

Translation Zone(s): Constellations Hong Kong 2018

Dr. and Mrs. Sze Chi Ching Exhibition Gallery,

Hong Kong Baptist University

3-6 July 2018

Performance evening and launch

Wednesday 4 July

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9.00 - 21.00

The first in a series of curatorial constellations and events, this exhibition and performance evening extends Dr Heather Connelly's transdisciplinary research into art-and-translation, which she began during her practice-based PhD in Fine Art at Loughborough University (2015) and ongoing research project, *Translation Zone(s)*, established during an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Cultural Engagement Fellowship at the Birmingham City University (2016). It has been designed to complement and expand the *Exploring Cultural Mobility through Visual and Performance Art* panel convened by Gabriela Saldanha (University of Birmingham) and Cristina Marinetti (Cardiff University) at the International Association of Translation and Intercultural Studies (IATIS) 6th International conference at Hong Kong Baptist University.

The exhibition includes work from established and emerging artists, curators, writers and researchers, and provides space for artists contributing to the panel to present their practice as objects, performances and documentation of events. Conference delegates are invited to encounter, experience and respond to 'works' as opposed to relying upon a mediated (linguistic/written) account of the work through the voice of another. 'Whilst the relationship between translation and the performing arts has become a popular field for investigation and translation studies has been undergoing a creative turn, there has been little attention paid to contemporary artists working with translation and interpretation within Translation Studies'.

The panel and exhibition aims to 'to open up a dialogue between artistic practice and translation so as to enable a more comprehensive exploration of the material and performative complexities of translation and interpreting, probing the potential of artistic practice to create new knowledge or present existing knowledge in a new light. The panel and exhibition offers a space to explore the role of art in relation to current concerns in translation studies.' (Connelly, Saldanha and Marinetti 2017)

Translation Zone(s): Constellations Hong Kong, provides physical and hospitable environment for artists and translators to engage in a critical dialogue about the potential of future international transdisciplinary research between artists and translators, and how contemporary arts practice can play a pivotal role within the research process.

Further information and documentation of the exhibition, works and research will be uploaded at :
<http://www.heatherconnelly.co.uk/translationzones/>

The exhibition has kindly been supported by IATIS, the University of Lincoln (UK),

Hong Kong Baptist University and the Academy of Visual Arts.



BILL AITCHISON (CHINA/UK)

Title: **Dispatches from Nanjing**

Date: 2018

Medium: Performance

The performance on Wednesday evening offers a short travelogue from mainland China through words and actions. It will situate itself in spaces of linguistic and cultural ambiguities and make a performance of these that flits between Mandarin and English attempting to occupy a third space between the two.

Bill Aitchison is a British inter-disciplinary performance artist based in China. He has presented his work in galleries, theatres and festivals in Europe, Asia, America, Australia and The Middle East. He holds a practice-based PhD from Goldsmiths College, University of London, is published in several languages, has worked in radio and teaches at Nanjing University.

W: www.billaitchison.co.uk/billaitchison/home.html

HEATHER CONNELLY (UK)

Title: *Escurrir*

Date: 2017- ongoing

Medium: Mixed media

Escurrir is a text work developed in collaboration with translation studies academic Gabriela Saldanha, which aims to explore the generative process of translation *through* translation. The work began from our shared interest in Riordan and Takayanagi's (1896:v) metaphoric description of the difficulty of translating Japanese literature, 'whose peculiar beauties are apt to disappear like the opal tints of a squeezed jellyfish', (Henitiuk 2014, 144). An evocative image of an elegant creature becomes 'medusa' and 'una agua viva' [live water] in Uruguayan Spanish, which and 水母 [water mother] in Chinese. The act of translation and its back translation into English expands the metaphor beyond its original context, leading us to imagine language oozing through our fingers and to contemplate how its attractive appearance belies its venomous sting, subsequently creating a new chains of metaphors which provide alternative ways to think about and frame translation.

Presented as a work in progress, the text continues to evolve as it encounters new languages takes on new forms and installed in different contexts - expanding its poetic textuality. Delegates are invited to contribute to the work...

Heather Connelly is an artist, curator and Senior Lecturer at University of Lincoln, previously research fellow at Birmingham City University (UK), with a PhD by Fine Art Practice from Loughborough University (UK). Her research concerns art-and-translation and linguistic hospitality and is particularly interested in how art practice can be used to examine the performativity of translation and engage people in the complex issues of translation, language learning and more broadly transcultural communication. Working with text, sound and the voice, Heather's work explores our relationship with language(s) from multiple perspectives, often working collaboratively, designing participatory projects and events that bring together people from different socio-cultural and academic backgrounds.

