

A woman with short dark hair, wearing a red dress, stands in front of a large Union Jack flag. The flag is draped across the background, with its red and white stripes and blue field with white stars clearly visible. The woman is looking slightly to the side with a serious expression.

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"Days push off into nights"
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Hong Kong Spring Workshop

Hong Kong
exhibition
002

CONTEMPLATIVE STREAKS RIDDLE DAY AND NIGHT 日夜雙生

Where do you find a moment for contemplation? Is it while gliding towards Central, eyes aglaze, in an MTR car packed with people? Or does it occur whenever you black out the world with descending lids? "Finding a moment" implies location. If you could mark moments of contemplation within a given day, what would their locations—paired with their respective thought production—look like when extracted from the waning day and then pieced back together? This experiment—a contemplation on the nature and structure of contemplation—will be presented by Spring Workshop in "Days push off into nights".

As hinted by the temporal title, most of the artworks will reflect directly on the passage of time during the various eventful and eventless moments of the day, seeking out those ephemeral pockets of contemplation. The exhibits include the works of Moyra Davey, Cevdet Ereke, Lee Kit, Job Koelewijn, and Magdalen Wong, among others. The curator, Christina Li, has offered a few answers to some of *a.m. post's* questions regarding the exhibition:

A: The exhibition opens with the Sphinx's second riddle to Oedipus: "There are two sisters: one gives birth to the other and she, in turn, gives birth to the first. Who are the two sisters?" Why did you choose to use this epigram for the exhibition?

C: By weaving this riddle in, it is a poetic way to bring to the foreground and to remind us, the regenerative nature of time, and its' passing, that we often take for granted. It also perhaps could be seen as a way for us to re-examine the way we live, conduct our lives and encourage viewers to rethink our relationship to routines, habits, and explore the many potentials of craving the necessary pause for ourselves, something which we might overlook in our busy lives.

A: The installation by Dutch artist Job Koelewijn (1962) is a very intriguing piece. Do you know what is written on the cassette tapes or if there is any reason that certain books are chosen? Does this comprise of a writer's monument to the building blocks of his personal intellect?

C: Since February 2006, Job Koelewijn has recorded himself reading books aloud for 45 minutes every day, which ranges from philosophical tractates to literature and song texts. The installation *Relief 2* (2009-



Curator Christina Li



Moyra Davey
Subway Writers,
2011, Photographs
Images courtesy of Murray Guy, New York

2012) presents Slavoj Žižek next to Hannah Arendt, and the James Joyce trilogy carries the largest pile of tapes, as it is the thickest book. The books and cassette tapes are presented on a wooden panel, where the height of the tapes indicates the volume of the book underneath. For the artist, this daily repetitive gesture is much like a pragmatic ritual, through which language becomes a mental workout, nurturing, activating, and alerting the brain—and in Koelewijn's case, creating relief. Yet, it is not just a ritual, as the artist says 'It's about setting yourself an objective. A mechanic act does not necessarily have to lead to benumbing'. Koelewijn employs the term, "High Definition Reading" in describing this habit of his, as he knows precisely which book's he's read and can listen to audio versions of them. You can also tell whether the choice of book was an ambitious one: his intellectual shadow, the transparency of his being.

Indeed, contemplative moments offer instances where we impose our intellectual shadow onto the world, although, like a shadow, it never truly exerts a lasting effect on the world. The artworks strive to compound the physical contemplation experience, its metaphysical content, and the passage of time into a memento—whether they be books and cassette tapes. The exhibit engages a complex interplay between the physical presentation of the metaphysical and the contemplative content itself that encourages viewers to become more aware of their own contemplation habits and the importance of those habits to ushering our days into nights. In fact, we, in these moments, digest not only the events of the day, but also the pocket of slowness occurring during that moment. This is how we note that the day has taken place—not by the physical turning of the earth on its axis. Therefore, the contemplative act offers a mechanism that metaphysically moves the day into night, distinguishing between the multiple sunrises and sunsets we experience throughout our lives.

何處是你心靈沉思之所？是在目光如炬之晨，肩摩接踵的中環線車廂內？還是一日將盡，閉目入眠的一刻才容讓人安靜？「找尋片刻」暗示著一個空間。而假若你能夠想到一日之間哪些時刻能夠享受沉思，將那些場景並那些思緒抽煉出來，可以縫紉出怎樣的一組畫面？Spring將會展示這個實驗，在《日夜雙生》中以沉思探討沉思

之源起及結構。

如題目所示，展覽大部分的作品都會直接反映一日之間的時間推移，不論那日的時間表填了多少欄目，零散的思緒一一被撿起。是次的參展作品來自 Moyra Davey、Cevdet Ereğ、李傑、Job Koelewijn 及黃頌恩等人。策展人李綺敏就展覽與 *a.m. post* 有以下的對話。

A：展覽以獅身人面像給俄狄浦斯的第二道謎題作引子：「有一對姐妹：一個給予另一個生命，於是，她也誕生了。她們是誰？」為什麼會有這個設計？

C：謎題以賦詩意的方式提醒我們要意識到日夜周而復始的規律和流逝，我們視之理所當然，卻未必重視。這或許也是一個讓我們重新審視現行生活模式的途徑；同時鼓勵觀眾再思我們與常規、習慣的關係，並在繁忙生活中往往忽略的片刻休止空間。

A：荷蘭藝術家 Job Koelewijn (1962) 的裝置作品頗為耐人尋味。你知道錄音帶上寫的是什麼、又或挑選某幾本書的原因嗎？這些元素是否象徵著創作人思想的里程碑？

C：Job Koelewijn 自2006年開始每天錄下45分鐘朗讀書本的聲帶，當中包括哲學論文，文學作品，以及歌詞。《解脫2》(2009-2012) 將 Slavoj Žižek 及 Hannah Arendt 的作品並列，而由於 James Joyce 的三部曲是最厚的那部作品，其錄音帶數量亦最多。書籍和錄音帶展示在木櫃之上，錄音帶的高度代表下面那本文字作品的分量。對藝術家而言，每天重複的姿勢就如同一種修練：語言既是養分，亦是刺激大腦的訓練，在這個意義來講，更令 Koelewijn 感到解脫。然而，重複不但是一種修練，如藝術家強調的，「重點是為自己訂立一個目標，機械重複的動作並非只能引致麻木」。Koelewijn 形容自己的習慣為「高清閱讀」，因為他很清楚他自己讀過哪些書，而且可以聆聽朗讀版本。你同時可以分辨出他的涉獵範疇是否進取：閱讀的選擇映照一個人的知識水平，同時將人格表露無遺。

誠然，沉思將我們的思緒投射在感官世界上，但一如影子，沉思並不能留下任何實際影響。藝術品的作用是記錄現實世界的沉思活動、活動形而上的內容，以及不斷流轉的時間。展覽引發的是一連串複雜的互動：以實體方式展示的思想及沉思內容鼓勵觀眾再思自己的沉思習慣，並感受這種習慣在周而復始的晝夜循環中擔任怎樣的重要角色。而事實上，我們在這些思考的時刻中，沉澱的不只是朝夕的所見所聞，更是片刻的緩慢。這讓我們在地球運轉以外意識到一日已然經過，沉思提供一道形而上的程式，將白晝轉為黑夜，讓我們在一生見盡的日出日落間分辨變化。