

# Week 4: Adapting Theme and Venue

After reading the Week 4 materials and discussing exhibition venues with my tutor, I developed a curatorial concept based on the *Introduction//Rural Art is...* framework. Although I later asked JL if the exhibition could be held outside Edinburgh, she confirmed this possibility. However, she noted that teachers would require more detailed explanations to understand China's geo-cultural context. I later asked two classmates for their opinions, and they both agreed that my new curatorial concept would be more suitable for an exhibition in Edinburgh.

To determine the venue, I also visited four small exhibitions in Summer Hall's four galleries after class. I believe Summer Hall's Sciennes Gallery is well-suited for my exhibition as a first-time curator with a limited budget.

Therefore, I relocated the exhibition to the Summer Hall Sciennes Gallery in Edinburgh. My target audience shifted to the public of Edinburgh, including international students worldwide. Most of them come from urban backgrounds, so I redefined the exhibition's purpose to reveal the truth about how cities exploit rural areas. Such an exhibition encourages city residents to reflect on urban exploitation of the countryside, preventing them from viewing rural areas solely as vacation destinations attached to cities[\[1\]](#).

In other words, I shifted the exhibition's theme to critical rural art[\[2\]](#). I hope to use a small village near Xiong'an,

China as a starting point, prompting viewers to consider through a microcosm: Has the plastic recycling industry in Huzhuang Village impacted local agricultural development? Do these industries truly serve the local residents, or are they primarily serving the Xiong'an as the new political center? Do plastic recycling plants and sewage treatment facilities—which seem distant from the lives of locals—bring more benefits or drawbacks to the community[\[3\]](#)? Has the migration of young people to work in Xiongan led to a decline in Huzhuang's youth population, hindering labor supply and economic growth? In the era of modernization, are rural areas being drained by surrounding metropolises?

I also found some collective, artists and artworks that could be used for exhibition.

Peili Zhang: *Document on "Hygiene" No.3*[\[4\]](#)

