

湯皇珍裝置—表演作品中的敘事時間

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本文我將試著探討今年五月份湯皇在「伊通公園」所發表一「要求觀眾身體參與的裝置作品」中的敘事時間結構。當然我還得借助她回國後所做的幾件重要作品。造形藝術常被歸類為空間藝術，而有別於音樂、戲劇、舞蹈、文學等的「純或混雜」的時間藝術。從所使用的物質元素著眼，這種分類是沒有問題的。但是一旦牽涉到美感經驗過程，則使始一件純靜態的造型作品，也是需要時間去讀、去體驗的。當然這種「時間消費」也許還不能算是作品的內在元素，然而如果作品的內部具有某種「邏輯」或「因果關係」，或某種「反覆變奏關係」，那麼，即使沒有實實在在的運動加入，「時間」仍是作品的內在元素。更不用說一件具有內在因果邏輯，又必須用身體去參與的作品；如果作品把「體力的消耗」、「不斷的無用的努力」、「不懈的重新追求」當作是它的內涵；特別是作品的元素被隔離而不能一次看完，並且各元素本身也在不斷的改變，「時間」更成為具體的內在元素。

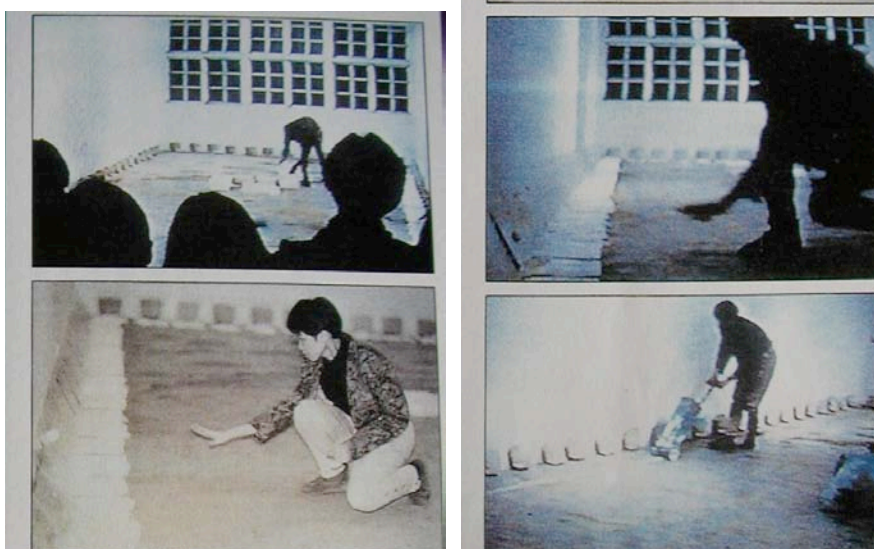
在這個作品中，「語意元素」被安排在三層樓的的延續路線中。觀眾被要求去與這些元素做實質的交往—接觸、變形、位移，並在路線中將經歷反覆、抉擇、交換、懸疑、驚訝...的身心變化。這行動一方面本身就是存在時間的展開，也一方面賦與意義及完成「大敘事文段」的實質過程，在此，閱讀、存在、創作同時完成。也許真正對全文的閱讀是在回家路上的回想中才完成，也就是透過回想、比較、組織才能將其中的的發展邏輯找出來。這是本文想試著做的工作。

在主要作品分析前，我將簡單的分析其他幾件作品：



(1)150本私藏書籍梯子 (1991 誠品書店)

摺疊的木梯張開成通天的金字塔型，150本書靠著木梯的斜坡往上方疊起，在三十天的限定時間中作者每天從家裡出發到展出會場，依次把梯子一邊的五本書搬到另一邊，同樣靠著斜坡疊高起來。無疑，每天搬五本書的行動是敘事的「基本單位」一絕頂荒謬無意義的強迫性反覆行為，相對150本人文科學書籍的精神內涵，象徵超越上升的梯子，這無用的反覆行為更顯荒謬！



