艺术界 **LEAP**

THE INTERNATIONAL ART MAGAZINE OF CONTEMPORARY CHINA
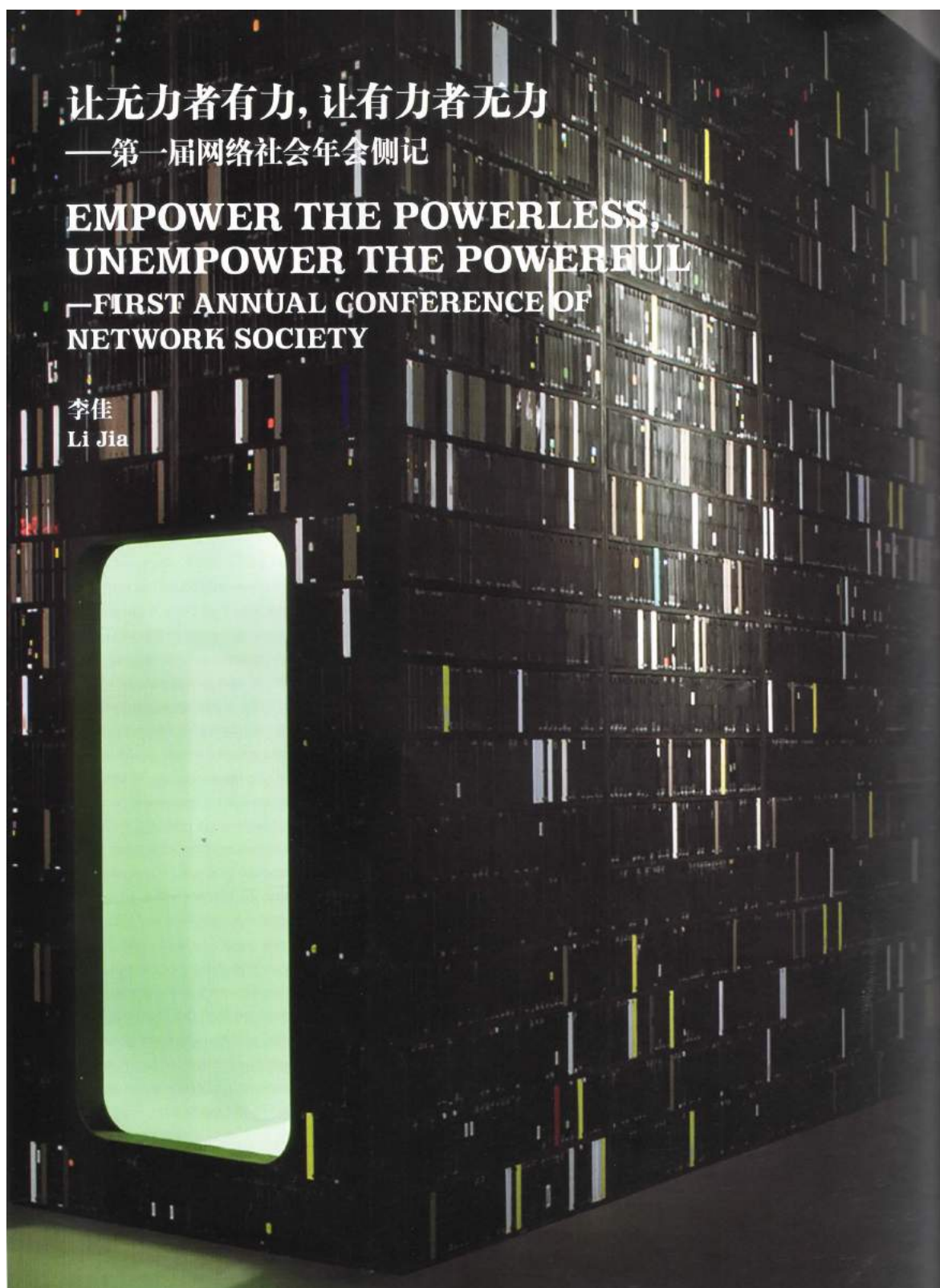
让无力者有力, 让有力者无力
——第一届网络社会年会侧记

EMPOWER THE POWERLESS,
UNEMPOWER THE POWERFUL
—FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF
NETWORK SOCIETY

李佳
Li Jia

第一届网络社会年会：
网络化的力量
First Annual Conference of
Network Society:
Forces of Reticulation

