imagery was later developed with the "spaceship earth" as David Wallace-Wells argues in his reflections concepts connected to Anthropocene. "Buckminster Fuller popularized the term, but it appeared original almost a century before him, in Henry George's 1870 work *Progress and Poverty* – in a passage later summarized by George Orwell in *The Road To Wigan Pier* [...] In 1965, Adlai Stevenson managed to give a more poetic treatment, in an address before the United Nations Social and Economic Council in Geneva: "We travel together, passengers on a little spaceship, dependent on its vulnerable reserves of air and soil; all committed, for our safety, to its security and peace; preserved from annihilation only by the care, the work and the love we give our fragile craft. We cannot maintain it half fortunate, half miserable, half confident, half despairing, half slave – to the ancient enemies of man-half free in a liberation of resources undreamed of until this day. No draft, no crew can travel safely with such vast contradictions. On their resolution depends the survival of us all." - Wallace-Wells, David. *The Uninhabitable Earth: A Story of the Future*. Penguin UK, 2019, p227. To this summary I could also add that ecological notions of the earth as a shared vessel can be traced back to cosmological belief, particularly pertinent for us is the Taoist depictions of the earth afloat not on a raft but on a turtle.

⁵⁰ Orwell, George; Angus, Ian and Davison, Sheila. *The Complete Works of George Orwell: I Have Tried to Tell the Truth, 1943-1944*. Secker & Warburg, 1998. p11 From radio programme 'Your Questions Answered,' *BBC Overseas Service broadcast with Colin Wills, 2 December 1943*. The pier was later attributed to a small wooden jetty over the canal, which was picked up by local comedians as bleak reflection on the blighted industrial landscape. "Wigan has always been picked on as a symbol of the ugliness of the industrial areas. At one time on one of the little muddy canals that run round the town, there used to be a tumble-down wooden jetty; and by way of a joke someone nicknamed this Wigan Pier. The joke caught on locally, and then the music-hall comedians get hold of it, and they are the ones who have succeeded in keeping Wigan Pier alive as a by-word, long after the place itself had been demolished." - Ibid.

serious that even the dullest-witted people find it difficult to remain unaware of it. We are living in a world in which nobody is free, in which hardly anybody is secure, in which it is almost impossible to be honest and to remain alive.⁵¹

I had worked with Rebecca on a retrospective of Lav Diaz's films in 2013 at the festival and have long championed the Star and Shadow Cinema as one of my favourite venues in UK. I proposed to present a version of the *Double Ghosts* as part of the 2018 AV Festival, connecting their theme with my search for Ruiz's lost film, the traces of the political rupture in the Left in Chile and echoes of the post-industrial region of West Yorkshire where I was raised. With these frames the festival would allow me to situate and reflect on the entanglement of historical artworks, anti-colonial legacies and international movements of Leftist solidarity which I have been excavating in order to locate my self and my work.⁵²

Before I go into more detail on the AV Festival, I want to briefly address my talk *Investigacion de George Clark sobre film inconcluso de Raúl Ruiz / An investigation into the unfinished film by Raúl Ruiz*⁵³ held on 13 December 2016 at the Museo de Artes Visuales / MAVI in Santiago. This stands as the earliest public iteration of the project and an important point in the unfolding constellation of *Double Ghosts*. Yet like all iterations it needs to be understood in a field of relations, part of an ongoing assemblage which pre-dates and post-dates this instance – from the conversations with Laha Mebow and cast and crew in Taipei in October 2016 and the interview with Valeria Sarmiento in Lisbon in November 2016. We can go further, back to the conversations with Yu Ling Chou and fellow researchers and artists in Taiwan, exchanges with Carolina Castro Jorquera or before that to discussions with Gasworks resident artists Patricia Domínguez from Chile and Marta Atienza from Philippines not to mention whole cast of friends, colleagues and collaborators.

The talk at MAVI was organised with the utmost generosity by curator Carolina Castro Jorquera who was introduced to me by Robert Leckie from Gasworks in London. We had never met in person but talked on the phone about the project and she introduced me to many curators and artists all during late stages of her pregnancy with her first child. Her son Bruno was born on November 25 at 3:33am the day before I flew from

⁵¹ Orwell, George. *The Road to Wigan Pier*. Penguin UK, 2001. p159.

⁵² Growing up in industrial West Yorkshire I was surrounded by ruins of the former textile industry. My primary cultural exposure before film was music through my parents engagement and active community organisations at the time. One group who I became involved with was Grand Union who performed a series of concerts built from workshops with local music schools which I joined. One of the key figures at Grand Union was the actor and musician Vladimir Vega who was imprisoned by Pinochet regime but was released into exile following international pressure in the 1980s. The political context of the work and connection were not something I comprehended but culturally I was marked at impressionable age by such musicians and artists creating work in such archipelagic models.

⁵³ <http://www.mavi.cl/2017/12/04/investigacion-de-george-clark-sobre-film-inconcluso-de-Raúl-ruiz/>

Buenos Aires to Santiago. Carolina was helping to organise the talk right into the last weeks of her pregnancy, providing an insight into the generosity and friendships that underpin the art scene in Chile. As I was in midst of research rather than try talk about the encounters with Ruiz's Chile I would focus on my encounters with shadow images in Taiwan. I presented material assembled up to this point drawing on interviews with cast and crew in Taipei and screened my short film *Sea of Clouds* (2016). The talk was followed by a discussion with Fernando Pérez Villalón, director of the Art Department of the Alberto Hurtado University, Santiago, a Ruizian scholar and poet.⁵⁴



Illustration 4.4: Invitation to artist talk at MAVI Santiago, Dec 2017. Photo from set of *The Comedy of Shadows* courtesy of Laha Mebow.

Following this first iteration in Chile I returned to the UK with new material to work on and prepare for the presentation in the rich context of the AV Festival's thematic frame. Under the banner *Meanwhile What About Socialism?* the festival looked outward and inward to address Orwell's provocation. This frame would help me approach some of the historical ruptures and phantoms I had been circulating, in particular the international entanglement of socialist movements. This would enable me to pull back from the absence of Ruiz's unfinished films to broader self-reflective concerns with how to develop a mode of practice informed by anti-colonial politics and address issues of international and historical entanglement following Glissant's

⁵⁴ The trip was funded with grant from the Artists' International Development Fund supported by Arts Council England and British Council. In order to do this I enlisted support from various partners in Chile helped by Carolina and in UK working with Rebecca Shatwell and Christo Wallers at the Star and Shadow Cinema. At the talk I also met Jaime Grijalba who would later begin project to translate Ruiz's diaries

archipelagic model. In assembling this iteration I could ask myself: what is it about art making in regions marked by the cold-war and histories of repressive politics that I have been drawn to as a model of practice? What are the means by which I can work in relation to these cultures now? How can I approach these works as models of resistant image making?

Drawing on the art, politics and cinema in Taiwan and Chile at the AV Festival I could ground questions within my own locality, finding links to Leftist trajectories and ways of conceiving new potential futures. For the AV Festival I curated a weekend of events to look at Ruiz's work in Chile, the ways he figured the fall out of the Left, the legacy of Allende's ideals and Unidad Popular as well as the impact of exile. Central to these events would be a presentation of my new work in a special screening following the lines of my Eyemo projections.⁵⁵ For these projections I have selected 35mm Eyemo film rolls to be interleaved with works by other artists as a live montage, creating echoes, shadows and alliances by treating the cinema as a site of entanglement. The ideal venue for this would be the Star and Shadow Cinema. In 2014 after ten years of activity, their rented building in Stepney Bank was put up for development. Rather than find another temporary home the collective who run the cinema sought to find a permanent home. In March 2016 they took over a former showroom in Sandyford and began an ambitious community building project to construct the cinema, performance space, offices, education rooms and cafe. The venue was due to open in the winter of 2017 so we were confident we could work with them in March 2018 when the festival was scheduled.

⁵⁵ I have presented the Eyemo Rolls project in a presented in series of iterations since 2016. The project has been presented at 25FPS Festival, Zagreb, Croatia (Sept 2016), Visions, Montreal, Canada (April 2017), BIMl / LUX, London, UK (June 2017), Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art / MMCA, Seoul, South Korea (Sept–Oct 2017), Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina (Nov 2017), National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art, Taichung, Taiwan (Oct 2018) and Irish Film Institute, Dublin (Oct 2019) Further details can be found here: <http://www.georgeandclark.com/untitled-eyemo-rolls/>



Illustration 4.5: Star and Shadow Cinema site entrance, March 2018

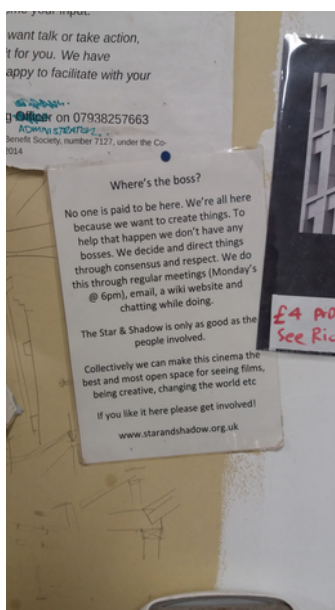


Illustration 4.6: Star and Shadow canteen, collective notice, March 2018



Illustration 4.7: Ongoing construction, cinema flooring, March 2018

After returning from Chile I began working on the material I had shot that would become *Double Ghosts*, the first film produced in this project. I processed and scanned all the footage at the Kodak Laboratory in London and realised quite quickly that what I had shot was not as propositional as I originally thought. Or to put it another way I realised the propositional was the form of the work itself. I began assembling the material and working with sound. I was missing quite a few location sound recordings. With help from Niles Atallah I was able to contact filmmaker Martin Baus who agreed to record locations sounds for me around Santiago. Equipped with a customised google map I had populated with stills from my film and pins for places and times to record sound, Martin created a rich field recordings at these locations. To get sounds outside of Santiago I was introduced to the Chilean sound artist Fernando Godoy M by filmmaker Azucena Losana. He was happy to help and pointed me to his open source collective sound map called audiomapa.org. Using the creative commons licenses the map has been populated since 2012 by sounds artists who upload recordings linked to geolocations. From these combined resources I was able to fill in many of the sounds I was missing, Fernando himself had even recorded the same ferry crossing on the Chaco channel in Chiloé as one the I had filmed.

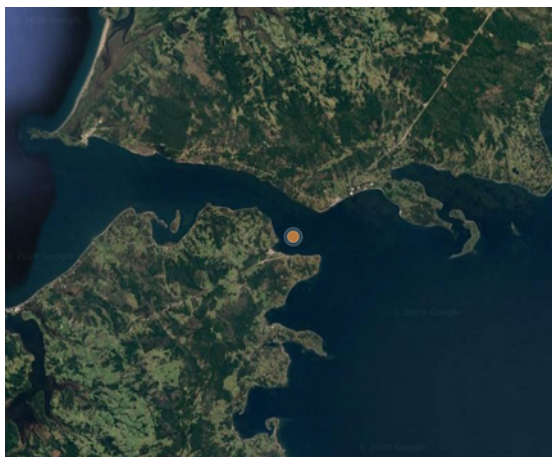


Illustration 4.8: Title: *Ferry*. Author: Fernando Godoy
 Date: 04/12/2016 Info: Crossing the Chacao channel,
 heading to the island of Chiloé. Sounds and vibrations of
 the ferry engine and ventilation.
 Link: <http://audiomapa.org/?loc=963>



Illustration 4.9: *Double Ghosts* (Dir. George Clark, 2018) Chacao
 crossing. 35mm frame enlargement

With these resources and additional foley recordings made in various locations in London and Yorkshire (smashing glass in the hallway of my flat, throwing stones into the Old River Lea, chopping wood with Sebastian Buerkner in Hackney Marshes) I was able to assemble a complete soundscape for the 31 minute film. I settled on the title *Double Ghosts* inspired by my interview with Valeria Sarmiento and working with Lucas Quigley we made titles for the film inspired by gothic font used by the Bank of Chile. In early January 2018 Christo Wallers from the Star and Shadow Cinema confirmed the venue, with a minor caveat: ‘We are aiming for opening at the end of February, but that is a tight deadline. I think there will be a way to make it work though, irrespective of whether we are formally open, so lets go with yes.’⁵⁶ As part of our contingency plan we also realised there is a potential way to go ahead even if the venue is not formally open, as Christo outlined: ‘We will be working closely with licensing to get fire safety etc. signed off but it may not have been by then. One work around we have used is to consider audiences “volunteers” and give them a safety induction (short). This works quite well in our conceptualising of audiences anyway as participants rather than customers.’⁵⁷

As I was editing the film I realised Christo’s contingency plan would be even better than if the venue was fully open. These conditions assembled the audience as active agents within the emerging constellation of the project. The iterations have developed with a conscious embrace of such conditions and occurrences as salient and active elements not to be overcome but to help guide the decision making processes. This is aligned to the economic reality of the project and the mode of precarious production rooted in material

⁵⁶ Email with author from Christo Wallers, 8 January 2018

⁵⁷ Ibid.

factors that determine what is possible to do. While at the same time working to be open to possibilities that exceed my means through the recruitment of an eclectic array of collaborators. These conditions helped to reveal and activate specific elements of the place and in their precarity embrace states of becoming. To address fragmentation it's important to resist sterility, my focus is on process and embracing the multiple state of *becoming* as proposed by Deleuze and Guattari.⁵⁸ The potential inherent in the unfinished space helped ground and entangle the project in the local collaborative practices of Newcastle in 2018.



Illustration 4.10: New 35mm print of *Double Ghosts*, first print produced by Cinema Printing Company



Illustration 4.11: Christo Waller one of founders of Star and Shadow Cinema, March 2018



Illustration 4.12: Day of screening volunteer electrician finishing wiring for roof lights, March 2018

As well as curated screenings for venues around Newcastle (Side Cinema, Star and Shadow Cinema and Tyneside Cinema) I also invited the artist Aurélien Froment to present the seventh part of his *Slow Retrospective of Raúl Ruiz*. By showing one film at a time when he has been invited to present an event or give a talk, Froment has slowly been working his way through Ruiz's filmography. Fortuitously Froment was still in the Chilean period and we settled on screening the fragment *El Realismo Socialista/Socialist Realism (Considered as one of the Fine Arts)* (1972). The original 270 minute long version has not surfaced since the late-1970s. The only surviving known elements of the film is a 50 minute fragment held at the Royal Belgium Cinematheque. Improvised with workers who stage an occupation in their factory, Froment conceived the screening along these terms, finding a way for the Ruiz fragment to occupy the space of industrial cinema. He chose to show the fragment as an unannounced interruption in the middle of a 16mm projection of the

⁵⁸ '[B]ecoming is neither one nor two, nor the relation of the two; it is the in-between, the border or line of flight or descent running perpendicular to both'; '[b]ecoming produces nothing other than itself [...]'. What is real is the becoming itself, the blocks of becoming, not the supposedly fixed terms through which that which becomes passes' – Deleuze, Gilles & Guattari, Félix. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. University of Minnesota Press, 1987. p263.

American cold-war B-movie *The Thing from Another World* (1951), imagined as one of the films Ruiz would have watched in his youth.

Working with Froment, brought another artist into the constellation of the project that gave me an opportunity to multiply subjectivities within this first iteration, introducing other voices and practices into the constellation. 'Becoming' as Deleuze and Guattari remind us 'is always of a different order than filiation. It concerns alliance.'⁵⁹ My constellations are built from alliances, embracing multiple and proliferating subjectivities aligned to the legacies of the Left and post-colonial struggles. This method of assemblage is aligned to Glissant's concept of creolisation, a process that 'adds something new to the components that participate in it.'⁶⁰ As Glissant argues in his *Poetics*, the 'difference between Relation and totality lies in the fact that Relation is active within itself, whereas totality, already in its very concept, is in danger of immobility.'⁶¹ The central tenet of relation then is this state of becoming and movement, modes of being which avoid the sterility of the totality. Expanding Deleuze and Guattari's conception of becoming, Glissant argues that 'movement is precisely that which realizes itself absolutely. Relation is movement.'⁶²

The films selection would circle Ruiz's country and his exile, showing Chile entangled with Ruiz's early years, his family and the Left's political aspirations, struggles and the ruptures of departure and returning. I presented the feature film *The Suspended Vocation/La Vocation suspendue* (1977) which addresses the fall out of the Left transposed onto an obscure quarrel in the Catholic Church. It is Ruiz's first feature made in France for INA adapted from the novel of the same name by Pierre Klossowski whose work on phantom and simulacra were having a substantial influential on French thought, and on Ruiz's images, at the time. Klossowski's book provided Ruiz with a means to reflect his own phantasms, as he stated the 'book talks about all the quarrels inside the church, of different factions in the Catholic church. This was not very different from the discussions and quarrels inside the Left movement in Latin America. Which is not so strange when you think that this movement was composed of ex-Catholics. They transposed old Catholic quarrels into the Left; this is one of the ways you can read the political movements in Latin America.'⁶³

In his oft cited article *Protase et Apodose*,⁶⁴ Klossowski outlined the two key terms *Phantasme*/phantasm and simulacra/simulacrum central to all his work. 'My true themes' he explained 'are dictated by one or more obsessional (or 'obsidianal') instincts that seek to express themselves [...] I am only the seismograph of the

⁵⁹ Ibid. p263.

⁶⁰ Glissant, Édouard. 'Creolization and the Making of the Americas' In: Lawrence, Vera and Nettleford, Rex. *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas*, Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995, p269

⁶¹ Glissant, Édouard. *Poetics of Relation*. University of Michigan Press, 1997, p171

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ruiz, Raúl. Martín, Adrian, *Suspended Vocation*, adapted from an interview in *Cinema Papers* no. 91. 1993

⁶⁴ Klossowski, Pierre. *Protase et Apodose*, L'Arc, 43, 1970

life of the impulses.⁶⁵ Phantasms would be the driving force behind all his work, repeated and circled throughout his long life, yet as Daniel W. Smith explains for Klossowski 'every phantasm is by nature incommunicable.'⁶⁶ The unreconcilable image is at the heart of creative impulse, as Klossowski's own eclectic career testifies, shifting from novels to philosophy, acting and large scale drawings. As he stated 'I am under the spell [dictée] of an image. It is the vision that demands that I say everything the vision gives to me.'⁶⁷ The name he would give to these attempts to capture this elusive phantasm was the simulacra, 'the actualization of something in itself incommunicable and nonrepresentable: the phantasm in its obsessional compulsion.'⁶⁸ Klossowski's body of work can be seen in this pursuit and reflection on the nature of an image, or more aptly, as Deleuze would put it, 'thinking the image.'⁶⁹

It is not surprising Ruiz would be so drawn to Klossowski and they would complete two films together both haunted by images in distinct ways. For Klossowski, as Kevin Clark argues, '[i]mage, metaphor, and myth are for him subjects rather than objects of interpretation. But far from suggesting an abandonment of thought in favour of some more intuitive way of apprehending the real, Klossowski, in taking the Idea as myth or fiction, intends to restore thought to an authentic and autonomous function as a way of seeing.'⁷⁰ For both of these films Ruiz employed the artist Karsiu Lee as a ghost-painter producing art works to be inserted into the fictional worlds of the films. For *The Suspended Vocation* he painted the actor François Simon dressed as the Pope, posed as requested by Ruiz to mimic the famous 1968 painting of youthful Chairman Mao (remember Ruiz himself had visited China with a delegation of the Unidad Popular government during this period). Following the production Ruiz kept this painting in his apartment in Belleville. I will return to illuminate the role of the ghost-painter Karsiu Lee in a future section, remembering as Ruiz suggests that 'it is always necessary to leave a dark corner.'⁷¹

⁶⁵ Klossowski, Pierre. *Living Currency*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017, p.8

⁶⁶ Ibid

⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ 'It seems to me that, at the moment, there are four great authors who are truly thinking the image – not only theoretically, but through its practices as a modern element of the present world: yourself, Godard, McLuhan, and Burroughs.' Deleuze, Gilles, *Letter to Pierre Klossowski*, 1979, in *Europe: Revue Littéraire mensuelle* 1034–5 (June–July 2015), special issue on Klossowski, 61–62

⁷⁰ Clark, Kevin. 'On Pierre Klossowski and the Problem of Transcription.' *MLN* 97, no. 4 (1982): 827–39. Accessed April 30, 2020. doi:10.2307/2905865. p827

⁷¹ Ruiz, Raúl, interview with Teddy Abdi and Patrick Coisman, *Image et son*, 334, Dec 1978, english translation published in 'Ruiz Filmography', *Afterimage Visual Studies Workshop*, Fall 1981, p123–124



Illustration 4.13: *Chairman Mao goes to Anyuan [to lead a miners' strike]* by Liu Chunhua, 1968



Illustration 4.14: Frame enlargement from *La Vocación suspendida* (Raúl Ruiz, 1977) showing painting by Karsiu Lee

The Chile from which many artists and intellectuals were exiled is a composite of material and social conditions as well as ambitions, dreams and hopes for the future. When Ruiz returned to Chile he found an unknown country and a different reality, he was haunted by the phantom of the Chile of his youth and the abandoned Leftist dreams. The first feature he shot in Chile after the coup was in 1990. *The Wandering Soap Opera/La Telenovela errante* was made following the lifting of martial law the film but was left unfinished until after Ruiz's death. It was completed by Valeria Sarmiento and premiered at Locarno Film Festival in 2017. For the final AV Festival event I presented this film, a collaboration between Sarmiento and Ruiz in which they recast various characters and episodes from past works now embedded in series of gelatinous fictions. *The Wandering Soap Opera* uses television drama as a filter to approach the new reality they encountered on their return.

These works - *Socialist Realism* (1973), *The Suspended Vocation* (1978) and *The Wandering Soap Opera* (1990/2017) – were presented in chronological order to evoke phantoms, both personal and collective and give coordinates to cultural and political histories, aesthetic strategies and obsessional images to shore up and form alliances with the presentation of *Double Ghosts*.

The screening of *Double Ghosts* took place at the Star and Shadow Cinema on 16 March 2018. It was the first event of the weekend and as such prefigured and set up echoes that would be populated over the following events. As Christo had anticipated the venue was not complete. When I arrived on the morning of

the screening volunteers were still nailing down floorboards in the cinema. Like my previous Eyemo screenings the montage would happen in the cinema itself, shifting between formats and works with the audience in the dark experiencing a new and site specific constellation of works. After my brief introduction there was no further explanation until the end of the screening.

I organised the event to open aptly with a 1985 film about Ruiz produced as part of *Visions*, Channel 4's cinema programme. Directed by Keith Griffiths and written by Ian Christie, this special episode was dedicated to Ruiz and included a new short film.⁷² The documentary is narrated from a future where cinemas are a distant and lost idea, film archives arcane remnants of an obscure culture from which Ruiz emerges as a rare polyglot. His biography is fictionalised and his work presented as that of a cinema obsessive fascinated by optical illusions as apposed to the commodity driven special effects of Hollywood (optimised by E.T.) This creative documentary includes an interview with Ruiz leading to a presentation of his film *The Return of a Library Lover/Lettre d'un cinéaste ou le retour d'un amateur de bibliothèques* (1982) which I have discussed previously.

As well as positioning Ruiz within the legacy of a particular moment in British internationalist cinephilia, the documentary looks back from the future to a present where cinema is rendered as a lost form. This provided a strange time loop on the present moment of the screening. This notion of a lost cinema found curious riposte in the present screening on the grounds of a new cinema being constructed all around us. The audience who attended could only do so by joining the community effort to build a different future, each of them had to undergo a health and safety briefing and sign in as volunteers. The documentary evokes a lost world of celluloid and analogue film. As well as screwing down floorboards in the cinema, we also unwrapped and used the 35mm projector for the first time to show my new print of *Double Ghosts*. Working with Mat Fleming we prepared the projection booth installed the custom built windows to dampen the sound and set up the reel arms to hold the new 35mm print. This first showing of my film has the honour of being the first 35mm film projection in this future cinema.

