Weaving from the Margin:
Femininity in contemporary jewellery within a Taiwanese cultural context

A project submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the project is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

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Abstract

This research project investigates the role of femininity in jewellery and its cultural connotations specific to Taiwan. It seeks to find out how jewellery may embody and incorporate ‘femininity’, and how this may contribute to an emerging narrative of femininity in Asian art jewellery. Further it seeks to discover what is understood by the ‘creating body’ and ‘wearing body’ through femininity in contemporary jewellery. To address these questions the project researches the cultural contexts of contemporary jewellery from the perspective of gender studies. It connects with recent art jewellery frameworks and the material practices of gold and silversmithing to examine and develop works that illustrate and investigate femininity through the frameworks of mid-twentieth century, French poststructuralist feminist theorists. The methodology specifically draws from Écriture féminine (women’s writing) by Hélène Cixous and Chora (maternal space) by Julia Kristeva.

The project engages practice-led research through the making of jewellery and objects to investigate materials, forms and narratives that can convey femininity as an aesthetic attribute and social characteristic. The project methodology is both ‘Heuristic Enquiry’ and ‘practice-led’. It follows a cyclical process of self-investigation as a female artist through studio practice and reflection. The research process entails experimentation in the creation of jewellery and objects. Through this process of experimentation and reflection I am able to refine the concepts and address the research questions that are driving my project. This process of enquiry through making responds to the non-linear writing processes of Écriture féminine (women’s writing), which privileges cyclical writing and situates experience before language.

Contemporary jewellery is an emerging field in Taiwan. The research examines the current situation of the field in Asia and locates my jewellery practice within that field. It also considers my marginal identity as a Taiwanese jeweller within a broader international discourse. The outcomes of this research are articulated through a series of jewellery and objects, which engage and investigate the concept of femininity.

Through my works, the aim of the research is to construct a ‘feminine subjectivity’ by developing a fluid, sharing platform between the ‘creating body’ and the ‘wearing body’. This is a method that situates the role of the body in the making and the reading of the work on the body. Through the investigation, experimentation, manufacture and installation of jewellery objects, this research offers new perspectives of engaging, viewing and interpreting the potential for femininity in jewellery and objects.
Chapter One /

Introduction

My jewellery practice has been established over a period of ten years. In that time my practice has sought to make jewellery and objects that combine the solidity of metal with the softness and malleability of fibre. To create softness I use a process that involves repetitive fiber-related techniques. The selection of fine thread and wires explores the meaning of objects through the associations and relationships with materials.

This research applies and develops studio processes that include repetitive fiber-related techniques to allow me to question and explore and depict femininity through cyclical methods of making. Weaving differs greatly from current state of the art techniques such as computer-aided manufacturing and automated processes. Weaving and fiber-related processes are by their very nature slow, and the maker cannot hasten the process. I know my woven pieces cannot be finished in one day, it may take weeks or even months to complete one piece; the repetitive and rhythmic movements of weaving allow me to enter a state of tranquility and meditation, helping me to develop patience and peacefulness in the face of life’s demands and obstacles. Through slowness, I am able to reflect and become introspective during the creation of a piece, to find a meditative space separated temporarily from the complexity and pace of the world we live in.

My work focuses mainly on art techniques such as weaving and crocheting, which have often been deemed as ‘female’ practices because of their domestic associations. In the history of art, domestic handicrafts have often been considered as decorative ‘women’s work’ and therefore not regarded as ‘high’ or ‘fine’ art. Processes such as weaving, quilting, sewing, embroidery, needlework, and china painting have long been positioned as traditional activities of women. They have historically been depreciated and categorized as ‘minor’ art or ‘low’ art for the reason of their close association with the domestic and the feminine. This attitude comes from a normative view of women’s work and its cultural position in a patriarchal tradition of cultural production, and social and economic values. According to Le Corbusier (Pieere Jeanneret) and Amédée Ozenfant:

There is a hierarchy in the arts: decorative art at the bottom, and the human form at the top. Because we are men. (Jeanneret & Ozenfant, 1918, p. 182)
This statement captures the modernist view of art and its history as a patriarchal tradition. The hierarchical concept of dividing art practices into ‘high’ and ‘low’ has been consistent throughout art history. In 1962, Horst Woldemar Janson, a leading American art historian pointed out that the applied arts are ‘deeply enmeshed in our everyday lives’ and their purpose is ‘to beautify the useful’ while ‘lesser order than art pure and simple’. (Janson, 1962, p. 182)

Janson’s approach to female artists (none were included in his major work on art history), and to applied arts and 'everyday lives', both came from, and contributed to the establishment of hierarchies in art and its production. The approaches to cultural identity and value were conservative, patriarchal and discriminatory. In response to these dominant values the feminist art movement began in the late 1960s and flourished in the 1970s and 1980s. During the Second-wave of feminism (the Women’s Liberation Movement) in the United States and England, the feminist art movement emerged in the late 1960s to reclaim the value and validity of ‘women’s work’. American artist Judy Chicago reflected on female experiences in her art projects such as Womanhouse in 1972 and The Dinner Party in 1974-1979. These two collaborative projects led the way for feminist interventions in the art world. (See further discussion in Chapter One.)

American art historian Lucy Lippard, in her Household Images in Art in 1973, showed how the movement reclaimed the confidence of female artist who had feared being labeled as ‘feminine artists’ because they had used techniques associated with women. Lippard highlighted:

‘Female techniques’ like sewing, weaving, knitting, ceramics, even the use of pastel colors (pink!) and delicate lines — all natural elements of artmaking. It encouraged female artists into action, by ‘shedding their shackles, proudly untying the apron strings—and, in some cases, keeping the apron on, flaunting it, turning it into art’. (Lippard, 1973, p. 57)

Through their acts, feminist artists sought to intervene in the canon of art history, not only to reclaim and resurrect the mediums and materials associated with women’s work, but also to highlight the meaning of expressing female experiences and their

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1 Second-wave feminism first began in the early 1960s in the United States, and eventually spread throughout the Western world and beyond. In the United States the movement lasted through the early 1980s. It later became a worldwide movement that was strong in Europe and parts of Asia. Second-wave feminism broadened the feminist debate to a wide range of issues: sexuality, family, the workplace, reproductive rights, de facto inequalities, and official legal inequalities.
subjectivity. It was not just the materials and processes that female artists embraced at that time, but also ‘female’ forms emerged such as the egg, cave, and soft round forms and particularly the ‘central core’ shape.

My research is informed by the revolutionary approach of early feminist artists of this time. From the work and politics of these women artists, I can now claim to present my own practice consciously and freely supported by their feminist theories.

Feminist theories from France also influence my approach. Based on mid-twentieth century, French poststructuralist feminist theorists of the 1970s to 1980s, such as Écriture féminine (women’s writing) by Hélène Cixous, Chora (maternal space) by Julia Kristeva and the concept of Speculum by Lucy Irigaray, I intentionally trace my own social situation and reflect on my art practice and creating journey as a woman artist.

In the recent text published by Art Jewelry Forum (AJF), a nonprofit organization established in 1997 to advocate for the field of contemporary art jewelry, Namita Gupta Wiggers mentioned in Contemporary Jewelry in Perspective, gender is a relatively unexplored aspect in jewellery. (Wiggers, 2013, p. 70) The development of gender study in contemporary jewellery lags behind the other art forms. It appears neither in continued analyses around the topic, nor in further discussions of current work and exhibition. This may occur because of lack of institutional interest or lack of resources.

At this present time when economic interests take precedence over other cultural concerns, there is a tendency for political or social issues of gender or race to be assimilated into a ‘normative’ world view, which means the idea of equality is assumed beyond any other concerns, and issues of economic productivity take centre stage. It is therefore assumed that gender makes no difference to the work we do or the art we make. However, my research seeks to speak actively about gender, and from a female voice. It aims to position issues of female experience at the centre of cultural life and cultural production.

From this perspective my research considers current artists working in contemporary jewellery whose work addresses gender. My work aligns with this emergent area, and through this, it will contribute to a profound and ongoing discussion around gender in contemporary jewellery.
**Research Questions**

- How can contemporary jewellery be created to embody and incorporate ‘femininity’?

- How can this research contribute to an emerging narrative exploring femininity in Asian jewellery?

- What is understood by the ‘creating body’ and ‘wearing body’ through femininity in contemporary jewellery?
1.1 Background of the research

This research is developed through the practice of contemporary jewellery and the study of ‘women’s art’, and the position of both of these within a Taiwanese context. This section looks in detail at the historical development of the above fields and the broader representation of them. I will explain how these aspects and my personal experiences growing up in Taiwan and practising as a jeweller have informed my project.

1.1.1 Women’s Art in Taiwan

Influenced by political regime change and the impact of social and cultural replacement, the development of women’s art in Taiwan can be divided briefly and broadly into three stages: The first stage (1895-1945) has been called as ‘the Japanese colonial period’ in Taiwan, during which Taiwan was a Japanese colony. Due to differing perceptions of history, it may also be referred to by some as the period of ‘Japanese occupation’. During this period, the colonists implemented an assimilation policy that included an education and social system. In art education a large percentage of female artists painted with Eastern Gouache (also been called ‘Nihonga’), a Japanese-style painting, which uses animal gelatin as cement, combined with natural mineral powder, ink or metallic pigment and mixed with water for painting. Various surfaces may be used, including papers, silk, wood board, lacquer and fresco, or combine with different materials. Eastern gouache reflecting regional realist subject matter, such as ladies’ living circumstances, flower and bird and natural landscapes. The painting of the figures of ladies has also been called ‘accomplished woman painting’, which represents the high class, well-educated ladies with the proper manners and the virtue of obedience.

The second stage (1945-1980) was a time of rebuilding and reinterpreting the Taiwanese identity. After World War II, Japan receded its occupied territory and the Republic of China received Taiwan and Penghu under its sovereignty. At this time, the popular Eastern Gouache was replaced by traditional Chinese brush painting, as seen in The Provincial Art Exhibition – the official art exhibition in Taiwan. This period has also been identified as a period of considerable modernisation of Taiwan, leading to the inclination of a small number of Taiwanese art students to consider studying abroad between 1950s and 1970s. During this time, some female artists chose further

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2 Starting from 1946, The Provincial Art Exhibition, which is the largest and oldest official art exhibition in Taiwan, used to have the most authoritative and decisive influence on the artistic development in Taiwan. However, during the past five decades, it has been challenged and questioned especially in its judge nomination system, particularly the appraisal-free system and permanent assessment-free system.
international education rather than graduating from art school in Taiwan to become art teachers in high schools.

Beyond Taiwan, in international locations, the students experienced conflicts of the difference between eastern and western culture and they searched for their own ways to consider and reflect on the impact of these differences. However in Taiwan, the martial law order, which had been issued from 1949 and rescinded in 1987, made the development of women’s art in this period politically restricted and therefore it was often concealed.

The third stage (1980-1998) was characterised by a new freedom for diverse cultural developments. The first female oil painting group was founded in 1984 in Taipei and, from this time, members of the group exhibited their work annually. A large number of female artists studied abroad and learnt relevant concepts of western feminism. Taiwanese female writer Yung Chin Lu indicated in the late 1980s, especially after the rescission of the martial law in Taiwan, these female artists and pioneers brought the feminist concepts back to Taiwan, and dedicated their focus of women’s art in the academy and art world through their research and art practice. (Lu, 2002, p. 107)

Based on different cultural structures and circumstances of society, the development of feminism in Taiwan is different from the manifestation and development of western feminism. Before martial law was rescinded in 1987, there were only very few feminist voices. Furthermore, in contrast to the positive resistance and radical motivation of western feminism, the development of feminism in Taiwan seemed to respond to the political landscape by adopting a relatively gentle and introspective way of growing with the social circumstances. Within this context, a continuing intervention became necessary as, too easily, the feminist voice became assimilated and neutralised. The interrogation, reflection and recognition of feminist situations in different fields could lead to a greater awareness of feminism in Taiwanese culture today. By this, a solid awareness of feminism and the relevance of gendered perspectives could be regained and reconfirmed.
1.1.2 Initial encounter of Women’s Art

My first encounter of feminism was in 2001, while I was studying for my Bachelor Degree in the Department of Fine Art and Craft Education at National Hsinchu University of Education in Taiwan. I undertook a course called ‘Study of Women’s Art’ led by Professor Juin Shieh. Through a succinct and systematic way, Juin introduced the trend of women’s art and their concepts in art history. From Marietta Robusti to Artemisia Gentileschi, then Judy Chicago, Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, Yoko Ono and others, within a short time, I became obsessed by the works and concepts of women artists.

In this course, Juin not only shared their artworks and achievements, but unfolded the background of ‘her-story’ of these female artists. It seemed as if I was reading their life, their experiences and internal world. The journey led me to a profound introspection of my own experience, which explained my doubts and anxieties during my growing years. In my big traditional oriental family, I have many female cousins but only one male cousin. My memory of being the youngest granddaughter in my generation was absolutely not a comfortable experience. My gender seemed like my original sin, which remains an ultimate and disappointing product. Through the understanding of these female artists’ stories, I then surveyed my own situation and started to view it from different angles.

Linda Nochlin published Why have there been no great Women artists? in 1971. She interrogated the ideological stereotype in art history and revealed the unequal structure of the art world. Through invoking John Stuart Mill's suggestion: ‘We tend to accept whatever is as natural’, Nochlin discussed the feminist ‘controversy’, as the woman problem…‘There are no great women artists because women are incapable of greatness.’ (Nochlin, 1988, p. 147) The art world was identified as a typical ‘social institution’ in which an unequal foundation was built for female artists to be situated. Being disadvantaged by fewer opportunities and less support, being restricted and ignored, female artists struggled to be seen, let alone to be recognised as great.

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3 The Department of Fine Art and Craft Education at ‘National Hsinchu University of Education’ was renamed as ‘National Tsing Hua University, Department of Arts and Design’ in November, 2016.
4 Marietta Robusti (Venice, circa 1552-1590), the eldest daughter and said to be the favorite of seven children of Jacopo Robusti (1518-1594), better known as ‘Tintoretto’. She has also been considered as the mysterious assistant in her father’s painting studio.
5 Artemisia Gentileschi (1593–1653), she created large-scale oil painting of heroines Judith and Holophernes. The emotional scene in this painting has been considered a response of her personal trauma of being raped by her father’s colleague, Agostino Tassi when she was seventeen years of age.
Tracing back my experience in studying art, both in my family and at school, I was always urged to shift my interests in art to other ‘valuable’ subjects. Even when I enrolled in an art program, I was still encouraged to develop art as a proper ‘hobby’ rather than be expected to become a successful artist. While in college, the best choice for me was to select a government financed educational program, which required a higher score in the university entrance exam and guaranteed a permanent job as a primary school teacher. Therefore following this expectation upon me, as a female art student, my destiny was to become an art teacher in schools, rather than an artist.

I translated this passage from Mali Wu, a pioneer, artist and curator of gender study in Taiwan. Mali wrote: ‘In the early 90s, there is a clearer distinction of gender in Taiwanese art world. Ninety percent of the managers are female, while the artists are mainly male; administers are almost all female and the owners of the gallery are male; moreover, lecturers in university are mostly male.’ (Wu, 1998) Juin Shieh reviewed the educational system in Taiwan in 1999 and pointed out that the percentage distribution of gender in the department of art was unbalanced; 80 percent of the professors where male while the female students far outnumbered than male students (especially in teacher training at universities). However, after graduating from university, more male students continue their artist careers and gain achievement than do female students. (Shieh, 1999, pp. 28-35)

There are still major systemic gender problems in the art world both in the status and visibility of women artists. Following my previous discussion of the hierarchy in the arts, my personal experiences in higher education provides a relevant example. In 2013, I received a similar but ‘sincere’ piece of advice from a Taiwanese male professor. He suggested that I needed to change the way I think and work and the motifs I used in my work. He said that if I insist on making craft and working though my hand rather than shifting my method to another much more ‘high-class’ way (for example, a modern technology such as 3-D printing), my art will always stay at the ‘bottom’ of society. This attitude comes directly from a normative patriarchal view of women in art and society.
In the hands of Artemisia Gentileschi, as a female artist, Judith in this Biblical story, takes the active role in the killing of Holofernes. This is by contrast to male artists’ depictions of the story, which do not position Judith as an active participant.

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Fig. 1.1 Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith and Holofernes*, 1620-21, oil on canvas, 162.5 x 199 cm. Uffizi Gallery, Florence.⁶
1.1.3 Micro-narrative in a Taiwanese cultural context

In response to ‘Study of Women’s Art’ and ‘Art and Humanities’ (a later course also led by Professor Juin Shieh), in 2002, ‘7 dollars’ was founded as an artist-run initiative (ARI) by twelve young Taiwanese artists (myself and eleven classmates from my college). We organized an alternative, artist run space and provided an experimental and responsive platform for the development, exhibition and contextualisation of artists’ work. The initial idea came from Judy Chicago’s Womanhouse in California in 1972. We borrowed the concept and pursued the creative freedom of the bodily and experimental experience, and took responsibility in leading open discussions. In contrast to Womanhouse, ‘7 dollars’ was a long term (more than two years) project, which created abundant outcomes. As Barbara Kruger observed:

I mean, making art is about objectifying your experience of the world, transforming the flow of moments into something visual, or textual, or musical, whatever. Art creates a kind of commentary. (Kruger, 1986, p. 88)

Influenced by the ‘Guerrilla Girls’,7 we tended to focus on the direction and issues of women in art, not on our personalities or our own artwork. Preferring an anonymous way of working, we launched most events through the group rather than individual names. Through numerous discussions, plans and overthrows, we then constructed a fluid and lively platform for our work. In 2002 and 2003, we curated different programs such as exhibitions, performances, a documentary film festival and a sound art festival, as a forum for our political, cultural and aesthetic concerns.

The membership of ‘7 dollars’ was fluid and also included male members. However, male members did not stay for very long. In a short period of time, the group became a purely female union. After the original space was closed down in 2003, ‘7 dollars’ became a conceptual group and has kept the intimate sisterhood alive until today.

Through this non-traditional, risk-taking journey, I explored concepts of women’s art as well as learning how to negotiate, critique, respect and collaborate with other female artists. During my master degree (2003-2006) at Tainan National University of The Arts, I explored in greater depth women’s art related concepts, specifically on how I interacted with the idea, materials and making process, and how I situated my work in

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7 Guerrilla Girls is an anonymous group, formed in New York in 1985. It was a group of radical feminist, female artists, writers, performers, and other arts professionals whose aim was to fight sexism through humor, activism, satirical slogan and the arts.
relation to my body. Through a sequence of body ornaments, I tested, wrapped, restricted and highlighted my body. It was an experience of learning, knowing, being that also provided me with enormous relief from the previous struggle with my position and identity.

Fig. 1.2 Guerrilla Girls, Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum? 2004-2005, poster. © Guerrilla Girls.

Fig. 1.3 Guerrilla Girls, The advantages of owning your own art museum, 2016, poster. © Guerrilla Girls.
Fig. 1.4 Barbara Kruger, Untitled (We don’t need another hero), 1987, photographic silkscreen/vinyl, 277 × 533 cm. © Barbara Kruger. Collection: Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Gift from The Emily Fisher Landau Collection. Courtesy: Mary Boone Gallery, New York.

Fig. 1.5 Transformation process of the alternative space of ‘7 dollars’, 2002. © 7 dollars.

Fig. 1.6 7 dollars, Deconstruction the interior space of the artist-run gallery, 2002. © 7 dollars. The renovation of the original space of ‘7 dollars’, led by young members in 2002, which transformed the wooden, metal hut into a colorful space for events.

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* Due to the urban renewal plan of Hsinchu city, the physical space of ‘7 dollars’, one of the old Taiwan railway company dormitories, has torn down and transferred into an open parking lot.
Fig. 1.7 7 dollars, Outward appearance of 7 dollars, 2002. © 7 dollars.

Fig. 1.8 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner*, 2003, steel wire, 900 x 15 x 15 cm. Photograph: Yu Fang Chi. The linear structure of *Inner*. A nine metres long steel wire weaving installation, crocheted by hand.
Fig. 1.9 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner*, 2003, steel wire, 900 x 15 x 15 cm. Photograph: Yu Fang Chi.

Fig. 1.10 Yu Fang Chi, *Laced with Lace*, 2006, silver wire, 20 x 20 x 30 cm. Photograph: Chuang Sheng Tsai.
Fig. 1.11 Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending* series, 2006, steel wire, variable dimensions. Photograph: Yu Fang Chi.

