

WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?
REFLECTION OF MY PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND PROJECT PRACTICE.

UWTSD
UNIT ONE
YURAN LIN (YUKI)
2114291

2114291_Yuran Lin

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Section one: What is knowledge?

“Knowledge which is believed to be universally certain and necessarily true. It is known and justified independently of experiential evidence” (Bunnin and Yu, 2001, p.2)

Children have been told to learn knowledge and read books since they were young. There are most people's impressions of acquiring knowledge are from books, So, what exactly is knowledge? With the advancement of society and the development of science and technology, in the past, the channel for acquiring knowledge was paper books. By 2021, the way of acquiring knowledge has undergone earth-shaking changes. People can get to know the world without leaving the house, and they can get "knowledge" through a small screen. However, is the knowledge gained in this way? At this moment, we need to first look at the letter composition of knowledge. The first is K-N-O-W, the second is to know. Children are always curious about things that happen. In the meantime, they are required to study daily. The things after study then they know it so that what they know is a kind of be defined as knowledge. So that what they know in the electronic equipment, it is difficult to define that is knowledge or information.

It is obvious that knowledge is a verb, and knowledge is a noun. If knowing is regarded as the appearance of things, and knowledge is the truth, then from this perspective, the Arabic proverb, “appearance is the bridge to the truth” can be interpreted in another way. But, in fact, is the relationship between knowledge and knowing should be explained like it? There is a fixed impression that playing Douyin is a waste of time habit. Most of the information is too fragmented and rubbish. Even

though nice quality content still exists, to avoid seeing the useless information then to prefer to ignore it.

“...What is sometimes called ‘the KK thesis’...holds that in order to know something, you must at the same time know that you know it.” (Carruthers, 1992, p.74)

Therefore, this decision is made precisely because of knowing this action, so if you don't know it, or you don't agree with the same opinion, then you may not make this decision. Ancient philosophy has a theory named epistemology, it responds to what people could know and how to know. Plato has said, Man is the measure of all things. In the 21st century, people learn how to get to know the world through technical assistance. Social media is primarily chosen.

If the discussion keeps on the issue of knowledge in the philosophical category, it is difficult to have a better understanding in a fleeting period. Imagine if something that is always known is common sense, for example, China has four great inventions, the compass, papermaking, printing, and gunpowder. So, if you look at it from this example, is this knowledge? Most people are certain, but when presenting this example, if someone hasn't heard of these four great inventions before, then it's because this person doesn't know it at all? Keep question, is this the core mind of that is history and truth are knowledge? It comes back to the point, knows, to know, knowledge.

For the exact purpose of people have been discussing the issue of knowledge in the philosophical category, it is difficult to have a better understanding in a fleeting period. Imagining something that is always known is common sense. For instance, China has four great inventions, the compass, paper making, printing, and gunpowder. This means, to look at it from this example, is this knowledge? Most people agree with it, but when presenting this example. Nobody has heard of these four great inventions before, so is it because this person doesn't know it at all? It could be possible. The particular reason for the circumstance is that could have this situation happen. Indeed, Keep continuing to ask questions, history, truth, and knowledge, how to know about the difference and justify.

There have been several important moments of progress in human history, including the first industrial revolution, where the steam engine appeared; the second industrial revolution was electrified, and the third industrial revolution entered the Internet age, and now we are in the fourth industrial revolution that is science and technology. Four industrial revolutions, knowledge exists in every time node important to mankind. Without knowledge, it is difficult for human beings to move forward repeatedly. However, these four industrial revolutions are reaching technical development. Indeed, is it true? Thus, knowledge is not only truth but also technology.

Whether it exists is reasonable or exists because it is reasonable. Descartes once said, "I think, therefore I am", so is it possible that all thoughts are real, and do these realities exist? Assuming it exists, what kind of form is it? When people look at a picture, they will have different feelings and interpretations based on divergent backgrounds. Then everyone's interpretation can be regarded as thinking, thinking exists, but the conclusion drawn from this thinking is not necessarily the meaning of the photo itself, so it could be untrue. There is a Chinese saying that seeing is believing, but if change the environment into the social media, since the technology developed. Nowadays, Seeing may not be believing.

