Blue Bird, Oil pastels drawing on paper, 297mm×420mm, 2019

Contents

The Haunted Paper Theater is a prototype of a bilingual digital box that can help children learn languages through stories as well as foster bonds between children and parents.

Instructor: Prof. Dr. Daniel Hromada
Materials: Arduino Uno, 4.3-inch E-Paper Waveshare, Music Shield V 2.0, Magnetic Sensors, Cardboards
Duration: Two month
User Group: Children between six to ten years old

Problem

I came up with the idea because when I was a kid my parents always worked overtime and barely came home before my bedtime to read stories for me. This situation is still normal and common in modern life because of stressful working environments.

Solution

Thus, I hope to design a story box that can help parents read stories to and maintain bonds with their children even though they are not physically around.

For the current version, the story box has one E-Paper screen, which shows illustrations of the stories, and two magnetic sensors attached in the two drawers, which activate different recordings of the stories when children close different drawers. The default recordings are in Chinese and English. Both the E-Paper and Music Shield use memory cards and parents can upload their own stories and recordings.

In terms of the exterior design, I changed from a pre-designed standard box to a self-assembled treasure box, which prompts children´s DIY ability. In terms of the general design, I wrote an adventure story for the treasure box itself. The adventure story aims at building a folklore setting for both parents and children to diverse as well as stimulating children´s imagination and their interests in the box.

Once upon a time, there was a ship. Inside the ship was the famous Paper Crane Theater. Each night, the theater held one performance aboard. At 4 p.m, the ship would stop at a city and the director would invite ten audiences aboard. According to the legend, the director sold his soul to Hades so that he could use ghosts as the actors. After the performances, audiences would be able to see the lost fortunes between light and shadow, between the living and the dead.

One afternoon, Paper Crane Theater received its audiences as usual and was heading towards a new open sea. Suddenly a tempest landed. A tempest strong like this had not been seen for one hundred years. Dark clouds encircled the last ray of light in sky, and the waves roared to chase the living in the sea away.

The director pulled off the alarm. But before the siren went off, the monstrous wave overturned the ship and devoured everything inside, including the treasure box. The treasure box which contains the soul of the director.

People rumoured that the director betrayed his vow with Hades and Hades took all the life aboard away. Whoever finds the treasure box could recall the Paper Crane Theater from death to life and won the lost fortunes.

During your treasure hunting journey, mermaids would surround you and allure you with their one thousand and one night stories. Ghosts would hunt you down with their mesmeric chanting.

Are you ready for it?

