

## Script | Video Essay

What we remember may not be what we truly felt.  
But it's those delayed, uncertain perceptions that shape who we are.

### Stage 1 | The Gesture of Hand and Knife

Perception is often unfaithful to reality.  
It's shaped by emotions, time, and the environment.

I created 100 iterations of hands holding knives,  
trying to understand:  
Why do some gestures feel dangerous, while others seem gentle—even humorous?  
Different knives and grips shape how we read an image.

I simplified the gestures to find subtle differences.  
What expresses harm?  
What communicates intimacy?

Meaning doesn't lie in the gesture itself—  
It hides in what we *assume* is happening.

With the knife, the pose feels sharp and clear.  
When it's dulled, broken, or replaced by a baguette,  
the same gesture becomes absurd—even funny.

I began removing the object entirely,  
placing the hand in different environments,  
and inviting the viewer to reinterpret the pose without clear context.

That's when I realized:  
**Perception isn't about what we see—  
It's about what we expect to see.**  
Once the object loses its function,  
the gesture loses its meaning.

### Stage 2 | From Movement to Memory

But what happens when we bring perception and memory together?  
Do we truly remember what we felt back then?  
Or are we giving meaning to something after the fact?

That gap became my turning point.  
I stopped drawing gestures—  
and started drawing moments.

At first, I tried to reflect on my entire coming-of-age journey.

I wrote down the parts I remembered clearly — places, objects, people.  
These became my "memory layer."

But the theme felt too big, too abstract.  
So I focused on one specific experience:

**Moving from China to Los Angeles for university.**

The suitcase became my clearest and most intimate symbol.  
It held clothes, books, documents —  
but also anxiety, anticipation, disorientation,  
and my expectations of the unknown.

As I continued growing and relocating, the suitcase changed.  
There was less inside.  
And somehow, less fear.

But each time I unpacked it,  
**my perception of those items had changed.**

I used **pencil** to draw memory —  
grey, delicate, erasable — like memory itself.  
I recreated this texture digitally,  
as if remembering in another dimension.

I used **pastels** to depict perception —  
emotional, unstable, imprecise.  
Not a reflection of reality,  
but a snapshot of how I felt at the time.

This zine is a mini suitcase of memory.  
Each page slowly unzips —  
revealing the objects I carried, the spaces I entered,  
and the relationship I had with myself.

I wanted visual expression to become a structure in tension —  
between clarity and blur,  
between outer reality and inner feeling.

Isn't that also how memory and perception are formed?

This project isn't about telling a story.  
It's about unpacking how I remember, how I perceive,  
and how I misread the past.

I don't just want the viewer to see my journey.  
I want them to ask:

**Have you felt this too?**

Have you ever left somewhere  
and felt the future uncertain,  
the past incomplete,  
the emotions delayed?

If so,  
maybe this journey wasn't just mine—  
maybe it was ours.