

Shu Lea Cheang

Portfolio 2026

<http://mauvaiscontact.info>

Shu Lea Cheang is an artist and filmmaker who engages in genre bending gender hacking art practices. She drafts sci-fi narratives in her film scenario and artwork imagination. She builds social interface with transgressive plots and open network that permits public participation. Celebrated as a net art pioneer with BRANDON (1998 - 99), the first web art commissioned and collected by Guggenheim Museum, New York, Cheang represented Taiwan with mixed media installation, 3x3x6, at Venice Biennale 2019. Crafting her own genre of Scifi New Queer Cinema, she has made 4 feature films, FRESH KILL(1994), I.K.U. (2000), FLUIDØ (2017) and UKI (2023). Her theatrical director debut HAGAY DREAMING was presented at Tate Modern (2025) and Taipei Performing Arts Center (2026). In 2024, she receives the LG Guggenheim Award granted for her innovation in art and technology. She presented a survey show KI\$\$ KI\$\$ at Haus der Kunst in Munich in 2025 and a new commission LOVER LOVE at Leslie Lohman Museum of Art in New York city in 2026.

TEN WORKS (1992 - 2026)

01. Those Fluttering Objects of Desire (1992 - 2023)
02. FRESH KILL (1994)
03. Bowling Alley (1995)
04. BRANDON (1998 - 1999)
05. Locker Baby Project (2001 - 2012)
06. 3x3x6 (2019)
07. UKI (2023)
08. KI\$\$ KI\$\$ (2025)
09. Hagay Dreaming (2000 - 2026)
10. LOVER LOVE (2026)



01. Those Fluttering Objects of Desire (1992 -2023)

mixed media installation with modified red phones, coin-operated booths, video loops (60min), audio loops (60min)

1992 - Exit Art

1993 - Whitney Biennale

2018 - Digitalized and re-installed at Res gallery, London

2022 - 2023 - Museum Brandhorst (2022-2023) Part of “ Future Bodies from a recent past – sculpture, technology and the body since the 1950s”

2025 - Collection Walker Art Center

The installation contains two parts (1) Channels of Desire (made with 20 woman artists) - still image made with artists filming self with hand held polaroid camera, re-captured by betacam into strips of moving images. Insert coins to view. (2) 1-900-DESIRES, dial this number to hear audio loops on desire and politics. The installation’s mechanism operation, video/audio loops are digitalized for the restored version shown in London and Munich. This work departs from situating women as objects of gaze to engage in participatory discourse.



Installation view at Whitney Biennale 1993



Installation view at Museum Brandhorst (2022-2023)

02. FRESH KILL (80:00, 35mm, 1994)
an eco-cybernoia film

1994 - Premiered at Berlinale, Berlin Film Festival
 1995 - Whitney Biennale
 2021 - Center Pompidou Paris
 2021 - Billy Wilder cinema/Hammer Museum
 2022 - BAM New York 90s film series
 2024 - BAM, Scifi New Queer Cinema, Shu Lea Cheang
 2024 - Fresh Kill roadtrip across USA, showing in 21 cinemas.
 2026 - Streaming and Blu-ray release by Criterion

FRESH KILL envisions a post-apocalyptic landscape strewn with electronic detritus and suffering the toxic repercussions of mass marketing in a high-tech commodity culture. Exploring connections between people surviving on the margins, “*Fresh Kill* collapses the globe in solidarity against racism, sexism, and the excesses of transnational corporate capitalism as resistance circulates through networks originally designed to facilitate the exchange of labor, commodities, and capital.....” - Cinema Frames, Videoscapes, and Cyberspace: Exploring Shu Lea Cheang's *Fresh Kill* by Gina Marchetti, Duke University Press 2001

“FRESH KILL participates in the New Queer Cinema while also drawing from cybernetic critique, a framework that understands how power is exercised through systems and feedback loops rather than by singular agents. Cheang visualizes this logic through interconnected scenes of toxic waste, food supply chains, and broadcast media.” - Mindy Seu for Critirion Blu-Ray release, 2026.





Michael Stütz

May 9, 2017 near Kreuzberg, Germany · 🌐

On Saturday, [The Xposed International Queer Film Festival](#) will screen [FRESH KILL](#) by the wonderful [Shulea Cheang](#) at 22:00 pm at [Kino Moviemento](#). The film celebrated it's premiere 23 years ago at the [Berlinale Panorama](#) and we could not be happier to show this gem in the cinema again. The film feels not one single bit dated. On the contrary: by ironically challenging ethnocentric normative expectations and it's combination of radical environmentalism, postcolonial feminism, and cyborg intelligence, it was way ahead of it's time. Not to be missed!



03. BOWLING ALLEY (a cybernetic installation, 1995)

Commissioned by Walker Art Center
with an AT&T New Art/New Visions grant.

