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李杰：一片生活

LEE KIT: A SLICE OF LIFE

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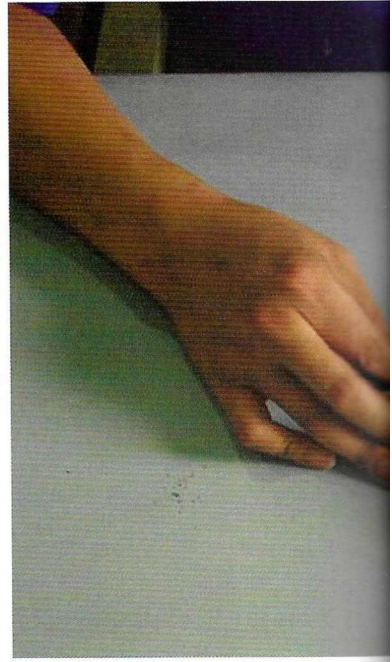
《Pears》，2012年

无酸纸上丙烯、乳胶漆、喷墨打印
机墨、以及现成物，尺寸可变

Pears, 2012

Acrylic, emulsion paint and inkjet
ink on acid-free board, readymade
objects, dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist and Vitamin
Creative Space



《星期天下午：与友人和手绘布于香港西贡榕树澳野餐》，2003年

彩布面丙烯，摄影纪录，尺寸可变

Sunday Afternoon: Picnic with friends and hand-painted cloth
at Yun Shu O, Sai Kung, 2003

Acrylic on fabric, photo document, dimensions variable

我们很容易将李杰的艺术看成是对生活的日常一面的赞颂；在空间中，寻常物件沉默地并置着，似乎是在向日常致敬。这样看来，他的艺术与今天风行全球的新贫穷艺术十分相似：这些日常物件和平凡材料，被小心地摆放于干干净净（或不那么干干净净）的画廊里，散发着日常性和简约的形式感。通过推理，这种艺术可以解读成一种旨在模糊艺术与生活之间的界线的尝试；如果放大一点看，由于它呈现了人的一般生活经验，它表明艺术家选择直面现实世界，而不仅仅满足于自己内心，因此这种艺术便马上获得一种政治或社会的面相。

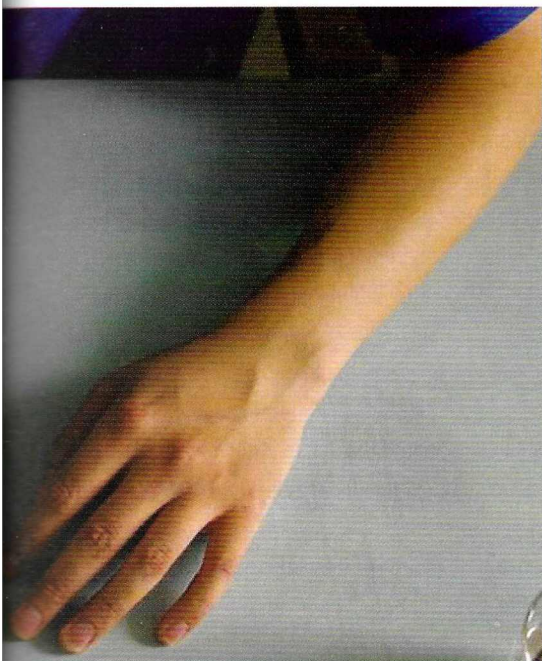
对于李杰来说，便利之处在于，香港的艺术圈很

小，在这里他不会怎么迷失；但与此同时，这种小环境有时也令人窒息，所以李杰有很多时间都在香港以外活动。跟其他年轻的香港当代艺术家一样，奇观和英雄感都不可能是李杰会使用的词汇。事实上，李杰最会创作让人费解的装置了，他的作品中满是极尽私人的原因，却往往没有可以清楚辨识的概念、目的和故事。他将日常物品与手绘布或纸板画（或其他在廉价材料上画的画）奇异地组合在一起，尽管他的出发点都十分个人，但这些作品却非常能说明作为一个香港艺术家究竟意味着什么。

