

# RIP OFF THE LABELS°

## 撕掉標籤°

1:  
Bengali Books of  
"I Judge a Book  
by Its Cover"  
我以貌取人之孟加拉  
國語書

2:  
Census - I am a  
house wife and  
I would have to  
give birth to a  
male baby so my  
mother in law  
would be happy.  
人口普查——男女不平  
等之重男輕女

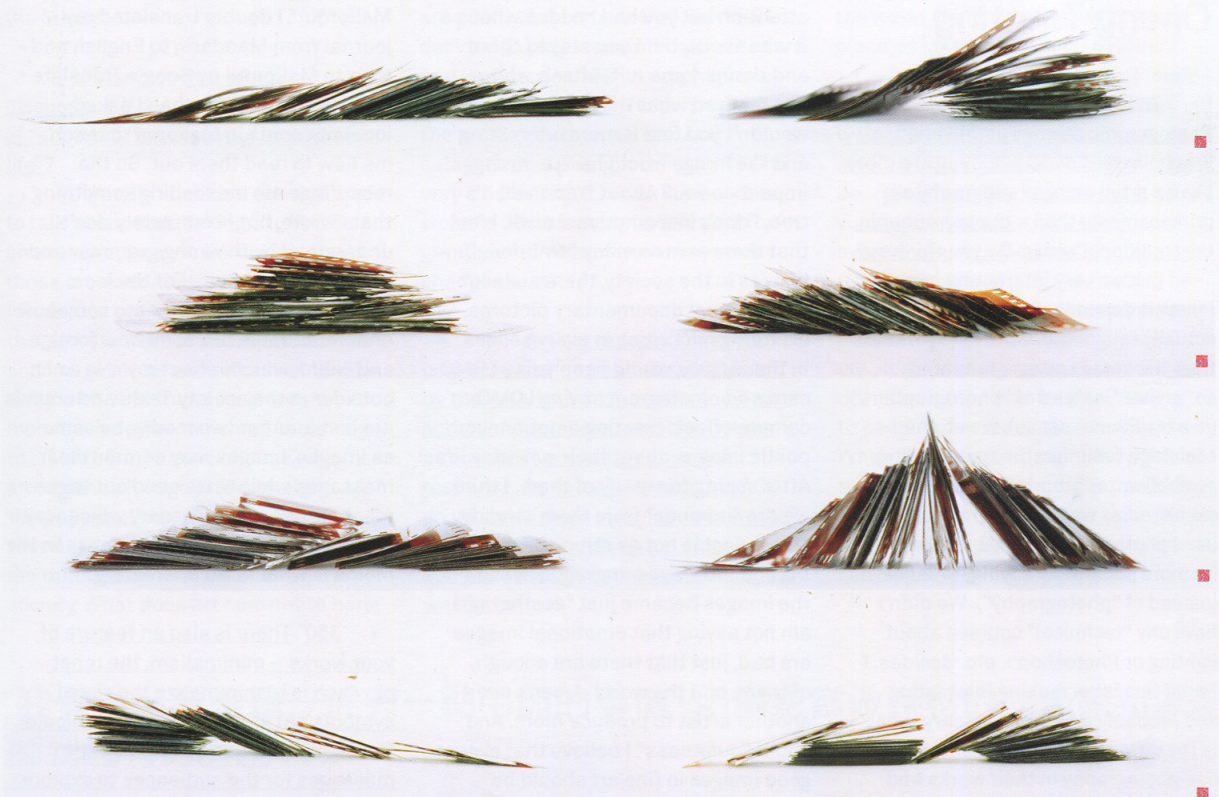
3:  
Census -  
National Taiwan  
University is  
the only way to  
success.  
人口普查——金榜題  
名最重要之我一定要  
上台大!

