

## Artist's Statement

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I was born and raised in China, where I studied industrial and interactive design. Since 2010, I've been working on digital media art. Over the past several years, most of my work has investigated the relationship between the human senses, nature and technology.

I grew up in an environment where I had no intimate contact with anyone or was shown any affection, least of all by my family. My father didn't see me as his daughter. He saw me as part of his crew and he treated me as such. He thought that if you could do the job, then it was your job to do. My being introverted and non-talkative did not help our relationship either. During college, this caused me much pain and confusion, but, at the same time, inspired and motivated me to examine the complexity of family relationships in particular, and human relationships in general.

In 2010, I chose to study abroad, in the U.S.A., by participating in a program at UCB – “human peace and conflict,” where I continued my exploration of human relationships and collective consciousness. Also, I have researched senses in biological aspect. I have studied various psychological including social behavior, group psychology, space psychology, interpersonal relationships, and some Chinese traditional psychologies(Taoism, Confucianism, etc.), etc. All to better understand human relationships. I explored a lot of interdisciplinary subjects, including what are the long term affects of the lack of physical contact in human relationships? How do senses convey information, make people connected with each other? How do different cultures and religions affect human sensing behaviors? Except for the general understanding, this time of exploration gives me deeper understanding of my family situation, and how I have become the person I am. Before this period of time, my design works were more focus on function and usability. After this time, I started questioning how senses affect human, what is the value of human connection and physical contact, and what are self embodiment and bodily perception. And have been experiencing these questions through my interactive art works,

Our physical bodies are limited and impermanent, in humanity I observe a universal desire to transcend these limitations. But our senses are boundless, rich and even immortal. The impression of certain smells or touch you left to people could affect them for a long period of time or even their whole life. In our day-to-day existence we often send information out in multiple ways which we may not notice, we affect other lives, and others effect us in the same way. How human senses themselves and the surroundings? How have developing technologies changed the ways of sensing?

I have been exploring the effects of human physical touch since last year. Thinking about 30 years ago, we exchanged information and expressed emotions by face-to-face chatting and body languages. We cherished every possibility of communication and connection with others. Nowadays, global Internet makes everything so fast and so easy, but the downside is that we don't appreciate the connection, and we don't have deep contacts with others anymore. And while physical contact is one of the most effective ways of communication, and even though we used to be as familiar with touch as we are with breathing, it's often downplayed or disregarded, even within such fields as the history of the body or the history of medicine. Human skin is the oldest and the most sensitive of our organs, our first medium of communication, and our most efficient protector. Touch is the parent of our eyes, ears, nose and mouth; it is the mother of senses. For me, the most exciting aspect of touch is that it is so broadly related to our culture, history, individual personality and emotions, humanity, sociology, biological effects, etc. I see touch not only as a special form of meaningful language, connection and interaction, but also as a representation of the human being, which has profound effects on society and the larger world, outside the self.

As a person and an artist, observing how human feel and deal with senses, making human enjoy being human, creating opportunities for sensing are of interest to me. Through projects and experiences, my focus have been how we may access, convey and manifest the internal feeling, and how the external surroundings touch and stimulate the internal feelings and emotions. Especially when the hustle and bustle of the physical city gets too intense, humans have little opportunity for taking a moment to being, sensing, and feeling, instead of doing. There is always more to feel, more territory to explore within the self and between self and others, more opportunity to open, grow and change.