中国美术学院，杭州
China Academy of Art,
Hangzhou
2016.11.14—11.16

好像是为了佐证或暗示什么，在这篇文章动笔的前几天，当时还是美国候任总统的川普同马云举行了会谈，给美国创造一百万个就业机会和重振制造业的许诺伴合了对互联网经济带给中国红利和尊严的兴奋，通过网络迅速传播并在社会心理层面发酵为一个事件。不管是草根论坛上"淘宝治国"、"马云爸爸"这样狂热露骨的对权力、资本及其象征符号的集体跪舔，还是号称凝聚中国青年知识群体的知乎对川普"反建制""反精英""反政治正确"的一片叫好，这场水到渠成的相遇所开启的并不是黄金时代的大门，相反却是一个暧昧不清的，充满矛盾与落差的现实：一方面是刚刚结束的"双十一"消费狂欢以1400亿人民币／天的成交量和17.5万笔／秒的交易峰值，再次证明了互联网为基础的云服务所能达

到的资本流动能力，另一方面则是笼罩在逐年加深的经济"衰退式增长"的阴云中，不断被政府争利的沉默的大多数。我们的直觉和经验似乎越来越难以协调和安放，摇摆在互联网大数据所许下的持续发展和便捷高效愿景，以及现实政治生活的苦涩和无力之中。而在这样的情境和前提下，我们的观察、实践、写作和分享，似乎都无法避免一种来自内部的矛盾之感：一方面是试图刺穿现实、直面真实的努力，一方面则是身在其中的沉重、茫然和无力。一方面是过去近半个世纪以来科学与哲学上的乐观主义的遗产，另一方面则是面对衰退、逆流和反动所表现出的经验不足与暂时性的失措。这种矛盾感也在某种程度上定义着今天的认知和自反性的思考。

左：
乔普·范·里弗兰
《录像宫殿44号—隐藏的宇宙》
木架、约20000盘VHS录像、带、霓虹灯管
"异物"展览现场，柏林世界文化宫，2017年

Left:
Joep van Liefland
Video Palace #44—The Hidden Universe
Wooden shelves, approx. 20,000 VHS
tapes, neon tubes
Thanks to the Creative Industries Fund NL.
Courtesy the artist and HKW, Berlin
PHOTO: Luca Girardini, CC BY-SA 4.0

苗颖
《黄金配方，素材的边缘》
2016年
滚动灯箱、发光字、电视机、视频、音响
226 × 184 × 35 厘米

Miao Yin
Golden Formula, Edge of Footage
2016
Scrolling light box, TV monitor, sound
system, backlit texts
226 × 184 × 35 cm

As if to prove or hint at something, in the days before I began to write this article, then U.S. President-Elect Donald Trump met with Alibaba CEO Jack Ma. Ma's promise to create one million jobs for Americans and rejuvenate the manufacturing industry stirred excitement about the revenue and respect the internet economy would bring China. News of the meeting quickly spread online, fermenting into a real event in society's mind. The success of this meeting is no harbinger of a golden age, despite the collective groveling at the feet of power, capital, and their talismans, as seen in the bald fervor for the "Taobao state" and "Papa Jack" on grassroots forums; and notwithstanding the praise for the anti-establishment, anti-elite, politically incorrect Trump on that so-called gathering space for young Chinese intellectuals, Zhihu. Instead, it augurs an amorphous reality wrought with contradictions and setbacks. On the one hand, there is the RMB 140 billion a day, RMB 1.75 million a second Alibaba consumer frenzy of November 11, 2016, proving once again that cloud computing enables capital flow. On the other hand, there is the silent majority, sought by the government for profit under the ever-looming, ever-darkening clouds of declining economic growth. It seems to

约翰·杰勒德，《太阳能储备，(托诺帕，内华达州)，2014》，2014年，模拟，尺寸可变
John Gerrard, *Solar Reserve (Tonopah, Nevada) 2014*, 2014, simulation, dimensions variable
Courtesy Simon Preston Gallery (New York), Thomas Dane Gallery (London), and the artist
PHOTO: James Ewing

