

Farewell to a Building, the Dong-Dong-Guan Project

2010.01-2010.07

Before the building was demolished, artist invited people wash the wholebuilding, order their own memory, and say good-bye to it carefully.

--2010.01~2010.07

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On "Farewell to A Building: the Dong-Dong-Guan Project"



About Dong-Dong-Guan

Dong-Dong-Guan(DDG) is a building complex located near the main entrance of NTU in Taipei, famous for its tub-shaped green glazed pantiles all over the walls. The building complex consists of Agricultural Display Center, Dept. of Anthropology, and Dept. of Philosophy (formerly Dept. of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Promotion). The most important feature of DDG is the glazed torus bricks embedded on the walls, combining modern concrete with traditional Chinese elements.

Each of the three buildings was completed at different times, the earliest is Agricultural Display Center, designed by ZHANG Zhaokang, who modeled after Bauhuas founder Gropius, and built by You Chao Architectural Office. You Chao Architectural Office completed the two buildings flanking it in 1963 and 1970, respectively.

DDG is a landmark of Taiwanese architecture during 1960s, and an important representative of modern Taiwanese architecture. But due to various reasons, Dept. of Anthropology and Dept. of Philosophy will be demolished in 2010, leaving only Agricultural Display Center, and a new Hall of Humanities will be erected on site.

Statement

written by SHIH Yunyu, 2010

The purpose of *Farewell to A Building, the Dong-Dong-Guan Project* is to bid farewell to DDG, an important architecture during 1950s' Taiwan. The core concept of the project is "Cleanse," and the content is divided into two parts: one is cleansing of the exteriors, dismantling of pipelines and part of the interior decoration, to reveal the original structure of the building; the other is present historical traces, disassembled objects, and architectural elements from 50 years before on. The core concept is derived from the "body cleansing" in funerary customs, and we regard the building as an independent object, hope to let audience bid farewell to DDG by artistic means trough this process of cleansing and revealing the historical traces and at the same timerecollect and revivify their own unique life experiences.

Escape from Conflicts

The Agricultural Display Center is undoubtedly a representative of the 60s modern Taiwanese architecture, but the two subsequent imitative buildings with similar forms were facing embarrassment: After more than 40 years of common glory and collective memories, they could not escape the fate of demolishment. Demolishment of a monumental building naturally caused heated debates about pros and cons, and along the prolonged process, all concerned parties, whether past users, or those who cared about architecture and city landscape, have formed their respective stances. Even the two buildings were to be demolished in July 2010, these contentions and conflicts would not be settled down by the public policy decision.

Farewell to A Building, the DDGP is a work born under this context. If protest is not the only way of preserving objects and memories, and decay and demolishment of architecture is inevitable, on this foundation we tried to propose a new perspective: to bid farewell to a building, and preserve memory in a final gaze and sense of beauty. "Valediction" is the core idea of the work: to bid farewell to architecture as well as memories, we hope to propose a new possibility of treating memory and architectural space to society by brand new artistic means, and further change the way collective memory is treated in the future.

As the concept of "farewell to architecture" has been established, two questions arise immediately: the first is disorderliness of collective memory, the second is the aesthetic of imitative buildings and its relation to ideas of the original one. Every past user has his/her own memory and interpretation towards space, so how to respect but not flatter his memory is the first question; although the soon-to-be-demolished building was not by CHANG Jao-kang's design, details of construction were almost wholly inherited from the style of Agricultural Display Center, hence the second question of how to make audience sense and see the subjectivity of the building.

Inventive and Unadulterated Artistic Concepts: Cleanse and Wash

Under these premises, we select "cleanse and wash" as the core method of the work. "Cleanse" and "wash" are both acts towards the buildings: removal of pipelines, partitions, and decoration, then the

cleansing of interiors and exteriors. The act echoes the main theme, i.e., "valediction," like body cleansing in funeral rites, which is instinctively connected to audience's life experiences; after thoroughly cleaning up the whole building, people would be able to see its structure and details in its original glory without interference of redundant objects. Past users see in a space not experienced before, and visual impressions revivify past experiences, coalescing them by contrasts of sameness and differences, thereby let them visualize the past once again. As for nonusers, we unite experiences of farewell to space and memories by cleansing, thereby influence the way the audience face old space and feelings within personal memories. We believe the method of cleansing and washing is best suitable for our concept of valediction and the core problematic of architectural aesthetic and collective memory. Through execution, creators are able to approach the architecture most deeply, and empathize with the formation of collective memory.

