

Week 8 Add Archives and Field Measurements

Based on my tutor's feedback, I developed a subtitle for my personal project—*Design Answers Rural*—to explain and expand my exhibition title, *Peripheral Future*. I also created a poster.

Peripheral

FOR RURAL TOURISM
FOR INDUSTRIAL
LEGACY WASTELANDS
FOR AGRICULTURE
AND NATURE

With urban expansion and accelerating capital flows, must rural areas exist solely as peripheral spaces to be consumed? Exhibition explores this theme through two approaches: "Problem Identification" and "Design Responses."

Future:

Design

15th August 2026



25th August 2026

Answers Rural

ARTISTS:

Yuhang Liu

Fangyuan Zheng

Kate Saldanha

Sara Dobbs

SUMMERHALL SCIENNES GALLERY

Figure 1: Peripheral Future: Design Answers Rural, a poster designed by Xinger Gao in 2026; variable dimensions

Based on the lectures and pre-class readings, I believe my project requires an archive. This is because I can use archive to present my personal observations of the current state of rural China—historical information that is often lost or displaced[1].

I plan to adopt a “radical care” archival approach[2]. I will incorporate my own photographic and interview materials, shot in Huge village, rural Hebei, China, into the exhibition. This will allow audiences to empathize with the residents and deeply understand my exhibition concept. I anticipate setting up the exhibition using table and chair—accessible facility—; the estimated costs include table and chair rental at Summerhall (0), printing costs (0), and the purchase of photo albums (5 in kind). I will place the photographs I took during my fieldwork and the texts obtained from interviews with locals in an album for visitors to browse. With tables and chairs provided, I believe interested visitors will be encouraged to explore my archives.



Figure 2: A photograph taken by Xinger Gao in 2025 in Hubei Village, Hebei Province, China; dimensions variable; used for archival display. Oil extraction rigs are located on the western side of the village and are scattered throughout the outskirts.



Figure 3: A photograph taken by Xinger Gao in 2025 in Huye Village, Hebei Province, China; dimensions variable; used for archival display. The walls in Huye Village reflect the local standard of building construction.



Figure 4: A photograph taken by Xinger Gao in 2025 in Hugu Village, Hebei Province, China; dimensions variable; used for archival display. The Dry Lusun River serves as an example of the local standards for water management and nature conservation.



Figure 5: A photograph taken by Xinger Gao in 2025 in Huge Village, Hebei Province, China; dimensions variable; used for archival display. The exhibition boards on “zero-waste village” projects displayed by the local government reveal that the local contemporary art foundation is virtually absent, with only exhibitions for political propaganda purposes.



Figure 6: A photograph taken by Xinger Gao in 2025 in Huge Village, Hebei Province, China; dimensions variable; used for archival display. A small local zoo where local children can play reflects the limited recreational facilities and activities available to residents.

At Summerhall, I used tape and a tape measure to measure and arrange the artwork. I raised concerns about the installation's placement; I noticed that positioning it in the center would block two walls, so I moved it to a corner where it would not obstruct the audience's movement or block the walls.



Figure 7: A photograph I took in 2026 of our collective setting up an exhibition at Summerhall; untitled; dimensions variable.

