

Video Art Viewing Notes

English translation draft based on collector-supplied Chinese materials for the LFC Video Art section.

These notes are designed as viewing companions. They do not replace the works, nor do they provide final interpretations. Each text opens a way to notice time, body, technology, memory, performance, and moving-image form.

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Liu Chengrui

Scraper Moving Earth

Body, time, and the work of moving space

In this action, Liu Chengrui moves soil from outside into an interior space by crawling and carrying it mouthful by mouthful. Before each pile of earth is released, the artist marks the exact time. The almost impossible gesture recalls the persistence of Yu Gong Moving Mountains, yet here the mountain becomes time itself. Across repeated performances between 2007 and 2016, the work uses the body to reshape duration, labor, and the relation between inside and outside.

Looking question: What changes when the body becomes the tool that measures time?

Lu Yang

Delusional Mandala

A digital body beyond ordinary limits

Lu Yang creates a genderless digital avatar based on the artist's own image. The work draws from neuroscience, stereotactic medical devices, religious imagery, and electronic dance music. The avatar dances, transforms, is destroyed, and seems to enter an imagined afterlife. Through this digital body, consciousness is staged as something that can travel beyond fixed identity, gender, flesh, and death.

Looking question: What kind of freedom does a digital body make possible?

Li Lang

30,219 Days

Remembering a life by counting its days

Li Lang writes the dates of his father's life across the wall, from December 3, 1927 to August 27, 2010. The number 30,219 becomes both a measurement and a memorial. After writing the dates, the artist scrapes them away with a knife. The action acknowledges that forgetting is vague and inevitable, while the force of erasure leaves another kind of trace.

Looking question: Can erasing something become another way of remembering it?

Ma Qiusha

Liu (Stroll)

A walk with something unseen

Two screens show bare legs walking back and forth across grass, as if leading an invisible object with a chain. There is no narration and no clear explanation. The viewer is asked to fill the gap between image and story. What looks simple becomes a space for uncertainty, projection, and continued movement.

Looking question: What does the work ask us to imagine when the object being led is never shown?

Ma Qiusha

Must Be Beauty

Beauty as pressure on the body

Ma Qiusha uses performance to examine the relation between the female body, beauty standards, and consumer culture. Surrounded by skin-care products, the artist does not apply them to the skin as an advertisement might suggest. Instead, she swallows them. Beauty becomes an invasion and a burden, exposing how commercial aesthetics can shape the body and self-recognition.

Looking question: When does beauty become a demand rather than a choice?

Ma Haijiao

Lying Dreams, Dreaming Panics

Reality, fiction, and the unstable story

Ma Haijiao uses video, narrative, and fiction to blur the boundaries between reality, fantasy, memory, and lies. Scenes, people, and stories appear in a condition of uncertainty. The work does not reject reality; it reveals that reality can be understood through imagination, fabrication, and self-organized fragments.

Looking question: Can fiction reveal something that ordinary reality hides?

Miao Ying

Post-Comments, Likes & Money - Morgan Freeman's Advice on Reality

Attention as a digital performance

Miao Ying turns livestreaming, online comments, likes, and digital attention into material for the work. The result is humorous and absurd, but it also asks how people watch others and construct themselves online. Traffic, performance, and reality begin to overlap until the border between lived experience and manufactured illusion becomes unstable.

Looking question: What happens when attention becomes the medium of the work?

Song Ta

Who Is the Most Lovable Person?

Public memory placed inside everyday entertainment

Song Ta begins from the famous 1951 essay Who Is the Most Lovable Person? and invites active-duty navy members to ride a roller coaster in Guangzhou. The work brings a heroic public memory into an amusement park setting. This contrast reopens the image of the soldier, not as a fixed symbol, but as something that can be seen again through ordinary pleasure, speed, and spectacle.

Looking question: How does a familiar public image change when it enters an unexpected setting?

Shen Xin

On the Shoulders of Giants

A meeting as a space of knowledge

Developed from a lecture-performance at Senate House, University of London, the work places philosophers, theorists, writers, and mythical figures into a shared intellectual space. Creatures from the Classic of Mountains and Seas appear through real-time animation. The meeting becomes more than a discussion: it is a staged site where different systems of knowledge collide, translate, and transform each other.