这些作品不止形式简约、毫无表现性，而且往往将物的状态和物性呈现于最显著的位置——如果你在其中感受到极简主义的气息，那你便很接近李杰的艺术了。李杰的粉色手绘布和现成物并置在空间中，各种东西之间微妙的间距在沉思彼此与整体的关系。他那简单的手法和对形式的俭省，借用了很多抽象和重复的原则，当然还处处散发着缺席和失去的气息。李杰看似钟爱工业产品，但他绝

通过观察我们日复一日的生活，
香港艺术家李杰用他极富绘画性的布画和纸板画，
以及由此构成的室内“陈设”装置，
提示着人在政治性中自处的方式。

While Lee's work may not be of the variety to offer any clear remedy to the various inequities or internal heartaches it addresses, it does suggest ways of locating the personal within the realm of the political simply by looking at how we live our lives on a daily basis.



《抓桌面》，2006—2010年

木本丙烯，摄影纪录，300张明信片，尺寸可变

Scratching the table surface, 2006-2010

Acrylic on plywood, photo document, 300 postcards, dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist and Vitamin Creative Space

《填满一个烟灰缸》，2008年

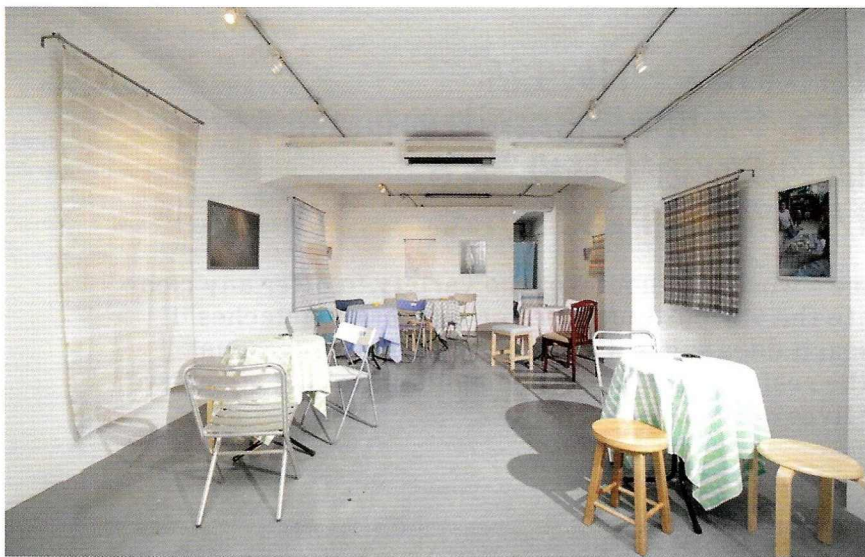
录像记录，电视机，1小时7分

Filling up an ashtray, 2008

Video documentation, TV, 1 hour 7 min.

IT WOULD BE easy to view the artistic practice of Lee Kit as a quaint celebration of the quotidian side of life, or perhaps as a pensive homage to the everyday carried out through a mute interplay of found objects placed within a space. In this sense it resembles so much global *arte povera* seen today: everyday objects or understated materials employed in ways that emphasize their mundane qualities or exude an economy of form enhanced by careful arrangement against pristine—or not so pristine—gallery walls. Such practices tend to be viewed

either reductively as attempting to dissolve the boundaries between art and life or, in exaggerated circumstances, are assigned automatic political or social valence just by virtue of the fact that they deal with the realm of common experience or reflect an artist's desire to confront realities outside the art world as opposed to confining oneself within it. Conveniently for Lee Kit the art world in Hong Kong is a small place, which means one cannot get too lost in it. But by the same token the smallness can be suffocating; which might account for Lee's decision to shift more of his time outside Hong Kong. In keeping with his Hong Kong artist counterparts, spectacular and heroic gestures are not a part of Lee's vocabulary. In fact, Lee may lead the pack in presenting obfuscating installations with personalized origins that come with no immediately discernible concept.