(2)隔著壓克力板往紙袋裡丟雞蛋的儀式性表演 (1991 伊通公園)

湯皇珍在長方形空間封閉的那端，呈現U型擺置了72個單位的紙袋、壓克力板、衛生紙；紙袋是以前小雜貨店用來裝麵粉、雞蛋等所用的手糊馬糞紙袋。紙袋它緊靠在牆角，壓克力板則一邊斜靠在地上一邊斜靠在牆面上，正好阻隔了丟雞蛋的射線。壓克力板前方鋪著一小疊衛生紙。她每次取一個雞蛋，半蹲在紙袋與板子前方，虔誠專心的瞄準，將雞蛋往紙袋裡投擲，但惘然，被透明界線所阻，撞破在界面，蛋白蛋黃渾濁的黏液順著板面流到衛生紙上聚成一灘。她然後起身取蛋，到達下一位置蹲下瞄準，再取蛋，再瞄準。這絕不是由齒輪帶動的均質性反

覆運動，反而隨著反覆的增加，體力不斷消耗，肌肉的疲乏也不斷累增；就心理反應而言，本是一疏離中性的身體行為，逐漸震盪成偏執激情的儀式。一個無意義荒謬、由超強意志力所支持的無用行為，最後可以變成「本身即為目的」的偏執行為！

之後，表演者用一只大垃圾袋將這些沾污的衛生紙像垃圾丟入袋中，如果丟雞蛋表現了一暴力，那麼把這些殘留物迅速丟到垃圾袋更是一怵目驚心一有死亡的意味，但這死亡似乎含著自虐的成分。這件作品叫很多人產生女性週期的聯想，但它的涵義似乎又比這更複雜，例如最後她用白石灰粉將清除殘骸的現場隔離起來，似乎產生某種集體屠殺的意象。

(3) 麵粉團餅、空瓶子、不斷反覆獨白：我愛你 (1992 台北市立美術館)



整個空間原鋪有大理石方磚，形成整齊十字方格眼。在每一個十字交叉處放置一個空瓶子，瓶口頂著由麵粉團所烤成的餅，每一個瓶子的下方寫著「不可觸摸」的警句；開幕時表演者躲在會場中不起眼的角落，面對牆壁，用法文、英文反覆獨白：我愛你，長達九十分鐘。

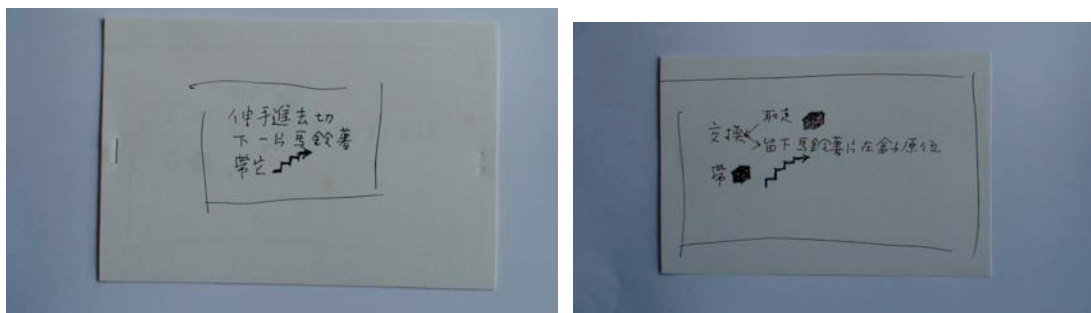
我們不禁要問「不可觸摸」是對誰而發，就如同「我愛你」是對誰而發。在這裡，我們可以發現三個時間的發展：1. 作者做餅、排餅、排瓶的苦工時間；2. 無對象「我愛妳」獨白的長時間反覆；3. 不斷反覆的禁忌〈不管是針對觀眾或是麵粉與瓶子間的進一步關係〉；這三層時間說法似乎要靠「丟蛋72」的作品以及往後作品的互文關係來確立。目前我們不急於深入的分析，我希望在分析主要作品時再不時回到先前的這三件作品。

