

DUAL LENS

As a woman of Mongolian heritage from China and a student studying at Vassar College, I find myself at the crossroads of vibrant yet contrasting cultures. Born and raised in the bustling urban landscape of Beijing, I was deeply immersed in diverse cultural exchanges. Influenced by my parents, I hold a profound pride in my Mongolian heritage. Relocating to the U.S. and engaging with the academic community at Vassar has further broadened my perspectives on not only myself but also the world around me. My journey of self-discovery began in an introductory Art History class, where I was struck by the realization of how Western-centric narratives often overshadow diverse cultural expressions. This pivotal moment inspired me to explore the art and stories from other cultures more intentionally. An Islamic art class opened my eyes to the depth and beauty of a culture often misrepresented by mainstream media, reshaping my previous perceptions.

My engagement with my own identity was further shaped in those art history classes I took. In one of my contemporary art history classes, I had the chance to learn the powerful works of feminist artists like Nancy Spero, Adrian Piper, and Carolee Schneemann. I vividly recall the profound impact I felt viewing Carolee Schneemann's "*Interior Scroll*(1975)" photographs. These artists' work showcased the strength and resilience of women, prompting me to challenge my initial discomfort with "feminism"—a term I had learned to view skeptically in China.

I started to realize the significant influence of the limited freedom of speech happened in the Chinese Internet and the stark contrast between the Chinese Internet environment and the open discussions I encountered here in the U.S. Because of the pervasive censorship and certain political propaganda, many people in China either hold a fervent loyalty towards the government or remain apathetic about political issues. Ultimately, most choose to overlook the ongoing events around them. Pressing social issues persist in China. For instance, the Chinese

government has enacted policies that deny ethnic minorities the right to learn their languages, mandating Mandarin education, which accelerates the erosion of diverse cultures. Also, as stated above, many feminist ideologies are heavily censored online in China, leaving many unaware of the challenges women face.

As a woman and a member of the Mongolian ethnic minority, I have felt the problem most acutely. However, I found discord between the feminist idea that I now deeply support for women's values and my Mongolian roots. This dissonance emerged from a conversation that remains etched in my heart, a dialogue with my mother about feminism within the Mongolian context. She spoke of respect and reverence for motherhood, yet my own observations and experiences completely contrast these cherished sentiments.

I recall stories of my grandmother, a woman of formidable strength who bore children until a son could carry on the family name. An uncle's words, suggesting a woman's place was confined to the domestic sphere, further deepened this rift in my understanding. Such moments have ignited a quest within me—a quest to reconcile these disparities, to weave together the threads of my identity as a Mongolian woman and a feminist.

This exhibition is, therefore, much more than a display of artistic works; it is a narrative of my personal journey and a call for greater awareness. Inspired by the feminist artworks of the 70s that enlightened me, I aim to highlight issues critically relevant to contemporary Chinese society. Through this exhibition, I invite viewers to recognize the resilience and beauty of Mongolian women, exploring these through the dual lens of my identity as a Mongolian and a feminist. This exhibition strived not only to resolve the dissonance within my own heart but also to illuminate the often-overlooked challenges facing women and ethnic minorities in both my homeland and the broader global context. It is a plea for the reevaluation of our cultural fabric, unraveling the complexities of tradition, strength, and womanhood.

Full Space Video:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/19Ui652OM1raxVW5-QEJMEWDdDHPzYCji/view?usp=drive_link

