

SONG DONG

DAD AND MUM, DON'T WORRY ABOUT US, WE ARE ALL WELL

5 JANUARY - 30 MARCH 2013

Family Member Photo Studio (1998), c-type photograph. Courtesy of the artist, PACE Beijing

In 1998, Beijing began a new round of demolition and construction, preparing the entire city for the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. Many families were forced to move to the suburbs, leaving their generations-old houses behind. Many now live in large apartment blocks that have contributed to the breakdown of former family and neighbour relations. The family is the basic unit of society. It is the centre of our lives. That same year, I shot videos in 12 different locations: at my home in Xi Si Hutong; in courtyards; in front of the yards' gates; in hutongs; at Ping An Street, which was undergoing extensive reconstruction; beside Hou Hai; around the Jingshan Tourist Spot; in front of Tiananmen Square; in front of the White Dagoba Temple, which was also undergoing renovation; and near the Second Ring Road, around residential buildings (where my sister and my parents lived). I also made a video of myself and my family members (my father, mother, sister, brother-in-law, niece, and wife) waiting to have our photo taken. The videos were strung together and then projected life size and displayed as a backdrop in the style of a commercial photography studio. In this interactive work the gallery viewer is invited to select a family member of his or her own choosing. The viewer could then stand in front of the family member's projected image. Two figures, the image of the gallery viewer and the family member overlap and become a new person. When this work was first presented I took still pictures of the viewers on site, at no charge, and mailed the photos to them afterwards. In this way, the audience began a communication with my family and became a member of my extended family. There were over 100 participants at that time, which increased the members of my extended family from seven to over 100. My direct family is composed of three different groupings of families: a four-person family made up of my father, mother, sister, and me; a three-person family made up of my sister, her husband, and their daughter; and a two-person family made up of my wife and me. Through this generative process my extended family could become a non-kindred four-person, three-person, and two-person family. With the development and continuation of this project, there will be more people from different countries and regions who will join my extended family. It will gradually grow to become one of the biggest families in the world.

Twelve years later in 2011, both of my parents have passed away. But they are still with us through works like this one. My father died in 2002 when my wife was pregnant with my daughter. He knew that I was going to have my first baby and it saddens me that he wasn't there to meet her. On the eve of Chinese New Year 2011, my parents reunited with the extended family through Family Member Photo Studio. The eight of us shot a family portrait together. The number of the members in this family portrait will grow again when my daughter and my sister's daughter have partners and children of their own.

Father and Son with my Daughter (1998/2010), single channel video (no sound). Courtesy of the artist, PACE Beijing.

This work grew out of *Images of Father and Son Together* created in 1998. After *Touching My Father*, my father agreed to appear together with me in another video. But he had one request, which was for me to cut my long hair. I was happy to do so. The image of me with short hair showed up again in *Family Member Photo Studio*. My father passed away in August 2002, before my daughter Song Errui was born in January 2003. They knew of each other but never got to meet. This was both my father's and my daughter's regret. It was through *Images of Father and Son Together*, which has never been shown before, that they had the opportunity to "meet" each other. My daughter moved between the images of my father and me, her face touching ours. It was exactly like what I did before in *Father and Son*. She witnessed her father's and grandfather's faces together with her own face in the mirror, turning into a new person. The work presents three different generations. Our regret has been compensated by art. My father and I are connected again. Life continues through our bloodline.

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Listening to My Parents Talk About How I Was Born (2001), single-channel video projection.
Courtesy of the artist, PACE Beijing.

I was born in December 1966. It was during the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. I was curious about the circumstances and situation around my birth. It is a unique bond between my elderly parents and myself as an adult. I invited both my parents to talk about how I was born. Sitting in the pavilion in front of our house, they shared their thoughts. During the conversation, the images of my birth popped up in all of our minds. I recorded the conversation with a video camera, projecting it on the wall. The projected figures of my parents were life size. I stood in between them, naked, trying to merge my body with that of my parents'. I would walk towards and enter the "body" of the one that was talking, overlapping my images with his or hers. I recorded this process again and projected it onto two columns, 31 inches in diameter and 138 inches tall. My parents' images each occupy one column. I would walk back and forth in the space between their bodies and the two columns. Through the work, I returned to my parents' bodies. I returned to the time when I was born. My parents and I experienced the continuity of our lives. Some of the stories my parents told were the following:

1. My grandmother wanted a boy. "Preferring males over females in order to carry on the family line" is a traditional belief. Before my parents gave birth to me, they already had my sister. My father thought one child was good, no matter if it was a boy or a girl. Since our family's financial situation was not good, it was difficult to raise two children. However, my grandmother still wanted a boy. As for my mother, since she was an only child herself, she wanted to have two kids so they could keep each other company. If it weren't for my Mum's insistence, I wouldn't be in the world and had the experiences I had.

