

# “Mirage” Project

## Interview with YAO Jui-Chung

Interview & Editing CHENG Shao-Hong

Date 2013.01.14

*“The important aspect of art is not to obtain a mathematical like solution; it is a question, instead of the standard answer what are the other possibilities?”*

— YAO Jui-Chung

### Discuss the content of *Mirage III: Disused Public Property in Taiwan* (Chinese Version, 2013)

Originally I intended to release a new volume each year to see how far this project can go. However because of the birth of my second daughter in 2012, things became much busier and the project was temporarily put on hold. The third volume still remained as objective documentations, selecting more than one hundred cases that mainly consist of the examples we have previously missed. Much of the informations from government agencies are non-disclosed and non-transparent, it is harder to seek out these non-disclosed informations, and the challenge of releasing these informations in a short period of time is in fact similar to the concept of “WikiLeaks”; pressure is generated from public discussions, it forces government agencies to conduct internal reviews due to the publication of investigations and informations, which government feared the people to know. Therefore our project does not touch on the actual implementation level and refrain from interventions. Instead we focus on documenting through photography from a spectator’s point of view, like an observer. The ripple effect it creates is one where the society has to face together, by this I mean when this information is released, in what way should society respond? In what way should government deal with the issue?

The articles featured in the book are more neutral; they are not overly critical or suggestive. We are only trying to initiate a discussion, allowing the society to enter into discourse. Open discussions are more important, therefore the key of this project in fact does not rely on criticisms of society that are frequently seen in social movement organizations or individuals, but it belonged to a more passive form of protest; of course this is only one of the objectives, another objective is the recording of changes in social appearances. This form of typology documentation becomes an objective record that in ten or twenty years time, may provide a starting point in accessing social development context for young people. Also the key focus of this project is the students’ sense of participation during their journey to return to their hometown for investigations. Technologies in information communication are very advanced today, but the students lacked a more macro perspective in understanding the core of contemporary issues. So after their photography trips, the students discussed in class.

Every student had a few cases each week, through the process of repeated discussions and observations, gradually forming the ability to reflect on the operating mechanism of power.

### Are the education in art institutions beneficial for participating in public issues?

This project basically offers critique on three aspects, the more recognizable being the relatively passive criticism of social issues. When only featuring one or two cases, this form of photography catalog is pretty powerless; it is the comprehensive inclusion and the generally accepted objectivity that produce its power, and only from gathering a certain number of cases will it be possible to demonstrate this is not only an one off scenario, but the product conspired by society.

The second is the discussion of the so-called “art education”. The art education we received in class, the education of aesthetic, lack objective understanding of aesthetic in certain situations in reality. For example, students may be requested by the teacher to draw the plaster bust sculpture, paint watercolors, imitate the techniques of old western masters, but they are much more indifferent and apathetic toward their environment. I particularly hoped for the student to return to their hometown in groups and in phases, I wanted them to leave their studios to interact more with reality. Of course this is only a starting point, because there are many problems in society, under comparison, mosquito hall is only a medium-sized issue and not regarded as a major problem within the contemporary Taiwanese society. After this training and experience, some students became more aware of the reasons behind social movement and protests, some students even continue to participate in social movement.

The third is the “critique on photography itself”. Due to many participating students coming from a background other than fine art, there are students majoring Chinese language, sociology, English language, chemistry, physics, etc. Many of the students possesses a narrower understanding of photography, they can only think of photography as a form of entertainment or recording method, but are uncertain if photography has the ability to generate any form of change in reality, also their understandings of photography are not as profound. The ordinary young people usually hold up their camera phone or a point-and-shoot camera and say “cheese” that will be all! Or maybe they will shoot some beautiful scenery.

