



Exhibition Date: July 13, 2016

Time: 8pm to 10pm

Location: Rabbithole Project (33 Washington St, Brooklyn, NY 11201)

As a non-English native speaker, I thought that I had created a word: wark, which combines work (labor in paid employment) and art (creative activities). Later, when I searched online, I discovered that wark actually was a historical Middle English and Proto-Germanic word meaning “to work, act” or “pain, suffering, anguish.” This definition perfectly matched one of the similarities of manufacturing and art-making that I intended to emphasize—labor.

Undeniably, artists suffer. I would say they do so probably in as much as factory workers, at least in most cases. Many social, religious, and historical factors have endowed artists with a sacred and respected status. Yet, when artists show up in a factory, at some level they lose that status and the art they produce immediately becomes useless.

My father was a great “maker”—today’s trendy term that people label themselves to represent their creativity and artistry. My father didn’t know what the term of “gradient” meant in color charts, but he could mix paint and perfectly match what clients requested.

As an individual artist striving to make what I believe in, I find it discouraging and depressing when I vacillate back and forth between manufacturing and art, because it is indeed hard to explain the two perspectives to each other. There is this vast gap in reality, so I can only try to combine the perspectives and describe what is in my imagination through the artwork that I am good at making.

Inspired by my father's former bonded leather factory in Taichung, Taiwan, *WARK* is part of the *Manufacture Series* that explores the contradictory yet parallel relationships between manufacturing and art-making. After visiting and documenting local manufacturers and post-industrial sites, and purchasing materials from them, I use photographs, sculptures, and videos to re-fabricate the boundaries and create overlaps between these two industries.

Jia-Jen Lin is a Taiwanese artist based in New York. Her work creates imagery that relates to the human body and our surroundings as it reflects in our minds. She uses sculpture, installation, video, and performative collaboration to portray the ongoing negotiation between our original desires and the manipulated realities in our fast-changing contemporary lives.

*Manufacture Series - WARK* is supported by the National Culture and Arts Foundation, Taiwan.