W: <http://heatherconnelly.co.uk/translationzones/>

JOHANNA HÄLLSTEN (UK/SWEDEN)

Title: *Vinddrivna existenser*

Date: 2018

Medium: Paper and wire

Vinddrivna existenser plays with the ways in which we translate and create meaning between two different languages. An old Swedish phrase, no longer in general use, is here translated and pulled apart to unearth the various ways in which it could be understood. Its 'final' translated meaning is created by the audience deciphering the mobile.

Johanna Hällsten was born in Sweden where she studied printmaking at Grafiskskolan i Stockholm. She completed her PhD in Fine Art & Philosophy in 2004 (Staffordshire University, UK). The research explored a new understanding of the uncanny in contemporary installation art. She currently lectures in Fine Art at Loughborough University. Johanna Hällsten's practice concerns translation between different cultures, species and forms. Often working with text, sound and performance. She is interested in the interrelation between sounds and environments, and the transience of the sound\ spaces created through movement. Johanna often work location-responsive-ly, and collaborate with organisations, institutions and professionals in other fields.

W: <http://johannahallsten.co.uk>

REBECCA JOHNSON (UK)

Title: **Milk Trip ≠ Milchreise**

Date: 2015

Medium: Poster and performance

I was commissioned by curator and translator Jen Calleja to translate the short story 'Sessel und Sätze' (Chairs and Sentences) by Austrian writer Anna Weidenholzer into a recipe... I did so, and made an installation, and then asked audience to translate the food translation into their own words. Here I present the posters from that work, and give a talk about the processes I used to translate from text to food.

Translator's Note: When thinking about what recipe I will make, I always imagine how I want the resulting eating to make me feel. In my mind try out the recipes: if I make this, how does it fit with my feelings and my body? Anna's short story made me feel a lot: strangeness in one's own language; the uncanny violence of a familiar and comforting routine; the simultaneous yearning for, and fear of strangeness. These feelings, along with specific elements of context – Germanness, Turkishness – were what I tried to convey through my translation of the story into a recipe. I think our bodies can be better diplomats and translators than our minds, realising and becoming fluent in the joy of difference, long before we are intellectually ready to engage in it.

Rebecca May Johnson is a writer, literary curator and creative practitioner living in London. She is co-founder and curator of sell out literary food salon 'Voices at The Table' in London and co-curates 'Sitting Room', a long-running series of readings in people's houses and public spaces. She created the Food Memory Bank, a digital project to collect public memory about food and eating. Rebecca has given a number of performances involving food, translation and memory at cultural institutions in London. She recently completed a PhD about a contemporary feminist radical 'translation' of the Odyssey into German at University College London and works as researcher into literature and translation at Newcastle University.

She is writing a book of public philosophy that takes food as its tool to think with.

W: <https://rebeccamayjohnson.com/2015/04/11/518/>

SASKIA HOLMKVIST (SWEDEN/NORWAY)

Title: **DOG IS DOG**

Date: 2018

Medium: Performance

DOG IS DOG is a performance that involves agency and translation practices that aim to communicate linguistic, cultural, political and psychological differences as a way to improve understanding. Four interpreters and researchers are invited directly from their professional contexts to perform according to formats they have developed in resistance to the idea of the interpreter as a non-biased and objective person in transmitting a conversation, interview, solicitation or news. The performance turns around improvised interpretation by looking at interpreted repetition and staged characteristics like parroting, mimesis and memorising through the legacy, agency and ethics of the interpreters themselves as a way of addressing contested situations, sameness and otherness.

Saskia Holmkvist's work explores questions of agency and professionalised language through fractured narratives, employing performance, orality, moving image and improvisation. In a hybrid form of realism, Holmkvist appropriates typical scenarios to serve as allegory and example. Many works use the interview as a form of storytelling to address consequences of translatability of subjects in relation to historical trajectories drawing from fields such as interpretation, psychology, journalism, and improvisational theatre.

Often the protagonists are invited specialists from various professional fields to interact through performative encounters, direction and improvisation. In the process strategies of the documentary are retooled with performative interaction to focus on verbal speculation. Each of Holmkvist's projects can be seen as a platform to perform, narrate, and share strategies, discourses and forms of resistance.

Holmkvist has held a professorship at the Academy of Fine art, Oslo since 2014 and her work is exhibited widely and part of public collections.

W: <http://saskiaholmkvist.com>

XIANGYUN LIM (SINGAPORE)

Title: **Palimptext**

Date: 2017

Medium: Paper, book and interactive talk

Palimptext presents a conscious exploration of the process of literary translation that probes into particular ideas of 'creativity' associated with the practice. Materialised as physical ensembles, the experiment looks at the palimpsestic interactions in a translator has with the text in the bid to embody it in and through another language. These interactions are distinct, but not necessarily chronological in the same way palimpsests are formed — thus the deliberate combination of the terms 'palimpsest' and 'text' into a portmanteau. This non-linearity in the creation of the palimptexts affords the space in which to explore further the parallels between creative and literary translation, tapping on the capacity of imagination to 'form internal images or ideas of objects and situations not actually present to the senses, including remembered objects and situations, and those constructed by mentally combining or projecting images of previously experienced qualities, objects, and situations' (OED).

