votes (y)

YELLOW YELLOW YELLOW YELLOW
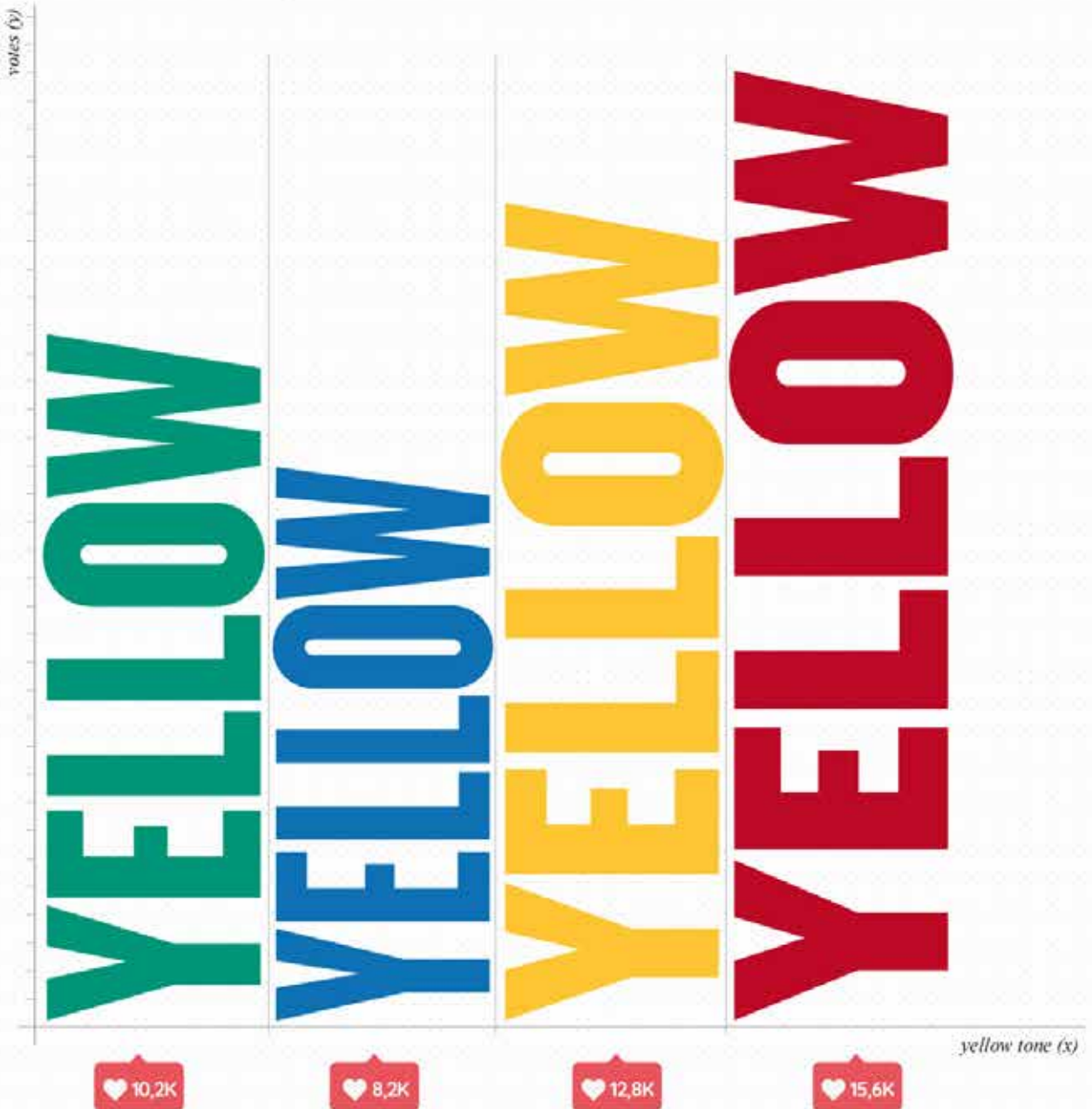
yellow tone (x)

♥ 10,2K ♥ 8,2K ♥ 12,8K ♥ 15,6K

DISEÑO Y POSVERDAD

Shanzhai Archeology

Nicolas Maigret
Maria Roszkowska
Clément Renaud

Shave,
pray,
dance,
defend yourself,
open a car,
light a cigarette,
provide electricity
…

Ferrari blue,
strawberry red,
skeleton green,
spinner gold,
prisoner black

The circulation of goods describe imaginary spaces. Products move around us to form what we know as the world. Trade agreements, customs regulations and technical certifications carefully regulate the distribution of symbols around the globe.

