Anastasia Arjalies / Louise Gholam / Nayonika Ghosh / Maya Gulieve / Carmo Pinheiro de Melo / Claudia Battisti / Ziyoo Hwang / Chang Liu / Yanxin Chen / Yuan Xu / Jiazhen Cai / Ryeojin Min / Zhenyi Zheng / Ge Feng / Ellen Walker / Jingchuan Luo / Jacob Courtney / Qiaochu Qin / Ke Sun / Siyu Qu / Yiran Wang / Jiali Wu / Jiahao Ji / Yihua Yan / Ziting Hong / Elena Galofaro / Jianing Li / Jinwen Xian / Waikwok Choi / Konstantina Benaki Chatzispasou / Kelly Macbeth Mackay / Jonny Drewek / Eleanor Wenham / Gun Lee / Rocco Punghellini / Can Yang / Xiaoyu Ma / Jin-hoo Park / Siqi Sun / Krivstina Kapeljuh / Shuo Yang / Shuyi Zhou / Rui Zhang / Shuning Jiang / Toby-Chengwei Mao

outbreak /
breakout

Royal College of Art
Postgraduate Art & Design

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breakout

Statements of Practice from
RCA Visual Communication
Students 2021

contents

The texts included in Outbreak / Breakout reflect a year unlike any other. The students on Visual Communication have engaged in a process of self-examination, based their own experiences and practice/s, but their words also point towards the world at large, becoming a wider, collective statement about this time.

Writing is a craft, and it needs to be practiced. In 'Explain Yourself', Ken Hollings shows how this craft is a fully-engaged practice in its own right, and what you will read here is the evidence of the central role which writing and dialogue take within the work and lives of our students. 'Conversation' is at the heart of the Visual Communication programme. This forms the method of our enquiry. We engage in dialogic methods, with writing (and speaking) as a key mode of expression. However, the perennial question is: how we invite others into the conversation. Who do we want/need to have conversations with?

The Digital Age is profoundly shifting the way in which we connect with each other. As a consequence, this work is part of an on-going discussion about whether we are losing our conversational abilities, in favour of the unexamined statement, and the reductive soundbite. Within this context, this work you see here is committed to 'the conversational', and as such is actively looking to reconnect, preserve, and value the 'work of a conversation', and to assess how it shapes our lives and our thinking.

There is an urgency to preserving the 'work of a conversation': to archiving our dialogues. We live in a world that is more interconnected than ever before, yet we see greater divides, borders and continued binary thinking. Our students' work explores the in-between spaces, and in doing so maps out new possibilities for breaking down divisions, crossing borders and dismantling binaries.

We hope you enjoy the conversation.

// Tracey Waller, Head of Programme, Visual Communication

foreword

The texts in this collection, along with the thoughts and experiences that inspire them, come from a space somewhere between 'Outbreak' and 'Breakout'. Two or more cases of Covid-19 recorded in the same place at the same time indicate an 'outbreak'; leaving a place suddenly after a long period of confinement can feel like a 'breakout'. The two words can also be read as indicating a beginning and an end; or their resemblance to each other might also signify a blurring of meanings. 'Outbreak/Breakout' is the result of a series of writing workshops open to Year 2 Visual Communication students during the Spring Term. Those taking part are encouraged to compose a 250-word statement that defines some key aspect of their practice. This could be anything from a specific design strategy or manifesto to a personal experience or ideological position. When read carefully, the texts produced during these workshops reveal the breaking down of barriers, the erasing of boundaries and the challenging of established definitions. Things can be 'both/and' as well as 'either/or' – hence our deliberate decision to locate these individual student statements of practice within categories that have not been clearly defined.

'Flight/Path' rediscovers the human in an age of machines, pandemics and emergencies, locating and celebrating lost voices and customs – finding hope in the unknown familiar and the unfamiliar known. 'Home/Quarantine' follows domestic routines in the time of Covid; isolation enhances identities and memories specifically in relation to friendship and family life. 'Online/Offload' opposes the concept of 'digital as value' with 'digital as material', engaging with data and sensation, meaning and nonsense, language and thought. Finally, 'Spread/Circulate' considers the ways in which visual communication can change patterns of behaviour and habits of perception through the distribution of new ideas. Taken together, they offer a unique series of perspectives on an unprecedented year. Between them they also offer a distinct glimpse of the future – now it's up to you to find it.

introduction

// The Editors

Anastasia Arjalies
Louise Gholam
Nayonika Ghosh
Maya Gulieve
Carmo Pinheiro de Melo
Claudia Battisti
Ziyoo Hwang
Chang Liu
Yanxin Chen
Yuan Xu
Jiazhen Cai

01
flight / path

'the power to preserve lost voices' / 'navigating intricate cultural landscapes' / 'travel through this in-betweenness' / 'one day life could be rewritten' / 'reclaim the ancestral arts and techniques' / 'ancient tools of self-discovery and analysis' / 'traces that will never vanish' / 'big moments, like death' / 'archival pictures depicting broken objects' / 'memories of older generations' / 'replacement, abandonment and rebirth'

Anastasia Arjalies

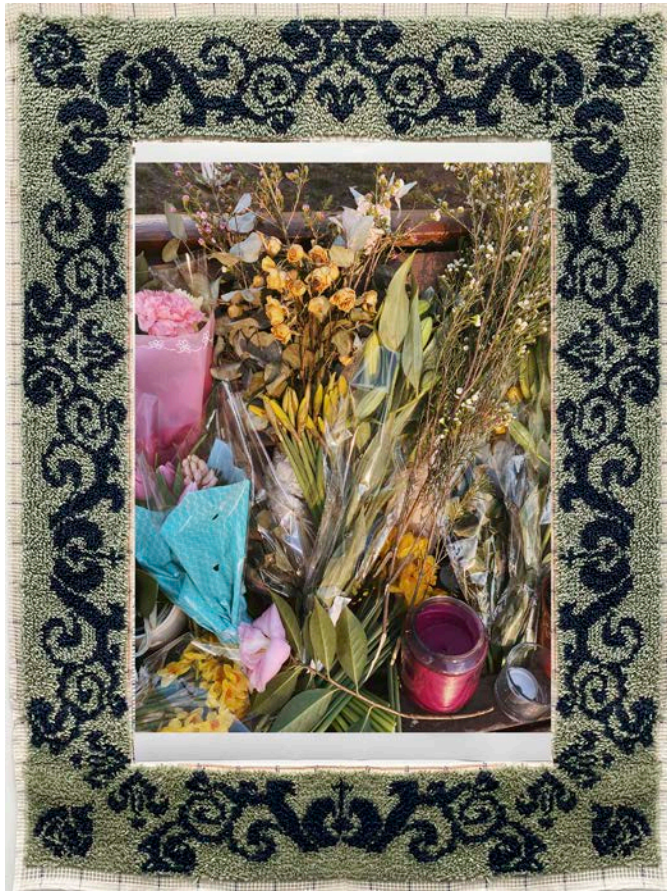**Louise Gholam**

Nayonika Ghosh

Maya Gulieve

Carmo Pinheiro de Melo

Claudia Battisti

Ziyoo Hwang

Chang Liu

Royal College of Art
Visual Communication 2021
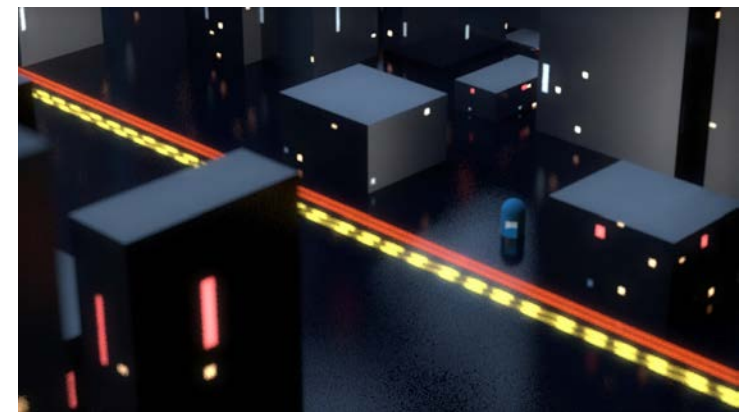
Jiazhen Cai

Yanxin Chen

Yuan Xu

Anastasia Arjalies

When I arrived in London, I didn't think I would have such a hard time rediscovering this feeling of belonging. And even more during the lockdown, I found myself looking into my childhood memories in order to feel more comfortable, wishing for a return to my hometown. I had lost my safe place and I was stuck in this loneliness.

