

Archive of *A night in A Theatre*

Edited by Director Chang Xu

This archive documents the developmental process of *A night in A theatre*, a production by A Theatre, tracing how the work gradually grew like a living organism — forming its bones and flesh, developing a personality, and eventually get a will of its own. It is not a result-driven creation, but rather a nonlinear, collective creative journey filled with intimate memories, entangled thoughts, and spontaneous connections.

The materials in this archive are organized into three chapters:

1. *Something Before Everything*
2. *Through Everything*
- 3.

Drawing from a range of materials — directorial notes, rehearsal sketches, personal conversations, collaborative documentation, and production experiments — this archive reflects how theoretical reflection, rehearsal, collaboration and scenographic exploration shaped and reshaped the work in both form and intention. These entries not only capture the development of the piece but also its ongoing afterlife and speculative futures.

Rather than offering a linear or finalized account, this document invites you to navigate through the creative mind of the piece itself — to witness its doubts, reversals, repetitions, ruptures, and unfinished thoughts. Feel free to read discontinuously, to pause and return, to wander — as one might explore an unknown place.

Chapter1 something before everything



Conceptual entry points

Director's notes 2024.12.23

A Theatre as the Body of Narrative

*As Derrida describes in *Hauntology*: unfinished pasts, forgotten ideals, and unfulfilled promises return and linger as ghosts in the present. When a theatre loses its function as a “theatre,” it becomes a living organism within the silence of time. In *A Theatre*, everything that has already passed — old props, lingering traces of human presence, archived lighting cues, echoes in the sound system, sealed backstage doors, half-malfunctioning rigging systems, the afterglow under the lights, unfinished plays, curtains left hanging mid-fall, and seats that no audience ever sat in — all become ghostly presences. They continuously remind us of a once-possible future and of what we may have lost. It is the “unfinished past” of a theatre entangling itself with reality. The stage is no longer a place for performance; its function is no longer a space for artifice, but a haunting rehearsal space — a pre-performance site that re-enacts what is already lost. Objects, lighting, and residual sounds do not illuminate a story; instead, they rehearse a forgotten function of themselves, with nostalgia acting as a kind of remedy.*

Director's notes 2025.1.1

A Theatre is therefore not only a container but an active presence.

*After *alife Ahead*, a work by Pierre Huyghe, takes place in a reactivated abandoned ice rink. He situates the work within a living environment—an autonomous and evolving life field. There, there is a living beehive, a self-renewing algae pool, an AI-controlled climate system, and a hairless dog with human tumor cells implanted in its head. It is like an ecosystem that continuously regenerates itself without human intervention.*

*When imagining *A Theatre*, I vision it as a breathing organism, a memory body whose organs cooperate with one another.*

Director' notes 2025.1. *

*If *A Night in A Theatre* is a contemporary fable. But as a fable, from what position does it speak? And why is the world it depicts devoid of human presence?*

*Pierre Huyghe's *Human Mask* offered me a perspective. In the work, a monkey wearing a young girl's mask repeats the gestures of a human waitress inside an abandoned inn after the Fukushima nuclear disaster. There is no audience, no narrative goal—this creature becomes the final proxy for humanity in a post-human era. Its lonely, fragile gestures evoke an eerie hallucination. He adopts a post-human perspective with a satirical but poetic tone, raising a critical voice and offering an imagined legacy for a future yet to come.*

Imagine a theatre abandoned by humans, left silent and still. What traces linger behind? What echoes of stories, emotions, and dreams remain as a legacy, quietly inviting anyone who stumbles upon them one day to pause and reflect?

Constructing the fictional through the Real

I began to explore the narrative framework, techniques, and content of *A Night in A Theatre*. In doing so, I attempted to fabricate the theatre and search for the possibilities of events taking place within it by weaving together multiple elements: incorporating the history of real Lost theatres, fragmented descriptions and rumors from others, imaginative associations with the movements of objects, as well as an exploration of the structure, organs, and existing materials of the Platform Theatre—the venue where I will soon stage the work.

A question list

This question list serves as a crucial tool for structuring my creative inquiry and deepening my reflection. It helps me navigate the complexities of constructing a fictional theatre grounded in real-world references.

Question

As a lost theatre, it may no longer exist — a vanished presence in verifiable records and archives. It survives only in rumors, perhaps even in mere hearsay. Within its memoirs, what events once took place? What were the significant historical turning points? How did the function of the space evolve over time?

Question

Where did these events occur — inside the theatre or outside it? And within the theatre itself, in which specific areas?

Question

What is the metaphor between the two worlds: the inside and the outside of the theatre?

Question

Imagine the theatre as a person — what are its past experiences? What moments have left a lasting impression on it? What kind of personality does it have? How are its emotions expressed — its joy, happiness, sorrow, fear, exhilaration, and ecstasy? Does it have any peculiar habits or fixations? During its silent periods, when it dwells in a limbo space, what is its state of being?

Question

What are its intentions? What lies within its subconscious?

*To rehearse To think
To drift into reverie
To dream
To mend
To lapse into a trance
To forget
To search, to reveal, to release*

Question

What has passed through it? What kinds of people? What animals? What kinds of light? What sounds?

Question

How are the present and the memories represented? What artistic or theatrical devices are used to express dreams and recollections? What do the present and the past signify in terms of function?

