



Andio Lai. Photo: John Batten.

黎仲民成為藝術家的過程非常間接，每次失誤和疑惑都令他自我評估和重新定向至現在的位置，而「現在」並不一定代表他作為視覺藝術家的地位。他對「藝術家」這個標籤並不完全接受，但如果「藝術家」一詞也包括音樂家、漫畫家、遊戲玩家、演奏家和創意故事畫家的意思，那麼也算得上貼切。

中學畢業後，黎仲民一如他的傳統學校所願到了墨爾本的蒙納士大學升學，打算投身商界。開學第一年，他與同樣來自香港的朋友一起就讀基礎課程。到了第二年他開始就讀第一年的經濟學位課程，發現課程不及校園圖書館的科幻書籍有趣。他不喜歡那課程，同時意識到自己並非從商的材料，加上思鄉病發，最後於2009年底回港。

黎仲民在深水埗一個細小公寓的溫馨家庭中長大，兩個姐妹和他一樣熱愛故事，喜歡演戲和於課後觀看無線電視的日本卡通。他的父親在一間玩具公司的辦公室工作，經常把樣本帶回家讓孩子玩耍，而他們亦把玩具融入幻想和虛構的遊戲中。這些玩具影響了黎仲民現時的藝術作品，令作品具有遊戲室的美感。他起初因為模型車而對遊戲和電子產品產生興趣，他的父親購買了第一條賽道，還改裝了一輛四輪驅動模型車。現在，改裝玩具成為了黎仲民作品中重要的元素。小學時代，他喜歡玩樂高模型，亦開始使用木材做模型，觸發了他對建構物件的興趣。青少年時期，他透過

觀看 YouTube 課程和參加網上結他論壇開始學習結他，結他為他在澳洲提供了逃離他不感興趣的學業的喘息空間。

2009年11月，黎仲民回到香港，他對藝術和音樂的興趣成為了他個人和學業重新出發的方向。他沉默寡言的性格帶他去到香港公共圖書館安全專注的環境，他在那裡學習攝影、畫漫畫，並參與與興趣有關的網上論壇。他擔心工作前景，於是在2010年4月報讀了公開大學的短期課程，學習卡通繪畫、實踐技巧、美學、漫畫業界，以及日本漫畫的佈局和故事。他驚訝發現香港漫畫家的繪畫能力與日本漫畫家一樣高超，這個有趣的課程繼而擴闊了他的志向。

黎仲民整合了自己的作品集，於2010年9月報讀並獲香港理工大學兩年制的設計副學士學位取錄。期間他認識了工業和激光設計，並進一步提高了他對攝影、漫畫和藝術的理解。雖然整體上他對設計課程不大滿意，因他認為「好的設計師不一定是好的老師」，但課程中仍有一些老師鼓勵學生發揮自我。對於黎仲民反傳統、非正式的設計和非主流的藝術方式，這種觀點讓他發揮開放和個人的創意，這個副學士學位成為他正式投身藝術相關研究的踏腳石。

黎仲民不了解入讀美術課程的要求，有別於一般的人物研究，他反而準備了一份側重於漫畫和卡通的

作品集。他報讀了香港所有本科美術課程，但唯一錄取他的是香港城市大學創意媒體學院。創意媒體學院的老師不拘一格，電影製片人、製作人、動畫師和聲音藝術家比比皆是，他們在黎仲民的卡通故事中發現了他古怪、奇特的潛在創造力。

從澳洲回港後不久，黎仲民在理大的學習時期加入了一個結他樂隊，定期在城門河旁邊的公園一起演奏。在一位原聲結他前輩的免費課堂和鼓勵下，黎仲民愛上了原聲結他和 Jack Johnson、John Mayer 和 James Blunt 的音樂。他加入了樂隊三年，這種演奏音樂的能力後來帶起他對電子聲音的發展和興趣。

黎仲民於2012年9月開始在創意媒體學院讀書，那幾年令他認識了嚴肅的藝術、理論和思想，以及各種藝術創作方式，激勵他跨越傳統藝術的界限，認識了同樣想探索的同學。他參加的首個分組活動之一就是他所說的「噴霧罐」，活動目的是讓學生探索物件的功能。黎仲民和另外兩位同學開發了一件可以握在手中的簡單電子樂器，傾斜和移動時聲音會產生變化，按下按鈕則會加入其他聲音。這件簡單的物件至今仍深深吸引黎仲民，他後來的「噴霧罐」通常用透明的圓柱形阿加力膠製成，分為兩個活動部分，有如萬花筒和一個按鈕。內部電子設備、電線和連接清楚可見，並經常會用LED燈裝飾，或需連接到

Andio Lai's path as an artist has been refreshingly indirect. Each personal misstep and doubt forced a self-assessment and redirection to where he is now – and “now” does not necessarily refer to his status as a visual artist. It is a label that sits uncomfortably for him, but if the word “artist” is associated with musicians, cartoonists, gamers, players and those that draw creative stories, then it is a little closer to being an accurate description.

