

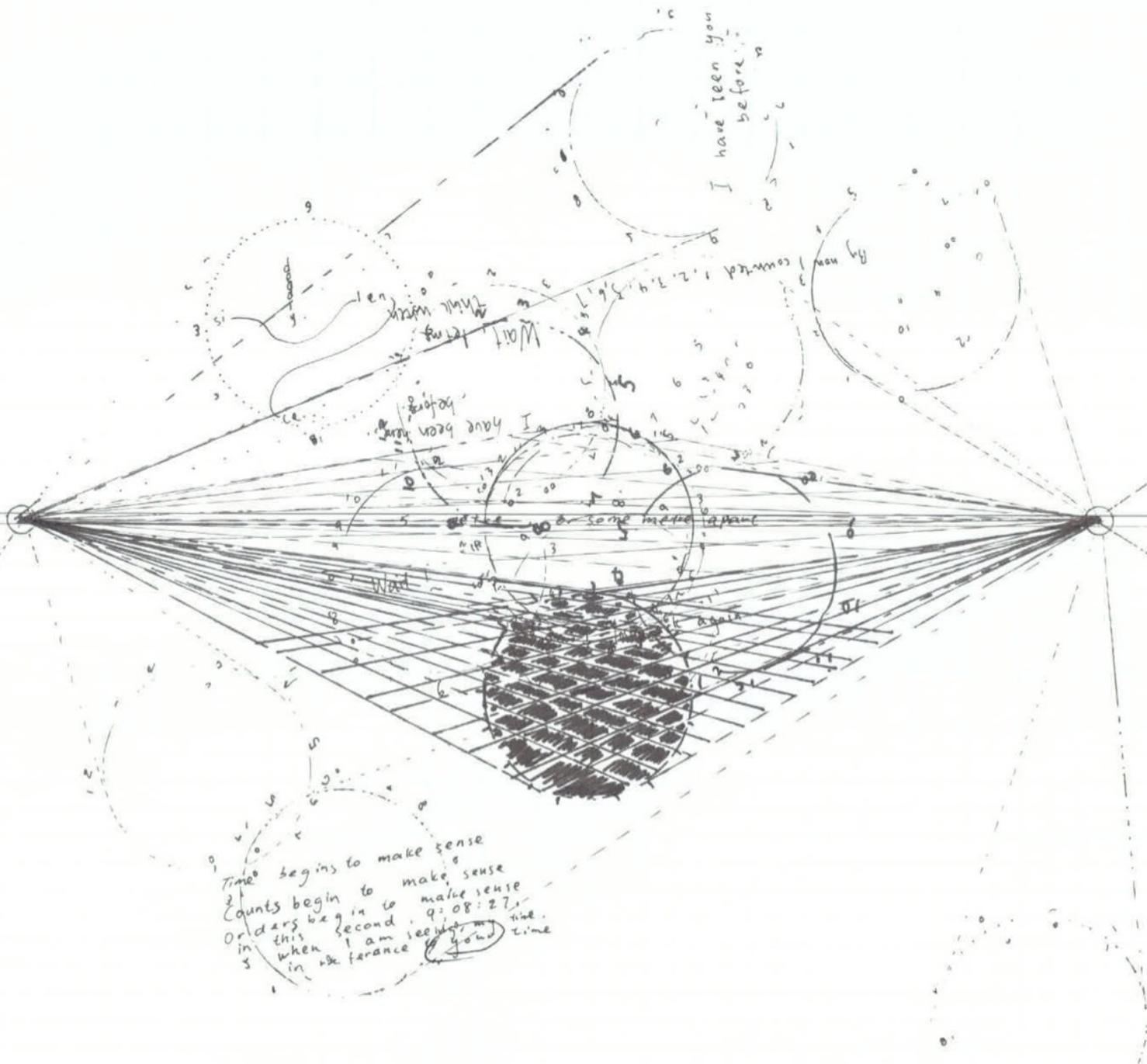
siyu 思予 chen

selected works / 2017-18

vastness

vastness

deadly



