

Frottage Animation *Oloc Boloc*

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Abstract: *Oloc Boloc* (directed by Sihun Kim: Shon Kim as a professional name, 2013) is an experiment and expanded animation project that uses the frottage technique. Research on frottage was initiated from coin frottage, which was enjoyed during the old days. It was later expanded to frottage drawing, frottage animation, and frottage installation. The project consists of three media, including flat surface, animation, and installation. The research recognizes the meaning of objects and the relationship between humans and objects anew. In addition, it raises questions on the authentication of existence and the system of mass duplication of the post-industrial society. We expect that halted communication can be restored through frottage, one type of art techniques, and its effects on natural arts education.

Keywords: coin frottage, frottage, experimental animation, expanded animation

1. Introduction

We remember placing a 100 won coin beneath a piece of paper and rubbing a pencil over the paper. On the lined paper, we saw the image of intaglio and relief. As we learned more about arts, we realized that this was a form of art. Then we gained self-awareness on our actions and ruminated on coin frottage. Later, we expanded the scope of frottage from coins to other objects, thereby developing frottage drawing into a project. We converted this into movement to create a frottage animation (8 min 30 sec, HD, color), and chronologically developed the frottage process into an installation that can be participated by the audience. Then, comprehensive media works including flat surface, animation, and installation were developed from the technique of frottage, which later led to the completion of an expanded project on frottage animation <Oloc Boloc> in 2013.



Fig.1. Coin frottage became the motive for <Oloc Boloc> .

2. Frottage Drawing

Frottage originates from “Frotter”, a French work that means “rubbing against” or “rubbing”. As a technique initiated by a Max Ernst (1891 to 1976), a surrealist from Germany, it is a method that rejects the use of conventional tools such as brush, paint, and canvas. In

terms of contents, it is an anti-picturesque method that abandoned the imaginative reproduction of the reality, which has been pursued in traditional painting [1]. Its feature of rationale evasion instinct that tends to be dependent on contingency while ruling out the consciousness that originates from automatism. Frottage has now stationed itself as a representative legacy of surrealism happening, together with *décalcomanie* and *Object*. It is similar to the oriental technique of rubbing, which is conserving the original form of an object on top of a thin piece of paper. Its characteristic of carrying and embracing the unexpected traces is also linked with Tachisme of the abstract expressionism of the 1950s [2].

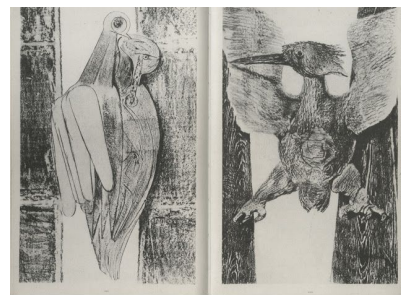


Fig.2. Max Ernst <Histoire Naturelle(1926)>.

Frottage is considered as 'discovery' of a new sense called visual tactile sensation that was extracted because of the change in reality. This leads to the learning of new artistic materials and methodology from ordinary objects. In addition, it leads to the realization of the convergence of the meaning of existence, spread, and expansion of senses about objects. When viewed at a different level, it is about discovering something new from something, and it establishes a new relationship of “contingency” between humans and objects, thereby giving a new meaning.

In frottage, contingency can occur in two phases of target and phenomenon. Such contingency comes from the physical or psychological relationship between humans and objects. In other words, as a type of happening that can be deducted based on the accessibility and dailiness of humans, it is a “contingency for target” that is related to the discovery of new functions and interpretation of meaning. Unfamiliarity from familiarity, rather than a sense of difference from something new like an abstract, is the core target reaction. In this sense, it is in line with the principle foundation of Surrealism. Contingency is something that occurs in a different stage and is the “phenomenal contingency” related to the artistic phenomena that take place during the process of imagification of the aforementioned accidentally selected target. In this case, the time of work done in the field, impromptu location, spontaneity of reaction where the image appears with the rub of a pencil, and the unpredictability of the process and result of image appearing from nothing [3].

A duplication algorithm of the engraving in relief method generally comes into effect when shaping an object into arts. This is similar to convex engraving in this sense. While convex engraving is based on the modeling of artistic motivation, frottage is different as it targets ready-made objects by natural or non-artistic motivation. Although actual 3D objects are reproduced as a shape on a flat surface through artistic processing like the principles of traditional painting, it goes against rationale and rules out the depth or giving perspective to a painting compared to traditional painting. This is because it is limited to a simple reproduction of the surface that prevents the intentional or imaginative intervention of painters that is also known as “diction of objects”. Therefore, the indexes are shown more strongly.

