

母性、土地與生命： 專訪藝術家林介文

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母親是生產者 製造者，
是給予生命的容器，
是孩子的土地。

——林介文¹

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生命與母性，在林介文的創作中，似乎總如編織的線般交疊密合。在林介文手中，最柔軟的編織有著最飽滿的力度，既能代表藝術家的個人生命經歷，也可以是任何一位孕育胎兒的母親；如同滋養代代太魯閣族人的土地與水，呼喚著生命誕生的宏大與神祕。

回顧林介文的創作，自 2008 年她取得碩士學位後²，在追尋自我的渴望中回到紅葉部落。她打開一個個衣櫃，爬梳 Bubu（奶奶）與部落女性長輩的編織布毯（qabang），由感而發創作以廢布料組構的軟雕塑〈打包〉（2011），並與陳若軒共同出版《嫁妝》。此後，她更結合求學時期擅長的金工、彈性線編織和廢報紙，完成《我的傳統服飾不傳統》（2011-2012）系列。身為漢人母親與太魯閣族父親的女兒，林介文也在此系列親自穿著「不傳統」的傳統服飾，實地於東海岸拍攝。其中，有一張攝影正是她面向大海、雙手叉腰的背影，觀者彷彿能從中聽見藝術家的吶喊、感覺到那內在奔湧的能量——吶喊過後，她在這片土地重新找回了根，並用力扎了下去。

太魯閣族的傳統中，女孩出嫁前，祖母、母親會送她手織布毯作嫁妝。在藝術家還未成為人妻與人母之前，她已本能地循著織者與織布機的律動，找尋女性長輩的生命歷程，試圖握住那條屬於部落女性的韌線。林介文提到，在日本殖民時期，太魯閣族曾被迫遷移；在故土，族人們有太多無法帶走的事物，只有織布機（Ubung）因為非常重要而被婦女隨身帶著，進而傳承下來。對部落婦女來說，任何材料都能拿來織布，直到二次大戰後國民政

府來臺，她們都還將美援毛衣拆解，重新織成美麗的布毯。然而，這份珍貴的技藝，依舊不敵時光與社會變化而逐漸式微。

2016 年，林介文成為母親以後，強而有力的母性使她的創作更為飽滿。藝術家勇敢的選擇在家生產，奮力將孩子擠出產道與哺育幼子的過程，讓她真正成為一位母親。第一個孩子的出生巧合地呼應了她與 30 位織者共同創作的〈Elug Tminun 織路〉，形狀如同子宮與產道的〈Elug Tminun 織路〉宛如林介文創作的又一次突破與新生。2018 年作品〈母地〉，則更完整的回應了這段變化。這件作品由「母」與「地」兩部分組成，先用藍色的同心圓海洋象徵生命開始的狀態，一路到金色的生命和對應的黑色死亡，最後歷經溫柔包覆觀眾的「分娩」，從巨大的女子雙腳之間離開。「母」來自藝術家苦甜參半的為母感受，而「地」則是藝術家對土地的憐惜。³

自那時開始，「母」與「地」可說成為林介文創作的主軸。2021 年，林介文啟動她的《裏山計畫 Dungku Asang》（以下簡稱《裏山》）。《裏山》發生在海拔 1,200 公尺尊古安山深處的「瑞欣石礦」，該地已開採蛇紋石 40 年。這裡原來是布農族丹社群傳統領域「Dungku Asang」，意思是隆起的地方。參展的觀眾從瑞穗林道蜿蜒而上，就能看到這片飽受機具切割的山體，如同見證裸露的傷口。

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在《裏山》中，林介文與合作的織者一同為山而織，希望將山的傷口「包裹」起來，反映織者與場域（山）的深度連結及土地對林介文的呼喚。她延續「裏山」精神為高雄市立美術館《泛·南·島藝術祭》（2021）創作的〈我的身體半座山〉更進一步呈現出母親、子女與山的內在聯繫。〈我的身體半座山〉以覆蓋兒童座椅、塑膠椅與紅色圓桌等常見物件的織物為中心，形成似山又似母體的造型，從山的乳房湧出金色乳汁，哺育了底下同心圓形狀的土壤和生命。