end of axis

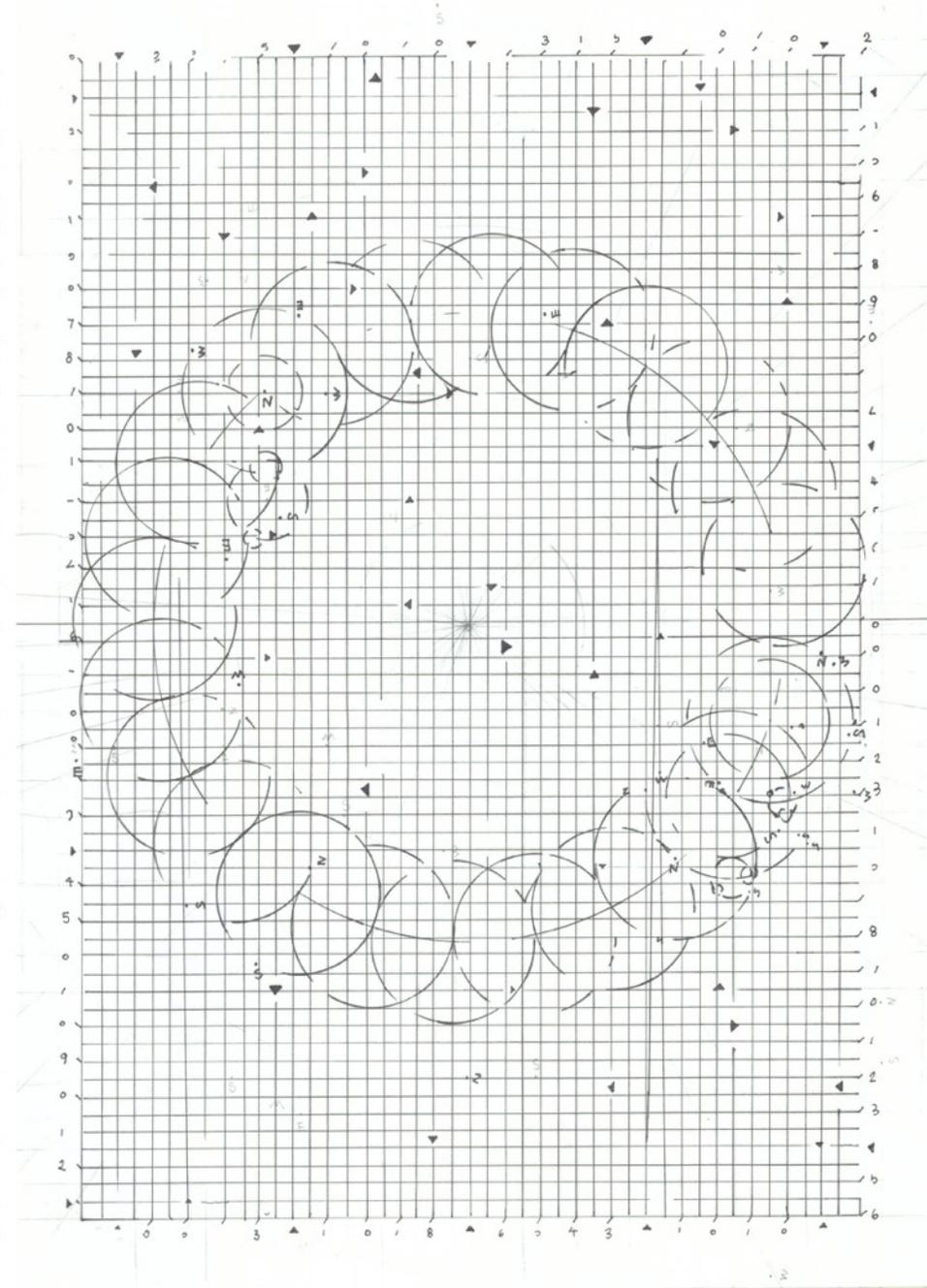
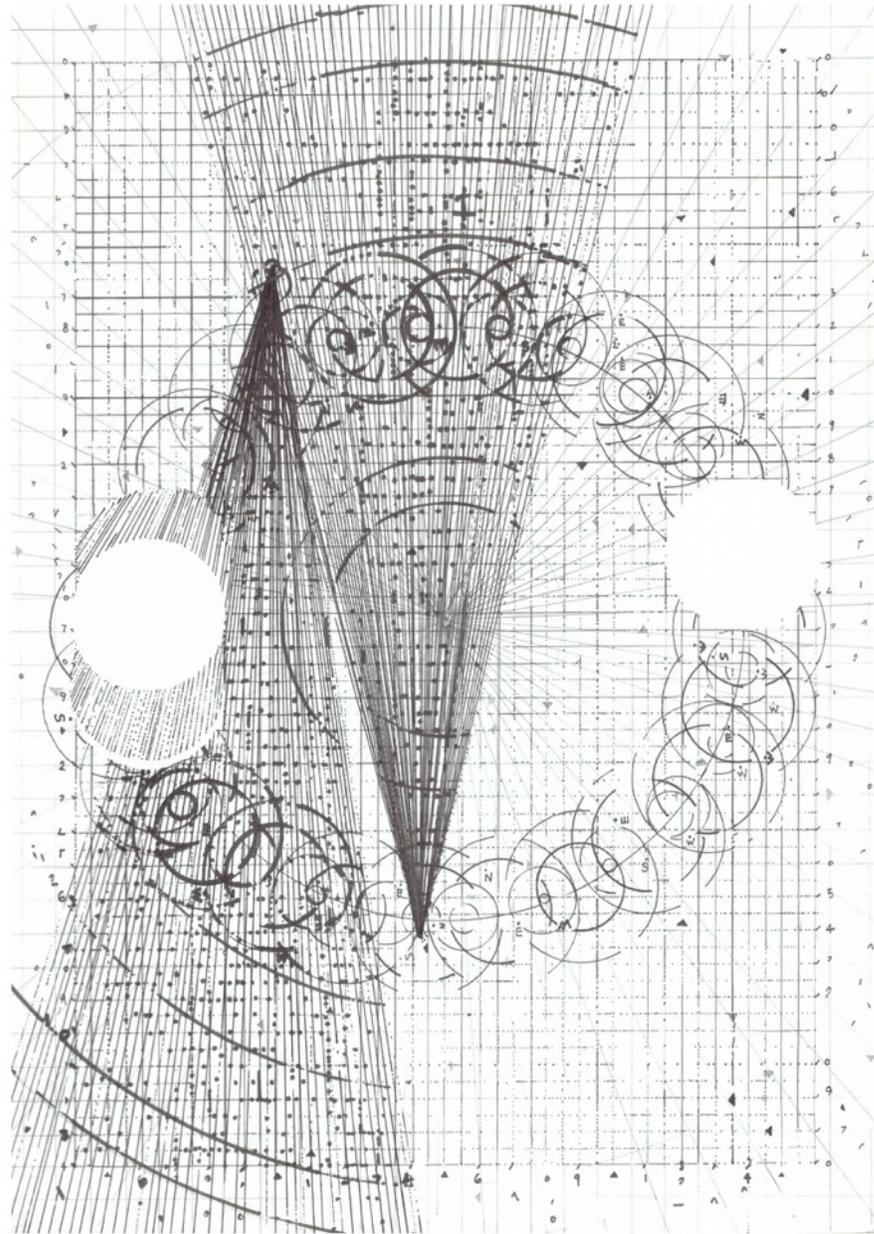
Orbit-in-Flux drawing series