Following the retrospective look at Ruiz and his short film I presented one film by the collective CADA. I selected their 1981 video *¡Ay Sudamérica!* that provides a perspective on Chile during martial law as it documents the groups aerial action of July, 12th, 1981 when six small airplanes, flew in formation over

⁷² VISIONS was Channel 4's main cinema programme since its inception. Produce by Large Door Ltd under the 'adventurous brief: to explore the whole world's cinema output, revealing how films give a privileged insight into societies that produce them, and, equally, how cinema is the major force for innovation in our audio-visual culture.' - *Visions: Programmes on World Cinema*, Large Door Catalogue, 1985. The production company was run by John Ellis and the series seen now is a spectre of radical arts television in the UK unique to this period. One of the early advocates of Ruiz in UK was Ian Christie who helped to edit special dossier on his work for *Afterimage* (No. 10, Fall 1981) with Simon Field (who would later dedicated retrospective to Ruiz in 2004) – both contributors to this series.

Santiago, dropped 400,000 flyers. This action or 'acción sobre arte y política', echoed the traumatic bombardment of the House of Government/La Moneda, which marked the fall of Salvador Allende's democratic government. In reconstructing the political theatre of 1973, CADA proposing a critical perspective. The flyers contained a message that simultaneously upheld each person's right to a decent standard of living and proposed that the general public was capable of instituting an entirely new concept of art – one that could overcome traditional, elite boundaries and become part of public life.



Illustration 4.15: *¡Ay Sudamérica!* (CADA/Colectivo Acciones de Arte, Chile, 1981), video still



Illustration 4.16: *VISIONS Screen Pioneers No.3* Raúl Ruiz (Keith Griffiths, 1985), video still

These works were then followed by *Cantos 9* of Ruiz's *A TV Dante* (1991). The film was met with confusion by the commissioners and the ambitious plans for future adaptations collapsed. Various of the cast were shared with *The Wandering Soap Opera*, that was shot during same period. In one scene the characters of Vigil and Dante walk through one of the soap operas. On his propensity for working on television project Ruiz has argued that 'in all commissions, there is space for freedom. A point of view which one must find, from which everything can become expressive.'⁷³ These connections between works encourage a way of looking where the frames of the screening and assembled films can similarly become expressive, making new combinations and alliances.

⁷³ Torrent, Jodi. *The Rhetorics of the Labyrinth Explained*, From: *Raúl Ruiz: works for and about French TV*, Exit Art programme, NY, Nov 1987



Illustration 4.17: *A TV Dante* (Raúl Ruiz, Chile/UK, 1991) Dante and Virgil touring the suburbs of Santiago



Illustration 4.18: *La Telenovela errante* (Raúl Ruiz & Valeria Sarmiento, 1990/2017) Dante meets one of the Telenovela characters as Virgil looks on

Material conditions, rather than being impediments to open forms, create the conditions for sited and embedded practice, contingent and existing in relation to active elements. The locations and images of Ruiz's work, and the displaced cinematic and political histories which I attempted to follow in the topography for *Double Ghosts*, were made vivid for the assembled participants in the screening. From glimpses of the Cementerio Católico Recoleta as filmed by Ruiz in early 1990s echoed in the final sequences in *Double Ghosts* to spectres of historical horror evoked through folk practices and culinary gatherings, searches for memories through a misplaced book, commingling of languages and subtitles from Spanish to Chinese. The landscapes and streets of Chile in 1980s and 1990s glimpsed in the historic works and in 2017 in my work provide a means to understand the processes of circulating reference that *Double Ghosts* seeks to activate and situate itself within.

The work of CADA stood in place of the those who lived in exile during this period. Such connections were further shored up by the frame of the festival, the frustrated inevitability of socialism evoked by Orwell and lines drawn in other works to the current political situation in the UK and hope or return of socialist politics represented by the Momentum.⁷⁴ These shores buttressed the project like Dante's circles of hell, existing in relation but each expanding the initial frame. These layers were grounded by other more embodied factors which I can only attempt to evoke here; the experience of seeing and entering the premieres of the new Star and Shadow Cinema and the optimism its very existence and community construction represents; the stark coldness of the unheated cinema contrasted with the warmth of the gathered bodies and heat radiating from the images of Chile in the summer and tropical Taiwan; the precarity of the first 35mm projection, the burr of

⁷⁴ At the time of the AV Festival Momentum was gaining increasing presence and drawing large public gathering in the North with strong campaigns in Newcastle. Jones, Owen. 'Momentum Is a Beacon of Hope. It Must Be Saved from the Saboteurs | Owen Jones', the Guardian, 7 December 2016. Accessed 20 January 2020: <http://www.theguardian.com/global/commentisfree/2016/dec/07/momentum-hope-saved-saboteurs-sectarian-labour>.

the shutter and excitement of seeing images projected for the first time with others; the temporary collective of the attendees all wearing high-vis jackets and staying warm with tea and biscuits served to those who attending and who contributed their time and bodies to the unfolding constellation of *Double Ghosts*.



Illustration 4.19: Attendees at Star and Shadow Cinema during AV Festival being given mandatory induction to become volunteers in order to attend the *Double Ghosts* event, 16 March 2018



Illustration 4.20: The auditorium with working lights, installed screen and temporary chairs for attendees, 16 March 2018



Illustration 4.21: Instagram post by Christo Wallers (aka ignorant_curator) with Mat Fleming (artist/projectionist), Rebecca Shatwell and myself

4.5 Artist as exile or a cloud over belleville



Illustration 4.22: Cinematographer Laurent Machuel on set of *The Comedy of Shadow*, November 1995, photo by Laha Mebow,

The Turtle by Chuang Tzu⁷⁵

Chuang Tzu with his bamboo pole
was fishing in the Pu river.
The Prince of Chu sent two vice-chancellors
With a formal document:
“We hereby appoint you Prime Minister.”

Chuang Tzu held his bamboo pole.
Still watching the Pu river, he said:
“I am told there is a sacred tortoise offered
and canonized three thousand years ago,
Venerated by the prince, wrapped in silk,
in a precious shrine on an altar in the temple.

“What do you think?
Is it better to give up one’s life
and leave a sacred shell
as an object of cult
in a cloud of incense

⁷⁵ Merton, Thomas. *The Way of Chuang Tzu*. Shambhala Publications, 2004., pp105-106

for three thousand years,
or to live as a plain turtle
dragging its tail in the mud?"

"For the turtle", said the vice-chancellor,
"better to live and drag its tail in the mud!"

"Go home!", said Chuang Tzu.
"Leave me here
to drag my tail in the mud."

Thursday 3 January 2019, Singapore

I left my reading glasses in Nantau in the indigenous village where I had spent New Years with artist friends. I have an overnight flight to Singapore to meet with Cheung Chin. My friends parents found my glasses but not with enough time to mail them to me. I think I will be ok but at last minute I panic I won't be able to read anything and start trying to find glasses on the night of my flight. Anywhere else would be absurd. Zhao recommends an optician in central station who boasts they can make glasses in 20 minutes. We rush to get a taxi after a frantic pack at Treasure Hill. It is raining and a cold winter night. We arrive there at 9.30, they close at 10. They say the glasses will be ready tomorrow. Zhou uses her journalist credentials to negotiate and they back off and agree to do it tonight but urge us to choose the frames quickly. I pick out a pair and before long on we are on the train to the airport with my new glasses. I even get there early. I keep forgetting things like this are possible here in Taiwan.

I am only spending one night in Singapore. I arrive early, buy some Chilean wine and a local phone card and head to Hotel Compass to drop my bags before finally meeting with the producer Cheung Chin for lunch. Nice to be back in a tropical climate after cold rainy Taipei. I change into summer clothes and walk to the train station, stopping to buy a durian ice-cream on route.

I meet Chin in a mall connected to Sengkang MRT station. He sends me a photo so I will recognise him – his portrait as film producer after Orson Welles, complete with huge cigar, in suit with shirt unbuttoned. Chin arrives, he looks different, maybe not playing the producer today. He's wearing a traditional Chinese black collarless shirt and carrying a few books. Tells me he moved to Singapore to be closer to his grandchildren but otherwise doesn't like it here. He offers to buy me lunch upstairs, but he doesn't eat saying as he is on a different time schedule – as he said to me in text, he is a *noctambule*.

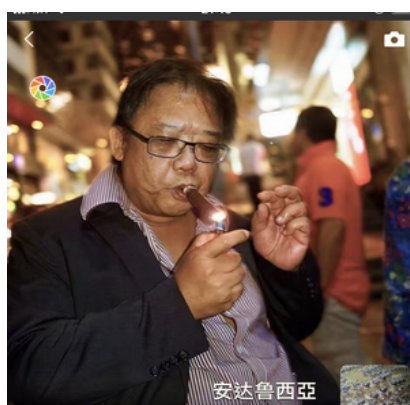


Illustration 4.23: Chuang Chin portrait as movie mogul

We sit in the mall and I eat noodles as Chin tells me how he came to know Raúl and about his life in Paris and Hong Kong. He is a great story teller, incredibly well connected, warm and generous. Clearly skilled at making friends, including many filmmakers across Hong Kong, Taiwan and China (sadly many have been dying recently). His father was an army general. They had to leave Hong Kong in 1950s, after the Chinese Civil War, as it had become dangerous for them to remain in Hong Kong (as it is on verge of becoming again). His family relocated to Paris and Chin was brought up in French schools. He studied film at Paris Censier University graduating in 1973 and was by his own account the ‘first non-occidental student’ to study semiotics at Paris III. He tells me that the translator of the script and his good friend Chen Chuan-xing/陳傳興 was the first Taiwanese student of semiotics there... the friendships and connections of *The Comedy of Shadows* start to reveal themselves.

He made his film debut *Paris Killers* in 1974 before working for RTHK 1975-76 producing documentaries for Hong Kong television (alongside contemporaries Allen Fong and Anne Hui working on the celebrated *Below the Lion Rock/獅子山下* series of socially engaged films). In the 1970s and 1980s he directed several erotic thrillers playing to the relaxed Cat III censorship in Hong Kong and trading on exotic Parisian flavour. He even had a small stint working for the Shaw Brothers Studios under Madam Shaw. He described how he had to hide in the back of a taxi in order to leave the studio early. He doesn't go into detail about these films but tells me his connection with Raúl was not based on aesthetics but based on them both being exiles, in their own ways both outsiders in Paris. They connected as friends over a shared passion for good food and good wine. He couldn't always understand Raúl's films, and he admits they are very different to his own, but they were good friends nevertheless. He clearly holds a lot of affection for Raúl and is still humbled by their friendship.

He tells me he didn't really understand the film Raúl made in Taiwan, but as a fellow cosmopolitan exile he admired and supported Raúl's endeavour nevertheless and did whatever he could to help. He has a clear belief in art and culture whichever form it takes and enjoyed the friendships it enabled. He used to host gatherings for filmmakers during the Hong Kong film festival and counted directors from Tsui Hark to Edward Yang as friends. He moved back and forth between Hong Kong and Paris throughout his life, as part of his many endeavours he worked as a special advisor to the Cannes selection committee often called in to do live translations for Chinese films before they were subtitled. The prints would always arrive late and he'd be called in to interpret them live during a selection screening in Paris. The screenings were confidential but he would always receive a call from the director – be it Chen Kaige or Zhang Yimou – asking him to translate their films very carefully. Through

these connections he worked as publicist for *Farewell My Concubine* (1993), *To Live* (1994) and *Happy Together* (1997) at Cannes.

We decide to move to a quieter spot so I can record sound and we can talk in more detail. His apartment is nearby so he invites me over and suggests we sit outside by the pool under a sun shelter. Nearby there are Christmas decorations on tropical trees and few children lazing near the pool. Chin removes his shirt to cool down since I am not filming. We talk for another hour in-between overhead military aircrafts – signs in case we forget of Singapore's military defence, reminders that we are not so far from martial law of Chile or Taiwan.

After we talk Chin invites me to his flat. He is apologetic for the disarray, he has just moved. His floor is piled high with books and art catalogues, he tells me one of his jobs was as arts advisor in China for member of Rothschild family. The apartment has a range of small statues from various cultures. Chin tells me he has photos from the time he visited Chile with Raúl in the early 1990s and the shoot in Taiwan hidden somewhere in his belongings. I give him the bottle of Chilean wine. He says we should drink that tonight in memory of Raúl, but will bring a second bottle, one for him, one for me. We agree to meet later and go for food in the night market near the MTR. I leave him to rest and visit National Gallery of Singapore and walk across the downtown harbour, have another ice-cream from street vendor, this time mango flavour.



Illustration 4.24: Chen Cheung visiting Raúl and his parents in Puerto Montt, 13 February 1994, Photo Chen Cheung

We meet that night and Chin has a small suitcase with him. We eat in the open air at the food market and order a selection of food from different stands. He opens the suitcase and brings out our wine bottles and two crystal glasses. He tells me he has not got the negative for *The Comedy of Shadows* any longer as the boss of the Hong Kong lab liked to gamble and he lost the laboratory to the triad or money lenders (one and the same).⁷⁶ He sadly doesn't know where the negative has gone. But he tells me there is a first cut of the film, a 35mm print he has in storage and says he can give it to me to help Raúl. We talk more and he tells me stories of his work and life in Paris, memories of Raúl and other filmmakers. He tells me I should be the one to finish the film as clearly I know more about it than anyone else – he was surprised when I told him he acted in it! We finish the wine and I

⁷⁶ 'Tonight we dine with Chin, who looks for funds to rescue our film from a Hong Kong laboratory which is on the verge of bankruptcy.' - Ruiz, Raúl, *Ruiz Diaries*, Saturday, December 12th, 1998, *Ruiz Diaries*, translated by Jaime Grijalba. TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/saturday-december-12th-1998>

head home late, filled with stories, good food and good wine.



Illustration 4.25: Raúl Ruiz on set of *The Comedy of Shadows*, photograph by Cheung Chin, November 1995

On 20 July 2018 I travelled to Paris in order to meet and interview various of Ruiz's collaborators. Paris has served as a home all manner of exiles and artists, marked at different times by migrations across the world from the former colonies of France in North and West Africa, Laos and Vietnam, to communities displaced from war and conflict or individuals seeking opportunity and promise of liberty. The city has a well documented history as a periodic heaven for artists and writers throughout the 20th Century from conscientious objectors, homosexuals, civil rights activists, Jazz musicians and political dissidents to host of aspiring bohemians. In the history of French cinema one remarkable shift were the generation of filmmakers from Latin America who not only came to Paris but produced a rich body of exilic cinema as well as central works in the city's own cinematic imaginary including filmmakers from Argentina Eduardo de Gregorio, Edgardo Cozarinsky, Fernando Solanas and Hugo Santiago, from Chile Valeria Sarmiento, Raúl Ruiz and Helvio Soto among many others.⁷⁷

The Argentine director Hugo Santiago studied film in France and worked as assistant to Robert Bresson before settling there and become an exile by circumstance following the 1976 military coup in Argentina. I visited Hugo Santiago in 2008 and made a short video of the encounter.⁷⁸ When I visited Paris 10 years later I mentioned Hugo Santiago to Valeria Sarmiento and she told me he was very important for their generation. Santiago was an already established director in France and helped Sarmiento and Ruiz navigate the city, he

⁷⁷ In a parallel way the influence of such exiles such as David Lamelas from Argentina, Helio Oiticica from Brazil, David Medalla artist Philippines all had foundational influence on contemporary art, performance and installation practice in UK in 1960s and 1970s.

⁷⁸ *Interview with Hugo Santiago: On Collaborating with Jorge Luis Borges and Adolfo Bioy-Casares* (George Clark, France/UK, 2008/2012, video, sound, colour, 25min). <https://vimeo.com/192834797>

even narrated Ruiz's short film *Colloque de chiens/Dog's Dialogue* (1977) produced, she tells me, during an actors strike which had caused a hiatus in the shooting of *The Suspended Vocation*. The community of the city extended to Ruiz's collaborators such as his Belleville neighbour the poet Waldo Rojas, his regular composer Jorge Arriagada as well as expansive constellation of interlocutors, performers and contributors to his work.



Illustration 4.26: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2019) Frame enlargement. Lunch with Waldo Rojas and Valeria Sarmiento 25 July 2018. 35mm frame enlargement

While staying in Belleville I realise the combinatory strategy of Ruiz's work is not so much an intellectual exercise but an expression of the reality of his life and neighbourhood. Belleville is intersected with communities from Laos, China and Vietnam as well as the Middle East (the Iranian author Sadegh Hedayat whose *The Brown Owl* Ruiz adapted in 1987, was written in Paris and he is buried in the nearby Père Lachaise Cemetery) and North African as well as Jewish, Armenian and Greek communities. Seeing the proximity of such cultures in his neighbourhood, Ruiz's cosmopolitanism becomes ever more tangible as an expression of his life and the street on which he lived. During this trip I invite Ruiz's colleagues to collaborate with me in the production of a new film to follow *Double Ghosts*, that would become *Inner Sage / Outer King* the second film in the project.

I invite Jorge Arriagada, Karsiu Lee and Waldo Rojas to participate in new combinatory game reading texts and playing versions of themselves adding to the traces I have been assembling. Valeria invited me to meet with her and Waldo on Wednesday 25 July in the evening. This would be my last night in Paris so I asked if it would be possible to meet earlier and she kindly invited me to lunch instead. When I arrived with Nouch

Papazian, who was helping to translate, they had prepared a lunch for us all to be held in memory of Ruiz on the anniversary of his birth on 25 July 1941, an alignment that had escaped me. Valeria told me that they had originally lived together with Waldo and his wife when they first moved to France and had subsequently lived just a few doors down from each other all their time in Paris. Sharing meals was a regular Sunday occurrence with one rule, you could not cook the same meal twice. After the lunch Waldo agreed to read entries from Ruiz's diaries connected to his work in Taiwan. The reading took a few hours and was delivered in Waldo's beautiful sonorous voice in his native Chilean Spanish.



Illustration 4.27: Eyemo rolls, constructed with help of L'Abominable artist film lab in Paris from Bolex 16mm daylight spools enabling me to film during trip



Illustration 4.28: Waldo Rojas reading from diary of Raúl Ruiz, 25 July 2018

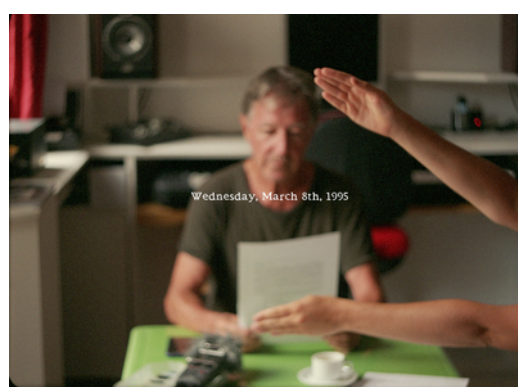


Illustration 4.29: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2019), Jorge Arriagada reading from Ruiz's diary, Nouch's hand clapping. 35mm Frame enlargement.

As well as recording audio, I shot on the streets of Belleville and exposed a few rolls to take with me to Taiwan and re-expose, collapsing the layers and geographies, making a film which takes place between places and times. To create the link between the topographies I drew on one of the images most often recalled in interviews about *The Comedy of Shadows*, the image of the yellow umbrella. This image would act as the anchor between the different geographies, the different histories. In combining these motifs and localities I begin assembling new constellation to bring these distant archipelagoes into relation.



Illustration 4.30: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2019) entrance of residence of Valeria Sarmiento and Raúl Ruiz in Belleville with double exposure of yellow umbrella filmed in Taipei. 35mm frame enlargement

In 1994 Ruiz published the scenario for a film he called *Un nuage à Belleville/A Cloud in Belleville*⁷⁹ which prefigures his scenario for *The Comedy of Shadows*. The text provides an insight into his keen interest in Chinese culture responding to the community at his doorstep. The opening passage parallels Benedict Anderson's tropical night sky, the central figure though for Ruiz rather than the stars is a 'cloud, always the same, watches Chinatown in Belleville.'⁸⁰ The cloud provides a cosmic perspective on the humans in a narrative intersected by elemental forces. Throughout Ruiz's work the border between life and death, the proximity and slippage between these states reoccurs and is employed again and again as a strategy for metaphysical exploration.

During the production of his film *Three Crowns of the Sailor* (1983), Ruiz said 'at that moment when I wrote the story I feel a stranger everywhere.'⁸¹ This feeling of being a stranger Ruiz understood as a distinct state, both in terms of social class linked to his status of exile as well as the idea of freedom and home. His early work for television through the INA in France became crucial to establishing his home in this new context. As Richard Pena has commented 'aside from steady work – a fact not to be discounted when speaking about an exile who arrived in Europe with next to nothing – television offered Ruiz a veritable world of forms and structures to discover and explore. Being an "exile artist" for Ruiz came to mean not simply a nostalgia for his

⁷⁹ Ruiz, Raúl, *Un nuage à Belleville*, Positif, April 1994, Issue 398, p62-63

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ruiz, Raúl, Interviewed in documentary '*Exiles: Raoul Ruiz Chilean Film Director*' (Dir. Jill Evans, 1988). Documentary was originally broadcast on BBC 20 May 1988 as part of series of six documentaries artists in exile, other episodes featured Erich Fried, Josef Skvorecky, Miriam Makeba, Edward Said and Abbas Kiarostami.

home country [...] but rather it came to symbolize his stance as an outsider; both literally and symbolically.⁸² Working with and against the conditions of television Ruiz was able to play games and through partial or misuse of conventions find the means to move beyond his context

The state of exile, of being without a home, links Chuang Tzu and Raúl Ruiz, functioning as a metaphysical framework to understand social upheaval and survival. As an exile, Ruiz has said 'sooner or later you have to accept this situation where you will never be back in your home ... so to react you have to invent fictions ... where in fact you don't have a home – the idea of home doesn't exist.'⁸³ The philosophical dialogues linking Chuang Tzu and Ruiz revolve around encounters between beings from different states (both geographical, cultural and ontological) that are ways to explore divergent lives and parallel fates, to see other potential futures one may have taken. Working with displacement and dislocation are means to explore mortal life, the dead as Chuang Tzu reminds us, can change the perception of the living. The metaphysical dialogues in Ruiz's work has a social dimension, the longing expressed by his characters is often that of a search for different social relationships. As Jonathan Rosenbaum has commented '[l]ike the exiled Argentine directors Eduardo de Gregorio and Edgardo Cozarinsky, Ruiz is involved in a leftist re-orientation of Borgesian metaphysics. His fantasies never trace perfect circles and return the viewer to a comfortable armchair equivalent of the status quo [...] but invariably set off in treacherous directions without return tickets.'⁸⁴

As we have seen these figures without homes remap territory and build relationships between people and generations. The displacement is overcome, or maybe more appropriate to say utilised, by combinatory practice to invent new assemblages. The turn to a metaphysical understanding of this displacement and exile is important for thinking beyond the determining concepts of the nation state. Exile as a movement, dislocation and displacement while also means of subversion and liberation. The cloud over Belleville feels nothing of the *toils of the living world*, instead the solemn cloud eventually rests and assumes the shape of the mountain. Who is it to say that this cloud over Belleville didn't decide to settle and become a mountain overlooking Taipei?

⁸² Raúl Ruiz: *works for and about French TV*, Exit Art programme, NY, Nov 1987

⁸³ Interview in documentary *'Exiles: Raoul Ruiz Chilean Film Director'* (Dir. by Jill Evans, 1988) originally broadcast on BBC 20 May 1988 as part of series of six documentaries artists in exile, other episodes featured Erich Fried, Josef Skvorecky, Miriam Makeba, Edward Said & Abbas Kiarostami

⁸⁴ Rosenbaum, Jonathan, 'Beating the Labyrinth – a conducted tour of Raúl Ruiz', *Monthly Film Bulletin* v52 n612 Jan 1985, p10



Illustration 4.31: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2019), clouds over Taipei. 35mm frame enlargement

4.6 Constellation #2: Chin Pao San, 19 August 2018

Tuesday 26 December 2017, Marsden

Return from Chile directly. Decided not to stop in Los Angeles on the way back, instead trade summer for winter and head to Yorkshire. Yuling writes to tell me she is curating the next Taiwan Biennial, the theme will be something like *Wild Rhizomes* after Deleuze, She asks for screener of my Eyemo rolls films as she'd like to propose I curate film programme for them. Exciting. I think could be great opportunity to build on work with temple projectionists, I tell her I am working more on this following our work in Madou with mosquito cinema event. Yuling says 'Yes, lets plan around the idea!!!'

'And keep on searching for *Shadow Comedy*.'

