

PROCESS PORTFOLIO

The image with this color box is NOT created by me.

The overall theme of my exhibit is that people usually consider themselves as the protagonist in their own lives. In this body of work, I use the concept of function to explore the idea of egoism as self-interest verses selfishness and mutual benefit as it relates to intent. This exhibition allows the audience to not only think of some selfish people or behavior around them, but also it makes them question: “am I selfish?”, “is being selfish always a bad thing?” The concept of function goes through my whole exhibit. Combining the concept of function and egoism together suggests the goal of being self-interested is to turn everything “functional” and beneficial to themselves.

Artwork #1: *Rest on the Chair*

Objective: Self-interest people want to maximize their benefit, and they try to take advantage regardless the consequences and the feeling of others.

Artwork #2: *Beggar's Bowl*

Objective: Everyone is a bit self-interested, but they do not realize it.

Artwork #3: *Peck for Me, Peck for You*

Objective: Being self-interest can be beneficial not only to themselves but also others.

Objective #4: *See! I Got Skinnier!*

You thought some people are being kind to you, but they are actually utilize you and you are not aware of it until they finish using you.

Objective #5: *You Heard What I Heard*

If you complain about others taking advantage of you and using you all the time, hey, here's a suggestion: just be useless then no one could use you. However, some people will still benefit from you even if you are useless.

Plan of the First Artwork —*Rest on the Chair*

Idea Formation:

Self-interest people just care about their own feeling or benefits, but ignored the consequences and the feeling of others. I believe most of the people have encountered and probably even got hurt by such selfish behavior once before.

Objective: Self-interest people want to maximize their benefit, and they try to take advantage regardless the consequences and the feeling of others.

Relevance: Many people know that when subway arrived, people who want to take on the subway will usually stand on the sides and wait for people get out of it first. But some people do not care about others, and just rudely squeeze into it. I want to criticize such behavior, which leads to my first objective.

source:
photo by
myself



Design Idea:

This idea came from the time when I coincidentally overlap two chairs (as in the image at right) with each other, then I thought: “The top chair is too tired to stand, so it sits down on another chair”. In this design, I use two identical chairs that are same in shape, size, color, and function—a suggestive of the equal status between them. Then I will simply overlap these two chairs to show one is taking advantage of the other even they are actually equal. By overlapping, it cancels the function that provides people to sit, this represents the top chair regardless of the feeling of the bottom chair, and consequences of no one could sit anymore.

The balance is important in my design since I want two chairs to look stable. The yellow chairs shown at the left seems not stable. Therefore, I started to look for suitable chairs with suitable positions.

Critical Investigation of Fur Breakfast by Meret Oppenheim



Meret Oppenheim, *Object (Fur Breakfast)*, 1936, Fur-covered cup, saucer and spoon
Cup 4 3/8" (10.9 cm) in diameter; saucer 9 3/8" (23.7 cm) in diameter; spoon 8" (20.2 cm) long, overall height 2 7/8" (7.3 cm).
Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Oppenheim uses **simple technique and process** of fur-covering to create an unity between these three various objects — cup, saucer, and spoon — which forms a contrast between unity and variety. Also, the combination of gazelle fur with manufactured tea sets forms a biomorphic versus geometric contrast. Such contrasts arouse audience’s interest and query. By **juxtaposing** such unusual material with **daily functional object** together, the level of abstraction becomes ambiguous. Also, the texture of these three objects should be smooth, but the fur brings them an abstract fuzzy texture. By **recontextualizing** the tea sets, it creates an odd and disgusting sensation — imagine drinking from this furry cup. Such process of turning functional piece into useless form is one of the main concept of **Dadaism**

However, if the composition of two chairs places like this, it seems unstable and easy to collapse. So I started to look for the chairs that is suitable in my artwork design. And while I looking for chairs online, I also asked the merchant to test the chairs on Wechat (a social media instant messaging). Unfortunately, the results are quite unpleasant.



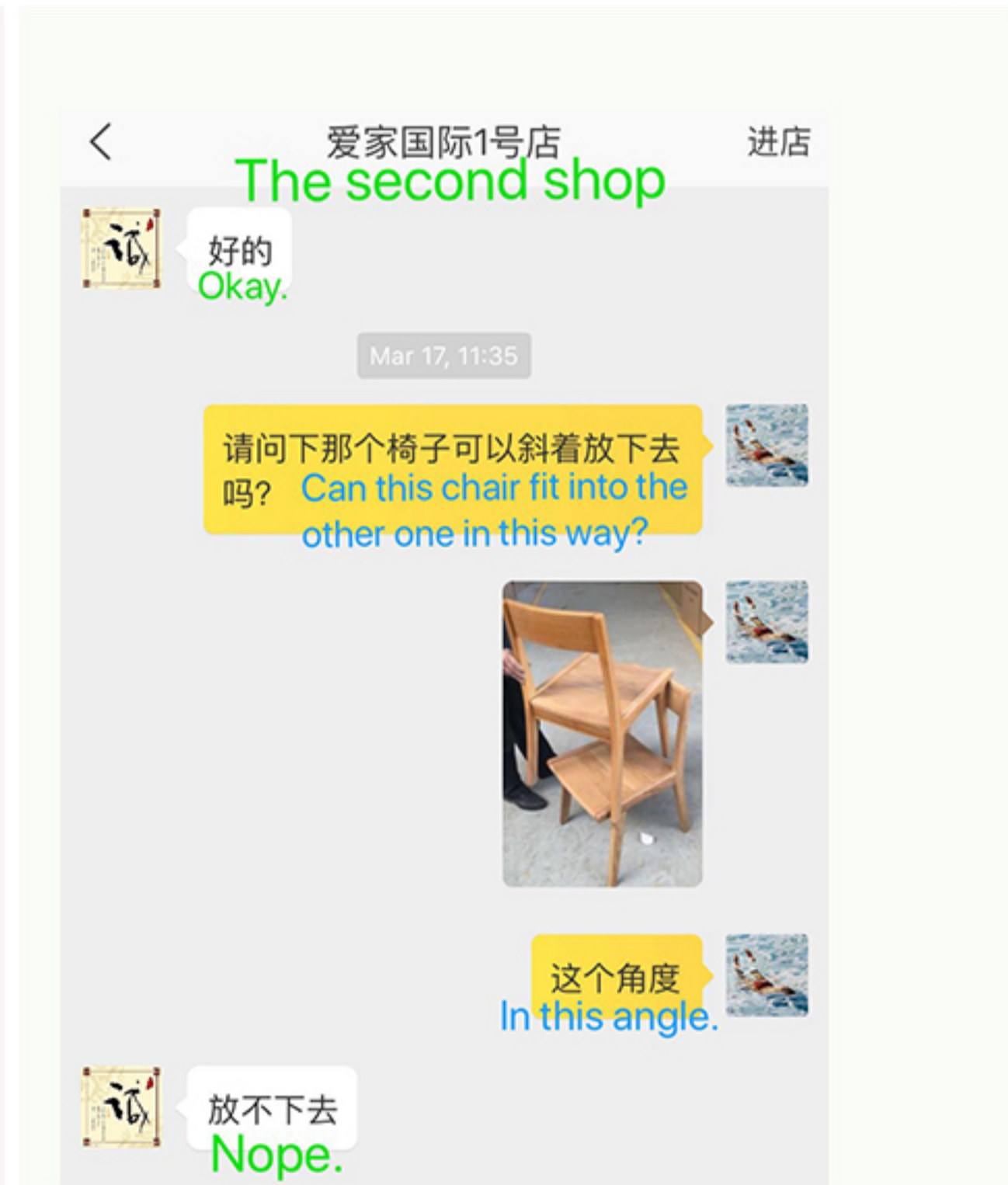
Process of Investigating Materials



First, I sent a link of the product to the merchant to tell him that I'm interested in this product.

I introduce myself in this way, just simply shows who am I and explain the situation.

He directly rejected me. End of the story. 😞



This is the second shop, and this person is so much nicer, he sent me photos of the ways to place it. I sent one of his photo back to him and ask him to push the upper chair down a little bit, but unfortunately, no.

Through the process, I certainly see the selfishness by interacting with some of the merchants.

Here is a quick summary of all the chairs I have examined. Also in this page, it shows how I **consider** about the material and the type of the chairs.

Process of Investigating Materials:



I tested four possible types of chairs. Specific details are shown below:

1. **Plastic folding chairs.** These chairs seems too weak and cheap. Not a good option for presenting in a formal exhibition.

2. **Outdoor furniture.** It is convenient to put one chair on the other one. But, it is an outdoor furniture and does not suitable to my objective, since I want to talk about a more general situation.



3. **Children folding chairs.** Children are not mature enough to consider others' feelings, and just consider of their own needs. But, children could also represent pure and innocent, which contradict with what I said. Also, it probably makes more sense that the top chair is acting like a child, how about the bottom one? This is confusing. Just use normal, regular folding chairs is better. And it has the same problem with the first chair, looks cheap and fragile.

Final Work



Reflection:

Technique is needed to be advanced in future, this artwork has low technical skills since it just only found objects. I have to fulfill the IB requirements (Criterion B, technical competence) as a body of work. Therefore, I should show more decent technical skills in later work.

Choice of material: wood, it is a more common and firm material, as I want to show my objective is commonly happened on everyone.

Choice of the type:

It has crosspieces--supports one chair on top of the other one; and by placing in this way, the function got canceled.