以下，我們很榮幸能邀請到藝術家林介文談談她《裏山》之後的創作：

2021 年《裏山》執行時，剛好同年度您也在高美館《泛·南·島藝術祭》展出新作〈我的身體半座山〉，可否談談這兩件作品之間的關聯？

林介文：《裏山》那時候我感覺自己跟整個礦區的連結非常深，我的作品也一直提到人的身體跟自然的相互連結。〈我的身體半座山〉有點像礦區的擬人法，把礦區想像成母體，用通俗一點的說法來講，也就是大地之母的形象。

土地給了我們很多東西，但一般人——甚至我自己，在這個便利的時代其實跟土地不再親近。如果你的生活本來就跟土地很近，比如你是一個礦工，每天要做的工作就是去採石，在採的時候生命也會受到一定的威脅；或者你是一個獵人，想吃東西就得去打獵，你不會知道自己在山裡面將遇到什麼，山豬也有可能攻擊你……這是一個同等的互換模式，要取得什麼就需要交換。不過，我們生活在當代，很多東西不是透過這種方式，而是透過賺錢去買就能輕易得到，這個狀態就讓我們離土地越來越遠。

我覺得我的生命就是想把我帶回土地吧，雖然我還是會去全聯買東西（笑）。

很多時候你會去思考，這個東西是怎麼來的，像阿美族人要吃魚就會下海捕魚，這些動作都不斷的提醒我們，我們在跟土地拿取時，必須要有回饋，這是一個相互之間的對等關係。〈我的身體半座山〉也是源於這樣的想法。

作品裡面的椅子是很重要的元素，那是我小孩的兒童安全座椅。養孩子就是這樣，會產生很多一次性垃圾。因為孩子已經長大，不需要安全座椅了，我就把它包回去，用勾針慢慢的勾，有一種贖罪的感覺。我很多包裹現成物的作品都是在做這樣的事，有點像是透過編織，讓這個物品跟土地有個好好的、儀式性的結束。

所以老師那時候才替作品寫了一首從山的角度出發的詩嗎？（詩作請見註釋 4）

對，我想像如果是那座山，我會有什麼樣的感受。感覺母親的角色就一直給予，不管是一開始哺乳，或是後來給予孩子陪伴，大概就是無私——「你就拿吧」的感覺。當然，土石流來的時候就再說了。

其實，我上個月（採訪時為 2023 年 10 月）才真正搬回部落，在部落有自己的房子跟家，因為 2021 年策畫《裏山》的時候我已經要慢慢準備搬回來，我注意的議題就會跟部落有比較大的關連，這是一個身在部落的婦女跟土地的聯繫。

災害來的時候，所有原住民的部落都有可能遇到土石流。山上很多種檳榔的地方，比如西部山區賽德克族的區域被過度開墾。所以，每次只要颱風或雨量過高，我們的手機就會一直響，「土石流警報、土石流警報」這樣不停地叫。有很多因素讓這種危險的感覺一直存在，不管是臺灣人的生活，或是部落人的生活，我覺得都很像在一個尖尖的東西上擺圓球，處於隨時可能崩塌的危險平衡。

您會想透過創作，喚起觀眾對土地開發議題的重視嗎？

我其實也沒特別想喚起重視，只是需要用方式抒發，不然會太苦悶。都市空間都是被規劃過的，野生天然的地方很少，就連公園也是；部落的話，未規畫或沒有受到良善規劃的地方很多，也才會有一直在山區濫墾、或礦區非法延展等現象。這背後當然有很多政治跟經濟的黑暗面，就算知道了，還是覺得很無力，就只能不斷創作。

在《裏山》的共織日記中，透過織布跟不同的人有新的碰觸，有一種織布把喜愛它的人彼此連結在一起的感覺，可以請老師多分享一些嗎？

以前，織布是比較族群跟個人的事情。但因為時代的錯位，讓織布變成跨越部落的共同語言。但有的織者身上背負著族群意識跟使命感，我覺得這樣的織者很偉大，但這比較不是我要走的方向。我覺得不是女性才能織布，或是原住民才能織布，反而如果一個人自然地被織布吸引，那她／他就有製作的權利，因為織布本身就是一個很美好的文化。

