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PHOTO-SCROLL(ING): borrowing, blending, hijacking

This series is the result of an artist residency in China. Upon return, the question in my mind is, "What constitutes cultural jurisdiction or ownership?".

A theme in this photographic series -- as it relates directly to art and how it spills over into almost every aspect of technology, religion, culture, and scientific research -- is the idea of informing, influencing, borrowing, reinterpreting or copying. Contemporary Chinese artist Xu Bing explains copying is part of making art, not thinking in terms of copyrights. When a Chinese poet composes a new poem, it is normal to take a line from an antique classic and insert it into his/her own: It is an acknowledgement to greatness and the poet doesn't attempt to hide the usage, but work off it and adapt it to new needs.

QR codes - ubiquitous in China and representative of their highly digitalized society - are present in this series in the form of both information packets (moments of Sino-European knowledge swapping) and as a symbolic replacement of the signature. A seal was a stamp of authorship and/or ownership, and in this case, a QR code represents disclosure, availability, and access. Every country's and individual's concern: can information still be owned, and contained?

A hand-held scroll was meant to be opened to the width of a single person's arm reach, not more, viewing a limited section at a time. Now, to scroll means to flip rapidly from one thing to the next. The photographic scrolls in this series implicate both.

The scrolls are equipped with scrolls on top of scrolls, for quicker, multiple viewing. Also, the excess emphasizes and even exaggerates the borrowing of the format, wondering at what point it will be pushed into a hybrid format (antique reference and contemporary overload).