I believe through the meaning of photography, it is possible to train them in different perspectives of observation, and not just learning techniques, because with today’s technology all you need is one finger, when you depress the shutter button, but what makes you press the shutter? Is it beauty? Or is it something hidden behind it? Are you trying to expose what is hidden? Or do you press the shutter because you want to explore the truth behind the scene? Because it is only the appearance you see, and under all appearances there will always be mechanics of power in operation! Therefore you have to personally visit and experience the

sites and press the shutter, observe through actually being present, and share this sense of presence. So when shooting the photographs, I specifically requested every detail of the site to be visible and conducting thorough investigation both officially and unofficially, sometimes many visits was required in particular sites. Since the students are neither reporters nor legislators, they have no authorities over investigations; therefore they have to interact with their interviewee in a more mutual manner. They can ask the guards, chat with him, or ask the local villager's opinion, the views of the neighbors. The results obtained from organizing these words will be more closely tied to the true feelings of the general public. Because these students are relatively innocent, therefore I wanted to develop their social consciousness through this project before they enter into society or leave to study abroad. A class is actually a miniaturized society. For example, within one hundred students, there may be twenty percent of the class who are enthusiastic and dedicated, fifty percent who are indifferent, only doing enough to get by, ten percent who might think their teacher is exploiting them (laughs), and the rest is just slacking off. But this does not matter since it is impossible to have a whole class of enthusiastic and dedicated student. Later on I also recognize this as the type of structural problems faced by every social movement projects, therefore I also learned a lot of myself as well.

**Learned a lot, is that referring to the reaction and feedback you received from the students?**

That is part of it, the other part is recognizing the many complicated social problems behind society such as, urban-rural disparities, the myth of developmentalism, the local dignitaries' collaboration and scandals with contractors...and many more. Afterwards I possess a much better understanding, and the students gradually understood as well. It is actually very rewarding!

**You mentioned publishing one volume each year, after the fourth volume and English edition, will there be plans of further development?**

This depends on the government, because it is actually relative! If there is no "mosquito halls", it will not be possible to photograph. The timing of the publications depends on the government's progress of transforming "vacant spaces". Over the past year, there were a number of spaces abolished, but there actually are many more that remained and with even more in construction still. Therefore I think we should retain a record of this fact, providing a catalog on the result of their governance, something that allows everyone to reflect upon.

**Your project included participation of students. From your observations, is there any difference in the criticism and protest of this generation?**

Due to the expansion of networks and communications, it created many changes in the behaviors of rallying supports. In the past, where there was only telephone or pagers, there was no mobile phone or email; the protests behavior in that era was very different compared to today. Today because of Facebook, a variety of lateral networking tools are available so mobilization can be achieved in a very short amount of time. But I'm still uncertain whether specific changes can be achieved, because it is slowly falling into a strange logic pattern, for example, the Lesheng protest incident, it has already been over a decade, there have been enough rallies and its effects widespread, but after so many heads of government it is still not resolved. Therefore you ask if these movements are effective? It is certainly effective, but whether the attitude of the government has changed to shoulder the responsibility? I still remain uncertain. Going on to the streets is a method, and undertaking a research project is another, I believe perhaps it is more effective if we can resort to a form of emotional expression or a less head-on approach to communicate with the government.

Actually we did not do too much; all we did was send the books to the chief executives of the governments, after seeing for themselves they will realize the severity of the problem. Our approach is to use...well, in order to supervise the government it is necessary to understand what works for them. For example, the government runs on bureaucratic procedures with actual paperwork based on documents with factual numbers and data. This is the most effective method for the government; it is ineffective to them if specific details cannot be provided. For example, sending an email to protest may receive a reply for the first time, but after the hundredth or the thousandth time the government becomes indifferent, they will only reply according to the administrative processes. If data, evidence, documents or actual physical hard copy information on paper were not submitted, then usually little attentions will be paid. The benefits of digital communication and electronic messages are its speed, but it will make people feel informal. For instance, you send an email to the Office of the President, it is so simple everyone should be able to manage, but if you send such a thick book to the Office of the President, this then is completely different to sending an email. They might believe this is a very serious, important and substantial incident and requires a response. If you are playing to its weakness you only have one chance! It is useless if you only go about stinging randomly like a mosquito, the responsible authorities will only spray more mosquito repellent in response. There are benefits and drawbacks to every method! The method we adopt are acceptable to the bureaucrats and civil servants, because in the book it only points out the unreasonable observations without accusing the bottom level civil servants, allowing everyone to understand the unreasonable aspect. If so, will there be possibilities of improvement? If there are, than maybe it could start the improvement from a few of the important cases? Gradually revitalize the spaces according to their importance and feasibility.

