

## Star Chart

Chen Chieh-jen

2017, Black and White Photograph

### Artist Statement

In 1997 when the Asian Financial Crisis erupted my brother lost his job. This was the second wave of mass unemployment among middle-aged workers in Taiwan after traditional industries moved offshore. The first was in the late 1980s.

On one day in 2008, my brother slit his wrists because he was suffering from severe depression related to long-term unemployment and was rushed to the hospital for emergency care by a friend. Some time passed and my brother, who rarely goes out, started converting his leaky apartment into an archive for images and text. He continued collecting and organizing alternative knowledge for his ever expanding archive, filling the entire apartment except for one room, in which, for whatever reason, he never installed electric lights.

I do not know what he was researching or what kind of space he was constructing.

He always sends messages that seem apropos of nothing, telling me to be careful about something or how I should deal with some affair.

One night in early 2017, I was talking with him in his apartment stuffed with alternative knowledge and looking at that dark room. I asked him why he never installed lights. "It belongs to the dust world," he answered.

A few months later, I decided to photograph my brother and that room without lights for my installation *Star Chart*, and also film *A Field of Non-Field*. I took photos of some things that I borrowed from his archive, other random stuff lying around his apartment, and the props I needed to make the film. Furthermore, many of the props that appeared in *A Field of Non-Field* came from associations I made with that dark room belonging to the dust world when I was talking with him earlier that year.

The day I took these photographs was the only time that my brother's dark room saw light.