

胡尹萍 Hu Yinping

精选文章 *Selected Articles*

Hu Jinping:

Experiment of Work Utopia

In the winter of 2016, Arrow Factory, an independent art space in a Beijing Hutong, was turned into a boutique of fashionably displayed knitted hats for the artist Hu Jinping's solo exhibition. Each of the 65 hats looks uniquely designed and well handmade. Hu Jinping was not a female artist who uses knitting, a type of labour typically associated with women, as her principal medium of practice. Instead, these hats are the creation of her mother, who lives in a small town in Sichuan. She knits to kill time and earn occasional minor income. The title of the exhibition, Xiao Fang, was the fictional middleman the artist asked her friend to play, in order to purchase her mother's knitting. The artist's project is essentially the act of fabricating an identity, purchasing, and collecting her mother's knitting, whereas hats are only the displayable by-products that the gallery system of contemporary art can accommodate.

The artist explained in the exhibition statement that she was appalled by the paltry compensation her mother could gain from selling hand-knitted beanies through a middleman in the local market. As revealed in a later interview, her mother earned only 1.8 yuan (about 0.02 pounds) per beanie (Zhao C., 2017). That was on the condition that she kept costs to a minimum by using the cheapest yarns because the middleman did not pay for the yarns. These beanies are sold cheap too, targeting low-income old people who cannot afford the luxury of design, colour or quality beyond its basic function. Mostly grey, a colour that dominates low-end garments for old people in China, these beanies are known as 'laonian mao' (hats for old people) (see Figure 1b). The artist's mother was not alone in this business. In her town, many other women about her age were involved.

Their time is worth little in the market, lamented the artist. Indeed, her mother and other women selling knitting are in their 50s and 60s and undesirable in a labour market demanding long working hours and sole devotion to jobs. Laid off from a socialist factory in the late 1990s, the artist's mother was never again in formal employment but took various part-time jobs alongside domestic responsibilities. Selling knitting was one of these jobs and became visible to the artist during one of her infrequent visits because a big sack, which was filled up by the beanies her mother knitted over a year, struck the artist as odd. She learned that her mother had

been doing this for some years and the middleman was said to come once a year to collect and buy their knitting. But there was no guarantee whether he would come and how many he would buy.

Although anger at the unreasonably petty compensation was Hu's immediate strongest feeling, she later came to realise and acknowledge her mother's will and agency in engaging in this labour. She clarified in our interview that women in her mother's town do not feel obliged to sell their knitting to this middleman and they sell because they find the pricing reasonable, despite the obvious disadvantage and lack of bargaining power. Given her mother's agency, Hu Yinping does not mean to approach the project *Xiao Fang* as an act of resisting market exploitation on her mother's behalf, but as an act of care, filial piety, and love. As a migrant in Beijing striving for an artistic career in a precious work environment, Hu can only visit her parents in Sichuan once or twice a year. She regretted that she had taken the ageing of her mother for granted and the big sack of grey sad looking 'laonian mao' symbolised the time her mother spent without the daughter's care or company. She almost burst into tears, noticing her mother's hands roughened by repetitively handling cheap coarse yarns to ensure the petty profits. However, as the Chinese are traditionally not expressive in their feelings to family members, there does not seem to be a better way of showing care and love to her mother than to give her money and ensure her a comfortable material life. Yet it has to be done through the façade of commodified labour because, for the same reason of love, her mother would not take Hu's money for nothing. Hence, *Xiao Fang*, a fictional middleman, took over. Hu Yinping told her mother that a new middleman *Xiao Fang* could offer a much higher price and persuaded her to sell knitting solely to *Xiao Fang* by post. To eliminate the hazard of handling cheap coarse yarns, the artist makes *Xiao Fang* provide fine quality woollen yarns to her mother. Believing that green is better than grey for her mother's eyesight, the artist often sends green yarns. *Xiao Fang* then purchases the knitting at whatever prices that the mother considers reasonable. The project is a success for the artist's goal, as it prompts more communication and topics of conversation between the mother and daughter.

Through the project *Xiao Fang*, the artist rejects the market value of her mother's

labour, even though it was initiated as an act of love. It is precisely Hu's altruist pursuit that turns her mother's labour into a non-capitalist one, despite the apparent form of commodification. Repudiating the demand-supply mechanism of pricing, Hu, the purchaser of her mother's labour, hands over the power to set prices. There is no control of quality, quantity, or working hours. Her mother is allowed to knit hats whenever she will and however she wants them to be.

The artist was also surprised by the concomitants of changed labour conditions. The project becomes a textbook illustration of Marx's ideal of free labour that fulfils human potential. Her mother has developed not only creativity but also confidence and social visibility, in addition to financial security. It also wins her more power in a traditional patriarchal family.



Figure 1a (left) A screenshot of 'laonian mao' from a big Chinese online retailer



Figure 1b (right) The Exhibition *Xiao Fang* at Arrow Factory, 2016, photo provided by the artist

The changes began when her mother received the new yarns. 'She has never seen yarns of such fine quality before', said the artist with a flair of pity. The fine quality of these yarns alone gave her mother a sense of worthiness of her labour. She felt the responsibility of turning these yarns into nice hats, so she began to invest time and thinking. Knitting grey beanies from the cheapest yarns was a simple repetitive task she managed while watching TV. Now she takes time designing the colour and style of each hat and takes the risk of experimenting, undoing a design if it does not please her. As the exhibition shows, her mother knitted hats of different styles, such

as berets with pompoms, brimmed hats with flowery decorations, and bucket hats, which are far more colourful and elaborate than 'laonian mao' (see Figure 1). She invented her own styles too and even named some of them. 'Fengxue mao' (wind-snow hat), a headgear that covers the whole head with holes for eyes and mouth, was inspired by the mother's experience of Beijing's cold snowy winter (Zhao C., 2017). As the artist understood from her communication with her mother, the pricing is based on the time, technique, and the cost of experiments (Hu, interview, 18 February 2022). Her baseline was the 1.8 yuan she made from a grey beanie, so at the beginning, she only asked for 10 to 35 yuan. Later she gradually felt comfortable asking for more, and the price got up over a hundred when her hats got fancier and more creative. Over a year, her mother knitted more than 300 hats which were all posted to Xiao Fang in Beijing.

The stable income also made her mother feel confident to step out of the private sphere. As an indicator of her mother's rising confidence, the artist noted that her mother decided to use her own name to send and receive packages. In the past, the artist always wrote her dad as the recipient when she posted things back home. Not only it was assumed that the dad is in charge of any 'external' and economic affairs, but also practically her dad is known to the local post office. The artist explained that probably the postman didn't even know about her mother (Hu, interview, 18 February 2022). Even decades through the market reform, the social scene of this small town seems to remain centred around danwei (work units). Her mother has no social visibility because she does not belong to a work unit. It was convenient for the post office to locate her dad, a person who can be identified by his work unit. But now Hu's mother has her own business connections with the outside world, which she felt comfortable claiming under her own name.

Hu Jinping's experiment with ideal labour continues in another project in 2018 called Lingjie ni zhen bang (You have done great, Sister Ling). Through an artist's residence project, Hu got to know Ling, a peasant who grows her rice without using herbicide even though this means much more work and lower productivity. Hu Jinping was impressed by Ling's determination to act differently in a village where everyone else uses herbicide to save the hassle of uprooting weeds manually for a

good harvest. Ling's efforts paid off in a different way: her rice tasted the best and that prompted the artist to ask why. Ling showed Hu Jinping the rice field and an idea came to her. 'I am going to liberate her in that rice field! I was quite excited even thinking about what I was about to do', said the artist in our interview. Again, this experiment takes the form of economic exchanges, a contract between Hu Jinping and Ling. It was agreed that Ling would not grow any crops but anything else as she will in that small piece of land, and in compensation, the artist pays Ling the income she could otherwise earn from growing rice. The contract is for ten years. In the first year, 'Ling had her husband grow flowers on that field as gifts to herself', the artist told me, 'This is so romantic, far more romantic than I expected!' In this project, Hu's pursuit of free labour liberated from the necessity of work becomes explicit. She sought after 'ziyou' (freedom) and 'jiefang' (liberation) and she felt excited about it.