There is an exhibition in 2018, the 6th Guangzhou Triennial As We May Think: Feedforward. This exhibition is based on the American engineer Vannevar Bush who published an essay in 1945 in the Boston-based journal which is *The Atlantic* titled "As We May Think." Looking at its thinking today, it is precise because of the author's imagination and daring to imagine that this kind of technological advancement has reached the level of imagination at the time, and human beings continue to advance.(Guangdong Museum of Art, 2018, p.18)

Vannevar Bush said "Consider a future device ... in which an individual stores all his books, records, and communications, and which is mechanized so that it may be consulted with exceeding speed and flexibility. It is an enlarged intimate supplement to his memory." (Guangdong Museum of Art, 2018, p.6)

What Vannevar Bush is the modern society's daily now. People could use mobile phones, tablets and laptops Implemented his idea a half-century ago. Look at this case, it seems in the opposite compared with the think. It seems to be proved that his thinking has been accomplished. Every time mankind progresses, it is piled up by an accumulation of knowledge to achieve a breakthrough. After human beings have created a civilization, all created things have a reverse effect. When Vannevar thinks about the future technology development, he may not consider today the world is getting into an over-information society then makes people could not recognize what is knowledge. This means people will only be covered by a lot of different information and need to take time to identify.

For example, when it comes to technical development, social media is in people's daily life. In recent years, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Tik-Tok in non-China areas and WeChat, Weibo, Douyin and Bilibili are getting increasingly popular. In the past, the traditional media platforms such as newspapers, outdoor advertising, communications, radio, television, and networks other than self-media, all are going to be described as a sunset industry. It brings people's daily life to the internet and leads to the new generation social fare. This is the disadvantage in the present time, The Internet has gradually occupied all areas of the agenda. While bringing convenience to humans, it also brings many negative effects, and time will be cut into more fragments. The Internet has gradually occupied all areas of the agenda. While bringing convenience to humans, it also brings many negative effects, and time will be cut into more fragments. Because of this convenience, the time to get increased people has become exceedingly small. Not to mention the acquisition of "knowledge", it is not easy to obtain "accurate" information. Technology, as a kind of knowledge, has changed a lot from past knowledge in the current digital society. And the advantage of this is to further eliminate the distance between people and break through the boundaries of space and time. If people make beneficial use of it, it is indeed a tool that is more convenient for the survival of human society.

Mark B. Hansen said "In this new world networked computation senses, tracks, and records the present in order to predict and shape the future in large part independently from human action." (Guangdong Museum of Art, 2018, p.104)

In future, there will be increased channels for humans to obtain knowledge, and they will become increasingly convenient. At the same time, there will only be more to consider. Just like Spinoza's understanding of knowledge or perception, "the essence of an object is inferred from the essence of another thing, but it is not sufficient. If knowledge is the only one, it can provide sufficient avoidance of misunderstanding things." The only truth is the affirmative factor.

Therefore, in the following research, technology is an auxiliary tool to achieve the purpose of recording and dissemination. Indeed, in the final presentation, there can be various forms, and there is no need to stick to execution. Practice is often the criterion for testing truth, and bold exploration is a good direction. The methodology is also an important part of knowledge, and there are many investigative methods involved in research. Of course, ethics cannot be shelved. The basic rules and regulations of society are one kind of restraint, and the other kind of restraint can be said to be the perception of the inner soul. In Chinese terms, it is whether there is a conscience. The cognition and understanding of knowledge will help one conduct better in-depth research.

Section Two: Reflection of my previous research and project practice

The research has been discussed, within the context of the use of Polaroid by artists, the curatorial strategies that could be deployed by curators in support of Polaroid photography as an art form.

It was four years ago research when I was in London, the original purpose was to show Polaroid as an artistic way for the artist to create their artworks, from the 1980s to nowadays. Therefore, as a curator's perceptive to consider the exhibition strategy in the contemporary era. Based on the research, it has an interview with the staff from the "Polaroid" company which was the "Impossible Project" at that time. From the

Brand perceptive to discuss the development of Polaroid photography and the technical. Besides, in a cooperation exhibition project with the British National Theater Archive which is about the film designer Jocelyn Herbert. In a practical way to explore the use of Polaroid photography in an artist creative process.

