

Preface

Unknown – Works by Wai Kit Lam, Artists in the Neighbourhood Scheme IV

by Art Promotion Office, Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Hong Kong, June 2009

Electronic and digital products and media including kinescope television, plasma screen, digital camera, MP3..... have found their way into millions of households, innovated the consumption modes as well as shocking the aesthetic and living styles. High-speed scientific and technological progress brings living conveniences, fun and engulfs people in the torrents of the macro environment, forcing people to learn and use new technological products and new trends before inquiring and understanding the old ones. When we have easy access to digital cameras and handheld video camera recorders that are compact, easy to operate and capable of providing inexpensive virtual storage space, and mobile phones that support high resolution recording, we get used to random and impromptu recording and take ubiquitous digital video and audio play for granted.

Artists also took firm hold of the new force in the torrents and use new technologies and multi media for art creation to enhance the communication effect and keep asking people concerning different topics. Although images based on practical life have been edited and modified significantly by the artists, the familiar images still leave passable gaps for the viewers to enter "without asking" the video and audio recording atmosphere created by the artists. The viewers may perhaps be puzzled about the ideas, but the seemingly familiar images and sounds and onsite participation basically remove puzzle and resistance and achieve soft landing of the artists' ideas, inducing profound thinking among the viewers. The viewers' "not asking" and the artists' "asking" find harmonious integration in the expressional mode of digital media.

Wai-kit Lam underwent creation experience with different media in her painting, photography and video art. It is the characteristics of the video art which contains images, sound and installation that make Wai-kit Lam opt to create with this media. For Wai-kit Lam, life is full of perplexing fragments, and the uncertainties of the unknown environment often upset her, so she keeps trying and exploring in her works and interacting with the viewers in the known and unknown. Wai-kit Lam's photography and videos often present her self portrait merged in different living environments in an attempt to identify herself. However, the "self" presented in the works is just an expression medium and a universal role. In the exhibition of the "Artists in the Neighbourhood Scheme", Wai-kit Lam selects to mix different human images with life space, buildings, household environment, pedestrians' footsteps and personal steps and play them synchronously on three screens facing each other. Her videos do not have any script, narration or dialogue. The characters in the works, whether motionless or moving in different time, space and sound effects, show some extent of uncertainty. The sounds in life – traffic sound, footstep, heartbeat, clock sound..... urge the viewers to search for role situations in the substitute video images.

Here we would like to extend sincere thanks to Hong Kong Film Archive and The Link Management Limited for their assistance and support in bringing art into communities, in exhibiting "Unknown – Works by Wai-kit Lam" as part of the "Artists in the Neighbourhood Scheme" in Hong Kong Film Archive and Tsz Wan Shan Shopping Centre, and in organising the "Meet-the-Artist" lecture and guided tours for the public. We hope the public can have better understanding of artist's works through these exhibitions and activities.

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序言

藝遊鄰里計劃IV：未知 — 林慧潔作品展

康樂及文化事務署，藝術推廣辦事處，香港，2009

從顯像管電視，到等離子屏幕、數碼相機、MP3.....電子數碼產品及媒體席捲千家萬戶，不但創造了新的消費模式，更震盪了審美欣賞及生活型態。高速的科技發展為日常生活帶來便利和新趣味，亦把人們捲進這股大環境的洪流，還沒來得及探究、提問，就又奔忙於學習運用新科技產品，緊貼潮流，享受成果。當操作簡易，體型輕巧，提供廉價虛擬儲存空間的數碼相機、手提攝錄機及至支援高解像度攝錄的手提電話進佔生活，人們越快習慣於不加思考，不問原因的隨意拍錄方式，亦很理所當然地接受無處不在的數碼影音播放。

藝術家在洪流中亦抓緊這股新的勢力，利用新的技術，結合多重媒體進行創作，提升溝通的效應，不斷向人們發問，探討不同的議題。在錄像藝術創作的過程中，取材於現實生活的影像儘管經過了藝術家大量的剪裁及再造，但這些人們所熟知的影像，仍為觀者保留了易於進入的缺口，讓觀者在「不問」中已進入藝術家的錄像影音營造的環境氛圍中。觀者也許對其中表達的意念感到不解，但在似曾相識的影像、聲音的引領下，臨場參與，大大消弭了困惑及抗拒，讓藝術家的意念軟□陸，引發觀者再三思考。觀者的「不問」，與藝術家的「問」在數碼媒體的表達形式中找到了融洽的契合。

從繪畫到攝影，再走向錄像藝術創作，林慧潔經歷過不同媒體的創作經驗。正是錄像藝術以上的特性，又能包容影像、聲音、裝置等藝術形式，吸引了林慧潔選取這種媒體進行創作。對林慧潔而言，生活中充滿零碎的片段，很多時都讓人感到無所適從。對未知境況的不確定常令她感到不安。於是她不斷地嘗試在作品中尋索，與不同的觀者在知與不知中互動溝通。林慧潔的攝影及錄像作品常喜以自身影像融入不同的生活環境中，與環境的相拼、並置或融合，尋找個人的身分確認。但作品中呈現的「自己」只是一個表達的媒介，一個含有普遍性的角色。在這次「藝遊鄰里計劃」的展覽中，林慧潔選擇了以不同的人物影像為主體，混入生活空間、建築、家居環境、人群的脚步、個人步履等大量重疊、交錯的影像，以三個互對的屏幕同步循環播放。她的錄像作品沒有劇本，不作敘事，亦無對白。作品中人物無論是靜默不動的，還是在不同的時空及聲效中游移，都呈現出一種不確定狀態。生活中林林種種的聲音 — 車聲、腳步聲、心跳聲、時鐘運轉聲.....催促觀者自己去代入錄像中尋找角色情景。

我們衷心感謝香港電影資料館及領匯管理有限公司的大力協助及支持，一同實踐將藝術帶到社區的理念，讓「藝遊鄰里計劃」這次「未知 — 林慧潔作品展」得以成功在香港電影資料館及慈雲山中心展出，並為公眾舉辦「與藝術家會面」講座與導賞。期待這些展覽及活動，能讓公眾對錄像藝術及藝術家的創作有更深的認識。