2. I was born at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution. My mother said that there were red guards everywhere as it was during the time when they took public transportation for free across the country to exchange revolutionary ideas. There was no way to get on the public buses. When she felt very serious pain due to child labor, she started to walk by herself from our home located on Xi Xie Street. After walking for six bus stops, she arrived at the Beijing Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital in Qi He Lou. Father told me that my grandparents were forced to go back to their countryside home during the Cultural Revolution, so they were not there and he was working. There was no telephone at home thus no way to communicate. He did not know what happened until he got off work. He rushed to the hospital. I was born, weighing 8 jins and a half. My Mum said I was very strong and my eyes were open when I was born.

3. We stayed in the hospital for 11 days and took a taxi home. It was a very luxurious expense as my family was very poor. It showed how important I was to my parents.

Touching My Father (1997-2011), c-type photographs with single-channel video work (no sound).
Courtesy of the artist, PACE Beijing.

When I was young, my impressions of my father were taken from photographs; sometimes pictured alone, sometimes standing among a group of people. I was aware that he was always on business trips, while I was attending kindergarten. We hardly saw each other. During the late 1960s, my father was sent to Wu Qi Carder School in Hubei. (Carder Schools were set up by the Communist Party to "re-educate" citizens to transform their thinking to align with the ideology of the Cultural Revolution). He was gone for a long time. My mother once brought my sister and I to visit him. I did not know that he was denounced as a counter-revolutionary. I have a very blurred memory of the Wu Qi Carder School. All I can recall was the "scorching weather," "a dog named Xiao Huang," and "a big trench" we had to cross in order to watch outdoor movies. What was left in my memory about my father's appearance was a man wearing "the yellow uniform used during the war to resist U.S. aggression and aid South Korea" with "a face with a prickly beard." I knew that he had never

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joined the military but I still had a moment of fear. During that time, soldiers were symbols of veneration and dignity. I knew he loved me so much. While his beard was poking my face, I felt warmth, affection and pain. I seem to still be able to feel all these sensations today. One day in 1973, I saw my father walking towards me from the entrance of the *hutong*. I did not step forward to welcome him but turned around and ran home instead. I knew it was because of the double effect of happiness and fear. My father was finally home! Then there was my unlimited admiration for my father. I loved to listen to the stories he told me, to play with all kinds of wooden guns and knives that he made for me. I thought that there was nothing he could not make. I was trying so hard to imitate him. My father was the authority and my idol. But there was still a quality of fear within me, accompanied by strangeness and respect. I gradually grew up and my feeling towards my father greatly changed. I started to challenge what he said and started to make my own decisions. I realised that there was a very deep generation gap between us. I was still scared of him. I always knew that he was my father and he never lost his dignity as a father in front of me. Whenever I had disagreements or conflicts with him, I kept silent and “refused to confess to the enemy” as if I was the little hero from the Eighth Route Army. I was rebellious and passive aggressive. In 1996, I was thirty, an age when a man is supposed to have matured and have an established career. In Chinese culture, we have a term for this, “san shi er li.” I made a work entitled “san shi bu li,” which literally means “not being mature and established,” the opposite of “san shi er li.” I asked my mother about things that had happened every year since I was born. I wrote down these stories told to me by my mother and my own memories throughout those thirty years using Chinese calligraphy, accumulating a total of thirty pages. But I never asked my father about anything. I knew I was trying to do things my own way and to be special. But my father was still awe-inspiring to me. “Father guides son” is one of the three cardinal guides (the other two are “ruler guides subject” and “husband guides wife”) in the feudal family ethical code, which is still emphasised in China today. I also grew up in a tradition that believed in this. I went to Berlin in 1997. I was solitary and homesick in the midst of a strange language and cultural environment. I re-thought the communications I had had with my father. I started to realise that my father had his own reasons for what he did and said, which was, in many aspects, his truth. My respect for him was gradually restored. I wanted to express my love for him. I wanted to touch him many times. I understood this would be very difficult because there was a big gap between us. Finally, I came up with the idea of using video with the image of a hand that is “visible but not in a materialistic form.” I projected the video of my hand touching the air onto my father’s body. I used my “virtual hand” to touch my father. He accepted this “hand” and I experienced a complex feeling. It was very hard to explain and my father was experiencing a complex feeling as well. We did not have any conversations about it. But my “virtual hand” was breaching that invisible gap between us. I truly felt the power of, and am truly grateful for, art. In “touching my father,” we had built a bridge between the still deep generation gap. We began to try harder in our communication. We did not define each other by each other’s ideas anymore. We both had our own way of living. Although father still did not agree with my choices in many aspects, he told me, “You’ve grown up. My opinions are only suggestions. Your choices need to be your own.” While before he often used imperative terms such as “you should” or “you must not,” he started to change his vocabulary to “I suggest” or “I will keep my opinion to myself.” I was moved. I felt my father’s strength. *Touching My Father* became the most important event in my life. Although the work has never been shown before, it opened the door for Art to enter my family life, becoming the centre of our lives. It also turned into the lifeline that brought the relationship between my father and myself into a new era.

