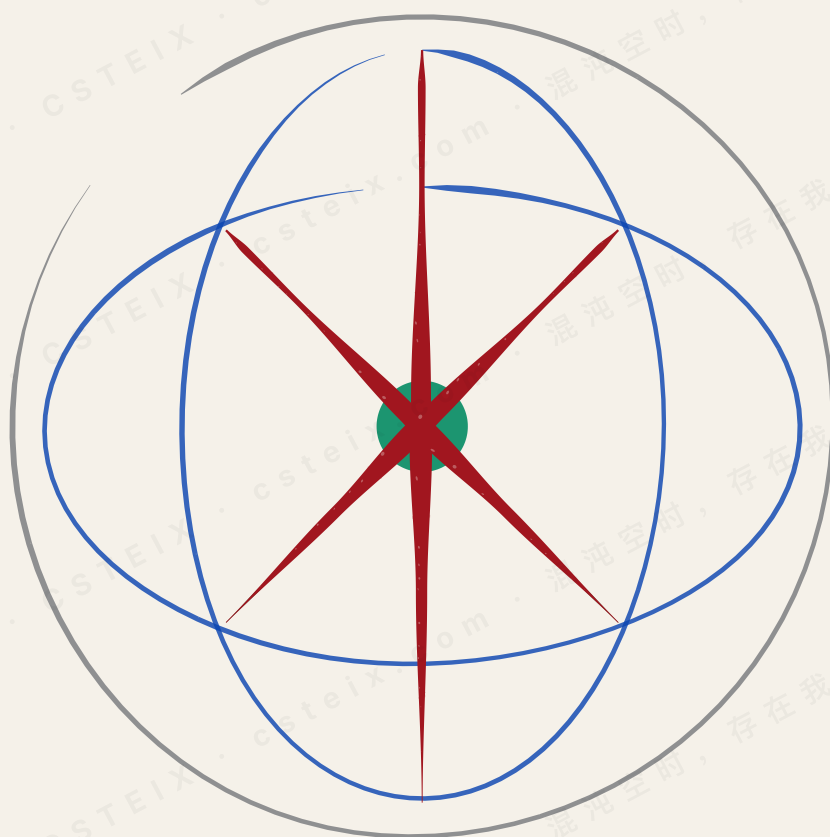




混沌空时 存在我求

CHAOSPACETIME



EXISTENCEIX

CSTEIX

csteix.com

One person's work in the face of the universe

Everything emerges from chaos and unfolds in spacetime. I exist within it as one place — a place that can feel, can give meaning, and will pass.

Existence is already a kind of meaning. I have needs and I have wants; wanting spreads meaning and experience outward, yet it does not earn existence its standing. It can go deeper, and it can turn; I can also stay. One line runs through all of it: complete is not the same as exhaustive — an experience can be complete while the world still has more to be lived. Within a finite life, what has happened does not lose weight for failing to last forever.

CSTEIX is one person's work in the face of the universe. Chaos, spacetime, existence and IX are four scales for seeing one world: the ground of becoming, the relations that unfold, the place where feeling happens, and the life that acts. They follow one another and also hold one another in check. Chaos keeps every order open beyond its own edge; spacetime gives unfolding its concrete conditions; existence gives meaning somewhere to happen; IX lets this one life take part in the becoming that comes next.

This picture is spoken from a place. The world has a side that does not change to suit my wishes, and I always meet it from this body, this moment, this way of feeling. Warmth and cold, sound, light and dark, negative space — all of it begins here, and ends here.

This is not an argument but one person's statement of position. The thinkers cited each have systems of their own; only the side that bears on this essay is taken up, and the essay says which side it took — it does not speak for what they hold. Every couplet on the site comes from here. CSTEIX is the Dao and LIZHICHAO is the craft: the Dao is written here; the craft — what gets made — is at lizhichao.com.

混沌

CHAOS

一切 基底

ALLTHINGS • ONEGROUND



Chaos names the generative background from which everything differentiates and which no settled form exhausts. It is not only at some distant beginning; it is wherever an order is not yet fixed, still forming, still able to change.

