

TPG Masters Project (2023-2024)[SB5+]

Name : Ye Yao





Artist Statement

I am Ye Yao, an artist dedicated to capturing motion, installation and behaviour and expressing ideas through video.

My goal is to bring the audience closer to understanding the psychological and social implications behind the featured behaviour.

Her most recent works use watermelons instead of human organs to express feelings. It emphasizes the feelings of pain and injury. This reveals the diversity of human nature, as well as the physical behavioural states of abusers and victims, which should be valued.

My work revolves around themes of health, healing, physical and social contradictions, and aims to heal wounds and challenge traditional prejudices.

Source of Inspiration

I remember when I was in middle school, I saw a news that a baby who could not speak cried every day, and the parents did not know why, after going to the hospital to check, found that there was a needle on the body, his grandmother made clothes for him, the needle was forgotten in the clothes, the child was pierced, he could not express. This reminds me of a lot of incidents of being abused. The victims were vulnerable people who could not express their feelings clearly, so I decided to use watermelon instead of people, because it would release red juice after it was broken, like bleeding, and the round watermelon also looked like a human head.

Babies who don't speak and minors who are bullied at school, like plants, don't speak to express their feelings, which is characteristic of victims.



Taken at home in China in May 2024



A photo in a 2019 news, China

Process

At the beginning, I thought that the abuser had a mentality of playing, releasing pressure, and doing things that hurt others, so I shot some video materials, mixed with some laughter, like a joke to express. But this is just my opinion, I'm not sure if the villain is such a psychological state, so I decided to do a test in an exhibition.



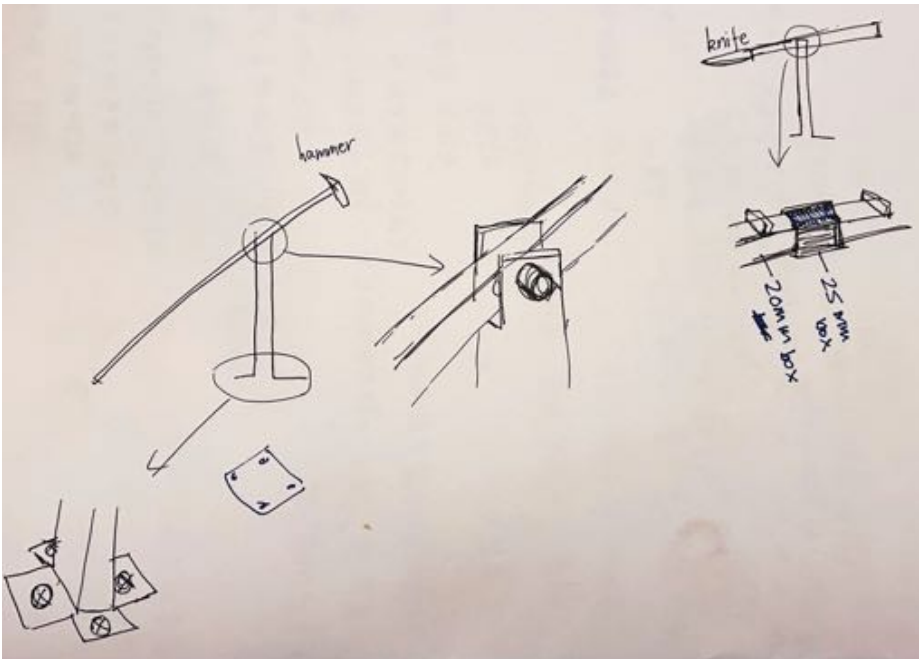
Process (Test in exhibition)

On the wall of the exhibit I wrote, “You can do anything.” It ‘s like a personality test, a test of how you would behave if you were allowed to. Behaviour is the focus of the test. The people at the exhibition site began with careful questioning and testing, and gradually began to boldly use tools to “abuse” the watermelon, and this process was not stopped by anyone. This test made me realize that I should do this thing seriously, because people touching the work casually would make them unable to seriously think about life and injury. But the exhibition was a success because the audience enjoyed smashing watermelons and releasing stress.

