Invitations 15 Years
Hu Fang & Zhang Wei
Feb-Jul 16
HU FANG & ZHANG WEI
UNTITLED (FOR REDUNDANT BOOKS)
Guangzhou-based Hu Fang and Zhang Wei intervened into the AAA library stacks with Untitled (for redundant books), a selection of books inspired by experimental botany, farming, architecture, and gardening philosophy that activate alternative readings of the AAA collection. Responses to the texts were gathered and shared through a series of reading groups, field trips, and conversations.

Hu Fang & Zhang Wei
Untitled (for redundant books)
February–July 2016
Please remember to close curtains when seeking privacy, particularly at night. The view you enjoy may be a two-way mirror.

我們建議您在私人時間拉上窗簾，特别是在晚上——此大窗戶會變成雙向鏡。
privacy one.
‘Untitled (for redundant books)’

Dear Navigator
Hu Fang
English, Sternberg Press, Berlin and the Pavilion, Beijing, 2014

Towards a Non-Intentional Space: About Sou Fujimoto’s Architectural Design for Mirrored Gardens
Essays by Hu Fang
Chinese, the Pavilion, Beijing, 2015

Towards a Non-Intentional Space: About Sou Fujimoto’s Architectural Design for Mirrored Gardens
Essays by Hu Fang

Sou Fujimoto: Primitive Future
English/Japanese, Inax, Tokyo, 2008

The Way of Crafts
Yanagi Soetsu
Chinese, Guangxi Normal University, 2011

Foot
Duan Jianyu
Chinese, self-published by the artist, 2015

2011( )10( )24
Edition 93/300
Chinese/English, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2011
Postcolonial Affairs of Food and the Heart
Leung Ping-kwan
Chinese, Oxford University Press, 2012

The Explanation of Yuan Ye
Ji Cheng, Ming Dynasty
Annotated by Chen Zhi
Chinese, Architecture & Building Programme, Beijing, 1988

Olafur Eliasson: Never Tired of Looking at Each Other—Only the Mountain and I

Authentic Foshan Wing Chun
Zhang Yong
Chinese, Singtao, 2012

Studio Olafur Eliasson: TYT (Take Your Time) Vol. 5: The Kitchen
English, Studio Olafur Eliasson, 2013

Sepp Holzer’s Permaculture: A Practical Guide for Farmers, Smallholders & Gardeners
Sepp Holzer
English, Permanent Publications, East Hampshire, 2004

abstract speaking sharing uncertainty and collective acts
Koki Tanaka
English, The Japan Foundation and NERO, 2013

on distance
Heinz Peter Knes
English, BOM DIA BOA TARDE BOA NOITE, Berlin, 2015
Humanity...we’re already condemned to imprisonment in the glory of [our] own making

–Hu Fang
Forms of Decay  
Notes on Hu Fang’s ruins, desolation spaces  
No. 1. ‘For Abandoned Sites’  
Towards a Non-Intentional Space, Vol I, pp 11-17

I will come back with short email texts soon this week:

Like No. 2 on ‘Unseen/Unbuilt’ with some examples in trying to answer: is it possible for architecture to transcend the physical significance of ‘occupation’ and achieve eternal ‘temporariness’?

Later No. 3 on ‘Village and City’ by speaking a bit on rural commons and non-human life-forms...

And No. 4 on ‘A Temporary Home’ by discussing on architectural forms and a bit on Japanese architecture... understanding time of interval by Arata Isozaki.

Soon...

Best  
Pelin
I went a few times to the library of AAA; at the end I selected and read some parts of *Towards A Non-Intentional Space, Vol. I*. I copied in the copy machine some pages and then I went to Paris for a chapter writing meeting on urbanism with some authors that will be out next year. Nuit Debout was getting crowded in the La République...and we are under the shadow of the refugee deal between the EU and Turkey that is receiving criticism...the refugee camps are expanding...the wars continue...

This is the current condition for me actually, what Hu is describing: ‘Humanity...we’re already condemned to imprisonment in the glory of [our] own making.’

Referring to abandoned sites and ruins; seeing these as a life form, I immediately connected with its anachronistic form and that reminded me of Lebanese thinker Jalal Toufic’s labyrinth time of ruins: ‘The threshold between a non-linear, labyrinthine-time, for example that of the undead realm, and the mostly homogeneous one of conscious life functions as a delimiting boundary only in homogeneous segmented time, thus is a one-way threshold.’¹ And ruins: ‘Ruins: places haunted by the living who inhabit them.’² Most reference spaces destroyed and constructed in Beirut during and after the war.

