



#### **BOOKS FROM TAIWAN**

http://booksfromtaiwan.tw/

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ABOUT
TAIWAN
CREATIVE
CONTENT
AGENCY

Gifted with cultural and natural diversity, Taiwan has created admirable economic and political miracles over time that empowers many fascinating stories. Even though cultural industries in Taiwan have been prosperous and prolific, in response to the knowledge economy and evolving technologies, we stand at a critical point to adapt and innovate.

Founded in 2019, TAICCA is a professional intermediary organization supervised by the Ministry of Culture to facilitate cultural industry development, including but not limited to publishing, audiovisual, music, animation, comics, games, and cultural technology applications. TAICCA drives industrial investments, innovations, and formulates Taiwan's cultural brand that enriches the international cultural landscape through our diverse and rich cultural content.



# GRANT FOR THE PUBLICATION OF TAIWANESE WORKS IN TRANSLATION (GPT)

MINISTRY OF CULTURE,
REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN)

 $\mathsf{G}^{\mathsf{PT}}$  is set up by The Ministry of Culture to encourage the publication of Taiwanese works in translation overseas, to raise the international visibility of Taiwanese cultural content, and to help Taiwan's publishing industry expand into non-Chinese international markets..

 Applicant Eligibility: Foreign publishing houses (legal persons) legally registered in accordance with the laws and regulations of their respective countries.

#### • Conditions:

- 1. The so-called Taiwanese works must meet the following requirements:
  - A. Use traditional characters;
  - B. Written by a natural person holding an R.O.C. identity card;
  - C. Has been assigned an ISBN in Taiwan.
  - i.e., the author is a native of Taiwan, and the first 6 digits of the book's ISBN are 978-957-XXX-XXX-X or 978-986-XXX-XXX-X.
- 2. Applications must include documents certifying that the copyright holder of the Taiwanese works consents to its translation and foreign publication (no restriction on its format).
- 3. A translation sample of the Taiwanese work is required (no restriction on its format and length).

#### Grant Items

- 1. The maximum grant available for each project is NT\$600,000, which covers:
  - A. Licensing fees (going to the copyright holder of the Taiwanese works);
  - B. Translation fees;
  - C. Marketing and promotion fees (limited to economy class air tickets for the R.O.C. writer to participate in overseas promotional activities related to the project);
  - D. Book production-oriented fees;
  - E. Tax (20% of the total award amount);
  - F. Remittance-related handling fees.
- 2. Priority consideration is given to books that have received the Golden Tripod Award, the Golden Comic Award, or the Taiwan Literature Award.
- Application Period: Twice every year. The MOC reserves the right to change the application periods, and will
  announce said changes separately.
- Announcement of successful applications: Winners will be announced within three months of the end of the
  application period.
- Application Method: Please visit the Ministry's official website (https://grants.moc.gov.tw/Web\_ENG/), and use the
  online application system.

For full details, please visit: https://grants.moc.gov.tw/Web\_ENG/

Or contact: books@moc.gov.tw

# COMICS (FROM RIGHT TO LEFT)

#### **About TAICCA Select**

As book adaptations and interdisciplinary development gain momentum in recent years, TAICCA recommends outstanding titles in each issue to publishers, TV and film producers, and other media developers worldwide, with sample translations and related articles available online.

For more details, email: booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com.

TAICCA SELECT

### NINE LIVES MAN: TIME'S WHEEL

# 九命人——時之輪迴



· Publisher: Tong Li

· **Date:** 9/2019

· Rights contact:

booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com

· Pages: 392

· Volume: 1 (END)

Everywhere he looks, Guy Ninemann sees nine tally marks – and somehow finds himself caught up in a cycle of reincarnation. He witnesses the destruction of the city he lives in, is shot in the head and... awakens as another Guy Ninemann.

As a child, Guy Ninemann claimed to have nine lives. As an adult, he does. Out in the city one day, a homeless man shows him nine tally marks spray-painted on a wall, and the image lodges itself inside his mind. Before he can make any sense of what is going on, he is kidnapped, sees his city destroyed and is shot dead.

But the end of one life throws him into the middle of another. Ninemann awakes in a new body, in a new time, in a new place - but with all his old memories. Each new life brings its own mission to complete - and linking them all, the explosion that destroys the city.

Inspired by the classic 80s Taiwanese sci-fi graphic novel *Nine Lives Man*, this fast-paced and intricate story challenges our understanding of time. Beautifully drawn, this is a banquet of suspense, detective work and mind-bending sci-fi.



## Chang Sheng 常勝

Chang Sheng worked in advertising for 15 years. He started his own studio when he was in his thirties, and since 2004 he has released work on a regular basis. Having read comics from a young age, Chang Sheng has always preferred science fiction stories best. He admits to having been deeply influenced by the work of Yukinobu Hoshino, and his training in drawing and oil painting while studying at the Fu-Hsin Trade and Arts School are likewise reflected in his exquisitely detailed and extremely realistic video game-like style. Chang Sheng has represented Taiwan at the Angoulême International Comics Festival three times and has won several prizes overseas. *Oldman* was a finalist in the 2013 International Manga Award in Japan, and *The Hidden Level* won the Grand Prize of 2017 Kyoto International Manga Awards (Taiwan Section).

# A MAN WITH NINE LIVES: AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR OF NINE LIVES MAN: TIME'S WHEEL

Written by Bernie Yang Translated by Joshua Dyer

In 1985, Taiwanese comic artist Push released his highly original sci-fi comic book *Nine Lives Man*. The comic inspired a generation of readers as they followed the adventures of Guy Ninemann, a man who unwittingly receives nine lives, as he travels between Heaven, Hell, and the mortal realm. One of those young fans was Chang Sheng. In 2018, Chang Sheng, now a comic book artist in his own right, enlisted Push and three other artists to create new interpretations of the classic. With no restrictions on genre or style, the artists agreed only to follow the core concept of "a man with nine lives".

# Calling All Artists: A New Edition of *Nine Lives Man*

According to Chang Sheng, a comic book becomes a classic because it has some element which transcends the era in which it was created. In the case of *Nine Lives Man*, the core concept of a man having nine lives always intrigued Chang Sheng, but, as a comic creator he felt frustrated that he couldn't run with an idea that was not his own. That frustration remained until five years ago, when, through a twist of fate, he had the opportunity to ask the original creator Push if he could draw his own version of *Nine Lives Man*. He never imagined Push would agree right on the spot, initiating a unique creative project never before seen in the history of Taiwanese comic books.

Drawing inspiration from the prominence of the number nine in the original comic, Chang Sheng wanted to invite nine different comic book creators to participate in the publication of a nine issue series to be released on September 9th, and later release a compendium of the series in 2019. He even hoped to curate an exhibition about the project, among other ambitious ideas. After pitching the concept to publishers and artists across the industry, he was able to recruit only five artists, including himself and the original creator, Push. Although the scale of the project fell short of the original conception, the five artists set to work based on the core concept of "a man with nine lives". Their creations span the gamut of styles from sci-fi to fantasy to thriller to romance, and even include a sequel that picks up thirty years after the timeline of the original. Taken together, the multiple versions of *Nine Lives Man* constitute a sumptuous visual feast.

Chang Sheng relates a number of curious episodes from the process of creating the series. The group first began their discussions at a coffee shop called R9. The number nine appeared again on Chang Sheng's bus ride after the meeting. After deciding to dedicate himself to the project, he began to pay more attention to where the number nine appeared in his life, taking it as a lucky number. Only then did he discover that traces of the number nine ran everywhere in his life.