***Cut One Fen into Two Parts With My Mother* (1998), coin and c-type photography. Courtesy of the artist, PACE Beijing.**

My sister took this picture when I was 17. The photograph was the inspiration for this work. Although 1983 was already the fifth year after China implemented the Reform and Opening-UP policy, my family was still poor. I borrowed a camera from friends when the family was on a field trip to Tao Ran Ting Park. We rarely

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had the chance to take photos back then. Eating fruit was also a luxury. Mother bought some bananas, which she didn't eat in order to save them for us. When I was eating one, I tried to share a half with her. But she still refused. My sister captured the moment of me sharing the banana with my mother while she was resisting. It was one of the images that left the deepest impression on me. I developed the film myself. Although the quality of the picture was not good, it was the best proof of my mother's generation, who sacrificed themselves in order to give their children better lives. I did not really know what my mother's favorite food was, as she never told the truth about it. She was afraid that once she told us, we would save the good food for her. Instead, she was the one who always saved good things for us. We looked at the old family albums in 1998 and saw the picture again. Our family was not as poor then but my mother still would not spend an extra penny. The picture thus led to a discussion about "cutting one fen into two parts." A "fen" is the smallest unit in the RMB currency. When I was little, one fen could buy a piece of candy. To "cut one fen into two parts" is a metaphor for being frugal as a value system. During times when there was a great lack of material goods, "cutting one fen into two parts" was a guideline for strict household budgeting. During times of plenty, it is a concept for not wasting anything and being environmentally friendly. Believing in such a value system, my mother was having a hard life but I wanted to give her a better life. I said to her: "Mum, you don't need to cut one fen into two parts." Then I cut a real fen into two parts. I kept these two parts and cut another fen for Mum to keep. I told her: "Let's save them for 12 years and see what their value will be." Unfortunately, my mother passed away and was unable to wait for this 12-year cycle and I was not able to locate where she had put her half-cut fen. Today, one fen cannot buy anything. Here, I present my half-cut fen in a jewellery box with my mother's signature. Together with the photograph, the work is a memento to commemorate the value system constructed by my mother and me. It is "waste not."

Father and Son in the Ancestral Temple (1998), c-type photographs (series of seven), handwritten correspondence and photographs (series of twelve). Courtesy of the artist, PACE Beijing.

Before I went to elementary school I knew of the Working People's Cultural Palace near Tiananmen Square. I heard from my mother that she would always take my sister there to play. The Palace was especially lively on October 1st, the National Day. What I remembered most was the "Garden Party" and "Book Fair." I don't remember when, but I started to call the Working People's Cultural Palace the "Ancestral Temple." Then my father told me that this place indeed used to be called "Ancestral Temple." It was the place where the emperor would go to worship his ancestors. I became more and more interested in the place. I discovered that after the last emperor Pu Yi moved out of the Forbidden City, the temple lost its original function. I think of the "Ancestral Temple" as an important place that refers to the relationship between father and son. The father and son relationship is fairly simple in China. It is the refraction and reflection of hierarchical social relations, such as the supreme power structure, which has endured throughout our long history. I like to go there a lot. The character of the place has been changing through commercial and entertainment activities. I've seen scenes of collective social dance in front of the temple's main hall; I've seen car fairs and fashion shows there; I watched the opera project *Turandot*, directed by Zhang Yimou there; I've also seen contemporary art exhibitions in the temple, including one featuring German artists, such as Joseph Beuys. In 1990, I showed my painting *Kicking Shuttlecocks* in the "Chinese Oil Painting Exhibition," which was held in the temple. I don't remember any of the other works in the show anymore. I was cheated and sold the painting for only 600 yuan without keeping any photo documentation. Later on, I always wanted to do a project about the relationship between father and son at the Ancestral Temple. But the rental fee was too expensive. Then one day in 1998, the curator Leng Lin gave me a call and invited me to participate in a contemporary art exhibition titled *This is Me* at the Ancestral Temple. I figured that it was the opportunity to realise my idea. After the work was finished and ready to be shown, the government refused to open the door of the Temple. Everyone, including me, waited outside in the snow for hours until dark but the exhibition still did not take