(4) 主要作品之分析：

「伊通公園」畫廊為三層樓房，每一層均為狹小樓梯所連接；實際上第一層只是通往第二層的狹小樓梯，這在台灣早期店面式建築的格局是常見的。

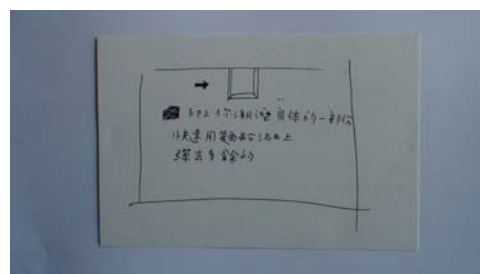
在樓梯進口，牆上凹處有一透明塑膠箱，觀眾可以伸手進去用小刀切一塊馬鈴薯，然後帶著它抵達二樓；在二樓等著觀眾的是大理石方格地板以及依照方格眼

排列、具有洞眼的黑色小紙盒，觀眾依指示拿起一個黑盒，將薯塊放在空出的方格眼上。到這裡似乎可以區分成一個大段落。



接著觀眾帶著黑紙盒上三樓，並被指定用身體潮濕的部份〈常是舌頭〉去接觸黑盒子，這一段與第一段表面上很不同，但仍然可以找出反覆的部份。接著動線將觀眾引導至一圓錐形麵粉山前，觀眾又再度被指示取一些麵粉灑在黑盒〈特別是弄濕的部份〉面上。但就在觀眾蹲下作此動作時身體處動電眼，同步啟動攝影機，將弄濕、灑粉的動作記錄在錄映機內。灑麵粉的動作可以視為交換薯塊以及舔黑盒子動作的反覆與補充，而窺伺、監視似乎是欲望喚醒以及達到臨界點的後果。

最後，觀眾驚魂甫定拿著舔過以及灑過麵粉的黑盒，穿越過整齊排列、已裝入一圓錐形麵粉的瓶子〈如沙漏〉，再依指示在牆上挑一個位置把盒子固定在與你眼等高的位置。就每一個觀眾而言行動已結束，但整個作品仍在繼續變動中。



也許我們的分析可以停在這裡，不認為其中有什麼邏輯也沒有反覆，但觀眾在參與的每一段過程中會實質的改變作品，並被喚醒某些奇怪的無法化約的感覺。我們可以把這視為一個半偶發的行動，但我還希望〈不無詮釋暴力的〉稍微理解這些物質的可能涵意，在這個敘事體中是否含有某種邏輯；從湯皇珍以往的作品來

看，我們假定反覆應該還會出現不管形式多麼隱藏。

實際上，要客觀理解這些「物體」的涵義〈涵義即使是多義〉，有必要透過文段之分節，並從與之相連的另一個物體以及某些反覆關係，試圖來確定「物體的意義」。

我們先研究隱藏在「敘事體」中反覆的部份：

1.馬鈴屬塊莖(可當種子來繁殖)，似乎可以合理被帶上樓放在黑盒子中，但盒子被不能繁殖的大理石地所代替；2.從終將在大理石地面上乾涸的薯塊，回溯到用刀切馬鈴薯的行為以及與黑色盒子的關係，死亡的意義似乎已偷偷與黑盒子連接在一起；3.觀眾只能用體液去濕潤黑盒子的表面，那麼1與3之間有奇妙的反覆與補充關係；4.用黑盒子潮濕的部分去沾麵粉或用麵粉灑在盒子潮濕的部份，可以是1與3的反覆與補充，也可以是2—死亡意義的反覆與補充。此處我們還須稍加情境的補充：a. 用體液潤濕黑盒子然後灑麵粉的行為，招致窺伺與監視，可見此舉是種欲望的行為；b.在最後一個空間，麵粉進入瓶子的內部。但這個行為是觀眾所不能親自完成〈因為已由別人—作者完成〉，這裡既表現了欲望的對象，也表現了禁忌的內容。5.最後我們還可以讀到另一個更不明顯的反覆—以自己眼高度來固定黑盒子。這行為似乎與被攝影機偷窺間有某種類似性，差別在—是被人的眼 看，—是被自己的眼 看。如果我們從黑盒子與死亡意象來導入，此時排列在白色牆上的黑盒子變成棺木或骨灰罐子，先前的灑麵粉彷彿可以確認為灑黃土。