4:  
Census - What  
is your monthly  
salary?  
人口普查——你收入多  
少啊?之一切向錢看

5:  
Census -  
Everything from  
The West is  
the bible we  
worship.  
人口普查——崇洋媚外  
之外國的月亮比較圓



# CHENG TINGTING



- An artist using photography as primary media or a photographer in the traditional sense? Cheng Tingting is not willing to choose between them to label herself. It's quite understandable. Being restricted is not that a creative wants. And what she works on is dimming the boundary between the two identities. Born in 1985 in Taipei, Cheng Tingting was graduated from MA Photographic Studies in University of Westminster. The education there focused more on social studies and art theories, and paid less attention to photographic techniques, which has deeply influenced what she creates afterwards.
- "We take some concepts or orders for granted, but what if we converse or change them?" Cheng Tingting has put this idea into effect. In use of "absurdity treatment of everyday life", she has created images with sense of ambiguity and vagueness. She thinks that it can take the viewers longer time to think of the messages hiding inside. Meanwhile, there is also rational and peaceful sense of her images. Without too much rendering of emotions, viewers can have much more room of thinking. Not merely images, along with words and sound device, Cheng Tingting makes her works multidimensional and even more profound. This is also the reason why she cannot be labeled.
- She tends to adopt subjects of social issues in her works. Then she makes use of her rational, peaceful and ambiguous images to discuss them. The experiences of studying in London and residing in Berlin and Ho Chi Minh City has made

her explored more of issues of foreignness, identity, cultural gap, etc. Meanwhile, social topics like Gender equality, consumerism have got well demonstrated in her works in a simple and profound way as well.

- 到底是一個用攝影當作主要媒材的藝術家還是一個傳統意義上的攝影師，鄭亭亭不太願意取其一來標籤自己，不難理解，被局限並不是一個創意人所願接受的狀況，而她的創作也在模糊著這個界限。1985年生於台北的鄭亭亭，畢業於倫敦西敏大學攝影藝術碩士學位，當時的所學重視社會學科和藝術理論，而淡化了攝影技術理論，教育的經歷深遠地影響著她的創作屬性。
- “我們常把一些概念和規則看做理所當然，若將他們顛倒改變又會產生怎樣的結果？”鄭亭亭把這樣的構想付諸實施，以“對日常生活荒謬的處置”作為藝術手法，創造出充滿曖昧性和意味含糊的圖像。她認為那樣的圖像能虜獲觀眾更長時間的注目。同時，她的圖像又是安靜而理性的，沒有過多的情感渲染，留給觀眾冷靜的思考空間而非強加的意識植入。除單純的圖像呈現，她還喜愛將圖片與文字及聲音裝置的搭配，使作品更多維、更豐滿，及觸及更深的深度，這也是不能輕易標籤其創作屬性的原因之一。
- 她的作品題材採納上更多地指向社會議題，再利用冷靜理性、乾淨明快、曖昧模糊的圖像探討著這些題材。在倫敦留學和在柏林和胡志明市駐村的經歷，使得她的作品更多涉及外來性、身份認同、文化隔閡等問題，同時她的作品也有對男女平等、消費主義等社會現象有深入淺出的反映。

# Interview with Cheng Tingting

◦ 360°: You graduated from MA Photographic Studies in University of Westminster, London. But you are more like an artist using photography as primary media than a photographer in the traditional sense. Do you think so?

◦ C: It's a very interesting question. I think it depends on what the degree actually taught me. Most of my friends from the same course graduated as "artists" instead of "photographers" (in a traditional sense). We studied sociology, feminism, images reading, symbolism, appropriation... etc. The case studies we did were how artists used photography in their works (or more accurately saying, "images" instead of "photography"). We didn't have any "technical" courses about lighting or Photoshop... etc. Besides, I found this label making interesting and probably a bit unnecessary, what is the difference between artists who use photography in their works and photographers? Do photographers mean "documentary photographer"? Or "commercial photographer"?

◦ 360°: As a female, you may be more emotionally sensitive. Would that help in digging out inspiration and in the process of creating?

◦ C: Hmm... Actually I am not sure that female is more emotionally sensitive. I found it a bit unfair for male. I do have male-artist friends whose perspectives are just as sensitive or even more sensitive than mine. Probably I am just too defensive about gender issues.

◦ 360°: You have the tendency to create your works with the sense of reason, peace and ambiguity. What makes that tendency?