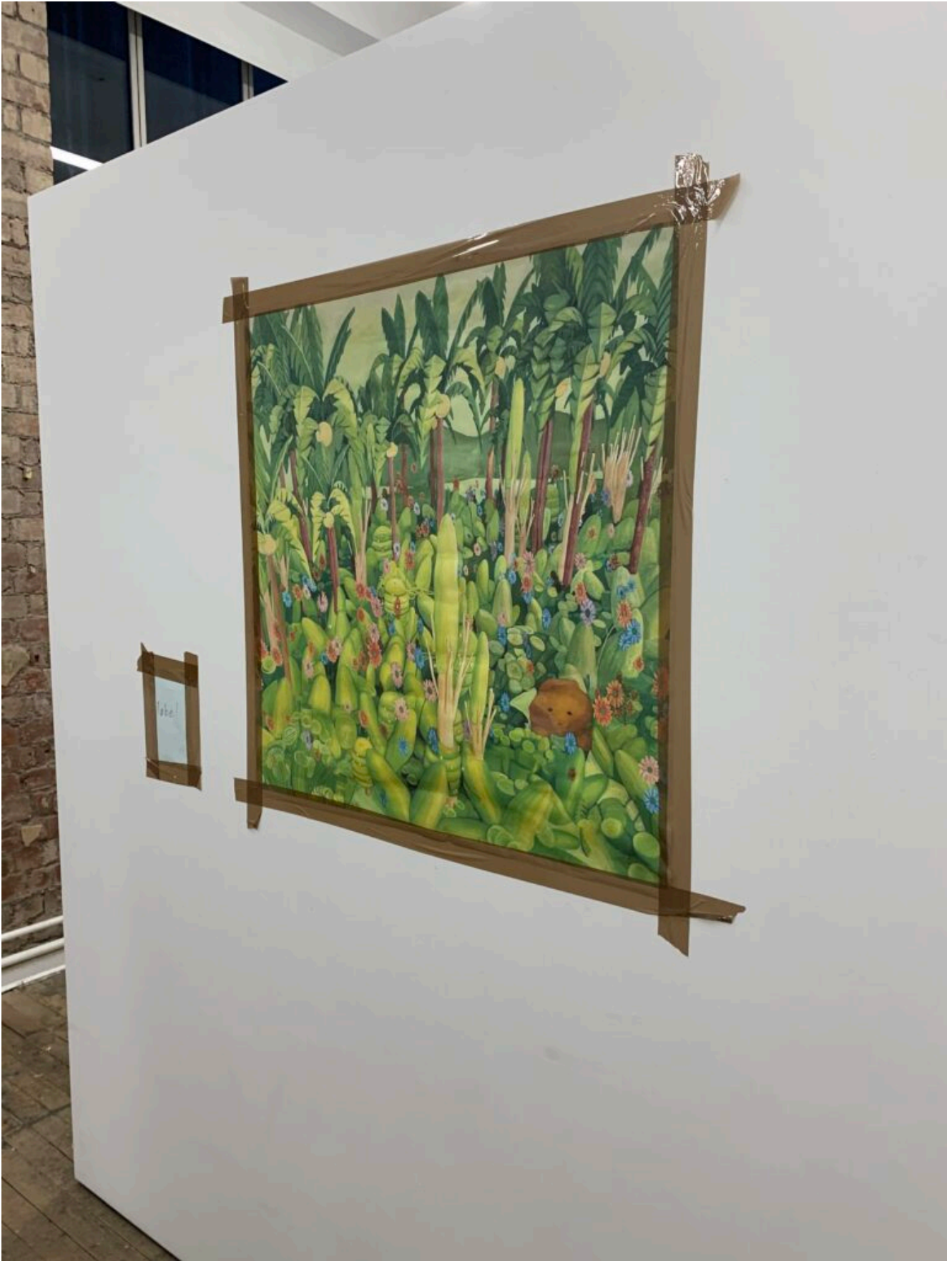


Figure 8: A photo I took in 2026 of our collective setting up an exhibition at Summerhall. We printed some of the works and attached them to the exhibition walls with tape. Untitled, variable dimensions.