I am from Arles in the South-East of France, so I decided to base my work on the traditions, craft and culture of the Mediterranean Sea. My two years at the RCA allowed me to develop a practice based on craft as my way to communicate. It was interesting for me to connect my practice with my origins and my childhood memories, in order to talk about heirloom and legacy. I think art has the power to preserve lost voices, and this is what I want my work to be about: enabling people to remember and not forget again, using archiving as an artform and an act of preservation.

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Louise Gholam

It seems like my generation has entered a process of 'awakening' in terms of the Politics of Identity. In the midst of a global pandemic crisis, we find ourselves 'finally' having time to reflect on where we come from. Being a second-generation Middle Eastern immigrant, I feel part of a 'neo-diaspora', sent on what appears like a reverse-crusade to restate how 'our' stories are told and regroup around common inquiries. Being of mixed heritage (raised between French-countryside-quietude and the always-boisterous Beirut) and a globe-trotter 'BC' (Before Covid) has allowed me to train a 'fugitive' identity, navigating intricate cultural landscapes and politics.

My approach to Visual Communication is intuitive and nourished by 'on-the-field' media archeology to bring forward a relevant storytelling. Using a collaborative methodology around ideas of collective memory, 'filmic politics' and cooperative broadcasting, I focus on developing conversational pieces.

FASCINATIONS
My relationship with journalism is deeply torn. I picture it as dualistic: both purposeful and corrupted. Information about one of my homelands, Lebanon, is often not depicted correctly. For a long time, I would rather have disregarded this part of my identity than hear people sharing fantasized visions recounted by the Media.

I feel the urge to participate in the expansion of voices heard in this field. Acknowledging perspectives that challenge Western logic, exploring alternative ways to 'inform' the public and lowering the threshold to journalistic jargon.

Being part of video production/direction teams (and a 'cinéphile') allowed me to expand my knowledge of moving image as a preferred medium.

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Nayonika Ghosh

Observe, make and reflect are the three ideals that define my methodology. I thrive in research-driven and collaborative environments. As an improvisational designer, I thoroughly enjoy creating/facilitating systems, tools and structures for interaction and speculation, with a keen focus on typography, colour, and the politics of identity.

Due to Covid-19, the lockdowns, and restrictions, how we work and live has changed immensely. The definitions of spaces and self are changing. The boundaries that we previously established between them are a blur. This condition amalgamated the questions I posed to myself into a line of inquiry for my practice.

My practice exists in-between.

It is –
Singular and Collaborative.
Systematic and Arbitrary.
Archival and Disseminative.
Digital and Analogue.

I travel through this in-betweenness.
Exploring identity; acknowledging transience.
Exploring language; questioning translation.
Exploring materiality; challenging colour and film.

Through my practice, I invite you into my journey of the in-between.
Hoping that you can find a fragment of familiarity.

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Maya Gulieve

What I'd like to say to you feels like a long story. A brewing one too. It is much to do with what we call 'a practice'. You see, I've always struggled to put it into words. At the moment, it is life-writing. It can also be voice if it must be heard. Perhaps it isn't it at all — could it be she?

She is an even longer story. She's always dreamed of a lemon orchard, so she planted a lemon pip on new soil and talked the lemons into growing. She remembers, still covered in salt from the sea, packing into a steaming tram like sardines and giggling. She dwelled in many shells — accountant, wife, *khanum*, comrade, refugee, grandmother, machine. She carried them: some she could pack into a suitcase, she lost most and gave away the others, whilst a few are still being written. She is a draft who lived a hope that one day, life could be rewritten. In words, it felt like she was for the first time.

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Carmo Pinheiro de Melo

In my practice I reclaim the ancestral arts and techniques from a modern position. Pieces made by women that are generally associated with the domestic environment. Why are textiles often seen as a hobby, while woodwork is seen as professional practice? So, it's not crafts in general that are undervalued but specifically crafts made by women. There have been movements before that brought the crafts to light, like the Arts and Crafts movement and the Bauhaus; but they all failed to acknowledge crafts made by women within their settings. Nor for that matter, Portuguese craft.

I want to give it the value that it deserves. I want to give the craftswomen and generations of people that make a living from these trades the recognition they deserve. I had plenty of male artisans in my life, but not enough female ones. My work takes a feminist perspective on cultural craft traditions and women's roles in the art world.

Yes to hand-made and yes to history-crafted art.

The grandmothers of our time are the ones who hold and store these histories and works of art in their small living rooms. By making the craft into a frame I'm using it as a method of communication, I'm using it to bring attention to what's inside, thus valuing both the frame and its contents in the process. By re-evaluating the position of craft and where it stands, I'm bringing to light important topics that connect with the devaluation of women in society more broadly.

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Claudia Battisti

Activism and collaboration have been the two words that have characterized my practice since I have arrived at the Royal College of Art. During my journey in finding a methodology for my practice I became more and more familiar with Tarot Cards; very ancient tools of self-discovery and analysis.

Tarot taught me that human connection is something that cannot be broken even when we have important physical barriers, it enables us to connect to each other and communicate no matter our backgrounds or experiences. I believe that the same mystical charm belongs to tattoos, the other face of my practice. Both are beautiful artefacts that help us reconnect to what we have inside and bring it to the surface. Tarot cards, like tattoos, can be powerful tools to embody the changes that we want to enact in our daily lives. My practice is about researching the contemporary meanings of the archetypal symbols present in both Tarot cards and tattoos to make them more accessible and inclusive.

Designing workshops has become the primary aspect of my work and something that I aim to continue to do in the outside world too. I am here to challenge educational systems and help to shape new ones.

I aim to create safer spaces for people of all genders and backgrounds, both online and in real life, to discover new creative practices or to help approach theirs with new eyes.

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Ziyoo Hwang

I am Ziyoo, an illustrator and animator.
I left from South Korea, laid over in China, then landed in the UK.
After studying Illustration,
I fell in love with moving images and am now adapting it to share
my stories.

I am a questioner.
I have carved countless question marks on my mind,
leaving traces that will never vanish,
slowly growing in numbers.

I am a storyteller.
I pick up the triggers in my daily life and then create another world,
somewhere similar but different to the real world.
I interweave imagination and truth.

With the thin filter I've applied to your eyes, does the world look
the same as the one before?

I am an archiver.
I collect thoughts and scattered ideas,
floating dreams that never have been engraved.
I challenge the invisible to be visible.

I am a wanderer.
I am hunting for more stories to be shared,
and then translating them into something that could be enjoyed,
including my own experiences and thoughts.

I am a traveller.
I am travelling around the world, seeking stories untold.
It's about time to get a new ticket for the next round.
Departing from the UK, where is the plane heading?

Please daydream,
be absurd,
be imaginative!
Let's escape from the world you've known before.

Hope you enjoy walking around my headspace.

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Chang Liu

Yanxin Chen

Imagine when Artificial Intelligence has been completely integrated with our lives. It will participate in every minute of our lives. Even some big moments, like death. If AI or other kinds of technology allows us to extend our lives in the future, our friends and family may no longer die in the same way they do now. We will no longer be immersed in the grief caused by death. Death would become a very untroubled topic. If we were able to eliminate grief – should we?

The pain attached to grief is just as much part of life as the joy of love. To ignore this connection, or to pretend that it is not so, is to put on emotional blinkers which leave us unprepared for the loss.

If we no longer feel grief with death, will death still be death? Will humans still care for and love others?

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In *Hometown* I explore the theme of returning to an abandoned house in a small town. I present some archival pictures depicting broken objects, and rooms which are emotional. I have done this because some people might resonate with my own childhood memories. In *Cityscape*, the concept of space has been magnified, shifting from my own story to the outside world. It's pleasing to shoot some moments and to present the culture of Chengdu city and its idyllic lifestyle. In *Kaleidoscope*, the work is more about graphic experimentation and a wild attempt at representing our *Neighborhood* and its various elements. In the final work: *Urban Isolation*, I put everything together – through my Visual Observations and Narrative, documenting and sharing my journey of isolation.

It's important to stand behind others when they are feeling hurt or isolated. I love to help, but I always get into the paradox of 'No man is an island' or maybe, 'Everyone is an island'. I get to have more time with myself, but I can say at some point in life that I couldn't face myself directly; I felt crowded and noisy staying simply with myself. But now I am more at peace.

