

陳肇彤當代雕塑的語法實踐：是句法而非單詞

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觀察、理解以及在跟藝術家陳肇彤訪談他的新作《頻寬》展時，突然意識到，作為一個雕塑創作者，他在思考世界時，其實是透過「物質性」的切入點，思考著我們眼中所見的「世界」究竟是什麼？以非畫廊走進大門前的廊道空間和玻璃櫥窗空間，所量身打造的現地創作《頻寬》展，非常精確的展現了這潛藏於創作者意識底層的問題意識。

觀眾走進《頻寬》的區域時，身體立刻被轉角前的〈頻寬222〉、右手邊牆面上〈頻寬221〉的金屬反光所映射，身影也直接進入了左手邊櫥窗中的不鏽鋼鏡面世界中，像是即刻沈浸入一個虛實交織的空間場域，而感知片段卻隨著視線在層層穿梭的疊影中閃爍著。或許觀者會在心中提問：這是一個什麼樣的世界呢？

事實上《頻寬》展的創作理念，正是透過上述裝置，將原本埋藏於建築空間中的管道與線路外露，這些通路宛如建築的經絡和血管，輸送著能量與資訊，管道也銘刻著建築體看不見的記憶。藝術家的作品透過這些鋼管、鏡面、鏡面下外露的不鏽鋼球，擬仿著建築內藏管線的資訊通路、壁面磁磚的表象、以及管線中的分子資訊流。所以藝術家說：「把無數個圓球依路徑來排列，圓球就會形成管道」，「管道裡挾帶著我們的日常、話語及信息，穿梭於空間中」¹。那些不鏽鋼球就像資訊分子般的存在。

藝術家已經預想著觀者在廊道特性的空間中，「會照著預設的路徑往返，視覺也在前進的過程不斷變動」，他透過裝置來讓觀者意會到自己像是進入了建築內部，因此會觀看到被掀開的水泥層、粗胚般的建築結構體等。觀者身體的「在場」，從一開始就是這件作品中心的移動視點，觀者身體尚未進入廊道空間前，此作品以一種留待空缺的方式，等待著觀視者的知覺進入，共同完成這件作品。

如此這般地與觀者「互動」的裝置概念，讓筆者意會到這件仍以雕塑的問題意識發起的創作，已經創造出與傳統雕塑概念截然不同的概念：是句法而非單詞。倘若傳統雕塑的表達方式，是以單件物體作為表達媒介，那麼肇彤的雕塑裝置就是以一系列、缺一不可的、連續性元素，構成一個具有整體性的表達語法，邀請著觀者進入，在觀者身體的無聲參與中，這個作為表達語法的物質性媒介，終於得以完成。

整個裝置場域，是透過不鏽鋼反光材質，創造出一種充滿影像映射的場域感，而金屬質地的冷硬屬性，卻在造型語彙的圓形開口、圓柱、球型、連續弧形等重複中轉化為輕盈、流動、變動、增生的語法序列，而衍生一種暖性氛圍。例如〈頻寬222〉帶有一種水意象的波動感，〈頻寬221〉則有著像音符五線譜的音樂性結構。在整個櫥窗的多層鏡面空間中，運用了金屬鏡面與石材質感的對比，也保留了圓形、方形等俐落的幾何線性之外的觸抹、手感痕跡，這些帶有繪畫感的細節處理，使得造型語法兼融了雕塑性、影像性、繪畫性的多重表達，更強化了藝術家作品能以句法持續衍繹的特徵。

事實上《頻寬》這個展覽的當代雕塑語法實踐，是從2020年福利社《銀幕上的遠方》展覽的創作實驗延續迄今。在《銀幕上的遠方》中不鏽鋼鏡面裝置是位於地下室展場的地面，觀眾走進此鏡面區域，像是進入了一個籠罩著身體的特殊場域。基於非畫廊前面空間的特殊條件，藝術家選擇以牆面不鏽鋼來取代地面裝置。在他加裝了兩面矩形的鏡面貼紙後，觀眾身體像是進入五、六層空間的交相映射，「儘管鏡像的映射是轉瞬的，但影像的截取還是取決於觀眾的視角，一個相對於內部（映

