



# Moonlight Calling

## 月亮的名字

**Author:** July **Illustrator:** July **Publisher:** Gaea Books

**Date:** 07/2023

**Rights contact:** bft.children.comics@moc.gov.tw

188 pages | 14.8 x 21cm **Volume:** 1

**BFT2.0 Translator:** Catherine Yu

Indigenous people, the original inhabitants of the island, preserved their heritage through intricate wood carvings. These sculptures hold fragments of their lives, yet the names of their creators have been lost to history.

In this thought-provoking and original work, an unnamed, wooden sculpture of exceptional artistry serves as a vital connection between two lost souls. As the story unfolds, the sculpture emerges as a symbol of unfulfilled promises from Japanese colonial exploitation of indigenous peoples.

This collaboration between Golden Comic Award Comic of the Year Winner July and the National Taiwan Prehistoric Museum delves into complex themes of indigenous identity and artistic creation, offering a profound exploration of history and culture.



**Author July**

July is a freelance creator who explores the nuanced and ambiguous gray areas of life, using the language of comics to reinterpret ordinary, local scenes and uncover new possibilities. In 2022, *The Free China Junk* received the Annual Manga Award at the 13th Golden Comic Awards.

# “This Comic Brings to Life the Journey of Uncovering the Forgotten Carvers”: On Forging a Connection to the Indigenous Past and Present

by Wang Chang-Hua

In 2017, Minister of Culture Cheng Li-Chun proposed the policy of “Reconstructing Taiwan’s Art History,” aiming to reinterpret and promote Taiwan’s art history from multiple perspectives. Under this policy, in 2020, the National Museum of Prehistory implemented a collection of indigenous art. Drawing from this collection, it launched the large special exhibition “Who Am I?: The Quest for Identity in Taiwan’s Art History” in June 2023.

A standout section of the exhibition, “What is Your Name? The ‘Discovered’ Carvers of the Jiaxing Tribe,” sheds light on the rich history of carving within the Jiaxing Tribe. This display uncovers a vital chapter in Taiwan’s specialized art history, adding a

precious piece to the puzzle.

This comic brings to life the journey of uncovering the forgotten carvers, shining a light on the transformation of museum classifications, the evolving relationship between museums and indigenous communities, and the search for indigenous identity. *Moonlight Calling* reimagines the traditional museum experience, using storytelling to bridge knowledge and connect with a wider audience. It invites readers into ongoing encounters with marginalized and overlooked histories, forging a deeper connection to the past and its untold stories.

*Wang Chang-Hua is the Director of the National Museum of Prehistory in Taiwan.*

# Restoring the Place of the “Nameless” in Art History

by Lu Mei-Fen

I have been studying the woodcarvings of the Jiaxing Tribe since 2005, a journey spanning nearly eighteen years. From my early thirties to approaching fifty, this work has taken me through commissioned research in 2010, a publication in 2012, the acquisition of artworks in 2020, and the curation of special exhibitions following the museum’s reopening in 2023.

At the start, my curiosity was unceasing. Who were the artists behind these remarkable carvings? How had the art form evolved from the Japanese colonial period to today? Before 1990, research on woodcarving in anthropology, crafts, and fine arts focused largely on “ethnic” art rather than the creators themselves. This approach rendered the artists “nameless,” their identities lost to history. For instance, while museums collected pieces from the Jiaxing Tribe, the historical records often lacked details about the creators or creation dates, noting

only the ethnic group, collection time, and location.

Even before the Japanese colonial period, the Jiaxing Tribe was home to carvers of exceptional skill and creativity. In February 1900, during his fourth expedition to Taiwan, Torii Ryuzō wrote from Chaozhou: “Tomorrow, I will ascend the mountain to Puntei, renowned as a ‘carving center’” (now known as Puljetji). Years later, in 1924, Mori Osamu recalled accompanying Torii on that expedition and praised Puntei as the home of the most skilled carvers, producing the finest carvings.

These accounts testify to the extraordinary legacy of individual artistry in the Jiaxing Tribe, a legacy I have been fortunate to explore and share.

*This afterword has been edited for the purposes of this booklet.*

*Lu Mei-Fen is a researcher at the National Museum of Prehistory in Taiwan.*

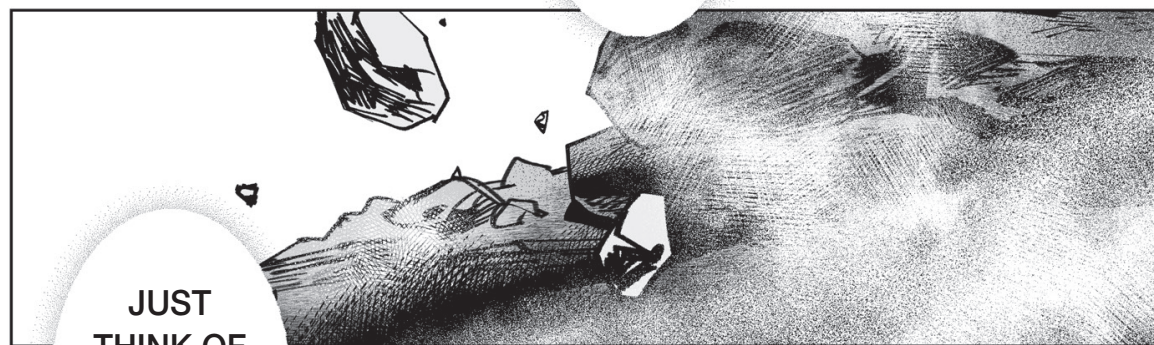




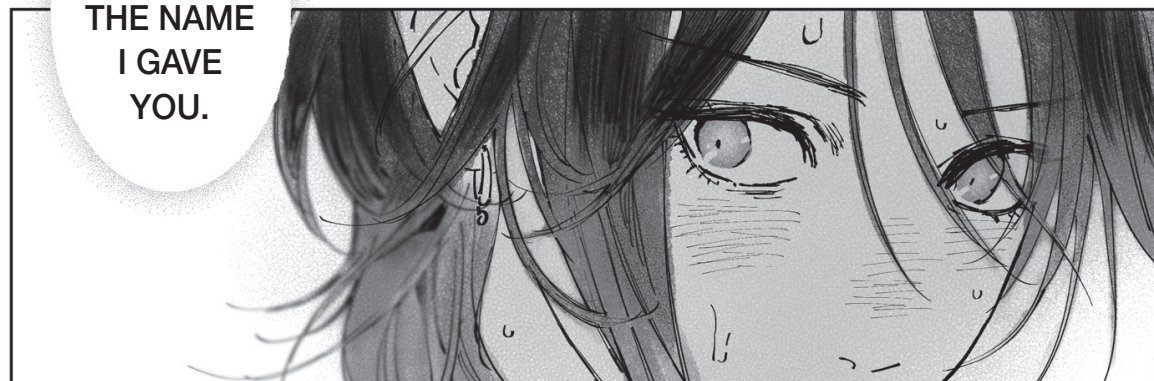
HSIAO-  
DAI,



WHEN  
YOU  
FEEL  
LOST,



JUST  
THINK OF  
THE NAME  
I GAVE  
YOU.





CHAPTER 1  
THOSE WHO ARE LOST

... YOU'RE  
ALREADY ON  
YOUR WAY  
HOME.

WHEN YOU  
SAY YOUR  
NAME...



