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Kwan Sheung Chi

關尚智



# “I am artist”

Kwan Sheung Chi in conversation with Tozer Pak  
關尚智與白雙全對談



On October 3, 2024, I met Kwan Sheung Chi for breakfast at a Japanese cafe in Hung Hom, and we began our conversation. Since we hadn't seen each other for a long time, we began with a long chit-chat. We knew each other when we were studying at the Department of Fine Arts of the Chinese University of Hong Kong; we attended classes together, I was there at his first exhibition, I stayed for two nights at the place where he was staying in New York when I went there, and I have been good friends with his wife, Wong Wai Yin... Many people and things overlap between us. When I was a student, there was no one who thought of becoming an artist (I remember Kwan kept writing “I am artist” as if being punished), but after a few years, ten years, twenty years, there are indeed former art students who have survived as artists, and although the number of them is small, each one of them is admirable—Kwan is one of them. Our conversation centred on our thoughts on being an artist in the beginning, our growth, the difficulties we encountered along the way, and our current situations. The topics were heavy but we had fun talking about them, and I've excerpted some parts of the conversation.

- Tozer Pak

按：2024 年 10 月 3 日，我跟關尚智約了在紅磡一間日式 Cafe 吃了一個早餐，之後開始了我們的對談。因為很久沒見，一開始也是說東說西說了很多瑣碎事。我們在香港中文大學藝術系讀書時已相識，我們有一起上課，參加過他的第一個展覽，我去紐約時也住過他當時旅居的地方兩晚，跟他的太太黃慧妍也是好朋友……我們中間有很多重疊的人和事。讀書的時候也沒有誰想到要當藝術家的（我想起關尚智不停寫「我是藝術家」好似罰抄），但過了幾年、十年、二十年，確是仍然有同學以藝術家作為專業生存著，雖然人數不多，但每位都令人敬佩，關尚智是其中一位！我們的話題就圍繞，一開始作為藝術家的想法、成長、中間所遇到的困難和現在的狀況，看似很沉重，但我們聊得稱心隨意，我節錄了幾段下來分享。

— 白雙全

Do you enjoy being an artist?

It's what I meant when I said in the beginning that I was worried about how you were going to deal with this interview job—because I feel like I've changed a lot over the years. I'm not as passionate now. It's been a few years. I don't care as much.

What do you mean you are not as passionate?

To put it in perspective: when I was studying, I felt that this was the only thing. This was the only thing I wanted to do, this was the only thing I was sure I was doing well. I even thought I was excellent. So I was looking forward to it, looking forward to more opportunities to do it. I do not have such an expectation now, to expect to do more, to expect more chances to prove that I can do this, not now. In the past, when I was in school, I wanted to prove to myself that I was able to do this, and I believed this thing was real. Now I do not have such thoughts.

What was the turning point?

What was the turning point... I'm not really sure. A lot of the things accumulated. I am just not as passionately in love with it. In the beginning, I felt happy, I felt joy, and that's important for a creator. I'm not completely deprived of that now. I still feel it sometimes. The moment when I feel it the most is when I prepare a piece, when it is not yet finished. In that moment, I can feel that I am still thinking about what the work should be like. That state of mind is rewarding. What I don't enjoy now are the other parts and processes. In the past, I might go to my own opening after finishing an exhibition, or I might go to someone else's opening, or someone might write a review or essay on your work, or I might go to meet with different people to talk about the work—I used to enjoy all these, but now I try to avoid them as much as possible. When a curator says he or she wants to meet me, I decline. It's been like this for some years. So now no one wants to meet me. I have learnt now that it doesn't work.

An artist can't act like that.

No. And that's why I have no shows.

Let's talk about the specific moments that you found stimulating when creating a work.

It was not about this or that moment but the whole experience.

Which periods were most exciting?

Until around 2010. After that, the passion waned.



你享不享受做藝術家這樣一個角色？

這就是為什麼我會在一開始提出擔心不知道你要怎麼寫——因為我在這麼多年來變化很大。現在的我沒有那麼大熱情。有好幾年了。我變得沒什麼所謂。

可不可以仔細說說沒有那麼大熱情是什麼意思？

說遠一點的話：在讀書的時候我覺得這是唯一的事，這是我唯一想做的事，這是我唯一確信我做得好的事。我甚至覺得自己做得很好。所以我很期待，期待有更多機會去做這件事。我現在沒有這樣的期盼，去期盼多做一點，去期盼更多的機會，去證明自己能做到這件事，現在沒有。以前在上學的時候，我想要證明給自己看，我有這樣的能力，我相信這件事是真的。現在沒有這種想法。

轉折在哪個時刻？

關：轉折在哪個時刻……我不是很清楚。很多事情吧。失去了一種熱愛。最開始的時候，我是能感受到高興的，是覺得快樂的，而這對於一個創作者來說是重要的。我現在也並不是完全沒有這些。我有時候還能感受到這些。最有感受的時刻就是準備作品的時候，作品尚未完成的時候。那時候，我還能感受到，我仍在思考作品應該是什麼樣的。那種狀態讓我覺得快樂。我現在不享受的是其他部分和環節。以前可能會在完成展覽之後去自己的開幕，或者去其他人的展覽開幕，或者有人寫你的評論文章，或者去見不同的人，去討論作品——以前我會享受這些過程，但現在我盡量避免這些事情。現在有策展人說想見面我也會推辭。有好幾年都是這樣。所以現在沒有人想見我。我發覺這是不行的。

這在藝術家生涯中是不行的。

是啊。所以就沒有展覽。

說說以前創作時感到興奮的具體例子。

沒有什麼特定的例子，而是整個狀態。

或者哪一段具體的時期。

直到 2010 年前後吧。在那之後，熱情就逐漸減退。



And what were the works you made around 2010?

It was about the time when I went to New York. I went to New York in 2009. In 2010, I did a performance with Wong Wai Yin at the fair (*Everything Goes Wrong for the Poor Couple*, 2010, Hong Kong International Art Fair).

It was a very impactful event.

Yes, it was a satisfying experience.

That was also around the time of the coin piece (*To Defend the Core Values is the Core of the Core Values*, 2012), yes?

The coin piece came a bit later. It was made in 2012. It's another thing to work with Wong Wai Yin—to work with your own people. I take it more seriously when I collaborate. My own work is just my own responsibility; I can't allow myself to disappoint others when I collaborate. I have to try my best to be responsible. When I collaborate, I have demands on myself and I have demands on the other person. When I work on my own, it is a little bit more relaxed—but of course there are still some aspects that are very tight. When I'm working on my own, I'm more flexible.

白：2010 年前後的作品是哪些？

關：也就是去紐約的那個階段。我是在 2009 年去紐約的。在 2010 年我和黃慧妍在藝博會做了行為表演（《貧賤夫妻百事哀》，2010，香港國際藝術展）。

白：那次展覽有很大回響。

關：是的，那次算是很滿足的。

白：那是「扔金幣」作品（《捍衛核心價值是最核心的核心價值》，2012）同期的展覽是吧？

關：「扔金幣」是之後做的，在 2012 年。和她合作，又是另一種事情——和自己人合作。合作創作時我會更認真。自己的作品就只是自己的責任；在合作時，我不能令人失望。我要盡力履行自己的責任。合作時對自己有要求，對對方也有要求。自己做的時候，認真程度上會稍微放鬆一點，但當然有的方面還是會很緊張。自己創作的時候彈性更大一點。







You've collaborated quite a lot with Wong Wai Yin, comparatively speaking.

It's actually not that often, but perhaps the scale is larger, so it's become rather memorable. It's also difficult because she and I work in very different modes. Now it's easier to work together because we've learnt to be more tolerant. After living together for such a long time, we've been able to understand where each other's no-go areas are.

But it seems that Wong Wai Yin has to have some co-creation with you in order to make some works complete. Is this her idea or yours?

I think we both enjoy working with each other. I mentioned we do things very differently; I need to make sure every part is thoroughly thought out—thinking about making art, I want every aspect of the work to be justified, or at least thought out, rather than just coming up with something arbitrary. The reasons may not be clear, but they have to be thought through. She doesn't need that. She can make decisions spontaneously. When it comes to paperwork, she can do it just as quickly. That's why I'm going to leave some of the writing tasks to her now; she's got a PhD, so it's a no-brainer for her, and there's no reason to leave those to me...

你和黃慧妍合作挺多的，相對於和其他藝術家合作創作來說。

合作作品的數量其實不算很多，可能因為作品規模更大型，所以容易被人記住。這也是困難的，因為我和她的工作模式很不同。現在合作起來可能更容易，因為我們學會要更寬容一點。一起生活了這麼長時間，就能瞭解到彼此的禁區在哪裡。

但是黃慧妍在做作品時似乎要有一些與你共同創作的部分才讓一些作品變得完整。這是她的意欲還是你的意欲？

我想我們彼此都享受一起創作。我剛才提到，我們的做法很不同；我需要要求每一個部分都想得清清楚楚——在面對創作的時候，我希望作品的每一個方面都是有理由的，起碼是想過的，而不是什麼都沒想過就拿出來。那理由未必是清晰的，但是要經過思考的。而她不需要這樣。她可以很快做出決定。處理文字工作時，她也可以很快完成這工作。所以我現在會把一些工作扔給她；她都讀了博士，那順理成章，沒有理由讓我來……

*Everything Goes Wrong for the Poor Couple* (2010), video installation with live performance

《貧賤夫妻百事哀》(2010)，錄像裝置，現場演出

Day 1: 5h 30m

Day 2: 8h 57m 11s

Day 3: 6h 36m 42s

Day 4: 6h 44m 40s

Day 5: 5h 4m 57s

Trailer: 10m 59s



The two things you mentioned just now sounded very interesting to me, and they may be related to the nature of your creation: you said that when you collaborate with others, you will be serious, you will take things seriously, and there is even a kind of professionalism in it; while when you make something on your own, you are more relaxed, and your work also embodies more of yourself, full of your own style. I'd like you to talk more about this, I think it's very interesting.

