

植物眼中的台北

PLANT'S-EYE VIEWS OF TAIPEI

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1 如果植物有眼睛，它会怎样去看一座城市？

植物也是城市居民中的一份子，它们以刻意或不经意的形态存在于城市环境之中。除了显而易见的绿化功能，植物对城市机能也有关键性的贡献，例如净化空气、缓解城市热岛效应等。此外，对城市居民而言，植物也可能是他们心灵的慰藉。然而，城市中的植物如同人类一样，也有各自的生命历程，有些植物可能来自远方，最终成为城市的行道树或观赏型植栽；有些则可能是不起眼的“杂草”，它们在水泥丛林的夹缝中突破困境、奋力求存。在快速发展的现代城市中，植物可能是旁观者，也可能是参与者，它们会利用、适应和改变我们所熟悉的城市环境。

《植物眼中的台北》是2018台北双年展的一件参展作品（图1）^①。为了响应双年展“后自然”的主题，该作品试图从城市植物的角度来反视城市：如果“自然”代表着人类对生物环境的想象与建构，那么“后自然”则代表着对这一单向投射与凝视的脱离，以及我们对所谓的“自然”框架的反视与批判。《植物眼中的台北》的素材源自2018年夏季在宝藏岩国际艺术村举办的一场国际工作坊。在两位参展人以及数位生态学与摄影专家的指导下，来自亚太地区不同国家的大学生自行选择“化身”为一种植物物种，以植物生理结构与栖息地环境为切入点，探索各种植物眼中的台北。我们设想在人工化日益加剧的环境当中，由于气候变迁与热岛效应的催化，城市中的植物开始突变，并产生了视觉。通过植物的眼睛，我们可以以一种有别于人类视野的视角来感知这个世界。

摘要

《植物眼中的台北》是2018台北双年展中的一个装置作品，其素材源自2018年夏季于台北市举办的国际工作坊。在两位参展人以及数位生态学家与摄影专家的指导下，来自亚太地区不同国家的大学生在工作坊中分别将自己想象为一种特定的植物。通过研究植物的生理机能，学员们可以更好地了解这些植物的生理特征、生命历程，以及环境适应性。通过“化身”为植物，他们可以从崭新的视角观察台北市——一个由植物群落和人类社区共同塑造的城市。该装置最终在台北市立美术馆展出，包括支架、示意图，以及相关影像成果。这一作品旨在探索从植物视角观察城市的不同方式，并传达植物“拟人化”、城市结构“植物化”，以及“向光性”的概念。

关键词

植物视觉；拟人化；植物化；向光性；台北

ABSTRACT

The installation of “Plant’s-Eye Views of Taipei” is the result of an international workshop that took place in Taipei in summer 2018, organized as part of the 2018 Taipei Biennial. Under the direction of two participating artists, and with the help from ecologists and videographers, university students from the Asia-Pacific region each imagined themselves as a particular plant. Students began by examining the physiology of selected plants to better understand their characteristics and life histories, as well as their adaptive features and ecosystem behaviors. In viewing themselves as plants, students were able to see Taipei through a new lens as a place co-produced by the city’s urban flora and human communities. The installation including scaffolds, sketches, and films was exhibited at the Taipei Fine Arts Museum to explore different ways through which plants view the city, as well as notions of anthropomorphism, phytomorphism, and phototropism.

KEY WORDS

Plant’s-Eye View; Anthropomorphism; Phytomorphism; Phototropism; Taipei

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- ② 展览影片预告片片地址：<https://youtu.be/aMOvfUjMTHY>。



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1. 《植物眼中的台北》为2018台北双年展参展作品。作为该装置的主要组成部分，支架和示意图在美术馆的空间中形成了一种对话。
2. 学员们在工作坊中深入了解台北市的城市生态及植物特性。
3. 通过对植物进行研究和绘图，学员们一个个“化身”为不同的物种。
4. 影像拍摄作业让学员们得以观察并纪录“植物眼中的台北”。

1. "Plant's-Eye Views of Taipei" was exhibited at the 2018 Taipei Biennial. There was a dialogue between two primary components of the installation — scaffolds and sketches in the exhibition space at Taipei Fine Arts Museum.
2. Participants in the international workshop explored Taipei's urban ecology and its flora.
3. By studying and drawing of the plants, participants transformed into different plant species.
4. The film exercise provided an opportunity for participants to observe and document a plant's-eye view of Taipei.

