

## Xiaolu Tu: Artist's Statement

Text | Shiao-Peng Chen

As with the titles of my previous solo exhibitions, this solo exhibition *Xiaolu Tu* (小鹿圖), or *Fawn Diagram*, embodies a double (multiple) entendre in its various Chinese homophones. The deer is a symbol of idealism in both Eastern and Western cultures, and its “fawn” (小鹿), *xiaolu*, imparts a connotation of newness and a state of playfulness, as do “dewdrops at dawn” (曉露), *xiaolu*. I have chosen this title to represent these artist's books that are typically not regarded as main creative work, but are of key inspirational relevance and intimately connected to my creative contemplation. Undertaking the creation of these artist's books has been akin to traveling down an ostensibly long and narrow “trail” (小路), *xiaolu*, that ultimately leads to an expansive destination.

Four forms of artist's books will be presented in *Xiaolu Tu*, including books of sketches (collection), exhibition catalogs (art book), textual books (anthology), and artist's books. For this exhibition, I have created an eponymous artist's book, *Xiaolu Tu*, which is conceptually similar to a guidebook. As an artist's book about the artist's books that I have created, it has connotations of a book within a book. The content of the book *Xiaolu Tu* includes a preface (artist's statement), two literary reviews (art critiques), and a journal of creative contemplations on the exhibited books (artworks). The book *Xiaolu Tu* is simultaneously a guidebook for the current exhibition, and for previous books.

The *Xiaolu Tu* solo exhibition will be held at the Artists Books Archive (Taipei). The Archive's collection provides an extended reading of books related to the content of my book, as well as of books created by artists I've been influenced by. It is both a white box, and not a white box; it transcends a white box as an ideal space where the exhibition content and imagination can be expanded. The Artists Books Archive functions conceptually as both a library and a museum that -- like the above mentioned book/artwork, guidebook/artist's book, preface/artist's statement; literary review/art critiques, etc. -- embodies a “Duchamp's older and younger sister” state of duality, which is an aspect of creating an artist's book that I find intriguing and thought provoking.