

Working group:

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Fragments for a Missing Whole

A Moving Image Project 2025–2026



<https://youtu.be/FEdQwv4uaMw>

Collaboration and Interdisciplinary Unit

Group Intro

- Xiao Chen

Director

Sound Design

Concept (with Tian Wang & Hongyu Cai)

Editing (with Tian Wang)

- Tian Wang

Concept

On-screen Performance

Editing

- Hongyu Cai

Concept

Editing

Cinematography



Our Shared Focus

We are interested in how fragments — of bodies, images, and memories — can become an archive.

Our project connects museum fragments and literary / media fragments (Dream of the Red Chamber) through a moving image work.

Project Question & Core Concept: Memory in Fragments

Research Question

How can fragments of objects, images and scenes evoke a sense of memory when the “whole” is absent?

What We Focus On

- Fragmented objects in the museum as traces of the past.
- Fragmented shots from Dream of the Red Chamber as emotional and cultural memory.
- The partial view in filming, where the camera never shows a complete body or space.

Core Concept

- We use physical and media fragments as building blocks of memory.
- By combining museum fragments, Dream of the Red Chamber clips and partial camera views, the film invites viewers to mentally reconstruct the missing whole.

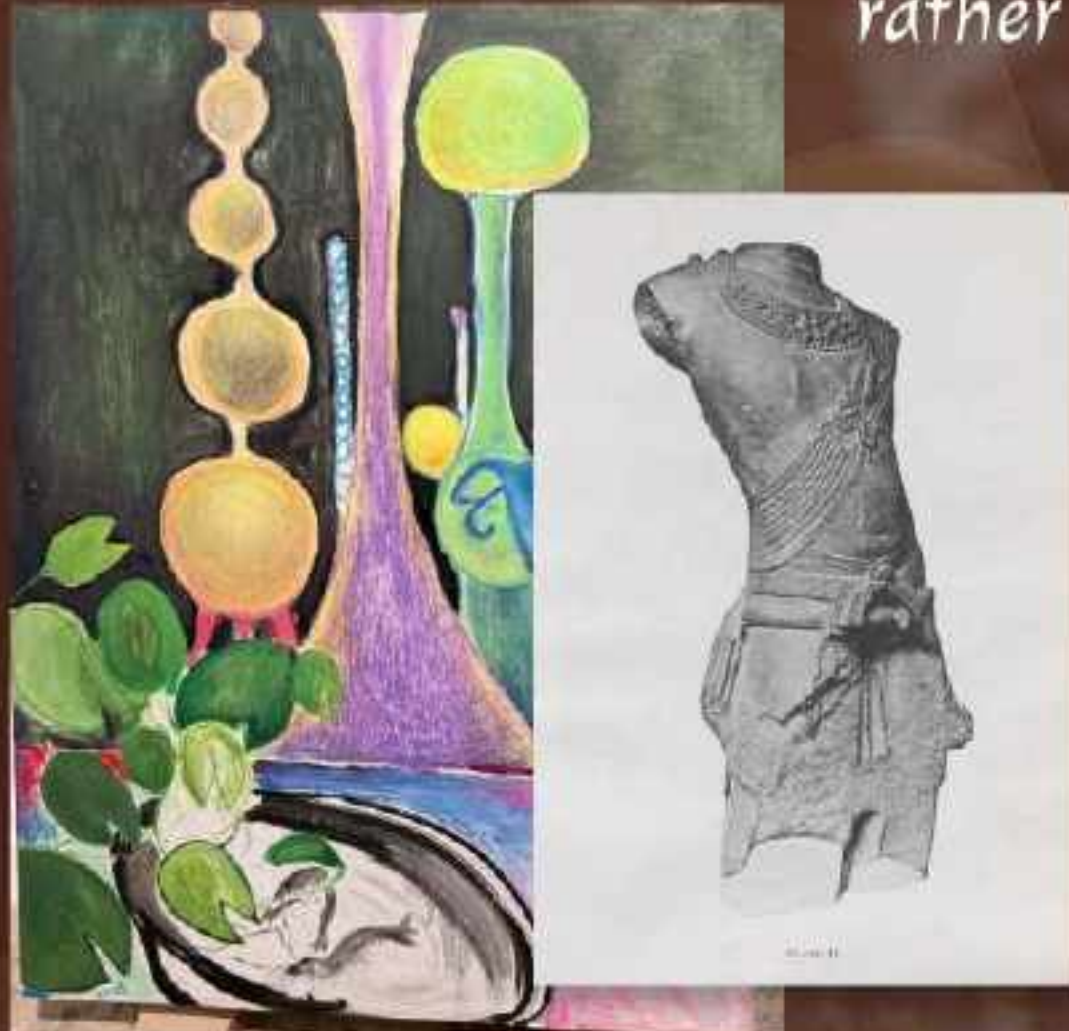
Our Archives (1): Museum Fragments

This archive consists of photographic recordings of incomplete museum objects: broken statues, missing limbs, eroded surfaces and sections of display structures.

The visual focus is deliberately placed on edges, fractures, joints, textures and architectural details, rather than on the integrity of the figures or artefacts.

Through this selective framing, the objects are presented not as finished works, but as discrete traces detached from their original narrative and spatial context.

These images are regarded as material fragments of memory, embodying what remains visible and tangible after the larger historical or contextual "whole" has receded.