Maybe there is a tension with what I see Hu mentioning which it is part of; if I bring it together; I will take the abandoned sites to active ruins that are released from human interference; still as the site of human affect in the labyrinthine time. I move a bit more to conflict territories...the urban warfare sites where it is bombed, abandoned, sieged, evicted, resistance, and attacked spaces...where humanity is evacuated. How to interfere in those spaces? How to experience the labyrinthine time there? How we can ‘truly enter’ in Hu’s words. Or can we experience other possible ‘times’ and ‘spaces’—lived or not lived—and how might their forms be represented? As artefacts? As ruins?

Ruins and abandoned sites or places could be framed through the form of ‘decay.’ A formation of the matter of non-human life. How humanity plays into this process? A putrefaction as Reza
Negarestani describes: ‘Is decay a positive of a negative building process?’ and answers by arguing that ‘the building process of decay is subtractive’ and ‘is concurrently intensively negative and extensively positive.’³ ‘Decay’ is a key concept in understanding form, time, and putrefaction—giving ‘decay’ a meaning that is not exclusively negative.

For me another artefact of an event, an architecture of decay, is a refugee camp. The contraction of the negative and positive sides of the process of decay shows that the subtraction of forms are potentials—the infinite latitudes of forms. Negarestani’s first axiom is as follows: ‘Decay is a building process; it has chemical slant and a differential dynamic distribution...the process of decay builds new states of extensity, affect, magnitude, and even integrity from and out of a system or formation without nullifying or reforming it.’ The decay of forms confronts us to deal with anachronisms that prevent the contraction of the ‘inhumanity’ that is rooted in human history. Urbanised refugee camps and settlements are forms of decay, a building process of subtraction that is both anachronism and a potential decay of architecture itself through the experiences of ‘ruins,’ ‘abandoned and deterritorialised’ spaces, inhumanity is testing us.

We go through. We live the déjà vu. We leave behind its crystallised time and so our traces too.

Pelin Tan
May 16, 2016
Chai Wan, Hong Kong

2. Ibid, p 36.
TOWARDS A NON-INTENTIONAL SPACE VOL.1

About SOU FUJIMOTO's Architectural Design for Mirrored Gardens

Essays by Hu Fang

KOENIG BOOKS, THE PAVILION
The book *Towards a Non-Intentional Space Vol. I* (2016) is about the Mirrored Gardens project, focusing mainly on Sou Fujimoto’s architectural design: to transform a site, located in the countryside near Guangzhou, into an art space which comprises an exhibition space, office, communal kitchen, bookshop, library, workspace, and some outdoor space for farming.

The main questions driving this project are:

- How can *art and agriculture* complement each other?
- Can we create a project that exists between *landscape and architecture*?
- How can the project fit naturally into its *rural context*?

How can art and agriculture complement each other?

‘In the book *Introduction to Permaculture* (1995), [Bill] Mollison defines permaculture as a “design system for creating sustainable human environments.” This concept not only stands for sustainable agriculture, it also extends to sustainable culture.’

Responding with *The HK Farmers’ Almanac 2014–2015* in AAA’s collection, a publication resulting from HK Farm’s one-year residency at Spring Workshop: ‘To those who question what this has to do with an art space like Spring, I would ask how a space focused on “Freedom and Culture” could not wish to add our birthright of Wildness to the mix. We are creating dialogue using side doors, not necessarily the main entrance. This project harnesses aesthetics, permaculture, politics, documentation, land use, food awareness, and good ol’ gardening to provoke questions about the way we relate to our surroundings.’

2. Mimi Brown, ‘Note from the Publisher,’ *The HK Farmers’ Almanac 2014–2015*.
THE HK FARMERS’ ALMANAC

2014 - 2015
Can we create a project that exists between landscape and architecture?

‘What good are the buildings of humanity before an architect like nature, which ultimately transcends vitality and decay alike?’¹

‘It is a house and simultaneously a garden. A garden with a roof. It is an externalised architecture. Garden and architecture are superimposed.’²

‘Exteriority is not architecture. Interiority is not architecture. Architecture exists in how exteriority and interiority are connected.’³

Responding with *Natural Architecture* (2014) in AAA’s collection, an exhibition catalogue presenting site-specific installations that use raw material, manual labour, and natural inspiration to create truly green architecture. The installations allow the changing landscape to naturally overtake each structure until it finally decomposes. In these works, nature and architecture integrate with each other; there is no distinction between outside and inside, architecture and nature.