“一些美好生活的提议”，2006年
 香港Para/Site艺术空间个展现场
 “3/4 suggestions for a better living,” 2006
 Installation view of solo exhibition at Para/Site Art Space, Hong Kong
 Courtesy of the artist and Para/Site

不、也不曾被流行于当代的光滑的、工业的形象和机械化的美学所吸引。李杰沉迷日常物，更多是因为它们是一些无助的现成物，尽管外表平凡，在李杰心中却标志着那些混合着个人记忆和虚构场景的、最为私密、模糊、暧昧的时刻。仰赖这种最为重要的迷恋，李杰躲过了任何井然的系统或理性思考，他希望复制或唤起某种气氛，某些特别的时刻，和那曾经充满其中的情绪。

李杰的近作更倾向于装置（或“陈设/settings”，用他自己的说法），但归根究底，其实他还是一个画家，只是他的画远离了任何传统的画布，没有任何再现的具象的图画。早在2001年，当他还是香港中文大学艺术系的学生时，他便开始了他的手绘布实验。但李杰很快便迎来一个转变，他那平面、挂在墙上的、充满了条纹图案的画，获得了真实的功能，进入了日常生活之中，而引起这种转变的关键时刻是一次野餐：那是2003年，非典暴发，政府呼吁人们留在

屋子里已有几个星期。这时，李杰和朋友决定勇敢地走出来，一起到郊外野餐，他的一块手绘布则即兴地变成了一块野餐布，这次事件便是作品《星期天下午：与友人和手绘布于西贡榕树澳野餐》。从那时起，李杰的手绘布获得了各种实用功能：抹窗、清洁工作室、或在一些随便聚会中用作桌布。但是我们不应因为这些桌布的实用性，以及关于人们使用这些桌布吃喝聊天的照片纪录，而将这些聚会解读为“关系艺术”。李杰并不特别关心如何加强或实现人与人的联系，他也不觉得这些布会在场合中加入了什么样的“经验”。重要的是，这些事件和作品都是那么的随便和偶然：这些布本身绝不带动什么事件，它们只是沉默地观看着这些平淡的时刻，没有事情发生，没有话要讲。

2004年，李杰的一块布甚至参加了本地的社会运动。或许他在表达对于简单直接的诉求的厌恶，他的“旗帜”上空空如也，就好像沉默地象征着这个无话可说的他。这个作品不像其他作品，可能并没有什么偶然的事，但它的确给艺术家提供了一个参与到这个行动中的间接机会，尽管他的位置极其矛盾，没有一种明确的诉求。或者这件作品会令人想起激浪派或法国情景主义中“把艺术带到街上”的策略，但这并非李杰的要旨：将布画加插到公共空间中，不是对艺术本质的反思，而是艺术家暗暗地对世界发表的自述，也即是说，他直认他不知道应该说些什么。或者可大胆的提出，对于李杰重要的，不是实际做了什么或者制造出什么

李杰沉迷日常物，更多是因为它们是一些无助的现成物，
尽管外表平凡，在李杰心中却标志着
那些混合着个人记忆和虚构场景的、最为私密、模糊、暧昧的时刻。

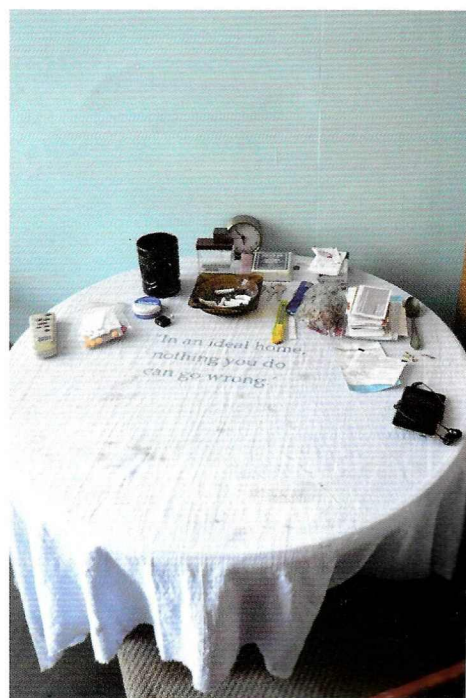
The everyday objects Lee fetishizes are more rightly understood as unassisted readymades and, despite their common origin, for Lee they stand in as touchstones for intensely personal, obscure, and ambiguous moments coupled with private memories and fictional scenarios.

agenda or narrative. His offbeat combinations of everyday objects with hand-painted textiles, cardboard paintings and other cheap materials emerge from eminently individual concerns, but they are no less valuable to the dialogue of what it means to be an artist in Hong Kong today.

