

More than meets the eye



Liang's front of house host Hana is partially blind, but she still coordinates big crowds coming to the exhibition every day.

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MULTI-DISCIPLINARY artist Poesy Liang added another feather to her cap when she took part in Singapore's Art Stage late last month.

She was invited by founders Lorenzo Rudolf and Maria Elena Rudolf to present her social message at the Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre.

"It is a dream come true for me," Liang said.

"I am most greedy for social impact and this was a prestigious stage with an international reach, to help my aspirations to make the world a better place."

Her pop-up exhibition, *Poesy Empathy — Hidden Message*, was designed to be an experiential installation that challenges the perception of disabilities.

One of the highlights was a sequence of experiences and tasks coordinated in a black box.

"I want to change perceptions. I challenge myself to let abled people feel disabled for a short while, so they can compare experiences."

Liang, who is also a writer, poet, composer, designer, jeweller and humanitarian, was paralysed from the waist down due to a rare spinal tumour when she was a teenager.

Through the exhibition, she hoped to simulate how most people would judge one another.

"Most of my team don't look like they have visual disabilities. Like me, they have hidden disabilities."

She added she wanted to emphasise how disabilities sometimes were not obvious just by looking at someone.

"Some people intentionally hide their disabilities, some can be disabled emotionally or mentally. If someone is being judgemental and such, they don't know better."

In addition, parts of her exhibits were designed to be whimsical, clearly inspired by manga and anime art.



One of Liang's blind staff members has her guide dog Nice at Art Stage. — Pictures courtesy of Poesy Liang



Nice the guide dog with five visually impaired and two sighted members of the 'Poesy Empathy' production.

The floor at her pop-up booth had 42 colourful QR codes. Visitors could scan the codes with their mobile phones and be linked to online content of some of her past projects to further the message of

compassion, kindness and empathy.

Her exhibits drew plaudits from visitors and industry heavyweights.

"Poesy Empathy has much going for it, exploring our otherwise under-used senses



Crowds at the 'Poesy Empathy' exhibition.

of smell, touch and hearing," said artist Chris Yap, 49, from Singapore.

Rudolf said he was convinced Liang was ready for her next international step.

"Knowing her way of thinking and working, it is clear to me she has to showcase not only some works but present herself through an interesting and comprehensive project.

"She fulfils my demands in a very impressive and successful way," he said.