正是在这样一个略显尴尬的时刻，在杭州这个诞生了阿里巴巴这样具有强大算力和服务能力的全球互联网巨头的城市，依托网络社会研究所（中国美术学院的跨媒体艺术学院下属的研究机构）而筹划组织的第一次网络社会年会，仿佛是对当下这个紧急时刻所作出的回应。年会的发起人之一、目前担任网络社会研究所所长的黄孙权的开幕发言中屡屡提及资本流动的高潮所带来的狂喜和不安，以及对网络和技术在社会中扮演连接者、开启者的期待与瞻望。而两天的会议加上一天的青年论坛下来，让人感觉议者同听者分享的不仅仅是这样一个共同愿景的地平线，更是某种关于未来的，或轻或重的乐观主义确证——即便后者并非坚如磐石。

当然，从任何角度来看这都是一次必要且恰逢其时的契机，年会选择了美学、生态、物质和算法作为四个理解网络社会的维度，将历史与现实，认识论和实践论结合在一起，而几乎每一个板块中每一位议者都跨越了这些维度并呈现为交叉的未完成态。在年会的同名主题报告中，网络一词由"network"被"reticulation"所替换，同基建的、物质性的"network"相比，"reticulation"将可见与不可见的循环模式一并接纳下来。而作为年会总题的"网络化的力量"讨论的不仅仅是

网络化本身，还包括网络化的技术条件，以及批判性地介入其中的方式。这些综合起来为一个在平台资本主义的阶段寻找替代性方案的努力提供了思想前提。换言之，或许可以认为在网络社会的研究中，是一种实践的紧迫状态催动着认识，而对技术世界的本体论探寻冲动也总是裹挟在历史的任务中。几百年前由莱布尼茨肇端的计算科学及网络已经构建起数字化的知识环境，而他著名的单子理论也经过德勒兹关于巴洛克寓言的进一步延展而深入到今日广泛使用的媒体理论之中。根据德勒兹"巴洛克之屋"的图示，作为信息接受终端的单子，其内部结构如同两层的房间，下层通过穿刺的孔洞作为感官的隐喻而单向接受来自世界的讯息，上层则是由褶皱所构成的封闭暗室，来自下层的影像投射在褶皱之上而形成多样性的"内在理念"。而今天的媒体环境也遵循了一样的光学隐喻，将封闭的创造出多元、超越性内在思维的开放性植根在通过感官同宇宙进行交流的基础之上。数字化技术则扮演了这层"界面"，将通往超越纬度的符号性活动同作为基础纬度的信息处理连接在一起。

正是在这个意义上，技术、特别是数字技术与网络科学，定义了今天的宇宙论的面貌，也抛出了我们今天的追问。根据单子论，我们每

卡特娅·诺维茨科娃
《晉迷运动》
2015年
电动婴儿摇床、聚氨酯树脂、电线粘合剂、显示器碎片，脑应激消除器、镜像玻璃，降压过滤器，上色的蛋白质模型，能量磁铁
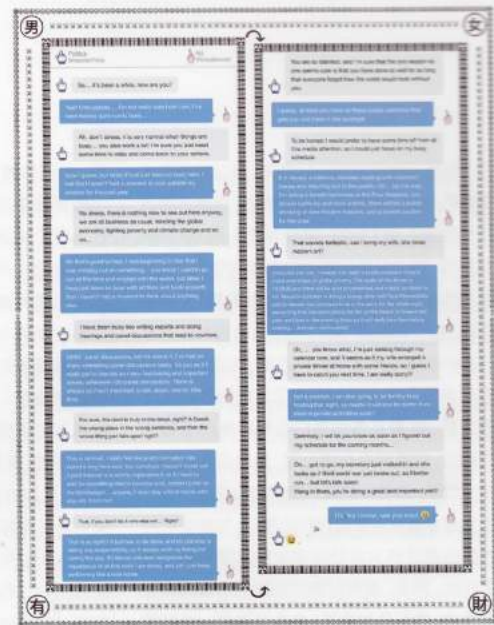"异物"展览现场，柏林世界文化宫，2017年

Katja Novitskova
Swoon Motion
2015
Electronic baby swing, polyurethane resin, cable binders, display clips, brain stress relievers, mirrored glass drops, downpipe filters, protein model render, power magnets
Courtesy Kraupa-Tuskany Zeidler, HKW (Berlin) and the artist
PHOTO: Luca Girardini, CC BY-SA 4.0