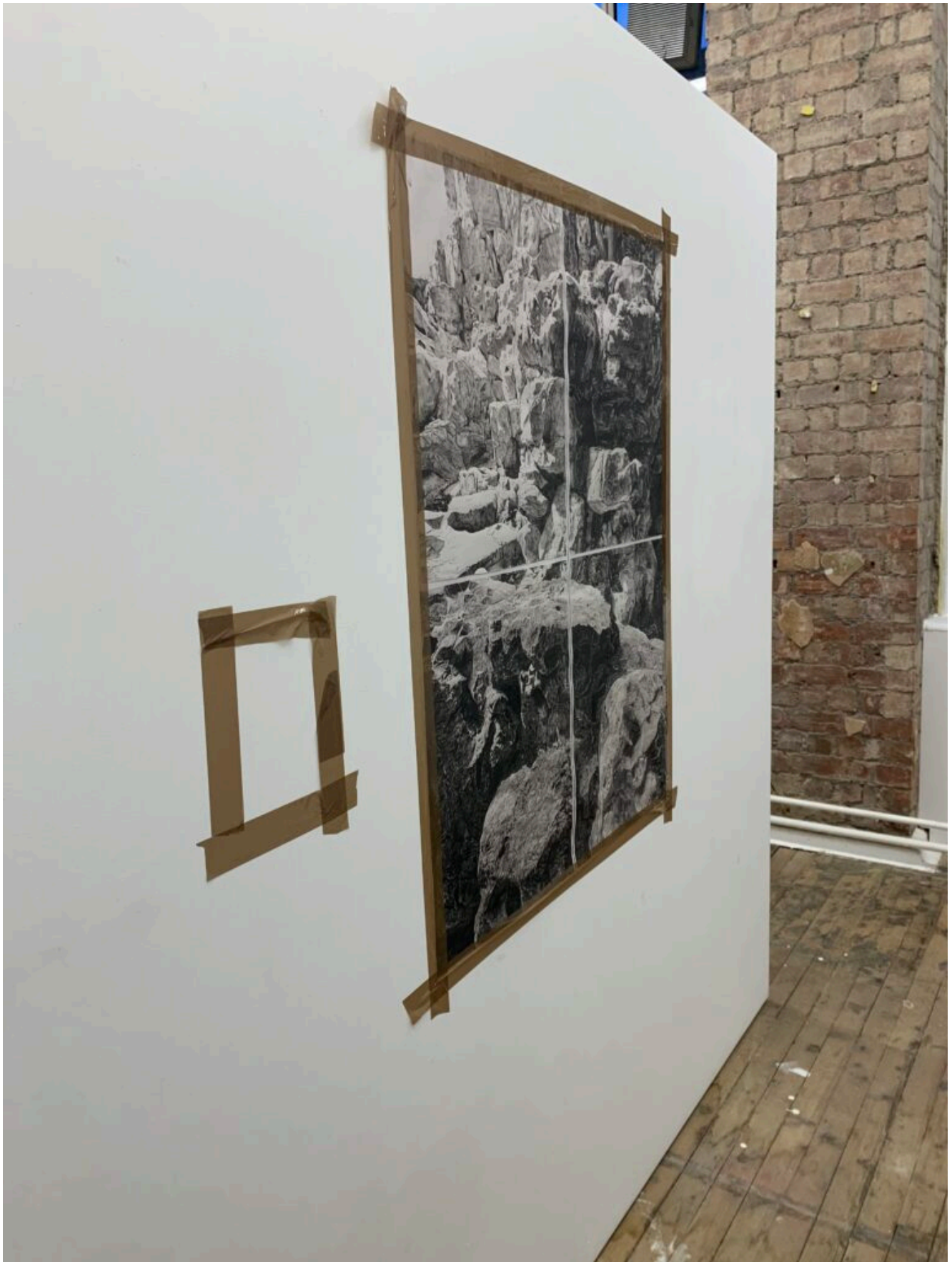


Figure 9: A photo I took in 2026 of our collective setting up an exhibition at Summerhall. We printed some of the works and attached them to the exhibition walls with tape. Untitled, variable dimensions.

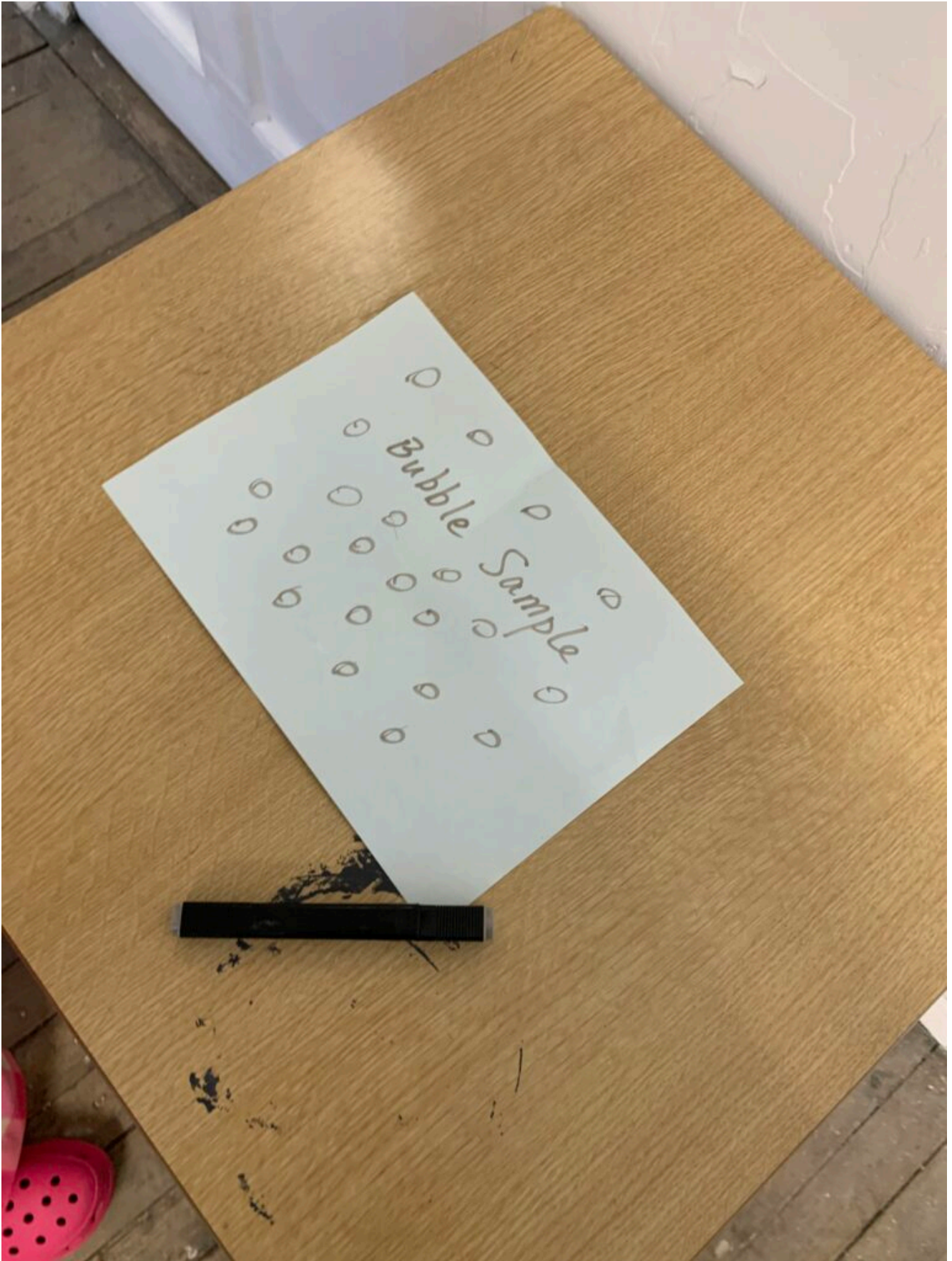


Figure 10: A photo I took in 2026 of our collective setting up an exhibition at Summerhall. I arranged the space to mimic the form of a small installation piece titled Bubble Sample. Untitled, dimensions variable.