**Do you feel the project carried out by you and students with fine art background will be different to people from other professional backgrounds? For example, people with news**

## media background and legal background.

Actually everyone could take part of this project. It's no matter what background they have such as art, medical science, ocean studies, science, or any other background, they can all join us. Since every profession take a different perspective. Fine art is a discipline based on visual thinking, so students are more sensitive to the visual elements, they are more capable to compose in relation to the space and the surrounding environment or areas such as materials. Therefore the photographs they produce are always full of physical presence and spatial awareness, with comparatively softer choice of words. I would go through all their articles and filter out excessively emotional or abusive words, and review all the figures provided...I will recheck everything. This is to prevent the students from being legally accused, hence in this regard I spend a lot of time in confirmation. I believe whether it is the engagements in photography, or text...I believe the important aspect is not their professional background but instead what they can contribute to the development in society under the context of their profession! I just happened to teach and also have taken photographs of many ruins, therefore have this opportunity to photograph these locations. I believe anyone could have done it! There are still many issues taking place that required the input of professionals, because the decisions in governmental policy and its technocratic viewpoint are essentially utilitarian and lacks a more sensual and emotional perspective. Hence we provided the views on the buildings government have constructed in the perspective of students studying plastic arts.

## **You mentioned the issue addressed in *Mirage: Disused Public Property in Taiwan* is only a medium sized problem in society, so what do you think are the main problems?**

Currently the top ten problems that must be reformed in Taiwan, if this is arranged in accordance with the priorities of each problem, then firstly the most urgent issue will be energy problem, including of course the issue of nuclear safety, the fourth nuclear power plant project, and the problems plaguing the first, second and third nuclear power plants, there are also issues with leakage in nuclear waste storage tanks which is very serious, but the government has been evasive in the subject providing a very non-transparent picture. However nuclear is actually a very serious matter, if problems in nuclear safety arise, efforts of several generations will be ruined! We can only escape! It will be similar to the novel by Song Zelai "*Taiwan in ruins*".<sup>1</sup> The second is the issue in land justice: the land justice issue includes the enclosure movement by consortiums and government, like the forced expropriation of Dapu farmland<sup>2</sup> by the city government, and many similar ethical land issues. This has now become a serious situation, consortium enclosures, government invest in public construction development and then driving up the house price, creating a vacancy rate of over one million houses, therefore in Taiwan there are currently many uninhabited "ghost towns" like the Danhai New Town where there is a very low occupancy rate and a high vacancy rate. Whether it is the large scale amalgamated housing districts or the overdevelopment and exploitation of land, these are all unbeneficial to

the people.

The third, urban renewal is also a fairly serious issue. On some levels the urban renewal regulations are against the constitution. It is understandable that old cities should be updated, but the update methods, regulations, incentive volume calculation...are all in favor of the consortiums. So ordinary citizens are evicted, without sufficient respect of their rights, from their homes that were built up over generations of hard work. As for the developers, in order to achieve higher profit, many means was utilized to lobby the legislature institutions to have regulations amended, in some sense the government have actually become the partners in crime for the consortiums.

