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其國是壓力? 东痛恆存在

> 不是過往,推動前進的點 越過深海而大難不死的後遺症 甚度是無法意懷的裂進? 差度是一素子不能是死 載在一個工具, 漂流消去的。 減在的工具, 漂流消去的。 把閉合的空間二次、別上。 那珍道的弓形、 這化。

甚麼是+創傷

什麼是 離别? 沙熊的. 海的. 甚麼是樂了了了看的時記 持续 無法復尿 什麼是失去到膝的鸟? 有點痛但總會好起來 啦~ 不自覺地邊邊和問出来 什麼是壓打?: 離,不厥的家」 記版 痛的過程有疑? 共存的 what is 加小树? 忌园寒. 不飲凍飲 基底是防止受得的方法 薩 思、

Lost in Translation —— 文美桃

蠟造的膜被一條黑線勾起,像以手指用力 「搣」自己的皮膚一樣,扯不斷,只能讓兩道 力持續對衡。這以物料訴說出來的張力是文美 桃的一份舊作。她的創作表面平靜,卻往往有 一處 plot twist (劇情轉折),像電影。

第二屆創意書院畢業的她現正在英國進修藝術 創作碩士,當年的她差一點便是時裝設計學 生,不知是注定還是巧合,輾轉還是成為了藝 術家。但她知道東西來得不容易,機會是要自 己爭取的。在這訪談中,文美桃提及了到外國 升學的原因,還有她對藝術生涯的看法。 (梁)=梁皓然@天台塾(文)=文美桃

(梁)

你現在在哪裏?

(文)

我在倫敦,是英國留學生,假期還會回港。至於往後會不會留在這裏就暫時未有想法。

(梁)

你何時開始有想去進修藝術這念頭?

(文)

在 2015 年皇家墨爾本理工大學及香 港藝術學院藝術學士畢業,後來在 2016 年底報讀本地及美國藝術創作 碩士(MFA)課程不獲錄取,同時 發現需要在網上申請「完成課程」才 能領取學士畢業證書,所以到 2017 年才拿到學士的畢業證書。2019 年 成功獲美國及英國三家學校的 MFA 課程取錄,卻不幸碰上疫情,加上還 沒有儲夠錢,所以一直沒有起行。 直至延期取錄兩年限期將至,才於 2022年7月下定決心,不顧一切後 果前往倫敦讀書。盼望進修多年,現 在終下定決心去做,<u>雖然沒有足夠的</u> 學費,也沒有獎學金的支援,花光積 蓄唯有見步行步,但幸得家人與伴侶 支持,也得堅持下去。

(梁)

最後為甚麼選英國?

(文)

我現在在倫敦大學學院的斯萊德藝術 學院(Slade School of Fine Art) 修讀雕塑碩士學位,原本一心打算到 美國,但最後因學費和學校架構改變 而決定去英國,而且獲收錄的學院 都不在紐約。本來孤注一擲申請了 香港政府的獎學金,2022年8月面 試,最後2023年1月正式收到電郵 通知,宣告面試失敗告吹。英國這家 學校很有名,而且系主任和很多舊生 都是我喜歡的藝術家。在這邊半年, 跟預期也有些不同。例如今年英國經 濟狀況差, 電費貴。我以為 MFA 學 生人數較少, 但我一班也有十多人, 而且同學都很年輕, 有 1999 年出世 的!<u>我現在是位「超齡學生(mature</u> student)」。也是這個原因, 我們 的觀點很不一樣, 有時候覺得同學們 很直率和勇於嘗試的心真好。

現在好像有點後悔選讀雕塑,嘗試其 他科目或許更有趣。可能是不甘心 吧,從前無法選雕塑為主修科,可以 再選擇時就想試。當年我在創意書院 **畢業後就入了香港藝術學院,當時高** 級文憑課程念的是繪書,升學士的 時候想轉讀 離翅, 伯學校不容許。當 然, 學校對繪書的定義很開放, 當時 我喜歡試驗不同物料,老師們也很高 興及鼓勵嘗試不同面向物料的作品。 成功獲碩十錄取後,我在2021年修 讀香港視覺藝術中心的雕塑課程,希 望打好底子。不幸遇上疫情高峰,課 程教學受阻。三年的漫長疫情也令藝 術轉向藝術科技的面向,傳統的創作 方法正慢慢被淘汰,我們需要學習更 加新的技術來面對時代的改變,例如 3D 掃描和打印等。但來到這裏之後 發覺有不同的限制,如物料費昂貴,



文美桃,《扒手》(2020)局部,照片由藝術家提供。 MAN Mei To, part of *Pickpocket* (2020). Image provided by the artist.