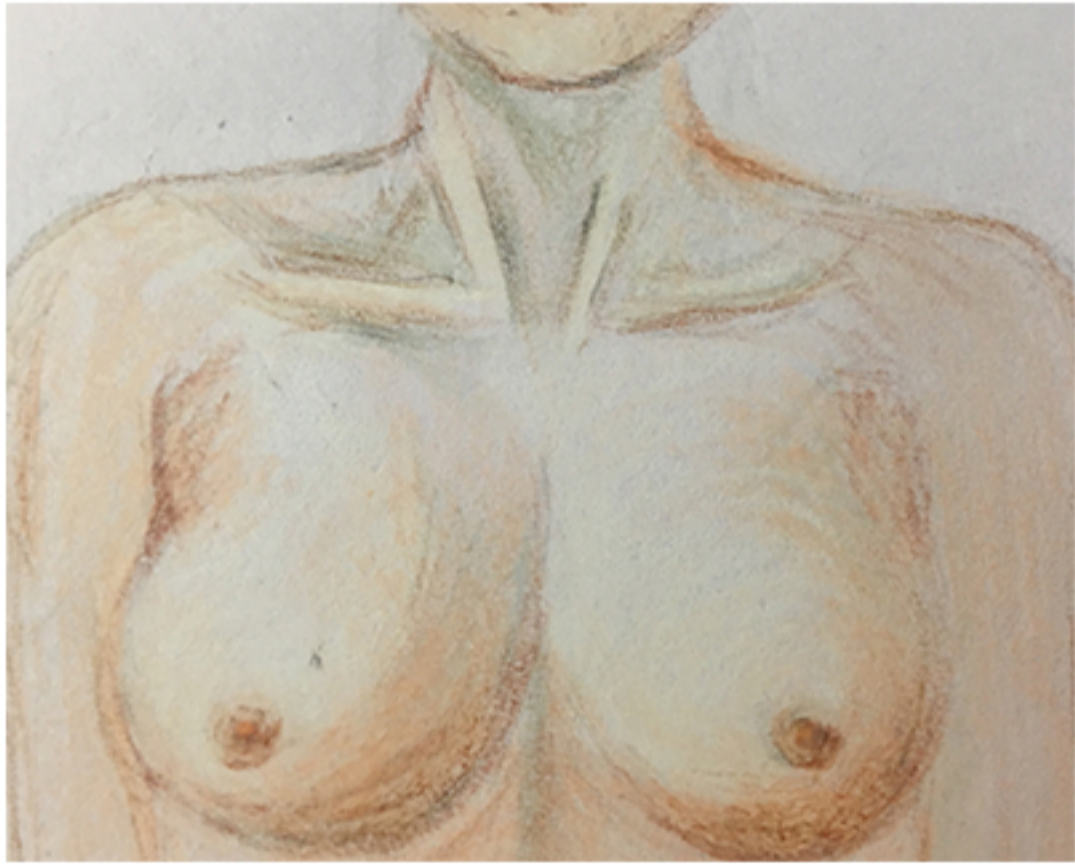
Title: *Rest on the Chair*
Media: Two wooden chairs (not self-made, Manufactured by Xiaofen Zhong's Bamboo Crafts Studio 龙泉市钟晓芬竹木制品店).
Size: 35 cm x 150 cm x 44 cm (together)

Plan of the Second Artwork—*Beggar's Bowl*

Idea Formation and Development: Most of the people have a tendency of criticizing or judging other people strictly, but making exceptions for themselves. Self-interest is a common human behavior, but people sometimes found selfishness on others instead of themselves, and even do not realize what they've done is actually selfish.

Objective: Everyone is a bit self-interest, but they do not realize it.

Relevance: There was one time, our teacher asked us a question, and my classmate does not know the answer and looked for my help. I helped him, but I saved the best answer for myself. This leads to my second objective.



Development of Design Ideas:

Design Concept: Nowadays, to be exposed some part of our body becomes more acceptable than before. But some people are still conservative, for example, wearing one-piece swimming suit rather than bikini.


← In this artwork, I will paint a zoomed view of a woman's chest, and the art right now are totally fine with nude, and viewers will think it is normal to see a nude in an artwork. However, what if the model in the painting is actually unwilling to show her body?

At first, I got an idea of asking people for the clothing on them as the material of this artwork. But my guess is that not much people will donate their clothes to me since they are wearing it. Moreover, if someone give their clothes to me, then I cannot support this objective. So I considered another way:

There are **several clothing hooks** on this girl, which turns this artwork a functional piece. This is similar with Fisher's work -- **both create a seemingly unrelated functional metal piece juxtaposed onto a female figure**. When people hang their clothes, it is not because they want to cover her body, but because of their own convenience. They just consider about their own needs, but did not aware to care about others.

By an inspiration from a beggar with a bowl his hand, the hooks are like the beggar's bowl, begging people to hook their clothes on and help to cover herself on silently. Because of this similarity between beggar and figure in my work, so I planned to name my artwork as *Beggar's Bowl*.

Critical Investigation of *Invisible Problem* by Urs Fischer



Invisible Problem, Urs Fischer, 2013, Aluminum panel, aluminum honey-comb, two-component epoxy adhesive, two-component epoxy primer, acrylic primer, gesso, acrylic ink, spray enamel, acrylic silkscreen medium, acrylic paint, 96 x 72 x 1 1/4 inches, (243.9 x 182.9 x 3.2 cm), Photo by Mats Nordman

Fischer creates a **seemingly unrelated functional metal piece juxtaposed onto an attractive female figure** to express her idea.



I made several design changes based on evaluating different artists previously. This is shown in chart below.

Artist Influence



Witty Shadow Pictures: Angler, Lobster, and Ark Shell, Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Gallery Beniya

- Japanese Ukiyoe style woodcut print
- Formal contrast (the shadow looks alike lobster, but actually it is not)



Design and Reason Why is Insufficient

I had planned that: firstly, print a good one; secondly, destroy the woodblock; tertiary, print again with the damaged woodblock. I planned to display all these three parts in my exhibition. I tried to use damaged woodblock to show it is selfish, and the third part shows the consequences caused by it.

However, first, there is no benefit of woodcut destroying it self; second, the use of Japanese Ukiyoe is not strong; third, it is not suitable with the objective “everyone is a bit self-interest, but they do not realize it”.

Here are two designs for the woodblock.



Crowd #2 (Emma), Alex Prager, 2012, pigment print, 59*80.7 inches, Lehmann Maupin, New York and Hong Kong.

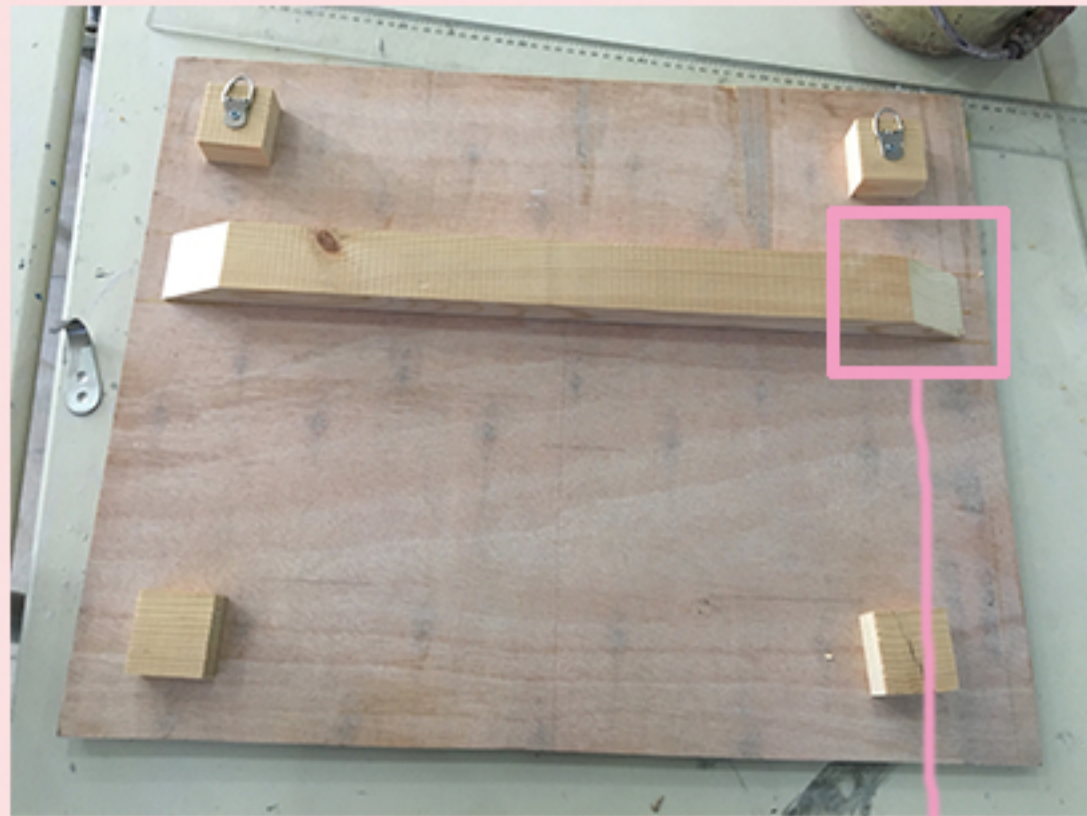


- High angel of view
- Major focus (crowd vs. individual; unity vs. variety; motion vs. motionless)

I had decided to create a scene of elevator, and everyone is holding a ball. One person tries to get in the elevator but there is no space. But someone could throw the ball away, but no one does so, even the person who tries to get in. This describes everyone is self-interested, and they are all not willing to let go the ball.

However, firstly, the design influenced from Prager is too direct and not creative enough; secondly, although this design fulfill “everyone is a bit selfish” part, not express the “do not realize” part; thirdly, it does not make clear what does the ball represents. Therefore I cancelled this design idea.