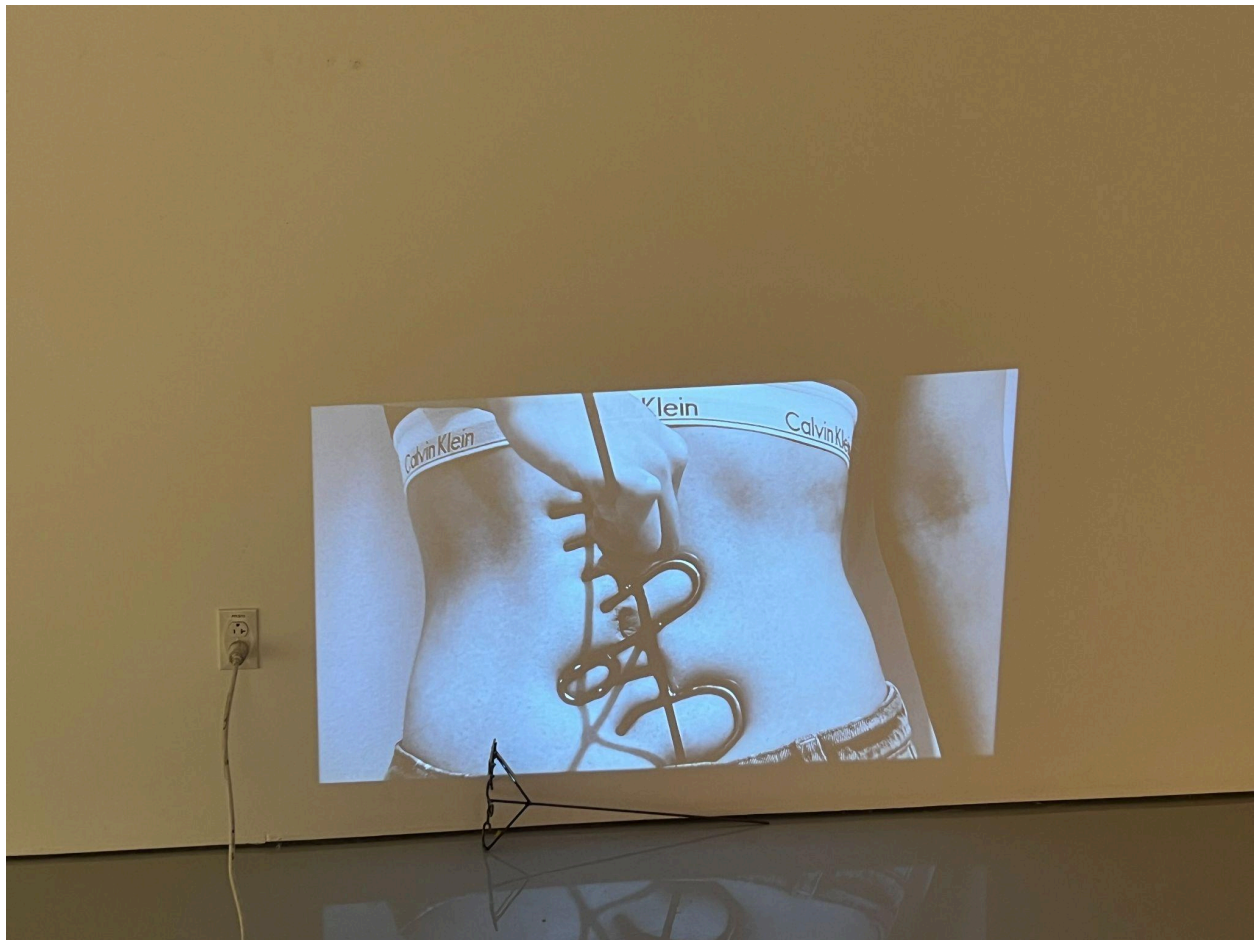


Untitled#1

2024

Inkjet photographs

This wall comprises 854 photographs related to Mongolian culture, sourced from various online platforms. The photographs are organized into six categories: Mongolian family life, Mongolian women, yurts, sheep bones, branding, and Mongolian utensils. These categories exemplify the current situation of Mongolian culture. The primary objective of this photo wall is to provide viewers with a contextual understanding of Mongolian culture. It aims to portray the appearance and societal roles of Mongolian women within their families and offer additional cultural references related to the works presented in this exhibition.



Branding#1

2024

22 seconds

The branding iron features the Mongolian script that translates to 'woman.'

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UK1PAC6UluvEjJsvQCyheO58GTEiJDZy/view?usp=drive_link



Portrait of Emperor Renzong of the Yuan Dynasty

2024

Digital illustration on inkjet print



Portrait of Empress Consort of Emperor Shizu of the Yuan Dynasty
2024
Digital illustration on inkjet print