浑然未分

PRIMORDIAL WHOLE

万象未启 皆在其中

NO FORM YET • ALL IS HERE

涌现自生

SPONTANEOUS EMERGING

无人编排 自虚无来

WITH NO CONDUCTOR • ALL COMES FROM VOID

熵增寂灭

ENTROPIC SILENCE

热寂之下 终归沉默

UNDER HEAT DEATH • ALL FALLS SILENT

生生不息

PERPETUAL BECOMING

逆熵而行 重构自己

AGAINST ENTROPY • REBUILDING ITSELF

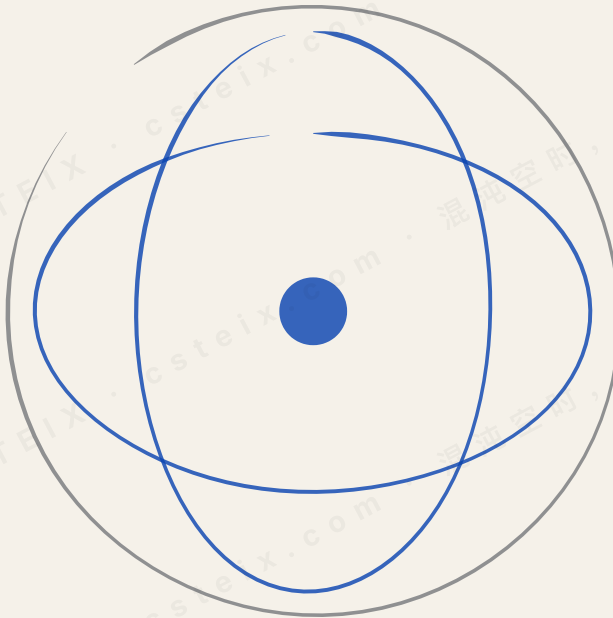
Becoming does not need an ending to authorize it, and the finite need not wait for eternity to be compensated.

空时

SPACETIME

涌现 容器

ALLRISING • ONEVESSEL



Chaos asks where forms arise from; spacetime asks how forms that have taken shape coexist and change.

自然宇宙

WILD COSMOS

无人执笔 万物自书

NO HAND WRITES • ALL THINGS WRITE

空纳万有

VOID HOLDS

因其有空 万有得容

VOID MAKES SPACE • ALL FINDS ROOM

时纳万象

TIME UNFOLDS

时无定形 万象流转

TIME HAS NO FORM • SO ALL FORMS FLOW

万物唯一

WOVEN ONE

天地并生 万物为一

HEAVEN AND I ARISE • ALL THINGS ARE ONE

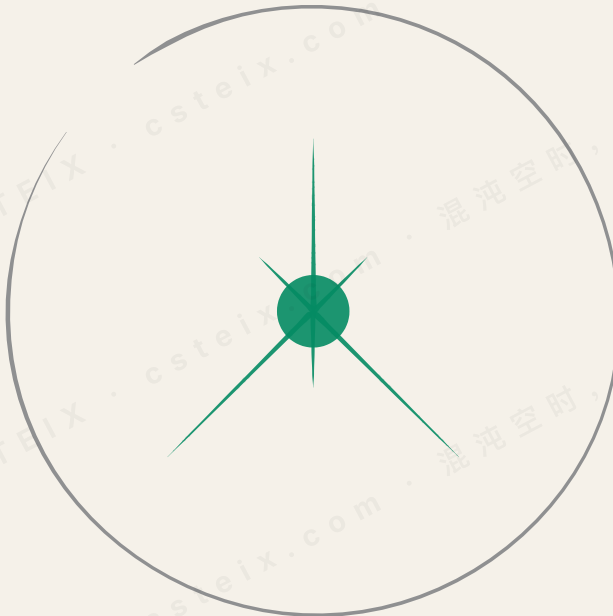
A picture seen from here can be true without exhausting the world.

存在

EXISTENCE

意义 本源

ALMEANING • ONEORIGIN



Existence is not conditional on completing a preset task. I do not first have to become some ideal person before I am qualified to feel the world.

形神涌现

BOTH EMERGE

非我所择 形神俱起

NOT MINE TO CHOOSE • BOTH ROSE AT ONCE

身体强健

FIT BODY

以身载道 无身则无

BODY CARRIES DAO • NO BODY NO DAO

道心稳固

STEADY MIND

风过千重 我自悠然

A THOUSAND WINDS PASS • I REMAIN UNTROUBLED

形神俱灭

BOTH VANISH

大限既至 形神俱归

WHEN THE END COMES • BOTH RETURN HOME

I have needs and I have wants; existence does not rest on what is obtained.

Existence can have an end without owing the world a final score.

我求

IX

混沌 生命

ALCHAOS • ONELIFE



The reason I seek is that I exist. This body has needs, this mind is curious, and experience draws out new connections and directions. IX is this life's activity turned outward, and the way meaning and experience go on unfolding.