#### From Nine Lives Man to Time's Wheel

Following the plan of the original, Chang Sheng's Nine Lives Man: Time's Wheel, tells the story of Guy Ninemann, a man with nine lives, who incarnates as various people (and life forms) to avert a city-wide bomb attack. In the various bodies of a police detective, a prisoner on death row, a writer, a little girl, a grandmother, a robot, and even a bear, he returns again and again to the scene of the incident to see if he can prevent the catastrophic loss of life and untold suffering that unfolds. The story subverts linear time, as well as traditional notions of reincarnation, as the successive lives of the protagonist overlap and interact with one another, each altering the course of events leading to the incident. The bewildering timeline is paired with Chang Sheng's admirably meticulous artwork to produce an utterly unique reading experience which inspires readers to ponder the very nature of life itself.

Faced with this complex narrative challenge, Chang Sheng prepared himself by plotting the relationships between the characters and events in the story, creating the conceptual map that now serves as epilogue to the comic book. Chang Sheng has always had the habit of first drafting a blueprint of his stories before beginning to draw. Doing so allows him to plan out the foreshadowing, big reveals, and pace of the story. In addition, it allows him to draw the comic sequentially, so he can ensure steady progress. Chang Sheng strives to create stories that conform to the classical dramatic structure of exposition, complication, reversal, and dénouement, both in the broad outlines of the narrative, and in the arrangement of panels and transitions between pages in the comic book format. His goal is to keep his readers hooked, and keep them turning pages.



Chang Sheng



Manuscripts of Nine Lives Man: Time's Wheel

Sharp-eyed readers may notice a number of Easter eggs planted throughout the comic that have real world correspondences. The publication dates of the series echo the dates of events in the fictional timeline or publication dates of fictional books in the story. These carefully scripted links help create the surreal sense of the interpenetration reality and fiction. Chang Sheng also hoped to maintain some implicit connections to the original series. The period of the original comic is referenced in the Prince album *Purple Rain*, which appears several times as a device to move the plot forward. In the original comic, Guy Ninemann reincarnates as a variety of life forms, including a dog or a tree. Chang Sheng kept the idea, but changed the specifics, having his Guy Ninemann reincarnate as a robot and a bear.

The cover of the comic book is no exception to the meticulous planning characteristic of the project. Chang Sheng worked with the publisher to ensure that no writing would appear on the outside jacket. By leaving only a symbolic representation of the number nine to hint at the contents, Chang Sheng hoped to leave space for readers to form their own interpretations.

#### Persisting in the Face of a New Challenge: the Warmth of Hand Drawn Art

Time's Wheel presented a major challenge to Chang Sheng. It was the first time in his more than ten years of drawing comics that he forwent the use of computer technology, instead producing the art completely by hand. The new approach allowed him to leave a physical record of his progress in the form of the original artwork.

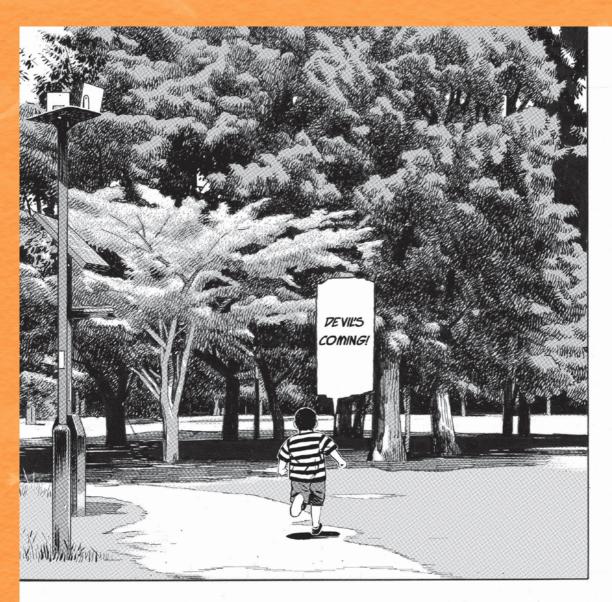
When discussing his work habits, Chang Sheng reaffirmed his belief that maintaining consistent hours and consistent output is the only way craft a superior comic. To stay on schedule he had to work roughly ten hours a day. However, because he was more familiar with computer art tools, producing art by hand took roughly three times as long.

With the additional time required to collect the reference materials on which he bases his realist art style and develop the various links between the real world and the fictional world of the comic, Chang Sheng was soon barely coping with the pressures of staying on schedule. When he was close to missing a deadline, he reluctantly requested aid from his old assistant, the computer. After submitting his work, he couldn't help joking with himself: "It's a good thing I'm working on *Nine Lives Man*. Without nine lives, I'd be dead by now!"

#### **High-Concept Comics Translate Better to International Markets**

In recent years Chang Sheng has established a formidable track record, winning numerous national and international awards, and selling overseas translation rights in a variety of foreign markets. But if you ask him if he's satisfied with his work, he responds with characteristic self-deprecating humor: "Ask any creative person. They'll always say they're unsatisfied!" But he does admit to a significant point of pride which may be the key to his headway in foreign markets, namely, his works are built around simple, but powerful, core concepts that transcend the demands and orientation of the market.

A concept that's good enough will always attract readers. When paired with art that presents a clearly distinct visual style, you've got a comic that directly impacts the reader, thus transcending the language barrier. *Nine Lives Man: Time's Wheel* is a stellar comic book that succeeds in shaking up conventional notions of time and reincarnation. With a high-concept plot and painstakingly detailed artwork, it seems destined to shake up international comic book markets as well!









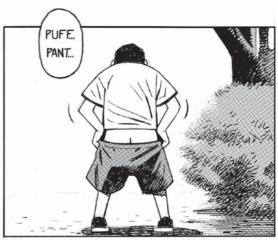


WHAT? NO, YOU'RE PEAR, YOU USEP UP ALL THREE LIVES. PON'T TALK SHIT.