Fig. 1.12 Yu Fang Chi, *Cluster*, 2006, silver wire, 30 x 30 x 60 cm. Photograph: Chuang Sheng Tsai.

Fig. 1.13 Yu Fang Chi, *Cluster*, 2006, silver wire, 20 x 30 x 50 cm. Photograph: Chuang Sheng Tsai.
1.1.4 Situating the research in contemporary jewellery and object field

My thinking about jewellery is influenced by my long-term interest in feminism, body experience, identity and materiality. After studying and practising fine art during my bachelor degree, I was then lured by contemporary jewellery for its particular engagement between creator/maker and audience/wearer. Eventually, I immersed myself into the field and focused on making jewellery and objects that speak to questions of femininity, and in particular allow me to address the issues of exclusion that female jewellery artists experience in Taiwanese culture.

Coming from a background of fine art and feminism, I see jewellery as an extended battle on the body – through both the conceptual enquiry of the creating process and the provoking gesture of wearing it. Jewellery and object are my medium, acting as a multi-meaning device which provides a particular way for individuals to experience and rethink material and personal worlds.

Merleau-Ponty claimed the primacy of the body as an agent of understanding, an object of social and political analysis. He insisted that we need to ‘rediscover ourself’, ‘reawaken our experience of the world’ while we are ‘in the world through the body’.

The theory of the body image is, implicitly, a theory of perception. We have relearned to feel our body; we have found underneath the objective and detached knowledge of the body that other knowledge which we have of it in virtue of its always being with us and of the fact that we are our body.

(Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 203)

As British born, New Zealand educator Nesta Devine stated: ‘Without the experience of the body, it would not be possible to conceptualise a physical object that exists in time and space. So the body is essential to experience and to theorising that experience’. (Devine, 2009) If body is the subject, the agent of perceiving the world, jewellery could be the medium ‘with’ the body, such as the glasses of the eye. It inflects the color we see, the distance we feel and the angle we survey.

Contemporary art jewellery expands the conventional beauty and function of ‘jewellery’. As a hybrid discipline across art, craft, design, sculpture, performance and so on…, art jewellery (some researchers prefer to call it ‘author jewellery’) contains a very wide possibility of definition and distribution. (Derrez, 2009, p. 12) Emerging in the 1960s and growing throughout the 1970s and 80s, the art jewellery movement
continues challenging, innovating and experimenting. This ongoing reinvention and questioning has paved a way for art jewellery as an art form. As Caroline Broadhead observed:

The form of each piece changes when it is worn or not worn and it is intended to be seen in both states. The form, proportions and the method of putting on and taking off the piece are all defined by the body. (Broadhead, 1984)

Caroline Broadhead is one of the pioneers of art jewellery in Britain. Her iconic work Veil woven with thin, colorful nylon, concealed the wearer with a flexible, semi-transparent membrane. She mixed up the identification of function, decoration and uses of jewellery. In 22 in 1, 1984, Caroline further explored the ambiguous transition between jewellery and costume, an ambiguity which also dissolved the boundary of wearing, playing and performing.

American visual artist Lauren Kalman questioned the relationship of body and ornaments. In her Hard Wear series, she restricted the mouth and lip into certain gestures. It seems that her jewellery is not a decoration made from gold, but a burdensome attachment of the wearer which limits the body into an immovable and unspeakable situation. Similarly, Turkish artist Burcu Büyükünal interrogated societal norms on the female body. Her Terrifying Beauty series, inspired by plastic surgery, bounds and distorts the face in an uncomfortable way. Here, as in Lauren Kalman’s work, the battle on the body becomes apparent.

‘Restriction’ is also an important motif in American artist Courtney Starrett’s work. In Body Bubble One, 2005, Starrett developed an unusual device for covering and observing the body. Jewellery is customarily worn by the body, however Courtney shifted and reversed the relationship. Her silicone membrane as an amniotic sac wrapping, capturing and occupying the body and constructing a fluid ‘jewellery space’ in between the membrane and the body surface.
Fig. 1.14 Caroline Broadhead, *Necklace/Veil*, 1983, nylon, variable dimensions. Photograph: David Ward. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 1.15 Caroline Broadhead, *22 in 1*, 1984, cotton, nylon, variable dimensions. Photograph: David Ward. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 1.16 Caroline Broadhead, *22 in 1*, 1984, cotton, nylon, variable dimensions. Photograph: Yu Fang Chi, Sydney, Powerhouse Museum. Courtesy of the artist.
Fig. 1.17 Lauren Kalman, *Hard Wear (Oral Rims)*, 2006, Inkjet print, 23 x 30 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 1.18 Lauren Kalman, *Hard Wear (Tongue Gilding)*, 2006, Inkjet print, 23 x 30 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 1.19-1.20 Burcu Büyükünal, *Terrifying Beauty*, 2008, Gold plated brass, cubic zirconia. Photograph: Firat Akarsel. Courtesy of the artist.
Through veiling, sealing and shackling the body, the jewellery objects discussed above were not created to fit or celebrate the conventional beauty of the female body, or to make the body more ‘attractive’. In contrast, they provocatively bounced back to the viewer, interrupting the joy of appreciating them, and breaking the conventional gaze based on pleasure or sensual delight. This work interrupts the idea of the body as a source of visual pleasure. By holding the body parts voluntarily, these jewellery objects convey a sense of discomfort and restraint. This questions the custom of producing an appropriately gendered body (such as regimes of dieting, makeup, dress, orthodontics and cosmetic surgery). The body has been sculpted, trampled, tortured and disguised, and this interrogates and reflects the dominant societal norms of the female body.

This project focuses my research practice of exploring feminism, body experience, identity and materiality. Through the above perspectives of body, gender, and social issues, the research questions and investigates my practice and responds to those feminist-inspired works and concepts. With strategies such as making, recording, curating, writing and collaborating, I sought to expand beyond the traditional definition and usage of jewellery, to investigate my own concepts, to expand the potential of my practice and to contribute a broader possibility of gender study in, and through, the field of contemporary jewellery.

Fig. 1.21-1.22 Courtney Starrett, Body Bubble One, 2005, silicone rubber, 122 x 122 x122 cm (variable dimensions) Photograph: John Miller. Courtesy of the artist.
1.2 Methodology

This research is practice-led. Through jewellery and object creation, the project enquires, investigates, explores and responds to the specific terms and gender characteristics of the contemporary jewellery field. During the PhD research period, my practice encompasses sequences of art works, the process and outcomes of curating two exhibitions and documentation from the making process. The research responds to my research questions and presents how I have approached the practice-led project, why I chose the specific way to approach the project and the eventual results.

1.2.1 Re-encounter Écriture féminine

The research methodology of the project is not linear but cyclical, reflective and flexible. A cyclical inquiry includes processes of discovery and rediscovery, thinking and rethinking, enacting and re-acting, and interpreting and reinterpreting. While introspecting the creating and making process, I have tended to focus on, and give attention to the possibility of individual experiences. This way of working responds to the concept of Écriture féminine (theory of ‘women’s writing’) by Hélène Cixous. The theory will be further discussed in Chapter Two. The following writing by Cixous shows her writing style as well as her central concerns. Hélène Cixous described her work in a profound and fluid way:

I go, we go, …On the way we keep a log-book, the book of the abyss and the shores. Everyone does. My books are thus like life and history, heterogeneous chapters in a single vast book whose ending I will never know. The differences in the genres of the books I write reproduces the eventful aspects of a life in our century. A woman’s life into the bargain. To briefly indicate my directions: in my fictional texts I work in a poetic form and in philosophical contents on the mysteries of subjectivity. (Cixous, 2000, p. 26)

The intention of my research has been to use my own practice and art series to follow the trail of Écriture féminine (women’s writing). Through the material practices of making jewellery, body ornaments and objects, I have selected metal, fibre and principally textile-relate techniques to be my main mediums and approaches. This has produced an adventurous and unexpected journey of creation. The repetitive method of making includes a close scrutiny of my emotional response of female identity. All of the above has provided me with an authentic standpoint as a possible speaking position to reveal my ‘mysteries of subjectivity’.
Art historian, writer, activist, curator, and early champion of feminist art, Lucy Lippard wrote a monograph on Eva Hesse’s work in 1976, in which she pointed out Eva Hesse’s work with an abundance of textile-related techniques...tying, sewing, knotting, wrapping, binding, knitting... that have long been regarded as ‘female’ activities and hence less valued than other ‘male’ work. Similarly, Brooklyn-based independent writer Ashton Cooper mentioned Japanese-American female artist, Ruth Asawa (1926–2013), in his 2013 article in Art+Auction Artist Dossier, ‘despite these early successes,’ Cooper writes: ‘many critics were quick to characterize Asawa’s output as “women’s work” or “craft”.’ (Archer, 2015, pp. 141-154) Again, Ruth Asawa’s crocheted metal sculptures received a negative characterization. Questions must be asked. Why do textile-related techniques and materials continue to be denigrated by their ‘hobbyist’ associations? If weaving has been considered an inferior method for creating art, why do so many female artists still tend to use it? In my research, I am interrogating these questions and more, and exploring the possible answers.

Fig. 1.23 Imogen Cunningham, Ruth Asawa, Sculptor, and Her Children, 1957, The Ruth Asawa Estate. © 2018 Imogen Cunningham Trust. All rights reserved.
Helene Cixous speaks of language as ‘a memory in progress’ (Grierson, 2009, p. 21). Similarly, for me, making/creating my visual artwork seems like reading/exploring ‘a map in progress’. Through a partly unexpected way of twisting, crocheting and weaving, I develop the structure and form of my artwork both consciously and unconsciously. Initially, following a main direction, I then linger, remain or even make a turn. The map, the landscape of my mind extends with my practice, which is not limited by a plan.

As an ‘in progress’ map, my artwork contains all the information about it at one time—colour, form, materials, traces of making processes, marks of modification, and the lengthy weaving experience. The artwork as a map shows everything on the same platform, unfolding the journey of my creating processes as well as the situatedness of my embodied approach. It carries a phenomenological calling to the audience for viewing and experiencing. All the elements were paved nicely to work together and reveal the conflict or harmony between my ideas.

Even after the work has been completed, the tension between every element is still active. Through display and demonstration, the jewellery has been touched and worn, performing an ongoing ‘battle’ on the body. Here, body is not a passive plinth for jewellery. As a social and political site, the body provides a complicated context and collaborates with the work. The artwork implicitly reveals a connective, specific and vivid atmosphere. Audiences may not read through the whole artist statement or follow the clues that are provided in the artwork. The wearer has the opportunity to immerse themselves in the work. They usually tend to touch and interact with the piece and may or may not grasp the full implication of the relationships between the body and the jewellery pieces. The ways of working described above have formed a fluid, open way to read the life and history of my jewellery.

1.2.2 A heuristic model of learning

What is heuristic research?

It refers to a process of internal search through which one discovers the nature and meaning of experience and develops methods and procedures for further investigation and analysis. (Moustakas, 1990, p. 10)

Weaving from the Margin is an arts–based and practice–led research which engages a heuristic method of inquiry through several artworks, projects and curatorial exhibitions. There are different parameters within the journey, such as the encounter
with various feminist concepts, an unexpected residency program or even an unexpected limitation in the creating of new artworks. Each challenge may open up new opportunities. In addressing the research questions, the trajectory of this research is open and cannot be foreseen. The process of this research shows an organic, non-linear pathway. As Clark Moustakas said: ‘Heuristic research is a search for the discovery of meaning and essence in significant human experience. It requires a subjective process of reflecting, exploring, sifting, and elucidating the nature of the phenomenon under investigation.’ (Moustakas, 1985, p. 40)

Here, a heuristic way of learning and discovering became an essential tool within the research journey. The focus of ‘experiences’ hovers in my work, through the research and making process. Through a cyclical way of questioning, exploring, engaging, investigating, practicing and reflecting, I apply a qualitative methodology in my research project. This approach is evident notably in Chapter Three—The dialogue and extension of the creating body & wearing body, and Chapter Five—Experimental Process & Finished work. In these chapters, I outline how I approached my research questions, discovered the essence of creation and adjusted the project through personal experiences. Creative Arts researcher Estelle Barrett suggests:

…artistic research provides a more profound model of learning—one that not only incorporates the acquisition of knowledge pre-determined by the curriculum—but also involves the revealing or production of new knowledge not anticipated by the curriculum. (Barrett, 2007, p. 5)

Unexpected accidents in artists’ everyday practice in the studio are an inevitable and common occurrence. The heuristic approach offers the possibilities of failure and adjustment, which encourages experimental processes. To find, to discover, to investigate, to enquire, to learn and to understand the meaning through the process, the characters of flexible, back and forth and ‘trial-by-error’ discoveries through an heuristic approach, are essential to my research.

Within the heuristic approach, I am growing and transforming along with the creating journey, rather than controlling all the approaches and designing a secure mode for creating and viewing the artwork. Thinking and developing through experience and practice, I enhance a deep awareness of being in the process.
1.2.3 Phenomenological understanding of narratives

In *The Phenomenology of Perception* in 1945, Merleau-Ponty claimed that the body is ‘an historical idea’ rather than ‘a natural species’. (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 170) This theoretical position provides a foundation for a feminist resistance to the biological determinism of the female body. French existential philosopher Simon de Beauvoir said, ‘One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman’. (Beauvoir, 1974, p. 301) She responded to, and extended Merleau-Ponty’s philosophical concepts of the body, prioritising gender as an ‘historical situation’ rather than a ‘natural fact’.

Simone De Beauvoir articulated her phenomenological approach to the female body in *The Second Sex* in 1949. Her investigation across different stages of a woman’s life explicitly offered an alternative narrative of lived bodily experiences of being female. De Beauvoir proffered a situated experience of gender. Of the female body ‘as a passive object … an inert given object,…’ Beauvoir claimed that the young girl was encouraged to treat her body, her whole person as a doll and to please others. Positioned thus, women live their bodies as objects for another’s gaze. (Beauvoir, 1974, p. 306)

As British writer and philosopher Kathleen Lennon wrote: Beauvoir’s account of the way in which women live their bodies in such an objectified way, internalising the gaze of the other and producing their bodies as objects for others, has been one of her most important contributions to a phenomenology of female embodiment. (Lennon, 2014)

Judith Butler, American gender theorist, supported the concept of ‘Body in situation’ from Merleau-Ponty and Beauvoir, while she further interrogated Merleau-Ponty’s ‘explicit avoidance of gender’ in the description of lived experience. She made an important point to do with specificity when she wrote: ‘For a concrete description of lived experience, it seems crucial to ask whose sexuality and whose bodies are being described...’. Butler addressed the root of the problem of sexual difference and pointed out: ‘sexuality’ and ‘bodies’ remain abstractions without first being situated in concrete social and cultural contexts. (Butler, 1989, p. 85)

To reflect on the concept of the ‘situated body’, I re-present the body in several ways in my work. The wearing body of the *The Nerve Ending series* is bound and restricted into certain gestures, which provides a beautiful but restrained scene of wearing jewellery. The creating body in the *The veiled memory series* is labored, subjected and repetitive, illustrating the implicit memory and violence in the history of Taiwanese

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9 Emphasis in original.
domestic industry. *Sensory Crease series* captures the bodily material — ‘hair’ and creates a nest-like vessel to reveal the imprint of the creating body, while engaging with the wearing body. Through the feminine makeup colour of powder painting, and a hint of the squeeze on bodily organs, the *Inner Crease series* re-presents a violent scene with a delightful and luscious colour. The re-presentation of body and bodily experiences play an important role in my practice-based work and curatorial projects. My approach is to provide a situation, a restricted gesture and an atmosphere for these artworks to be seen, experienced and rethought. Iris Marion Young expresses her concerns regarding female body, she claimed: ‘While feminine bodily existence is a transcendence and openness to the world, it is an ambiguous transcendence, a transcendence that is at the same time laden with immanence.’ (Young, 2005, p. 36)

To explore my experiences through making art as a phenomenological investigation, I drew from Young’s analysis and reinterpretation of ‘motility’ on the female body. Collecting and analysing the images and video processes of my object and jewellery making became important as I explored and highlighted the creative processes of feminine writing, making and being. In *Creating Body & Wearing Body* and *The Fitting Ceremony* in Chapter Three, I tended to share and unfold the mysteries of an artists’ studio experience. I observed how individuals touched, wore and interacted with my jewellery, with consideration for the feeling and impact of specific gestures and how the narratives of experience are embodied in their interactions as well as in my jewellery making.

Philosopher, researcher and educator Elizabeth Grierson explains this process when she writes:

> In telling the narratives of experience the connection to methodology becomes paramount in determining how to tell the narratives. If the methodology is phenomenological then the narratives could be told through the embodied processes of experience in the moment when knowledge of something in the world becomes present to consciousness. (Grierson, 2009, p. 28)

As well as jewellery-making processes, two curatorial projects constitute further ways of understanding and revealing the mysterious narratives behind the work. Through curating and exhibiting, I have been able to test, examine, experience and verify the possibility of an embodied femininity in contemporary jewellery. Through curating, I have expanded my concepts and invited other artists to respond to a stated theme. In both the curatorial exhibitions, the strategy of constructing a valid device for the perception of artists’ narratives was encapsulated by the installation and atmosphere in
the galleries. In the exhibition of *Inner Crease* in 2015, I covered the walls and windows of the gallery with numerous semi-transparent curtains, which built a domestic scene and evoked an atmosphere of daily life. While in *Tacit Recollection* in 2017, I applied stretch fabric usually used in leggings and tights to create a series of flexible installation in the gallery space. I sought to represent the tension and elasticity of skin and to connect jewellery and object with a bodily experience.

I anticipated learning, testing and leading the audience toward a closer bodily understanding of the artwork. Through building a specific environmental installation and displaying a sequence of texts, images or videos, which revealed the making process, I sought to unfold the narratives of individual art works and, thereby, enhance phenomenological understandings of them. This sharing occurs through an immanent vibrating echo. Through this process, the aim of both curatorial projects was to activate an empathy with the embodied art pieces, and for this to be shared by the audiences, artists, artworks and curator.
Chapter Two /

The genealogy of feminism and femininity

2.1 An ambiguous temperament: The definition of femininity

Dictionary definitions of ‘femininity’ indicate: the quality of being female, the quality or nature of the female sex or the quality of being feminine. Some reveal ‘feminine’ as having characteristics that are traditionally thought to be typical of or suitable for a woman especially delicacy and prettiness. Synonyms for ‘femininity’ include, womanliness, feminineness, womankind, womanhood, women collectively, womanly qualities, feminine qualities, delicacy, softness, gentleness, girlishness, muliebrity, effeminacy. Based on the above definitions, femininity represents the qualities and appearances traditionally or stereotypically associated with women.

Feminists generally consider that femininity refers to a series of behavior characteristics, and it plays a gender role in society arising from social and cultural conditions. Therefore, femininity and masculinity are rooted in the social (one’s gender) rather than the biological (one’s sex) conditions of one’s life. American cultural anthropologist, Margaret Mead claimed that personality characteristics were molded and shaped by cultural conditions rather than biological inheritance. Through her research on three primitive societies in Papua New Guinea, Arapesh, Mundugumor and Tchambuli people, Margaret Mead wrote: ‘The material suggests that we may say that many, if not all, of the personality traits which we have called masculine or feminine are as lightly linked to sex as are the clothing, the manners, and the form of head-dress that a society at a given period assigns to either sex.’ (Mead, 1935, p. 280) Her research on the structure of the Tchambuli people, a peaceful and successful female-dominated tribe, also became a major cornerstone of the feminist movement in the United States.

Views on the issue of whether femininity is a positive or negative term vary. Some early feminists argue that femininity is a limitation, which restricts the female in certain behaviours and temperaments. Others consider that through differences of gender and living circumstances, women do experience a unique and different reality, therefore female artists or writers may represent their feelings in a different way.