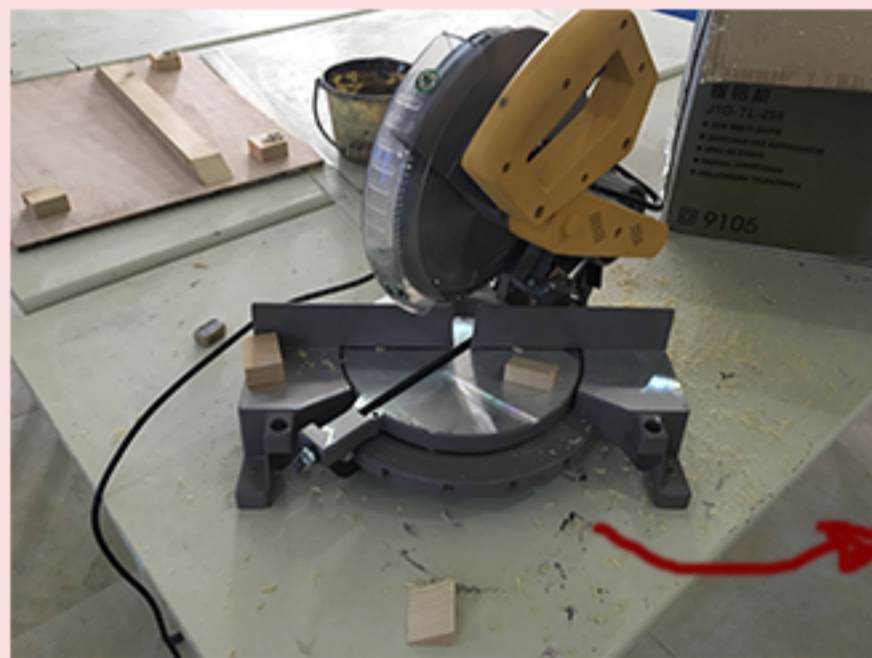
Process and Formation of My Artwork



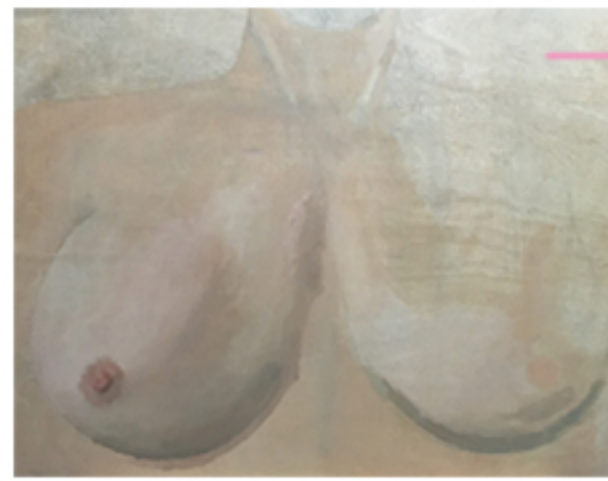
Because my wood is too thin, so I made some wood attachments in order to let the screws not get through my artwork.



The diagonal shape prevents viewers see the wood pieces at the back.



These wood pieces are all cut by miter saw.



The lights are quite low, so the intensity here is lower than the final image.



Putting the hooks on.



This is my final artwork from the front (left) and from the side (up).

Title: *Beggar's Bowl*
Media: Oil on wood and clothing hooks (from Taobao).
Size: 62x50x5 cm

Reflection:

- Oil paint is a good choice since it is a natural fit for showing the tonal gradations of flesh.
- The value contrast is higher in the sketch, but in the final artwork, the color contrast is lower. Low contrast is okay since this figure is in a situation as a beggar.
- The negative space is not considered in the design process. Everything have to be 100% considered before making an artwork. This must be improved next time. It is probably better if the negative space is this woman's hair.
- Human body proportion (including angle of the neck and shoulders) adjustment must be fixed before the painting.
- How could future work interact with this artwork in the future? There could be some interaction between artworks.

Plan of the Third Artwork

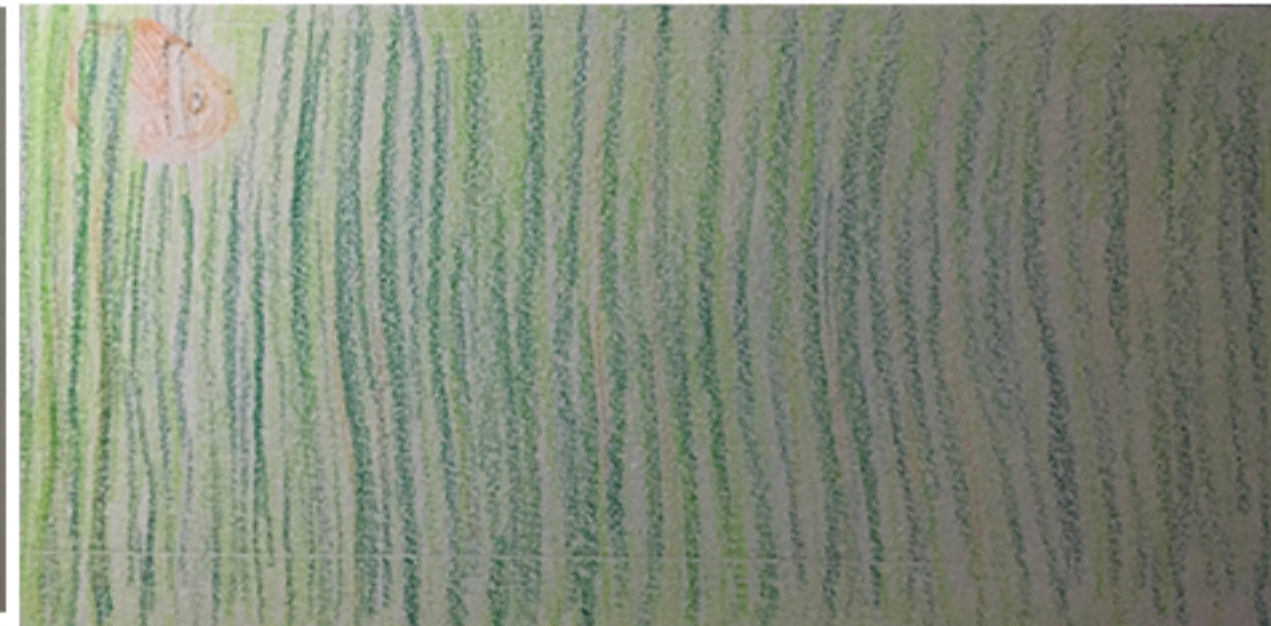
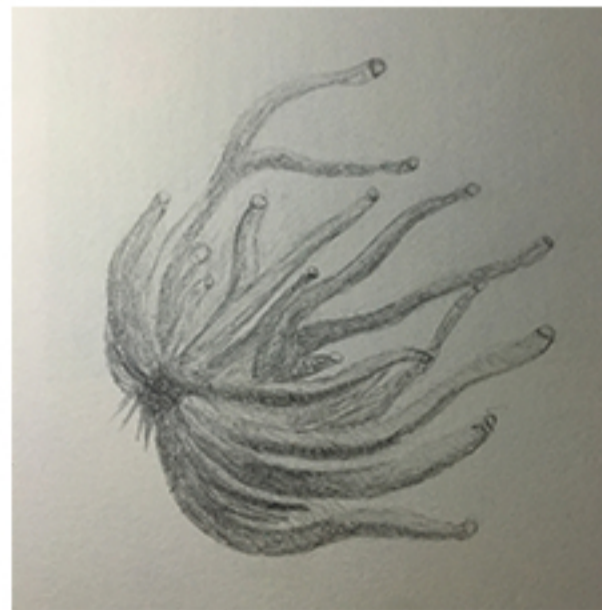
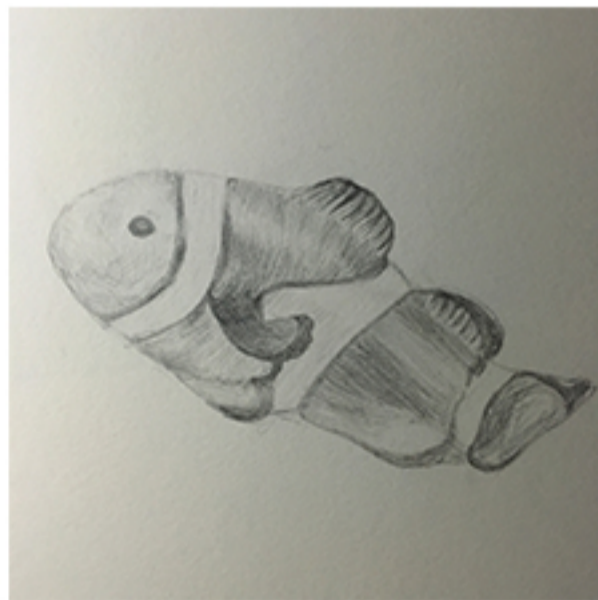
—Peck for Me, Peck for You

Idea Formation and Development:
 In previous two artworks, I talked about the negative side of being selfish. I start to consider that is being selfish only has bad effects? There are positive effects of being selfish also.

Objective:
 Being self-interest can be beneficial not only to themselves but also others.

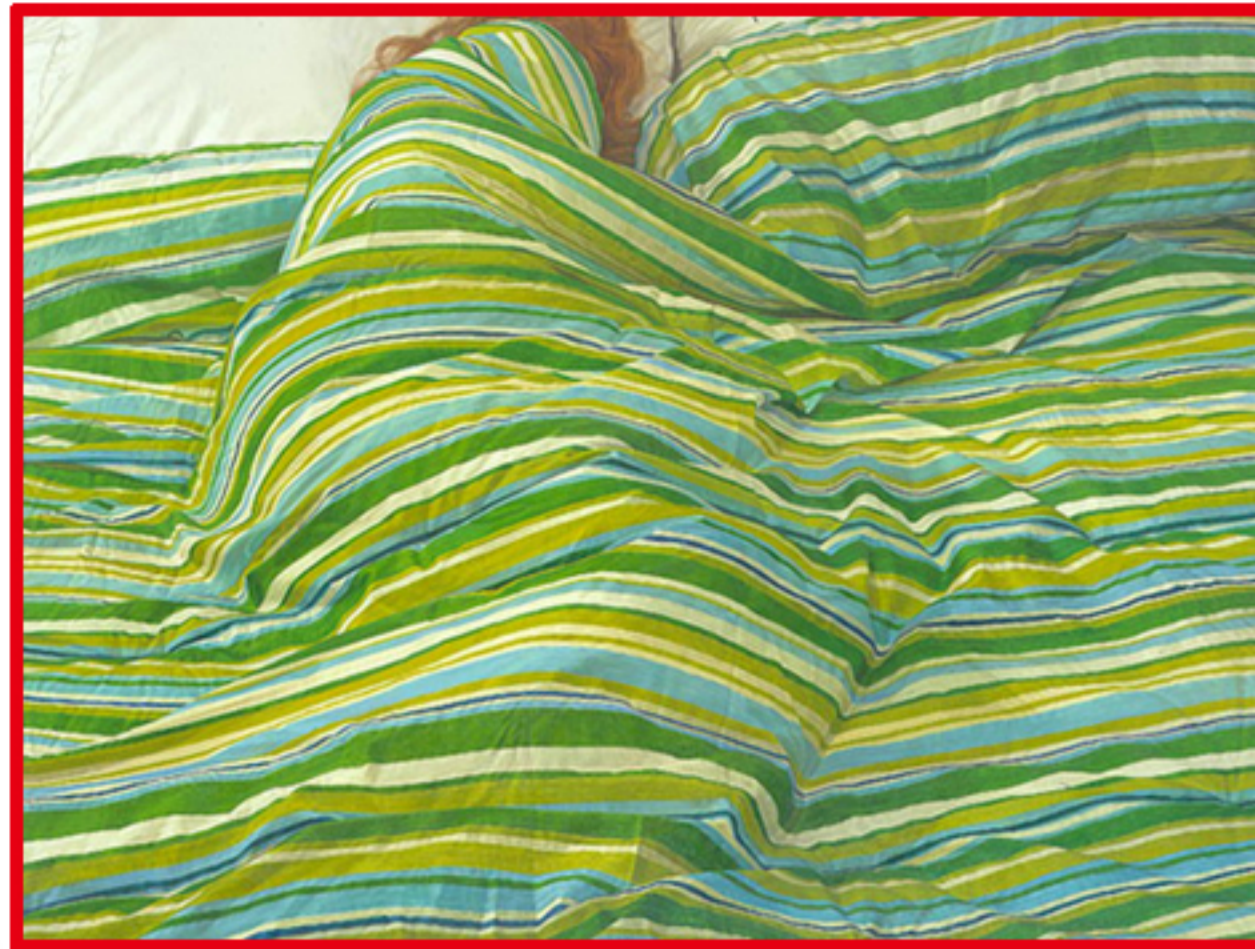
Relevance: Humans sometimes is acting like symbiotic species--some people get along with each other is because of they can both get what they want from each other.