Question

*What is the content of the dream? How does the dream unfold? What is its structure?
What is the form or aesthetic of the dream?*

Question

What is the weather like?

a. Gathering Lost Theatres: Fictions Found in the Real

Director's notes 2025.2. ~

During my exploration of some websites, I discovered a site dedicated to documenting abandoned places, which includes a series specifically about the stories of abandoned theatres in London. By examining their histories, I tried to identify the spatial changes these theatres underwent throughout their iterations, as well as what happened around them. For example, the foyer of The Grand Cinema in Camberwell was once turned into a café. Outside the back door of LEYSTONSTONE Theatre is a narrow alley where, on the night of its opening, a person died—rumors about who this person was have become unverifiable. On the day Barkingside Theatre was converted into a music hall, 200 seats were added to the audience area, and the opening night was packed to capacity. Later, insiders revealed: "Mecca closed down the bingo club in 2014, and the building has been vacant ever since. Its future use is uncertain, though it is a Grade II Listed building. The venue made London headlines in 2016 after 700 youths showed up for a 'squat rave.' Riot police, police dogs, and helicopters were present at what locals described as a battlefield." These records, like novelistic stories filled with rumors, cloak everything that happened there in a veil of mystery. I try to place these stories appropriately within my script and adapt them, while reflecting on their narrative relationships and symbolic meanings.

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Whenever a space undergoes change, it makes me think of how transitions (scene changes) can be applied in my work—representing transformation and evolution. Perhaps transitions can be a form that repeats itself.

Not sure if had happened

<p>Tentatively Mulholland Drive. Transition into DV footage.</p> <p>Wandering and searching. Will a ghost appear?</p> <p>A sudden gunshot. The DV camera whips around—the image disappears.</p> <p>"Send me my heart with a kiss." (Emotional shift.)</p> <p>A girl dances with a plastic bag.</p> <p>The camera captures the audience. The projection turns off. The curtain falls.</p>	<p>A final ritual of the theater, the last battlefield before dawn.</p> <p>An unacknowledged revelry, an overload of information, a short circuit.</p> <p>Techno loses its coherence. Hardcore BPM rises. Bass tremors shake the stage.</p> <p>Hallucinatory layers—reversed cues, strobe lights, slow motion.</p> <p>Sirens. Aviation alarms. Helicopter rotors.</p> <p>Dogs barking. Swarming flies.</p> <p>Blurred silhouettes of departing ravers.</p> <p>A moment of silence.</p> <p>A rolling bottle, airborne Bingo balls.</p> <p>A looping bird in flight.</p> <p>Out-of-control smoke machines.</p> <p>Silver streamers caught in a fan.</p> <p>A soundtrack from Mulholland Drive's Silent Theater.</p> <p>A few fireworks burst in the mist-filled theater, leaving behind only fading light.</p>
<p>The Most Complex Sequence</p> <p>Curtains. Lighting. Sound. Stage movement—all must be precisely coordinated.</p> <p>(Second scene transition.)</p>	<p>Dawn.</p> <p>A final backstage dialogue between a man and a woman.</p> <p>A shaft of morning light enters through the stage door.</p> <p>Audience seats retract in the corridor.</p>
<p>Backstage teardown: drills, mechanical sounds, storage room.</p> <p>Curtains Rise and Fall, A Feverish Battle, A poetic post-party.</p>	<p>The End.</p>



Barkingside State Cinema 2016

The State cinema was built by famous cinema architect George Coles and opened in October 1938 with a seating capacity of nearly 2,200. In 1940, it suffered some bomb damage and was closed down and requisitioned by the Government War Office to be used as a store house for the remainder of the war.

After the war it reopened as the ABC then in 1978 became the Ace cinema in August 1984 it closed its doors for the last time. The stall area is currently used for bingo, but the remainder of the cinema is all still there in its disused dusty glory and according to Lee Unwin (who took the interior pics), there is local talk of the cinema reopening one day. All the photographs below were taken around 2016.



(A psychedelic trance.)
Outdoor free-party techno as background sound.
Light tests, wandering spotlights, hidden figures. (10 min.)
Theater: Zoom out.
Lighting adjustments, wandering between clarity and distortion.
A janitor's cart rolls across the stage. A single bubble floats midair.
Winter Light Test - A Weather Phenomenon
Snow drifts across the wooden transport platforms.
A row of moving steel pipes conceals a firework tube.
In the darkness, a flickering lighter. Smoke rings.
A half-leg protruding from a trailer.
A spinning office chair.
Fading footprints.
A foam board masquerading as a glacier.
Conversations from the catwalk.
A sound designer's melodic notes.
An unanswered telephone call.
Coded radio chatter, a stage manager's cue left unheard.
Micro-fractures in reality—tiny sounds breaking through.
Roving flight cases. A DJ set flashing its lights.
Film Screen Rises and Lowers - Entering the Cinema
Theater goes dark. The only light comes from the projector.
The screen glows with pure white light, its presence lingering like an unresolved dream.
A concealed fear, tension, and anxiety.
Cinema (10 min - Building Tension, Fear)

Floating in the air is an inert atmosphere from an old time zone, mixed with dust. A missing theater lingers in a distant land—perhaps even beyond the abandoned techno airports of the future—like a dormant, silent, and hungover steam chamber. The light of bygone days, now as ineffective as diluted acid, lingers over the space where stray dogs and malnourished pigeons have found refuge.
At dusk, on this very day, the spring wind exhales Xiao Hong and plum blossoms, lifts the secrets hidden beneath plastic sheets. In a legend of a cold summer, its appendix holds records of more than just Shakespeare and farcical comedies, more than ballet shoes and dead cats hurled onto the stage. Insomnia and manic depression intertwine here—paranoia, peculiar obsessions, and insidious pranks. This is an affair in which the missing one is the theater itself, a farcical tragedy of universality and failure, an unwritten memoir, a chaotic and unordered poem.

