

NEW MODEL MINORITY

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This display is an eclectic collection drawn together from creatives - staff, friends and students of LCC, UAL - of different East Asian identities.

The brief was to contribute something - a book, reading, work of art or design, object, media or experience - that somehow represents you, your cultural identity and experiences that may have influenced your creative practice.

The title is a play on the 'model minority' narrative which carries connotations that East Asians are uniformly hard-working, compliant, perhaps apolitical, achievement-oriented and economically upwardly mobile. These kind of notions, even if 'positive stereotypes' or exotifications, tend to one-dimensionalise and overlook wildly diverse communities, cultures, politics, histories, identities and experiences.

This small collection of items attempts to hint at this incredible richness of diversity of staff and students by exhibiting some personal references, stories, expressions, representations and interests from a handful of East Asians from China, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, Canada and the UK.

If you are interested in knowing more, or participating in this project and research related to Chinese and East Asian creativity at UAL, please contact **Mo-Ling Chui** at m.chui@lcc.arts.ac.uk.

LCC LIBRARY DISPLAY 2018

Hong Yane Wang

Video artist and filmmaker
MA Goldsmiths Film Studies, 2012
Beijing, China

'Vinyl Blossom' (2009), Hong Yane Wang's short film which was inspired by the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Social/political event; collective frenzy; display of power, prosperity and pomposity; gentrification; surreal reality; artificiality.

As a born and bred Beijinger, I grew up with certain ideas of what Beijing should be like - it is a place where the artistic, intellectual and liberal-minded meet, and we locals are well-known for being relaxed and happy to live a simple life. But events like the Olympics changed and continue to change Beijing. It was a display of power and prosperity. I remember that poor looking buildings in my neighbourhoods had to build a false facade overnight to appear to be a newer and fancier building because Beijing shouldn't have poor buildings lining its streets. I felt that it was vain and a waste of money. One year after the Olympics, I saw this knackered looking five-ring statue near a former game venue. Its rundown look is in sharp contrast to the glory one year ago. This inspired me to make the parody style video.

‘沉默的大多数’ (The Silent Majority)

Used book in Chinese

It is a collection of essays by Wang Xiaobo, a renowned contemporary Chinese novelist and essayist from Beijing.

Independent; liberal; intellectual; humour; fun; epitome of the Beijing character.

Selina Chen

Senior lecturer, BA Graphic Media Design, LCC, UAL
Singaporean British, European

This is a found photo.

It is of no one I know but it represents a lost moment in time –the post-war period in Singapore when its “pioneer generation” began to into poverty and hardship was able to to the glittery West- the promise of freedom and affluence.

Fast forward some 50 odd years later to a Hollywood blockbuster showcasing Singapore as home to some the richest people on the planet. British politicians have started speaking admiringly of the Singapore model while all the world now knows Singapore as where the “Crazy Rich (Chinese) Asians” live.

Did we “win”? Did we show the West, with all its colonial arrogance that it was not in fact the “best”? Did we take from the “best” – economic affluence – whilst discarding the decadent mores of Western cultural imperialism whose presence the Government curtailed and constantly warned us about, namely, misguided individualistic notions of freedom and instant gratification?

Or does this troubling East vs West narrative make more sense as part of what Ong and Cooper call “global assemblages” – a perspective on global systems of thinking that questions linear and monolithic claims about their provenance and shows how their abstract nature is recontextualised and mutates and legitimised in local contexts and configurations of power?

“One may detect a kind of nostalgia in post-colonial critique whereby imperial

forms are constantly invoked and made salient to contemporary issues. The continual resurrection of former colonial power as evil oppressors creates blind spots when it comes to understanding how contemporary ideas and practices recombine older forms of oppression in new configurations of power."

Collier, S.J. and A. Ong (2005) 'Global Assemblages, Anthropological Problems', in S.J. Collier and A. Ong (eds) Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Andersen, Nina. (2015). 'I don't do theory, I do concept work'. Interview with Aihwa Ong. Women, Gender & Research. 12-19. 10.7146/jk.f.v24i1.28509.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/oct/10/crazy-rich-asians-can-economic-hit-hollywood#comments>

Wang Wei

Photographer: editorial, commercial, art
Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing

'Waste Not'

Catalogue book of artist Song Dong

Contemporary culture, hoarding, material
visual history, Cultural Revolution

I haven't read this catalogue yet, but Song Dong is a Chinese artist and friend. He grew up in a family that was prosperous but became impoverished through repeated upheavals. His father was sent to a re-education camp during the Cultural Revolution for supposedly being a "counter-revolutionary". Song was raised by his mother, whose extreme thriftiness led her to obsessively hoard anything that could possibly be re-used.