British psychoanalyst Joan Riviere wrote in Womanliness as Masquerade in 1929, ‘Womanliness therefore could be assumed and worn as a mask, both to hide the
possession of masculinity and to avert the reprisals expected if she was found to possess it.’ She claimed: ‘Women who wish for masculinity may put on a mask of womanliness to avert anxiety and the retribution feared from men.’ (Riviere, 1929, pp. 301-313) This suggests that to hide the aggressively masculine temperament, women tend to masquerade, represent and perform a certain gentle ‘femininity’ to earn the status and recognition from the world. In *The Second Sex* in 1949, Simone de Beauvoir regarded the ‘eternal feminine’ as a patriarchal myth that constructs women as a passive *erotic, birthing or nurturing body* excluded from playing the role of a subject who experiences and acts. (Bergoffen, 1977, pp. 143–144)

From the 1960s to 1980s, feminist writers and critics started to explore and hold different opinions of ‘femininity’. In *The Power of Feminist Art* in 1994, Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard paved the ground for the background story, history and legacy of American feminist art of the 1970s. They sought to explore and understand femininity beyond the limitation of masculinised pleasure. Griselda Pollock claimed: ‘Femininity should be understood therefore not as a condition of women but as the ideological form of the regulation of female sexuality within a familial, heterosexual domesticity which is ultimately organized by the law.’ (Pollock, 1987, p. 78) Linda Nochlin also argued that there would be no answer for trying to categorise femininity. She investigated a number of female artists and writers’ works and pointed out: ‘…no such common qualities of ‘femininity’ would seem to link the styles of women artists generally.’ She insisted, ‘In any case, the mere choice of a certain realm of subject matter, or the restriction to certain subjects, is not to be equated with a style, much less with some sort of quintessentially feminine style.’ (Nochlin, 1971, pp. 480-510)

Analysing, reviewing and refining the purposes and configurations of femininity, Clare Johnson, a British Visual Culture researcher, investigated feminist art, femininity and feminism as political and critical practices. She inquired into the ambiguous but interesting spaces between the practice as one seeps into the other, asking: ‘What these artworks share is the repetition of femininity?…My approach is to read femininity as an activity rather than a noun.’ Johnson stated:

This is not a position of compliance… but an argument about the potential to re-orientate femininity from within its symbolic infrastructure. I ask whether feminist tactics can be imagined within what Pollock has called the ‘space of femininity’ opened up by the art-works, not in opposition to it. Rather than under-standing the visual pleasure of femininity… (Johnson, 2013, p. 3)
Throughout my research, I use the notion of femininity as a key register in two ways. Firstly it refers to the aesthetic value of women’s art in representation; and secondly, it is used to trace the unknown background story within my cultural context. My research is not trying to categorise what ‘femininity’ is, or trying to identify a ‘more inward-looking’, ‘more delicate’ or similar characteristic in art. My intention is to explore what femininity could be in and through jewellery and object art as a material practice. In and through my work, I am looking for the possibilities and potentials of femininity in jewellery and objects. Is it possible to respond to the notion of femininity with an active movement through the making, displaying and wearing of art jewellery? Through my research, practice and curatorial projects, I aim to find a space beyond the limitations of conventional definitions and understandings of femininity in the norms of patriarchal cultural traditions.

2.2 Feminine writing, making and being

By writing her self, woman will return to the body. (Cixous, 1976, p. 880)  

In the article *The Laugh of the Medusa* in 1975, Hélène Cixous asserts: ‘Woman must write herself: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies.’ (Cixous, 1976, p. 875) because their sexual pleasure has been repressed and denied expression. Cixous worked with *Écriture féminine* (theory of ‘women’s writing’) in the early 1970s to place experience before language, and privilege non-linear, cyclical writing that evades the discourse regulating the phallocentric system. *Écriture féminine* suggests a creative process of feminine writing, making and being. This is the process I call on and explore, through my jewellery and object making.

*Écriture féminine*, the theory of women’s writing, is sometimes translated as ‘writing the feminine’. Through *Écriture féminine*, Hélène Cixous sought to de-center and challenge the norms of patriarchic structures. She encouraged women to write, to express their personal sexual feelings and unique pleasures, and to become the subject in language. For her, *Écriture féminine* is a strategy to transcend the rule, to rupture and transgress the inevitable phallocentric order of language.

Cixous projected *Écriture féminine* in creative forms specifically in ‘poetry’. She described it this way: ‘Because poetry involves gaining strength through the unconscious and only inscriptions of femininity…’ (Cixous, 1976, p. 879) Here, in

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10 Sentence in original.
poetic form, language is relatively unstable, the chains of signifiers flow loosely, freely and meaning is less restrained. Cixious considered poetry to be closer to the unconscious. This also suggested what has been repressed in the dominant order of society, as in the logic of language, such as female bodies and sexuality. Cixous further built the metaphor of 'white ink'. As she explained: ‘good mother’s milk. She writes in white ink.’ (Cixous, 1976, p.881) The use of white ink represented writing in mother’s breast milk, which built on the relationships of female bodies and connected them to the maternal experience. Through art practice, I respond to this conceptual trend of Cixous and investigate them further. In my project, the jewellery making materials such as wire and thread seems to be my pencil; the creating process becomes the gesture I write and act; and the body as a site of ‘writing’ is my space and paper. As Griselda Pollock comments:

Hélène Cixous wants to encourage women to make themselves women by producing women-text. Her sense of what these might be involves a specific theoretical construction of femininity and its unacknowledged relations to female corporeality. Thus she writes: ‘Let’s not look at syntax but a fantasy, at the unconscious: all the feminine text I’ve read are very close to the voice, very close to the flesh of language.’ This produces a feminine textual body as a trace of a female libidinal economy. (Pollock, 1999, p. 123)

Thus my research becomes a ‘female libidinal economy’ as it constructs an embodied femininity in and through the metrical practices of jewellery. Here lies my feminine principle at work. Through collaborating with female artists, the curating strategy in my project also captures the lived and vivid feminine responses of jewellery and art work. By providing feminine texts, the curatorial projects sought to build an emerging narrative in the field.

Another French feminist theorist who has influenced my research is Julia Kristeva, who adopted the *chora* concept from Plato. The *chora* (a nourishing maternal space) is a mysterious space as a vessel, which contains ambiguity, chaos, the unspoken, ‘feminine jouissance’. (Phoca, 1999, p. 63) Plato explained the *chora* as an indescribable, mysterious, feminine principle that was *like a womb*. Kristeva explored the idea of the *chora* and interpreted it in several ways: as a metaphor of the uterus, as a temporal ‘body space’ shared by a mother and her children. The ecstasy, motility and vibration in the *chora*, is an indeterminate mediated realm on the female body where it becomes full of meanings and possibilities. It is this ‘body space’ that is important in my work.
Drawing from the gender theories of *Écriture féminine* (women’s writing) by Hélène Cixous and *Chora* (maternal space) by Julia Kristeva, my research explores the way femininity may be recognized and understood within my own practice. Through the making of jewellery and the experience of the materials I use, I respond to the process of creation as a gendered transaction as I consider the position and reflection of the body on the art jewellery. Through refining my thinking and understanding of these way of working, I try to get closer to the way of *Écriture féminine*.

To locate and position my work in this framework, I investigate the possibility for different narratives of femininity in Asian jewellery and objects. Western art history provides seminal examples of feminine and feminist art practices. In the iconic feminist artwork, *The Dinner Party* in 1979, American artist Judy Chicago celebrated traditional female artisanship and its accomplishments, such as textile arts (weaving, embroidery, sewing) and ceramic painting. These forms of making be framed as ‘craft’ or ‘domestic art’, and placed on the margins of the culturally valued, male-dominated ‘fine arts’ practices. Chicago’s work was part of the feminist art movement and it came at a time when females had been written out of art history and literary history in general.

This was a time when the Women’s Liberation Movement was making its mark in the United States. Artworks such as *The Dinner Party* exposed social and political issues of marginalisation of women in history, and opened the necessity of dialogue on women’s oppression in Western cultural norms and traditions. However, the discussion of these issues was not followed in Asian contexts and the recognition of female art in Asian craft continued to be absent; the feminine voice in this field is faint and indistinguishable even today. Through the exposure of different narratives in artworks, the diversity of lived experiences can be revealed; and in that diversity, the politics of silencing and marginalisation may be presented. Then the petit narrative of ‘Her-story’ may be rediscovered and woven in from the margins, to disturb the single, heroic and arbitrary interpretation of ‘History’.

Fig. 2.2 Judy Chicago, *The Dinner Party — Emily Dickinson Place Setting*, 1979. © Judy Chicago /ARS. Licensed by Viscopy, 2018.
In another ‘dinner party’, American photographer Cindy Sherman in 1990 makes up and disguises herself as *Madame de Pompadour* (The mistress, the most powerful woman behind French King Louis XV). Her famous self-portrait image is printed on the decorative ceramic dishes and pots of the dinner table. It is significant to see that an artist from 1990 as engaging with Chicago’s work from 1979 and the politics of feminism continue to be addressed by this work.

As a female artist in Taiwan, my creative work as a contemporary jeweller and object maker is generally regarded within the dominant Taiwanese discourse as a ‘hobby’. Art jewellery or conceptual jewellery is rarely located in a contemporary art context, and seldom collected in fine art museums in Taiwan. Multiple oppressions are situated on craft and gender. Both suffered from the categorised perspective of being inferior. Through a marginalised position, I am able to observe my personal experiences, and reflect on them, as I trace back to the history of these marginalisations. By so doing, I find connections with other artists with similar experiences.

To situate and position this research, I explore the specific characteristics of Asian contemporary jewellery and identify the limited discussion that is occurring in this field internationally. The political and social investigations provide an important context to my research. Informed by my bibliographic research of feminist theories and contemporary jewellery, I work through studio practice to construct my ‘feminine subjectivity’ and situate an alternative narrative in and through my work. By investigating the concept of femininity in my art practice, the research attempts to contextualize this theme of femininity in the broader international field of jewellery and object making.

![Image of Madame de Pompadour and her dinner table](image)

*Fig. 2.3-2.5* Cindy Sherman, *Madame de Pompadour née Poisson (1721-1764) Soup Tureen and Platter*, 1990, Porcelain, glaze (silkscreened, hand-painted), 12 × 22 × 14 3/4 in. (30.5 × 55.9 × 37.5 cm), Photo by Eva Heyd. © Cindy Sherman.
2.3 Femininity in jewellery practice

Since the 1970s, jewellers have questioned the function of jewellery and its relationship between the body and the external world. In some cases, jewellery was no longer a worn object, but was a trace or a mark on the body described as and placed within the context of jewellery. Works by jewellery artists such as Gijs Bakker’s Shadow Jewellery in 1973 and Susanna Heron’s Light projection in 1979, have explored the transience of jewellery by photographing shadows and ephemeral light projections on the body. These early explorations of jewellery on the body expanded the conceptual possibilities within the field of jewellery.

More recently, Monika Brugger expressed a similar concept in her work Jeuje | Gameme in 2000. She projected a luminous, intangible daisy chain image on the wearer’s neck to recall the memories of childhood play and the imagery of her spiritual and personal world. In a following series, Brugger began to engage predominantly with the concept of femininity. Here embroidery tools like tambours (embroidery hoop) and thimbles where used to create perforated, delicate and fragile images, reflecting the artist’s consciousness and the expression of femininity and the body, which she called ‘female work, made in the home’. (Brugger, 2006, p. 109)

Likewise, Melanie Bilenker captures images of her life and repeats them by using her own hair in her art jewellery work. She claims:

The Victorians kept lockets of hair and miniature portraits painted with ground hair and pigment to secure the memory of a lost love. In much the same way, I secure my memories through photographic images rendered in lines of my own hair, the physical remnants. I do not reproduce events, but quiet minutes, the mundane, the domestic, the ordinary moments. (Bilenker, 2010)

Melanie Bilenker’s work translates the historic Victorian hair jewellery into the delicate and wearable pendants. She refers to the domestic ordinary moments of everyday life—making lunch, bathing, washing dishes, and draws the profoundly intimate concept with her own hair. Melanie Bilenker seals her private, intuitional daily life in her work, proofs the existence and conjures a sense of home for the viewer.

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11 In New Direction in Jewelry II in 2006, the writer Sackville A, Cheung L. & Clarke B. pointed out Monika Brugger engages specifically with the notion of ‘femininity’.
Fig. 2.6-2.8 Gijs Bakker, *Shadow Jewelry / Schaduwssieraad*, 1973, yellow gold. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 2.9-2.12 Susanna Heron, *Light Projection*, 1979, black and white silver bromide prints. © Susanna Heron and David Ward.

Fig. 2.15-2.16 Monika Brugger, *Le(s) Petit(s) Robert(s) or The Jeweller's Studio* detail, 1996, linen, cotton, wood. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 2.17 Monika Brugger, *About the Thimble —Selfportrait*, 1998-1999, various materials, 1.1- 3.7 cm. Courtesy of the artist.
Fig. 2.18 Melanie Bilenker, *Undress Brooch*, 2007, gold, sterling silver, ebony, resin, pigment, hair, 4.2 x 4.7 x 1 cm. Photograph: K. Sprague. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 2.19 Melanie Bilenker, *Hairpin Brooch*, 2006, gold, sterling silver, boxwood, epoxy resin, pigment, hair, 5.7 x 4.7 x 1 cm. Photograph: K. Sprague. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 2.20 Melanie Bilenker, *A Bath Brooch*, 2004, gold, sterling silver, ivory piano key laminate, epoxy resin, hair, 3.5 cm x 2.2 cm x 1.0 cm. Photograph: K. Sprague. Courtesy of the artist.
Yuni Kim Lang, a young Korean artist, uses her jewellery to reference qualities of her black hair. Her *Comfort Hair* series in 2013 references cultural signifiers such as the knot and hair braid to question and explore her Korean identity. She suggested:

The jewelry references qualities of my hair, thinking about cultural identities in an ever-globalizing world. The reference to hair brings you to a tactile and visceral place, allowing oneself to think about their own identity within adornment. (Lang, 2014)

Yuni Kim Lang builds wearable and non-wearable sculptures with synthetic materials that transcend their materiality and become something organic and bodily. Through her knotted jewellery and large-scale photographs, audiences encounter and experience a different perspective of adornment and think about the relationships of hair, society and identity.

*Fig. 2.21* Yuni Kim Lang, *Comfort Hair*, 2014, digital pigment print, 101 x 101 cm. Courtesy of the artist.
American educator Arline Fisch is one of the pioneers of incorporating metal wires and the application of textile techniques in the creation of jewellery. Her work applies different materials and textile processes that have influenced a generation of students who studied under her in the San Diego State University metalsmithing program. Along with Fisch, American artist Mary Lee Hu also pioneers the sophisticated use of metal wires with textile and basket-making techniques to create intricate woven wire jewellery. Both Fisch and Hu’s work reveal the texture of materials, irregular shapes, and complex structures as evidence of their weaving processes.

In Jewelry by Artists: In the Studio, 1940–2000, American curator and writer Kelly Hays L’Ecuyer observed both Arline Fisch and Mary Lee Hu’s weaving artwork and indicated that America's West Coast, where Fisch taught and worked for more than 40 years, was the center of the Southern California-based feminist art movement. L’Ecuyer suggested:

The proud display of handcraft techniques typically labeled ‘women’s work’ was part of a wider movement to reclaim craft and decorative arts as expressions of female power. (L’Ecuyer, 2010, p. 116)

![Fig. 2.22 Arline M. Fisch, # 52 Bracelet and Glove Arm Ornament, 1999, machine knit coated copper wire, hand knit fine silver, and crocheted fine silver, 13.3 × 41.9 × 15.2 cm. © Smithsonian American Art Museum.](image1)

![Fig. 2.23 Mary Lee Hu, Bracelet # 60, 1999, 18K and 22K gold, 3 5/8 x 4 x 1 5/8 in. © Mary Lee Hu](image2)
In 2010, Two Taiwanese jewellery artists (Yu Chun Chen and Min Ling Hsieh) established the collective MANO. Their inaugural exhibition in 2013 named A jewel a day keeps wrinkles away, which celebrated diverse types of women (all of whom were mothers) and jewellery together.

MANO portrayed the project: More than a mother, more than a piece of jewellery. They invited different mothers to wear specific jewellery works which were selected by the MANO group to match their individual stories. Through the female photographer, Ro Hsuan Chen's poetic and domestic lenses, this project captures the role of mothers, female conversation and relationships within different generations in Taiwanese families. These jewellery works go beyond decoration and beyond bringing out the personality and experiences of the mothers. They capture the situated and embodied experiences of the Taiwanese subjects.

In the article Keeping the Faith with Contemporary Jewelry – Taiwan is a Family Affair, independent writer and curator Dr. Kevin Murray indicates that this approach made an effort to draw on existing social structures like family as a context, which can offer new possibilities for contemporary jewellery, by inviting alternative ways of thinking about identity in contemporary jewellery. (Murray, 2014)

These works form part of a growing international arena, and my project, with its emphasis on the concept of femininity, will contribute to its understanding through a Taiwanese outlook. Through the collection and analysis of these works and others dealing with similar subject matter, my research investigates how femininity can be recognised within these works and seeks to locate my work in this context and field.
Fig. 2.24 Carissa Wen Hsien Hsu, *Lust & frost/ Sweetness & numbness brooch*, 2011, cotton, cardboard, silk, steel, shibuich, silver, magnet, 9 x 9 x 1.8 cm. Participating mothers: Ching Chi Hsieh Chuang and Weng Chin Chou. Photograph: Ro Hsuan Chen. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 2.25 Gieh Wen Lin, *Rojo brooch*, 2010, elastane yarn, sterling silver, titanium, color beads, quartz, 16 x 61 x 6 cm. Participating mothers: Feng Jung Chen, Tsui Wei Ko and Yi Huei Wu. Photograph: Ro Hsuan Chen. Courtesy of the artist.
Chapter Three /

The dialogue and extension of the creating body and wearing body

3.1 Transcendence & Immanence in trivial movement

Iris Marian Young considers the inherent tension for the female between her human subjectivity and situated feminine bodily experience:

As human she is a free subject who participates in transcendence, but her situation as a woman denies her that subjectivity and transcendence. My suggestion is that modalities of feminine bodily comportment, motility, and spatiality exhibits this same tension between transcendence and immanence, between subjectivity and being a mere object. (Young, 2005, p. 32)

During the creating process, my body employs mainly small muscle movements. I focus on fine motor skill control and keep the other parts of my body still for a long time. The comportment of my creating process is that of a series of small-scale kinesthetic movements, in which I tend not to move the body and am surrounded by a quiet, domestic, and constricted space. The repetitive and trivial movements are those associated with domestic arts and are usually attributed to limitation, introversion and passivity. Through the observation and documentation of the creating body, my work celebrates the positive aspects of immanence and to reveal the feminine jouissance (enjoyment) in stillness. The transcendence I experience in my creating process arises from the rumination, imagination and extension of the immanence, which offers a modality of bodily existence in relation to particular processes. The aim is to explore and provide a broader understanding of femininity from a Taiwanese jewellery perspective.

Fig. 3.1 Creating processes. Yu Fang Chi, The Nerve Ending IV – Congeal series 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Fig. 3.2-3.3 Trivial movements in the creating processes of *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal* 2014. Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
3.2 Performative present

The position of body in my jewellery is varied, indefinite and fluid. In my work, I create art jewellery and objects to reflect the position of body and to investigate the presence of the performative subjectivity. As jewellery art historian, Leisbeth de Besten states:

The wearer is another kind of display, a moving display, a living display, a display that can answer and look back and also a briefly experienced display because the viewer normally cannot gaze at a brooch that is pinned on a woman's breast or a necklace that is hanging in a woman's decolletage. (Besten, 2011, p. 62)

The ‘position’ of body in art jewellery is a notable issue. It is at the core of thinking for a creator who wants to articulate the voice of body and express the existence of the subject.

When creating a piece of conceptual art jewellery, one thinks jewellery deeply about how it can be used to bring about different knowledge or experiences. How it can raise a disturbance? How can jewellery cause a sensation? How can jewellery interact with the external world? When wearing a jewellery object, one may also wonder: how do I look? What is the response of my viewer? Where should I wear my treasure? These questions and many others from different perspectives weave together and echo around the space between the jewellery object, the wearer and the viewer. The self-reflexive characteristic of art jewellery is not only on the body that wears it, but also on the body who creates it, and on the body who views it. Jewellery has the potential to create a performative relationship between those different subjectivities.

3.3 Creating Body & Wearing Body

The fiber-related techniques and the jewellery objects I make are fragile and soft, and they tend to evoke the sensation of touch in the viewer and the wearer. In the chapter Women Recovering Our Clothes, Iris Marion Young uses ‘clothes’ to rebuild the sharing experiences of the female by reflecting on the concepts of Luce Irigaray. Young explains a series of actions and mental feelings relating to the way the female experiences fabric through touch. Through the movement — ‘touch’, the desire and senses are awakened by texture. In this research I apply the poetic imagery of Young’s words to my own studio practice and represent the sensory experience on the fabric installations in two curatorial projects. In the process I seek similar ways to share my own situated experience through the physical processes of making and the act of
touching and wearing. It is the differentiation of situated experience that Young was considering when she said:

Sensing as touching is within, experiencing what touches it as ambiguous, continuous, but nevertheless differentiated. (Young, 2005, pp. 69-70)

In touching the body, the jewellery evokes sensations that make the wearers feel more conscious of themselves. The jewellery or object may start from a sketch, but through the actual process of making the form soon grows without a sense of direction; it permeates the boundaries and touches the edges of the body. Through the exploration of specific parts of the body, this way of working reveals the fragile, delicate, sensitive intuition of the subject and develop a sharing platform between the creating body and wearing body.