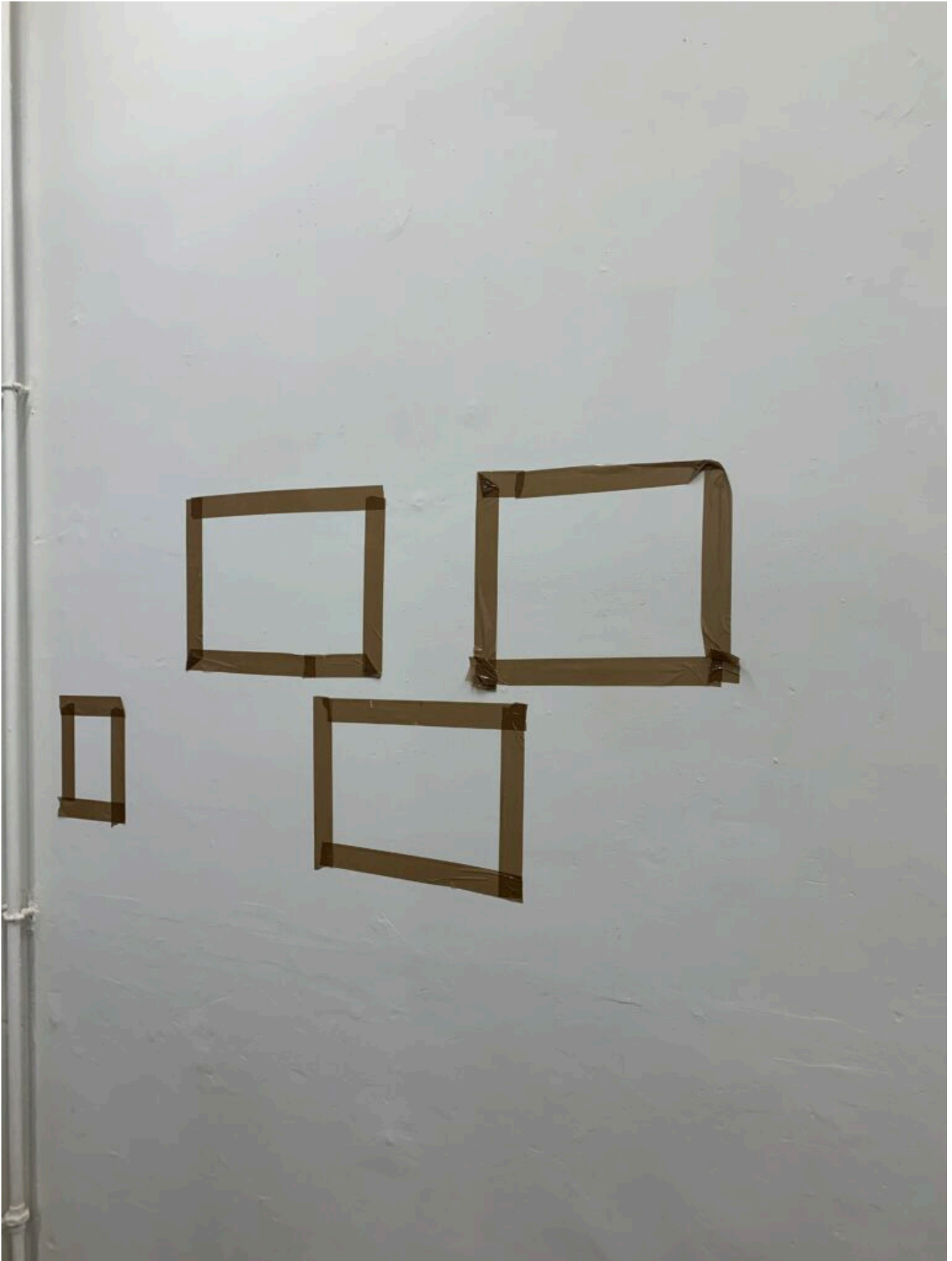


Figure 11: A photo I took in 2026 of our collective setting up an exhibition at Summerhall. I used tape to outline the approximate location of my work, because my piece is a variable-dimension photograph titled Wood and Tree.

For long-form video art installations, I proposed adding a chair as an accessible facility for viewers who have difficulty staying standing continuously. After consulting with Yufan, I selected a 19-inch monitor available for rental from ECA for my video installation.



Figure 12: A photo I took in 2026 of our collective setting up an exhibition at Summerhall. I suggested setting up a video-viewing area and adding chairs for viewers who are tired or unable to stand for long periods of time.