We saw the 'Waste Not' exhibition together; there were hundreds, maybe thousands of household items from the home of his late mother which Song Dong placed meticulously in installation pieces. These incredible collections of household items and rubbish, are recontextualised to form a material and visual record of forgotten everyday Chinese material culture and historical memory.

Mo-Ling Chui

Course Leader, BA (Hons) Design
Management and Cultures, LCC, UAL
Canadian, Hong Kong Chinese, British

Wing Chun (1994), video clip loop

Representation, Feminism, Role models,
Power, Humour

This is one of my favourite Michelle Yeoh fight scenes of all time.

She is the patron of a humble cafe and challenges this bandit to try and wreck her perfect pallet of tofu and basically kicks his ass with total grace and precision. It's hilarious as well as so powerful in terms of representation of a strong female historical character, who is independent, skilled and uses this symbol of domesticity (the handmade pallet of tofu) to defeat the male bully. It blew me away at the time and I still love it, as there are not diverse, complex and fun characters and identities of East Asian women like this especially in Western mainstream media even today.

Chungking Express (1994) video clip

Hong Kong pre-handover, hyper-urbanism, HKG identity

This section of Wang Kar Wai's breakout film is a meditation on Hong Kong - urban relationships, the eclectic, paradoxical and in flux character of HKG identity and contemporary culture at that time. Faye Wong (a Beijing born mainland Chinese pop star) is a young waitress and Tony Leung (the 'Tom Cruise' of HKG cinema) plays the cop. This experimental portraiture is a lovely story of a random, cryptic relationship between people and the city.

Wedding Box, red lucky money packages, mini-buddhas

A bit of personal history to share

Ling Chiu

Printmaking Technical Coordinator, LCC,
UAL

I was born in Canada to a Hong Kong Chinese father, and a Malaysian Chinese Mother, but now I've gone and married a Dutchman, and my nederlands is better than my pu tong hua.

A selection of **chinese calligraphy brushes**, used in the print workshop for European processes.

Resourcefulness; Repurposing.

Every two years or so, I visit family in Hong Kong and East Malaysia. I buy fistfuls of these brushes because they are cheap and cheerful there, but so expensive in the art shops in London. They are traditionally used for Chinese calligraphy and painting, but we use them for processing photopolymer plates, or stone lithographs!

The soft bristles and the way they are made without metal fixtures makes them perfect for our processes - they do not contaminate solutions, or damage the plates!

They represent something I dreaded as a child - practicing brushwork, turned into beautiful tools for my practice today, in the printmaking workshop.

I remember going to Chinese school on Saturdays as a small child. I am naturally left-handed, but when it came to calligraphy, I was told I had to use my right hand. I hated it. I couldn't control the ink or the bristles, and I would smear everything, everywhere.

I hated painting bamboo, and practicing my mountains, seas, and fish. I hated waterfalls most of all.

But now I wish I had practiced it more.

Harith Jailani

BA Design Management & Cultures, Year 1

Kuala Lumpur, Selangor

Video on 'Wau' kite-making

It originated in the Malaysian state of Kelantan. This state is not as developed as others as they still use traditional ways in their everyday lives despite the technological rise. Wau got its name from the crescent moon shape. However, there are not many left wau makers even in Kelantan or in Malaysia in general. This is one of Malaysia's dying art.

Judea Cheong

BADesign Management & Cultures, Year 3
Singaporean Chinese (Cantonese & Hakka)

Chinese rice bowl and spoon

Rice is a staple in my family and culture, it's a constant that we instantly identify with! These small rice bowls are commonly used during family gatherings and reunion dinners, representing our closely-knitted kinship that is often visible through the sharing of food.

Alfie Chung

BA Design Management & Cultures, Year 3

This is a ready-made soup formula made by traditional Chinese medicine. It represents my identity and roots of Chinese culture.

My family runs a modern Chinese health consultancy. This is a soup formula we sell to patients. Back in the days, my mother used to bring me to the old Chinese doctor whenever I was sick, and this soup reminds me of how twisted my face was when I had to swallow the bitter medicine.