2 国际工作坊：宝藏岩×公馆

工作坊首日，在植物与生态专家的带领下，学员们在宝藏岩与公馆地带对台北市边缘地区进行生态和植物方面的探索（图2）。在了解台北盆地历史的同时，学员可自行选择一种植物物种，深入观察其栖息地环境及其与城市之间的互动。回到工作坊后，学员对各自所选的植物物种进行资料收集与研究，针对其生理特征、栖息地和生命历程，做深入的了解与记录，以作为接下来影片制作的依据。次日上午，通过简短的视觉设计课程，学员即可着手研究并记录植物的特征及其栖息地特性。之后，根据对每种植物的了解，学员开始探索植物可能的视觉特征与凝视的方式与角度，并借此开始研究影像纪录的概念。

工作坊接下来的重点是影像纪录，第三天上午的影像纪录课程为学员讲授基本的拍摄与剪辑技巧，以帮助他们进行“植物视觉”的

影像纪录。在完成一天半的拍摄工作后，学员于隔天晚上进行简短的初步成果分享，并由讲师与摄影专家进行讲评与指导。工作坊的最后两天则用于成果的制作与呈现，包括过程中的植物绘图以及影片剪辑（图3、4）^②。成果展示当天有相关专家、学者、艺术工作者以及本次双年展的策划人员参与讲评。

3 展场装置：支架×示意图

展场装置分为两部分：支架与示意图。前者是立体的，后者是平面的。支架试图呈现不同的植物视角，其结构上的每个屏幕分别代表一种植物，即每一位学员的作品；示意图所要呈现的则是学员对不同植物的图绘，以及这些植物在城市中的生长栖息环境（图5~7）。

首先，对应“植物眼中的台北”概念中所代表的植物在城市环境



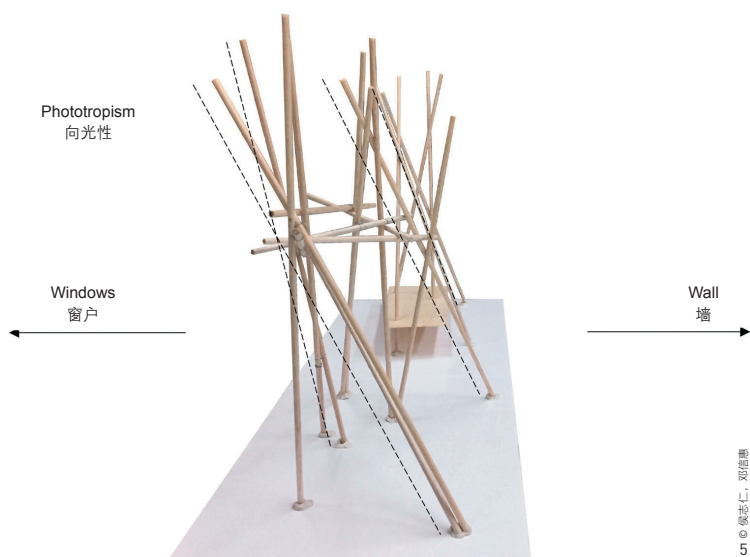
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中的“拟人化”，支架的设计亦试图同时呈现城市结构可能的“植物化”，包括结构体的“向光性”——这体现为该装置在展览空间中面对一整面落地窗的位置朝向。此外，通过利用镀锌钢管与活扣组合成不规则但却有规律的结构，加上搭配的大小屏幕，支架一方面展示了不同植物的视觉与视角，另一方面则试图呈现有异于人为理性结构的“生物复杂性”。示意图的内容在展示不同植物图绘的同时，也呈现出田野工作场域的都市肌理与植物生长环境。经过斜角处理的不规则但有规律的背板也隐喻了城市环境中不同的视角与空间转折（图8~10）。