If one can detect the air of minimalism in Lee's practice—not only in the scant use of forms and perceived lack of expressive cues but a certain foregrounding of the object's status or objecthood—you would not be far off. Lee's pastel-colored fabrics and readymade items are situated in space with a just-so pitch that contemplates relationships to each other as well as to the whole. His pared-down approach and reduction of forms owes much to the principles of abstraction and repetition, not to mention allusions of absence and loss. But reliant upon industrial production methods Lee most definitely is not, nor is he seduced by that period's sleek, manufactured surfaces and machined aesthetic. The everyday objects Lee fetishizes are more rightly understood as unassisted readymades and, despite their common origin, for Lee they stand in as touchstones for intensely personal, obscure, and ambiguous moments coupled with private memories and fictional scenarios. Lee arranges his prized possessions in ways that actively avoid any semblance of ordered systems and rational thinking; rather, the objects are used to conjure contextually specific moods or precise moments in time that have grown symbolically loaded with emotional significance.

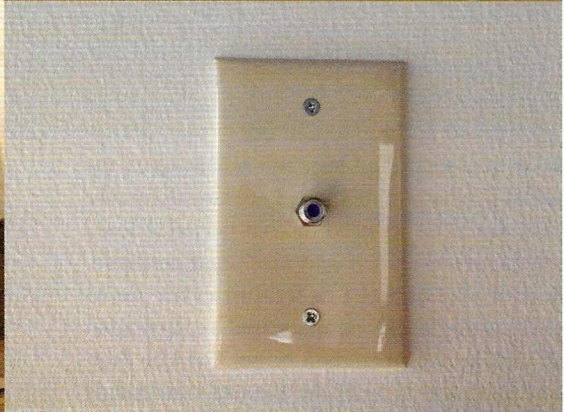
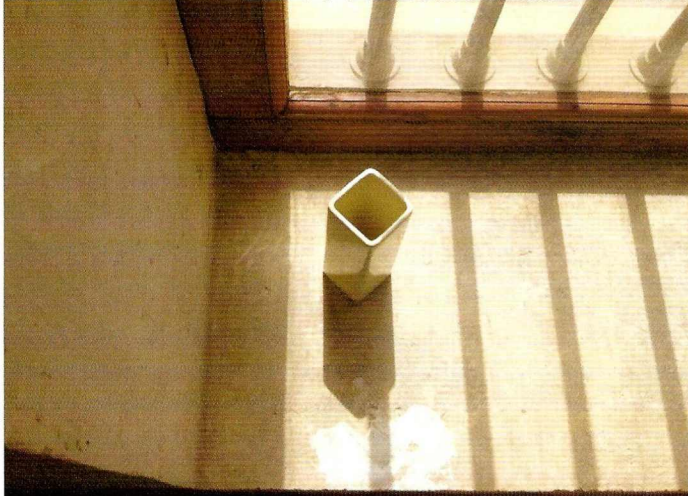
Lee Kit's recent works may be weighted towards installations (or "settings" as he prefers to call them) but at his core he is a painter, albeit one that shies away from conventional canvases and representational or figurative imagery. Experimenting with hand-painted textiles as early as 2001 while a student at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Lee soon experienced a

transition whereby his flat, previously wall-hung paintings consisting of striped patterns became transformed into functional objects that could be utilized and handled on a daily basis. The defining episode for this change was a picnic during the aftermath of the SARS epidemic in 2003 when—after many weeks of government-encouraged indoor seclusion—he and some friends took the bold step of holding an outdoor picnic. One of his cloth paintings played an impromptu role as a picnic spread, leading to the work *Sunday Afternoon: Picnic With Friends And Hand-Painted Cloth At Yung Shu O, Sai Kung* (2003). From that period on, Lee's painted fabrics doubled as cloths he could use to wash windows, to wipe down his studio, or as table coverings during random social gatherings. The resulting works and photographic documentation of people eating, drinking and socializing upon his painted cloths, however, should not lead us to interpret these events as belonging to the category of "relational art." Lee is not particularly concerned with strengthening or materializing the bonds of social relations nor does he view his fabrics essential to adding up to a certain kind of "experience." Rather these events and the resulting works belong