Observational Drawings



Final Design Idea: I decide to use the combination of zebra and oxpecker. Oxpecker remove ticks and other skin parasites from the coat of zebra, relieving itching and pain. This symbiotic relationship helps illustrating my objective -- oxpecker filled their belly with the parasites (filled their own benefit), and by doing this zebra will feel comfortable (benefit others).

Critical Investigation of *Comforter* by Catherine Murphy



Comforter, Catherine Murphy, 2007, oil on canvas

- **Organization of space**, and top small area gives clarity to the whole artwork
- **Ambiguity**, viewers do not know what actually is in the blanket (A boy or a girl? Old or young? Sick or healthy?)
- **Major focus** (without the little space, this artwork will become non-objective)
- **Formal contrast** (the upper small area is shown in contrasting complimentary colors)

Previous Design Idea: Clownfish and sea anemone are in symbiotic relationship. Clownfish seek food for sea anemone since sea anemone move slowly. And sea anemone (has poison) protects clownfish from its predator. The design has a compositional relationship with Murphy's work. However, this design is a bit cartoony so I changed my thought.

Process of *Peck for Me, Peck for You*:



At left is my final sketch. This design depicts the curve of zebra, and little footprints of birds. I had planned to let real little birds to step on it, however, two little birds got scared every time I get close to them. So I conclude that forcing them step on it is not a good option. Also ink is too difficult to wash it off from their little feet, so I changed my plan. I carved a little stamp of footprint instead. Stamping is similar to the jumping process of birds.



I printed many times, some of them cannot be used because of too much ink or also sometime too less ink. Such as this:



Reflection:

- Include better observational drawings.
- The stamps can be used in exhibition space, for instance, on the wall, on the ground, even on the audience, etc. This requires more detailed consideration.



Title: *Peck for Me, Peck for You*
Media: Woodcut and stamps.
Size: 30x85 cm.

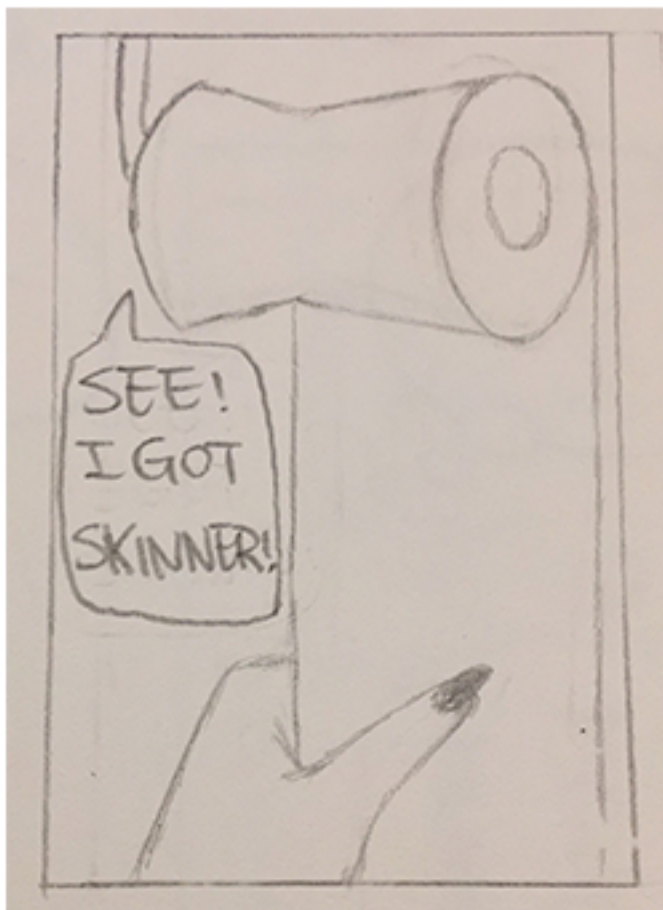
Plan of the Fourth Artwork — See! I Got Skinnier!

Idea Formation:

Pervious idea talks about people can benefit themselves and also benefit from each other. However, some people might pretend they are nice and take advantage of you. But when you need help from them, they will be gone.

Objective: You thought some people are being kind to you, but they are actually utilize you and you are not aware of it until they finish using you.

Relevance: It is nice that people could help each other (benefit themselves, benefit each other) like zebra and oxpecker (in symbiotic relationship). However, some people will pretend they are your oxpeckers. Not the ones help you to get rid of the parasite but it is the “oxpecker” eats your meat and drinks your blood.



Design Idea:

- People who utilize others see those people as tools, once they finish using the tools, they will “toss” them away (**dark humor/satire**). They see the victims as toilet paper (**symbolize**), after using them whipping their butt, they will toss it. Toilet paper are “cheap” (not important), and the process of using it is “formulaic” (get them, use them, abandon them).
- I will use comic form (**pop art**) and toilet paper yells “See! I got skinnier!” (**use of image with text**) shows that the toilet paper thinks what’s happening to it is a good thing.
- As Lichtenstein’s work, the main characters in both artworks are not aware of the situation but the audience knows, which creates **dramatic irony**.

The image on the left is my final composition.

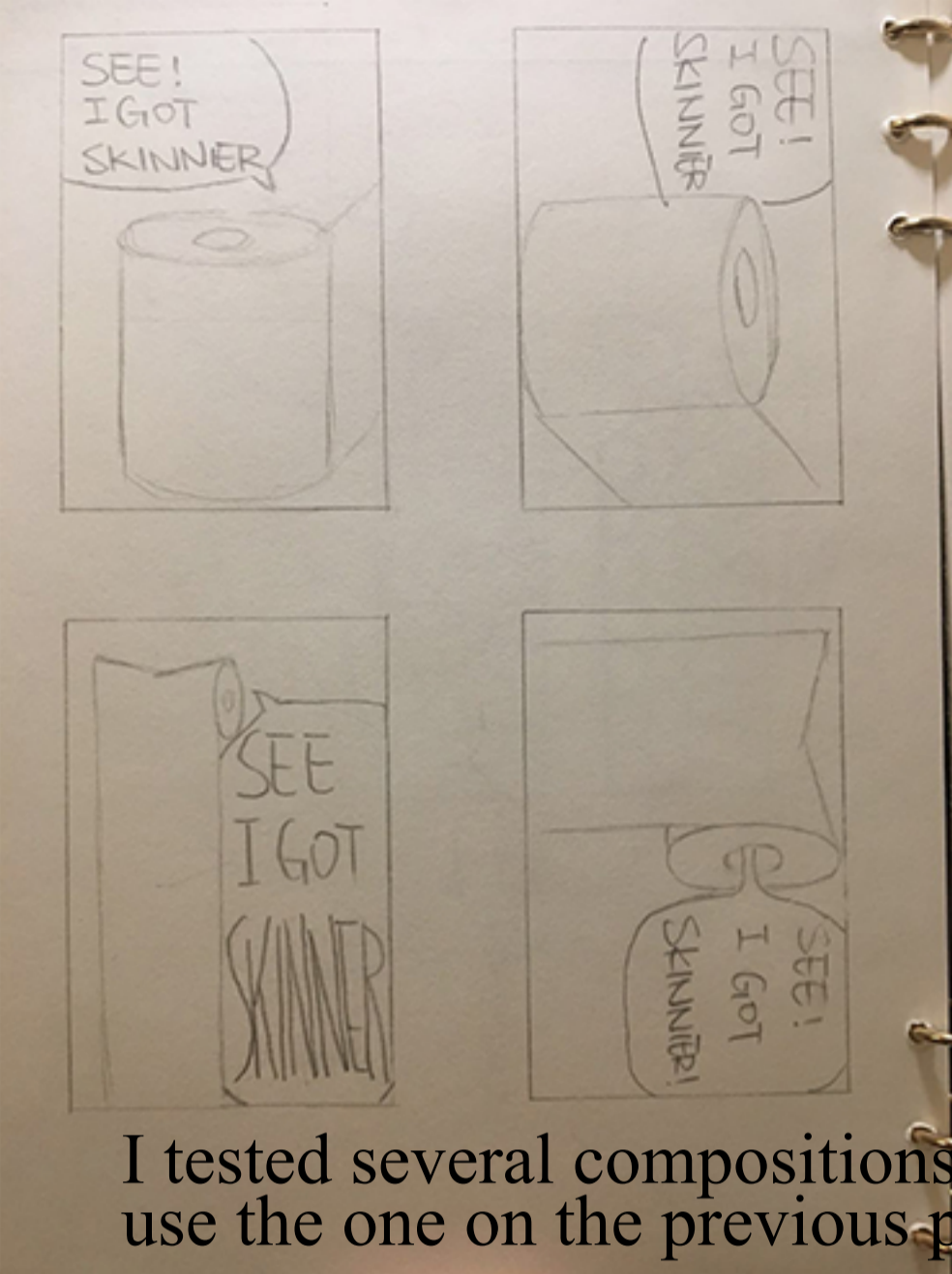
Critical Investigation of *Look Mickey* by Roy Lichtenstein