Frottage as a work on a flat surface is relatively freer than animation work in terms of object type or size, surface availability, and shaping methods. The surface can also come in diverse types of thin material ranging from paper, cloth, and canvas. Shaping can also be performed using various methods from realistic reproduction of object to surreal processing.

3. Frottage Animation

With the development of frottage flat surface work, the media was converted into animation that could carry time-based movement and narrative. The target was also expanded from a 100 won coin that acted as a motivation of the work into all types of domestic coins and later into all types of foreign coins. While selecting domestic coins, the phases of the times or certain incidents were extracted from the issued date of money that embodied individual or social meaning. Foreign coins were collected while living or visiting foreign countries. As they had a sense of commemorative coin beyond a simple function of money, they embodied the unique characteristic of time and location. After the work on coins was completed, the

process was generalized into other objects that have intaglio and relief on the surface. Among the many objects, the targets were selected based on the following two standards: objective and subjective.

First, we consider the objective standard. The thickness of the object has to be thin, and the surface needs to have distinct intaglio and relief. The clarity of intaglio and relief, in particular, is the basic principle for frottage. It comes from the appropriate pitch of convex surface and the reasonable physical measurement of thickness, and the convex surface is approximately less than 0.5 cm. When the height of the convex surface is too high or low, the intaglio and relief becomes plain. For instance, when the coin has been issued a long time ago or has been tampered, the surface is worn out or eroded, and thus the surface image becomes less apparent. On the other hand, when the surface is too high, the convex surface becomes thicker than the average, and the paper becomes penetrated during the drawing process. In extreme cases, drawing itself becomes impossible. For instance, because a lock is thick, rubbing over it with a pencil will penetrate the paper on the outside. Frottage becomes difficult because the loop area is not a flat surface. With the development of skills that enabled us to overcome the limitations of the height of the convex surface thickness, we are able to experiment with diverse objects including locks, mobile phone, cassette tape, and remote control.

Then, we consider the subjective standard. As a possession, the object needs to have a strong emotional link with the life of a person. While collecting the belongings that match the abovementioned qualifications, we found that most of the objects were ready-made products that were manufactured using a molding method of the mass production system. Even when Max Ernst was living in the period of post industrialization, the cottage industry was still the pillar, and the authors themselves worked with elements from nature as the main material. However, the principle object of this work lies in looking back at the traces of life through actual possessions. Although the objects are possessions with great affection, there is only emotional subjective exclusiveness and no objective originality principally because these same objects are also possessed by many other people. In comparison, as industrial products bring out the sympathy from a group as a legacy of a certain location or period, they act as an icon that bring out visual tactile feeling by reproducing the shape of the object of the era.

As we realized that possessions were mostly industrial products, we began to adopt the basic principle of frottage of reproducing the shape of the object without any manual modeling or any abstract or surreal combination. While aspects of Surrealism, which was initiated by Max Ernest, consists of a combination of an unfamiliar combination of excluding different layout or practicality of the objects through *dépaysement*. It was an approach that relatively reproduced the reality through the practicality of materials or the motive of the work that began from the actual memory.

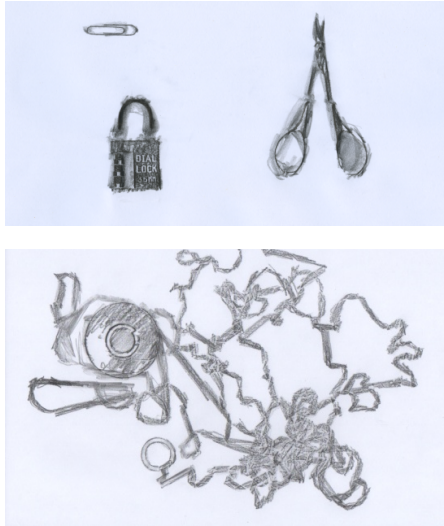


Fig.3. Frottage Animation.

As the work is done mainly with small coins or belongings, the expression of textures and details of hand drawing are important and a close-up of the small surface is required. Therefore, a paper smaller than the A4 size is used, and the digitizing technique through scanning was used instead of camera filming in order to let out the Matière of the material to the fullest extent.