It's not just about Covid, it's about getting used to the *Impermanence.*

I'll keep doing Experimental Photography and bring people positive or undefined energy.

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Yuan Xu

Beixiang (North Lane) focuses on the life stories and memories of older generations. By analyzing existing material from my family (old photographs, film, artifacts, prints), and documenting stories told by my grandparents, I aim to evoke and represent memory and time based on their personal experiences.

Beixiang explores and reassembles personal family history through the insight of earlier generations. The textual content of *Beixiang* is based on the conversation between my grandma and me. The vernacular puts a more saturated colour to the stories happening during the 60s and 70s. The design language of *Beixiang* mimics the visual systems of propaganda posters made during the specific time scale, corresponding to the textual content of each page. Since the dialogue occurred in fragments, the design retains a sense of randomness. It is also the way I approach the history of previous generations. The typography and editorial design are not only a way to translate this historical content into a modern context, but also a representation of my impression of the narrative and this age.

Print is my chosen format, for I believe that the materiality of printed matter can enhance the value of the information. In *Beixiang*, the transformation from vernacular language to tangible print is the process of contextualizing and materializing the information. The texture and touch of the paper transmit the content into a physical space, connect it to the present and create a unique relationship with audiences.

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Jiazhen Cai

My lively memory of the city is frozen in the late summer of 2014.

I was born in a coastal city in the northeast of China. After years of growing up there, I left it. The city of my birth has gradually become a symbol to me, with the highlights of my earlier life buried there. Some moments with people, views of places, and appearance of structures are still quite clear, but everything has been thrown into the mist, as time is passing. My impression of the city continues to grow. The deviations and gaps between my imagination and the city in authentic reports become unique, mysterious and charming. The content of that place experienced replacement, abandonment and rebirth.

onNodeFocus explores six sites and related events of my birthplace. From the perspective of either an inhabitant or a bystander, the narrative lets audiences peek into the facts, emergencies, rumours, creations and reconstructions that happened in Dalian, reflecting on the resources and information transfer in places. This film uses monochromatic drawing and frame-by-frame animation to make sequential statements and imaginations of place and, to a large extent, eliminates my emotions that could be triggered by colour.

The city is my city, and the city in my mind.

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'broken and reconstructed' / 'a tool for distinguishing our behaviour' / 'period of isolation' / 'provide a cathartic outlet' / 'closed restaurants, vacant public spaces' / 'a solitary figure wandering through a residential street' / 'relationships between animals and humans' / 'personal and collective yearning' / 'the complexities of intimacy' / 'an act of listening' / 'the continuity of identity' / 'the establishment of relations'
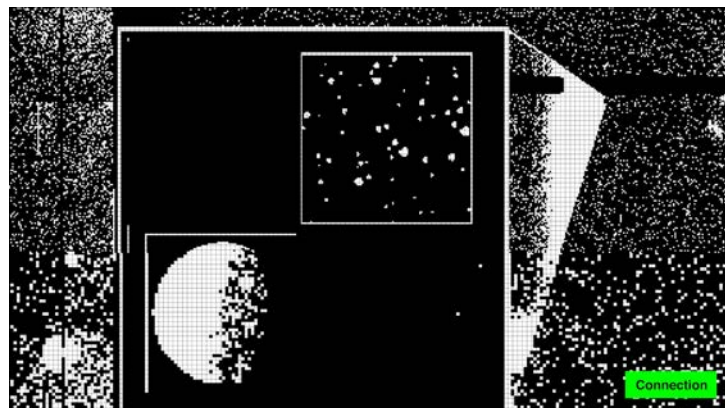
Ryeojin Min
Zhenyi Zheng
Ge Feng
Ellen Walker
Jingchuan Luo
Jacob Courtney
Qiaochu Qin
Ke Sun
Siyu Qu
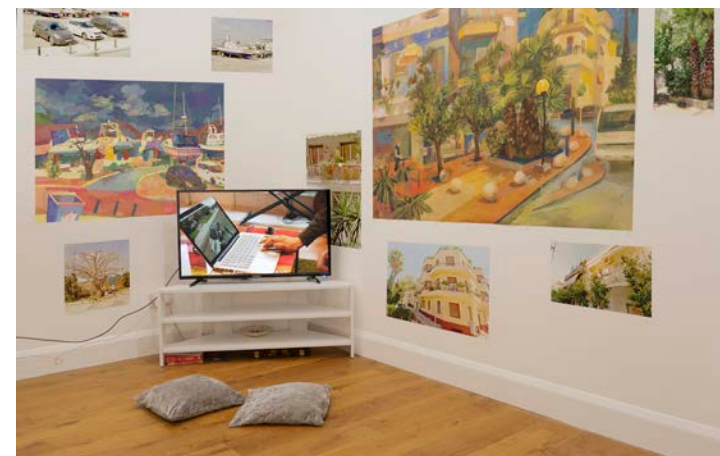Yiran Wang
Jiali Wu
Jiahao Ji

02
home / quarantine

Ge Feng

Ryeojin Min

Ellen Walker

Zhenyi Zheng

Jingchuan Luo

Jacob Courtney

IN THE CAT'S EYE

Qiaochu Qin

Ke Sun

Siyu Qu

Jiahao Ji

Yiran Wang

Jiali Wu

Ryeojin Min

Zhenyi Zheng
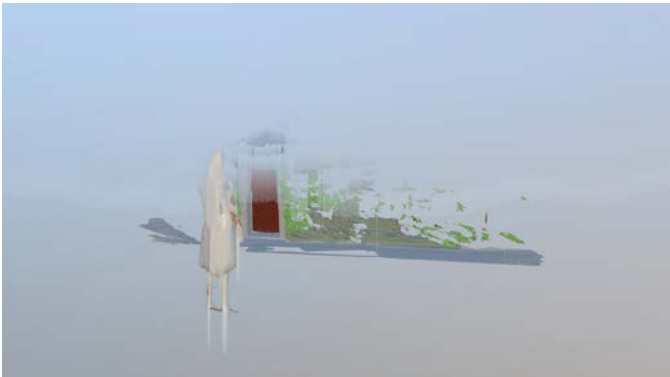
As a visual communicator, I record contemporary portraits of the places in which we live. This is a continuous practice of documenting things that exist in the moment. I meditate on urban space and record the everyday space that is constantly being broken and reconstructed.

The 'Deconstruction - Reconstruction' model finds a new alternative space through the act of deconstructing and reconstructing various elements from existing objects to spaces. In other words, the model explores new methodologies and speculates on another world of possibilities. First, the concept of deconstruction, influenced by postmodernism and poststructuralism, questions structured human life and perception and seeks to find a new meaning. Therefore, the concept of deconstruction is an attempt to understand our lives from various angles and to understand it anew by considering more possibilities.

The 'Deconstruction - Reconstruction' model presents a restructuring step that reassembles the separated pieces. In other words, this model insists that we rearrange and reinterpret existing objects through active actions. An alternative story that is newly discovered through deconstruction becomes the starting point of reconstruction. This process does not end just once. It repeats constantly and has to go through the process of deconstruction and reconstruction again. It does so because the image we perceive changes every day. By doing so, we can provide a new understanding of the world to provide sustainability for space, and furthermore, to give rich ontological meaning to objects.

I wandered in the universe of my home,
Seeing the tiny and huge,
Feeling the subtle and grand in the house.

It seems that everything is familiar, but it is broader and more complicated than I see.

The bedroom hides my emotions.

The table is a tool for distinguishing our behavior.

The plants in the house are a growing landscape, they know everything.

The window is the eye of the house, the connection between the inside and the outside world, and making them integrated.

Continuous home life has prompted me to have a more intimate connection with the space where I live. I am both a witness and a bystander, experiencing and observing the space.

Inspired by phenomenology and semiology of lived experience in architectural places, I realized that there are far more profound meanings within the home space.

Dialogues between flatmates have been recorded, then made visual into comics, made physical as play blocks and re-performed by the same flatmates. The illustrative components of comics, blocks and performances link and translate to each other.