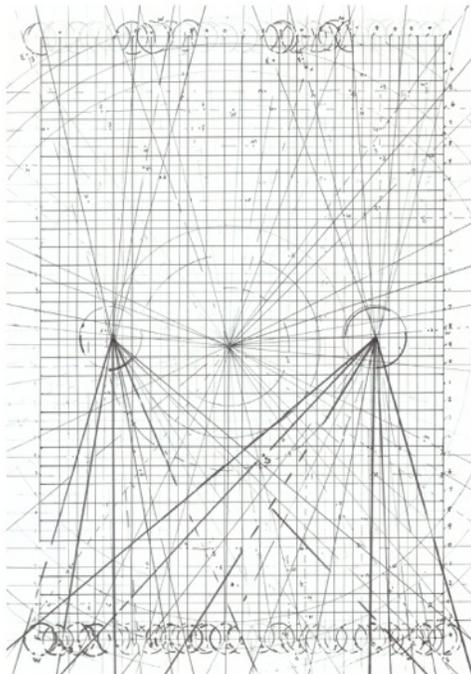
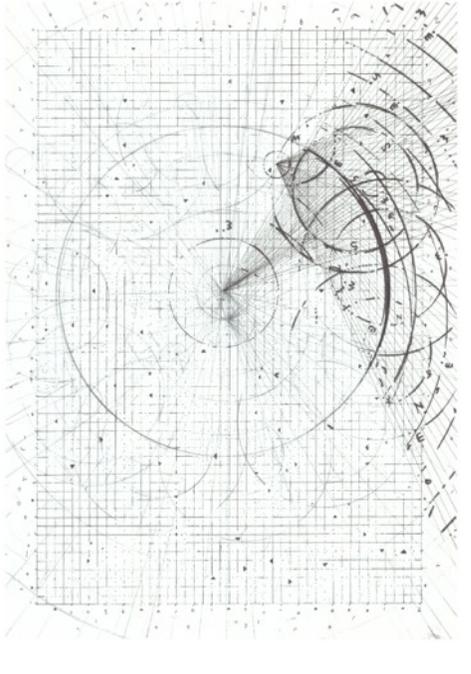
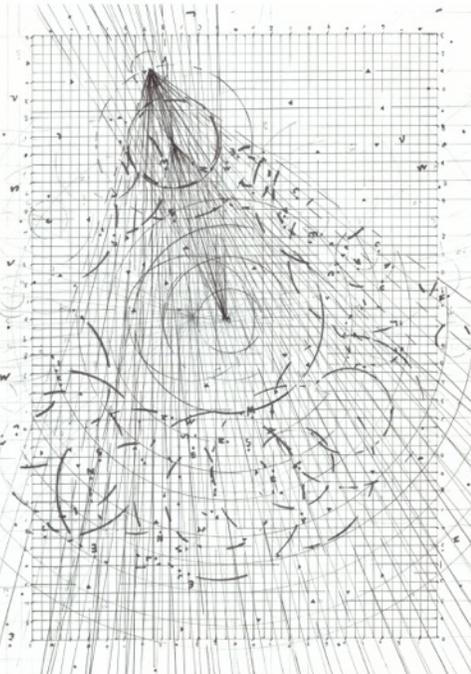
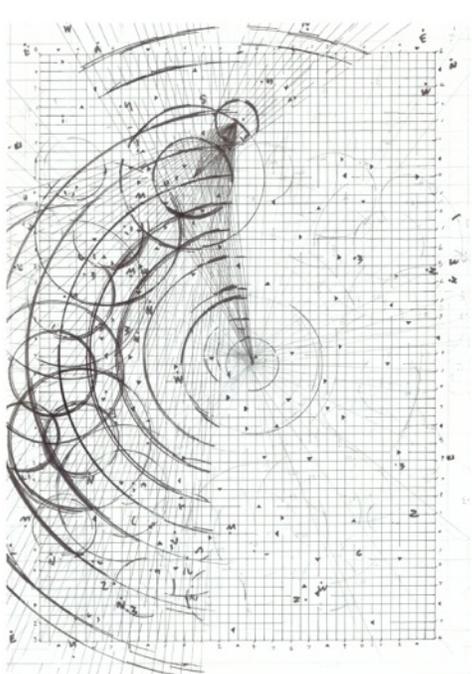
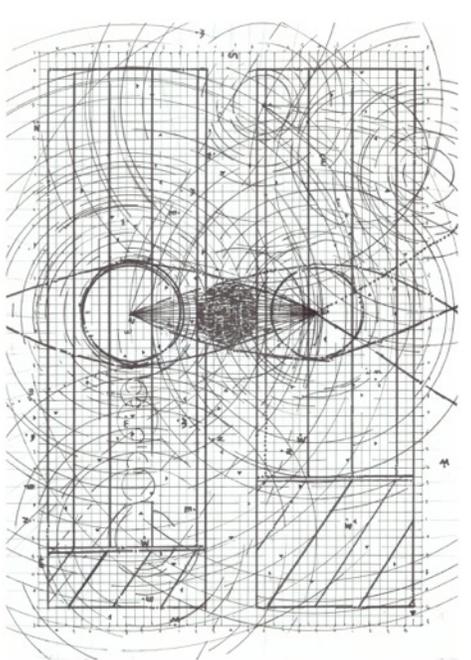
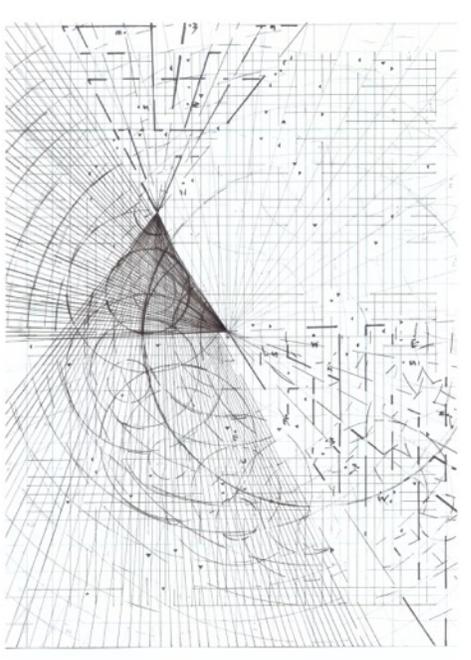
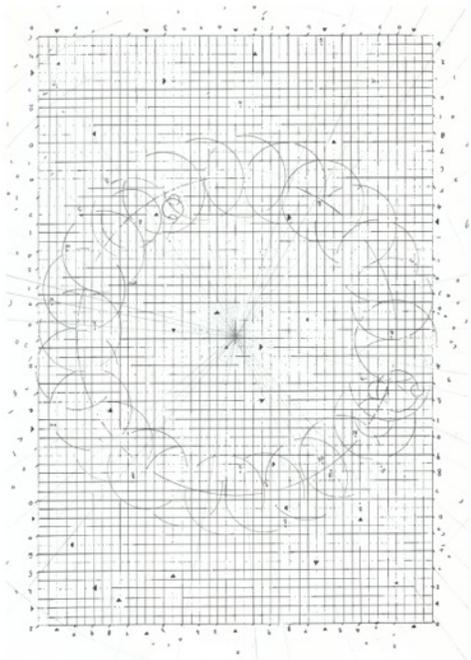
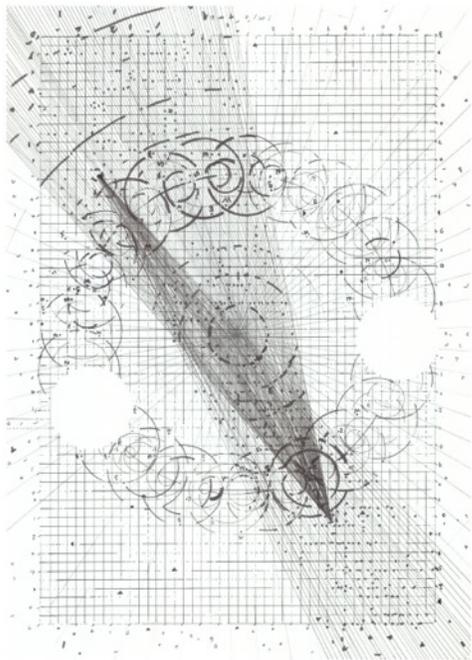
2018 - Ongoing

pencil and pen on graphing paper

A series of drawings that studies the mirroring relationship between planetary orbits, eclipses, quantum physics, system of visual semiotics (point to line, line to plan), the gaze, the crowd.

