

徐瑞憲

SHYU Ruey-Shiann

1966-

徐瑞憲 1999 年創作的〈童河〉，以 64 艘瓷船作為童年記憶的載體，馬達帶動精準計算的機械構件，於往復轉動之際發出沙沙聲響，但觀者無法準確辨識，究竟是河水流動的擬聲，還是風吹樹搖、麻雀嘖喳的多聲部合唱。原來，這聲響的產生，也超乎藝術家設想，它們是在作品完成之後，無機的構建彷彿有了生命似的，唱出有機的藝術語言。

「一張紙能帶給我們多少快樂？」徐瑞憲著手構思這件作品時，腦海不斷蹦出這句話。64 艘瓷船就是 64 張考卷，每張摺成紙船的考卷都經過灌模及兩三回釉藥上色、素燒才成型。在這過程，也是藝術家重返孩提時代，面對那個學習成就低，放學就把成績很差的考卷、作業簿撕下來，摺紙船放水流的自己。

1999 年這件作品首度展出時，對當時尚未習於作品以機械動力呈現的藝術圈帶來頗大衝擊，展後部分原件因故毀損，2010 年徐瑞憲耗費半年重製。除了原有的數學簿紙瓷船，他加入各個科目的卷紙，將填鴨教育遭受的壓力與挫折感摺疊。這些摺線，轉化了教育體制的標準線，考卷上的題目和分數，曾經是成長階段的鞭笞，此刻頓成瓷船裝飾。徐瑞憲在重製過程意識到，隨著機構帶動瓷船運轉，視覺暫留模糊之際，看起來更似一張張旋律奔放的樂譜，他也從再創作的過程感受：這件作品會持續延伸它本身的生命故事；學習，不應是高壓威嚇，而該是激發更多想像的基點。

提及想像，〈童河〉的電線不但是讓這組機構運作生命線，同時也是一道道想像力放送的弧線。電線已完全融合進這件作品欲呈現的視覺引導概念，彷彿河流流動產生的陰影與光影，且它具有更重要的任務——負責串聯每一組機構，蜿蜒成整體作品的視覺延伸性。

順著記憶之河往回走，將數學習作、考卷摺成紙船，目送一艘艘小船漂流消失，徐瑞憲自忖「對當時的我來說是心靈上的一種解放。」這件作品亦具有另外一層意義，透過藝術的語彙，借科學手法去架構與他生命經驗緊緊契合的「信義計畫區演變史」。金屬基座，是信義計畫區興起過程的結構意象，是在時間之流裡被資本餵養的異獸。轉動不息的船身作為視覺焦點，則是徐瑞憲追憶童年環境變遷消逝的載體：無論身處任何年代，人類都該與自然有這麼親近的關係。

徐瑞憲視藝術創作為他與這個世界溝通的語言，希冀〈童河〉能讓觀者感受與自我、與自然締結，暫拋科技網綁，一種最單純素樸的快樂。且無疑地，這是一部將人文、記憶與情感連結為一的自傳性作品。(吳思瑩)

In 1999, Shyu Ruey-Shiann created his work *The River of Childhood*, which contains 64 porcelain boats serving as vessels for childhood memories. The precisely programmed back-and-forth movement of each boat is controlled by a series of motors that together produce a rustling sound, but audience members have no way of accurately discerning if they are hearing the sound of flowing water, leaves rustling in a breeze, or sparrows chirping. Actually the sound produced by these motors exceeded the artist's expectations, and after these inorganic mechanisms were activated, their sound, like an organic art song, imbued the installation with life.

When Shyu was conceiving of this work, the question "How much happiness can a piece of paper give us?" kept coming to mind. He folded 64 sheets of exam paper into 64 boats, which he then used to make molds. He then cast clay boats and covered them with two or three layers of glaze before firing them in a kiln. In this process, the artist was returning to his childhood when he would tear those pages with poor grades out of his workbooks, fold them into origami boats, and set them in flowing water.

When this installation was exhibited for the first time in 1999, the art world was shocked by its mechanically powered artwork. After the exhibition, a number of the original boats were somehow damaged, so in 2010, Shyu spent six months remaking the work. In addition to the math exam booklets he had originally used, Shyu added test papers for different subjects as a sign of the frustration and stress he suffered under an education system focused on rote learning. His fold lines transform the standard line of the education system, and the questions and scores on the test paper, which were used to flog him as a student, are transformed into decorated porcelain boats. While remaking the boats, Shyu realized that the bobbing boats hoisted by small sticks looked like a musical score, sensed that the work was taking on a story of its own, and realized that study, rather than pressure and intimidation, should foster the imagination.

Speaking of imagination, the electrical wires in *The River of Childhood* are not just lifelines for motors, they also deliver the power of imagination. The wires have been fully integrated into the visual concept that this work intends to present, functioning like the shadows and light produced by the flow of rivers, and along with their important task of connecting each group of mechanisms, they wind through the entire installation to extend its visual properties.

While walking along the river of memory, Shyu was thinking to himself that folding math homework and examination papers into paper boats, and watching the boats drift and disappear was a kind of spiritual liberation for him at that time. But the work has another layer of meaning. Using the vocabulary of art and by borrowing a scientific technique, Shyu constructs a history of the evolution of the Xinyi District, which is closely connected with his life experience. The metal bases holding up the small boats create an image of the rise of the Xinyi Project Area, which was a strange beast fed by capital at the time. The constantly rotating boat hulls both serve as the visual focus and are carriers for the changes and disappearance of the artist's childhood environment. No matter what era we live in, we all should have such a close relationship with nature.

Shyu communicates with the world through his visual art and hopes *The River of Childhood* can help viewers to help them establish connections with themselves and nature, and cast aside the fetters of science to find simple joy. There is no doubt that this is an autobiographical work that unifies humanities, memories, and emotion. (Seeing Wu)

童河 The River of Childhood

1999/2010

機械裝置 (銅、鐵、瓷土、釉藥、線材、馬達、感應器、變壓器) Mixed-media mechanical installation (copper, iron, porcelain, glaze, cables, motors, transformers)

尺寸依場地而定 Dimensions variable

捐贈 Donation 2021.0037.001