In practice, the difference between the two may not be that significant, because I also have very high expectations of myself, but at a certain point I would go a completely different route. For example, for an exhibition, if it's my own exhibition, I may put nothing in the exhibition space and that's it—this could be my strategy for a solo job. But if I am working with other people, I may not be able to do so. Other people may not be able to accept such an extreme approach. I might try to convince my collaborators to do it this way, if I really think it's a good idea. Therefore, I think there may not be a big difference between the two. It may have something to do with weaknesses: when I work independently, I may reveal some of my weaknesses, whereas when I collaborate with someone else, I may be reluctant to reveal my shortcomings and weaknesses. I will try to contribute my strengths or what I do well.

你剛才說到的兩件事情讓我覺得很有趣，而這些事情可能和你創作的本性有關係：你說，一起創作的時候會認真，認真做事，甚至有一種專業性在裡面，而自己創作時則更放鬆，而作品里也體現了更多的自我，自己創作的形態更充分。我想請你再談談這件事，我覺得這很有趣。

其實兩者的差異未必有那麼大，因為我對自己也有很高的要求，但是有的方面我會用完全相反的策略做出來。舉例來說，做一個展覽，如果這是我自己的展覽，我可能在展場中什麼都不放——這是單人創作可能會選擇的策略。但是如果是和別人一起，那我未必可以這樣做。別人未必能接受如此極端的做法。不過，我有可能會嘗試說服合作者以這種方式去做，如果我真的覺得這樣是好的話。所以，我覺得兩者未必相差甚遠。這可能與弱點有關：在獨立創作的時候，我會釋放自己的一些弱點出來，而在和別人合作的時候，我可能不願意展露自己的缺點、弱點。我會嘗試把自己的優點或做得好的方面貢獻出來。







*Doing it with Mrs Kwan... Making pepper spray (2012), Single channel video, 5' 16".*  
《同關太一起做…製作胡椒噴霧》（2012），單頻道錄像，5分16秒。



*Doing it with Chi... making an Exit Bag (2009), Single channel video, 3' 44".*  
《跟阿智一起做…製作往生袋》（2009），單頻道錄像，3分44秒。

It shows that you care. You want to make sure others are not seeing a loss in you when you collaborate.

Yeah. When it's just me, I'd think it doesn't matter, I'm not hurting anyone else, I'm just hurting myself.

But is this something that relates to or contradicts the art you are exploring?

What's this something?

That you can make compromises and care more about others. How is this gesture related to your own art?

I don't think there is a contradiction. Like I said earlier, the process of trying to do a good job is enjoyable, and it still makes me feel satisfied. When I work with other people, I can feel that I am doing what I want to do. Of course, I have not collaborated with too many people so far.

Oh you have collaborated enough. You have had many collaborators. Many artists never have the chance to try it.

Is that so? I have not collaborated with many different artists, and the artist I have collaborated with the most is Wong Wai Yin. It's difficult to collaborate after all; there are many people you just can't collaborate with. You have to speculate who you might be able to work with before you start... Even my first collaboration with Wong Wai Yin was difficult. Although the final outcome was good, the process was painful.

Many couples choose to avoid working with each other. They may think that they could be happier if they don't work together. But you choose to get together when dealing with art.

I think we can communicate with each other in this regard. Although I have said that our approaches are very different, we can understand each other, fortunately. But I also think that we chose each other at the beginning exactly because of this reason, to a certain extent. At least I think so. I think I can communicate with her, even at the artistic level.

這是在意（care）的表現。你在意在一起做事的時候，其他人不會在你這裡看到有一種損失。

是的。如果只有我自己的時候，我就想：沒所謂，我不會傷害到其他人，我只是傷害到我自己。

但是，這件事和你探索的藝術是否有關係或抵觸？

什麼事？

你可以放低一些姿態，對別人更在意這件事，和你自己藝術的探索是否有關係？

我不覺得有抵觸。像是我剛才說的，想做好一件作品的過程是享受的，那個過程仍然讓我覺得滿足。和別人合作的時候，我能感受到，我在做自己想要做的事。當然，我也並沒有和很多人合作創作。

你算多的了。你的次數算多的了。有的藝術家一輩子都沒有。

我算多嗎？我並沒有和很多不同的藝術家合作，合作最多的藝術家就是黃慧妍。合作也是困難的；有許多人是沒法合作的。你要預想誰有可能可以合作，再開始……甚至我和黃慧妍的第一次合作也是難的，雖然最後成果是好的，但是過程也是痛苦的。

很多情侶或夫婦會選擇避免與彼此合作。他們可能會想，避免一起工作可以更開心。但你們選擇在一起處理藝術這件事。

我覺得我們在這方面可以溝通。雖然我剛才說我們的做法很不同，但是我們可以互相理解。這是幸運。但我也覺得，我們在最初選擇了對方，在某種程度上也是因為這個原因。最起碼我是這樣想的，我覺得我可以和她溝通，在藝術的層面也是可以的。



Can I think of it this way: art-making is actually a part of your process of understanding each other in depth and at a high level?

I think so. Sometimes I think she understands me more than I understand her. That's part of the relationship.

It's interesting; living together, you may spend 24 hours a day together, you have a child to take care of, and you deal with all the other aspects of life together. Art occupies a unique place in your relationship.

It's very natural. Our educational backgrounds are the same, and we were only one grade apart in school. Our friends are all mutual acquaintances. Our best friends are all from the same group of people. From falling in love to getting married, we have made artistic developments side by side. We go to see exhibitions together, and make works in a shared environment... I helped photograph some of her works, and she mine. We're not too independent from each other. If she needs my help with something, for example, if she has a piece of work that she wants me to photograph, I'll make sure I understand her requirements. It's also like the mentality of collaboration that I talked about earlier—I become very strict, trying to understand what the other person wants, trying to figure out what they ask for. In the beginning, the instructions I received from Wong Wai Yin were very vague and I was not very satisfied with them. That was not the way I work and I found it hard to understand; and if I can't understand, how can I meet your expectations? What do you envision in your mind for the finished work? I didn't know how to handle it that way. But she has been generally satisfied with my assistance. Every time she says it's good. Then I'm even more confused. If you can't even give me a bad example, how am I supposed to know how to assist next time?

我能否這樣理解：藝術創作其實是你們高層次、深入地理解彼此過程的一個部分？

我覺得是的。有時候，我覺得她理解我比起我理解她要多。這也是兩人關係的一部分。

這很有趣；你們一起生活，可能一天二十四小時都在共同相處，你們還要帶孩子，還要一起處理生活的其他方面。藝術在你們的關係中佔據的位置是很獨特的。

這是很自然的。我們的教育背景是一樣的，在學校時只差了一屆。朋友也都是共同認識的朋友。最好的朋友也都是同一群人。從談戀愛到結婚，我們各自的創作過程也是同步進行的。一起去看展覽，再在彼此共享的環境中同時做作品……她有的作品是我協助拍攝的，我的也是。我們不太分彼此。如果她需要我協助做什麼，比如她有一件作品希望我協助拍攝，我就會問她有什麼要求。這也像是我剛才談到的合作時的心態——我會變得很嚴謹，想清楚瞭解對方的要求，想弄明白對方想要什麼效果。最開始的時候，黃慧妍給我的指示是很模糊的，我就會因此不是很滿意。這不是我工作的方法，我也覺得很難理解；我要如何才能滿足你的要求呢？你心裡想象的作品成品是什麼樣的？我不知道要如何才能做到這件事。但是她一般都滿意我協助她創作的工作。每一次她都說很好。那我就更糊塗。你如果甚至不能給我一個不好的例子，那我要如何知道下次該如何協助？

Kwan Sheung Chi 關尚智  
*To Wong Wai Yin 《給黃慧妍》*  
2007  
Fragment of a black & white photograph, pencil on paper in handmade wood frame  
黑白照片斷片，鉛筆紙本，手造木框  
52 x 52 x 3.5 cm



Wong Wai Yin 黃慧妍  
*To Kwan Sheung Chi 《給關尚智》*  
2006  
Fragment of a black & white photograph, in handmade wood frame  
黑白照片斷片，手造木框  
52 x 52 x 3.5 cm





But that's her attitude. It shows she has trust in you.

Yeah. But my approach is that I want to avoid bad possibilities in advance. If she's going to school tomorrow, what are we going to eat after school—for me now, it is a scenario that is not so different from collaborating with her. It's a life thing; it's something the two of us do together.

The two of you think about and explore things at somewhat different levels. Besides the everyday life, there are also the artistic and philosophical sides of things. Not every couple can continue to communicate at this level.

We may not discuss these subjects directly. We feel that there is a shared, fundamental understanding of things, so when we think about one particular subject, the discussion may revolve around the specific details of it. I don't think there is an urgent need to discuss many things. That's probably why the relationship works. Details require a lot of thought, especially if you've worked together before. You can recognize what problems might arise in practice, and therefore, in subsequent collaborations, we tend to cover those aspects more.

Do you think this is also why you are reluctant about having discussions with curators? Because you may feel that you have to keep digging yourself out for them, whereas your exchange with Wong Wai Yin can be tacit and immediate.