You can see processed and dried traditional Chinese herbs such as coconut wrapped in a brick red package printed with dragons. This is known as the classic package you can find in Chinese medicine stores in Hong Kong.

Binh V. Vu (Eric) (& Mo-Ling Chui)

BA Design Management & Cultures, Year 1

Crimson paper fan with calligraphy from Plum Village

Thich Nhat Hanh is an expatriate Vietnamese Buddhist monk, peace activist, and prolific author. He invented the term 'Engaged Buddhism' where Buddhists engage meditation practice and dharma teachings with the current social climate to push for a world of peace and mindfulness. The quote on this fan, 'This is it' - inspired by his mantra teachings - is a reminder that we are living in the now and responsible for our own happiness; for we have the power to shape how we look at the world and change it.

Sowon Kim(Wish)

BA Design Management & Cultures, Year 1
South Korea

Sewol ferry badge, 2014

To remember the victims, comforting people who lost their families.

The Sewol ferry accident is one of the most terrible disasters in Korea history. 476 people boarded Sewol ferry to go Jeju island, and only 172 survived from this disaster. Furthermore, we disappointed that irresponsible attitude of our government. Therefore, people have started to make products such as this badge or sticker to commemorate victims and their family. The majority of people are using those products in their life until now.

Wenyang Lu

Product designer
Tutor, Guangzhou Academy of Fine Art

This is a beautifully designed and crafted **travel incense holder** based on ancient Chinese wood boxes made by a student of Product design at GAFA.

Mob.art 100 is a project that breaks down the boundaries of the museum and college, and turns neighbourhoods into creative art and design spaces, including shopping centre, coffee corner, subway or public library. Student-made products like this were displayed and for sale.

J.J. Lee

Artist, Assistant Professor, Contemporary Issues of Representation

Faculty of Art, OCAD University,
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Chop Suey Fortune Cookie

When the Chinese immigrated to Canada they were limited in what jobs they could work. Running restaurants was one of them. Early entrepreneurs adapted authentic Chinese food for Canadian palates, making it sweeter, saucier and less spicy. Fortune cookies, too, are a North American innovation. This is one of a series of drawings of popular Chinese-Canadian hybrid foods. Each drawing of a popular Americanized dish was folded into a fortune cookie format in dispensed from gumball machine around the city of Toronto.

Moon Cake

A Moon Cake is a Chinese pastry made of lotus seed paste and a preserved egg yolk representing the moon. It is traditionally eaten during the Autumn Moon Festival. This particular cake was manufactured in China, purchased by my mother from Walmart in Halifax, Canada, taken home by me to Toronto, Canada and then taken to London by a good friend. Its production, dissemination and eventual squashed state is symbolic global economies and cultural migration.

NEW MODEL MINORITY THANKS

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(not to be confused with...)