I regard my creating act as an ongoing situated process; therefore the term ‘creating body’ is more appropriate than ‘creator’s body’. The whole process of making is fluid and not limited to one’s body. Through the free and repetitive characteristics of weaving, I can start to create at any time and also stop at any time. Meanwhile, through the continuous repetitive movements of my body, my concepts and approaches permeate the object and enable me to share part of my history of making with the wearer. The ongoing process flows between creating subjectivity and object, and transferring this process to the wearer and beginning another journey. The action and cycle is flexible. This is liberating as it allows the creating body and wearing body to constantly change and shift, during the process of being viewed, being touched and being experienced. As Elizabeth Grierson states:

Jewellery may generate stories for makers as much as for wearers. (Grierson, 2017)

To reflect the concept of ‘creating body’ and ‘wearing body’, I frequently re-perform the ongoing process in making artworks. In *The Nerve Ending* series, my body was the actual mold. I tried on, tested, contemplated the shape of the silver jewellery prototype, and built the piece following my gestures. The fine silver threads were soft and flexible, allowing me to develop a second layer of virtual skin and veins on the back of my hand. Here, ‘creating body’ and ‘wearing body’ were two in one; they echoed each other and revealed an ambiguous relationship.

In the *Sensory Crease*, *Inner Crease* and also *Veiled Memory* series, I re-presented my body image, I recalled my own memory of hairs, muscles and gestures. Through
creating and imitating certain parts of my body and re-producing a meaningful piece, I then found an opportunity to re-encounter my past and re-wear the histories I found. Here, the ‘wearing body’ is a strategy to transcend the original ‘creating body’, to rupture the order and gain new energies.

Fig. 3.4 The wearing scene and creating processes of The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal 2014. Yu Fang Chi, The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Fig. 3.5 Yu Fang Chi, *Sensory Crease*, 2015-2016, silver wire, 6 x 6 x 6 cm.

Fig. 3.6 Creating process of *Inner Crease object*. Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease object*, 2017, plastic, copper, 10 x 10 x 8 cm.
Fig. 3.7 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Jewellery series*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm. Photo: Cheng Lin Wu

Fig. 3.8 Creating processes of *Veiled Memory II*. I soaked the hydro-soluble rice paper in water and gently washed out the substrate material of paper and glue. Yu Fang Chi, *Veiled Memory II*, 2017, fishing line, variable dimensions.
3.4 The fitting ceremony

The creating body is not only ‘doing’ and ‘finishing’ the object, but contributes an ongoing differentiated sensation between the creator and wearer. Through trying on and taking off the object repeatedly, the creating body interacts with the wearing body over and over. The hollow and lace-like jewellery resembles a second layer of skin, which is embellished and restricted at the same moment. Wearers are restricted into certain postures where they may experience a still ceremony, while the delicate wire endings of my jewellery and objects bring about the sensation of consciousness of the wearing body.

This fitting of the object to the body is a process I also recall from my childhood memories of wearing my mother's accessories, or playing with the hair of my sister and my friends. The experiential heritage comes from my family and culture. The movements of these experiences are imprinted in me and have become embodied in the way I approach my jewellery making process.

‘Fitting’ is a bodily movement with multiple meanings in my work. The notion includes adorning the body, fitting the jewellery on the body, finding a specific body site and positioning the object, and adjusting the jewellery to find a suitable way to wear it. Fitting always comes with a mirror, and through the reflection of self in the mirror, the body becomes a lived theater, a living performance of preening, displaying and demonstrating itself. The fitting ceremony fulfills my desire of ‘looking back’ to my past, carrying a sense of intimacy and informing my embodied memories in present gestures.

The on-going process of creating and experiencing jewellery is a two-way conversation, which develops the complexity between the creating body and wearing body. The ceremony of wearing evokes echoes between mind, body and materials. This extends from the maker to the wearer, allowing the body to be immersed in particular bodily, and even spiritual, circumstances. The creating body develops a bodily platform to share personal sensations. Meanwhile, the reinterpretation and re-imagination from the wearing body enriches the understanding of objects while breaking the boundaries of limited interpretations.
Fig. 3.9 The wearing scene of *The Nerve Ending IV—Congeal* 2014.
Fig. 3.10 Fine silver wires resemble a second layer of skin and veins on the wearing body. Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV—Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Weaving from the Margin

Weaving from the Margin is the title of this research project. The title brings three of my research questions together in a conceptual way. Through weaving, I incorporate my creating process of jewellery with the concept of ‘femininity’. My use of weaving locates seminal aspects of my research. These include the skilled techniques employed in my work, the connection of craft and domestic art, the conceptual engagement of a feminine approach to create artwork, the reflection of personal memories and my Taiwanese cultural context.

Weaving is a time-consuming but obsessive process, which immerses the maker in a meditative state of repetitive making. In my practice, the concept of weaving involves a broad use of craft techniques, including winding, sewing, twisting, embroidering, stitching, crocheting and lacemaking. Through practising and repeating these processes, I then immerse my mind into a particular spiritual contemplation and meditation. As a ceremony, the process of making comfort my mind and through this process the idea of weaving becomes apparent.

In my jewellery practice, I approach the explicit use of weaving techniques, which holds the traces of my earlier experiences in learning domestic arts and crochet techniques from my female family. This was a home-based weaving practice handed on from generation to generation of women. Weaving acts as an interrogation or a disruption of the normative patriarchal values of modernism. The second wave feminists disturbed the elitist perspective of modern art. As Judy Chicago claimed:

Women had been embedded in houses for centuries and had quilted, sewing, baked, cooked, decorated and nested their creative energies away. What would happen, we wondered, if women took those very same homemaking activities and carried them to fantasy proportions? ...Could the same activities women had used in life be transformed into the means of making art? (Chicago, 1975, p. 104)

From this feminist position, as expressed by Chicago, my research shows how weaving responds to the marginalised position of women in art. Through persistent weaving, winding, twisting and crocheting, my research brings into play Écriture féminine (women’s writing) as well as interpretations of femininity as previous discussed, and presents them as visual expressions in my jewellery series. My jewellery weaves both material practices and concepts together, the conceptual and actual threads of historical and contemporary practice, in addressing the research questions.
The margin means: ‘The edge or border of something’. *Weaving from the margin*, this project situates and investigates a journey of making from an indeterminate and undefined field. Yet, on the other hand, the field is clearly based on practices of contemporary jewellery. My method of weaving offers the opportunity to learn and grow with the experiences, and brings the process and the structure to the surface. Weaving and trailing from the margin, I then embodied my creating journey and internal world. From there, all the artworks, projects, experiences and thinking are echoing and slowly interweaving and meshing together.

Today it can be difficult to identify the ‘margin’ in social and cultural production. In today’s world of neo-liberalism, everything is valued and measured by economic efficiency. Dominant forms of rationality, which are now cast in terms of enterprise and innovation, serve to shift the value of cultural production from the public sector to the private sector. As a result, individuals or groups who once spoke from the margins of gender, race and class, are now assimilated by economic priorities. Individuals are like cogs in an economic wheel of production. The ‘margin’ is obscured and surrounded by the intricate power relationships of politics and economics. Through this incorporation, issues of feminism, gender study and female labour inhabit the broad scope of neo-liberalism. Consequently, if there is a ‘margin’ then it becomes blurred, ambivalent and assimilated by the dominant economic forces.

Notwithstanding this dominating process, issues of gender and power do not go away. They remain relevant even if they are not so obviously evident. My research seeks to articulate in feminist terms, the gendered labour in art production. Feminism, as such, is quite precarious in neo-liberal global culture and that makes my project both difficult and important. The curating projects, which form part of my overall research, are providing a space for women artists to speak from, and to get strength from each other. When dealing with a very intimate and intricate subject matter, they group together to gain a stronger voice.

As quickly as female voices are being incorporated into global neo-liberalism and mainstream economy, women artists are showing that the quiet voices are still needing to be heard. Through presenting art work, those quiet voices carry the trace of layers upon layers of social and political marginalisation. The histories are there to be spoken and women artists refuse to be silent. Through the work of these artists, the traces are weaving back together and disclosing the knowledge, language and politics they contain. These disclosures then become available for people to see and understand what marginalisation has been, what marginalisation is, and why it matters to continue to speak out today.
Fig. 3.11 Yu Fang Chi, Inner Crease, Jewellery series, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm. Photo: Cheng Lin Wu
Chapter Four /

Identity and femininity in my studio-based work and its position in an Asian art jewellery context

4.1 Reinterpreting the invisible bodily experience

The actual process and action of weaving in my work is often more important than the final results. The real joy of weaving is the process of creation, not the act of completion. When I touch fibre and wire with my bare hands, I feel the fine lines and detailed texture and temperature of the materials as they grow into hollow and lace-like forms. Through the act of repeating, I enter an isolated, domestic and calm creative state. Although I begin with sketches and drawings of what I think the work might be, the genuine process of weaving includes diverse and unpredictable variables, and therefore the transformation of work cannot be foreseen. The substance and the actions guide the creator to the end and to the object.

Through the movement of weaving and using the sewing machine with my hands, I chase and experience the rhythm of the female worker’s daily life. I act, produce, intervene, contemplate and also introspect my acts. Louise Bourgeois discussed the meaning of making and reflects on why bodily experiences are such an important element in her work. She has said: ‘I need to make things. The physical interaction with the medium has a curative effect. I need the physical acting out. I need to have these objects exist in relation to my body.’ (Bourgeois, 2006, p. 16.)

Fig. 4.1 Louise Bourgeois, The Welcoming Hands, 1996, Bronze, 15.2 x 45.7 x 45.7 cm. © The Easton Foundation/Licensed by Copyright Agency, 2018
As Bourgeois states so succinctly: ‘I am not what I am, I am what I do with my hand.’ (Bourgeois, 2001, Art 21) The creating journey frames my subjectivity and connects with the bodily experiences and actions, which have been handed down from one generation to the next. This invisible labour emerges through the physical movement of my hands onto fabric or in the process of weaving. The silent bystander appears and starts to whisper the micro-narrative from the margins.

4.2 Female labour in public and private domains

In *The Factory* 2003, Taiwanese artist Chieh Jen Chen invited former female garment labourers to return to the Lien Fu garment factory, which had been closed down and abandoned for seven years. Previously, these workers had been dismissed without any prior notice, and without retirement pensions or severance pay. Some of this all female work force had worked for over twenty-five years before the manufacturing company moved its operations abroad in search of cheaper labour. The silent film is interwoven with archival footage from an early documentary, which was produced by the Taiwanese government to promote the economy of the manufacturing industry, the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) in Taiwan. The documentary was used to recruit large numbers of women to work in the 1960s.

Chieh Jen Chen intent to represent the specific struggle of Taiwanese labour. He collected relic documentaries of the past that connect with, and reflect Taiwanese manufacturing history. In *The Factory* 2003, Chen reshoot the daily life of these female garment labourers, edited and mixed the film with a series images from history archives. With no sound, slow-motion, and mostly black-and-white tone, the film reproduced the scene of repetitive sewing and working in the factory, and re-presented a strong sense of oppression, vagueness and depression. In an interview article on *History of the Photographed*, Chen claims:

I hope to reflect on a derelict factory and female workers’ life histories in a way that explores the essence of time and considers people who live in marginal areas, at the same time allowing their life experiences to reveal themselves in a silent manner. (Chen, 2012)

Chen describes the states of the women workers: ‘Returning to ‘work’ after a separation of seven years, interacting with the sewing machines, cloth, and even the teacups on the table that had been part of their lives for twenty years, they seemed to effuse a certain ineffable spirit.’
It is the intention of Chieh Jen Chen to reveal the mechanism and management behind these female workers. In this art work the artist takes on the role of the film director who designs the scene and directs the operations of this fictitious company, while the workers carry out his instructions to the letter. The line between re-presenting the history and creating an art work becomes ambiguous. In the long term, the viewer is required to watch the extremely simple movements of the workers, which in turn provides a setting, a space and a period of time for people to experience the state of the workers’ minds and concentration on the detail of the work in front of them.

The extremely repetitive movement in Chieh Jen Chen’s film is not only a critical engagement in its aesthetic responses to a specific time, but a reminder of my own childhood memory of outworkers from the textile industry working in the domestic setting. In the 1980s, many Taiwanese families ran small-scale businesses at home and received outsourcing work from suppliers, such as packing cotton swabs, sewing buttons, winding electric wires, and sewing garments. (Shieh, 1992) These jobs involved repetitive processes and were usually done by females and children who had more ‘free’ time.

I shared in this collective experience with other children of my generation, which provides a context for the way in which the repetition was present in our body and gesture. We practised our skills in the assembly of components of light balls, garments or accessories, and sometimes we even competed against each other with the same speed and power as doing our ‘homework’. From the social collective of workers in factories to the individual outworker within the subcontracting system of the 1980s, it appears that the experience of repetitive work and industry remains in my culture’s history and in this way, it appeals to me when I work and when I create objects. I am drawn to repetitive and methodical processes. The processes reveal traces of my female Taiwanese subjectivity. They expose who I am in terms of a gendered and cultural practitioner. So, by creating through these processes, the objects and I are working together shaping our identities. I am informing the objects, and the jewellery objects are informing me in the bodily experience.
Fig. 4.2 Archive footage from documentary of 1960s. Chieh Jen Chen, The Factory, 2003, super 16mm transferred to DVD, colour without sound, single-channel video. 31’09”, loop. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 4.3 Installation view at Lien Fu Garment Factory, 2003. Chieh Jen Chen, The Factory, 2003, super 16mm transferred to DVD, colour without sound, single-channel video. 31’09”, loop. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 4.4-4.5 Chieh Jen Chen, The Factory, 2003, super 16mm transferred to DVD, colour without sound, single-channel video. 31’09”, loop. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 4.6-4.11 Trivial movements in the creating processes of Veiled Memory I, The Nerve Ending IV —Congeal and Sensory Crease. Photograph: Yu Fang Chi.
4.3 Immanence in trivial movement

My practice involves numerous, repetitive trivial movements such as sewing, crocheting, twisting and other fiber-related techniques. Through the conversations and the relationships I have with materials, technique and my own body gestures, my research explores the positive aspects of creative processes in the trivial movements connected with femininity rather than the critical controversy of the past and the loss of identity during the industrialisation of these processes.

In my own work, the simple, trivial, small muscle movements construct my creating process, which is related to my childhood memories of the domestic environment with outsourcing being present in Taiwanese families. It seems that the female labour’s experience has internalised in my whole body and spirits, and my research practice brings into play a process of recalling and reflecting the lost memory and history spontaneously. Elizabeth Grierson cites Foucault on this point:

The body carries the imprint of our actions, manifests the stigmata of past experience and also gives rise to desires, failings, and errors.

(Foucault, cited by Grierson, 2017)

The fragility, delicacy and flexibility of my jewellery contains light and soft characteristics, allowing the possibility to change and alter the shape and form. The wearing body can experience the work as a second layer of skin. To try on, take off and play with the jewellery object, the wearing body feels the weight, size and existence of it throughout the continuum of movement. In each momentary movement, the body is touching and interacting with the jewellery object, and the object changes its shape in response to the body. Therefore, the object carries all the traces and history of the body, like a bodily imprint, which is both from the creating body and wearing body. It might seem as though the jewellery form is fragile and easily damaged. However, every touch from the wearing body brings in some other history and enriches the object in a new way.
4.4 Taiwanese scenes in Art jewellery — Ambiguous identity: Sense of loss

4.4.1 A paradoxical ‘Promised Land’ in art

In 2011, an exhibition named Republic without People, launched in Taiwan, which reflects both the reality and the imaginary states of Taiwan. Curated by Taiwanese curator Dar Kuen Wu, the exhibition included 22 groups of artist unions (24 individuals) and brought together three generations of artists. Through re-mapping the cultural context, the artists focused on reproducing reality and finding the contextual legitimacy of Taiwan.

In 2013, Ching Wen Chang, the co-curator of the exhibition Asia Cruise used Island of Ghost as the title of the exhibition. She interprets ‘The Ghost Island (Taiwan)’ as a ‘Ghost summon Ghost’ situation, to project the struggling, embarrassing and ineffable social reality of Taiwan. Chang indicates:

> The Term ‘Ghost Island’ originated from a criticism full of ethnic antagonism on the Internet. It reveals deep resentment against Taiwan. It is also a pejorative term that regards Taiwan ‘a place which is not considered as a place’ or ‘a country which is not recognized as a country’. The term is widely discussed by the Netizens on the internet and gradually used as an antonomasia of Taiwan. (Chang, 2013, p. 6)

Chang reveals the common frustrating anxiety evident through many Taiwanese contemporary artworks, which convey a sense of loss and an invisible trauma. Often these wonderful artworks carry a sense of decadence to indicate the complex condition of Taiwan, where softness and complexity co-exist.

The term ‘Ghost Island’ and several exhibitions can be related to the experience of the sense of loss within the specific atmosphere, and cultural and political situation in Taiwan.

The sense of loss was most apparent in both Republic without People and Ghost Island, which reflected the uncertain and suspended situation of Taiwan. It represented the

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13 Taiwanese local online communities often refer to Taiwan as a ‘Ghost Island’. In the beginning, it was a derogatory term used by people who are not critical of Taiwan as a nation but instead focus on its problems such as its ineffective bureaucracy, stagnant economy. In recent years, this term has shift to a humorous deriding phrase.
politically controversial identity and potentially ambiguous position with self-deprecating humour and a sense of powerlessness. Through the expression of art, Taiwanese artists sought to construct the possibility of the paradoxical ‘Promised Land’ and to enhance a cultural awareness of Taiwan. Through developing alternative narratives, artists responded to the sovereignty of the island and dealt with the status quo of national identity.

4.4.2 A jewellery response — Bubble Land

In 2013, ‘Bench 886’, a Taiwanese jewellery group started to operate annual exhibitions in Munich jewellery week. The name Bench 886 comes from the elements of the jeweller’s background. The ‘bench’ is the working table for jewellers and ‘886’ is the international dialing code of Taiwan, signifying the identity of these Taiwanese jewellers. The title acted as a signifier of cultural, political and social reclamation.

In 2014, Bench 886 curated a show named Bubble Land in Munich, as a response to Ghost Island. They selected the word ‘bubble’, the extremely light and delicate material, to represent a sense of the suspending, floating and unsecure political circumstance of Taiwan. Through transforming their concepts and aesthetic practice into series of jewellery, these artists aimed to interpret the land they love and rebuilt their identity. Instead of calling the group of creators as ‘artists’ or ‘jewellers’, they identified themselves as ‘islanders’. Their intention was to capture and construct impressions of Taiwan and reflect these in their artwork.

Bubble Land is an imaginary space reflecting our mind state, delivering treasures integrated with our history, present and fantasy on the island we live in.

We may all come from the same land; some see it as a mystic island that is often neglected by the outside, while others embrace the diverse, rich and wealthy livelihood. (Exhibition statement from Bubble land, 2014)

In this exhibition, jewellery was sealed in plastic bags which implied and reflected the weightless and unstable conditions. It seems that these jewellery works are joyful and playful, but on the other hand, they are also drifting and floating in the air. The viewer actually had to destroy the bubble and then retrieve the real jewel using needles provided to pierce the plastic membrane. This action suggested that bursting the bubble was like going back to the reality of real life.
Bubble Land was a vivid observation and description of the ‘uncertain’ circumstances in Taiwan at that time. It represented the ambiguous identity and insecure experiences of Taiwanese artists. As Ching Wen Chang states:

Many contemporary artworks represent the ghost of trauma. These works are beautiful but meanwhile make the audience feel sad, because they always convey a sense of decadence no matter how wonderful they are. (Chang, 2013, p. 9)

The discussions of the exhibitions Bubble Land and Ghost Island provides a broader understanding and background to the Taiwanese critiques of the art field, which also reflects aspects of the traumatic background and history of colonisation in Asia. The split of subjectivity, identity and nationality is reflected in artists’ work and presents a specific atmosphere. The introspection not only appears in fine art, but is also mirrored in Asian craft and the field of contemporary jewellery. Korean artist Yuni Kim Lang’s Comfort Hair reflects a silent memory of Korean cultural signifiers; and Taiwanese jewellery artist, Ying-Hsun Hsu’s Home is Nowhere snaps the shape of Taiwan into two parts and presents an emotional scene of division and separation. The sense of loss in these jewellery suggested meanings and tracing of memory are interweaving within the context of the work.

