

5th February, 2009 – 3:00pm / BENKY CHAN

Ben passed by our studio at 3pm sharp but said we should not go to Antique together. So we went separately.

The blueberry yoghurt tea was served with a "Linda-In" card. Ben looked around, blackcurrant, he said. Nouns, he murmured as I explained to him about the card, the tea, this meeting. Ben felt that we knew each other too well and there was no mystic attached to this whole experience. If he had not met me before, this would have been a great half an hour. Who was she? Where was she taking me? What was I going to see? As such, he felt nothing. So he had nothing to write on the card. In fact, I was prepared to stay on a little longer when Ben said he wanted to leave.

The walk back to Experimenta felt as if you were walking back to your offices with a colleague; the anticipation was of yet another afternoon in a familiar place. But the sun was shining. The time was 3:30pm.

Ben followed the red line, climbed upstairs, took off his shoes and started watching the videos. I sat downstairs. After he finished, I switched off the lights, lit up the candles and offered him a warm white wine. We should buy a small fridge.

This is what he said, or rather what I heard:

There is a division; one of a former part and a latter part. The former part imposed a sense of loneliness. And if life is like the latter part, then I really wanted to live my life alone.

The former part shows many images that I think are the worst images, images that I really dislike. Yet this part is full of them. The 80s, wedding. I particularly dislike the scene where the newly wed couple was signing the wedding certificate. I did not understand why people would do something they would later regret. It is especially a solemn ceremony for Chinese, as we place a lot of importance into signing an agreement because it is about one's own honour. The signing ceremony touched me, I was single but I was once nearly there.

These images of the 80s: the people, the hairstyles, the buildings; especially the hairstyles, it made me want to cut their hair and to give them new hairstyles. The buildings were so ugly; they should be torn down. I really did not want to see these images. Hong Kong after the 1980s were lonely, those were lonely times. It made you wanted to leave the city, but the problem was that you did not know where to go.

The husband scenes confronted you with a reality. And that reality was that one day; you would be like the elderly mother and the cousins. You would be old, retired, bent. Glaring. It is what it is.

The later part (*Chairs*), with a sign of relief, was full of hope. It made me felt as if there was no limit in how to live a life. Because in the end, living this life depends on your spirit. The "European" chair signifies a time when I was young and I wanted to see the world. Watching the chair makes me felt that the world should be more accommodating.

This is a good work, it was filmed with sincerity. If the world is like the way it's depicted in the first half of this work, I would continue life's journey on my own.

(Gina Wong / LiTA)