Throughout the project one of my key allies has been the curator Yuling Chou/周郁齡, we have shared research interests and been in touch over the past decade. I kept her updated on *Double Ghosts* as it emerged, the events planned for Newcastle and my ambition to work more with temple projectionists in Taiwan. In early 2018 our conversation moved from the idea of presenting one of my Eyemo Rolls projections during the Taiwan Biennial to presenting the *Double Ghosts* project as an exhibition. This takes some negotiation on her end as the Taiwan Biennial is traditionally for Taiwanese artists but after presenting the project and the range of local collaborators I have been working with the museum agrees to my participation. The museum officially invited me as one of the exhibiting artists on 21 March 2018 just a week after the AV Festival events in Newcastle.

To realise the project in the context of the Biennial I realise it should unfold not as a fixed singular form but as a multiple open iterations, this is how I understand the difference between installation and constellation as an exhibition model. My imperative for the Biennial is to explore what other elements could be brought into play and how this iteration should contribute to the growing constellation of the project linking Santiago, Paris, Newcastle with Taipei, Taichung and Chin Pao San. The new iteration would give me the unprecedented opportunity to draw the various lines of my research together with local the Taiwanese context central to which would be the opportunity to work again with the temple projectionists.

Early in our conversations it became clear that a central element would be a site specific screening of *Double Ghosts*, rooting the project back into the fabric from which it emerged. We were all excited by this idea but had to figure out how this could then be integrated as part of the biennial exhibition. To start realising these ambitions I talked with Ellen Lu and Yu Cheng-Ta who I knew from their involvement with Taipei Contemporary Art Centre/TCAC and they put me in touch with Shih-yu Hsu who curates their

programme along with Bochun Hsiao and they agreed to work with me and Yuling on a series of events in the summer. The Biennial would run 15th September 2018 to 10th February 2019 so we hatched our plan for a projection event in the early summer leaving me August and September to work on the documentation and develop a means of assembling this material with new collaborations from Paris and the accumulated research to date for the Biennial venue, the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art in Taichung.

Yuling put me in touch with the curator Huiying Chen/陳慧盈 who would join us as project manager to help realise and co-ordinate the projection events. When discussing the place for this it became clear that the ideal environment would be the original shooting location for *The Comedy of Shadows*, the Chin Pao San Cemetery itself. I had kept representatives at Chin Pao San informed about the project since meeting them in October 2017 and now with the Taiwan Biennial onboard we proposed holding our outdoor projection on the grounds of the cemetery. We hoped that Chin Pao San's arts programme and philanthropy would make them amenable to the unusual proposition.

In the early summer before I headed to Paris, Cheung Chin contacted me to say he had located the original Chinese script for *The Comedy of Shadows* and sent it to be from Singapore. I finalised the sound mix with Alex Bonney with added narration supplied by voice messages from Niles Atallah and Carolina Castro as well as interview with Valeria Sarmiento conducted in Portugal. The lab agreed to make the print due to the digital artefacts in the first copy. I picked up the new print of *Double Ghosts* on 30 July in a flurry of activity before my flight to Taiwan.

Tuesday 7 August 2018, Taipei

Arrived in Taiwan yesterday, spend first night at Treasure Hill, they booked me into a few different rooms as it's busy this August so I will have to move each week. I start in a little house where I stayed last October. I get up early the next day to travel south to Taichung, catch local intercity bus from Jingmei station – near to old political prison where Josette's family were interned. While researching the prison camp, now a human rights museum, a few years ago I found one group photograph of female inmates and in the centre was her grandmother smiling, she looks very confident and very beautiful. It is not a defeated portrait. Maybe the shame came later. I have never been to visit. Last few times I have been in Taipei I keep thinking I should go, but a stronger part of me has stopped me as I don't know what will be gained, already too many shadows in Taiwan and don't want to add more to it. Don't want to think of this green island only as a prison and remember it for family trauma, feels more important to remember joy and happiness, not sure what focusing on pain will do.

When I stated the project looking at grandparents I didn't want to narrate it as exceptional or them as victims but more I wanted to understand how they managed to live with so much love despite going through this

experience. To remember that this is very common, mundane even and their route was marked by luck and love. I think about it every time I catch the intercity bus, while I am sitting on the bench in the sun drinking lemon tea. Maybe this is a way to visit, to remember and acknowledge the memory but also get on with my life. This is first time I am back in Taiwan since our separation, I am apprehensive and confused about how to navigate on my own. What is my relation to this history now we are not together? I am still marked by this but maybe can't speak to it. When it's my grandmother-in-law it is one thing but my ex's grandmother-in-law is it not another?

I sleep on the bus and arrive in Taichung, I visit a Buddhist buffet near the museum, good vegetarian food you pay for by the weight. No air con only fans, happy to have opportunity to acclimatise. After I go to library and search a few books connected to Ruiz and get copy of FA magazine with a translated interview with him and profile of Valeria from their early trip to Golden Horse Festival.⁸⁵ I realise it was actually Valeria who was invited to Taiwan first, no wonder she holds so much affection for the country. I meet with Yuling and we look at the gallery space together. It is large. She tells me I will be sharing the exhibition hall with Tzuan Wu and Yin-Ju Chen. Happy to be with friends.



Illustration 4.32: Valeria Sarmiento attending the 1991 Golden Horse Film Festival to present her film '*Amélia Lopes O'Neil*' (1990) From: *Fa/Film Appreciation Journal*, Taiwan, volume 10, No. 56, 1992, p45

Friday 10 August 2018, Taipei

Meeting with Laha Mebow at the Dante Cafe. I tell her Raúl made a film of *Dante's Inferno* so he would like that we meet here to talk about him. She has brought a collection of photographs and looks for the negatives from the original shoot. She has found a VHS tape shot on set documenting the time at Chin Pao San. The photos are amazing, the negatives have a few new images as well giving further insights into the production. We discuss the upcoming exhibition and she is happy for us to include a selection of her photographs. I film a little with Laha in the cafe as she looks through her old negatives. Later she posts some photos from our meeting on facebook, seems the inter-continental nature of project is not only exciting and heady for me:

⁸⁵ *Fa/Film Appreciation Journal*, Taiwan, volume 10, No. 56, 1992, p44-47



Illustration 4.33: Facebook post and photos by Laha Mebow, 10 August 2018

‘Dizzy head
Almost say hello with French kisses
Scared the English gentleman...
It’s been a long time since I’ve roll of photographic negatives
Looking forward to watching the first film of my life, from 1995’⁸⁶

⁸⁶ Facebook post by Laha Mebow, 10 August 2018

Saturday 11 August 2018, Taipei

I meet with Huiying and we take the worshipper bus from Taipei to Chin Pao San. It is a hot sunny day, very different to my first visit in cloudy and rainy October last year. In one of the official buildings we meet with Patty Tsai who is acting on behalf of the director of Chin Pao San to discuss the project with us. I am still not sure if they really know what they have agreed to, but she is very accommodating and welcoming. The projectionist arrives, I got his contact for the Taiwan Film Archive as needed a local projectionist based in Taipei. Mr. Lin/林源樹 agreed to work with us and drove up to help find the site. He speaks Taiwanese with Huiying as we are taken by Patty to look at potential sites. He tells us he shows films in all sorts of events, not exclusive to temples as Mr. Hsu from Pingtung. The main line of his work now, he tells us, is political rallies. Patty takes us down to the entrance where there is a large sculpture garden (and shine to King Hu, although his remains are buried in Los Angeles). The site is beautiful with large fragrant Pomelo trees but feels far from the heart of the cemetery and would feel like watching a film in a park. I explain to Patty that it feels bit removed and ask if there is a place closer to the cemetery, I say I have an idea for an ideal site and take her to look at it.



Illustration 4.34: Patty Tsai and Mr. Lin inspecting first potential projection site at entrance of Chin Pao San, 11 August. Photo George Clark

I show Patty a lawn right in the middle of the cemetery with the golden pagoda clearly visible and the tombs ascending above. She hesitates and says this won't be possible and points out the statues in the garden. There is a bronze statue of a distinguished looking gentleman relaxing in a chair, he is being poured wine by a woman on his left and his cigarette is being lit by woman on his right. She explains that this area is the tomb for Mr. Tsao, the founder of Chin Pao San which he selected long ago and already built these statues of himself, his wife and daughter. As this is sacred ground we backtrack and find an area with two large Banyan trees just off the road, with the same view of coastline, the green valley below and the rows of tombs above. It is perfect. Mr Lin likes it too as he can suspend the screen from the trees.



Illustration 4.35: Mr. Lin, Patty Tsai and Huiying Chen in the chosen projection site under the large banyan streets that will support the screen. Photo George Clark



Illustration 4.36: Screening site location overlooking the Golden Pavilion. Photo George Clark

We talk about the weather as even though it is sunny now the forecast is very gloomy for the 19th of August. The site is exposed so will be a disaster if it rains but I feel like we need to push ahead nevertheless and hope things will work in our favour. Mr Lin gives us a ride back into Taipei and drops us off in the middle of a torrential downpour.

Friday 17 August 2018, Taipei

Talk and screening at TCAC this evening, narrate the project to date with focus on Karsiu Lee as an extended introduction to a screening of Raúl Ruiz's *Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting*.



Illustration 4.37: 'Searching for *The Comedy of Shadows* & *The Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting*', event at TCAC, screening and discussion on 17 August 2018

Sunday 19 August 2018, Taipei

Today is my birthday and the anniversary of Raúl's death. It is overcast and there is bad weather forecast. Last night I was at a party for Taipei Arts Festival and ADAM (Asia Discovers Asia Meeting, many of the participants are staying in Treasure Hill and I've fallen in with their activities and parties). Spent the night in an old piano bar with live karaoke. Lots of nice people in good spirits although I was preoccupied and worried about the weather for the event today. I spend the morning preparing my camera and equipment and move it to the car as the rain starts. Huiying arrives and waits in shelter for me as I film one roll around Treasure Hill in the rain. I chance upon a young couple with yellow umbrella – a good omen but everything feel bad at the moment.

I pray at the Treasure Hill temple for good weather and try to explain my intentions for the event. I had asked Shih-yu Hsu to pray to her grandfather who is buried in Chin Pao San and ask him to put in a good word for us as well. If it rains and we can't show *Double Ghosts* that will be the event – the day is too important to delay it. The film I intend to make today, to stand as the document of this projection, may just end up being film about a cancelled event. If so I have to live with it and that is what I'll show in the Taiwan Biennale.⁸⁷ Huiying says we can also draw a picture of a turtle and burn it in the temple to ask for good weather but neither of us has time to do it. We set off and drive out of Taipei in heavy rain and head north through the mountains. Feeling very apprehensive but also excited.

⁸⁷ The material from this day would be integrated into the exhibition and become the film *A Mountain Inside A Cave* (2019)

As we cross the mountains the weather clears and the rain clouds dissipate as we get to Chin Pao San. The projectionist is there already and has already began setting up with his son. Feel like we arrived late and I want to film as much as I can of the set up. The screen is already hung between two huge trees – it looks great. It is hot and sunny with clear blue skies. Feeling blessed and eternally thankful. Say hi to Patty and Mr. Lin who is sweating in the afternoon sun but quickly start to film as no time to lose.

The event is sold out. Huiying has arranged the coach. People will meet Shih-yu Hsu at TCAC and then be driven up to Chin Pao San at dusk. The projectionist has also brought one short ceremonial film to show, a beautiful colour scope film called *Eight Drunken Immortals/醉八仙*, (c.1980), playful Gods drinking and celebrating in their celestial domain. Adjacent to the projection area there is a huge stone statue of *Tudigong/土地公*, an earth God popular in rural areas. He is the God of the Soil sometimes referred to as Village God as more common in rural areas. Here he overlooks and protects Chin Pao San. Huiying has brought fruit as an offering for him and after we have done the first projection test we make the offering and give him the print of *Double Ghosts* and my camera. Patty Tsai and the projectionists son join the offering.

Mr. Lin asks if we really want to show the film in the cemetery at night? It is too late now to turn back, as dusk approaches the cemetery's army of gardeners begin to leave on in a steady stream of mopeds and a peaceful quiet falls over the mountainside (during opening hours music is played around the cemetery via a network of hidden speakers). Huiying has arranged for food to be delivered so we rest and eat as dusk settles, we hear that the coach has left Taipei and is on its way. We do some final tests in the dark now we can see the projected images. The generators fill the air with noise only increased with the din of the projectors that echo through the mountains. We are prepared now and just await the coach to arrive before we start.

I had invited a photographer to help document the event and by mistake I invited two people. Luckily Vito Yang/楊唯多 came early to Chin Pao San so could document the set up and Ko Chun-Yao/柯泓宇 came to TCAC so was able to capture the journey with the audience and allowed me to focus on filming.

Departure from Taipei (photos by Ko Chun-Yao/柯泓宇)



Illustration 4.38: TCAC waiting for coach



Illustration 4.39: Shih-yu Hsu briefing attendees



Illustration 4.40: Coach for Chin Pao San departing in the rain in Taipei



Illustration 4.41: Arrival in Chin Pao San in the dark

Preparation for *Double Ghosts* in Chin Pao San (photos by Vito Yang//楊唯多)



Illustration 4.42: Mr Lin and his son setting up projectors and filming with Arriflex 2B 35mm camera.



Illustration 4.43: Offering to Tudigong with Huiying



Illustration 4.44: Filming set up with Eyemo 35mm camera

Double Ghosts projection at Chin Pao San



Illustration 4.45: Chin Pao San projection (photo by Ko Chun-Yao/柯泓宇)



Illustration 4.46: Projection of 'Eight Drunken Immortals ' (photo by Ko Chun-Yao/柯泓宇)



Illustration 4.47: Final section of *'Double Ghosts'* filmed in Chin Pao San in October 2017 (photo by Ko Chun-Yao/柯泓宇)



Illustration 4.48: Chin Pao San projection (photo by Vito Yang/楊唯多)

Monday 20 August 2018, Taipei

I was tired and elated after the screening, so thankful not to have been rained off and indebted to Huiying and Shui-yu who organised things so smoothly. The projection by Mr. Lin was excellent and I think he was happy in the end and surprised people actually turned up. After the screening we had a talk and I answered range of questions, the critic and curator Manray Hsu made excellent reflections on the notion of mirror as a powerful act with distinct meaning in Western and Chinese art and commented on the crucial support offered to the screenings by the Banyan Trees. After the pack up I managed to do some final sound recordings before driving Huiying and Shui-yu back to Taipei... we eat some left over food and had a low key beer at TCAC for my birthday. I was too tired to party but also didn't need to as was glowing from the event. I have the car for another day so agreed to take Shui-yu back to Chin Pao San in the morning. Her grandfather is buried there so she is going with me to clean his tomb and make offering.

Monday morning is sunny and fresh, bit of early morning rain but very peaceful and calm so nice to spend more time at the golden mountain. We arrange to have lunch in the restaurant there – the food is excellent. It seems we are the only people eating and visiting Chin Pao San today. The woman who serves us is the same woman who helped me last year. She doesn't recognise me at first but we start to talk and she remembers me, one of the guardian spirits at Chin Pao San who saw me lost when I first visited and gave me lift back to Taipei. I film up high at the top levels of the cemetery making double exposures with the celestial cleaners and field recordings. As they pump music through speakers across the cemetery its hard to find places where you don't hear it but the melodies are at least soothing. There is huge team of cleaners, sweeping, spraying, trimming hedges, gardening and maintaining all the tombs. They are friendly and amused by me wandering around with my camera but have lot of work to get on with so generally ignore me. I stay all day, bit longer than Shui-yu planned but it is relaxing place, and much easier with car to get back so she's happy to hang out. We film a few shots from the window of the car, with Shui-yu driving. And shots of workers leaving for the day on their mopeds. I managed to film more of the statues and take more time with the Arri to pick up some things I captured for only a few frames of on my first trip last year.

The black spot that had appeared in the top left corner of my phone the night before is spreading. By the time we are about to leave the cemetery it is a cloud blocking half the screen. The phone works but it is getting hard to see anything. As we drive back into Taipei the whole screen clouds over leaving only an outside rim of the screen. Maybe this is price for the good weather? The next day my phone's screen has completely died and I decide better to buy a new one than trying to repair it. I hope the film stock comes out ok and this is the only sacrifice I have to make to the cemetery.



Illustration 4.49: The price for good weather. Black cloud takes over phone after Chin Pao San on 20 August 2018.

Tuesday 21 August 2018, Taipei

Huiying sends me a message about the good weather we had. It appears to have been a freak event, as a weather phenomenon was reported in national newspaper. She writes:

I seldom read Taiwanese newspaper, but happened to flick through newspaper and came across an interesting news yesterday – a message from the God, I would say.

There was an unusual meteorologic phenomena happened near Chin Pao San between 5 to 6 pm on Saturday. It was called ‘waterfall rain,’ a pouring rain which comes all of a sudden in one small area, and looks like a waterfall comes from the sky.

As director Tsai told me that they had heavy rain after 4 pm for the past whole week, it just like the God moved all the rain which should have fallen on Chin Pao San to one specific place, and gave us a beautiful clear sky on that day. I don’t mean to be superstitious, yet this is so persuasive that there must be some magic in it! LOL⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Message to author, 21 August 2018



Illustration 4.50: Taiwan Newspaper clipping from Huiying Chen, 20 August 2018

She attaches the newspaper article which I google translated below:

The convection on the north coast was violently shocked by the rainfall. At about 5:30 pm the day before the water dragon roll (18th), people in the Wanli Mountain area at the junction of Xinbei and Keelung City were shocked to see the "rainfall" marvel at the wonders of nature. Tang Weiran, director of Keelung Meteorological Station, said that the convective cloud system in the north coast area was strong last day, and there was lightning and electric convection in the air, which would lead to the rainfall. The owner of the North Coast Allied Commune "touches" said that at the same time as the rain waterfall, the water dragon roll appeared on the north coast the day before yesterday. This is the first time he witnessed it and filmed it. Many witnesses were also shocked. (Photo: Provided by the North Coast National Union Commune: Reporter Yu Yufu)⁸⁹

⁸⁹ 北海岸對流劇烈驚見雨瀑，水龍捲前天（18日）下午約5點30分，有民眾在新北，基隆市交界的萬里山區驚見「雨瀑」驚嘆大自然的奧妙。基隆氣象站主任湯舜然表示，前天在北海岸地區的對流雲系旺盛，出現雷電交加，空氣中的對流劇烈，才會導致雨瀑發生。北海岸全民聯盟公社版主「摸摸」說，和雨瀑同時，前天在北海岸也出現水龍捲，這是他第一次親眼目睹，拍攝，很多目擊者也都嘆為觀止。（圖：北海岸全民聯盟公社提供文：記者俞肇福）



Illustration 4.51: Taiwan Biennale installation of *Double Ghosts*

With footage of the 19 August projection, and some additional filming in my Treasure Hill studio, I had assembled all the material to prepare my exhibition for the Taiwan Biennale. I began the process of editing a parallel work to *Double Ghosts* which would gather the diverse cast into new configurations drawing on material from Paris and Taipei as well as the documentation of the cemetery projection at Chin Pao San. This new work I called *Inner Sage / Outer King*, after Ruiz's first idea for a film title while pitching his project to Chin Pao San in March 1995. Ruiz even supplies the translations of this title in French, English and Spanish which I get his collaborator, the composer Jorge Arriagada to recite for my film.⁹⁰

For the Biennale I edited a 30 minute version of *Inner Sage / Outer King* which would be projected on an alternate wall to *Double Ghosts*. In subsequent iterations of the project I would divide this film into two separate works, *Inner Sage / Outer King* and *A Mountain Inside A Cave*. In addition the projection would be accompanied in Waldo's reading of 24 entries from Ruiz's diary which would appear one at a time in synch with the documentation of the Chin Pao San projection. This would in effect offer an evolving narration each time the sequence looped as it would be accompanied by another reading ranging from 3 – 7 minutes in length. Accompanying the reading in Spanish would be synchronised translation in English and Chinese displayed on monitors on either side of the main projection. This audio/video work I called *Diarios 1995 by Raúl Ruiz read by Waldo Rojas on 25 July 2018, Belleville, Paris*. The entries would play as follows:

⁹⁰ 'In one moment I fall into the expression (in English) *inner sage / outer king*. In this dichotomy the maximum aspiration would be contained (philosophy doesn't search to know, it searches for happiness). Suddenly I realize that that could be the title of the film: *The Inner Sage and the Outer King* or *The Secret Sage and the Visible King*. In French: *Le sage caché et le roi visible* or *Le sage nocturne et le roi solaire*. Alas, I don't know. It may just be that for a Chinese it's an unpalatable platitude.' - Ruiz, Raúl, 'Ruiz Diaries: Wednesday, March 8th, 1995'. Translated by Jaime Grijalba, TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/wednesday-march-8th-1995>

	Loop 1	Loop 2	Loop3	Loop 4	Loop 5	(continue....)
Inner Sage / Outer King (projection stereo sound)						
DIARIOS (left channel) (monitor stereo sound)	DIARIOS (Lt) 8 march 1995	10 march 1995	6 april 1995	11 april 1995	20 June 1995	7 August 1995
DIARIOS (right channel) (monitor silent)	DIARIOS (Rt) 8 march 1995	10 march 1995	6 april 1995	11 april 1995	20 June 1995	7 August 1995

Illustration 4.52: Installation synchronisation diagram for Taiwan Biennial



Illustration 4.53: Installation diagram for Taiwan Biennial

These two works would share one wall with the monitors mounted on either side of the projection. On the adjacent wall would be the projection of *Double Ghosts*. The film on each wall would play in full while the other was off creating a one hour sequence to watch both works in entirety (but only seeing one combination of *Diarios* which would only loop every 24 hours). Both films were installed with the same projector model, sound and same picture size and ratio creating parity between the two works and avoiding full bleed framing for more cinematic framed image.

Exhibition documentation 'Double Ghosts' at Wild Rhizome – 2018 Taiwan Biennale
National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art, Taichung, Taiwan, 22 September 2018 – 10 February 2019



Illustration 4.54: *Double Ghosts*, single screen projection with stereo sound, Taiwan Biennial exhibition documentation



Illustration 4.55: *Inner Sage / Outer King*, single screen projection with stereo sound together with *Diarios*, two monitors and stereo sound, Taiwan Biennial exhibition documentation



Illustration 4.56: [Top L] *The Comedy of Shadow* script; [Top R] photos by Laha Mebow; [L] VHS documentation of Chin Pao San 1995 shoot; [R] display vitrines; [Bottom L] *Double Ghosts* projection [Bottom R] *Inner Sage / Outer King* projection with *Diarios*. Installation documentation Taiwan Biennale



Illustration 4.57: [L] Yu Pong's painting courtesy of NTFAM [C] Projection of *Double Ghosts* [R] Slide projection & Karsiu Lee's Painting



Illustration 4.58: [R] 35mm slide projection with Chinese Translation of the synopsis of *The Comedy of Shadows* [L] Karsiu Lee's painting 'L'arbre de Keelung, Taiwan: Pour Raúl Ruiz/The Tree of Keelung, Taiwan: For Raúl Ruiz'

In this iteration of the project the elements have been expanded and many facets of the research brought together. Drawing on the museum's display conventions I organised the exhibition to provide primary and archival material in an open manner to encourage attendees to find new combinations among the assembled elements. Throughout it has been important to find modes of display which respect the discrete islands of the project, the various collaborators, lives and art works I am seeking to bring into relation without determining what the assembly will generate. In the vitrines I displayed Laha Mebow's photographs and except from her 1995 video documentation of Chin Pao San. In concert with the films the display aimed to create space of fluid association and connection. The painting of Karsiu Lee hung on one wall and the source photo could be found in the vitrine and glimpsed on Karsiu's desk his Paris studio in *Inner Sage / Outer King*. I created a 35mm slide in English and Chinese of Ruiz's brief synopsis of his film projected adjacent to the screening room.

The use of assembly in this way sought to use primary voices and respect the integrity of these as they rub against each other to help give shape to the various absences the project narrates and space for attendees to create linkages. This mode of exhibition sought to push the idea of a constellation as the means of creating relation without denying difference, to link these islands in more and mutable means. As I will address in the final sections the project continued to evolve and build on this in new iterations. The model then is not that of a touring exhibition or a static model of installation, but a multiple and proliferating network, part of the expanding constellation of *Double Ghosts*.