2020.06.15
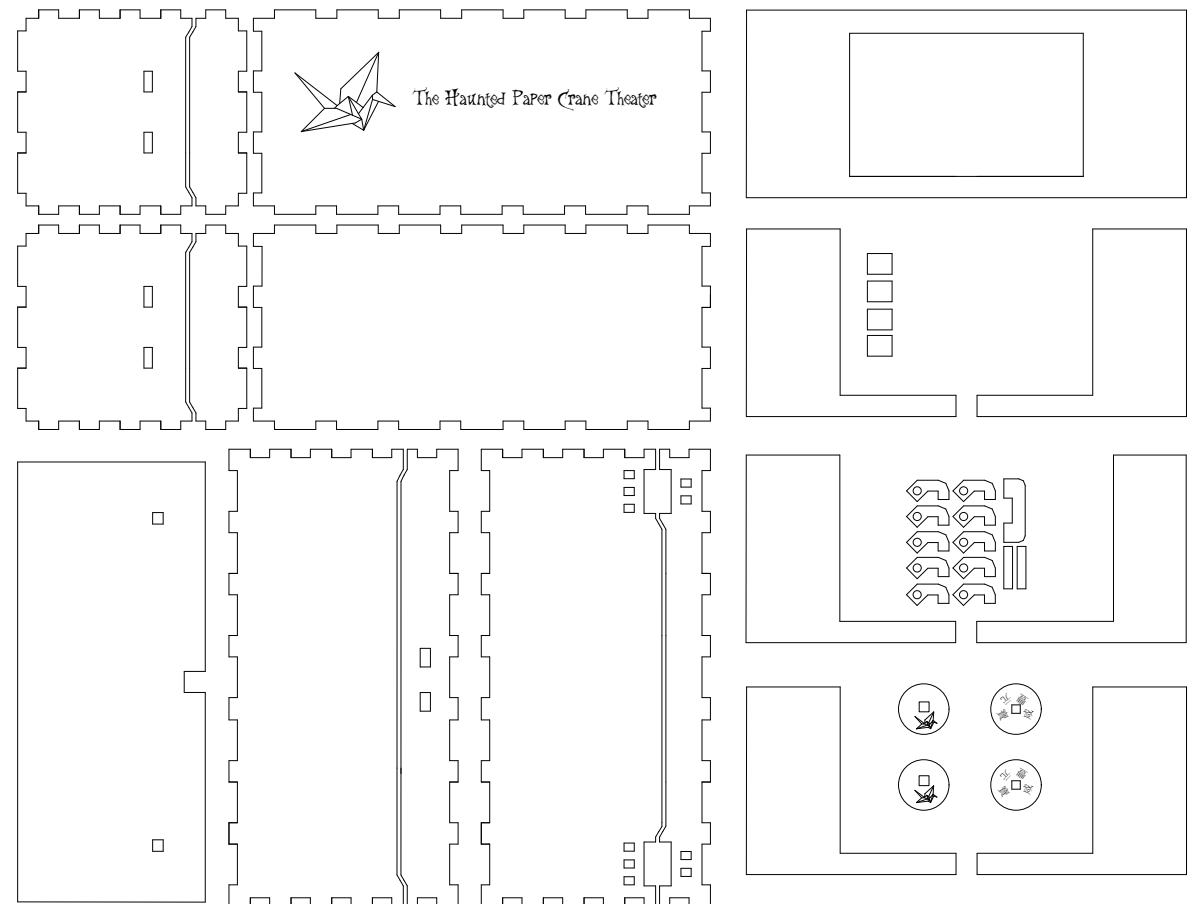
Ongoing

My future research plan is to build a digital system for both parents and children to grow their emotional resilience together. The system is composed of a digital toy for children and a mobile application for parents.

Problem

Sometimes parents may ignore their emotional problems and needs and mainly focus on their children´s, and other times parents may ignore or fail to recognize their children´s emotional problems and needs. Thus, I want to build a system that motivates parents and children to share their emotional problems openly, accept them individually, but find solutions collectively. I believe that children´s performance on emotional management is highly influenced by their parents´ performance as well.

Solution

The digital toy aims at providing behavioral games and stories for children to recognize emotional-disturbed behaviors, differentiate their feelings, and understand the thoughts behind their feelings. Children can choose whether to finish the games alone or with their parents together. The App gears at providing parents both pedagogical and behavioral tips for understanding their own and children´s emotions as well as the methods of communicating with their children about negative emotions. The digital toy and the App will share the same system, which children and parents can choose voluntarily to share each other with their emotional status.

Right now, I am researching the application of behavioral sciences and emotional management in early childhood education. Apart from that, I am analyzing the pros and cons of the present Apps for children to understand their emotions.
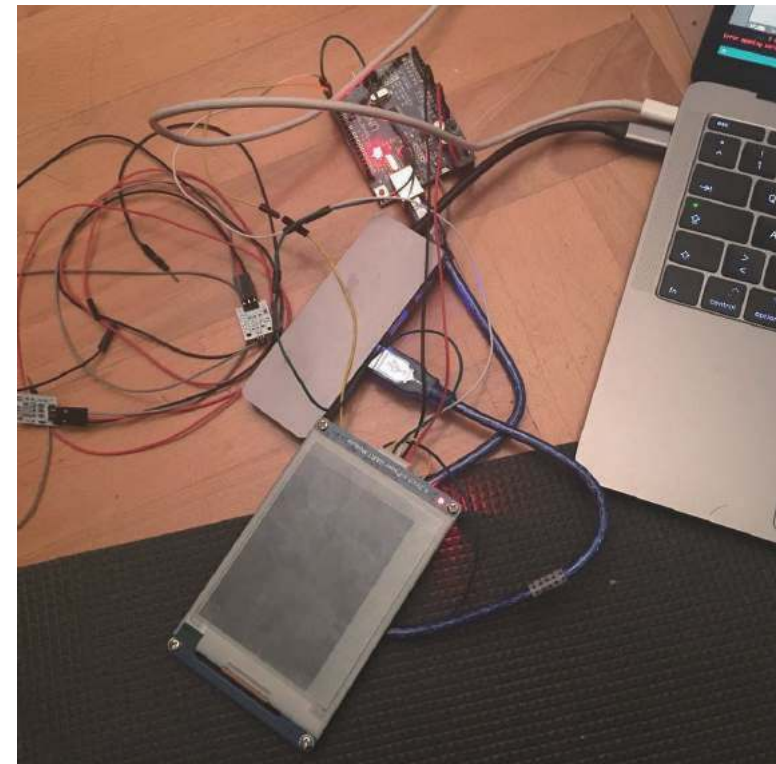
The Emergency Detector