我織布的歷程跟其他人比較不一樣，織者一般採師徒制，或以族群為主的傳承，但我不是，我就是對織布這個行為很著迷，也不介意打破族群的界線。在《裏山》邀請織者時，我也不會特別設定族群，當然接受邀請的織者想法會跟我比較接近，所以能比較開放的接受他們的織布暴露在戶外。因為礦區太大，只有我一個人無法裏山，這些織者其實也都是我認識的好朋友，剛好來自各個族群。

我覺得織布最迷人的地方，是它坐在地上就可以織，不受任何場域限制。之前我有申請過一個國發會的計畫，讓世界各地想學織布的人都可以來學，辦了很多場工作坊，讓學員從做織布機開始認識織布。很多非原民的人也很有興趣，也培育了幾個非原住民的織者。

高美館有收藏老師較早期的作品〈打包〉，在看《裏山》時，忍不住會一直想到〈打包〉，很像某些老師以前的創作想法用更圓滿、連結更深的方式在策展作品實現了？

我在做《裏山》的時候，也會一直想到〈打包〉。〈打包〉是在做我們（太魯閣族）被遷移的狀態，而且我花了三天就做好了……好想回到不用勾那麼多東西的時候喔！〈打包〉講一種很臨時匆忙的感覺，跟後來的作品比起來手法相對沒那麼細緻。我之前都是在做金工，比如《我的傳統服飾不傳統》結構比較細緻，

量體也比較小。〈打包〉應該算是我的第一件軟雕塑，在〈打包〉我開始嘗試用廢鐵，結構就變大了。回收衣服的部分則連結到美援時期部落婦女拆毛衣重織的過去，我用很多回收衣服做出整個雕塑的肉。我覺得自己作品的結構都比較像骨頭，最後才會構成一個立體的東西。

最後，想請老師多談一下《裏山》之後您的創作方向。

《裏山》之後，我的關注點也開始從山到河川、再到海洋。其實就是秀姑巒溪流域，秀姑巒溪的源頭在尊古安山，流到紅葉部落。夏天我會帶小朋友去那邊玩水，對溪流的整個變化很有感觸。每一次，只要颱風一來，溪流就會變，之前游泳的地方可能會被填起來，又要換一坑游泳。在游泳的時候會看到很多砂石，從山上不斷搬木頭下來。從紅葉溪流到秀姑巒溪，再到阿美族大港口，再到海洋，又回到南島。

現在我所做的整個計畫都有所關連，這是一個持續性的計畫。2023《南迴藝術祭》的作品〈曬海〉也在這整個想法裡面，織布的形狀看起來就像往上噴的乳房，畢竟海洋就是奶水嘛。

織布是很持續的一件事，從2021年策展《裏山》之後，我一直在織布，已經織了三年。我的作品很喜歡呈現不穩定的緊張感，但它又是編織，所以我應該也會延續這樣的創作形式！

- 1 參見〈山地媽媽 | 林介文〉，國藝會補助成果檔案庫，網址：<https://archive.ncafrog.org.tw/result?id=ce35d0da578b46a18b348f37cc53abc4#>
- 2 藝術家畢業自西班牙巴塞隆納自治大學 (Autonomous University of Barcelona) 浮游空間設計系碩士。
- 3 同上註。
- 4 林介文搭配〈我的身體半座山〉的短詩如下：「山從海底隆起不小心帶上了兩隻鯊魚 / 雖然台灣沒有出現過恐龍 / 但我幻想著它佔領了那個山頭 / 然後 人來了 / 是布農族丹大社的族人在這裡經過他要回家 / 然後 資本家來了 / 在這裡取走山的身體 / 用挖土機 用高超的技術跟鑽石鋸片 / 然後 / 山空了半個身體卻依然想擁抱上來探望的你 / 然後 / 山垂落的乳房還在努力的擠出奶水變成河流餵養著居民 / 我的身體是半座山 / 半座山呀半座山。」原詩收錄於《藝術認證》96期 (2021年6月)，頁107。



Motherhood, Land, and Life: An Interview with Artist Labay Eyong

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**Mother is a producer, a maker,
A container that gives life,
And the land of her child.**

—Labay Eyong¹

Life and motherhood, in Labay Eyong's artmaking, seem to be tightly woven together. In Labay Eyong's hands, this softest woven work is the fullest and most powerful, representing the personal life experience of the artist and also of any mother who gives birth. It resembles the land and water that have been nurturing the Truku people from one generation to another, calling for the spectacularity and mystery of the birth of life.