這也是她的態度，她對你的信任。

是這樣的。但是我的做法是，我要在事前避免一些不好的可能性。舉例來說：你明天要去上學，那放學後我們要去哪裡吃飯——這和共同創作對現在的我來說區別不是很大。這是生活上面的事情，是兩人一起做的事情。

而你們兩人思考、探討的事情的層次始終是有些不同的。除了生活中的日常操作之外，還要處理藝術和哲學層面的事情。並不是每個人都能夠在這個層次上繼續溝通。

我們未必會直接討論這些事情，某程度上我們覺得大家都明白，我們在思考同一件事的時候，討論的話題可能是其中的細節。我不覺得我們非常需要討論什麼問題。這可能是為什麼這種關係可以運作下去。細節需要很多的考慮，尤其是在曾經有過合作經驗的時候。你能意識到，實際工作中可能會出現什麼問題，因此在之後的合作中會更多討論那些方面。

是不是因為這樣的原因，你比較抗拒和策展人討論？因為你可能覺得你要不斷挖自己出來說給他聽，而你和黃慧妍的交流可以是默契的、不需要言說的。

*Two Hands Clapping*

《雙手拍掌》

2011

Single channel video, 3'19"

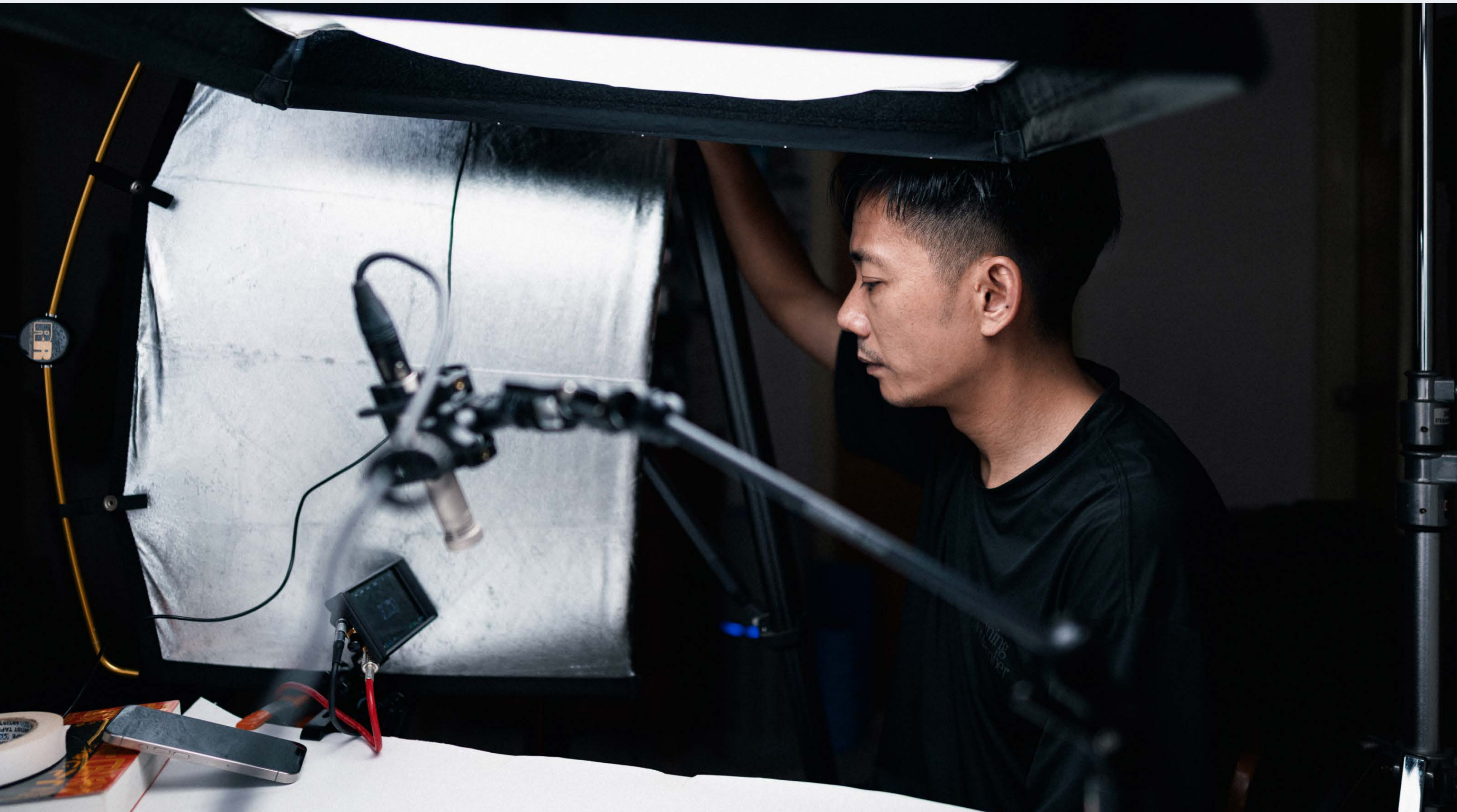
單頻道錄像，3分19秒





I don't like to present my work. I think it's like a sales pitch. Another problem is that it's difficult. For someone who does a lot of video work, how do you talk about the work in a particular context? Do you just play the videos one by one? Or do I have to explain to people this is how it's shot, that's why you're seeing the images that way, so on and so forth? I think the whole thing is silly.

不喜歡去展示 (present) 自己的作品。我覺得這像是推銷的過程。另一個問題就是，這很難。對於一個常做影像作品的人來說，你要如何在什麼場合去講述作品呢？一部部播放作品？還是說，我要解釋給別人聽：這件作品是這樣做的，所以你看到的畫面是這樣的，諸如此類？我覺得這整件事很傻。







Are you reluctant about interactions and relationships that are more goal-oriented?

Yeah. I don't trust people. Although it is interesting that you are here to write about me, I think you and I are in very different places: you want to meet people and try to trust them, whereas I don't want to... I don't want to at all, but I don't have the confidence and I'm a bit resistant to it. I'm very aware of this.

I would like to go back a little and talk about the time you lived and worked in the United States before you came back to Hong Kong.

In fact, I didn't make anything in the United States. It's a bad habit: I get tired of doing something for too long. So I may have gotten tired of art after a long time. But I don't have the ability or interest to do anything else. So I have to force myself to do it, which isn't bad if it works out...

你是否對目的性比較強的關係有抗拒？

是的。甚至我不信任他人。雖然你來寫我是挺有趣的。我覺得你我在很不同的位置：你想去認識人，嘗試去信任人，而我不想……我也不是完全不想，但是我沒有信心，我對此有些抗拒。我自己很清楚這件事。

我想我們回頭談談你在回到香港之前、在美國生活工作的那段時間。

其實在美國我什麼都沒有做。我自己有一個壞習慣：面對一個事情太久就會覺得厭倦。所以面對藝術久了，我可能也已感到厭倦。但我也沒有能力和興趣去做別的事情。所以就要強迫自己去做，這也不壞，如果可以順利地……





Why did you choose to major in art as you enrolled into college?

At that time, I felt... I felt I could try to do my best, I could choose an area where I may give it my all. That was one of the main reasons. If you have the ability to do it, then do it. At that time, it was natural for me to like art because of this reason. You may enjoy the process because it is rewarding.

You were already very conscious about it when you made art in high school.

Not really. My older brother was also an art student, so I understood it better than others. I studied art for the HKCEE, but not for A-Level because my school didn't have this kind of program. I wasn't very good at it in high school, There wasn't anybody to teach me art, and I didn't have any peers who were also interested in art. But at that time, I did feel that I was rather talented. Although, in the school environment, there was no one around who could understand what I was doing. Preparing for A-Level, a teacher who knew me well asked me in a private conversation why I didn't choose to study art. He didn't teach art, he taught history. That was the first time I started to think about it, I had never thought about it before. I started to ask my brother what the art department was all about. I had heard him talk about it occasionally, but I wasn't curious about it in any specific way before then. It didn't take long for me to decide I wanted to study art in college. On the other hand, another reason was: I yearned for that kind of life, and I felt that I could... realize the things I believe in by doing the things I do. My brother told me about Leung Po Shan and her art, and I thought it was great, I thought she was fearless, and I wanted to be a brave person myself. Of course, later I realized that art is not exactly what I thought it would be, and that there is a gap between the two—what I believed in was not exactly what I could accomplish on my own, but from the outset that was the idea. The different ideas are not far from one another, and I do try to practise what I believe in through my own work.

Your art was also above what students were making; high school students usually thought art was about making paintings.

I was just making paintings.

But you thought art could bring about the changes you wanted to make.

Yeah. We were saying that the most ideal situation is that there is a tangible connection between art and reality. It may depend totally on chance, and I accept it even if it is just a fortuity. If it can change something by chance, that's fine with me. You can even say that one can never force it. Many events in history happen by chance. If something I do can become a point in history, I think it's perfect.

你中學升大學時為什麼選擇藝術專業？

那時覺得……盡自己所能，選擇能發揮自己能力的地方。這是其中一個最主要的地方。你有能力去做這件事，那就去做這件事吧。那時也很自然地因為這個原因喜歡上這件事。可能因為有滿足感，所以你會享受那過程。

你在中學時已很自覺地去創作。

不是；我的大哥是藝術系的，所以我對這個範疇比一般人多些理解。會考的時候有讀藝術，預科的時候就沒有，因為我的學校沒有這種課程。我在中學時並不擅長這件事，沒有人教我，也沒有同樣對藝術感興趣的同輩。那時卻也的確覺得自己是比較有天分的。雖然在當時的學校環境中，身邊沒有人能理解你在做什麼。在預科時，一位比較熟悉我的老師私底下聊天時問我，為什麼你不選擇讀藝術系。他並不是教藝術的，他是教歷史的。那是我第一次開始想這件事，之前完全沒想過。我於是開始問我大哥藝術系到底是怎麼一回事。之前偶爾聽他說起，但是也沒有帶著明確目的去瞭解這件事。隨後就很快決定了要讀藝術系。另一方面，另一個原因是：我嚮往那種生活狀態，覺得可以……我覺得，你自己相信的事情，可以在自己做的事情裡面體現出來。那時我大哥有講梁寶山做的行為給我聽。那時我覺得很棒，覺得她敢作敢為，自己也想做一個敢作敢為的人。當然，後來我意識到藝術和我想象的不完全一樣，兩者有差距——我相信的事情不完全是我自己能夠完成的，但是最初的時候我是這樣設想。但是兩者還是接近的，我的確在自己的工作中嘗試做自己相信的事情。

你的藝術在那個時候也是超前的；一般的中學生覺得畫張畫就是藝術。

我那時候也只是畫張畫而已。

但是你覺得藝術可以實現你想要完成的改變。

是的。剛才說到，最理想的情況，就是藝術和現實有聯繫。對於我來說，這可以是一個偶然情況，而就算它是一個偶然我也接受。它如果可以偶然改變些什麼，我也覺得很好。甚至說，你無法強求這件事。歷史上的許多事件都是偶然發生的。如果我做的什麼事情能夠成為歷史中的一點，我就覺得是最完美的了。





Do you believe that artists have played a role in human history?