On the other hand, the project Xiao Fang has been expanded to include other women, most of whom are her mother's former colleagues laid off from the same socialist factory. Although the financial pressure increases, Hu Jinping tries her best to create an honourable and respectable work environment through reasonable pricing, encouragement of creativity, and additional remunerations.

Like many other Chinese artists who are not usually informed by theories, Hu said she did not read Marx and did not really have a clear idea of communism or socialism as concepts. But as my interview with the artist unfolds, her personal story reveals that her ideal of respectable and honourable labour, labour as valued and meaningful, comes from the fading memories of the socialist factory, the work unit which she spent her childhood in but no longer exists. Her sentiment toward the value of the labour of her mother's cohort comes from the altruist care they showed to her when she was a toddler. She recalled to me that her mom's colleagues took turns feeding her while they were on shift. At a time when children were allowed around the workplace, they were raised partially by the collective effort of women in the same work unit. By contrast, what the artist experienced in the transition from the planned economy to a market economy was poverty and misfortune. She perceived the anxiety of her parents relocating themselves, finding new ways of living, and the resulting negative impact on family life. In a way reminiscent of the

socialist factory, Hu Jinping distributed free housework goodies to those who now work for Xiao Fang. 'In the past, we were all happy getting these goodies from the work unit. It doesn't cost much but brings simple happiness', said Hu Jinping. Perhaps this also brings back a sense of care and belonging, which was lost for those who were laid off from a work unit.

However, in contrast to this work utopia Hu Jinping created for other women, the artist herself has to face the market reality. Having around 50 women working for Xiao Fang, the cost of her project expanded from 15,000 to 30,000 and then 50,000 yuan per year. Even though Hu decided to sell the knitting she collected, the income cannot by far sustain this utopia. The artist must cover the loss by selling sculptures, which are not central to her artistic practices. In her upcoming exhibition, Hu Jinping is going to juxtapose the work utopia and the reality of an artist's work by showcasing both her sculptures made for money and her projects made for art.¹

¹ The exhibition, originally scheduled to open in April 2022, was postponed due to the rising cases of Covid in Shanghai.

社会植物学（节选）

周琰 [加拿大]

在另一个社会植物学实践中，艺术家胡尹萍帮助一位女性农民重新编织了劳动与生活。林姐是广州附近一个乡村的农民，不像其他村民，她拒绝在她的地里使用杀虫剂，因为她觉得不应该伤害土地。因此，她要承受她的地里收获比其他人少三五倍的后果。胡尹萍很欣赏林姐出于关心而不是单纯获利做出劳动和生活的决定，2018年，胡尹萍决定从林姐的土地中租一小溜地。她以估计的最高可收获的土地租用价格，租地47平米，租期10年。胡尹萍要求林姐用这片地种植任何不是用来吃或者卖，而只是让她自己高兴或者作为礼物给他人的东西，并选择任何色彩丰富，而不是单一绿色的植物。她希望当林姐在这一小溜地上劳动的时候，能够从生产和消费的焦虑中解放出来，自由地享受自己的劳动。



花田，摄影：林姐。胡尹萍提供

第二年，当胡尹萍再去访问林姐的时候，她看到她租的那片地已经变成了一块花田。林姐和她的丈夫种了许多各种各样的花。她还买了花苗，也去山里挖了一些野花，包括野兰花。在胡尹萍拍摄的录像中，林姐表达了自己的感受和想法：

事实上，当你的生活不用忍受么多压力的时候，也许，你在五十或者六十岁的时候会变得浪漫。人的情感会更平静，更好。

这个（项目）真是很“写意”。它让人更快乐，你能带着花回家……当你有一点这样的生活的感觉的时候，也许你自己就慢慢改变了。

林姐的话中用了“写意”这个词。它本来是中国传统美学中一个很重要的观念，表示一种自由抒写情感和精神感受的创作，而不是以正统或者形式主义的方式表现某种具体事物。林姐使用这个词来表达喜悦和摆脱生存束缚的自由感。在南方乡村地方语言中，人们的俗语中仍然保留了许多古老的词汇用法。而在正统的现代汉语中，这些词语通常只会出现在书面语言中，在日常生活语言中已经消失了。

林姐所表达的“写意”其实和古老的生活方式和想像之间有内在的联系。古代中国乌托邦理想拒绝体制化和基于等级与财产的统治，追求自由和与万事万物的和谐，正如上古歌谣“击壤歌”所表达的：“日出而作，日入而息。凿井而饮，耕田而食。帝力何有于我哉！”歌中的“击壤”最初是古代劳动人民在田边地头的一种游戏。劳作之后，大家在地上立起泥板，投球比赛，类似保龄球。它暗示了一种自耕自足、快乐、而不是完全困于劳动和压迫的生活。人们一同劳作也一起游戏，有共同的娱乐、愉悦生活。从林姐和胡尹萍的相遇与交往来看，或许可以说这种艺术行动实践能够帮助个体尝试、建立一种微型的乌托邦世界。胡尹萍的实践和傅立叶描绘的“有吸引力的劳动”不谋而合。傅立叶强烈反对工作中的任何强迫；相反，他提倡“有吸引力的工作”；并鼓励人们的自由表达，而不是根据某些理想来改造、塑造人类。近年和中国无政府主义以及艺术界有很多交流的日本无政府主义者松本哉的“大笨蛋造反”，也同样拒绝强迫工作，提倡快乐的生活，实质上都是乌托邦理想的表达和实践。

在“林姐，你真棒！”这个项目中，胡尹萍介入了生产和消费的微观经济圈。她说：

我一共租赁了十年，因为玲姐今年 50 岁，对这事有很多期待，同一块土地希望她不再种粮食，可以种点其他的，农民不是天然种粮食，如果她出生在都市，也许她在种房子。又比如种喜欢，玲姐说很喜欢玫瑰，也挺好的，她其实不是在种玫瑰，是在种喜欢，种感受，种很理想还不现实的东西。

收成后我不允许她再次买卖，因为我已付过钱了，也避免滋养贪婪因素，所以她只能自用或者赠予，而其他村民接受到这份礼物时会聊起、感受甚至嫉妒，嫉妒其实是个好东西，嫉妒让人思考，思考可以改变，所以期待思考和改变。

当朗西埃谈论每一个普通人都拥有自己的学习能力和美学体验时，他的分析基于对创造者和普通人的对立关系中。而胡尹萍抛弃了这种分离，帮助普通人自己成为创造者。他们的创造性实践并不局限于表现的世界中（the world of representations）；相反，他们是通过重构一种创造性的生产和交换关系，来改变社会和经济的联系。