Fig. 4.12-4.14 Exhibition scenes in exhibition Bubble Land in Gallery Kobeia, Munich, Germany 2015. Bubble Land is a group exhibition curated by artist collective Bench 886, the exhibition was selected in 10 Best Displays at Munich Jewellery Week 2015 on Art Jewelry Forum website. © Bench 886
Fig. 4.15 Yuni Kim Lang, *Comfort Hair - Woven Identity II*, 2014, digital pigment print, 101 x 101 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 4.16 Ying Hsun Hsu, *Home is Nowhere_B01*, 2015, porcelain, 20K gold plated, 11 x 5 x 4cm, handwriting, porcelain slip brushing, glaze. Courtesy of the artist.
4.5 The Loss of Feminine jewellery

In 2011, a travelling Ceramic Jewellery exhibition *A Bit of Clay on the Skin* was held in Taiwan. French artist, Carol Deltenre used a forthright image, with white porcelain casts of vaginas surrounded with frames made from the ancient metal technique—‘filigree’. From a distance, the small jewellery objects look like an elegant ancient pendant made from ivory, but when the viewer gets closer, they realise it is cast porcelain moulded from real vaginas.

The exhibition travelled around the world and achieved reputable success. However, in the brochure of this exhibition in Taiwan, a politic of exclusion occurred. This exclusion spoke to the politics of gender and the body. Every artist in the exhibition had one photo, but the image of the vagina jewellery cannot be found anywhere in the catalogue. Even the German curator, Monika Brugger, did not know what has happened to the work or why. The image just mysteriously disappeared. My research is disclosing the reasons behind this disappearance in terms of the politics of exclusion based on the female body.

The presentation of this work also showed a dark and unreadable artist statement which was positioned to escape the attention of audiences. The isolated cube was separated away from the main gallery, and therefore many people walked past it and did not realise there was an artwork inside the semi-sealed cube. Interestingly, I found an article in an official publication of the ceramic museum magazine in 2015, which pointed out that the presentation of the exhibition was successful as it defined a suitable boundary for the appreciation of the artwork. Therefore, the public and audience of the exhibition were directed to focus on the ‘aesthetic’ aspect rather than the ‘erotic’ aspect of the work. (Chang, 2012, pp. 14-15) The assumption was that an exhibition arrangement that allowed a focus on the aesthetic of the design elements was safer than any focus on subject matter. By this process, the importance of any feminist statement was effectively neutralised, and ‘erotic’ connotations were thus excised. The female voice and femininity were thereby made invisible once more.

The mysterious incident in the exhibition seemed like an alarm bell squeaking in my brain. This event activated a profound contemplation on my personal experiences in the art field. The motif, techniques and materials of my work all involved gender-related concepts. Since 2006, a very high percentage of my works have been rejected for exhibitions in Taiwan; however, the same pieces have been accepted in international competitions. For example, both *The Nerve Ending* and *Cluster* series have been turned down in the first stage of craft competitions in Taiwan, while they were exhibited in
Talente 2008 and Schmuck 2009 (annual special exhibitions at the Internationale Handwerksmesse, international handicrafts fair in Germany). 14 This situation of exclusion in Taiwan of my gender-related work continued to happen for a number of years. Ironically, after all these responses, which have given rise to disappointment, I have been invited to share my international experiences in government occasions in Taiwan. Perhaps the trial and acceptance of my work in international arenas has given it an authentic value, which substantiates its recent inclusion in Taiwan.

The restrictions of expressing femininity in the art field in Taiwan creates a dilemma for female artists. The complicated issue of gender bias is interwoven with a conservative ideology. Responding to my previous discussions, female artists have been disadvantaged by having less opportunities and support. This restriction and censorship, which appears to be a form of ignorance or unconscious bias is common to the whole system and the constitution of the art world in Taiwan. It is not just particular to the politics of one institute. I have been considering how female artists in Taiwan can change the situation and unravel the current dilemma. My research is a way of investigating this question by exploring, examining and understanding femininity in contemporary jewellery. Through collecting, comparing and responding with other artists who work within similar concepts, I can connect lesser known stories and dialogues around both femininity and Taiwanese cultural identity. This reconsideration and repositioning contribute to an emerging narrative in the field, a narrative that has been locked away due to the restrictions and ignorance of the normative views of society.

Fig. 4.17 Carole Deltenre, Nymphs, since 2008, silver, porcelain, casting, soldering, filigree, variable dimensions. Courtesy of the artist.

14 Schmuck is the eldest exhibition of contemporary jewellery work in the world. It takes place since 1959 every year during the International Trade Fair in Munich. Talente was founded in 1980 as an international competition for emerging artists from all areas of craft and design.
Fig. 4.18 Ceramic Jewellery exhibition A Bit of Clay on the Skin, 30 December 2011- 05 February 2012, The New Taipei city Ceramics Museum, Taiwan.

Fig. 4.19-4.20 The New Taipei city Ceramics Museum built a special cube in the corner for the ‘vaginas’ jewellery. Ceramic Jewellery exhibition A Bit of Clay on the Skin, Taipei. Taiwan.
Fig. 4.21 Exhibition catalogue of *A Bit of Clay on the Skin* in The New Taipei city Ceramics Museum, Taiwan. The ‘vaginas’ jewellery by Carol Deltenre was also missing and excluded from the brochure printed by the museum of the travelling exhibition in Taiwan.
Chapter Five / Processes of investigation & Finished works

5.1 The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal, 2014

In The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series, I trace the shapes, wrinkles and palm prints of my bare hand by flexibly wearing art jewellery. Silver wires are twisted and woven, which like a flowing lace river comes across my skin and records my body history.

American political theorist and feminist Iris Marion Young asked: ‘How do girls and women constitute their experienced world through their movement and orientation in places?’ (Young, 2005, p. 9) Young’s statement in relation to body experience is evident in making my artwork. Through trying on and taking off the half-finished jewellery over and over again, the shape of the work grows slowly in micro-changes along with the gesture of my body.

When I started to create The Nerve Ending work, I did not expect the final outcome to be of the scale, shape or complexity that it finally was. With the process, I gradually learnt, understood and realised how the material responded and likewise the responses my body was wanting. I did not regard the body as an object or a thing to observe while I was wearing the jewellery; rather I aimed to reveal my subjectivity and experiences as a living and feeling being resonating with the artwork. It may be identified as a phenomenological process as the fine silver wires reverberated like nerve endings, and my skin surface responded to the internal and external compounds of the body.

Fig. 5.1 Yu Fang Chi, The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Fig. 5.2-5.3 Creating processes. Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV – Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Fig. 5.4-5.5 Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV – Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Fig. 5.6-5.7 Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV – Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Fig. 5.8-5.9 The wearing scene of *The Nerve Ending IV – Congeal series*, the organic jewellery structure been placed and held in the palm. Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV – Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Fig. 5.10-5.11 Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV—Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Fig. 5.12-5.13 Facial wearing gesture and display. Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV—Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Fig. 5.14 Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV – Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
5.2 Veiled Memory I, 2014–2015

Veiled Memory I is a series of work which includes twenty pieces of handkerchiefs. Making the Veiled Memory I series involved sewing very fine fishing line (monofilament nylon thread, which is also called ‘invisible nylon thread’) on hydro-soluble rice paper, as well as writing the milk-like, white Écriture féminine (women’s writing) on white paper. Through numerous repetitive movements of sewing, there are hundreds of invisible lines interweaving to create a transparent and weightless fabric where the hair-like, veiled and unknown landscape emerges.

I use the delicate hair-like materials to recall my childhood memories in wearing my mother’s accessories and playing with the hair of my sister and friends. Through the movement of weaving and using a sewing machine with my hands, I recall the rhythm of the female worker’s experience. The experiential heritage comes from my genes, my family and my culture. The creating journey frames my female subjectivity and connects with the bodily experiences, which have been handed down from one generation to another. Nicola Wong observed:

Infinitely weightless, Yu-Fang Chi’s ethereal Veiled Memory draws from the artist’s memories of her childhood in Taiwan and the nature of intimate feminine relationships. Repetitive movements such as sewing and weaving connect the artist to her cultural and familial lineage, while simultaneously heightening her awareness on the making process and the haptic sensibility of the materials.

(Wong, 2015)

In this work I seek to build an opaque atmosphere of memories, rather than creating a figurative object or representative image. Once the sewing and weaving of layers and layers of fine thread are complete, the final step is to place the whole piece in hot water. The water dissolves the white background and reveals a hair-like, veiled images, both unknown and unknowable, much like the writing of the milk-like, white Écriture féminine (women’s writing) on white paper.

The experimental making processes of Veiled Memory I was an unusual experience. I intentionally worked on soft materials as an unfamiliar method. During the activity of sewing, I threw myself into a labour-like working gesture and encountered an unexpected result. All the outcomes of the sewing process were unpredictable and the final appearance was only revealed in the last stage. When I laid the hydro-soluble rice paper in the water, a momentary transformation appeared. The motion of challenging my approach of making, by recording the trace of sewing, is a profound response to my
desire to explore the territory beyond jewellery. It is a way of coming closer to the
concept of memory, which is veiled but embedded in the body as an imprint from my
childhood and gendered history.

The act of sewing in *Veiled Memory I* enacted a broader process of weaving, which
refers to the previous discussions in Chapter Three. The repetitive movements and an
insistent gesture of sewing carried an imaginary scene of an intimate recollection, as
represented in the textile industry of the domestic setting in Taiwan and resonated with
my Taiwanese cultural context. From this, a domestic, docile, female and laboured
creating body is woven into existence and becomes apparent.

**Fig. 5.15** Yu Fang Chi, *Veiled Memory I*, 2014-2015, creating process. Water dissolves the paper and
reveals a hair-like, veiled image.

**Fig. 5.16** Yu Fang Chi, *Veiled Memory I*, 2014-2015, fishing line, wool, variable dimensions.
Fig. 5.17-5.18 Yu Fang Chi, *Veiled Memory I*, 2014-2015, fishing line, wool, variable dimensions.

Fig. 5.19-5.21 Yu Fang Chi, *Veiled Memory I*, 2014-2015, fishing line, wool, variable dimensions.
Fig. 5.22-5.23 Water dissolves the paper and reveals a hair-like, veiled fabric. Yu Fang Chi, Veiled Memory I, 2014-2015.
Veiled Memory II, 2017

Veiled Memory II is the second work in a series of my exploration of sewing. This work builds on Veiled Memory I. It became an extended installation, which was different from the small scale of handkerchiefs in Veiled Memory I. The installation was of a bigger scale to reflect my concept of Écriture féminine. The intention was to find a connection with the earlier feminist artwork discussed in Chapter Two.

The making process of Veiled Memory II evinced a continuous practice, a long ceremony of repetition over three months. In the beginning, I laid several pieces of hydro-soluble rice paper (fabric-like material) on the ground and hand-stitched the pieces together into a four-metre squared piece. I splayed a large amount of fishing line on the base of rice paper, which created the foundation for weaving. I then folded the square paper into a giant triangular sheet and hand-stitched carefully to combine layers of paper and fishing line together. After the shape of the sheet had been set, I then started to work on the sewing machine and stitched fishing lines onto the rice paper.

Over three months, I immersed myself into a labour-like bodily gesture through the significant repetitive movement of sewing. To a certain extent, the density of fish line on the sheet has been built through the repetitive sewing process. I then drew the flowery lace patterns on the paper and embroidered these patterns with fishing line. The design of the pattern is a combination of antique European lace patterns and Taiwanese wrought iron window frame. The fishing line was transparent and nearly invisible, and the white pattern was also difficult to make out on the white paper. However, as time passed and through the repetitive sewing and building of lines, a hidden low relief appeared.

The transformative process of soaking the rice paper in water was essential for transforming the texture of the fabric sheet into a light and transparent ‘net’. Through gently washing out the substrate material of paper and glue, I was able to collect and gather the remainder of the fishing line. This new object became the trace of sewing, a trace of my past processes appearing in a new form.

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15 Wrought iron window frame pattern design started from 1920s in Taiwan. This was influenced by modern Western architectural styles merged with Taiwanese local pattern. The use of these patterns was popular between 1970s - 1980s and then declined in the 1990s, when it was slowly replaced by manufactured stainless steel frames.
Louise Bourgeois expressed the concept of her giant spider sculpture *Maman* (Mummy) by connecting it to a maternal figure – the artist’s mother. In her monumental steel form, Bourgeois responded to the positive attribute of an actual spider – ‘deliberate, clever, patient, soothing, reasonable, dainty, subtle, indispensable, neat…etc.’ (Bourgeois, 2000, p. 62)

The spider is an ode to my mother. She was my best friend. Like a spider, my mother was a weaver. My family was in the business of tapestry restoration, and my mother was in charge of the workshop. Like spiders, my mother was very clever. Spiders are friendly presences that eat mosquitoes. We know that mosquitoes spread diseases and are therefore unwanted. So, spiders are helpful and protective, just like my mother. (Bourgeois, 2008, p. 86)

As with Louise Bourgeois’ giant spiders, I intentionally emphasised with a connection of the net or web in *Veiled Memory II*. The fishing line structure in my work is fine, delicate and light, reminiscent of a spider’s net or web. This work draws attention to the positive aspects of the spider net or web – invisible but retrievable, soft but strong, fragile but deadly. Through a sequence of splaying, sewing and soaking, I record and collect my experiences of ‘making’ the net.

In the final installation, the inclusion of the making tools focus the ‘making’ process for the audience. Similar to an actual spider’s net, my ‘net’ serves to seal the corner of the space, creating an intimate scale for the artwork to be viewed, touched and experienced. My concept was to highlight the inconspicuous space (the corner) with a soft, weightless and ‘un-concealing’ layer of handmade fabric. The work references the voiceless female stories, which vanished in the grand-narratives of patriarchal history. The writing of *Écriture féminine* that underpins the work provided an opportunity for me to lead the audience to trace the abandoned ‘veiled memory’ within my Taiwanese cultural context.

There was an interval of two years between *Veiled Memory I* and *Veiled Memory II*. When I created the first series of handkerchiefs in 2015, I experienced uncertainty in my creating processes with an evident self-doubt. The feeling of incompleteness remained and led to further enquiries in the work. For the next stage of the work in 2017, I devised a making method as a complete strategy, taking me on a three-month journey in which I was able to review my position. Here, I interrogate this process to consider the mechanism behind the body gesture, rather than examining a single movement of the body.
The whole journey of *Veiled Memory II* was a profound response to ‘Female labour in public and private domains’ as discussed in Chapter Four. My intention in the making process was to re-experience the historical scene of female labourers’ working to regain body memories through remembered gestures. I sat, bent at the sewing tasks and immersed my whole body in repetitive sewing movements over three months. These imprinted gestures spoke to me of my Taiwanese background and childhood memories of the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) in a history of ready-made garments in Taiwan.

In this work, I adopted the symbol of the ‘inverted triangle’, which had been used in *The Dinner Party* by Judy Chicago to symbolize woman. The celebration of traditional domestic art and female artisanship (weaving, embroidery and sewing) became interwoven with my sore arm and aching back. In creating the work, gestures were restricted and endured by me as the maker, as I was standing in for the invisible women of history. By their imprint in my body, the gestures were implicit, re-presenting, reclaiming and regaining the voiceless and innocent female body of history, and particularly Taiwanese history.

The mechanism within *Veiled Memory II* not only showcases the intricacy of a sewing machine, but also replicates and reproduces the rhythm of the operating movements activated by the user. Through a sequence of testing, I disassembled my sewing machine and removed the plastic cover. I observed, examined and contemplated each component. Then I took away the colored and redundant parts and left the essential machine components for the operating process. My intention was to reveal the inner parts of the sewing machine and highlight the industrial mechanism behind the working system. Through the moving of machine components, the gear wheels mesh with each other and re-present the operational scene of making.

The installation with a moving mechanism provided a unique opportunity for me to observe the responses from both an immersed (from my own experience) and distanced (from the audience) situations. The scale allowed me to work on a larger scale, beyond the security and confines of being a bench jeweler. From this I could observe its effect. From this distance, I could observe people gathering and pausing in front of the semi-transparent fish line work; they viewed the movement of the sewing machine and gently touched the piece.

In the installation, I pulled one thread from the web and connected it with the sewing machine. This had the effect of connecting the feeling of memories together. When the
machine arm moved backward and forward, the whole fish line web moved cooperatively with it. I then scheduled the whole work with a timer and allowed the mechanism to operate automatically. The repetitive sound and movement from the sewing machine was crucial, not only to bring the sensation of time and body into appearance, but to activate the heartbeat and pulse of the work. The vibrations of the fishing line web gave rise to a sensitive sensation, which triggered the disturbances behind the women layer. An ephemeral atmosphere hovered in the toiling process. Here, the ‘labour’ was voiceless and absent, however, the machine still operated seriously and continuously.

I compressed the three-month process of making Veiled Memory II into a three-minute video to show the absent performance. My own body was a theater and medium, and the video provided a retrospective way to read and review my actions. Through the compilation of sewing gestures and movements, I focused on the endless repetition of my ‘futile efforts’ (spreading and sewing the invisible line on white paper and washing it out, as well as writing words with white ink on white paper.). The process was responding to the background and memory of domestic industry within the Taiwanese culture context. This work references jewellery practice; it contains traces of jewellery in its making and crafting processes.

Fig. 5.24-5.25 Creating processes of Veiled Memory II. In the beginning, I laid out sections of hydro-soluble rice paper (fabric-like material) on the ground and hand-stitched them together into a four-metre squared piece.
Yu Fang Chi, Veiled Memory II, 2017, fishing line, hydro-soluble rice paper, 400 x 400 x 1 cm.

Fig. 5.26-5.27 I splayed a large amount of fishing line on the base of rice paper which created the foundation for weaving.
Fig. 5.28-5.29 I then folded the square paper into a giant triangular sheet and hand-stitched carefully to combine layers of paper and fishing line together.

Fig. 5.30-5.31 After the shape of the sheet had been determined, I began working on the sewing machine and stitching row upon row of fishing line on the rice paper.

Fig. 5.32-5.33 I immersed my body into a labour-like gesture over three months.

Fig. 5.34-5.35 Repetitive sewing processes of Veiled Memory II.
Through the enormous repetitive sewing, more and more rippled creases appeared on the hydro-soluble rice paper.

I drew the flowery lace patterns on the paper and embroidered these patterns with fish line. The pattern design is a combination of lace pattern and the Taiwanese iron window frame.

Through the repetitive sewing of electric embroidery, a transparent low relief appeared on the surface.
Fig. 5.42 I soaked the hydro-soluble rice paper in water and gently washed away the substrate material of paper and glue that had been used to create the intricate pattern over three months.

Fig. 5.43-5.44 Thread have been pulled out from the web and connected with the sewing machine.

Fig. 5.45-5.46 The lace pattern was symmetric at the bottom of the inverted triangle, while gradually broken at the right hand side.
Fig. 5.47 I disassembled my sewing machine, took the plastic case off and left the metal mechanical components.

Fig. 5.48-5.49 The disassembled sewing machine showed the intricate and industrial inner structure of the mechanism.

Fig. 5.50 The semi-transparent web of Veiled Memory II. Through the reflection of spotlight, the handmade fabric showed a delicate silver-white colour and projected opaque shadows on the corner wall.
Fig. 5.51-5.52 Audiences observed *Veiled Memory II*, touched and interacted with the installation.
Fig. 5.53-5.54 Exhibition installation, *Identity Intersection*, 2017, 300 x 300 x 300 cm, Counihan Gallery, Brunswick, Melbourne.
5.3 Sensory Crease, 2015–2016  
Drawing Sketch/ Structure Research & Idea development/ Object & Jewellery

In my previous work, I used delicate materials to recall my childhood memories. Inspired by linear materials and the streamlined shape of hair, I then started to research the structure of hair. I collected many images of female hair and hairstyles, which included styles such as tresses, ponytails, buns, braids. I spent time looking, thinking about and ordering these fascinating photos before I began following the lines of hair in each by drawing and developing sketches to trace the multiple formations of different hair structures.

During this process, I traced all of my hair-related memories. I recalled my early childhood memories of playing in the domestic barbershop run by my aunt, a hairdresser who raised me for four years. I also remember binding my hair to make a perfect bun on the top of my head before dancing ballet and Taiwanese folk dance for a period of six years.