3. Ibid, p 79
How can the project fit naturally into its rural context?

‘I feel the most recent plan elicits a sense of naturalness, a naturalness that has randomness. While adding character, I molded [the plan] into something that looks like an architectural grouping, mixing flat-roofed structures among those with pitched roofs, or inserting volumes of differing heights. In the end I was really happy to have come up with a plan that resembles a village.’\(^1\)

Responding with the first issue of the periodical *zine out loud* (2016), which is part of the YMCArts in Education Project. Since 2010 November, the team has launched a long term project entitled Urban Rural Life Community Arts Education (城鄉共生 藝術遊學計劃) that closely partners with local artists, villagers and Mapopo Community Farm to organise art happenings and events at Ma Shi Po village, and is aimed at arousing public concern and visits as well as empowering the local villagers and farmers.

‘A contributing YMCArts youth Wu, states: ‘During art creation, passing-by villagers often will stop to greet us with sincere smiles and attentive gazes. They will share [with] us invaluable tips on enhancing the artwork’s impact. Their enthusiastic response encourages my belief which my concern with Mashipo also reunifies them closer with their own homeland. This intricate mutual rapport is endlessly yet persistently growing despite the recent land demolishing actions.’\(^2\)

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2. Excerpt from ‘Endeavour of the Insignificant Sprout,’ *zine out loud 1*, 2016
Welcome! Organic Veggies
Dear Hu Fang,

Thank you for sending the poem. We think it is a really nice way to inflect on the contents of the books. Have you heard of the play Arcadia by Thomas Stoppard? It takes place in an English garden that merges classical landscape architecture with elements of the romantic, it crosses past, present and future, and explores knowledge, experience, mathematics, and the unpredictable. History repeats itself, and yet new things are found. There is a beautiful dialogue when young Thomasina mourns the destruction of the Alexandria that goes:

‘Thomasina: Oh Septimus! Can you bear it? All the lost plays of the Athenians! Two hundred at least by Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides—thousands of poems—Aristotle’s own library...

Septimus: We shed as we pick up, like travellers who must carry everything in their arms, and what we let fall will be picked up by those behind. The procession is very long and life is very short. We die on the march. But there is nothing outside the march so nothing can be lost to it ... Ancient cures for diseases will reveal themselves once more. Mathematical discoveries glimpsed and lost to view will have their time again. You do not suppose, my lady, that if all of Archimedes had been hiding in the great library of Alexandria, we would be at a loss for a corkscrew?’

— Arcadia (1993) by Tom Stoppard
We shed as we pick up, like travellers who must carry everything in their arms and what we let fall will be picked up by those behind.

–Tom Stoppard
On each balcony the plant (here a bawl plant) will put down new roots and provide itself with water and nutrients.
The Becoming

I am on the plaza of inverted time seeing myself walking towards this life-changing tipping point:

Once again I squeeze a few books in the overloaded rucksack I foresee myself on my future journey keep leaving books on the road I walked across Expecting there would be someone picking them up - In the soon to happen warfare the existing books seem redundant

I just hope The ignited thought by the flame of war Could turn your crystallised existence into red hot through smithing and become the red hue of dusk that humans cannot wipe away

At this moment I could get my gardening book left in the forest The book of cookery handed over to humans The book of geology returned to the earth

–Hu Fang
〈形成〉
我在逆時間的廣場上
看到自己正走向這個生命轉換的節點:
我往不堪重負的行囊
再塞幾本書
我看到自己在將來的旅行中
不斷將書
留在路途
期待有人將它們撿起
一一在即將遭遇的戰火中
所有的書都顯得多餘
我只是希望
被戰火燃燒起的意念
能將你水晶般的存在
鍛造得通紅
成為揮之不去的
人類的晚霞

這時
我可以把園藝之書
留在森林
烹飪之書
交給人類
地質之書
歸還給地球

— 胡昉
Asia Art Archive marks its 15th year by extending *15 Invitations* to creative practitioners to look within and beyond the organisation as an archive, a collection of material, a digital platform, and a node in a wider collective network. *15 Invitations* take various sizes, forms, and creative directions—literary, polemic, political, sonic, physical, and digital—and function as a series of ‘drop pins’ to alternatively navigate where AAA originated and where it may be going. AAA’s e-journal *Field Notes* traces the 15 participants as they contribute notes and entries to document the process.

*15 Invitations for 15 Years* is supported by the S. H. Ho Foundation Limited, the C. K. & Kay Ho Foundation, and The Hong Kong Arts Development Council. The programme is part of the ADC 20th Anniversary Celebration Series. Special thanks to Spring Workshop.

Asia Art Archive is an independent non-profit organisation initiated in 2000 in response to the urgent need to document and make accessible the multiple recent histories of art in the region. With one of the most valuable collections of material on art freely available from its website and on-site library, AAA builds tools and communities to collectively expand knowledge through research, residency, and educational programmes.

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