林姐的种花实践已经进入第四年了，她的丈夫现在每年种花送给她，她把一部分花留在家里，另一部分则送给自己的朋友。1998 年，当尼古拉斯·布里亚德（Nicolas Bourriaud）发表了影响深远的文章“关系美学”时，他也将艺术实践视为基于美学标准，在交换领域中进行的一种实践。而这种美学实际的价值应当转化到社会中，并嵌入到社会组织中。艺术作品应当作为一种“社会间隙”（interstice，德勒兹的理念）发挥作用。在这样的间隙中，人民可以获得生活的丰富性和快乐。胡尹萍并没有强迫人们以极端方式改变自己的生活。她只是通过改变劳动中的生存和交换的方式而为人们提供了一些帮助。就像一个编织的女性，她重新编织了劳动和生活之间的经纬结构，创造了劳动、生存、交换、价值和生活之间一种新形态的关系；使得人们能够享受，并追求自己的创造性和美学体验。她将艺术作为一种间隙插入，改变了日常生活的结构。

新马克思主义思想家们批评资本主义和国家社会主义扭曲了马克思关于生产、交换、价值和需求之间的关系的理念。阿格尼丝·海勒（Agnes Heller）指出，“人的需求”在马克思的经济分类中占有一个根本位置，而正是这一点被资本主义和国家社会主义有意识地忽视了。柄谷行人认为交换同时包括自然与人类之间，以及人类之间的交换，这是社会形态的经济基础；而马克思的生产方式并不是社会的经济基础。艺术和文学可以使人摆脱生产力和生产关系的直接制约，带来让人获得解放和获益的新形式的交换。他们的思想，都与胡尹萍的实践相吻合，也就是说：人类的需求并不完全基于获利，而是也包括在劳动和生活之间建立更良好的关系。

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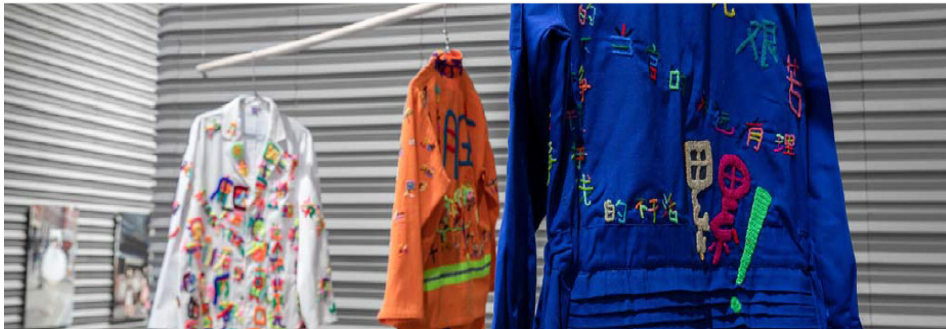
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‘The Endless Garment’ Unpicks the Fashion Industry

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Curated by Jeppe Ugelvig and Poppy Dongxue Wu, the group show at Beijing's X Museum, questions identity, community and controversial impact of the global fashion industry



‘The Endless Garment’ at Beijing's X Museum is the second of two exhibitions curated by Jeppe Ugelvig and Poppy Dongxue Wu to explore garment production in Asia. Containing 26 works by artists and designers based in Asia or from the Asian diaspora, the show questions ideas about identity, belonging, community and global interconnectedness in the fashion industry. And more subtly, perhaps, it touches on the considerable and controversial impact of the clothes business on the environment.

Evelyn Taocheng Wang considers the idea of ‘elegance’, a concept whose definition is both personal and cultural. Her *Spreading Elegance* (2019) is an installation that contains letters written by the artist's friends – given in exchange for a piece of clothing by designer Agnès B – which explain their individual understanding of elegance (Agnès B was, until recently, considered by many Asians to be the epitome of European chic). In her *kleine verhaal – 1ste_3de* (2019), traditional Xuan rice paper sheets (decorated with ink drawings, Chinese calligraphy and Mylar) hang from two Agnès B garments, transforming the clothing into a piece of art and thus achieving an aesthetic that embraces both East and West.

The plight of older migrant workers in China is brought to the fore by Hu Yinping's contribution to the show. Once they return home to the places they left to find work in the cities, these people are faced with the prospect of no further employment. The artist invited out-of-work migrant workers in her hometown in Sichuan to produce hats and bikinis. Over the years, this has led to the development of a community of knitters, each of whom have used the work to help them find a new sense of purpose. In *Xiao Fang* (2021), a work commissioned for this show, Hu asked the women to decorate working people's uniforms with words or phrases they associate with their jobs (for example, on the uniform of a delivery person, we repeatedly find the word *kuai* 'fast'). Hu's work crosses divides and helps connect the older generation with the younger, the unemployed with the employed, the rural with the urban.

Checkered-plastic laundry bags are strongly associated with migrant workers in China, as well as with immigrants and refugees in many other parts of the world. *Traveller's Checks* (2021) by the German-Vietnamese artist Sung Tieu highlights

the irony of these humble, utilitarian bags being rebranded by several fashion brands as desirable items for the global jet-setter. The collective Shanzhai Lyric (a 'poetic research and archival unit') reverses this proposition in its latest video *CNANEL* (2021), which explores how inexpensive counterfeit products copy international luxury brands, resulting in fashion trends that become both global and mass market.



Evelyn Taocheng Wang, *het kleine verhaal -1ste_3de*, 2019, installation view. Courtesy: the artist and X Museum, Beijing

The installation *He Wanted to Talk About Love. The Blue that Pulsates Through All Living Things* (2021) results from a collaboration between fashion designer Philip Huang, artist Korakrit Arunanondchai and ECCO Leather. It features a new version of Arunanondchai's serial video work *Painting with History in a Room Filled with People with Funny Names 3* (2021), which is presented inside a womb-like space formed of handwoven textiles and indigodyed leather hides that have been digitally printed with stills from the video. The artists' collective goal here was to produce natural, indigo-dyed leather without synthetics.



Philip Huang and Korakrit Arunanondchai, *He Wanted to Talk About Love. The Blue that Pulsates Through All Living Things*, 2021. Courtesy: the artists and X Museum, Beijing

'The Endless Garment' underscores the interconnectedness and interdependence of the global fashion business. Ugelvig and Wu highlight the thematic strands that can help describe this complicated industry, such as globalization, commercialization and exploitation. Works in the exhibition engage with the labour conditions and inequalities that are implicit to the production chain.

'The Endless Garment' is on view at X Museum, Beijing, China, until 3 March 2022.

Main image: Hu Yinping, *Xiao Fang*, 2021. Courtesy: the artist and X Museum, Beijing

对谈 | 胡尹萍

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孟尧：你为什么一直把你的作品定义为事情？

胡尹萍：2012 年我和另一个艺术家成立过一个小组 @PARTY，从在那个时候开始用事情的这个概念。

很多时候作品如果不拿到一个艺术的场合去呈现和展示的话，做的就是一个事情而已。比如《小芳》这个作品，没有拿出来呈现的时候它只是我跟我母亲做的一个事情，当它拿出来以后，它就变成了一个具有社会属性的艺术项目。实际上即便没有展览和艺术项目，这个事依旧在发生。《你舅妈叫什么名字》也是这样，如果没有因为“《画刊》封面计划”制造的这种很正式的表达途径，我之前会做这个事，之后也会继续这个事。所以“事情”就是这么来的。它就是我工作的一种方式 and 习惯。

孟尧：2013-2015 年，你创作了《卖笑》《保卫艺术》《如何炸掉美术馆》《金融产品升值史》，这些作品表达了你对艺术的价值、艺术行业的一系列态度和思考，那段时间，为什么集中关注这方面的问题？

