

From Inside to Outside to Inside

Hi, I'm Meene An, an artist and curator from South Korea. This letter is part of my work featured in the *Forces of Nature* at the Oare Gunpowder Works Country Park on March 15.

I was initially conceived a project to find someone who lives in Faversham and create a small exhibition on their shelf, using items we collect together while walking through the park. I imagined us walking in the park, sharing stories of our lives and discovering things from the park. I was excited by this vision: using my 'exhibition-making' skills to curate their shelf, inviting their friends and family and sharing this quirky episode—how they met a foreign curator from Korea and created this exhibition together. While I envisioned this project, I felt a strong affection for that imagined person. However, it was challenging to seek someone when I didn't even know whom I was looking for. My heart overflows with affection for them, yet in reality, they do not exist.

Ultimately, I couldn't find them, but I'm writing this letter to you in the hope that you might be that person. While I can no longer create the exhibition with you, we can now connect through our imaginations and create exhibitions from our respective visions. I ask you to imagine. If you're willing to actively participate in this imagination, you may continue reading.

Now, let's create an exhibition together.

We have one image to work with: a photograph taken 100 years ago at the Oare Gunpowder Works. Let's travel back in time and reflect on their lives. Now, we encounter the unfamiliar process of making gunpowder—the smell of sweat mixed with gunpowder, the black powder swirling in the air, the noise of machinery. In contrast to this scene are the outside landscape: the sky, the wind, the trees, the sound of insects, birds, and small animals, and the sunlight. As you picture those who once stood on the same ground you are now, traversing 100 years of time, you might pick up a small stone or twig that could be a trace left by them. Whatever catches your eye, collect it and place it one by one on the windowsill of your living room. It would also be nice to include some of your own items.

I wrote 21 letters with 21 images and printed them in pairs. One copy was placed in the park, and the other was left at the front door of someone's house I encountered while strolling through Faversham. If you found this letter in the park, imagine the person who found the same letter at their door. If you discovered it at your front door, picture the person who encountered this letter in the park. Then, across that distance, add some items for them to your shelf.

Now you have an exhibition that layers different times and spaces on your shelf.

This exhibition is now yours, created under your responsibility. It is up to you how long this exhibition will last, to whom you will share it, and what you will create from it. Having entrusted the responsibilities of the exhibition to you, I will now leave Faversham and return to South Korea with peace of mind. Meeting you has truly been a stroke of luck. Thank you so much, and I wish you great success with your exhibition. Goodbye.

March 15, 2025

Best wishes,
Meene An