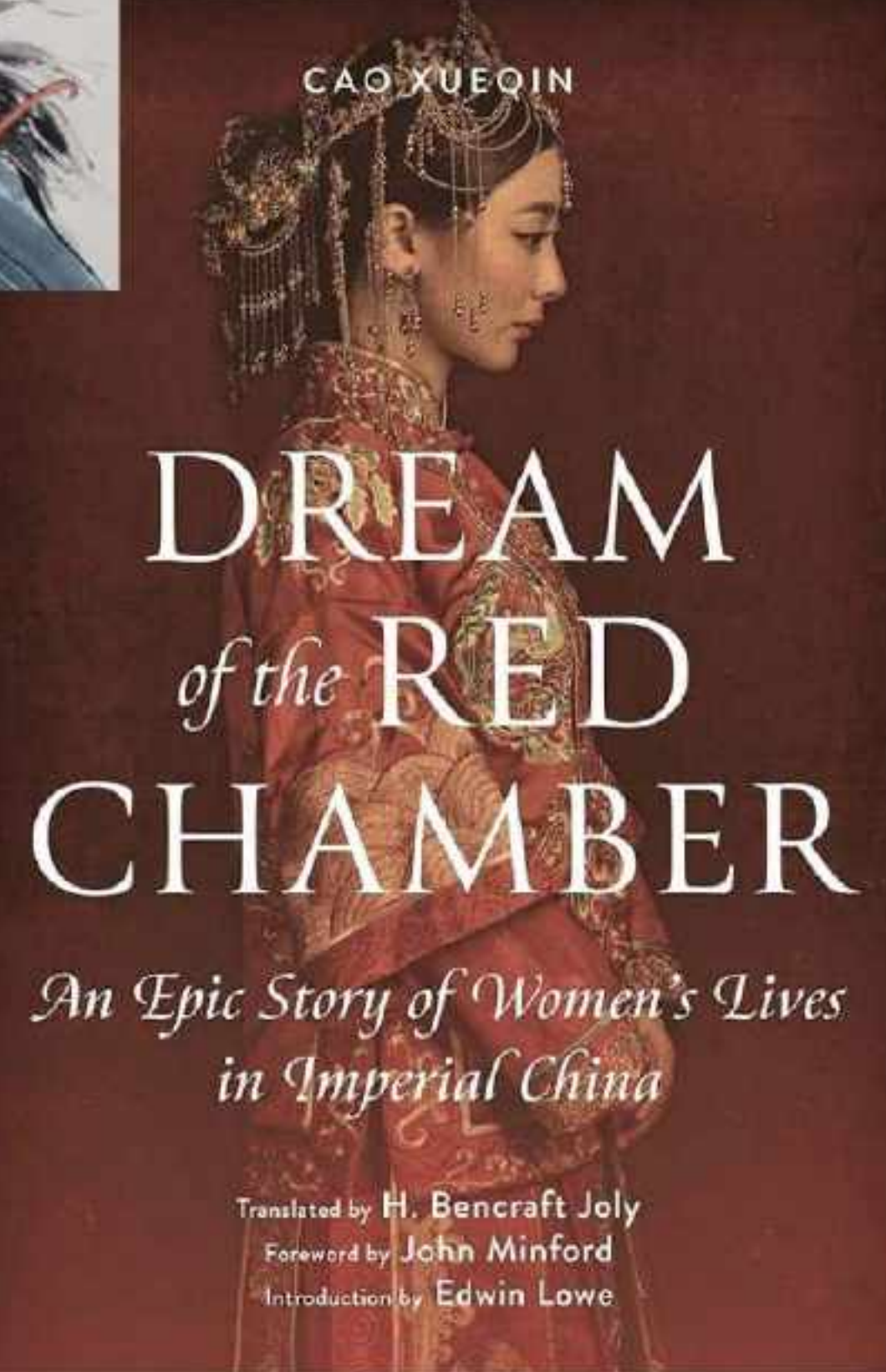
Our Archives (2): Dream of Red Chamber

- The second archive is composed of short clips and still frames extracted from the 1987 television adaptation of Dream of the Red Chamber.

- Rather than engaging with the complete narrative structure, the project isolates discrete moments—such as gestures, glances, walking sequences, garden vistas and interior scenes.

- These images operate as elements of shared cultural memory, more often recalled as atmospheres, moods or impressions than as a coherent plot.

- Within the project, they are approached as emotional and cultural fragments of memory, which resonate with the museum's material fragments while existing on a more ephemeral, affective level.



References & Interdisciplinary Perspectives

Artistic / Visual

Contemporary practices that work with fragments, ruins and partial bodies, treating incompleteness as a constructive visual and conceptual strategy.



Conceptual References

Ideas of the archive as open and unfinished, and the fragment as a unit that simultaneously signals absence and invites reconstruction in memory.

Interdisciplinary Approach

The project situates itself between museum studies, film practice and memory studies, using methods and perspectives from each field.

Museum fragments, television images and filmed bodies are treated as different but comparable carriers of memory, and are brought together within a single moving-image framework.

From Archive to Script & Storyboard



Museum fragments

sequences of slow observation (surfaces, edges, joints)...

Red Chamber fragments

brief emotional atmospheres inserted at specific moments.

