

Linda Chiu-han LAI 黎肖嫻, historian, writer and research-based trans-disciplinary artist, works at the intersection of intermedia arts, experimental moving images, Critical Theory, the histories of everyday life and media archaeology, as meaningful extension of her PhD training in Cinema Studies (NYU). She persists in artistic creation as the practice of theory.

Lai is interested in human-thing/machine co-agency, and a materialist in her moving image practice. She prefers an anthropological stance in her investigation of art and cinema, drawing also from speculative theories in exploring the epistemological force of imaging. Most of her works, videography or installation, are historiographic experiments, thus also the interrogation of narrativity. As a montage artist, she considers images material facts with rich perceptual surfaces, defying the figuration-abstraction binary split. Her videos have appeared in documentary and experimental venues, including International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Traverse Video (Toulouse), LOOP Barcelona, Jihlava International Documentary Film Festival (Czech Republic), and the Asian experimental film/video circuit in Seoul (EXiS), Taipei (EXiT), Macao (EXiM), and Kuala Lumpur (KLEX), among others. C3A (Cordoba, Spain)^[1] had her video art retrospective in 2021, after dedicated solo features in EXiM (2015)^[2] and EXiS (2017: Inde-visuals).^[3]

A critical researcher in the History of Everyday Life, she seeks organological views of cinema and art's fluid relation to other existential and social-economic domains. She was part of the 3-year historians' workshop series *Everyday Coloniality* at Hanyang University (Seoul, Korea, 2010-2012) headed by the late Professor Alf Luedtke. At the School of Creative Media (1998-2023), she designed inter-disciplinary courses on the criticality of micro/meta narrativity, new materialism's contribution to media archaeology as historiography, automatism in pre-digital and digital artmaking, visual ethnography, sound art, and generative art & literature. Micro Narratives, a signature course of hers, integrates interdisciplinary theories in a laboratory context of videographic experiments, which has proliferated into two editions of "video manifestos," involving about 60 young artists in writing about their own works. A parallel yet distinct project to the manifestos is an ongoing online video zine, *D-Normal/V-Essay*, a participatory project that gathers short video pieces from artists and non-artists, especially the latter, through open call and curation.

Some of Lai's historiographic experiments take the form of research-creation and (self-)archiving activities, such as *Door Games Window Frames: Near Drama*, automated 3-channel projection on HK Cantonese melodrama (2011, Hong Kong Contemporary Art Award), *1906-1989-2012: Guangzhou-Hongkong-Shanghai-Anji* (Shanghai Biennale 2012-13) and two iterations of *Mnemonic Archiving: a Dispersive Monument* in Singapore (2016) and HK (2017) at Pearl Lam Galleries, which explore the spatial-visual logic of connectivity among memory objects. Archiving and experimental historiography are also central to *Lost Texture* at H-Queen's "Exit Strategies" (2019), *Ruminations: a Montage of Hong Kong's (Post)Coloniality* (2018, Osage), *Blasting Modernities 1930s: Techniques of the Self* (2017, Para Site), *Domestic Moonlighting* (2023) and *Tree of Life* plus at *signals...* chapters 1-3 (Para Site 2023). She also plays with chronologies to process her media archaeological research, such as *Object-Subjectivities* (2016, "No Reference," Videotage) and her curatorial statement in the form of an interactive map, *Object-Subjectivities, a Techno-Art Saga* (2018-

19, "Algorithmic Art," City Hall, Hong Kong), both site-specific experimental chronologies exploring media archaeological readings of Hong Kong's media (art) histories.

By 2021, she has completed two editions of her video Manifesto project, seeking a deeper view of HK's media art practices. Floating Projects (FP, 2015-) is her participatory art experiment on sustainability as "collectives." Her concern for art-tech dialogues prompted her founding of the Writing Machine Collective (2004- , with 6 group shows and one lecture-seminar series), which epitomized in her curatorial experiment "Algorithmic Art: Shuffling Space and Time" (2018-19), a public exhibition and educational event to mark the 20th year of the School of Creative Media (SCM).

Lai's commitment to bringing art, humanities and science/technology together began with her founding the new media art group [the Writing Machine Collective \(WMC\)](#) in 2004, with persistent curatorial experiments to define critical interdisciplinarity by illuminating computational thinking in digital and pre-digital art practices. More recently, her concern has informed her research and teaching in media archaeology, a conceptual space to argue for the many possible dialogues between the arts, sciences and the humanities. Numerous courses she has created for the SCM articulated her research in possible dialogues of art and technology, such as "Media and Contemporary Art: an Archaeological Study" (graduate level), "Generative Art & Literature" and "Narrative Strategies" (undergraduate) to move beyond cinematic narrative. To the general public, she spoke on "What is media art?" at the Cultural Centre and Visual Art Centre, delivered an hour-long lecture "Living in the Age of Convergence: (working through) the scientific images, manifest images and the aesthetic images"^[4] (2022, WMC_e7) and dialogued with on-line audience through her presentation "Art ← → Tech: an inventory of an 18-year-old experiment"^[5] (2022, 7th Network Society).

With the [Floating Projects \(FP, 2015- \)](#), she explores with young graduates concrete possibilities of survival and sustainability, such as exploring the contextual meaning of the economy of contribution and gift culture, as opposed to pure dependence on charity models in art practice. FP experiments also focus on deploying new technology to form new communities. [D-Normal/V-Essay](#), a FP initiative in the form of an online video zine, is Winner of Ars Electronica's "State of the ART(ist) 2022" initiative.