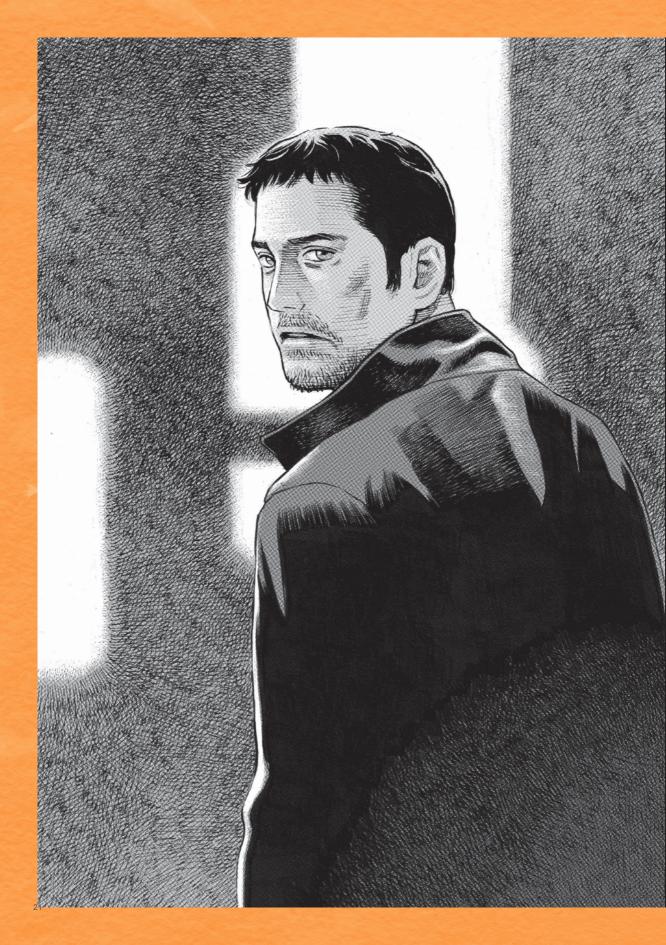


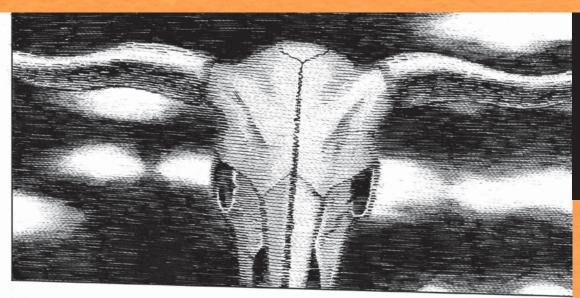


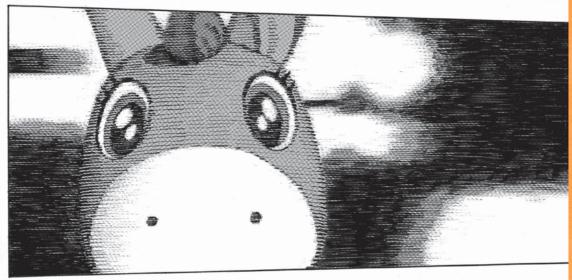


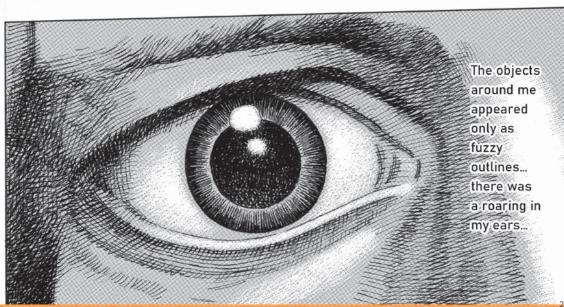


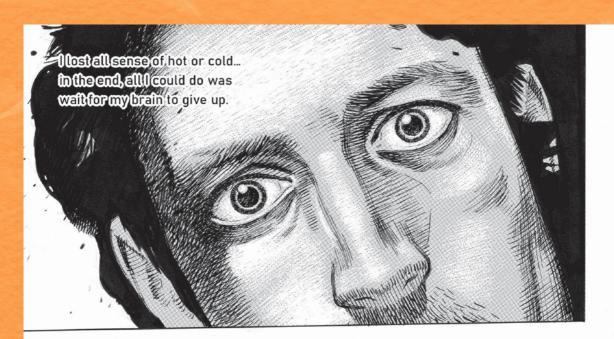
It seemed the perfect game, arranged by the gods...

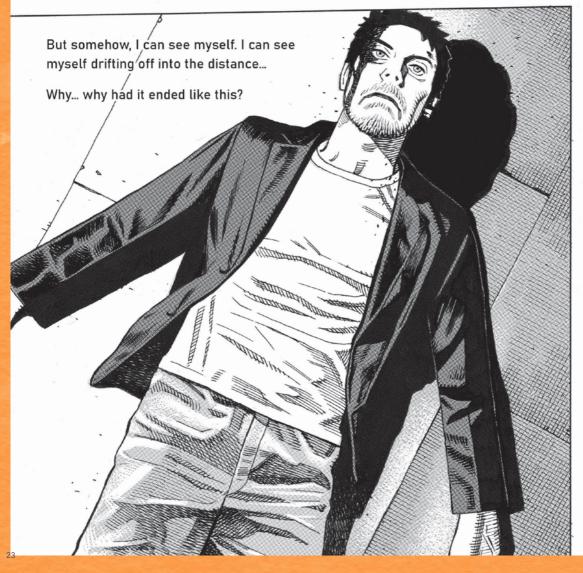












# COMICS (FROM RIGHT TO LEFT)



# **GUARDIENNE**

# 守娘



 Publisher: Gaea Books
 Date: 10/2019
 Rights contact: booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com

· Pages: 188
· Volume: 1 (ongoing)

#### \* 2020 Golden Comics Awards Best New Talent

In the Taiwan of the early 1900s, the happiness of a married woman depended on providing a son. Doing so became an obsession, involving various rituals. Nownow combines traditions and history to provide a visually ravishing look at the lives of women in Qing dynasty Taiwan.

Taiwan during the Qing dynasty was deeply patriarchal. Women were disregarded from birth, their only purpose was to make a good marriage. But once married, the pressure was on to provide sons. This gave rise to various folk practices which were claimed to ensure male offspring. Chieh watches as her sister-in-law, obsessed with giving birth to a son, gives in to these superstitions. And she herself is under pressure to marry - can she ever break free?

Walking by the river one day, she comes across the body of a woman. A priestess is summoned to ensure her spirit passes peacefully and does not haunt the town. The woman, with her mysterious ways, does seem able to communicate with the spirit world and Chieh, seeing a glimmer of hope, enrolls as her apprentice. But soon after, small handprints start appearing on her legs as she sleeps, while more women go missing or are found dead. What will Chieh do, and will she find the life she wants?

A look at an independent young woman during the Qing dynasty, *Guardienne* is critical of the society of the time. Mixing folk tales and religion, it portrays the struggle of the women of the era living in a provincial city, and the beauty and tragedy of their lives.



### Nownow 小峱峱

A graduate of National Taiwan University of the Arts, Nownow excels in portrayals of traditional clothing and her work has been serialized in the Create Comic Collection.



Pretty, very pretty.





SHE'LL EASILY MARRY INTO A GOOD FAMILY WITH THOSE FEET.



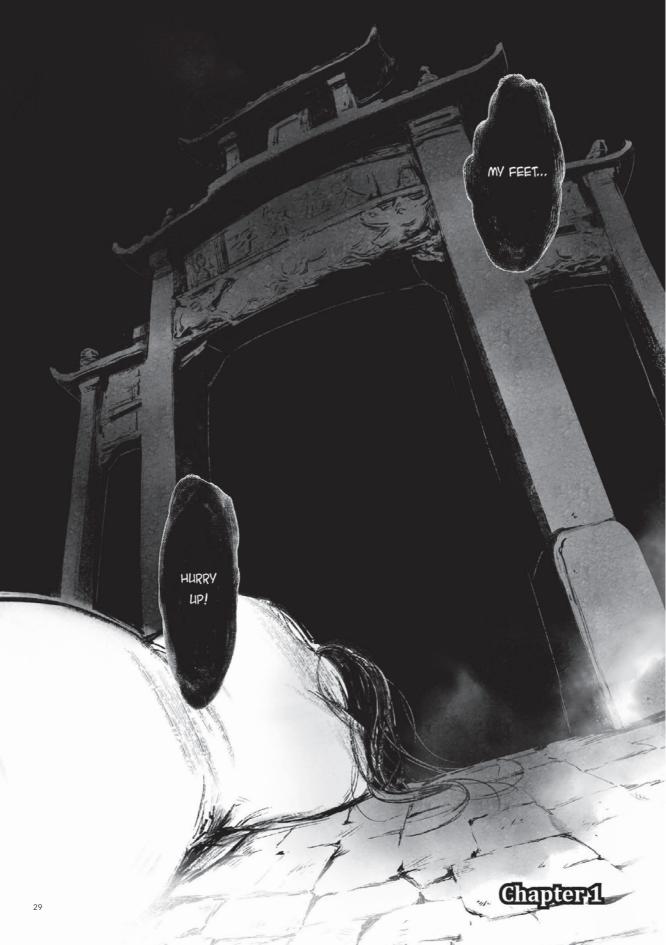
Oh, and are her feet small?





"YOU BE CAREFUL, AND DO WHAT YOUR HUSBAND TELLS YOU."













# **DUTCHMAN IN FORMOSA**

# 蘭人異聞錄



Publisher: Gaea Books
Date: 2/2020
Rights contact:

booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
• Pages: 202

· Volume: 2 (ongoing) · Rights sold: Thai (Siam Inter) During the Age of Discovery, Dutch surveyor Phillip meets Dalai, a Taiwanese indigenous boy. Dalai helps Phillip as he learns about the local indigenous culture – but a conflict between the newcomers and the locals is brewing...

During the Age of Discovery, Portuguese explorers named Taiwan "Formosa" - the beautiful isle. In what is now Anping, in the south-west of Taiwan, countless red deer roamed across the plains and marshes where the Siraya people hunted. It was here, that Westerners first made contact with the people of Taiwan.