The exhibition focuses on Jocelyn Herbert's design for film. The displays had incorporated material that considered pre-production, production and post-production, including photographs, sketches, drawings, costumes, diaries, and correspondence from the Jocelyn Herbert Archive at the National Theater.

The film, *Hotel New Hampshire* (1983) shows that Jocelyn Herbert has used Polaroid photography for her work process that includes scene design and actor casting. A photography album of *Hotel New Hampshire* from the archive contains on-set and behind the scenes photographs of cast and crew, and with Polaroid photography. In addition, which could be deployed the artist used Polaroid, so the exhibition is like an experiment to prove the display strategy in an exhibition from a curator's view.



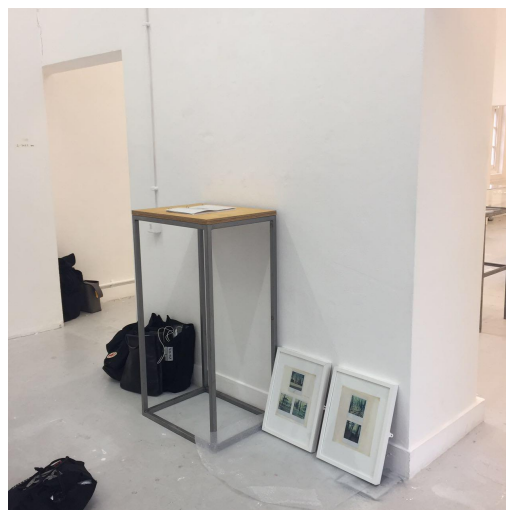
(JH/2/35/38. BERRY House and outside scene design.<Two pages of the file are outdoor scene shooting location> *Hotel New Hampshire*. Polaroid photography, 1984)

These photographs reveal Herbert's research and process methods, and they were all taken using a Polaroid camera, which was a highly popular method of documentation at the time. These objects are exhibited in two ways, one is framed and hung up on the wall, the other is a digital scan and presented on the table. I wanted to display the original Polaroid photographs due to their unique character as

something that cannot be replicated and their status as recordings of a particular place and time.

The difficulties of this research and practice, the first is how to display Polaroid photography as an Archive, not an Artwork. Second, work individually, how to connect with others. Third, how to exhibit in a space.

In this exhibition, I own my selfish motives. I want to make it my own experience for curating an exhibition with Polaroid Photography, which could link to my research paper. I try to draw the attention of the artists who use Polaroid photography at that time. From to think of the reason I want to display Polaroid photography as documentary material to show in the exhibition. I focus on two points, Polaroid photography as an artwork and Polaroid photography as an archive, a documentary material. If it is an artwork, of course, I prefer to show the original piece to the viewer base of the unique charm of Polaroid photography is the only one in the world and could not copy or change it. But as a documentary material, especially in the 70s and 80s, the digital camera has not appeared yet, Polaroid camera played a digital role in that period. Artists, photographers, designers would like to use it to record their ideas at once because it could let them get the photo in 60 seconds.



(Exhibition Installation, Photo by author, 2017)



(Exhibition Installation, Photo by author, 2017)

In this case, I consider that I still want to show the original piece even it is documentary material. Firstly, due to this object being archived that the way of the display is limited. Most of the objects could not take off from the album, which means those two pieces that I could have been very treasured. Secondly, the object also shows that the habitat at those times, the 70s and 80s. Thirdly, the Polaroid which I selected is incredibly beautiful and has a special color with chemicals. The last reason, as I said before, I want to try to do an exhibition of Polaroid photography, I could not give up.

Otherwise, I got many pieces of scan Photo from the Album, how could I use it and get that effect which I want. Because this exhibition is an archive exhibition, when we do research in the National Theater Archive; we must open the number of various kinds of documents. So, it reminds me that I could print the scan copy out and make it like a document. Then when the viewer in the exhibition could open it and watch it page by page, it seems like us to see the original material in the National Theater Archive. And I print it on superior quality paper, it could avoid the damage by they open it many times. It also will be an advantageous thing to let the viewer get the feeling of looking at a real archive and protecting the original object.