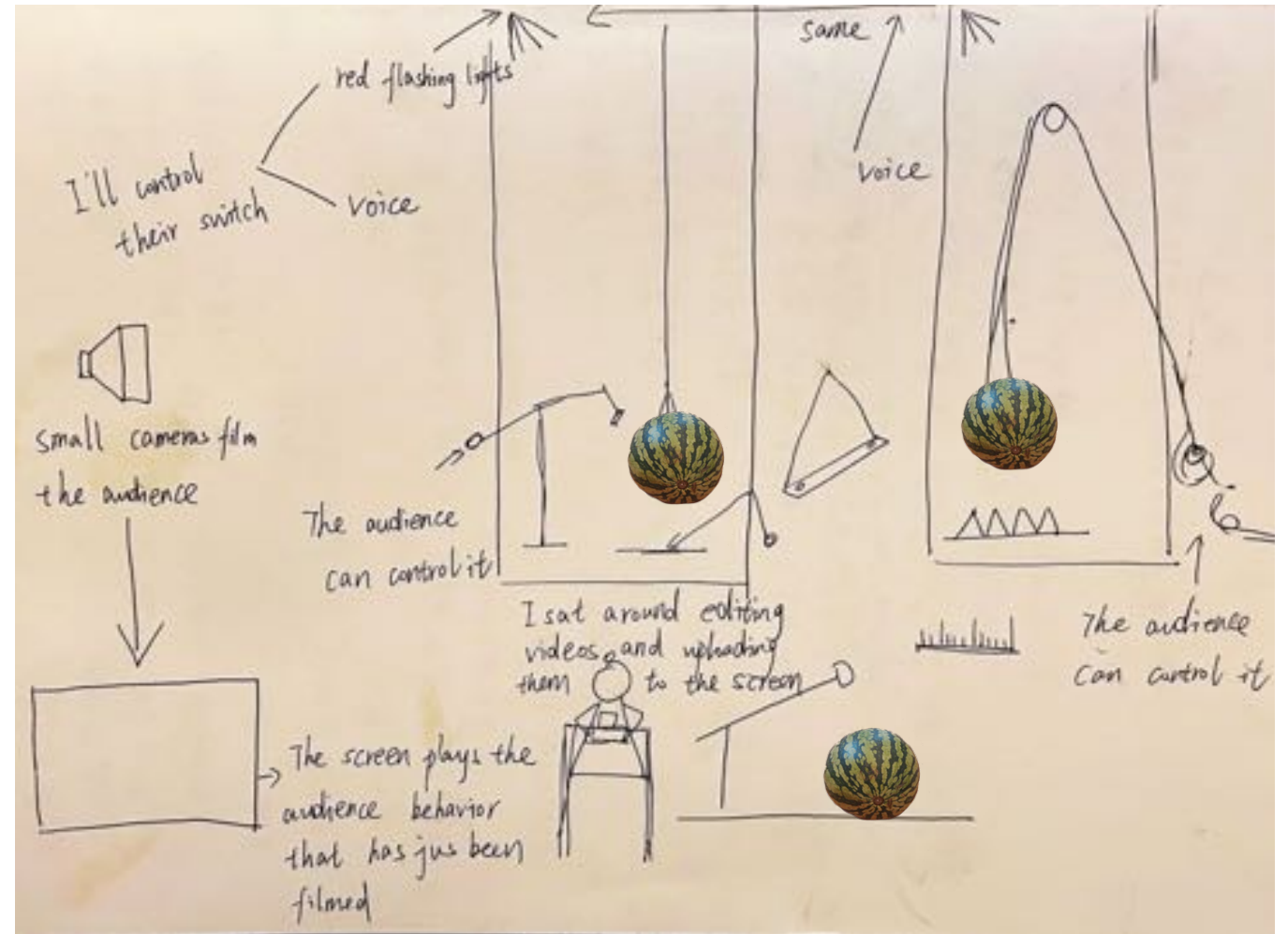


Embassy exhibition, Edinburgh, July 2024

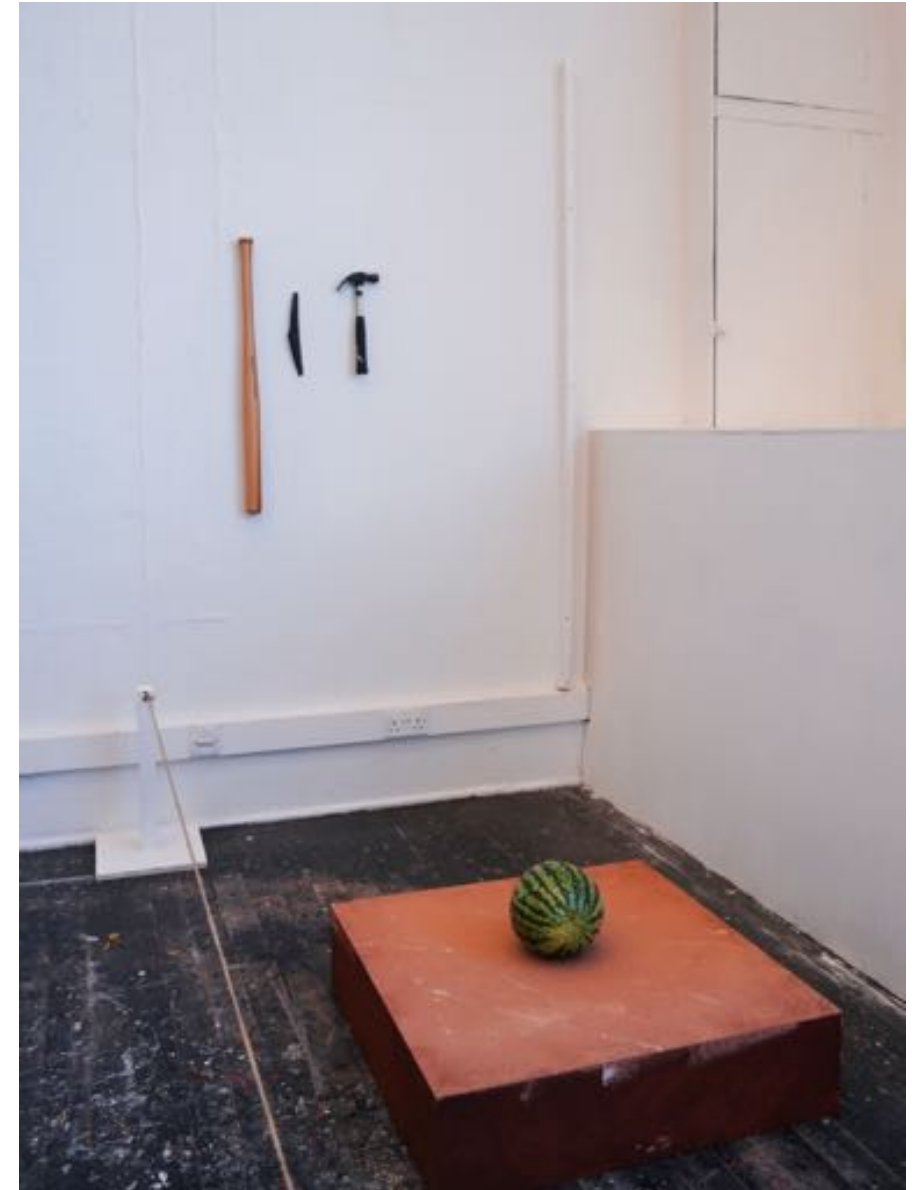
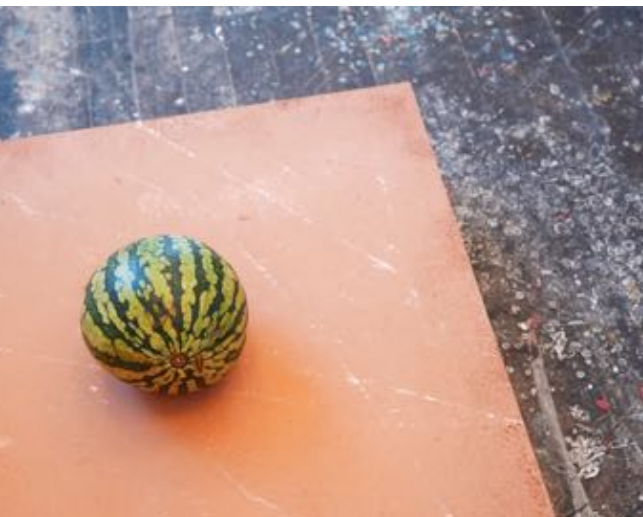
The idea is to make a device, and when the person moves the device, the surveillance and the lights and the sound are turned on, the red light, the sound is a cry of pain and saying, "You're bad," and the surveillance is to film the person operating the device, and it loops over the surveillance video that this is the killer. However, due to various factors such as safety, it could not be presented in the graduation exhibition, and finally it was simplified to only one installation.



Process (Preliminary Sketch)



Sharp metal against the watermelon, as if it were about to be pricked the next second, the watermelon was placed on a red stand, as if red light surrounded it, as if its red SAP stained the platform, as if the tools on the wall had been used and as if someone had changed them.



Who Killed the Watermelon 3, August 2024, Edinburgh, Graduation Exhibition



Who Killed the Watermelon (video), August 2024, Edinburgh, Graduation Exhibition



Video Link : <https://youtu.be/Dw2YCRfklo>



The video is also interspersed with the shadow of the woman's red dress, and in the process of twisting the watermelon, the nail appears to be twisted into the woman's body. The contrast between the red clothes and the green watermelon makes the visual effect even more prominent. The background sound is accompanied by the sound of banging nails, which makes people feel headache and noise, expressing the evil side of human nature, just like the child Shouting for no reason, people always have such a indulgent side.

Slicing of video , Who Killed the Watermelon (video)



Who Killed the Watermelon , August 2024,
Edinburgh, Graduation Exhibition