Labay Eyong's artmaking can be traced back to 2008, when she obtained her master's degree² and returned to Ihowang Tribe in pursuit of her sense of self. She opened a wardrobe after another to go through *qabang* (woven throw) of her *bubu* (grandmother) and other female Elders in the tribe, which inspired her scrap-fabric-made soft sculpture work, *Packing* (2011), and her book publication *Tminum Pdsun* (dowry; 2012) co-authored with Ro Hsuan Chen. She later brought in her educational background in metalwork, elastic yarn weaving, and the use of old newspapers to complete the series *My Traditional Costumes Are Not Traditional* (2011–2012). In this work, Labay Eyong as a daughter of a Han mother and a Truku father dressed herself up in 'untraditional' traditional costumes and returned to the east coast for photo shooting. She was facing the ocean with her arms akimbo in one of the photographs where the audience could seemingly hear the artist's shout and feel her rolling energy within. After the shout, she found her roots back on this land and vigorously struck them back into it.

In the Truku tradition, before a girl gets married, her grandmother and mother would gift her handmade woven throws as dowry. And before the artist became a wife and a mother, she was already, out of instinct, following the rhythm of weavers and weaving looms to trace female elders' life experiences and trying to grasp that tough thread that belongs to tribal women. As Labay Eyong pointed out that the Truku people were forced to relocate during the Japanese colonial period, and that people had no choice but to leave most things behind except for *ubung* (weaving loom). For Truku women, any material was 'weavable.' After the Kuomintang government's postwar relocation to Taiwan, they even unraveled sweaters from the US military aid and remade them into beautiful woven throws. However, this precious craft still failed to rival the passing of time and the change of society, gradually fading into history.

After Labay Eyong became a mother in 2016, the strong and powerful nature of motherhood has added even greater depth to her artmaking. The artist made a brave decision to give birth at home, and the effortful process of squeezing the baby out through the birth canal and feeding it transformed her into a real mother. The birth of her first child coincidentally corresponded to her collaboration with 30 other weavers, *Elug Tminun* (*The Woven Path*), which came in a shape of the uterus and the birth canal, marking another breakthrough and new life of Labay Eyong's artmaking. Her 2018 work *Motherland* further gave a complete response to this transformation, constituted by a 'Mother' part and a 'Land' part where she started with a blue ocean depicted by concentric circles symbolizing the beginning of life, proceeded to a golden life and its corresponding black death, and finally experienced the 'delivery' that gently wrapped the audience up and led them out between a gigantic female's legs. The 'Mother' part was inspired by the artist's bittersweet feelings about being a mother, and the 'Land' part embodied her empathy for Land³.

Since then, Mother and Land have been the core themes of Labay Eyong's artmaking. She began *Dungku Asang* in 2021, with its setting in the 40-year-old Rui Hsin Serpentine Mine located deep into the 1,200-meter-high mountain Dungku Asang. With a placename meaning 'hump,' Dungku Asang used to be part of the traditional territory of the Takiivatan sub-group of the Bunun people. There, the audience walked all the way up along the winding Ruisui Forest Road before they found themselves presented with this severely scarred mountain by machinery as witnesses of the bare wounds.

In *Dungku Asang*, Labay Eyong joined hands with other weavers to create a piece of patchwork, with a hope to 'wrap' the mountain's wounds up while reflecting the deep

connection between weavers and the space (namely, the mountain), as well as the call from Land towards Labay Eyong. Later, she extended her spirit of ‘mountain wrapping’ to create *My Body Is Half of a Mountain* as part of the *Pan-Austro-Nesian Arts Festival* (2021) by Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts to present the inner connection among Mother, Child, and Mountain. At the center of the work were woven pieces of common objects, such as a children’s highchair, a plastic chair, and a red round table, forming a silhouette that resembled both a mountain and a mother’s body where golden breast milk gushed out from a pair of breasts of the mountain and fed the concentric circular land and life beneath.

Here, we were of great honor to have artist Labay Eyong share with us her creation after *Dungku Asang*.