Wearables Hearing aid, *Wearables and Machine Learning* Workshop, September 2019

The Emergency Detector is a prototype of wearables hearing aid that uses vibrations to send alarms to people with hearing weakness about the potential dangers around them.

Instructor: Dr. phil. Eleftherios Avramidis
Designers: Xiaojing Li and Yi Luo
Programmer: Christian Pflug
Materials: ESP32, Mini Sound Microphone Sensor Transducers, Japanese fabric
Duration: One week

In this project, I was responsible for researching hearing aids online, choosing the design problems, and the possible design directions for team discussions.

Problem
Some people may have a hearing weakness, but do not own hearing aids. Thus, they may not be able to quickly discern the dangers around them through sounds in public places.

Solution
For the hardware of the prototype, we used the micro-controller Adafruit and two mini sound microphone sensor transducers to transform sounds into vibrations. (Because of the pressure of the time, we only had time to install two sensors on the belt.) In the prototype version, the Detector was able to vibrate when someone nearby clapped their hands.

We decided on the Japanese Obi-Belt design for two reasons. Firstly, the Obi-Belt can hold all the wires and the sensors within the belt so that people will not feel intimated by them and keep a distance from the users. Secondly, the Obi design can protect the users´ privacy and provide them with security at the same time. The Obi-belt is portable and flexible and users can take the device out and put it into other belts easily.

Concept

The Emergency Detector is built on big data and open sources and can recognize noises from above certain levels (like fire alarm sirens or honking from cars) and transform them into vibrations to raise the users´ attention. The frequencies of the vibrations will reflect the proximity between the users and the dangers. The default version is to detect dangers and send alarms. But as it is open-sources based, users could edit and upload the library of receptions of sounds on their own. For example, users could upload the sounds of birds to further connect with the environment around them.
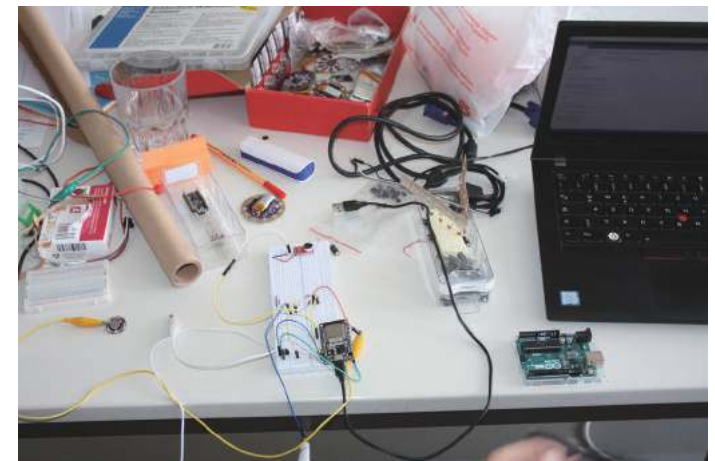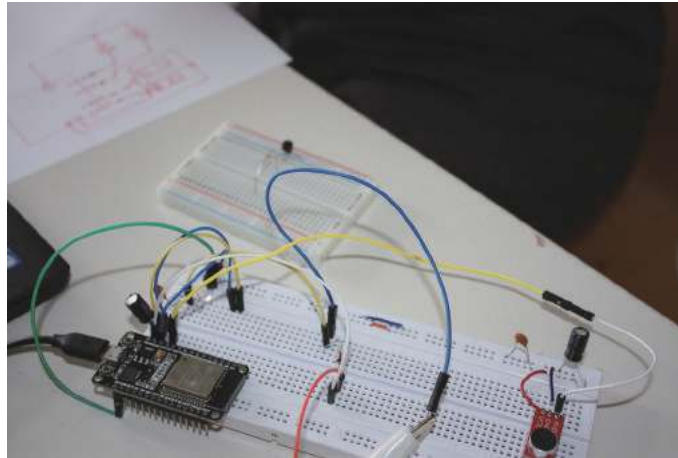
Seen/Seen is an interactive maze that intends to reflect on the daily decision-making process and raises the question on how many decisions are made on our own and how many are made by the influences of others.