Dusk (Suspended Time) Public Garden - 15 min
The dusk light stretches through the corridors, illuminating a row of audience seats. (Pause.) A common moment at the close of an ordinary day—an air raid siren seeps into this tunnel, though there is nothing to commemorate. Nothing happens. (Pause.) Birds fly from one end to the other, while the remnants of this rainy season, sedimented inside the speakers, cause a minor short circuit.
The local meteorological agency had used four words beginning with "D" to describe the weather during that period: "dull, dreary, dismal, and disappointing." Over the past eleven days, most of the UK had only seen eighteen minutes of sunlight, concentrated almost entirely around dusk.

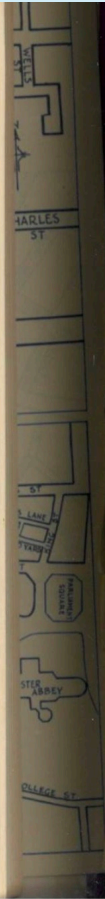
In the public garden, a motor vehicle is parked outside, its headlights cutting into the theater—then receding into the distance.
A man urinates.
A shadow lingers at the backstage door, then leaves, closing the door behind.

First Physical Action: The Chair
A skateboard glides slowly onto the stage from the left, in tandem with the fading twilight.

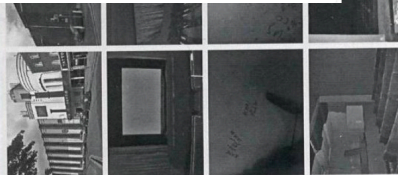


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The musical arrangements were entrusted to the full members of the company, but under the arrangement of Mr. John Caulfield, late of the Canterbury Hall. Misses Eva Brett, Pearce, and Mrs. Caulfield, with Messrs. G. Allen (who was deservedly honored in "The Merry Men of England"), Parkinson, Corri, S. Heartley, and Matz, all united efficiently to produce sufficient entertainment, in this respect, during the entire evening. When the cloth was with-



Psychdelic compounds found in 'magic mushrooms' are increasingly being recognized for their potential to treat health conditions such as depression , anxiety, compulsive disorders and addiction

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"Brian Mulligan said: *"I once wrote a song about this place - the ABC where she kissed me now has bingo on every night"*

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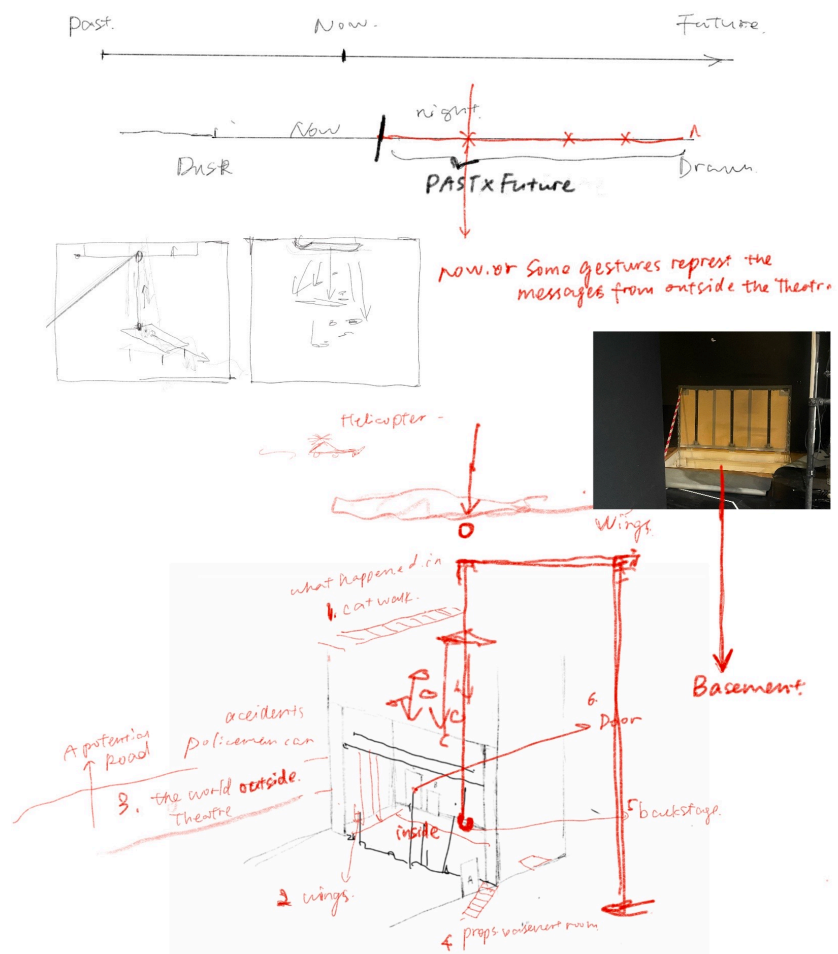
*Like the Grand Rex in Paris, this 1927 cinema was one of the first built in the so-called atmospheric style, with **a permanent set** and twinkling stars on the ceiling. The goal was to create the illusion of a classical Italian garden at night. "These temples to cinema built nearly a century ago aroused the enthusiasm of cinema-goers even when a film wasn't that good. Even in ruins, they can still inspire admiration and respect, as well as deep sadness and regret at finding them in their current state," says Lumenick, who hopes that photographs like those that Lambros has taken will help save more cinemas.*

b. Platform Theatre as a Living Archive

Director's notes 2025.2.*

From the spatial perspective of platform theatre as a site-specific case

I am trying to find a form of conflict that establishes a metaphor between the external and the internal. My intuition is to approach this from the perspective of spatial narrative. The external world carries a latent crisis. I need to find an action that continuously appears throughout the entire composition, serving as a foreshadowing and a suspense. The shadowy figure, as an outsider, is a deliberate design choice. The back door of the platform theatre acts as a gateway, a medium connecting the outside and the inside. So, who is this intruder? Does their repeated appearance function as a recurring action? What gesture does this act of intrusion bring? It is both a disruption and an intervention. Another narrative element is to consider what happens at the wings — a middle ground of sorts. The ringing of a phone might be another option, acting like a form of communication or invocation. Who is calling? What does the other party want to say?







c. Useless Objects as Invisible Narrators (what is in the backstage?)