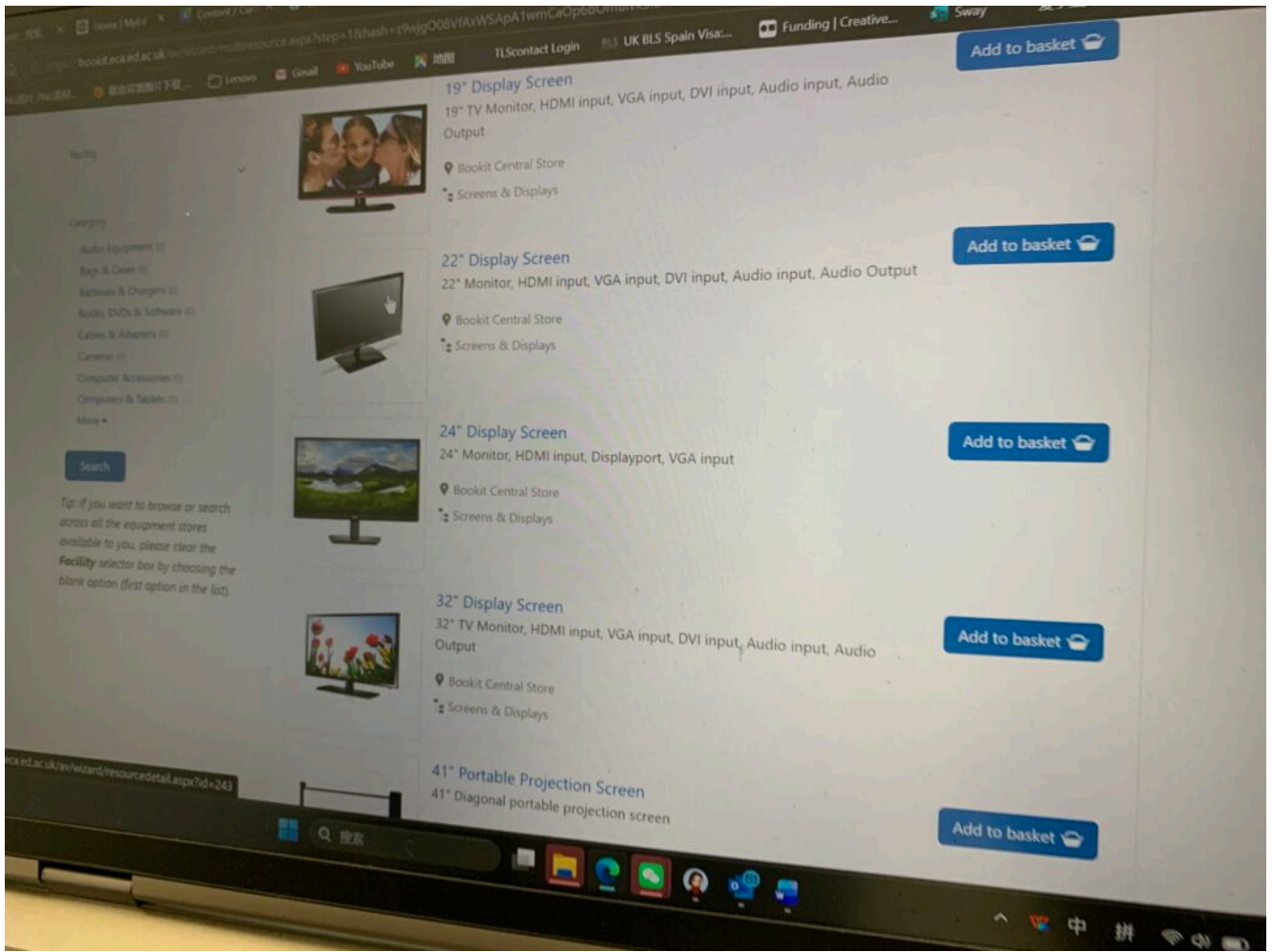


Figure 13: A photo I took in 2026 of our collective setting up an exhibition at Summerhall. My classmate Yufan and I accessed the school's website to look up the sizes of the display screens available for loan.

In this week's collective task assignment, I volunteered to create the captions for artworks. I am responsible for editing and refining the text submitted by everyone, as well as finding high-resolution images of the corresponding artworks and researching their detailed dates, materials, and dimensions.

Virtual Exhibition To-Do List for This Week:

Yufan Xie

- Miro board creation

Xinger Gao: artwork details, Vivien: artist profiles

- Artist and artwork information drafting
- Qrcode and link

Wenchang Jia:

- Guideline Video

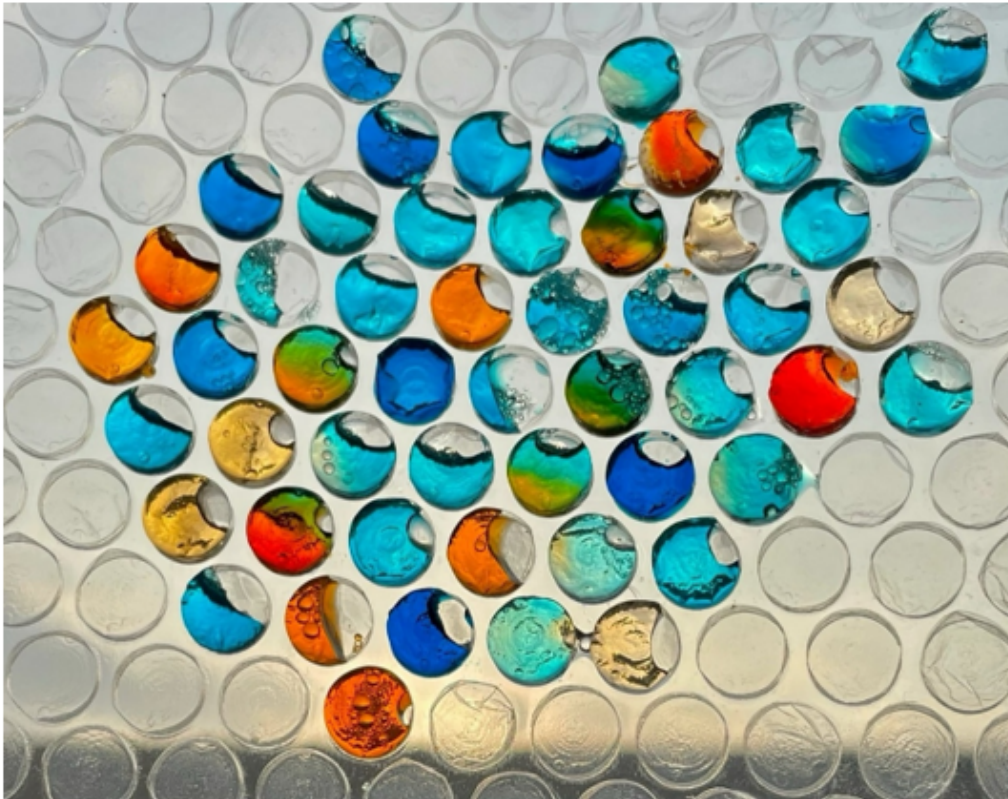
Nan Wu:

- 3D Modelling Production

Zhiyu Yang

- Material Production (Zhiyu Yang)

Figure 14: This is our collective division of tasks for this week.



Bubble Sample

Fengjunya Zheng

2022

Bubble wrap, food coloring, gelatin powder

Variable dimensions

This work is based on a fabric experiment in her graduation project in undergraduate. We chose this work so that parents could guide their children in hands-on painting activities. Using syringes, children could inject the provided paint and water with added gelatin powder into bubble wrap according to their own ideas, creating a blueprint for environmental protection and zero waste.

Figure 15: The caption I created for the collective exhibition

can be used to produce a guidebook and promotional materials.



Lichenvision Lounge

Melissa Webb

2022

Video installation. 4' diameter wood panels, swag lamps, hand-dyed crocheted vintage

textiles

19-inch display

←

In Melissa Webb's work, lush, enchanting environments permeate floors and ceilings. The artist dyes vintage fibers and crochets them into forms of moss-covered plants. When these are layered and sewn together, they become captivating installations reminiscent of forests and gardens. Webb says that green hues often dominate the textile ecosystem, an acknowledgment of "growth, verdancy, and inevitable change." "Through my work, I envision a less anthropocentric future of cultivating the earth through wilderness, where we learn to coexist with the natural world."

←

Figure 16: The caption I created for the collective exhibition can be used to produce a guidebook and promotional materials.