Team members: Eamonn Williams, Tudor Rusu, Xiaojing Li
Materials: Medium-density fibreboard, Plastik, Iron Wire
Duration: One week

For this project, I came up with the question and later designed and built the maze with other two students from engineering and architecture backgrounds.

Problem

I came up with this idea because peer pressure is a dominant phenomenon in modern society. People sometimes think that they make decisions independently but instead, the decisions are out of others´ expectations. The unconsciously "conscious" decision making may lead to the loss of self-identities and self-recognition. Thus, I wanted to design an interactive game that could reflect on the peer pressure that we may all face in society.

Solution

Seen/Seen reverses the way of playing mazes. Players are not allowed to see the interior design of the maze. They are only allowed to see the backside of the maze, which is a piece of wood. The rule allows users to make simple decisions, like right or left, up or down, based on offered handles. For other mazes, players find their ways through consciously reading and studying them. For *Seen/Scene*, players find the way by "blindly" making decisions.
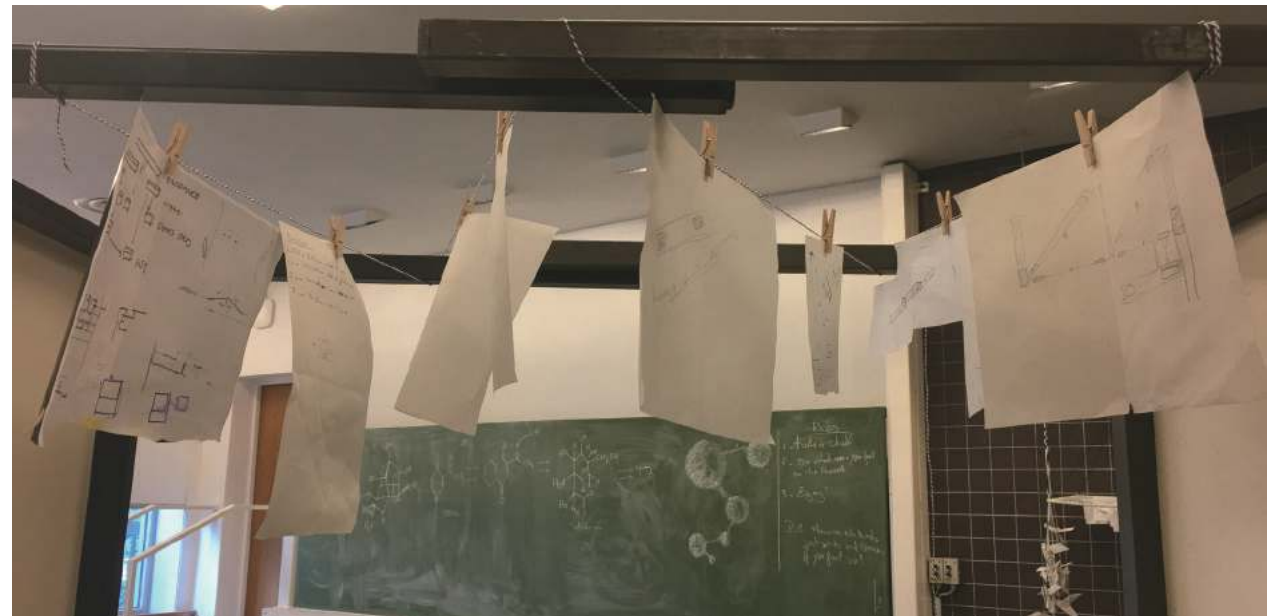
Why are you called the Sleeping Beauty?
Why are you called the Prince?
What is Sex?

Instructor: Julia Hart
Director: Xiaojing Li
Play: Sleeping Beauty by Elfriede Jelinek   Actors: Melanija Damjanović and Ross Sounart
Length: 15 minutes   Rehearsal: One month

Unlike Jelinke's emphasis of the woman (the Sleeping Beauty) as victims and are at the manipulation of man's (the Prince) power in the play *Sleeping Beauty*, I decided to direct the scene based on Judith Butler's theory of Gender Performativity and raise discussions about the meanings behind females and males, and one's consciousness in understanding genders and its power relations in society.