Also more related to you (referring to the editor) is problems in higher education. The problems in education are not only the excessive amount of universities but also the twelve-year public education program...of course this is also related to low birth rate, but Taiwan's acceptance rate into university is over one hundred percent; this is excessive to an outrageous state, there are over one hundred fifty universities in Taiwan, but the university system have occupied the sector that was originally technical and vocational education, previously there was the five year junior college program and three year junior college program that provided more technical originated education; but currently the universities in Taiwan are almost all directed toward white-collar and research oriented profession with the practical aspect being suppressed. In addition, the dilution in quality of university graduate leads to tendency of university becoming the equivalent of high school and postgraduate studies becoming the equivalent of universities. More and more people are losing confidence in higher education, the rich prefer to send their children abroad, resulting in the loss of skilled labor and implicitly forming the antagonisms of classes.

Then comes the loss of skilled labor and talents, it was mentioned before, because of living injustice, lack of land ethics, excessive education, businesses venturing abroad, resulting in many skilled workers following overseas, this of course reduces competitiveness. However there is a shortage in the blue-collar working class, so foreign workers was introduced, nevertheless foreign labor and foreign spouses derive yet other problems, so all problems are in fact all related.

There is also the problem of fallowing agricultural lands. In Taiwan around half of the farmlands are fallow lands and many of our agricultural products are dependent on imports. After fallowing, most farmers receive government subsidies, old age pensions or agricultural land allowances, therefore fallowing actually increases their income, and imported products are actually cheaper. So what to do with the many agricultural lands that lie fallow? The farmers sell it to urban city residents to renovate into luxury farmhouses, hence many rustic luxury villas begin to appear one after another, but they are in fact fake farmers. Agricultural policies are also associated with industrial development, for instance, recently there was an issue with

Fourth Phase Central Taiwan Science Park's competition for water supply; this was the result of the imbalance of agricultural land and scientific and technological developments. There are many other problems such as national insurance and health insurance that might be soon bankrupted and the closely associated health care system, the institutional problem in taxing everything, the judicial and human right issues, and so on.

Therefore I would say relatively speaking, the mosquito hall problem is a medium sized problem, because it is not the most urgent in nature. It has been a tool to close the urban rural disparities by developmentalism for a long time, but in the middle of it lays a lot of interest in the reward system in terms of rebates and votes. For example, if I want to run for mayor, or become an elected representative then I would need political achievements, and issuing election checks, talking about empty promises, such as "I'm going to build a Taichung tower!" "I'm going to build a rotating theater!" these are election checks. Why would Taichung need a tower? Because there is a Sky Tree in Tokyo hence there should be one in Taichung? This issue then becomes a blind pursuit of internationalization! This type of developmentalism at times is like a never satisfying monster that will turn its head to devour the virtues of the land if it was not managed with care. Such an example would be the ravaging large-scale tourist industry development causing havoc in the eastern regions, and one of the first cases resulting from the eastern development regulations is the Miramar Resort. Once passed, this case will open up the east coast to more than a dozen more large-scale development projects competing to set foot on the coastal beaches; the entire Hualien, Taitung region will become a Bali island like resort. The locals will cater to the large international hotel chains; natural resources will become private assets of consortiums, becoming another problem by itself. Even for cases like Matsu Islands becoming a casino area, it is just the cover for blatant money laundering by the government. The whole of Taiwan is taken in by the idea that local prosperity can be driven in the positive direction as long as there are large-scale development projects. But what if the development fails? Who will take responsibility? Whether it is the habits of local residents, traditional beliefs or source of economic income, all of these will undergo huge transformations, have these aspects been taken into the assessment? But in the eyes of the consortiums, there is only profit! For the government, it only strives for figurative, quantifiable improvements; positive growth in economic development is the best insurance for votes. Actually this was also touched upon by this project! Because many of the "mosquito park sites" are the product of failed large-scale development projects generated from this mindset. Then there are also the products from false populism, what is false populism? It is when electoral candidates claims to serve in the benefit of the people, but in actual fact is only interested in mobilizing the momentum of the majority in exchange for power and not actually for serving the people. There is of course a line that we do not cross in these books, we did not publish who the developer, coordinator, architect and planner were, we deliberately stay behind that line because I fear the student will be taken into prison by authorities or intervened by criminal organizations. These information are all removed, but if you really investigated, it is possible to find bid riggings, bribery, and dishonest government-business relationships, as well as the huge profits that lie behind the scene, this is

the area which the Control Yuan should be conducting comprehensive investigations.