This series is a work in progress. I look forward to contextualize these drawings with photographs and text in relation to my experience of Shanghai after six years of study-abroad.





lovers Orbits / in collaboration with jenny 如 hsiao

2018

in-situ performance at artist residency Arts Letters & Number (ALN), Upstate NY, U.S

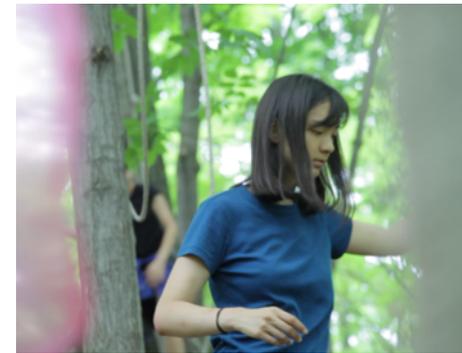
participated by members of ALN

When two people fall in love, the lover is constantly present even if the two were not in the same physical space at the same time. Events occur in relation to oneself triggers the presence of the lover. The act of triggering, however, occurs naturally. It is similar to making a drawing, where one spontaneously transform thinking into line drawing. These are moments that mirror with solar eclipses.

lovers Orbits was born in the Hill at the back of the House where residents of ALN live. We asked all our participants to improvise the following instruction:

Find your favorite tree,
or something that you identify as a tree.
You will be meeting your lover underneath the tree.
Using the tree as the midpoint,
You and your lover will be orbiting around the tree.
You will encounter many unknowns, but
it is important that you are aware of the presence of each
other.





Me and Jenny made up the large framework for the performance. We walked in a circle around our choice of tree in our individual orbital track repetitively. Through walking and becoming aware of the distance between us, we were exploring how the memory of each other shifts in relation to the surrounding environment. From that, we believed that an Ending for the performance would be born.

Meanwhile, other participants orbited on the Hill based on their own perception of the instruction. Some were holding hands with their backs facing each other to move the Tree between the two. The tip of the twig on top of the tree was continuously making drawings in circular motion. Some were orbiting on their own, having solitary conversations with the Tree(s) without any external interference. Some wrapped the Tree bark around with a rope and used the tree as a support for a swing. Whenever someone arrived behind the back of the swing, the swing got pushed in circular motion. Some saw presence of the Tree in another person and orbited around him/her/they. Some tried to, from afar, mirrored every act of the (him/her/they) Tree.

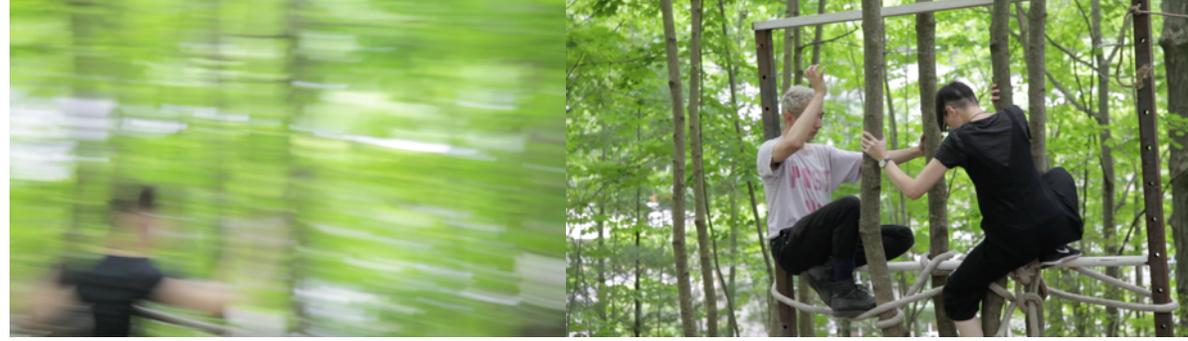
When a planet is pulled toward a body, it would follow an orbital path when it has enough tangential velocity. It falls toward the body, however, when the orbital path encounters friction. When the orbital path decays, the planet will roll in a spiral path toward the center of the body.

Time was the friction in this performance. It constantly reminded us to conceive the ending of the performance. When we sensed it was about time to end the performance, we spontaneously shifted our individual circular paths into helices. This way, the distance between us gets smaller and smaller.

The Tree of our choice was the meeting point for our individual helices. Jenny picked up the string that was tied to the tree, wrapped it around the tree bark. I followed Jenny's helix, and folded my path into her helix. As the string were all wrapped around the tree, Jenny stopped moving.

I held onto the tip of the string where Jenny's hands rested. As we pulled the string against the tree, Jenny came to my back and wrapped around me with both arms.





A close-up photograph of a person's arm. The person is wearing a blue t-shirt and dark denim jeans with a white frayed tear on the left knee. On their left wrist, they are wearing a silver metal-link digital watch and a light green, smooth, cylindrical bracelet. The person's right arm is bent at the elbow, resting against their left arm. The background is a white, wrinkled fabric.

We have arrived at the center of the Wave.

The Joy of Cooking / a curatorial project in collaboration with Anna Bonesteel, Jeff Egner, Gabe Guerin, Jacob Lee, Ester Lim
2018

Group Exhibition at Memorial Hall Gallery, Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), Providence RI, U.S.A

Named after one of the most published cookbooks in the United States, The Joy of Cooking aims to bring its audience to a gallery space at the institutional setting of RISD where objects - including paintings, sculptures, bed, table, pillows, microphone, speaker, IKEA lamp, signboards, photo albums, etc – all coexists. The coexistence lies in the pleasure from lying comfortably on the bed and having casual conversations about paintings on the wall, to finding a song on Youtube to play and singing fearlessly in front of the microphone.