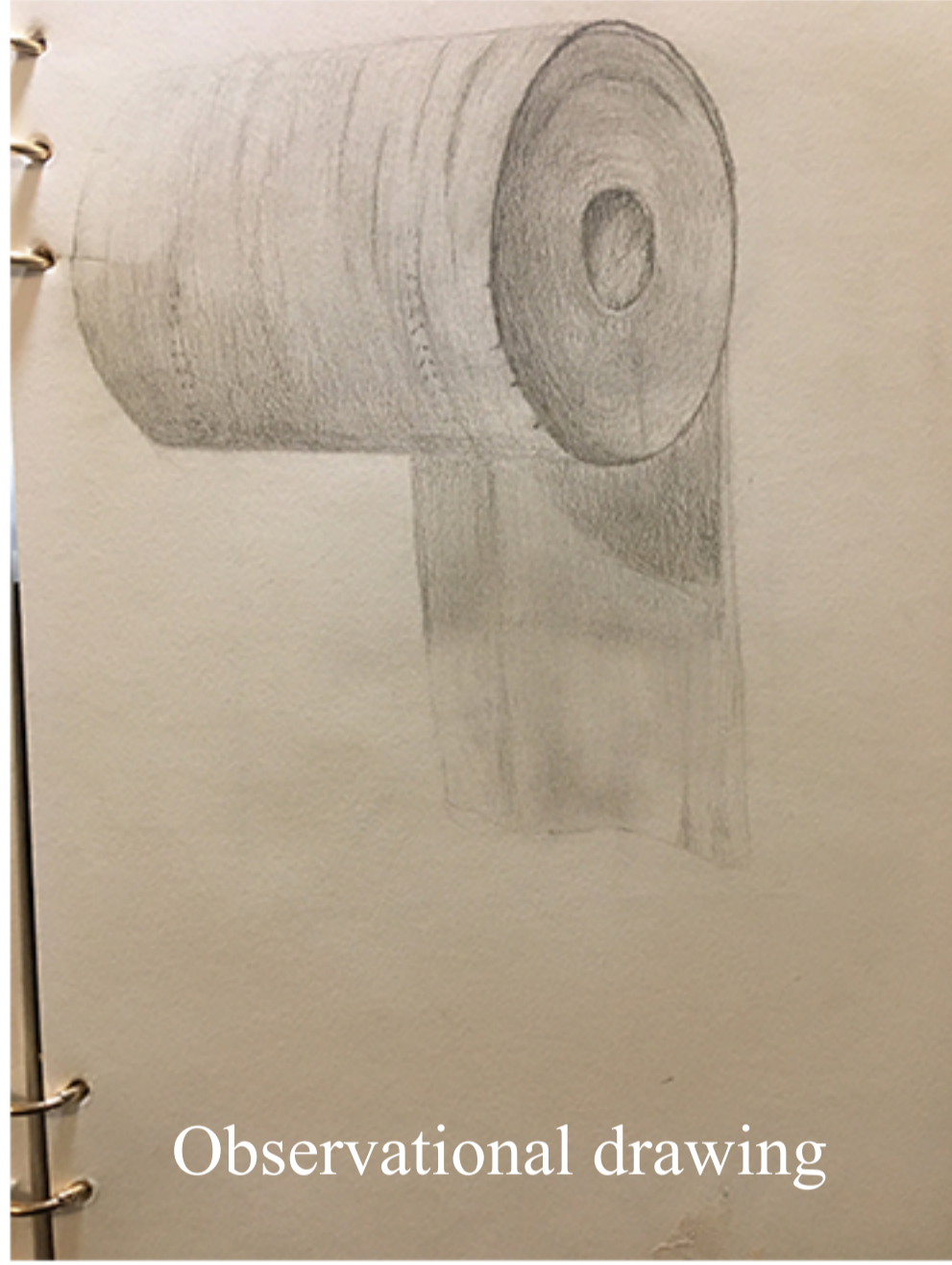
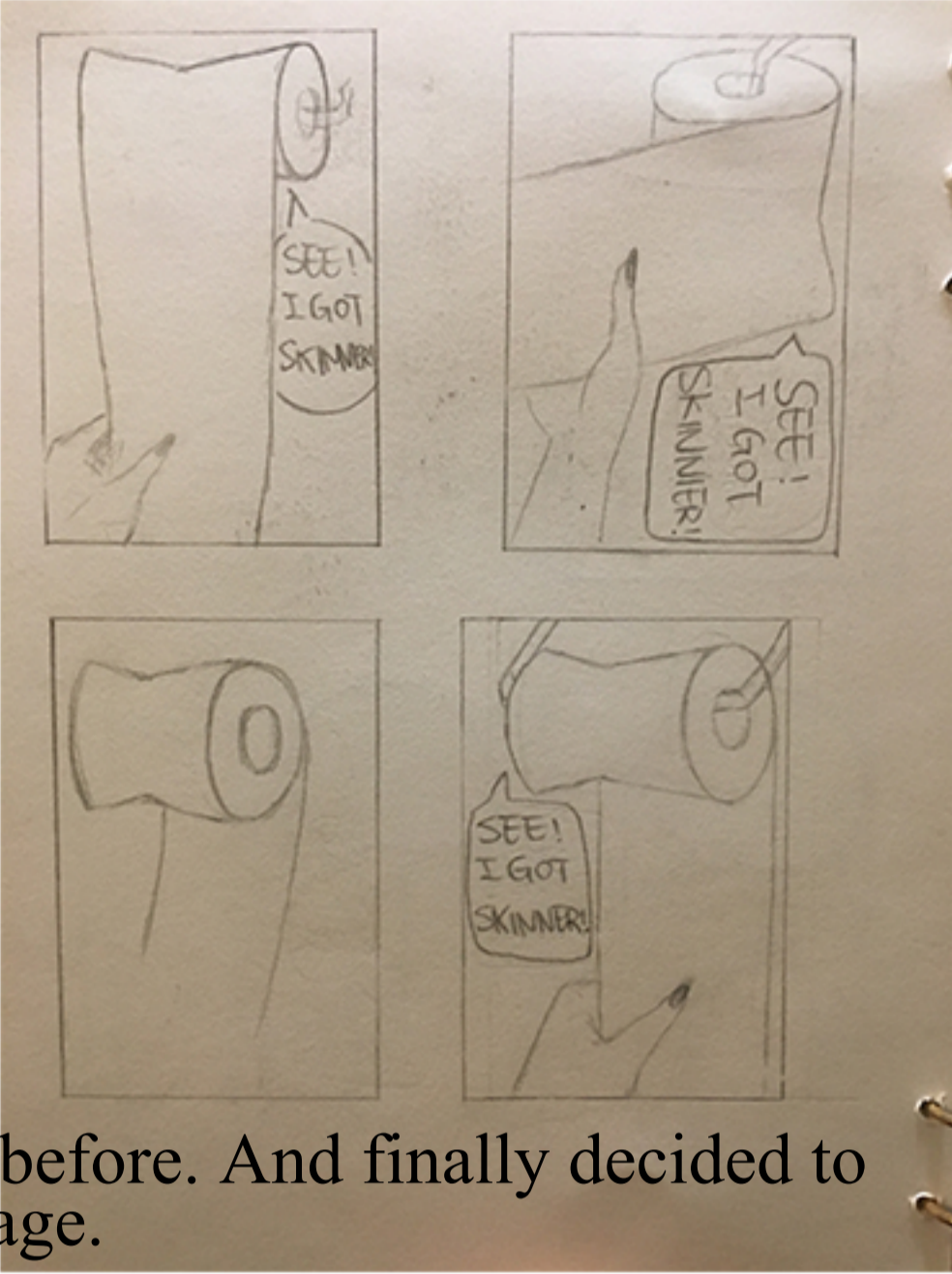
Roy Lichtenstein, *Look Mickey*, 1961, oil on canvas, 122*175 cm (48*69 inch), National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

Lichtenstein uses **pop art** to create a **humor** piece, which includes **dramatic irony** in the artwork (Everyone except Donald knows he hooks on himself). Lichtenstein is different among all the peers and colleagues, he pursues for formalism which is very unusual at that time. Both Micky Mouse and Donald Duck are Lichtenstein himself. For making himself as, Donald Duck, he believes he has finally “hooked” the “big one”. For making himself as Micky Mouse, he is using laughter to protect himself in case his work is not well accepted by others.

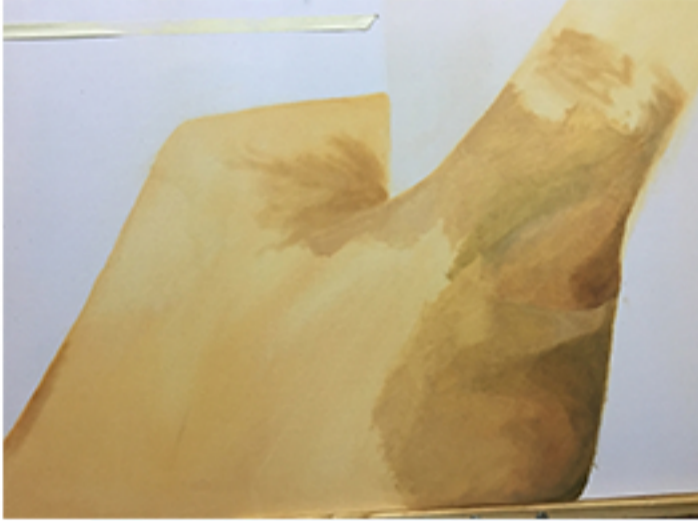
Process of Creating this Work



I tested several compositions before. And finally decided to use the one on the previous page.



Observational drawing



At first, color of the hand is too yellow, later, I adjusted it better.





I will place a bucket of toilet paper core in front of this big canvas. The cores could help making clear the subject in my artwork. Moreover, they create a big vs. small and single vs. multiple contrast. Such stark contrast suggests that the big toilet paper on the canvas is being considered as useful, but once it used up, it will become small, less important, and then got tossed away. And the bucket is like a garbage can, many other cores got abandoned there. This hints that it is a common thing happen to us, and which are caused by human selfishness.

Title: *See! I Got Skinnier!*

Medium: Oil on canvas, marker

Size: 100 cm x 150 cm

Reflection: - The technical skill improved from the previous oil painting (*Beggar's Bowl*), but however, it is still pretty basic. I will apply more sophisticated technical skill into my body of work.

