

-My Body is Mostly Water, 2013, wire, synthetic fabric, hand-dyed indigo cotton thread, 10m x 4m  
水主宰的世界 铁丝, 化纤面料, 缠绕



Eco AiR Program 苔画廊生境艺术驻地项目

# 水主宰的世界 (装置影像展) My Body is Mostly Water

2013.11.29-12.07

Kay S Lawrence  
(澳洲Australia)

开幕酒会Reception  
2013.11.29, 20:00

中国昆明金鼎山北路15号金鼎1919艺术园  
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苔画廊  
TAI PROJECT



## Kay Sheila LAWRENCE

Doctoral Candidate at the Queensland College of Art, Griffith University.  
b. 1954, Ipswich QLD Australia

### MOVING OVER WATER

An explanatory text accompanying *My Body is Mostly Water* at Tai Project.

Kay Sheila Lawrence approaches ecology through documentary practices and traditions of handiwork related to textiles. She's a photographer; but also a textile artist, writer, sculptor and environmental advocate.

This text accompanies Lawrence's exhibition at Contemporary Yunnan, Kunming, China. Titled *My Body is Mostly Water*, the series of work (all completed in situ) teases out a relationship between the artist's body and salient aspects of the local ecology.

Lawrence's approach synthesizes her personal responses to context - taking in the geography, social/cultural factors, and her psychological experience of place<sup>1</sup>. This text broaches the diversity of encounters that inform Lawrence's work reflecting her practice as a lived narrative (the artist's story in Kunming).

### THIRD CULTURES

In China, Kay is of a third culture. Arriving on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October and departing on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December, Lawrence is just one body in a population of 1, 362, 391, 579 billion people<sup>2</sup> on the mainland. Not a native speaker of Mandarin and living under special circumstances (within the Contemporary Yunnan program), Lawrence must use her art practice to make sense of the in-between-ness of her context.

The American sociologist and anthropologist Ruth Hill Useem dedicated her career to studying persons living in a 'third culture'. Identifying trends in children (in particular) who lived outside their parents' country. Useem noticed that these persons built relationships to both cultures - the culture of their passport and the culture in which they resided - while not having full ownership of either<sup>3</sup>.

'Third culture' identities apply to artists too - often living away from home countries for intervals to focus on their work and their artistic development. The idea of the 'third culture' represents an identity in flux: a hybridization that results from negotiating the gap between a primary culture (passport culture) and secondary culture (lived-in culture).<sup>4</sup> This is the context of Lawrence's exhibition, which should consolidate tangible shifts in her practice as a result of her 'third culture' experience.

展览还包括跟踪长江的衰落和其前所未有并持续恶化的污染问题的视频。在大屏幕上播放时，数码媒体会隔离和扁平一个特定的时刻，在那一时刻里，主题被拍摄和被观赏的时间会被重叠。这些视频让影响长江的复杂生态状况变成一条单一的视线，通过互联和纺织品的比喻进行持续的播放和再播放，并以开放的心态迎接各种理解。

总之，本文的几个部分反映了艺术家的工作方法。每部分的标题有如一块织物或编织物的一部分，他们是分离的，但又因为围绕他们的共同思想（视觉和文本）而结合在一起。本文追溯了令 Lawrence 在苔画廊的 *水主宰的世界展览* 成为可能的多样性体验。艺术家在中国昆明尚未结束的旅程在这篇简短的文章里以叙事和非线性介绍她的故事和每日创作。

Kathryn Sawyer, 2013

- 1 Kay Lawrence 2013, *About*, Kay Sheila Lawrence, 不里斯本, 2013 年 11 月 23 日  
[www.kaylawrence.net/about](http://www.kaylawrence.net/about)
- 2 联合国经济和社会事务部 2013 年人口处, 纽约, 2013.11.22,  
[www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/)
- 3 Donnan, Lea 2013 耳语画廊, 图片来自地球杂志 Nick Garner 采访, 当代艺术平台.  
2013.11.19. [www.dasplatforms.com/videos/l-a-donnan-the-whispering-gallery-images-from-earth-](http://www.dasplatforms.com/videos/l-a-donnan-the-whispering-gallery-images-from-earth-)
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 与 Kay Sheila Lawrence 的邮件往来, 2013 年 11 月 22 日
- 6 Ibid
- 7 世界野生动物基金会 2013 年 *长江污染威胁*, 世界野生动物基金会, NSW, 澳大利亚. 2013 年 11 月 21 日  
[http://wwf.panda.org/about\\_our\\_earth/about\\_freshwater/freshwater\\_problems/river\\_decline/10\\_rivers\\_risk/yangtze/yangtze\\_threats/](http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/about_freshwater/freshwater_problems/river_decline/10_rivers_risk/yangtze/yangtze_threats/)