By taking as example the translator's own processes in translating poetry from a language family to another (Mandarin Chinese to English), the reader gains visual access to mental processes behind the translatory act, and is invited to a new way to engage/read texts that at the same time challenges translation as a mere linguistic process.

Xiangyun Lim is particularly interested in translating contemporary works from the Chinese diaspora, and in the creative processes behind the translatory act. Her works can be found in *Living in Babel* (Canopy), *The Creative Literary Studio* and is forthcoming in *Poem and Alluvium*. Having grown up in Singapore, Xiangyun has lived in Seattle, Barcelona, Taiwan and United Kingdom. She is one of the recipients of the Singapore Apprenticeship in Literary Translation (SALT) and holds a MA Literary Translation programme at University of East Anglia under an International Excellence Scholarship.

W: <https://tweedlingdum.com>.

SOLOMON YU, JIMMY CHAN AND EDDIE CHEUNG (HONG KONG)

Title: **The Essences of "Watching Soaps"**

Date: 2011

Medium: Text and mixed media installation

If art is a universal language, international art english, aka 'art-speak', is not. Translating a curatorial text is not an easy task and it is understandable if one seeks help from Google Translate. Starting from the bilingual curatorial text on the original exhibition leaflet of Lee Kit's 'Watching Soaps' in Osage Kwun Tong 2011, we conducted a creative review and research with the further assistance from Google Translate and email correspondence with Lee Kit himself, trying to filter his exhibition down to the essences, the universal messages that transcended 58 languages used in more than 50 countries around the world.

Jimmy CHAN (MAFA, CUHK 2011), who is an architect working with photography to examine contradictions in existence; Eddie CHEUNG (MA Visual Culture Studies, CUHK 2009) is an art critic focusing on exploring alternative ways of interpreting art exhibition; and Solomon YU (MAFA, CUHK 2011) is an artist-curator who is attracted to the negotiations between forms and their narrations.

W: <http://solomontyu.wixsite.com/foldednotes/essences-of-watching-soaps>

MARIANNA MARUYAMA (USA/ITALY/NETHERLANDS)

Title: *Loving with Both Hands*

Date: 2018

Medium: Digital video

Loving with Both Hands is inspired by the Japanese pop idol Yamaguchi Momoe ("Momoe"), born 1959 in Tokyo. Discovered by a talent agency at only 13 years old, her popularity soared for the next eight years, until she abruptly retired from professional life and went completely off the radar, never again to make a public appearance. Her retirement from professional life and the public eye in 1980 was precipitated by her decision to marry one of her co-stars, a mediocre, but handsome actor, to whom she is still married.

Whether her story is tragic because of the loss of a brilliant artistic career, or triumphant because it allowed an escape from a brutal entertainment industry and the paparazzi, is an open question – what little we actually know about the person Momoe is eclipsed by the mediated image fans fell in love with. I have been listening to her voice, trying to find an honest version of what she was willing to share about her life. This has become my starting point for this project, which is not only about Momoe and the story summarized above, but also about that split between the public and private, the messages encoded in the voice and in music and the messages delivered by verbal language. I have to ask, at which point does the text (lyrics or words) become a translation of the vocal expression? Can the voice be "back-translated" (a second translation going back to the original language, usually) in order to gain insight into a more honest or accurate narrative?

The title, *Loving with Both Hands* refers to both of the artistic forms I have chosen to work with, the act of translation as a two-handed process, and a quote from Momoe herself, who sings the phrase in her final recording (1980) titled, "I am a woman".

Marianna Maruyama uses the body and voice as primary agents in her performance-based practice. One of her primary interests is translation as an artistic method. Following an extensive working period in Japan, Maruyama moved to the Netherlands in 2012, and is now based in The Hague. She guest tutors at the Dutch Art Institute Art Praxis MA and is an artist-researcher at the invitation of the Sedje Hémon Foundation. She performs in both contemporary art and music contexts; recent exhibitions and performances include documenta 14 Parliament of Bodies (DE), SMBA (NL), Manifesta 11 (CH), and others.