随着三座支架的搭建以及对影片的分析，我们发觉工作坊记录的植物观点主要可分为三种类型：漠视、撞视，以及窥视。

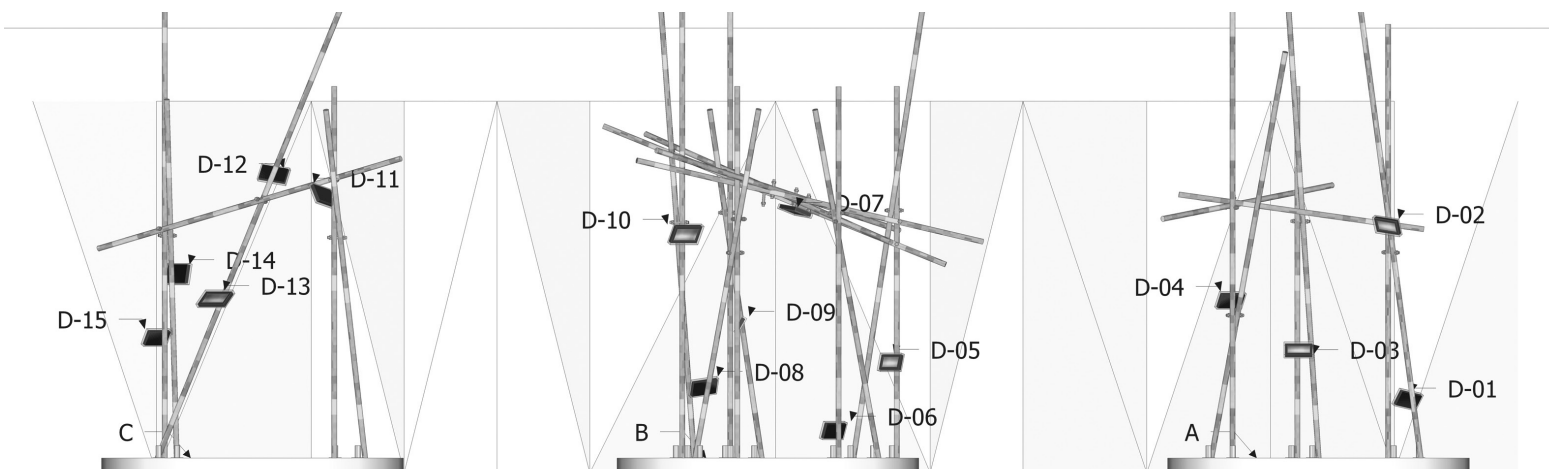
在学员们“化身”为各种植物所拍摄影片中，我们发现了一个有趣的现象，这一现象与工作坊最初的出发点有很大的落差。我们原本期待能够从植物的眼中看见城市的不同面貌，但模拟为植物的学员们却大都着眼于植物本身的求生本能。在这些影片中，它们对所谓的“城市”几乎不予理睬，我们像是被植物背叛了一般，看不到“我们”原本想象中的“城市”。因此，我们将这一类影片归为“漠视”（图11）。

在另一组影片中，我们则看到一种似乎相反的现象——影片反映了植物在城市中的另一种境遇，即在人造的城市环境中，植物必定会与城市居民产生直接的接触，植物的出现（与消失）也多由人类行为造成，这时就会出现不同的“撞视”，即植物所看到的城市景象是被迫的、没有选择的，甚至是被暴力胁迫的（图12）。有些植物因此结束了它们的生命，但也有些植物则在这个过程中完成了适应与繁殖，甚至扩散与反扑。

