



culture. We often talk about “entering/exiting history” or “going into/coming out of a dream state.” Walking involves reality, fantasy and dreams. We also often talk about “finding a path” or “seeking the way,” using the everyday act of walking as a metaphor for the search for a goal in life. Many possibilities exist in the cracks that separate all the things in the world. The word “Crack” in the exhibition title has a double meaning – an experience of walking in a space, but also a sense of being “pressed in,” of finding it difficult to move forward yet having no choice but to move. At the same time, it hints that people are always walking “in between” things. These indiscernible distances enable people to move forward, communicate, connect or interact, which in turn hints at the possibility of thinking innovatively and overcoming our conundrums.

Human life began with walking, and humans have developed language to communicate with one another. The evolution of language and writing has endowed the development of cities and cultures with rich imagery. French theorist Michel de Certeau asserts: “The act of walking is to the urban system what the speech act is to language or to the statements uttered.” Walking is to the weaving of a city’s fabric as speech is to language. Walking (both the action and the idea) creates paths—perhaps shortcuts, perhaps detours. These many different paths form lines, some running parallel to each other, others intersecting, others interweaving into surfaces and forming networks. In the exhibition, these “linear” concepts arouse the imagination and engage the minds of visitors through dialogue and interconnection.

Some significant works from the TFAM collection are selected, such as **Lucio Fontana’s** *Concetto Spaziale* (1961), with two linear slashes in the canvas concretely transforming a two-dimensional painting into a three-dimensional space. The performance art documentary *Pencil Walker* (1996-2015), records **Jin-Hua Shi** walking while dragging a pencil for countless hours over the course of two decades, creating overlapping lines that form an overlay image of both life and art. In *Taipei Note: 2011.11.19-2011.11.28* by **Pak Sheung Chuen**, lively short sentences composed in diary form are scattered in fragments in inconspicuous spots throughout the space, inviting viewers to search and imagine as they roam the exhibition.

The exhibition also features major international artworks rarely exhibited in Taiwan, including **Omer Fast’s** *Continuity*, commissioned for Documenta 13 in 2012, which follows a young German soldier returning home after serving in Afghanistan. A familiar domestic environment with emotional parents soon gives way to a series of anomalies that gradually become perverse and uncanny. The film is a surreal, fictional narrative that elaborates the nightmares and suffering brought about by memories of war, while also responding to the prospect of war in the present day. In the video documentation *Touch*, **Janine Antoni** engages with the horizon by walking a tightrope. She says, “I wanted to walk in this impossible place, to walk on the line of my vision, or along the edge of my imagination.” **Mona Hatoum’s** well-known performance art piece *Roadworks*, filmed in the 1980s, recorded her walking forward, followed by a pair of boots, alluding to the racial tension that had for many years cast a shadow over the streets of Brixton in South London. **Jiro Takamatsu** was one of Asia’s pioneers in performance art of the 1960s and 1970s, gaining considerable attention for his “shadow paintings.” Where there is light, there is shadow – and the subjects of these images, who are absent, form an intriguing relationship with the shadows they project, inviting the viewer to ponder many questions about the nature of life, images and space. *Shadow Procession*, South African artist **William Kentridge’s** renowned animation series of the 1990s, is a major work that arouses and directs the audience’s emotions. Inspired by the “Allegory of the Cave” from Plato’s *Republic*, its images of ordinary people on the streets of Johannesburg

infuse realism into this myth, with silhouettes of a crowd marching in line to the accompaniment of sonorous music.

The exhibition also presents works by Taiwanese artists spanning different generations. In *Fifty-Five Waka Poems*, **Te-Lai Ho**, a Taiwanese expatriate in Japan for several decades, relates his own personal history in a series of short verses (Japanese *waka* poems), using a special compositional method merging calligraphy and painting to produce a “narrative painting” that explores the relationship between words and images. **Hilo Chen**, a member of the influential 1960s Taiwanese modern art collective Ton Fan Art Group, created a series of groundbreaking paintings with sharp observations of New York from the position of an outsider, centered on sidewalks, coffee shops and conversations. **Huasheng Li**, widely recognized one of the pre-eminent traditional landscape ink painters of his generation, abandoned the classically-trained painting style, and embraced the time-consuming, slow and focused process of hand-drawing dense grid lines like the surface of a fabric, recording his own spirit and contemplative state. These paintings have been deliberately installed throughout the entire exhibition to intimately elaborate on the themes of “between” and “gaps.” Meanwhile, **Han-Chih Liu’s** installations using a low-tech mechanical approach and hand-drawn documents ruminate on the nature of life and time.

The lines and lattices formed in “Walking the Crack” connect art with daily life, artists with viewers, artworks with spaces. The viewing and reading of the exhibition are drawn together into a cycle, which implies the cycle of birth and perishing that encompasses the universe and all things. The final gallery attempts to bring together an array of historical documents and artifacts. It also presents *Anathema* by **The Otolith Group**, an object-oriented video that isolates and recombines the magical gestures of dream-factory capitalism, exploring the relationship between technology and human beings.” (1) Meanwhile, **Tung-Lu Hung’s** *Ming I / Darkening of the Light* considers the meaning of the hexagrams in the *I Ching*, suggesting that we should seek an inner brightness even in dark times. In this gallery, the exhibition ponders the birth, formation and extinction of the universe, the cycle of life and death, the endless nature of cosmic existence, and the concept of human progress. Linear cracks signify unforeseeable change, and mended fractures inquire into the true nature of healing.

To more deeply explore the concepts in *Walking the Crack*, the exhibition also features “A Guide to Roaming and Thinking,” developed by the scholar **Li-Chun Lee**, a series of images and texts illuminating the exhibition’s many themes – lines, cracks, walking, paths, detours, tracks, text, processions and shadows – from the vantage points of image theory, culture, history and philosophy. The content covers important contemporary works not included in the exhibition by such artists as **Francis Alÿs, Richard Long, Sophie Calle, Trisha Brown, Mona Hatoum, and David Weiss & Peter Fischli**, as well as related historical images.

The exhibition will also be a selection of interactive performances, such as **Liu Yu’s** newest work, *Field*, in which the performer and therapist will lead participants in an experience of sensorial healing, transforming the body into nature. Meanwhile, **Ni Hao’s** *Structure Study I* combines a complex installation and musical performance to explore the contradictions between technological systems and life, creating a poetic sculpture latent with intangible violence.

For more information, please visit TFAM’s official website ([www.tfam.museum](http://www.tfam.museum)) or follow the museum on Facebook (search for “Taipei Fine Arts Museum”).

## Participating Artists

Suling Wang, Natsuyuki Nakanishi, Pak Sheung Chuen, Jin-Hua Shi, The Otolith Group, Te-Lai Ho, Huasheng Li, Tai-Chun Chou, Tung-Lu Hung, Janine Antoni, William Kentridge, Jingfang Hao & Lingjie Wang, Ni Hao, Hilo Chen, Chi-Kwan Chen, Jiro Takamatsu, Hung-Chih Peng, Kuang-Yu Tsui, Mona Hatoum, Li-Juan Huang, Shih-Chiang Yeh, Omer Fast, Lucio Fontana, Yau-Horng Deng, Liu Yu, Han-Chih Liu, Noemi Marquez, Tehching Hsieh.

(1) <http://otolithgroup.org/index.php?m=project&id=167>