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Ge Feng

Ellen Walker

We Connect with the Outside World is a research project that began during the Covid-19 pandemic, based on the phenomenon of Google Street View tourism. Here I invite a series of guests to use Google Street View to travel to places that cannot be visited due to the global restrictions. It is a reflection on the 'reality' that exists on the Internet. The project began with the endless anxiety and worry I felt during the period of isolation, when we are trapped indoors, we can still receive most information via the screen, and yet we still feel anxious and out of touch. The series of documentaries and drawings asks questions about what is real in the context of the internet and how can we adjust to the restrictions and new possibilities of living through the screens.

In the first episode an illustrator and a photographer travel to Athens via Google Street View. The second episode records three friends using Google Street View to take a detailed, planned trip to Paris that is made impossible by the pandemic. The guests in the third episode are a couple, and unlike previous guests, they present a very positive attitude towards their virtual life together.

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Having previously focused on pre-existing narratives or self-authored fiction, I have begun exploring autobiographical writing in the form of a graphic novel entitled *Muses and Demons- A Very Normal Autobiography*. I have found the medium of comics to be a highly emancipatory outlet for discussing themes of neurodiversity in families, mental health and identity, and disability advocacy. Through this I hope to translate the convoluted inner workings of the neurodiverse brain, not only to spread awareness of disabilities, but also to highlight the very pressing issue of disability discrimination and ableist educational structures in the UK.

The story's narrative is anchored to the period during the early months of the 2021 pandemic, wherein I found myself becoming deeply introspective about my childhood and family, as I experienced a period where I was apart from them for the longest time in my life. Through daily video chats, my family and I reminisced about our shared anecdotes and personal recollections. Both happy and dispiriting memories arose from these conversations, and it was through this that I found our story was one which needed to be told to a wider audience: not only to provide a cathartic outlet for those from similar backgrounds, but also to raise awareness of the reality many disabled children and families are facing, which too often goes unnoticed.

I will be taking forward the idea of comics as a multimodal communicative tool into my PhD research at the RCA, exploring the phenomenon of internet/online storytelling.

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Jingchuan Luo

Jacob Courtney

I am a storyteller who combines illustration with other disciplines, from anthropology and sociology, to literature, film and history. This helps me form a hybrid illustration practice conveying and shaping knowledge and narrative in experimental and compelling ways.

My practice mainly includes but is not limited to editorial illustration, children's books and comics/graphic novels.

I have a landscape architecture background, which shapes my understanding of spaces and my interest in depicting the built environment.

During my two-year RCA journey, I have delved deep into people's mundane, extraordinary lives, working with these human stories to read, understand and illustrate a specific site.

The abrupt change of landscape - closed restaurants, vacant public spaces, people with masks – caused by the pandemic, inspired me to rethink human relationships with places. Have humans always been in the process of losing their attachment to place? Is Covid-19 just an accelerator?

To raise and answer the question, I situated my final project in a deserted old fish restaurant street based in a small district of southwestern China and created a semifictional story collection *THERE*, showing the process of small businesses and personal community-focused restaurants getting pushed out by the pace of modern society.

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I am an illustrator from Essex in the UK. In my work the images I produce are usually grounded in reality. I draw in a more representational way influenced by everyday environments I encounter, depicting scenes such as characters waiting on a train station platform on an overcast day, a solitary figure wandering through a residential street, or a student working late at night in a dimly lit bedroom, often with an emphasis on atmosphere and creating a strong sense of place, sometimes with an uncanny or dreamlike quality. As well as this I also have a keen interest in narratives and sequential storytelling, considering the potential for how the juxtaposition of certain images can creatively imply ideas or create meaning, drawing on theories of montage in which new meanings can be created by the spatial or temporal juxtaposition of two or more images, as seen in films or graphic novels. An image of a London Underground train driver alone in their cabin juxtaposed with an image of a solitary passenger surrounded by others within the intimate confines of the carriage could suggest ideas of isolation or separation, despite the different environments.

My current project focuses on the somewhat surreal experience of travelling on the London Underground. Informed by academic writings about the Tube and accounts from Transport for London workers, the work focuses on themes of collective isolation and loneliness, mediated behaviour, routine, and the transient, disconnected space of the Underground. I want to consider the parallels between the collective isolation of using the Tube to that of recent lockdown restrictions, using the London Underground to record the change in circumstances occurring from the pandemic, questioning the established way things were before. I will speculate as to the future of Underground travel and everyday commuting.

Qiaochu Qin

What do animals mean to us? We domesticate animals as pets and keep them, arranging their lives according to our will. Animals became integrated into human society, and at the same time, we adapt to their presence. In this process, what have animals gained and lost? And what have we gained and lost?

In my practice, I used people and their cats as a starting point to explore the original, existing and potential relationships between animals and humans. In the past, people kept animals mostly for functional purposes, such as using cats to catch mice, and using dogs to guard the house. The lives of animals and humans, as separate beings, should be parallel to each other. But in today's relationship, people tend to feed animals to satisfy their emotional needs; the autonomy of both parties has been lost. We may think that we could communicate with animals through the eyes – actually we will never understand each other. We always think that the best that can be done for an animal is to take good care of them, but that's just human thought. The freedom they enjoy in the human environment is artificial. They are becoming dependent on the life we provide for them. Animals have integrated into human life and started to live like humans; also, we have adapted to their presence and accepted everything about them. I've heard 'I think I'm controlled by my cat.' more than once, so it seems that as we domesticate animals, animals also domesticate us.

In The Cat's Eye tells a story of the change of a cat's life to show the role transformation between a human and a cat and the losing identity of both animals and humans. Through the eye contact between humans and cats, we can see them losing identity and experiencing the role exchange between them. When a cat belongs to me, I also belong to the cat.

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Ke Sun

'To be homesick and to be sick of being at home – occasionally at the same time.' (Glenn Albrecht 2005). It sounds contradictory, but it is also the present that we are experiencing. Where is the home we are looking for? What is our spiritual longing? With the pandemic, our lives have changed dramatically. Digital virtual spaces have taken over our social life. Will contemporary nostalgia be affected by technology, and what kind of nostalgia will it present?

My current work *Nostalgia Echo* focuses on this personal and collective yearning in the creation of anxious scenes of both nostalgia and imagination. My audiovisual experiments aim to open up a vision of a past that haunts and informs a present reality where analogue and digital, physical and psychological combine in acts of repair and reimagining.

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Siyu Qu

Happy Birthday To Me is my exploration of, and reflection on, the complex parent-child relationship, by telling the life story between me and my mother through manga.

My mother used to work as a broadcaster and journalist at my hometown TV station. Because of her busy work, I was raised by my grandparent until I went to high school. In my childhood memory, 'mother' is just a term. 'Mother' is the scenario that a woman dressed formally reporting news on television. 'Mother' is the door shut when she left home to go to work. 'Mother' is a shadow that cannot be touched. Because of her long absence in my growing-up progress, this emotional void caused some mutual uncommunicable incomprehension and unhappiness on both sides. As I grew up, we sometimes encounter disagreements in our lives, and when I try to communicate with my mother as an independent person, I am often met with her using the attribute of the child to emphasize my subordinate relationship.

After talking to a few female friends my age, I realized that those gaps are not just my family issue. It can be said that it is a serious divergence between the old generation and the young generation in the view of life and gender identity.

I understand family affection to be multi-layered, including both love and warmth, as well as frustration and exhaustion. With these ideas in mind, I wanted to create a short story to explore the complexities of intimacy.

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Yiran Wang

Jiali Wu

I'm not used to being defined by my discipline, my practices, the forms of my works or my favoured materials and techniques. They are all to be played with for the interest of my content. And my content doesn't tell, but listens.

You may imagine me working closely with communities to trigger conversations, but I work the other way around. All we need is to leave the room for the conversations to happen and to be heard as we create the noise called me. So enjoy the distance and inclusiveness created by my content.

Then you are invited, accompanied by me, the silent author, into a space where the Other's narration could be heard. The space, often named 'project' by other artists, holds my search for authenticity, a shared consensus that can be distorted both socially and individually.

In this project, a human story is shown as 'an act of listening', where personal memories of a devastating social movement are revealed through family conversations. Those memories of that turbulent time, although always lingering around the family's everyday life, remain covered up by a collective narrative, a correct one, an official one.

And history echoes the present. When the pandemic hit London, Beijing declared the national lockdown lifted. But ever since, the Chinese government has received international accusations. In response, the authority urges the public to 'form a correct collective narrative.' The government's earlier failures turned into a taboo. The personal losses are veiled by the collective victory, just as it has always been in all human history.