The
joy
OF COOKING



April 24 - 29
OPENS Apr 24
6:30 UNTIL
KARAOKE IS
OVER

Anna Bonesteel
Siyu Chen
Jeff Egner

Gabe Guerin
Jacob Lee
Ester Lim



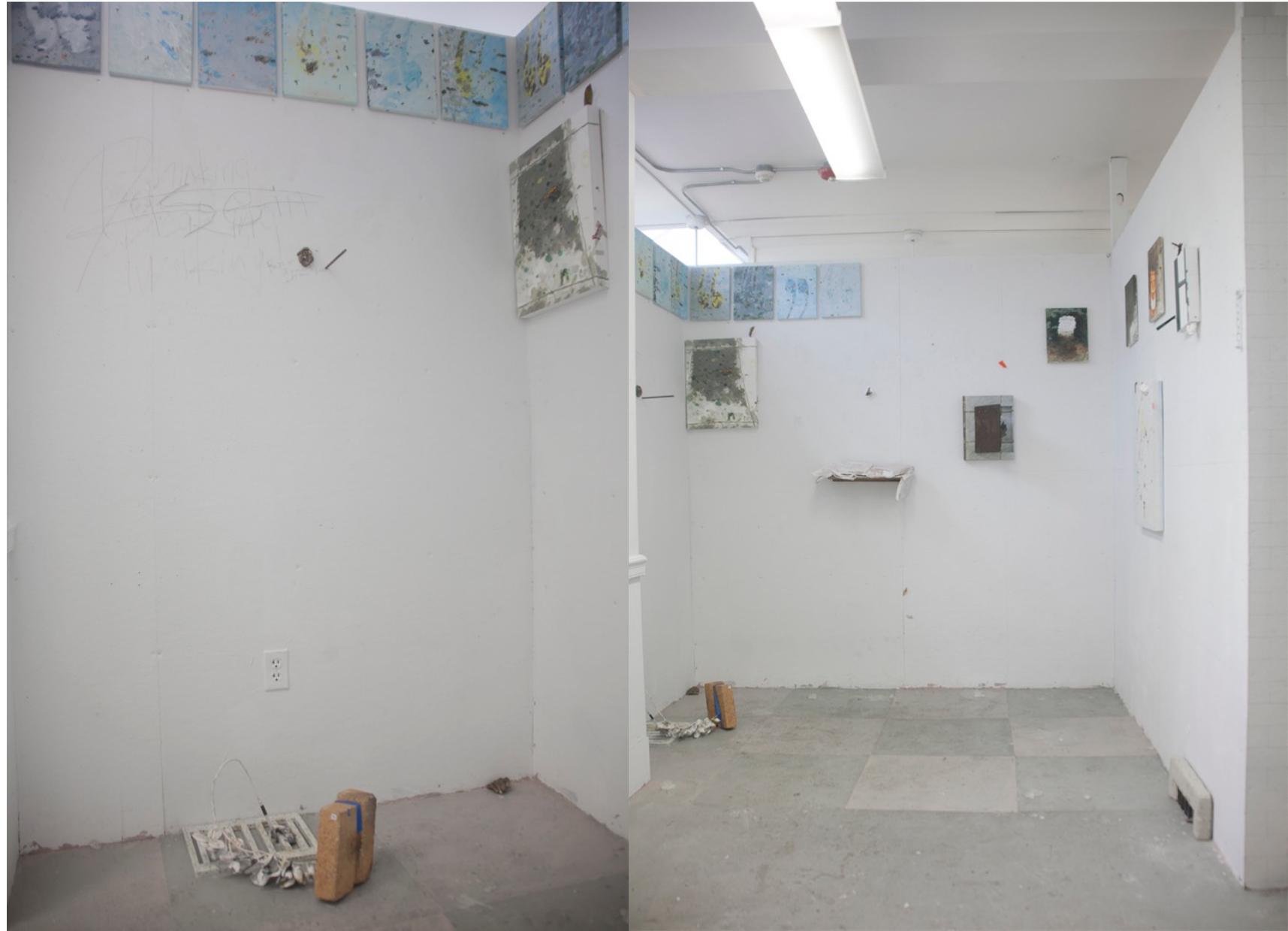




A List of Controversies Coexisting
2018
installation



The installation maps the artist's mind palace during the creative process, which travels in between ends and beginnings, writing and not writing, function and dysfunction, solitude and community.