刘诗园与克里斯蒂安·蒙德洛普·尼尔森，《最好的朋友》，2017年，单频录像，6分35秒
Liu Shiyuan & Kristian Mondrup Nielsen, *Best Friends Forever*, 2017,
single channel video, 6 min 35 sec
Courtesy Leo Xu Projects, Shanghai and the artists

be getting harder to bring our intuition and experience into agreement. They oscillate between the internet and big data's vision of continuous development, convenience, and efficiency, and the frustration and powerlessness of our everyday political reality. Under these circumstances and presuppositions, it seems that we cannot avoid a sense of internal contradiction in our observation, practice, writing, and sharing: at one end is our diligent attempt to pierce reality and confront authenticity, at the other the weight, ignorance, and powerlessness it embodies. At one end there is science and philosophy's legacy of optimism from the last half-century, and at the other the inadequacy of experience and temporary loss manifest by decline, countercurrents, and the reactionary. To a certain extent, this contradiction defines today's cognitive and introspective thinking.

As if to respond to our urgent present, it was precisely in this somewhat awkward moment, in the city that birthed the computational and client service powerhouse that is Alibaba, Hangzhou, that the first annual meeting of the Institute of Network Technology (http://caa-ins.org) was planned. In his opening remarks, institute head and co-founder Huang Sunquan repeatedly brought up the ecstasy and unease carried by the swell of capital flow, as well as the expectation and hope for the internet and technology as an agent of social connection and openness. The two-day meeting and additional day-long youth forum gave the sense that the participants and audience share not only such a common vision, but also a certain kind of positivity, to varying degrees, of optimism about the future–however unstable that future may be.

Of course, from any angle, this is a necessary juncture with impeccable timing. The conference chose aesthetics, ecology, material and algorithms as the four dimensions by which to understand network society, bringing together epistemology and practice theory. Nearly every piece surpassed these dimensions, emerging as intersections of the unfinished state. In the conference's eponymous presentation, the word "network" was replaced with "reticulation." Compared to the network's capital foundation and materiality, the reticulation also admits visible and invisible cycles and patterns. And the theme of the conference, "Forces of Reticulation," is not merely about networking itself, but also its technical requisites, as well as modes of critical interposition. Together, these offer a premise on which to search for a substitute for platform capitalism. In other words, one could believe that it spurs us to recognize the urgency of the study of network society, and to realize that the pursuit of the ontology of the world of technology is invariably swept up by the historical project. Several hundred years ago, the intellectual environment for digitalization was established with Leibniz's computational science and network, while his famous theory of monadology was deepened, through Deleuze's expansion on Baroque allegory, into today's widely-used media theory. In Deleuze's illustration of the "Baroque room" as the terminus for receiving information, the monad is internally structured like a two-level room. The lower level, through small openings, acts as a metaphor for the sensory organs, and receives information from the world uni-directionally; while the upper level is sealed off by folds. Images from the lower level project onto the folds and form a multi-faceted "intrinsic rationality." Today's media environment adheres to the same optical metaphor, where the diversity and transcendence of intrinsic

个人都是万维网中的一枚单子，通过与计算机终端的共生，通过唯一的IP地址，凭借内在的独特性进入这个宇宙，同接近的单子互联并相互影响，随之扩展到相邻的星群和宇宙中间。借用德勒兹的表达，单子作为包裹着"无限多样性"的"个体化"之"一"，恰恰投射出万维网用户集体心灵的个体化过程，因此，无数相互融合的个体化过程包含了无限的多边主义的力量，这是万维网用户心智和集体智慧的大融合，它是网络化的力量，也是多元化的力量，如同一本书中的每一页都可以自成一体，但又是总体当中不可分割的部分。而网络化的力量也通过超文本的链接实现其潜在实在的多样性。那么，莱布尼茨的问题仍然是具有关联性的，我们仍然要问：在今天这样一个万维网的数据宇宙中，有没有可能去更好地定义我们作为每一个基础单子的个体化或超个体化过程？换言之，当面对川普的当选、种族主义的蔓延……是否还有一个更好的宇宙，不仅是可以被想象的，更是可欲的？当然，我们对本体论的思考同时也被拉向实践／政治的向度，这是毫无疑问的，但眼下，至少在这次会议的案例中，这一根本性的问题虽然基于此时此刻的技术条件而被具体化，但对于它的解答最终还是回归到了技术的拓延所带来的可能性（以及建基于此的某种希望）之中：通过不断复я013、增殖、扩展的网络化过程，我们作为单子的个体记忆被无限地连结在一起，这个多样性、无限扩张性和不会被穷尽的可能性，保证了宇宙的无限多样组合，而所有的组合都是可能的：越扩张、越多样，我们就越接近于发现"最佳"（或相对其他更佳）世界的可能性。今天，谷歌引擎的运算速度已经接近光速，它所存储的记忆／数据接近无限，因此人并不需要沮丧，因为另外一个万维网是可以被期待的。同时，持续扩展的技术将不断地引入无数新的多样的疯狂的形式去对抗、抵消、治愈我们已知的疯狂。