The Dutch East India Company, in search of profit, took over southern Taiwan, and our story's protagonist is Phillip, a surveyor for the company. Living and working with the Siraya people in the village of Sinckan, Phillipe forms a friendship with Dalai, adopted son of the village elder, and comes to understand the dilemma the arrival of the foreigners means for them. Meanwhile, the village medicine woman is hostile towards the Dutch, even blaming the death of the village elder on the anger of the gods at his meetings with the foreigners.

Conflicted, Phillip leaves the village and learns that the Dutch governor Nuyts has responded to the conflict with Sinckan by forming an alliance with their sworn enemies, the village of Mattau. The people of Sinckan, including Dalai, lose their trust in Phillip and relations become tense. As the two sides engage in a fast-changing battle of wits, what choices will Phillip be forced to make?

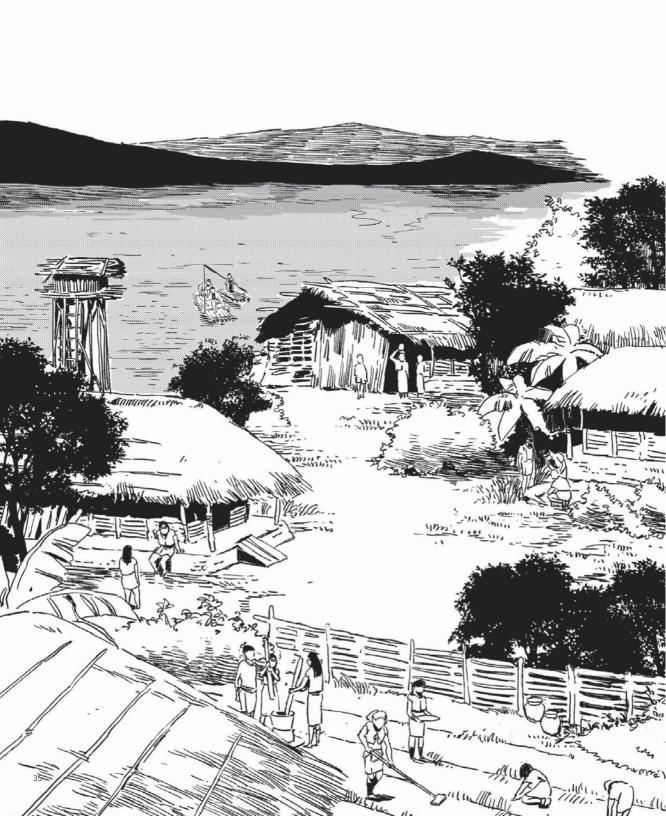
Kinono turns the interactions and conflicts between the Dutch and the indigenous people into an exciting graphic adventure. The first section takes place without dialogue, introducing Phillip's mysterious background while retaining emotional tension and creating curiosity as to how the story will develop. This carefully researched book recreates the process by which local and Western cultures met in Taiwan four centuries ago and portrays the unique local culture.



#### Kinono

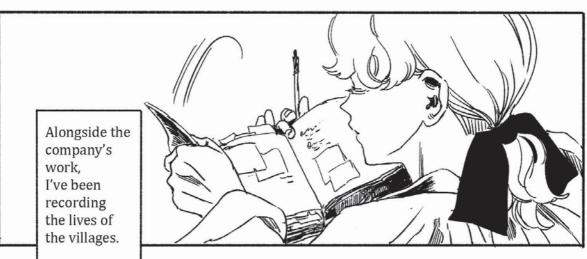
A graphic novelist and illustrator, Kinono's work, including the *Waltz Woods* and *Dutchman in Formosa* series, creates unique and fantastical worlds, despite minimal use of language. In 2008, Kinono won the second prize in the *Morning* International Manga Competition.

Chapter 1: Deer-Hunting









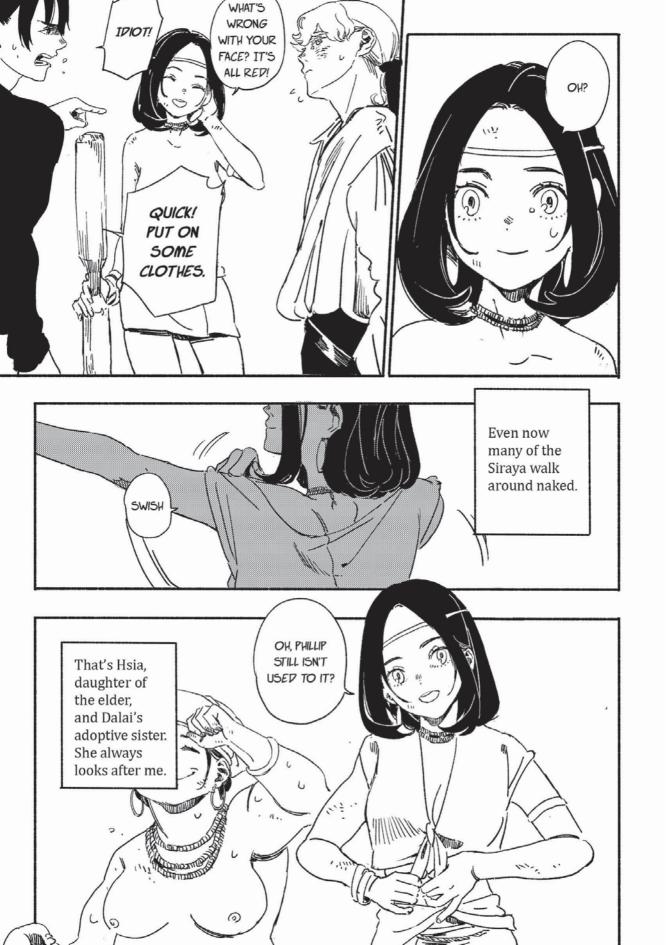












## THE FUNERAL CONCERTO

送葬協奏曲



· Publisher: Gaea Books

· Date: 2/2020

· Rights contact: booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com

· **Pages:** 234

· Volume: 1 (END)

\* 2020 Japan International Manga Award (Gold)

In search of herself, Lin Chu-sheng quits university and ends up living and working for a funeral director. From her shock at seeing her first corpse, to becoming a practiced yet still compassionate employee, her experiences help her realize who she really is, and what she really wants.

In search of her dreams, Lin Chu-sheng quits university, leaves home and starts working for a funeral director. Her first job: a decomposing corpse. And before the shock of seeing her first dead body has passed, she is set to work, cleaning floors and washing bodies. It might sound like simple work, but she has plenty to learn...

And while she may work with the dead, most of her time is spent dealing with the emotions of those still living: a father unable to accept his son's suicide; a bigamist's families meeting only after his death; a mother unwilling to let a child go; and parents unsure if their son's body will ever be found. Lin witnesses the full range of human experience and reflects on her own family and life.

This is a story of the real emotions lurking beneath the fussy details of a funeral, told from the perspective of a new employee. Rimui visited funeral homes as part of the research for this book and draws on traditional Chinese funeral practices. Moving and meticulously researched, this is a compelling tale of a unique profession.



## Rimui 韋蘺若明

A graduate of National Taiwan University of Science and Technology and an ethnic Atayal, Rimui is from Taoyuan in northwestern Taiwan. Her other graphic novels include *Where Are You Going?*.