After finishing secondary school, Lai – as was expected by the traditional school he attended – began studies at Monash University in Melbourne, on track for a career in business. He settled into university alongside close school friends from Hong Kong during his first-year foundation course, but the following year he found the first-year economics degree courses much less satisfying than reading the campus library's selection of sci-fi books. Unhappy with his studies, realising he was not cut out to be a businessman and mildly homesick, he returned to Hong Kong in late 2009.

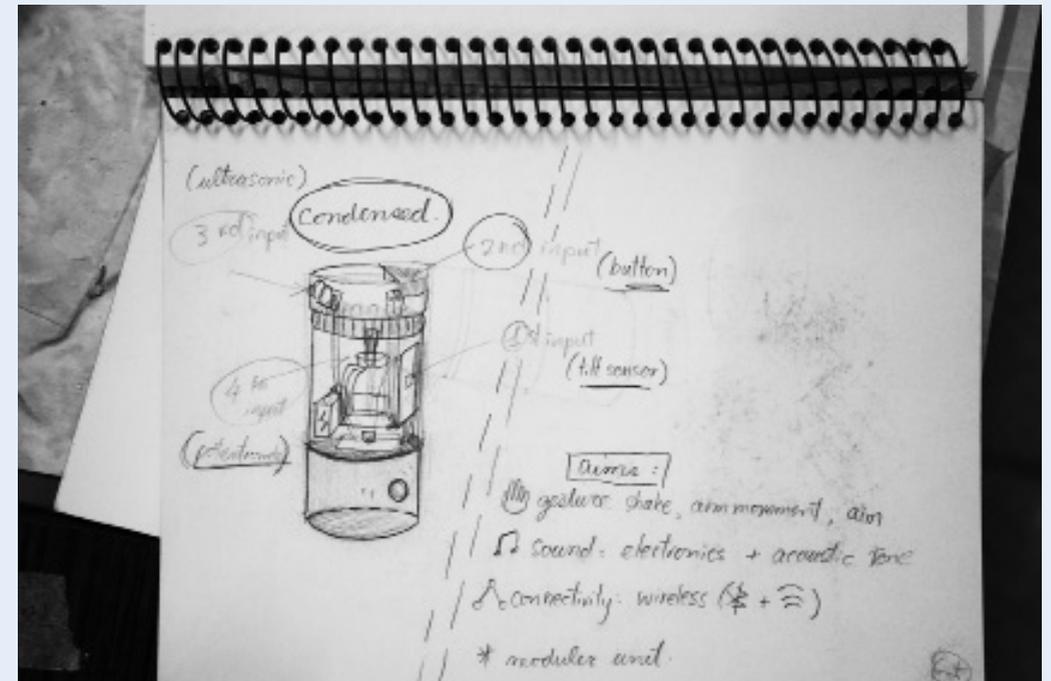
Lai grew up in a small Sham Shui Po flat in a supportive family,

with two sisters who also shared his passion for stories, play acting and watching Japanese cartoons on after-school TVB. His father worked in the office of a toy company and often brought home samples for his children to play with: these toys were happily incorporated into fantasy and make-believe games, an influence on Lai's current art work, with its playroom aesthetic. He first became interested in gaming and electronics through model racing cars, with his first racing track bought by his father, who also modified a four-wheel-drive model car; modifications of toys are central in Lai's current work. In his primary school years, he played with Lego and started modelling with wood, as constructing objects became an early interest. As a teenager, he started learning guitar by watching YouTube lessons and joining online guitar forums. In Australia, it was the guitar that had been one of his escapes from uninteresting academic studies.

In November 2009 and back in Hong Kong, Lai's hobbies, which were associated with art and music, offered a direction in his

personal and academic restart. His quiet personality led him to the safe, studious environment of Hong Kong public libraries: there he studied photography, drew cartoons and joined online forums related to his interests. Concerned, still, with future job opportunities, in April 2010 he started an Open University short course in cartoon drawing, learning practical skills, aesthetics, the business of cartooning, layout and the storytelling of Japanese manga. This enjoyable course expanded his aspirations: to his surprise, he realised that Hong Kong cartoonists were capable of drawing just as well as their Japanese counterparts.