但这里唯一的问题是，如何协调两种不同的时间性呢：一边是宇宙论的永远向明天开放的洪荒时间，另一边是个体、社会的生命周期所界定的、有边界和确定性的具体时间。如何将宇宙论的图景协调于一个当代性

的、政治性的、情感性的期许，以及实践所提出的紧迫要求呢。如果我们进一步追问，为什么这个抵消与治愈不能在当下奏效，而总被期许给一个或许是不断延宕的未来，这个帕斯卡式的结论似乎值得推敲。如果说这种心态在理解与想象的维度尚无可厚非，那么当将其推演到其他领域的现实问题中，则略显无从着落。后者的工作，在以美学及艺术实践为主题的分论坛得到了展示。各个面向的实践者，包括以计算机项目为导向的艺术家，和从媒介及技术理论的研究者着手的现实关切者各自媒体化研究和实践转化分别做了比较充分的介绍。比如，通过对剧院或展厅的改造，观众可以通过声音捕捉、调制、输送的系统，和之前存在的自然声音进行交互反馈，并在这个过程中成为环境里面主动的一分子，认识到自身的开放性和潜能。或者通过交互式游戏，将技术物体作为人与之对话，进行直觉型互动的媒介和对象，吸引人在认知上有所行动，意识到赋权和权利剥夺之间无休的角力关系并有所觉悟。又如，英国的"余波"小组，通过对戒毒中心的数据库进行调查和重新探索、梳理，来追踪患者、员工、管理层、政府层及数据库之间复杂的关系，并通过媒体的介入为共同的讨论打开平台，帮助机构更有效的沟通、整合与运行——这当然令人兴奋，不过，今天已经川普化的分裂而极化的世界版图中，隔离和分裂让阶层之间的差异进一步被常态化，这让我们在讨论和观察技术的发展的时候越发骨鲠在喉，谁可以享受技术的红利，谁可以接近和掌握它？换言之，怎样的社会结构和政治形式，能够保证技术的可接近性，保证技术不被垄断化、特权化、过度商品化？什么时候，技术会掌握在那些被削弱者，被压抑者，被损害者和被迫沉默者的手中？我们可以说这也是人道主义问题在技术中的体现，但它显然并不简单。因为一方面，一个已经被自然化的技术在更多的情况下是在"中立性"、"工具性"的表皮下被视而不见其中的毒刺，另一方面则正如这次会议所披露的某种风险一样：某种易于滑向乐观的风险。诚然，根据数论和算法的对应，我们可以在本体上通过哥德尔的不完全性定理从而

直面与释放运算系统的无限性和开放性，而通过数据结构与计算的互换，也即不同的语言系统之间不断映射、转译、过渡，我们可以对当代政治的编码系统进行观察，可以通过运算能力的改善去更好理解平台资本主义以及不同群体的政治经济立场与定位。但这同样避开了可接近性的问题，算法的工具和算法的力量，在谁手中，而这个群体是否足够大到覆盖我们的全部？
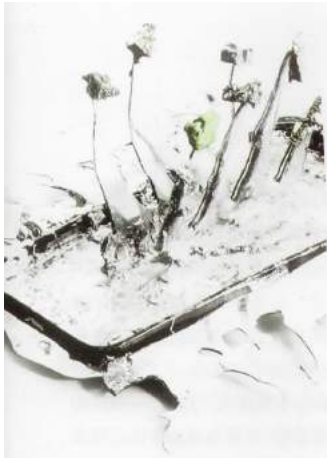
约翰内森·保罗·雷尔特
《Protekto.x.x. 5.5.5.1.pcp》
2016年
基于表演《Protektoramae Forking Horizon 5.5.5.1.》的装置
"异物"展览现场, 柏林世界文化宫, 2017年