Illustration 4.59: Offerings for Tudigong/土地公, 19 August 2018. Photo by Vito Yang/楊唯多

4.7 Icon counter-icon: The spectres of Wu Feng and Sa Yun



Illustration 4.60: 'Totem and Taboo/圖騰與禁忌' Performance by Anti-Spectre Theatre Troupe/反幽靈劇團 at National Taiwan University, 4th May, 1989. Photo by Tsai Ming-de

Before I go into the third iteration of the project I want to take some time to reflect on two significant actors who I encountered through the project and who influenced the project in distinct way. I refer to them as actors for the key roles they played within the constellation of *Double Ghosts* as well as their appearance in my films (despite neither of them holding profession of actor). As much as the distant and absent actors I have described above, Laha Mebow/陳潔瑤 and Karsiu Lee/李加兆 helped me to navigate and make sense of the many distributed fragments. Through their generosity and work they provided new ways of approaching the material I was assembling. I have discussed them before but will take some time now to elaborate on their roles, their movement through the project and constellations they illuminate.

The first person I met who had worked on *The Comedy of Shadows* was the filmmaker Laha Mebow. A film student at Shih Hsin University in the mid 1990s, Laha was told about a 'French Director' shooting new film in Taiwan by her professor and disappeared to Chin Pao San for two weeks to get involved. She carries fond memories from this time. Born in Nanao, Yilan in 1975 she was raised distant from her indigenous heritage, as she recalled 'I never grew up in the tribe because my father was a policeman in Taichung, and my mother was a teacher,'⁹¹ it wasn't until after university when she joined Taiwan Indigenous Television/原住民族電視台 as a producer that she reconnected to her indigenous roots. 'Every time we go to a tribe, the elders tell us to grow things, and I gradually understand why, because the plants are alive, indicating that you have really been there.'⁹²

⁹¹ Zhijun, Zeng/曾芷筠 '電影特寫：從都市到原鄉，從台灣到第三世界——《只要我長大》導演陳潔瑤 / Laha Mebo 的尋根旅程 - 放映週報,' Funscreen, No.548, 18 March 2016. Accessed 13 February 2019. http://www.funscreen.com.tw/feature.asp?FE_NO=1543

⁹² Ibid

Her renewed engagement led to her first feature film *Finding Sayun*/不一樣的月光 (2011) a search for the origins of an Atayal tribal myth tribe and her ancestral home. The myth was the subject an earlier film called *サヨンの鐘/Sayon's Bell* (1943) produced during the Japanese colonial period directed by Hiroshi Shimizu. As such her film is both a reworking and reconciliation with cinematic and indigenous history.



Illustration 4.61: Laha Mebow on set of *Comedy of Shadows*, 1995. Set photo by Leha Mebow

The legend tells story of Sa Yun (aka Sayon), a 17 year old Atayal woman who fell to her death in a stream while carrying a Japanese teacher's belongings. *Sayon's Bell* was very loosely based on a news report from 1938 which celebrated Sa Yun's death as an example of Imperial devotion. In the film Sa Yun is played by the Japanese actress Yoshiko 'Shirley' Yamaguchi, a romantic star of many Japanese colonial productions.⁹³ The story was used to show how Taiwan's indigenous people had embraced imperial values, as Leo T. S. Ching recounts:

Sayun's accident was only casually mentioned in the *Taiwan Daily News* in its September 29, 1938, edition with the simple heading "Aborigine Women Missing after Falling into Stream." For three years the story of a drowned seventeen-year-old remained obscure and insignificant. In the spring of 1941, after Kiyoshi presented the Ryohen settlement with a ball inscribed with the following phrase: "The Bell of the Patriotic Maiden Sayun." The commemoration reverberated throughout the island, especially among the aborigines, and generated a media sensation and number of paintings of Sayun, a popular song, and eventually a film based on her story.⁹⁴

⁹³ Yoshiko Yamaguchi/山口 淑子 was born in Manchuria China on 12 February 1920. Her career spanned China, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan and the United States. The Manchukuo Film Association concealed her Japanese origin and promoted her with the Chinese name Li Xianglan (rendered in Japanese as Ri Kōran) allowing her to represent Chinese characters in Japanese propaganda films.

⁹⁴ Ching, Leo T. S. *Anti-Japan: The Politics of Sentiment in Postcolonial East Asia*. Duke University Press, 2019. p122



Illustration 4.62: *Sayun's Bell* (1943) Japanese production directed by Hiroshi Shimizu with Chinese born Japanese actress Yoshiko Yamaguchi as Sayun

Following the Musha Rebellion in 1930, the Japanese empire sought greater control of the representations of indigenous and aboriginal people as part of their broader assimilation and pacification process. As Leo T. S. Ching observes in this period 'the aborigines are no longer the savage heathens waiting to be civilized through colonial benevolence; they are imperial subjects assimilated into the Japanese national polity through expression of their loyalty to the emperor.'⁹⁵ As such we can understand Sa Yun as 'a post-Musha tactic of idealizing primitivity in the making of civility.'⁹⁶

Laha's grandmother was a school mate of Sa Yun and attended a ceremony in Taipei where she performed a song to commemorate her loss in their community. With her connection to the origins of this loss, before it was instrumentalised as myth, Laha's sought to return to her ancestral home and retell this story in the process. To present it not as a patriotic sacrifice but as the beginning of the displacement of her people. Working with a largely non-professional cast her film is a mirror to the previous cinematic history.

Many of the phantoms in Taiwan, as I have discussed, are engrained in the landscape and entangled in cinematic history of the island. One such landscape is that the Alishan mountain range in Chiayi County.⁹⁷ Preserved as a national scenic area it is one of the central visitor and tourist sites in Taiwan. It is the historical home of the Tsou tribe and became a central focus of the Japanese administration who mapped

⁹⁵ Ibid. p122

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Alishan was one of the first places I visited in the interior of Taiwan. Due to the confluence of scenic landscapes, the contested nature of its occupation and its history of resource extraction, it became a key site for me to begin to understand and to unpack some of these complex layered histories inherent in the landscape that became central to my 2016 film *Sea of Clouds/雲海*.

the territory to extract ancient Cypress trees, during which time it was classified as 'Savage Land'.⁹⁸ After 1945 the area was renamed Wu Feng Township/吳鳳鄉 after the Ching Dynasty Chinese merchant Wu Feng/吳鳳/Gōhō, whose alleged personal sacrifice at the hands of a local tribe has been utilised as a nationalist myth by successive administrations to demonstrate the benevolent presence of outsiders on the island.

I first came across Wu Feng as he was one of the historical figures featured in the series of postcards depicting wax figures from in the former Chinese Culture & Movie Center/中影文化城 (a film studio turned historical museum).⁹⁹ The history narrated in these cards spans from Confucius to Chiang Kai-shek. In looking at these figures I was struck by how they narrated a familiar history of China yet had strange omissions and additions, no card for Chairman Mao but one for Wu Feng, giving an insight into modes of historical construction in Taiwan. The myth of Wu Feng has a central but shameful place in the islands cinematic output with adaptations made at pivotal points both during the Japanese colonial period and the rule of KMT. The story of Wu Feng originates in the Ching dynasty before Japan assumed control of Taiwan yet as Daw-Ming Lee has argued, the colonial administration 'actively promoted the idea that Wu Feng sacrifices himself in order to successfully persuade Tsuo tribes people living near Alishan/阿里山 mountain range to forsake their headhunting practices. The intention of the colonial government was obviously to create an image [of themselves] similar to that of Wu Feng – saviour of the indigenous peoples.'¹⁰⁰



Illustration 4.63: Photograph of Wu Feng, re-filmed by George Clark 2016. Original from Central Motion Picture Corporation Chinese Culture & Movie Center historical wax museum

⁹⁸ Threatened by loss of habitat over cutting the endemic *Chamaecyparis formosensis* (Formosan cypress/Taiwan cypress/紅檜/紅/ihong kuai) is now endangered on the conservation scale and the *Taiwania* (*Taiwania cryptomerioides*) is registered as vulnerable

⁹⁹ Founded by the state owned film studio Central Motion Picture Corporation/中央電影事業股份有限公司 (est. 1954), the park opened on 10 February 1975. It was closed for renovation in 2006 and after a failed relaunch was closed indefinitely in 2008.

¹⁰⁰ Lee, Daw-Ming. *Historical Dictionary of Taiwan Cinema*. Scarecrow Press, 2012., p38



Illustration 4.64: Theatrical poster and press clippings related to film *No Greater Love/Wu Feng/吳鳳* (Bu Wancang, 1962)

The image of aboriginal people as primitive savages requiring the civilising influence of outsiders, be it imperial Japanese or Han Chinese, continued to be propagated throughout the 20th Century. In 1930s the film *Gohō, the Righteous Man/Gijin gohō/Yiren wu feng* (Andō Tarō, 1932) was produced to tell the benevolent story of Wu Feng and endorse the settler administrations position.¹⁰¹ The first film made and distributed in Taiwan after the arrival of the Nationalist KMT government was *Storm over Alishan/Happenings in Alishan/阿里山風雲* (Chang Cheh, Chang Ying, 1950) another retelling of Wu Feng's sacrifice. This film was not alone, just ten years later it was followed by another adaption, this time produced by the Taiwan Provincial Government's Taiwan Film Studio (TFS) called *No Greater Love/Wu Feng/吳鳳* (Bu Wancang, 1962) that bears the distinction of being the first colour film produced and distributed on the island.

These films are not alone in depicting indigenous people and presenting versions of history endorsing colonial policy. As Daw-Man Lee notes '[t]aking the colonizer's viewpoint in the interpretation of history, *Storm over Alishan Mountain* and other comparable films implied that Tsou tribal culture and customs were backward and savage and must be transformed by more civilised Han Chinese culture. This provided a rationale for the Nationalist government's assimilation policy.'¹⁰² The key difference in the adaptations of Wu Fung, as Daw-Man Lee has reflected, is the degree of their cultural inaccuracy '*Gohō, the Righteous Man* was shot on Alishan, with Tsou tribes people playing nonessential roles. The two films made afterward by Han Chinese were not made on Alishan and were inaccurate in their content related to Tsou culture, including costumes, ceremonies, songs, dances and so forth.'¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ The film was supported by the colonial government and produced by the Taiwan Film Production Office (TFPO, Taiwan eiga sei-sakusho), which was part of Japan Gōdō News Agency's Film Department.

¹⁰² Lee, Daw-Ming. *Historical Dictionary of Taiwan Cinema*. Scarecrow Press, 2012. p39

¹⁰³ 'In a similar vein, the TFS's national policy film *Story of the Heroic Pioneers/Heroic Pioneers/Tangshan guo Taiwan* (Lee Hsing, 1986), portrayed Wu Sha leading a group of Han Chinese across the mountains two centuries ago, overcoming extreme difficulties to turn the Langyang plain into fertile farmland. Wu was depicted as the incarnation of justice, who came to save and educate

The Tsou/鄒 are an indigenous group in central Taiwan living in Nantou County, Chiayi County and Kaohsiung City. The Tsou have been understood as consisting of three groups based on language and origin, the Kanakanavu and the Hla'alua (referred to collectively as Southern Tsuo) and the group known as the Alishan Tsuo or Northern Tsuo. These designations are determined in part by the history of occupation in Taiwan: 'A review of historical records of the past three hundred years from the Dutch occupation (1624-1662) to the KMT government shows that each of the three "Tsou" groups have their own myths about where they originated, and their own migration histories. [...] In fact, the 'Tsou' is a general ethnic term created by Japanese scholars to describe these three groups, the Kanakanavu, Hla'alua and Alishan Tsou. None of the archives before the period of Japanese rule had systematically discussed the relation among these three groups.'¹⁰⁴ Since Japanese occupation the Thau/Ngan/邵族 tribe who live near Sun Moon Lake, and have connections to Alishan, have been mistaken with the Tsou people given their geographic proximity and interpretations of the legend of their origin. The Thau/Ngan people are said to have followed a white deer to the shores of Sun Moon Lake.¹⁰⁵ There are differences in the story, one tells of the tribe following the deer from an island within the lake and another that the deer came from Alishan. As such the Thau people have historically been regarded as a branch of the Alishan Tsuo. Thau/Ngan were not officially recognised until 15 August 2001 when they were acknowledged as the tenth and smallest indigenous group in Taiwan.

As well as this dubious line in Taiwan film history, the legend of Wu Feng was heavily promoted through civil structures and education, with commemorative statues, monuments and parks dedicated to him. His story was retold in school texts books for generations despite his very existence being debated and the conflicting records as to the period he lived and when he is said to have been in Taiwan. Temples were built in his honour and various texts and poems were written from the 1800s onwards to promote the legend. In the 1980s, amidst the growing democratic movement as broader recognition was given to indigenous people in Taiwan, the myth of Wu Feng became a key cause for campaigns and protests. In 1984 campaigners for indigenous rights founded the Alliance of Taiwan Aborigines/ATA/原住民權利促進會 in Taipei lead by indigenous activist and musician Hu De-Fu/胡德夫/Parangalan who held protest concerts across Taiwan.¹⁰⁶

barbarians – the Kavalan plains tribe. However, this colonist discourse is disputed by the colonized Kavalan tribe. In their interpretation Wu Sha and his followers deceived the Kavalan ancestors into lending their land, resulting in the tribe ultimately losing it all.' - Lee, Daw-Ming. *Historical Dictionary of Taiwan Cinema*. Scarecrow Press, 2012., p39

¹⁰⁴ Digital Museum of Taiwan Indigenous people, 2008, <http://www.dmtip.gov.tw/Eng/Tsou.htm>

¹⁰⁵ In the midst of the lake is Lalu Island considered scared land by the Thao Tribe. During the Japanese administration it was renamed *Jade Island/玉島* and later Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Government renamed it *Kwanghwa Island/光華島* (which literally translates as 'glorious China island'). The island was badly effected by the 921 earthquake in 1999 which destroy a wedding pavilion build there in 1978 and sank the majority of the island. Following this and under pressure from indigenous groups the island was returned to its original name in the Thao language as "Lalu".

¹⁰⁶ The ATA movement was part of broader social movements across Taiwan. The impetus for these movements can be traced to the Kaoshiung Incident/高雄事件 in 1979 when an opposition demonstration on Human Rights Day was suppressed. Despite the suppression, it has been argued by Ming-sho Ho that, this incident began a new political phase in Taiwan and led to the emergence of various movements seeking the democratization of the country throughout the 1980s and the successful establishment of the oppositional Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) (民主進步黨) in 1986. The movements related to diverse range of issues from

In the late 1980s the group campaigned for the removal of Wu Feng myth from text books, monuments, parks and civic areas and the return of regions to their original names. These campaigns culminated in the city of Chiayi, one of the key gateways to Alishan, which had a prominent park dedicated to Wu Feng and a large statue of him directly outside the cities main train station. Chiayi was a central site for anti-KMT uprising that lead to the February 28 massacre as such it became an important locus for protest and the democracy movement in the 1980s. (It was in Chiayi that Ouyang Wen, discussed in chapter 1. *Fragment*, confronted KMT forces before his arrest in the 1950s.)



Illustration 4.65: Protest calling for the Ministry of Education to remove the 'Wu Feng Myth' from school text books and township, January 1987, photo by Pan Shiao-shia/潘小俠

On 9 September 1987 following the reopening of the Wu Feng Temple in Chiayi, *Project Mount A-Li/阿里山專案* was launched to protest the ongoing mistreatment of indigenous people. On 31 December 1988 around 20 indigenous Taiwanese activists, together with other supporters including the presbyterian priest Lin Chung-Cheng/林宗正, led a protest to tear down the bronze statue *Wu-feng riding on the horse*¹⁰⁷ in front of Chiayi train station. Following this action and the mounting public support for the campaign, mentions of Wu Feng were removed from textbooks and the Wu Feng Township was reverted to Alishan Township. On 28 February 1989 an estimated three thousand people participated in a procession through the city to campaign for a peace monument for February 28 incident. The procession lead to the former site of the Wu Feng statue where a temporary peace monument had been erected. This proposal was however was not realised on this site, but a February 28 monument was erected in the city park and the Wu Feng statue was replaced by a Liberty Bell.

environment degradation and rural impoverishment and rapid industrialisation of Taiwan as well as persistent issues of sexism, class division, aboriginal rights, labour relations and inequality. A key precursor to the movement in Chiayi was the anti-DuPont protests organised in March 1986 by community activists in Lukang in Central Taiwan to oppose project by US corporation DuPont.

¹⁰⁷ The statue was erected in 1980 and was sculpted by Pu Tian-Shen/蒲添生 (1919-1996). In the 1930s he studied at the Imperial Art School in Japan before leading to study with the Japanese sculpture Fumio Asakura (1883-1964). Upon returning to Taiwan who was famous for creating memorial statues including the first statue of Sun Yet-sen erected in Taiwan, today displayed in front of the Zhongnan Hall in Taipei.

The 228 Peace Memorial Monument (嘉義市二二八紀念公園二二八紀念碑), designed by San-Yuen Chan, was completed on 19 August 1989 and located on Mituo Road in the Eastern District of Chiayi City and stands as the first such monument in Taiwan.¹⁰⁸



Illustration 4.66: Wu Feng demonstration, Chiayi station, December 31, 1988, photographer unknown

The last decade has seen filmmakers in Taiwan return to the Japanese period from *Le Moulin*/日曜日式散步者 (Huang Ya-li, 2015), that explored the literary and artistic connections between Taiwanese poets and the international avant-garde, to the big-budget *Seediq Bale*/賽德克·巴萊 (Wei Te-sheng, 2011) that retells the Wushu Incident as a moment of nativist resistance. Laha Mebow's film in contrast follows everyday life and personal memories, providing a portrait of three generations in contemporary indigenous village, her own search for her roots align her film with ongoing de-colonial projects illuminated by the entangled myth of Wu Feng.¹⁰⁹

With the original title of Laha's film we can better understand what is at the heart of her project. The Chinese title is 不一樣的月光 translates directly as 'A Different Moonlight'. The story of Sa Yun for Laha, is a means to trace linkages back into the mountains and the origins of the Liuxing tribe. Myths such as that of Sa Yun

¹⁰⁸ With the lifting of martial law in 1987 the government moved to limit the potential effects of the escalating oppositional movements and maintain social control against raising disaffection through a liberalisation programme giving rise to new social movements as impediments to free speech were tempered. A central actor in these movements was the student body and campus activism that began in the early 1980s and progressed through a series of marches and demonstrations in solidarity with various campaigns and the publication of political journals and magazines throughout the late 1980s. One incident that bears reflection with the protests in Chiayi occurred at National Taiwan University on 4th May 1989 under the title *Totem and Taboo*. This action mounted by the Anti-Spectre Theatre Troupe/反幽靈劇團 was directed against the personality cults that had dominated Taiwan through the proliferation of public statuary and perpetuation of mythic figures. Here the spectre which was the focus of the protests was non-other than the former leader of the R.O.C. Chiang Kai-shek. This action and other elements of the student movement culminated in the influential Wild Lily Movement (initiated also by students from National Taiwan University) when the Chang Kai-shek Memorial in central Taipei was occupied between 16 to 22 March 1990 in order to demand immediate democratic reform.

¹⁰⁹ These contemporary reviews reflect on the film in context of parallel productions and representation of indigenous communities and stories gives and insight into the reception of the film in Taiwan. See: Ho Yi, 'Movie review: Finding Sayun 不一樣的月光', *Taipei Times*, 25 Nov 2011. Accessed: 20 January 2021: <http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/feat/archives/2011/11/25/2003519152>. And: Sterk, Darryl, "Finding Sayun" and aboriginal romance films, *Savage Minds* [blog], 9 December 2011. Accessed: 20 January 2021: <https://savage minds.org/2011/12/09/finding-sayun/>

were used to justify one of the policies of the Nationalist KMT government which forced people to leave their ancestral homes and cultures deep in the mountains. Members of the Liuxing tribe migrated to the lowlands of Nanao Township becoming the Jinyu tribe of today. This is a cycle of displacement and movements, which Laha describes; 'our ancestors were rushed to the flat from the sea, and rushed to the mountain, and then forced down from the mountain with cannons.'¹¹⁰

In 2008 Laha embarked on her root-seeking journey with her father to find their ancestral home hidden deep in the mountains. Trekking for four days to elevations over 1000 meters, the group hiked into the ancestral region through overgrown trails looking for traces of their former settlement, but encountered only wild long grass. At the point of defeat they asked their ancestors for help. Aided by a sudden memory which returned to her father they eventually found stone steps, the only remaining parts of their home. This site became central to the film which traced the story of Sa Yun in reverse, shifting the narrative to one of reclamation and reconnection with ancestors and with the land. The final scenes of the film were recorded at this site, whereupon the elder tribesman Zhang Jinzhen delivers a monologue in Atayal language, that is translated as 'Grandmother, father, do you know? Your child has came home to see you. I came back to see you on the mountain... Although I can't see you, I stand in front of you now'¹¹¹



Illustration 4.67: *Finding Sayun* (2011) photo by Huaying

¹¹⁰ 黃采文/Huang Caiwen, '影像 . 人生 | 了解原住民 看見不一樣的月光'. 新紀元周刊 | 和您攜手，共同走進新的紀元'. Epoch Weekly, Taiwan, No. 254, 15 December, 2011. Accessed 7 May 2020. <https://www.epochweekly.com/b5/256/10203p.htm>.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

This final address to her distant relatives, addresses the mountain and land as site of ancestral connection. The different moonlight of the original title, evokes both animist cosmologies and the famous line from *Green Island Serenade* describing this island amidst the South China Sea, East China and Pacific Ocean *Like a boat floating in the moonlight*/像一隻船 在月夜裡搖呀搖'. The film's search doesn't lead to a confrontation with the violence of displacement and centuries of mistreatment, but attempts to reconcile these histories and nourish Laha Mebow's roots in the process. The sentiment she strove for was that of '笑中帶淚/laughter with tears.'¹¹² Her film then is her own *comedy of shadows*.

¹¹² Ibid.

4.8 Hypothesis of a painter



Illustration 4.68: Karsiu Lee, 'L'arbre de Keelung, Taiwan: Pour Raúl Ruiz/The Tree of Keelung, Taiwan: For Raúl Ruiz', oil on canvas, 55 x 46cm, 2018. Photo George Clark.

Since Raúl died in August 2011, I haven't stopped dreaming about him. Every time I close my eyes, I remain alert to signs of a parallel kind of life, a life in which Raúl and I continue to live together, where we sometimes argue and fight, and also continue to understand each other as friends and companions, where we sometimes walk, listen to music, look out the window, cook, and above all talk about God and the world. And it's true: after Raúl's death I continued my relationship with him in [my] dreams. Every time I delve into the endless notebooks, diaries, and the theatre, opera, or film projects he left unfinished, or that remain as initial gestures of his creative power, this dialogue that I continue with him follows me into sleep. - Valeria Sarmiento¹¹³

Given his championing of a shamanic cinema it is not surprising that since his death Raúl Ruiz has been an unusually prolific filmmaker complicating what his 'final' film may be.¹¹⁴ It could be his free adaptation of the

¹¹³ Arsenal – Institut für Film und Videokunst e.V. 'Arsenal: EL TANGO DEL VIUDO y Su Espejo Deformante'. Accessed 8 May 2020. <https://www.arsenal-berlin.de/en/berlinale-forum/program-forum/main-program/el-tango-del-viudo-y-su-espejo-deformante.html>.

¹¹⁴ Ruiz, Raúl. *Poetics of Cinema. Vol. 1*. Dis Voir Editions, 1995. pp79-80 - 'All these films are sleeping within us. An ordinary narrative movie provides a vast environment in which these potential film sequences disperse and vanish. A shamanic film, on the other hand, would be more like a land mine: it explodes among these potential films and sometimes provokes chain reactions, allowing other events to come into being. In the same way, the shamanic sequence makes us believe we remember events which we have

stories by Chilean writer Hernán del Solar *La noche de enfrente/Night Across the Street* (2012) made only to be shown after his death, or perhaps *Lines of Wellington* (2012) the last feature he was working on which was completed by his partner Valeria Sarmiento. But then other films have emerged such as *La telenovela errante/The Wandering Soap Opera* (1990) shot as part of an actors workshop in Chile and finally completed with new sections filmed by Sarmiento in 2017.