'Identity' and 'memory' have been the main keywords of my works in recent years.

In this fluid society, the boundaries of public space tend to be blurred, which can cause anxiety about our identity. How do we maintain the continuity of identity and the identity of selfhood? We often rely on memory to find our identity. However, as a subjective activity of consciousness, memory is, of course, influenced to a certain extent. In that way, is memory reliable? Should we question the reliability of our identity when it is constructed by memory? What is the relationship between memory and identity? Can identity thus generated really serve as a definition of ourselves?

Based on this context, my practice discussed these issues through interviews with five ordinary people. I interpreted the concept of identity mentioned by the five interviewees with visual languages and, at the same time, studied the dynamic relationship between the memory fragments they provided and their construction of identity. This project aims to explore how to construct identity in a postmodern context and interrogates the rationality of relying on memory to construct identity.

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Jiahao Ji

Coastline Utopia project is based on future artificial land plan in Longkou Bay in Yantai, Shandong as an imaginary government plan, seeking an imaginative, symbolic 'solution' for current unsolvable and contradictory community needs.

'Intimacy can create spaces.' This project explores intimacy as an inherently spatial phenomenon, how to create spaces through the establishment of relations between interactive practices and space. Through 'site-space-content', building incubators that 'allow intimacy to happen', and to create a seaside intimacy community.

The design of architecture and incubators is based on the concept of future realistic design that speculate new concepts of urban design and public engagement to educate and create awareness about more sustainable, flexible and mindful approaches to building and living.

Coastline Utopia:
Scientists extract biological material from a kind of new coral to construct a movable utopia that can float on the sea. These artificial biological spheres will not occupy or change the coastline and are friendly to marine ecosystems. The biological architecture has a 'cell division' process that will generate incubators. Each incubator provides communities spaces to create intimacy and intimate sites.

Incubator I:
The first series of incubators focus on self-intimacy space. Dispersive particles converge through users' consciousness to create a concrete Buddha. Through a mindfulness process, users could establish a mild relationship with healthy ego and neurotic ego.

Incubator II:
The second series of incubators will provide a set of 'gym equipment' for the community. These objects encourage interaction between users and emphasize the relationship between bodies and social space from everyday rhythmic structures.

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'even though virtually no horse has wings' / 'how these mutations happen' / 'to cultivate an interest in the absurd' / 'going online means leaving the body behind' / 'camera lens, Amazon Sphere and air bubble in the ice' / 'allowing our imagination to liberate the story' / 'a refusal of meaning' / 'screaming for the future, restricted by the present' / 'Egbert Who?' / 'Digital + Physical realities'

Yihua Yan
Ziting Hong
Elena Galofaro
Jianing Li
Jinwen Xian
Waikwok Choi
Konstantina Benaki Chatzispasou
Kelly Macbeth Mackay
Jonny Drewek
Eleanor Wenham

03
online / offload

Ziting Hong

Elena Galofaro

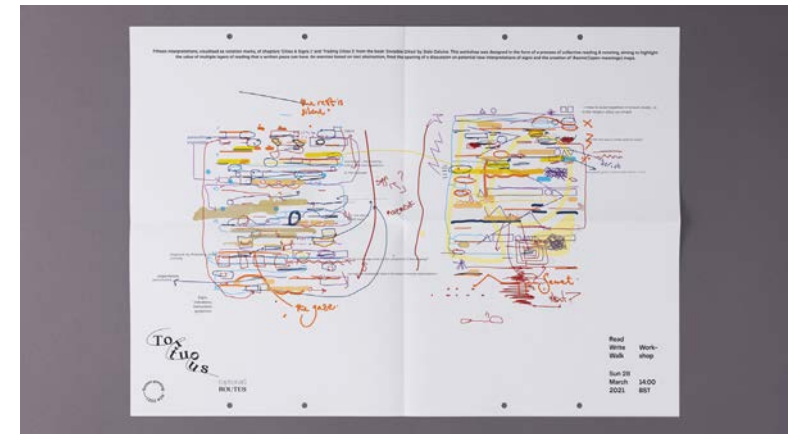

Yihua Yan
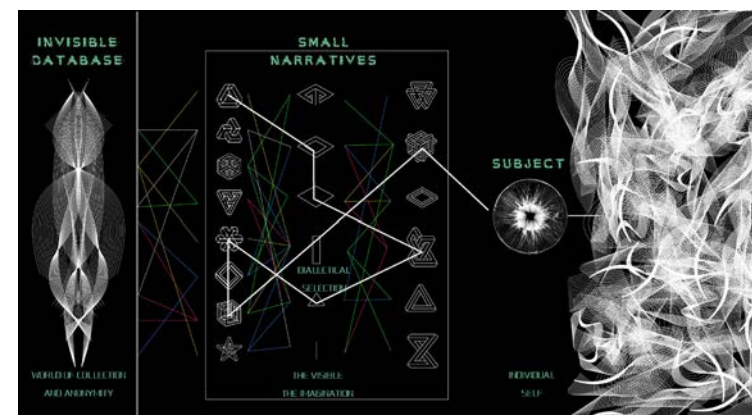
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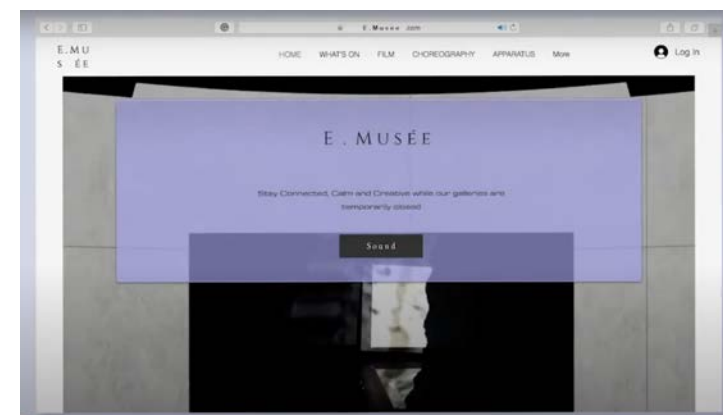Visual Communication 2021
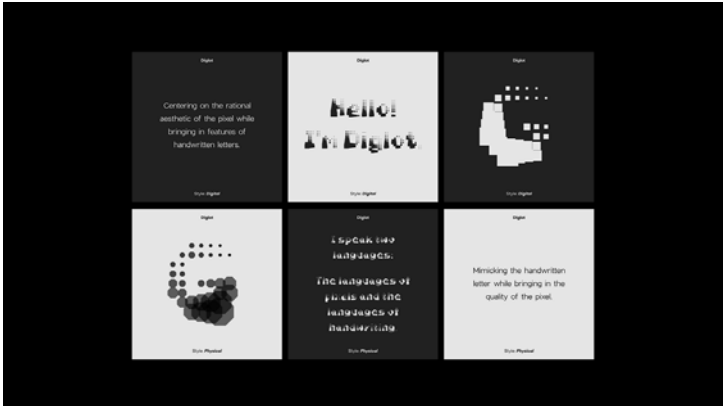
Jianing Li

Konstantina Benaki Chatzispasou

Jinwen Xian

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Kelly Macbeth Mackay

Jonny Drewek

Eleanor Wenham

Yihua Yan

This project is about whether we can determine a certain relationship with the robot in the future. This seems to be an imagination of the future based on the lonely projection of modern society, but it actually happened much earlier.

We see the possible future from where we are, using a nostalgic gaze to scrabble the connections and possibilities in the present dimension, narratiing from the center of ourselves (human). Not aiming to find the answer but feeling the possible future narrated. Feeling over explanation is the most important part of this project. Imagine a horse with wings, even though virtually no horse has wings; imagination is a romantic thing, squeezing the dimension of visualization and making space of imagining, creating our unique individual 'future'.

The universe is made up of lots of things, even though it looks like a thing.

Welcome aboard.

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Ziting Hong

My interest in ideas around 'physical vs digital' has sparked my interest in observing the ordinary and guided me in questioning the formation, existence and perception of materiality in the digital age.

This subject interest was later consolidated by the national lockdown. Instead of physical engagements, communications were predominantly channelled through the digital medium. Since then, I stayed at home and stared at screens for most of the time. This is the first time that I felt we are experiencing a collective dematerialization – we are gradually getting used to experiencing a subject through a screen.

