

The Lasting Echo Of Xiang Shou: A 64-year Love Story From China

P2-00

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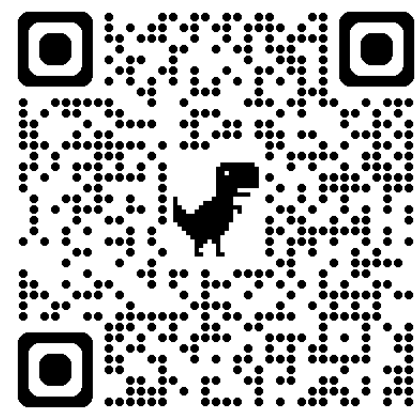
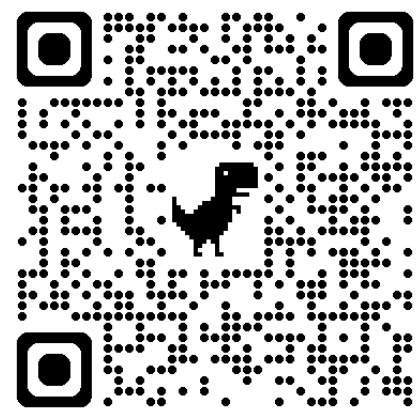
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Theme
Person with Lived Experience

Activity
Beyond the Data: Art and Reflections

KEY TAKE AWAY
A profound, culturally-rooted love bond can shape the trajectory of the mind. Behind every patient is a lifetime of devotion that even the fading of memory cannot erase. Grief and loss are not peripheral to neurodegeneration — they may be central to it

THE ARTWORK	ARTIST’S REFLECTION	CULTURAL CONTEXT
	In Memory of Zhong Jiang (蒋种, 1934-2022) and Jiande Tang (唐建德, 1937-2020) This digital diptych juxtaposes two photographs of my grandparents, an elderly Chinese couple, taken exactly 60 years apart: the first in 1956 at the dawn of their marriage, and the second in 2016 during their twilight years. The Chinese inscription on the side captures the essence of their journey: 相伴一生，相守到老 (A lifelong companionship, growing old together). <u>What is Xiang Shou (相守)?</u> In Chinese culture, the concept of “Xiang Shou” (相守) goes beyond mere cohabitation; it signifies a sacred commitment to guard and remain by each other's side through every trial of life. For 64 years, they were each other’s primary witness and anchor. <u>Loss, Grief & the Descent into Dementia</u> In 2020, shortly after I moved abroad, my grandmother Tang Jiande passed away at the age of 83. Shortly after losing his lifelong partner, my grandfather Jiang Zhong began his rapid descent into dementia. It was as if his mind, having lost the soul it had "guarded" for over six decades, chose to let go of a reality that no longer contained her. He followed her two years later at the age of 88. <u>Beyond the Data</u> Beyond cognitive scores and biomarkers, this work invites the audience to look "beyond the data" at the emotional heart of neurodegeneration. It reflects how a profound, culturally-rooted connection can influence the trajectory of the mind, and serves as a poignant reminder that behind every patient is a lifetime of devotion that even the fading of memory cannot erase.	Xiang Shou (相守) is a deeply rooted Chinese value: the sacred vow to guard and stay by one’s partner through all of life’s trials. This lens offers a perspective on the psychosocial dimensions of dementia onset, and on the profound ways that grief and loss can hasten cognitive decline in older adults. CONTACT Jianying Zhang, PhD Group leader, Xiangya School of Stomatology Central South University, Hunan, China Email: zhjianying@csu.edu.cn  Scholar google LinkedIn  