- I did not consider how the size of hand could help to achieve my objective (should it be skinnier or be fatter?). Such detail should be consider more carefully in future works.

- The connection with artist (Lichtenstein) is strong and creative.

Plan of the Fifth Artwork — *You Heard What I Heard*

Idea Formation:

I originally want to make an artwork about “if something is 100% useless, no one would ever take advantage of it nor benefit from it anymore”. However, this is not possible. If I create an artwork that is 100% useless, but if I present it in an exhibition and upload to IB, this means that I am still using it. Thus, it is impossible to make something 100% useless. Therefore, this is how this objective is formed.

Objective: If you complain about others taking advantage of you and using you all the time, hey, here’s a suggestion: just be useless then no one could use you. However, some people will still benefit from you even if you are useless.

Relevance: Nothing can be 100% useless. For instance, students might consider a piece of used scratch paper as useless. But for paper-making company, it is still valuable for them to recycle it.

First Design: The angle of view of this video is from the hole where the earphone will be plugged in (This might not be recognizable at first, but viewers will know later). The scene will be a girl plugs in the earphone and listens to it. But the thing is she does not plugged in, since if it in it, it will be filled and does not have extra space. By combining the title, audience could know she does not really listen to music.

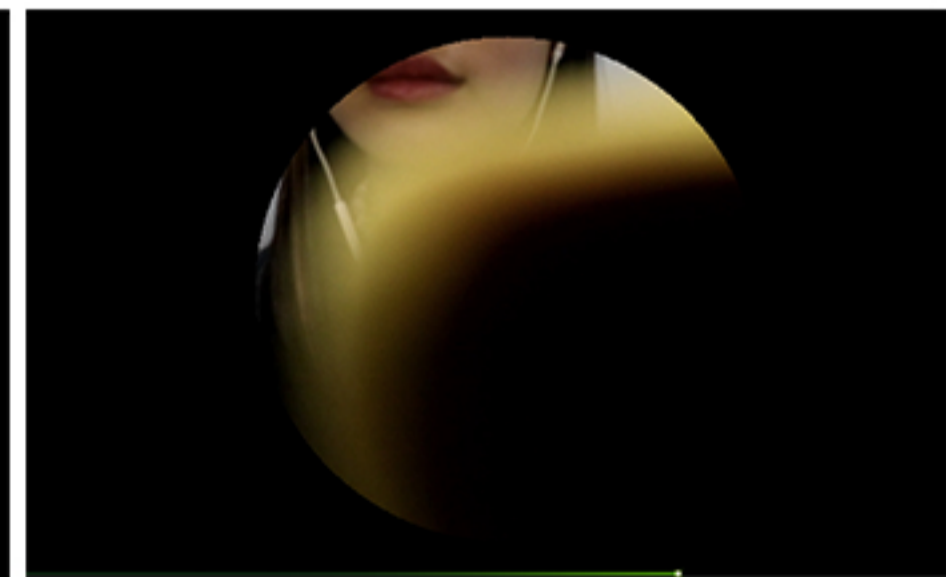
The title *You Heard What I Heard* can be a hint to the viewers. In IB Visual Art requirement, there is no sound allowed. Therefore, what viewers hear from the video is silent. And what viewers heard is what the volume of the earphone is.



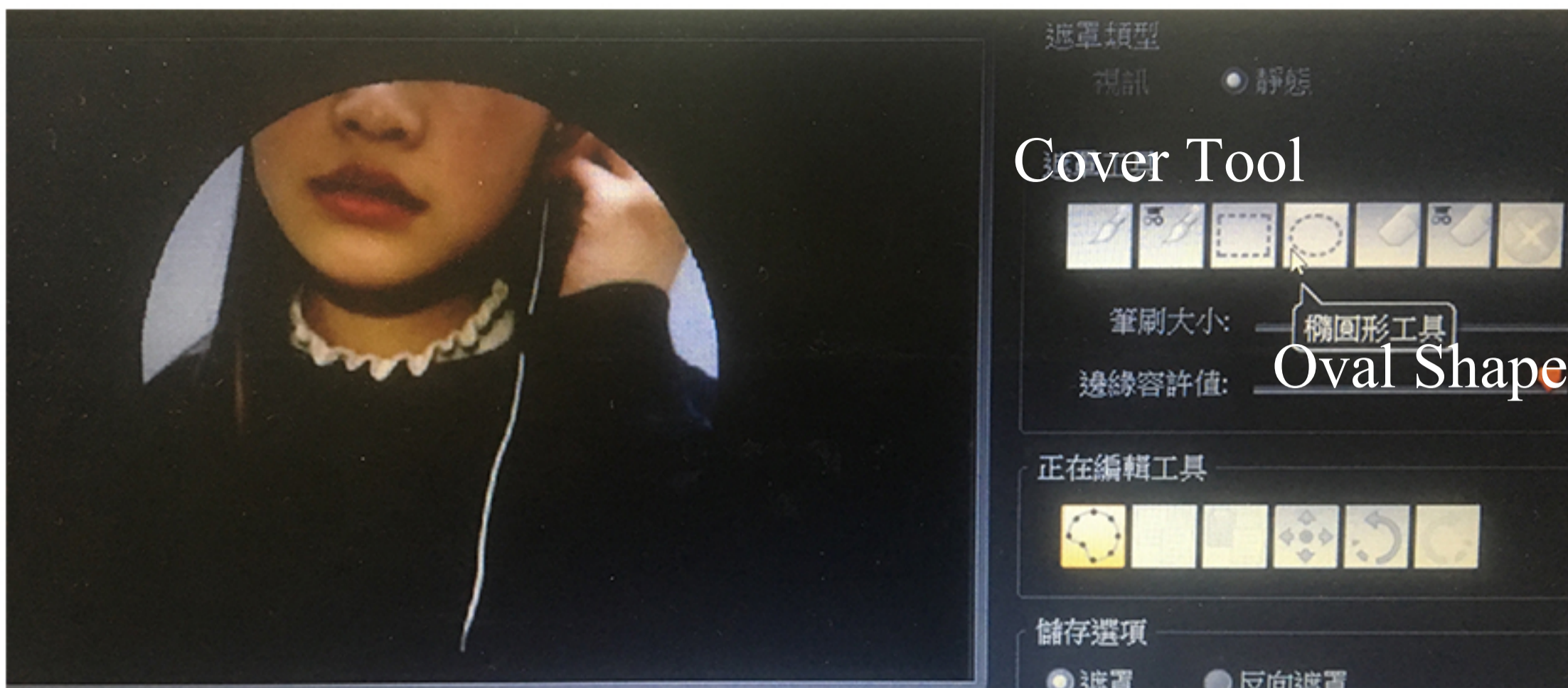
Untitled, David Levinthal, 1975, gelatin silver print, 9 1/8 by 11 1/8 inches
In Levinthal’s work, he tricks the viewers with ambiguous proportion. The soldiers at the background are actually toy soldiers, and the “grass” at the foreground is actually a coat. By cooperating with the size and proportion, it turns out to be seems like a battle field.



video 00:01



video 00:17



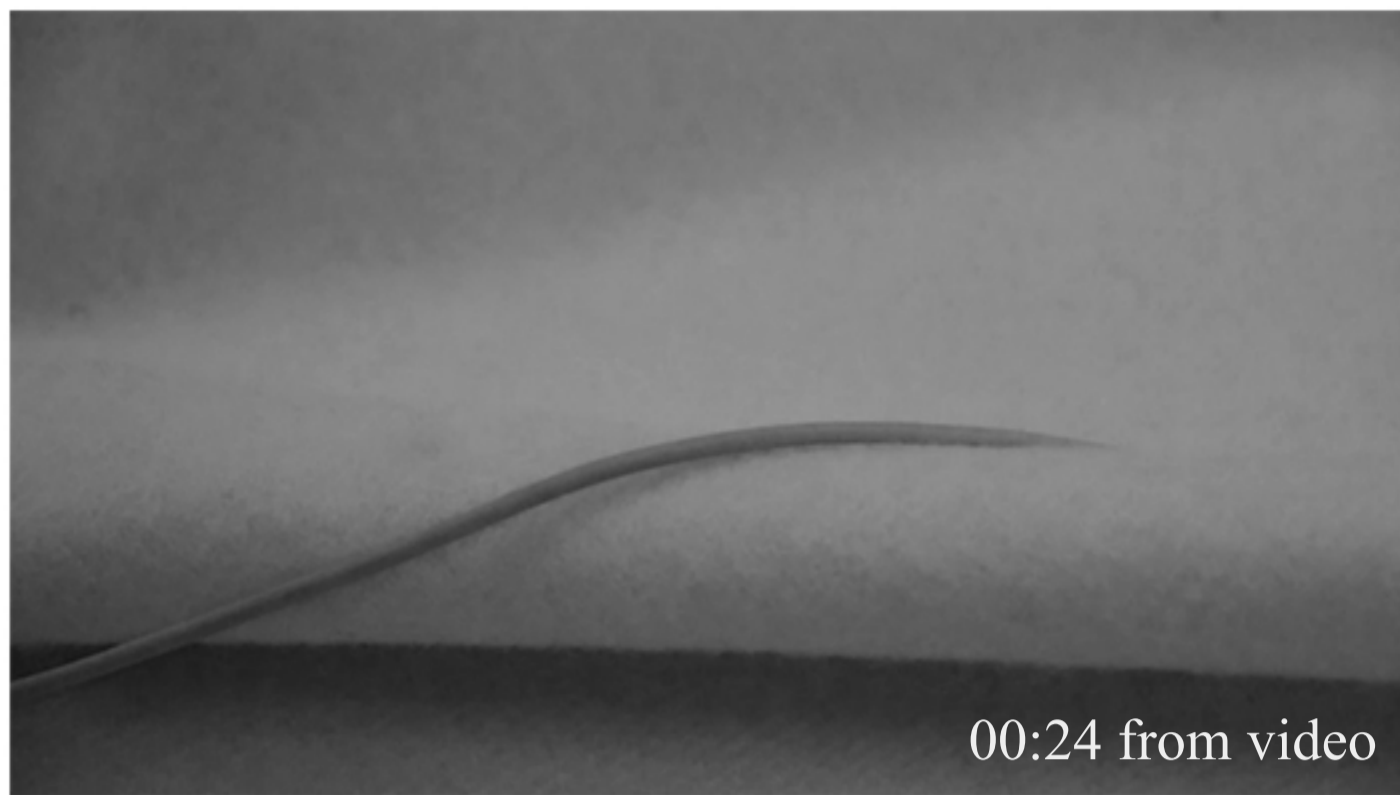
I used oval shape in the cover tool to make the whole frame as earphone's hole.