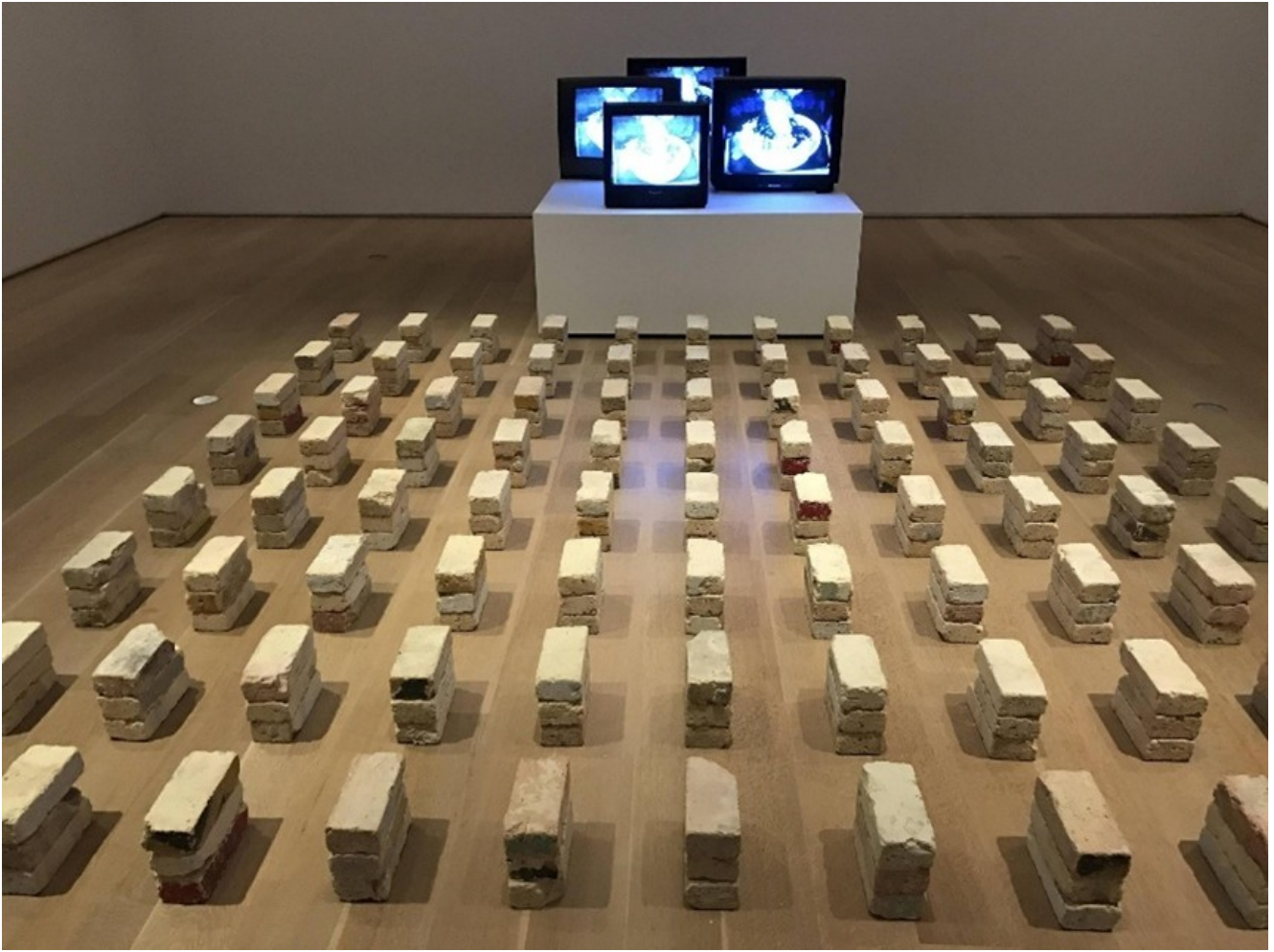


Figure 1, Peili Zhang, Document on “Hygiene” No. 3, Single-channel video, Silent, color, 24’45”, PAL.

Wang Bing Tie Xi Qu / Three Sisters [\[5\]](#)



Figure 2, Wang Bing, Tie Xi Qu / Three Sisters, video artwork, dimensions variable, in Mandarin with Chinese and English subtitles

MyVillages Collective [\[6\]](#): Printed Publications, Wall Archives, Desktop Reading Areas, Posters, Maps, and Text

Marjetica Potrč [\[7\]](#):



Figure 3: Marjetica Potrč, *The Resilience of Roots*, 2024, ink on paper, 56 x 76 cm, 22 x 29 7/8 in



Figure 4: Marjetica Potrč, *The Rights of a River*, 2021, ink on paper, group of 10 drawings, each 29.7 x 21 cm, framed 36.7 x 28 cm, 14 1/2 x 11 in, and *The Life of the Lachlan River*, 2022, ink on paper, group of 10 drawings, each 29.7 x 21 cm, framed 36.7 x 28 cm, 14 1/2 x 11 in, courtesy of Fragmentos, Espacio de Arte y Memoria, photo by Juan Velasco



Figure 5: Marjetica Potrč, The World in the Age of Stories (Part 1: The Birth of the World Before the Age of Stories), 2020. Acrylic paint on wall. Walldrawing from original drawing 'The World in the Age of Stories (Part 1: The Birth of the World Before the Age of Stories)' (2020).



Figure 6: Marjetica Potrč, The World in the Age of Stories (Part 2: Humans in a Borromean Knot), 2020, ink on paper, 76 x 112 cm, 29 7/8 x 44 1/8 in, framed 85 x

119 cm, 33 1/2 x 46 7/8 in

[1] Kathrin Bohm & Wapke Feenstra, "Introduction" in MyVillages (eds.), The Rural (Whitechapel Gallery, 2019), pp. 16.

An endless stream of images of the rural enters our imaginations through multiple screens and printed matter. This intense objectification of the rural is alarming and splits our roles into spectators and dwellers. The transition from an agricultural and mining economy to a service, and above all non-land-based, economy has fixed our view of the landscape. We see the rural environment as an image that serves us. We build the picture that we long for.

[2] Kathrin Bohm & Wapke Feenstra, "Introduction" in MyVillages (eds.), The Rural (Whitechapel Gallery, 2019), pp. 14.

.....perhaps it's time to introduce the term critical rural art, as part of a collective ambition to emancipate art from its urban hegemony and to introduce a new dialectical dynamics into the current consideration of cultural production.

[3] Kathrin Bohm & Wapke Feenstra, "Introduction" in MyVillages (eds.), The Rural (Whitechapel Gallery, 2019), pp. 15.

The rural is equally shaped by industrial production both within the rural and the cities. Industrial and technological revolutions/infrastructures in urban areas offered overcrowded and economically weak rural communities a new home, causing depopulation and a new urban working class, while industries that rely on ground and soil resources dig up rural landscapes and spit them out as hubris and holes.

[4] Peili Zhang: Document on "Hygiene" No.3, single channel video, silent, color, 24'45", PAL, ([Documenton "Hygiene"](#))

### [No.3 – ZhangpeiliART](#)

Recording the process of washing a chicken: a live chicken is placed in a basin, and constantly scrubbed with soap and water for 150 minutes, until the end of the cassette. The camera angle does not change for the duration of the video. No one knows what a chicken feels when being washed in a basin, because chickens lack the ability to express themselves, or we believe that they cannot express themselves. Even so, why is our previous judgment correct?

[\[5\] UCCA×LEAP×CIFA THREE SISTERS SPECIAL SCREENING + Q&A WITH DIRECTOR WANG BING | UCCA Center for Contemporary Art](#)

Three Sisters was filmed in a village in northeast Yunnan, and treats the lives of three sisters struggling to get by without parents or other support. The film won the Venice Horizons Awards at the Venice Film Festival in 2012.

[\[6\] Myvillages](#)

Myvillages is an international artist-led collective and non-profit cultural foundation, established in 2003 by Kathrin Böhm, Wapke Feenstra, and Antje Schiffers, that promotes cultural production in rural settings by linking local knowledge, communal practices, and artistic interventions across global village networks.

[\[7\] Marjetica Potrč](#)