It is similarly difficult to identify Raúl's first film. It could be the short work *La maleta/The Suitcase* (1963) an adaptation of an absurdist play by Victor Jara which was produced under the auspices of the Experimental Cinema programme at the University of Chile in 1963. Originally intending as a feature, Ruiz edited a 20 minute film which was thought lost until 2007 when it was re-discovered at the University in a can labelled as 'French film.' The material was re-edited by Inti Briones with new music by Jorge Arriagada and premiered, 45 years later, at the Valdivia Film Festival in 2008.¹¹⁵

In April 2019 news emerged about the reconstruction of another work, Ruiz's abandoned first feature film *El tango del viudo*.¹¹⁶ The work was filmed silent on 16mm in June 1967 in and around his 115 Huelén apartment in Providencia which is still kept by Valeria and her sister. Ruiz took the original negative to Tecnofilm laboratories in Buenos Aires in the winter of 1967. But rather than record the soundtrack he used the remaining budget to make a blow up to 35mm from the 16mm original. After returning to Chile he shifted focus to work on what would become his debut *Tres Tigres Triste* supported by Los Capitanes, a production company founded by his father and his sea captain friends. In a news article from the late 1960s, Ruiz prophetically stated 'the future will be responsible for giving this movie sound, which today is being stored silent.'¹¹⁷

The reels for the film were left with friends and didn't resurface until 2008. Ruiz viewed the material but deemed it too much work to reconstruct. Now under the supervision of Sarmiento they have begun work to complete the film, hiring lip readers to study the footage and reconstruct the dialogue. The film 'takes its title from Pablo Neruda's poem dedicated to his Burmese lover Josie Bliss, femme fatale and witness to the hard years of the poet in Burma, between 1927 and 1928. Although the connections with the poem are oblique,

not experienced; and it puts these fabricated memories in touch with genuine memories which we never thought to see again, and which now rise up and march towards us like the living dead in a horror movie. This mechanism is the first step in a process which could permit us to pass from our own world into the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, even to the stars.' - Raúl Ruiz

¹¹⁵ The film is preserved as part of the Cineteca of the University of Chile, Santiago. 'CinetecaVirtual.UChile.Cl » The Suitcase (1963)'. Accessed 7 June 2019: <http://cinotecavirtual.uchile.cl/cineteca/index.php/Detail/objects/2345>

¹¹⁶ Gonzalez, Rodrigo, 'El primer filme de Raúl Ruiz recupera la voz'. *Culto* (blog), 14 April 2019. Accessed 8 May 2020: <https://www.latercera.com/culto/2019/04/14/primer-filme-raul-ruiz/>

¹¹⁷ Arsenal – Institut für Film und Videokunst e.V. 'Arsenal: EL TANGO DEL VIUDO y Su Espejo Deformante'. Accessed 8 May 2020. <https://www.arsenal-berlin.de/en/berlinale-forum/program-forum/main-program/el-tango-del-viudo-y-su-espejo-deformante.html>

the figure of the cursed woman travels to the film.¹¹⁸

In his diaries Ruiz recounted the narrative of the film: 'The story revolves around a man whose wife appears as a ghost. The ghost follows him everywhere, under the bed, under the tables... by dint of frequenting the ghost, the man begins to resemble him, so that he becomes more and more effeminate, in a spiral in which we discover that he was never married, and that is simply a personality split and a schizophrenic game.'¹¹⁹

Roanne Kantor has argued that the figure of Bliss has become an 'unrecoverable subject',¹²⁰ an absent figure in the abundant scholarship around Neruda. When she is acknowledged as such, Kantor argues, she can 'yield productive insights about [the] structure in which it is housed',¹²¹ primarily that of 'Latin American Orientalism' in the stereotypical figure conjured and perpetuated by Neruda and his followers. His famous poem in which he presented the clearest image of his lover from Burma, *Tango del viudo* was reportedly written on a ship transferring him from his consular position in Burma to his new appointment in Ceylon. As Kantor carefully outlines the use of tense in the poem creates a complex picture, presenting the lover with 'a sort of respect for her separate interiority that makes the poem more artful than its later elaborations.'¹²²

For example, the poem's infamous accusation that Josie tried to kill him with a kitchen knife, is more ambiguous through his use of subjunctive and the future tense, creating 'a distance between Neruda's perception and Josie's reality.'¹²³ The myth of Josie was further perpetuated and shorn of its ambiguity in Neruda's own memoirs *Confieso que he vivido* posthumously published in 1974. As Kantor argues 'we must consider that, despite his reduced finances, Neruda would have appeared in a position of power to the hypothetical Josie, phenotypically aligned with the white colonial rulers and holding a government job.'¹²⁴ Any consideration of Bliss must be from point of view of this voiceless, silenced figure, a production of colonial relationships.

The reconstructed film was completed by Sarmiento, sharing directing duties separated by 50 years with her phantom lover. *El Tango Del Viudo Y Su Espejo Deformante/The Tango Of The Widower And Its Distorting*

¹¹⁸ Gonzalez, Rodrigo, 'El primer filme de Raúl Ruiz recupera la voz'. *Culto* (blog), 14 April 2019. Accessed 8 May 2020: <https://www.latercera.com/culto/2019/04/14/primer-filme-raul-ruiz/>

¹¹⁹ Diary extract published in: Valeria Sarmiento on "The Tango of the Widower and Its Distorting Mirror" by Ruiz: "Sometimes I'd Guess What He Wanted to Do; I Hope That in This Film This Is the Case", *cinemachile*, 5 February 2020. <https://cinemachile.cl/en/espanol-pelicula-de-raul-ruiz-abrira-seccion-forum-de-la-berlinale-2020/>

¹²⁰ Kantor, Roanne L. 'Chasing Your (Josie) Bliss: The Troubling Critical Afterlife of Pablo Neruda's Burmese Lover'. *TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 3, no. 2 (2014), p60

¹²¹ Ibid, p61

¹²² Ibid, p63

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

Mirror opened the 50th Berlinale Forum in February 2020. Commenting on their ongoing collaboration Sarmiento has said 'in the rooms of the house where he lived with his parents Olga and Don Ernesto, I find the same poetic, philosophical, and critical intentions that characterise Raúl's work, only in a pure state, as with a new toy. For me, completing his first feature film is a way of materialising this dialogue that comes directly from the world of dreams, where we make films as if following improvised cooking recipes, and where we create something with the means at our disposal. That's why neither Raúl nor I will ever stop making films.'¹²⁵

On Sunday 3 December 2017 I visited Veronica Sarmiento in Raúl and Valeria's old flat in Providencia where *El tango del viudo* was shot. The apartment block was undergoing renovation. Veronica tells me that under the scaffolding and protected with paper is a dedication to Ruiz written by Waldo Rojas. The plaque she tells me says something like, 'Home of Raúl Ruiz (1941-2011), inventor of mechanical dreams.'



Illustration 4.69: 115 Huelén, Santiago, 3 December 2017, photo by George Clark



Illustration 4.70: View from 115 Huelén, Santiago in *El Tango Del Viudo* (Raúl Ruiz, 1967)



Illustration 4.71: 115 Huelén, Santiago in *El Tango Del Viudo* (Raúl Ruiz, 1967)

¹²⁵ The completed version has the extended title for its premiere at 50th Berlinale Forum, Arsenal – Institut für Film und Videokunst e.V. 'Arsenal: EL TANGO DEL VIUDO y Su Espejo Deformante'. Accessed 24 August 2020. <https://www.arsenal-berlin.de/en/berlinale-forum/program-forum/main-program/el-tango-del-viudo-y-su-espejo-deformante.html>.

In July 2018 when I had lunch with Valeria and Waldo Rojas in Paris, Valeria gave me treatment for another of Ruiz's projects connected to Taiwan that he had hoped to film. The 9 page treatment written in 1990 for Nomad Films, a production company in Luxembourg, was called *The Shadow Players*. The film was set in Taiwan in 1956 and follows generations of travelling magicians who perform with projected shadows and mirrors. Valeria lent me the treatment which I took to photocopy nearby, the nearest place was a Chinese owned shop specialising photographic processing and photocopying (see illustration 4.72 & 4.73), a perfect place to mirror and create a shadow image, thinking of China in Paris, of films within films.

Around the Providencia apartment are various photos of Ruiz's mother and father, collected books and other items from his and Valeria's travels. Beside Ruiz's writing desk were two paintings, one of a large ship on the high seas and the other, just above his writing desk, is a small Chinese ink painting of a mist shrouded landscape. These distant landscapes, prompts for travel and the entanglement of culture, reminds me of my own working process, working to assemble images of places separated in space and time into new constellations on my editing timeline or my diary. This process is evocatively encapsulated by the Taiwanese writer Chu, T'ien-wen: 'Sitting at my desk, I saw the features and construction of the city composed by arrangement of words materializing in front of me like icebergs rising out of the water, there the clouds and ocean met. The city appearing under my pen existed only in words, and then words disappeared, so would the city.'¹²⁶



Illustration 4.72: A.C.F. 23 Rue de Belleville, 75019 Paris, France, Google Maps Image, retrieved 11 June 2019



Illustration 4.73: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2019), 35mm frame enlargement

Fernando Pérez Villalón has analysed Ruiz connection to Chinese aesthetics and poetics in his film *Las soledades* (1992) in which he approaches the landscape of Chiloé guided by Shih-T'ao's compositional strategies and instructions in which 'letting the world breathe is more important than how we breathe in the face of the world.'¹²⁷ One of the oldest traditions of Chinese painting is *Shan shui* / 山水 (literally 'mountain water') which approaches landscape focused on the movement through rather than any static view. When people have tried to find the vistas depicted in Shan shui paintings they often fail as the paintings are, according to Ch'eng Hsi's famous definition, 'not an open window for the viewer's eye, it is an object for the viewer's mind... *Shan shui* painting is more like a vehicle of philosophy.'¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Chu, T'ien-wen. *Notes of a Desolate Man*. Columbia University Press, 1999.

¹²⁷ Ruiz derives the lessons from Shi-Tao via text he calls *Opinions on Painting by the Monk of the Green Pumpkin* based on Pierre Ryckmans' famous translation '*Propos sur la peinture du moine Citrouille-amère de Shitao. Contribution à l'étude terminologique des théories chinoises de la peinture*' and Francois Cheng's essay *Plein et vide: le langage pictural chinois*. Pierre Ryckmans, who largely published under his pen name Simon Leys, inspired by the main character from Victor Segalen's *René Leys* published in 1922, about a Belgian teenager in Peking in last days of the Qing Dynasty. It was under this name that he wrote his most famous book *Ombres chinoises*, published in english as *Chinese Shadows*. (Ruiz borrowed this title for his 1982 short TV commission.)

¹²⁸ Maeda, Robert J.; et al. *Two Twelfth Century Texts on Chinese Painting*, University of Michigan, Center for Chinese Studies, 1970. p16

The elements are active agents in forming landscapes over centuries and the means by which landscapes are obscured and reconfigured on a daily basis by rain and clouds. This makes a distinction between later European traditions of landscape painting which prioritise the prospect view where land is seen as territory to be owned. The land we see in Shan shui is more aligned to Glissant's concept of *Lieu/place* rather than territory. Such paintings, which Ruiz carried with him, can be understood as *images of passage*, images of relation, painted by scholars whose work sought to combine poetry and ecology with an awareness of the way we pass through landscapes rather to own or possess them. One of Shih-T'ao's radical departures with tradition was to see this as an intertextual dialogue between equals. As Shih-T'ao said 'I am myself because my Self naturally exists. The whiskers and eyebrows of the Ancients cannot grow on my face, nor can their entrails exist in my stomach. [...] I have been taught directly from Heaven; how can I learn from antiquity without transforming it?'¹²⁹



Illustration 4.74: Raúl Ruiz's former study, Santiago Chile, Nov 2018. Photo George Clark



Illustration 4.75: Raúl Ruiz's former study, Santiago Chile, Nov 2018. Photo George Clark

¹²⁹ Hay, Jonathan. *Shitao: Painting and Modernity in Early Qing China*. Cambridge University Press, 2001. p229



Illustration 4.76: Detail of painting in Raúl Ruiz's former study, Santiago Chile, Nov 2018. Photo George Clark.

Discourses on painting has recurred throughout Ruiz's work from his reflection and fascination with Velázquez and his lost painting on the expulsion of the moors (a double loss) to his readings of Chinese compositional strategies are all connected to the movements of his life. In his diary written on his way to shoot *The Comedy of Shadows*, I discovered a remarkable connection across these various aspects of his work and through this will introduce the second key actor after Laha Mebow, the painter Karsiu Lee/李加兆.

Thursday, November 9th, 1995

On flight between Frankfurt and Taipei.

Reading the China Post I recognize, in the social section, Kar Siu Lee, a Cantonese painter I met in Paris twenty years ago and that, in the meantime, has "made a career". In these moments he has an exposition in Taipei.

When I met him in Paris he had just arrived from Hong Kong. He had escaped Popular China swimming and escaping sharks and lifeguards. I searched for a painter that was capable of imitating the style of the academic oil painting, the so-called *pompier* style. He lived in a minuscule *chambre de bonne* without electricity and he had managed in a little time to bring his wife, Wendy, a beautiful woman that only appeared to be 15 years old. In less than a year Karsiu Lee had gone through every style of European painting from the 20th century: expressionism, the action painting, with a particular predilection for Nordic expressionism. In half a day he painted an oil portrait of François Simon

dressed as the Pope, but in the pose of an official portrait of Mao that represented him young, going through the mountains, dressed with a traditional tunic and with a closed umbrella in the left hand and a book on the right one.

Then we continued collaborating in *The Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting* and in a special effects film for which he did an extensive story-board. Today he paints mental landscapes, lives in Montmartre and sells in Taiwan and Hong Kong.¹³⁰

In July 2018 while I was in Paris to meet with Sarimento I managed to contact Karsiu Lee. He was preoccupied with a new body of sculptural works but agreed to meet with me. I visited him a few times in his studio in the 18th Arr. near Simplon, north of Paris. I interviewed him about his life and work, and the paintings he made for Ruiz for *The Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting* and other films. He kept a folder of clippings from his work with Ruiz including his own small preliminary paintings and photographs on which he was to base his painting. We talked about his life in Paris, his exhibitions in Taiwan where he has various collectors and the focus of his current work. He fled mainland China in dramatic fashion for Hong Kong where he studied painting before moving to London in 1971 to study at the Sir John Cass Art School (now part of the London Metropolitan University) and subsequently settled in Paris in the mid-1970s where he met Ruiz.

After meeting a second time I made two proposals to Karsiu Lee. First I asked if he would read some passages for my film from the script for *The Comedy of Shadows* in French. Secondly if he would consider making a new painting connected to this project that I could exhibit in the Taiwan Biennial. I was keen to cast him in the project to solidify the constellation of connections I was assembling, to give shape to the movements and exchanges which have populated the project and to open it out onto other lives and practices. After protesting that he wasn't an actor he agreed to participate in my film for Ruiz as long as he could read it as himself and not have to perform. Perfect. I left him copy of the script. When I came back the following day he told me he had called his friend in Taiwan to try and find out more about the director Ki mentioned in Ruiz's script and the films he directed. I had assumed that Ki was a Ruizian invention but Karsiu had assumed the opposite and spent the night on his own investigation trying to find details of this unusual filmmaker to no avail. It seemed like maybe Karsiu had already begun performing the role of Ki after all.

¹³⁰ Ruiz, Raúl, Ruiz Diaries, 'Thursday, November 9th, 1995'. Translated by Jaime Grijalba, TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/Thursday-November-9th-1995>



Illustration 4.77: *Inner Sage / Outer King* (George Clark, 2019) Karsiu Lee's studio planning new painting inspired by *The Comedy of Shadows*. 35mm frame enlargement

We recorded the reading of the scenario for *The Comedy of Shadows*, taken from the diaries of director Ki. Karsiu delivered the text in a slow and careful manner, he told me he doesn't have so many visitors so isn't so used to speaking in French nowadays. We also discussed my second proposal to which he was very skeptical as he was too busy with his sculptures. But I had left a selection of photographs taken by Laha Mebow which could be source material with him. When I returned to his studio for the recording he had already laid out one image on his desk. He had selected the photograph with Shu Kuo-chih/舒國治 standing by the large tree on the hill top. He told me he would make a painting but in his new style, a new work connecting to his friend and made to help materialise the lost film which I could bring to Taiwan and include in the exhibition there.¹³¹

I left Paris with his promise to finish the painting if I could arrange to have someone bring it to Taipei. He told me the size he planned would be easy to hand carry and gave me the contact for his collector in Taipei, a Dentist to whom he has sold more than 20 paintings since exhibiting there in the 1990s. With this new potential work and thread to another career and life, I began talking with the Taiwan Biennial curators about connections to other artists, principally Yu Peng/于彭 and Cheng Tsai-tung/鄭在東 who attended Ruiz's shoot and were in the orbit of Cheung Chin. As the Biennial's host was the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Art we realised that we could also exhibit a work by Yu Peng from their collection. The cast of actors was growing moving across film to visual arts, music and literature and expanding into new avenues.

¹³¹ Interview with author, Paris, 24-25 July 2018, unpublished

Yu Peng is known for his literary style of large scroll paintings drawing on the traditions of Chinese painting and contemporary hedonism. His work, as Leslie Ma has commented 'translated and transformed the contradictions between literati ideals and the realities of cosmopolitan life, giving his trees, mountains and figures a surreal, almost ethereal, *jolie laide* presence.'¹³²

Never formally trained Yu Peng's aesthetic was developed as a street artist and outsider to the conservative discourse of Taiwanese art of his contemporaries. Residing in the Waishuangxi, in northern Taipei City, neighbouring the National Palace Museum, he eschewed the art market and institutions while drawing on the traditions of the scholar-painter invested in personal expression above direct representation or beauty. Cultivating this outsider status he became associated with other artists who used the Waishuangxi Creek as their drinking spot to subversively rethink the culture housed in the nearby Palace Museum. We were able to present an original work by Yu Peng in the exhibition, I chose a work from late 1990s following the period of Ruiz's shoot and showing Peng's impressionistic ink rendering of an almost psychedelic landscape. The most pertinent and evocative for the constellation of connections and friendships was his 1997 painting known as *Natural Affinity with Friends*/碩果眾緣有因花繞坐生. Due to an overlap with an another exhibition at the museum we had to swap my first choice, *Natural Affinity with Friends* for another work mid-show called *Sitting amid Bamboos while Enjoying Their Pleasant Odor*/閒坐幽篁靜微聞清香味 (1998).¹³³ Both works are from same period and style of Peng's work but I felt title of my first choice was a better fit.

¹³² Ma, Lesley, 'Yu Peng (1955-2014)', ArtAsiaPacific, 10 November 2014. <http://artasiapacific.com/News/YuPeng19552014>.

¹³³ *Flowers of Immense Charm – A Masterpiece Exhibition by Four Major Museums*, 6 Oct 2018 – 10 Feb 2019, National Taiwan Fine Art Museum



Illustration 4.78: Yu Peng '碩果眾緣有因花繞坐生/Natural Affinity with Friends', 1997 (shown first)



Illustration 4.79: Yu Peng, '閒坐幽篁靜微聞清香味/Sitting amid Bamboos while Enjoying'



Illustration 4.80: *Double Ghosts*, exhibition documentation, Taiwan Biennial, 30 September 2018



Illustration 4.81: *Double Ghosts*, exhibition documentation, Taiwan Biennial, 5 January 2019

With the network of connections through French and Chilean cinema and visual arts, both Ruiz's and my own contemporaries, as well as broader networks across South American and South East Asia, the constellation of the project was widening to the literati world through Chin Cheng's connections to Taipei intelligentsia and my own connection with contemporary generation of artists, musicians, filmmakers and curators in Taipei. During his earlier trip to Taipei to prepare the production in March 1995, Ruiz spent time with the sculptor Shiao Jon-Jen which he records in his diary:

Friday, March 10th, 1995

The night before yesterday, travel through Taipei with three friends of Shiao (the sculptor) that know my films. They've studied in France in the golden years of semiology and cinephilia, the last years of the last Vanguard. Dismayed at the state of cinema, of the European culture of the 80s-95, and admirers of Latin American literature.

Anyway the center of cinema today is here, in Asia. All of this is talked about in a nightclub surrounded by charming escorts.

One of the semiologists tells me: "Now that you've passed the obligatory entry exam for all visitors we shall go to an artists cafe with an outrageous name: The Cemetery."¹³⁴

I asked my Taipei friends if they had heard about the artists bar mentioned in Ruiz's diaries... maybe this was another invention or forgotten detail. But after a short search they find the reference in Chinese and know the place. The bar was notorious in the 1990s when it originally went under the name 'Postmodern cemetery/後現代墳場'¹³⁵ situated in the Da'an district in central Taipei. The bar was hit by Typhoon Herb in 1996 which blew off the characters for *Postmodern* leading it to be known just as *The Cemetery*. It was a popular place for the underground to meet and where worlds of cinema, music and politics intersected.¹³⁶ The bar still exists but with new owners and a different name.

¹³⁴ Ruiz Diaries, 'Friday, March 10th, 1995'. Translated by Jaime Grijalba, TinyLetter. Accessed 24 April 2019. <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries/letters/Friday-March-10th-1995>

¹³⁵ The bar was also known as the 'Postmodern Graveyard' and has influential cultural history across media. It is mentioned T'ien-wen Chu's influential novel in *Notes of a Desolate Man*, Columbia University Press, 1999. p122

¹³⁶ For a contemporary interview with current owners of the bar reflection on its 20 year history see: Lin, Lig. '專訪 | 又臭又沒特色，大家卻很愛去的「操場酒吧」'. *every little d*, 27 December 2018. Accessed: 24 May 2020: <https://everylittled.com/article/110873>

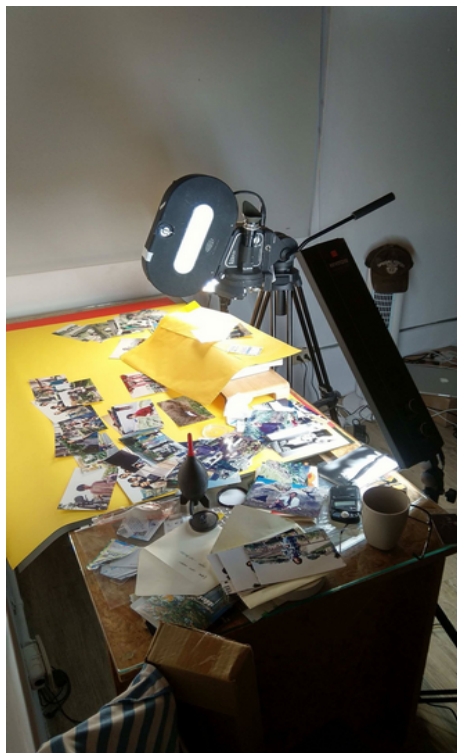


Illustration 4.82: Studio filming for *Inner Sage / Outer King*, Treasure Hill artists village, Taipei, August 2018



Illustration 4.83: Studio filming for *Inner Sage / Outer King*, Treasure Hill artists village, Taipei, August 2018, calligraphy by Chou Chung-yen/周重言 curator Yu Ling Chou's father

While in Taipei in August 2018 I stayed in Treasure Hill artists village preparing for the exhibition and waiting for news from Karsiu Lee if he will finish the painting in time for my contact who had agreed to bring it from Paris. After a long day filming Laha's photographs and titles for the film in the studio I asked my neighbours, a musician from Hong Kong and dancer from Singapore, who were in Taipei for the ADAM programme, if they want to go for a drink. They tell me they know a grungy place nearby which is walking distance. The bar it turns out is the same location as *The Cemetery*, but now has a new controversial name, it is simply called 操場/*Fucking Place*.

I get news from my French contact that he managed to meet with Karsiu Lee when he was back in Paris and has arrived in Taipei with the painting. This painting for a lost film is a key piece in the exhibition, a contemporary anchor linking Ruiz's early films and new work through my growing cast of actors. Karsiu Lee allowed me to hold onto the painting for the duration of the exhibition and bring it to the UK to present it in a new context within my *Double Ghosts* in exhibition Berwick-upon-Tweed which I will introduce in the following section. Before I go into that I will complete the orbit of Karsiu Lee. In January 2020 I was back in Taiwan and had brought the painting with me now the UK exhibition had closed. I arranged to meet with the

collector Dr Dens Chen who had agreed to purchase the new painting. I meet him in his dental practice, where he showed me the various works by Karsiu Lee he has hanging in his office and others in storage. He was happy to support his old friend and give this painting for a lost film a home in Taipei.



