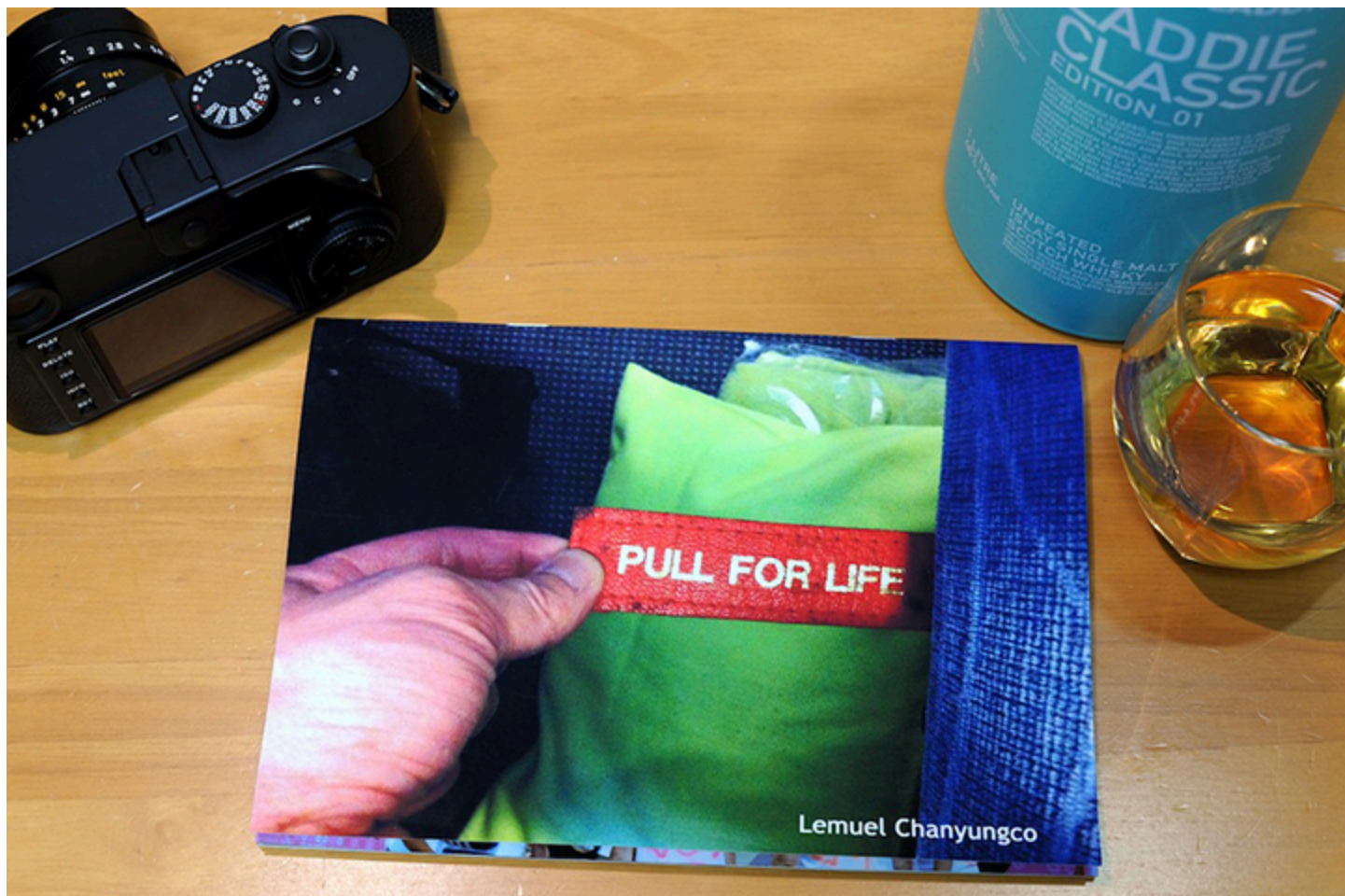


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Pull for Life by Lemuel Chanyungco



This one is a bit different. As it came with a review already attached. My mate [Simon Becker](#) has knocked up a decent review of this book, so I shall let him to the talking.



If you are familiar with Lem's work, then you may have come across his self-published book *Breaking The Ice* (2012), which, as I understood it, was the subtle photographic essence of an intimate and at the same time anonymous process of coming to terms with the city of Berlin as a home, for better and

for worse.

Pull For Life seems to be different. There is no focus on a particular place or time in this series of 26 pictures – to say it with photographic metaphors: the angle is wider here, the depth of field greater.



Two naked feet are holding two 9mm pistols. A middle-aged woman seems lost in between a legion of shoes on sale. Religious objects and symbols come face-to-face with their commercial or kitsch reality, and with bananas. A little baby defecates on its father's lap, one wonders what might have caused the yellow colour... Some passers-by melt into the silhouettes of their surroundings, and a

giant Barbie stares across a self-publicising bachelor party and straight into the camera's eye saying "Besuch mich!" – visit me!



We are confronted with life in terms of what people are, what people seem to be, what people think they are, what people believe, what people consume, and ultimately the realisation that these “people” include ourselves, you and me and your grandmother. This alone wouldn’t be remarkable, universal topics such as these are always prone to be considered easy and clichéd, even if the individual pictures are as good and clever as they are in Lem’s case.

What makes Pull For Life special is the unavoidable feeling of something moving underneath the reflective surface of empathic yet cynical global insights, beyond themes like religion and consumerism, something very individual and personal indeed. Even without further information on why, how, where, and when this series was first created, even though you are not told the details of this story, it vibrates and resonates in and between the photographs with notes of both hope and despair formulated with Lem's typical ability to constantly redefine what is serious and what isn't – and to laugh about the things he identifies with.



You can check out Lemuel's work here:

www.chanyungco.com

www.fistfulofbooks.com

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