I guess. I don't really pay much attention to other artists. In interviews, I often get these questions: What artists influence you? What artists do you like? I usually don't answer because I don't like to read about art. I prefer literature or books in other fields. When I was in college, I rarely went to classes during the last two years, and I spent all the evenings reading books, novels, and so on. Other fields have a much greater influence on me. The influence I got from looking at art is mainly formal; I got to know what contemporary forms were, what forms could be used for expression. You could learn from them or challenge them—that's the biggest influence art has on me. The textures and imaginations that I want don't come from art, they come from literature. What were we talking about?

We were talking about why you chose art in high school—that kind of faith you had in art.

Right.

I asked do you believe that artists have played a role in human history, because one of your works have said it: I am artist, I am artist, I am artist. Be it a curse or an aspiration, it's like your logo or your signature.

My faith in the figure of the artist is like my faith in the figure of the writer—they are very close. I also have faith in athletes and musicians—they have their place. I used to love playing basketball, and I even played occasionally in college, and then I stopped for more than a decade because I didn't

think I was any good at it.

It was just for fun, right?

I didn't think so at that time. At that time, I thought that no matter how hard I tried, I could not get any better than this. If you're not as tall as others, not as fast as others, not as good a jumper as others, not as strong as others, and you don't have time to practice, and you can't shoot well, then why do you want to play? In contrast, it was very easy for me to make art, and it was very easy to make people think I was good at it. I gave up basketball altogether, I didn't even watch the games, but when I got older, in my thirties, I started to regret it—I hadn't played for the past seven or eight years. I used to live in the suburbs; I finally started to play basketball again in the neighbourhood at that time, and I invited other people from the art scene to play with me. I played a lot, but then I hurt my leg and took a long break. Last year, I played occasionally with Wong Ping, Samuel and Nadim. When I was young, I didn't think that I could treat it as a hobby, even if it wasn't what I was meant to do. I was more extreme then. In other words, at that time I was very absorbed in art: I could do it, I was good at it, I just wanted to do it, I wasn't interested in anything else. That's not the case now. I'm less and less interested in art. At that time I was also very interested in what was happening around me. When I was in school, I would go to any exhibition, any opening. At that time, Mr. Lui (Lui Chun Kwong) taught us that this was a way to show respect to fellow students. The idea was: if you want people to come to your opening, then you have to go to other people's openings as well.

你是否相信藝術家在人類歷史裡面扮演了一個角色？

應該是吧。我其實不常留意其他藝術家。在訪談中，我經常遇到這類問題：什麼藝術家影響了你？你喜歡什麼藝術家？我一般都不回答，因為我不喜歡看藝術相關的東西。我喜歡看文學或其他領域的書。讀大學時，最後那兩年我很少去上課，那時我晚上一直在看書，看小說等。別的領域對我的影響要大得多。我看藝術作品能接受的影響主要是形式層面的，我可瞭解到當代的形式是什麼樣的，可以用什麼形式來做表達，而你可以從中學習或去挑戰這些形式——這就是藝術對我最大的影響。而我想要的質地或想象不是從藝術來的，而是從文學來的。我們剛才在說什麼？

我們剛才在說為什麼你在中學時選擇了藝術——你對藝術有一種信任。

哦哦。

為什麼我要問你相不相信藝術家在人類歷史裡面扮演了一個角色，因為你的作品就說了這件事：我是藝術家，我是藝術家，我是藝術家。無論這是一種詛咒還是志願，這句話就像是你的標誌或簽名一樣。

我對藝術家的信念就像是我對作家的信念一樣，兩者很接近。對運動員、音樂家也有信念——他們有各自的位置。我以前很喜歡打籃球，上了大學

還偶爾打籃球，之後有十多年時間再也沒有打，因為覺得自己打得不好。

打打玩而已。

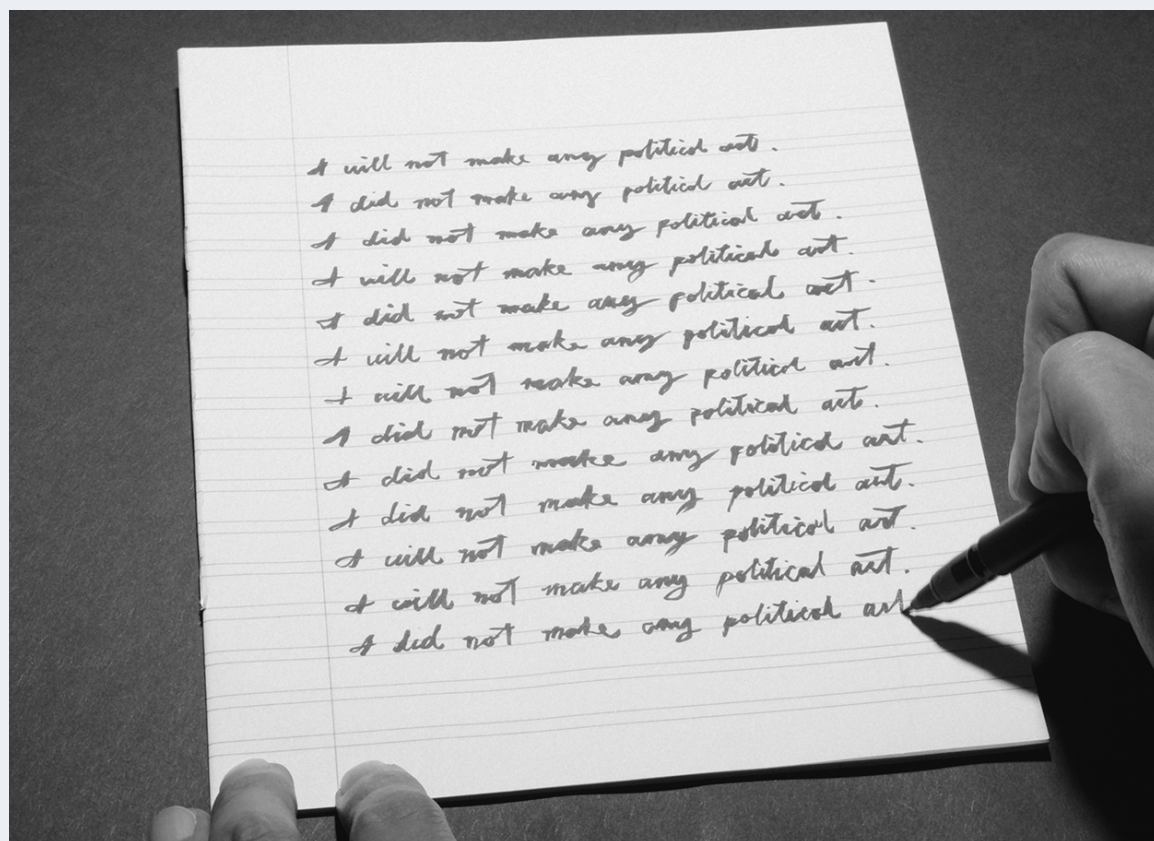
當時不是這樣想的。當時覺得無論多努力也就只能這樣了。沒別人高，沒別人快，沒別人跳得高，沒別人壯，沒有時間去練習，投籃又不准，那還為什麼要打呢。相比之下，做藝術很輕鬆，很輕鬆地就能讓別人覺得做得很好。我完全放棄打籃球，連比賽都不看，而年紀再大一點、三十多歲的時候就開始後悔——過去的七八年我都沒有打過球。那時住在近郊，就開始常常在附近打籃球，隨後還邀約藝術圈的其他人一起打球。那段時間經常打球，後來卻又傷到腳，休息了很久。去年偶爾有打球，跟黃炳、Samuel、Nadim 一起。年輕的時候不懂，不知道還可以把這件事當做興趣來對待，縱使這並不是你注定要做的事情。那時候比較極端。換個角度來說，那個時候的我很投入，我能做（藝術）這件事，做這件事做得好，我只想做這件事，其他事情我沒有興趣。現在就不是這樣。我對藝術的興趣越來越少。那個時候我對身邊發生的事的興趣也很大。從上學期間開始，任何一個展覽我都會去看，任何開幕我都會去，那時呂生（呂振光）教這是給同學以尊重。那時的說法是：如果你想要別人來你的開幕，那你也要去別人的開幕。





Installation view, "Not retrospective", Kiang Malingue, Hong Kong, 2023  
「Not retrospective」展覽現場，馬凌畫廊，香港，2023 年  
© Kwan Sheung Chi and Kiang Malingue. Photo by: Kwan Sheung Chi





*I Will Not Make Any Political Art. I Did Not Make Any Political Art.*  
2020

video: 4:3, B&W, mono sound, 9' 24"  
錄像: 4:3, 黑白, 單聲道, 9分24秒

One of your works from some years ago claims: I Will Not Make Any Political Art. Which in effect reflects that you have made a lot of political art.