Looking question: Can a conversation become an artwork?

Shen Xin

Snow Country

Landscape, testimony, and buried memory

Set against a Nordic snow landscape, Shen Xin's work draws on historical trauma and the testimony of former comfort women. Its reference to Yasunari Kawabata's *Snow Country* opens a further layer of memory, oppression, and fragile intimacy. Snow becomes more than scenery. It becomes a surface where histories can be buried, silenced, and made visible again.

Looking question: What can a landscape hold that language cannot easily say?

Shen Xin

The Book of Rites: In Practice

Who owns the retelling of history?

The work unfolds from the viewpoint of a dinner guest around a Chinese businessman's proposal to reconstruct the Crystal Palace in Britain. The original Crystal Palace was built for the 1851 Great Exhibition, a site tied to empire, display, memory, and cultural power. Shen Xin uses this scenario to ask who is allowed to retell history, rebuild symbols, and imagine cultural ownership.

Looking question: When history is reconstructed, whose memory is being built?

Xiao Wenjun

Chocolate Trilogy

Sweetness, melting, and the image of love

Chocolate often appears as a familiar symbol of love, desire, and sweetness. Xiao Wenjun treats this material differently, allowing it to melt on or with the body. The work moves love away from advertising language and turns it into a physical process: softening, staining, dissolving, and disappearing.

Looking question: What happens when a romantic symbol becomes a material action?

Xiao Wenjun

Chicken

Life seen through industrial efficiency

The chicken is often understood through efficiency: a creature transformed quickly into food. Xiao Wenjun slows that logic down. By treating the act of killing a chicken as a ritual, the work asks viewers to feel the disappearance of life that industrial production usually hides. The ordinary meal becomes connected to debt, care, and violence.

Looking question: What do we stop seeing when life becomes a commodity?

Zhang Peili

Q & A

Question and answer as a structure of seeing

Zhang Peili treats question and answer not simply as communication, but as a system that shapes how information is exchanged. The work reflects on language, dialogue, and the conditions of viewing. Within the context of biennial culture and public discussion, the simple structure of asking and replying becomes a way to examine institutional speech.

Looking question: Does an answer close a question, or create a new one?

Li Binyuan

Room

A body crossing the line of danger

In an empty factory space, Li Binyuan straddles a line of fire. The action is direct and tense. Fire becomes a boundary, an obstacle, and a test of distance. By placing his body against this line, the artist turns space into a question of risk, control, and transgression.

Looking question: Where does a boundary become visible: in space, or in the body that crosses it?

Xing Danwen

I Can't Feel My Feeling

The body as the site of invisible force

Xing Danwen places the body at the center of the work. Red wounds, the twisting back, and the sense of an unseen aggressor make feeling visible through physical movement. The body seems to want stillness, but pain makes it move. The work holds this contradiction between sensation, control, and the impossibility of fully naming what is felt.

Looking question: How can an image show a feeling that cannot be directly spoken?

Ge Yulu

Security Check

Testing safety by creating danger

Ge Yulu climbs an exterior safety net without protection in order to enter a building for a so-called security check. The action is absurd and sharply humorous. By producing danger in the name of examining safety, the work asks how rules, systems, and rational procedures can become unstable when tested by the body.

Looking question: Can an action expose the weakness of the system it seems to obey?

Wu Ziyang

A Technological Woman

Technology, gender, and future control

Wu Ziyang uses 3D animation and AI-assisted scripting to create a futuristic narrative around gender, transformation, and power. The conflict between HUAWEI and COKYO becomes a fable about technology's ability to manufacture, control, and recode identity. The work asks how artificial intelligence enters artistic production as both tool and subject.

Looking question: Who controls identity when the body becomes technological?

Xu Bing

Dragonfly Eyes

Surveillance footage becomes cinema

Xu Bing's film is made entirely from real surveillance footage, with no newly shot images. Unrelated fragments from public cameras are edited into narrative form. The work turns surveillance into cinematic material and shows that reality and fiction can be separated by a single act of editing.

Looking question: What changes when the world is already filming itself?

Ou Jin

Drift

Between digital calculation and physical form

Ou Jin works between digital computation and material conversion. Virtual forms are made physical while retaining a sense of mechanical movement. The work holds a balance between computational objectivity and subjective artistic decision, asking how digital processes can become objects of perception.