胡尹萍：那个时候我刚刚毕业，对艺术或是艺术群体，是存在一个理想主义的想象，所以遇到各种事情的时候，对群体肯定是不满的，比如拍卖的问题，空间的问题，教育的问题、美术馆的问题太多了。那个时候实际上会条件反射地把这些问题做一个处理，那些作品也是一个阶段化的结果。其实所有这些问题，本质是一个生态的问题，不仅是群体或者个体的问题，是形成中国当代艺术生态的时间太短了。中国的画廊也就 30 年，798 艺术区也才十几年。这么短的时间，又非常急功近利地疯狂生长，所以在这个里边肯定有很多问题。

孟尧：2012 年你做《身份》开始，为了这个作品曾一直增重，把一个陌生人“全方位”地带入你的生活，为什么？

胡尹萍：那会觉得“人可以是任何人”，从上学，念书，选专业到工作很多时候都是误会，并不是自主意识选择。正好朋友微信发说像我的一张照片，“那么丑却那么自信”从厌恶到审视到感受她自信的状态，后来就那样做了。中间还经历了一些事情，觉得应该要长胖一点比较好。那阵比较自闭，还想跟一个在

大庆油田做会计师朋友交换生活。人对很多东西是上瘾的，真的上瘾，那件衣服我可能做了五六件，越做越像照片那件，直到没办法再改为止，我希望像照片上的人，越来越像，增重只是途径。思考和自我审视是复杂的，方式比较简单。

孟尧：我觉得除了《身份》之外，《小芳》《玲姐》《雪白的鸽子》这些作品之间也都存在某种与“身份”相关的东西，比如《玲姐》她是一个农妇，你租了她的地，让她按照她的要求自由耕种，使得她是从一种比较粗暴的劳动里面解放出来，变成像一个艺术家式的创作；《小芳》也有类似的地方，你通过你的方式，把她们从一种平淡、乏味的人生里拉出来，让把她们在新的生活情景里获得了新的“身份”，各自的生活都被激活了。

胡尹萍：其实《玲姐》是从《小芳》那个感觉里顺着生长出来的东西，并不是我要去找的一个东西。我也在反思，她为什么突然生长出一个玲姐出来，也是挺有意思的。但是对身份这个事，我可能还没有太多的思考，但是你说了以后，我倒可以好好思考一下。这两个项目里

不管小芳、玲姐从这个项目获取多少自我意识和存在感，我只能在物质上不亏待她们，浇水施肥，除此外我也是项目观察者。

孟尧：我曾经说，我觉得你的艺术是以改变别人的方式改变世界。这当然是一种带有我个人主观偏见的判断，但是整体来看，你的很多作品都有这种“效果”。像《健身房》《谢谢 - 自由生育计划》，甚至提供了一系列改变生理的治疗方案。能谈谈这两件作品的关系吗？

胡尹萍：我其实还没有把这两件作品放在一起比较过，你这样讲好像也有一定相通性。我天生近视，眼镜成为我的必需品，就像人的每一块肌肉是可以被训练的，我为自己的眼镜做了一个“健身房”，通过反复练习凝视，改变的视力度数。我画了一些画一直放在工作室经常看到的地方，没事就凝视它，之前是四百多度，两年多以后是三百多度，家里放了一个视力测试表没事就测测，哈哈。“谢谢”是因为我出生后性别让家人不太高兴，我的童年都被家人当成男孩来，养即使这样家人还是不太高兴。我一直在想如果我能在出生以前送给父

母一个生男生女攻略就好了，我父母和我父母的父母就不会不高兴那么多年。两个作品相似的点可能都是有攻略，不同是一个给别人用，一个给自己用。

孟尧：你的很多作品带有方案性，并且角度和主题都有差异，你如何去定格你的创作线索，平时有记录思考的习惯吗？

胡尹萍：我很少现做方案，展览会从记录里筛选合适的作品呈现，记录想法是一个必备的基础工作。我的工作方式比较日常化，平时会记录一些想法，慢慢去审视和完善。实际上，我觉得现在中国的艺术家简直是幸福得要死的，每天都可以“捡钱包”，不停地遭遇各种各样的事情，随时受刺激，每天都可以换不同的角度，各种方式去反思自己，工作和周围所有的东西。这在西方固化的日常是不可能的。在中国，艺术家是一个太幸福的职业了。当然如果你是一个迟钝的人，那就不太适合干这个事情，这样说可能非常残酷，但是我认为情况就是如此。

孟尧：2010年开始的《谢谢》，2012年开始的《身份》，2015年开始的《小芳》，2012年开始的《人间》，以及《玲姐，你真棒！》（2018-2028），都是长时段的作品。除了《玲姐，你真棒》《人间》，其他几件，你准备做多久？为什么？

胡尹萍：这是关于作品形成时间的问题比较有意思，但其实都不是故意的，时间长短是这些事情自身需要，很多时候是想做这个事就要这么个时间。不过2012年后我工作方式开始调整，我开始怀疑“反应本身”，希望用时间来过滤作品，想法放几年如果还想做那肯定有原因的，这种原因就可以生成一件作品；如果不想做或者有替代的方式就先放放，已经在进行中的作品也可以持续生长。个人觉得做东西和呈现其实需要合适的契机，不怕放，时间可以完善作品。

胡尹萍的实验：劳动、工具理性与身份脱嵌

文 / 廖廖

《小芳》与《玲姐，你真棒！》（以下简称＜玲姐＞）是艺术家胡尹萍的两个关于“劳动”的作品。《小芳》是胡尹萍发现妈妈在四川老家县城给人制作一种劣质、廉价的毛线帽子，于是她隐瞒着妈妈，让朋友假扮代理商以更高的价格聘请妈妈做毛线制品手工，妈妈在代工劳动中获得满足感与存在感，并且带动了一群闲散在家的同乡姐妹加入生产，她们最后甚至成为设计者，这也改变了阿姨们的生活，产品也弄假成真，销售到各地，并且与各大品牌有了合作。“胡小芳”已经成为在中法注册的独立原创品牌，而妈妈和阿姨们至今一直不知情。

《玲姐》中的玲姐是胡尹萍认识的一位不施农药进行传统种植的广州农妇，胡尹萍认为玲姐很棒，她以传统作物的单位最高产值的价格租赁了玲姐家的一块田，条件是玲姐只能在地里种植非粮食与非绿植的作物，收成也不能销售。玲姐在没有收成压力的情况下，种了玫瑰、菊花等，并采摘下来送人。

“小芳”中的阿姨们在劳动中充实了生活，重新寻回自我价值。“玲姐”则通过摆脱单调重复的劳动来获得精神的愉

悦与解放。“劳动”在两件作品中有着完全不一样的意义。作品也提示着我们在后资本主义时期过度消费与自我压榨中，在 996 社畜的刷屏与人工智能取代劳动力的焦虑中，重新思考“劳动”对于不同的群体的意义，不同的“劳动”如何塑造时代，“劳动”的定义又是如何反映出社会的博弈。

劳动意义的变迁

“劳动”在人类文明史中的意义一再发生变迁。古希腊人和罗马人都认为劳动低下而无内在价值。诸神因为不喜欢人而将他贬为苦役。古希腊的“劳动”一词有可恶的意思。柏拉图和亚里士多德都认为让奴隶去劳动，为社会提供生活必需品和物质财富，而“公民”则有时时间来从事艺术、科学和政治。中国文人士大夫统治阶层同样认为劳动是底层人民的苦役，而文化与政治则是精英的事务。

早期基督教认为劳动本身没有问题，但是它会带来一些问题——人们会因为勤于劳动而耽误了侍奉上帝。而劳动获得的过多财富会带来忧患，成为信徒去往天国之路的障碍。中世纪的时候，基督