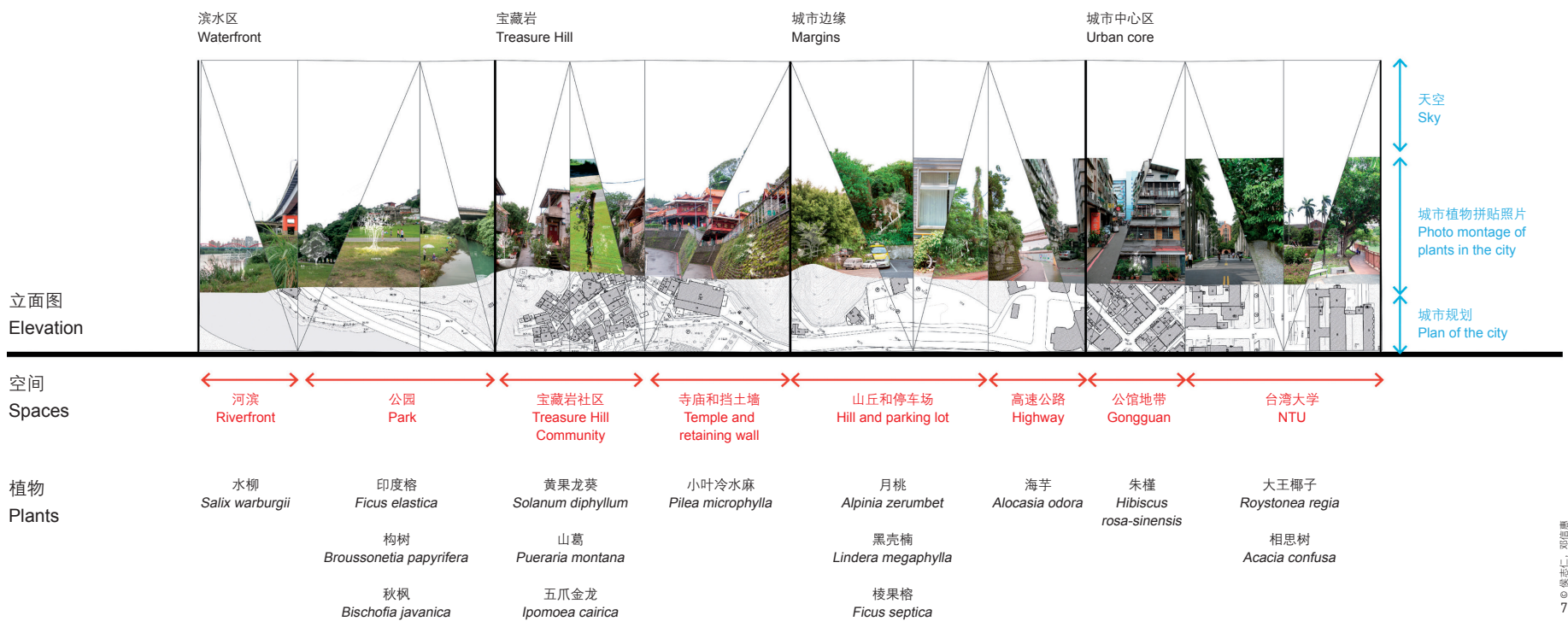
在最后一组影片中出现了另一个有趣的现象：由于植物生长环境与位置的特殊性，透过植物，我们可以看到在城市环境中通常不会刻意去观察的角落与景象：透过它们，我们能够看到自身，但却是通过一种类似“窥视”的方式，仿佛是从街角的监控摄像头中看到了我们自己的身影，而植物的眼睛就像藏在城市中的针孔摄影机（图13）。

这三组影像代表了我们对《植物眼中的台北》的三个观察与诠释。当然，它们并不代表所有的可能性，根据植物不同的特性和生长环境，植物眼中的台北必然也会展现出其他的面貌，通过不同的视角与观点，也自然会有更多的观察与诠释。《植物眼中的台北》这件作品（包括这三组影片）代表着一个开始，它让我们重新看待城市内的生物以及我们与城市本身。从植物的眼中看城市，代表着一种视线与观点的翻转。跳脱出以人为中心的视野，通过植物之眼看台北，事实上也模糊了生物、自然与非自然之间的界线。在凝视与被凝视的过程中，我们也进入了“自然”与“后自然”之间的界域。LAF

5. 支架呈现出一种向光性结构。
 6. 三座支架与15个屏幕的摆放图
 7. 拼贴示意图呈现了植物图绘以及这些植物在城市中的生长栖息环境。
5. The scaffolds reflect a structure of phototropism.
 6. Layouts of 3 scaffolds and 15 screens
 7. The sketches present plant illustrations within the context of their habitats and the urban environment.