When you were working on *Dungku Asang* in 2021, you also had your new work *My Body Is Half of a Mountain* exhibited as part of the *Pan-Austro-Nesian Arts Festival* at Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts in the same year. Could you share with us the relation between these two works?

I felt deeply connected to the entire mine when I was working on *Dungku Asang*, and my art is also always about the connection between the human body and nature. *My Body Is Half of a Mountain* was somewhat like a personification of the mine, imagining the mine as a mother’s body. Or, to put it more simply, it’s the image of Mother Earth.

Land has given us a lot of things, but people—even myself—are no longer close to Land at this convenient time. If you already live close to Land... Say, you’re a miner. Your everyday work is mine, and your life is under certain risk when you’re mining. Or, if you’re a hunter, you’ll go on a hunt when you want food, but you won’t know what you’re going to see in the mountain. You could also get attacked by a boar. So, this is an exchange of equal value. If you want to take something, you need to make an exchange. But we’re living in modern times where not many things are obtained in this way. Instead, we can easily obtain them through making money and buying them with money. Because of this situation, we’ve got farther and farther away from Land.

I think my life probably wants to bring me back to Land although I’d still go get groceries at PX Mart (laughing). A lot of times, you’d think about how this certain thing came about. Like, the Amis have to go fishing in the ocean

if they want to have fish. Such action would constantly remind us that we’re taking something from Land and that we have to give something back. This is a reciprocal relationship. *My Body Is Half of a Mountain* stemmed from this concept, too.

The chair in this work is an important element; it’s my kid’s highchair. This is how it is to raise kids—you’d produce a lot of one-time trash. Now that my kid has grown up and doesn’t need the highchair anymore, I started to slowly wrap it back up by crocheting, hook by hook, like an act of atonement. Many of my works that involved wrapping up found objects are essentially doing the same thing. It’s like I’m making a good, ceremonial closure for this object with Land through weaving.

Was that why you wrote a poem from the mountain’s perspective for this work? (See Footnote 4).

Yes, I was imagining what I’d feel if I were that mountain. I feel like the mother’s role is to be constantly giving, from breastfeeding at the beginning to accompanying your child later on. That’s probably what we call ‘selfless’—“Well, take it all” kind of feeling. But of course, if there’s debris flow, then that’s another story.

I actually only officially moved back to my tribe last month (interviewed in October 2023) and have my own house and home there. I was already slowly preparing myself to move back when I was planning *Dungku Asang* in 2021, so I also started to pay more attention to issues that were more relevant to the tribe. This is the sort of connection between a tribal woman and Land.

When a disaster occurs... Well, all Indigenous tribes are likely to encounter debris flows. There are a lot of places in the mountains growing betel nuts, like the overcultivated land that belongs to the Seediq in the western mountain range. So, every time a typhoon is coming, or the rainfall gets too high, our cellphones will start to ring non-stop. It’ll keep saying, “Warning of debris flows. Warning of debris flows.” There are many factors out there that make us always feel this sense of danger. Whether it be any Taiwanese’s life or a tribal resident’s life, it all feels to be like a ball placed on something spikey—it has this dangerous balance where it can fall apart anytime.

Are you aiming to raise the audience's awareness of land development issues through your work?

I actually didn't particularly intend to draw attention. I just need a way to express myself; otherwise, it'd get too depressing. Urban space is mostly planned; there are not many wild, natural areas, not even parks. But in tribes, there are many unplanned or not well-planned places. That's why we always have issues like overcultivation in mountain areas or illegal extension of mining areas. Behind these, of course, underlie many dark sides of politics and economics. But even if we know all these, I still feel powerless. All I can do is just keep making art.

In the co-weaving journal of *Dungku Asang*, you made new connections with different people through weaving. It feels like weaving has brought its enthusiasts together. Could you please share more with us on this note?

Back in the days, weaving was something more personal and more community-specific, but now because of the dislocation of this era, weaving has become a cross-community common language. Some weavers are bearing ethnic consciousness and a sense of mission on themselves, which I find very admirable and heroic, but that's less of what I want to achieve. I don't think weaving only belongs to women or to Indigenous people. Instead, if someone feels a natural call from weaving, then s/he has the right to weave because weaving is a wonderful form of culture in itself.