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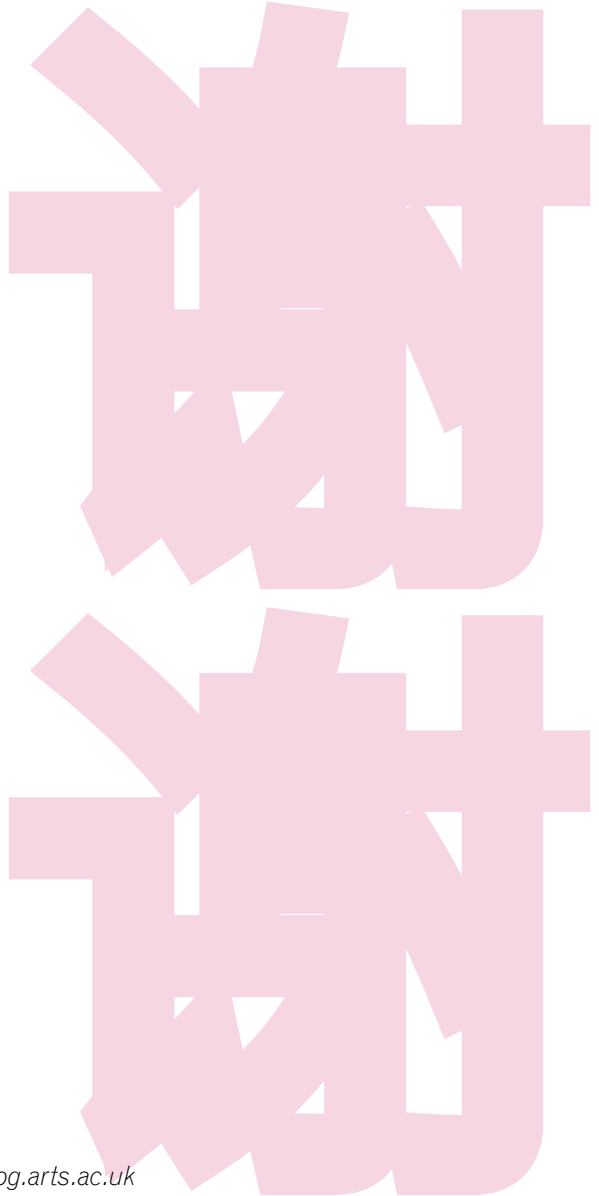
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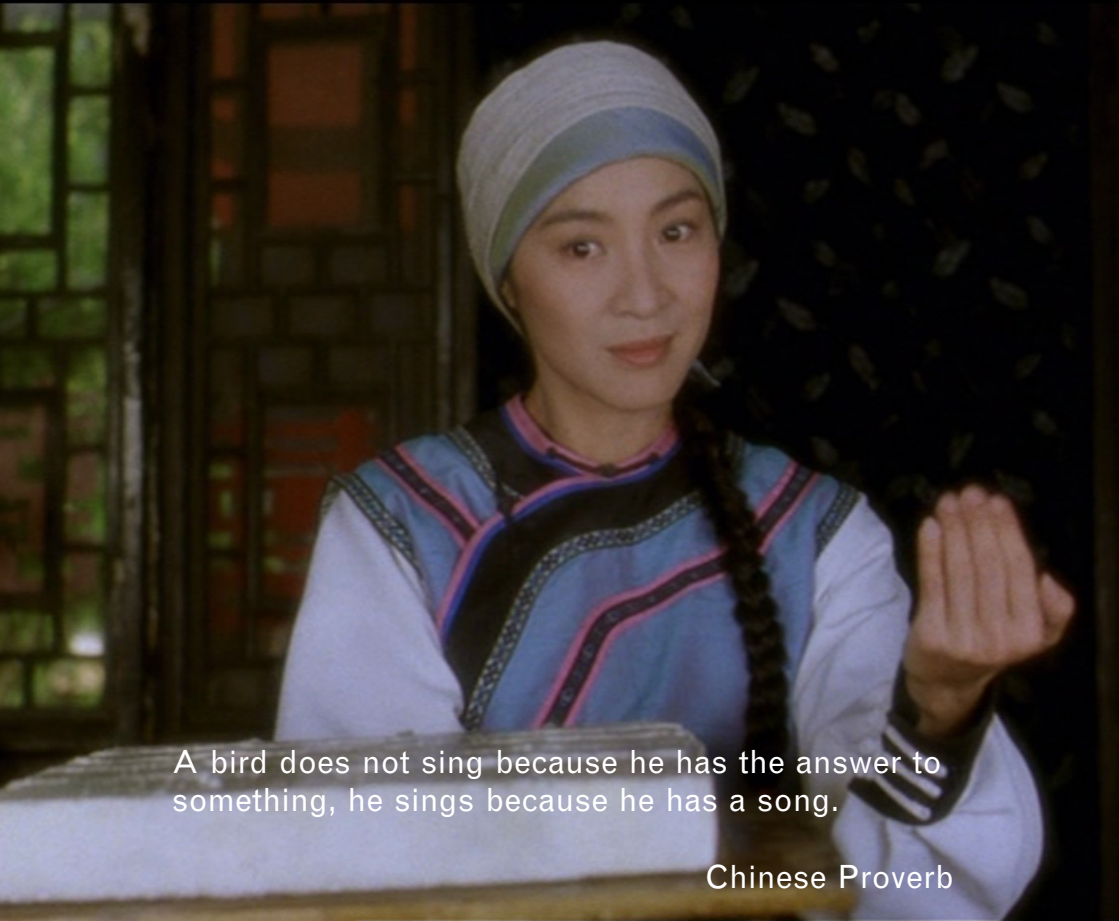
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A bird does not sing because he has the answer to something, he sings because he has a song.

Chinese Proverb