Looking question: When a digital form becomes physical, what kind of presence does it gain?

Shi Jinsong

Magic Lantern (00:00:29:99)

Memory as a sequence of flashes

Shi Jinsong uses the visual language of slides, diagrams, and time markings to think about life as a series of remembered fragments. The title's timecode suggests a moment that flashes, stops, and becomes record. The work compresses memory into images that feel both schematic and intimate.

Looking question: Can a life be understood through fragments rather than a complete story?

Zhao Zhao

Taklamakan Project

An impossible line through the desert

Zhao Zhao's project involved a large team, a long cable, and a refrigerator filled with Xinjiang beer powered deep in the Taklamakan Desert. The action is absurd, logistical, and physically demanding. It connects personal action with infrastructure, territory, borders, labor, and the vast indifference of the desert.

Looking question: Why would an artist carry electricity into the desert?

Deng Wei

Inflatable Doll vs. Watermelon Spirit

Humor as a way to cut into reality

Deng Wei's practice often begins from painting and extends into a sharp, playful observation of everyday and marginal realities. Humor is not used to soften the work. It becomes a way to reveal awkwardness, desire, social absurdity, and the instability of ordinary experience.

Looking question: Can humor make a work more critical rather than less serious?

Xue Ruozhe

Still Life No. 8

Figurative painting after the image

Xue Ruozhe explores how figurative painting can be recontextualized and re-enchanted amid the fractures between image, painting, and history. The work appears restrained, almost emptied. By reducing narrative elements, it creates a suspended psychological density rather than a simple representation.

Looking question: What remains when a painting-like image refuses to explain itself?

Xue Ruozhe

Sketch (From Life)

A quiet image held in suspension

Xue Ruozhe's work examines the place of figurative painting in a field already saturated by images. Instead of adding drama, the work subtracts. The resulting stillness allows image, memory, and painting history to gather in a quiet but psychologically charged state.

Looking question: How can restraint make an image more difficult to leave?

KOO Jun-yup

Girl with a Pearl Earring - Video

A familiar icon remade through sound and image

This video and music work borrows from Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, but it is not a simple reproduction. It places a familiar art-historical image inside a contemporary digital and musical context. The work asks how an old icon can move again when it is translated through another medium.

Looking question: What happens to an art-historical image when it begins to move and sound?

Shen Lieyi

2024-04-15

Burning, memory, and cultural fragility

Shen Lieyi documents the burning of a sculptural model of Notre Dame de Paris. The work echoes the collective memory of the 2019 Notre Dame fire, but it reenacts the event through a fragile miniature. Destruction, repair, and continuity become questions about cultural heritage and the vulnerability of civilization.

Looking question: Why does a small reconstruction of destruction feel historically heavy?

Han Qian

Arabian Speedwell

A small plant as a carrier of memory

Han Qian uses the image of a small plant to connect time, memory, life traces, migration, and emotion. The work turns attention toward what is usually overlooked. A modest natural form becomes a clue to micro-history and individual experience.

Looking question: What histories can be held by something small enough to ignore?

Sun Yuan & Peng Yu

Hegemony

Competition under unequal rules

Three free fighters from different weight classes are placed into one match. What appears at first to be sport becomes a discussion of power, competition, and institutional rules. By making the imbalance visible, the work asks how victory is shaped before the contest even begins.

Looking question: When are rules fair, and when do they simply organize inequality?

Wang Yefeng

The Levitating Perils

Identity, stereotype, and animated anxiety

Wang Yefeng creates a virtual narrative space between reality and fantasy. The work addresses Chinese diasporic identity through an octopus-like figure connected to Fu Manchu imagery and the history of the Yellow Peril stereotype. Animation becomes a way to confront prejudice, historical memory, and cultural anxiety in contemporary visual culture.

Looking question: How can a fictional creature carry the weight of a real stereotype?

Li Ming

Inspiration, Chapter 7: The New Angel Runs Away

AI, mistranslation, and the runaway image

Li Ming uses AI-generated video and sound to explore inspiration as translation, misreading, and transcription. Visual references connect to Walter Benjamin's reading of Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus*, while tools such as Midjourney and Runway provide material that is selected and edited by the artist. The work asks how memory and creation shift when machines participate in image-making.