文美桃,《案發現場 - 腳》(2020),照片由藝術家提供。 MAN Mei To, *Crime Scene - Leg* (2020). Image provided by the artist.

工作室空間不足故終難以完成大型的 立體作品,反而造石或木的作品在香 港相對容易找到原材料做。

(梁)

你如何看創作跟生活的關係?

(文)

如果你問我創作重不重要,那當然是 重要,不然不會堅持到現在。黃鴻 飛(當時創意書院的其中一位客席導 師)曾在讀書時期這樣跟我講過,<u>做</u> 完一件作品後,要退後看作品的中心 點到底是甚麼,經常繃緊埋頭苦幹做 會令自己看不清楚事情,放鬆工作會 有更多領悟,創作的念頭也會自然地 出現。

(梁)

甚麼時候發現自己把創作看得過緊?

(文)

讀書時期仍在探索不同物料的特性, 畢業後慢慢收窄媒介範疇起來,因吸 取的經驗多了,可以以人生經驗去講 一些議題。直到開始出來當一位藝術 家,又變得緊了,那是因為我不清楚 自己的藝術事業可以走到多遠,或者 如何繼續,這是很不穩定的職業。我 不是一個展覽接着下一個展覽的藝術 家。對我而言,做藝術很需要自己爭 取。另一方面,我也很興幸畢業時有 前輩給予的機會,自已也有積極申請 不同資助來維持下去。<u>對我來說,我</u> 的藝術事業不是一件順理成章的事, 與報讀碩士的過程一樣,成功並不容 易,總是沒有想像的預期,但過程中 又會學習到更多,有更多意外和驚 喜。何不嘗試出外走一趟陌生風景旅 程,可能看過外面的世界後會更理解 香港。

(梁)

那你從書院畢業到入讀 MFA 之間經 歷了甚麼?

(文)

2009年中五畢業前我一心想報考服裝設計,也在會考前修讀過 IVE 及 工聯會的時裝課程。但當年放榜成績 不夠,沒有獲得取錄,迷茫的我還記 得當時回創意書院哭着跟時任校長馮 美華說不知道怎麼辦,後來她把我推

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萬到香港藝術學院修讀藝術。在那 **裏**,我認識了藝術家馬琼珠,後來成 為了她的助理。我們會一起工作、聊 天,自然地成為了好朋友。同一時 間,2013至2014年左右,我也有 參與土地影像製作和田邊故事,從城 鄉共生的角度拍攝、製作關於新界東 北村民護村及抗爭的錄像。其後也有 跟時任書院老師郭梓祺、區華欣等創 作禍無台演出,當助理無台設計,我 還記得我們做了很多道具出來。也曾 經跟同是書院舊生的周翊琳接手營運 書院小食部,當然還有幕後大神及監 督洪忠傑(另一位舊生)的支援,在 書院老師陳上城的提議下取名為「食 母堂|。在那一年以全職廚師的角色 介入學生日常生活。書院人類生性奔 放自由,雖然同是書院人,也不敵書 院人類的無定向,生意難做,每月收 入得幾千元難以為生,翌年2017年 9月重回藝術的懷抱。

(梁)

那你到了英國之後,有沒有給自己一 些目標? (文)

我在 2022 年參與了 CHAT 六廠 (六 廠紡織文化藝術館)的一個展覽,那 時候我發現原來自己的創作很狹窄, 跟同場其它藝術家相比,其他藝術 家探討的議題相對偏向具爭議性或面 向大眾,而我關注的議題比較微細。 這讓我開始想到自己是如何看這個世 界?我的作品不太暄鬧,而且作品說 話很間接。來到英國後更發現這問 題,譬如我2022年的作品《扒手》 **講香港的社會狀態,裏面有很多個人** 情緒,當外國人看那作品時會覺得是 件好作品,卻不能進入那個語境裏。 說到底,我們不是來自同一片土地, 不能對我們所經歷的感同身受,難以 明白香港人曾經經歷過的震撼、互相 依偎的情感寄託,以及被一一挖空、 掠奪的所有。所以我想多研究如何能 把作品的中心議題說得更清楚一點, 同時拓闊自己使用的藝術語言、物料 性和討論議題的方向等等。來到一個 陌生的地方,我想找尋另一套藝術語 言來探索英國的日常文化,譬如是比 較香港跟倫敦在微小事情上的不同。 說到底,人的經歷其實跟身處的地方 文化很密切。