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place. Professor Wu Hung from the Smart Museum of Art in Chicago heard about the story, and invited me to participate in an exhibition he curated titled *Canceled: Exhibiting Experimental Art in China*. I was aware that I could not move the architecture of the Ancestral Temple to Chicago. I made a replica of the structure with pillars instead. The work was entitled *Father and Son in the Ancestral Temple*. It was the first and only time that the work had been shown to the public. The image of my father and I were printed on the cover of the catalogue. He was very happy and the artworks made him feel rewarded. Father framed the poster of the exhibition with our portraits and hung it in his living room.

1. I recorded my father reciting his resume on video and I recited mine. We actually took turns speaking but it sounded like we were speaking at the same time from the mouth of one person. The resumes reported the same type of information. For example, Father: "I was born in Kui De Su Village, Jian Ping county, Liaoning Province on October 8, 1936." Song: "I was born in Beijing on December 6, 1966," etc.

2. I projected the video on my face to create a "new person" that did not look like my father or me. And then I recorded this "new person" on video.

3. I projected the images of my father, the new person, and myself onto the three pillars inside the Beijing Imperial Ancestral Temple. The video showed my father and I reciting each other's resumes.

Note: The resumes shown on the wall were hand written by my father and myself.

Father and Son Face to Face with a Mirror (2001), two channel video projection (no sound).
Courtesy of the artist, PACE Beijing.

Father and I stood face to face. There was a double-sided reflective plastic sheet between us. We each saw our own images on the plastic. Then we set it on fire, and looked at each other's images as they burned away. When the sheet burned down, we were truly face to face. I videotaped the process from both sides and then projected them onto two translucent mirrors (both 59 inches in diameter). When I, on one side of the plastic sheet, and my father, on the other side, were looking at each other burning, the images of my father and me reflected in the plastic were facing their own images on the wall, watching themselves burn.

Chinese Medicine Healing Story (2004), three-channel video and two heads sculptures (no sound).
Courtesy of the artist, PACE Beijing.

In 1976, an unexpected accident happened that affected my face and created an unforgettable memory. I was ten years old. There is "pain, love, beauty, and dignity" in this memory. When I grew up, there were always some images repeatedly showing up in my mind: in order to avoid a puddle on the ground, I jumped over it, which caused me to be hit by a swing. My mother and father took me to the hospital on their bicycles. The right side of my face was badly swollen. Friends and classmates laughed at me. Then there was the magical Chinese medicine. It seems that I lost my memory the moment I was hit. It was so quiet. But this experience has turned into a life-long memory, which is imprinted on my heart. Traditional Chinese medicine not only cured both my body and spirit, but also conveyed my parents' love. Like a mirror, it reflects the memory which trickles down deep into my heart. After my father passed away, my mother always mentioned this accident. If the accident and the subsequent Chinese medicine healing experience had not happened, I would not be who I am. It was the impetus for a very important connection between my parents and myself. It was also the first lesson that helped me to understand the value of the phrase "pain, love, beauty, and dignity." In honor of this memory, I decided to make a work about it. First, I interviewed my mother. Then I made a sculpture of my

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head with the wound. Then, I rode a bicycle around Beijing, carrying the head with me, to experience what my parents went through in order to find a good doctor and the right medicine for the swelling. I shot video of the bike rides and then rerecorded the images reflected in liquid Chinese medicine. The images waver when the liquid medicine ripples, silently. Interview conducted by Song Dong with his mother about the Chinese medicine healing story, Summer 2004.

Song: I want to know some more details of my being hit by a swing when I was little. The experience left me with a very strong impression. I can always recall part of the experience, such as the Chinese medicine, and the unconditional love you and dad had for me.

Mum: It hit you right here. The right side. In 1976, after the fall of the Gang of Four, I brought you and your sister to the Temple of Heaven for the first time as there was a garden party there.