To achieve the effects, I decided on the cross-gender acting. The actor and the actress acted as both the Sleeping Beauty and the Prince. On stage, there is constant ambivalence in cross-gender, same-gender, and both-gender actings. The ambivalence stages audiences into an unsetting environment and pushes them to further reflect on the gender roles.

I further designed a mask that stood for the identity of *Sleeping Beauty*. The mask was composed of pieces of cut paper and the eerie look further alienated audiences out from the stereotypical romantic fairy tales and helped them focus on the scene itself.

Paper Crane Tea

The group installation, Handshake 302, Shenzhen, March 2014

Paper Crane Tea intends to use art to dispel misunderstandings and prejudices against migrant workers and promote conversations between locals and migrant workers in Shenzhen.

The group installation, Handshake 302, Shenzhen, March 2014

Paper Cranes Tea is held in Handshake 302, a 12.5 m2 rental apartment within an urban village in Shenzhen. I was invited as a representative of "the second-generation immigrant" (Shen Er Dai) to co-curate it with the other three artists Dr. Mary Ann O´Donnell, Kaiqin Zhang, and Yan Wan.

Even though migrant workers build out the miracle of Shenzhen´s economic growth, they are discriminated from the local social welfare system and fail to register at a legal local household. Migrant workers strive all their way for a decent life in Shenzhen, but most of them can only limit their life in cramped urban villages and isolate themselves from the city life because of the social prejudices and unfair social system.

The exhibition is curated in one-thousand-paper-cranes installation. According to the tale, when one folds up 1,000 paper cranes, they will fly away and realize one´s aspirations. *Paper Cranes Tea* recreates migrants' pipe dreams under the relentless economic and social pressure inside a metropolis. The mechanical repetition of folding 1,000 paper cranes stands for their loss of identity and their assimilation into tasks themselves.

Interview videos
1.what's the use of public art in an urban village?
https://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNjkzNTMxODQw.html?spm=a2h0j.11185381.listitem_page1.5!4~A
2.So why do foreginers come to Baishizhou?
https://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNjkzNTM4MTUy.html?spm=a2h0j.11185381.listitem_page1.5!3~A
3.Arrival Shenzhen
https://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNjkzNTM4MTUy.html?spm=a2h0j.11185381.listitem_page1.5!3~A
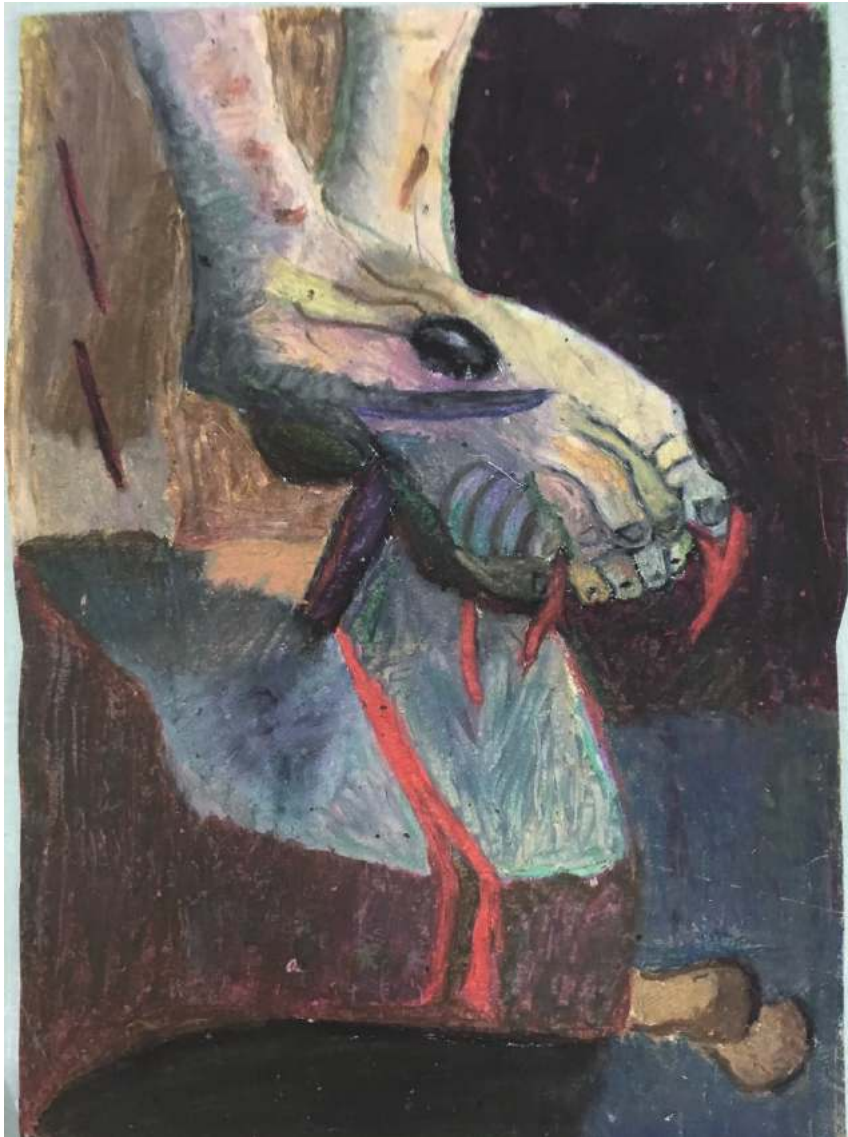4.Animal City rights
https://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNzAwMTk3Mjg0.html?spm=a2h0j.11185381.listitem_page1.5~A

