

**The Other Shore** is a story of a new generation of Chinese migrants in Hong Kong. Young Mainland Chinese have been migrating to Hong Kong from across China, leaving their homes because of family business, or in search of better education and career prospects. In Hong Kong, they find themselves in majority Chinese and increasingly tense environments, often confronting entrenched ideas regarding 'Mainlanders'. I worked with mainly young professional or student Mainland Chinese in their twenties and early thirties who are reflective of the surge in this particular immigrant demographic in the last decade. The interactions, which culminated in audio interviews and photography, asked how movements affect how one conceives of one self - how national and family histories and narratives converge with one's memory, how they are affected by everyday relationships, and how contemporary conditions, be they social, economic or political, create a discordant interiority that inadvertently shape the participants in the project. **The Other Shore** was created via a methodology of encountering, interviewing, photographing, hearing, seeing and unseeing, and questioning. In **The Other Shore**, the participants are not named and the image and text/audio elements are unlinked. These create an anonymity and a sense that what is said and the experience recounted can be heard in much of Hong Kong. Through this anonymity and the relationship between the images and audio/text, a dissonance between what is said and what is seen is created. Through this dissonance, the idea and fluidity of the migrant identity in Hong Kong, the relationship that many Hong Kongers have to this migrant identity, and the complex relationship between Hong Kong and China are questioned.

**The Other Shore | 彼岸**  
(2014-16)

Transparencies in Lightboxes of variable sizes, audio installations of variable durations

All works untitled



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Installation view at the Jut Art Museum, Taipei, 2018.  
Photo courtesy Jut Art Museum.



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Installation view. *The Other Shore*  
(2014-2016)



*The Other Shore | 彼岸*  
(2014-16)

Transparencies in Lightboxes of variable sizes, audio installations of variable durations

Installation view at the NUS Museum, Singapore, 2018.



Transparency in Lightbox, 40x50cm

香港其實本身是一個移民城市來的，就是多與少也好，這一代會少一些。他們的上一代與大陸都會有關係。可能是他們Daddy媽咪在大陸，或者他們甚至是小時候在大陸[長大]，類似這樣。但倒過來說，他們來到這裡，好像一段足夠長的時間以後，他們就會忘記了這件事情。在我的角度來看，我覺得我的舅父忘記了這件事情，我媽媽忘記了這件事情。於是他們就單純的站在一個，嗯，與大陸人不一樣的角度來看所有的事情，所以就變成是令到香港看大陸這件事情[的時候]更加的疏遠。就連曾經跟大陸非常親密的人都會突然間[覺得自己]跟大陸是不一樣的——我跟他們是不一樣的——好像隔岸觀火一樣的一種看法去看所有的事情。其實[這種態度]令香港人和大陸的距離，都還是很遠，我自己是這樣覺得。所以說，回歸了，但是人心未歸。可以這麼說。

Hong Kong is actually fundamentally a migrant city. The older generation invariably has some kind of relationship with China—perhaps their mum and dad are in China, or maybe they themselves grew up there. But then, after they have been here for long enough, they forget about that. In my opinion, I feel my uncle has already forgotten this, my mum too. So then they take an entirely different position from Mainland Chinese people on everything, and this adds to the sense of distance Hong Kong feels from China. Even people who were once intimately tied to China will think they are different from Mainland Chinese, presuming 'I am not the same as them'—as if they are watching the fire from the other shore, on everything Chinese. This really creates a vast gap between Hong Kongers and Mainland China. That's how I feel. You could say, the city has returned, but not the heart.



Transparency in Lightbox, 80x100cm



Transparency in Lightbox, 56x70cm



Transparency in Lightbox, 56x70cm



Transparency in Lightbox, 80x100cm



Transparency in Lightbox, 80x100cm

但是其實，我記得那個時候內地呢，你帶紅領巾上學啊，你國民教育啊，你共產黨那套呢，你是讀書的去讀咯，就是你系要buy這套的，讀書去讀。嗯，但是不需要你daily life去practice呢一個，共產黨的精神。它只不過是好像.....就是有些科目呢，你讀了是為了考試。可能以前聖經科啊那樣，讀了就單單為了考試，你不會說真的daily practice聖經那樣。就是都是這樣咯，就是你只不過是一個正常的人那樣生活咯，共產黨是完全不會影響到你的生活的。但是香港人完全不是這樣想的，就覺得有共產黨一天呢，就不會可以好好的生活。就是他覺得呢，每件事情都關政府的事，但是不是這樣的咯。可能是。。。嗯。。。你只需要正常的生活。

