



用镜头 挖掘真相

Shooting Forth With Conviction

新加坡独立纪实摄影师沈绮颖在本地拍过红头巾、女佣、外劳等社会课题，目前常驻北京，通过富于感情的镜头，专注老百姓的生活现状。

Beijing-based documentary photographer Sim Chi Yin takes on difficult projects with a sense of social responsibility

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常驻中国北京的独立纪实摄影师沈绮颖最近回到新加坡主持短期摄影工作坊。她的右手大拇指韧带断裂，动了手术，须要疗养几个月。37岁的沈绮颖应法国《世界报》(Le Monde)之邀，到中国吉林与朝鲜边境采访，路经经济特区厂房，见到数名锄草的朝鲜女工，按下快门，不想六七名女工伸手抢夺相机，弄伤她大拇指。过后警方取回相机，沈绮颖手术费由受邀单位承担，其他医疗费用还没下文。

这就是独立摄影师所须承担的风险，没有固定收入和生活保障。不过，坚持纪实摄影的沈绮颖的潜能，被全球知名图片社VII看中，让她在2014年7月成为正式成员，是该社首位、也是唯一亚裔摄影师，为新加坡争光。这家图片社以阿富汗战争摄影等闻名，独家代理全球20位摄影师作品，有作品卖出，摄影师才有收入。沈绮颖受访时笑说，爸妈至今担心她的生活，说：“你在中国吃草啊？”

新加坡这样安逸平稳的国度，竟然培育出关注社会课题的摄影界异类。沈绮颖是《海峡时报》前北京特派员，本来可以和国人一样优渥生活，但她辞职投入纪实摄影，作品散见《纽约客》《时代周刊》《新闻周刊》《纽约时报》等国际刊物，偶尔为了生活接些酬劳较高的商业摄影。她说：“不是为拍而拍，也不是一般摄影，而是有社会意义的摄影，在大事上带来改变”。

在新加坡难道不能拍纪实摄影？沈绮颖说，若有合适题材，时间配合，她会回来拍。她拍过25个印度尼西亚女佣和红头巾的故事，任职《新报》时的外劳报道也具舆论与政策影响力。“毕竟是自家院子的事情，做来总有亲切感。”不过，她觉得新加坡“世界稍小，也太舒服了，软绵绵的。这里的人爱自己看自己，不太与外面的世界互动”，因此选择常驻北京。

沈绮颖耗费四年拍摄中国矽肺患者何全贵的垂死悲剧与背后的真爱故事，在网上引起很大反响，与大爱清尘基金三天内为患者筹得10万人民币善款，也叫她料想不到。她曾协助患者张罗住院费用，取得信任，从北京飞去西安十几次，近距离拍下平面摄影与视频，承受这家人的情绪波动，目睹患者试图自杀不果的困境。

沈绮颖指出，因采矿而染上矽肺病者多达600万，她只帮到他们一家。其实这样的悲剧可以避免，只要矿工采矿戴上安全口罩，或工地采用水滴式机器，即可减少尘埃飞扬。她希望借此故事促使中国政府改变政策，教育矿工保护身体健康。这个故事感动不少报刊杂志负责人，但至今未售出纸媒版，这类“不性感”的报道仍缺乏市场。

然而，同行给予沈绮颖肯定：“有些战地摄影记者的镜头靠得很近，这需要勇气，有些近距离镜头也需情感投入，像你的，这也是一种勇气。”沈绮颖说：“镜头很难保持纯粹客观。如果没介入自己的情感、投入自己的时间，不可能与拍摄对象成为朋友，也就不可能拍到这个故事。”

沈绮颖与新加坡的纽带不断，她接着会投入家族故事的挖掘、整理与拍摄。沈绮颖和祖父没见过面，但对他有特殊感情。“家里除了他，没人具备参与社会行动的正义感。我想我们应该会很好聊。”

她看到祖父沈焕盛一张胸前挂相机的黑白照，引发好奇心，2011年起，一年几次回广东诰上村老家探亲、拍摄，挖掘出一段隐秘史。原来祖父是革命烈士，墓地前耸立一座3米高纪念碑，60几年来每逢清明乡亲会祭拜。祖父曾是校长、商人、马来亚《怡保日报》总编辑，被英国政府驱逐出境，回到广东省老家，加入中国共产党游击队，最后落入国民党手中被处决。

父母不能理解沈绮颖为何花那么多时间、金钱与精力去挖掘过去的事，只有沈绮颖大伯趁记忆犹新，记下50页家族史。沈绮颖计划到吉隆坡搜集档案文件，补充叙述，通过文字、档案图片与口述历史录音，叙说从广东下南洋的移民故事。这不只是新加坡，也是全球各地都有过的移民故事——沈绮颖坚持通过纪实的镜头说故事。④

沈绮颖是新加坡独树一格的纪实摄影师，常驻北京，作品散见《纽约客》《时代周刊》《新闻周刊》《纽约时报(周末版)》等国际刊物，其近距离镜头关怀社会，充满人道精神，反响很大，引起各方瞩目。去年她被全球知名图片社VII看中，是该社首位、也是唯一一位亚裔摄影师，为新加坡争光。

times to document the life of the family up close, Sim has stood firm in the face of death threats from parties with mining interests, and rode the same emotional roller-coaster with He's family as they survived multiple attempts by him to end his sickly life.

War photographers need courage, but documentary photographers such as Sim often need a higher degree of emotional involvement and a different sort of courage.

The truth is that the camera lens is hardly ever objective, says Sim. "If you don't get involved and if you don't devote your own time and emotions into it, you won't be able to connect with your subject and you won't be able to capture the story." To do documentary photography full-time, Sim quit her job as Beijing correspondent for The Straits Times.

For her next project, Sim is digging deep into her own family history. It started with a black-and-white photo she found of her grandfather Shen Huansheng with a box camera around his neck, which intrigued her so much, she decided to visit her ancestral village of Gaoshang in Guangdong province for answers.

She was rewarded with an incredible find: Her grandfather was a revolutionary martyr and on his grave stands a 3m-tall monument in his honour. She learnt that her grandfather was a school principal, businessman and chief editor of Ipoh Daily. After he was banished from Malaysia by the British government, he returned to his hometown, joined the communist party's guerrilla army and was captured in battle and executed by the Kuomintang.

Since 2011, Sim has been returning several times each year to the village to take photographs and gather material. She plans to visit Kuala Lumpur for more archival photos and audio tapes.

"I never met my grandfather, but I think we would have got along with each other," she says. "Apart from him, no one in my family bears a sense of social responsibility; I feel a special connection with him."

Sim's project on Beijing's Rat Tribe, people from the outskirts who eke out a living in the big city while living in squalid conditions, has attracted worldwide interest. In Singapore, Sim documented the stories of Indonesian domestic workers and Samsui women.

While she feels for these Singapore stories, she thinks "the world here is too small and too comfortable; it's too soft". This is why she has chosen to base herself in Beijing.

Sim's parents remain somewhat befuddled about the path their daughter has chosen. Although her work has appeared in international publications, they are more excited when they see her work in the local media. Being named Young Woman Achiever of the Year by Her World magazine last year and appearing in ZbBz's SG50 issue may offer them some consolation, Sim says with a smile.

Having flown to Xi'an from Beijing a dozen of