Director's notes 2025.2.*

I attempted to search for the potential remnants of A Theatre within the platform theatre. My attention turned to objects that seemed useless: transport trolleys, storage racks, wooden boxes, flight cases, metal pipes used to build the stage... Things that are both unfamiliar and strangely familiar. They are never the protagonists of the theatre. They usually appear on stage only before or after the performance — in those in-between moments. Unlike actors or other stage props, these objects have no clear motivation or lines. They are like shadows, forever stuck before the beginning — always getting ready, building, supporting, working. There seems to be no reason for them to develop a narrative of their own. From very personal view, I feel the urge to give these marginal objects the chance to appear.

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The choice of objects lacks strong symbolism—they act as neutral mediums. As Roland Barthes says, neutrality doesn't erase perspective; there's always some viewpoint, but it softens any overt expression. Objects loaded with heavy symbolism actually limit the audience's perception because the signs they carry dictate meaning too rigidly. Barthes critiques how codes and their interpretations manipulate us in meaningless ways, shaping how we understand the social realities around us. At the same time, these codes also steer our imagination, obscuring the full picture of reality.

I see these regular geometric objects as invasive, inert bodies. Ones you can't ignore,



Chapter 2 Through everything

Rehearsal Notes 3.6 // 3.10

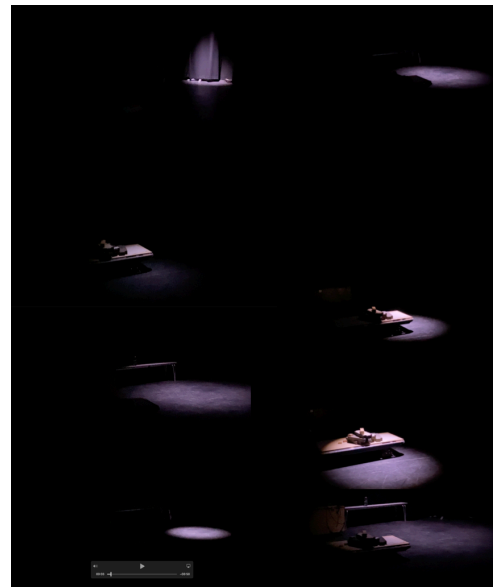
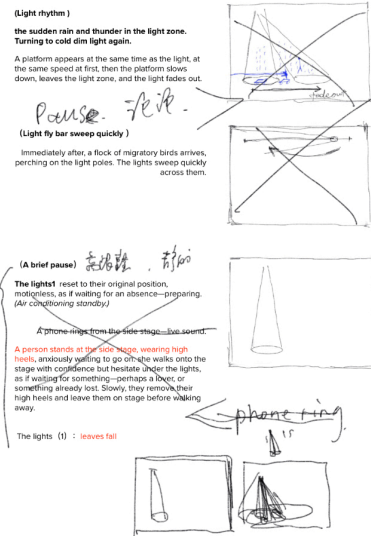
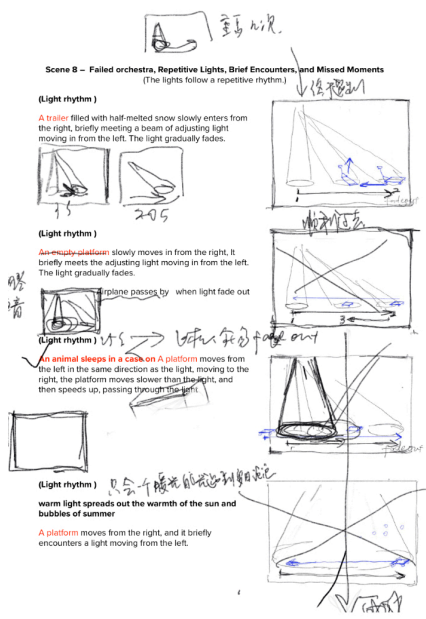
To capture the atmosphere of a theater settling into night, preparing for a performance, I started by focusing on the state of the lighting, how it feels in that in-between moment of setup. I treated the light not just as illumination, but as a character with its own language and gestures. I chose a single spotlight to experiment with.

During tests, the spotlight moved along different speeds and paths, creating a range of moods and implied intentions. When it repeated a straight path over and over, it felt like a memory frozen in time, a fixed lighting cue recalled mechanically, its motion stiff and purposeless. But when it wandered freely and unpredictably around the space, shifting speed and direction like a dancer, it gained a life of its own.

This made me wonder what if a light in the theater only remembers one cue. It would endlessly replay that left-to-right movement, a kind of ghostly ritual. Sometimes it brushed against small platforms or trolleys on stage, other times it floated alone through empty space. These brief encounters, paired with the mechanical repetition, made me think of the theater itself as being in a kind of trance, lost in a fog of absent-mindedness.