¹ 陳肇彤，《頻寬》，創作論述。

射影像)的『外部』視角」²。

從《銀幕上的遠方》開始的創作實驗，還包含了2021年絕對空間的《離岸星塵》展、以及今年2022年榮獲高雄獎在高雄市立美術館展出的《對焦202》，到《頻寬》展，除了究竟什麼是「當代雕塑」的顯提問之外，一直還有個非常鮮明的次顯主題：「雕塑與影像」的關係，在肇彤所探索的方向中：雕塑的被觀看，成為影像生產的現場。透過這個微妙的問題意識，一直擾動著雕塑的物質性與影像性之間的相互激盪與生產。而這個創作的靈感源頭，始終是伴隨著藝術家凝視著遠方山巒或海浪時，內心對於什麼是「當代雕塑」的潛在提問，而化生為一圈圈向外擴散的漣漪。

在觀者走進《頻寬》展場域前，還有一件呈現於樓梯間螢幕中的影像作品〈姿態#18〉，這件錄像作品記錄著被雕塑結構所框取的氣球洩氣的「倒數計時」。觀者一邊看著變動中的雕塑物件，一邊意識到被提取出來的「時間」。潛藏於雕塑中的「空間」與「時間」概念，在相互轉換之際成為這件作品的運作「機制」，並藉由「影像」手法體現。這件〈姿態#18〉成為了《頻寬》的楔子，在看完了《頻寬》展之後再去回看，方才發現兩件作品間彼相呼應的概念意涵。

年輕創作者陳肇彤，他的創作體現出深厚、耐人尋味的思維架構與感性的出發點，這些特徵成為他創作的美學蘊藉，在理性制約的外表下，含蓄內蘊的感性知覺。他的創作重新定義了「當代雕塑」，成為一種納入觀者身體在場之知覺性的雕塑概念，而這樣的雕塑概念，又是扎根於創作者身體知覺的在場。這是一種在觀展現場，有著創作者與觀者、身體與知覺之間往返、持續迴盪的「在場」進行式。

² 同註1。

Chen Chao-tung's Contemporary Sculpture Vernacular: Syntax, Not Words

By Wang Pin-Hua

While observing, understanding, and speaking with artist Chen Chao-tung about his new exhibition, **Bandwidth**, it suddenly dawned upon me that as a sculptor he thinks about the world from the standpoint of "materiality," contemplating just what this "world" we see before us is. The **Bandwidth** exhibition, created on site between the foyer and display window upon entering the Beyond Gallery, very precisely demonstrates this problem awareness that lurks beneath the artist's consciousness.

Upon entering the **Bandwidth** exhibition space, the viewer's body is immediately met with reflections from *Bandwidth 222* right before the corner, and the metal glint of *Bandwidth 221* on the wall to the right. One also directly physically enters the mirrored stainless steel world of the display window on the left hand side, like becoming immersed in alternately real and imaginary realms, while fragments of perception flicker in the overlapping shadows, following one's gaze. Perhaps viewers will be prompted to wonder to themselves: What kind of world is this?

In fact, the creative concept of the **Bandwidth** exhibition uses the aforementioned installations to expose the pipes and lines that were buried in the architectural space. These passages are like the meridians and blood vessels of the building, transporting energy and information, and the pipes are also etched with the building's invisible memories. Using these steel pipes, mirrors, and stainless steel spheres exposed under the mirrors, the artist's works imitate the information pathways of pipelines in the building, the appearance of wall tiles, and the flow of molecular information flow through cables and wires. That is why the artist said: "When countless spheres are arranged by pathways, spheres form channels." He adds, "Channels carry our daily lives, words, and information, moving through space." Those stainless steel spheres exist like information molecules.

The artist has envisioned that in the space with the characteristics of a passageway, the viewer "will follow the preset path back and forth, and vision also constantly changes over the course of progressing." He uses the installation to make the viewer feel as if he or she has entered a building, and can thus observe such aspects as the exposed cement layer and coarse embryo-like building structure. The viewer's physical "presence" is a moving

perspective at the center of the work from the start. Before the viewer's body enters the space of the corridor, this work leaves a blank space, waiting for the viewer's perception to enter and complete the work together.