Illustration 4.84: Dr. Dens Chen holding Karsiu Lee's painting to add to his collection in Taipei, January 2020. Photo George Clark.

4.9 Constellation #3: Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival, 19 September 2019

Tuesday 14 May 2019, London

Moved into a new flat at start of the month. It is council tower block in Isle of Dogs sat on edge of the Thames. It belongs to Anthony, a photographer who teaches at Kingston. I got to know him through his partner Erika, also an artist. They have moved south of river as the flat is too small for them and their son. So I am staying on the 23rd Floor for the rest of month and maybe longer depending on when they can sell it. There are bits and pieces of furniture in the flat, an antique Chinese mirror, lots of empty jars in the cupboards and a coffee cup with picture of Anthony as a young man in tennis gear. The neighbour Terry makes me a cup of tea and talks me through the view from the front and back of the flat, noting the changes to the landscape he's watched unfold since late 1970s. He recommends watching the river below each morning with my coffee. It proves to be a perfect place to write.

I have started to track down details on the short film shown before *Double Ghosts* at Chin Pao San cemetery last August. It is a ceremonial film designed to be shown in temples and on religious holidays, we asked the projectionist to bring one and he knew what we were talking about. Mr. Lin brought a 10 minute colour scope film (although he ended up projecting it with academy lens so he wouldn't have to change and realign the projectors when he showed *Double Ghosts*). I found a link to the film on youtube it is labelled 1980年代台灣宮廟野台電影的扮仙戲《天官賜福、醉八仙》.¹³⁷ The film title itself is '天官賜福、醉八仙/Heavenly Blessing, Eight Drunk Immortals'. It depicts the legendary group of Xian (the 'immortals') from Chinese mythology in their heavenly realm. Worshipped by Taoists, they are also part of popular secular Chinese culture each of the immortals can transfer their power to a vessel (法器) that serves as a blessing or to dispel evil. They reside atop the mythical mountain of Penglai/蓬萊仙島 located among five islands in the Bohai sea/渤海 in the east coast of China. The legendary mountain is where the immortals gather for ceremonial meals, it's palaces are made of gold and platinum, jewels grow on the trees and everything is white. There is no agony or winter, the wine glasses and wine bowls are never empty and the fruits are enchanted.

Various scholars have attempted to locate the mountain with its special powers and a few theories exist proposing the island to be situated off the coast of Japan and Korean Peninsula with Geoje-si/巨濟, Jeju/濟州島 and Namhae-gun as well as the island of Taiwan itself potentially being the mystical island.

The Eight Immortals are part of tradition of ceremonial drama in Taiwan. The performance style is highly theatrical and follows the procedures of ritual performance to help bring good fortune.¹³⁸ In this film we meet the immortals Fu, Lu, and Shou known as the Sanxing/福祿壽 (also known as the 三星/Three Stars), who represent prosperity, status and longevity and offer blessings and gifts.

¹³⁷ The title of the youtube video translates as "Blessed by the Heavenly Officials, Drunken Eight Immortals" from the Taiwanese Gongmiao Yetai Movie. There are various versions of the film on YouTube. Often the film is shown as one of three blessing films. We just showed the first of three films uploaded by user 張哲生 to youtube. 100SuperEKS. 醉八仙 [懷念的廟口扮仙影片, 完整版.]. Accessed 14 May 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgmAUyEqSkA..>

¹³⁸ See: 張連強/Chang, Lien-Chiang 〈臺灣儀式戲劇及演出程式研究——以北管戲曲扮仙戲為例〉 / Taiwanese Ceremonial Drama and the Study of Its Performing Procedures., 國立中央大學博士論文, PhD diss., National Central University, 2013.



Illustration 4.85: '天宮賜福、醉八仙/Heavenly Blessing, Eight Drunk Immortals' (c. 1980) introduction of the Sanxing immortals (video still)



Illustration 4.86: Magong Beiji Temple, Pengdu, Taiwan

At the end of the film a series of texts appear on screen which translate as follows:

1. 天宮賜福 a gift of happiness/Heavenly blessing
2. 叩謝神恩 divine favor / thank god's grace
3. 合境平安 Peace for everyone and everything
4. 風調雨順 The wind and rain come in their time/ favourable climatic weathers
5. 國泰民安 The State is prosperous and the people live in peace
6. 中華民國萬歲萬歲 / Republic of China [will live and reign for] ten thousand years, ten thousand years, ten thousand of ten thousand years

These clearly indicate the film print is for Taiwan but not clear where the film was made (The Republic of China titles No.5 & 6 appear on different background to the others). The titles shows it was explicit function as a filmic blessing. I ask a designer friend Taipei if he can help to identify the font. He responded today with following image and message:

I've spent some time searching the fonts you've mentioned. And I think it's called "Clerical script."¹³⁹ I'll leave the wiki's link below if you're interested. This kind of style is often used as subtitle in retro Chinese film during maybe '20-'60. Unfortunately, I couldn't retrieve the exact font like the one from your sources. But I've downloaded three kinds of clerical scrip styled fonts. I made an image of the comparison from your source and those I've found. You can tell they're from the same structure system.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Clerical script/隸書 is an archaic style of calligraphy that originated in the Warring States period and has remained popular due to its high legibility while still retaining artistic quality as such it is a popular type for signage, headlines or billboards. See: Qiu Xigui. *Chinese Writing*. [Translation of 文字學概論 by Mattos and Norman]. Early China Special Monograph Series No. 4. Berkeley: The Society for the Study of Early China and the Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 2000

¹⁴⁰ Message to the author, Facebook messenger, 5/13/19, 6.02pm



Illustration 4.87: Font comparison diagram

This would suggest the film was made earlier than the 1980 date given with youtube clip unless the old font was being used to evoke that style. He says it is defiantly 'retro'. I realise the frame I gave him is squashed and in the wrong ratio and say this and he feels it adds to the nostalgic element. Is nostalgia when things have traces of their age literally here in the poor transfer and processing that leaves an image degraded? It is not cinema that is nostalgic but the way it is encountered now, in poor transfers that stand in for signs of its age? I realise this is definitely not what I want to do with my film. Instead I realise I am interested in stripping away these generational traces of degradation we take as signs of age, to make things seen closer rather than further away. Shooting with 35mm film allows these older images to not feel so distant, at least that is the hope.

The exhibition of *Double Ghosts* in the Taiwan Biennial brought together many elements for the first time. Within the structures of the museum, this iteration took the furniture and formal language of the institution to present objects and artefacts. The human and nonhuman actors from the evolving constellation of the project where present in the installed films and accompanying vitrines. The projection performance in Chin Pao San was integrated into the installation in the new film *Inner Sage / Outer King* (long version). We also invited 林源樹/Mr. Lin to the museum to present an outdoor screening – making a bridge between my film and this live model of exhibition. I assembled a programme from my ongoing Eyemo Rolls project with films by Raúl Ruiz, CADA/Colectivo Acciones de Arte. Chang Chao-tang, Richard Yao-chi Chen, Mok Chui-yu & Li Ching, Shannon Te Ao and Chen Chieh-jen to project in front of the museum. The event was called *Like a boat floating in the moonlight/像一隻船 在月夜裡搖呀搖*.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ The screening took place 6 October 2018 and featured the following works:

1. Eyemo Rolls #86, #1-3 (George Clark)
2. Wind Water / Feng Shui (Raúl Ruiz, UK, 1995)
3. Eyemo roll #86 (George Clark)
4. 現代詩展 / Modern Poetry Exhibition (Chang Chao-tang, Taiwan, 1966)
5. Eyemo roll #56 (George Clark)
6. The Mountain (Richard Yao-chi Chen, Taiwan, 1966)
7. Eyemo Rolls #57-60 (George Clark)
8. Letter to the Young Intellectuals of Hong Kong (Mok Chiu-yu & Li Ching, Hong Kong, 1978)
9. Eyemo Rolls #16-17, #74-76 (George Clark)
10. Untitled (epilogue)(Shannon Te Ao, Aotearoa New Zealand, 2015)
11. Eyemo rolls #120, #121 & #124 (George Clark)
12. 機能喪失第三號 / Dysfunction No.3 (Chen Chieh-jen, Taiwan, 1983)

In the months following this exhibition I had discussed the project with Peter Taylor, director of the Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival who was interested in presenting *Double Ghosts* as an exhibition in the UK. The exhibition would follow one year later in September 2019 giving me time to reflect on the assembly and explore how to reconfigure it for this new context. During the year I presented *Double Ghosts* as a standalone work in various festivals and curated programmes developing new ways to position the work. One of my key concerns for Berwick iteration was how to shift the resonance of the project away from the museological. To do this it felt crucial to rethink the exhibition model and draw on my contemporaries to structure the exhibition in such a way as to initiate new cycles of work. During the development of the exhibition in Taipei I had got to know many artists but in particular the arts collective lololol and participated in their FUTURE TAO: WORKOUT GUIDE workshop at TCAC while preparing for the Taiwan Biennale.¹⁴²



Illustration 4.88: *Future Tao Workout Guide*, TCAC 23 Sept 2018

Future Tao was initiated in 2017 by experimental musician Sheryl Cheung/張欣 and multimedia artist Xia Lin/林亭君 who practice as Taipei based collective lololol. While working in Taipei in August 2018 I had met with Sheryl to talk to her about her music and work inspired by Taoist thought. We had kept in touch following the show and were all keen to find a way to work together. The exhibition at Berwick would provided the ideal

13. Eyemo rolls #87, #88, #89, #90, #91, #92 (George Clark)

14. ¡Ay Sudamérica! (CADA/Colectivo Acciones de Arte, Chile, 1981)

15. Eyemo roll #186, 187, 188, 189 (George Clark)

¹⁴² Future Tao: Workout Guide is an artist-led workout session that features three projects participating in lololol.net. Heavy Breathing presents Christian Nagler: Cosmoconvulsive Anxiothenics, a neurological dialogue on global risk and the body, including muscle relaxation, full-textual paralysis and brain stimulation from distant galaxies. Sound artist Sheryl Cheung's Internal Motivations is a collective listening and improvisation session for energy circulation between people and their environments. Multimedia artist Xia Lin guides a workshop session of 3C Xing Yi Quan, a new form of martial arts that imitates the form and essence of 3C gadgets. TCAC, Sept 23, 2018

opportunity for this, not only exhibition of *Double Ghosts* but planned thematic programme *Animistic Apparatus* which would draw on meeting in Udon Thani in Thailand¹⁴³ organised by curator May Adadol Ingawanij that both Sheryl and Xia attended.

Working with Peter Taylor we developed an expanded plan for my *Double Ghosts* exhibition which would be housed in the Gymnasium Gallery and accompanied by a series of workshops and performances. The Gymnasium Gallery is run by Berwick Visual Arts and has a rich exhibition history and its unique gallery has its own host of ghosts. The gallery is a former military gymnasium build in 1901 as an addition to the Berwick Barracks. Designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor in the early 18th Century, they were build during programme of barrack-building in the north of England to suppress any further Jacobite uprisings. As well as re-configuring the space for *Double Ghosts* it would be important to create an environment which could house other activities during the show, to open up new contexts and shift emphasis from the museological to generative.

During this time I returned to *Inner Sage / Outer King* and decided to split the film into two works, cutting it at the natural point between the assembled material. The first part featured readings and interactions with cast of collaborators as well animating objects from my research (photos and VHS). This part would constitute *Inner Sage / Outer King* (14 min). The second park made from material of the Chin Pao San projection of *Double Ghosts* on 19 August 2018 would constitute *A Mountain Inside A Cave* (15 min). Each film reworks assembled material in distinct ways. For this new work I took the title from the original Hong Kong set report from *The Comedy of Shadows* which described the films meta-structure as 'like finding a mountain inside a cave and then finding another mountain inside the cave, in which there is another mountain.'¹⁴⁴

A Mountain Inside A Cave would be shown in Berwick without the accompanying reading and text from *Diarios* which I decided to present on a standalone monitor. To finish *A Mountain Inside A Cave*, and the hour long cycle of the three works (*Double Ghosts*, *Inner Sage / Outer King* and *A Mountain Inside A Cave*), I returned to the ceremonial film shown at Chin Pao San and realised that my own film had a dual function: It is both a documentation of a ceremonial projection but in itself it should operate as a blessing film bestowing good fortune on the viewer, other works in the exhibition and the constellation of actors joined by the project.

From the blessings I selected the most pertinent for me and most useful for our current times (leaving out the blessings for the prosperity and the ten thousand year reign of the Republic of China.) Using the font I had

¹⁴³ *Animistic Apparatus: Artistic Research Lab* in Udon Thani, 21-26 April 2019. See: Dhansandors, Kridpuj, 'Ban Chiang Animism,' Art4d, 2 June 2019. [in Thai and English] Accessed 20 January 2020: <http://art4d.com/2019/06/ban-chiang-animism>

¹⁴⁴ Trailer "影子喜劇", 電影雙週刊/City Entertainment Magazine, Hong Kong, 1996, Vol 1, No. 405, p26. Translated by Dub & Ko Language Services, September, 2018

researched I reanimated the blessings to appear over the final nighttime images of the film. At this point the film's use as a document has dissipated, the event is now underway as the nighttime has come. The film seeks to create linkage between the preparation for the ceremonial projection and the contemporary situation where the film is being currently viewed. In this way the film should function as a circular link from the field site of Chin Pao San into the gallery or cinema in which it is being exhibited. Like a Möbius strip with no inside or outside it should move from the documentation of a film ceremony to being a ceremonial film itself and back again.



Illustration 4.89: *A Mountain Inside A Cave* (George Clark, 2019) 35mm frame enlargement



Illustration 4.90: *Heavenly Blessing, Eight Drunk Immortals* (c.1980) video still

The poor quality bootleg of *Double Ghosts* in the film – refilmed during the projection, the image dark and sound noisy – aims to push our focus away from the ostensible main event (the film being projected) to the act and event of the projection itself, with all its rituals, preparations and longueurs. With the final on-screen blessings the film disappears as it reaches its destination. The film is a vehicle for these blessings, folding us back into a chain of relations between actions and their poetic documentation. The circle ends with blessings which in turn initiate the next cycle of the work, blessing the space in order to begin again.

All together the sequence of three films was arranged in the space to run in sequence for an hour and loop round naturally. The new work *A Mountain Inside A Cave* would return us back to *Double Ghosts* whose projection in Chin Pao San it documents. With this structure I designed the exhibition space accordingly to accommodate three screens. To make this work in the long thin Gymnasium the walls on which the screens were mounted were put at 45 degree angles stretching out the space creating a large entrance wall and partially enclosed central area framing the gym's original markings and central points.

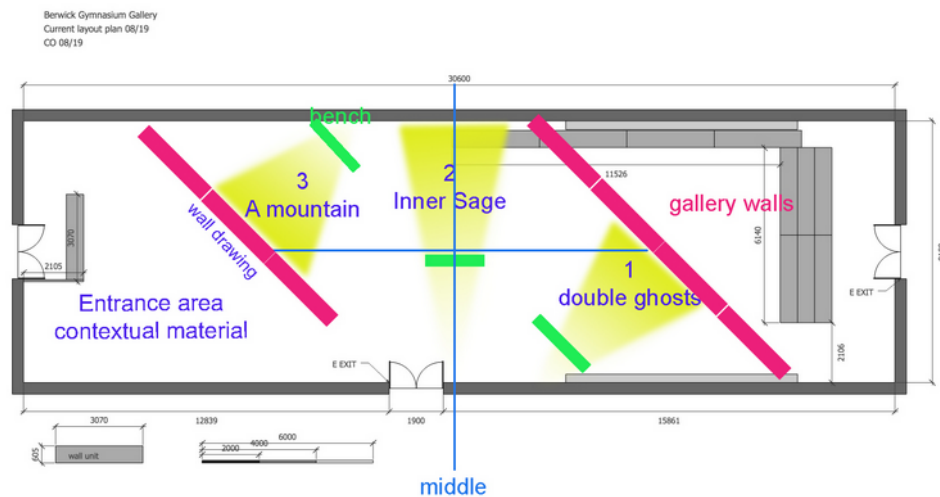


Illustration 4.91: *Double Ghosts* plan for Gymnasium Gallery, August 2019

Screen 1 and 3 (as seen in illustration 4.91) would be aligned as opposites, creating echo between *Double Ghosts* and its projection in *A Mountain Inside a Cave*. The central space would have a second function as a performance and workshop space for projects planned with lololol and the Thai artist Tanatchai Bandasak one of the invited artists for *Animistic Apparatus*. Together with Tanatchai we presented our new performance *Bangkok Sound Delay* (2019) that has had a slow gestation dating back to 2012.¹⁴⁵ With lololol we decided to present a new performance and use a series of workshops, or workouts, to develop it together, using group exercises to explore our shared interest in ecology, sound and movement. These workshops were threaded into the structure of the festival and presented as *Future Tao Workouts* taking place each morning.

¹⁴⁵ *Bangkok Sound Delay* George Clark & Tanatchai Bandasak, 35mm, Thailand/UK, live two channel stereo sound, approx. 20 min Between 22 Jan- 6 Feb 2012 George Clark shot nine 100ft rolls of 35mm film of street scenes, hospital, sleeping dogs and aerobic classes in and around Bangkok. Three years later Tanatchai Bandasak, guided by Google Maps, made a series of field recordings at the same locations. Traversing a period of political change, these fragments—assembled for this collective listening event—mark ellipsis and erasure in the city.



Illustration 4.92: Gymnasium gallery installation, construction of screening walls. The original floor markings and other facets of the gym are still preserved in the space. In planning the installation we looked to respect these dimensions and find balance between the spaces history and our temporary construction

Rather than presenting materials in vitrines, for Berwick I wanted to create a new means of display which could allow for different and more fluid connections across material. Working outside of Taiwan there was a need to narrate the context of the project and some of the historical echoes in a different way. Rather than present a traditional timeline I designed a large scale painting which would assemble objects from the project, photos, texts, images and books in a new constellation. The wall would seek to invite visitors to find and freely piece together material in an open model. The space for this would be the large 9 meter wall which greets visitors on their arrival. The painting would contain texts from Raúl Ruiz and be accompanied by an A3 Risograph print with annotations; a map to a map.



Illustration 4.93: 'Double Ghosts wall painting', 920 x 250cm, 2019 (See Appendix for detailed view)

Integrated into this wall were 17 objects and 11 quotes assembling fragments in range of sizes to map the contours of the social political history of Ruiz and actors involved in *The Comedy of Shadows*. The wall included from postcard for Valeria Sarmiento's first film *Notre Mariage/Our Marriage* (1984), Laha Mebow and Cheung Chin's photos, a recent promotional video for Chin Pao San, my 2004 interview with Raúl Ruiz in Vertigo Magazine, film posters and books by Ruiz, Karsiu Lee's painting and finally invitation to projection of *Double Ghosts* on 19 August 2018 at Chin Pao San.¹⁴⁶

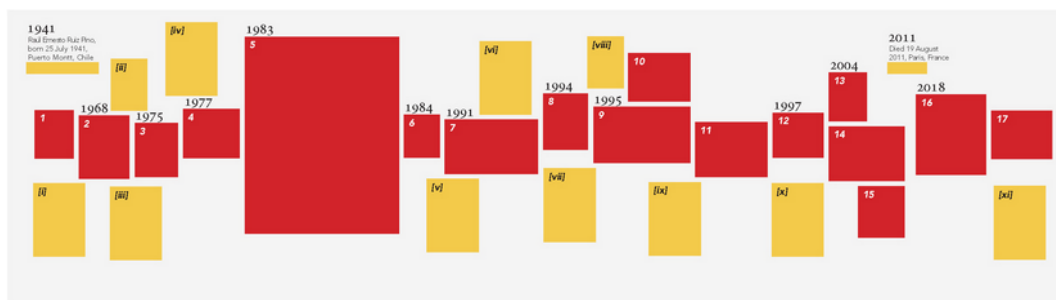


Illustration 4.94: *Double Ghosts* wall painting key, 2019 (see Appendix for detailed view)

Behind the wall you can discover the three screens on which the films would show in sequence, circling the viewer around the space and returning them back out past the wall again. As such the wall operated as both preface and an afterword. In this configuration the assembled fragments aimed to create linkage and loops, both multiple and networked existing in evolving relationships with each other rather than presenting a singular narrative.



Illustration 4.95: Gymnasium Gallery, finished screening space with screens L-R for *A Mountain Inside a Cave*, *Inner Sage / Outer King* and *Double Ghosts*

¹⁴⁶ See: Appendix: *Double Ghost Wall* – this includes digital layout of the wall including all the quotations and facsimile of the risograph print accompanying the exhibition

When preparing a space for a technical presentations, such as an exhibition, it is customary in Taiwan to make offerings to local gods to ensure everything goes smoothly. This is especially common for film shoots or projections as ghosts are said to like to watch dramas, so it is important to have offerings to stop their potential interference. This is so common that a popular snack brand called 乖乖 is marketed particularly for such purposes – the name literally means *obedient* so it is an ideal offering to ask the machines to behave themselves.¹⁴⁷ I remember being with Yuling in Soulangh Cultural Park prior to opening of her exhibition *Every Film is an Enigma: Moving Images in the Black Box and White Cube* (2017) when she made such offering to help settle Tzuan Wu's projections.

My new presentation at Berwick streamlined the installation with just three projectors playing in sequence rather than having the complex loop and synchronisation of monitors with projectors as I had done in Taiwan. Despite this (or maybe because of the simplicity) we left the checking of the playback until late in the installation period at which point we encountered major issues with the smooth presentation of the works. We traced all the cabling and connections, isolated and tested each projector and player in turn and rendered new versions of each film but the problems persisted. Late in the night prior to the opening I was on the phone with technicians up a ladder restarting the players for the fourth time to only re-encounter the same problems. The issues and conditions were so persistent I made the decision to bypass the players and show all three films from a laptop on the central screen for the opening.

¹⁴⁷ Know as Kuai Kuai culture this practice takes its name from the snack company founded in 1968. Kuai Kuai Company limited produces a range of snacks but it is the corn puffs which bare the companies name and furthermore the coconut flavour as the packed is green packet is synonymous with the green light of correctly functioning machines and must be in date. The tradition is so pervasive the snack is regarded as part of the essential supply chain of information industry in Taiwan and a special commemorative pack was produced for the launch of the Fuwei 5 satellite in 2017



Illustration 4.96: *Double Ghosts*, Gymnasium Gallery, BFMAF opening 19 September 2019, photo by Erika Stevenson



Illustration 4.97: *Double Ghosts*, Gymnasium Gallery, BFMAF opening 19 September 2019, photo by Erika Stevenson



Illustration 4.98: *Double Ghosts*, Gymnasium Gallery, BFMAF 2019, photo by Erika Stevenson



Illustration 4.99: *Double Ghosts*, Gymnasium Gallery, BFMAF 2019, photo by Erika Stevenson

Exhibition histories tend to focus on singular iteration of an exhibition as a static form, but all presentations are contingent to different degrees. The experience at the Venice Biennial is markedly different if you visit early in May or late in November. There is a history of exhibitions who open with one set of works for press which are later removed or censored before opening to the public.¹⁴⁸ But these slights of hand are rarely documented giving an impression of each exhibition as a universal presentation rather than an evolving iteration. The brilliance of some of my favourite artists such as Paul Thek or Hanne Darboven, is linked to their resistance to static form, as their work constantly expands and accommodates the structures that it comes to occupy. Rather than fighting entropy they integrate it as a material.

In order to face the technical difficulties in the Gymnasium I sought to integrate them into the workshops with lololol. The *Future Tao Workouts* were envisioned to help us develop new performance work together, yet facing these issues of the space it was clear that the performance would have to address these as a fundamental conditions. Our work together took as its starting point a line from the script for *The Comedy of Shadows* used before the characters start filming, as an alternative to saying action:

Ne dites pas moteur, dites eau! bois! feu! terre! Or!