For the reason of our group doing the research individually, so how to make them connected is important. So, we classify in a different movie and put them together, it could make the object space related. In the meantime, I have a lot of flaws in this

exhibition. I have not learned enough theory to support my idea somehow. In other words, I mean I could not flexibility in the use of some theory. And I realize that means I do not really understand it, and this situation always makes me upset. However, I realize most of the time when I have an idea or when I see others work, I will keep a question and ask why in my mind. It is a good beginning for me. Thinking more and thinking critically, even it is not enough.

The exhibition Jocelyn Herbert: Design for film, is a practical way to link to my previous research. About the interview is kept going even after I graduated from UAL: Chelsea. In 2018, there was an Image Triennial in Guangdong Museum of Art which is my first job when I came back to Guangzhou, China. The interesting thing is that when I work in the exhibition Simultaneous Eidos - Guangzhou Image Triennial 2017, I have focused on the artist who will pay attention to multiculturalism and self-identity.



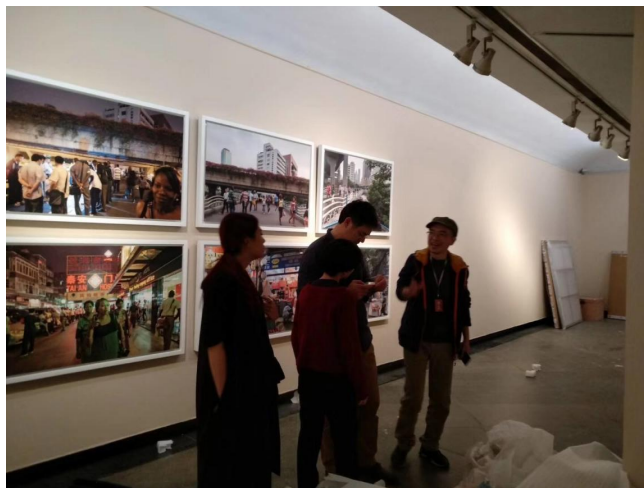
(Exhibition poster, 2017)

As a curatorial assistant in the Returning to "Cantonese Photography" in Parallel Considerations special exhibition of the Guangzhou Image Triennial 2017. I have assisted the part of an American artist Daniel Traub with local photographer Wu Yongfu and Zeng Xianfang who focuses on the Africans in Guangzhou, and his project called "Xiaobei Road" in the exhibition. Xiaobei Road also has a special meaning, that is, it is like a symbolic gate, opening the door to China for many African people who come to Guangzhou from all corners of the southern hemisphere to seek import and export trade opportunities with the Pearl River Delta. The 115 groups of Africans on the sky bridge are artists and two folk photography enthusiasts. From

2009 to 2011, take pictures of pedestrians from the African continent on this flyover.



(Exhibition installation, photo by author, 2017)



(Exhibition installation, Artist, Curator and author, 2017)

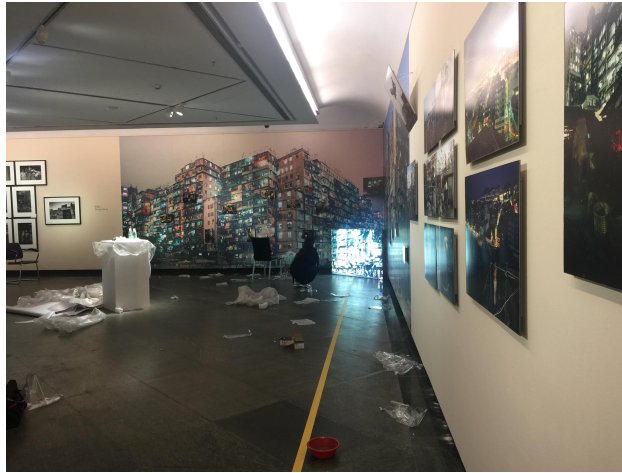


(Artist Daniel and author, Polaroid photography, 2017)

And the other artist Greg Girard comes from Canada, and he has been working and living in China for many years. His famous artwork is the photography have recorded the Koon Long City in the 1970s to 1980s' Hong Kong. His works discuss the social and physical changes of major cities in Asia over the past three decades. The core of his artistic practice is to present works in the form of books. This exhibition exhibits Kowloon Walled City photography, the Kowloon Walled City has another well-known name, the "Dark City". The artist's photography book is named after this. In his work, the audience could learn the humanistic and the social issues of it. In addition, it responds to a deep mind and history in that period of Hong Kong.