◦ C: I am going to start with "ambiguity". I like things which are not that obvious from the first sight. Imagine you walk by an image, and straight away you know what the messages are, would you stay there

and think about it? But if you walked by an image which attracted your attention but you had no idea what it was about, then you stayed there and thought about it, after a while you realized what the messages were, wouldn't you find it more interesting and the image would have a stronger impact on you? About "rational", it's true, I don't like emotional stuff. I feel that there are too many "emotional" images in the society, there are a lot of emotional documentary pictures, exploring minorities in every senses in the society, young people like LOMO camera or Instagram having LOMO camera effect, creating emotional or poetic images about their everyday life. After seeing too many of them, I think we are "immune" from them already. The impact is not as strong as it used be, and messages are vague, while the images became just "aesthetic". I am not saying that emotional images are bad, just that there are enough of them, and the world doesn't need another artist to produce more. And about "quietness", I believe that every good images in fine art should be well-calculated and designed. There shouldn't be anything inside without a meaning or reason, like why is that object there and why is the frame white... etc. By eliminating unnecessary stuff, I want to focus on the subject itself.

◦ 360°: Specially, you try to make your works even more profound by means of collocating images with texts and sounds, meanwhile, you are fond of hiding some obvious messages in the images creating the distance to the audience and engage them in spending more time to explore the connotation of your works. Don't you think there is a paradox between the two attributes of your works?

◦ C: I don't think so, it depends on which projects you are referring to. If you are talking about "Things We May Never Know", the texts are written in the subjects' mother languages without translations. It was deliberately designed to create distance from the viewers, mirroring the language

and culture gaps in the reality. And for the sound in "Jo vull aprendre Mallorqui", I double translated my journal from Mandarin to English and then to Mallorqui by Google Translate without corrections, then I asked local residents in Mallorca to teach me how to read them out. So the recordings are me reading something that I wrote, but I completely don't understand, with wrong grammar and funny pronunciation. For the local residents, the recordings are somehow understandable but somehow foreign and weird, which reflect my role as an outsider in the society. Texts and sound are just another two media, as same as images. Images may contain clear messages while texts send out vague meaning. It's not necessary which way round. And the relationship between the media is what I find interesting.

◦ 360°: There is also an feature of your works – minimalism, the tenet of which is to minimize the visual symbols but still able to communicate the significance and even hide the messages for the audiences to explore. How do you minimize those visual symbols?

◦ C: I think while making images for a project, the artist should think about what the messages he/she want to convey. And find the best way to deliver it, no matter in which way.

◦ 360°: The experience of living in London makes you discuss more about issues of foreignness, identity, nationality, stereotype of language and etc. Nowadays the communication of information is highly advanced, and culture immersion keeps progressing. are the topics of cultural gap, race issue boycott to the foreigners, etc. still very outstanding and worth discussing via your works?

◦ C: Of course that wouldn't be the only subject that I want to talk about in my projects, but yes, that is the topic that I am interested in. I think in the global era, the topic is getting more and more interesting (for me). More and more immigrants are in more and more cities, and the economic crisis and the

classic issues are reflected on them. Tourism also changed the way we view the others.

◦ **360°:** How do you wisely discuss the (social) topics in the way of “absurdity treatment of everyday life”?

◦ **C:** Usually I decided on what topic to talk about first. Taking “Kunst” as an example, I was in Berlin, I received those art exhibitions or performances invitations everyday, and when I visited there, there were more introductions and images than audiences could take away with. And then I received more and more each day, at the end, I couldn't go to all of them, I had to choose which one among the all to go on every night. All the papers piled up in my room, and all these overwhelming art events made me think about the role of art in the society. What does art contribute here,

while wasting all the papers and killing all the trees, and while the people are poor living on benefits? So then I decided to play around those invitations and leaflets, in order to emphasize on the existence of them which represents the art events themselves. And categorization is something that I find very interesting. It is like stereotypes, we take some concepts or orders for granted, but what if we converse or change them

◦ **360°:** Artists react to the social issues by means of discussing them by their works, which seems to be an action of depression and discontent but couldn't arouse great social response. Do you agree with that? Or do you have more vision to your works? What feedback did you get from your audience including the easterners and westerner

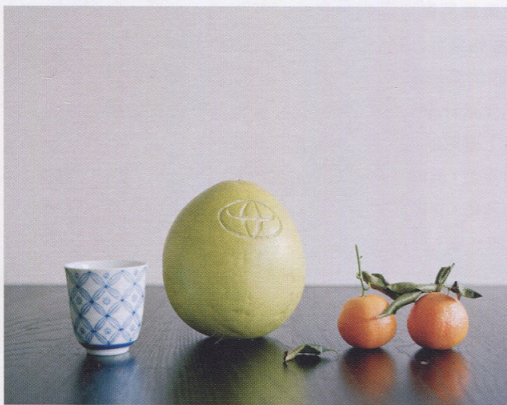
◦ **C:** Of course lots of artists including myself are trying to change the world, making the society a better place, at least that is how I believe.