I'm not going to say this outright, but... It's actually nonsense. Art has to do with politics, everything is involved with the political, and it's something I'm very concerned about when I work. Politics must have affected everyone. Some people make art about romantic relationships, but not everyone is interested in that subject. Politics may be a subject that interests more people. Some people make art about trees, but not everyone is interested in trees. Politics affect everyone, and everyone can understand politics, so I feel the need to do this, and I feel it is meaningful to do this. If I were to do something related to basketball just because I like to play basketball, I don't think it would have much to say to the audience. Political art doesn't require a lot of imagination in the viewing process; anyone who sees these works should be able to be reminded of something he or she has experienced in life. So... What kind of art is political art, and what is its definition? Is it political art if it's about politics, or is it, as I said earlier, something that I believe can have a tangible impact on reality? I prefer this kind of art, I can only make an argument about the value of this kind of art-making, and I guess some people may feel motivated or inspired by it. I have got some feedback in the past that surprised me; I thought my work was not very rich in emotions, but I have heard people said that they cried after seeing my work.

你幾年前有一件作品聲稱：I Will Not Make Any Political Art。這事實上反映你曾做過許多政治藝術。

我不會直接這麼說，但是……這其實是一句廢話。一定是有關的；所有事情都和政治有關，而我也在創作時非常關心這件事。政治必定對每個人有影響。有的人的創作和男女感情相關，但並不是每個人都對這個主題感興趣。政治可能是比較多人感興趣的問題。有的人的創作和樹木相關，但也不是每個人都關心樹木。政治對每個人都有切身的影響，每個人都能夠理解政治，所以我就覺得需要做這件事，覺得做這件事是有意義的。如果說因為我喜歡打籃球就做和籃球相關的作品，那我覺得這裡能向觀眾表達的內涵不多。關於政治的藝術在觀看過程中不需要太多的想象力；任何人看到這些作品應該都可以觸發他想起他生活里曾經歷的事情。所以……什麼藝術是所謂政治藝術，它的定義究竟是什麼樣的？是只要關於政治就是政治藝術，還是說，像我剛才說的，我相信它能夠發生實際的作用？我當然想，但我只可以說這種藝術有做的價值，我覺得可能有人能從其中感受到一種動力。我有收到過這樣的回應，因此也感到意外；我以為自己的作品是感情不充沛的，但是我聽過有人說看完我的作品痛哭流涕。



After watching a video of yours?

No, there was once at Oi!—do you remember? I participated in a group exhibition at Oi! ("back to the basics — Kwan Sheung Chi: Travel in the Universe", Oi!, Hong Kong, 2018), and I used the large space on the ground floor, which I made look like a tunnel, painting the walls pitch-black, leaving only a wooden plank walkway in the middle for people to walk through. There was a dark room in the back, also pitch-black, with some cushions on the floor for the audience to lie down on. In another room I showed a sculpture, a globe folded out of a map of Hong Kong; it's basically about imagining Hong Kong's travel in the universe.

I went to that exhibition.

So a friend told me he went with his girlfriend, and his girlfriend cried because she could really feel the work.

看你的影像作品？

不是，有一次在油街——你有沒有印象？我曾參加油街一次群展（《還原基本 — 關尚智：宇宙飄流記》，油街實現，香港，2018），使用了地下的那個大展廳，我把展廳弄成像是通道一樣，牆面完全塗黑，中間有一個木板通道供人行走。後方有一個昏暗的房間，裡面也是漆黑的，地上鋪了一些海綿，觀眾進去了之後就可以躺在海綿上。在另外的一個房間裡我放了一件雕塑，是用香港地圖折出來的地球儀，大致意思是香港飄流記。

我當時去看了那個展覽。

有朋友說，他和女朋友去看展覽，女朋友看到哭，覺得很能感受到作品中的狀態。

The large-scale tunnel structure you made for the Kiang Malingue exhibition—was it somehow linked to the Oi! exhibition?

In my first exhibition with Kiang Malingue, "Blue is the New Black" (Hong Kong, 2017), I used many tapes in the space to make crisscrossing lines at a certain height so that the audience had to crawl to enter. For the exhibition at Project Fulfill Art Space in Taiwan ("Well, you can have what's left of mine.", Project Fulfill Art Space, Taipei, 2015), a closet-like cabinet was placed at the entrance, filled with concrete, leaving only a gap as wide as my body. It meant that you had to be thinner than I was in order to get into the exhibition. There was a special meaning to this arrangement, although I never talked about it—that exhibition was rather private and personal, and I rarely do exhibitions like that, and the hidden meaning was that not everyone could go in. Although there was no direct relationship between the two, if you were physically bigger than me, you can't go in, and you couldn't therefore understand me.

你後來在畫廊做的大通道結構和油街的展覽有沒有聯繫？

在馬凌的第一次展覽「藍是新的黑」（香港，2017）在空間里拉起許多線條，因此觀眾需要從底下鑽過去才能進入。在台灣就在藝術空間的展覽（「嗯，你可以擁有我所剩下的。」，就在藝術空間，台北，2015）則在入口處放了一個類似衣櫃的櫃子，裡面鋪滿了混凝土，僅留下一個和我身寬一般寬的通路，也就是說你一定要比我瘦才能走進去看展覽。對我來說這種安排其實是有意義的，雖然我從來沒有說出來——那個展覽是比較私密、個人的，我比較少在其他場合如此去做展覽，而其中的暗示是：不是所有人都可以進去。雖然這之間沒有直接的關係，但是你比我壯的話就不可以進去，就不能瞭解我。



"back to the basics — Kwan Sheung Chi: Travel in the Universe", Oi!, Hong Kong, 2018  
「還原基本 — 關尚智：宇宙飄流記」，油街實現，香港，2018 年  
© Kwan Sheung Chi and Oi!



Installation view, "Blue is the New Black", Edouard Malingue Gallery, Hong Kong, 2017  
「藍是新的黑」展覽現場，馬凌畫廊，香港，2017 年  
© Kwan Sheung Chi and Edouard Malingue Gallery



It's implied that the exhibition was exclusive.

Yeah. I've enjoyed the process of doing solo exhibitions all along: thinking about the exhibition sites, audience feedback, feeling the spaces—these are all very important to me, there's a lot to play with, and different configurations can produce very different experiences. These aspects of an exhibition are also where I want to differentiate myself with from other artists. I think I have handled these things well.

I am particularly fond of a couple of your works, such as the early series of “I Am Artist” (2003-2004), and a mid-career piece you made with your mom (*Teapoy*, 2005)—your mom made a drawing and you made a teapoy based on her design. Can you talk a little about that work?

That piece was made specifically for the Hong Kong Art Biennial 2005; I realised that there was room for me to play a game like that. The goal was for my mom to win the Biennial's award that year.

Who was credited as the artist, your mom, or the two of you together?

It's my mom. she was the one participated with *Teapoy*. Of course, the staff knew what was going on when they saw me there with a letter of authorisation. Before making that piece, I spent a day tagging along with my mom; I followed her since she went out for morning exercise that day. It was also about talking to her a bit

展覽是隱含排他性的。

是啊。那麼，一直以來，我都挺享受做個人展覽的過程：去思考場地的問題，觀眾的互動問題，感受空間的問題，這些對我來說都很重要，也有很多可玩的地方，也可以給人以非常不同的體驗——這也是我想要和其他藝術家有區別的地方。我覺得，在這些事情上，我處理得好。

你有幾件作品我特別喜歡，包括早期作品「我是藝術家」（2003-2004），而你在創作中期時曾和媽媽做過一件作品（《茶几》，2005）——你媽媽畫了一張圖，然後你依照那繪圖做了一張茶几出來。能否談談這件作品？

那件作品就是為了香港藝術雙年展而做的；我當時看到雙年展的制度是有可以玩的空間。我的目的就是讓我媽能夠拿到雙年展的獎。

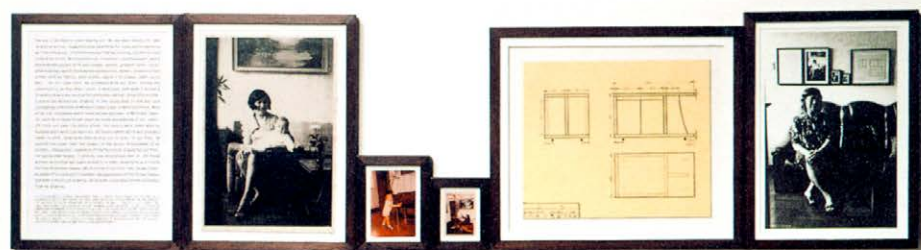
創作者的名字寫的是你媽，還是你和媽媽兩個人？

就是我媽。我就是用她的名字來參加的。當然，藝術館的職員看見我拿著授權信過去也知道是怎麼回事。創作那件作品時，我在一天內跟隨我媽活動；她去晨運，我就跟著去晨運。在這個過程中我也想和她多聊聊天。平時也有和她聊天，而在做這件作品時我也是想看有沒有什麼方面可以做成作品。她的人生經驗——其實我爸也