In Europe, the typical mobile phone is dark, golden or silver, rectangular and flat, weighs around 150g, measure between 13 et 16 cm, has two slots for SIM and SD cards and at least a camera lens at the back. It is easy to assume that this is a normal evolution - a social process of collective effort, encapsulated in our lastest technology. Then, these features are memories of decisions made by individuals and firms for some reasons.

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Archeologists dig out unusual objects to uncover the movement of cultures in time. They reconstruct social spaces by excavating technical artifacts. They unfold hundreds of stories from a single fragment of stone.

Shanzhai Archeology is a collection of soon-to-be vestiges of the cell phone era, products from a market that is so efficient that its own products disappear. It is an attempt to witness the brief moment of the apparition and disparition on Earth of the obsolete mobile phone. This cabinet of curiosities displays things that exist elsewhere with the hope to cast light on what has become invisible at home.

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For almost two decades, small factories in Southern China have been producing *shanzhai* mobile phones. Sold at a very cheap price, they are assembled from existing or recycled parts in plants located mainly in the Pearl River Delta. This manufacturing powerhouse has the capacity to put together new batches of phones in a few days. This incredible velocity and competition between manufacturers has lead to a surge in cheap copies and weird hybrids that gave its badge of honours to the *shanzhai* industry.

Shanzhai as a phenomenon has been vastly documented: glorious[1] or infamous acts of piracy[2], new entrepreneurial dynamics[3], emerging design patterns[4], model for iterative innovation[5], cultural singularity[6], etc. In Chinese, the word itself remains a derogatory term used to describe knockoff products of poor quality. Despite its romanticisation by non-Chinese media and literature, it is widely associated with illegal activities and degrading labor conditions. We cannot but notice how little attention has been given to their users, and how they interrogate the canonical uniformity of our daily products

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[1] Keane, M., Zhao, E.J., 2012. Renegades on the Frontier of Innovation: The Shanzhai Grassroots Communities of Shenzhen in China's Creative Economy. *Geography* 53, pp. 216–230.

[2] Yang, F., 2015. *Faked in China- Nation Branding, Counterfeit Culture, and Globalization*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

[3] Chien, C.-F., Wang, J.-C., 2010. Shanzai! Mediatek and the "White Box" Handset Market. [pdf] *The Harvard Business Review*.

[4] IDEO, 2012. Shanzhai | *Patterns from IDEO*.

[5] Lindtner, S., Greenspan, A., Li, D., 2015. Designed in Shenzhen: Shanzhai Manufacturing and Maker Entrepreneurs. *Aarhus Series on Human Centered Computing*, 1, pp. 85–96.

[6] Zhao, J., 2014. Shanzhai: An Emerging Entrepreneurial Model. *Management and Administrative Sciences Review*, 808, pp. 762–808.

SKELETON PHONE   STRAWBERRY PHONE   LIGHTER PHONE   BUDDHA PHONE

WOODEN PHONE   RADIO PHONE   CARD PHONE   SOUND SYSTEM PHONE

CAR PHONE   CIGARETTE PACK PHONE   CAR & LIGHTER PHONE   PRISONER PHONE

RAZOR PHONE   POWER BANK PHONE   GRENADE PHONE   WALKIE-TALKIE PHONE

Shanzhai Archeology is an initiative to preserve side narratives in the history of modern telephony, an ongoing collection made of dozens of phones of all shapes, colors and features: a power bank phone to face power cuts in Ghana, a tiny phone with a voice-changer for ambitious British cellmates, a speaker-blaster phone for Chinese grannies dancing parties, etc.

Each of these objects carries its own story, offering solutions to marginal problems. Their feature sheet do not offer to 'change the world' by fabricating new needs. Their assembly started with hybridations of existing objects. Their designs talk about the lives of individuals who use them, those who made them, and the specific time and place that has allowed them to emerge.