With a fine pencil, I drew the outline of a hair bun and depicted the detail of the tresses. Each hair is individual and fluid and each sketch is about the size of the hand, which implies the real size of the bun on the back of the female head. The deliberate process of this sketch is meticulous and formal, unlike freehand brushwork. I chose a technical drawing pen to create a very delicate structure, which is similar to the fine brushwork painting processes in traditional Chinese realistic painting. The exquisite drawing process is cautious, but also contains some freedom. I did not anticipate the final result nor did I plan a well-organized draft. On the other hand, I drew the structure without a specific direction and spontaneously extended the outline.

Fig. 5.55 Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, sketches, pencil on paper, 15 x 15 x 15 cm.
Through my drawings I did not define the whole formation of the hairstyle, but instead focused on the detail of each braid. Tresses weave and twist together, and this in turn creates a dynamic visual effect. The movement is reminiscent of shuttles in weaving, which move backwards and forwards through the warp. Through drawing and moving my finger in a meditative way I experienced a weaving process on paper.

I used metal wire to pursue the bun shape and recreated a haired skeleton. The hollow structures resembled three-dimensional sketches, allowing me to experience a solid and tactile making process. Silver wire was measured, twisted and arranged properly to fit each space between lengths. Through twisting and binding, I strengthen the fragile single wire and build elasticity on the linear material.

The shapes of the first two pieces are more sealed and self-contained, starting from a central point and spreading out to the circular edge. Radiating lines construct the tensions between center and frame. The central cavity becomes the visual focus which implies the figure of the central core shape. The sealed outline restricts the boundary of the object and creates a strict character, holding traces of the gesture and dress of a ballerina.

Fig. 5.56  Yu Fang Chi, Creating process of Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, silver wire, 8 x 8 x 5 cm.

Fig. 5.57  Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, silver wire, 10 x 10 x 6 cm.
To explore and create a greater number of diverse structures, I weave different sections and then put them together. In my previous work, I used only one wire section to structure the whole work. This process is more complicated. Each section requires concentration for its placement to achieve my original intention, therefore I have no scope to play or change my mind during the process. Now, as each piece consists of several components, and I can rotate, rearrange the order and change the direction.

This process enables exploration of the vitality of the structure. After developing more than eight different knitting-pieces, I was looking for ways to connect and display them. Through winding and curling, I finally found the idea of a flexible, moving-construction. The freestanding frameworks cover, but also reveal, the undefined space. The shell-like structure resembles a hollowed-out flower bud, as well as a calm but fluid shelter.

Chains in the jewellery series were all crocheted by hand. Through ancient and domestic craft techniques of crochet, I hid the beginning of the silver wire into the end of the thread. I crocheted the whole chain to express the circle of life, a loop without start or end. As time passes, the fine silver will darken and become dusky, as our hair becomes gray and silver through ageing. Here, a transformation will occur in the work.

Fig. 5.58 Yu Fang Chi, Creating process of Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, silver wire, 10 x 10 x 6 cm.
Fig. 5.59 Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, sketches, pencil on paper.

Fig. 5.60 Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, silver wire, 6 x 6 x 6 cm.
Fig. 5.61-62 Yu Fang Chi, *Sensory Crease*, 2015-2016, silver wire, 40 x 10 x 6 cm.
Fig. 5.63-64 Yu Fang Chi, *Sensory Crease*, 2015-2016, silver wire, 40 x 10 x 6 cm.
Initially *Sensory Crease* was a jewellery series, made with the intention of responding to my other jewellery work. During the making processes of twisting, I was inspired constantly by the material, shape and method, and it was my desire to create a further work with a bigger scale. It seems that the material grew, transformed, evolved and renewed by itself and was eager to develop a new life.

I continued to use ‘twisting’ as the main movement of creation and developed a curled prototype for the whole work. I learnt how to assemble numerous elements and adjust them, rather than focusing only on one single bun shape. In contrast to my previous center-focused jewellery, the object became a nest-like vessel with numerous tentacles spreading out from the center. The spiral prototype sought to engage a new way of structuring and it also showed, demonstrated a superior flexibility and density.

In making this object, I was able to observe how a new structure may work. All the components were joined loosely and naturally by the shape of the prototype. Therefore, when I held and touched the piece, the shape of work changed constantly. The *Sensory Crease object* was created by the same technique (twisting) as previous jewellery and used the same material (silver wire), but it responded to a different container which was changeable and flexible. This articulated the material in a new way.

![Image of Sensory Crease object](image.png)

*Fig. 5.65* Yu Fang Chi, *Sensory Crease object*, 2015-2016, silver wire, 20 x 20 x 10 cm.
Fig. 5.66-67 Yu Fang Chi, *Sensory Crease object*, 2015-2016, silver wire, 20 x 20 x 10 cm.
Fig. 5.68 Creating process of *Sensory Crease object*. Yu Fang Chi, *Sensory Crease object*, 2015-2016, silver wire, 20 x 20 x 10 cm.
5.4 *Inner Crease*, 2016–2017

The *Inner Crease* series explored the ambiguity between surfaces and layers of skin and also questioned the relationship of the body and the jewellery. I explored and adapted special effects on daily domestic materials (such as the strainer, filter mesh and bath sponge) and used electroforming processes. The aim was to create an object and wearable ornament. I twisted, distorted and made molds with the flexible filter mesh to create positive plastic prototypes. The plastic prototype was used as a base for later electroforming procedures.

The plastic prototype of filter meshes enabled me to respond to the qualities of an ‘alternative skin’, underlying the tension and gesture of the real body. I explored the materials and built alternative forms and textures with my fingertips. Through testing, experimenting, and making, I was able to articulate the observations of my sensory experience within the three-dimensional work, as well as reflecting on my emotive responses to the skin-like sculpting objects. The filamentary structure evokes the texture of skin. The outside of the fictional body-like object is plump and fleshy, while hollow and dark inside. It seems that the surface is flexible and soft, but as a result of the electroforming, the structure of the object is extremely light. The end result is as hard and brittle as a shell.

My encounter of the material is the sewer and kitchen sink. The fleshy mesh sculpture comes from the kitchen drain and pipe, which is usually clogged with grease in the setting of a domestic kitchen. Viewers are seduced and lured by the sexual and sensual form and texture, while the original scene of the material in the domestic kitchen is extremely unsexy. It is abject. As Julia Kristeva wrote in *Powers of Horror*:

> Abjection is above all ambiguity. Because, while releasing a hold, it does not radically cut off the subject from what threatens it — on the contrary, abjection acknowledges it to be in perpetual danger. (Kristeva, 1982, p. 9)

The ambiguity between the skeleton and body, the soft and hard, beauty and dirt is an intimate response, suggesting indeterminate relationships between the flesh and the external world. This also reveals an emergence of the polysemy, multi-meaning personal narrative. As Elizabeth Grierson expresses clearly in the catalogue of *Tacit Recollection*:
The visceral forms entwine with a marked sensuality, coiling like bodily organs, yet they carry the imprints from discarded materials of kitchen duties. Here, with the capacity for sensuous adornment, ambiguity carries an expressive form.

(Grierson, 2017)

Compared with the other series of my work, *Inner Crease* involved more complex methods in the creating process, such as stitching the mesh mode, electroforming, and painting, as well as crocheting and knotting. The creating process involved tracing and exploring the dark, intricate and mysterious spaces of the body, such as exploring inner organs, the maternal space with speculum. In my work, the bodily organ-like components were transformed into chunks of meat, stacked, squeezed together. Through binding and squeezing, a sense of restriction, distortion and irritation emerged. The shapes of these bodily organs are no longer distinguishable.

To present the meaty, fleshy characteristic, I chose intentionally soft and warm colors, which refers to the skin tone of cosmetics, combined with the delicate texture and matt surface of the painting. These intimate, but ambiguous, meaty knots seemed like an autobiographical epitaph of the body. Through wearing the light ‘belly button’, the meaty knot, the wearing body then shares the sensation of reversing the body inside out and also being part of it.

Similar to the development of *Sensory Crease* series, the *Inner Crease* series started from a jewellery context to respond to the concept of my other jewellery work. I was inspired by the shape and making process and created a further development of objects. The vessel shape can be easily connected to the human body, the squeeze of muscles, and the distortion of organs.

*Fig. 5.69* Strainer / filter mesh is a layer of flexible plastic net which be laid in the kitchen drain to prevent residues and wastes.
Fig. 5.70 Yu Fang Chi, Electroforming creating process of Inner Crease series.

Fig. 5.71 Yu Fang Chi, Inner Crease object, 2017, copper, 25 x 15 x 10 cm.
Fig. 5.72 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease*, 2017, plastic, copper, 10 x 10 x 8 cm (each).

Fig. 5.73 Prototype of *Inner Crease object*. Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease object*, 2017, plastic, copper, 28 x 28 x 15 cm.
Fig. 5.74-5.75 Yu Fang Chi, crocheting process of Inner Crease series.
Fig. 5.76 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Jewellery series*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm (each). Photo: Cheng Lin Wu.
Fig. 5.77 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Jewellery series*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm (each). Photo: Cheng Lin Wu
Fig. 5.78 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Jewellery series*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm (each). Photo: Cheng Lin Wu.
Fig. 5.79 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Jewellery series*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting. 9 x 5 x 46 cm (each). Photo: Cheng Lin Wu.
Fig. 5.80 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Jewellery series*, 2017. copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm (each). Photo: Cheng Lin Wu
Fig. 5.81 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Jewellery series*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm (each). Photo: Cheng Lin Wu
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Chapter Six /

Curatorial project

6.1 Inner Crease, 1st September – 3rd October, 2015

In 2015, I curated a group exhibition in Melbourne at Upstairs at the Napier Gallery. My curatorial position was to invite seven Taiwanese female jewellery artists to respond to the theme – Inner Crease. There were eight emerging female artists in the exhibition: Ying Hsiu Chen, Yu Fang Chi, Yung Huei Chao, Ying Hsun Hsu, Jiun You Ou, Cai Xuan Wu, Shu Lin Wu and Wen Miao Yeh. The aim of my research was to extend from my own making to dialogue with other women jewellery artists of my cultural background.

The title of the exhibition evokes ideas of fragility, sensuality, transparency and intuition. The works of all eight artists are an intimate feminine response to specific views of the body and the external world. Inner Crease promotes a dialogue, which aims to create a varied, indefinite and fluid platform for jewellery to be touched, perceived and appreciated.

Through the making of art jewellery and the experience of materials, the artists wanted to introspect the process of creation and reflect on the position of the body on our work. In this exhibition, the intention was to apply the poetic imagery from our own studio practices and to find similar ways to share experiences through the physical processes of making and the act of wearing.

Fig. 6.1 Inner Crease exhibition, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. The wall and windows of the gallery were covered by numerous semi-transparent curtains, which built a domestic scene and evoke the relationship of daily life and memories.
Fig. 6.2 *Inner Crease exhibition*, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. Jewellery is pinned and installed on the curtain.

Fig. 6.3 *Inner Crease exhibition*, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. The catalogue is printed on fabric, audiences can cut it and take it away with them as well as holding some of the fluid memories from the exhibition.
In this exhibition, I invited eight Taiwanese artists from different backgrounds of study and the aim was to develop a broader platform for Taiwanese contemporary jewellery to be appreciated. Yung Huei Chao and Ying Hsiu Chen graduated from Tainan National University of The Arts in Taiwan; Wen Miao Yeh, Ying Hsun Hsu and Cai Xuan Wu received their master degrees from Birmingham City University in the United Kingdom; Shu Lin Wu obtained her degree from École Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs de Strasbourg, France; Jiun You Ou are currently studying in Idar Oberstein, Germany; I am studying in RMIT, Australia.

Through studying in five different countries and engaging with different educational systems, these artists experienced various cultural perspectives. These experiences gave rise to the development of their aesthetics and ideas as well as to the creation of methods and skills. The aim of my curatorial approach was to provide a broader understanding of the current developments of Taiwanese art jewellers especially creators from young generations.

As a curator, my intention was to focus on a female perspective in daily practices. I invited each artist to record their making processes and then I collected the short videos to weave into a whole film. This revealed the ‘secret’ in creating their artwork. Interestingly, these female jewellery artists chose various materials and alternative ways to combine typical metalsmithing techniques. Some creating processes can be connected easily to domestic scenes and female daily life. For example, Shu Lin Wu needled all the components such as mending a hole in clothes; Ying Hsiu Chen blended and squeezed the craft clay such as kneading a dough; Cai Xuan Wu dyed and baked acrylic sheets, which is extremely similar to barbecuing a cuttlefish.

Through making, artists in this exhibition shared a fluid female response to their daily practice. Both the diversity and similarity evident in their work revealed a rich, but ambiguous, situation. This, in turn, reflected the complexity of the current developments of contemporary jewellery in Taiwan.

Fig. 6.4 Video in Inner Crease exhibition, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. Shu Lin Wu needled the ceramic sexual organs’ shape bead to a chain, Ying Hsiu Chen mixed and squeezed the colorful clay, Cai Xuan Wu cut, twisted and heated acrylic sheets to make her jewellery.
Compared with the other projects, such as *Bubble Land* and *A jewel a day keeps wrinkles away*, *Inner Crease* focuses on creating an alternative and domestic atmosphere for the viewing and touching of jewellery. The walls and windows of the gallery were covered by numerous semi-transparent curtains, which built a domestic scene and evoked an atmosphere of daily life. Jewellery could be pinned and installed on the curtains or behind them. Through drawing the window curtain apart, audiences could interact with the work, engaging different gestures rather than gazing at a distance.

As Virginia Woolf stated in *A Room of One’s Own*:

> There is no gate, no lock, no bolt that you can set upon the freedom of my mind.

(Woolf, 1929, p. 76)

I also invited artists to take a photo of their own studio and then edited the scenes in the video. This presented unique spaces where the artists fully immersed themselves and created their art work every day. The photo contained materials, elements of work, display of tools, unspoken spiritual movements and emotion as the traces of creating process. This is also a response of *A Room of One’s Own*. In her famous essay and feminist text, Woolf encouraged woman to have a room, an individual space, where she can think, write and create. To regain and sustain the personal liberty to create art, a woman must have a space and financial support of her own. Through presenting the scenes of female artists’ workshops in *Inner Crease*, my intention was to reveal both literal and figurative spaces where women creators built their artworks, found their voice, and developed their art careers to ensure cultural visibility in wider spheres.

![Fig. 6.5 Video in *Inner Crease* exhibition, 2015, scenes of artists’ studios. Upstairs at the Napier Gallery, Melbourne.](image-url)
**Fig. 6.6** Video in *Inner Crease* exhibition, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. Audiences watched the film in the projection room. In the dark, narrow rectangle space, visitors encountered an enclosed and intimate experiences of the video.

**Fig. 6.7** Video in *Inner Crease* exhibition, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. An unexpected but similar angle of creating process from different artists. On the left, Wen Miao Yeh folded the plastic sheet and joined the jewellery, on the right, Yu Fang Chi twisted and wound the silver wire to create a strong structure.

**Fig. 6.8** Personal article on *Taiwan Craft* quarterly magazine which introduced and discussed the curating ideas. Yu Fang Chi, TW 2015, *Radiant Pavilion_ Melbourne Contemporary Jewellery and Object Trail*, Taiwan Crafts Quarterly, vol.59, Dec., (pp. 86-91). Personal article on *Taiwan Craft* quarterly magazine which introduced and discussed the curating ideas.
*Inner Crease* was my first curatorial exhibition in Australia. As a project, it allowed me to be introspective and to contemplate my own work, practice, approach and relationship with Taiwan alongside the work of other Taiwanese female artists in the contemporary jewellery arena. I was able to trace and identify similar characteristics and differences between the works of these Taiwanese female artists, who offer different perspectives from my Taiwanese cultural context. As an artist and also curator, the tricky and complicated position gave me a freedom to test, rethink and demonstrate the possibilities of the various female artists’ responses in the field of contemporary jewellery. I attempted to not only display the Taiwanese female artists’ work internationally, and discussed their ideas in the academic arena, but also increase opportunities for them, to benefit their creating careers. Therefore, sharing the concepts with the public was important. I built a specific website for the project and connected it with the main festival in Melbourne city. After the actual exhibition, I collected images, responses and my curating experiences, and wrote an article in the *Taiwan Craft* magazine, which is the only one quarterly publication for craft and applied art in Taiwan.

The exhibition was exhibited during two public happenings and festivals, one was *Radiant Pavilion*, Melbourne Contemporary Jewellery and Object Trail, which was focusing on the many aspects of contemporary jewellery and object practice; and the other is *Melbourne Fringe Festival*, which has gained responses from audiences of diverse fields and backgrounds.

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**Fig. 6.9** Floor plan of *Inner Crease* exhibition, the right bigger room is main gallery where displayed all the artwork and curtain installations, the left smaller room is projecting space with an eight minutes video. Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier
**Fig. 6.10** The previous and original scene of Upstairs at the Napier Gallery, all the windows were sealed by wooden boards, plinths and track lights presented a clean, white-cube gallery. On the right is *Inner Crease* exhibition, which appreciate the window, shadow and nature light.

**Fig. 6.11** A few faint gleams of sunshine penetrated the curtain installation and also reveal the background environment of the historical building of Fitzroy Town Hall.

**Fig. 6.12** Promotion materials for *Inner Crease* exhibition. Designer: Yu Fang Chi. Website Link: [http://innercrease.wixsite.com/innercrease](http://innercrease.wixsite.com/innercrease)
Tacit Recollection was my second curatorial project as part of this research and it was exhibited in 2017. The exhibition engages object and jewellery artists, photographers and emerging writers. Tacit Recollection is a vivid observation and description of the 'uncertain' body circumstance of these artists. It represents the ambiguous identity and insecure experience of their speechless sensation, invisible trauma or memory. Through the making of artworks and the experience of materials, artists trace and recall their inner responses of memory as well as introspecting the process of creation and the position and reflection of the body.

This exhibition is an extension and renewal of the previous curating show – Inner Crease in 2015 Melbourne Fringe Festival and 2015 Melbourne Contemporary Jewellery and Object Trail – Radiant Pavilion. Whereas for the first project in 2015, I invited eight Taiwanese female artists to have a group exhibition, while in the second curated project, I collaborated with five international female artists. This was a completely new team of artists.

From the previous experience in Inner Crease exhibition, I reflected on, and contemplated my own practice. The plan was to develop the ideas on the body in different ways. Members of the exhibition are all from different backgrounds. Lauren Kalman is from America, her artwork has been discussed in Chapter One. Taiwanese artist, Yu Chun Chen studied in Italy and founded one contemporary jewellery gallery in Taiwan, in 2010 (in Chapter Two). Monika Brugger is a German artist who is also the curator of the exhibition—A Bit of Clay on the skin (in Chapter Three). French artist Carole Deltenre and Korean artist Yuni Kim Lang (who lives and works in America) have been discussed in Chapter Five.

When I started my research journey in 2014, I collected information about, and observed these female jewellery artists who have similar but different notions of the feminine in responding in creating contemporary jewellery. In Chapter Three and Chapter Five, I illustrated my personal observations of their work. In my research and writing, I studied, explored and truly respected and admired their concepts. Thus, I was hoping to engage with these outstanding artist in an actual project, which was titled Tacit Recollection.

Through the collaboration and discussion of curating the exhibition, I was able to understand their 'story', the micro narrative behind the book and word. For example,
what is the experience and history behind the creating process? Why does the artist chose the specific size of an image to match the work? How does the artist express the jewellery orally with a clear and open voice? All of above may not be written in an artist’s statement but may appear through discussion and execution. This unique experience is also a precious learning process, unfolding the concepts of the artist’s mind, which exceeds written statements or images in the catalogue.

The topic Tacit Recollection implies an unspoken circumstance of feminine voice. The aim is to trace the ambiguous, unstable and shifting memory in the female body. Photographic documentations are presented beside the actual art work, to identify the wearing and performing condition. Through a series of conceptual works and images, the aim is to explore a non-linear Écriture féminine, as well as invoke the dynamic understanding of the exhibition. As Elizabeth Grierson suggests in the catalogue of Tacit Recollection:

As the body may be considered a sacred, personal or intimate site, so too jewellery carries that sense of intimacy and the personal. Yet at the same time jewellery objects speak beyond the self to evoke stories of the cultural, material, spiritual or external world of time and place. (Grierson, 2017)

The exhibition brings together a variety of jewellery works that collectively generate feminine sensorial responses of material performativity. Through experimental engagements with the female body, each of the jewellery works constructs a unique and insightful context form different perspectives. By bringing together this group of creative jewellery work, Tacit Recollection exposes femininity as an active term, an element that can animate the experience and encounter of the female body in unexpected and powerful ways.

