

The Silviculture Museum

onscreen:

Hello. Welcome to the miniature version of the National Taiwan Museum, The Silviculture Museum. For English, Press 1. For Taiwanese, Press 2. For Japanese, Press 3, For Mandarin, press 4. You have selected 1, 2, and 3. *(smiles for a whole minute)*

Chiasui entering:

Damn it, never mind, it's broken. I guess I'll have to give you the tour myself.

(clears throat)

Welcome to the miniature version of the National Taiwan Museum. To celebrate this museum's 100th anniversary, we have built this small version near Times Square in New York City, so that all of the Taiwanese immigrants, like me, can become immersed in roots. The real museum, the big one, covers a lot of things, earth sciences, botany, education, lots of things. We don't have room for all of that here in this little room. So we are focused. This is a museum about silviculture, my obsession. This museum is about me. Silviculture may not be the most important thing about Taiwanese history, but it grows on you! Ha ha ha. See, that was funny because silviculture is the science of tree farming, and trees grow. No? Oh man, you are all idiots.

onscreen:

onscreen

歡迎來到國立台灣博物館的縮小版，為了慶祝我們今年百年館慶，我們特地在紐約時代廣場附近建造了這個縮小版的博物館，好讓所有像我一樣的台灣移民者可以沉浸在根裡。

那個大的，真正的博物館，裡面有很多不同的主題，例如：地球科學，植物學，教育等等。我們這地方小，沒那麼大的空間裝所有的東西，所以我們可以很專心。

這是個造林博物館，造林或許不是台灣歷史中最重要的一部分，但它會是你會慢慢上癮的，哈哈哈

好笑吧？

因為造林學是種樹的一門科學，樹會長，不好笑？媽的，你們都是白癡！

WHY do you want to be an actress in the U.S? WHY? What the hell is your problem? Do you know how expensive it is to live in New York City? What, are you going to go there and play Ariel in “The Tempest” and dance around barefoot in the woods? 陳佳穗，我真的搞不懂你，我認得你，可是我不了解你，你太勇敢了，我無法了解

Live:

This uh, National Taiwan Museum, the big one in Taipei, was built by the Japanese in 1908 to commemorate the finishing of the North-South railroad. A railroad is an important part of any successful perfection of a new colony. Hey, and do you know what is also important to making a new colony thrive under your occupation? Some kind of industry. Yeah, that’s pretty important. Make sure this colony is producing something you want. This is actually what they wanted to know when I came to the U.S, whose job would I be taking? Am I producing something that people want? I’m sure that I am, every tree has wood doesn’t it? And all woods can be made into furniture, or paper, or even wood chips to dye red and spread around in the flowerbeds, right?

onscreen:

Hey Chiasui, what’s that growing out of your face? Is your face covered in bark? Are your eyes made out of seeds? Are you blowing in the wind like a nobody?

LIVE:

不要再用隱喻打我了，我想要了解真正的自己

You are familiar with the concept of a “metaphor”? something that is literally “carried over” one idea to the next? Like, I could say, The brain is a tree that has been bred to bear unrecognizable fruits, Sanity is a shallowly rooted shrub with poisonous berries, Culture is a farm that grows paper

onscreen:

大腦是被種來長不認識水果的樹
神智清醒的是扎根不深有毒果實的灌木
文化是長紙張的林場

Live

Yes? Ok good. Now I want you to concentrate on what we are going to tell you. This is a museum of metaphors regarding tree farming, of models on silviculture. One thing is a smaller model for the next, another is a bigger model for a smaller thing, but all are constructed in similar enough ways to relate to one another in a metaphorical way. It's like a game isn't it?!

I'll give you some clues first, first, I am Taiwanese. I am from Taiwan. No lightbulbs yet? Ah, surely you know that Taiwan was one of the most successful models ever built! Yes! After the Dutch and the Chinese were done fighting over and inseminating and digging up the little scrap of land that I call home, the Japanese won Taiwan in 1895 and decided to make it a model colony.

onscreen:

1895, HA ha! this is the same year that Oscar Wilde's play *The Importance of Being Earnest* premieres. Oscar Wilde is promptly thrown in jail for sodomy! (*laughs*) This same year, the Lumieres show their radical "moving picture" and W.E.B. DuBois receives his Ph.D from Harvard.