現在我們再根據「形的類似」以及「配對的關係」，找出兩組相對物體及符號：

1馬鈴薯塊→種子的意象→屍體的意象〈被切割逐漸乾涸的薯塊〉體液→圓錐形麵粉堆→黃土→會腐敗、無形式的麵粉

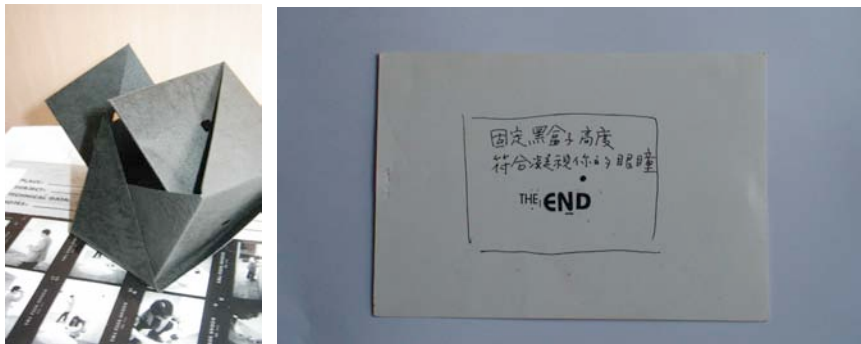
2黑色盒子→不能種植馬鈴薯的大理石地→裝馬鈴薯的透明箱子→裝了麵粉的瓶子→看人的眼 →棺木骨灰罐→身上親密、私密的部份。也許我們可以把這兩組符號關係化為「身體」與「身體」、「欲望」與「死亡」的兩組關係，這裡壓抑與禁忌自始至終發揮威力。

關於此矛盾情結，可再借湯皇珍在侯俊明婚禮上所做的表演來說明：她將一系列新娘的黑色大頭照排列到牆上，並用和過水的黏麵粉反覆貼黏在肖像眼 與嘴巴的部位，這時麵粉不似「我愛你」—作與中性的玻璃容器相靠，而是直指身體的色情地帶〈至少是身體兩欲望敏感器官〉連接在一起，麵粉也因此連接變成了一「欲望的物質」。在這裡欲望與死亡比鄰，婚禮—黑白大頭照—生麵團，祭亡靈的婚禮，混合著性虐待式的色情感覺！

透過以上分析，我們似乎可以把湯皇珍的「敘事體」看成是從生到死的無盡反覆

的荒謬，無間的努力。在其中充滿了慾望之壓抑與挫折也含有偷偷的享樂，慾望、禁忌、死亡總不時糾纏在一起。也許有人傾向將這個「敘事體」看成是偶發的、無反覆的線性連續。但我趨向將其分成幾個大段落，它們不同但卻局部類似，或是類似卻局部不同，它們在不同領域、層次相互截斷、相互補充、加強。也由於相當的類似性，使得作品在大段落層次或符號的層次上，有相融合滲透而形形成某種不可分割的範圍的現象。

觀者只參與一次，恐怕不易有反覆形式的感受，而比較是一種偶發的展開。本文比較是從它的「敘事時間」以及混著「存有時間模式」的向度切入，從符號的角度，我們可以看到隱喻之多義性，從更寬廣的角度，它還具有範疇互換，或論述與生活層次互滲的現象，但反覆的結仍隱約可見。



The Installation of Tang Huang-Chen: Narrative Time in Performance Art

By Huang Hai-Ming(Critic)

Artist Magazine 1994 8

In this article ,I will take a look at the structure of narrative time in Tang Huang-Chen's "Installation that Requires the Physical Participation of the Viewer" exhibited at IT Park in May 1994. I will, of course, also have to refer to a few of her important works since her return to Taiwan.