Putting together a portfolio, Lai also applied and was accepted in September 2010 into a two-year associate degree in design at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He was introduced to industrial and laser design, and further improved his understanding of photography, comics and art. Although the design course was generally unsatisfactory because, he feels, “good designers don't necessarily make good teachers”, a few teachers gave their students encouragement to be themselves; for Lai's



Sketch by Andio Lai for a design for his 'spray can.' Photo: John Batten.

他最喜歡的Teenage Engineering OP-1合成器、電腦或外部喇叭。他至今仍有在音樂表演中使用這些噴霧罐。

電影導演譚家明和電影歷史學家家明等老師在電影歷史、製作、導演和編劇方面都教授了對他影響力深遠的課堂，羅海德介紹了電影理論，而楊嘉輝則透過聲音進行實驗。課程探討了一系列的藝術：達達主義、生物藝術和國際激浪派藝術家。激浪派向黎仲民證明了藝術可以使用傳統媒體發現和

重用物件，藝術亦可以重新組合物體以產生光、聲音、影像或音樂。他的藝術疆界突然擴大，納入自己熱愛和著迷的玩具。2013年，黎仲民加入了有其他五位藝術家的火炭工廈的工作室，至今仍為其中一員。隨著時間流逝，他的工作室夥伴予他支持，與他分享不同的藝術創作方式。

在創意媒體學院獲得創意媒體學士學位後，黎仲民希望繼續鑽研藝術，他於2017年取得了香港中文大學的藝術碩士學位。他的學術研

究為他作為表演者、樂器製作者和現在中學老師的實際工作奠定了基礎，他對遊戲、觀眾參與、玩具和聲音的興趣令他專注在他稱為「側重於實驗樂器、遊戲和人類與機器關係的媒體考古學，研究工具發展和界面相對歷史」上。

這點在他參與的「據點。句點」中最顯而易見。「據點。句點」由一群對電影、動畫、裝置、聲音、歷史和影像有興趣的藝術家組成，由創意媒體學院副教授黎肖嫻發起，始於黃竹坑一工廈，現已遷至石硤

unconventional, informal design and non-mainstream approach to art, this sentiment allowed an open and personal approach to creativity. Graduating from this associate degree was a stepping stone to formal art-related studies.

Not really understanding the requirements for entering a fine art course, Lai prepared a portfolio heavily weighted towards comics and cartoons, not the usual figure studies. He applied to all of Hong Kong's undergraduate fine arts courses, but his sole offer was from the School of Creative Media (SCM) at City University of Hong Kong. SCM had an eclectic range of teachers – themselves filmmakers, fabricators, animators and sound artists – who saw the quirky, nerdy potential creativity in Lai's cartoon stories.

Soon after returning from Australia and in parallel with his PolyU studies, Lai joined a guitar group that regularly played together in the park next to the Shing Mun River. Led by an older devotee of the acoustic guitar who gave free lessons and encouragement, Lai developed a

love for the acoustic guitar and the music of Jack Johnson, John Mayer and James Blunt. He was a member for three years and this ability to play music was to be carried into his later interest in and development of eclectic electronic sounds.

Lai began studying at SCM in September 2012. These student years introduced him to serious art, theory and ideas, and various approaches to artmaking. He was encouraged to cross traditional art boundaries, and met fellow students who similarly wanted to explore. One of the first student group tasks in which he participated resulted in what he refers to as a "spray can". The project's aim was for students to explore the functionality of an object. Lai and two other students developed a simple electronic musical instrument that could be held in the hand, its sound altering when it was tilted and moved, and a button adding another sound dimension when pressed. This simple object has retained its fascination for Lai, and his later "spray cans" are often constructed in see-through cylindrical acrylic that has two

moving parts, like a kaleidoscope, and a button. The inner electronics, wires and connections can be seen and are often embellished with LED lighting; variations might require connection to his favoured Teenage Engineering OP-1 synthesiser, a computer or external speaker. These spray cans still feature in his musical performances today.

Teachers such as film director Patrick Tam and film historian Ka Ming gave influential classes in film history, production, direction and screenwriting. Hector Rodriguez introduced film theory, and Samson Young experimentations with sound. A range of art was discussed: dada, bio-art and the international Fluxus group of artists. It was Fluxus that demonstrated to Lai that art could use traditional media and found and repurposed objects. Art could then be something else: objects reassembled to produce light, sound, video or music. The boundaries of his own art suddenly expanded to incorporate his own objects of obsession and fascination, particularly toys. In 2013, Lai joined a Fotan industrial building



Andio Lai in his studio, demonstrating playing his dinosaur theremin connected to a synthesizer and computer. Photo: John Batten. Next spread: Close-up of a 'spray can' designed by Andio Lai. Photo: John Batten.