By the way: of what sort of life is an iPhone the reflect?
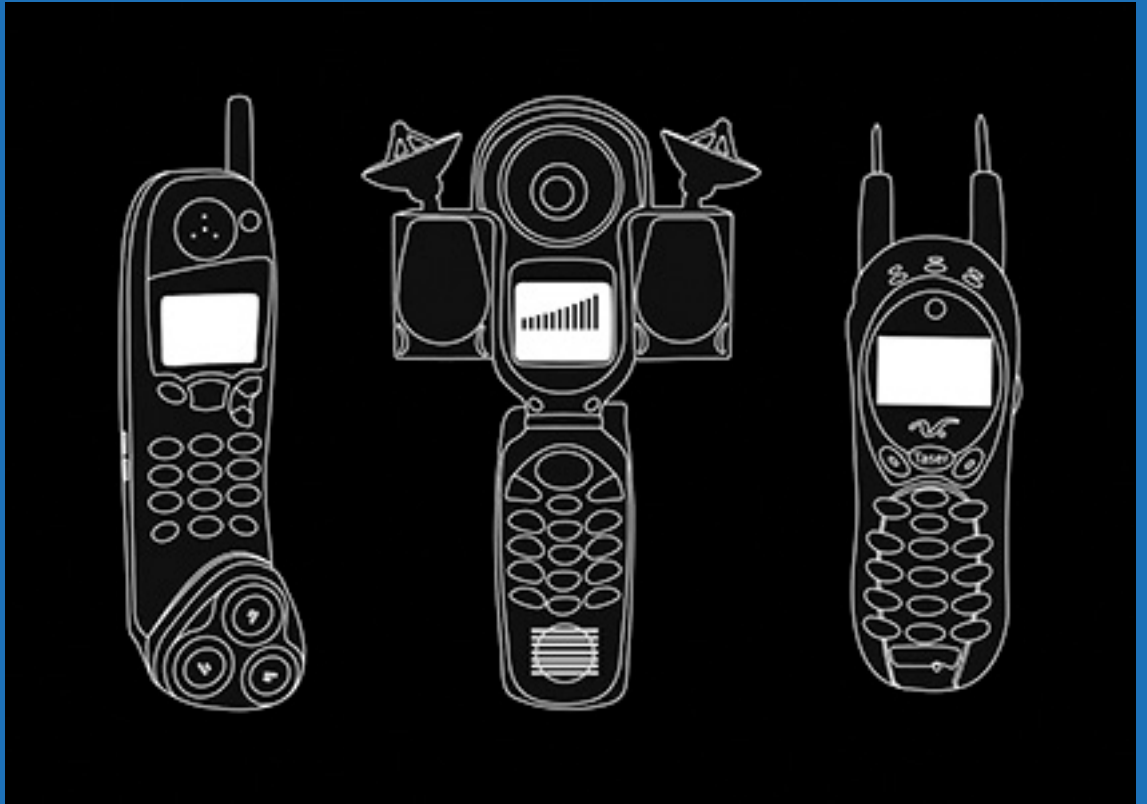
DISNOVATION.ORG is a working group based in Paris, initiated by Nicolas Maigret and Maria Roszkowska. At the crossroads of contemporary art, research and hacking, the collective develops situations of disturbance, speculation, and debate, challenging the ideology of innovation and stimulating the emergence of alternative narratives. They recently edited The Pirate Book, an anthology on media piracy.
Their research includes curation, artworks, & editions. Their work has been presented in international exhibitions and festivals: Transmediale (Berlin), Museum of Art and Design (New York), 30th Chaos Communication Congress (Hamburg), Palais de Tokyo (Paris), Centre Pompidou (Paris), V2 (Rotterdam), Elektra (Montréal), China Museum of Digital Arts (Beijing), HEK (Basel), Polytechnic Museum (Moscow), North-West Film Forum (Seattle), Eastern Bloc (Montreal).
http://disnovation.org/

Nicolas Maigret is an artist who exposes the internal workings of media, through an exploration of their dysfunctions, limitations or failure thresholds which he develops into immersive, ambiguous and critical artworks. He teaches at Parsons Paris and develops a research on "AI's Black Boxes" with V2_ Rotterdam and UCL Louvain. With Maria Roszkowska he co-edited The Pirate Book, an anthology on media piracy.
http://peripheriques.free.fr/

Maria Roszkowska is an artist, designer and initiator of the DISNOVATION.ORG working group with Nicolas Maigret. From 2010 she conducted research with EnsadLab Paris, before joining Intégral Ruedi Baur, a cultural design studio based in Paris. She designed and coordinated Don't Brand My Public Space!, a three-year research on the issue of cities applying branding strategies. In 2015 she co-edited The Pirate Book, an anthology on media piracy.
http://cargocollective.com/mariaroszkowska

Clément Renaud is a French researcher and artist investigating how technologies can be used to create new forms of writings, spaces and representations.
His works stands at the crossroads of the anthropology of technologies and the practice of data visualization. Fluent in Mandarin Chinese, he has founded several international initiatives related to digital and free cultures. He is currently researcher at Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) in Lausanne, Switzerland and lives in Lyon, France.
http://clementrenaud.com/