《手绘布用作桌布》
2011-2012年
彩布面丙烯，摄影记录
尺寸可变

*Hand-painted cloth
used as tablecloth*
2011-2012
Acrylic on fabric, photo
document
Dimensions variable



他的陈设中虽然兼有平面和立体的东西，
且缺少一般绘画的图像空间，
却比我们想象中更接近绘画。

Lee's installations are works eminently grounded in the interior—which is why, despite their use of flat and three-dimensional forms and an absence of pictorial space, they do not stray as far from the practice of painting as one might think.

《经常》，2012年

纸板画，手绘布及现成物，尺寸可变

Always, 2012

Cardboard painting, hand-painted cloth and readymade objects

Dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist and Lombard Freid Projects

PHOTO: Aimee Lin

to the province of randomness and chance. The cloths themselves—far from being instigators to a process—act as silent witnesses to moments of ordinariness where nothing happens and where nothing in particular is said.

One of Lee's cloths even made its way into the annual July 1 protests in Hong Kong in 2004. Perhaps as a way of registering his disinclination towards the literal, the cloth banner remained characteristically blank, acting as a sort of wordless emblem for his own taciturn self. Far from an accidental gesture, it did offer the artist an indirect way of participating in the street action, even if his position remained a deeply conflicted one bereft of concrete pronouncements. Likening this work to Fluxus or French Situationists' strategy of "taking art to the streets", however, would fail to register the crucial point for Lee: inserting his cloth paintings into the public sphere is not a reflection on the nature of art per se, but rather a veiled statement of his own position vis-à-vis the world, that is, an oblique way of admitting he simply might not know what to say. One might venture that what matters to Lee is not the actual gesture or action of making the cloths—though this is also clearly valued—but the attitude towards life that they suggest and the freedoms that they represent. If artistically his hand-painted cloths represent the ability to debase the rarefied status of the art object (thereby opening up a new realm of possibilities for making art), then politically they come to stand for a certain attitude towards life that finds emancipation in the small details and cracks of everyday life. Reveling in moments of purposelessness and boredom can, for Lee, form

an understated counterpoint to the usual forces of productivity and efficiency so prevalent in Hong Kong's goal-oriented and highly bureaucratic society. To this end, Lee offered "3/4 Suggestion for Better Living," his breakthrough solo exhibition at Para/Site Art Space, Hong Kong in 2007 that recast the intimate exhibition space as a lively café/bar setting adorned with hand-painted patterned fabrics atop tables and hung on the walls. Guests were welcomed to socialize aimlessly while being served drinks by Lee and his artist friends wearing T-shirts saying "My Favorite Waste of Time." In addition to enjoying live music and drinks, people were allowed to smoke indoors—a small triumph that Lee used to thumb his nose at the then-recently passed Hong Kong law banning smoking inside bars and restaurants. The show epitomized Lee's interest to bring a slice of his life into the gallery or exhibition setting and to temporarily address the lack of casual gathering spots for the growing Hong Kong art community.

In recent years Lee has taken to paintings pieces of cardboard in ways that resemble aged packaging materials for commercial products. Lee crafts these works from layers of cardboard that are wrapped around a wooden core and then covered with acrylic or emulsion paint in light candy-colored hues. Afterwards, he applies inkjet transfers of product logos and the occasional bit of tape; scratch marks or other calculated imperfections help to make works such as *Johnson's (Mild and)* (2010) or *Pears* (2011) come across as worn and faded portraits of products from some distant past. In some cases Lee's fascination with these cosmetics takes an eerie turn, such as with "Sing Any of Them, Sing All of Them" (2009), a set of karaoke-style videos featuring various shots of jars of Nivea and tubes of Vaseline set to schmaltzy music. First exhibited in Osage Soho, Hong Kong, the obsession reached new heights as actual products were displayed like museum artifacts encased in Plexiglas vitrines.