There is a saying that 'seeing is believing', but is seeing through a screen considered 'seeing'? I doubt it – I believe the message carried by a subject would be filtered or even mutated when the subject moves from physical to digital forms. As such, I am keen to explore how subjects behave in both worlds and how these mutations happen. How should I act as response? And whether I could create an alternative existence of the subject?

My interest in typography naturally led me to consider it as the potential agent of this project, not to mention it is aptly associated with both the physical and digital formats. The final body of work ranges from typographic experiments, employing various digital processes, to a set of typefaces, fused with the digital behaviour of the pixels and the physical behaviour of handwriting.

My process-driven practice celebrates experimentation by pushing each letterform through multiple digital processes. Every step of the experiment has inspired my next stage. Archiving every design process from initial experiments to final design iterations is key to understanding the concept behind my body of work.

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Elena Galofaro

From September 2017 to April 2019 I lived in Japan. Having experienced firsthand the disadvantages of living in a country where speaking English is not enough for being understood, I started to cultivate an interest in the absurd. An absurdism which led my memories to travel between the real world and a fantasy, between human and not.

The incapacity of communicating with someone else represents not only a focus but also the contour of a conflict between the self and the other; a fight which I translate through dreamlike atmospheres where no one is ever fully human, and no one is ever fully understood.

The philosopher Wittgenstein once said that if a lion could talk, we could not understand him, and that would happen because all its experience – *Umwelt* – is based on something we cannot translate. To me, this concept is conveyed in the figure of the octopus (or in general, of marine creatures), which represents the other and an element whose level of sensibility cannot be translated by any language.

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Jianing Li

What is the 'real'? After the expansion of digital space since last year, I've questioned myself with respect to the position between physical existence and online life.

My practice explores the distorted subject position between real and fiction through different interpretants, into semiotics and the reading process of communication. At the same time, going online means leaving the body behind, and I question if it is possible to introduce the body as a material opposed to the disembodied figure or acknowledging the body in cyberspace.

This journey is continuous progress, with the discussion of language that is not only cognitive but also performative. My work utilizes multidisciplinary media, such as sound, voice, film to illustrate the perception of language, which is inspired by philosophy and poetry, including Wittgenstein and Mallarmé. During this exploration, the language boundary between human and non-human beings blurring with AI-generated text connected the relationship between language and human beings through comprehensive experience, which tries to get closer to the essence of language in the digital age.

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Jinwen Xian

Waikwok Choi

'An event may be small and insignificant in its origin, and yet, when drawn close to one's eye, it may open in its centre an infinite and radiant perspective, because a higher order of being is trying to express itself in it and irradiates it violently.'

BABO is proof of this viewpoint, as well as an example of the fullness of a small event. In the BABO, you can see many items which seem to be independent but can be connected to form an irregular grid. We all wandered on this grid.

After watching a reality show last year, I realized that reality is not what it seems. The world is more complex than we thought, and we can no longer distinguish illusion from reality. Instead of being obsessed with the 'truth' of reality, this project reconstructed the image of reality through what it called 'Baboism', illustrated by three different bubble-shaped objects (camera lens, Amazon Sphere and air bubble in the ice). What 'Baboism' reveals is that we can only see a collection of events as a process of de/reconstruction: narratives are decomposed to simple principles and imaginations, which later are reconstructed as new narratives.

This project started with the fantasy of chasing stars and ended with the sigh of the complexity of the world. This is a broken, incoherent project, and I will not continue to improve it, because I am a half-assed person. I am a fan without self. Who I am depends on who I love at this moment. When facing a complicated world like this, I can only choose to be relaxed, be selective, and be irreducible.

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E-Musée museum was created in April 2021 and opened on 18 May 2021. As a virtual museum organized by individuals, it has the independence and autonomy to react flexibly and quickly to any developments. For example, when the museum was ready to open, a pandemic hit and various museums in the community were temporarily closed, so the museum simply decided to open in order to close.

These days, E-Musée decided to hold an auction which aims to bring artifacts back to us virtually during the quarantine, while allowing us to be inspired by history and build a sense of empathy across time and space. Let historical stories save our lives while allowing our imagination to liberate the story.

The entire auction is presented in a video, four virtual auction rooms and an auction catalog. The auction objects were mainly twelve virtual ceramics called Ru ware. The artist plays almost any of the roles in the process. Like an archaeologist, she collects the vast virtual images of the museum into a small cabinet. Then she closes her cabinet of curiosity, which she may never open again, or she may only leave it temporarily and occasionally insert pieces into it in the days that follow.

As E. H. Gombrich says: 'There really is no such thing as Art. There are only artists.' She continues: 'An artist will die, but her (E) Musée will not.'

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Konstantina Benaki Chatzispasou

During my time at the RCA, I have been exploring the topic of language from the angle of variation among communication systems. I studied fragments of various art movements that have focused on manipulating language in a unique way. Asemic writing in particular captured my attention precisely because it looks like writing, but the semantic value of 'words' under its scope is abandoned. Through an exploration of asemic writing (primary research and study of artists using this medium) my research's focus was to investigate whether language, a communication system, can be reapproached from different perspectives and if the meaning of signs can change.

Asemic writing hides radical ideas that challenge our communication system. Roland Barthes said: 'The language is never anything but a system of forms, and the meaning is a form.' Since our life is based on our communication system, a refusal of meaning could signify fighting against ideas and oppositions that are the foundations of our society.

Another part of asemic writing that interests me is that its works leave it up to the reader to decide how to translate and explore the text; in this sense, the reader becomes co-creator of the asemic work. This notion made me question the idea of authorship, not only for a written text but generally for language, which is everywhere. What are the dominant narratives around us? How much do we allow different narratives to enter and be considered equally?

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Kelly Macbeth Mackay

Fractured Realities: Part Three – Spoken Reflection

I want to wake up when I fall asleep so that I can understand reality.
Understand the self, the collective, the society.
Find clarity in an open-ended conclusion – comfort in complacency.
Social media is screaming for the future, restricted by the present,
Wanting to feel connected while staying disconnected.
But what does it mean to 'be human'
During a time when society is more focused on technological advancement than healthcare?
Daily chores to maintain an 'identity' in a subliminally seductive world.
/Stay awake.
And yet humans continue to connect: orally, physically, digitally
Where do I feel most at home – online or in my skin/the mirror?
Our world is complex, so why mistake labels for clarity rather than accept complexity?
Find flow in our transient instability.
Comfort in finding beauty in humanity; transcending screens;
Accepting the disparity of connection in our social spaces
and choosing to amplify the true value of connection:

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Jonny Drewek

'Knock Knock'
'Who's there?'
'Egbert'
'Egbert Who?'
'Egg, [but] no bacon.'

This is the first joke I remember learning, probably around the age of four. I would retell it excitedly to anyone who would listen. Thing is, I was so young I didn't even get it. To me, the hilarity came entirely from a man called 'Egbert Nobacon' arriving at your house. What a mad thing to happen. That's not what people are normally called.

Trying to make people laugh is the only thing I can confidently say I've done for Gladwell's infamous 10,000 hours.

Sisyphus was cursed to push a rock to the top of a hill for eternity, only to have it roll back down every time. Albert Camus said we should imagine him the happiest man. Every time it rolled down, he saw with his own eyes the absurdity of his existence yet resolved to totter down and creatively re-engage with his environment. Camus died aged 46 in a car crash.

Making Light is a term I like to throw around....

1. We use light to see things, so if it's lighter, we can see them in better detail (and it might be warmer)

2. Light also means 'not heavy,' so it's like making something easier to carry or bear, which could be emotional or conceptual weight.

3. Making Light of something just means joking about it.
That's the main metaphor bit really.

In a 1970s study on laughter, subjects were asked to lift a series of visually identical weights, one by one. One of the weights was sneakily made much lighter than the rest and placed near the end of the series. Lifting this 'trick weight', most subjects impulsively laughed at the sudden experience of a far lighter load than expected.

The early weights can be seen as a 'setup', presenting a premise and creating an expectation. The 'trick' weight is then a 'punchline', destroying this expectation. The subject's logical presumptions have been shattered. Their immediate response is formless shock. The laughter accompanies the subject, building a new, more accurate model of their world.

It's just theory, though.

Don't take it too seriously.