Johannes Paul Raether
Protekto.x.x. 5.5.5.1.pcp
2016
Installation based on the performance *Protektoramae Forking Horizon 5.5.5.1.*
Courtesy Johannes Paul Raether and HKW (Berlin)
PHOTO: Luca Girardini, CC BY-SA 4.0
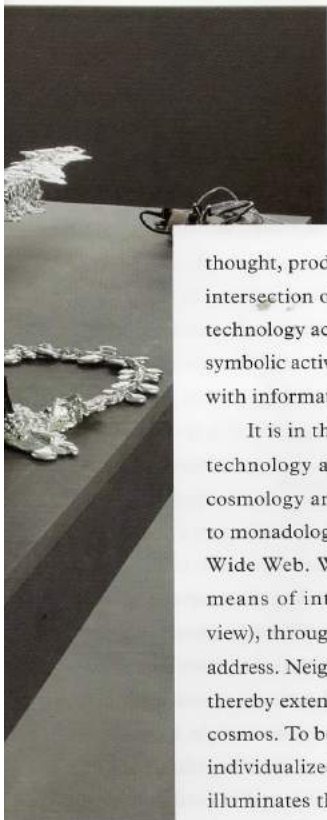
thought, produced in isolation, openly roots itself on the intersection of the senses with the cosmos. Thus digital technology acts as the interface for this level, linking the symbolic activity leading to the transcendence of latitude with information processing as fundamental latitude.

It is in this sense that technology, especially digital technology and network science, has defined today's cosmology and cast away today's questions. According to monadology, every one of us is a monad in the World Wide Web. We enter this world through symbiosis by means of intrinsic uniqueness (a proper and single view), through the computer terminal and a singular IP address. Neighboring monads mutually join and interact, thereby extending between nearby constellations and the cosmos. To borrow from Deleuze, the monad acts as one individualized unit packaged in limitless diversity. This illuminates the process of individuation of World Wide Web users' collective spirit. Consequently, the process of individuation from the innumerable, the reciprocal, and the assimilated contain limitless multilateral power. This is the great fusion of the intelligence and collective wisdom of World Wide Web users. It is the power of networking and the power of pluralism, as if each page of a book had its unique style, yet could not be separated from the whole. And the power of the network realizes its latent, true pluralism through hyperlinked text. Now, Leibniz's question is still relevant, and we still must ask: is there

a way to better define each of us as the individuation or trans-individuation of a basic monad in the present data universe of the World Wide Web? In other words, in the face of Trump's election and spreading racism... is there a better universe, one that can not only be imagined, but also desired? Of course, our thinking on ontology has also been pulled in the direction of practice and politics. There is no doubt about this. But at present, at least in the case of this conference, while this fundamental question has been concretized by the technological conditions based in the present moment, the answer ultimately returns to the potential of technological extension (and a kind of hope established therein): in the ceaselessly complex, propagating, expanding process of networkization, we are infinitely linked as individual memories of monads. This diverse, unbounded, and unboundable potential guarantees the limitless, pluralistic composition of the cosmos, where any composition is possible: the more it expands and diversifies, the closer we get to discovering the optimal (or comparatively preferable) possible world. Today, Google's search engine is already approaching the speed of light, and the memory (data) it stores is approaching infinity. For this reason, we have no need to despair, as another World Wide Web may be anticipated. Meanwhile, ever-proliferating technology will continue to lead to countless new and varied forms of madness that will resist, neutralize, and cure the madness we already know.

The only problem is how to balance two different senses of time: the primordial time of cosmology, with its eternal movement toward an emergent tomorrow; and concrete time, defined and bounded by the life cycle of the individual and of society. How do we harmonize cosmological prospects with contemporary, political, emotional expectations, as well as with the urgent demands brought about by practice? If we go a step further, why can't the neutralization and cure be immediately effective, but are instead expected in a future that will perhaps always be postponed? It is worth deliberating this Pascalian conclusion. If we say this mentality is beyond reproach in terms of understanding and imagination, then there is a glimmer of hope among the real questions derived from their domain. The latter work was shown in a sub-session focused on the practice of art and aesthetics. Everything

这引入了一种紧迫性,算法和网络科学需要同批判理论结合,来更好地面对现实的挑战。至少,在数字环境同人文主义的弥合研究中,对算法的批判性研究和利用已经展开。当网络制造的"共鸣室"(echo chamber)或"过滤泡沫"(filter bubbles)已经作为常态而被接受,相应在网络文化中,分裂和隔离以及作为其基础的个人主义在侵蚀着公共领域。通过批判性的审视算法乃至网络科学的特性,我们会发现同质性作为网络科学的基本公理,通过相似而不断地产生着连接。这种内在同质性的运算将开放和无限的网络分隔成相对封闭的小群体,内嵌于大部分数据收集撷取系统的代理人市场逻辑更加深了这种分裂。因此,如果网络出现隔离,那是因为网络的分析停留在简化的身份政治上,后者将种族和性别视作不可

