

When resonance becomes creation



My dialogue with Robert Cahen and the birth of **Porous Instant**

The meeting of two artistic worlds doesn't necessarily begin with a similarity. It can arise from a more subtle sensation: the impression that the other's work touches upon a question one already carries within oneself, but makes it perceptible differently.

This is how I gradually came to understand the relationship between my work and that of Robert Cahen. Our practices differ significantly. Robert works mainly with moving images, sound, slow motion, and the appearance and disappearance of things. My practice unfolds through ink, photography, paper, thread, weaving, installation and the transformation of earlier works. Yet, behind this difference in media, our explorations converge around shared concerns: time, memory, traces, transience, the fragility of presence and the transformation of images.

This affinity didn't immediately present itself as a fully formed project. It began as an intuition, born of my discovery of Robert's work and our exchanges. I recognised in it some attention to what occurs between two moments: what appears, disappears, remains or returns in another form. This question had already come up in my work, particularly in the way I revisit old paintings, transform them and allow several moments of creation to coexist within them.

FUQIAO's curatorial support enabled this intuition to develop further. The dialogue was no longer merely about noting that some of our concerns overlapped. This involved closely observing the works, seeking out correspondences, discrepancies and tensions. Then we tried to understand what might result if we combined them.

This process led me to view my artistic journey in a different light.

Returning to the works to open up new paths

The dialogue with Robert didn't mean abandoning my artistic language to align myself with his. On the contrary, it encouraged me to explore more deeply the elements already present in my practice: the flow between different times, memory inscribed in the material, the transformation of traces, and the possibility that an older work might once again become a living space.

I thus began to revisit some of my ink paintings. These works belonged to an earlier period of my life and my artistic exploration. Rather than regarding them as definitively finished, I chose to reopen them. Revisiting them didn't mean correcting or erasing them, but allowing them to embrace a different sense of time.

In a work reworked in December 2025, I inserted a stone I picked up during a walk with friends. I inscribed the place and date of that walk on it. The original painting thus retained the trace of its initial moment of creation, whilst the stone introduced a more recent, precise and lived memory.

Two timeframes now stood together within a single object.



Discovering Robert Cahen's *Red Memory* made it easier for me to understand the work better. It wasn't a matter of narrating the past in a linear fashion, but of allowing temporal fragments to coexist, each retaining its autonomy. The painting doesn't disappear beneath the new intervention. The stone doesn't become

an illustration of the old image. Both remain visible as two distinct presences, whilst together constituting a new material archive.

This interplay helped me realise that the porosity of time could become not only a theme, but a genuine creative principle. A work can contain several dates, several experiences and several states of itself. The past isn't closed off. An act performed in the present can traverse it, reactivate it and transform it.

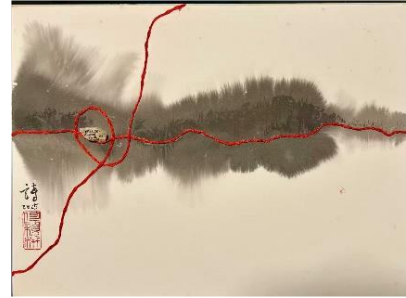
Responding without illustrating

One of the key aspects of the work carried out with FUQIAO was to avoid seeking overly immediate parallels between Robert's works and my own.

Artistic resonance isn't imitation. It doesn't consist of translating a video into a painting or producing a still image that would replicate what a moving work depicts. It emerges when two works address the same question from different perspectives and mutually transform the way we perceive them.



In response to **Traverse**, for example, I developed **Nouer le Présent**. In Robert's videos, the figures seem to be traversing an uncertain space, caught up in the fog, the movement and the instability of their appearance.

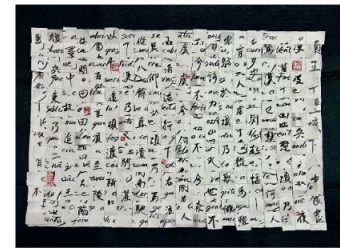


For my part, I used red threads knotted onto old calligraphic works. Where the image passes through and always seems nearly to disappear, my gesture seeks to anchor, connect and retain a presence.