教义认为工作是对罪人的惩罚，工作的意义远比不上伺奉上帝。

14 世纪的欧洲黑死病导致大量人口死亡，瘟疫过后出现了劳动力缺乏，为了确保与促进劳动力的责任，欧洲开始抛弃了基督教早期的鄙视劳动、清贫光荣的信念，一种新的劳动伦理被建立，鼓励劳动成为重要的社会价值。

文艺复兴时期，人们开始认为人应该通过工作养活自己，也必须在工作中寻找生活的意义，无所事事是反自然的罪孽。那时候的人们认为工作不仅仅是养家糊口的劳役，工作也能让人性充满光辉，工作能够让人精神更加完满，技术本身给劳动者带来了无可取代的满足感，他们认为资本创造的利润是无耻的，只有实实在在的手工劳作才是人间正道。16 世纪宗教改革之后，加尔文主义认为劳动的成就与价值是上帝的恩赐。新教理论把辛勤劳动与虔诚信仰完美结合，成为后来的资本主义伦理的底色。

19 世纪的马克思主义认为：劳动是光荣的，劳动能够解放生产力，也能够解放人的思想。通过劳动效率的提升，劳动的时间越来越少，用于个人全面发展的

时间越来越多，于是人们“有可能随自己的兴趣今天干这事，明天干那事，上午打猎，下午捕鱼，傍晚从事畜牧，晚饭后从事批判。”

工业革命之后，劳动的概念面临着分化，一方面逐渐被赋予正面价值，甚至人的价值也通过劳动才能实现，给予劳动者精神满足的同时，才能发掘劳动者的动力。另一方面，机器大生产也让劳动者机器化。工业革命之后的美国人也迫切地感觉到工作热情与工匠精神的衰败。工业革命之前的美国人把工作当作一种荣耀与本能，而机器大时代的来临，让传统的进取心和热情不断消退。工业革命之后的劳动者，所从事的工作不再是以往那种让人感到充实与满足的手工艺。

在“后资本主义”的今天，物资前所未有的丰富，劳动者不再被被暴力和饥饿所驱使而不得不去劳动，但是劳动者的工作强度并没有因此下降。劳动者被资本所构建的消费文化所诱惑，从而陷入了“劳动—消费—劳动—消费”的漩涡中不能自拔。

“后资本主义”市场经济面临的问题不

再是“商品短缺”，而是“商品过剩”。人们面临的问题是如何把巨大的生产力生产出来的商品销售出去，当消费能力不能满足劳动者的生产能力的时候，经济就会崩溃。

要解决生产力过大、商品过剩的终极问题，资本主义的解决方法是：重新创造一个商业时代的文化与价值，在资本创造的现代文化中，生活的意义必须在消费中被发现，活着的价值就在于买买买。人们在温饱之后，继续被引导着用劳动换取根本不需要的东西，譬如一代代不断更新的手机和电子产品。只有让劳动者有一个虚幻的生活目标，不断地消费，才能解决后资本主义时期生产过剩的核心问题。

资本成功地把消费与幸福等同。资本打造出一个消费至上的商业世界，让劳动者更勤奋地工作，以出卖更多的劳动力换取更多的物资消费。刺激消费、引导消费成为资本对劳动者的新奴役。“奴役的艺术”包装得越来越精致，引导着我们把消费等同于幸福，奢侈品、新手机、时尚衣饰，现代文化成功地把不同的消费等同于阶层的身份象征。

人们陷入劳动与消费的不断循环中，除了消费文化的影响，还有一个根本原因，不断的劳动是人类在进化史中形成的为了生存而斗争的本能与习惯。今天的社畜们一边抗拒抵触 996 的过劳，一边陷

入“自我增值”的焦虑当中，如果不进行过度的“自我剥削”，就会陷入被时代淘汰的不安当中。我们理想的乌托邦中构思出来的那种物质无限满足之后，空闲时间都用来创作艺术与文化，其实很难实现。虽然现代的社畜常常抱怨“上班如上坟”，但是以工作劳动来实现自身价值，确立自身与世界的关系，这是人类在进化史中形成的为了生存而斗争的本能与习惯。凯恩斯说：“因为我们已经在这样的价值观中浸淫太久，以至于我们既苦于坚持奋斗，也不可能放开享受。”

今天的中国面临着复杂的劳动问题，既有对流水线生产线的重复劳动给人造成伤害的反思，也有对工匠精神的向往，既有技术进步带来的劳动力解放与性别平等，也有被人工智能取代的担忧。

工具理性之外的劳动

对于“小芳”的阿姨们来说，劳动意味着自我意识的确立，重新寻找自身价值的过程。对于“玲姐”来说，意味着可以在不用承担收成压力的劳作中重新体验劳动的乐趣。阿姨们是重新投入劳动，萍姐是摆脱了繁重的劳动，但是两者的共同点都是挣脱了工具理性的束缚。

小芳的阿姨们与玲姐，在回乡务农、闲散在家或者开小卖部之前曾经是中国第一代农民工，在城市里从事机器化的大

生产。她们在流水生产线上的劳动自然谈不上满足感与成就感，也不是什么工匠精神，更像是在工具理性安排下的一颗螺丝钉。

18、19 世纪的第一次工业革命之后，实用类的传统手工艺产品比不上机器生产更廉价、更高效。传统工匠的很多工作被机器所取代，工匠也被流水线上的工人所替代。在工具理性的主导之下，一切都以利益最大化、效率最高化为原则，大多数劳动者只是生产线上的一个环节，或者办公室里的一颗螺丝钉。由于没掌控一件产品的全部权力，他只是机器大生产其中的一个环节，被管理与被操纵的工人与白领很容易对工作感到厌倦，他们谈不上在工作中完成自我，一切工作都是为了降低成本与提高效率，因此很容易感到厌倦、无聊，并且认为自己的工作毫无意义。这甚至不是敬业精神的问题，而是生产方式的不同，让当代的劳动者很难获得传统工匠那种满足感与成就感。

工具理性曾经创造出巨大的效率与价值，但是也让人成为计划中的原材料或工具，更令人不安的是，工具理性用利益与效率来作为原则，一切都为满足效率而存在。

在胡尹萍项目的安排下，阿姨们与玲姐从事的都不再是工具理性主导的以获取利益最大化的重复劳动，胡尹萍有意设置为不是简单的计件工作，充分发挥阿

姨们的创造性，让她们参与设计手工的样式。这种劳动更具自主性，避免了让阿姨们重新成为流水生产线的工人。因此她们能够从中获得价值感，某种意义上更像是工匠而不是工人。当一件件实实在在的手工毛线在手中诞生，她们会感觉到工匠那种创造者的满足感与乐趣。玲姐则在胡尹萍“买断”了土地使用权之后，掌握了自主栽种作物的自由（作物不能出售获取经济利益）。当玲姐不再受困于作物的产值之后，由此认为田间劳作不再是体力的负担与乏味的精神透支。玲姐从心理和技术上完全掌握她的作物，她以造物主的身份创造与拥有它的时候，汗水与辛劳慢慢凝结出一个看得见、摸得着的成果，那些玫瑰、菊花就是她的意志、毅力与智慧的结果，这让她充满金钱难以换取的成就感。

从《小芳》到《玲姐》，胡尹萍在普遍存在的工具理性与过劳焦虑之下，重新讨论了人与劳动的关系、人在劳动中的价值。

身份的脱嵌

改革开放以来，大规模的城市化、商业化与工业化带来了大量人口的空间迁移与社会层级的流动，《小芳》的阿姨们与玲姐曾经进入城市成为工业生产线上劳动力，她们不仅离开了家乡，也在农村的秩序中脱离出来，被重新置于另一个环境中。虽然是人群聚集，但是