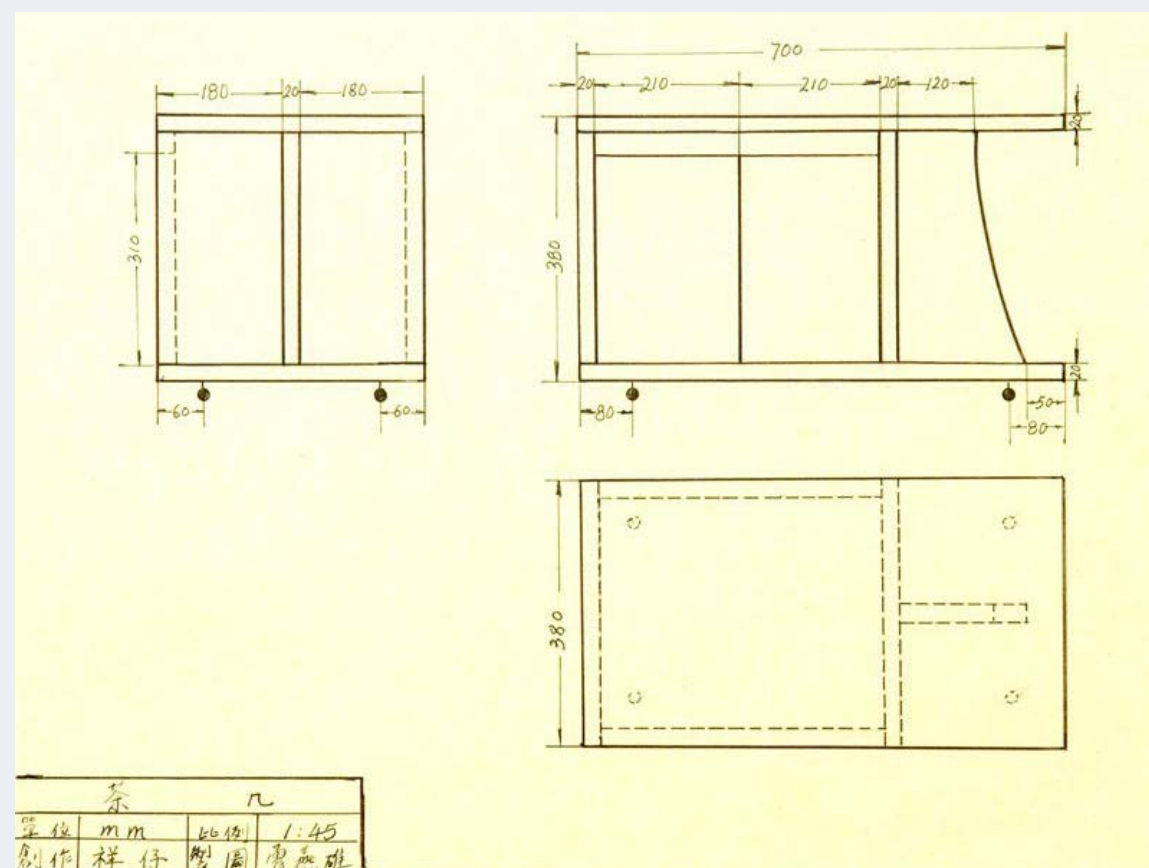
more during the process. We talk on a daily basis, but when I was making that piece I wanted to see if there were any aspects of her life that I could address. Her life experience—actually my dad is similar—I think she counts as an intellectual, having majored in mechanics when she was in school. My dad came to Hong Kong first; he and his brothers came to Hong Kong and worked in the plastic molding industry. My mom was smuggled into Hong Kong and worked in a factory before she got married. My mom received higher education in mainland China and even taught math afterwards, but she never used her professional knowledge and experience in Hong Kong. She almost never used anything she learned from school in her whole life. So I wondered how I could represent this experience. She and I went through old albums and found a picture of a teapoy—so *Teapoy* the artwork includes this picture, in which my mom is holding a baby, my brother. I had never seen that teapoy, so I asked her to draw it from memory. The memory was partly of the teapoy, and partly of the skills she had learned—the craft of technical drawing that she had never used in her life. I invited her to use her memory to recover the teapoy. The photo represents abandonment of her life in mainland China, where her classmates who stayed behind probably did go on to professional careers as engineers, and she became a housewife in Hong Kong. Making the drawing, she whined, “Ah, I can't remember how to draw these lines that properly represent dimensions.” so she really called her classmates in Guangzhou for help.

類似——她其實算是知識分子，曾是機械專業的。我爸先來的香港，他們有幾兄弟，來到香港後從事塑料制模行業。我媽是偷渡來香港的，在結婚前於工廠上班。我媽在大陸接受高等教育，也教過數學，但是在香港完全沒有使用過她的專業知識和經驗。幾乎一輩子都沒有用過她學的東西。因此我就想，要如何重新去利用這些東西。我和她重新翻老相冊，找到一張茶几的照片——《茶几》作品就包括這張照片，照片里我母親還抱著一個嬰兒，我的哥哥——我從來沒有見過那張茶几，於是我就請她憑記憶去畫出那茶几。這記憶一方面是對那茶几的記憶，另一方面是對習得技術的記憶——她一輩子都沒有使用過的製圖技術。我邀請她用記憶去復原那茶几。那張照片代表她捨棄了在大陸的生活，她那些留在大陸的同學可能後來的確從事工程師的專業工作，她在香港就變成了家庭主婦。在畫畫的時候，她說：啊，不記得這些代表尺寸的線要怎麼正規地畫了，於是真的打電話給廣州的同學詢問要怎麼畫。





Teapoy  
《茶几》  
2005  
Photograph, inkjet print on paper, ink on tracing paper, handmade wood frame & glass, teapoy  
照片、噴墨列印紙本、墨水描圖紙本、手造木框及玻璃, 茶几  
approx. 187 x 187 x 168 cm







I don't know if I've ever told you this: I called your house one time—I don't remember why—and said I was looking for you, but for some reason I said the wrong name and asked for Lin Sheung-whatever. I think it was your mom who answered the phone, and she laughed out loud and said to you, "It's for you, it's for you." This left a deep impression on me, and I felt that your family atmosphere was very relaxed and happy.

My mom is quite adorable and has a sense of humor. Wong Wai Yin thinks she is very gentle. She recently... This old lady's WhatsApp account has been stolen by someone else and has been sending foul-mouthed messages to Wong Wai Yin. All the messages were nasty curses. It's clear, I knew it couldn't have been her. Wong Wai Yin sighed: why did this happen to the gentlest person she knows. My mom was very angry about it when I told her that her account got stolen; it was hilarious.

Listening to you talk about the process of creating *Teapoy*, I think the whole thing is beautiful: it involves the rules of an art award; family relationships; huge changes in a person's life; and a person's current situation—and the way you, as an artist, connect all these factors. I think it's a very ideal situation for making art.

Yeah, I was disappointed that the work didn't win an award. Also, there weren't 10 award recipients that year as it was supposed to be, because the jury didn't think many of the submitted works were good enough. So I was really disappointed and haven't entered again.

I think I have got enough material here.

Good, very good.

我不知道我有沒有和你說過這件事：有一次我打電話去你家——我現在已經不記得為什麼了——我說要找你，但是不知為何說錯了你的名字，說成了林尚什麼。當時應該是你媽媽聽的電話，她聽後哈哈大笑，邊笑邊和你說：找你，找你。這給我留下的印象很深刻，覺得你的家庭氣氛很從容樂也融融那種。

我媽挺得意的，有幽默感，黃慧妍覺得她很溫柔。她最近……她這位老人的 WhatsApp 賬號被別人盜用了，一直發粗口信息給黃慧妍。全部都是粗口。一想也知道沒可能是她發的。黃慧妍就感嘆：為什麼認識的人裡面最溫柔的那個會發生這種事。我再說給我媽聽，她很生氣，非常搞笑。

聽你說完《茶几》的創作過程，我覺得整件事很美：一個獎項的機制；一個家庭的倫理關係；一個人巨大的人生轉變；一個人當下的狀況——以及你作為一名藝術家聯繫這些因素的方法。我覺得這是一個很理想的藝術創作情形。

是啊，我也很失望那作品沒有拿獎。而且，那年的獎項沒有頒夠十個，因為他們認為作品的水平普遍不夠拿獎。所以我真的很失望，之後也沒有再參加。

我想我夠內容寫的了。

好，非常好。



But I still want to ask: Can you tell us a little bit more about life in New York? Because I also had an ACC residency in New York.

We met in New York, you crashed at my place for two nights.

Right, it just came to me. You live in the East Village too, right? I think it's the same building?

Yeah. Where did you come from? You stayed with me for two nights.

Yes, and you cooked me a sausage with honey on it. I remember now. I seem to have completely forgotten about it.

It's more than a decade ago now.

You were saying that you were in a better state after you came back to Hong Kong from New York, so I am curious about the time when you're not making art.

It was a good experience because I was able to feel that: Oh, New York is the centre indeed. When you have been to the centre, you have more confidence because you feel like you've seen it, you've experienced it. But at the same time you realise that it's a long way from you. And you don't fantasise about it anymore—I can go to the centre and make it out there—now that you've seen what it's like. I saw a lot of performance art pieces at that time: Marina Abramovic's exhibition was on at that time; the curator of my Location One residency was a member of Abramovic's team. He invited a lot of other people who were doing performance art to come and share. That experience taught me something. Before that, Wong Wai Yin and I didn't really know much about performance art, and we often didn't know what they were doing. Some works that were more performative in essence were even further away—the hugging and cuddling kind of work. Nowadays, there is another kind of trendy performance art, such as stuffing things in the mouth and blindfolding people. Every performance art in recent years has been like that. When we came back from New York, we did a performance art piece exactly because we didn't know much about it, and wanted to deepen our understanding through working with it. When I was in New York, I saw a lot of interesting things.