Paintings/Drawings

The Guardian
Calligraphy pen on paper, 210mm×297mm
2017

The Eye of the Rabbit
Oil pastels drawing, *Between the Mountains Live the Good*
Beijing, February 2019

Oil pastels drawing on paper, 297mm×420mm, 2016
The Eye of the Rabbit was on the public exhibtion called *Between the Mountain Live the Good* February 2019.

Ghosts
Oil pastels drawing on paper, 297mm×420mm
2016

Clowns
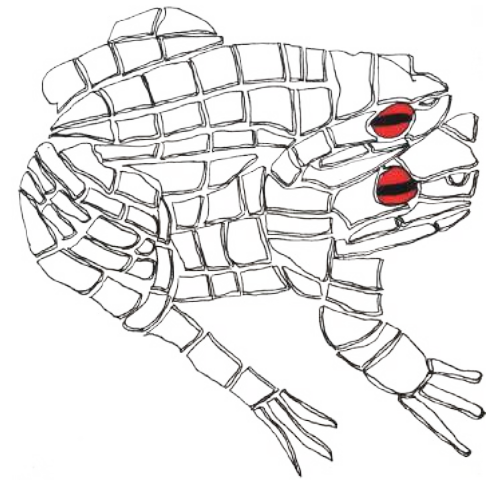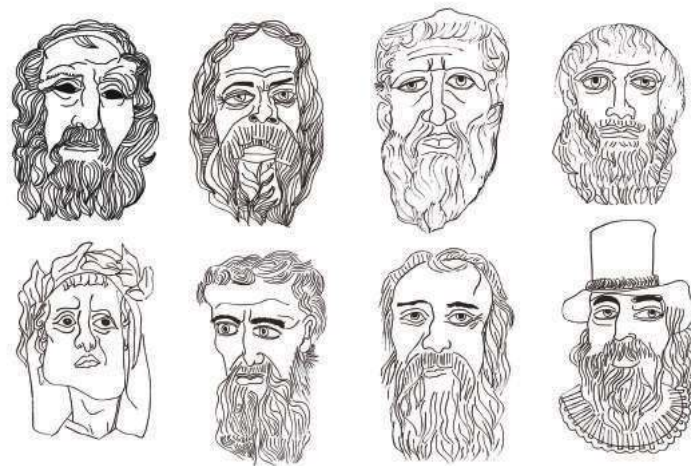Oil pastels drawing on paper, 297mm×420mm
2017

Plato´s Pigs
Oil pastels drawing on paper, 420mm×297mm
2017

Grandpa is the Monkey King
297mm×420mm, Crayons on paper
2018

Theaters in Berlin
Sketch on paper, 148mm×100mm
2019

Plato Goes Alive
Drawing on paper
2016

Visual Communication Design for Eine Uni
- Ein Buch Bard College Berli
2017

The Great Thoughts
Drawing on paper
2016

Consummation
Drawing on paper
2016