Melting

Annabelle Pelaez

2025

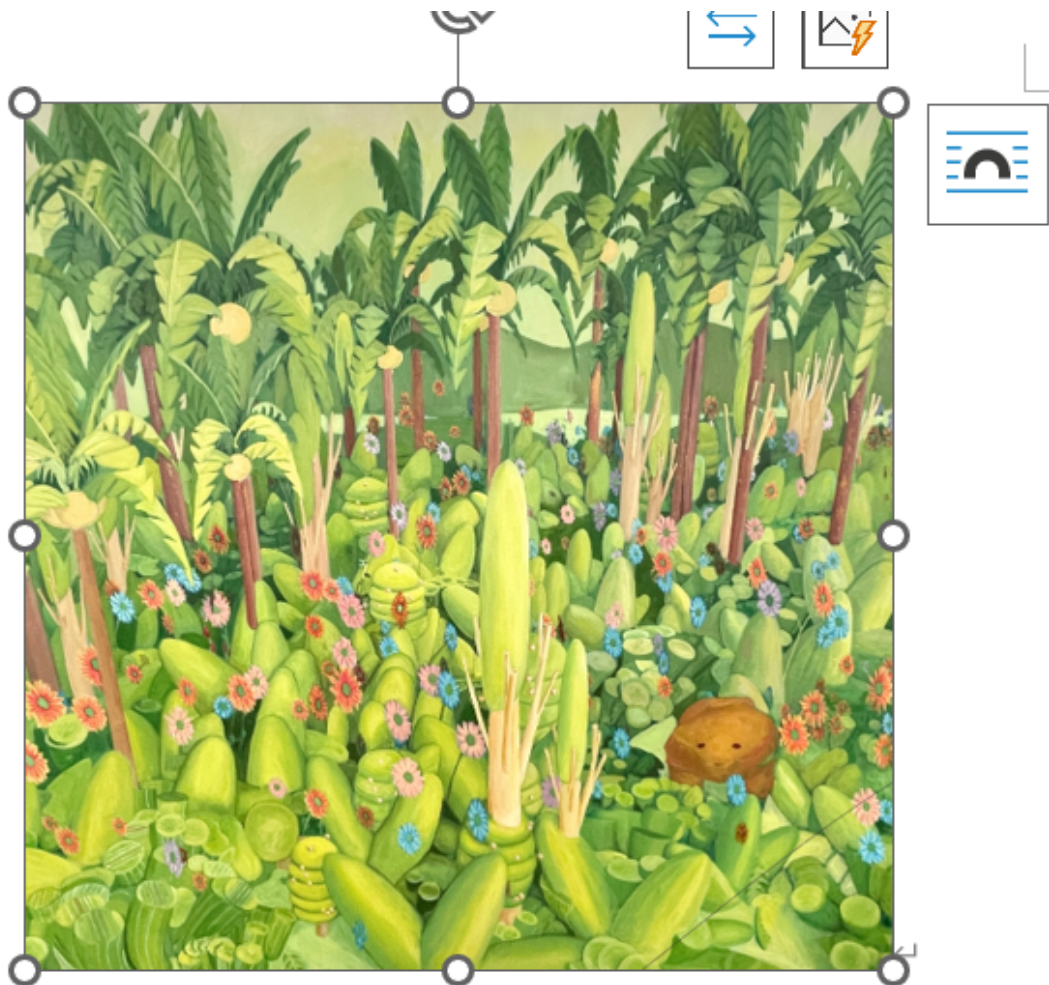
Ink, pebeo prisme on paper, on calico

120 × 120cm

←

Annabelle Pelaez (an Edinburgh University student) focuses her works on landscapes and natural details. She pays special attention to the often-overlooked tiny elements in nature, such as ripples on water surfaces, insect marks on leaves, and the moment when raindrops rest on plants. Through painting and mixed media, she attempts to transform these microscopic natural phenomena into visual images, thereby reawakening the audience's attention to the natural environment.^[1]The artist, through microscopic observation, enables her to view natural landscapes from a new scale and reveals the impact of human activities on the environment.←

Figure 17: The caption I created for the collective exhibition can be used to produce a guidebook and promotional materials.



Place of Growth

Nan Wu

2021

Acrylic on canvas

90 × 90 cm

↩

This painting depicts a dense and abundant plant landscape in which trees, flowers, and organic forms expand across the surface of the canvas. Rather than presenting a stable or distant view of nature, the work constructs a space where vegetation appears to grow continuously, filling the pictorial field with layered forms and repeating structures. The composition suggests an environment where life proliferates in multiple directions, creating a sense of vitality and ongoing transformation. Through bright greens and tightly packed plant forms, the work emphasises the energy of biological growth and renewal. What appears at first as a calm natural scene gradually reveals itself as an active ecosystem in which plants, textures, and colours accumulate and interact.↩

Figure 18: The caption I created for the collective exhibition can be used to produce a guidebook and promotional materials.



Stone Time

Nan Wu

2019

Pencil on paper

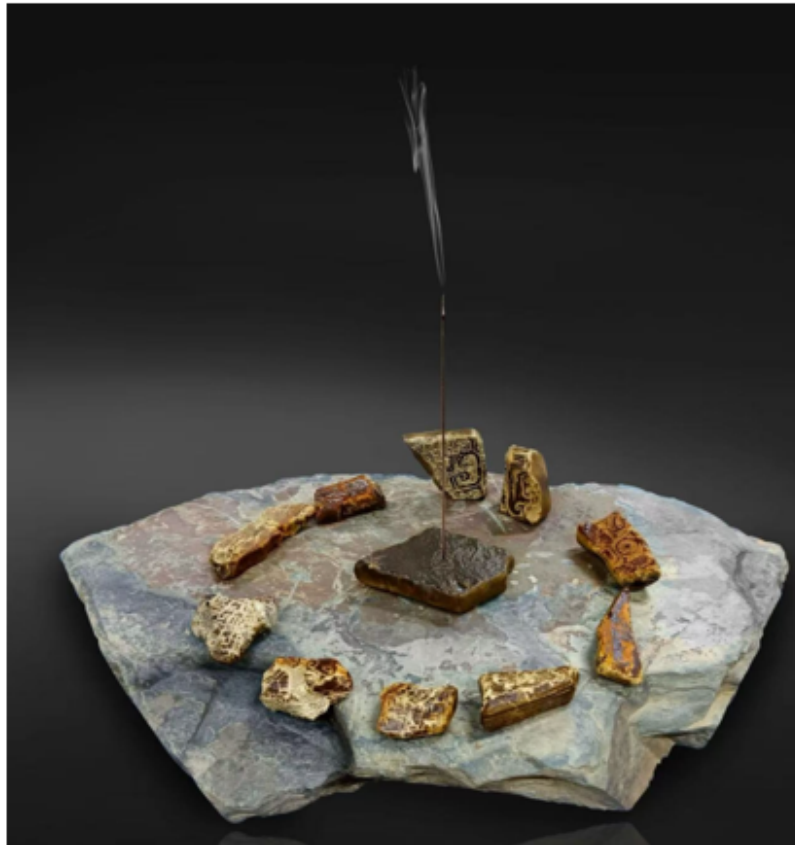
90 × 120 cm (four panels, each 45 × 60 cm)

←

This drawing series is based on rock formations in Zhanyuan Garden in Nanjing, a classical Jiangnan garden. Rather than representing landscape as scenery, the work focuses on the material presence of rocks shaped by long processes of erosion and geological transformation. In traditional Chinese gardens, rocks are often valued for their porous structures and irregular forms, which are the result of slow interactions between water, time, and mineral matter.

←

Figure 19: The caption I created for the collective exhibition can be used to produce a guidebook and promotional materials.