Lee's cardboard paintings have grown to become a consistent feature of his installation settings. Perched on the wall next to settings including everyday materials and household items, they are a constant reminder of daily rituals and cycles of consumption that permeate contemporary life. Mimicking humdrum domestic spaces such as living rooms, bathrooms, and kitchens, Lee's installations are works eminently grounded in the interior—which is why, despite their use of flat and three-dimensional forms and an absence of pictorial space, they do not stray as far from the

(虽然这些当然也有价值),而是这些行为反映出的生活态度,寄托其中的自由。如果说,在艺术上他的手绘布将艺术品从稀罕珍品的位置上拉了下来(于是也打开了艺术创作的一些新的可能性),那么政治上它们便代表了某种生活态度,它们在日常生活的细微处和小裂缝中找到了解放。

对于李杰来说,这些没有目的的无聊时刻,轻描淡写地对抗着香港这个功利而高度官僚化的社会所推崇的高效率生活。针对于此,李杰提出了《一些美好生活的提议》,那是他2007年在香港的Para/Site艺术空间举办的具突破性的个人展览。李杰将不大的展览空间,变成一间热闹的咖啡厅/酒吧,他的手绘布是这里的装饰,挂在墙上。人们可以随便进来聊天,李杰热情地给客人递上啤酒,和他的艺术家朋友穿着印有“My Favorite Waste of Time”(“我最爱这样浪费时间”)字样的Tee Shirt。除了听现场音乐和喝

酒,人们还可以在这个空间里抽烟——这是一个令人自豪的小小胜利,因为当时香港刚刚通过禁止在所有酒吧和餐厅室内抽烟的法令。李杰喜欢将一小片生活带到画廊或展览现场,以为日渐扩大的香港艺术界提供一些不可多得的聚会点。

近年,李杰创作的纸板画看来就像一些陈旧的商品包装。他将一些纸板装裱在木架上,用丙烯或乳化漆涂上粉浅的像糖果一般的色彩,然后用喷墨印上产品商标,在某些地方贴上一些胶纸。画面上的刮痕和其他小缺损处,令作品如《Johnson's (Mild and)》(2010年)或《Pears》(2011年)显得像陈旧褪色的产品图像。有时,李杰对这些护理用品的沉迷又神秘地转变成像《唱其中一首或全部》(2009年个展)中那一系列KTV风格录像,录像中只见一些妮维雅和凡士林瓶子呆坐在感伤的音乐之中。当这组作品第一次在香港奥沙画廊展出时,这些产品的实物同时被珍而重之地放在玻璃柜中展示,就像博物馆中价值连城的珍品一样。这些纸板画往往出现在李杰的陈设环境中。它们挂在环境中,与各种家庭日常物品一起,似乎在提示着生活中不断的日常仪式和消费循环。模仿平凡的家居空间如客厅、浴室、厨房等,李杰的装置简直是专为室内环境而设,这也说明了一点:他的陈设中虽然兼有平面和立体的东西,且缺少一般绘画的图像空间,却比我们想象中更接近绘画。李杰一直致力于创造和表达一种心境,一种多少源

《“这不是件容易的事。”》,2012年
北京箭厂空间个人项目现场
“It's not an easy thing.” 2012
Solo project at Arrow Factory, Beijing





《“在纯洁里，我静静地追寻你。”》，2011年
公共洗手间场景、纸板画、现成物

上海当代艺术博览会 Hot Spots 展览现场，2012 年
“*In purity, I silently reach for you.*” 2011

Public toilet setting, cardboard paintings and
readymade objects

Installation view at Hot Spots, SHcontemporary, 2012

Courtesy of the artist and Aike-Dellarco

practice of painting as one might think. Lee's concerted efforts at creating and representing a state of mind or disposition in his installations are contingent upon a degree of illusion, and rely predominantly on pulling the viewer into this realm through retinal rather than other sensory means. Looking at his work it often feels like one is peering into someone's private space or through a window into Lee's personal past—but in sense this is precisely the point: the atmosphere Lee creates is both precious and commonplace, highly symbolic and utterly random.

