



(...) **Forgot**

to **Forget** (⋮)

to **Remember**



Supported by

**The Swedish Arts Grants Committee
The Exhibitions Hub, Department of Art
Goldsmiths College**



Visual /booklet design by

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**29th October –
5th November**

2022

**Gerald Moore Gallery
Mottingham Lane**

London

SE9 4RW

Wheelchair access on ground floor

Accessible toilets and baby change facilities

Guidedogs only allowed

Open to the public on Saturdays
10am–4pm or by appointment via
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Curated by

Yueh-Ning Lee & Sixten Liu

[@otherwiseproject](https://www.instagram.com/otherwiseproject)

(...) **Forgot to Remember to Forget (...)** is a group exhibition featuring nine artists rethinking nostalgia's interrelationship to memory, the home, identity, and migration.

Nostalgia is widely viewed as a negative human experience that denies an absence of the present, and assumes loss of faith in the future. However, (...) **Forgot to Remember to Forget (...)** proposes nostalgia can instead hold a multiplicity of meanings and spatial and temporal dimensions. This exhibition will unfold three different notions of our perception of nostalgia.

Svetlana Boym's idea of restorative nostalgia and reflective nostalgia demonstrates the complexity of our emotions toward the past. One can romanticise the 'good old days', as a tool of escapism from the present harsh reality and yearning to return to the lost home. While also taking the sentiment as a valuable tool of self-reflection to live with what happened, learn and move on from it.

The third notion is based on Milan Kundera's view of nostalgia as a deceptive sentiment. The home people long for is no longer the same but only exists in the process of endless exile. These three distinctions are not absolute binaries or a 'correct' perspective on nostalgia but instead a starting point in mapping this grey area on the outskirts of an imaginary home.

(...) **Forgot to Remember to Forget (...)** showcases artists whose research and practices explore, aesthetically and/or discursively, a sense of nostalgia embedded in the fragments of memory to reflect on the place attachment with our identity and a sense of belonging.

We will forget these habits, things which seem to us so unchangeable. We might replace them with others, equally ephemeral but apparently just as permanent. What we forgot to remember to forget is what we ever lived with the feeling of home longing.

I Forgot to Remember is a commissioned short story written by London-based Chinese artist **Feiya Zhang**. The story is based on the exhibition concept, and wish to bring an alternative expression on the multi-dimension of nostalgia.

Feiya makes art books that revolve around the ethical question – “How should one live?”. Focusing on people’s own interpretations and justifications of their convictions, she explores answers/ failure to answer from one’s internal perspective. These books are dialogues with the outside world and responses to her own position within it. Her recent artist books include In the Outsider (2022), The Londoner (2022) and The Shiniest Thing (2022).

<https://feiya-zhang.com/>



I Forgot to Remember

I was driving on the highway. There were four passengers squeezed inside the tiny cabin.

The girl next to me kept complaining, “You should turn up the air conditioner more.” I turned the button that could no longer be turned, then she leaned back in her seat with a sigh.

The middle-aged man in the back said, “you’re already sitting in the front seat, just bear with it.” With that, he sat a little closer to his wife, who soothed him. They were carefully avoiding a ragged, bad-smelling vagrant on the other side of the back seat.

The vagrant, unconcerned as he was, crossed his legs and tapped along to the intermittent rock music on the radio.

The music stopped when I drove out of the signal area. I tried to break the silence: “Hey, where are you all from? And why are you going to Brotos?”

The girl next to me spoke first, her voice was dry: "I'm going to find my biological parents." I noticed in my periphery that her fingers were twisted together and the ticket in her hand had become wrinkled and damp. She had yellow skin, single eyelids, and shiny black hair. I asked her, "Do you know where they are?"

"In China," she replied, "but I don't know exactly where."

"That's a needle in a haystack." said the vagrant, vocalizing what we'd all been thinking.

"Are your foster parents good to you?" The wife in the back seat asked her.

"Very good" she lowered her head, "but they never wanted me to find my birth parents, and I don't understand why that is." Her eyes began to sink as she said that.

