

Jin Hien Lau
Train of Thought
2021
Giclee print
Courtesy the artist

Train of Thought is a graphic recording of the conversations we have with ourselves when we feel voiceless.

The comic begins in a train carriage with Lau sitting next to a neon, green sticker before unloading his stream of consciousness.

We follow his crowded mind as it jumps from diversity tokens to oriental sensationalism, Pauline Hanson and racial violence. It concludes with a panel of Lau unchanged from his initial position; the train has barely shifted.

Ultimately, *Train of Thought* is a response to attitudes from our national news. At best, they are indifferent and infantilising. At worst, they inflame any immigrant rhetoric already charged during COVID times.

Nathan Liow

Air(borne)

2020-21

Two-channel video, 2min 37sec, digital piano, gu-qin (古琴)

Courtesy the artist

Air(borne) is a meditation on Liow's heightened anxiety as a visibly Chinese person during COVID-19.

The two-channel video documents a semi-improvised work for gu-qin (古琴) and piano. Conceived during Melbourne's lockdown, there is an absence of other members in this musical ensemble to ensure regulatory compliance.

The gu-qin introduces motifs which are extrapolated beyond harmonic conventions by the piano – a Western instrument set to standard Western tuning. The piano further develops the melody and dynamic breadth of the work, culminating in an energetic solo. In the process, the gu-qin is subsumed.

Returning to Liow, *Air(borne)* expresses his confictions within the public domain. There is a constant oscillation between an assertion of one's heritage, and the necessity of remaining inconspicuous.

* Air is a musical term referring to ensemble works common to the Baroque period.

Sweet and Sour Group
Sweet and Sour: Postcard Collaborative
2020 - 21
Mixed media postcards
Courtesy the artist

Sweet and Sour: Postcard Collaborative is a series of reflective entries on the compound stresses of xenophobia and the pandemic.

Sweet and Sour designed various postcards and sent them to individuals across Australia who identify as Asian. Participants were asked to reflect on 2020 and the acute racialisation of their identity during the pandemic.

From distant letters to separated family, the stifling of sneezes on public transport and outright abuse, each postcard is raw. As a cumulation of intimate vignettes, *Sweet and Sour: Postcard Collaborative* fractures broad-sweeping labels of Asian identity.

It evokes a complex mix of comfort and validation when we realise these microaggressions and aggressions are shared with others.

Sweet and Sour invites you to participate in the work.

* Each postcard (and its associated items) has been digitised on this website.

<https://www.sweetandsourzine.com/postcards>

Zachary Lopez

Roil Horizon

2021

Video, sound, 3min 15sec; filming and editing by Emma Harrison.

Courtesy the artist

Asian iconography forms and skews the minds of the unknowing. A body weaves, avoids and collides as identities merge and disintegrate. Trauma is embodied and the diaspora is drowning.

Roil Horizon brings Lopez's contemporary dance practice together with installation to explore personal and societal challenges of xenophobia. Specific movement vocabulary is drawn from research within the 'COVID-19 Racism Incident Report' by the Asian Australian Alliance.

Combining film, installation and dance, *Roil Horizon* shifts between a meditative acceptance and an overwhelming chaos that vibrates around the question: Who are the ones truly being swamped?

Zachary Lopez

Roil Horizon

2021

Installation, bamboo, nylon string, various objects and materials

Courtesy the artist

Decorative ornaments, dolls and ceremonial objects are arranged and suspended beneath a bamboo frame to initiate questions about the appreciation and devaluation of Asian iconography. En masse, the objects reflect the cultural differences and diversity of East and South-East Asian peoples, and their racial misrepresentation in Australia. The disposed nature of the objects – purchased from various op shops in regional Australia and repurposed by the artist – speaks to a temporary and perhaps superficial interest in Asian culture that is replaced by xenophobia, fear and resistance when the novelty wears off.