Art Can Do More

In this project, we no longer pore over the definition of art, nor do we categorize it, but think about what art can do. If the pursuit of things higher, faster, and bigger is inexorable in societal progress, we hold that memories and sentiments crushed by it should be handled more delicately. Farewell to A Building, the DDGP critically inspects the methodology and form of an artwork, and look critically into significant issues like architectural aesthetic, historical memory, modernity, etc. With such stance, we hope to make a humble but confident artistic statement and propose a new possibility of art.

"Cleanse" and "Wash": Artistic Participation During the Practical Process

written by SHIH Yunyu, 2010

We adopted "Cleanse and Wash" as our core method. "Cleansing" and "washing" were towards the building: we dismantled the pipelines, partitions, and decoration of it, and then cleansed thoroughly the inner and the outer, to correspond to the main theme of "valediction," like body cleansing in funerary customs.

Cleanse

Cleansing of the interior was divided into two parts. One was that of the users-produced trash, and the other was the decoration, pipelines and add-on objects. Most of the objects for display belonged to the latter. As for the user-produced trash, it weighted almost 5 tons, including various tables and chairs, papers, and others which could not be classified. In addition, we have cleaned up nearly 8 tons of decorative wood materials, pipelines, and wires.

Wash

After discarding the indoor trash, we then cleansed the entire building. The outer walls were thoroughly cleansed. We carried tools in a 25 tons aerial ladder truck. The interior was cleansed manually, and the inner walls and the glazed bricks were washed with the help of high-pressure cleaning machines.

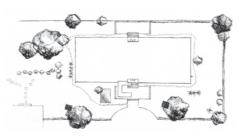
Design Ideas for Exhibition Space

written by LIU Weishen, 2010

LIU Weishen, majored lighting design in Department of Drama and Theatre of National Taiwan University. Worked in theatre as a designer and technician for years, now working in a space design company. (willyliu54@gmail.com)

Design Ideas for Outdoor Space

The exterior of the building directly reveals the most salient idea of the project: cleanse and wash. Before audience enters the building, they receive messages of body cleansing and valediction, as in treatment of a deceased in funerary customs. The walls, the glazed torus bricks, and the gargoyles

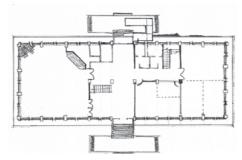


revealed their original luster after being washed: after fungi and dirt were scrubbed off from the concrete surface, it was white under the sun, not gray, and the blemish and damage on it added luster. The glazed bricks reappeared verdant after being polished and washed by water. The pipes and wires on the walls which interrupted with surface lines of the building were kept to a minimum: they were added on, without restraint and design, because old pipelines were jammed and also because new needs arose. After removal of dirt, fungi, stains, and pipelines, original beauty of the building was revealed.

In order to let visitors get closer to the walls to inspect details and prolong their stay outdoors, heat-insulation bricks, which were on the top floor originally, were placed on the lawn to serve as passageways, and the original partition materials became tables, making the work more approachable.

Design Ideas for the 1st Floor

On the first floor, most of the traces left behind by users were preserved. Lecture platforms, blackboards, doors and windows were on the original site, clean and tidy, as did the frame of the ceiling, though the sugarcane tablets were on the elm floor.



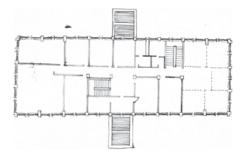
Around the center of the northern room were dismantled water pipelines, wires, and internet cables formerly sprawling all over the building—all added by subsequent users without a clear design idea. Among these indistinct and many objects, one can have a chance to reflect upon the questions of excessive consumption and perturbed equilibrium caused by thoughtless space usage.

In another room, there is nothing in it except the blackboard on the wall, but we can tell it was partitioned into three rooms before. Before the dismantlement of the partitions, the blackboard

appeared too large and chunky, and the partition materials made the space seem cheap. If we have not returned it to its former glory, the ease the blackboard showed in this room would not be able to appear before our eyes.

Design Ideas for the 2nd Floor

The display and part of the dismantled partitions on the second floor echoed geometric form in modernism architecture. After dismantling the windows, they and the glazed torus bricks could be caressed; the structure of the partition was revealed, the space also expanded.



Entirely different from the first floor, the objects for exhibition on the second floor were mostly those for partition like doors, windows, partition panes, etc., which serve as interfaces between the inner and the outer and seldom attract attention in our daily lives. Audience on the floor can touch and smell the exposed Taiwanese cypress, toy with locks on the window panes, or knock on the mineral fiber tablets towards the south. Objects in a building may never been inspected so closely before, and if they had not been dismantled, some parts would have disappeared without a trace and never to be seen along with the erection of the new hall, or become deposited in some visual records with fixed perspectives, their textures never to be felt by us with our hands and noses.