变的范畴,将爱好和选择归于天生。而回应的方式之一在于正视且利用网络的述行性来构建起一种新的系统:网络不仅仅是对现实的反映和描述,更通过描述来制造现实,甚至通过不断的重复的行为来创建作为系统构件的点与线。那么,我们是否可以建立起足够容纳对于身份认同至关重要的流动性的新系统?批判理论会带给网络科学什么新的动力?这个答案同样不是简单的。大数据通过算法将群体行为和偏好呈现为数值、图表和模型,但是后者的生命显然不能被化约和演算。这些不可被视觉化的阴影在多少程度上能够进入我们的视野呢?前路仍然很漫长。

不过,这种总体上的乐观和信心,无论怎样仍是针对现实的一剂药,即便是德里达意义上的药也罢。说到底,我们是思考者和

行动者,但我们更是那载浮载沉于大数据的洪流中并借此被资本所不断解读、捕获和投喂的"所有人",是分享着共和教育的式微、大同理想的破灭,甚至是公共理性的衣不遮体的"所有人"——是一样在茫然、恐惧和痛苦的"所有人"——即便不安也好,不甘上罢,就像不止一位与会者在展开关于未来、开放性和多元本体的论述之前,总要表达对今天的现实和川普上位的忧虑及难受。是啊,如果把川普和马云的相遇看作是治理术和演算法的媾和,这其中被减去的自由与自主,为网络无界和技术中立的幻想所替换了,在越来越嘈杂和浑浊的现实之中,真实,以及生命的能动性又在哪里呢?也许我们暂时只能希望那微弱的种子,就在这沮丧和乐观融合的当下,在这人群的聚集和集体的想象之中吧。■
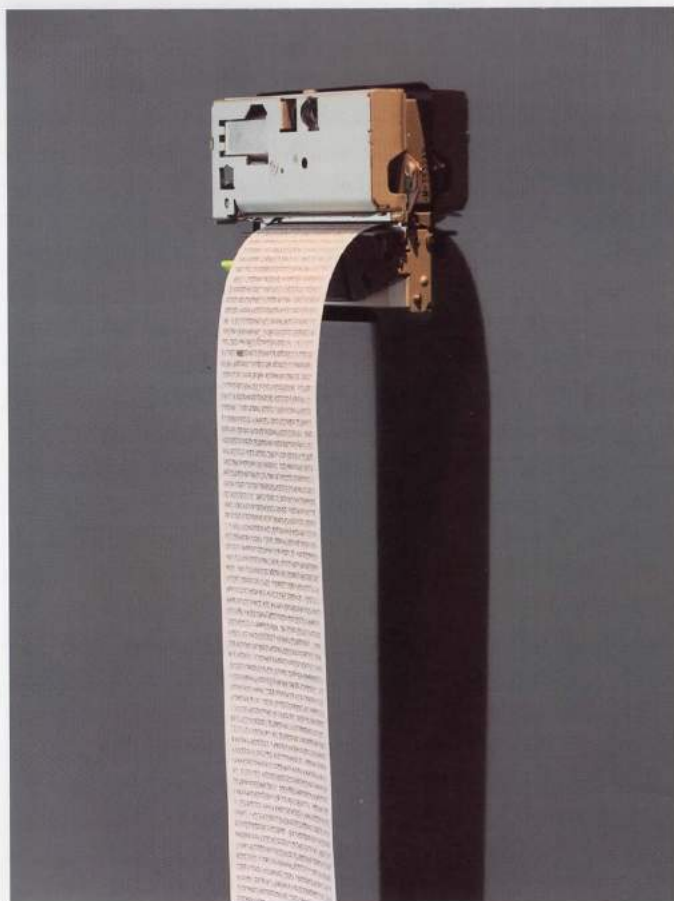
徐文恺
《Gfwlist》(局部)
2010年
装置
240 × 60 × 18 厘米