但是我還是想問：你能否稍微多說說在紐約的生活？因為我也在紐約進行過ACC駐留。

我們當時在紐約見過面，你在我那還住了兩晚。

對啊，你一說我有些印象。你也是住在東村對不對？好像是同一棟樓？

是啊。你當時是從哪裡過來？你還在我那裡借住了兩晚。

是啊。你還煮了一條香腸給我吃，加了蜜糖，我現在有印象了。我好像完全忘記了這件事情。

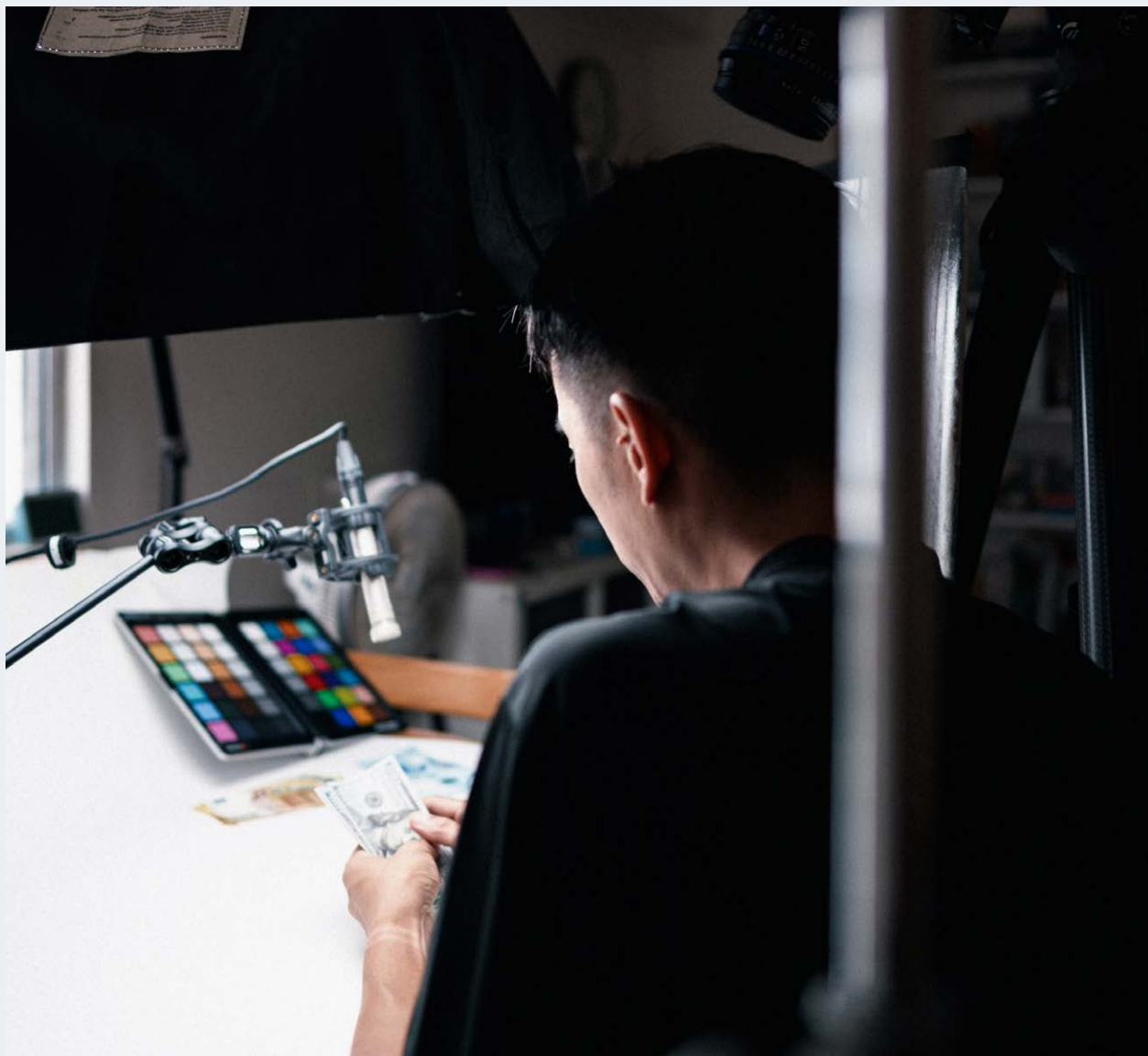
十幾年前的事情了。

剛才你說，從紐約回來之後有了一種比較好的創作狀態，我就想瞭解不在創作時的你在狀態上是否有什麼差別。

那個經驗是好的，因為當時的我能感受到：啊，紐約的確是中心。你去到中心處就會多點信心，因為你覺得你看過了，經歷過了。但同時你也意識到，這和自己的距離很遠。你也不會再幻想這件事：我可以去中心處發展，既然你已經看到中心的面貌了。在那時候，我看了很多行為藝術表演：Marina Abramovic 的展覽就在那時舉辦；我當時參加 Location One 駐村的策展人就是 Abramovic 展覽團隊的其中一員。他邀請了許多其他做行為藝術的人來做分享。那種經驗教會了我一些事情。在那之前，我和黃慧妍其實並不瞭解行為藝術，常不知他們到底在做什麼。而更為富有行為屬性（performative）的作品距離我們就更加遠——抱來抱去的那種作品。現在又有另一種流行的行為藝術，比如在嘴裡塞個東西、蒙住眼睛的那種。近年的每個行為藝術都是這樣的。從紐約回來之後我們就做了一次行為藝術，這也是因為我們原先對此並不瞭解，想刻意地通過創作去瞭解。在紐約的時候，我見到了很多很有意思的東西。

自由取用  
Free





I think your work often involve other people in your life.

Yeah.

Did you do it on purpose, or did it just happen that way?

I think that when I want to involve other people, the easiest thing to do is to involve the people around me. First of all, they will definitely agree to participate. If I want to involve other people, then I have to consider a lot of factors, such as ideas, money, and so on. To a large extent, I don't need to negotiate these things with

我覺得你作品里也挺多牽涉生活中的其他角色的。

是的。

這是有意識的做法還是不自覺就發生了的事情？

我想，有時候我想要牽涉其他人，那最容易的事情就是牽涉身邊人。首先他們肯定會答應參與創作。如果想要牽涉其他人，那就要考慮很多因素，比如理念、金錢等。家人在很大程度上不需要考慮這些事情——理念本來就是相對

family members—our ideas are already quite similar so we don't have to discuss much, and the money has already been spent in daily life. The simple reason is that I need help, so I go to the people I trust the most, the people I am closest to. For the recent exhibition ("Not Retrospective", Kiang Malingue, Hong Kong, 2023), I actually did this on purpose. In the past, I would want to challenge things I couldn't do before, or things I had wanted to try to do at different stages, such as when I did "Inside Looking Out" at Osage ("Inside Looking Out", Osage Kwun Tong, Hong Kong; Osage Beijing, Beijing, 2007), I was aiming for something large-scale because I never had the chance to do it. My goal at that time was simply to make something big. I did performances because I had never done that before, and I've done works with an element of audience participation, because I wanted to try to do that as well. Lately, I've been thinking that maybe I don't have the resources to do anything else, so I've been looking for what's at my fingertips. So I've kind of returned to an early stage: for a while, most of my video works were about shooting a hand or a foot, why? Because there was too little space. By shooting only the hand, I didn't have to bring into the shot all the other messy stuff in the house. I needed lighting for video works; I didn't have enough lights to illuminate a big space, so I just focused on my hands, it's easier. I do what I can with what I have. In fact, all the new works in the recent exhibitions are like this, all made at home. I even deliberately tried not to go out to make works, because I wanted to return to the most basic mode. You have to accept the reality, and if the reality is this, then you have to try your best.

Are you concerned with presenting life as it is?

I can't say it's about "presentation". I don't want to show others the embarrassing situation of life, I do want to cover it up. It's fine if it's shared between friends, but I don't mean to show it to the public and say: Look, this is how an artist lives. I mean to only share it with my friends. I think, being natural or real is a quality I care about, and I don't embellish things.

接近的，不需要有爭議；金錢已經在平時的生活里花掉了。一個簡單的理由是，我需要幫手，所以我就找自己最信得過的人、最親密的人。在最近的展覽（「Not Retrospective」，馬凌畫廊，香港，2023）裡，我其實是有意識地這樣去做的。以前我會想在不同的階段去挑戰先前不能做到的事情，或曾想要嘗試去做的事情，比如在 Osage 做「Inside Looking Out」（「從內到外」，奧沙官塘，香港；奧沙北京，北京；奧沙新加坡，新加坡，2007-2008），我的目標就是要去做大型的東西，因為我從來沒有機會做。當時的目標就是總之要大。之後曾做過表演，因為我在那之前從未做過；曾做過有觀眾參與元素（participation）的作品，因為我也想要試試做這種作品。在最近，我會想，或許我沒有資源去做別的什麼作品，所以我就尋求唾手可得的資源。所以，我有點回歸到早期的那種創作狀態：有一段時間，我的影像作品大部分都是拍一隻手、拍一隻腳，為什麼？因為空間太小。只拍手，這樣就不用帶到家裡其他亂七八糟的畫面。拍影像需要燈；那我沒有足夠的燈為大空間照明，那我就給手打燈吧，那樣比較容易。有什麼資源就做什麼作品。最近展覽里的新作品其實全部都是這樣的狀態，全部都是在家裡做的。我甚至刻意地不要走出去做作品，想要回歸到最基本的狀態。你要接受現實，而如果現實是這樣的，你就要這樣去盡力做。

你是否在意要在作品裡面呈現生活的本質？

也不能說是「呈現」。生活裡的窘態也不想別人知道，也想要遮掩。朋友之間的話，知道了也沒所謂，但我也不會公之於眾，說：大家看看，藝術家的生活狀態是這樣的。只會純粹向自己認識的朋友分享。我想，自然或真實是我在意的特質，不會去裝扮。





Kwan Sheung Chi  
關尚智

Not retrospective

28.11.2023 - 13.01.2024

Installation view, "Not retrospective", Kiang Malingue, Hong Kong, 2023

「Not retrospective」展覽現場，馬凌畫廊，香港，2023 年

© Kwan Sheung Chi and Kiang Malingue. Photo by: Kwan Sheung Chi





© Kwan Sheung Chi and Kiang Malingue  
Photo by: Anthony Yung

## Kwan Sheung Chi

Born 1980 in Hong Kong

Currently works and lives in Hong Kong

From a series of flitting bills to a bouquet of poised lilies, Kwan Sheung Chi tenaciously pursues across multiple mediums a conceptual practice rooted in critiques of political status quo, assignments of value and modes of existence. Employing simple props to articulate his reflections with pointed focus, Kwan unravels Hong Kong's relationship with money, its political framework and the livelihood of those who inhabit it. The viewer senses in his art a tension between meditation and intervention, a feeling that is heightened by a running sense of banality that pervades Kwan's propositions. Fielding commentary that's against-the-grain, Kwan heralds a non-assumptive yet determined voice that quietly digs at the underpinnings of Hong Kong, but also more widely, the society we're born into.