The blank rooms served as places for brooding, letting the audience immerse in the serenity of the architecture, whether in sunshine or raining, light passed through the holes and air conditioner vents, footsteps and whispers echoed in the room, the images of DDG were imprinted on the audience's hearts.

Design Ideas for the 3rd Floor

From low to high, the design ideas of the building gradually showed up. The interesting effect of light passing through the glazed torus bricks reached its maximum after most of the walls



being torn down, and audience can see the original chiascuro of light and shade as well as the design.

On the third floor, wood structures were removed from concrete/hollowed brick walls, so that there was no intervention between the walls and the audience. People could easily feel the cleanliness and spaciousness of the rooms—whether the shining glazed bricks, polished floors and maroon bricks—and clean them with white silks, bidding farewell to them.

In this opened space, modular construction in modernist architecture, ZHANG zhaokang's innovative

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plate molds grout method, and partition walls made of hollow bricks unique to the American assistance period were all exposed.

A room left deliberately blank enabled details of the structure to appear once and again, and under the bright light the audience cannot help but inspect them carefully. The objects displayed on the third floor were the three most important elements in architecture: stones, glasses, and wood. Wood strips and broken glass were respectively laid in the two exhibition rooms—two simple elements were dispersed in the space: broken and fragmented, they intimated about the imminent fate of the building. In the northern space was erected a squat volume, made of combined glass plates: no inscription was on it, but the audience would understand that what it put to an end was not only the fixed line.

Workshops and Volunteers

by LIU Weishen, 2012

As a significant building standing next to the main campus entrance, its memory is shared by different groups of people. The team desired to communicate with those memory holders. Through workshops and volunteering, the team delivered the main statement of DDG project to the students and the public, and aimed to build connection with them.

There are three reasons to host workshops for the students: Firstly, to invite more students to get involved with the project and to share their emotions and ideas about the building. Secondly, NTU students' attendance made communication between artwork and audience broader and faster. Third, as NTU Alumni, team members felt responsible and obligated to share their experiences.

There were three workshops among the project. By collecting intimate stories of DDG from individuals, Fieldwork Workshop aimed to provide soft materials outside of historical records. Photography Workshop observed and depicted the building and the users' stories of DDG with various aspects. Design Workshop sought to find an optimized touch to interpret the main statement of the artwork through performance and exhibits.

The volunteers were divided into the installation volunteers and the frontline volunteers. Artists explained and discussed with volunteers on daily basis and provided training sessions. More and more volunteers were drawn and devoted to the project through these interactions and trainings.

We were most honored to gather more than 10 workshop members willing to hear us out and to express themselves without reservations. Their contribution was greatly valued. In addition, only with the help of over 500 volunteers could the team overcome countless tasks to accomplish DDG project. Thank you to all the people who gave us a hand.

Neighborhood and Social Works

by SU Chiyu, 2012

SU Chiyu graduated form History Department, National Taiwan University. He was the president of the Photography Club at school. SU now works as an editor in United Daily Evening News. b93103007@gmail.com

After several discussions, the team decided to extend the DDG project to the neighborhood by hosting a photo exhibition on Wen-Zhou Street, in the hopes of connecting and interacting with the neighborhood.

Standing at the intersection of NTU campus and its surrounding Goungguan area, DDG is a common image shared by people from both the university and the neighborhood. The project intended to offer every groups of people who share the memory a chance to bid farewell to DDG. Especially to the residents of Wen-Zhous Stree, DDG is not only a building but also a back yard of home because of the openness of NTU campus.

The members of the Photography Workshop were in charge of curating photo exhibition. Most of them were once the users of DDG. The inspiration of the photos came from their personal experiences related to DDG, and the trace of use left on the building they observed. Furthermore, they had to choose a proper store by themselves to exhibit their own works, such as bakeries, laundry stores, or restaurants.

The photos served as miniatures of DDG. Photo exhibition in stores taking part in people's daily life not only evoked residents' empathy, but also enforced connections between DDG and its surrounding neighborhood. (Map see page.8)

Forum, Lecture and Public Activities

by SUN Shidou, HUANG Sixuan (Phil) , 2012

SUN Shidou is a member of Crimson Hall poetry club. Modern poetry has always been one of his passions. After graduating from National Taiwan University (NTU) School of Forestry and Resource Conservation, SUN becomes a staff of his home university as a start of his academic career.