"Maybe they're just worried about you. They don't want you to get hurt." The woman reassured her.

"But I need to know who I am and where I came from. I can't keep wondering who I am for much longer."

The vagrant laughed: "Who are you? Aren't you sitting here and trying to find your mom? As for home, where cannot be the home? I sleep on the street, in the grass, in the train station, wherever I am, that's my home."

The man next to the vagrant asked skeptical, "Then why did you come and endure this four hour drive? Anywhere is the same for you anyway."

"There's something odd about this," the vagrant man muttered, pointed at me, "I was drunk last night and lying next to the tires of this car when this dude shook me awake this morning. He asked me if I wanted a ride, for £8. I felt my pocket and there were exactly eight coins. I thought it was God's will. So here I am."

The husband was sick of his nonsense. "Then look out the window at the wheat field, do you feel its call? Ever feel like it should be your new home?"

The vagrant's attention was drawn to the window, and he stared

firmly out, as if seeing such a wide and endless wheat field for the first time.

I looked in the rear-view mirror at the couple, "And what about you? What are you going to do in Brotos?"

The woman looked at the man beside her, her eyes full of sweetness, "We are going to build a new home, a real home." The man took her hand.

The girl asked, "How long have you known each other?"

"Over 20 years. We went to the same high school, but we lived the rest of our lives separately. Just when we thought our lives were going to be in the mud forever, we met each other again. He stayed with his wife until her last days, she had terminal cancer. I finally divorced my alcoholic ex-husband. Drawing an end to the pain of the past, we decided to find future happiness together."

The man cleared his throat and added, "To be precise, we are going to see a house."

The wife suddenly remembered something: "I still insist on taking the one with the backyard."

"No, that building is so old that I can hear the footsteps of the neighbors upstairs. Believe me, I have too much experience living in old houses."

"Okay, I'll take your word for it. We'll look again. But the one facing the river, it can get cold as hell in the winter, just like my previous flat."

"Well, we'll look again, we can always find home."

"What about the number of rooms? I still think three bedrooms is more appropriate, one for ourselves, one which can be converted into a theater or study, and one for our future children ..."

"Look," the vagrant suddenly interrupted their discussion. We all looked out the window. The wheat field was still there, but there now also stood a huge elm tree with branches extended infinitely outward. Its leaves twitched and made a loud rustling sound.

"Jesus Christ! Such a big tree." We were all amazed. The vagrant

said, "I've seen it! I've seen it before! This is my home, no, it was. Everything has changed, everything but the tree."

We were silent, not knowing what to say. The vagrant said again, "Yes, everything is changing. It's no surprise."

The husband finally stopped judging. Patting the homeless man's knee, he said, "Everything will change for the better." The vagrant did not respond, and was immersed in the wheat field outside his window again.

The girl looked to me, "What about you?"

I did not understand her, "Are you asking what I'm driving there for? Or are you asking about my home?"

The girl was amused by me, "Driving is your job right?"

"Yes, that's right. I drive passengers back and forth between the two places every day."

"And where is your home? Who are you?"

"I've farmed, been a lawyer, a rock singer, rich, a bum, married, had kids, and ran away from home like you did. Now I'm a driver."

The husband bantered with me, "Sounds like you've lived as long as seven lifetimes."

"Maybe longer than that."

"Did you lose your home?" The girl continued to ask.

"Hahah, turns out you're a bum like me." The vagrant inserted.

"That's not true." I gave him a smile back.

After a few moments, I could not smile: "Yes, I lost my home."

In the waiting room, a news item being broadcast on the TV screen caught a girl's attention: "At 4:50 p.m., a car on Brotos Highway crashed into a roadside elm tree, and the vehicle exploded in mere seconds, killing only the driver ..."



artworks and artists >



In Virtual Return You (can't) Dehaunt

於虛擬的彼岸 迴魂 (不) 散

2018-2021

4k Videos with Audio, HD available, 24mins18

Created in London, Paris, and Hong Kong

In Virtual Return You (can't) Dehaunt is a multi-channel moving-image work by Yarli Allison. It traces the real life stories of four queer Hong Kong (trans)migrants by reconstructing their nostalgic homes in virtual reality (VR), that draws attention to diasporic narratives and cultural archives through the process of cognitively metaphorical 'returns'.

