

## *We Write Our Own History, 2017*

In September 2014, tens of thousands of people took to the streets of Hong Kong, united in their act of civil disobedience. Mobilised by activists, ordinary citizens organised themselves in mass sit-ins and rallies, demanding their rights to genuine universal suffrage.

Protests went on for months, yet like so many demonstrations throughout history, this momentous event finally gave way when the police came marching in. The episode was named Umbrella Movement when tear gas, batons and pepper spray were used to repel the masses; whilst people responded to protecting themselves with umbrellas. The disappearance of several book sellers in the ensuing months, ensured people's earlier demands were silenced.

*We Write Our Own History* is an attempt to piece together some of the incidences that took place in the streets of Hong Kong during the Umbrella Movement. Working in collaboration with some of the activists directly involved in the revolution, Li's work presents a discourse on public participation and a way of making visible the invisible.

Each image is staged inside the homes of the demonstrators, as they arrange their personal items to map out specific incidences that took place in the streets of Hong Kong. What at first may seemingly appear nonsensical, are in fact types of cartographic studies - using rolled up tissue balls to suggest a stand-off; a bundle of matchsticks to imitate DIY barricades; a plastic tube propped next to a remote control to best describe a collision. Each set-up therefore, not only reveals intense pivotal moments back in 2014, but also a chance to write one's own history.

**Dinu Li**