Fig. 6.13 Carole Deltenre, Seal Ring, since 2008, iron, wax, casting, 3 x 2.3 cm. Courtesy of the artist.
Fig. 6.14 Carole Deltenre, *Nymphs*, since 2008, silver, porcelain, casting, soldering, filigree, variable dimensions. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6.15 Carole Deltenre, *Nymphs*, in *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne. Photograph: Cheng Lin Wu. The installation of *Tacit Recollection* involved the stretch fabric. Through pulling the fabric and pinning the jewellery on it, my intention was to apply a soft, flexible and elastic sense in the environment and to provide a bodily experience on these second layer of skin.

Fig. 6.17 Monika Brugger, *TIMBLES!* , since 2005, ring, recovered thimbles, gold, H. 2.1 cm. earrings, recovered thimbles, gold, garnet, L. 2.7 cm. Photograph: Cheng Lin Wu. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6.18 Monika Brugger’s work in *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne. Monika Brugger used domestic art tools-thimbles to create delicate objects, reflecting her consciousness and the expression of femininity. Her work locked, protected and preserved in a suitcase, as heirlooms without real family ties build up prospective inheritances. The art work presented with an ancient sewing table and tent to build a context for her ‘feminine’ practice.
Fig. 6.19 Lauren Kalman, *But if the Crime is Beautiful... Hood (5),(2),(6),(10)*, 2014, fabric, pearls, glass, 25.4 x 25.4 x 38 cm, inkjet print, 70 x 50 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6.20 Lauren Kalman’s work in *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne. Lauren Kalman’s pearl ornament references diseases like acne, cancer, herpes, and elephantiasis on human body, representing an infection and restriction of female body. In *Tacit Recollection*, the actual hood be hung on the wall, which inscribes an immovable, voiceless, blind and restricted face.
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Fig. 6.28 Yu Chun Chen’s work in *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne.

Fig. 6.29 Exhibition catalogue of *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne. The catalogue is printed on tracing paper, audiences can roll it and tight it with the rope.
Fig. 6.30 Exhibition scenes, Tacit Recollection, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne.
In *Tacit Recollection*, I applied the fabric of tight (a stretch fabric for leggings) and installed a series of flexible installation in the gallery space. I sought to represent the tension and elasticity of skin and to connect these jewellery with a bodily experience.

**Fig. 6.31** Installation process of *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne. Walls, shelves and pillars of the gallery were connected by stretch fabric, my intention was to dissolve the hard edges of the white cube and provided a soft and organic atmosphere.
Fig. 6.33 Exhibition scenes, *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne.
Conclusion

This research project investigates the role of femininity in jewellery and its cultural connotations specific to Taiwan. Through engaging the practice-led research, I aim to address how jewellery may embody and incorporate ‘femininity’, how this may contribute to an emerging narrative of femininity in Asian art jewellery and discover what is understood by the ‘creating body’ and ‘wearing body’ through femininity in art jewellery. Through processes of experimentation and reflection on poststructuralist feminist theorists Écriture féminine (women's writing) and Chora (maternal space), I am able to refine my concepts and address the research questions driving my project.

The outcome of this research includes various series of jewellery and objects, which engage and investigate the concept of femininity. Through the introspection of the making process, I am able to review my concepts, construct my own ‘feminine subjectivity’ and develop a fluid, sharing platform between the ‘creating body’ and ‘wearing body’.

The role of femininity in contemporary jewellery is evident in both my artwork and two curatorial projects. In my jewellery practice, I approach the extensive use of weaving techniques and incorporate my creating process of jewellery with the concept of ‘femininity’. By responding to the significant feminist literary theory of Écriture féminine (women’s writing), Veiled Memory I and Veiled Memory II involve the remembered gestures of sewing. The monofilament nylon thread and hydro-soluble rice paper become symbolic elements of my feminine responses on representing the historical scene of female labourers’ working gesture in Taiwan. Both the Sensory Crease and Inner Crease series further elaborate on my personal narratives and Taiwanese cultural interactions in the domestic realm. In The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series, I explore the relation between ‘creating body’ and ‘wearing body’. The creating body plays a role as the actual mold and foundation of making, while the jewellery evokes sensations that activate the awareness of the wearing body. The ‘wearing body’ transcends the ‘creating body’ and ruptures the order to earn new energies. These works carry that sense of intimacy and personal narratives, speaking beyond traditional jewellery and objects. Through the making of jewellery and objects to investigate materials, forms and narratives, this research has provided me with a way of understanding femininity as an aesthetic attribute and social characteristic.
Weaving from the Margin presents a way of interrogating the relationship between the experience of being and the experience of jewellery making and practice. Through two curatorial projects, Inner Crease and Tacit Recollection, I fulfill and verify my findings and contribute to contemporary jewellery practice. The physical experiences of two curatorial projects become a compelling demonstration to expand my artistic perspective of how I explore femininity in contemporary jewellery, in particular the practice of addressing how to enquire, test, examine, adjust and provide an alternative understanding of it. The words of Elizabeth Grierson regarding femininity in contemporary jewellery match the insight I have discovered through this research project. Elizabeth Grierson proposes:

The feminine and feminist interventions of contemporary jewellery expose not only the fragility of poetic associations, but also cultural and political representations and challenges. The female body emerges from its interiorised cultural space to celebrate a transformative potential. (Grierson, 2017)

Contemporary jewellery is an emerging field in Taiwan, in which gender is a relatively unexplored terrain in jewellery making and in the ideas that inform jewellery making. Thus, the politics of gender remain obscured in the contemporary jewellery field. This research aims to change this situation by considering current artists working in contemporary jewellery whose work addresses gender and is in sympathy with my own work within this emergent area. By bringing my work into conversations with other contemporary jewellery artists, I have been able to contribute to an ongoing discussion around gender in contemporary jewellery. Through the investigation, experimentation, manufacture and installation of jewellery objects, this research breaks the silence on gender in contemporary jewellery. In so doing, it offers new perspectives on engaging, viewing and interpreting the potential for femininity in jewellery and objects in a Taiwanese cultural context.
Books


**Electronic Resources**

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**Chapter Four**

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Fig. 4.3 Installation view at Lien Fu Garment Factory, 2003. Chieh Jen Chen, *The Factory*, 2003, super 16mm transferred to DVD, colour without sound, single-channel video. 31’09”, loop. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 4.4-4.5 Chieh-jen Chen, *The Factory*, 2003, super 16mm transferred to DVD, colour without sound, single-channel video. 31’09”, loop. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 4.6-4.11 Trivial movements in the creating processes of *Veiled Memory I*, *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal* and *Sensory Crease*. Photograph: Yu Fang Chi.
Fig. 4.12-4.14 Exhibition scenes in exhibition *Bubble Land* in Gallery Kobeia, Munich, Germany 2015. *Bubble Land* is a group exhibition curated by artist collective Bench 886, the exhibition was selected in *10 Best Displays at Munich Jewellery Week 2015* on Art Jewelry Forum website. © Bench 886.

Fig. 4.15 Yuni Kim Lang, *Comfort Hair - Woven Identity II*, 2014, digital pigment print, 101 x 101 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 4.16 Ying-Hsun Hsu, *HOME IS NOWHERE_B01*, 2015, porcelain, 20K gold plated, 11 x 5 x 4cm, handwriting, porcelain slip brushing, glaze. Courtesy the artist.

Fig. 4.17 Carole Deltenre, *Nymphs*, 2008-2015, silver, porcelain, casting, soldering, filigree, variable dimensions. Courtesy the artist.

Fig. 4.18 Ceramic Jewellery exhibition *A Bit of Clay on the Skin*, 30 December 2011-05 February 2012, The New Taipei city Ceramics Museum, Taiwan.

Fig. 4.19-4.20 The New Taipei city Ceramics Museum built a special cube in the corner for the ‘vaginas’ jewellery. Ceramic Jewellery exhibition *A Bit of Clay on the Skin*, Taipei. Taiwan.

Fig. 4.21 Exhibition catalogue of *A Bit of Clay on the Skin* in The New Taipei city Ceramics Museum, Taiwan. The ‘vaginas’ jewellery by Carol Deltenre was also missing and excluded from the brochure printed by the museum of the travelling exhibition in Taiwan

### Chapter Five

Fig. 5.1 Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.

Fig. 5.2-5.3 Creating processes. Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, 20 x 20 x 15 cm.

Fig. 5.4-5.7 Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.
Fig. 5.8-5.9 The wearing scene of *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series*, the organic jewellery structure been placed and held in the palm. Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.

Fig. 5.10-5.11 Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.

Fig. 5.12-5.13 Facial wearing gesture and display. Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.

Fig. 5.14 Yu Fang Chi, *The Nerve Ending IV — Congeal series* 2014, silver wire, variable dimensions.

Fig. 5.15 Yu Fang Chi, *Veiled Memory I*, 2014-2015, creating processes. Water dissolves the paper and reveals a hair-like, veiled image.

Fig. 5.16-5.18 Yu Fang Chi, *Veiled Memory I*, 2014-2015, fishing line, wool, variable dimensions.

Fig. 5.19-5.21 Yu Fang Chi, *Veiled Memory I*, 2014-2015, fishing line, wool, variable dimensions.

Fig. 5.22-5.23 Yu Fang Chi, *Veiled Memory I*, 2014-2015. Water dissolves the paper and reveals a hair-like, veiled fabric.

Fig. 5.24-5.50 Creating processes of *Veiled Memory II*.
Yu Fang Chi, *Veiled Memory II*, 2017, fishing line, hydro-soluble rice paper, 400 x 400 x 1 cm.

Fig. 5.51-5.52 Audiences observed *Veiled Memory II*, touched and interacted with the installation.

Fig. 5.53-5.54 Exhibition installation, *Identity Intersection*, 2017, Counihan Gallery, Brunswick, Melbourne.

Fig. 5.55 Yu Fang Chi, *Sensory Crease*, 2015-2016, sketches, pencil on paper, 15 x 15 x 15 cm.
Fig. 5.56 Yu Fang Chi, Creating process of Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, silver wire, 10 x 10 x 6 cm.

Fig. 5.57 Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, silver wire, 10 x 10 x 6 cm.

Fig. 5.58 Yu Fang Chi, Creating process of Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, silver wire, 10 x 10 x 6 cm.

Fig. 5.59 Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, sketches, pencil on paper.

Fig. 5.60 Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, silver wire, 6 x 6 x 6 cm.

Fig. 5.61-5.62 Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, silver wire, 40 x 10 x 6 cm.

Fig. 5.63-5.64 Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease, 2015-2016, silver wire, 40 x 10 x 6 cm.

Fig. 5.65 Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease object, 2015-2016, silver wire, 20 x 20 x 10 cm.

Fig. 5.66-5.67 Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease object, 2015-2016, silver wire, 20 x 20 x 10 cm.

Fig. 5.68 Creating process of Sensory Crease object. Yu Fang Chi, Sensory Crease object, 2015-2016, silver wire, 20 x 20 x 10 cm.

Fig. 5.69 Strainer / filter mesh is a layer of flexible plastic net which be laid in the kitchen drain to prevent residues and wastes.

Fig. 5.70 Yu Fang Chi, Electroforming creating process of Inner Crease series.

Fig. 5.71 Yu Fang Chi, Inner Crease object, 2017, copper, 25 x 15 x 10 cm.

Fig. 5.72 Yu Fang Chi, Inner Crease, 2017, plastic, copper, 10 x 10 x 8 cm (each).

Fig. 5.73 Prototype of Inner Crease object. Yu Fang Chi, Inner Crease object, 2017, plastic, copper, 28 x 28 x 15 cm.

Fig. 5.74-75 Yu Fang Chi, crocheting process of Inner Crease series.
Fig. 5.76-5.81 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Jewellery series*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm (each). Photo: Cheng Lin Wu

Fig. 5.82 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Object*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, electroforming, painting, 25 x 15 x 10 cm, 28 x 28 x 15 cm. Photo: Cheng Lin Wu

Chapter Six

Fig. 6.1 *Inner Crease exhibition*, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne.

Fig. 6.2 *Inner Crease exhibition*, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. Jewellery is pinned and installed on the curtain.

Fig. 6.3 *Inner Crease exhibition*, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. The catalogue is printed on fabric, audiences can cut it and take it away with them as well as holding some of the fluid memories from the exhibition.

Fig. 6.4 Video in *Inner Crease* exhibition, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. In the video of the project room, I edited a film which conveys the making processes and artists' concepts of their jewellery works. Shu Lin Wu needled the ceramic sexual organs’ shape bead to a chain, Ying Hsiu CHEN mixed and squeezed the colorful clay, Cai Xuan, Wu cut, twisted and heated acrylic sheets to make her jewellery.

Fig. 6.5 Video in *Inner Crease* exhibition, 2015, scenes of artists’ studios. Upstairs at the Napier Gallery, Melbourne.

Fig. 6.6 Video in *Inner Crease* exhibition, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. Audiences watched the film in projection room. In the dark, narrow rectangle space, visitors encountered an enclosed and intimate experiences of the video.

Fig. 6.7 Video in *Inner Crease* exhibition, 2015, Gallery: Upstairs at the Napier, Melbourne. An unexpected but similar angle of creating process from different artists. On the left, Wen Miao Yeh folded the plastic sheet and joined the jewellery, on the right, Yu Fang Chi twisted and wound the silver wire to create a strong structure.
Fig. 6.8 Personal article on *Taiwan Craft* quarterly magazine which introduced and discussed the curating ideas. Yu Fang Chi, TW 2015, *Radiant Pavilion_ Melbourne Contemporary Jewellery and Object Trail*, Taiwan Crafts Quarterly, vol.59, Dec., (pp. 86-91).

Fig. 6.9 Floor plan of *Inner Crease* exhibition, the right bigger room is main gallery where displayed all the artwork and curtain installations, the left smaller room is projecting space with an eight minutes video.

Fig. 6.10 The previous and original scene of Upstairs at the Napier Gallery, all the windows were sealed by wooden boards, plinths and track lights presented a clean, white-cube gallery. On the right is *Inner Crease* exhibition, which appreciate the window, shadow and nature light.

Fig. 6.11 A few faint gleams of sunshine penetrated the curtain installation and also reveal the background environment of the historical building of Fitzroy Town Hall.

Fig. 6.12 Promotion materials for *Inner Crease* exhibition. Designer: Yu Fang Chi. Website Link: [http://innercrease.wixsite.com/innercrease](http://innercrease.wixsite.com/innercrease)

Fig. 6.13 Carole Deltenre, *Seal Ring*, 2008–2011, iron, wax, casting, 3 x 2.3 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6.14 Carole Deltenre, *Nymphs*, 2008-2015, silver, porcelain, casting, soldering, filigree, variable dimensions. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6.15 Carole Deltenre, *Nymphs*, in *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne.

The installation of *Tacit Recollection* involved the stretch fabric. Through pulling the fabric and pinning the jewellery on it, my intention was to apply a soft, flexible and elastic sense in the environment and to provide a bodily experience on these second layer of skin.

Fig. 6.17 Monika Brugger, *TIMBLES!* , since 2005, ring, recovered thimbles, gold, H. 2.1 cm. earrings, recovered thimbles, gold, garnet, L. 2.7 cm. Photograph: Cheng Lin Wu. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6.18 Monika Brugger’s work in *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne. Monika Brugger used domestic art tools-thimbles to create delicate objects, reflecting her consciousness and the expression of femininity. Her work locked, protected and preserved in a suitcase, as heirlooms without real family ties build up prospective inheritances. The art work presented with an ancient sewing table and tent to build a context for her ‘feminine’ practice.

Fig. 6.19 Lauren Kalman, *But if the Crime is Beautiful... Hood (5),(2),(6),(10)*, 2014, fabric, pearls, glass, 25.4 x 25.4 x 38 cm, inkjet print, 70 x 50 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6.20 Lauren Kalman’s work in *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne. Lauren Kalman’s pearl ornament references diseases like acne, cancer, herpes, and elephantiasis on human body, representing an infection and restriction of female body. In *Tacit Recollection*, the actual hood be hung on the wall, which inscribes an immovable, voiceless, blind and restricted face.

Fig. 6.21 Yuni Kim Lang, *Comfort Hair - Woven Identity I*, 2014, digital pigment print, 101 x 101 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6.22 Yuni Kim Lang, *Black Knots*, 2013, rope, 40 x 15 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6.23 Yuni Kim Lang’s work in *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne.

Fig. 6.24 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Jewellery series*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm (each). Photograph: Cheng Lin Wu

Fig. 6.25 Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease, Jewellery series*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm (each). Photograph: Cheng Lin Wu
Fig. 6.26 Yu Fang Chi’s work in *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne.

Fig. 6.27 Yu Chun Chen, *Ventrioguy*, 2009, belly brooch, silver, coral, velvet ribbon, 12 x 9 x 1.8 cm. Participating mother: Hui-Ni Chen. Photograph: Ro Hsuan Chen. Courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 6.28 Yu Chun Chen’s work in *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne.

Fig. 6.29 Exhibition catalogue of *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne. The catalogue is printed on tracing paper, audiences can roll it and tight it with the rope.

Fig. 6.30 Exhibition scenes, *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne.

Fig. 6.31 Exhibition scenes, *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne. In *Tacit Recollection*, I applied the fabric of tight (a stretch fabric for leggings) and installed a series of flexible installation in the gallery space. I sought to represent the tension and elasticity of skin and to connect these jewellery with a bodily experience.

Fig. 6.32 Walls, shelves and pillars of the gallery were connected by stretch fabric, my intention was to dissolve the hard edges of the white cube and provided a soft and organic atmosphere.

Fig. 6.33 Exhibition scenes, *Tacit Recollection*, 2017, Gallery: Blindside, Melbourne.

**Appendix**

Fig. 7.1 Exhibition catalogue, *Identity Intersection*, 2017, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne.

Fig. 7.2 Exhibition scene of *Sensory Crease* jewellery series, *Identity Intersection*, 2017, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne.

Fig. 7.3 Exhibition scene of *Sensory Crease* jewellery series and *Veiled Memory II*, *Identity Intersection*, 2017, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne.
**Fig. 7.4** Exhibition catalogue of *Silver Triennial International Competition*, 2016, Deutsches Goldschmiedehaus Hanau (German Goldsmiths’ House), Germany.

**Fig. 7.5** Exhibition scene of Sensory Crease object series in Silver Triennial International Competition, 2016, Deutsches Goldschmiedehaus Hanau (German Goldsmiths’ House), Germany.

**Fig. 7.6** Exhibition catalogue and website of Funaki Award 2016, Aug. 23 – Sep. 24, 2016, Gallery Funaki, Melbourne, Australia.

**Fig. 7.7** Exhibition scene of *Inner Crease* in *Funaki Award* exhibition, 2016, Gallery Funaki, Melbourne, Australia.

**Fig. 7.8** Exhibition scene and website of *Inner Crease* series in *Mary & Lou Senini Student Art Award*, 2017, McClelland Sculpture Park + Gallery, Victoria, Australia.

**Fig. 7.9** Exhibition catalogue and e.g.etal design & development award of *2015 Contemporary Australian Silver & Metalwork Award*, 2015, Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum, Australia.

**Fig. 7.10** Exhibition scene of *Sensory Crease* in *2015 Contemporary Australian Silver & Metalwork Award*, 2015, Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum, Australia.

**Fig. 7.11** Exhibition scene of *The Nerve Ending Series* in *The 24th Legnica International Jewellery Competition*, 2015, Poland.

**Fig. 7.12** Exhibition scene of *Veiled Memory I* in *Peripheral Visions*, 2015, RMIT First Site Gallery, Melbourne, Australia. The exhibition is part of the 2014 Virgin Australia Melbourne Fashion Festival Cultural Program (VAMFF) / RMIT Link Arts & Culture Fashion & Textiles Show 10 March – 20 March, 2015.

**Fig. 7.13** Exhibition scene of Peripheral Visions, 2015, RMIT First Site Gallery, Melbourne, Australia.

**Fig. 7.14** Exhibition catalogue of *Attitude as a form*, 2015, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney, Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group Australia (NSW) 2015 conferences satellite exhibition program.
Fig. 7.15 Exhibition scene and catalogue of *Attitude as a form*, 2015, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney, Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group Australia (NSW) 2015 conferences satellite exhibition program.

Fig. 7.16 Exhibition scene of *Attitude as a form*, 2015, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney, Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group Australia (NSW) 2015 conferences satellite exhibition program. *The Nerve Ending IV—Congeal series* presented in Exhibition as photography print.