不能說開機，要說、水、木、火、土、金

Don't say 'roll camera'! Say: Water! Wind! Fire! Earth! Metal!¹⁴⁹

Each workout would follow a preparatory structure, draw on Taoist practice to help prepare the ground for our work together, diagnose and integrate the space as well as excavate the local ecologies. We began to gather material, gestures and tools from the exhibition and installation process. The performance would act as a preparation and a much needed settling of the space, directed to ghosts of Ruiz and his film as well as the dormant screens, the environment of the Gymnasium and surrounding park. Materials ranged from a laser spirit level used for the wall painting, to local flora and fauna collected during walk with Kate Dixon (Berwick Parks Development Officer), as well as gestures and movements developed in Xia's practice of her 3C Xing Yi Quan with festival attendees and sounds found in the space during Sheryl's *Internal Motivations* workshop. Sheryl used contact microphones to enable the assembled collective to listen and diagnose the energy circulation in the gallery.

¹⁴⁸ A recent such case is the Aichi Triennale 2019 in Japan which opened with one section called "After 'Freedom of Expression?'" about history of censorship in Japan which was closed few days after the opening causing other artists to withdraw works in solidarity. The exhibition was reopened but just for the final 10 days of the exhibition on 9 October. Durón, Maximiliano. 'Following Censorship Controversy at Aichi Triennale, Artists Discuss Why They Removed Their Work—and Then Reinstated It' *Artnews*, October 14, 2019. Accessed: 20 May 2020. <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/aichi-triennale-artists-censorship-removals-13386/>

¹⁴⁹ See *The Comedy of Shadows*, translated by Adrian Martin (2004) with additional translation by Phoebe Weston-Evans, 2018, unpublished

Preparing the space with lololol

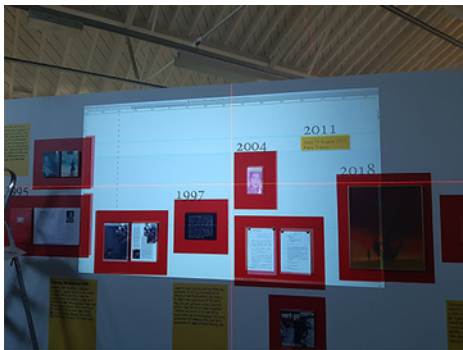


Illustration 4.100: *Future Tao Workouts* documentation, BFMAF Sept 2019 (photos by George Clark and Erika Stevenson)

These workouts were ways to inhabit the space, to explore it as ground for new assemblages. Against the dormant screens onto which *Double Ghosts* and *A Mountain Inside a Cave* were due to be projected I installed *Double Ghosts Screen Offerings*, temporary sculptural assemblages made from material gathered during the workouts – local flowers from Berwick parks were pressed under two stones from the cities ramparts in pages of the following books: *Tao Ti Ching* by Lao-Tze (Hackett Publishing Co, Inc, 1993), *Six Characters in Search of an Author and Other Plays* by Luigi Pirandello (Penguin Modern Classics, 1996) and *Wen-Tzu: Understanding the Mysteries* by Lao-Tze (Shambhala Dragons Editions, 1992).



Illustration 4.101: *Double Ghosts Screen Offering* (2019), stone, wood, pressed flowers, books



Illustration 4.102: *Double Ghosts Screen Offering* (2019) stone, wood, pressed flowers, books

Our evening performance brought these materials, gestures and pre-actions together. Beginning with myself and Sheryl attaching contact microphones to the malfunctioning projectors, we then proceeded to work with gathered materials directed at the assembled ghosts, audience and dormant screens. Using an Acemade 35mm film editor, I wound frame by frame through a fragment of a degraded 35mm print lent to Sheryl by a temple projectionist in Udon Thani. The film was said to depict the mythical Nagra serpent. This skin of film was projected onto the main wall with two other projections from my studio footage of botanical photographs and archival images from Taiwan. Xia performed a series of movements in the space directed at each screen, following gestures from the archival photographs and other actions developed in connection to the space. Sheryl worked with processed sound from the projectors and the Acemade film editor through a variety of contact microphones. Once the film reel had been wound through in its entirety Sheryl began performing with her guitar amplifier by inserting a local plant stem directly into the amp jack socket shorting the circuit to create a wailing sound. Once she had a good contact she stood up and left the space followed by myself, Xia and the audience who we lead out into the night.

In the dark on the ramparts we made our way to the large tree dominating the star filled sky and put the gymnasium in the shadow of the moon. As we talked and illuminated fragments of the path with torches

myself and Xia looked for potential sites for a film to come, asking each other and the assembled participants 'is the camera ready?' As we neared the tree we began reciting other lines from the script in Chinese and English, '不能說開機，要說、水、木、火、土、金/Don't say 'roll camera'! Say: Water! Wind! Fire! Earth! Metal!' before putting out the torches and amp leaving us in the dark with the sound of the nearby ocean, assembled together under the large oak tree swaying in the moonlight.

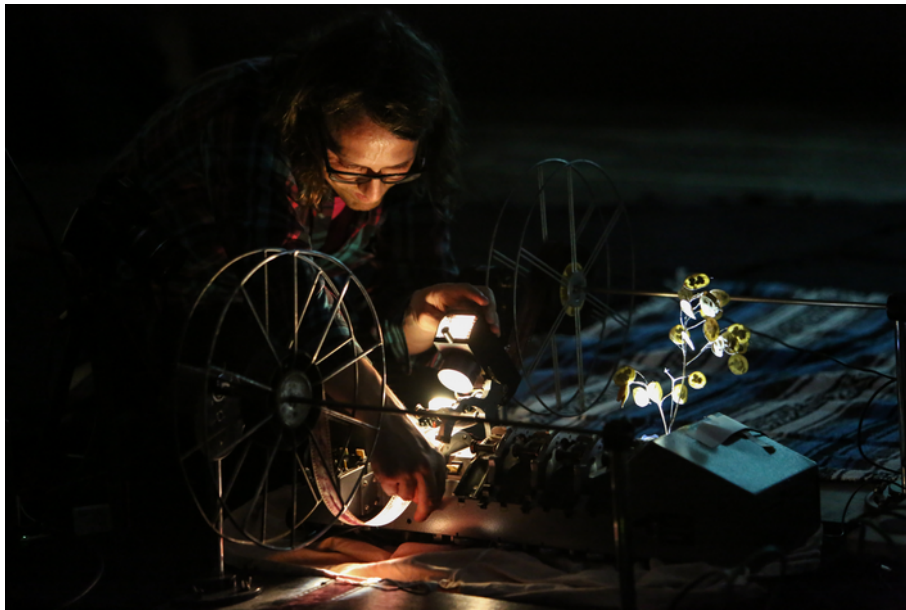


Illustration 4.103: lololol x George Clark performance, photo by Erika Stevenson, BFMAF 2019



Illustration 4.104: lololol x George Clark performance, photo by Erika Stevenson, BFMAF 2019

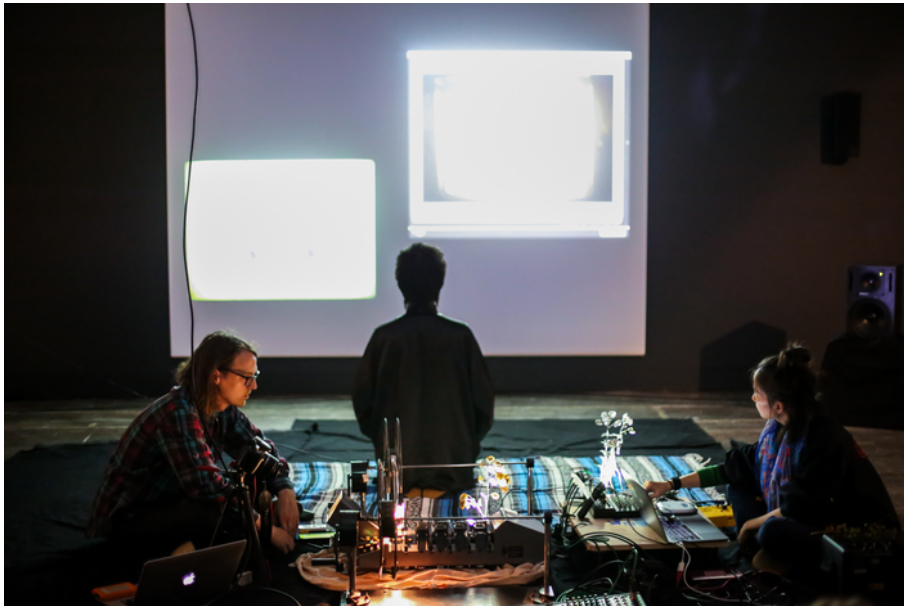


Illustration 4.105: lololol x George Clark performance, photo by Erika Stevenson, BFMAF 2019



Illustration 4.106: lololol x George Clark performance, photo by Erika Stevenson, BFMAF 2019



Illustration 4.107: lololol x George Clark performance, photo by Erika Stevenson, BFMAF 2019



Illustration 4.108: lololol x George Clark performance, photo by Erika Stevenson, BFMAF 2019

4.10 Expanding Constellations

In first week of December 2019, Cheung Chin tells me he is going to Hong Kong. I quickly arrange with Wood Lin and the Taiwan Independent Documentary Festival for a college to accompany Chin to see if they can find the 35mm film print of *The Comedy of Shadows*. Chin believes it is in his storage unit and I managed to get TIDF and the Taiwan Film Institute to agree to digitise the film print and work with me on making the transfer. They are keen to support the project. On 18 December 2019 we get message that the film is not there. Chin believes it must be in Singapore. After his return Chin checks in Singapore but has no luck. On 9 January 2020 we get message from Chin, he believes the print is actually in Hong Kong after all. They will have to go back and look for it harder. Seems it won't be easy to track down the film so quickly. We agree to follow up when I am next in Taiwan in few months time without knowing the Covid-19 pandemic would emerge. All things considered Chen says there is no rush, the '*Comedy of Shadows* has already waited for 25 years!¹⁵⁰



Illustration 4.109: Cheung Chin in his storage unit in Hong Kong, December 2019

¹⁵⁰ Email to author, from Cheung Chin, 9 January 2020

Through the routes and constellations of this project, Ruiz's phantom film has moved through various states of being, from its initial state as a mere rumour, to meeting the cast and crew who worked on the film and finding evidence of its actual production. To my own work, making three new films and video works. By inviting participants in Ruiz's constellation to work on new material and new gestures with me, we point to and help modify and enhance the film's existence in its limbo state. These processes of creating linkages, of following the traces of this film and opening it out to broader connections and networks has always circled back to the tantalising proposition of finding the film. But equally they have not been dependent on this discovery. The film is still waiting yes, but at least it is less lonely than it was at the start of my project.

As my project has moved through these phases I aimed to show how the model of practice and research are entangled and their existence is not posited on the appearance of this final object. Drawing on the archipelagic thinking of Glissant, the project seeks not to create fixed objects or to ship heavy materials, but to propose a relational, multiple, light and open constellation. The project has never been about seeking to replace speculation with an object, but seeking to establish other ways in which things can come into being. As Latour argues in *Pandora's Hope*, facts emerge through processes of *circulating reference*, their value is the way they exist in an expanding field of relation, the way they are articulated through multiple gestures both as part of ongoing processes.

To explore this proposition Latour turned to the French biochemist Louis Pasteur who established the importance of yeast for lactic acid fermentation in his laboratory in Lille in the 1860s. His proposition bridged human and nonhuman actors, as Latour argues '*Pasteur authorises the yeast to authorise him to speak in its name*. Who is the author of the whole process and who is the authority in the text are themselves open questions, since the characters and the authors exchange credibilities. ... [I]f his colleagues at the Academy do not believe Pasteur, he will be made the sole and only author of a work of *fiction*. If the whole setup withstands the Academy's scrutiny, then the text itself will be in the end authorised by the yeast, the real behaviour of which can then say to *underwrite* the entire text.'¹⁵¹ To repurpose a quote from Deleuze on philosophy's purpose, the aim of my project 'is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced.'¹⁵²

This shift of authorship and authority between the human and nonhuman, living and dead has been one of the constant negotiations of my work on the *Double Ghosts* series of films and exhibitions; to embrace and work with a diverse array of material in an ongoing process of creating chains of relation and new

¹⁵¹ Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*, Harvard University Press, 1999, p132

¹⁵² Deleuze, Gilles & Parnet, Claire. *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, New York, Columbia, 1987, p.vii

configurations. Latour positions Pasteur as a 'director bringing certain aspects of the experiment to the foreground and backgrounding others outside the spotlights glow.'¹⁵³ The scientists position maintains two contradictions; he was able to fabricate the ferment in his laboratory yet he also proved how it exists independently of his work. With this model of the director, Latour argues his 'metaphor has the great advantage of focusing attention on the two planes of reference at once, instead of making them pull in opposite directions. Although the work of the stage manager – or that of the puppeteer – clearly aims at its own disappearance, directing attention away from what happens backstage and toward what happens on the boards, it is clearly indispensable for the performance to take place. Most of the pleasure of the audience actually comes from the trembling presence of this other plane which is at once constantly felt and happily forgotten.'¹⁵⁴

Finally as Glissant reminds us, all of these processes are ongoing. They are part of what he refers to as 'the constantly shifting and variable beginning again of Relation.'¹⁵⁵ This is the position of the non-aligned and unreconciled. In his work, and his poetics, we find again and again Glissant's optimism and hope. Relation and the processes of creolisation are states of futurity. This mode of being is inherent in displaced people but also Glissant finds it optimised in his figure of the poet. For Glissant the poet 'offers the readers a space that satisfies their desire to move, to exit the self, to travel through a new earth, where they will not feel like strangers.'¹⁵⁶ The iterations and configurations of my project have not sought to hide my trembling backstage but to bring them into new relations, to shift from the desire for an object into an expanding cosmic assemblage. The constellation I have attempted to describe will continue to move, form and reform beyond this text, to approach the new earth not singular but multiple.

¹⁵³ Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies*, Harvard University Press, 1999, p135

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Drabinski, John E. *Glissant and the Middle Passage: Philosophy, Beginning, Abyss*. U of Minnesota Press, 2019. p74. I am quoting here from updated translation of by John E. Drabinski, that shifts the interpretation of the text from that published in translation in Glissant, Édouard, *Caribbean Discourse: Selected Essays*. University Press of Virginia, 1992, p15, translated by J. Michael Dash. The crucial difference is in change of "that thus enters the constantly shifting and variable process of creolization" to "that thus enters the constantly shifting and variable beginning again of Relation." These concepts are interlinked in Glissant's work but Drabinski's translation is more precise in rendering the following passage that he quotes as follows: "I feel that what makes this difference between a people that survives elsewhere, that maintains Being [l'Être], and a population that is transformed elsewhere into another people (without, however, succumbing to the reductions of the Other) and that thus enters the constantly shifting and variable beginning again of Relation [recommencée de la Relation] (of relationship, of relativity), is that the latter has not brought with it, not collectively continued, the methods of existence and survival, both material and spiritual, which it practiced before its transport [transbord]. (CD, 15; translation altered)"

¹⁵⁶ Glissant, Édouard. *Soleil de la conscience*. Paris: Gallimard, 1997, p39 (English translation by Nathanaël, *Sun of Consciousness*, Édouard Glissant, Nightboat Books, 2020)

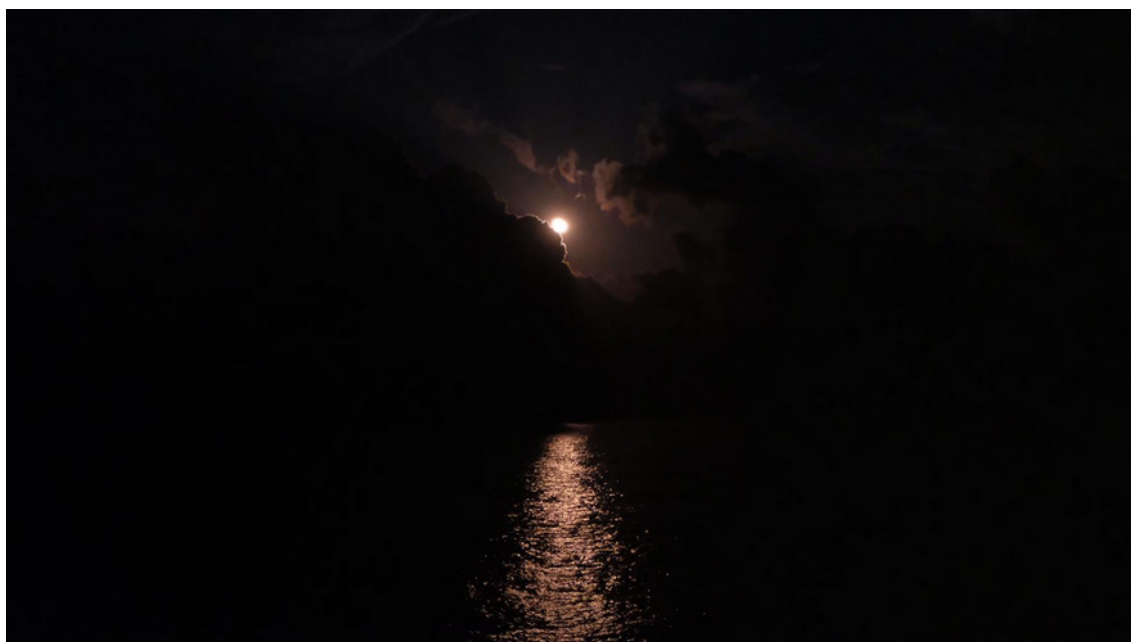


Illustration 4.110: 月光海 / Moonlight over the Pacific Ocean from east coast of Taiwan, 10 May 2020

APPENDIX: DOUBLE GHOSTS WALL

Wall Handout (2009, risograph print, 297mm x 420mm)



OBJECTS

[1] *Chilod Mitalogios, Dr. Bernardo Quintana Manilla, 1972*

At the age of ten Ruz with his family moved from Puerto Montt to the nearby island of Chilo where he was raised. His father worked as a sea captain navigating the narrow straits and canals around Chilo. The mythology of the island, documented in this book, would greatly influence him throughout his life.

[2] *True Ritesa Figure / Three Sad Figures, Ruz Ruz, 1968, cinema advertisement*

In 1968 Ruz released his first feature film *True Ritesa Figure*. This figure is loosely adapted from a play by Alejandro Sverding. The film won the Golden Leopard award at Locarno Festival in 1969.

[3] *Diálogos de exilados / Dialogues of Exiles, Ruz Ruz, 1974, promotional card*

The presidency of Salvador Allende and the democratically elected socialist government of Popular Unity (Unidad Popular) was overthrown in a coup d'état on 11 September 1973. Chile was ruled by a military dictatorship headed by General Augusto Pinochet until the return to democracy in 1990. Many artists, filmmakers and intellectuals went into exile during this period.

Ruz Ruz together with his wife and collaborator Valeria Samartino settled in Paris in the mid-1970s. Ruz directed his first feature film *Diálogos de exilados* in France in 1974. During this time over 50 feature films and more than 100 documentaries were made by Chilean filmmakers in exile.

"Speech's words on exile are quoted somewhat ironically at the beginning of the film. The best school for dialectics is emigration. The most penetrating dialecticians are exiles. There are changes that have forced them into exile, and they are interested only in changes. From intellectual lights, they

decide, if they are capable of reflection, the most fantastic conclusions, if their adventures prevail over them, they calculate the price they must have paid for their exile, and they have a sharp eye for contradictions." (Ruz Ruz, interview by Gonzalo Gervasi, *Juine Cinema*, April 1975)

[4] *Chin Pao San promotional video*

Chin Pao San Cemetery was founded in 1977 by Ruz-Cheng Tsao. It is the largest private cemetery in Taiwan and is situated in Jushan Province on the northern coast. The grounds are adorned by ornate mausoleums as well as art works and sculpture gardens including works by Ju Ming and Shaw Jon An who worked as the art consultant at Chin Pao San since 1991. In this capacity he helped Chin Cheng and Ruz Ruz produce their film at the cemetery in 1995.

[5] *Le Village Des Prêtres / City of Priests, Ruz Ruz, 1995, French cinema poster by Benjamin Balme*

Michael Goddard's wonderland is there

first feature. As well as editing the majority of Ruz's films she also edited films for Robert Kramer and Luc Mollat.

[7] *Fe Film Appreciation Journal, Taiwan, 1992*

Valeria Samartino was interviewed in Taiwan following the screening of *Amor y Luz*. On 26th November 1991 at the 28th Golden Horse Film Festival. The film, written with Ruz Ruz, was shot in and around Wujiao where Valeria grew up. It is her first feature film shot in Chile.

[8] *Photographs, Chin Cheng, 1994*

In winter of 1994 Paris based Hong Kong film producer Chin Cheng travelled with Ruz and Valeria to Chile. During the time Ruz received the title of 'Stoutest Son of Puerto Montt' in November 1994.

[9] *Production photos from the set of The Comedy of Shadows, Luis Mabres, 1995 & Production photos from the set of The Comedy of Shadows, Chin Cheng, 1995*

[11] *City Entertainment Magazine, Hong Kong, 1994*

A report on the film shoot of *The Comedy of Shadows* published while the film awaited post-production in City Entertainment Magazine (電影雜誌) and written by Alice Cheung (張麗儀).

[12] *Comedy of Shadows synopsis, 1997*

The first English language synopsis for *The Comedy of Shadows* was published in Ruz Ruz's annotated bibliography in film Comment magazine in 1997.

following the retrospective of his films. The interview was published that year in the British independent film magazine *Vertigo*. It is available online: <http://icf.film/ruzz-interview>

[14] *Libro de Kaeling, Taiwan: Four Ruz Ruz / The Tree of Kaeling, Taiwan: Four Ruz Ruz, Karin Lee, oil on canvas, 55 x 46cm, 2018*

Inspired by a production photo from *The Comedy of Shadows*, painter and Ruz collaborator Karin Lee made this new painting for the Double Ghosts exhibition. "On Right Between Frankfurt and Taipei, Reading the China Post's interview, at the social network, Karin Lee, a Taiwanese painter I met in Paris twenty years ago and that, in the meantime, has made a career, in these moments he has an exhibition in Taipei. When I met him in Paris he had just arrived from Hong Kong. He had fled Popular China swimming and escaping shells and hegemony. I searched for a painter that was capable of relating the style of the academicism of painting, the so-called pompier style." (J. Jin)

QUOTATIONS

[6] *Ruz Ruz, Poetics of Cinema*, Vol. 1, Dis Voir, 1995, p.89

[10] *Ruz Ruz, Ruz Biography*, see Christine, *Afterimage*, 1981 Fall, no. 10, p.115

[13] *Ruz Ruz, Ruz Ruz Hypothesis and Enigma*, George Clark, Vertigo, 2004 Autumn, Winter, vol. 2, no. 7, p.42

[16] *Ruz Ruz, Films, exile and running*, Jan, *Cinema*, Monthly Film Bulletin, Dec 1984, p.20

[17] *Ruz Ruz, script for short film Las Soledades, Chile, 1992*

A sort of poetic reverse narrated by me about a trip to the region of Chile where I was born. I had two opposite intentions - to make contact with a magic place and to make a sort of distortion of magic memory. It's trying to be ironic and sentimental at the same time - Ruz Ruz

[18] *ruzz - ruz Ruz, Ruz, Cinema, 1970-1990*, <http://tinyurl.com/ruzzline>

"In 2018 the collected diaries of Ruz Ruz were published in Chile as *Diario. Notas, recuerdos y sermónes de cruz enter*, edited by guest and founder of the Ruz Samartino Archive, Benji

Cruces. On 27 February 2018 the Chilean filmmaker, critic and programmer Benji Cruces started an unofficial project to make daily English translations of the recently published diaries.

[19] *Ruz Ruz, Poetics of Cinema*, Vol. 1, Dis Voir, 1995, p.8

[20] *Ruz Ruz, Ruz Ruz Hypothesis and Enigma*, George Clark, Vertigo, 2004 Autumn, Winter, vol. 2, no. 7, p.43

[21] *Ruz Ruz, Images, Death, Memory Imaginary Dialogue*, with Louise Schaefer, Ga cinema, 1980, no. 30. Translated by all Forbes

a connection for you between Portugal and Chile?

Ruz Ruz: As a bridge. Because for a long time I was divided between Chilean memories and nostalgia and all that and reality which was Europe. France and Portugal were between I started making a bridge there with *City of Priests*. It was made at Basel on the coast at Sines I made *The Territory and Love for Cinema*. Portugal has that idea of the secret which I always connect with cinema, in cinema you have a secret film inside a film, and you have to keep that secret.