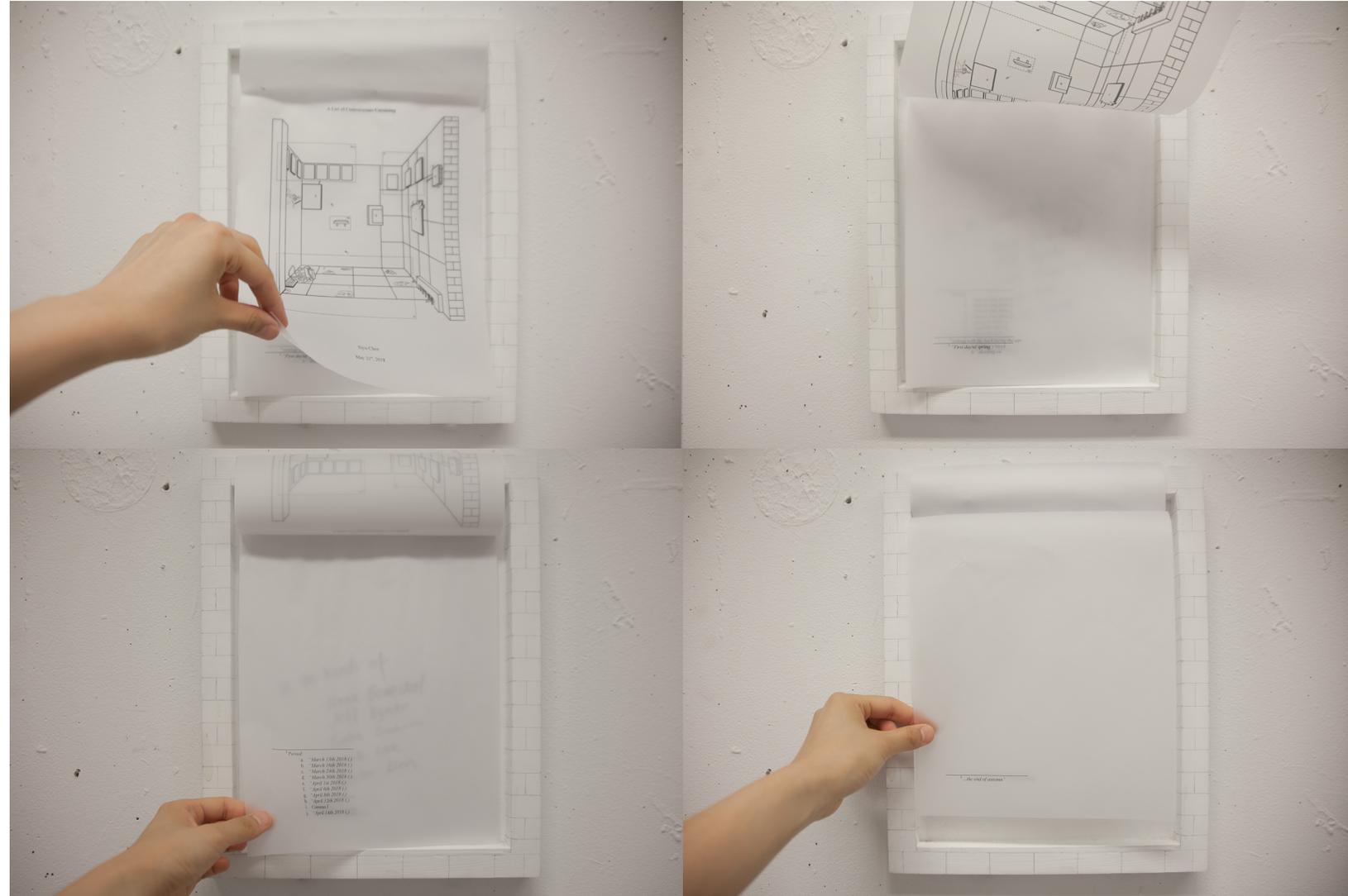


The work utilizes the format of an academic essay, but oriented by the individualized physical experience of the space stimulated by the process of reading between the object and the guidebook. The controversies exist within and beyond individual objects shown in the space.

The guidebook begins with a three-page-title-page with

- 1) a poem of Matsuo Basho, a Japanese Haiku pioneer from the 17th century: “first day of spring, I am already thinking of - the end of autumn”.
- 2) the name of the artist and the date the work is installed for public view
- 3) a visual map of the space with each object footnoted.

Following the title page, each page is an empty body page with a footnote on the bottom. The footnotes, linked with the diagram and the space, is the title of each individual object.





Period

2018

acrylic and mixed media on canvas

A series made of of 9" by 12" paintings. Each is a portraiture of an open quotation mark. The series is drawn from the experience of witnessing an unexpected flash flood in Boston in early March 2018. Since the flood, I gathered my experience of the weather every day in photographs and writings. They became the determining factors for the palette and the mood of the paintings, with each named for the date the source material was collected. "March 13th 2018 (," is based on a snow day in which grey tone overtakes the yellow ground of the canvas. "March 30th 2018 (," is painted with washy marks of snow and yellow Scotch brooms on a light blue ground. *Comma I*, however, is a portraiture of a close quotation mark from the weather on April 13th 2018. It is the first painting in the series that cherry blossom, a symbolic indicator for spring, appears.



title from left to right:

"March 13th 2018 (,"

"March 16th 2018 (,"

"March 24th 2018 (,"

"March 30th 2018 (,"

"April 1st 2018 (,"

"April 6th 2018 (,"

"April 8th 2018 (,"

"April 12th 2018 (,"

Comma I

"April 14th 2018 (,"