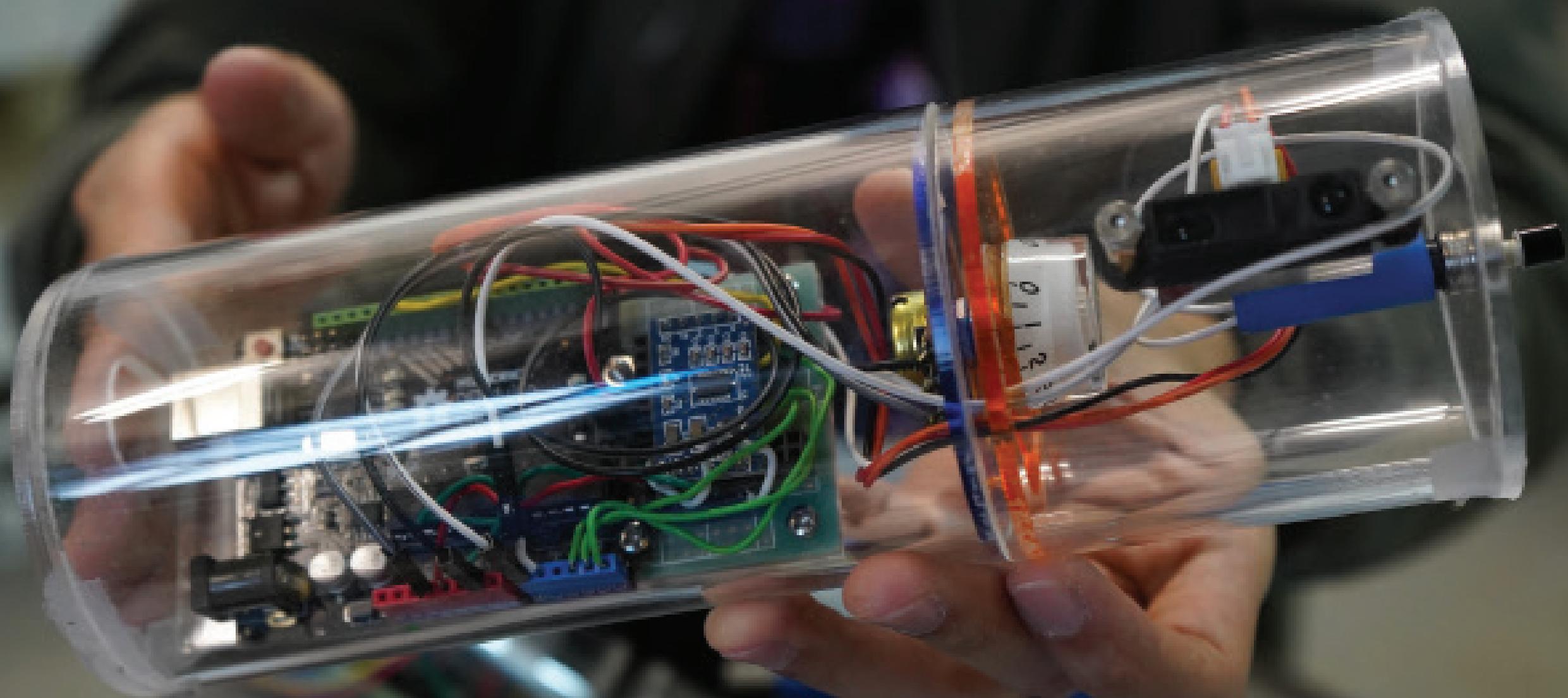
尾賽馬會創意藝術中心的工作室。他們的首批展覽之一是由黎仲民共同策展極富創造力的「玩具之間」群展（2016年），探討玩具、玩耍和遊戲。有別於他平常的作品，他安裝了一個由梳化、電視和電子遊戲機組成的裝置，讓觀眾玩任天堂的《超級瑪利歐兄弟》遊戲。裝置位於入口附近，仿如小朋友在玩電子遊戲，而父母則煩人地在屏幕前走動的情景，重現了香港狹小單位的常態。

黎仲民經常會將玩具重組成古怪、色彩鮮豔、容易上手的樂器。他把玩具恐龍的輪廓連接天線，製成了特雷門琴。特雷門琴是一種早期的電子樂器，聲音由天線控制，感測手部活動與震盪器的相對位置，令震盪器產生不同的頻率和音量，透過喇叭播放。