The reason why I did not use this design is that the whole video seems confusing, and it is hard to understand without detailed explanation.

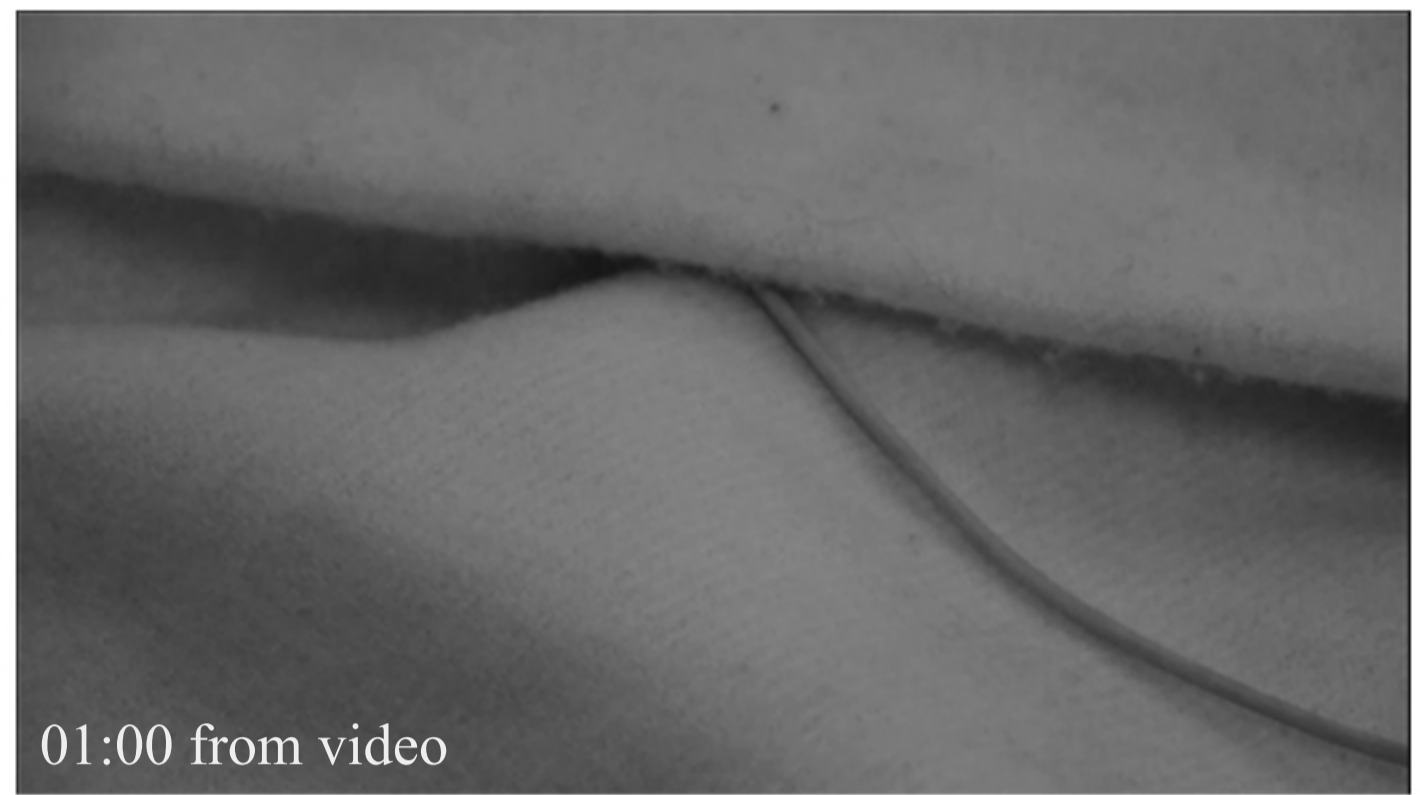
Final Design: I use angle of view and the strategy of delay to manipulate subject recognition in this video. The beginning shows that this earphone is broken, but at last, the girl in the video is still pretending to listen to the earphone! This means that although earphone lost its real function (listening to music), however, it still can be used as a camouflage for unwanted attention from others. Moreover, it has strong detail at the beginning and the end, which contrasts with the minimal part in the middle.



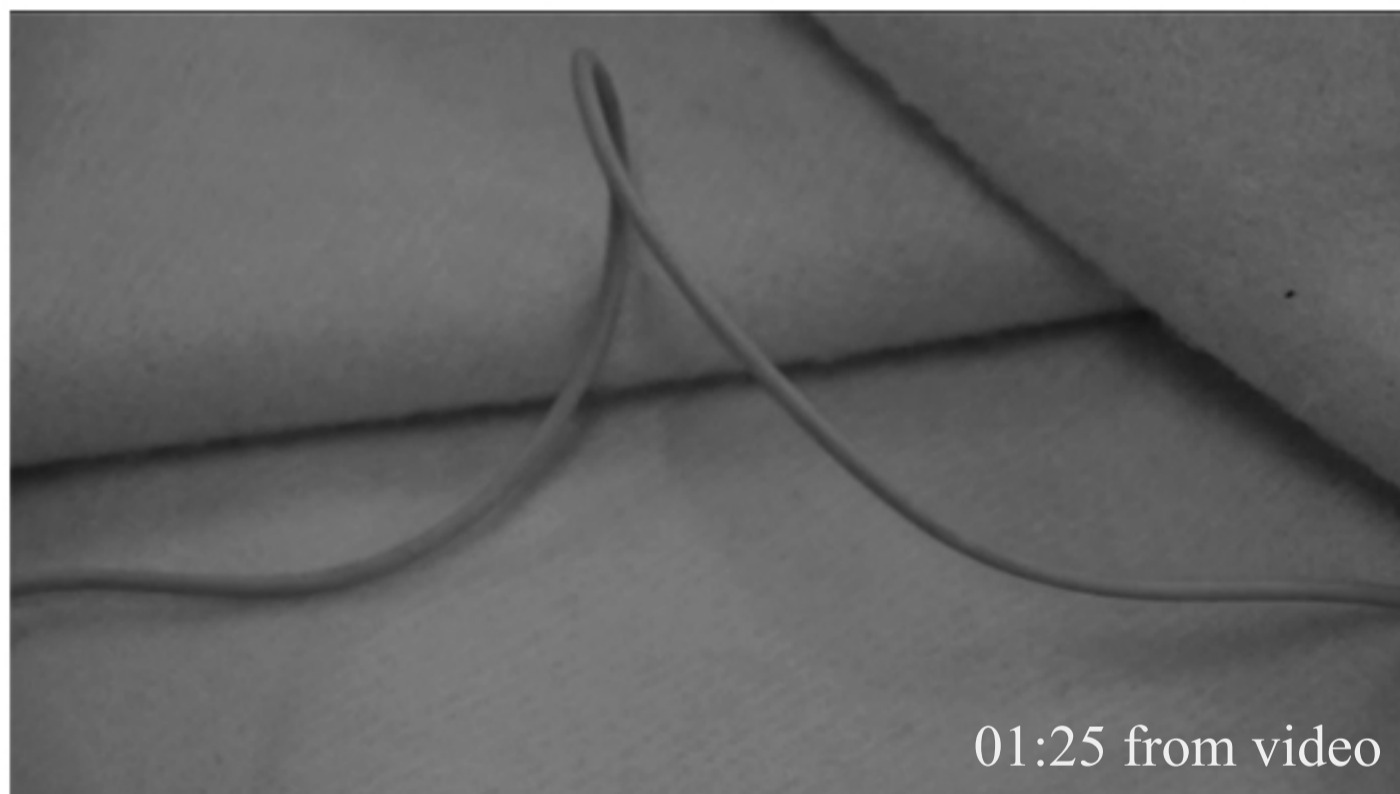
The detail view on the beginning and the end both only lasts for 2-3 seconds. However, the middle minimal part takes about 3 minutes (my whole video's length is 03:08 minutes). This is a contrast of time duration with a quick recognizable moment, a long period of ambiguity, and then one more quick recognizable moment.