If conceptual art has traditionally placed emphasis upon a concept or idea over its materialization or spatio-temporal presentation, then

the work of Lee Kit might be something of an imperfect fit. He perhaps belongs more appropriately to a post-conceptual or even post-minimal designation whereby so-called non-expressive gestures are coupled with bouts of language and non-linear thinking. Lee's reluctance to verbal articulation echoes that of many painters (“if I could describe and explain what I am doing, then I wouldn't need to make it”) and resembles a position disliked by hardcore conceptualists who maintain that the work need not be made at all to exist. And yet Lee finds ways to embrace language through his prolix and sometimes zany titles. Borrowing song lyrics from bands as diverse as *Spice Girls* and *Joy Division*, the titles introduce a level of poetic framing to what might otherwise appear to be random gatherings of unrelated objects and seemingly insignificant narratives. In some cases he develops narratives based on concrete sources such as song lyrics or found photographs, as in “Well, That's Just A Chill” (2010), a series of patterned cloths and cardboard paintings that emerged from various found images. Each work's title—sometimes several lines long—recounts a brief invented story. In other cases, Lee's installations gravitate towards the arcane, drawing upon an intuitive set of associations and connections that are both logical and oblique at the same time. Take “*It's Not An Easy Thing*” (2012)—a title gleaned from a song by Taiwanese singer Tsai Chin—an installation at Arrow Factory (a non-profit space in Beijing that I co-founded with three artists) this past winter as one example of Lee's circuitous thought process. In a space totaling less than five square meters, Lee carefully arranged an

李杰提醒我们，
在今天（特别是在香港）这个生产性、
高效性、超紧密的环境中，
愈来愈难找到不事生产的时刻，
要是我们遗忘了这些重复而
平庸的生活时刻，
便会有无数意想不到的
荒诞的可能性从我们的生活中溜走。

Lee does well to remind us that
such moments are increasingly
hard to find in today's—especially
Hong Kong's—industrious, hyper-
productive, hyper-connected
environment; and that without
attention to life's repetitive
banalities, we may lose possibility
for the truly unexpected and
irrational to occur.



《KAO-Bleach》，2011年
无酸纸上丙烯、乳胶漆、喷墨打印机墨，47 × 44 厘米
KAO-Bleach, 2011
Acrylic, emulsion paint, and inkjet ink on acid-free board
47 x 44 cm

自幻觉的意向，他引导观众的方法往往是通过视觉而不是通过其他感官的。看着他的作品，我们会觉得正在潜入了别人的私人空间，或者是通过一扇窗窥看着艺术家的回忆——而在某种程度上，这就是重点。李杰营造的气氛既精确又普遍，极具符号性却又不可能更轻巧。

可以说，观念艺术最初的目的，是将艺术的重点由物质或暂时空间的呈现，转移到观念和想法上；而在李杰的艺术中，我们看到的往往是一种结合着语言和非线性思考的非表现性手法，这样看来他的艺术更倾向于后观念或后极简。李杰不太愿意解释他的作品，这一点也跟很多画家相像——“要是我能形容和解释清楚我要做的事，那么我就不用做出来了。”这种态度不同于正宗的观念主义者，因为观念主义者认为作品甚至不必做出来便能存在。然而，李杰的创作也不乏语言元素，特别是他那些冗长、时而滑稽的作品题目。借用流行乐队的歌词（从Spice Girls到Joy Division各种各样南辕北辙的乐队），他的作品题目构成一些诗意的框架，装裱着各种随便的聚会、偶然的东、琐碎的故事。有时，他会从具体的材料如歌词和照片中发展出故事：在个展《这只是一个冷颤》（2010年）中展览了一些随便找来的照片，并置着从照片中的东西演变成的布和纸版画，其中一些作品的题目有几个句子，简短地交代了艺术家从照片中想象出来的故事；而另一些作品更走向神秘，只让我们