A Forming, while (A)N Becoming

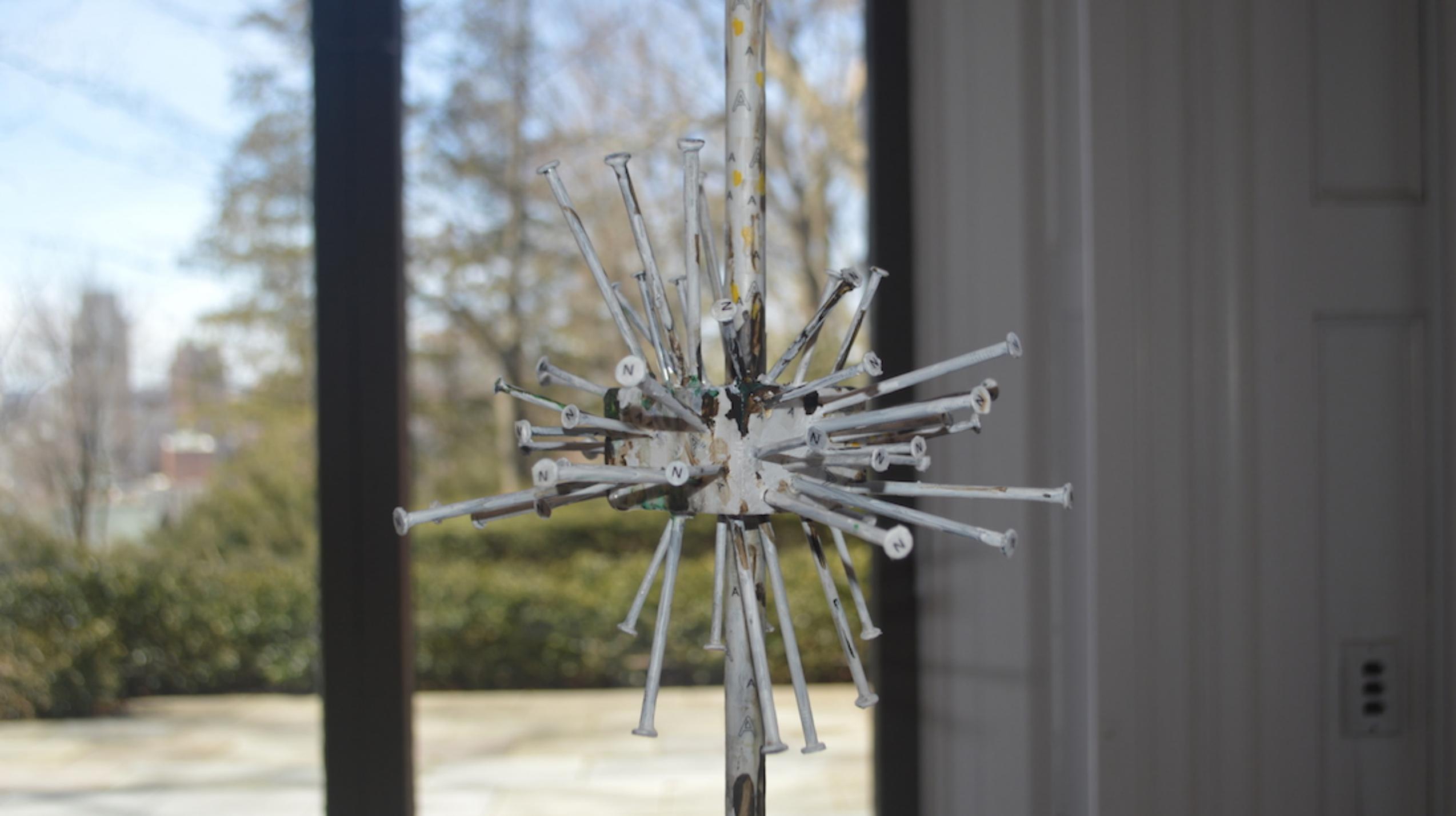
2018

acrylic and labels on welded steel, nails, plywood

The work is drawn from the awkwardness I felt when first encountering the two letters “a” “n” being used to describe singular countable nouns with vowel sound. Recognizing the singular horizontal stroke (一) as the article before countable nouns in Chinese, I wondered why two letters were needed to describe a singular when I first studied English. By drawing a relationship between the letter “N” and the viewer’s eyes, I propose a way of looking that encourages the viewer to notice the singularity of the letter “N”.

Multiples of the letter “N”, printed from a label maker, are attached onto the top of the store-bought nails pointing towards the viewer. Those nails were hammered into five wooden blocks at different eye levels. These blocks are held up by two rods, each supported by a pedestal. The rods, expanding vertically towards the ceiling, are covered with multiple printed letters “A”.





neither gate nor door series

2017

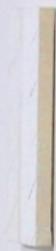
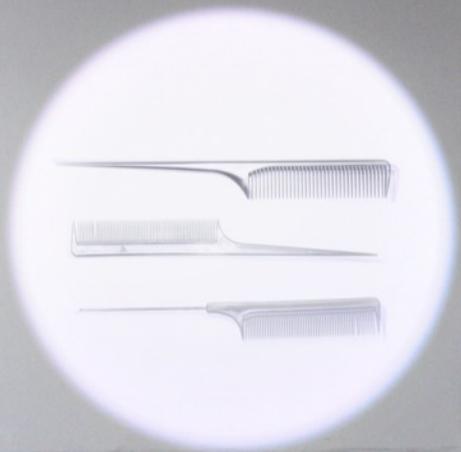
acrylic and mixed media on canvas

installation view from *BOTTLENOSE*, a group exhibition at 891nmain

(curated by Dylan Ahern and Audrey Ryan)







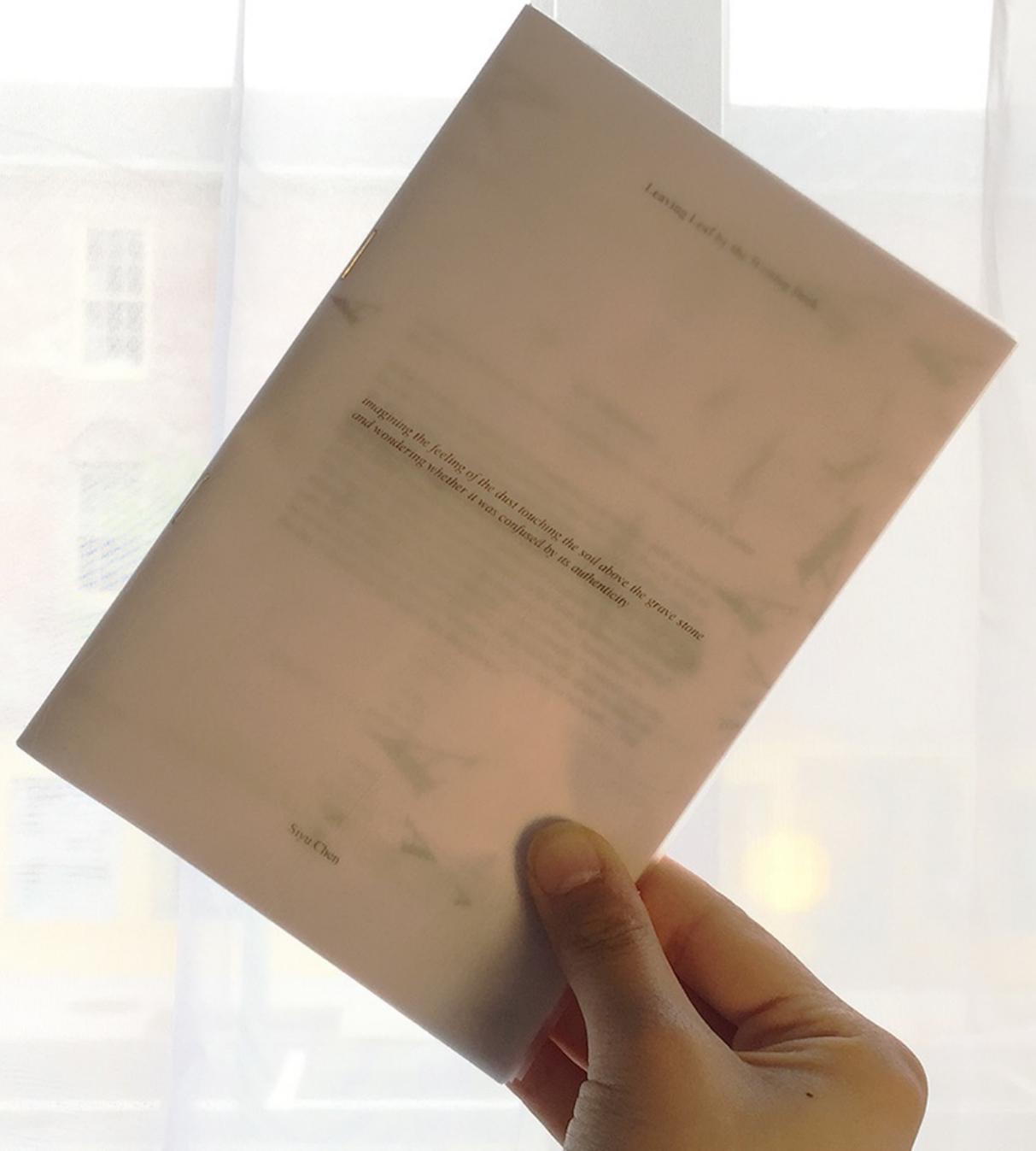
Leaving Leaf by the Writing Table

2018

self-published prose poetry chapbook

The word “leaving leaf “ is either a leaf being blown by the wind or a page being turned by the reader of a book. The word “writing desk” is a direct translation of the German word “der Schreibtisch”, meaning writing table.