黎仲民堅信觀眾可以令藝術作品變得完整。在正式展覽中，他經常需要用家積極與他的玩具進行互動，用家可以操控玩具以產生聲音。他

並不介意作品受損，反而認為讓他有機會修理、調整和改裝，因此他在構建的過程採用了粗糙的美感，他的藝術重點並不在於外觀，而是其可玩性和樂趣。

「聲音下寨 #24 身聲控動」（2015年）是黎仲民其中一個早期的公開表演，由香港音樂團體「現在音樂」舉辦。他站在一張桌子後，擺放著已重組成樂器的玩具，再配上震盪器、喇叭、電腦和 OP-1 合成器。黎仲民的表演純粹



Profile

studio with five other artists, and has remained a member. His studio-mates, rotating over time, give him support and share their different approaches to artmaking.

After completing a BA in creative media at the SCM, Lai wished to continue the art-focused momentum of his studies and applied for a MA in fine arts at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, graduating in 2017. These layers of academic study have nicely underpinned his practical work as a performer, musical instrument maker and, currently, a teacher in a secondary school. His interests in play, audience participation, toys and sound have led to his self-described focus on “media archaeology, studying tools development and the relative history of interfaces, [which] focuses on the subject matter of experimental instruments, playing and human-machine relations”.

This is best seen in his membership of Floating Projects, a collective of artists interested in film, animation, installation, sound, history and video. Initiated by SCM teacher Linda Lai, Floating Projects

began in an industrial unit in Wong Chuk Hang and now operates in a Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre studio in Shek Kip Mei. One of their first exhibitions, co-curated by Lai, was the wonderfully inventive *Toy as Medium* (2016) group exhibition that explored toys, playing and gaming. In a departure from his usual work, he set up an installation of a sofa, TV and video game consoles, where visitors could play Nintendo’s Super Mario Bros game. Located near the entrance, it replicated the common situation of a small Hong Kong flat with children playing video games while their parents annoyingly walked past in front of the screen.

Lai’s usual work features toys that he reconstitutes as musical instruments: quirky, colourful and easy to play. For example, using the contours of a toy dinosaur, he rewires it with antennae to make a theremin, an early electronic instrument whose sound is controlled by antennae sensing the relative position of hand movements to oscillators that produce different frequencies and volumes broadcast over a speaker.

Lai strongly believes that an audience makes an art work complete. In formal exhibitions, he often requires the active involvement of users with his toy objects: they can handle and play with them to produce sound. He does not fuss if a work is damaged – indeed, it gives him the opportunity to repair, adjust and modify it. Consequently, he has adopted a rough aesthetic in his constructions: his art is focused not on appearances but on playability and fun.

One of his early public performances was at *Sonic Anchor #24 Interfacing Dynamics* (2015), organised by Hong Kong sound group Contemporary Musicking. Lai stood behind a table fully set out with his toys repurposed as musical instruments, variously rigged up to oscillators, speakers, a computer and an OP-1 synthesiser. Lai’s performances are pure experimental sound, but the experience has other dimensions: it is visually beautiful with the bright array of toys that he uses, it is experiential and it is about play. He says that when giving a musical performance, he “enjoys



Andio Lai performing on his dinosaur theremin, *Sonic Anchor #24 Interfacing Dynamics*, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2015. Photo: John Batten.

the playing, not so much the resulting sound”.

It is refreshing that Lai’s approach to art is generally carefree and audience-centred. His art brings a playful happiness to viewers, and fulfils the need in any art scene for humour and enjoyment. There is a lovely lightness in his work; his experience as a performer can be genuinely replicated by his audience, who can play with the same repurposed toys in an

exhibition to produce similar sound effects, and enjoy the same pleasure of playing as the artist who made them.

是實驗性的聲音，但體驗還引伸至其他層面上。他使用的玩具看起來美輪美奐，表演富有經驗且與遊戲相關。事實上，他在演奏音樂時就曾提及過，他「喜歡玩，但不太喜歡所產生的聲音」。

黎仲民的藝術方式通常都悠閒愉快，且以觀眾為主，令人耳目一新。他的藝術為觀眾帶來了歡樂的享受，滿足任何藝術場景中幽默和娛樂的需要。他的作品輕鬆自在，觀眾可以複製他的表演經驗，使用與展覽相同的重組玩具來產生相似的聲音效果，享受與製作這些玩具的藝術家相同的樂趣。