(Exhibition installation, photo by author, 2017)



(Exhibition installation, photo by author, 2017)



(Artist Greg and author, Polaroid photography, 2017)

Moreover, I also have assisted a local artist Qiu, his photography artwork is not only present in the traditional way but also combined into pieces of old demolition house. As a local Cantonese, I have strong common sense and memories of the old buildings in Guangzhou. When I told Qiu that my master's research was related to Polaroid, he deliberately brought his Polaroid photography from home to share his creative experience with me, and even gave me one of them.



(Exhibition installation, photo by author, 2017)



(Curator and Artist tour, photo by author, 2017)



(Artist Qiu's Polaroid, photo by author, 2017)

The last artist I assisted was the American Chinese Lau Pok Chi, his work inspired me a lot. He focused on the ethnic Chinese in the world, and he was especially highly taking part in the Taishan People. Taishan is the famous hometown of the ethnic Chinese. The immigration history could be traced back to the Qing dynasty. His research has shown that the America-Chinese, Cuba-Chinese and newest research is in Myanmar. His interest in the history of the diaspora of Chinese people, because his family has been in diaspora for four generations. Curiosity and imagination are Lau's motivation. He cannot express the experiences he has gained in words. The main reason is the lack of traditional Chinese education and cultural heritage, and no scholarly professional training. What you discover with your five senses and sixth sense is to educate yourself. He let me think about the power of photography and the story behind it.



(Curator and Artist tour, photo by author, 2017)



(Artist Lau Pok Chi and author Polaroid photography, 2017)

Modern photography is inextricably linked with the history and culture of the Pearl River Delta. Not long after its emergence in the 19th century, photography was introduced to China by France's trade missions. It spread from Canton, Hong Kong, and Macao to the whole country. Therefore, this means that there will be more behind the story to be discovered. However, The Pearl River Delta region has always been open in history, especially Cantonese people. In addition, The Chinese people have never stopped communicating and colliding with the outside world through this place. If the form of video art is regarded as a language, then the video art of the Pearl River Delta is one. This is a mash up language mixed with Cantonese, Mandarin, and foreign languages. It maintains regional characteristics and global influence at the same time, which is in line with the contemporary context of globalization.

At that time, although I had already graduated my research did not end. I still will keep continuing to follow the Image study although not only in Polaroid but also just like a button to turn on my eyes to observe and record the world in a way. As John Culkin said, "We shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us." Polaroid also is a connection, "tools" that link me into the artist, in this era, there are how many artists will use these "tools" to assist creative or it is the actual final artwork version.

Another important exhibition that influences me is the 6th Guangzhou Triennial As We

May Think: Feedforward in 2018. As a core member of the Guangzhou Triennial office, I take responsibility for the Netherlander Curator Angelique Spaninks. In her part Evolution of Kin in the exhibition is focused on Re-worlding the Digital Now and the Biotech Present. She mentions in the exhibition catalogue "Academia, the media and the arts are buzzing as well, with the Anthropocene, with Posthumanism, a Non-Human Turn and Dark Ecology.(Timothy Morton, 2016) Each of these words represents a way of thinking about, and interpreting, the need to face the changing dynamics of time and place, Earth and humanity, nature and culture, that is occurring right in front of our eyes." This point of view makes me link back to my previous experience and reconsider the meaning of a documentary. Even though her discussion is about technical development and biotech it is also the thinking of the Anthropocene in the future. With this consideration, reviewing the idea of self-identity and multiculturalism how to develop in a way from me who grow up in a Cantonese culture and developing country China but have art and design educated in China and UK.

Looking back to my different practice and experience, makes me rethink my past and connect to the present. As a graphic designer in the past, dealing with the customer's require is my work daily; as a curator, assisting artists have a better effect on the exhibition is daily; as a visual design teacher, supporting students' creative ideas is my responsibility daily. However, the common point is even in separate roles in my life, I am a problem dealer and a questioner in a kind of way. It reminds me to consider my PhD research now and the outcome of how it is going to be. Connecting to my future research, by following closely to the changing of the world I hope I can bring my experience and knowledge together to complete my research plan.

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