The videos, presented on a set of three screens, consist of ethnographic research, VR modelling, soliloquy and poetic extracts from real dialogues. These are intertwined with docu-fiction writing and choreographic representations, while exploring the possibilities of sexual and political identities that have transcended geographical definitions in the digital age.

Yarli first poses the question "to which house do you most wish to return?"; recalling memories of the four overseas ethnic Hong Kongese who were all born in the 80s and identified as queer. The VR spaces are then contextualised after a series of interviews conducted by writer Yin Lo and anthropologist Dr. Haro Matas. Upon invitation, the interviewees revisit their memories of 'home' — now a synthetic but emotionally believable VR environment. Further comments are recorded, allowing the team to build a social construct among them, which becomes the core of the work. These misplaced nostalgic spaces — or 'homes' — are as if empty shells but significantly contribute to the formation of their identities, yet one can no longer confirm its spatial accuracy and are left with immaterial impressions.

Throughout the work, the concept of 'returning' obsessively exposes itself, attempting to transition from "longing" to "belonging", whether it is achieved with the act of perpetuation with VR; or illustrating the migrant being forgotten; or as a self-reflexive phantom-like being who is heedlessly seeking to survive.

In Hong Kong's mainstream cultural beliefs, phantom-beings are expected to return to their origin after death, otherwise a wandering result is expected. Before reincarnation, one has to drink a bowl of Mang Po Soup (孟婆湯) to forget past attachments. These semi-invisible lingering phantom-like beings appear in the middle-half of the work, metaphorically representing in-betweenness, embodying unconscious imprisonments and cultural alienation. Their existence questions the romanticised attachment to the non-existent spaces of the past.

In an attempt to distinguish between the four characters, viewers are met with faceless creatures with mixed soliloquies, evoking a sense of confusion and distance, implying the characters' tangled identities could easily be dismissed, simplified, or depersonalised.

With Hong Kong's complex political history, including several past "Mass Migration Wave" events, the unceasing debate on migration for a "better life" remains. The need for an "escape route" is further stirred by the recurring political turbulence. Although a temporal sense of 'community' among diasporic Hong Kongese is reinforced by digital connectivity, the practicality of migration is left perpetually unresolved.

◆ **Yarli Allison** 林雅莉

Yarli Allison (88, Ottawa) is a Hong Kong-Canadian born, UK-based art worker with a multidisciplinary approach that traverses sculpture, performance, virtual reality imagery, film, drawing and installation. They are currently exploring subjects on biodata humanity, belonging and coping mechanisms with a queering fictitious approach.

and I love her for that

2019

video installation, 120 × 30 × 3cm

Projecting images of salt and fire, searching for visions of a lost home.

◆ **Nikolai Azariah**

Nikolai Azariah is a video and installation artist whose practice delves into memory, place and poetry, navigating myth to make sense of the world. His recent work investigates salt as material and manifestation of poetic meaning. Our bodies exude salt, in its sweat and tears; from birth to death we are bathed in the substance. Its durability, permanence and immunity to decay has led it to being emblematic of eternity and immortality and make it the perfect material through which we can understand our earth, our locality, and their shared history.

Hermitage

2020–2022

Installation & performance, 1.6m × 1.6m × 2.4m

Hermitage is a performance and installation work developed since 2020. The media and materials used are: a room or wall (painted green), mud, woods, a priest's cassock, pee, shoes, water, fear, depression, odour, and exhaustion.

The following writing responds to my notes while researching for Hermitage: Mental space. Cábala. Symptom, oblivion–construction. Isolation. Substance, clergyman, cassock, uncontrollable water, Infraleve. Penance, mortification. Asceticism, conversion, Mysterion. Childhood Amnesia.