### **The problems you mentioned above are in fact all related to government's governing policy**

The mentality of the Taiwanese government has remained more or less unchanged since 1949. Firstly it always carries a sense of anxiety from the competition across the Taiwan Strait. Under the analysis of historical context this relation can be seen in examples such as the Cultural Revolution in the Mainland China in 1960's, and correspondingly in Taiwan the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement Promotion Committee organize the Chinese Cultural Renaissance Movement. In 1980's the economy took off, special processing and exporting district began to establish, labor-intensive factories and traditional industries thrived, it was the emergence of the middle classes, this was turned into a model and symbol of democracy. Another example is the reason for Taiwan to host the recent Deaflympics, it was because Beijing hosted the Olympics! The authorities in Taipei always hoped to be considered as equals with Beijing in order to ensure its authenticity in Chinese heritage internally, but because of the geo-political realities it can only host the Deaflympics. Many reasons behind government thinking are to potentially compete with the Mainland China. Such as why did Taipei organize the 2010 Taipei International Flora Exposition? Because there was the Expo 2010 Shanghai China during the same period in Shanghai, but in the end both cities were left with many "vacant spaces" after the festival. This implicit competition of the two sides of Taiwan Strait has always been present, such as the arms race between the two nations. The more profound and underlying factors behind this is because Taiwan consider itself as the true inheritor of the excellent Chinese culture heritage, including the National Palace Museum, Traditional Chinese characters and Confucianism are all representative of Chinese orthodoxy.

There is an inferiority complex due to Taiwan being always treated in a state of exception and not a normal country, making us utilize other methods to participate in the international community to achieve what we consider as international standard. Regardless if we have the ability, we just "have to participate!" why? Because this will demonstrate we are at the position of being a country, but in actual fact we are not. Without the ability to deal with the diplomatic issues, instead such inferiority complex issue is dealt with internally. Why was the Taipei 101 was fearlessly constructed in Xinyi District that rest upon the earthquake fault zone? It was the same reason! Because Taiwan wishes to be seen, is it so important that Taiwan be seen? Why should the world notice Taiwan? Because Taiwan has long been shadowed by China. In order to be seen by the world then it was necessary to become the first in Asia, the first in the world, only then will it be possible for the world to see Taiwan! China also has this anxiety, but it is not the fear of being unseen, as no matter what China will still be visible to the world. It's anxiety originates from the too many illicit affairs it wish to remain unnoticed by the world. However China wishes Taiwan to remain unnoticed even more, as China believes Taiwan is only a province of China, hence Taiwan's anxiety grows even deeper.

Apart from the aspect of policy, there was also the fact that Taiwan used to be the world's factory. But then this was transferred to Mainland China or Southeast Asia. Taiwan is actually backed by the United States, therefore a lot of its values and philosophies have deeply affected Taiwan, the American values is a neo-liberal one, hence Taiwan could only develop in this direction, during this process it was met with many obstacles, making the problem even more complicated. I mentioned earlier Taiwan have many serious problems, in fact currently it is enduring the price we have to pay for the past.

**Government mentality was mentioned earlier, could party politics make any sort of difference?**

None of the political parties in Taiwan are the left wing parties! Whether it is the Kuomintang or the Democratic Progressive Party they are all right wing parties, there are no left wing politics in Taiwan, but there are left wing ideologies.

**Indeed, the phrase we said about politics is always 'We are only choosing the less rotten ones out of the rotten bunch' but do you think there are any possibilities of improvement in the current situation?**

Because currently the party politics have become a two party system instead of multi party system, I believe possibly the third sector or party other than the two parties may improve the situation. On the television you will never see the views of other political parties, overtime people's thoughts becomes polarized, in these thought there will be many emotional problems and the reunification or independence problem that cannot be solved, also the likelihood of being labeled as one or the other.

