

My Favorite Place – My Room

Lauren Chen

My room exemplifies that every room reveals something about its occupant. It's not neat, nor is it messy. I'd like to think that the room reflects a mind highly organized but inwardly absorbed mind.

The room is an elongated rectangle, with a large window opening to the Waishuang River. It's a no-frills rented suite, a self-sufficient unit serving as a living space, a bedroom, and a study. There is a certain makeshift quality to it. The few pieces of furniture are mostly DIY or moveable; there are always books, CDs, and articles of clothing in piles. It displays few keepsakes and is hardly decorated; most things are there for practical purposes. It's a bare-bones stage for a busy soul.

删除: of makeshiftness

删除: on

A kitchenette would have been an unnecessary luxury for somebody who can make nothing but coffee. Instead, I converted the computer table left by the previous tenants into a utility table to accommodate a water filter and a portable gas stove. Nearby are a one-door refrigerator and an iron shelf for household stuff. Lined against the wall are a collapsible wardrobe, two plastic chests of drawers, and a wood bedstead with a folding mattress. Two packing boxes of not-in-use books function as a bedside table, on which I station my personal computer. Also by the bed are two adjoining desks, one of which is entirely occupied by textbooks and reference books.

Then there are the five bookshelves.

I've built a wall of books, many of which I'm yet to finish. Umberto Eco was once asked if he had read all the books he owned; he said hardly any – there was no need to keep a book after finishing it (for it would have been in his memory). I can't use that claim to justify the existence of all my to-be-read books. They spur me to work harder, remind me of all the wonderful things I'm yet to learn. They are a

constant reminder of what I expect of myself. I have a set of Encyclopedia Britannica and a whole set of Great Books of the Western World (54 volumes from Homer to Freud). I got them from my father, along with the aspiration for something greater than oneself, something weightier than any human being. The books are a curse when moving, a burden which I bear willingly and willfully.

“The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” (That saying isn't really appropriate here. Maybe “Healthy mind, healthy body”) Half of my room is to satisfy the bodily needs; the other is for the mind. My room is where I retire every day and where my real work begins. It's an anchor of a life on the move.

删除: fresh

删除: live