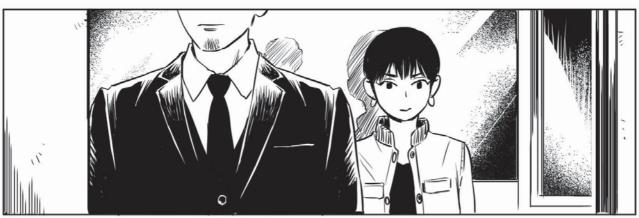






























### Comic by Sean Chuang 小莊

Sean Chuang is a director of commercial films. More than ten years ago, he published *A Filmmaker's Notes* in the form of a comic. The book, fresh in style, was well received. In 2009 he finished his second work, *The Window*, a full-colour comic that had been a decade in the making. Using a storyboard technique and a non-narrative pantomime approach, it received GIO's Graphic Novel Award. Sean Chuang continues to work both in film and to draw. In 2013 he finished his third graphic novel, *80s Diary in Taiwan*, which has been sold in French, German, and Italian.



#### Comic by Ruan Guang-Min 阮光民

Ruan Guang-Min is a former advertising major and interior decorating major. After leaving the military he worked as an assistant to comic artist Lai Yu-Hsien. His first work to receive recognition was an adaptation of the TV show *Friends*, using the comic form to tell a moving story about a group of young people from the countryside struggling to make a living in Taipei. Conversely, his book *Dong Hua Chun Barbershop* and *The Corner Store* has been adapted into television series.



### Original Story by Wu Ming-Yi 吳明益

Wu Ming-Yi is a writer, artist, professor, and environmental activist. Widely considered the leading writer of his generation, he has won the *China Times* Open Book Award six times and his works have been translated into over ten languages. In 2018, his novel *The Stolen Bicycle* was longlisted for the Man Booker International Prize. He teaches literature at National Dong Hwa University. Wu's works have been translated into English, French, German, Turkish, Japanese, Korean, Czech, Hungarian, Italian, Swedish, Vietnamese, Thai, Polish, Ethiopian, Arabic, Ukrainian, and Indonesian.

## THE ILLUSIONIST ON THE SKYWALK

# 天橋上的魔術師圖像版





 $\cdot \ \textbf{Publisher:} \ \mathsf{Thinkingdom}$ 

Date: 1/2020Rights contact:

books from taiwan. rights @gmail.com

Pages: 260 + 266Volume: 2 (END)

- \* 2020 Japan International Manga Award (Silver)
- \* 2020 Golden Comic Award
- \* French, Japanese, and Korean rights have been sold for the original novel and a TV series is soon to be released.

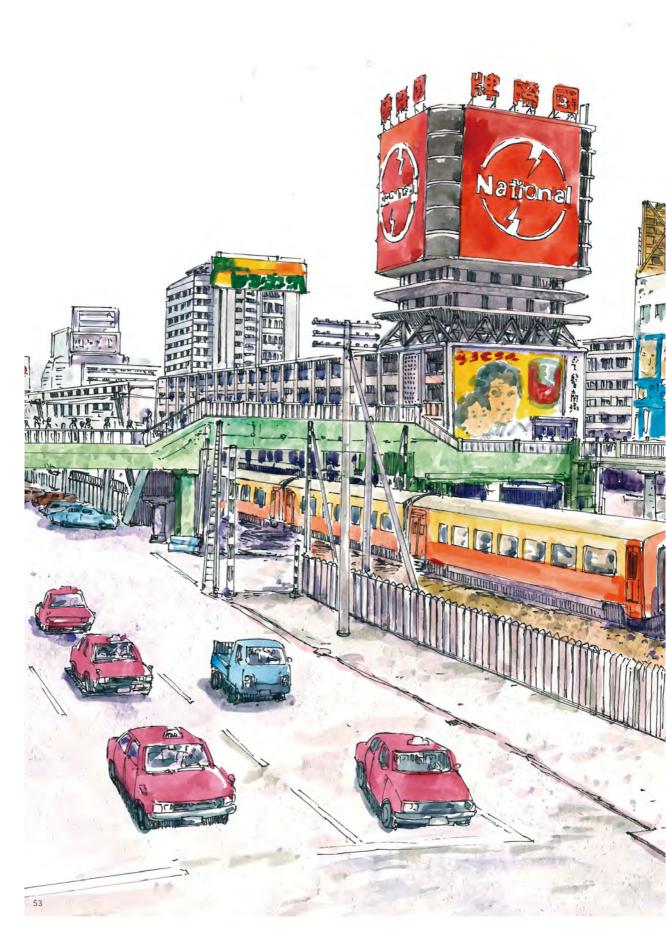
Man Booker prize nominee Wu Ming-Yi's much-loved collection of nostalgic short stories, as a graphic novel. Let the artists whisk you back to Taipei of the 1980s, to the long-gone Chunghwa Market Bazaar and a world of magical memories.

In 1980s Taipei, the Chunghwa Market Bazaar was home to hardware stores, snack stalls, record shops, tailors, locksmiths, and seal-carvers – if you needed it, you could find it here. Any resident of Taipei at the time will have precious memories of the eight buildings that formed the market. And linking those buildings, they will remember, was a skywalk. And perhaps one day, on the skywalk, they saw an illusionist.

The illusionist on the skywalk has many tricks. He can magic up a copy of a key, make the safety railing disappear, and have a papercut man stand up and dance. Children cluster round, trying to spot the trick to his tricks. Years later, those children are grown and the market is gone, and all that is left is stories steeped in magic: The elevator to the 99th floor that turns you invisible, the stone lion that walks into your dreams and joins you for a stroll, the drawing of a goldfish which comes to life and swims around its bowl (although if you look closely, you can see through it) and a curiously clever cat which keeps lonely old folk company.

Adapted from a collection of short stories by Taiwan's best-known writer, Wu Ming-Yi, this graphic novel has been created by two artists, each drawing four stories from the lives of those children who watched the illusionist on the skywalk. These are tales of adventure and setback, of love and death – of all that we must face as we grow up, told in a blend of nostalgia and magical realism. Let Wu Ming-Yi's words and the art of Sean Chuang and Ruan Guang-Ming carry you back to 1980s Taipei.

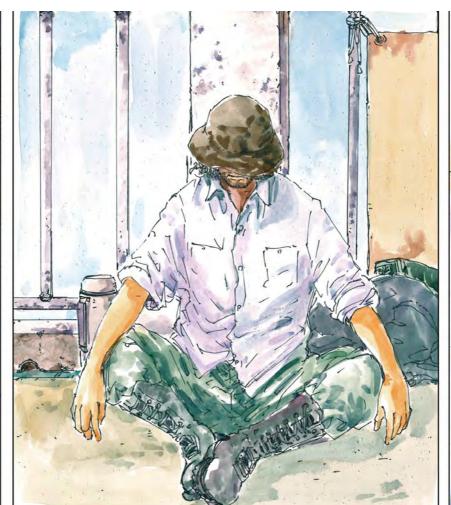










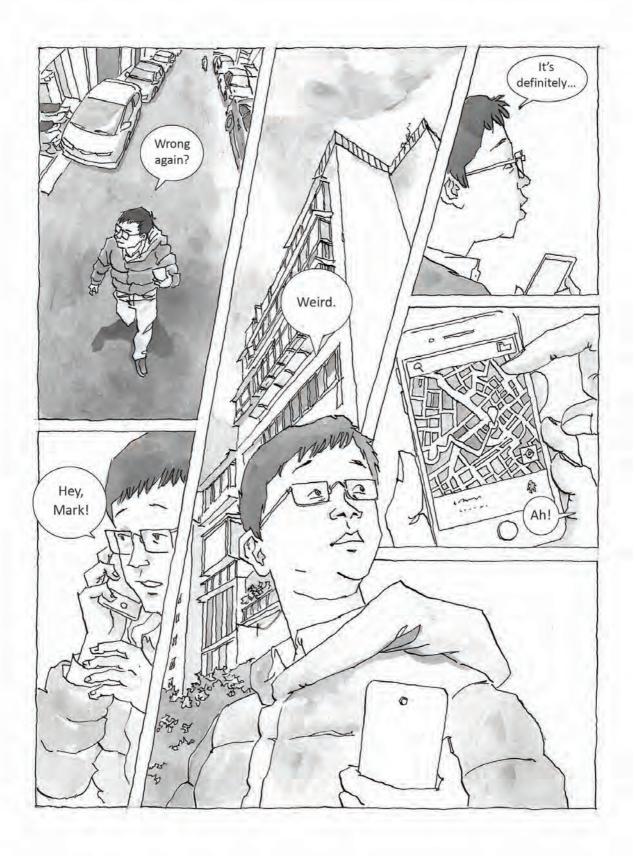




















# COMICS (FROM RIGHT TO LEFT)

Please turn to the back to enjoy the last comic which is read from left to right.



