Looking question: Where does inspiration begin when an image is partly generated by a machine?

Lu Yang

DOKU: The Creator, Life and Death, Twelve Nidanas

Digital existence and the cycle of life

Centered on Lu Yang's digital figure DOKU, the work connects Buddhist ideas of the Twelve Nidanas with neuroscience, virtual embodiment, and personal experience. The digital body becomes a site for thinking about consciousness, life, death, and existence beyond the biological body.

Looking question: Can a digital avatar become a spiritual body?

Wang Xiaoi

Self-Inflicted

The body bearing its own action

Wang Xiaoi transforms everyday pressure, confusion, and emotion into a direct bodily action. The title suggests both agency and consequence: the action is initiated by the self and borne by the self. The body becomes a medium for feeling and responding to reality.

Looking question: What does the body reveal when language is not enough?

Zhou Xing

We Dance Together, We Fight Together

Life cycles after a shared crisis

Emerging from the experience of the 2020 Wuhan pandemic, Zhou Xing's work combines news, personal feeling, life-cycle imagery, video, sound, and self-programmed data visualization. Seeds and flowers become signs of death, renewal, ritual, nightlife, and a possible future world.

Looking question: How can a crisis become an image of collective rhythm?

YAGI Ryota

Sea and Metronome

Mechanical rhythm against natural time

A metronome's steady beat is placed against the shifting movement of the sea. The simple opposition between rule and wave makes time visible. Through ordinary objects, sound, and video, the work reorganizes how we perceive duration and rhythm.

Looking question: What happens when mechanical time meets natural movement?

Carsten Holler

Dot Painting (Foxtrot)

Movement reduced to points

Foxtrot dancers are abstracted into white dots, filmed from different angles, and arranged into a sequence. The viewer sees movement appear, vanish, and loop through minimal visual information. The work questions how little we need in order to recognize motion.

Looking question: How much information does the eye need to believe in movement?

Pan Yizhou

Neighbor

Proximity as restraint and conflict

The work begins from the artist's curiosity about what an apartment neighbor might be doing. Two tanks are connected through their barrels, making them inseparable and locked in mutual restraint. The idea of the neighbor becomes a figure of distance, tension, conflict, and entanglement between people or neighboring nations.

Looking question: When does being close to someone become a form of conflict?

DaDa

Endless #3

Mathematical growth as a living image

DaDa builds the work from an L-System, a mathematical model often used to describe growth. Simple parameters and rules generate a developing digital structure, while light turns the system into a life-like visual experience. The work connects digital generation with the logic of natural growth.

Looking question: Can a rule-based system begin to feel alive?

Nils Hansen

Hercules

Classical sculpture entering a digital skin

A classical bust of Hercules is placed into a digital visual field, overlaid by a luminous hexagonal structure. The object seems scanned, digitized, or remade. The work stages a meeting between traditional sculpture and virtual modeling, asking what happens when historical bodies are translated into contemporary technological images.

Looking question: What does digitization do to a body inherited from art history?

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Michael Najjar

Liquid Landscape

Volcanic matter as a planetary image

Filmed after the eruption of Fagradalsfjall in Iceland, the work moves through rock, lava, crater, and aerial perspective. The volcano appears as a site of birth, destruction, and regeneration. Najjar's technological viewpoint also asks how humans now witness geological transformation through machines.

Looking question: What does technology allow us to see in a landscape that is still forming?

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Michael Najjar

Glacial Dystopia

The sublime collapse of ice

Footage from Najjar's 2022 High Arctic journey descends over glaciers, crevasses, and ice formations before a massive ice wall collapses into the sea. The work holds beauty and alarm together. Its mechanical sound and fragile landscape respond to climate change and industrial pressure on the natural world.

Looking question: Can beauty make ecological loss harder to ignore?

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Renato Nicolodi

Regna Transitus - Shifting Realms

A fictional ruin for historical memory

Renato Nicolodi constructs a space that feels linked to classical civilization: an inward arch, simplified architectural forms, and the atmosphere of a ruin. Yet the scene is fictional, not documentary. By extracting and recombining architectural memory, the work holds viewers between history and invention, power and disappearance.

Looking question: Why can an invented ruin feel historically real?

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