In total darkness, the moving beam of the spotlight became a searching eye, sweeping across the void. It transforms emptiness into a defined, temporary space, a frozen moment suspended in time. The light ceases to be mere function, it creates a "third space," a theatrical realm where the real and the imaginary coexist. The spotlight carves out a temporary stage, drawing our attention to what's revealed while also hinting at the hidden unknown beyond the shadows.

But what is the light really searching for. Perhaps it's chasing fragments of memory, those small, precious moments we try to hold on to. How can these memories, normally invisible, be brought to life? Sound enters as an agency for memory in this process. By designing relationships between light and objects, sometimes moving in sync, sometimes objects lag behind and then overtake, or sometimes moving in opposition, these encounters between light and matter create collisions between memory and emptiness.



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Can the meeting of light and memory be seen as an overflow?

Overflow as a gesture, a moment when something spills beyond its boundaries, escapes control or expectation. When light and memory collide by accident, it's more than visual overlap, it's an intertwining of emotion, time, and memory bleeding into each other. These brief images illuminated through rupture reveal a hidden potential, a richness born from failure or excess. The mistakes, the fragments left behind, carry the seeds of truth or feeling.

fallen leaves resting on the theater roof, waiting for a random moment to slip through cracks and drift down inside. The confetti from a ball decades ago, long forgotten in the fly system, fluttering down by chance. A thirty-year-old lighting fixture meeting floating dust motes in a quiet dance.



L: "You okay?"

C: "Not really."

...

C: "Everything just feels so boring. Rehearsals are draining me. I can't see the fishing lines clearly—they're like traps. Everyone's half-asleep in this dark rehearsal room. None of the props are cooperating. And everything feels so fragile. Things keep breaking down, and my team is constantly fixing something. Every move we try just... gets stuck."

L: *[laughs]* "Ah, I know get i....."

C: "I'm kinda losing it. We've still got over 20 days... Can I actually make it? I feel like I'm going off track."

L: "..... Try bringing the audience into your thoughts. Bring *yourself* into it too. Just put your strongest feelings right into the work."

...

C: "At this point, I don't even know if it's me rehearsing, or the theatre itself."

L: "That's because *you* are the theatre. Its world is your world."

Director's notes 3.27

After that phone call, something suddenly became clear to me.

This entire rehearsal process is pointing towards inefficiency and delay—towards those unstable, unpredictable, and unmeasurable moments. The platform's wheel keeps falling off. We've fixed it over and over again, but it never really works. And maybe that's no longer a problem to be solved. Maybe failure itself is the gesture—it's the weight of disappointment, of awkwardness, of a complex, bitter kind of frustration. The sensation of something heavy slipping away. Meaninglessness itself might be the meaning. Exhaustion is the content.

To stare into an empty space requires a real kind of conflict—an exposure to the complexity of reality. A platform may always remain empty. That's not despair. It's a kind of waiting filled with potential. The sudden pivot caused by its friction against the floor feels brave—and weirdly lovely.

This rehearsal is like a system that fails repeatedly from within. Movements are constrained; breakdowns are endless. Outside, the world feels like a fated rainy day. Somehow, it all points to a larger fable: that even in a rehearsal full of nothing, we keep rehearsing. This spinning-in-place, this persistence—that might just be the spiritual core of the piece.

Will anything come out of this? I don't know.

What is this piece really trying to say? I don't know.

But we need a kind of theatricality. We need absurd and a bit humor. We need tiny miracles and spectacles. The world is already full of meaning. What we need to do is to keep creating spaces for meaning.

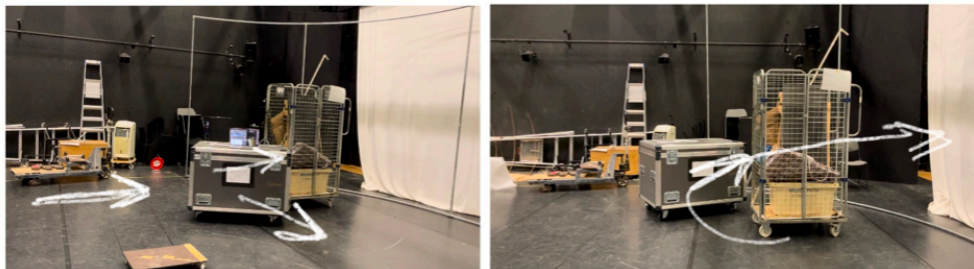
Rehearsal record 3.29

We began by letting Jungyun familiarize himself with the motion state of the flight case. Its wheels are smooth, and when pushed with consistent force, it creates a steady sound against the floor—a kind of rhythmic movement. There are hardly any limitations to its mobility. The only constraint is that when the operator stands behind the flight case, their view of surrounding objects is blocked, so movement must rely on anticipation and intuition.

We decided to make use of this disadvantage brought by the visual obstruction. We placed the cage in a fixed position as an obstacle. The instruction I gave to the flight case was: move toward the backstage, but go around the cage. I asked Jungyun to improvise, to physically explore the relationship between the cage and the flight case.

Their first contact was tentative, followed by a 5 second pause. (Should it return to its original position? Or just take a small step back and try again?) During the first turn, Jungyun was clearly embodying the kind of “intentional failure” we had discussed. On the second backward movement, one of the wooden bars sticking out of the cage created strong friction with the flight case—a moment of awkwardness.

In the quiet rehearsal room, the physical contact between metal, wood, and rubber was greatly amplified. These sounds became part of a strange, irregular rhythm. Their encounter wasn't violent—it had a touch of lightness, a bit of dullness, some humor, and a faint sense of absurdity.