**Back to the Mirage project, what inspired you to begin working on this project?**

This is because I have previously taken many photographs of ruins, and during the process I also found and shoot many "vacant spaces". Actually I was pretty interested in "vacant spaces", but I don't know how many there are, or their locations. To finish photographing alone may take a very long time, hence I asked the students to participate in the project together. The public sector has many spaces available, but they are not familiar in operating these spaces, they will contract out the space or land on BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) basis to consortiums. Basically I am unsatisfied with this, I believe in addition to the so called BOT, OT (Operate-Transfer) or ROT (Rehabilitate-Operate-Transfer), there is in fact another possibility, NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) should also be a possibility for operating and use of the space.

Therefore I published a few books (referring to the series "*Mirage: Disused Public Property in Taiwan*"), this is actually partly because the government has taken many of the space for their use but its benefits and results were limited. Another direction will be outsourcing to consortiums, thus becoming a commercial space entirely. Like Huashan 1914—Huashan Creative Park, in the past we have done many experimental art projects over there, but then it became completely commercialized and value oriented. Previously there were many experimental art spaces and art bases in Taipei, but now there are only a few left. Plus the government has been constantly talking about culture and creative industry, the so-called cultural and creative industry is really just handing capitals over to enterprises, allowing the enterprises to open up markets and retail channels, and then mass produce or create market derivatives of related products. Many of the empty spaces become restaurant, cafes or some becoming cultural and creative shops, but artists still required space to work! If the whole cultural and creative industry is established only by shouting cultural and creative without the labs, researching teams and studios to back up, then how could we even discuss culture and creativity? In the end it will only become a portal for imports. Why are the big creative parks promoting Doraemon and Hello Kitty? Because those are imported in packages directly from abroad, as long as the royalties and premiums are paid, it does not require development, training talents and skilled workers, because these are all too time consuming and the rate of return too slow and too low. Just get Doraemon, DreamWorks or Hayao Miyazaki then everything will take care of itself! It doesn't matter where the exhibition takes place, as long as the organizers rented a venue, promote, sell tickets, pack up and leave after exhibition finishes; it's no wonder some public museums and art museums have joined this fictitious business, because it is too easy and too well paid. Did this help the culture and creative industry? It probably only helped with the box office! Therefore we called on the government to release some disused spaces to charities, social welfare organizations or artist studios, or even the marginalized disadvantaged groups in society. Well, the government is slowly doing it! So there are spaces released to nurseries, charity organizations, public housing...In Taiwan there are many institutions that are lacking spaces, therefore this project also indirectly allowing these institutions that require spaces to approach the government for discussions.

**So the project will still continue.**

We are neither civil servants of the public sector nor legislators. What we are able to do is objectively describe the reality. I think we can create a civilian version of census with transparent information.

**In our previous email correspondences, you mentioned you are only a 'nosy bystander'. How do you see yourself, and the roles this project plays in the society?**

Let me put it this way! Even artists such as us, who usually considered to be unaware of the



real world happenings can do this, then couldn't the university professors, sociology scholars, government officials do the same? Of course they can! And they might be even better than us, so why didn't they jump out to take this project? Because their monthly salaries are too high! My income for teaching this class is only 4800 NTD a month (laughs). So I think this project provides a romantic imagination. It is not romantic as in romance today, but the passionate and enthusiastic "romanticism" of Delacroix. Through the most basic meaning and methods you can still demonstrate a burning passion for social transformation. I believe many people are in the position to do this, but they must be encouraged, there must be an example for them to reference. The ten questions that I have mentioned could be solved mostly. Including investigation on the vacancy rate in Taiwan, it is very simple, you send a group of people to the chosen spot at the luxury apartments to photograph, and see whether the apartments lights was ever turned on. Continue for one month, then you would know if it is an empty apartment, and the calculations can be carried out showing this is all a scheme to drive the property prices up. Whether or not the government should implement a vacancy tax or other necessary measures all require evidence and data.