In animation, the repeated aesthetics of reproducing numbers is divided largely into three categories. First, there is “Repeat”, an equipment of volume that induces the effect of Imprinting by using a certain element such as image or sound more than twice. Compared to simple repetition, this method generally adds a variation and makes a structure similar to a Mobius strip by creating a link between the start and the end instead of infinite repetition [4]. *Le ravissement de Frank N. Stein*(1982) by Georges Schwizgebel, a Swiss author is a representative piece of work. This reflects a flow of unconsciousness where space and counterpart are changed slightly within a similar repetition. The repetition is applied even to the infinite repeated structure of the finale, thereby coinciding with the logic of disbanding the original through irregular reproduction of post modernism. Second, there is the “Cycle”, which is an equipment of circulating a certain section periodically. This is applied while utilizing a certain movement section periodically by key frame animation like the work cycle. Jim Trainor, from the United States is a representative author. In his works including *The Bats*(1996), *The Moschops*(1999), *Harmony*(2004), *The Presentation Theme*(2008), he expressed the characteristics and behaviors of living characters such as bats, dinosaurs, hyenas, and monkeys by periodically circulating their certain movement. His own style of drawing simple lines and making cycles with a Sharpie, a popular pen in the U.S., is well expressed. Cycle is also often utilized for limited animation for saving the

movement. Third, there is “Loop”, which is a complete reproduction system with a beginning and end. Works by Zbigniew Rybczynski, a Polish author fall under this category. A representative work of art is the Oscar winning *<Tango>*(1980). In this work, he generated the surreal coexistence where the existence and time is separated within a single space, thereby effectively illustrating the repetition of modern life, individualism, and indifference through the category of loops.

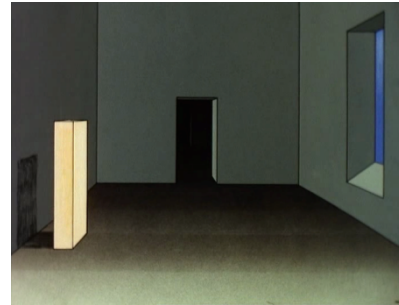


Fig.4-1. Georges Schwizgebel <Le ravissement de Frank N. Stein(1982)>.



Fig.4-2. Jim Trainor <The Moschops(1999)>.



Fig.4-3. Zbigniew Rybczynski <Tango(1980)>.

The movement focused on reproducing the wonderness of the real image. This appeared gradually from coin frottage, and emphasized the 'phenomenal contingency' on the unpredictability of the aforementioned process and result by repeating the appearance and disappearance of objects through cycle, thereby excluding man-made movement as much as possible.

By paying attention to the fact that most objects were industrial products, acoustic direction was carried out mainly through the pre-existing Foley. It focused on stimulating the associations on bringing out certain

memories from the objects and the signs of a certain period and society from goods that have been mass produced. As a media consumer goods produced for the explanatory purpose, Foley sound itself implies exaggerated explanation. However, it also acts as a complementary tool of frottage, an action of individual vision that has strong iconicity.

4. Frottage Installation and Expansion

The benefit of frottage is that it can be utilized by people who do not have artistic backgrounds, as it has a strong sense of target contingency and does not require professional sketching skills. It is appropriate for art education and hands-on experience by audience because it can be enjoyed by the general public. In making this frottage animation, we placed the foundation in emotional universality from the beginning to the end. Showing the work to the audience was also produced based on participation and sharing. The background of the installment was a classroom of the analog era (1970 to 1980), where the ambiance of a classroom was reproduced using desks and chairs, blackboard, bulletin board, backpacks, and textbooks, which were actually used in the past. The desk consists of four rows according to the development phase and difficulty of the work of frottage. The desk also plays the role of a chair of the audience as well as a worktable. The frottage animation is shown on the blackboard near the lectern through a projector, and the audience can have a hands-on experience of frottage drawing by using the actual objects that were used in making the frottage animation and pencil and paper while watching the animation. They begin to discover the commonalities between the frottage drawing that they are experiencing and the frottage animation that is being filmed. They even begin to discover the interface of arts and animation, thereby understanding the process of frottage animation.

