PROJECT PROPOSAL

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Lens-based Media, PZI

2020 – 2022

INTRODUCTION

ChungKing Express (working title)

Chongqing, a mountain city located in southwest China, which has very special and complex reality which combining urban, rural, mountainous, waterways, construction sites and ruins, and is integrated into the global production chain, in addition to the traces of industrialization from the early war of resistance against aggression and socialist periods. It is now a "smart city", the most important artificial intelligence pilot and robotics base on the mainland. In addition, due to Chongqing's strategic position in the history of sovereign state and geopolitics (provisional capital and the Great Rearguard of China), the city undergoes a corresponding strategic shift and form change when the International or domestic situation happen to change or face potential threats. From the beginning of the Sino-US trade war to the post-pandemic era, In order to cope with the unstable situation in the international community, the Chinese government claims to accelerate the internal circulation of the country. Many important economic and technological productive forces have once again begun to transfer from the coast to the inland, especially the hinterland of the southwest. Chongqing, as the gateway connecting the west, on the one hand, vigorously develops industry and technologies, such as builds the Western China Science City, logistics center and smart city，on the other hand, it continues outward expansion as a strategic focus of the One Belt One Road Initiative and the China-Europe Railway Express.
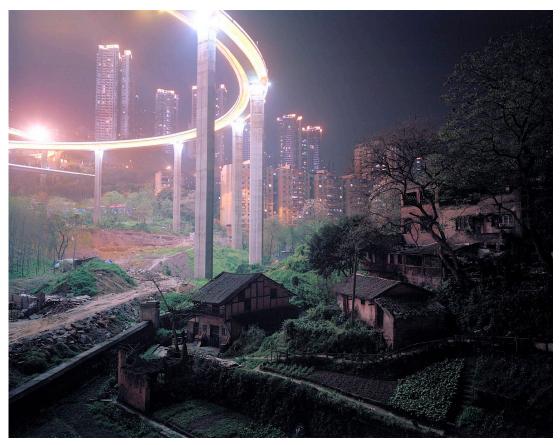

Photo from Google. (https://mobile.twitter.com/alteredq/status/921823912396247040/photo/2)

I. What I want to make

I want to make a video essay or docu-fiction film which consists of images from different ways and channels such as archival documents, found footage, Internet material, social media short video and field filming. In addition to film as the main part of this project, the graduate show may involve the presentation of installation，print and archives. The content of the film will be based on a mountainous area in the west of Chongqing, which was once a dependency of Ba ancient state in Chinese history, a region radiating from the birthplace of the witch culture, also a civil society with the belief in "土主 (*tu zhu*，Lord of the Soil and the Ground）", and now as an pilot zone for China's intelligent industry and a future planning prospect for AI City.

The film may be narrated in different chapters, trying to avoid a linear structure narrative such as the background statement above, trying to sort out and present the complexity of the reality dimension based on historical, folklore, technical and geographical perspectives, outline a cosmogram of a place and relating it to the strategic position and current status of the whole city.

II. How I want to make it

Up until now, the most important thing for me in this project has been to sorting out structure and writing, as the narrative and structure of the text may directly determine that of the film. At the same time, the fact that I am currently unable to return to my home country for fieldwork and filming due to the pandemic, and that everything is in suspense, has led me to change the way I work, so I will start by writing the text, which is itself a process of collecting material. I will divide the text into chapters corresponding to different key concepts (or time, space, medium, perspective) and the content that extends from them. On the other hand, I will continue to collect images for the video section, combining them with some of my previous shots to create a rough cut, so that I can get a clearer idea of what is missing and plan my shooting around it, until I return to China to make up shot sometime before the final exhibition next year. (If still impossible to return to China at all, found footage will be used extensively, even comprehensively)

III. My timetable

November - January

Writing on the text;
Collecting image / video materials；
Reading and doing archival research on the period

January - March

Writing, First rough cut (if possible, making spot investigation and filming in China)

April - May Writing, Second rough cut

Ⅳ. Why I want to make it

Personally, I am interested in using different narrative media such as moving image， writing etc. to excavate and present the intricate structural relationships behind reality, and I have been practicing with some local work since early on, particularly based on Southwest China, discussing the relationship between the individual, the collective and local space. Therefore, this graduation project is to a certain extent a review, continuation and concretisation of my previous work.
On the other hand, in the context of the current technological reality in China and globally, especially as the entire Chinese state and individual people are immersed in the state of accelerationism and technology worship, I feel it is even more important to combing these relationships and look back at history again. So I try to through a local place of southwest China as an entry point to imagine future blueprint of a giant complex integrating state capitalism, authoritarianism, accelerationism, strategic rearguard, Pre-modern agricultural society and red evolutionary base areas.

Ⅴ. Who can help me

The PZI LB tutors and pears will help me in the process of film making.

Writing tutors could help me with text creation and theories related to this project. For instance，on the narrative method and structure of my film and how to link different chapters and narrative perspectives. And also, the guidance of technical media criticism theory and the suggestions on selection of relevant issue in real cases.

VI. Relation to previous practice

Float Down the Stream, is a trailer for a project I worked on during my first year of study, I juxtapose a wharf in my hometown, with the Katendrecht port in Rotterdam - the place where the first generation of Chinese immigrants landed in Europe, and which is now the starting and ending port of China's Belt and Road Initiative respectively. In the film, archives, advertising films, actual photography and texts are interspersed and built upon each other to narrate the reality behind the landscape. The film wants to discuss the relationship between the history of migration and modern logistics and the waterway as a natural element and a technological medium for human society.

"Rear area" and "Chongqing drift" are video works based on the topic of Chongqing I made a few years ago. Real Area, which is about a hidden history behind an abandoned place in the city - Chongqing artillery school, involving the history of the cold war, military industry and technology development history of China, and the process of regional modernization after reform and opening up. Chongqing drift, which a film divided into several chapters, with different personal perspectives, narrative ways and topics, combined with collective memory and individual experience, to jointly cut into the past and present life of an urban space.
The common themes in my previous works are about the dynamic and tension between the historical archives of a specific space, grand narrative, media technologies and the experience of human individuals. These practices inspire my strong desire to explore and reconstruct the complex structural relationships behind reality, which will be continued in my new project.

https://cqwi.weebly.com/

VII. Relation to a larger context

This project involves several topics, such as the geology, folklore history of Chongqing and southwest regions, the cosmology under the influence of the concept of border, and the change of urban form in the geopolitical context, and the relationship between society shaped by modern technical media and local nature and people. In this project, southwest Chongqing is only used as a sample , which aims to the reflection on the construction process of Chinese modernity.

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