aaajiao
Gfwlist (detail)
2010
Installation
240 × 60 × 18 cm

Courtesy Leo Xu Projects (Shanghai) and the artist

that faces the practitioner, including the computer-oriented artist, and those scholars of media and technology theory who are deeply concerned with reality, have each made rather abundant forays into both mediatization research and transformation of practice. For example, through the remaking of the theater or the exhibition hall, the viewer may realize their own openness and potential through the system of capture, modulation, and conveyance of sound; the reciprocal feedback of previously extant natural sound; and moreover, as an active participant in the environment created by this process. Or through interactive games, where the technological object dialogues with the human, advancing an intuitive, interactive medium and target. This motivates the person to act cognitively, and to become aware of the neverending battle between the granting and wresting of power. Or as did the British group YoHa, which traced the complicated relationship

between the database of the National Drug Treatment Monitoring Service and addiction clinic patients, staff, and management, as well as the government, by examining, re-exploring, and re-sorting through the Service's database; and which helped to improve the system's communication, integration, and operation by introducing media as a common platform for discussion. This is exciting, of course, but in today's Trump-ized, divided, polarized world, segregation and separation are normalizing the divergence of different social strata. This makes it increasingly difficult to express ourselves when discussing or observing technological development. Who can enjoy the benefits of technology? Who can access and master it? In other words, what kind of social structure and political form can ensure the accessibility of technology? What can ensure that technology is not monopolized, made privileged, or overly commercialized? When will technology be in the hands of the weak, the oppressed, the victimized, and the silenced? We may say this is also technology's embodiment of humanitarian questions, but clearly it is not so simple. Because on the one hand, a naturalized technology more often hides its venom under a surface of neutrality and functionality, while on the other hand it presents the same risk that was revealed by the conference: the risk of easy optimism. Indeed, following parallels with number theory and algorithms, we can face head-on and set free the openness and limitlessness of the operational system by applying Gödel's unfinished theory to the noumenon; and furthermore observe the current political code through the exchange between data structure and calculation, that is to say the mapping, translation, and transposition of different linguistic systems, and better understand platform capitalism

and the political-economic positions and orientations of different communities by improving operational capacity. But this also avoids the question of accessibility. In whose hands are the tools and forces of algorithms? And is this group big enough to cover all of us?

This introduces an urgency to integrating algorithms and network science with critical theory in order to better confront real challenges. At the very least, the research bridging the digital environment and humanism has already begun to critically study and utilize algorithms. Now that the echo chambers and filter bubbles of the network have become normal and accepted–echoed in network culture–division and segregation, as well as foundational individualism, are eroding the public domain. By critically examining the characteristics of algorithms, and even of network science, we will find that homophily is the basic truth of network science, continuously generating connections through similarities. This inherently homogenous operation divides the open, infinite network into opposing, closed microcommunities, while these divisions are deepened by the proxy market logic embedded in most systems of data collection and selection. Consequently, if segregation appears in the network, it is because network analysis has stalled on simplistic identity politics, which treats race and gender as immutable categories, and preferences and choices as innate. And one way to respond lies in confronting and exploiting the new type of system created by the network's performativity: the network is not merely a reflection and description of reality, but produces reality through description, going so far as to set down the dots and lines of the system through constant repeated action. So, can we build a new system that

has room for the crucial fluidity of identity? What new impetus does critical theory bring to network science? This also has no simple answer. Big data uses algorithms to present collective behavior and preference as numerical values, schemata, and models. But lives clearly cannot be reduced and calculated. Then to what extent can these unvisualizable shadows enter into our field of vision? The road before us is still endless.

But no matter what, this general optimism and confidence is still a dose medicine to counter reality, even if it is medicine in the Derridean sense. In the end, we are thinkers and doers. Yet we are more so that "everyone" who sinks or swims in the flood of big data, and who by these means is forever analyzed, captured, and discarded by capital; that everyone who shares in the decline of republican education and the disintegration of utopian ideals, to the point that our public ideals leave us half-naked; that everyone who is left in the dark, amidst terror and pain–though troubled, we are not resigned, just as the conference participants needed to express their anxiety and sadness about today's reality and Trump's ascent prior to expounding on the future, openness, and diversity. And yes, if we regard Trump and Ma's meeting as a truce between governance and mathematical calculation, then where are the freedom and initiative that were left out of this meeting, displaced by the illusion of the borderless network and neutral technology, amidst the increasing noise and muck of reality, truth, and the dynamism of life? Perhaps we can only hope that the feeble seed is within this time of intermingling depression and hope, within the collected and collective imagination of this gathering.

(Translated by Anne Henochowicz)