



Shady clearing, dangling hands

林蔭小空地 一雙懸掛著的手

Go to the parks dotted around Taipei — or other towns and cities around Taiwan — and you will likely see, and usually in the early morning, before the workers hit the offices, or the seniors return home for a late morning nap, people doing exercises in the park. It's nice. Fresh air, picturesque environment, sunny day.

This scene is in a small, shady clearing by the side of a set of steps leading up to a peak in a ridge in Neihu. In the far left hand corner of the clearing is a couple of colorful, tiled pieces of what are presumably fixed gym equipment, provided for stretching exercises, or for sit-ups, or the like, sitting abandoned among the scattered leaves.

Edged with rectangular, brown tiles, the main facades of the objects are covered with oval tiles, like flat, colorful pebbles — blue, pink, yellow, red — in a design reminiscent of tiled bathtubs once seen in inexpensive hotels in central Taiwan, 10, 15 years ago (I wonder if those tubs still exist).

Here, in this clearing, they look vaguely alien, and certainly belonging to another time. If they were not situated among other gym equipment, I'm not sure I would have known what they were for. But I liked them, and I took the picture.

It was only later, when I was processing the photo, that I noticed the dangling hands.

(PAUL COOPER, TAIPEI TIMES)

在台北的公園，或台灣任何一個市鎮的公園，常能看見運動的人，最常是一大清早，上班族還未開工，而老人家還沒回家睡回籠覺的時候。那是宜人的：清新的空氣，如畫的風景，燦爛的陽光。

相片中的場景位於內湖一塊充滿林蔭的小空地，在一座通往山頂的階梯旁。在空地左邊的角落固定著幾塊鋪滿彩色瓷磚的物體，看上去應是體育設施，給人做伸展操或仰臥起坐之類的，就這樣荒置於滿地的落葉之間。

這些奇特的物體以棕色的長條瓷磚鑲邊，其餘表面則貼滿扁平的、鵝卵石般的橢圓彩色瓷磚，有藍有黃、還有紅和粉紅。造型就像個浴缸，且是十到十五年前中部的廉價旅館裡常見的那種（不知那樣的浴缸如今是否還有）。

在這塊空地上，這些浴缸似的物體看起來有些格格不入，顯然是另一個時代的產品。若不是放置在一堆體育設施中間，我恐怕也不能理解它們究竟有何功能。但我喜歡這些設施，於是拍了這張照片。

至於那雙懸掛在背景中的手，我一直到事後處理相片時才注意到。

(台北時報編譯涂宇安譯)

A shady clearing in Neihu.

PHOTO: PAUL COOPER, TAIPEI TIMES

位於內湖的一塊充滿林蔭的小空地。

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