## **IRON BOY: PIRATE TOWN**

## 鐵男孩: 山寨之城



Publisher: Dala
Date: 5/2020
Rights contact: booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com

Pages: 128

· Volume: 1 (ongoing)

In a future dominated by robots, the human outpost Pirate Town is under threat. But when cantankerous robot designer Max arrives in town and meets young mechanical prodigy Davy and a martial arts master who cannot believe humanity will fall to the robots—anything could happen.

In a not-so-distant future, robots are replacing humans and leaving them out of work. For the destitute and homeless, there is only one place to go: Pirate Town. A chaotic settlement of traders in counterfeit goods, criminals and murderers, where tourists from the big city gawk at the chaos while wearing masks to avoid choking on the toxic air.

Davy, 13 and a talented mechanic, is a Pirate Town native who dreams of competing in the hugely popular Robot Tournament. But his grandfather, dependent on the boy, will not allow it, and Davy continues to help his grandfather and other old folk by smuggling in medicines: a single kind act in this evil place. Meanwhile, robot designer Max arrives in Pirate Town to meet his old friend, Cheng Chuan, a martial arts master who believes humanity will overcome the robots. But until that day, he sits in his empty dojo awaiting students.

Max and Davy's stories become intertwined when Max rescues Davy from street thugs. The thugs seek revenge, armed with a battlebot, forcing Cheng Chuang to step in. Robot or human - who will emerge victorious?

Adapted from a developing movie of the same name, *Iron Boy: Pirate Town* features unique characters and the conflicts they face: from robot advocates and opponents, to robots with personalities of their own, to greedy cartel bosses - in bold yet detailed strokes, Richard Metson takes us on along on Davy and Max's thrilling adventure through the shadows of... Pirate Town!



#### Richard Metson 麥人杰

Born in 1964, Richard Metson has worked on graphic novels, comics, movies, and video games. In 1998 he directed Taiwanese animation *Grandma and Her Ghosts*, which was well received at international film festivals in Vancouver, San Francisco, New York, Seattle, and Philadelphia. French and English translation rights have been sold for his graphic novel *Modern Sex-Files*.

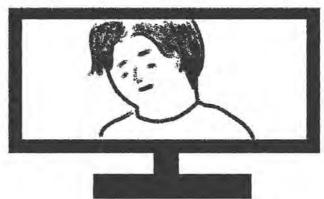
2007年她在看 OND O非 王子時 就 說 3 一樣的話 SHE ASKED ME THE SAME THING AFTER WATCHING COFFEE PRINCE IN 2007





她看着电视上的孔别, 問我:

SHE LOOKED AT GONG YOU AND ASKED ME:





# 我給她我平常吃的心律菜

I GAVE HER MY ANTIARRHYTHMIC DRUG

你吃完去坐著看電視 TAKE THIS, GO SIT DOWN AND WATCH TV.



# 喪禮前終天,媽媽可能看到3 外公的屍體而嚇到

MY MOM SEEMED FRIGHTENED AFTER SEEING HER DAD'S BODY.

心足抄女子小老...

睡不著...

MY HEART BEATS SO PAST ...

I COUDLN'T SLEEP ...





## 2017年春末,病了一陣子的外公去世了

AT THE END OF SPRING, 2017. MY GRANDFATHER DIED OF BLOOD CANCER.







## GOOD FRIEND, CANCER

## 癌症好朋友



Publisher: Slowork
Date: 12/2019
Rights contact:

books from taiwan. rights @gmail.com

· Pages: 184 · Volume: 1 (END)

When my mother gets cancer for the second time, she asked if I would keep her company through her chemotherapy. And of course, I said yes. But how am I meant to cope with it all? Pam Pam uses a clean but comical style to portray the joys and sorrows of accompanying a loved one through an illness.

Despite the technical and medical wonders of the modern age, cancer remains one of humanity's biggest enemies. And while we all know the patients themselves suffer, what of their loved ones, who find themselves sudden becoming carers, struggling with negative emotions, drained by the demands upon them? They too face a long physical and emotional battle.

Good Friend, Cancer is a daughter's first-hand account of her mother's chemotherapy treatment. Finding herself now responsible for caring for her mother, she worries as she waits in the hospital that maybe her genes mean the same fate is in store for her. And she is also resentful - she has missed out on a change to follow her dreams and travel overseas. And most of all, and most unanswerably: why her?

Graphic novelist Pam Pam's simple style and plain strokes provide a humorous look at a harsh reality and turn misfortunes into charming tales. Over the course of 18 short comics, Pam Pam examines the traditional roles of a "daughter" and the pressures of being an adult as she portrays truths about family relationships which we all recognize even if we cannot admit to it.



#### Pam Pam Liu

Active as an illustrator, an independent graphic novelist and a musician, Pam Pam is also a talented animator. She often turns the dark side of life, its anger and failures, into fantastical graphic novels, but also creates true-to-life works such as *Good Friend, Cancer*. Her other works include *A Trip to Asylum* and *When My Brother was a Kid*. She was a resident of La Maison des Auteurs in Angoulême, France (2018-2019).

































































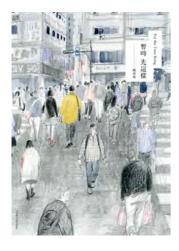






### FOR THE TIME BEING

## 暫時先這樣



Publisher: Dala
Date: 12/2019
Rights contact: booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com

Pages: 144 Volume: 1 (END)

· Rights sold: French (Actes Sud)

- \* 2021 Taipei Book Fair Award
- \* 2020 Golden Comic Award

These are tales of women making lives for themselves in the big city: commuting to office jobs, enjoying cooking for one, and wandering through the historic streets with an old friend. In the city, everyone is playing a role in their own stories, and our author depicts those ordinary yet meaningful scenes of everyday life, building up a Taipei tapestry.

Have you lived in a city? People come here for their own reasons - to stay, to study, to follow their dreams, to love, to work, to marry. Maybe you thought you'd just be passing through, but one day you realize you've become used to the urban bustle - and are now a part of it.

For one young woman working in the big city, Taipei is the flood of motorbikes at rush hour, tiny apartments that get more expensive by the minute, and her only source of joy: her cat. For another, it is catching up with an old friend in Dadaocheng, savoring the childhood tastes of a bowl of almond tofu, and visiting the Xiahai City God Temple to pray for a new love. For a third, there are sad times, as caring for a grandmother in hospital with cancer stirs up old memories. But what can she do, but accept the facts and make the most of what time is left?

Nine stories of women living in the city, told with only sparse dialogue, shows the reader the different lives playing out in the city, whether those are lives of leisure or of scraping by. And sometimes, when it's too hard to make sense of, just tell yourself this is all just "For the Time Being".

Chen Pei-Hsiu has twice been nominated for the Angoulême Young Talent award. With her realistic watercolor art and authentic young urban voice, she records vignettes of daily life on Taipei's streets. The scenery may be unique to Taipei, but the estrangement and self-sufficiency are something familiar to anyone who has lived in a city.



#### Chen Pei-Hsiu 陳沛珛

Originally an archaeological illustrator at the Academia Sinica, Chen eventually went freelance, and has published work in magazines, newspapers, and in book form. She has been short-listed for the Angelême Prize for Young Talent two times, and her most recent titles include picturebook Asleep All Day Long, Le Anguille Comandano, and her first comic book For the Time Being.



