*Far Horizon*, 2013, archival digital print on linen, 90x40cm

遥远的地平线, 艺术微喷

## 羚羊之首

Lawrence 展览的海报是她身着羚羊头的照片。头骨意指改变的动力；随着她的身体从人身变为半动物，我们对她的身份认同会加倍了解。

Lawrence 驻地创作最初的材料是羚羊头骨。头骨作为她的展品之一，也可能会由一组缝制、钩编或由人类毛发制造的仿制品代替。对材料的研究往往具有揭示性，并且未完成或未展出的物体能够以更直接、更不抽象的方式展示艺术家的想法。对于 Lawrence 来说，她的实验是具有转换性的：用软性材料（毛发）制造硬质材料（骨骼）。这些展品也回归艺术展的主题（*水主宰的世界*），进一步陈述身体的材质（人或者其他）。

## 似远却近

头骨是在昆明的花鸟市场找到的。这件当地的物品，象征了身体和心理的地理学：脚下走过的土地和心灵走过的距离。在 Lawrence 驻地创作期间，头骨会在她身边，但是当她离开中国前往新加坡后，头骨会留下来，变的遥远。

虽然 Lawrence 正在向澳大利亚海关服务局申请将头骨带回她在昆士兰工作室的许可，但该申请却很有可能被拒。如果被拒，她能带走的就只有与头骨有关的回忆了。

## 面料与创造

常年使用纺织品形成了 Lawrence 独特的方法：纤维和纺线经常能够有力的比喻感应体验和记忆。Lawrence 会利用多种除面料以外的不同材料和方式，如数码摄影和摄像、装置和雕塑等。然而，她使用面料的想法贯穿于整个创造过程——编织、缝纫或钩织。数码媒介（例如）被她理解为通讯线路，有如一根纺线连接物体和观众。

在*水主宰的世界*展览上，视频和数码摄影以测试或纪录片模式播放，来诠释 Lawrence 的视角。刺绣和缝纫会用来重新诠释创作主题，例如 Lawrence 用毛发缝制的三峡大坝。纺织品创作与视频和新媒体一样利用时间的延续性，令创作本身或播放跨越很长时间。

## HEAD OF GOAT

Photographs of the artist wearing the head of a goat appear prominently on Lawrence's exhibition announcements. The skull is a motif of transformation; doubling our understanding of the artist's identity as her body changes from human to part animal.

Lawrence worked experimentally with the goat skull (as an object) during the developmental phases of her residency. The skull is featured within her exhibition and may or may not be aped by a set of imitations sewn and crocheted or made of human hair.<sup>5</sup> Studio research is often revealing and objects, which are not resolved or not exhibited, can demonstrate a more immediate, less abstract link between the artist's ideas. In this case, the experiments are transformative: making a hard material (bone) from a soft material (hair). They also reach back to the premise of the exhibition title (*My Body is Mostly Water*) to make further statements about what the body (human or otherwise) is made of.

## FARAWAY NEARBY

The skull was found at the Bird and Flower Market in Kunming<sup>6</sup>. An object from the landscape, it symbolizes physical and psychic geography: lands traversed on foot and distances travelled by the mind. During Lawrence's residency the skull will remain nearby, but as the artist departs China for Singapore the object may stay behind and become faraway.

Although the artist is applying to the Australian Customs Service for permission to bring the skull to her studio in Queensland;<sup>6</sup> it is possible that the proposal will be refused. In this instance, the artist will be left with a memory of the object and images/traces of her relationship with it.

## FIBERS IN PRACTICE

Years working with textiles inform Lawrence's approach to practice, with fiber and thread appearing as strong and recurrent metaphors for connective experiences and memory. Lawrence works with a range of mediums – digital photography and video, installation and sculpture – in addition to fabric. However, she applies the idea of working with fibers – weaving, sewing or knitting – across her practice. Digital mediums (for example) are understood by the artist as *lines* of communication, which connect the subject and the viewer like a thread.

In the exhibition, *My Body is Mostly Water*, video and digital photography feature as surveying or documentary modes, which describe what Lawrence sees and how she sees it. Embroidery and stitching are used to reinterpret and remake subject matter, like Lawrence's rendering of the Three Gorges Dam, sewn from human hair. The creation of textiles shares a durational aspect also common to video and new media, whereby the act of making or play back spans across time.