HUANG Sixuan is a graduate from National Taiwan University Department of Philosophy. Literature, music and film are the aspects of his creation. He adores things out of the box, with sense of creativity, texture, and depth. Huang now works as an independent film producer and soundtrack composer. (Ioneway4@gmail.com)

Through *Farewell to A Building, the DDGP*, we expect to examine how collective memory is handled in perspective of modern society. Historical building is the single point that we chose to dig into this subject.

The building 'Dong-Dong-Guan' was the core of public lectures. Through conversation between a diversity of aspects and backgrounds, our aim was to gradually discover the mechanism of memory. In the aspect of architecture, the lectures are connected geographically with historical buildings both in NTU campus and in Taipei city, and historically with the first generation of Taiwanese architects after World War II. In the aspect of design, the project acted as a demonstration of turning waste into art. In the aspect of literature, we discussed how ruins inspire poets regardless of time and space. In the aspect of modern art, the land art itself proved the possibility of creating aesthetic value in capitalized cityscape. In this way, 'Dong-Dong-Guan' is transformed from an 'old building' carrying users' long-time affection, to a space where users could communicate and exchange ideas with the general public. To achieve this goal, we recruited NTU students to introduce the beauty and details of 'Dong-Dong-Guang' to visitors through exhibition. By passing over the knowledge and the stories, we expect to keep the memories and the artwork alive even after the building is demolished.

Apri. 7th Taiwanese Architecture - Stories Start From National Taiwan University WANG Chungshiung (Modern Taiwanese Architecture Historian)

April. 14th **The Generation of Jaw-Kang Chang** HSU Mingsung (Modern Taiwanese Architecture Historian)

May 19th **The Heritage of Living and the Transformation of Design** HU Yozong (Designer)

May 26th Click & Link: Insights of Intriguing Japanese Design WU Donglung (Designer, Author)

June 1st **Detective In City - An Architecture Walk In Taipei** LI Chingchi (Columnist)

June 8th A Moment In Time - Architecture in National Taiwan University SHA Zujou (Architectural Critic)

June 14th **Disappearing Inhabitation - From Ruins to Literature** RUAN Chingyue (Architect, Writer)

June 16th Forever Poet of Architecture - Dahong Wang HSU Mingsung (Modern Taiwanese Architecture Historian)

June 21st **Street Is Museum - Interaction Between Land Art and Space** HU Chiaosheng (Curator)

Event, Promotion, and Public Relationship

written by FENG Tzuchun, LIN Yuching, 2012

FENG Tzuchun, born in 1984. Graduated from Department of Chinese Literature of National Taiwan University. She is now a professional market planner. (tzucfeng@gmail.com)

LIN Yuching, graduated from Taipei First Girls' Senior High School and National Taiwan University Department of

Finance. She now works at Citi Bank. (alicialin@gmail.com)











If art work is a way of expression, then the primary task of its promotion is to define target audience's interest, and to achieve efficient communication. Different schemes have to be set for the artist to communicate with different groups of audience in overlapping communities. Therefore, the team divided the audience into three groups in the light of promotion goals. Firstly the intimate users of DDG and the teachers and students in the NTU. Secondly, the general public conscious of the issue. Thirdly, the critics and commenters in the field of architecture and art.

Before the opening of the exhibition, the focus of promotion was set on recruiting members to join the workshops of design, photography, and fieldwork. Members were mainly students who were the users of DDG. The workshop offered them a chance to smooth their pain, and to transform their vulnerable





previous page: News Reports in Taiwan. current page: Poster and Flyer of the exhibition

emotions into documentation or creation. On the other hand, through various media in campus, including internet, newspapers, and words of mouth, these members became the most important information delivers, and kept DDG project being discussed in campus.

Consider the exhibition solely on its merit, the team focused on "how human beings face buildings," rather than "how the school authorities, teachers and students face the building about to be demolished." The team strategized to contact with two mass media, television and newspapers, expecting that the objective neutral reports by the media would interest public society.

The team therefore argued for the statement to be published, for either it should be described as a campus event held by students, or as an art work created by an artist. Since the work was created to evoke the public attention, and the core issue should be audience related and open floor to discussion, the team decided to define it as a funeral/farewell ceremony for a building. Except the duality of destruction and preservation, a funeral could be another choice for us to face the demolishing building. This endeavor was a success and had been reported by the mass media broadly.