Song: Oh? We had never been there before? **Mum:** No. Never. When we got there, there was a performance and the theme was about the fall of the Gang of Four.

Song: Oh. I see.

Mum: Neither of you wanted to stay to watch the performance. You became impatient so we left. You wanted to go to the Children's Park instead. There were some very simple playthings for children, such as swings and slides. You liked the swing and started to play with it.

Song: Okay.

Mum: We were about to go home. When you were almost done, the accident happened. It was when we were waiting for you to get off the swing.

Song: Yes.

Mum: There was a water puddle on the ground and you did not want to get your shoes wet.

Song: Yes. There was a puddle. I can still remember this part. I was trying to jump over it. But I don't remember any of the rest.

Mum: Then it turned into a catastrophe. You rolled around on the ground. And then...

Song: What happened? Did I run into other kids? Or?

Mum: When you were coming down from the swing, another kid was eager to get on. He did not pay attention to see if you were out of the way. He pushed the swing when you were still in its path. Then, you were covered in blood. We took you to the clinic at the park right away. They cleaned the wound a little and transferred you to the Friendship Hospital as an emergency case. After we got there, the doctor gave you an overall checkup and said: "You were very lucky. If it had hit your nose, then your nose would be gone; if it had hit your eyes, then you would be blind. It hit just a little towards the right of your face. Right here. If you had turned your head back, it would have hit your temple and you would be dead." Yes, something like that.

Song: So I was actually lucky.

Mum: Yeah.

Song: I see.

Mum: You were very luck. But finally...

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Song: I was okay even after the X-ray examination, right?

Mum: The doctors thought you were fine. So they gave us some anti-inflammatory medicine and let us go home. But when we got home, your face started to swell. The swelling was so bad that your right eye turned into a little slit. You could not go to school for a long time. We went back to the Friendship Hospital. The doctor decided to try physical therapy. After the treatment, your muscles were getting better however the bone was still protruding. Very badly. The swelling was this big. Yes, about this big. Then you weren't able to continue doing your homework, as you could barely see. The swelling blinded your sight and you had to adjust yourself into a unique angle in order to read. You actually retain this posture until today. And you were afraid to go to school. Before that, you would always wait there happily in the morning to go to school. But you did not want us to worry either. You would still go to school. But your father, your sister, and I were very anxious about your situation.

Song: I was very embarrassed. When I was at school, my classmates, everybody was making fun of my face. They thought that I looked like a freak, like someone from the "Story of the Journey to the West" (Xi You Ji). That was, of course, why I did not want to go school. Then my teacher changed my seat, putting me in the last row. Because I told my teacher...

Mum: Because you...

Song: I would like to sit at the back. Yes.

Mum: We were so worried about your face. Your dad kept talking about the problem with his co-workers and I was talking to my co-workers. We took you to so many different places for treatments and medicines. Your aunt and your uncle were really worried too. But finally, it was through your aunt's connection, we found this doctor. He was an old man living near the Beijing Railway Station. We went. It was very hard to make an appointment with him. He only saw five patients every day. It was almost impossible. The rumor was that some people, who even waited in line from 10 p.m. the night before could not get appointments. We went there at 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning. Finally we got to see him. The old man was a very nice gentleman in his eighties. He told us: "I am going to give you some herbs and medicines, some for oral use, some just to put on your skin. I cannot guarantee that these treatments will work but you can at least have a try." The ones that you needed to take by mouth took a long time to work. The other herbs were applied to your face. I ground them and soaked them in sesame oil, then spread the oil on your skin directly. The herbs were cheap. I remember they cost something like two mao and seven fen. Yes. That was right. But two mao and seven fen was still a lot of money back then. The herbs had to be applied every night. Then the sesame oil became a problem for us.

Song: Why did we need to use sesame oil? That was a kind of binder?

Mum: Yes. The herbs needed a binder otherwise the herbs would not be effective.

Song: So the doctor said that we must use sesame oil as the binder. Right?

Mum: Yes, yes, yes.

Song: Ok.

Mum: Yeah. We had to use that. But there was a great lack of sesame oil. We did not have any. Your dad was very anxious.

Song: I remember a little bit about that. Not just sesame oil, but we had to use coupons for any oil we used to cook at home.

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Mum: Yes.

Song: Each family only got a very limited quantity.

Mum: About half a jin 2 for each family. Yes, half a jin.

Song: That was barely enough for cooking.

Mum: And that was just peanut oil.