每个人都是原子化的，都要重新面对新的陌生关系。劳动者从熟悉的社会环境中脱离出来，不再从属于稳定的共同体。投入到一种新的生产关系与社会关系当中，她们在原有的乡村的社群认同与集体秩序中脱离出来，这是一种文化意义与政治身份的“脱嵌”。

小芳》阿姨们在参与到手工劳作的时候，已经是身处乡村的传统的稳定共同体中，但是整个劳动的环境发生了不同意义的变化，虽然是熟悉的生活秩序，但是给“小芳”做设计与手工的行为本身，就脱离了小镇的生活秩序，她们不再是闲散人员，也不再是麻将馆里消磨时间的退休人员，当她们在街边编织内衣引来议论的时候，当她们不再去麻将馆打牌让麻将馆老板恼怒的时候（最终老板也加入了手工生产者的队伍中并成为熟练工），她们甚至局部改变了小镇的生态，这是她们在离乡进城打工的“脱嵌”之后，返回家乡后的另一种“脱嵌”。

对于玲姐来说，她同样经历了进城务工的身份脱嵌，当她参与了胡尹萍的项目之后，也进入了另一种脱嵌。虽然身在乡村田间种地，但是所种的已经不再是经济作物，而是随心所欲的非经济植栽。玲姐所种的花卉甚至引来了村民的“嫉妒”，这种嫉妒一方面是对她脱离了艰苦的田间劳作的羡慕，另一方面也是对于个人脱离了当地文化的一种警惕，某种意义上玲姐毫无压力的随心所

欲的种植，也“破坏”了乡村的既定的文化秩序与经济秩序，这是另一种脱嵌。

结语

王尔德写过一篇著名的文章《社会主义下人的灵魂》，其中讨论了未来乌托邦中的劳动与艺术创作，他认为“体力劳动没有什么尊严……当机器能够替代劳动之后，人就能自由地创造艺术……”从某种意义上，胡尹萍两个项目中的阿姨们与玲姐都有意无意地参与了艺术的创作——以劳动者的身份。如果如王尔德所说“艺术的美意味着它的作者实现了自我。艺术也是世人知道的唯一的个人主义的方式。”那么通过劳动来参与艺术创作的人也不应该停留在以往的劳动者的刻板印象当中。

胡尹萍的项目不仅让我们重新思考在普遍的工具理性与过劳焦虑下的劳动的意义，也让我们在这个后期资本主义时期与人工智能时代，在占据头条的焦虑社畜的自我剥削、消费主义对劳动者的异化、人工智能之后“失业弃民”等等时髦话题之外，重新关注人与劳动的关系的复杂性，以及劳动对于人的意义的多重性。

【Y-People】

胡尹萍 超级麻烦制造者

2016.03.15 采 / 曹丝玉 ARTYOO



她说生活中有许多事情是必须要去做的，比如吃饭、喝酒还有做爱，但唯独没有工作或赚钱，她想做让这个世界看起来更可爱的那 1% 的人。她是一个超级麻烦制造者，也是一个可以探入内心深处寻求答案的冒险家，她叫胡尹萍，我生命中出现的一个极具力量的女人。

我一直坚信自己是捡来的

曹：展览叫“身份”，怎么解？

胡：开始是 2012 年底一个很久没见的朋友微信给我一张照片，他以为那个女人是我。看到这张照片的时候，第一反应是，日，我怎么可能这么丑！哈哈，身份是后来的事。



朋友微信给胡尹萍那张陌生女人的照片

曹：但为什么后来着迷于这张“很丑的”照片？

胡：这么丑还像自己的照片一定是不能忘的。（笑）但这也可能与小时候的挫折式教育有关。小时候我妈

常说我是捡来的，描述很具体，比如我出生那年如何发大水，他们是如何从河边的篮子里发现我，如何捡到我等等。

曹：父母都会骗人。

胡：小孩子没有辨识能力，但我去求证过我出生那年是真的发大水的，童年的很长一段时间，我一直坚信自己是捡来的。



胡尹萍个展“身份”现场，戴卓群策划，Mo Projects

我可以是任何一个人，任何身份的人

曹：这种烙印让你对那个陌生女人的态度有影响吗？

胡：有一定影响，我觉得这个人与我存在某种关系或者是希望有联系。所以再次拿出照片来看的时候，不是厌恶，而是审视。平时照镜子也是化妆衣服啥的，



胡尹萍在想象陌生女人的所有可能的形象和状态时画的单色画

真用来审视自己时，突然发现镜子前的自己居然很陌生，感觉跟自己很不熟。

曹：的确。照镜子这事情，要慎重。

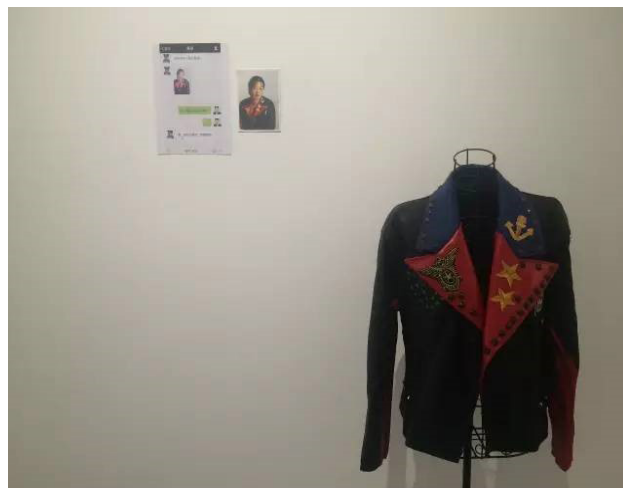
胡：哈哈，对自己不熟这事儿挺逗的，然后对着照镜子画肖像，想画清楚那张有点陌生的脸。后来把头发梳起来画的，感觉真的很像。但对这个人又完全没有概念，只能画单色的背景，最后直接画单色，这时的想象力是开放的。

曹：有从其他方向切入想象的层面吗？

胡：因为太无聊，我开始剪杂志，各种身份的人，把脸换上去，一是试着猜测一下她的身份，但是到后来你发现这些被换了脸的人，不是她也不是我，可以是



胡尹萍把那张脸置入不同的身份、角色和环境中，有一种很合适的荒诞感



胡尹萍亲手制作了陌生女人的机车服，以此深入对陌生女人的想象和理解

任何人，任何身份一个人。

曹：都很合理？

胡：很奇葩，比如把脸换到一个女市委书记的头上，想象自己当个政客，也挺牛逼的。或者换到一张 AV 女优脸上，觉得也好性感，换张脸的代入感就很强。

把自己复制成另一个女人

曹：那张照片的审美的确看起来不太像这个时代。

胡：不是一个日常的状态，也有很多想象。这个人可能现在很老了，可能是别的什么国家的，也有可能是男的，（笑）但衣服很机车。

曹：以此找到答案了？关于那个女人的。

胡：没有，画画的主观性太强，只是处理“形”的问题。那张图片如此真实，一切可以更写实。我从网上找了一件皮衣，因为要还原照片上的信息，所以基本上把皮衣拆了一遍，包括那些徽章，照片上不全的些信息，比如衣服上的绣片，“P”开头，所以我就绣了一个“PEACE”，世界和平。（笑）

曹：陷入其中。

胡：对，更换发型，玩自拍。但问题是，我自己拍不出来那种形态，而且当时太瘦，没有体量感。所以第二次拍摄的时候，我前一晚喝了盐水，第二天脸肿了，但眼睛肿成一条缝，没拍成。（笑）最后想着增点肥。