The activation of the flight case marks the beginning of the wait-in process. Accompanied by ~~random~~ random orchestra notes, it feels as though the theatre is starting to assemble the beginning of a play using fragments from its own memory. The collision with the cage immediately makes the audience aware that the cage is a large, yet redundant object.

{ Here we face two options:

Should every collision reset the action to its starting position? Z about how our answer.

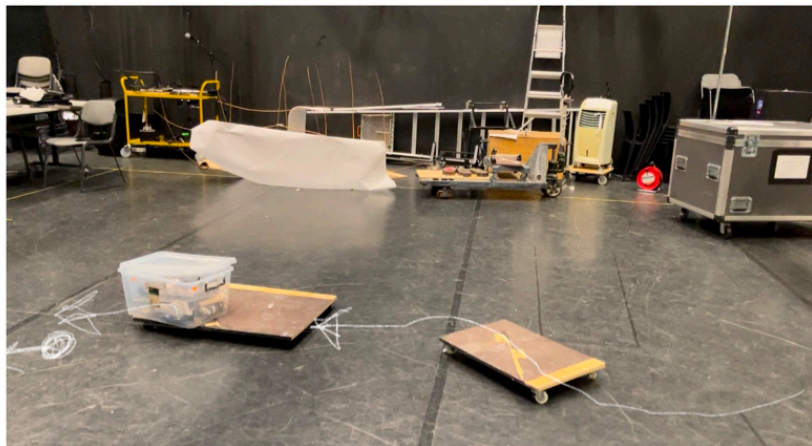
One of the small platform's wheels is tangled with fishing line—it can't be undone. As a result, its movement is never in a straight line. No matter how much force the operator applies, it always veers slightly to the left, as if it has its own will—an insistence, a personality.

But what if it had other moods?

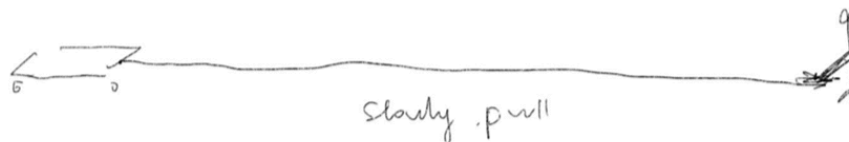
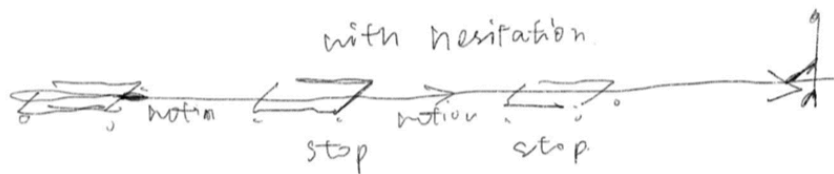
Rushing eagerly onto the stage.

Advancing at an extremely slow, almost painful pace, but never stopping.

Moving forward with occasional pauses, as if hesitating, uncertain.



Different mode. → different mood and intentions
subconsciousness





 A grid of 20 small images arranged in a 4x5 layout, showing various stages of a video production or artistic process.

- Top row: A person in a grey hoodie and cap; a person working with cardboard; a person in a blue hoodie; a person in a blue hoodie; a person in a blue hoodie.
- Second row: A person painting a wall; a person painting a wall; a person painting a wall; a person painting a wall; a person painting a wall.
- Third row: A person painting a wall; a person painting a wall; a person painting a wall; a person painting a wall; a person painting a wall.
- Fourth row: A person painting a wall; a person painting a wall; a person painting a wall; a person painting a wall; a person painting a wall.

 The images include timestamps "0:05" and "0:22". There is also a text overlay in the bottom right quadrant:

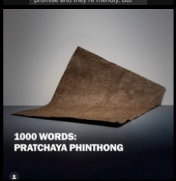
What will happen: say bye to Telling before she leaves. What you'll receive: a small sketch of you.

This is a chill quite COME. AND COOL TIME. It's not limited. But it'll be at the spot all the time. So please take a walk in the heat when you wanna take a break or simply home.

Do bring JACKETS. It could be outdoors sometime. The weather might rain lightly.

You're expecting to see several of my friends arriving in different times. But won't match a promise and they're friendly. But

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1000 WORDS:
PRATCHAYA PHINTHONG

Experiments in Platform Theatre 3.28

“In Platform Theatre, I conducted experiments with Haze machines and light in an attempt to discover a form of narrative. I have long sought a sequence of fluid images something that can appear on stage and vanish without a trace, in the absence of human performers. The smoke produced by the theatre’s machine becomes the body of a ghost: beautiful and unexpected, uncanny and transcending time. During the experiment, in a lost Theatre, a Haze machine suddenly activated by itself, releasing ephemeral clouds that quickly dissipated. The varying densities of smoke slowly rose and dispersed, forming images in conjunction with light from different angles. On-site, I realized that their shapes, and shifting rhythms formed a kind of gesture and narrative. They were alive—and seemed to carry consciousness.

Sometimes they exhaled small continuous rings of smoke, tentatively; other times, they hung motionless; sometimes a cute little puff waited in the wings before darting away; at other times, they hovered on the verge of disappearance, anxious, or burst into destructive chaos. These subtle variations formed a complex scenario: graceful repression, melancholic freedom, and a spirit of rebellion. A machine once intended to merely create atmosphere now became the protagonist, dancing a sad yet joyful ballet in the dark theatre—endowed with desire, vitality, and agency.





