



STILL FROM "SINGLE BED," (2011).
SINGLE CHANNEL VIDEO. 24
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GALLERY, NEW YORK.

LI LIAO

"FOXCONN DIDN'T KNOW I WAS MAKING ART, I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY TO THEM, I WILL NEVER GO BACK TO THE FACTORY TO WORK"⁸ —WHERE PERFORMANCE ARTIST LI LIAO SITS ACROSS FROM HIS 2013 INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW YORKER

PLAGIARIZED BY BRYCE SHANNAHAN

In 2013 Chinese-born artist Li Liao spoke to *The New Yorker* about "What is an iPad doing on a pedestal at a Chinese art museum?"^{8.1} The magazine was investigating Li's contribution to The Ullens Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing's ON | OFF exhibition, wherein Li's contribution was an iPad on a pedestal, alongside the mementos "from his job"^{8.2} working on the iPad construction line at electronics giant Foxconn's Shenzhen factory (including his uniform and employment contract). The iPad in question took Li 45 days worth of wages to buy. Upon being able to afford it, he quit.

Fundamental to the ideologies of mainstream capitalism is the notion that if you work hard enough, you can buy what you want. But everybody knows that Charlie only got his golden ticket through an incredible stroke of luck. "Everybody knows"^{8.3} that Veruca Salt's dad was rich. That's how it goes, and everybody knows. I want the world. I want to lock it all up in my pocket. Locking iPad puts the display to sleep, saves the battery, and prevents anything from happening.^{8.4}

Li Liao's 2015 solo exhibition *Attacking the Boxer from Behind is Forbidden* at Klein Sun Gallery in New York involved an encounter with a large, aggressive professional boxer, who stalked behind a sketched out ring inside the gallery. Violence can be provoked at any time, and usually those without golden tickets are able to find it that much more quickly.

Today Li Liao, conversed with *Flaunt* through cognitively stratified layers of human-to-human translation.

Art tends to be synonymous with "beauty." How do you determine if something is ugly?

There're tons of quotes about beauty. So that's to say there's no right answer. The way I view the beauty of a work is only in the choice of materials and one's control of one's own body. Ugliness certainly then is of bloatedness.

"What surprised you about your job?"^{8.5}

Never surprised. When I create something that resonates, it's not something I can control because the public is also a material part of the work.

Have you ever made something you thought was of high quality and intelligence that just wasn't understood by anyone else?

No—there will always be people who misunderstand, including me. In reality however, this isn't an

issue that I think about.

How far into the future do you like to plan?

When it comes to the future of art, I can't say. But because I now have a daughter I'll make some works here and there to sell. When it comes to art, you see it and you do it.

When did you become proficient at skirting the firewall and freely accessing the Internet? Have you taught any younger students or family members how to do this without getting in trouble?

I started skirting the firewall at a relatively young age, but I don't do it now. And I haven't taught anybody.



INSTALLATION VIEW, WEIGHT LOSS PLAN (DETAIL), (2011).
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