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Eleanor Wenham

Being Human
            { in our }
                    Digital + Physical realities
                    { awareness of our }
                    Online + Offline Presence
                    { between our }
                    Urban + Green Spaces
                    { our }
                    Built + Natural Environments

            — —
                            { surrounding }
                    Structures of the Everyday
                            { merging }
                    Typologies of Language
                            { diverging }
                    Layers of Complexity
                            { shifting }
                    Reflexive Boundaries
                            { navigating }
                            Fluidity
                                            — —

                            { connecting to }
                    Human Experience
                    { disconnecting from }
                    Moments of Neutrality
                            { reconnecting with }
            What it Means to be Present

                                    { a state of }
                            Constant Flux

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'fascinated by irrational human acts' / 'endless flow of conflicts and encounters' / 'migrate to a higher discursive dimension' / ' how to name them' / 'women, transgender and non-binary people' / 'attempts at subtle subversions/ 'create a constellation' / 'a small fictional world unto itself' / 'the emotion of each sound' / 'the word is ambiguous' / 'found objects from various sources' / 'about 30 seconds'

Gun Lee
Rocco Punghellini
Can Yang
Xiaoyu Ma
Jin-hoo Park
Siqi Sun
Kristina Kapeljuh
Shuo Yang
Shuyi Zhou
Rui Zhang
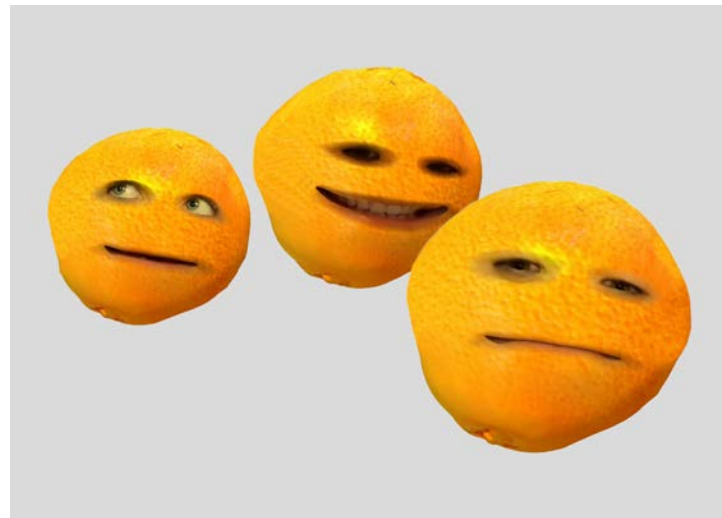Shuning Jiang
Toby-Chengwei Mao

04
spread / circulate

Gun Lee

Can Yang

Rocco Punghellini

the colour of zucchini n. definition of a specific compounding condition relative to the thought zucchini; as presented in the background [be in +] I am in the colour of zucchini because of the bad weather.
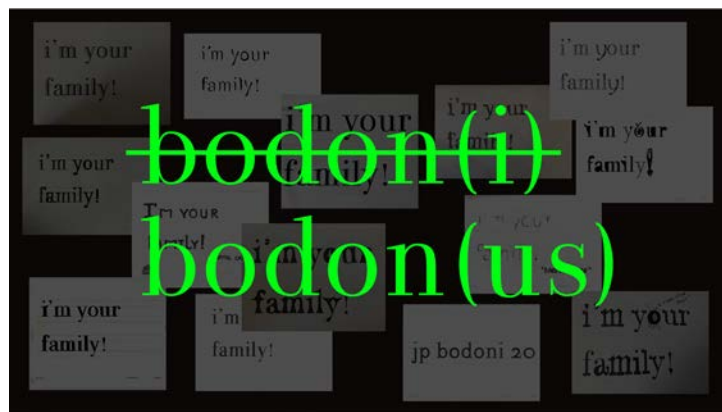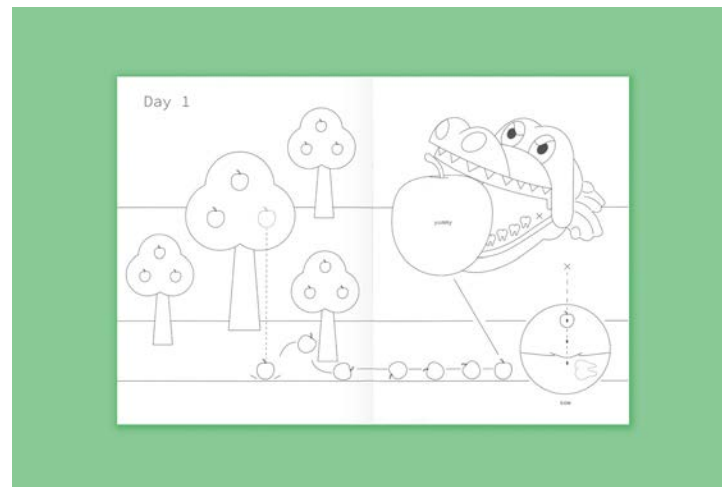
Xiaoyu Ma

Siqi Sun

Kristina Kapeljuh

Jin-hoo Park

Shuo Yang

Shuyi Zhou

Toby-Chengwei Mao

Rui Zhang

Shuning Jiang

Gun Lee

Hi, I am Gun Lee.

I am a visual communicator and a graphic designer based between London, UK and Seoul, Korea. In 2018, I have achieved a BA in Sculpture at the Seoul National University. My key interest is in storytelling related to social-political issues. I am deeply curious about and fascinated by irrational human acts.

The theme throughout my journey at the RCA has been 'imperfect hero myths and paradoxes'. For the MA dissertation, I have established a theory for a narrative building called 'fugitive gaps'. The term refers to the three different types of paradoxical chaos between rationality and irrationality. While observing the social-political happenings under the global Covid pandemic, I focused particularly on the term 'double-standards'.

Today's generation aged between 20 and 30 in Korea call themselves '7-Po'.
It means the generation to give up 7 things in life:
Love, marriage, birth, community, housing, hope, and dream.

The ship is sinking.
But no one is stopping the hole.

Project <*O Brave New Voices*> is a collection of four illustrated stories around four Mr. Ones, the wooden mannequins in the Unknown Town. Each story depicts different kinds of hypocrite playing hot potato related to the mysterious crimes happening in the neighbourhood.

Anyone claims him/herself to be sound minded.
Someone might try to step up but is easily criticized.
No one is willing to take the responsibility.
Everyone believes he/she has a good reason to run innocent.

I would like to ask, 'Who is behind the scene?

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Rocco Punghellini

I come from the sense of confusion and disaffection generated by detaching myself from my practice, and I move towards making myself one with it.

In this mental space, the act of living is an unconscious, multi-layered, contradictory and always-in-progress performance that drives me with its endless flow of conflicts and encounters. Here, the body returns to be the entry point and the main medium through which I communicate with others. The work instead simply exists as an act of care and reflection towards the self, as a tool of survival.

Ultimately, technology is to culture as the designer is to the community. Both play at humanizing or mechanizing each other. This fatal attraction is a consequence of their common trauma, which is being asked to exist for someone else's needs. So, in a way, somewhere under the skin, being a designer is flirting with technology, to recognize yourself otherwise.

In contrast to the concept of designer-saviour, I recognize myself as a designer-listener, who becomes a designer-performer. A designer-listener is a mimetic creature. A designer-performer is a vulnerable, organic medium who challenges the boundaries of individualism aiming for the common good. And if the designer's perspective becomes pivotal, to what extent can its work be accessible to, and reusable by, a larger audience? And what role should the audience play?

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Can Yang

Suspend your body in a fluid that has intensity=0.
Breathe in and out through your skin, as the non-productive entities are exhaled in all dimensions.
Close your eyes, see through the timeline of death with the corrugated tip of your tongue.
Flatten and ease your intestines, swallow down the extraordinary beings into endless becomings.

Arrest desire in the lawless motion of stillness that has net dynamism=0.
On the Neobridge, we explore how our consciousness can transcend the boundaries of concrete realities and migrate to a higher discursive dimension.

When artwork is considered as a fluid with undefined substance in the exhibit space, the meaning can be only generated through interacting and feeling in the pool. Imagining ourselves being in the molecular free-flow, de-organized motion without a determined goal. Neobridge is the friction between molecules, a speculative net that counts on multimodal sensory stimulus. It is no longer a linear passage which lays on the x-y dimension left-to-right, with an entrance and an exit that only opens to the participants who are willing to join and go through from one end to the other. It is a speculative net that never restricts the passages or boarders: it overruns dispersively, since there is no end of such gateway, as the end of one side is always the start of the other; it is not only a linkage between two terminations, but a network of other Neobridges, from which it differs.