My journey of weaving is rather different from others'. Weavers usually follow a master-disciple system or a community-specific line of inheritance. But that's not my approach. I'm just very fascinated by the action of weaving itself and I don't mind breaking the boundaries among different communities. When I was inviting weavers to join *Dungku Asang*, I didn't set specific limitations regarding ethnicity. But of course, people I invited would have more similar mindsets to mine so that they'd be more open to the idea of exposing their weaving works in the outdoors. Because the range of the mine is too wide, I couldn't possibly wrap the mountain on my own. Those weavers are actually all my good friends that I already knew. They just happen to come from different communities.

For me, the most fascinating thing about weaving is that we sit on the ground

and do it. No site-specific limitations. I once submitted a project proposal to the National Development Council, hoping to take in anyone who wanted to learn weaving from across the globe. I held many workshops where learners started to learn about weaving by learning how to make a weaving loom first. Many non-Indigenous people were very interested. We've also trained a few non-Indigenous weavers.

One of your earlier works, *Packing*, is collected by the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts. When looking at *Dungku Asang*, I was constantly reminded of *Packing*. It feels like some of your earlier creative ideas are now realized in the currently exhibit in a better-rounded way, with a deeper connection. Is that correct?

I kept thinking of *Packing* when I was working on *Dungku Asang*, too. *Packing* was about our (the Truku people's) status of being relocated, and it only took me three days to finish it... How I want to go back to a time where I didn't have to crochet or weave so much! *Packing* was about a sense of urgency and rushing. Its crafting wasn't that delicate compared to my later works. My focus used to be metalwork, such as *My Traditional Costumes Are Not Traditional*, whose structure was more refined with a smaller size. *Packing* was probably my first soft sculpture. I first tried to use scrap iron in *Packing*, so its structure became larger. The part where I used recycled clothes was related to the history of tribal women using unraveled sweaters from the US military aid to weave new things. I used a lot of recycled clothes to create all the 'flesh' of the sculpture. I think the structures of all my works are more like the 'bones,' and they only become something 3D in a later stage.

Lastly, please share more with us your direction in artmaking after *Dungku Asang*.

After *Dungku Asang*, my focus has shifted from mountains to rivers, then to the ocean. Well, it's actually the basin of Xiuguluan River. The river originates from *Dungku Asang* and flows past Ihowang. I always bring my kids there to play in the water in summer, so I feel quite deeply about all the changes of the river. Every time a typhoon comes, the river changes. Maybe where we could swim before would be filled with debris now, and we'd have to move to another pool. We'd see tons of debris when swimming or that the river would bring more and more woods down. From Hongye River to Xiuguluan River, then to the Cepo' sub-group of the Amis, then to the ocean and back to the

Austronesian region.

Now my entire project is relevant to this as well. It's an ongoing project. My work *Seabathing* for the 2023 *South Link Arts Festival* is also rooted in this concept. The shape of the woven work looks like a breast bursting milk upward. Well, the ocean is basically breast milk after all.

Weaving is a continuous endeavor. I've been weaving ever since my 2021 curatorial project *Dungku Asang*—it's been three years. My creation likes to present a sense of tension that comes from instability, but again, it's woven. So, I think I'll continue making art in this form!

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- 1 See "Aboriginal Mom" by Labay Eyong, National Culture and Arts Foundation (NCAF) Granted Project Database, retrieved from <https://archive.ncafroc.org.tw/result?id=ce35d0da578b46a18b348f37cc53abc4#!>
 - 2 The artist graduated from Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain, with a master's degree in Temporary Space Design.
 - 3 See Footnote 1.
 - 4 Labay Eyong wrote a short poem to accompany *My Body Is Half of a Mountain*: "The mountains accidentally scooped up two sharks from the bottom of the sea / Although there were no dinosaurs in Taiwan / I imagine them reigning the mountaintop / Then came the humans / The Dan people of Bunun Tribe passed this land / On their way home / Then came the capitalists / They took the mountain's body / With excavators, advanced technology, and diamond blades / Then / The mountain, with half of its body gone, still wishes to embrace you / Then / The mountain, with its sagging breasts, still tries to produce milk that becomes streams that nurture its residents / My body is half of a mountain / Half of a mountain, oh half of a mountain." The poem was originally included in *Art Accrediting* No. 96 (Jun 2021), P. 107.