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① Jeffrey Hou and Dorothy Tang are participating artists and workshop leaders of "Plant's-Eye Views of Taipei" exhibition. Chi-Tung Huang and Harley S. Pan are workshop co-instructors. Xiaomeng An, Baiyu Chen, Hsin Cheng Chien, Juliana Hom, Chun Sing Hui, Pui Ling Ip, Michelle Lam, Eva Lin, Sam Lin, Sharon Lin, Sammy Sin, I. Hsiang Wang, Carmen Yuen, Shiyue Zhang, and Jingyi Zhou are workshop participants. Huasun Chang, Chingwen Cheng, Serena Chou, Che Lin, and Zo Lin are workshop commentators. Detail design was finished by Rio Conception — Cheng-Chuan Shieh and Ya-Shan Yin. Harley S. Pan worked as a video producer, and scaffold construction is installed by Green Comfort Health Architecture (GCHA).

② A short trailer of films from the exhibition can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/aM0vfUjMTHY>.

1 If Plants Had Vision, How Would They View the City?

Plants are also inhabitants of the city. They occupy urban spaces and systems in manners that are both intended and unintended. More than just green ornaments, plants contribute to the functioning of a city through photosynthesis and the reduction of heat island effect. For many urban residents, plants may also play a spiritual and cultural role in everyday life. However, urban plants, like human settlers, also have life histories of their own. Some plants may come from afar and become street trees or ornamental plants in cities. Others may be perceived as weeds, surviving in the cracks of concrete jungles. In a fast-paced city of today, plants may be bystanders or participants, utilizing, adapting to, and shaping the everyday urban environments.

"Plant's-Eye Views of Taipei" was exhibited at the 2018 Taipei Biennial (Fig. 1)^①. In response to the Biennial's theme of "post-nature," this project attempted to revisit the city from the perspective of urban plants: if "nature" represents human imagination and an anthropocentric view of the biological environment, "post-nature" represents a departure from a unidirectional gaze and offers a critical view of these forms of "nature." The exhibition work was based on an international workshop held at the Treasure Hill Artist Village in the summer of 2018. Under our direction and with help from ecologists and

film-makers, university students across the Asia-Pacific region each imagined themselves as a plant species, starting with a study of its physiology and habitat to explore a plant's-eye view of Taipei. We envisioned a dystopian yet exhilarating scenario where an increasingly artificial landscape is catalyzed by climate change and heat island effect, urban plants begin to mutate and produce vision. Seeing the world through the plants' eyes allows us to perceive the world beyond the experiences that we take for granted.

2 International Workshop: Treasure Hill × Gongguan

On the first day of the international workshop, we led the participants to explore the ecology and plants of Taipei's urban fringe in Treasure Hill and the Gongguan neighborhood with help of an ecologist and botanist (Fig. 2). While learning about the history of the Taipei Basin, each participant simultaneously selected one plant species for an in-depth observation of the interaction between their habitat and the urban environment. Returning to the workshop, participants began to research their selected plant species, focusing on their physiological characteristics, habitats, and life cycles — including their migratory histories — as a basis for films in the next phase. A brief session on landscape representation in the next morning



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prepared participants to use drawings as a basis to explore and document characteristics and habitats of individual plants. Based on this new found understanding of individual plants, participants began to envision possible ways that the plants might view the city and to develop a conceptual approach for their films.

The next highlight of the workshop was filming. Equipped with a filming tutorial on the day three, participants began their creative process of filming a “plant’s-eye view.” Over the course of a day-and-a-half, we held a preliminary screening session for feedback and suggestions from instructors and a professional filmmaker. The last two days of the workshop focused on the production and presentations, including both the drawings of plants and the films representing plant’s-eye views of Taipei (Fig. 3, 4)². Invited experts, scholars, artists, and the curatorial team from Taipei Fine Arts Museum took part in the comments and critiques on the final day.