“the curious ability of inanimate things to animate, to act, to produce effects dramatic and subtle” (Bennett, Vibrant Matter, p. 6).



Scene 7 show time script

Scene 7 show time

The curtains rise fully, revealing the theater's "rehearsed" performance. (Haze machine, trolley, old light on platforms, cage—all arranged in an elegant yet absurdly unstable composition. Lights and clouds remain misaligned, attempting correction but always drifting apart. Making coincidence and errors at the same time.)

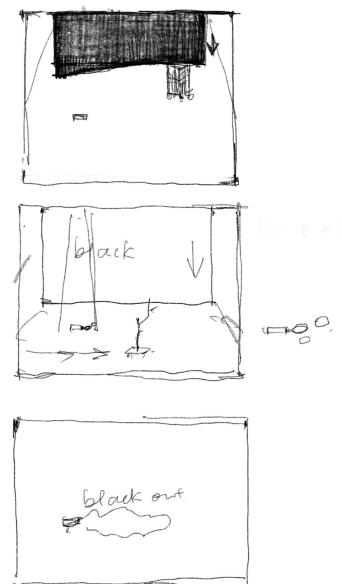
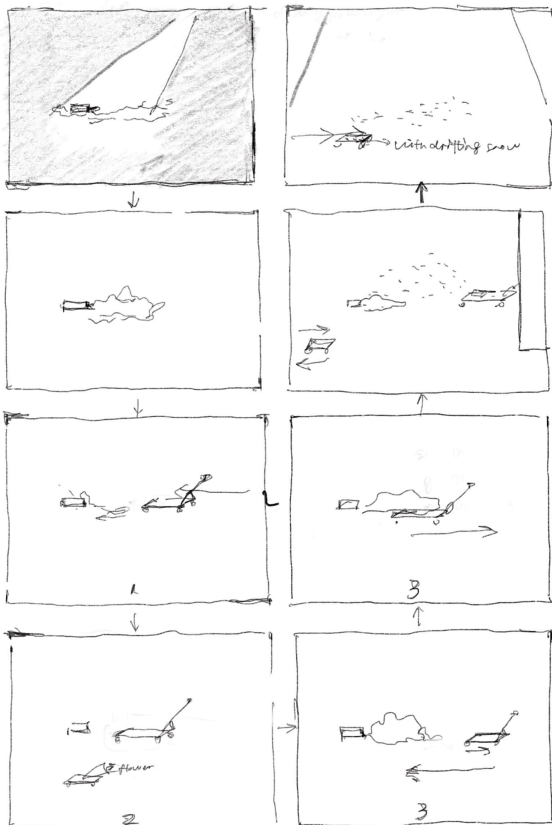
Character 1 (Jack): The Cloud(The most unruly presence in the theater—capricious, even rebellious, disappearing and reappearing at will. Once just an old haze machine for ambiance, now with a mind of its own.)

Character 2 (Florence): The Trolley(A slow, lumbering old thing with limited mobility. It harbors a quiet fondness for the elusive cloud, always trying to guide it backstage—but their timing never quite aligns.)

Character 3 (Ray): The Snow Machine on the Trolley(An accidental encounter between snow and cloud—an unintended consequence.)

Character 4 (Sonia & Jungyun): The Small Platform(A dutiful but flustered stagehand, scurrying about like an intern, hauling odd props from the wings, perpetually a step behind.)

Character 5 (Florence): The cage (The last thing that should be onstage—always in the way, blocking light and movement. It doesn't know whether to advance or retreat, like an actor who's forgotten their lines, causing one stage mishap after another.)



Sound Design Collaboration and Experiments records

Through multiple meetings and on-site experiments with the sound designer, we sought a way to make Theatre A—a forgotten space—re-emerge sonically with a fragment of its past memory: once home to an orchestra that ultimately faced disbandment due to their awful amateur performances. Our intention was to "rehearse" this history through sound, embedding it within the theatre's overall mechanism, thereby creating the distinctive sonic language of the "Failed Orchestra."

BOLERO MAURICE RAVEL

Tempo di Bolero moderato assai

FLUTES
2 Grandes Flûtes
Petites Flûtes

HAUTOIS
1 Hautbois
Hautb. Fagot
Cor Anglais

CLARINETTES
1 Clar. en Si b.
2 Clar. en Si.
Cl. basse en Si b.

BASSONS
2 Bassons
Contrebasson

3 SAXOPHONES
Saxophone en Fa
Ténor en Si b.
Basson

4 CORs en fa

TROMPETTES
3 Tromp. en Si
Petite Tromp. en Ré

3 TROMBONES

TUBA

2 TAMBOURS
3 CYMBALES
TACETM

Fl.
Tamb.
115 voix

Fl.
Cors
Tromp.
Tamb.

1^{re} V^{ms}
2^{de} V^{ms}
Altos
Violon

Handwritten notes: "first sentence" (top right), "6 speakers x4" (left), "Stage" and "audience seats" (diagram), "move this instrument by a few bars" (Tromp. part).

Our initial approach was based on randomness and improvisation. However, we quickly realized that this method failed to clearly communicate to the audience that the sound itself was wrong. It merely produced an abstract atmosphere, lacking the sense of kicking the point. Ultimately, we shifted to a more recognizable direction: adapting a well-known classical piece familiar to the audience, so they could immediately sense where things were wrong. This pivotal idea was proposed by the sound designer—we chose to adapt Ravel's *Boléro*. Its repetitive, layered structure

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Change the instrument to a classic synthesizer sound

Through meeting with sound designer.