The last group of target audience is the art critics and commenters. An art work has to be reviewed by the professionals, who belong to a relatively closed elite group, and are hardly accessed by mass media. The team therefore held eight lectures, invited scholars, architects, authors, designers, and curators, to discourse on different realms which DDG project related, and to submit their comments to media. Meanwhile, this formed a larger communication and interaction between different audience.

The promotion of DDG project was executed through the schemes described above, which aimed to elaborate the statement of the artist, and initiate public disccussion.

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Funding

written by SHIH Yunyu, 2012

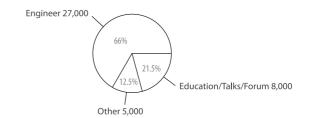
Funding is not only the most practical but also the most important issue in this project. The expense can be divided into three part: engineering, education/talks/forum, promotion. Except NTU Art Centre sponsored one fourth budget, those support from professional engineer company is the key element in this project. Those engineer companies provided help such as technique, material, pro staff and so on. Beyond expectation, most company sponsor not for the exchange of promotion but the acknowledgement to the idea. Those unexpected aid extend the possibility of this project.

The team didn't receive funding from the official because it's late for the application deadline. And the team is too young to create their own reputation and relationship so it's no possible to get money from government or any private organization.

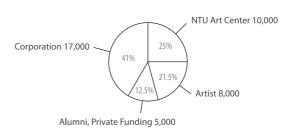
DDGP is one of the biggest art project fund privately in recent year in Taiwan and should be record in history. Though the funding issue had never been solved while the project running from January to July, the situation is always unstable and no one is able to make end of meat.

There is one thing should be reviewed and put into note. EVERYONE in this project is UNPAID and there is a hidden budget in the list. It's hard to get resource and funding in Taiwan for an art project, most of them are based on artist's own relationship and private funding. This is some issue should be discussed and improved.

Budget



Funding Resource



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Total: 40,000 (currency: USD)

About The Team

Curator SHIH Yunyu

Artist SHIH Yunyu, LIU Weishen

Chief Project Manager LIN Yuching

Public Relationship FENG Tzuchun, SUN Shiduo, HUANG Sixuan, SU Chiyu

Theory Critic CHO Haoyu

Cooperator PENG Ruoxuan, MENG Xianglu

Workshop

DESIGN Leader LIU Weishen

Workshop Member LIN Yixi, LIN Ruizhe, WU Pan, ZHANG Gangxian, ZHAN Ziqi

PHOTOGRAPHY Leader SU Chiyu

Workshop Member LIN Junru, FAN Ruian, ZHANG Jieru, YANG Yonghao, YANG Zhehao

FIELDWORK Leader CHO Haoyu

Workshop Member QIU Yanyu, QIU Jiayuan

Translation TSENG Weiyang, LIN Yuching, SHIH Yunyu

Sketch LIN Yixi, YEN Wanling
Photography LEE Yurong, SHIH Yunyu

Visual Design Sean Wang

Artist Biography

施昀佑 SHIH Yunyu

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SHIH Yunyu Born in Changhua, Taiwan, year 1985. SHIH sees art as a medium of social observation. In his eyes, art creation and works are forms of reference in long flow of history.

In 2010, SHIH present his first large scale art project *Farewell to A Building, the Dong-Dong-Guan Project*, SHIH gathered a crew to wash and say goodbye a building about to be demolished. Through the process he tried to handle memory both collective and private with a gentle touch. SHIH developed curatorial concepts, organized a highly professionalized execution team, and worked independently without any official support or sponsorship. The art project covered a various of aspects including architecture design, public relations, public lectures, community communication and funding. This work was also invited to the 2010 Taipei International Forum Biennial. In 2012, HIDE AND SEEK publish his artist book of this project.

His previous work *Prolonged Valediction*(2009) was a series of still photography works which see object in normal life as metaphor of decay and separation. This work was selected in the finalists of Tokyo 1_WALL New Artist award. Before this project, SHIH made a documentary photography book *Light In Darkness*(2007) and a film *Spurt of Blood*(2006) in theatre. He tried to discuss how a play been made and the power relationship between director and actors.