**You mentioned the romantics of the project, is this the difference between art participating in public issues compared to other professions?**

Indeed even more, so than what people think art is even more (laughs)...art is indeed more unrealistic. But also because of this, we dare to carry out such a project! If it were ordinary people, would they be up for it? Doing this will offend so many people, block so many people's fortunes. Those things we completely ignored! Actually I think after the publishing of this book it was beneficial in many aspects, and it didn't really block any one's path! Many of the cases have received improvement and revitalization opportunities because of this book. Previously government don't often set aside budgets for revitalization, but now because there are the governmental monitoring project, there is a chance for improvement. Actually I don't really wonder whether or not art can participate in public issues or change anything. I believe that through art, things can be more dynamic, with creativity and imaginations, and a little of what was mentioned before, a different perspective to the solution; art can provide contemplations in this direction. As to whether the proposed method will be practiced or resolved will be another matter. But essentially it still allowed people to have a different direction of thinking for a particular issue.

**You mentioned you own role, how do you feel society will look at a critically commenting artist?**

In terms of art, Taiwanese society is pretty disinterested in understanding; the society still remains in the aesthetic appreciation of the classical period. This project has actually allowed the public to have a new understanding, art is not an ivory tower or only beauty and aesthetics,

art is also capable of actively participating in society. People's impression of artist also remained in the period of Vincent van Gogh, but our world have changed, and artists are already different, therefore I think the public can slowly adjust their impression and understanding of artists (laughs). Currently there are many artists in Taiwan working with social issues, they provide another level of thinking and mentality. I believe the most important thing in art is the ability to allow people to rethink, there will be more dynamism in the mindset, and not just constantly confined by the old approach. Because art has always been a pseudo-science, it is not science, there is no way of verifying, of logical reasoning, or even to obtain a specific, a correct result or answer, there is no way! The important aspect of art is not to obtain a mathematical like solution; it is the question, instead of the standard answer what are the other possibilities? If we all choose the standard answer immediately, then it is sufficient to only have mathematics in this world, but other than this answer there are many other possibilities: art allows us to contemplate on the possibilities. Like last week, I returned from Luda Island, and discovered many more vacant spaces (laughs) so I took the opportunity to shoot a few, sigh...Taiwanese society is gradually following the footsteps of Japan in the economic development...the bubble will soon burst. Presently the real estate prices is outrageous, the period of depression should be upon us soon. Today young people is unemployed as soon they graduate! The salary is at 22k to 28k, this has slipped back to the salary twenty years ago when I have just graduated! There have been no improvement at all. Where have all these money gone to? It went to the consortiums (laughs), or to Mainland China.

**Will there be other projects similar in nature to the Mirage project in the future?**

Not necessarily! It depends on chance. For example, on the issue of nuclear energy, I would not be able to develop on the subject as I have relatively fewer background knowledge on the subject, but because "mosquito hall" is related to my previous works of ruins, therefore it is easier for me to access. I am still most concern with the land issues, didn't the Ministry of the Interior recently release nine hundred units of land to Ministry of Finance for management, maybe I will take a look at those lands, because the lands that was released will definitely be going to the consortiums. After finishing the third volume, *Mirage III: Disused Public Property in Taiwan*, maybe I will publish a book on successful revitalization of disused spaces, so the relevant departments can refer to it!

**NOTE**

- 1 Taiwan in ruins by Song Zelai is a novel published by Avanguard in 1985. The story describes in 2010 Taiwan was destroyed overnight by a disaster in the nuclear plant and becoming an empty ruin.
- 2 Dapu incident: Miaoli County Zhunan Township Dapu village's protest incident. The protest was instigated from forced expropriation of farmland by the Miaoli County Government.