

Stop Motion Artist Statement: (edited)

Our project was based on Hsin Roe's memory of reading Chinese storybooks to her neighbors. She recalls not being able to read most of the Chinese characters, so she would tell her own story from the visuals provided in the book. We chose this particular story about the fisherman and his wife because we both had some recollection of reading that story- despite being in different contexts and having different versions of the story. Hsin Roe probably read her iteration of the fisherman and his wife in this context, but I recall reading a slightly different version in my Chinese textbook for class, something which rendered me laughably miserable- because it wasn't a big deal, yet it was the most painstaking, irritating thing during class, when we would have to read it out loud and have quizzes on it.

Basing the fish off our original idea of sculpting a human head and having koi sprout out of the skull, we decided to animate a pop up book stop motion of The Fisherman and His Wife, the German tale by the Grimm Brothers. It is about a poor old fisherman who catches a flounder (who is really a prince turned into a fish by magic). The old man lets the flounder go, but when he arrives home, his wife scolds him for not asking the fish for a favor first. She tells him to ask the fish to grant them a bigger house. Then for her to be empress with much wealth. However, when she receives this, she is still greedy and demands to be a god. When the fish hears this, he becomes angry, and he puts the fisherman and his wife back at their old home.

At least, this was our shortened version of the story to fit our stop motion. The actual story might have taken maybe 10 minutes total. We then filmed me talking to a stuffed fish asking him for a wish, but he says no and is the only one to speak in this sort of silent film. To be honest, we spent most of the allotted time drawing the scenes, printing, and constructing the pop up book and did the actual photographing and editing in one day, pulling an all nighter before Friday.