Her works have been acquired by M+ (HK, 2019), Video Bureau (Guangzhou/Beijing, 2015), and the Power Station of Art (Shanghai Biennale). She was "Artist of the Year 2017 – Media Art" (Hong Kong Arts Development Council). In 2022, online video zine *D-Normal/V-Essay* was a winner of Ars Electronica's "State of the Art(ists) Initiative (Linz)."^[6] (updated 23 March 2024).

Notes

[1] https://www.c3a.es/exposiciones-actuales/detalle/-/asset_publisher/pQOPxnELFHj/content/linda-chiu-han-lai-retrospectiva

[2] <http://oxwarehouse.blogspot.com/2015/10/exim-2015-hong-kong-experimental-video.html>

[3] https://eng.koreafilm.or.kr/movie/PM_006954

[4] http://www.writingmachine-collective.net/wmc_e7/annotations/

[5] <https://www.caa-ins.org/archives/9923/2>

[6] <https://ars.electronica.art/stateoftheartist/en/d-normal/>

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See C.V. for art practices under “Research Creation,” pp. 11-20 as well as 2 lists on art project and screenings.

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For writings on Linda Lai, see C.V. pp. 25-26 AND actual published writings in a dedicated folder: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JzKN-pS09XpPq2NXZucfNjF_7iJpiXfl?usp=sharing

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For Lai’s recent art and art-history related published essays include, among others:

2023.02 [commissioned] “Floating Projects Assemblage From Coming Together to Events of Co-individuation as Loops and Networks of Multiplicity”:

https://cdn.aaa.org.hk/source/programme_documents/floating-projects-assemblage-from-coming-together-to-events-of-co-individuation-as-loops-and-networks-of-multiplicity-dr-linda-lai.pdf AND a play book as appendix:

https://cdn.aaa.org.hk/source/programme_documents/floating-projects-assemblage-playbook-dr-linda-lai.pdf

[2022 summer] Linda C.H. Lai, “In the Name of Protest... what critical thinking could do to preserve the space of visual articulation (for Hong Kong),” *Photoworks Annual* 28, UK, 204-211.

[2021.01] Linda C.H. Lai, “Videography as Tentacular Practices,” artist’s narrative for *Linda Chiu-han Lai. Retrospective* (5 Feb – 13 Jun 2021), Centro de Creacion Contemporanea de Andalucía (C3A), Cordoba, Spain. [essay]

https://www.c3a.es/documents/51713/83598/Linda+Lai.+TEXTO_eng/022f7129-3660-40cf-b2ac-d9e04329fac8; [event] https://www.c3a.es/exposiciones-actuales/detalle/-/asset_publisher/pQOPxnELFHj/content/linda-chiu-han-lai-retrospectiva

[2020.02] Linda C.H. Lai, “Contemporary ‘Women’s Art in Hong Kong’ Reframed: performative research on the potentialities of women art makers,” *Positions* 28:1. 237-274.

[2019.06] Linda C.H. Lai, “Algorithmic Art: Shuffling Space & Time. Interdisciplinary Media and Technology, Art-Science Dialogues, a Techno-saga” in the “Mobility & Art” section, *Transfers: Interdisciplinary Journal of Mobility Studies*, v. 9 n2, winter. Berghahn Journals, New York.

2019.05 [commissioned for art catalogue] “Ruminations: Critical Miniatures & a Montage of HK’s (Post)Coloniality” in *The Sun Teaches Us That History is Not Everything*; ed. Rafael Fonseca; Osage Art Foundation, Hong Kong. 80-87

[2017.02] 黎肖嫻 · 〈在「人類紀」以活動影像為據點重整「辯證結構」〉《新美術》2017年2月第38期·中國美術學院學報·中國杭州·核心期刊 CSSCI / CN : 33-1068/J [Linda C.H. Lai, "Moving Image as a tactical location to restore 'dialectical structures' in the Anthropocene," special issue: Anthropocene, *Journal of the National Academy of Art*, no. 38, Feb 2017, 118-131, the China Academy of Art, Hangzhou, China.]

[2015.08] Linda C.H. Lai, "Documenting Sentiments in Video Diaries around 1997: archeology of forgotten screen practices," *A Companion to Hong Kong Cinema*, edited by Gina Marchetti, Esther Yau, and Esther Cheung, Wiley-Blackwell. 462-488.

[2015.07] Linda C.H. Lai, "Video Art in Hong Kong: Organologic Sketches for a Dispersive History" in *Hong Kong Visual Art Yearbook 2014*; Chinese University of Hong Kong (Fine Arts Department), funded by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council. 14-93.

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Technology-related:

Presentation at Networked Society 2023

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rQQRNkx54UgWA7ACiVUAMiYG97K8wBSH/view?usp=drive_link [****first presentation after introduction**]

Writing Machine Collective's website 7 editions, 2004-2022):

<https://www.writingmachine-collective.net/>

« Living in the Age of Convergence: (working through) the scientific images, manifest images and the aesthetic images » [documentation of Lai's talk : abstract, video-recording, transcript]

http://www.writingmachine-collective.net/wmc_e7/annotations/

****An earlier draft version of the talk was presented at NUS, Singapore in an academic symposium.**

"Algorithmic Art: Shuffling Space and Time" (curatorial experiment on art, science and technology):

<https://vimeo.com/332921823?share=copy> (on-site documentation)

<https://shufflingspaceandtime.wordpress.com/introduction/>

D-Normal/V-Essay (On-line video zine)

<https://d-normal-v-essay.floatingprojectscollective.net/>

[algorithmic art] *Door Games, Window Frames: Near Drama*

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/35050069> (exhibition view 1)

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/48866866> (exhibition view 2)

[algorithmic art] *Vaulting Space* (2014)

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/110445362> (exhibition view)