

Qianye Lin and Qianhe 'AL' Lin in conversation with James Tapsell-Kururangi, at AL's home in Tāmaki Makaurau, on *Thus the Blast Carried It, Into the World* 它便随着爆破, 冲向了世界.

What was the process like when you made this new work, *Thus the Blast Carried It, Into the World* 它便随着爆破, 冲向了世界? Was it similar to the process for making *What a thrill, WHAT A SUCCESS!!*?

In *Thus the Blast Carried It, Into the World*, 它便随着爆破, 冲向了世界 the text exists in many different forms. There was text that already existed as part of the found footage, animated text, digitally handwritten text, and there is the monologue performed by AL. Regardless of the form, the texture of these texts is one that lives in a moving image work, so we decided on a more pared back installation and not to recreate what we did for *What a Thrill, WHAT A SUCCESS!!* This new work is a moving image work; the last one, despite having a big moving image component, is not.

The video was mainly made in AL's house in Tāmaki Makaurau, leading up to the show we were working 12 hours a day. So we had to make a very strict schedule with deadlines for set making, filming, rendering, and editing. We made the decision to put in the 'oracle host' as a very very last touch, about two weeks before we were going down to Christchurch. It was really the final piece of the puzzle that we needed.

Thus the Blast Carried It, Into the World, 它便随着爆破, 冲向了世界 wouldn't have been possible without all our friends. Ningyi Hu did the costume, makeup, and set design. Alex Su also worked on the set and makeup and rendered the mountain background and the final scene where the stars started to sparkle. JingCheng Zhao was our videographer superstar, and Jack Kettley helped with the rendering.

This time a three-channel video?

It did start out as a single-channel video, but it felt very linear, something you watch from start to finish and we didn't want the work to be like that. At that point there were parts of the video that were just blank with the monologue spoken, and we were really drawn to them. So we wondered if the video could be like an orchestra, visuals coming in only when needed. Could less footage serve the entire experience?

You choose to include the reading of the text within the work this time?

The whole work is an amplification of a very small moment. Which is what we called in the video 'the first day'. An enclosed experience that derived from, but is not reality. *What a thrill, WHAT A SUCCESS!!* was a lot about gathering, whereas this work was about amplifying an abstract moment. That is something that I think everybody knows or could resonate with. It is an encapsulated world of its own. The end is when the viewer steps out of this little enclosure we built, into reality where meaning structures are stable and sound. It is important that there is a distance, a distinction between the experience of viewing the work of what you step out of, and back into.

What fascinates you about the sun? Why have you selected those images of the sun? Or perhaps where are those images from? Lately I have been reconsidering my relationship to the sun...

The sun is important. The found footage is from the movie *Mo ku Zhong de huan xiang* 魔窟中的幻想 (1986) by director Jixing Wang, which we feel like we need to honour and not appropriate out of context. It is set within a prison, where a young girl, Xiaoluobotou (Little Turnip) and her mother were imprisoned. The film is perhaps kind of magic realist. A lot of the footage gives us the feeling of terror as well as desire. The film is seen through the imagination of the young girl and one scene that interested us was her birthday celebration. The character stands on top of a piano in a nice dress. Hundreds of people circle round the young girl in an identical dress. Each with a birthday cake.

The sun was a significant motif in *Mo ku Zhong de huan xiang*. We were particularly interested in the scene where she is in the courtyard, within the four walls, and she looks up, she sees the sun.

In the end, she is killed after escaping the prison. The last scenes are of a watercolour drawing depicting the sun, with her hand holding it, and a soldier trying to pull the drawing away but her hand was not letting go. We see the sun speaking to hope and desire, which also heightens the feelings of terror and hopelessness; the sun being the only channel to the outside, as she lives in this courtyard with four towering walls.

Although we use footage from this film, we want to reference the gesture without claiming its significance in the original work. It helped us to think about how we see the world around us. The coexisting terror and the desire spoke to us.

Finally, the sun was also significant to our previous work *What a thrill, WHAT A SUCCESS!!* The protagonist Pig resisted the sun. The day was a metaphor that Pig was resisting, as when the day began, Pig transformed into a human. In this work the sun is kind of scary, it represents a feeling of being overwhelmed. Moreover, the timeline in *What a thrill, WHAT A SUCCESS!!* could be seen as being zoomed out, we were observing the sun at a distance. Whereas in this new work, we took on the perspective of the sun, or perhaps we are right next to the sun. Looking outward into something which is vast, and beyond our understanding.

What was it like writing about the character 'It'? Last time the protagonist of the story was Pig, and you spoke of Pig going towards the celebration. Did you work in the same way as before when writing? Can you tell me a little about 'It'?

We used the same process for writing, once again, the text came first which we wrote. We were heavily inspired by the beginning of Japanese manga series *To your eternity* (2016), by Yoshitoki Ōima. The story goes...

"A circular thing, a ball, was dropped by an extraterrestrial being into the world, to learn about the world. At first it was by a rock. So, it transformed into a rock. Spring came, and moss grew on the rock, so then it was moss. After a while, a wolf died next to the moss and the rock, so then it became the wolf. And so, the story continues."

Similarly, the protagonist 'It' encounters the world in a similar fashion and learns about the world from a blank slate. Moving forward, when we started writing we were thinking about human birth. In the second stanza of the text, we thought about the meaning structures, and the substantial physical impact of birth on your body...

"It flew high and landed heavily, if it had understood the operating mechanisms of the body, it's bones must have been crushed, but fortunately it didn't understand so everything healed before it was crushed."

So, in this new work, we are taking perception, the way you perceive, and manifesting that moment in the writing. Manifesting it into reality. Moreover, 'It' is like a parallel narrative to us. When 'It' is oblivious to the physical and linguistic structure in our world. The multiplicity of human sensories. For example, when 'It' uses its skin to look out into the world to see. As opposed to singling out senses e.g... as we use our eyes to see, and our ears to hear.

"At first it used its skin to look out, at the time there was no part of it that was not skin. So its skin connects to the skin of the world into one piece, together they wrap up a huge mystery."

Finally, in making the work we were wanting to honour our own sensibilities, relating, on a very physical bodily level, to the materials we were using; the text we were using; what we are writing. It is a celebration of a process that in some ways is very private and genuine. *Thus the Blast Carried It, Into the World*, 它便随着爆破, 冲向了世 does not describe the whole world or the universe, but instead enacts and enlarges a particular moment; what our sensorial perceptions can reach to understand. 'It' is speaking as though it is not in the world, but we are.



Qianye Lin and Qianhe 'AL' Lin
Thus the Blast Carried It, Into the World 它便随着爆破, 冲向了世界, 2021
HD video, colour, sound
duration 6 min 49 sec, loop
ed. 1/3