Portrait of Emperor Shizu of the Yuan Dynasty

2024

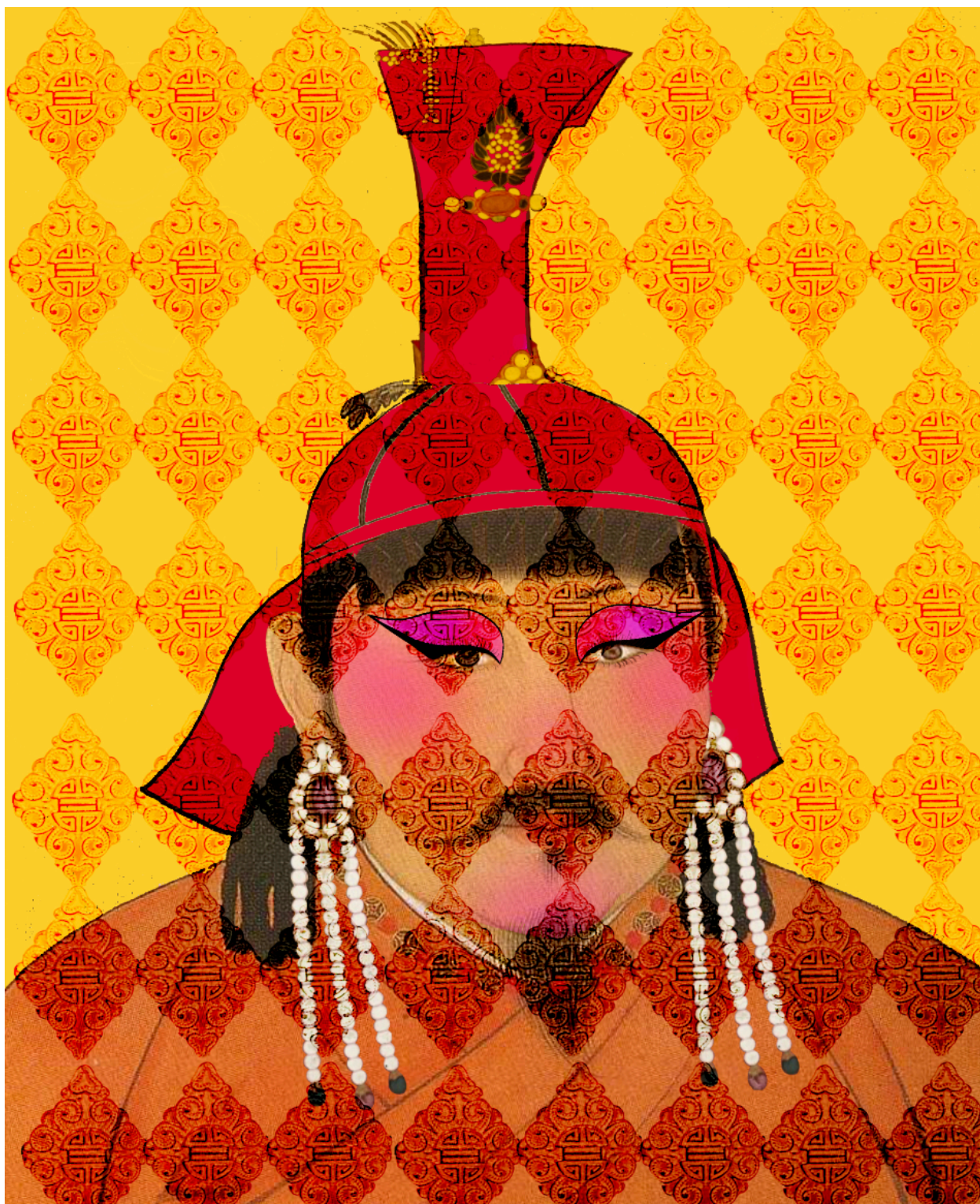
Digital illustration on inkjet print



Portrait of Empress Consort of Emperor Chengzong of the Yuan Dynasty

2024

Digital illustration on inkjet print



Portrait of Emperor Chengzong of the Yuan Dynasty

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Digital illustration on inkjet print



Portrait of Empress Consort of Emperor Renzong of the Yuan Dynasty

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Digital illustration on inkjet print



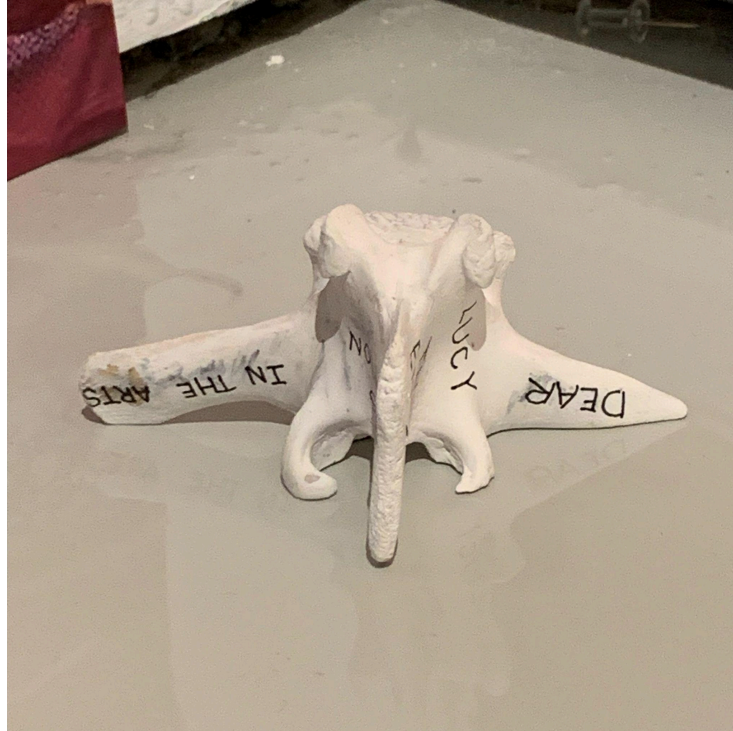
Yurt#1

2024

Woven fabric, chicken wire, painted wood, video projector

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JQwdI_fU0En3lGM6nhA2rjpNmqr5tJRo/view?usp=drive_link

The yurt has been meticulously handcrafted by myself. By projecting the interiors of my room and my toys onto the yurt, it is my attempt to reconcile the dissonance between my cultural heritage and my own identity.