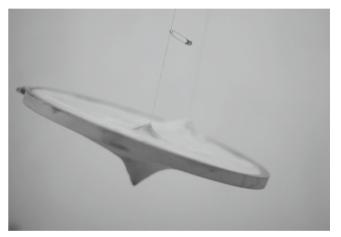
(梁)

你如何理解這文化差異?

(文)

<u>我認為藝術是一種透過作品呈現的溝</u> <u>通媒介,當我意識到這點,我就需要</u> <u>找方法去跟受眾溝通,而不是把問題</u> <u>歸咎於文化差異之上。</u>所以來這邊三 個月了,我的著眼點是觀察這裏的日 常,譬如是在這裏的洗手間找不到燈 的開闢,然後發現這裏是用一條線來 開燈,微小如此,慢慢去找英國跟香 港日常中不同的東西。

(訪談日期:09/01/2023@Zoom。文字稿因應內容經修輯。)



文美桃,《Little Island》 (2014) ,照片由藝術家提供。 MAN Mei To, Little Island (2014). Image provided by the artist.



食母堂的餐單每天都不一樣。照片由食母堂 facebook 提供。 The menu of The Mother Tuck Shop was different every day back then. Photo provided by The Mother Tuck Shop.



郭梓祺作品《他鄉》劇照,區華欣任美衛總監及舞台設計,文美桃與洪忠傑任助理舞台設計,周翊琳任服 裝設計。

Still shot of *Ta Xiang,* directed by KWOK Tsz Ki. Art direction and stage design by AU Wah Yan, assisted by MAN Mei To and Kensa HUNG. Costume design by CHOW Yik Lam.

In one of her early works, MAN Mei To used a wax film lifted by a black line to embody the tension of a person 'pinching' and 'pulling' their skin. Appeared calm and still on the surface, her artistic creations often twist like movie plots.

Graduating from the second cohort of the HKSC, MAN Mei To is now studying for a master's degree in Fine Art in the UK. Before that, she almost became a fashion design student. But, be it a twist of fate or coincidence, she eventually became an artist. She knows that things don't come by easily. Therefore, she seizes every opportunity with both hands. In this interview, MAN Mei To reminisces about the reasons for studying abroad and shares views on her art career. (H) = hoyin@Rooftop Institute (M) = MAN Mei To

(H)

Where are you based now?

#### (M)

I'm studying abroad in London now. I'll return to Hong Kong during the holidays. But I haven't decided whether I will stay here in the future.

#### (H)

When did you start thinking about studying art?

#### (M)

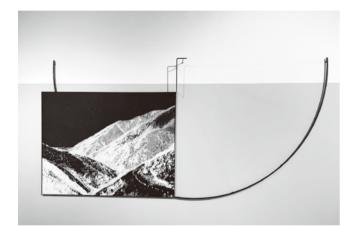
I graduated from the RMIT University and Hong Kong Art School with a Bachelor of Arts (Fine Art) in 2015. Then I applied for MFA in Hong Kong and the US in 2016 but was not admitted. Only then did I realise I had to apply online to 'complete the course' and obtain my Bachelor's degree certificate. That's why I didn't get it until 2017. Then in 2019, I received MFA offers from three US and UK universities. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic outbreak and insufficient savings, I didn't enrol in any of the programmes. As the extended enrolment deadlines approached, I decided in July 2022 to study in London regardless of the consequences. That said, I've finally determined to further study after years of yearning. <u>Although I can only play it</u> by ear as I don't have enough savings or any scholarship support, I've managed to persevere with the support from my family and partner.