The poems in the book propose ways of interpreting English language – include the English alphabet, capitalized letters used in proper nouns such as names, locations, school of thoughts and titles; quotation marks used to indicate speech, quotation, and emphasis; commas and periods as indicators of pauses and transitions between ideas; and article used before singular nouns – in relation to day and night, sky and ground, architecture and forest, and the space in between.



a thought is authentic of one's own
 already an inauthentic thought
 since
 another evolves in
 time and place
 an act of organization
 by
 controlling
 the time and place
 in which one
 experiences
 an attempt to
 communicate
 from one
 D and E are wonderful beings - letters for day and end, able to put beings
 into sleep so that communication can take a break before it reoccurs. It is
 simple. Too much carbon dioxide in the air isn't good.
 when one comes in one's perceived time and place
 one goes into sleep
 the time
 when
 one
 of
 from
 in the time and place
 one perceiving the question again
 is already different
 but it remains
 in the reminiscent of the memories

'ROOM'

when the curtain takes form in the tiny lifted place
 you begin to search on the shelf of words
 filled with books labeled in all words of the Bookish
 seeking where your last hug in the dark really fits
 you clean the dusty tented facade of Commu
 let me in light on the normalized shelves
 the word is in that shelf you say
 Communication is the same.
 as for now, there is not enough light
 even you want to say it all - inhale consciousness and thought
 watching the dawn, exhale
 building walls to be crossed in dusk
 you expand your arms blindly in finite silence
 till unnamed dust entering your crossed arms

And then the concept "I" must come
H for habrha
E lph and O are words so much like
H for habrha

A

K is a break in the journey

the drop shadow of the Bookshelf

- Fiction, an imaginary writing as oppose to fact
- Fact, the truth about events as oppose to interpretation
- Interpretation, the action of explaining the meaning of something
- Something, a thing that is unspecified or unknown
- Unknown, not known or familiar
- Familiar, well known from long or close association
- Associate, connect with something else in one's mind
- Mind, the faculty of consciousness and thought

I allow the "I" to go on journey, so "I" can make meaning
I let you to let go during the journey, so that you can

XYZ are there for you

But remember

It is the pathway in between unknowns and knows.

It is the hope and the only hope.

painting in shadows

while learning to dance

at the birth of each breath

you've asked What How and What

in seas of beads that will

blooming and falling into the void

where your iris ~~will~~

~~thinks~~

~~talks~~

reconnecting the dots

between two ends of the string

then Yellow blooming arrived

while

forgetting Why How and What

in gratitude of

the hollow circle

7 for Now

drawing a circle
for the blooming yellow
at the bottom of february
where all the beads are ~~brown~~
gone
as the gravity of rice cake melts
between two ends of the string

speaking of happiness
as blooming yellow filling the iris
of your stripe shirt's pocket
your heart dwelled in florescent brown
now
sunk into the grey ~~new horizon~~
noziroh wen

painting in shadows
while learning to dance
at the birth of dark humor
you've asked What How and Why
in seas of beads that are
blooming and falling into the wall
where your iris ~~sits~~

~~thinks~~
~~talks~~

chills

Value of English Alphabet

2017

prose poem

This alphabetical poem proposes a way in thinking about the relationship between the existence of each English alphabet and concepts in thinking, naming, and communicating.

Value of the English Alphabet

A makes the concept of English noun possible.

Then B becomes the distinction between a and an, as un une in French, die der das in German.

The existence of C cuts of words, allowing communication to happen.

Therefore, D and E are wonderful beings - letters for day and end, able to put beings into sleep so that communication can take a break before it reoccurs. It is simple. Too much carbon dioxide in the air isn't good. Communication is the same.

But if F does not exist, then how is it possible to have fun?

E hhh and G eee adds so much expression into speech, which brings out H for hahaha.

And then the concept "I" must come. Otherwise these expressions don't mean much.

J allows the "I" to go on journeys, so "I" can make meaningful use of expressions. K is a break in the journey. So many thinkers, from Franz Kafka to Kazimir Malevich all have K in them. L lets you to let go during the journey, so that you can find *more meaningful moments*.

(s i l e n c e)

You are insecure. You don't know what this feeling is like. There are so many unknowns in the way. Maybe because it is the lack of n.a.m.i.n.g that bothers you. But your teachers in school would never teach you that you can also make your own *name*. They would always refer to the OTHERS, expecting you will follow the OTHERS. OTHERwise you will get lost in the journey. Blame the existence of P and R! OTHERwise words like "principles" and "rules" would not matter. In between P and R, Q for quite just make simple matters even more confusing. What does "quite nice" or "quite good" even mean?

(s i l e n c e)

But then, words like "target", "tension", "terror" would not present either. As long "B" exists, its lover "U" for us has to exist. V is the letter for an attempt in measuring abstract concepts, so it can go from "vague" to "very". Sometimes though, you have to employ the word begins with W,

telling them things are going very WELL, so they would keep the s i l e n c e floating for the time being.

But remember, it's not the end of the world.

XYZ are there for you. It is the pathway in between unknowns and knows. It is the hope and the only hope.

As Zarathustra once sang, "you must be ready to burn yourself in your own flame; how could you rise anew if you have not first become ashes?"

siyu 思予 chen (b.1996) was born and is currently based in shanghai, china

siyu received a bfa in painting from rhode island school of design in 2018; she is also an alumni of united world college south east asia

through drawing and performance, she studies the mirroring relationship between system of visual semiotics, planetary movements, quantum physics, the gaze, the crowd

*

she moves between the peak time metro, cubic offices, parks, apartments, parent's home, studio spaces,

as well as cinematic spaces, wechat video chats, instagram moments, jet lags, ephemeral relationships

- from which physical geography sinks into the background, creating a constellation between mirroring memories