Shagai#1

2024

Sheep bone, paint on bone

Text on the bone:

"DEAR LUCY

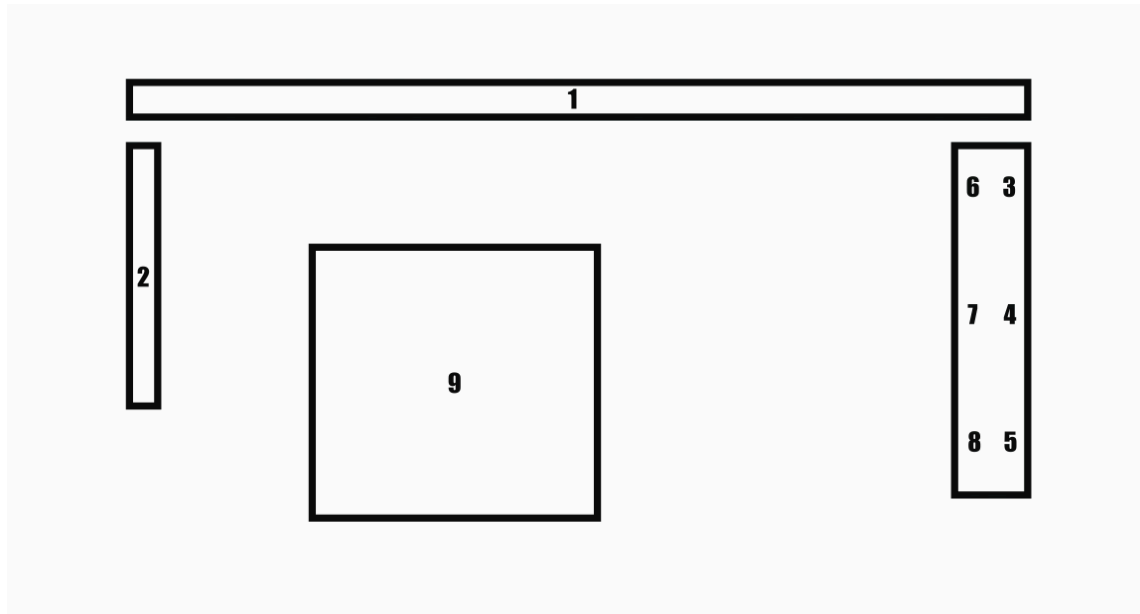
THE ENEMIES OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION IN THE ARTS WILL BE CRUSHED.

LOVE NANCY"

This piece, crafted from a sheep's ankle bone traditionally used in Mongolian children's toys, embodies a fusion of my cultural heritage and feminist identity. The bone, sourced from a sheep hotpot restaurant, is inscribed with a letter from Nancy Spero to Lucy Lippard, reflecting my engagement with contemporary art history and feminist discourse. This work represents not only my attempt for resolving the dissonance between my dual identity, integrating elements from a pivotal feminist text that I learned from my favorite art history class and a iconic toy from my culture, but it also shows my vision for the future of feminism. Intentionally omitted from the exhibition's mapping, this piece is designed as a "hidden gem," inviting viewers to uncover an additional layer of my narrative and beliefs.

Exhibition Mapping:

DUAL LENS



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| 1. <i>Untitled#1</i>
2024
Inkjet photographs | 6. <i>Portrait of Empress Consort of Emperor Chengzong of the Yuan Dynasty</i>
2024
Digital illustration on inkjet print |
| 2. <i>Branding#1</i>
2024
22 seconds
The branding iron features the Mongolian script that translates to 'woman.' | 7. <i>Portrait of Emperor Chengzong of the Yuan Dynasty</i>
2024
Digital illustration on inkjet print |
| 3. <i>Portrait of Emperor Renzong of the Yuan Dynasty</i>
2024
Digital illustration on inkjet print | 8. <i>Portrait of Empress Consort of Emperor Renzong of the Yuan Dynasty</i>
2024
Digital illustration on inkjet print |
| 4. <i>Portrait of Empress Consort of Emperor Shizu of the Yuan Dynasty</i>
2024
Digital illustration on inkjet print | 9. <i>Yurt#1</i>
2024
Woven fabric, chicken wire, painted wood, video projector |
| 5. <i>Portrait of Emperor Shizu of the Yuan Dynasty</i>
2024
Digital illustration on inkjet print | |