The concept of an installation "interacting" with the viewer in this way makes this writer realize that this art, which is still initiated by the problem awareness of sculpture, has created a concept completely different from conventional sculptural concepts: it is syntax rather than words. If traditional sculpture's approach to expression uses single objects, then Chen Chao-tung's sculptural installations use serial, indispensable and continuous elements to comprise a holistic vernacular of expression, inviting the viewer to enter. In the silent participation of the viewer's body, this material medium is finally made complete as a vernacular of expression.

The entire installation site uses gleaming stainless steel material to create sensations of being surrounded by reflections. The cold and hard properties of metal are repeated in the circular openings, cylindrical and spherical shapes, and continuous arcs, transformed into a vernacular sequence of lightness, fluidity, change, and proliferation to precipitate a warm atmosphere. For instance, *Bandwidth 222* has an aqueous ripple effect, and *Bandwidth 221* has the structure of musical notation. Within multi-layered mirrored surfaces of the overall window, the contrasts between the mirrored metal surfaces and stone texture are employed, retaining textures and sensory traces beyond the spare circular and rectangular geometric linearity. The treatment of such painterly details allows the appearance to embrace the myriad expressions of sculpture, imagery, and painting, further strengthening the characteristics of the artist's works to be continuously reinterpreted through syntax. The contemporary sculptural vernacular at play in the **Bandwidth** exhibition is a continuation of the creative experiments the artist has conducted since the 2020 *The Distant End on the Silver Screen* exhibition at the Frees Art Space. In **The Distant End on the Silver Screen**, the stainless steel mirror installation is located on the floor of the basement exhibition hall. When viewers walk into this mirrored realm it is like moving into a peculiar setting enveloping the body. Given the particular conditions of the entrance area at Beyond Gallery, the artist elected to use stainless steel walls in lieu of the floor. With his addition of two rectangular mirrored stickers, viewers' bodies are seemingly thrust among criss-crossing reflections five or six layers deep. "Although the mirrored reflections are instantaneous, capturing of the images still depends on the audience's perspective - an 'outside' perspective in contrast to the reflected images inside."

The creative experiments that started with **The Distant End on the Silver Screen** also include the **Offshore Stardust** (2021) exhibition at the Absolute Space for the Arts and **Focusing 202#2** at the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, which earned the artist the 2022 Kaohsiung Prize. By the **Bandwidth** exhibition, apart from posing the question of what is “contemporary sculpture,” all along there has been a very clear secondary theme, namely the relationship between sculpture and imagery. In the direction of Chen Chao-tung’s investigations, viewing sculptures becomes a setting for producing images. This subtle problem awareness provokes constant interplay between the materiality and imagistic qualities of sculpture. The inspiration for this creation is always accompanied by the lingering question in the artist’s mind about what is “contemporary sculpture” as he gazes at the distant mountains or ocean waves, which are transformed into outwardly expanding ripples.

Before viewers enter the **Bandwidth** exhibition space they encounter a video installation in the stairway, *Attitude #18*. This work records the “countdown” of the deflation of balloons framed by sculpture support structures. While watching the changing “sculpture,” viewers are cognizant of the “time” taken away. Lurking between the concepts of “space” and “time” in the sculpture, they become the “mechanism” upon which the work operates with their interplay, embodied through the video approach. Thus *Attitude #18* becomes the preface for **Bandwidth**. And after going back to see it once again after having viewed the **Bandwidth** exhibition, this conceptual interplay between them becomes evident.

Young artist Chen Chao-tung’s creations reflect a deep, intriguing thought structure and emotional starting point. These characteristics serve as the aesthetic basis of his creations. Under the appearance of rational constraint lies a subtle inherent emotional perception. His art redefines “contemporary sculpture” by a sculptural concept that incorporates the perception of the viewer’s physical presence, and such a sculptural concept is rooted in the creator’s physical presence. This is a kind of progression of “presence,” in which the creator and the viewer, the body and perception continuously reverberate back and forth at the exhibition site.