Live:

But I am not here to give you all a history lesson, I am here to tell you that *Formosa*, as the Europeans called my country, or *Takasago Koku*, as the Japanese called my country, is a metaphor itself. I myself, am a metaphor.

onscreen:

Outdoor exhibits at the National Taiwan Museum include Bronze buffaloes, Collection of Stone Tablets, relics of the Giant Stone Culture, Old cannons, and Old locomotives. The National Taiwan Museum is part of the "System of Museums in Capital" is a big project started in 2005 by Council for Cultural Affairs. The National Taiwan Museum is central in a cluster of historic monuments associated with Japanese rule in Taiwan. The other monuments include the 228 Memorial Park, Taiwan Railway Administration, the Taipei Guest House, Kangyo Bank, Mitsui Bussan Company's old building, (**Land Bank of Taiwan**), and of course the Presidential Building (kind of like the white house, you know) This project of linking monuments in a big tour has become a wonderful thing for those who wants to know the history of Taiwan. Some of the buildings have to be restored. But there are some things that aren't as obvious as these big buildings, like tree farms.

Live:

博物館的觀眾，我把它總結成一個隱喻，我不知道你能不能明白比這更複雜的事，這個隱喻的博物館裡隱喻的事件，這問題本身就有夠複雜了，它不好也不壞，這個隱喻就是造林學。

是的，造林學，馴養跟照顧森林以及人造林裡的樹，跟樹有關的一切的學問。

The enculturation of trees. Forest management. Silviculture, model forestry. I have grown obsessed with this, and I have built this museum to show how it all makes sense, yes, it all makes sense ladies and gentlemen, it makes sense

Why I am smarter than everyone else

Why Taiwan is so economically and socially stable

Why Taiwan has a culture of discretion and evasion

Why Taiwan is sustainable

Why Taiwan has given its techniques to others in Indonesia, The Philipines, and supported indiginous peoples with lovely monoculture plantations and gotten them to civilize and eat fast-food like everyone else.

You and I, museum guests...come closer, come closer! You and I, museum guests, we are several languages apart, several hundreds of years apart, and miles and miles apart perhaps in terms of brain power. I, you see, have a model brain.

onscreen sings and plays the piano:

In 19 hundred and 70 so I am told

A certain organization decided to be bold

They cut open several carcasses

Of scientists and farmers

In 19 hundred and 73

they invented me

A model citizen, a model brain,

Liberally political, very typical

I like cute things and expensive things

Like stuffed bears and diamond rings

LIVE:

Okay museum guests, if you could step over here I will show you the models.

1.) MONOCULTURE

This is the secret to a healthy culture: grow only one kind of tree.

2.) PRUNING/GENETICALLY MODIFIED TREES

Yes, make sure only the good ones survive. And prune the ones who you let live so that they are just the way you want them.

3.) ENRICHMENT PLANTING

Giving special care to the desired trees. Giving them fertilized mats, and other foods.

4.) RELEASE TREATMENTS

Chemical crop tree release treatments are applied to stands of young trees to test the effectiveness of herbicides. Ooh! That winces as they put the needles under the bark.

5.) CONTROLLED BURN

This is good for trees, burns out all the competition. Gives us carbon dioxide to clean.

These techniques are good for both man-made forests and for natural forests that need people to take care of them. These are the secrets that the Japanese gave the Taiwanese, and the secrets which have been passed on to Indonesia.

onscreen:

Timeline: Taiwan won by Japan. Silviculture techniques developed as part of "model colonization." Taiwanese Independence. Taiwan outsources silviculture. Taiwan imports wood chips, hardwoods for furnitures, and runs artificial Christmas Tree industry for world. Taiwan runs efficiently and without accident. Taiwan has average mental illness statistics, average income statistics, average almost everything. We are a model of what life for humans is pretty much like on this planet.