### THE SHORT ELEGY

## 小輓



Publisher: Locus
 Date: 10/2019
 Rights contact:
 booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com

• **Pages:** 304 • **Volume:** 1 (END)

- \* 2020 BolognaRagazzi Award (Comics Young Adult)
- \* 2020 Golden Tripod Award (Children and Young Adult)
- \* 2019 OpenBook Award

Death can shake us, and it can prompt us to reexamine our lives. Death can be physical, and it can be an emotional or spiritual loss. In these short tales told through exquisite images, Animo takes a thought-provoking look at three aspects of death.

An elegy is a poem, written for the dead. We all have different answers when asked what a death means for us. It can be sadness, or shock, or a spur to reexamine our own lives. Death can be physical, but also emotional or spiritual. These three stories are visual elegies exploring everyday deaths.

In "Dry River", a schoolboy witnesses a fatal accident on his way home. Shaken, he wonders when death will strike next. In "Home Mosquito", the struggles of a mother and a mosquito as they both try to raise their offspring are contrasted. "The Ribbon" tells of a foreign student, a love lost, and ever-lasting memories.

Animo communicates the emotional detail of everyday life almost without dialogue. The panes combine to tell a complete story; taken individually each image has its own point to make. These are simple tales with much to say, depicted with great art and style.



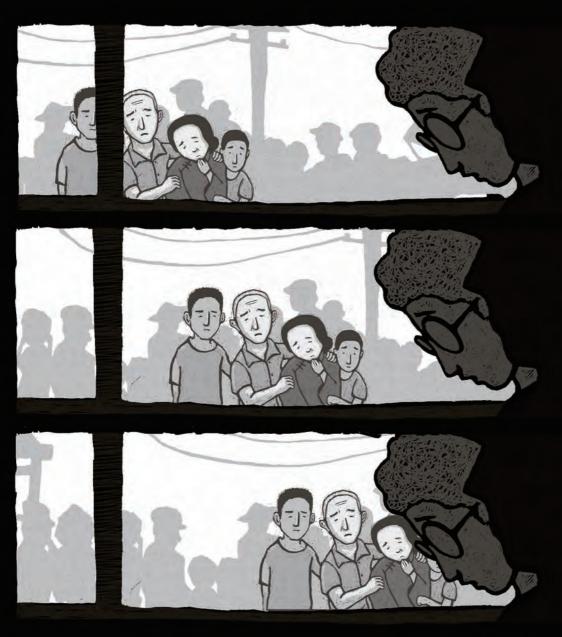
#### Animo Chen 阿尼默

Animo Chen graduated from Dayeh University with a degree in Visual Communication Design and has an MA from the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague. His works are prolific and varied, and he has worked as a still photographer, art director for film and TV, and has directed animations. He also has 18 years of illustration experience. He is often published in the literary supplements of newspapers and also designs book covers. His own works include the illustrated book *The Disappearance of 366* and a collection of photographs titled *Let it Ring*. In 2020 *The Short Elegy* won the BolognaRagazzi Award for Comics - Young Adult.



## COMICS

(FROM LEFT TO RIGHT)





Kun-lin had no idea what awaited him once he boarded the bus. He did not know if he would see his family again, or Yang Pi-ju, the girl he had yet to confess his love to.











#### 10 September, 1950

"Kun-lin's been taken away!" Working late at the town hall, Kun-lin was detained by plain-clothes military policemen. His colleague and elementary school friends Chang Sheng-po saw what happened and rushed to tell his family.

Kun-hsiu, second eldest of the brothers, hurried to the police station, but despite repeated enquiries he learned nothing.

A-sià, A-niâ! I asked and asked, but they won't let him out...



Ai-ya! How could this happen? Policeman Lin knows him!

I asked the military police why they took him, but they wouldn't say.



He's an honest boy, what do they think they're doing, arresting him at work?















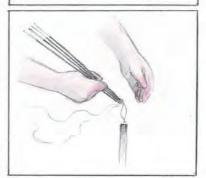


















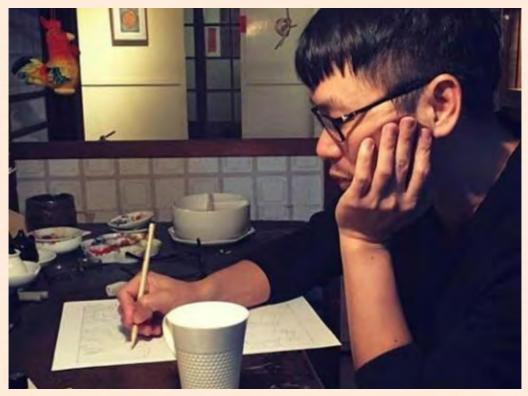
on the table in his childhood home, and the stage from which the Japanese officers announce the end of the war. "This wasn't a story we invented on our own. We were concerned about how we represented this living person, and wanted to minimize mistakes." From the beginning, Zhou Jianxin felt a deep calling to faithfully depict Tsai Kun-lin's life.

## Reading as a Personal Experience of Collective Memory

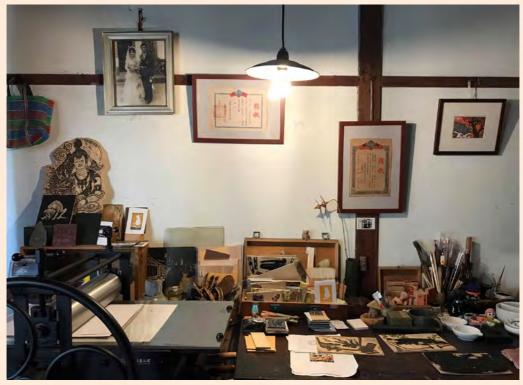
At the end of the interview the conversation turns to *Son of Formosa*'s potential in foreign markets. Yu Peiyun is forthright in her insistence that comic books and graphic novels are a gentle medium, free from the stimulating lights and sounds of high-tech entertainment. Readers can choose a solitary moment to quietly digest a work, giving space for emotional currents to be drawn out

in their own time. This kind of reading experience is cherished around the world, allowing comic books and graphic novels to easily cross borders.

While the story of *Son of Formosa* is a microcosm of Taiwan's journey through the modern era, from colonization, to totalitarianism, to democracy, these elements of collective memory are not exclusive to Taiwan's people. They are greater than the history of a single nation. "To international readers," Yu Peiyun reflects, "Taiwan may seem like a far-away place, but possibly their own country, or neighboring countries, have a similar history. These feelings are something we hold in common." The potential of *Son of Formosa* is not only to provide international readers a window on Taiwan. More importantly, it will resonate with ordinary people in all countries who feel caught up in the great tides of history.



Zhou Jianxin



Zhou Jianxin's studio

that graphic novels are usually fast paced, narrating a complete event within the space of a page. But Mr. Tsai's story contained emotional tones that needed to slowly steep before their impact could be fully felt, such as the homesickness, melancholy, and cherished ideals that are conveyed by the aforementioned songs. At these moments, Zhou Jianxin uses the full-page and multi-page spreads so common in picture books to create a sense of stillness, slowing time within the progression of images to allow for sustained emotional development.

The well-thought out variations in color scheme and illustration techniques used in each volume are another highlight of these books. In the first volume Mr. Tsai's childhood memories are represented by unfussy sketches touched up with pink watercolor for skin tones, a color which also symbolically hints at the red of the Japanese imperial flag. The second volume digitally emulates the relatively stiff forms of ink woodblocks to bring out the dreariness of internment, only introducing color upon

Mr. Tsai's release as he is greeted by the sight of the blue sky and ocean. The third volume, in which Mr. Tsai founds a children's magazine, *Prince*, echoes Japanese manga in its use of effect lines and screen tones, accentuating the retro vibe with its maize and maroon palette. The artwork of the as-yet-unreleased fourth volume utilizes modern illustration techniques paired with bright orange accents for a more contemporary feel. By laying out a comprehensive and precise design plan for the entire series, Zhou Jianxin hoped to better convey the passage through the phases of Mr. Tsai's life. His intent is to use "lines to convey feelings, technique to convey the era".