the storyboard avoids establishing shots and complete figures, and instead organises the film around details, cut-offs and transitions between different types of fragments.

Structure of the Final Moving Image

- Observation of Objects



- Movement of the Body



- Overlay of Memories



the Final Outcome



<https://youtu.be/FEdQwv4uaMw>

Reference & Samples

Reference

- Yee, S. Translated Vase series. Ceramic / mixed-media installation.
- Bailey, C. Digital Kintsugi. Digital media project.
- Solomon, V. Kintsugi Court. Basketball court / installation project.
- Calle, S. Suite Vénitienne. Photographic and text-based work.
- Calle, S. The Address Book. Text-based / conceptual project.
- Boltanski, C. Les Archives de C.B. Installation / archive-based work.
- Salcedo, D. Shibboleth. Installation, Tate Modern, London.
- Whiteread, R. House and other cast works. Sculpture / cast architecture.

- Stewart, S. (1993) On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Bennett, J. (2010) Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Ingold, T. (2007) 'Materials Against Materiality', Archaeological Dialogues, 14(1), pp. 1–16.
- Steyerl, H. (2009) 'In Defense of the Poor Image', e-flux journal, 10.

- V&A Museum. Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara (Sanchi Torso). Sculpture, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
- V&A Museum. Joachim Tielke Guitar (1693). Musical instrument, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.
- Traditional Japanese Kintsugi ceramics. Various makers and periods.

Cao, Xueqin. Dream of the Red Chamber. Various editions.