Song: How about sesame oil? How much did we have?

Mum: Only two liangs. 3 How much is two liangs? Just a tiny little bit. It was only enough for three doses of the herb applications.

Song: Only three times?

Mum: That was why we were so worried. At the beginning, my co-workers gave us theirs. So did your aunt's. But we could not always take other people's oil. Finally, your dad found some in the villages in the countryside. Anyway, he was very upset with me about this. Whatever you asked him, he would be angry.

Song: I see.

Mum: He blamed me and thought that I was not taking care of you well enough. Yeah. Later on, a little less than a week actually, the protruded bone started to get better and calmed down. Very strangely. In terms of the physical therapy you had before, the more treatments you got, the more swollen the bone got. It looked like a little hill on your face.

Song: Yeah. I remembered asking dad about this when he was still alive. He told me that after applying the medicine, the bone stopped getting bigger. Before that, it grew a little bigger every day. It felt like endless swelling...the medicine stopped the continuous swelling of the bone, then gradually calmed it down. It took about two months to completely heal it.

Mum: Yes, yes, yes. More or less. We did not give up. We took you to see the old doctor again and we did not need to make an appointment this time. He said if the medicine was working, then we should keep using it. He did not brag about the result at all. We continued using the medicine and it was cured.

Song: What I remembered the most was if there were no such medicine or no care from you and dad, I would have turned into a very ugly person. It would have also affected my personality, behavior, and lots of other things about me even today.

Mum: Absolutely.

Song: The psychological effects it created were so serious. It was not just about the physical appearance.

Mum: Yes.

Song: Whenever I thought about this accident, I would think of you or dad bringing me to see doctors on your bikes. I only remembered these things and I talked about this with dad as well. It was in the summertime, you would wrap my head with a scarf or handkerchief. Anyway...

Mum: (Smile) Yes, just like that. (With gestures) The sun was strong and the wind was blowing. I did not want your little face to get burned. Yeah. (Smile.)

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Song: Was I on the platform tricycle? And then? I don't remember much. I grew up. Especially after I had my child, I started to understand more. When I was younger, I wondered why you had such tanned skin. Now I know it was because of me. You would not let me get too much sun but you got so burned yourself. This was love. I also remember once dad put me in a store in the wintertime and left. After I grew up, I asked once about what was going on then. He told me that he went to get me some sesame seed cakes. I did not even remember eating it that time...

Mum: He left you in the store because he was afraid that you were getting too cold outside. It was a lot warmer inside.

Song: He took me with him every day and left me there. Then he went to get sesame seed cakes. They were about five fen each, right? Or three fen maybe?

Mum: Sesame seed cakes were five fen. Baked wheat cakes were three.

Song: I see. And then what happened?

Mum: He just bought one? And saved it all for you?

Song: Yeah. He only bought one for me. He did not eat any of it.

Mum: (Bitter smile) He did not have money. He did not have money...

Song: So, I always think about these things. How many sacrifices dad and you had made. That was love, your love for your children. Whenever I think about it, I can feel the love. Whenever I think about Chinese medicine, I think about that experience. Dad also told me a lot more details. I feel like my memories do not match exactly what happened back then. Now dad has passed away.

Mum: (Sigh.)

Song: I always remember the sesame seed cake. The one that dad did not get to eat.

Mum: Your dad did not have money...(Sad and lonely expression) No money, no money...(Her voice choked with sobs.)

Song: But he still bought me one.

Mum: We would not eat them ourselves. We felt that you were...you were sick. The wound on your face was a sore point for us and he was also worried about you being hungry, being cold, being...

Song: Sometimes, I cherish this experience. Without it, we would not be able to sit here talking about it. I think the experience is like a container for memory. It is one of the elements that make up my life, constructing my spirit. If I had not gotten hit, then I would not try to remember these childhood stories, such as the stories between you and me.

Mum: You are a good boy, a good guy.

Song: Mothers always think that their children are the best.

Mum: We were so relieved when you were cured. I'm not sure if the doctor is still alive today.

Song: I am sure he is.

Mum: (Smile.)

Song: Maybe he is in his eighties. I don't even know his name although we have been talking about him a lot today. But I feel he will always be alive. Yes, just like this experience, which will be with me for the rest of my life.

Mum: Yes...I think so.

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4A CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ASIAN ART

5 JANUARY – 30 MARCH 2013

WASTE NOT

CARRIAGEWORKS

5 JANUARY – 17 MARCH 2013