Plastic art is often regarded as a type of "spatial art", different from those "pure or mixed" temporal art such as music, the theater, dance, and literature. Such classification is certainly applicable where the material element are concerned. However, as long as one is dealing with the process of aesthetic experience, even if the piece concerned is a static work of plastic art, one still needs time to look at it, to experience it. Perhaps this type of "time consumption" cannot be considered as an inherent element of a work. But, where there is a "logic",

“causal relations” or some “repetition and variation”, time is still one of the work’s internal elements, even if the work does not involve any tangible movement. This is even more so for an installation piece which not only has an internal causal logic, but requires physical participation. If a piece uses the consumption of physical energy, continuous yet useless hard work, and an unremittingly renewed pursuit for more as part of its content, then time will become a substantial internal element, especially if the other elements present in the piece are separate and impossible to view at one time, and if they are themselves continuously changing.

In the work of this installation, some “linguistic elements” are arranged along a path extended over three levels. The audience is asked to come into real contact with these elements, to change their shape, move them around and to repeat what one has already experienced on the path, changes in mind and body, choices, exchanges, conjectures and shocks. This movement is a development in existential space, and at the same time the process of bestowing meaning and completing a greater “narrative passage”. Viewing, existing, and creating are simultaneously completed. Perhaps, true reading of this “passage” is completed only on one’s way home while reflecting on the exhibition. It is only by means of recollection, comparison and organization that one is able to discover the logic of its inner development. This is what I hope to do by means of this article. However, before analyzing this piece, I would first like to take a quick look at a few others.

(1) One Hundred and Fifty Books form a Private Collection and a Step-ladder (Eslite bookshop Gallery 1991)

The Wooden folding-ladder opens up to become a pyramidal form reaching to the sky. One hundred and fifty books are piled up next to one of the ladder’s sloping sides. During a prescribed time of thirty days, the artist set out every day from home and went to the place where the piece was being exhibited, successively moving five books from one side of ladder to the other, and piling them up in the same way next to the ladder’s sloping side. The act of moving five books every day is undoubtedly the “fundamental unit” from which this narrative piece is composed, an absolutely absurd and meaningless obsessive repetition. In comparison with the spiritual content of the one hundred and fifty books on the humanities, and the ladder symbolically reaching up transcending everything, this futile act of repetition is even more obviously absurd.

(2) The Ceremonial Performance of Throwing Eggs into a Paper Bag From One Side of a Plexiglass Barrier (IT PARK Gallery 1991)

At the sealed-off end of a rectangular space, Tang Huang-Chen arranged various paper bags, Plexiglass, and toilet paper into an inverted “U” shape. The paper bags are the type grocers use to put flour and eggs in. They are packed closely against the foot of the wall. The Plexiglass slants diagonally between the wall and the floor, so blocking the line along which the eggs are to be thrown. There is a small pile of toilet paper in front of the Plexiglass. Each time, she takes an egg and squats in front of the paper bags and the Plexiglass, piously and attentively aiming towards the target and then throws the egg. But of course the eggs are blocked out by the transparent barrier. Broken by this barrier, the turbid mucus of yolk and egg-white slides down the Plexiglass and onto the toilet paper. Then she gets up, takes another egg, goes to a second and then a third position, squats down and aims. Then she takes another egg and aims again. This is certainly not some well-gearred, well-proportioned repetitive act. With the repeated action and the continuous using up of physical strength, her muscles are increasingly worn out. As for the psychological reaction to all this, it was originally an alienated, neutral, physical action, but has gradually become an emotional maniac ceremony, a meaningless absurdity, a futile act maintained by great willpower. In the end it will possibly become an obsessive action carried out for its own sake. Afterwards, the artist put all of the dirty toilet paper into a big rubbish bag. If throwing eggs was a violent display of sorts, then quickly throwing these remains into a rubbish bag is even more so a terrifying act. It is a metaphor for death. This death seems to have a certain masochism to it. This piece makes a lot of people think of a woman’s period, but it seems as if its content is even more complicated than that. For example, at the end, she separates these remains into different areas using chalk powder, seeming to produce a certain image of some group massacre.