你是崇尚那種共產精神，只不過是口頭上咯，不是嗎? 就是你不可以說中國現在還是奉行共產主義的嘛。所有事情都是資本主義的啦，是嗎? 你有競爭就可以賺到錢咯。就是一個很資本主義的環境。就是我覺得香港人是bias了那種政府那種手法咯。從頭到尾都沒用過共產的手法咯。它個黨，只不過叫共產黨咯，它其實可以改名的啊，是不是改了名你們就能接受。就是只不過是一種手法嘛，是的。

But I remember when I was in China, wearing the red scarf to school, studying patriotic things. When you learnt about Communism, it was all part of your studies; it wasn't something you needed to practice in daily life, like practicing the Communist spirit. It was just a subject, like something you study for an exam. Perhaps it's like Bible studies once was. You don't really practice what is said in the Bible everyday. It's just like that. You still lead your life as a regular person; the Communist Party didn't really affect your life. But Hong Kongers don't see it that way at all. They think that as soon as the Communist Party is here they won't be able to live a good life anymore. They think everything is related to the government. But that's not the case. You just need to live normally.

Nowadays, people just pay Communism lip service. You can't really say China still upholds Communism. Everything's capitalist now, right? If you are competitive, you will make money. It's a very capitalist environment. But I think Hong Kongers are biased against this government and its methods. But from the beginning, they've [i.e. China] never really used Communist methods. The Party is called the Communist Party, but they can change their name, right. If they change their name, will Hong Kongers accept them then? It's just a method, that's all.



Transparency in Lightbox, 80x100cm



Transparency in Lightbox, 56x70cm



Transparency in Lightbox, 100x125cm

刚来香港那个时候,好像觉得自己一头家在自己学校的圈子里面,而且我们刚上大学的时候就会有一个**orientation camp**。然后在那个**O CAMP**里面,我们可能一**team**里面有十几个人,然后完了以后呢,其他人都是**local**,然后可能有两个是跟我一样是**Mainland**。那我们刚刚来都真是完全听不懂广东话,但是其他的所有人都在说广东话,然后包括这整个活动,就是**organiser**在比如在解析这是个什么活动现在要干嘛干嘛,都是在说广东话。所以那段时间就很多压力。就起码在表面上看我是从语言的障碍开始,因为你语言上有障碍,你没有办法听懂别人在说什么话,或者你只能猜到几句这样。而且你跟人家去沟通用普通话的时候,这不知道为什么,当下有一种感觉好像你比别人低了一等。就是你没有办法去主动跟人家沟通或者你会觉得普通话就怎么了哈。。。就是觉得普通话在广东话的下面,所以当时有一段就是很努力的学广东话,可能也出于当时在**O CAMP**很灰暗的一段经历。就是你很想融入,但是很难,就是包括你心里上的调整也很难。就所以。。。但那个之后,可能就是大家慢慢去学会了那种语言,然后你又有机会跟别人沟通,就包括你 就是可以用普通话和英文跟人家去沟通的时候,你可能会慢慢的消除一些误解或者消除当时那种就是自卑的感觉。但是像后来其实我们是不是真正融入到,比如说香港同学的那个圈子里,其实也很难说。

When I first arrived in Hong Kong, I felt I had to immerse myself in university life. Furthermore, there was orientation camp. In an o-camp team, there were ten or more people and most would be locals; there might have been two other Mainland Chinese students like me. When we first arrived, we didn't understand any Cantonese, but everyone else would be speaking it, and the organisers would use Cantonese to explain the activities. So, at that time, there was a lot of pressure. And I believe, at least if one looks at it superficially, it all started with the language barrier. Because of that initial barrier, you couldn't understand what people were saying, or you could only guess at certain words and phrases. And when you tried to speak with others using Mandarin, I don't know why, but you would feel like you were somehow beneath them. So you couldn't initiate conversations or you felt like Mandarin was so whatever... and that Mandarin was inferior Cantonese. So, for a time, I tried very hard to learn Cantonese, perhaps it was also after the negative experience of o-camp. Even if you really wanted to fit in, it was very difficult, and it was also very difficult to adjust psychologically. So... After that, perhaps everyone all slowly learnt enough Cantonese, and there were opportunities to communicate with people, as well as use Mandarin and English. So you might slowly get rid of misunderstandings and feelings of low self-esteem. But did we really assimilate ourselves, for example, into our Hong Kong classmates' circle? It's hard to say.



Transparency in Lightbox, 80x100cm



Transparency in Lightbox, 56x70cm



Transparency in Lightbox, 56x70cm



Transparency in Lightbox, 100x125cm