◦ And from the audiences... I found it a bit shame that there is a certain type of audiences in contemporary art – college students, cultural workers, bourgeois, wealthy collectors, hipsters, yuppies... etc., it is a bit unavoidable in everywhere in the world. Culture is rich people's accessory. I think it would be much more interesting if art can reach people from all ages, classes, races... etc., it's one of the goals that I want to do in the future. And I enjoy listening to people's feedback about my works. When “authors are dead” (The death of the author, 1968, Roland Barthes), how the works are being read is as important as the messages that I am trying to convey.

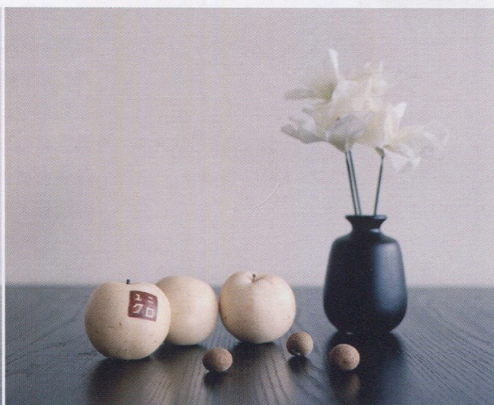
## “我覺得貼標籤是一件有一點弔詭的事情，用攝影當做媒材的藝術家和攝影師到底有何區別？”

1 2  
3 4

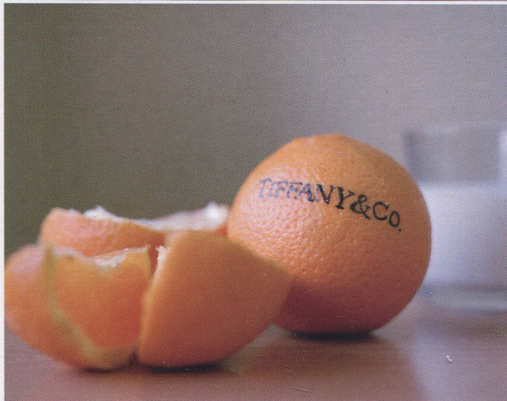
1:  
Still Life  
with Toyota  
Grapefruit  
有Toyota柚子的靜物



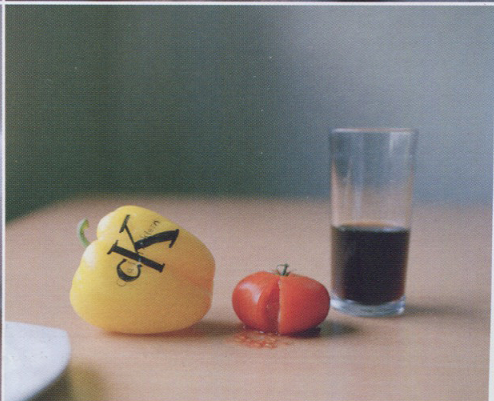
2:  
Still Life with  
Uniqlo Pear  
有Uniqlo水梨的靜物



3:  
Still Life with  
Tiffany Orange  
有Tiffany橘子的靜物



4:  
Still Life with  
Calvin Klein  
Yellow Peper  
有Calvin Klein黃椒  
的靜物



。採訪 鄭亭亭

。360°: 您畢業於倫敦西敏大學攝影藝術碩士學位，卻更像是“用攝影當做主要媒材的藝術家”，而非傳統意義上的攝影師，您怎麼認為？

。C: 這是個很有意思的問題。我想那取決於當時我所學到的東西。我大部分畢業於同一課程的朋友，後來都成為了“藝術家”，而非傳統意義上的“攝影師”。我們當時學習了很多理論，像是社會學、女權主義、圖像解讀、符號學、當代藝術裡的挪用技巧等等。而所作的案例研究，也是在當代藝術中使用攝影當作媒介的藝術家們（或者更確切地說，是“圖像”而非“攝影”）。我們並沒有什麼“技術”課程，像是打光或Photoshop之類的。另外，我也覺得貼標籤是一件有一點弔詭的事情，用攝影當做媒材的藝術家和攝影師到底有何區別？攝影師指的是“紀實攝影師”或“商業攝影師”嗎？