The Healing Mirror

Xi Mengfan

2025

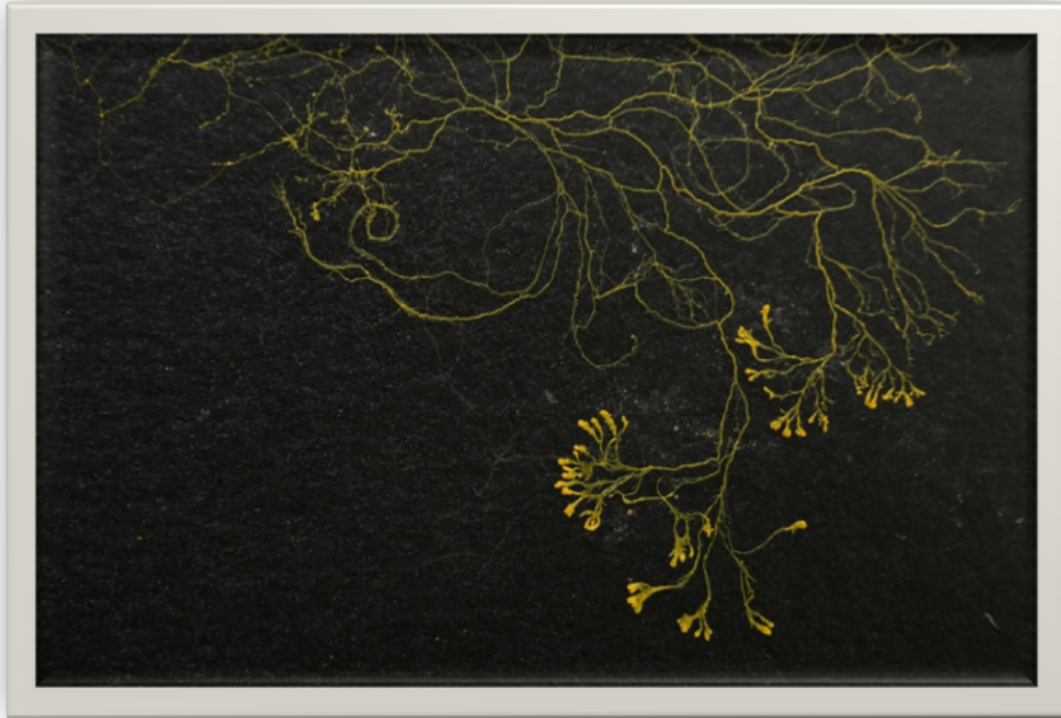
Jade carving, incense, mixed media

70 × 40 × 16.5cm

←

This artwork draws from the classic Chinese story of a broken mirror being put back together. It turns the shape of ancient bronze mirrors into scattered pieces of jade. The spiritual core of this design is the Eastern philosophy behind this story. At the end of the Chen Dynasty, Princess Lechang and her husband Xu Deyan broke a bronze mirror during a time of war. They each kept half as a promise to find each other again. Because of this history, the broken mirror represents reunion, holding on to hope, and rebirth. We want to connect this idea of rebirth with our main theme of 'vitality and revival' in the Entanglement section. To do this, we are looking at material connections instead of biological ones. Even though the pieces are physically broken apart, their connection is not lost. They are held together by an invisible pull. ←

Figure 20: The caption I created for the collective exhibition can be used to produce a guidebook and promotional materials.



←
The Physarum Experiments←
Study No 22: Starvation Fireworks←
Heather Barnett←
2008←
time-lapse films, photographic studies←
32-inch display←

←

This video is included in our exhibition because it challenges human-centered ideas of intelligence. The slime mold demonstrates how complex behavior can emerge from simple biological systems, suggesting alternative forms of collective organization. By presenting life as a dynamic process of growth and adaptation, the work invites viewers to reconsider how intelligence and cooperation operate within natural systems.←

Figure 21: The caption I created for the collective exhibition can be used to produce a guidebook and promotional materials.



Tide and Temper←

Kristel Bodensiek←

2025↓

Glass and Steel↓

130 × 230 × 70 cm←



Tide and Temper showcases a delicate relationship between humans and nature: nature is not only an external landscape, but also an experience that can be re-perceived through materials, light, and space.^[SEP]This work's inspiration comes from the calming effect of rain and waterfalls on the human psyche. The artist chose glass as the material, symbolizing the transformation process in nature.←



Figure 22: The caption I created for the collective exhibition can be used to produce a guidebook and promotional materials.



Trees and Wood↵

Xinger Gao↵

2026↵

Edited photos↵

Variable dimensions↵

↵

This is a series of photographs taken by Xinger Gao around Grasmere. This work documents the current state of deforestation in a British tourist destination. The wood is used as fuel to supply consumers. The massive felling of trees creates a peculiar and cruel landscape. What will people think when they see these lives transformed from trees into wood?↵

Figure 23: The caption I created for the collective exhibition

can be used to produce a guidebook and promotional materials.

[\[1\] Hal Foster, 'An Archival Impulse' in October Vol. 110 \(Autumn, 2004\), pp. 4, The MIT Press](#)

In the first instance archival artists seek to make historical information, often lost or displaced, physically present. To this end they elaborate on the found image, object, and text, and favor the installation format as they do

[\[2\] Alasdair Gray Archive – a generative 'living' archive – curated through 'radical care' by Custodian Sorcha Dallas.](#)

Sorcha Dallas chose the title of Custodian because she believes caring, and relationship building is central to creating an equitable resource and a horizontal community. This is a feminist approach to archiving called radical empathy, which is the “ability to understand and actively consider another person’s point of view in order to connect more deeply with them.”