"Ruz Ruz Interview, Paris, November 2009," Goddard, Michael, *The Cinema of Ruz Ruz* *Impossible Cartographies*, Columbia University Press, 2013, p.62

[4] *Notre Mariage / Our Marriage, Valeria Samartino, 1984, promotional card*

Film director and editor Valeria Samartino (b. 1948, Vina del Mar, Chile) has made documentaries and fiction films working between Europe and Latin America. *Notre Mariage* made in France and Portugal is her

Film director Luis Mabres / 廖慕傑 worked on the film shoot while a student at Tsinghua University in Taipei. With her debut *Finding Japan*, 2011 she became the first indigenous female director to make a feature film in Taiwan.

Film producer and director Chin Cheng (b. 1952, Hong Kong) studied at Paris Centre University and worked between Hong Kong and Paris on numerous co-productions. He also worked as interpreter and special press attaché at Cannes Film Festival alongside numerous Chinese directors. In 1995 he worked with Ruz of *The Comedy of Shadows* as producer and acted in various scenes in the film. He also voiced part of painter Shen Tao in Ruz's short film *Water*, 1996.

[10] *Poetics of Cinema I & II Ruz Ruz, 1995 / 2006*

The three volumes of Ruz's poetics were written between 1995-2009 drawing on lectures given internationally during this time. Vol. 1 was published in 1995, followed by Vol. 2 in 2000 and Vol. 3 was posthumously

[13] *Ruz Ruz: Images of Passage, 2004*

This book contains many rare texts and is accompanied by an annotated online bibliography (www.ruzz.com.au/2/index.html).

The publication contains fragments from the first English translation of Ruz's scripts for *The Comedy of Shadows* translated by Adam Martin. Martin edited the book with Helen Barlow and Clara McDermott. It was published on occasion of the Ruz Ruz retrospective at International Film Festival Rotterdam, 2004.

[14] *Script for The Comedy of Shadows Ruz Ruz, 1995*

The original script for *The Comedy of Shadows* was written in French. For the shoot in Taiwan a Chinese translation was made by photographer, filmmaker and National Tsing Hua University professor Chen Tsun-shung / 陳尊榮

[15] *Vertigo magazine, UK, 2004*

George Clark reviewed Ruz Ruz at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2004

less than a year Karin Lee had gone through every style of European painting from a 20th century expressionism, the action painting, with a particular predilection for Abstract expressionism, in half a day he painted an oil portrait of François Truffaut dressed as the Pope, but in the pose of an official portrait of Mao that represented his young, gong

through the mountains, dressed with a traditional tunic and with a closed umbrella in the left hand and a book on the right one. Then we continued collaborating in *The Hypothesis of the Broken Painting* and a special effects film for which he did an extensive storyboard. Today he paints internal landscapes, lives in Montmartre and sells in Taiwan and Hong Kong."

- Ruz Ruz, *Diaries*, 9 Nov 1995

[17] *Initiation card, No 1995*

[18] *Initiation card, No 1995*

Double (class) premiered at Chin Pao San cemetery, Taiwan held on 19 August 2015.

Stomach program by Benji Lee / 廖慕傑, a specialist in outdoor and ceremonial film

OBJECTS

[1] *Chiloé Mitológica*,
Dr. Bernardo Quintana Mansilla, 1972

At the age of two Raúl with his family moved from Puerto Montt to the nearby island of Chiloé where he was raised. His father worked as a sea captain navigating the narrow straits and estuaries around Chiloé. The mythology of the island, documented in this book, would greatly influence him throughout his life.

[2] *Tres Tristes Tigres / Three Sad Tigres*,
Raúl Ruiz, 1968, cinema advertisement

In 1968 Raúl Ruiz released his first feature film *Tres Tristes Tigres* loosely adapted from a play by Alejandro Siveking. The film won the Golden Leopard award at Locarno Festival in 1969.

[3] *Dialogos de exilados / Dialogues of Exiles*, Raúl
Ruiz, 1974, promotional card

The presidency of Salvador Allende and the democratically-elected socialist government of Popular Unity (Unidad Popular) was overthrown in a coup d'état on 11 September 1973. Chile was ruled by a military dictatorship headed by General Augusto Pinochet until the return to democracy in 1990. Many artists, filmmakers and intellectuals went into exile during this

period.

Raúl Ruiz together with his wife and collaborator Valeria Sarmiento settled in Paris in the mid-1970s. Ruiz directed his first feature *Dialogos de exilados* in France in 1974. During this time over 50 feature films and more than 100 documentaries were made by Chilean filmmakers in exile.

"Brecht's words on exile are quoted somewhat ironically at the beginning of the film: 'The best school for dialectics is emigration. The most penetrating dialecticians are exiles. There are changes that have forced them into exile, and they are interested only in changes. From infinitesimal signs, they

deduce, if they are capable of reflection, the most fantastic conclusions. If their adversaries prevail over them, they calculate the price they must have paid for their victory, and they have a sharp eye for contradictions.'"¹ (Raúl Ruiz, interview by Ginette Gervais, *Jeune Cinema*, April 1975)

[4] *Chin Pao San promotional video*

Chin San Peace Cemetery was founded in 1977 by Ryh-Chang Tsao. It is the largest private cemetery in Taiwan and is situated in Jinshan Province on the northern coast. The grounds are adorned by ornate mausoleums as well as art works and sculpture gardens including works by Ju Ming and Shiao Jon Jen who worked as the art consultant at Chin Pao San since 1991. In this capacity he helped Chin Cheung and Raúl Ruiz produce their film at the cemetery in 1995.

[5] *Le Villes Des Pirates / City of Pirates*,
Raúl Ruiz, 1983, French cinema poster by
Benjamin Baltimore

Michael Goddard: I wondered is there

first feature. As well as editing the majority of Ruiz's films she also edited films for Robert Kramer and Luc Mollet.

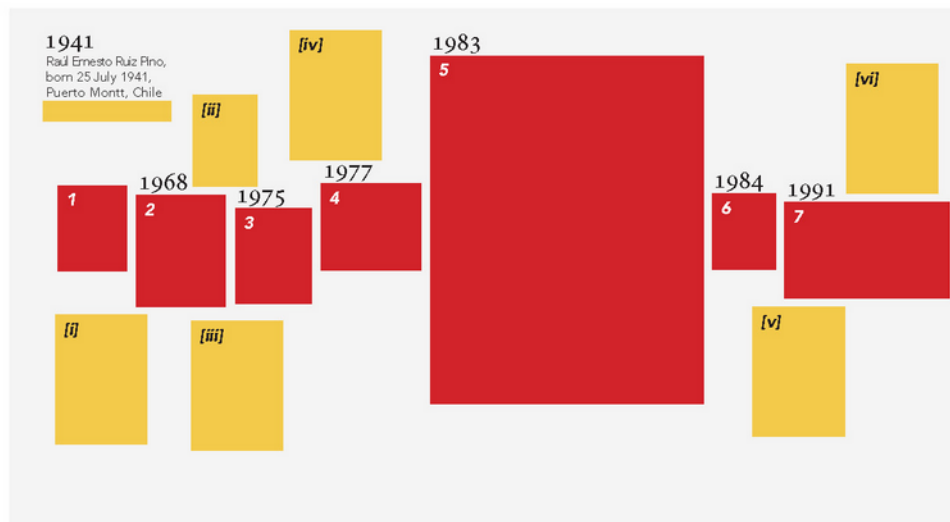
[7] *Fa / Film Appreciation Journal*, Taiwan,
1992

Valeria Sarmiento was interviewed in Taiwan following the screening of *Amelia López O'Neill* on 24th November 1991 at the 28th Golden Horse Film Festival. The film, written with Raúl Ruiz, was shot in and around Valparaíso where Valeria grew up. It is her first feature film shot in Chile.

[8] *Photographs*, Chin Cheung, 1994

In winter of 1994 Paris based Hong Kong film producer Chin Cheung travelled with Raúl and Valeria to Chile. During this time Raúl received the title of 'Illustrious Son of Puerto Montt' in November 1994.

[9] *Production photos from the set of The Comedy of Shadows*, Laha Mebow, 1995
& *Production photos from the set of The Comedy of Shadows*, Chin Cheung, 1995



a connection for you between Portugal and Chile?

Raúl Ruiz: As a bridge. Because for a long time I was divided between Chilean memories and nostalgias and all that and reality which was Europe, France. And Portugal was between. I started making a bridge there with 'City of Pirates'. It was made at Baleal, on the coast. At Sintra I made 'The Territory' and 'Love Torn in Dream'. Portugal has that idea of the secret which I always connect with cinema, in cinema you have a secret film inside a film, and you have to keep that secret.

- 'Raúl Ruiz Interview, Paris, November 2009,'
Goddard, Michael, *The Cinema of Raúl Ruiz: Impossible Cartographies*. Columbia University Press, 2013. p182

[6] *Notre Mariage / Our Marriage*, Valeria
Sarmiento, 1984, promotional card

Film director and editor Valeria Sarmiento (b. 1948, Viña del Mar, Chile) has made documentaries and fiction films working between Europe and Latin America. *Notre Mariage* made in France and Portugal is her

Film director Laha Mebow / 陳潔瑤 worked on the film shoot while a student at Shih Hsin University in Taipei. With her debut *Finding Sayun*, 2011 she became the first indigenous female director to make a feature film in Taiwan.

Film producer and director Chin Cheung (b.1952, Hong Kong) studied at Paris Censier University and worked between Hong Kong and Paris on numerous co-productions. He also worked as interpreter and special press attache at Cannes Film Festival alongside numerous Chinese directors. In 1995 he worked with Raúl of *The Comedy of Shadows* as producer and acted in various scenes in the film. He also voiced part of painter Shin-T'ao in Ruiz's shot *Wind Water*, 1996.

[10] *Poetics of Cinema I & II*
Raúl Ruiz, 1995 / 2006

The three volumes of Ruiz's poetics were written between 1990-2009 drawing on lectures given internationally during this time. Vol. 1 was published in 1995, followed by Vol. 2 in 2006 and Vol. 3 was posthumously

published in Spanish in 2013. As well as these volumes, Ruiz wrote poetry and fiction. The poet and writer Paul Buck, who has translated several books by Ruiz states; 'Each fiction is like a piece on a chess board, creating a game that works on the surface as well as beneath in the labyrinthine world of illusions and mirrors that shapes the space Ruiz creates for his enjoyment and ours.'

[11] City Entertainment Magazine, Hong Kong, 1996

A report on the film shoot of *The Comedy of Shadows* published while the film awaited post-production in City Entertainment Magazine / 電影雙週刊 and written by Alge Cheung / 張國翔.

[12] Comedy of Shadows synopsis, 1997

The first English language synopsis for *The Comedy of Shadows* was published in Raúl Ruiz's annotated filmography in Film Comment magazine in 1997.

following the retrospective of his films. The interview was published that year in the British independent film magazine Vertigo. It is available online: <http://bit.ly/RaulRuizVertigo>

[16] L'arbre de Keelung, Taiwan: Pour Raúl Ruiz / The Tree of Keelung, Taiwan: For Raúl Ruiz, Karsiu Lee, oil on canvas, 55 x 46cm, 2018

Inspired by a production photo from *The Comedy of Shadows*, painter and Ruiz collaborator Karsiu Lee made this new painting for the *Double Ghosts* exhibition.

"On flight between Frankfurt and Taipei. Reading the China Post I recognize, in the social section, Karsiu Lee, a Cantonese painter I met in Paris twenty years ago and that, in the meantime, has 'made a career'. In these moments he has an exposition in Taipei. When I met him in Paris he had just arrived from Hong Kong. He had fled Popular China swimming and escaping sharks and lifeguards. I searched for a painter that was capable of imitating the style of the academic oil painting, the so-called pompiere style. [...] In

QUOTATIONS

[i] Raúl Ruiz, *Poetics of Cinema*. Vol. 1. Dis Voir, 1995. p89

[ii] Raúl Ruiz, 'Ruiz filmography', Ian Christie, *Afterimage*, 1981 Fall, no. 10. p116

[iii] Raúl Ruiz, 'Raúl Ruiz: Hypothesis and Enigma,' George Clark, *Vertigo*, 2004 Autumn-Winter, vol. 2, no. 7. p42

[iv] Raúl Ruiz, 'Filters, exile and cunning', Ian Christie, *Monthly Film Bulletin*, Dec 1984. p370

[v] Raúl Ruiz, script for short film *Las Soledades*, Chile, 1993

A sort of poetic reverie narrated by me about a trip to the region of Chile where I was born. It had two opposite intentions - to make contact with a magic place and to make a sort of distortion of magic realism. It's trying to be ironic and sentimental at the same time. - Raúl Ruiz

[vi - vii - viii] Ruiz, Raúl, *Diaries*, 1993/1994/1995*, <https://tinyletter.com/ruizdiaries>

*In 2018 the collected diaries of Raúl Ruiz were published in Chile as 'Diario. Notas, recuerdos y secuencias de cosas vistas', edited by poet and founder of the Ruiz-Sarmiento Archive, Bruno

[13] Raúl Ruiz: Images of Passage, 2004

This book contains many rare texts and is accompanied by an annotated online filmography (www.rouge.com.au/2/index.html). The publication contains fragments from the first English translation of Ruiz's script for *The Comedy of Shadows* translated by Adrian Martin. Martin edited the book with Helen Bandis and Grant McDonald. It was published on occasion of the Raúl Ruiz retrospective at International Film Festival Rotterdam, 2004.

[14] Scripts for The Comedy of Shadows Raúl Ruiz, 1995

The original script for *The Comedy of Shadows* was written in French. For the shoot in Taiwan a Chinese translation was made by photographer, filmmaker and National Tsing Hua University professor Chen Tsun-shing / 陳傳興.

[15] Vertigo magazine, UK, 2004

George Clark interviewed Raúl Ruiz at the International Film Festival Rotterdam in 2004

less than a year Karsiu Lee had gone through every style of European painting from the 20th century: expressionism, the action painting, with a particular predilection for Nordic expressionism. In half a day he painted an oil portrait of François Simon dressed as the Pope, but in the pose of an official portrait of Mao that represented him young, going through the mountains, dressed with a traditional tunic and with a closed umbrella in the left hand and a book on the right one. Then we continued collaborating in 'The Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting' and in a special effects film for which he did an extensive story-board. Today he paints internal landscapes, lives in Montmartre and sells in Taiwan and Hong Kong."

- Raúl Ruiz, *Diaries*, 9 No 1995

[17] Invitation card, 2018, designed by April Wei / 姦如

Double Ghosts premiered at Chin Pao San cemetery, Taiwan held on 19 August 2018. 35mm projection by Mr. Lin / 林源樹, a specialist in outdoor and ceremonial film

Cuneo. On 27 February 2018 the Chilean filmmaker, critic and programmer Jaime Grijalba started an unofficial project to make daily English translations of the recently published diaries.

[ix] Ruiz, Raúl, *Poetics of Cinema*. Vol. 1. Dis Voir, 1995. p7

[x] Raúl Ruiz, 'Raúl Ruiz: Hypothesis and Enigma,' George Clark, *Vertigo*, 2004 Autumn-Winter, vol. 2, no. 7. p43

[xi] Raúl Ruiz, 'Image, Death, Memory: Imaginary Dialogues' with Louise Schefer, *Ça cinema*, 1980, no. 20. Translated by Jill Forbes.

Wall Painting (Left)

1941

Raúl Ernesto Ruiz Pino, born 25 July 1941
in Puerto Montt, Chile

Suddenly there was a chance to make
a film in which Chileans would
recognise themselves. [2]

I didn't decide on France: I was already there and had
no money to leave and no visa to go to Berlin, which
was actually my first choice. Later I realised there were
advantages to France, where everybody is considered
foreign and there is usually open society, with all the
confusion, competition and difficulties this implies, but
still with the freedom to see the world for what it is and
to act.

People in France are still confused about my
nationality, then often refer to me as 'my Brazilian, or
Portuguese, or Mexican friend' - which I quite like,
because it's difficult to be Chilean all the time. [3]

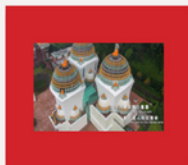
1968



1975



1977



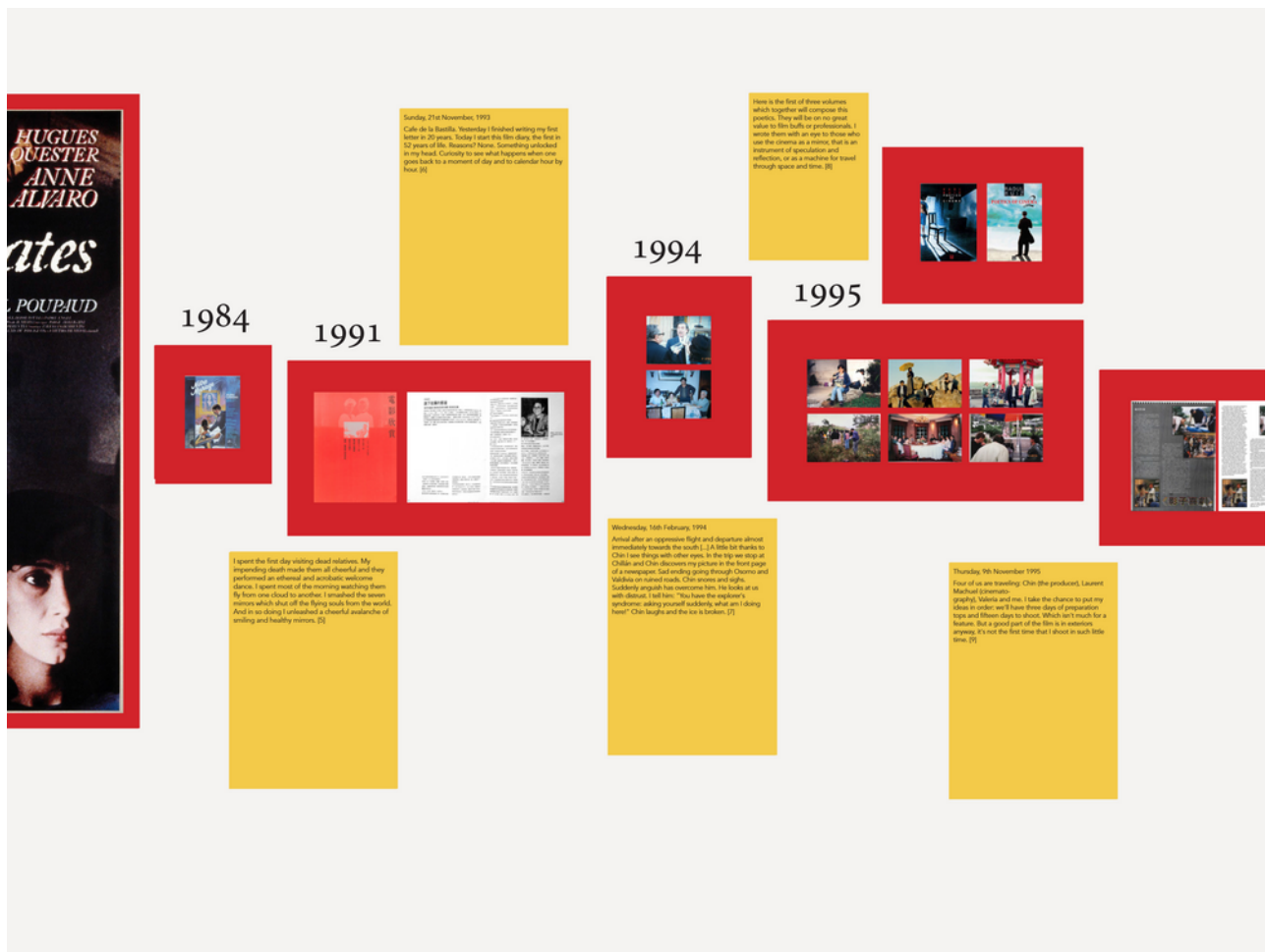
As a child in Chile, a land of monsters and mythic
creatures, I heard the story of a monster. And what
made him a monster was that he could not be
described, not because his form was constantly
evolving but precisely because he had no form of any
kind. A monster without qualities. Or rather only one,
but a big one: his size. In fact, his name meant 'big'.
But, he was so big he was invisible. [1]

I make films with everything I can, so by definition
everything that has happened to me is there. Chile is a
country with an earthquake and sometimes, when you
are in the middle of an earthquake, you say it should
be an earthquake somewhere else; you never believe
you are in the centre. I realised a little later that, with
the political earthquake, I was in the centre. [2]

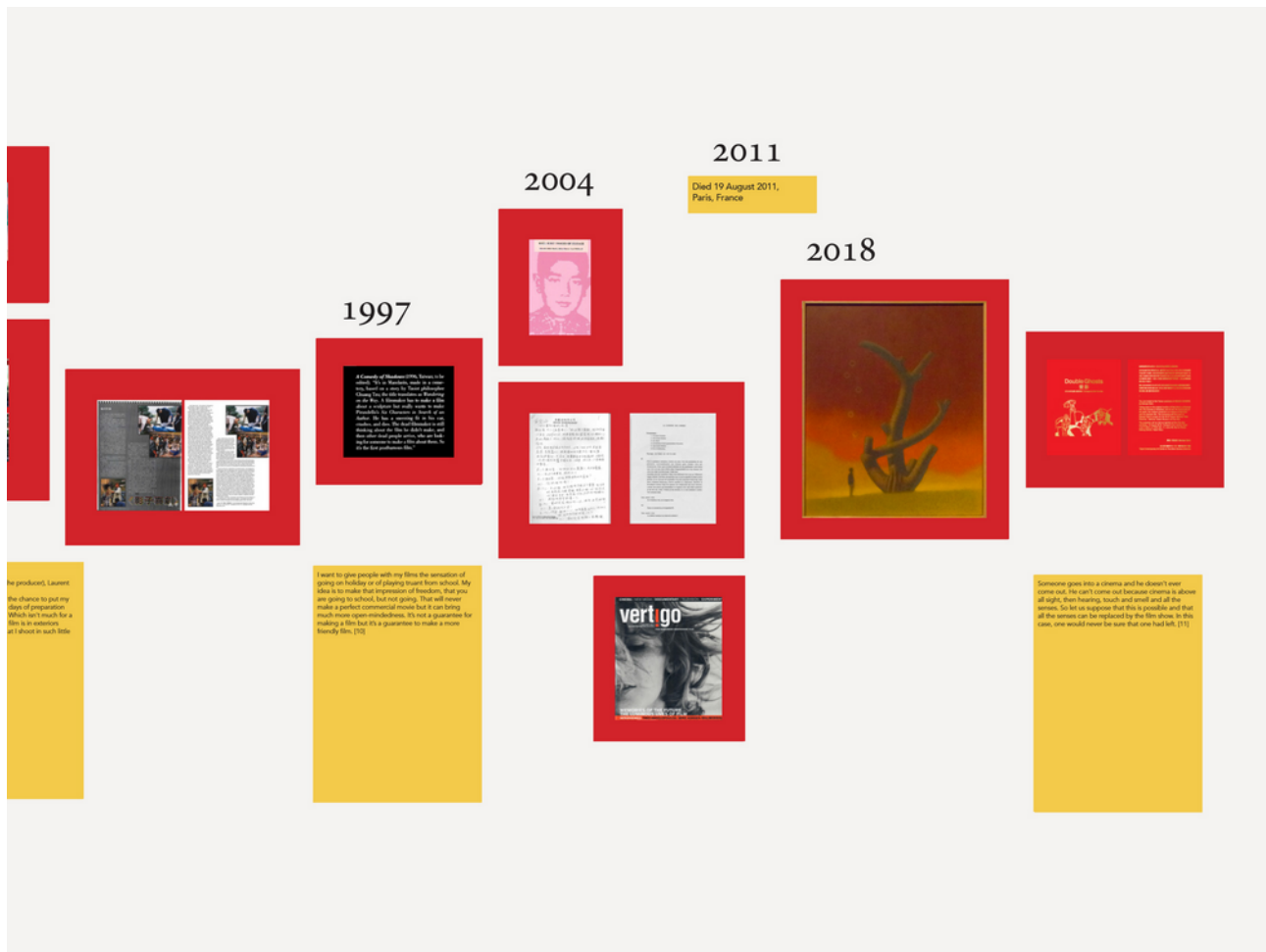
1983



Wall Painting (centre)



Wall Painting (right)



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