Fig. 7.17 Exhibition catalogue of *Azimuth*, 2014, RMIT Object based Practice Postgraduate Exhibition, School of Art Gallery, Melbourne, Australia.

Fig. 7.18 Exhibition scene of *Azimuth*, 2014, RMIT Object based Practice Postgraduate Exhibition, School of Art Gallery, Melbourne, Australia.

Fig. 7.19 Working processes of artist in residence program in Australian Tapestry workshop, 2015, South Melbourne, Australia. The processes of making tapestry piece with wool and cotton threads.

Fig. 7.20 Working processes of artist in residence program in Australian Tapestry workshop, 2015, South Melbourne, Australia. Artist talk and the processes of constructing textile structure with steel wires and the other linear materials.

Fig. 7.21 Workshop scene of Australian Tapestry workshop, 2015, South Melbourne, Australia.

Fig. 7.22 Group exhibition of ATW AIR 2015, exhibition scene of Australian Tapestry workshop gallery, 2015, South Melbourne, Australia.

Fig. 7.23 Exhibition floor plan

Fig. 7.23 *Weaving from the Margin* exhibition invitation.

Fig. 7.24 RMIT Site Eight Gallery Floorplan and examination exhibition layout.

Fig. 7.25-7.30 *Weaving from the Margin* exhibition installation shot.

Fig. 7.31 *Weaving from the Margin* exhibition invitation.
Appendix /

Curriculum Vitae

Publication

Group Exhibition/ International Exhibition

PhD Examination Exhibition
Curriculum Vitae

Yu Fang Chi
Kaohsiung, Taiwan
Mail: yufang.chi@gmail.com
Website: http://www.yufangchi.com/

Education

2014 PHD, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), Australia
2003~2006 MFA, Tainan National University of The Arts, Graduate Institute of Applied Arts /Metalsmithing & Jewelry, Taiwan
1999~2003 Bachelor of Education, National Hsinchu University of Education, Department of Fine Arts and Craft Education, Government financed student, Taiwan

Experience

2015 Artist in residence program, Australia Tapestry workshop, Melbourne, VIC
2015 Sessional lecturer at RMIT, Melbourne, VIC
2013~2014 Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Innovative Design and Management, Chung Hua University
2011~2014 Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Art and Creative Design, Hsuan Chiang University
2010~2014 Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Art and Design, National Tsing Hua University
2010~ Columnist of Taiwan Crafts Quarterly
2008 Public art Project & Resident Artist, Gold museum/Gold Ecological Park, Taipei
2007 Resident Artist, 435 International Artists village, Taipei County, Taiwan
Selected / Award

2017 Victorian Craft Awards, Melbourne, Australia / Finalist
2016 Mari Funaki Award for Contemporary Jewellery, Melbourne, Australia /Selected
2016 The 18th Silver Triennial International Competition 2016 Deutsches Goldschmiedehaus Hanau (German Goldsmiths’ House) /Selected
2016 Mary & Lou Senini Student Art Award, McClelland Sculpture Park &Gallery / Finalist
2015 Contemporary Australian Silver & Metalwork Award Castlemaine /e.g.etal DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT AWARD
2015 The 9th Cheongju International Craft Competition, Korea /Honorable Mention
2015 The 24th Legnica International Jewellery Competition BOUNDARIES, Poland /Selected
2014 RMIT PHD Scholarship (RPIS)—RMIT Postgraduate International Scholarship (RPIS)
2013 The 17th Silver Triennial International Competition 2013, Deutsches Goldschmiedehaus Hanau (German Goldsmiths’ House) /Selected
2013 The 8th Cheongju International Craft Competition, Korea /Selected
2012 The 6th Tallinn Applied Art Triennial -The Art of Collecting, Estonia /Selected
2011 Perfect Perforation, Handwerksform Hannover /Selected
2010 SOFT 4, Four International Textile Fashion Accessories Biennale /Selected
2010 Itami International Craft Exhibition, Japan /Selected
2009 The 6th Cheongju International Craft Competition, Korea /Outside The Box Special Prize
2009 International Handwerkmesse Munich—Schmuck Jewellery Competition /Selected
2009 The 2nd National Metal Crafts Competition, Taiwan /Recommendation Prize
2008 International Handwerkmesse Munich—Talente competition2008 /Selected
2008 Taipei County Cultural and creative Featured Product Competition, Taiwan /Silver Award
2006 National Taiwan Craft Award /Electee
2004 ChangHua Fine Art Exhibition /Merit Prize
2004 Taiwan Provincial Fine Art Exhibition /Electee
2003 Hsinchu Art Exhibition 2003 /Grand Prize
2003 Nation Hsinchu University Fine Art Exhibition /Gold Prize
**Government Funding / Sponsor**

2017 *Tacit Recollection* / Melbourne Contemporary Jewellery and Object Trail—Radiant Pavilion/ Curatorial Project Funding  
2015 *Inner Crease_8 Female jewellery artists from Taiwan* / Curator and Exhibition Funding  
National Taiwan Ministry of Culture/ Melbourne Contemporary Jewellery and Object Trail—Radiant Pavilion 1st Sept – 6th Sep/ Melbourne Fringe Festival  
16th Sept – 4th Oct

2015  
2013 *The 17th Silver Triennial International Competition 2013* / Travel Funding from National Taiwan Ministry of Culture /Visit Norway  
2013 *The 8th Cheongju International Craft Competition*, Korea / Travel Funding from National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute /Visit Korea  
2012 *The 6th Tallinn Applied Art Triennial -The Art of Collecting* / Travel Funding from National Culture and Arts Foundation /Visit Estonia  
2011 *The 7th Cheongju International Craft Competition*, Korea / Travel Funding from National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute /Visit Korea  
2010 *Itami International Craft Exhibition*, Japan / Travel Funding from National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute /Visit Japan  
2010 Artist Creation Funding /Sponsor by National Culture and Arts Foundation  
2009 *The 6th Cheongju International Craft Competition*, Korea /Travel and Tour Funding from Cheongju International Craft Biennale /Visit Korea  
2009 *MAISON&OBJET*—The international trade fair for lifestyle fashions and trends/ Travel Grants from National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute /Visit France  
2008 *International Handwerksmesse München—Talente 2008* /Travel Funding from National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute /Visit Germany

**Solo Exhibition**

2010 *Trace—Metalsmith & Art Jewellery of Yu Fang Chi*, National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute/Taipei, Taiwan  
2007 *The Nerver Ending* Solo Exhibition by Yu-Fang CHI, 435 International Artist Village/ Banciao City in Taipei County, Taiwan  
2006 *The Line of Demarcation* MFA Thesis Show, 13F Lection Space of *Focus* in Tainan Eslitebooks Gallery/Tainan, Taiwan  
2003 *Inner* Solo Exhibition of Metalwark by Yu-Fang CHI, Corridor Gallery in National Hsinchuh Teachers’ College/Hsinchu, Taiwan
Joint Exhibition

2018  *Regale — Crafting the Table*, Craft Victoria, , Melbourne, Australia
2017  *Identity Intersection*, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
2016  *Attitude as a form* Exhibition, 24 Jan – 28 Feb, Redland Art Gallery, QLD, Australia
2015  *Attitude as a form* Exhibition, 25 Jul – 7 Nov, Artisan Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
2015  *Attitude as a form’* Exhibition, 9 - 20 July, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney, NSW, Australia, Part of the Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group Australia (NSW) 2015 conferences satellite exhibition program.
2015  *Taiwan Craft in Movement*, Taipei, Taiwan
2015  *Radiant Pavilion* _Melbourne Contemporary Jewellery and Object Trail*  *Illuminate*, Studio INGOT, 1-12 September, Melbourne, Australia
2015  *Inner Crease_8 Female Jewellery Artists from Taiwan*, Upstairs at the Napier, 16 Sept – 4 Oct, , Melbourne, Australia
2015  *Danger: Research in Progress*, Kaleide Theatre, RMIT University, 5 Sept
2015  *Peripheral Visions*, RMIT First Site Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
2014  *Azimuth—RMIT Object based Practice Postgraduate Exhibition*, School of Art Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
2014  *Scoop it – a spoonful of life*, MANO Contemporary Jewellery & Object gallery, Taipei, Taiwan
2013  *Beijing International Jewelry Art Biennial*, Beijing, China
2012  *Metal Element of Seoul—Art Metal Element of Korea / Japan / Taiwan/ U.S.A. / Space Duru Gallery*, Seoul, Korea,
2011  *Welcome Signs: Contemporary Interpretations of Contemporary Garlands* jewellery from Asia Pacific region/Exhibition for the World Craft Council Jewellery Conference, Abhushan: Tradition & Design - Dialogues for the 21st Century/New Delhi, India
2010  *Shuki and Shuhaidai_2010 Itami International Craft Exhibition*, The Museum of Arts & Craft · ITAMI/ Itami, HYOGO, JAPAN/ Tokyo, Japan
2010  *SOFT 4, Four International Textile Fashion Accessories Biennale* Asociación de Creadores Textiles / Miami, America/ Madrid, Spain
2008  *Outside The Box* The 6th Cheongju International Craft Biennale/Cheongju, Korea
2009  *Interior life style* Trade Fair for New Lifestyle and Desogn, Big Sight, Tokyo, Japan
2010  *Trembling as Summer Flowers —The Golden Age as a New Journey* Taiwan Craft - Canada Tour Exhibition/Toronto, Canada

2009  *Schmuck 2009* Presentation in RMIT Gallery of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology/Melbourne, Australia

2009  *Schmuck 2009* International Handwerksmesse München/Munich, Germany

2008  *Talente 2008* International Handwerksmesse München/Munich, Germany

**Conference**

2016  The *Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia (PESA)* 45th Annual Conference  
Conference theme：Knowledge Ecologies, Dec 8 - Dec 12, 2016, Coral Coast, Fiji.  
Title of Paper/ Making from the Margin：Explore Femininity in contemporary jewellery

2015  *Minor Culture Conference*  
The Cultural Studies Association of Australasia (CSAA), the School of Culture and Communication in the Faculty of Arts at The University of Melbourne.  
Title of Paper/ Immanence in trivial movement: Femininity in contemporary jewellery within a Taiwanese cultural context., 2 December 2015
Publication

Taiwan Craft Quarterly / ISSN 1017-6438
http://www.ntcri.gov.tw/quarterlylist_207.html


2017 Yu Fang Chi, *Contemporary Perspective of Tapestry — Australian Tapestry Workshop*, vol.65, Jun., Taiwan Crafts Quarterly, pp. 82-85.


2015 Yu Fang Chi, TW 2015, *Art of the Table — National Gallery of Victoria*, Taiwan Crafts Quarterly, vol.56, Mar., pp. 82-85


Craft News / BooooooMB News

2015 Yu Fang Chi, TW 2015, *The Infinitely Imaginary of Tapestry—The Australian Tapestry Workshop*

2014 Yu Fang Chi, TW 2014, *The Observation of 8th Korea Cheongju International Craft Biennale*

2014 Yu Fang Chi, TW 2014, *The Fluidity of art jewellery—Aeon Profit - Piano Forte from Group A5*

2014 Yu Fang Chi, TW 2014, *Transplantation: A sense of place and culture- British and Australian Narrative Jewellery*
Art work publication and articles

2013  Yu Fang Chi, TW 2013, *Inspired By Contemporary Silverware —The Observation of Hanau 17th International Silver Triennial*, Taiwan Crafts Quarterly, September 2013, vol.51


2010  *Trace —Metalsmith & Art Jewellery of Yu-Fang CHI*, Nation Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute, ISBN/ 978-986-02-5154-8 / Artist Portfolio; Published and sponsored by Taiwan Government.

2010  *The Cups series* selected in Pewter Studio, Lark Books


2008  *Cluster series* selected in *Taiwan Collection*, Nation Taiwan Craft Research Institute

2008  *The Rings series* selected in *500 Wedding Rings*, Lark Books

2007  *Laced with Lace II* selected in *500 Earrings*, Lark Books

2006  *Laced with Lace I* selected in *500 Necklace*, Lark Books
Group Exhibition / International Exhibition

*Identity Intersection* 2017, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne, Australia

![Exhibition catalogue](image)

**Fig. 7.1** Exhibition catalogue, *Identity Intersection*, 2017, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne.

![Exhibition scene](image)

**Fig. 7.2** Exhibition scene of *Sensory Crease* jewellery series, *Identity Intersection*, 2017, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne.
Fig. 7.3 Exhibition scene of Sensory Crease jewellery series and Veiled Memory II, Identity Intersection, 2017, Counihan Gallery, Melbourne.
Silver Triennial International Competition 2016, Deutsches Goldschmiedehaus Hanau (German Goldsmiths’ House), Germany

Fig. 7.4 Exhibition catalogue of Silver Triennial International Competition, 2016, Deutsches Goldschmiedehaus Hanau (German Goldsmiths’ House), Germany.

Fig. 7.5 Exhibition scene of Sensory Crease object series in Silver Triennial International Competition, 2016, Deutsches Goldschmiedehaus Hanau (German Goldsmiths’ House), Germany. Following the presentation in Hanau Deutsches Goldschmiedehaus, Nov. 06, 2016 – Jan. 15, 2017, the exhibition traveled to:
Jan. 26 – Apr. 9, 2017: Museum voor Edelsmeedkunst, Juwelen en Diamant, Antwerp (B).
**Funaki Award 2016, Gallery Funaki, Melbourne, Australia**

**Fig. 7.6** Exhibition catalogue and website of **Funaki Award 2016**, Aug. 23 – Sep. 24, 2016

Gallery Funaki, Melbourne, Australia.
Fig. 7.7 Exhibition scene of Inner Crease in Funaki Award exhibition, 2016, Gallery Funaki, Melbourne, Australia.
Mary & Lou Senini Student Art Award 2017, McClelland Sculpture Park & Gallery, VIC, Australia

Fig. 7.8 Exhibition scene and website of Inner Crease series in Mary & Lou Senini Student Art Award, 2017, McClelland Sculpture Park + Gallery, Victoria, Australia.
2015 Contemporary Australian Silver & Metalwork Award Castlemaine
e.g.etal DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT AWARD, VIC, Australia

Fig. 7.9 Exhibition catalogue and e.g.etal design & development award of 2015 Contemporary Australian Silver & Metalwork Award, 2015, Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum, Australia.
Fig. 7.10 Exhibition scene of *Sensory Crease* in 2015 Contemporary Australian Silver & Metalwork Award, 2015, Castlemaine Art Gallery and Historical Museum, Australia.
The 24th Legnica International Jewellery Competition _ BOUNDARIES 2015, Legnica, Poland

Fig. 7.11 Exhibition scene of The Nerve Ending Series in The 24th Legnica International Jewellery Competition, 2015, Poland.
Peripheral Visions 2015, RMIT First Site Gallery, Melbourne, Australia

Fig. 7.12 Exhibition scene of Veiled Memory I in Peripheral Visions, 2015. RMIT First Site Gallery, Melbourne, Australia. The exhibition is part of the 2015 Virgin Australia Melbourne Fashion Festival Cultural Program (VAMFF) / RMIT Link Arts & Culture Fashion & Textiles Show 10 March – 20 March, 2015.
Fig. 7.13 Exhibition scene of *Peripheral Visions*, 2015, RMIT First Site Gallery, Melbourne, Australia.
Attitude as a form 2015, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney, Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group Australia (NSW) 2015 conferences satellite exhibition program

Fig. 7.14 Exhibition catalogue of Attitude as a form, 2015, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney, Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group Australia (NSW) 2015 conferences satellite exhibition program.
Fig. 7.15 Exhibition scene and catalogue of *Attitude as a form*, 2015, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney, Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group Australia (NSW) 2015 conferences satellite exhibition program.
Fig. 7.16 Exhibition scene of *Attitude as a form*, 2015, Gaffa Gallery, Sydney. Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group Australia (NSW) 2015 conferences satellite exhibition program. *The Nerve Ending IV—Congeal series* presented in Exhibition as photography print.
Azimuth 2014, RMIT Object based Practice Postgraduate Exhibition, School of Art Gallery, Melbourne, Australia

Fig. 7.17 Exhibition catalogue of Azimuth, 2014, RMIT Object based Practice Postgraduate Exhibition, School of Art Gallery, Melbourne, Australia.
Fig. 7.18 Exhibition scene of *Azimuth*, 2014, RMIT Object based Practice Postgraduate Exhibition, School of Art Gallery, Melbourne, Australia.
**Artist in residence program** 2015, Australian Tapestry workshop, South Melbourne

In 2015, I participated the Artist in Residency program in Australian Tapestry Workshop in South Melbourne. During the residency for more than 10 weeks, I introspected the processes of making and the position of female body. Through immersing in the atmosphere of weaving and interacting with the other weavers, I observed and contemplated the textile-related making process as well as exploring the contrasts between experience and memory. One of the outcomes of this period is the ‘Sensory Crease’ series of jewellery works.

![Fig. 7.19 Working processes of artist in residence program in Australian Tapestry workshop, 2015, South Melbourne, Australia. The processes of making tapestry piece with wool and cotton threads.](image-url)
Fig. 7.20 Working processes of artist in residence program in Australian Tapestry workshop, 2015, South Melbourne, Australia. Artist talk and the processes of constructing textile structure with steel wires and the other linear materials.

Fig. 7.21 Workshop scene of Australian Tapestry workshop, 2015, South Melbourne, Australia.
Fig. 7.22 Group exhibition of ATW AIR 2015, exhibition scene of Australian Tapestry workshop gallery, 2015, South Melbourne, Australia.
PhD Examination Exhibition

Yu Fang Chi PhD Examination exhibition, 16-18 November, 2017
Weaving from the Margin: Femininity in contemporary jewellery within a Taiwanese cultural context

The final presentation of this exhibition focuses on how to unfold and display that were been trialed, developed and investigated throughout my research project. Through the arrangement of my artwork in the exhibition, I intend to provide an understanding of the trajectory of my research journey. Ideally, audiences will encounter the gallery desk fist, where display the information and documents of the exhibition, then they walk along the left hand side and follow the clockwise direction of the gallery.

The installation of my work will include four different ways. The creating process of artwork is presented as the video form and projected on the west wall of the gallery space. Inner Crease, The Nerve Ending IV—Congeal and Sensory Crease series are displayed and arranged in certain order on wooden shelves. Veiled Memory II is suspended and installed with specific height from the wall, allowing pieces to be viewed from different angles and directions. Two curatorial projects, Inner Crease and Tacit Recollection, are presented as the documentary video form on screen and displayed along with other promotion materials.

Fig. 7.23 Weaving from the Margin exhibition invitation.
Exhibition plan

Fig. 7.24 RMIT Site Eight Gallery Floorplan and examination exhibition layout.

List of Works


2. Yu Fang Chi, *Inner Crease*, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, thread, steel wire, crocheting, electroforming, painting, 9 x 5 x 46 cm (each jewellery).
   25 x 15 x 10 cm, 28 x 28 x 15 cm (object).


5. Yu Fang Chi, *Sensory Crease*, 2015-2016, silver wire, 40 x 10 x 6 cm (each).
   Yu Fang Chi, *Sensory Crease object*, 2015-2016, silver wire, 20 x 20 x 10 cm.

Views of *Weaving from the Margin* examination exhibition

![Installation shot of Weaving from the Margin exhibition](image)

*Fig. 7.25 Weaving from the Margin* exhibition installation shot.
Fig. 7.26 Weaving from the Margin exhibition installation shot.
Fig. 7.27 Weaving from the Margin exhibition installation shot.
Fig. 7.28 Weaving from the Margin exhibition installation shot.
Fig. 7.29 Weaving from the Margin exhibition installation shot.
Fig. 7.30 Weaving from the Margin exhibition installation shot.
Weaving from the Margin
Femininity in contemporary jewellery within a Taiwanese cultural context

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PHD Exhibition Opening: Thursday 16 November 2017, 5-7pm
Exhibition Dates: Friday 17 November – Sunday 18 November by appointment
RMIT University, SITE EIGHT, Building 2, Level 2, Room 8, Bowen Street (near La Trobe Street)

Yu Fang Chi, Inner Crease object, 2017, copper, metallic car paint, 25 x 15 x 10 cm, Photography by Cheng Lin Wu

Weaving from the Margin investigates the role of femininity in jewellery and its cultural connotations specific to Taiwan. It seeks to find out how jewellery may embody and incorporate ‘femininity’, and how this may contribute to an emerging narrative of femininity in Asian art jewellery.

Fig. 7.31 Weaving from the Margin exhibition invitation.