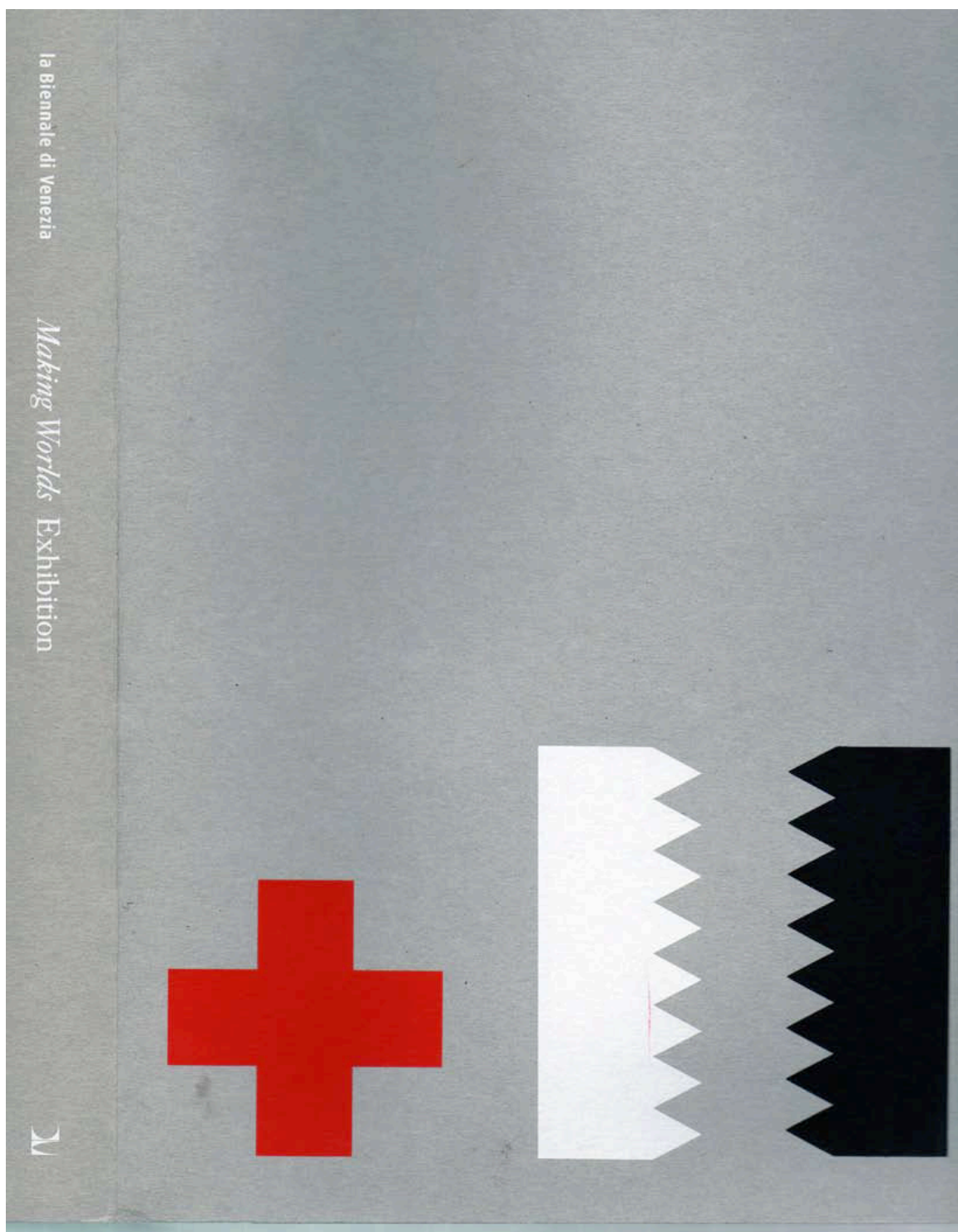


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*Making Worlds*  
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53rd International  
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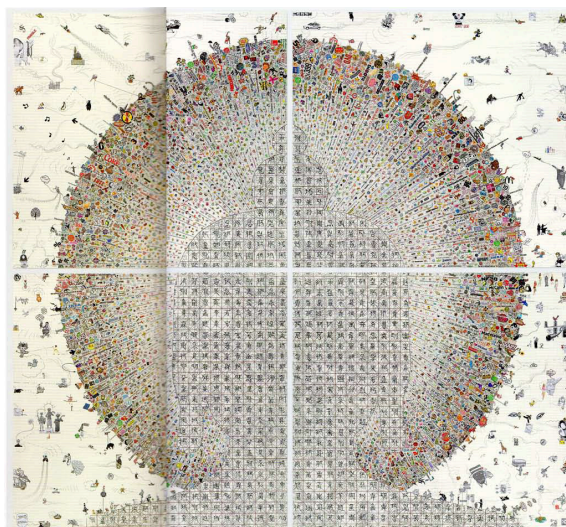
Marsilio



# Gonkar Gyatso

Born in Lhasa, Tibet,  
in 1961. Lives and works  
in London, GB.

► Gonkar Gyatso,  
*The Shambala in Modern  
Times*, 2008. Stickers,  
paper cuts, pencil, ink on  
treated paper, 200 × 219 cm.  
Collection Peggy Scott  
and David Teplitzky



Although Gonkar Gyatso does not define himself as a political artist, there is no mistaking the political commentary and gentle rebuke that emanates from all his work. Subverting the iconographic structure of Thangka paintings and the detailed, meditative study of the Bodhisattva forms that this entails, Gyatso re-presents the traditional images in an apparently more light-hearted vein and always with subtle, non-confrontational political undertones. Images of Bodhisattvas are infused with children's stickers, references to cross-words, and other symbols of popular western culture. Gyatso's four recent Bodhisattva works titled *Terrorist*, *No Entry*, *Power*, and *CCTV*, which seemingly guard the four cardinal directions, are the most recent manifestations of this lineage. *Reclining Buddha—Beijing Tibet Relationship Index* (2009), however, is Gyatso's personal mapping of fifty years of Chinese domination. Presenting a red equilibrium line that cuts through the pages of a monumental depiction of the Buddha in repose, Gyatso plots the tension-filled relationship, noting milestones that commemorate real-life events.

Boxed-in captions are constructed from an agglomeration of Chinese and Tibetan characters, alluding to the power of both as influences in the artist's own life. The work is presented as an articulated monumental manuscript replete with decorative book covers, adding a further veneer of veracity and gravity. [SA]

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