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Xiaoyu Ma

I am sitting in a group of eleven and try to tag them in colours for easier recognition. Let me make this person White because of his white T-shirt, but how can I name the next person in white shirt? After all, I am not able to list out eleven colours at once.

Or maybe I do, as long as I know how to name them.
I want to write in the colour of zucchini; the second I think about that, every word tastes like zucchini. If I am going to write a statement about zucchini, is it better to write in the colour of zucchini or better not? If it were better to, how can I visualize the colour of zucchini? Is it the colour of its pericarp or the colour of the pulp? Is it the colour of THE zucchini pops up in my mind or the sum up of all zucchinis on the earth?

The whole previous paragraph talks about the colour of zucchini. However, the conclusion cannot be displayed in colour mode. When I struggle with the colour of zucchini, white began a new topic I fail to follow since five minutes ago, which is the moment I figured out 'the colour of zucchini'. Today is its birthday. Happy birthday! Every word tastes like birthday cake from now on.

I think I already know how to tag all eleven people with different colours, but the problem is, the colour white now has a human face to me.

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Jin-hoo Park

The collective and the 'we'.

I believe in the power of collective voices. I love learning from people, finding out what they think and bringing them together into the project – I call it 'live research'. 'Live research' emphasizes listening, empathy and operating in the personal and communal realms.

I wondered why typography appears to be a particularly male-dominated area of the design industry; where are the women, transgender and non-binary people in the world of typography? I want to make space for underrepresented designers and artists to create a more gender-balanced world of typography. I am bringing people together and connecting them to create a type-family.

To make room for all, I'm running a workshop to codesign a type-family using simple methods and tools that don't require any specialist or technical knowledge. In this workshop, both participants and I will interact and get involved to create a typeface. Even though each version looks different, they are all part of the type-family since they come from the same root.

I'm still looking for participants in this movement.

I will be pleased if you come. Please, be my family!

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Siqi Sun

What is 'a sense of place'?

What does 'creating a space' entail?

Places and spaces are multidimensional, complex amassments that one gravitates towards, sometimes out of a compulsion to land, to orient or to belong. Whether they are literal or abstract in use, concrete locations or an expression, the ambiguous terms both denote some extent of idealization and sentiments of attachment.

Rather than imposing another set of differentiation, my personal practice explores what falls in between, outside or stretches beyond the comfortably grounded; and examines when, familiar unquestioned spatial notions start to derealize and crumble into something ungraspable. Fascinated by concepts such as non-place, flatness and dimensionality, my practice frequently attempts at subtle subversions, taking apart conventions and less discussed aspects of place or space across academic and everyday settings. Using drawing, writing, found text, digital compositing and manipulation, I often integrate multiple materials and methodologies specific to my inquisitions but also in acknowledgement to the plural, indefinite existences of 'works' in contemporary contexts.

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Kristina Kapeljuh

I have been staring at the ice for longer than I imagined until finally I dare to snatch a chunk with my bare hand. Its transparency creates beautiful glimpses of light and deceives the understanding of depth. The sound of cracks is as crisp and sharp as a knife.

For my final project at the RCA, I have chosen a piece of ice on the road for its insignificance. A banal product of consequences and influences. Isn't it, however, the case for metaphysics?

For animism, interobjectivity, dualism, binary difference and ice under our feet. In a particular framework, a simple piece of matter is an anchor for the complexity of theories. Piece of ice and its metamorphosis is a departure for the narrative, not fully open-ended but open enough for interpretation.

Because that is what we do: finding narratives.

We join dots to create a constellation. I feel the same about the systems we create to live in. We create myths of theories to have a sense of existence. I understand, digest and apply all of them; and simultaneously I am lost in the hiccups of mismatching structures to exist in. My methodology uses printmaking, digital manipulation and intuitive drawing. All of these methods are vectors directed to question the invisible representation of the difference embedded in Western perception. Figurative, but abstract; printmaking, but digital; archaic, but chaotic; almost fluid, but slightly geometrical. I aim for the hybrid in my imagery to create a transcendental feeling of found but lost meaning of a place in-between.

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Shuo Yang

Shuyi Zhou

I am a sci-fi / fantasy nerd who has some drawing skills. Prior to studying at RCA, I studied Fine Arts at China Academy of Art.

Science fiction has been what interests me the most. A majority of my work is telling stories from the perspective of sci-fi. I have been keeping an eye on the development of sci-fi culture in China and wish to contribute my effort to the improvement of domestic general recognition on sci-fi.

To The Stars • A short story of love, promise and sacrifice.

To save the one he loves, a young boy comes to a remote island where the Fire Keeper lives a tough life of routines, sameness and monotony that keeps the world running.

Sci-fi has a strong sense of logic within the perimeter of the given settings. Fairy tale has the flexibility to reduce the restraint from complying to the reality. I attempt to present a small fictional world unto itself with its own self-contained law of nature.

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Booth, sound artist, graphic designer, craftsman. Born in China. By integrating and remodelling images, videos, and sound, my work breaks from the static expression of traditional graphic design and invites us to explore the space between looking and listening. Recent projects include *Sound Calendar* and *Dream*.

Sound art is like a record of my personal understanding, which, when displayed, might touch people's memories and emotions. I have always wanted to record my life in this way.

These sounds, which can be heard everywhere, are distilled and concentrated but are not meant to express any particular meaning. My intention is to communicate the specificity of the everyday. These seemingly insignificant sounds unwittingly reveal and celebrate individual experiences of ordinary moments. At the same time, these moments connect us with the world. No matter where we are or how different our backgrounds are, we just need to feel the emotion of each sound, each moment.

Sometimes I ask myself: what modes of communication work best? Those that make people understand? Or those that raise questions? I don't know. Maybe there's no right answer. What happens is one thing, how people interpret it is another.

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Rui Zhang

Shuning Jiang

I am an object-oriented visual player who reintegrates the shape and function of objects, which weave a speculative dialogue with the audience.

To engage with the familiar but bizarre states of vital essentials, by assembling a visual anchor between the object and the reader through words.

A visual discipline is created in terms of words' obligation; the objects' function and identity are redefined both as a reaction and retention from the reader.

My current research *Object Conversation* reveals hidden things in my personal life and presents them as an object-oriented conversation with the reader-viewer. It does so through three treatments:

Speculative: the description of the word is ambiguous; is a flowing idea; rather than a static form.

Sequential: the position of the object is various; is a periodic movement; rather than a static gesture.

Gameplay: the interaction of the audience is adaptive; is a subjective recreation; rather than a static instruction.

In combination, these treatments cognitively refresh the reader-viewer, leading to the completion of the 'visual bridge'.

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My research sits on the composite idea of objects and materiality, exploring the narratives behind them. Our imagination of everyday objects seems to be limited in some ways. However, I think they contain meaning and value worthy of critical attention. My current work is a collection of found objects from various sources which have been used for another function beyond their nature, unconsciously or accidentally. By disassembling images of the objects into different parts, my aim is to open narratives of different dimensions.

- Language
To activate people's imagination by giving each object a name/title and description that reveals its nature and imaginary function

- Shape
To explore the gap between an object's physical shape and its digital representation

- Materiality
To interpret an object's history, social mobility and cultural identity in some way

- Description
To describe an object's unconsciously formed function beyond its nature

- Moving Image
To bring the objects together to form an abstract narrative, a visual essay

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Toby-Chengwei Mao

The Appearance and Disappearance of an Art Object

Step 1: I will get an object and place it in a certain place. This process will take about 30 seconds.

Step 2: I will get another object and place it next to the object mentioned in step one. This process will take about 30 seconds.

Step 3: I will get another object and carefully place it on the top of the object mentioned in step one. This process will take about 30 seconds.

Step 4: I will get another object and put it inside the object mentioned in step two. This process will take about 30 seconds.

Step 5: I will get another object and cover it on the object mentioned earlier. This process will take about 30 seconds.

Step 6: Now you will have 2 minutes to have a short stay with the object.

Step 7: In the next 30 seconds, the constructed object will be taken apart and placed back in the original place.

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acknowledgements

outbreak /
breakout

**Statements of Practice
from RCA Visual Communication Students 2021**

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