主动叙事

NARRATIVE AGENCY

万物之先 是为故事

BEFORE ALL THINGS • THERE WAS STORY

刻意留白

NEGATIVE SPACE

满则慢 空则快

FULL IS SLOW • EMPTY IS FAST

酿造快乐

DISTILLING JOY

深度共鸣 耐心复利

DEPTH RESONATES • PATIENCE COMPOUNDS

编织好运

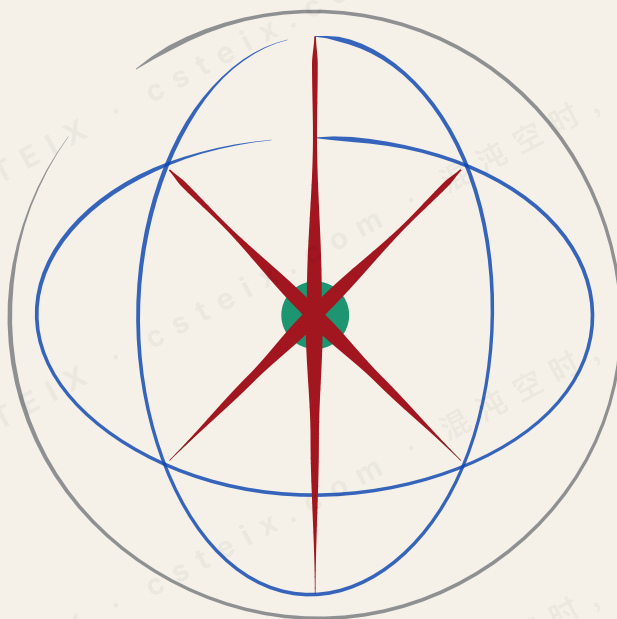
BRAID FORTUNE

好运也许晚点 好奇有趣发生

GOOD FORTUNE CAN WAIT • GOOD WONDER WILL NOT

To be deliberate is to leave this blank knowing nothing at all may happen in it.

Some joys brew slowly; some are already enough once they have happened.



Chaos, spacetime, existence and IX are related, but do not form a four-step history of the universe's becoming.

Looking from the world toward me is the unfolding of conditions: life takes shape in becoming, and exists in concrete relations and duration. Looking from me toward the world is the unfolding of experience and action: I feel from this body, give meaning within feeling, and enter the world through action. Only where the two directions meet do these four dimensions form their back-and-forth.

Life unfolds within conditions and also acts within them. The world exceeds my experience, and my action can take part in it; the individual has boundaries, and relation lets boundaries meet. After one unfolding ends, the influence it formed can still enter what comes later.

Complete is not the same as exhaustive — the line from the opening is what runs through all four. An experience can be complete while the world still has more to be lived; a life has no standing to make good, yet can keep forming new meaning. "Already enough" and "continuing outward" can therefore hold at once: completeness gives this moment its weight, and not-yet-exhausted keeps room in the future.

Form lets some relations be felt before they are said. It has the power to express, and the limits of expression: a work can invite a reading, and the viewer still meets it from their own place.

A person comes to know the world through warmth and cold, sound, light and dark, and negative space. Only the last two are within reach of a page, so everything here is asked of them. Form carries the argument, not only its appearance: the seam at the centre is where the text yields to existence, not a typographic flourish. The sections below are the other half of one statement.

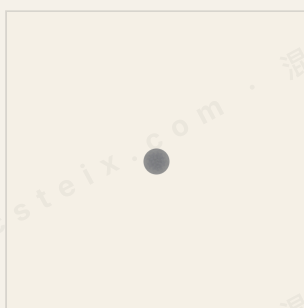
The centre : the origin, not eternity

The four figures share one compositional centre. The text leaves a seam at the centre so the origin can show; the ink at the centre surfaces, takes shape, thins and withdraws in the animation.

A fixed position and a limited duration can therefore be seen at once. "Fixed is the origin, not eternity" is the meaning the work gives it: I unfold feeling from here, yet do not become the universe's centre or a permanent thing by becoming my own origin.



Emergence
specks surface



Emergence
and wind in toward one place



Emergence
and fuse into a point



Entropy
the ring is written around it



Entropy
the ink has set



Entropy
the ring thins as it holds



Passing
the ring has gone; the point cools to ash



Passing
the wind eats it from the windward side



Passing
the ash is carried off and thins away

One life: emergence, entropy, passing. Every page's figure begins from this point, thins as it holds, and is finally let go by the point itself. On a change of page the old figure lets go at once, and a new point gathers on the same spot.

The seam : two halves across a gap

The two halves of the title face each other across a gap. The seam makes relation visible: what is separated can still connect, and what is not filled by text also takes part in meaning.

Nesting and extending : three axes taken into one stroke

The home page places chaos's ring, spacetime's double ellipse, existence's axes and IX's seal within one scale, with spacetime's orbits giving the levels a reference. IX extends outward along existence's axes until it takes those three axes, back-stubs and all, into its own strokes: when it is written, existence is not beside IX but inside it. What is taken in is the figure, not existence's standing: coordinates can enter what is sought, and existence's meaning is not issued by IX because of it.