(3) Biscuits, Empty Bottles and a Continued Repetition of “Je t’aime”, “I love you” (Taipei Fine Art Museum 1992)

The whole space was divided into a grid. An empty bottle was put at each intersection, a biscuit placed at the mouth of each bottle. On each bottle was written the warning “Don’t touch”. The performer hid in a corner of the room, facing a wall and monotonously repeating “I love you” in French and English for a period of ninety minutes. We can’t help but wondering for whom

“ Don’t touch.” is meant. In the same way , to whom is she saying “ I love you”? Here we can discover three spatial developments:

(1)

The time used for the artists hard work in making and setting out the biscuits and in setting out the bottles.

(2)

An “I love you” meant fir nobody in particular , and its lengthy and monotonous repetition.

(3)

The continual repeated use of taboos, regardless of whether these are aimed at the audience or a development of the relationship between the biscuits and the bottles.

It seems as though these three theories need to be confirmed by an observation of the mutual relationships between the piece involving the throwing of eggs and her later works. At the moment we needn’t analyze these any closer. I hope that while giving an analysis of the main piece in question, I might at any time refer to these three works

(4) Licking, Sprinkling, and Spying (IT PARK Gallery 1994)

IT PARK is a three-story building , each floor connected by a narrow staircase. Actually, the ground floor is just the narrow staircase leading to the second floor. This is often seen in shop-like layouts. At the entrance to the staircase is a transparent plastic case. The visitor can reach into the case and use a small knife to cut off a piece of potato, and then take it up to the second floor. On the second floor there is a marble floor with small black paper boxes on it arranged in a grid formation. Following the instructions given, the visitor picks up one of the black boxes and puts the piece of potato into the space vacated in the grid. It seems that one can distinguish a first part of the exhibition here.

Next the visitor takes the black paper box to the staircase , being told to touch the box with a wet part of the body (generally speaking, one’s tongue). This appears to be different from the first stage of the exhibition, but in fact one can spot certain repetitions.

Next, the moving line brings one before a cone-shaped pile of flour. The visitor is once again instructed to sprinkle some flour onto the black box (especially the wet part). But just as s/he bends down to do this ,a light sensor is triggered and a video camera is turned on, recording the act of licking boxes

and sprinkling flour . This action can be regarded as a repetition of or complement to those of putting the piece of potato on the floor or licking the box, and being spied on seems to be a reminder of our desires and a result of reaching some boundary or other.

The visitor then takes the black box which s/he has licked and sprinkled with flour through an arrangement of bottles filled with cones of flour. Then, again following instructions ,s/he chooses a place at eye-level on the wall in which to put the box. As far as the visitor is concerned the action is already over. Meanwhile, there is a continuation in the changes taking place in the exhibition.

Our analysis could possibly finish here, feeling that there was nothing logical or repetitive at all in the piece. In participating in each process, the visitor can in fact bring about changes in the work, and at the same time made aware of certain irreducible strange feeling. We can regard this as an action brought about half by chance. However, we hope in the risk of applying the violence of interpretation , to know a little about the possible meanings represented by these objects and whether or not there is anything logical at all about this “narrative” piece . From what we have seen of her previous pieces, we can suppose that, regardless of how hidden their forms, there should be some type of repetition present.

In fact, if we are to objectively understand the fact that the meaning contained in these “ objects” are multiple meanings, then we have to start with an analysis of their various parts. We can have a slightly clearer idea of “an object’s meaning” by looking at other objects linked to it and a few of the repeated relationships between these objects.