LIVE:

Oh my god! I am Pinocchio. Oh my god! Something has to be done about everything, I got so upset about the “intensifying environmental concerns” that I have come to the U.S to pursue a career as an actor.

onscreen:

The total forest area was estimated at two million hectare (4.9 million acres) in 2001. The roundwood harvest was estimated at 49,000 cubic miles (1.73 million cubic ft) in 2001 (90% softwood). Domestic timber production only meets 1% of total demand; the value of wood imports totaled \$837.5 million in 2001. Taiwan's timber production has declined since the 1980s due to local labor shortages, intensifying environmental concerns, and logging restrictions. Principal timbers are oak, cedar, and hemlock. Taiwan is a major furniture exporter that relies heavily on imported wood products to support the industry. Furniture exports in 2007 were valued at \$624 million.

Live:

My brother says “why the hell do you want to go to the U.S? they hate Asian people there. You’ll be like a second class citizen.” He has all of these political ideas...I have always been one who hesitates to tell my political opinion. Especially my generation in Taiwan I think is more...well from the day I was born, China threatened to bomb us, every day I my generation was afraid so now we don’t feel anything. The new generation now can go to China freely. I just don’t like political. Nobody really cares.

onscreen:

Shut up Volunteer, we have to give them real facts, not personal ideas.

2001年統計，台灣森林面積約有兩百萬公頃，相當四百九十萬英畝。圓材收穫估計有四萬九千立方英里，相當一百七十三萬立方英尺，其中百分之九十是針葉林。但是當地的木材產量只占市場需求的百分之一，進口木材總值達美金八億三千七百五十萬元。台灣的木材產量從一九八零年代一路下滑，主要因為環保意識抬頭，政府對砍伐限制以及勞工短缺。台灣主要盛產橡樹，香柏以及杉樹。台灣是家具出口國，卻大量仰賴進口的木材。2007年家具出口總值達美金六億二千四百萬元

Live:

I don't think any tree would say, "Oh, I don't want to grow my branch this way, I'll block the light from this other tree, I'll grow this way instead" No trees just reach for the light and this is the way people are, even politicians.

onscreen:

Before some ground can be a tree plantation, the ground is prepared usually by burning, herbicide spraying, and cultivating the dirt. The saplings are planted by human crews, but now sometimes by machine. The saplings are usually got in bulk from industrial nurseries.

Live:

People don't care about each other.

onscreen:

The nurseries have developed fast growing disease- and pest-resistant kinds of trees. In the first few years of a tree plantation until the canopy closes, the saplings are looked after, and may be dusted or sprayed with fertilizers or pesticides until established. After the canopy closes, with the tree crowns touching each other, the plantation is becoming dense and crowded, and tree growth is slowing due to competition. This stage is termed 'pole stage'.

Live:

I don't really care that Indonesia is growing all the trees now. I'm glad there isn't so much in Taiwan now.

onscreen:

When competition becomes too intense, it is time to thin out the area. There are several methods for thinning, but the best and most popular is 'row-thinning', where every third or fourth or fifth row of trees is removed, usually with a harvester. Many trees are removed, leaving regular clear lanes through the section so that the remaining trees have room to expand again.

Live:

And I don't really care about all this "free Taiwan, free Tibet" stuff. Why not? Well the violence has to grow somewhere. It always has to go somewhere.

onscreen:

The removed trees are delimbed, forwarded to the forest road, loaded onto trucks, and sent to a mill. A typical pole stage plantation tree is 7-30 cm in diameter at breast height. Such trees are sometimes not good enough for timber, but are used as pulp for paper and particleboard, and as chips. Around year 10-60 the plantation is now mature and so is ready for the final harvest. All remaining trees are felled, delimbed, and taken to be processed. The ground is cleared, and the cycle is repeated.

Live:

I'm very thirsty from all of this talking. You get the idea. Now you can do whatever you want.

onscreen sings and plays the piano:

一千九百七

我被告知

有一個組織決定動手

把幾具屍體切開

科學家和農夫

一千九百又七十三

他們製造了我

模範公民，模範大腦

自由政治，非常典型

我喜歡可愛的東西和昂貴的東西

填充娃娃跟鑽戒