Because Son of Formosa is based on the life of a living individual, the creators were both nervous and excited to pass their drafts to Mr. Tsai for review. "Only he could discover those details which we knew nothing about," Zhou Jianxin says with a laugh. Mr. Tsai's personal feedback led to the incorporation of additional details for readers to enjoy, like the carved floral ornamentation



Zhou Jianxin in his studio

a chord with readers. One such detail appears in the second volume, as political prisoners are moved to Green Island for internment. Upon seeing the prisoners, the local inhabitants are shocked. "They're so pale. They look like white woodlice," they say, comparing the malnourished prisoners to the thin-limbed crustaceans that inhabit the island. In confusion they ask, "They're all people? Why were we told they were apes (singsing)?" The island's inhabitants had been told that "new students (sin-sing)" would be arriving, a euphemism for prisoners which is also a near-homophone for apes in Mandarin. Humorous details such as these come directly from Yu Peiyun's research, and were incorporated to more accurately recreate the atmosphere of the times. Yu Peiyun jokes that her research was a bit like solving a historical mystery. Since Mr. Tsai couldn't possibly provide all of the details to recreate an entire era, it was left her to track down the missing pieces of the puzzle. Fortunately, Yu Peiyun relishes detective work.

In addition to finding historical information to weave into this moving tale, Yu Peiyun put a great deal of thought into the presentation of the story. The title, Son of Formosa (Child of Qingshui District in Chinese) indicates how she differentiates her approach from that of conventional memoirs covering this period of history. She hopes to clear away the clouds of misery and suffering associated with the era, erasing the usual labels, and instead convey that same impression of purity she had on first meeting Mr. Tsai. Although he had lived through political and national upheavals, in the end he was still that innocent child of Qingshui District - a son of Formosa

A number of period songs also appear in the books. Yu Peiyun relates that Mr. Tsai is a music lover with a fine singing voice, for whom music has an almost redemptive power. Inserting interludes of song into the story highlights this aspect of his character, showing readers how his singing restored his spirits in times of hopelessness and kept the taste of freedom alive in his heart through the darkest years of his imprisonment.

#### Images Reveal the Feelings Beyond Words

Zhou Jianxin's ample experience illustrating picture books informs his creative approach to this long-awaited challenge: his first full-length graphic novel. He explains

# TAIWAN'S HISTORY THROUGH AN ORDINARY LIFE: AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR AND THE ILLUSTRATOR BEHIND SON OF FORMOSA

Written by Anting Lu Translated by Joshua Dyer

Son of Formosa, the first graphic novel series from Slowork Publishing, depicts the milestones of Taiwan's modern history seen through the life story of Mr. Tsai Kun-lin. Within its pages, readers witness the shifting panorama of the eras of Japanese colonization, postwar retrocession, the White Terror, the lifting of martial law, and the coming of democracy. Combining the spare but powerful text of author Yu Peiyun and the sensitive artwork of Zhou Jianxin, the four volume series is more than the story of one man – it is a vessel for the memories of an entire generation of Taiwanese.

#### An Ordinary Life: History in Miniature

Author Yu Peiyun laid eyes on Mr. Tsai Kun-lin for the first time in 2016. At the time she was assisting with an exhibition of writings by victims of the White Terror being held at National Taitung University, and Mr. Tsai attended the opening as an honored guest. The man Yu Peiyun witnessed that night was spry, radiant with energy, at once modest and warmly engaging. Having some understanding of his life experiences, she couldn't help but wonder, "How could someone who had endured so

much give the impression of such warmth and wisdom? Coming into contact with him was refreshing, as if he had the heart of an innocent child." As she listened to him sharing his memories, the impulse kept welling up inside her to record the story of his life.

As both a scholar and author of children's books, Yu Peiyun had discovered that most of the children's literature available in Taiwan came from overseas. "But we have such rich history and stories of our own," she relates, "They should be written down." For this reason she decided to collaborate with Slowork Publishing to produce a book focused on Taiwan: a detailed life history of Mr. Tsai Kun-lin that would serve as a portrait of an era in miniature.

#### Sleuthing for Source Materials: Piecing Together Taiwan's Unique History

A work of historical biography cannot be undertaken without first gathering a rich array of source materials. Mr. Tsai had already published a personal memoir, so Yu Peiyun focused on researching details of everyday life that she could write into the story in hopes of striking



#### Story by Yu Peiyun 游珮芸

A graduate of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at National Taiwan University, Yu Peiyun also holds a PhD from Ochanomizu University in Japan. She currently researches and teaches at the Graduate Institute of Children's Literature at National Taitung University. She is also involved in the curating, writing, translation and criticism of children's literature.



#### Comic by Zhou Jianxin 周見信

Zhou Jianxin has established himself as one of Taiwan's up-and-coming illustrators. His first illustrated title, *The Maroon Oriole*, won the 2014 Taiwan Golden Butterfly Award for Best Book Design and honorable mention from the International Design Awards. His collaborative works with Kuo Nai-wen have also been very well received: their title *Missing Cat Posters* also won Honorable Mention in the Hsin-Yi Children's Literature Award in 2012, and *Puppy and I* won first prize for an Illustrated Publication at the 2016 Hsin-Yi Children's Literature Award, a position that has remained empty for eight years. He is the featured artist of Taiwan Pavilion at the 2017 Guadalajara International Book Fair (FIL), for the launch of the Spanish edition of *Missing Cat Posters*.

## **SON OF FORMOSA**

## 來自清水的孩子





· Publisher: Slowork

· **Date:** 5/2020 (Vol.1), 6/2020 (Vol. 2)

· Rights contact:

booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com

Pages: 162 (Vol.1), 182 (Vol.2)

· Volume: 2 (ongoing)

· Rights sold: Japanese (Iwanami Shoten)

#### \* 2021 Taipei Book Fair Award

The true story of Tsai Kun-lin, born in Qingshui, Taichung, in 1930, as he lives through Japanese rule and the arrival of the Kuomintang. Polite and a good student, Tsai found himself sentenced to ten years in jail for "membership of an illegal organization" after attending a high school book club. This graphic novel recounts his tenacity and determination.

The 1930s, Japanese-ruled Taiwan. A young boy, Tsai Kun-lin grows up, accompanied by picture books and folk tales. But the merciless flames of World War 2 soon arrive - protests, bombing and conscription will change his life forever.

After the war, the young booklover learns a new language and hopes to finally live a life of peace, never expecting his attendance at a high school book club will land him in jail. Transported to the penal colony for political prisoners on Green Island, he loses ten years of his youth to torture, terror, hard labor, and brainwashing.

This series of graphic novels draws on the actual events of Tsai's life. At Taichung First Senior High School he was a trainee soldier and a good student; years later he was sentenced to ten years in prison for attending a high school book club. On release he worked in publishing and advertising, and founded *Prince*, a children's magazine which kept Taiwan's cartooning tradition alive during martial law. He raised funds to allow a rural little league team to compete in Taipei and, on retirement, became a human rights activist.

Tsai's life is Taiwan's recent history writ small. There is darkness, but always a light; hardship, but always the strength to endure. A simple yet graceful style faithfully recreates the historical scenes, with the accurate use of the Chinese, Taiwanese, and Japanese languages bringing those times to life. The warmth and vitality of the storytelling demonstrate that while we cannot control events, we can, as Tsai did, persevere through them.

TAICCA SELECT

# COMICS (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT)

#### **About TAICCA Select**

As book adaptations and interdisciplinary development gain momentum in recent years, TAICCA recommends outstanding titles in each issue to publishers, TV and film producers, and other media developers worldwide, with sample translations and related articles available online. For more details, email: booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com.