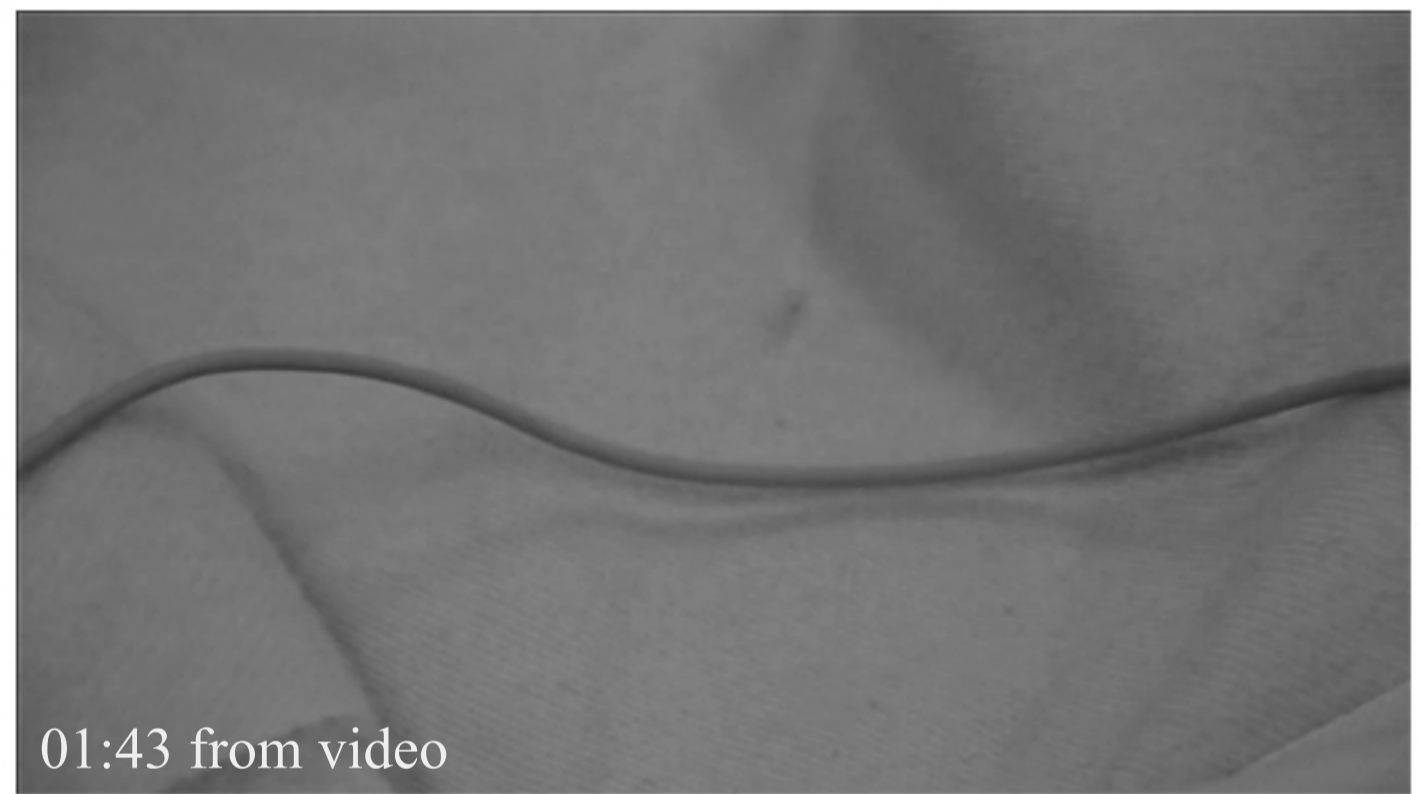
00:24 from video



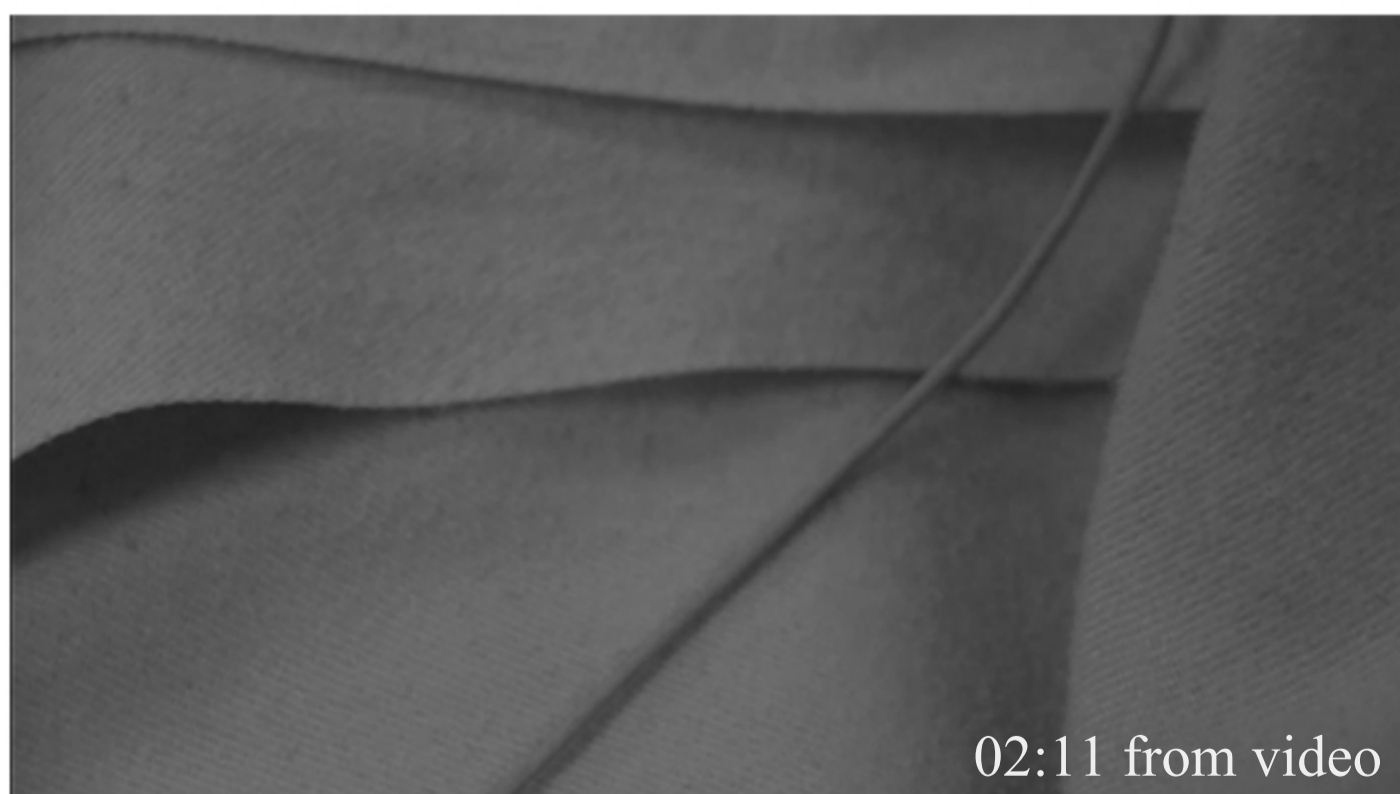
01:00 from video



01:25 from video



01:43 from video



02:11 from video



02:26 from video

This is the middle section which is more ambiguous than the short beginning and the short end sections. This adds to the “camouflage” or the ruse of pretending you can’t hear others.



Since one earphone is not enough long, therefore, I connected with several earphones. And I hide the head and tail under the scarf.



I have to move the camera while taking the video. It is important to remain stable since I want the frame to be stable. Therefore, I put the camera with tripod on a movable table. When I started to record, I slowly pushed this table forward. I used iMovie to adjusted the whole frame into black and white, in order to let the subject more unrecognizable.

Artwork Title: *You Heard What I Heard*

Medium: Digital video

Size: 282.7 MB (file size); 03:08 (time of duration)

Reflection:

- The idea of manipulating the “sound” idea is interesting.
- Suitable use of media (video).
- Design could be more

Bibliography

List of Images:

page 2:

- Object (Fur Breakfast), Meret Oppenheim, 1936, Fur-covered cup, saucer and spoon, overall height 2 7/8" (7.3 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Image Source: Fred S. Kleiner, Gardner's Art Through the Ages, A Global History, Thirteenth Edition, 2005 Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 20 Channel Center Street, Boston, MA 02210, USA

- Two chairs

Image Source: taken by myself (primary source)

page 3:

- Two chairs

Image Source: taken by myself (primary source)

- Two screenshots from my phone

Image Source: taken by myself (primary source)

page 4:

- A White Plastic folding chair (manufactured by ikea)

Image Source: taken by myself (primary source)

- A outdoor furniture chair (manufactured by Xiaofen Zhong's Bamboo Crafts Studio)

Image Source: Online shop from Zhong's Bamboo Crafts Studio

- A children folding chair (manufactured by Xiaojiang Jiang's Shop)

Image Source: Online shop from Jiang's shop

- My final artwork, Two chairs (manufactured by Xiaofen Zhong's Bamboo Crafts Studio)

Image Source: taken by myself (primary source)

page 5:

- A sketch of woman's chest

Image Source: drew by myself (primary source)

- A sketch of woman's chest with hooks

Image Source: drew by myself (primary source)

- Invisible Problem, Urs Fischer, 2013, Aluminum panel, aluminum honeycomb, two-component epoxy adhesive, two-component epoxy primer, acrylic primer, gesso, acrylic ink, spray enamel, acrylic silkscreen medium, acrylic paint, 96 x 72 x 1 1/4 inches, (243.9 x 182.9 x 3.2 cm), Photo by Mats Nordman

Image Source: Urs Fisher official website (<http://www.ursfischer.com>). [Accessed Date: April 2017]

page 6:

- Witty Shadow Pictures: Angler, Lobster, and Ark Shell, Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Gallery Beniya

Image source: Serper, Zvika. "Eroticism in Itami's The Funeral and Tam-popo : Juxtaposition and Symbolism." Cinema Journal, University of Texas Press, 29 May 2003, muse.jhu.edu/article/43024. [Accessed Date: Apr. 2017]

- Crowd #2 (Emma), Alex Prager, 2012, pigment print, 59*80.7 inches,

Lehmann Maupin, New York and Hong Kong.

Image source: Slenske, Michael. "Alex Prager's Crowd Control." W Magazine, 15 Dec. 2016, www.wmagazine.com/story/alex-prager-face-in-the-crowd.

[Accessed Date: September 2017]

- Two pencil sketches

Image source: drew by myself (primary source)

- Two watercolor sketches

Image source: drew by myself (primary source)

page 7:

- Picture of miter saw

Image Source: taken by myself (primary source)

- Process of creating my artwork (7 photos)

Image Source: taken and drew by myself (primary source)

- Final artwork (2 photos from different angles)

Image Source: taken and drew by myself (primary source)

page 8:

- Source image of clownfish

Image source: search engine bing, (<https://cn.bing.com/images/search>). [Accessed Date: September 2017]

- Source image of zebra and oxpecker

Image source: search engine bing, (<https://cn.bing.com/images/search>). [Accessed Date: September 2017]

- A clownfish sketch

Image Source: drew by myself (primary source)

- A sea anemone sketch and a oxpecker sketch

Image Source: drew by myself (primary source)

- Design of clown fish and sea anemone

Image Source: drew by myself (primary source)

- Comforter, Catherine Murphy, 2007, oil on canvas

Image Source: "comforter", wikiart, visual art encyclopedia, (<https://www.wikiart.org/catherine-murphy>).

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- A stamp
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- Final woodcut print
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- Roy Lichtenstein, Look Mickey, 1961, oil on canvas, 122*175 cm (48*69 inch), National Gallery of Art, Washington DC
Image Source: "National Gallery of Art." Roy Lichtenstein, Look Mickey, 1961, www.nga.gov/collection/highlights/lichten-stein-look-mickey.html. [Accessed Date: November 2017]
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- Untitled, David Levinthal, 1975, gelatin silver print, 9 1/8 by 11 1/8 inches
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- Screenshot from the video-editing app
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