3 Exhibition Installation: Scaffolds × Sketches

The installation design of the exhibited work has two primary components: scaffolds and sketches — one is spatial while the other is planar. The scaffolds represented the various perspectives of plants through video screens mounted on

different parts of the structure, each representing a plant, that is the work of each participant; the sketches presented the participants’ illustrations of different plants within the context of their habitats and environmental conditions in the city (Fig. 5 ~ 7).

In response to the anthropomorphism of plants in the concept of “Plant’s-Eye Views of Taipei,” the design of the scaffolds also attempted to represent the possible phytomorphism of urban structures through phototropism — with a site specific installation oriented towards a glass curtain wall in the exhibition room. In addition, the formally irregular but structurally ordered scaffolds consisted of galvanized steel pipes with flexible joints with screens of different sizes mounted at different heights. This expressed a “biological complexity” in contrast to human rationality. The sketches, on the other hand, juxtaposed plant illustrations against the urban environment and habitat of the field along an imaginary transect throughout the study site. Tilted plates are formally irregular but structurally ordered, reflecting colliding perspectives and unfolding spatial experiences of the urban environment (Fig. 8 ~ 10).

8. 植物视角在美术馆中的重构
 9. 结构的向光性以及活扣与钢管组合的复杂性, 模糊了“自然”与“非自然”的界线, 并重新诠释了“自然”的内涵。
 10. 示意图细部: 城市肌理与植物栖息地
 11. 漠视: 大王椰子
 12. 撞视: 朱槿
 13. 窥视: 槭叶牵牛
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8. The reimagination of a plant’s view in the museum
 9. The phototropic structure and complexity from steel pipes with flexible joints blur the boundary between the “natural” and “artificial,” and destabilize the common notion of “nature.”
 10. Details of sketches: urban environment and plant habitats
 11. Disregarding: *Roystonea regia*
 12. Confronting: *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*
 13. Spying: *Ipomoea cairica*



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As we developed the layouts for the three scaffolds and worked with the films, we found that the plant's-eye views documented in the workshop fell naturally into three main categories: disregarding, confronting, and spying.

The films produced in the workshop yielded an interesting and unexpected outcome in comparison to our original intent. At the outset of the project, we hoped to see a different view of the city from the perspective of plants, but the participants truly embodied their chosen plants and most of them focused on the survival instincts of plants instead. One subset of films in particular showed almost a complete disregard to the obvious environment of what we understand as the “city.” Here, our intention seemed to be contradicted by these “plants” that do not view the “city” as “we” do. We call this subset “disregarding” (Fig. 11).

In another subset of films, we observed the opposite, reflecting another situation that plants face in the city. In some sense, plants inevitably have interactions with urban residents within a constructed urban environment, and their presences (or disappearances) are often the direct result of human action. In this subset of films, “confrontation” was depicted through a plant's perspective of the city through hardship, force, and even violence (Fig. 12). Some plants do not survive, while others continue to adapt to reproduce, or even spread as resistance.

In the last subset of films, we observed yet another intriguing phenomenon: through the unique urban locations that plants occupy and their perspectives, our attention is drawn to scenes and spaces that we often neglect as urban human inhabitants. The vision of plants were like pinhole cameras hidden in the city. Through the perspective of plants, we “spy” ourselves as if looking through surveillance cameras on the street corner (Fig. 13).

These three collections of films reflected our observations and interpretations of what “Plant's-Eye Views of Taipei” could be. They certainly do not represent all possibilities. With diverse characteristics of urban plants and a wide variety of urban habitats, there is bound to be other views of the city, and consequently additional observations and interpretations. “Plant's-Eye Views of Taipei” as a whole, including the three collections of films, symbolizes a starting point to develop alternative and renewed perspectives of all living mechanisms in the city, and our relationships with the urban environment. Viewing cities from the perspective of plants represents a reversal of vision and gaze. When we detach ourselves from an anthropocentric view and see the city from the perspective of plants, we begin to blur the boundaries between species, nature, and the artificial; we enter the interstitial zone between “nature” and “post-nature” through seeing and being seen by plants. **LAF**