。360°: 作為一名女性，情感會更為細膩，而這對您挖掘創作靈感，或者在創作過程中有何幫助？

。C: 額……實際上我不太確定女性在情感就一定更加細膩。這好像對男性有點不公平。我有一些男性藝術家朋友，他們的觀點視角和我的一樣敏感，甚至有過之而無不及。可能我對性別議題特別介意吧。

。360°: 您更喜歡把作品創作得理性、安靜而帶有曖昧性，是什麼原因造就了您這種創作偏好的？

。C: 從“曖昧性”說起的話，我喜歡那些並非從第一眼就很明顯的事物。想像一下你從一幅影像邊經過，一下子就明白了其中的信息，那你會在那裡停留並思考一下它的意義嗎？但如果你從一幅吸引你注意的影像旁經過，不知道它要表達些什麼，然後你停留在那並思考它的內容，一段時間後你理解或體會到它所想要傳達的訊息，是否會覺得它更有意思，並且它對你會產生更大的影響呢？另外，關於“理性”，是的，我不是太喜歡太感性的東西。我感覺有太多“感性”的影像存在於這個社會了，許多感性的紀實性攝影，探討著社會裡的弱勢族群，而年輕人喜歡LOMO相機或者像Instagram那樣擁有LOMO效果的程式，創造一些關於他們日常生活的感性或者詩意的影像。看過太多那樣的圖像後，我們已經免疫了。那種影像的影響力已經沒有以前那麼強烈了，信息變得含糊，影像變得僅僅是為“美

感”而存在。我並不是說感性的影像不好，只是已經夠多了，而這個世界並不需要我，另一個藝術家，去創造更多這樣的影像。而關於“安靜”，我相信每一張好的藝術創作的影像，都需要經過縝密的計算與設計。不應該有任何沒有意義或理由存在的東西在裏面，像是為什麼那個物件要擺在那裡，為什麼選的框是白色的……通過剔除不必要的事物，我只想要專注在我打算探討的議題之上。

。360°: 特別地，您的一些作品還會藉由文字、聲音來深刻作品的主题，而您卻又喜歡在攝影圖像中隱藏一些明顯的信息來產生與觀眾間的距離感，從而吸引觀眾用更多的時間來探索其中涵義，但這兩個創作的特點不是相悖了嗎？

。C: 我不這麼認為，這要看你指的是哪些作品。如果你說的是《那些我們永遠不會知道的事》，裡面的文字是以照片中人物的母語所寫出來的，沒有經過翻譯。我是故意這樣設計來讓作品和觀眾間產生距離感，反應出現實中語言和文化的隔閡。而作品《Jo vull aprendre Mallorqui》（馬略卡語中，“我想要學馬略卡語”的意思）中的聲音，是我對自己的日記進行了雙重翻譯，利用穀歌不加修正地將中文翻成英文，再翻譯成當地的馬略卡語，然後我再找馬略卡居民們教我把它們讀出來。所以那些錄音都是我讀著自己所寫的東西，用著錯誤的語法和滑稽的發音，但我根本不知道自己在讀什麼。對於當地居民，那些錄音在某程度上是可以理解的，但聽起來奇怪並且充滿著外來性，反映出我作為一個社會當中的局外人的角色。文字和聲音只是另外兩種媒體，就和影像一樣。圖像有可能包含著清晰的信息，但文字則傳達著曖昧的意義。以哪種媒介來完成並非是絕對的。這些媒體之間所產生的關係才是我覺得值得研究的。

。360°: 您的作品還呈現出一個特質，就是極簡主義，而它的奧妙在於，最少化視覺符號，卻足夠表達意義，還能隱藏更多信息於深層待發掘，在創作中如何精簡那些視覺語言呢？

。C: 我認為創作時，藝術家應當思考他/她所要傳達的信息是什麼，並且找到一種最佳的傳達方式，無論方式為何。

。360°: 旅居倫敦的經歷，令您更多地探討外來性、身份認同、國籍或語言間刻板印象等議題，在信息互通越來越發達、文化彼此滲透的今天，文化隔閡、種族問題、外來抵制等等這些仍然是很突出的問題以致於讓您想要