曹：上瘾了。

胡：这个事情是有瘾的，画肖像之后，我就想做衣服，做完衣服之后就想拍照片，拍着拍着就希望能无限接近。最难拍的是眼神，得从内心去找这个人的状态。最后选出来的照片是每个阶段里状态和气质最接近的。这事挺微妙的，她眼神自信，冷漠，犀利和坚定。一张照片带出来的信息太多了，这张脸背后的力量很强大。

曹：她的什么状态是你缺失的吗？

胡：可能缺一个职业吧，女政委，女博士，女老板，女领导，女村长什么的…（笑）

一个麻烦制造者

曹：后来你还把这个形象用在证件照上。

胡：包被偷了，正好要补办证件。我正好穿她的衣服，她的发型，留她的刘海，然后就很严肃地去派出所补办了所有证件。（笑）

曹：你总是要制造点麻烦，在其他作品里也是如此。

胡：因为生活圈子就这么大，很多东西是恒定的，事情也是，信息也是。有很多触及不到的东西，多给自己制造一些意外机会。

曹：给意外一个发生的契机，还把很多人卷入其中。

胡：所有的事情都是一种遭遇，在一个大的系统里，许多的事情是没有选择的，只能用自己的方式去处理，很多人卷入也挺意外。

曹：所以你很少在作品里出镜，都是以一种看不见的力量在背后引发，以及策划。做女BOSS的感觉，对吧。（笑）

胡：女老板挺好（笑）。我有一个 Boss Club，所谓 club 里其实一般情况就我一个人，然后去策划或去雇佣其他的人出现在我的事件里。

曹：所以你的作品用时间命名，因为你认可它们事件的属性。

胡：为一“事儿”命名不是我的强项。“事儿”是一个动作，你也不知道这个动作会引起什么样的反应，所以把之前所有事件以发生时间命名这样就更合理一些。

曹：所以像制造矛盾？恶作剧？

胡：肯定不是恶作剧，规则是不知道是谁定好的，我只是加点难度，他们说是个“trouble maker”。

曹：“夜走黑桥”就是。

胡：如果把“夜走黑桥”比喻成游戏，我只是让这个游戏在最后升级了一点儿，那个升级是给艺术家的，也是给空间的，给策展人的，这其中也包含着自己的立场。

曹：能说下动机吗？

胡：因为作品是“夜走黑桥”的最后一天，项目持续了很长时间，大家都想在最后一天搞出点名堂，一种很功利的心态。所以我托人雇佣两个民工去守空间 1

米外的空间，签了合同，民工也不知道雇主是谁，后来那两个被雇佣的两民工实在非常负责，他们甚至可以豁出命去，最后这个事情变成两个民工和所有人的对话。

曹：包括你让一辆出租车在路口一直左转，把液化气罐放在美术馆里，所有的事情都在打破常规，期待意外。

胡：“打出租车”这个事是当时有一个展览邀约，主办方材料费是 500 块人民币，这个材料费很尴尬，展览是在一个街道上，很多车流，所以到现场后我就打了一个车，上车后让司机一直左转，一直左转就是一个圆，那车就在现场一直原地不停转圈。“液化气”是美术馆的一个展览邀约，当时拿到美术馆平面立面图，于是找了一个理工科的朋友帮忙进行了仔细核算，多少方的液化气能炸掉这个馆，算好后再找人装满相应量的特大号液化气罐就拉过去放美术馆里了。

曹：还有那个把人拉到火葬场的“VIP”。

胡：VIP 是一个海杰发起的工作室开发项目，我工作室也没啥好开放的，所以我找了个司机在固定地方等，来的人需要预约，一次一位，司机按我预设好的路线车速带着他们，其中一站是平房火葬场，完了走高速路回到原点。参观者有好奇的生气的怀疑的兴奋的，也有看完要绝交的 ... 其实这事儿想得挺简单，人一辈子不一定要死的时候被人送到火葬场，活着不知道的那一天自己也可以把自己送到终点去看看。

所有的人都职业化，这个世界就不可爱了

曹：你希望把这种不符合常规的事情带到生活、思想甚至行动的层面上，让更多的人参与其中，发生关系。

胡：这个社会太有秩序感了，大家都很职业，全民价值观很统一，百分之九九的人价值观就是挣钱。所以像我这种无聊的人就不需要那么职业了。

曹：作为艺术家就是花很大的力气做那 1% 的人？

胡：这个花力气大小也不清楚，但如果这个世界变成了百分百的统一，那也很恐怖。所有人都职业化了，就不可爱了。曹：还有什么事情对你来是这样必须的吗？

胡：太多了，必须要吃饭，必须要拉屎，必须要喝酒，必须要做爱，很多必须。以前我偷拍过爸妈“做爱”，在中国“色情”是被抵制的，性是色情的，所以性是被抵制的。但谁怀孕了，大家都会恭喜，我们羞愧于做爱，却为做爱的结果欢呼。满大街都是做爱的结果，却羞愧于此事，这不是很奇怪吗？

曹：所以你爸妈现在还不知道这件事的存在吧。

胡：他们知道了大概会把我告上法庭吧。（笑）

Hu Yinping: SUPER Troublemaker

Interviewed by Cao Siyu, 【Y-People】, ARTYOO
15th March 2016



She says there are lots of things you must do in your life, like having meals, alcohol and sex, but only not working or earning money. She wants to be one of the 1% people making the world looks more lovely. She is a super troublemaker, also an adventurer exploring deep inside to look for answers. Her name is Hu Yinping, one of the most powerful woman appears in my life.

*By firmly belief, I had this idea that
I was an orphan accidentally found by my parents
somewhere in a corner*

Cao: The exhibition is entitled 'Identity'. Why is it?

Hu: It was a photo sent to me on WeChat from a long-lost friend in 2012. He thought the woman in that photo was me. My first reaction to this image was 'Fuck, how on earth could I be that ugly!' Ha ha, the saying of 'Identity' was something following afterwards.



Sent to Hu Yinping from her friend, this is the photo of that unknown woman.

Cao: But then you were obsessed by this 'awfully ugly' photo, for what reason?

Hu: No one would forget such a photo in which a subject look so similar to oneself yet so ugly. (laughing) But this might be related to the frustrating-esque education to my childhood. As a child, I was told by my mother that I was found somewhere, instead of being their own. The description was in quite some detail, for instance, how dreadfully was the flood the year I was born, how did they find me in a basket by the river, and how did they bring me home, etc.



Hu Yinping, 'Identity', Solo Exhibition, Curated by Dai Zhuoqun, Mo Projects.



Hu painted these mono-coloured paintings when she was imagining all the possible looks and states of that unknown woman

Cao: Parents lie.

Hu: Children are not able to identify the truth, but I did verify that it was indeed flooding the year I was born, thus for a long time in my childhood, I had been firmly believing that I was not their child.

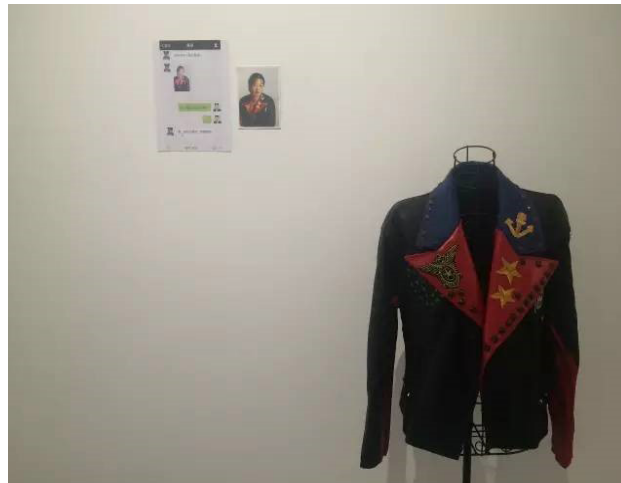
I could be anyone with any identity

Cao: You were borne the stamp of years of that story, and did this influence your attitude to this unknown woman?