As a graduate of National Taiwan University, SHIH devoted to explore fields of history, philosophy, sociology and poetry. In 2012, SHIH receive New Artist Society Scholarship from SAIC and now a MFA student in School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Postscript

On "Farewell to A Building: the Dong-Dong-Guan Project"

YANG Chihsheng

Since 21 years ago, in 1989, when I moved with the Department of Philosophy in the building which is nicknamed as "Dong-Dong-Guan", I had been studied in her, with the exception of two short intervals. She was old then. For nearly 20 years she had become older. A Scandinavian styled building, gloomy and not well ventilated. In the summer people insides can always felt the heat in the confined space of the building. The mosquitoes drummed their wings happily. The time ravaged her. She should have existed in the north. The blazing sun of the subtropics withered her. The humid air of the Pacific eroded her. When it rained in torrents outsides, the raindrops dripped in my office on the third floor. I always had to place quite a few basins on the floor to prevent the indoor blood.

At last, the university decided to tear her down two year ago, in 2010. The professors and the students were asked to move out. Some of them had, like me, been living in her for nearly 20 years. Most of us were not against the demolition of "Dong-Dong-Guan" and the reconstruction of a new building. She had, after all, been old and sick. To keep her is to torture her and the people living or working in her. But our emotions interrogated us. Should a building in which people have lived for 20 years be treated just the same as one in which people have lived for only 2 years?

The eastern religions teach us to believe that one thing would have spirit, like the human, when it has existed for quite a time, especially when it has undergone love, hatred, and the other passions. Thus might has a spirit a stone, a tree, a fox or a turtle, a hill or a river. As far as I have known, there have been so many stories happened in the "Dong-Dong-Guan". The spirit has grown for long. All that is solid melts into air, but only the solid, not the fluid, or even the spirit. If the spirit is immortal, should we let it leave its body willingly, and feel free?

SHIH Yunyu, who has been one student in my class of philosophy, came back to the university after he has graduated. He gathered professions and volunteers, curated Farewell to A Building, the

| 二年教學傑出教師

希臘哲學與黑格爾哲學。為臺大二〇〇九至二〇一一連續三年教學優良教師與

。現為臺灣大學哲學系助理教授。研究領域為美學

Dong-Dong-Guan Project. In the past, I taught him the theory of philosophy, now, he taught me the practice of making one's farewell to a building.

As the staff, the students, the books, the shelves, the desks, the chairs and the other furnitures are all evacuated, Yunyu began to endow "Dong-Dong-Guan" the dignity of an honoured dead. He washed her. The chambers, the room and the walls were all cleaned. "Dong-Dong-Guan" took her last shower in the sunlight of the spring. Then he photographed her. He took pictures of every place, every corner, every patch of sunlight on the floor, every patch of shadow beneath the sunlight, from insides or from outsides, upwards or downwards.

The stones, the woods, the metals, the tiles, the pieces of glass, the cement blocks, the wires, the pipes, the lamps, the doors, the window frames, the gauzes... were all cleaned and decorated. They became art works and were displayed in her rooms. "Dong-Dong-Guan" became so beautiful in her last moment of life; she could show off with so much pride.

On May 29, 2010, Yunyu and his team hold a solemn funeral for her. All the artists and the guests had their dark clothes on. They lined up and offered a flower to the building. The memories emerged, the eyes suffused with tears. It is the human to see the spirit in the appearance of the material, The art is not merely the shapes, the colors, or the light and shadow, but is the spirit given out from the combination of them; the art is neither merely the tones, the melodies, or the chords, but is the spirit given out from the combination of them; the art is neither merely the forms or the material, but is the spirit given out from the combination of them. It demands us not only to perceive with our eyes, ears and the other organs, but also with our heart, and thus moves us.

YANG Chihsheng

Born in Changhua, Taiwan, year 1964, now an assistant professor in department of philosophy of National Taiwan University. His professions are in the fields of Aesthetics, Greek philosophy and Philosophy of Hegel. As a professor, he was voted as a superior faculty of the year from 2009 to 2011 and the outstanding faculty of the year in 2012.

Co-operation

Corporation NTU藝文中心、誠品書店、忠泰文化、EPSON台灣、玖福清潔 Special Thank To 無垢舞蹈劇場、施明煌、靳蓉、劉雲英、林書瑤、徐明松、大溪邱師傅

Publication Info

Publication HideAndSeek 書喜出版 hideandseekart@gmail.com Editor SHIH Yunyu 施昀佑 www.shihyunyu.com Designer WANG Wanyu 王琬瑜 www.wangwanyu.com Print ChinHua Printing Company 晶華彩色製版有限公司

Publication Date August 1st' 2012

Price TW/550NTD, EU/20€, BR/18£, North America and Other Country/24USD (Included Taiwan Local/Oversea-shipping fee)

500

Edition 500 copies. Copyright&Authorized © 2012 SHIH Yunyu

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