

04 Unconventional exhibition space

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* Cover image: Fran Cottell, Collecting Time: the Living and the Dead, 2005

This week we were privileged to hear from Fran Cottell. In the pre-class readings, I learned that Fran has launched a series of art installations and performance projects under the theme of “House Project” since 2001, among which the work that impressed me deeply was her 2005 work Collecting Time: the Living and the Dead, which Fran himself described in detail in his lecture. In this work, Fran changes the layout of the room to encourage the audience to re-experience the everyday environment from a non-everyday perspective. She regards her home as the field of an overall installation, not only paying attention to the work itself, but also paying attention to every detail in the field, such as life dynamics, architectural structure, and the audience’s movement and interaction in the space.

Fran’s “House Projects” break the traditional solidification of art exhibition space, transform the private family space into an exhibition space with a critical perspective, build the connection between art practice and daily life, and emphasize the interaction between art exhibition content and reality rather than the material properties of the exhibition itself. I think this is a curatorial practice that is very much in line with contemporary curatorial trends, so I have tried to combine the theoretical framework therein with the curatorial theme of “Dreams and the subconscious” (which, as I wrote last week, is the theme I would eventually like to pursue). Within the framework of the exhibition “Dreams and the Unconscious Mind”, Fran’s series of House Projects can be read as a kind of spatial psychoanalysis that simulates the

fragmented, non-linear perceptual logic of dreams. As Freud mentioned, dreams are the manifestation of people's subconscious desires after they are operated through the displacement and condensation mechanism.

Reference

Freud, Sigmund. 1900. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Translated by James Strachey. London: Hogarth Press, 1953.

Cottell, Fran. n.d. "Collecting Time: The Living and the Dead." Fran Cottell. Accessed September 23, 2023. <http://www.francottell.com/artwork/collecting-time-the-living-and-the-dead>.

Deepwell, Katy. 2001. *Walking/Working through Fran Cottell's House*.