Let’s first have a look at the repeated parts hidden within the piece’s ‘narrative section”:

(1)

The pieces of potato(which could be seeds used for further planting)seem as though they can be taken upstairs and put into the black boxes. However the boxes are replaced by the barren marble floor.

(2)

From the pieces of potato that will finally dry up in the concrete floor, back to the act of cutting the potato with a knife and its relationship to the black boxes,

an images of death seems to be silently associating itself with these same black boxes.

(3)

The visitor is only able to use saliva to moisten the outside of the boxes. Therefore ,there is an intriguing relationship of repetition and complement between (1)and(3).

(4)

The sprinkling of flour onto the wet part of the black boxes could be a repetition of or complement to(1) and(3)or the image of death in(2). It is necessary for us to say a little more about this situation. (a) The use of saliva to moisten the black box and the subsequent act of sprinkling flour led to the visitor being spied on. From this we can see this act as desire. (b)In the last space encountered , flour is put into the bottles . However, this action is not completed by the visitor, because it has already been done by somebody else. This is an expression of the objects of one's desires, and also that of the content of some taboo or other.

(5)

We can finally come across anther, even less obvious repetition. There seems to be a similarity between placing the black boxes at eye-level and being spied on by the video camera. The difference between the two is the fact that with one, one is being looked at by somebody else's eye, while with the other one , it is one's own eyes that are doing the viewing. Seen from the perspective of the image of death present in the black boxes, these boxes now arranged in rows on the wall have become either coffins or urns , and the scattering of flour on top of them has been designated as the earth that one scatters in a grave.

Judging by these "similarities in form" and "relationships in the coordination between Objects", one can discover two groups of objects and symbols.

(1)

The piece of potato<> the seed image<>the image of a corpse(the pieces of potato, dissected and gradually drying out)<> saliva <>cone –shaped piles of flour<> earth<> the decaying and formless flour.

(2)

The black boxes<> the concrete floor in which it is impossible to plant the pieces of potato<> the transparent box containing the potatoes<> the bottles of flour <>the eyes looking at the visitor <>coffins<> urns<> intimate part of the body.

Perhaps we might be able to class the relationships between symbols in the

two groups into the relationships between “body” and “body” and between “desire” and “death”. Here taboo and holding oneself back make their presence felt throughout. In connection with these types of contradictions, we can take a look at the performance presented by Tang Huang-Chen for the occasion of Hou Jun-Ming’s wedding . She Arranged a series of black and white photographs of the bride on a wall, and then repeatedly pasted sticky flour onto the pictures’ eyes and mouth. The flour is no longer situated next to some neutral container , but is linked to the erotic zones of the body, or at least with the sensitive parts, and because of its proximity to the body’s genitals has turned into “the material of desire”. Desire and death are placed next to each other , a wedding, black and white photographs , flour , a feeling of sacrificing to the dead and a sadistic eroticism.

From the analysis given above ,it seems as though we can regard her “narratives” as a lifelong, unendingly repeated absurdity, a futile exertion. Included are the suppression of desire, frustrations, and surreptitious enjoyment .Desire, taboo, and death are constantly tangled up together

Perhaps some people might be inclined to regard this “narrative” as unintentional, as linear without repetition. However, I am inclined to divide it into a few important stages, either different in nature with similar layouts, or identical with different layouts, mutually interfering, or mutually complementing or reinforcing. The fair amount of similarity between the piece’s various different parts and symbols results in a certain harmony filtering through and forming an integral presence in the whole work.

If the viewer only participates once in this exhibition, then I’m afraid they won’t get some feeling of “repetition of forms” from it, but rather the impression that this is all unintentional. In this article , I have tried to approach the exhibition from its “narrative time” and “model of existential space”. From the standpoint of the symbols used, we are able to see the multiple meanings of the metaphors. From an even wider viewpoint, it has a great amount of interchange of categories, a mutual penetration of discursive and life. However, its repetitive character is still faintly visible here and there.