These works aren't alike, but bringing them together reveals a fruitful tension between transience and rootedness.



With **Entrelacs**, a dialogue with Robert's **L'Entre**, my research has shifted towards the spaces that exist



between languages, texts, traditions and

cultural memories. Weaving isn't merely a technique here. It becomes a way of conceiving relationships: the fragments retain their origins, but their interweaving produces a new space that belongs entirely to none of them.



In **Visites au passé**, in dialogue with Robert's works devoted to the life and memory of objects, I continued this work of sensory archaeology. Old paintings, fragments, tears, objects and new interventions are superimposed upon one another. The work becomes a place where multiple states of time can coexist.

These connections have helped me to understand that artistic dialogue doesn't take place solely between two artists. It also operates within each work itself, between what it was, what it's becoming, and what a different perspective allows it to reveal.

From resonance to the creation of new works

As we identified and formalised the connections with Robert's videos, they began to open up new avenues in my work.

Some works were reinterpreted and revitalised. I conceived others directly from the questions that arose during the dialogue: how might one give form to duration? How might one make perceptible what remains after a passage? How might one circulate a presence between several places? How might one transform the interval between two images, two cultures or two moments into an active space?



My project **Transporting Qi** thus found new extensions. **Qi** — the breath, vital energy and invisible flow between beings and places — could resonate with the fleeting faces, the landscapes traversed and the



unstable presences that appear in Robert's videos. The relationship between breath, journey and image deepened. The portrait was no longer merely the representation of a person, but the temporary deposit of a presence in motion.



This exploration also led me towards more spatial installations. With **The Pores of Time**, time is no longer confined solely to the surface of a painting or a transformed object. It becomes an experience to be traversed: a space composed of light, transparencies, texts, fragments and passages.

Porosity thus ceases to represent itself. It becomes a defining feature of the work and of the visitor's experience.

The birth of *Porous Instant*

It was from this movement that the *Porous Instant* project took shape.

The project didn't, therefore, arise from an initial decision to artificially bring together two artists, one European and the other Asian. It emerged from a more organic process: an encounter, intuition, careful observation of the works, the recognition of shared questions, and then the gradual creation of a shared field of research.

FUQIAO played a decisive role in formalising this space. By organising a cross-reading of the works, identifying sets of resonances and providing a curatorial structure

for the dialogue, the platform enabled the transition from a perceived artistic affinity to a project capable of being exhibited, communicated and developed.

Three strands gradually emerged: the Threshold, the In-Between and the Multiples.

Le Seuil corresponds to the moment when something begins to emerge without yet presenting itself fully. L'Entre denotes the active space in which the works meet and alter our perception. Les Multiples open up this dialogue to a plurality of times, objects, faces, cultures and presences.

This structure wasn't imposed on our works. It emerged from them and from the relationships they made possible.

'Porous Instant' is thus more than just a two-artist exhibition. It's a process of exploration and transformation. Robert's works don't serve as a context for my work, any more than my works serve to illustrate his. Each remains autonomous. But bringing them into relation with one another creates a third dimension: a space of perception and thought that neither practice could produce on its own.

This experience has profoundly changed the way I view artistic dialogue.

I no longer see it as a conversation external to the works, but as a force capable of acting at the very heart of the creative process. One work can awaken a question present in another. It can reveal a path that wasn't yet named. It can lead to revisiting an old work, repositioning a material, devising an installation or bringing a new series to life.

Resonance doesn't diminish differences; it makes them productive.

My dialogue with Robert Cahen has let me recognize more clearly the role of time, trace and transformation in my own practice. It has also led me to conceive new works in which multiple temporalities can intersect without cancelling each other out, where memory becomes matter and where the interval becomes a space for creation.

It's within this space that, for me, **Porous Instant** arises: an instant that other instants traverse; a work that retains the traces of what it has been whilst remaining open to what it may become; an encounter in which two distinct languages don't merge, but learn to resonate.



Cecilia HO – August 8th, 2026