The exhibition also includes videos tracing the decline of the Yangtze River and its unprecedented increases in pollution.<sup>7</sup> Played back on screens, digital media isolate and flatten out a specific moment collapsing the time at which the subject is captured and the time in which the subject is reviewed. These videos bring the complex set of ecological circumstances affecting the Yangtze into a single line of vision, played and replayed in duration and open to understanding through metaphors of interconnection and fiber.

In conclusion, the division of this text into sections reflects the artist's approach to her work. Each heading functions like a block of fabric or part of a weave, which is discrete but joined to the ideas (visual and textual) around it. This text traces the diversity of experiences informing Lawrence's exhibition *My Body is Mostly Water* at Tai Project. Yet unfinished, the artist's time in Kunming, China has been broached in this short essay as a lived narrative and a non-linear, exploratory story of daily practice.

Kathryn Sawyer, 2013

1. Kay Lawrence 2013, *About*, Kay Sheila Lawrence, Brisbane, last viewed 23 November 2013 < [www.kaylawrence.net/about](http://www.kaylawrence.net/about)
2. United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs 2013 Population Division, United Nations, New York, last viewed 22 November 2013, [www.un.org/en/development/desa/population](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population)
3. Donnan, Lea 2013 The Whispering Gallery, Images from Earth interview with Nick Garner, Das Platform Contemporary Art. Retrieved 19 November 2013 from [www.dasplatforms.com/videos/l-a-donnan-the-whispering-gallery-images-from-earth-](http://www.dasplatforms.com/videos/l-a-donnan-the-whispering-gallery-images-from-earth-)
4. Ibid.
5. Email correspondences with Kay Sheila Lawrence, 22 November 2013.
6. Ibid.
7. World Wildlife Foundation 2013 *Threat of Pollution in the Yangtze*, World Wildlife Foundation, NSW, Australia. Retrieved 21 November 2013 from [wwf.panda.org/about\\_our\\_earth/about\\_freshwater/freshwater\\_problems/river\\_decline/10\\_rivers\\_risk/yangtze/yangtze\\_threats/](http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/about_freshwater/freshwater_problems/river_decline/10_rivers_risk/yangtze/yangtze_threats/)



*Atomic No. 4* (detail), 2013, 4 mobile phones, digital videos

## Kay Sheila LAWRENCE

格里菲斯大学昆士兰艺术学院博士生候选人

1954 年生于澳大利亚昆士兰州伊普斯威奇市

### *随水流动*

本文为苔画廊*水主宰的世界*展览的介绍。Kay Sheila Lawrence 通过涉及纺织品的传统手工艺和拍摄纪录片等方式走进生态学。她是一名摄影师，同时也是纺织品艺术家、作家、雕塑家和环保倡导者。

本文伴随 Lawrence 在中国昆明苔画廊的展览。展览标题*水主宰的世界*，该系列作品（均在现场完成）旨在揭示作者身体与当地生态显著问题之间的关系。

Lawrence 将她的个人情感与所处环境进行了同步处理——包括地理位置、社会和文化因素，以及她的精神情感经历。本文将探讨影响 Lawrence 作品的多种因素，以及她亲身经历的事件（艺术家的昆明故事）。

在中国，Kay 属于第三文化。10月20日抵达、12月8日返回，Lawrence 仅为 1,362,391,579 人<sup>2</sup>中的一份子。普通话不是母语，并且在陌生的艺术家驻地项目地居住（苔画廊驻地项目），Lawrence 必须用她的艺术语言表达她独特的“中间性”。

### 第三文化

美国社会学和人类学家 Ruth Hill Useem 的事业方向就是研究生活在“第三文化”中的人群。识别生活在父母所在国家以外的儿童（儿童为研究侧重群体）中的一些现象。Useem 注意到，这群人会与两种文化都建立关系——所持护照国家的文化和所住国家的文化——同时又不对任何一种文化拥有归属感。

“第三文化”身份对于艺术家同样适用——他们经常会前往陌生的国度专心从事艺术创作和艺术发展。“第三文化”的概念代表了一种身份的变化：是主要文化（护照国文化）和第二文化（居住地文化）混合后的产物。这就是 Lawrence 艺术展的背景。她的展览旨在展示她在体验了“第三文化”灵感下创作的艺术作品。