通過作品來深究嗎？

。C: 當然這並不是我想討論的唯一話題，但的確，那是我很感興趣的議題。在全球化的時代，這個話題（對於我來說）越來越有意思。越來越多的移民遷移到不同的城市，而經濟和階級問題也反應到他們身上。觀光產業也同樣地改變了我們看待他者的角度。

。360°: 您是如何把“對日常生活荒謬的處置”這種手法明智地應用到想要探討的（社會）議題中的？（從訂立主題、揀選物件到具體的處置方式，舉一兩個例子來說明一下）

。C: 通常我會首先決定要探討的議題。拿《Kunst》（德文的“藝術”）舉例，我當時在柏林，每天都收到一些藝術展覽和表演的邀請函，而當我參加那些活動時，那裏有比觀眾人數更多的信息物料都沒有人取走。之後我每天收到的越來越多，到最後，我根本沒辦法去完成所有的活動，我每晚都必須在那當中選擇性地參與。所有宣傳物料的紙張都堆在我的房間裏，而這些氾濫的藝術活動促使我思考藝術在社會中的角色到底是什麼。浪費了那麼多的紙張，砍掉了那麼多的樹木，卻還有那麼多人靠社會福利生活，藝術在這裏的貢獻到底是什麼？所以我決定來研究那些邀請函和傳單，以強調它們的存在來反映其所代表的藝術活動。我一向都很喜歡“分類”這個行為，那就像是刻板印象，我們把一些概念和規則看做理所當然，若將它們顛倒改變了，又會產生怎樣的結果？

。360°: 藝術家對社會議題的反映，似乎更多的是一種充滿著壓抑的憤懣卻又無聲的抗辯。您認同嗎，還是對作品寄予了更多的願景？又從觀眾那裡（包括東西方人士）得到如何的回饋？

。C: 當然許多藝術家包括我自己，都試著去改變這個世界，把這個社會變得更好，至少我相信是這樣。

。而從觀眾那裡……我覺得有點可惜的是當代藝術有一個特定的觀眾群——院校學生、文化工作者、中產人士、有錢的收藏家、嬉皮士、雅皮士……這個情況在世界的每一處都都不太避免。文化是有錢人的配件。我覺得要是藝術能夠觸及所有年齡層、所有階級、所有種族等的人士會更有意思，那是我未來想要達到的目標之一。我喜歡聽到人們對我作品的回饋。當“作者已逝”（引用法國文學批評家和理論家Roland Barthes於1968年所寫的文章《作者之死》），作品被如何解讀就如同我想要傳達的信息一樣重要。

大同電鍋是所有台灣留學生的好朋友，它煮出來的飯才香。



이 것은 서빈 아가의 첫 번째 생일 선물이다. 이 곳은 한복이다.



這是在台灣的時候女籃的朋友們送我的禮物，是我最好的回憶。



这是我爸爸在我四五岁时送我的礼物，它每晚都会陪我睡觉。



Бұл менің ұлттық - оюлы ұялы телефон қоржыным.



これは私のアルバムです。私の友人と私の家族が写っています。



“我認為創作時，藝術家應當思考他/她所要傳達的信息是什麼，並且找到一種最佳的傳達方式，無論方式為何。”

1-6:  
Things We May  
Never Know  
那些我們永遠不會知道的事

In “Things We May Never Know”, Cheng combines texts with objects that belong to international students from Asia who studying in London to

explore the isolation of being an outsider in a foreign land. The text is written in the language of the owner to describe the relationship between the object and the person, and it is untranslated to force the owner's position upon the viewer.

曾在英國求學的藝術家鄭亭亭，在《那些我們永遠不會知道的事》中結合文字及物件影像，探討身為外來者(outsider)的亞洲留學生，在異鄉所面臨的孤立與疏離。影像中的物件，是留學生從家鄉帶來的物品，以錯位(dislocation)方式出現在不熟悉環境中，主角的面貌是模糊且片斷的，正如作品名稱所提出，在面對不同文化時，總是有些事情是永遠無法理解的。在影像

中，雖然進入主角最私密的房間，卻還是無法清楚地看到其面孔。搭配影像的亞洲各國文字，以主角的母語寫出，描述著物件與其之間的關係，而對於不懂該語言的觀眾，這裡的文字已失去了它原始的意涵，僅剩下對該國家的刻板印象。藝術家更刻意不去翻譯這些文字，製造作品與觀者之間的距離，希望觀者能體會他們在異鄉所面臨的文化隔閡與孤單。