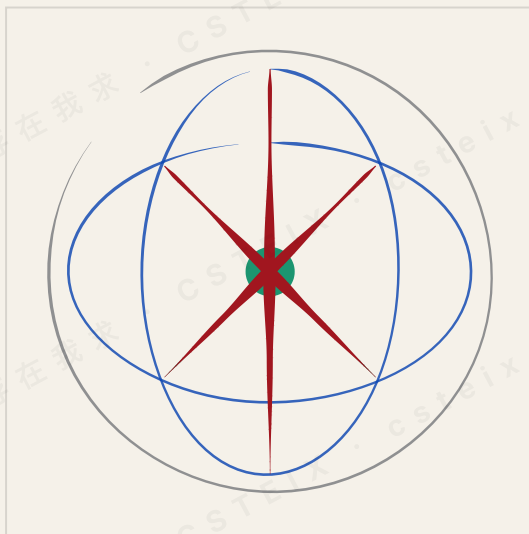
The composition hands relation to the viewer: IX unfolds from existence, and existence is within a wider becoming. Geometry first shows containment and extension; the back-and-forth of the four is evoked by the composition together with the words "all chaos | one life."

Repetition : the same construction, a different moment

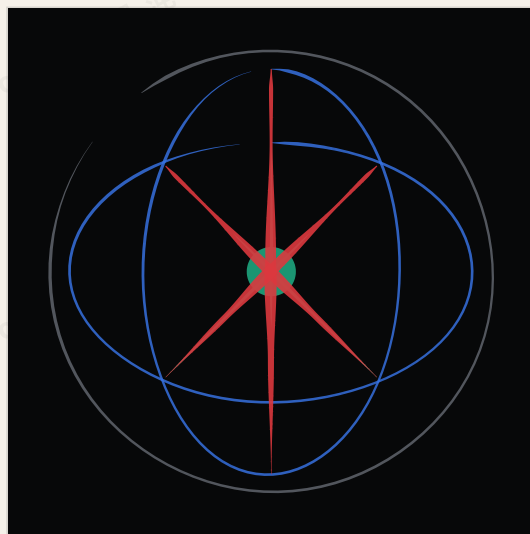
The default animation repeatedly writes in, holds, and withdraws the same construction. What is the same is the construction; the moment of each meeting and the viewer's feeling can still differ. Repetition can hold difference, and the familiar can keep deepening.

Two grounds : xuan paper and the night sky

Xuan paper and the night sky use the same geometry; the ground and the light change how it appears. Chaos's ink shifts depth with the ground, while azurite, malachite and cinnabar keep their own recognizable identities of colour. Continuity of structure and change of appearance can be felt in one place.



宣纸 · XUAN PAPER



夜空 · NIGHT SKY

Guest stars : not guaranteed

Meteors and guest stars in the night sky bring chance meetings. They are not guaranteed to appear on every visit, and meeting them is not a condition of a visit being complete. Rarity gives meeting an extra surprise, and an ordinary night sky can be just as complete.

Still water : a stone, a wave, and stillness again

Touch an empty part of the ground and a point strikes where the hand lands, then sinks; from that point the surface gives up ring after ring, travelling outward, fainter the further they go, until the water is still and nothing shows where it happened. That is the day, on xuan paper; at night the sky is not water, and a touch there sends a meteor out from the fingertip, on until it has left the screen.

The water is the mind. What enters the mind raises a wave: a sentence, a meeting, something not foreseen. The wave is real, and here it is neither pressed down nor kept out; it spreads by itself, thins by itself, settles by itself. A steady mind is not a surface no wave crosses; it is one that returns to stillness once the wave has passed. "A thousand winds pass | I remain untroubled" names that order: the winds pass first, and only then the calm.

Stillness does not undo what happened, either. The stone is still down there; the surface simply no longer shows it.



the stone lands and sinks at once



rings rise out of the point



ring after ring outward, fainter the further



the surface is still again

One screen : a completeness you can stay in

One screen makes what is in front of you a complete space you can stay in. Completeness comes from already being able, in this moment, to look, to feel and to think; it does not require the viewer to keep searching before the visit counts as finished.

Negative space therefore allows both continuing and stopping. More content and more experience can still be prized, and the place in front of you need not become a half still owing completion.

Where undefined : outside the names

An undefined path lands on "where undefined | inquiry goes on." When a set direction is lost, the page still leaves a place that can be felt. Meaning can begin outside existing names, and can pause for a while in what is not yet named.

All things arise of themselves; spacetime unfolds.

I am within it, feeling from this body, giving meaning from this mind.

Existence is already a kind of meaning; IX lets meaning and experience go on unfolding.

One can go deeper, can turn, and can stay.

Some joys brew slowly; some are already enough once they have happened.

Good fortune can wait; good wonder will not.

CSTEIX

Chaos-SpaceTime-Existence-IX · one person's work in the face of the universe

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