In particular, when parents have brought their children, the new and old generations can share memories. We expect that they can restore communication that has been halted due to the digital revolution, thereby naturally leading to art education. The audiences can either bring their own frottage drawing back home or place them on the bulletin board stationed at the back of the desks, thereby competing the audience participation installment.

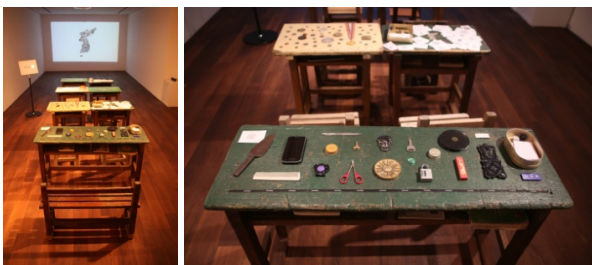


Fig. 5-1. Frottage Installation.

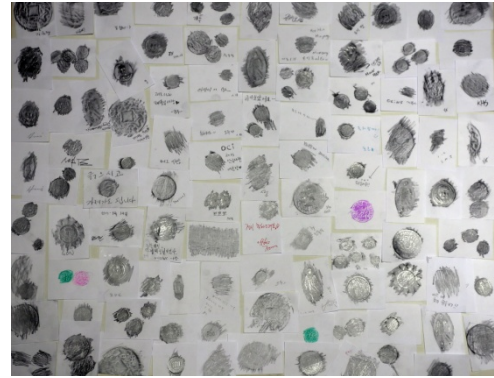


Fig. 5-2. Works by audience.

5. Conclusion

The greatness of the present begins from the triviality of the past. Max Ernst discovered the technique of frottage by chance while looking at the floor. This project was also initiated from a memory of the past and was later expanded into frottage drawing, frottage animation, and frottage installment. We began to realize the new matters that were derived from this process. On the micro-level, we realized that coin frottage itself as a technique of frottage, and the coins inside our pockets that were originally known as a symbol of consumption and transaction as an economic means brought us another meaning by implying a mental value and exclusiveness through the aesthetic process of frottage. With an art technique, the bumpy surface of many industrial products including coins were given their own visual quality and were converted from a de-individual object into an abstract original of the mental domain. This later led to the consideration of the relationship between humans and objects and a new awareness of objects. This also induced self-examination. Although it seems trivial, all art techniques including frottage do not simply end up as art techniques, but they suggest a methodology of perception. The human race has rooted the system of mass production, and the exclusiveness of manual work is becoming much weakened. We have been accustomed to the system of mass production that has been fixated by the post-industrial society. As we enter the era of software caused by digital revolution, the intangible aspects, moving beyond hardware, including our thinking and spirits have even been dominated by duplication and sense of standard. We began to contemplate on whether we are sole existence despite the fact that we are surrounded with products that have been mass produced while we are being forced to possess and use such products. We also contemplated on if there are objects that have their own originality within the duplication system that produces uncountable same objects through extreme standardization.

At a time when social polarization is being more apparent with the gap between the rich and the poor, which dates back to the postwar generation, conflict of the right and left, and damaged communication between the analog and digital generations, we are in need of a link for

communication more than any other times. Although the bond of sympathy that can melt the icy polarity can be found from politics and social issues, the field of arts and culture that is based on the universality emotion of humans can bring more natural resolutions. Going forward, we expect that frottage techniques can be utilized in workshops, educational programs, thereby contributing to the vitalized arts education and arts therapy. We also hope that this frottage project can bring light and turn the media that has been chilled through the intensified rationale and technology into a “warm media” and reconsider the therapeutic and embracing function of arts that stem from art techniques.

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Biographies



Jea-Cheol Moon was born in Korea. He is a professor at the Chung-Ang University, the graduate school of Advanced Imaging Science, Multimedia & Film.



Sihun Kim studied fine art at School of the Art Institute of Chicago and received an MFA degree of Experimental Animation from CalArts. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Animation Theory at Chung-Ang University. Sihun Kim had exhibitions at MoMA, REDCAT, The Hammer Museum, Modern and Contemporary Art Centre in Hungary, Museo de Arte Contemporaneo in Chile, The Orange County Museum of Art, the IFC Center, Arad Art Museum, Seoul Museum of Art, Arko Art Center, Daegu Art Museum, OCI Museum, Art Center Nabi, Coreana Museum of Art, etc.