Hu: To some degree, yes. I think this person is somehow related to me, or hopes to be connected.



Hu Yinping merges the face into different identities, roles and backgrounds, makes the absurdity apposite.



The biker jacket was made by Hu Yinping herself, to have a deeper fantasy and understanding of the unknown woman

Therefore, when I looked at this photo again, I found myself observing this woman, rather than dislike her. A mirror is normally for dressing and making up, but if it gave a chance to look inwards, it would suddenly show me a stranger with whom I was quite unfamiliar.

Cao: Indeed, looking at a mirror, this must be careful.
Hu: Ha ha, it is funny to be unfamiliar to myself, and I started to paint self-portraits by looking at the mirror, I wanted to paint the somewhat strange face well. I had my hair styled then, we were pretty alike at that moment. But I had no idea about this person, I can only paint in mono-coloured background, and ended up painting everything directly in mono-coloured, I was open minded.

Cao: Have you tried of other ways to be involved in your imagination?

Hu: It was too dull. I started to do magazine cuttings, pasted her face on people with different identities, tried to figure her identity out, but you would notice those people with new faces are neither her nor me. Each of them could be anyone, a person with any identity.

Cao: All of them make sense?

Hu: Bizarre, I would say. It would be awesome to paste the face onto a female Secretary of the Municipal Committee and imagine myself being a politician, it would also be sexy to paste it onto an AV idol. Substituting a face would make people empathetic.

Copy another woman into me

Cao: That picture's aesthetic does not look like from our time.

Hu: It is not a daily state, with a lot of imaginations. This person might be very old now, might be from some another country, might be a man, (laughing) but the jacket is a lot Biker than a usual one.

Cao: And you had the answer in this way? About that woman.

Hu: No, painting is much too subjective, it only works with the 'form'. That photo is so real, and my work could be more realistic. As the information given by the original picture have to be recreated, the jacket I bought online was mostly unstitched. I made all those things, including badges and things with incomplete information, such as the embroidery patch, which has a word start with the letter P, so I had it embroidered with the word 'PEACE', May Peace Prevail On Earth. (laughs)

Cao: You were in.

Hu: Right, styling my hair, taking selfies. But the problem is, I could not take a photo with the exact atmosphere by my own, and I was too skinny to have the apposite weight at the time. The salty water I drank the night before my second shoot successfully caused a swollen face the next day, but my eyes

turned out to be a slit. I still did not make it. (laughs) It ended up with my gaining weight plan.

Cao: You were addicted.

Hu: This is quite addictive. I expected to be infinitely close to her whilst shooting, which became my methodology after I made the jacket, which was a task I wanted to do when I finished painting. The most difficult part on shooting was the eyes, I have to understand her state from the bottom of my heart. I was in these selected images closest to her, comparing both of our temperament and state each time. It is subtle, her eyes are confident, indifferent, sharp and steadfast. There is too much information in her photo, and something powerful is behind her face.

Cao: Do you lack something?

Hu: Probably an occupation, female commissar, female doctor, female boss, female leader, female village chief...(laughing)

A troublemaker

Cao: You took this image as your ID photo.

Hu: My bag was stolen, I happened to reapply for identification documents. I happened to have her jacket, her hair, her fringe, and I just went to the police office to reapply all of these seriously. (laughs)

Cao: You always make trouble, and you did do this in

your other works.

Hu: Many things are constant, like events and information, as our circle is not big. A lot of things are untouchable. Create unexpected chances for yourself.

Cao: You created opportunities lead to unexpected events, and have people involved.

Hu: Everything is an encounter that exists in a large system. You don't have a choice every time, what you can do is dealing with them in your own way. People can be accidentally involved.

Cao: You design works, as if you are the boss with some unseen force behind each plot, and you yourself rarely appear in your own works. You enjoy it? (laughing)

Hu: It's good to be a boss (laughs). I have a Boss Club, which actually has only one member, i.e. me, and I work for this club to design and employ other people to participate in my events.

Cao: You name your works in date since you accept their properties as events.**Hu: I'm not an expert naming an 'event'. I would say 'event' is a movement, and you wouldn't know what kind of reaction that one movement would cause. It would be reasonable to entitle all of these previous events separately in their happening date.**

Cao: Like creating paradoxes? Playing pranks?

Hu: Definitely not pranks. Rules are already there. All I do is adding a bit of difficulty. They call me a 'troublemaker'.

Cao: *'Heiqiao Night Away'* is the case.

Hu: If *'Heiqiao Night Away'* was a game, what I did was only upgrading it at the end. The upgradation was for artists, also for the space and curator, it involves my standpoint.

Cao: Can you talk about the motif?

Hu: Everyone was in utilitarian manner and planning to make something different on the last day of this project *'Heiqiao Night Away'*, which was lasting for a long period of time. So I asked someone to employ two migrant workers to guard at one meter away from the space. They signed the contrast, without knowing who their employer was. They were so responsible that they could even guard with their lives. It turned out to be a conversation between these two workers and everyone else.

Cao: All you did was breaking rules and expecting unexpected moments, including hiring a taxi and keeping it turning left at street corners, and bringing a gas cylinder into a museum.

Hu: *'Calling Cab'* came from an invitation to exhibit something. I was only given 500 yuan as material fees, which is quite embarrassing, and the exhibition was on a street with heavy traffic. I went to the location,

called a cab, asked the driver to keep turning left and that would make a circle. So the car was basically and physically going in circles around the location. *'Gas Tank'* started with another invitation sent from an art museum. After receiving the elevation and plan of that museum, I asked one of my scientific friends to carefully calculate the right amount of gas that could destroy the whole museum if exploded, inflate a large size gas tank and send it to the museum.

Cao: And the *'VIP'* project that drove people to the crematorium.

Hu: *'VIP'* belongs to the Studio Developing Plan originated by Haijie. There is no need to show my studio, thus I asked the driver to wait somewhere for people booked this tour. One person each time. Itinerary and speed was presetted in advance, with one of the stop at Pingfang Crematorium, and back to the start point at the end taking the freeway. Visitors were then curious, angry, doubted or excited, some were also going to break up with me... My idea was simple. Being sent to a crematorium after death is not a rule, it could be done some day when one is still alive, for going to the destination to have a look.

If Everyone was professional, the world would not be lovely anymore.

Cao: You hope to bring these unconventional things into your life, thoughts and even acts, and have more people participated and related. Hu: Our society is too systematic – everyone is professional, has the same

values, 99% of them has the one of earning money. Boring people such as me have no need to be that professional then.

Cao: Being an artist means making every effort to be one of the 1% people?

Hu: It's hard to say how much effort has to be made, but it would be horrible if the whole world was unified. People wouldn't be lovely if they were all professional.

Cao: Anything else is a must-do for you?

Hu: Too many, eating, pooing, drinking, intercouring, there are lots of must-dos. I had secretly filmed my parents having sex, as 'porn' is resisted in China, and sex is porn, in this logic sex is consequently resisted. But people would congratulate whoever is pregnant. We are ashamed of having sex, but cheer for the result of having sex. The results of having sex are walking on every street, meanwhile ashamed of what made them. Isn't this bizarre?

Cao: I reckon your parents haven't known this yet?

Hu: They would take me to court. (laughs)

Translated by Xiaohui Feng