# (H) Why did you choose the UK in the end?

## (M)

I'm now studying for a master's degree in Sculpture at the Slade School of Fine Art at the University College London. I planned to study in the States initially. But due to tuition fees and school structure changes, I chose the UK eventually. Besides, the school in the States isn't based in New York anyway. I went all out to apply for a scholarship from the Hong Kong government. I attended the interview in August 2022 but got declined in January 2023. The Slade is a prominent art academy. Most of its department heads and alumni are artists I like. But there were many unexpected matters over the past half a year. For example, the economy here in the UK is not in good shape, and the electricity bills have shot up lately. I thought the number of MFA students would be small, but a dozen people were in my class. More importantly, they all are very young—some were born in 1999! So, I'm now <u>a 'mature student'. Our views are disparate</u> <u>because of our age difference; sometimes, I'm</u> envious of their boldness and candidness.

But I slightly regret choosing sculpture as trying other subjects may be more enjoyable. I chose sculpture probably because I couldn't choose it as a major in the past. So, I wanted to try it as I had the chance. After graduating from the HKSC, I entered the diploma programme in painting at the Hong Kong Art School. I was eager to study sculpture in the bachelor's degree programme, but HKAS didn't allow that. Fortunately, the school had a broad definition of painting. At that time, I liked to experiment with different materials, and the instructors were open to this idea and encouraged us to do so. I even took a sculpture course at the Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre in 2021 after accepting the master's degree offer, hoping to lay a solid foundation. Unfortunately, the peak of the pandemic put the course on halt. The 3-years pandemic also sparked the evolution of art technology, phrasing out traditional artmaking approaches gradually. We must learn



文美純,《擴散性緣體》(2022), 六廠紡績文化藝術館委約, 照片由藝術家提供 MAN Mei To, *Diffusing Linear Body* (2022). Commissioned by CHAT by MILL6 Foundation. Image provided by the artist.



the latest technologies, such as 3D scanning and printing, to respond to the changes. But after coming to the UK, I've faced different limitations. For instance, materials are expensive here, and the insufficient studio space has forbidden me from producing large-scale installations. It's actually more convenient to source the materials for stone and wood-based works in Hong Kong than here.

#### (H)

How do you see the relationship between artistic creation and everyday life?

#### (M)

I'd say artistic creation is crucial to my everyday life. I wouldn't persevere in it otherwise. When I was in the HKSC, WONG Hung Fei (one of the guest teachers at that time) once told me that artists had to step back and reflect on the core of a piece of art after completing it. One wouldn't realise their intention if they buried oneself in art-making. By contrast, you would apprehend more relaxingly and find inspiration naturally.

#### (H)

When did you find yourself taking artistic creation too seriously?

#### (M)

I was exploring the characteristics of different materials when I was in the HKSC. After graduation, I gradually narrowed my creative scope. And since I had gained more experience, I could talk about specific issues with my life experience. But then, I started taking artistic creation more seriously after becoming an artist, probably because I didn't know how far my career would go or how I could maintain this unstable career. I'm not an artist fully scheduled with exhibitions; I must fight for the chance. But I'm thankful that many established artists have given me opportunities. And I have been actively applying for funding to sustain my art career. My art career hasn't been a smooth one, much the same as my application for MFA. It hasn't been easy to come by as things never turned out as expected. Yet, I've learned much more along this rugged road and found many more surprises and astonishment. That's why I believe journeying to the unfamiliar scenery and seeing the outside world will make me understand Hong Kong better.

## (H)

What did you go through between graduating from the HKSC and enrolling in the MFA?

(M)

I wanted to apply for fashion design programmes before completing Form 5 in 2009-I even took fashion courses from IVE and the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions before the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Exam. However, I failed to enrol in fashion design programmes as my exam result didn't meet the requirement. I still remember being frustrated and asking May FUNG, the then-principal of the HKSC what I should do. Later, she recommended I study art at the Hong Kong Art School. I met artist Ivy MA there and became her assistant. We even became close friends as we made art together and chatted. At the same time, in 2012 or 2013, I took part in Local Made Productions and Field Side Stories, filming and producing videos about villagers fighting to conserve their villages in Northeast New Territories from the perspective of urbanrural symbiosis. Afterwards, I served as an art and stage designer and produced stage performances with KWOK Tsz Ki and AU Wah Yan (then-teachers of the HKSC). I still recall that we made a lot of props for the performances. That year, I also took over the school tuck shop with an alumna CHOW Yik Lam and the support of Kensa HUNG (also an alumus). Our teacher Dunet CHAN suggested us to rename the tuck shop 'The Mother'.