At the core of Kwan's practice is the thematic of reality as seen and experienced by ordinary citizens. Strongly associated is the specific discussion of capitalism, which reappears as a topic of reflection in Kwan's work. Based in a world financial centre, Kwan does not steer away from Hong Kong's emphasis on money as a vehicle for impact and governance. Consider the work *1000* (2012), for example, which involved the systematic erasure with a rubber eraser of a 1000 HKD bill till it's left raw and worthless. We are prompted to realise how we have granted significance to an object, the value of which does not exist when stripped of its visual identity. Developing on this sense of worth is *To Defend the Core Values is the Core of the Core Values* (2012), a commission Kwan carried out with his partner Wong Wai Yin. At the time, a broad discussion was being held regards the 'core values' of Hong Kong, amongst them democracy. Kwan and Wong invested their production budget in the creation of a gold coin marked 'Hong

## 關尚智

1980 年出生於香港

目前工作與生活於香港

從一系列飛速清點的紙鈔到一束靜態的百合插花，關尚智執著於在多種創作媒介中探索一種深植於政治狀態批判、價值分配批判和存在形式批判的概念實踐。他運用簡單的創作道具來表達其尖銳鮮明的思索，試圖揭示香港與金錢的關係、它的政治環境以及香港居民的生計。細緻觀察的觀眾能夠在他的作品中感受介於冥想和干預之間的張力，而貫穿其創作理念的平凡感將這一感受進一步加強。關尚智紛雜乃至充滿矛盾的創作體系使其顯得格格不入，而他正是因這一特點得以揭示潛於社會表象之下的真實且堅定聲音。

關尚智的創作核心是普通城市居民所聞所見的現實。因此，與之緊密相關的資本主義批判就是在他多個作品中反覆出現的創作主題。在世界金融中心生活創作，關尚智自然而然地關注香港對金錢重要性的認知——金錢是影響力和統治的驅動力。作品《1000》（2012）是一張表面圖案被橡皮擦除、已失去實際價值的 1000 港幣。這件作品讓我們意識到我們對物品賦予價值的方式；物品的視覺身份被剝奪抹去時，其原先的價值也隨之消失。基於這一價值認定方式，關尚智又和黃慧妍合作完成了作品《捍衛核心價值是最核心的核心價值》（2012）。在那時，香港掀起了有關「核心價值」和民主的廣泛討論。兩位藝術家將預算用於製造一枚名為「香港核心價值」的金幣，並將這一金幣贈給了香港托洛斯基分子梁國雄。這一舉動進一



Kong Core Values' and engaged Trotskyist Leung Kwok-Hung by donating the coin to him, which led to a spontaneous discourse on Hong Kong's 'core values', the all of which was filmed as documentation. The viewer is left with observing the tension between the practicality of ownership and conflict of beliefs. Kwan further highlights our tentative relationship with possessions in *One Million (RMB)* (2013), a video series in which Kwan flips through a short stack of bills, counting them until it reaches a million. It is in fact but a short loop, effectively an illusion of wealth, serving as an analogy for greed or indeed our desire for evermore.

Stepping into a more defined political zone, Kwan delivers his works with a deadpan sense of humour and an anarchic disposition. In the films *Doing It With Chi—Making an Exit Bag* (2009) and *Doing It With Mrs Kwan—Making Pepper Spray* (2012), for example, Wong and himself pose as DIY instructors akin to those found on Youtube albeit delivering advice for assisted suicide and the creation of a weapon or self-defense tool, respectively. Dark and dry, the artworks follow videos providing assistance regarding everyday problems, an approach that prompts us to realise how we tend to focus on the mundane whilst not tackling the major threats to our existence such as the dissolution of democracy. On a more confrontational level is *Water Barrier (Maotai:Water, 1:100)* (2013), an installation comprised of two 170 cm-high, white plastic anti-riot barriers filled with diluted Maotai—a Chinese distilled white liquor that is commonly served at state functions. Alluding to mounting social issues and the types of physical and ideological barriers that stand to prevent change, Kwan instigated a second phase of the work following his receipt of the Hugo Boss Art Prize for best emerging Chinese artist, inviting members of the public to join in a renewed attempt at the barrier's destruction. With the help of a randomly selected group of 16, Kwan successfully knocked his artwork to the ground.

步引發對「核心價值」的討論；觀眾可在這作品的紀錄影片中觀察到所有權象徵和信仰之間的衝突緊張態勢。系列錄像作品《一百萬（人民幣）》（2013）則探討了我們和所有物之間的暫時性關係。在這錄像中，藝術家用雙手清點一疊疊紙幣，直至數到 100 萬為止。實際金額數量遠不及 100 萬；這龐大的數額只不過是單個清點行為的循環播放結果而已。這一過程看似永無止境，而關尚智由此來類比人們荒謬的慾望。

關尚智常用貌似冷峻的方式給創作增添幽默感，在更明確的政治範疇內傳遞其無政府主義傾向。在兩件錄像作品《跟阿智一起做…製作往生袋》（2009）和《同關太一起做…製作胡椒噴霧》（2012）中，他扮演一位 DIY 老師，拍攝偽 Youtube 教學視頻，在前者中提供協助自殺的建議，在後者中教人們如何製作自衛武器。他一本正經地模仿教學視頻的模式和姿態，通過透着黑色幽默的錄像作品讓我們意識到，我們忙於世俗生活，卻忽略了威脅我們自身存在的迫切問題，比如民主的瓦解崩裂。更為激進的裝置作品《水馬路障（茅台：水，一比一百）》（2013）是由兩個 170 厘米高、被注入稀釋茅台酒的白色塑料防爆屏障構成的作品。茅台是一種全國知名的蒸餾白酒，經常被用於國家公務有關的宴請。這一作品因而指涉社會問題和阻礙社會變化的政治手段及意識形態。關尚智在獲得 HUGO BOSS 亞洲藝術大獎之後，開始了這一作品的第二階段：在隨機邀請的 16 位公眾的幫助下，他將這件作品徹底拆除。

Ultimately, Kwan Sheung Chi creates works that voice histories that have been neglected, or actualities we either do not want to see or are unable to confront. By employing a language that is honest and accessible, his works advocate criticality and reflection whilst not imposing action. Subtle, yet sharp and alarming, it is up to the viewer what they take from each and what they decide to do next with the information provided.

Kwan Sheung Chi holds a B.A. degree in Fine Art from The Chinese University of Hong Kong. He has held exhibitions at Oil!, Hong Kong (2018); Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2017); Mill6, Hong Kong (2016); ZKM, Karlsruhe (2015); Borusan Contemporary, Istanbul (2015); Para Site, Hong Kong (2015, 2014); Witte de With, Rotterdam (2014); Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna (2014); Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (2013), and Hiroshima MOCA, Hiroshima (2013), amongst others. Kwan is also a founding member of local art groups, including Hong Kong Arts Discovery Channel (HKADC), hkPARTg (Political Art Group) and Woofer Ten.

In 2009, Kwan was awarded the Starr Foundation Fellowship from the Asian Cultural Council to take part in an international residency programme in New York. Kwan received a commission from the West Kowloon Cultural District Association (WKCD) in 2012, and was the winner of the inaugural Hugo Boss Art Prize in 2013. Kwan's art has been collected by international institutions and public collections, including: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; Solomon R. Guggenheim Collection, New York; Borusan Contemporary Art Collection, Turkey; Burger Collection, Hong Kong; DSL Collection, France; Kadist Art Foundation, Paris/San Francisco; M+, Hong Kong; and White Rabbit Collection, Australia, among others.

關尚智的作品固執地回顧已被遺忘的歷史，或是那些我們不願直視的棘手問題。他通過坦誠直白的創作語言來激發反思，傳達微妙而又令人警醒的信息，並最終灑脫地由觀眾決定其與作品的關係。

關尚智畢業於香港中文大學，擁有藝術系文學學士學位。他曾在多地舉辦展覽，包括油街實現，香港（2018）；所羅門·R·古根海姆美術館，紐約（2017）；香港六廠基金會（2016）、德國卡爾斯魯厄媒體藝術中心（2015）、伊斯坦堡 Borusan 當代藝術博物館（2015）、香港 Para Site 藝術空間（2015、2014）、荷蘭鹿特丹 Witte de With 當代藝術中心（2014）、維也納藝術館（2014）、上海外灘美術館（2013）和廣島市現代美術館（2013）等。關尚智是香港藝術團體「香港藝術探索頻道」（HKADC）、「政藝小組」（hkPARTg）和「活化廳」的創辦成員。

在 2009 年，關尚智獲亞洲文化協會頒予美國 Starr 基金會獎金，並獲邀前往紐約參與國際藝術節駐留項目。在 2012 年，關尚智獲西九文化區委任，並在 2013 年獲得首屆「HUGO BOSS 亞洲藝術大獎」。關尚智的藝術作品已被多個國際機構收藏，包括：舊金山現代藝術博物館，舊金山；所羅門·R·古根海姆收藏，紐約；Borusan Contemporary Art Collection，土耳其；Burger Collection，香港；DSL 收藏，法國；卡蒂斯特藝術基金會，巴黎 / 舊金山；M+，香港；白兔中國當代藝術收藏，澳大利亞。



Kiang Malingue  
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