看到一些直觉性的、既合理却又间接的联想。

例如，去年冬天，李杰在箭厂空间（我和三位艺术家在北京共同创立的非营利机构）实现了装置作品《这不是件容易的事》（其题目出自蔡琴的名曲《恰似你的温柔》中的一句歌词），这个作品中便隐藏着李杰迂回曲折的思路。在这个不足五平方米的空间中，李杰细致地摆设着一些簇新和二手的物品和家具，在橱窗上贴上一张海报，往胡同播放蔡琴的甜美的音乐。这个简单的布置让人想起八十年代那些简陋的唱片店宣传新唱片的方式，那是来自艺术家第一次来北京时的经验，那时也正值严冬。一段由南向北的旅程引起了李杰一连串的联想和交错的感觉：对严寒的惧怕尚不及进入中国大陆政治中心的惶恐，那是过去纷纷乱乱的感受。这些内心的悸动，混合了他作为香港人的边缘身份，产生了一种虚构、没有逻辑的隐秘记忆，其中又有一种明确的政治含意。这个装置呈现出李杰的艺术一直以来的一种主旨：如何调和人内心脆弱的感受，和每天面对的来自外部世界的不安和不公。

李杰的作品可能没有提供解救各种不公平、各种内心痛苦的良方，而仅仅通过观察我们日复一日的生活，提示人在政治性中自处的方式。作品《填满一个烟灰缸》（2008年）或《抓桌面》（2006—2010年）很好地示范了李杰有多么沉迷于平淡，多么竭力于单调而无谓的行为。在四年之间，他不断用手指在工作室的桌子上刮出一个洞，表现出了恒心的力量——这是一部关于懒散和无所事事的史诗。在此期间，他还给三百多个朋友写明信片，就告诉他们他在削他的桌子。如此尽心尽力，就为了什么都不做（而且还专门告诉他的朋友），强调了一个问题：即一个努力工作的艺术家，和一个简单地活在日常生活的闲暇、琐碎和纷杂中的艺术家，究竟区别何在？李杰提醒我们，在今天（特别是在香港）这个生产性、高效性、超紧密的环境中，愈来愈难找到不事生产的时刻，要是我们遗忘了这些重复而平庸的生活时刻，便会有无数意想不到的荒诞的可能性从我们的生活中溜走。



assortment of new and secondhand objects and furniture, taped a poster to the glass and piped Tsai Chin's syrupy music into the street. The scant installation—meant to evoke a 1980s-era rundown music shop on the eve of a new album release—was inspired by sentiments surrounding the artist's first visit to Beijing during the dead of winter. Facing a journey from south to north triggered in Lee an array of associations and conflicting emotions: fears about experiencing the acute cold gave way to trepidations about entering the political space of mainland China and being confronted with unresolved feelings about the past. These internal agitations, compounded by his peripheral position as an outsider from Hong Kong, yielded a cryptic memorial with fictional and illogical origins and decidedly political undertones. The installation epitomized Lee's ongoing effort to reconcile the fragile workings of his inner self with the outward discomforts and injustices he faces in everyday reality.

While Lee's work may not be of the variety to offer any clear remedy to the various inequities or internal heartaches it addresses, it does

《“告诉我你要什么,有什么是你很想很想要的。”》, 2012年
 纸板画、厨房场景、烹饪, “未来事件交易所” 展览现场, 台北当代艺术中心
 “Tell me what you want, what you really really want?” 2012
 Cardboard painting, kitchen setting, cooking
 Installation view at “Trading Futures,” Taipei Contemporary Art Center
 PHOTO : Pauline Yao

suggest ways of locating the personal within the realm of the political simply by looking at how we live our lives on a daily basis. Here we might look to *Filling Up An Ashtray* (2008) or *Scratching the Table Surface* (2006-2010) as exemplary demonstrations of just how committed Lee is to championing the banal sphere of monotony and purposeless behavior. Gradually digging a small hole in the surface of a table in his studio by scratching it repeatedly with his finger on and off for various stretches over a period of four years speaks to a strength of resolve as much as it does to epic levels of laziness and boredom. During this same period, he sent postcards to some 300 friends informing them that he is scratching the table surface. Such a concentrated effort at doing nothing—and announcing it to his friends no less—underscores the tension he feels between acting as a productive artist, and one who simply lives out the redundant gaps, trivial spaces and restless moments of one's daily life. Lee does well to remind us that such moments are increasingly hard to find in today's—especially Hong Kong's—industrious, hyper-productive, hyper-connected environment; and that without attention to life's repetitive banalities, we may lose possibility for the truly unexpected and irrational to occur. 🌀