◆ Ignacio Chico

“Friend of psychoanalysis” Project

‘Religion and theories about how the “world” was/is conceived was introduced to me by a Catholic education in the schools I attended until I was 11 years old (baptism, and elementary school catechism –first communion–).

In the following years, my mother told me about Sigmund Freud’s psychoanalytic theory, introducing me to the concept of the unconscious and psychoanalytic research on childhood and sexuality.

Around the memory of my religious book readings as a child at school and my mother’s teaching on psychoanalysis, my meta-physical concerns emerged. Through bibliography and practice I seek to express the complexity of thought, psychic confusion and my ambivalent mood.’

/Prompt:

2022

AI-generated Photography. Polaroid i-type print,
8 × 8cm, projection-based Installation, 2 × 2 × 2m.
Commissioned.

“Prompt” is a series of fictional documentary images generated by AI and materialized by Polaroid films.

“There are countless historical photos behind every AI-generated image, which point to the phantoms of things that once existed. The history fictionalized by AI is the fragmentation and reorganization of history, and also the reimagining of history.

In this project, I use my own memory as the starting point and instruct the AI to visualize my memory of people’s memories as I see. Memory has been reconstructed many times on two parallel lines, one is the reconstruction of my memory of others, and the other is the reconstruction of ready-made images by AI. The two parallel lines eventually reunite at the presentation level. From a macro perspective, each person’s image may become a part of the other person’s image, and each person’s memory may be reorganized into new memories, but the real history has been broken and invisible behind all of these processes.

Perhaps, in the future, nothing will be truly forgotten, also, nothing will be truly remembered.”

◆ **SHI JIAO**

Shi Jiao(SHI), graduated from Journalism (BA) of Fudan University and Photography(MA) of RCA, is an interdisciplinary artist based in London. SHI’s works focus on photography, installations and interactive arts, exploring the new possibilities brought by new media. He hopes to create a new aesthetic through the fusion of media and produce a freer meaning.

Other White Mixed Background

2021

HD video, 4:30 min

Digital collages, inkjet print in rice paper
(Kingawa Ivory), 62 × 91cm each

Other White Mixed Background is a collaged exploration of the paths of a nomadic matrilineal genealogy whose origins are unknown. Family archives and sister's voices, interviews and remembrance rituals are the raw material to shape subjective mythology that aims to bound geography, lineage and the female body.

◆ Catalina Correa Moller

Catalina Correa Moller's work examines the bodily connection with territory and the politics of location around them. The perception and movement of a "nomadic subjectivity" (Braidotti, 2011) are rendered into a transmedia practice that is constantly incorporating new languages.

For years her research was located in extreme rurality to explore the nature of identity, belonging, borders and power dynamics in our society. While working in a context devoid of infrastructure and institutionality dedicated to contemporary art, it was crucial to diversify her practice incorporating methods and tools from landscape sciences (such as archaeology, anthropology and botany) as well as collaborations from people from other disciplines and backgrounds.

Recently, motherhood and its radical relationship with territory has become a vehicle to address embodied modes of knowledge. She has incorporated the use of moving image, collage, performance, VR and ceramics to question, from a decolonial and feminist perspective, dichotomies like intimate and public, play and labour, violence and care.

Spatial Nostalgia, “Homeness”

2021-2022

Mixed Media (Fabrics, Threads, Duvet, Copper Bells, Vintage Lamp, Ribbons, Crank Clay, Origami Stars, Paint), Dimension Variable

The new window series included in the show is “The Other Side of Home” which is a textile wall piece depicting windows seen from the outside. Unlike doors, the window is meant to be looked at from inside to outside. Its transparency lets you take a glimpse at someone else’s home but this one-way manner only allows you to have a peek at the small fragment of depthless square curated for the inside, the home. It is a bridge with limitation and separation with hope at the same time. The scene of the window seen from outside, the perspective of a home searcher is brought back to the interior, asking ‘Have you ever stared at the back of the frame?’

◆ **Semin Hong**

Semin Hong is a South Korean artist (1995, Pennsylvania) who lives and works in London, UK. She studied MA Fine Art at UAL Chelsea College of Arts in London and BFA Painting at Hongik University in Seoul.