We playfully ran the shop, intervening in the students' everyday life as full-time chefs. The students in the HKSC are free-spirited. Even though we graduated from the same school, we still couldn't keep up with their trend and struggled to sustain the business. We made barely a few thousand dollars per month. At last, I returned to artistic creation in September 2017.

(H)

Have you set yourself a goal in the UK?

#### (M)

I realised the confine of my creative scope when I participated in an exhibition at CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) in 2022. Compared with other participating artists who discussed controversial topics appealing to the mass in their works, my work appeared trivial. It got me thinking about how I see the world, and I discovered that my works were subtle and inexplicable. This issue became more apparent after I've come to the UK. Take my work, Pickpocket, in 2022 as an example; it talks about the social conditions in Hong Kong through my emotions. Although foreign viewers spoke of the work highly, they couldn't comprehend the context. In other words, they can't identify with the shocks we experienced, the comfort

we found by clinging to our fellows, and the hollowness of being plundered as they come from a different cultural context. Therefore, I'm keen to research how to express the core idea of an art piece more explicitly while expanding the visual language, materiality, and narrative approach of my artwork. Being in this unfamiliar place, I want to seek an alternative set of artistic language to explore the cultural phenomenon in the UK, such as comparing the views on trivial matters between Hongkongers and the British. <u>Ultimately local cultures are inseparable from</u> <u>people's experiences.</u>

#### (H)

How do you understand this cultural gap?

#### (M)

Art is a communication medium embodied in artworks. I must find ways to transmit my ideas to different audiences instead of blaming cultural differences. That's why I've been observing the daily life here over the past three months. For example, I couldn't find any light switch in the toilets here. But eventually, I found the light was toggled with a pull cord. I hope to spot the differences in daily life in the UK and Hong Kong through these trivial matters. (Interview date: 09/01/2023 via Zoom. The manuscript has been edited according to the content.)



Capture 攝影學會捕捉書院學生上學時的情況。照片由 Capture 提供,特別鳴謝文美桃。 HKSC students having class as taken by Capture the photography club. Image provided by Capture. Special thanks to MAN Mei To.

# 甚麼是+任何東西

# 甚麼是幸福 5分的电话?

見到·感覺不到。 甚度是大发时的我? 被貓抵德丽结束的疤痕。

甚麼是復原的原因?

甚麼是痛?

在海中小事品经

# 見得到的黑龟

如常生活好嗎? 回街以為唐望方子

甚麼是未来?

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# 後記:書院精神?

創意書院有鮮明的「書院精神」嗎?或,需要嗎? 讀書的時候,學校不會強迫學生跟隨某一種價值 觀;相反,老師會不斷問問題,要我們找尋屬於 自己的答案。「讀書時的衝擊只是種子,都靠大 家離開之後才逐一收割」。其中一位舊生在去年 的一次小組面談中這樣形容他跟書院的關係。正 因為「睇你造化」,策展團隊一開始就沒有把這 展覽看成是歌頌書院的「晒冷大會」,畢竟書院 還未有足夠深厚的歷史,而入面的人類都習慣要 動腦筋處理新的觀念和挑戰,每日都似要重新給

#### Afterword: The HKSC Spirit?

Does the HKSC represent a distinctive spirit? Or the question should be, does it need one?

The HKSC seldom asks its students to follow a specific value. I remember during my time studying at the HKSC, teachers would always throw questions, prompting them to find the answers by and for ourselves. 'The school's influence is seeded within us. Whether they thrive or not depends on our choices and determination,' an alumnus shared his thought on the school during one of our curatorial workshops earlier. As curator, we knew it from very early on that this exhibition will never be about 'showing-off' of the works of 39 participating HKSC alumni artists. Instead, it is like a process for the curatorial team to learn from their 塑造出來。所以在處理展覽的時候不單是安排藝術品的擺放,更是在從 39 位書院人類身上學習 各人的「造化」。這也是這本場刊的初衷。

天台塾在展覽籌備初期先以小組形式跟藝術家聊 天,期望在過程中找到忠於他/她們的詞彙來整 理展覽。同時,在重聚的時候發現不同人類都在 處理許多生活上的問題,包括生計、職業發展等, 基本上沒有一位有那份福氣成為全職藝術家。大 家在不同的身份和責任之間彈出彈入,卻同時堅 持創作。因此我抽選了六位在不同年代畢業的人

growth and fruits of thought. After all, the HKSC has a relatively short history; its students and alumni are used to brainstorming every now and then to devise new ideas and tackle unseen challenges, reshaping and transforming themselves every day. Therefore, the essence of this book is to document the growth and developments of these alumni artists have gone through over the years.