W: www.mariannamaruyama.com

MANUELA PERTEGHELLA (UK/ITALY) & **RICARDA VIDAL** (UK/

Title: **Talking Transformations - Home on the move.**

Date: 2017-18

Medium: Video Showreel and poster

Artists: Heather Connelly (UK) & Belen Cerezo (SP), Zuzanna Janin (PL), Benoît Laffiché (FR), Domingo Martinez (SP), Kate McMillan (UK), Ghenadie Popescu (RO), Sally Waterman (UK); *Poets:* Rafał Gawin (PL), Deryn Rees-Jones (UK); *Literary Translators:* Teodor Ajder (RO), Elise Aru (FR), Noèlia Díaz Vicedo (SP), Marta Dziurozs (PL), Anna Hyde (PL), Jozefina Komporaly (RO), Timothy Mathews (UK), Silvia Terrón (SP).

The exhibition Talking Transformations. Home on the Move explores notions of 'home' – challenged and reshaped by unprecedented migration - through translation, film art and poetry, all of which underline the fluidity of the concept of 'home'. We looked at the impact of migration on notions of home by commissioning and sending poetry about aspects of one's own 'home' into a linguistic and artistic 'migration', where poems were translated into different languages and into film art. Poetry and artwork travelled to and from the countries most important to EU migration into and out of the UK: Poland and Romania, and France and Spain. In Britain, Deryn Rees-Jones created the poem about 'home' from material collected from workshops in Hereford and London. Rafał Gawin wrote the Polish poem, based on material collected at a workshop in Lodz. The project generates cross-media migration routes for both literary and visual artwork and their culturally and linguistically diverse practitioners.

W: <http://talkingtransformations.eu/>

Dr Manuela Perteghella is a translation theorist, arts practitioner and independent researcher. She has published research in the field of literary and theatre translation, promoting the theory of translation as creative practice (Translation and Creativity, Continuum 2006; One Poem in Search of a Translator, Peter Lang 2008; Staging and Performing Translation, Palgrave 2011). She has taught translation at UK universities, and worked for theatre companies. Manuela blogs on The Creative Literary Studio, on the art of 'text-making' and is the co-curator of TransARTation!, a touring exhibition of inter-art translation, with objects, performance art, multimedia art, artists' talks and site-specific work. (<http://transartation.co.uk/>).

W: <https://thecreativeliterarystudio.wordpress.com/>

Dr Ricarda Vidal is a lecturer, translator and curator. She teaches at King's College London and is the founder of Translation Games, a research project into the theory and practice of intersemiotic and multilingual translation (www.translationgames.net). Recent publications include Death and Desire in Car Crash Culture: A Century of Romantic Futurisms (Peter Lang, 2013), The Power of Death: Contemporary Reflections on Death in Western Society (Berghahn, 2014) and Alternative Worlds: Blue-Sky Thinking since 1900 (Peter Lang, 2014). Together with artist Sam Treadaway she also runs the bookwork project Revolve:R (www.revolve-r.com), a collaborative exploration of visual communication.

W: <https://.ricardavidal.com>

ANNIE XU (CHINA/UK)

Title: **Texts in Texts VR**

Date: 2016-17

Medium: Digital video documenting immersive VR Text work.

Texts in Texts VR uses virtual reality technology to explore the contemporaneity and textuality of contemporary text art. It has been designed to extend the act of reading and provide an immersive, multi-dimensional encounter with the text. Xu has created a three-dimensional virtual structure from two written languages (English and Chinese), using two different scripts (书体) - Xing Shu (行书) and Xiao Zhuan (小篆). The original text is a verse written by the artist, composed from 26 Hui Yi characters (会意字) that are comprised of two or more Wen (文) - Xiang Xing (象形) or Zhi Shi (指事) characters.

别冬寒 望春华
光阴无隙莫等闲
定尘嚣 斩烦弦
睿义恒成敬众先

Xu has translated the individual Wen characters into English, imitating the construction of each Hui Yi to provide an insight into the complex textuality which constitutes their meaning. The VR environment itself has been constructed out of another language – the binary numerical system 0 -1, which was inspired by Leibniz' encounter with Fu Xi Ba Gua (1703).

Video documentation of the work, in this exhibition demonstrates how audiences are invited to enter into this virtual environment, and are, encouraged to navigate the texts, deciphering and interpreting the riddle as they encounter, walk around and through these characters.

Annie Xu is a PhD candidate in contemporary art and curation in the University of Lincoln (UK). Xu's art and research praxis draws upon her previous undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in English language and British and American Literature and most pertinently her experience as a translator. Her PhD research has involved translating works between modern English to modern Chinese, modern Chinese to English, and classic/ancient Chinese to modern English in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the different cultural approaches to and of understanding of 'text art' within an Anglophone and Chinese context. This has included translating the interpretation of Fu Xi Ba Gua (伏羲八卦) from the Book of Changes (易经) and the important concepts of Dao De Jing (道德经) directly from scanned ancient books of Imperial Collection of Four Categories (钦定四库全书) into modern English.

W: <http://www.annie-xu.com>