Through mixed media installation, she explores relationships between people and home, especially in the context of migration. In her work, the elements of home — whether they are architectural fragments or gestures extracted from ritualistic actions taking place in domestic space — are isolated and inserted into the new context. By building a temporary shelter in a gallery and using repeated motifs from her childhood memory, she attempts to navigate her sexual, racial identity and belongingness as an immigrant.

Semin is currently an artist in residence at Sarabande Foundation (est. Lee Alexander McQueen), continuing her research of spacial nostalgia, focusing on the textile element of the installation while newly expanding her inquiry to the aspect of ‘otherness’ she has experienced in the process of finding home with an immigrant identity.

South East-West Seasons

2022

Stoneware, slip, glaze, tin, various sizes

Cutout from “A Sunny Place for Shady People” – a sculptural narrative about impressions of life, memories, fantasies, meetings and hopes.

◆ Zaratea Gården Hurtig

Zaratea Gården Hurtig's work is as much a parody on, as an appreciation of the everyday. With some disrespect of rules and a lot of joy, her pieces might appear stuck mid process, possessing a sketch-like energy. They come from a fine blend of stories, nature, humour, and some nostalgia. Inspired by children's books and the surrealness of life, she often builds nonsensical scenes with references to the known – homes, plants or paintings, organised in a dreamlike logic.

Courtyard of Forgotten Memories

2022

Pencil and ink on paper, PVC pipes, fabric, wool string, banana leaves, 260 × 180 × 200 cm

The site-specific installation Courtyard of Forgotten Memories reassembles the outline of a tropical Patio of skewed angles, a space for contemplation and intimacy of what feels like a past time. An organic mantle made of banana leaves in decay works as the glue and the common ground for the fabric covered structure forming the shape of the courtyard. Hanging from the structure, a series of small pencil drawings and texts on paper suggest fragments of the story of a person who remembers from before the time of being born.

The work offers poignant reflections on the passage of time, the relationship between the built environment and nature, as well as notions of home and belonging. In this way, Courtyard of Forgotten Memories invites the mind to wander in what recalls the ecosystem of someone's memories.

◆ Daniel Rey

Daniel Rey is a Venezuelan visual artist currently living and working in London. He creates site specific installations, paintings, drawings, and collaborative projects to explore themes of migration, the collective memory and the built environment. His research addresses how the notion of home changes and expands for people who have gone through processes of displacement, questioning our sense of belonging, our relationship with the architectural space and our perception of borders.

Rey's practice deals directly with the migration crisis happening in Venezuela, where more than 6 millions have fled. He is interested in creating a universe to recreate elements of those homes that exist only in the collective memory, using rituals and culturally charged materials. With a background in architecture, his works often incorporate elements of the architectural language, with the potential of intersecting, and also challenging, the limits between art and architecture. He conceives his art practice as an active vehicle for the discussion of the issues that threaten our vulnerable communities in the present.

No Such Person Found

2019–2021

- ▷ **Atlas**
Sculpture, 20cm × 15cm × 3cm
- ▷ **Another Cradle I & II**
Photography + Sculpture, 32cm × 42cm
(Framed)

No Such Person Found (2019–2021) was inspired by the discovery that Wenxuan's name had been replaced in the family genealogy by a non-existent male. The story is deconstructed into three parts: the vanished face, the false evidence and the re-enactment of the letters, which are presented through the use of mixed materials and photographic techniques. The precondition of memory is not one of the continuous presence or continuous absence, but rather a shifting relationship between multiple presence and multiple absences. Through the review and manipulation of the family archive is the means by which she responds to this transformative relationship. Derrida argues that the archive is fundamentally a political domain, a symbol that governs the entire field and determines public affairs, and that there is no political power that does not control the archive and control memory. Breaking through the boundaries of control, she utilises the act of destruction as a more radical form of preservation.

Perhaps the truth that she desperately seeks is just a future with curiosity: what will happen when a prediction with an expectation turned into a fiction.