In the preparation stage of this exhibition, Rooftop Institute conducted group workshops with the participating artists, aiming to capture their genuine expressions and responses for the exhibition. During these sessions, we briefly touched on various issues, say, livelihoods and career developments. Almost none of 類,包括正準備考大學的黃祖兒(Jil)、身兼幾 職的洗浩彰(J)、以合作社的形式參與社會的鄧 樂滔、在英國留學的文美桃、從事過電影製作的 羅昊培(Prescott)和兩位孩子的媽媽周翊琳。 在一對一的訪談中,我們不談藝術而談生活。說 到底,大家都在社會打滾過了,明白對藝術無需 作過多的浪漫想像,回到基本更加平易近人。

六位人類背景不同,卻有着相同的執着和敏感, 硬要歸納出「書院精神」的話,也許是這兩點 特徵吧。執着,在於對細節、創作的謹慎,例

them are fortunate enough to become full-time artists. Everyone pops in and out between different identities and responsibilities while insisting on making art. There is an urge to call for more in-depth dialogue with them. So I conducted one-to-one interviews with six of the participating artists, covering different age range, to learn about their everyday lives. They include Jil WONG Cho Yi, who is preparing for university entrance exams; J SIN Ho Cheung, who serves several part-time roles; TANG Lok To, who is involved in social movements in form of a collective; MAN Mei To, who is studying in the UK; Prescott LAW Ho Pui, who has engaged in film production; and CHOW Yik Lam, who is a mother of two. Being smoothed by society, they understand the 如J提及到他以情緒帶到畫畫,每次都似掏空自 己般創作直到感覺對了。又如翊琳明明為照顧孩 子而失去私人時間,卻為了要照顧好自己而堅持 創作,捕捉不同階段的狀態。Prescott 執着於以 影像呈現意象,謝絕多餘。而敏感,在於無時無 刻的自省,不敢以假的東西示人。例如樂滔在參 與社會運動時就全心投入,不會分心創作,待時 機合適時才埋首,又如美桃在倫敦發現藝術語言 建基在日常生活之上,於是重新學習對文化的觀 察,而 Jil 每次創作都是對自身過去的扣問,是了

unnecessity of romanticising art and have become more approachable than ever as common folks.

Although each of them has a different background, they all share the same resoluteness and sensitivity. These two traits are perhaps the embodiment of the 'School Spirit'. Their resoluteness lies in their meticulous care of the details in their artistic creation. Such as, J mentioned that his paintings were representations of his emotions. He would not stop hollowing out himself until the painting felt right. Yik Lam has given up her private time to take care of her children while insisting on creating to care for herself and capturing the different stages of life. Prescott is obsessed with the accurate representation of his fantasies. As for their sensitivity, it lies in their



Capture 攝影學會拍的書院課室,照片由 Capture 提供,特別鳴謝文美桃。 A classroom of the HKSC taken by Capture, a photography club organised by the HKSC students. Photo provided by Capture. Special thanks to MAN Mei To.

constant reflection and refusal to showcase fabricated emotions. For example, when Lok To participated in social movements, he devoted himself without distraction and saved artistic creation for the right time. Mei To is learning to observe cultural phenomena again for her daily-life-orientated creations in London. And Jil sees questioning her past in every artistic creation as an inevitable process of understanding herself.

Every student and alumnus of the HKSC is a pioneer in their own right. All of them are striving to position themselves in society after graduation. Precisely because they do not follow the established path (such as the clichéd pathway of pursuing tertiary education and getting employed), they experience a more down-to解自身的必然過程。

書院人類沒有前車之鑒,每人在畢業後都在江湖 上努力尋覓自己的定位。但正正是大家都不在 「正常」的路之中(例如上大學、找工作這些老 套情節),反而生活得更加貼地。這六篇訪問只 是樣本,如果有所謂的「書院精神」,大家又如 何在切實的生活中實踐出來?

#### 梁皓然

天台塾策展及研究團隊成員、創意書院舊生

earth life. These six episodes are only samples. If the 'HKSC spirit' does exist, I call on everyone to ponder what it means to you and how they would apply it to your everyday lives.

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