1. Two instruments are clashing in the two channels - try moving one of the phrases slightly earlier

2. One instrument fails to reach the pitch, creating a break - a sense of waiting and suspense.

Follow out

Great a sense of suspense.

and its perpetual build-up toward an unresolved climax closely aligned with our theatrical understanding of time and rehearsal mechanics.

By systematically “breaking” the piece—introducing deliberate wrong notes, disrupted or missing rhythms, sudden phrase cut-offs, detuned instruments, and delayed or early phrase entries, we aimed to construct a sense of structural imbalance while maintaining the audience’s ability to recognize the melody.

Beyond melodic and rhythmic deconstruction, we focused our experiments on the theatre’s sound system itself: for example, creating a surround effect with the snare drum, incorporating occasional glitches, stutters, or delays between channels. This “faulty” sound design echoed the physical incompleteness of the theatre machine itself. The degradation of sound was thus not only a musical expression but also a synchronized disintegration of the theatre’s “body.” We produced three versions during the adaptation process. The first version was overtly flawed, like an amateur orchestra with obvious wrong notes and chaotic rhythm—too provocative and direct, mismatching the subtlety needed to reflect the flawed rehearsal and performance rhythm. Such a blatant error was too obvious; the errors and deviations needed to be subtle. Just like everything is wrong in a dream, yet still somehow makes sense.

In the second version, we experimented with subtler modifications: changes in instrumentation, missing notes, or the unexpected disappearance of instruments that should be present. Studio sessions and spontaneous experimentation fostered a tacit understanding between Zhao and me in making these decisions—such as a trumpet failing to reach pitch in the software, adjusting volume dynamics between two instruments to create a sense of conflict. using vintage synthesizer tones.

This second version created an atmosphere that felt simultaneously nostalgic and strange, like a “failed future” emerging from the past. Since this section cannot be fully rehearsed, we needed to anticipate certain elements, but the intention was key—for example, evoking “suspense in waiting,” the manner in which this movement closes, and pre-empting the duration of rehearsal and the performance rhythm.



Director's Notes: before last round rehearsal 4.15

Rhythm as a Compositional Mechanism

In the final week of rehearsals, I attempted to identify three different modes of rhythm to deepen the connections between Scenes 5–8, refining the midsection of the performance through a more holistic approach. Rhythm, in this sense, is not only a perceptual tool for grasping the overall flow, but also a structural element that responds to the narrative, form, and conceptual framework. Rhythm here refers to a sensorial organization of movement trajectories and the soundscape produced by those actions—something more than mere pace or tempo. It is an organic arrangement of presence and perception.

In Scene 5, what emerges is a pure form of aberration—movements appear in a completely random way. Through an absence of recognizable logic in their actions, a latent melody begins to form. These unconscious falls or collapses derive entirely from everyday experience, appropriated from a familiar context for the audience, drawing them into the night of Theater A.

Scene 6 (setup) attempts to establish a kind of premeditated failure. In this phase, all object movements are tentative: the flight case moves forward steadily and moderately. All contacts are gentle, and all failures arise from the objects' inability to precisely control their bodies. It is their first appearance on stage, and a palpable tension lingers. While gaps or ruptures in rhythm are minimal at this stage, a false sense of smoothness is maintained. Actually, minor collisions cause subtle misalignments, making the overall rhythm difficult to synchronize.

Scene 7 ("Show Time") pushes the content into a realm of farce. You can't quite tell what's wrong—everything seems to go on as usual. Yet just as the loop begins to resemble a harmonious ensemble, an outside intruder suddenly enters and the world constructed by the stage collapses in an instant. This violent rupture points to the loss of control within the theater itself—an intentional failure of narrative structure.

In Scene 8, a state of extreme dissonance is sought. After the intervention from outside, the theatre attempts to recover its rhythm but fails to find an anchor point. It experiments with irregular pauses, delays, and repetitions, ultimately leading into a prolonged stillness. The intention of the objects becomes unreadable; their movement trajectory, unpredictable. Here, the absence of sound is a deliberate choice: the sounds of the objects are distilled and purified at the auditory level. As the stage gradually gives up—losing its rhythm—might the audience begin to enter the theater's subconscious?

Throughout this creative process, rhythm became more than a tool for organizing stage actions—it evolved into a dramaturgical insight. By through the Philosophy of utilizing Rhythm, we almost there !

Scene 5

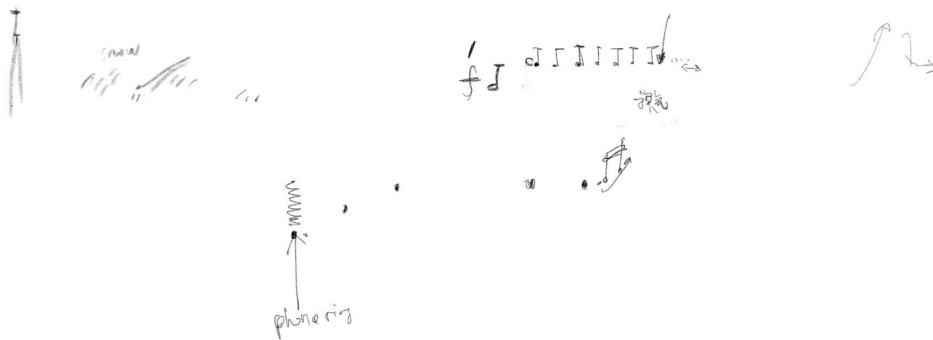
A Random pace.



Scene 6



A breath.





Director's note5.30

The story of Theater A is not yet over, it will continue to unfold in time, under different lights, in future spaces yet to be built.