◆ **Wenxuan Wang**

Wenxuan Wang (1996, China) is a London-based artist, working with photography along with mixed media. She investigates the concept of absence and the distortion of dynamic memory/memories, and how photographic materials can serve as a means of presenting and delivering the ambiguity, fluidity, and malleability of memory/memories that manifest in multiple realms and forms of presences and absences. Questioning archives, histories, and meta-narratives, Wenxuan considers one's individuated identity, as well as the memories, crucial for a constantly constructing and re-constructing narrative.



workshop >

5th November 2022
12pm - 2pm

Gerald Moore Gallery,
1st Floor Gallery

Workshop | Pastel Dreams: Interactive Nostalgia Maps

Pastel Dreams: Interactive Nostalgia Maps is the workshop led by artist Vi Trinh with a focus on positivity about personal nostalgia. The core of the workshop is to use nostalgia as motivation for a better future as well as nostalgia as recreated memory, as a story a person tells themselves, and the connection to interactive divergent storytelling. With the following exercise, she would like to highlight the translational effect of nostalgic memory in which it is hard to communicate memories both to others and to ourselves with a separation in distance or time. This is also a look into Vi's process of making her hot potato hot takes, video-game projects that only take 48 hours to make.

What participants create during the workshop will become the materials for the video games that Vi will create later and the final product will be uploaded on itch.io and simmer.io.

- ◆ **Vi Trinh** is a Vietnamese American artist. She is currently studying in the Masters of Fine Art program at Goldsmiths. She makes conceptual work using humour, video games, and installation to deconstruct and understand forms of structural inequality.

For more information about joining the workshop, please check at @otherwiseproject

film screening >

5th November 2022
2pm–3pm

Gerald Moore Gallery,
1st Floor Gallery



Mother

2020

16 mins

Asuf is showing the film he made in 2020, called Mother. It's trying to foster an understanding of a shared familial history. He investigates the experience of displacement, reconciling memories and artefacts from lost times and places. In Mother, he digitally repairs a personal photograph of his mother when she was young.

- ◆ **Asuf Ishaq's** practice is centred around themes of embodiment, fragmentation and displacement, especially in the migration and post-colonial; and memory, often presented in a physical diasporic body, as in an evolving archive that transmits experience with cultural and political meaning. Asuf work's with moving images, sonic and sculpture.

He has shown work at Goldsmiths CCA, ICA, Whitechapel Gallery and New Contemporaries at South London Gallery. Asuf works between Birmingham and London, he studied an MFA Fine Art at Goldsmiths College of Art and an MA Graphic Design at Royal College of Art.



I Don't Feel At Home Anywhere Anymore

2020

16 mins

Thirty-year-old Viv Li is studying art in Belgium and hasn't lived in her native China for ten years. During the Christmas holidays, she pays a nine-day visit to her family in Beijing, where it soon becomes clear how uprooted she has become by her life abroad. Losing your roots is a painful process, Li shows, though it has its humorous moments. In brief, this wistful but witty account of a trip to Beijing portrays the discomfort of the bird that has flown returns to the nest.

- ◆ **Viv Li** is a Chinese filmmaker, writer, and comedian based in Berlin. Born and raised in Beijing, she spent the past twelve years travelling and living in various cities in Europe, South America and Southeast Asia. Her research often deals with alienation and displacement and focuses on the sensibility and tangibility of moments, relationships, identity and self-awareness. Viv is dedicated to the use of humour. She likes to joke, but please take her seriously.



A Mother's Body

2021

9mins

A Mother's Body is an intimate portrayal of two women hotel cleaners from a daughter's perspective. While the women perform their daily work, the daughter reflects on how their profession affects their bodies and relationship to time. Meanwhile, the women navigate and negotiate the demands of the strenuous labour with experience, preciseness, and beauty.

- ◆ **Jonelle Twum** (b.1992) is filmmaker and cultural producer who often employs the archives in examining quotidian practices and experimentations within the Black diaspora- its various modalities and sites.