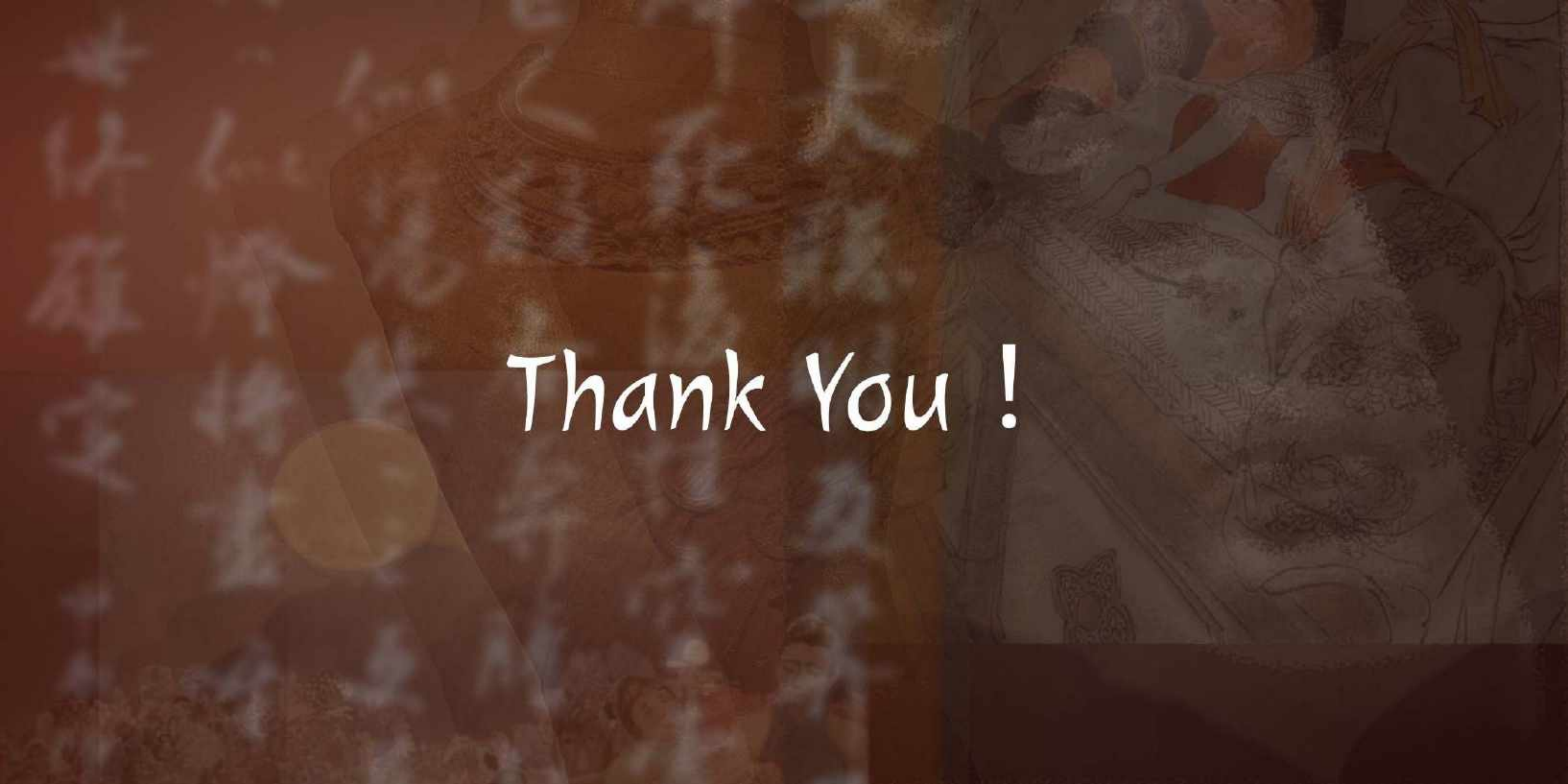
Samples

Sound / Music Samples

- Traditional Chinese piece, Qin Wang Po Zhen Qu
- Traditional Chinese piece, Ambush on Ten Sides.
- King Crimson, In the Court of the Crimson King, from the album In the Court of the Crimson King (1969).
- Bauhaus, Bela Lugosi's Dead (single, 1979).
- Pink Floyd, The Dark Side of the Moon (album, 1973).

Television series:

Dream of the Red Chamber 《红楼梦》, China Central Television, 1987 (dir. Wang Fulin).



Thank You !