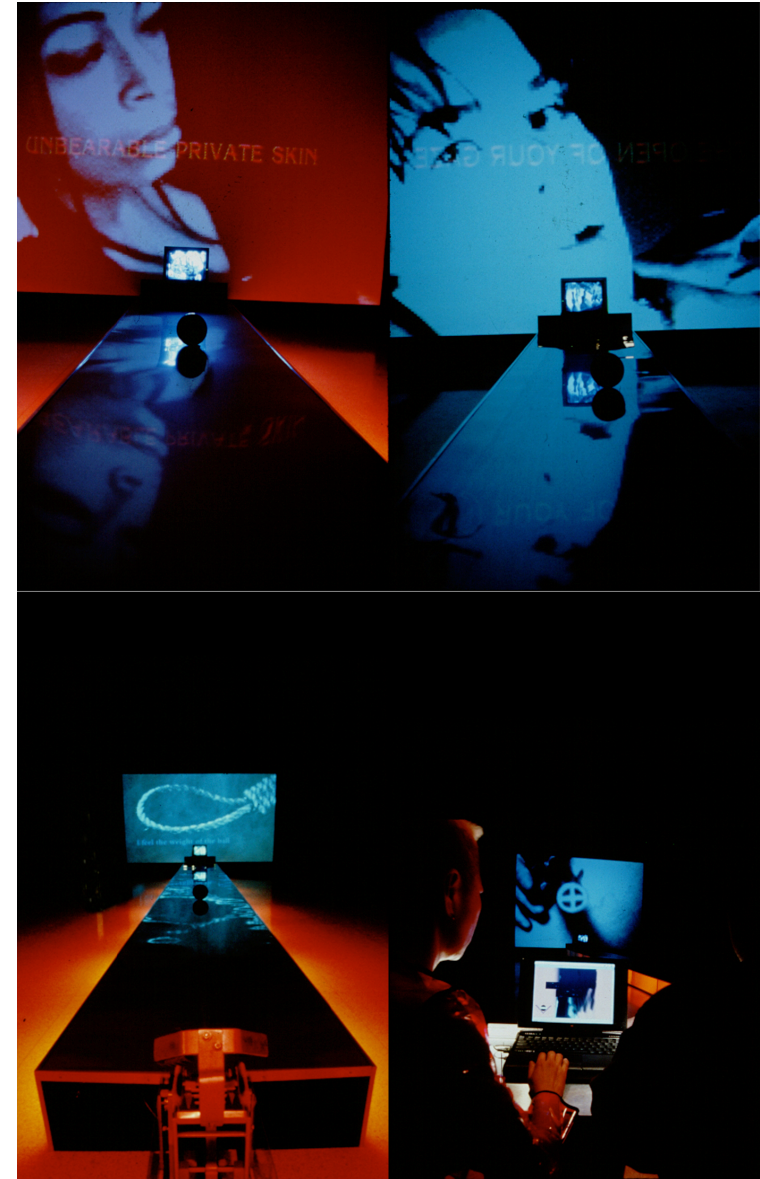
Exploring issues of power, access and desire in public and private spaces, Bowling Alley is a cybernetic installation linking 3 public spaces-Walker Art Center's gallery 7, Bryant Lake Bowl, Minneapolis and the bowling website - through ISDN lines that transmit sensor data. Bowling at Bryant Lake Bowl triggers changes in the chain of site connections, scrambling the gallery's laserdisk projection and interfering with netusers/cyberbowlers paths through the website.

.....There are some questions that the concept of Bowling Alley readily poses. The dynamic of power and desire as they relate to access. Who has access to the tools of change. In a world that has become desensitized, polarized, chaotic, and violent, "how do we cultivate that cyberland to become more of a diverse community?" asks Cheang " - written by techno-culture writer Jason Sack,



What comes to your mind?

The 30 seconds you hold up the ball before tossing it off down the bowling lane?



installation view, Walker Art Center, 1995

04. BRANDON (net art, 1998 – 1999)

a one year narrative project in installments

Guggenheim Museum New York - commission & collection

<http://brandon.guggenheim.org>

BRANDON: A One-Year Narrative Project in Installments explores issues of gender fusion and techno-body in both public space and cyberspace. The project, a multi-artist/multi-author/multi-institutional collaboration, unfolds over the course of one year (1998 - 1999).

Using the metaphor of a road trip through different zones in cyberspace, the project is derived from the highly-publicized case of Brandon/Teena Brandon of Falls City, Nebraska, a gender-ambiguous individual who was anatomically female but lived as a man. In 1993, Brandon was sexually assaulted and murdered. Uploading Brandon onto the net, the work explores Brandon's transient presence on the web, using both his murder trial as well as noted cases of sexual assault in cyberspace to explore the debates surrounding issues of crime and punishment.

BRANDON was restored and relaunched in 2017 and included in rhizome.org's Net Art Anthology

<https://www.guggenheim.org/press-release/guggenheim-restores-first-internet-artwork-acquisition-through-conserving-computer-based-art-initiative>



BRANDON installation at Guggenheim Museum Soho.



Web interface connecting Guggenheim Museum with Waag Society, Amsterdam.

Two public forums were held at Theatre Anatomicum,
Waag Society, Amsterdam

- (1) Digi Gender Social Body Under the knife, under the spell of anesthesia
- (2) Would the jurors please stand up?
Crime and punishment as net spectacle

WOULD THE JURORS PLEASE STAND UP ?
November 17 - 20, 1999

ONLINE VIRTUAL COURT
Theatrum Anatomicum
De Waag, Amsterdam

Society for Old and New Media
in association with
the Guggenheim Museum
request your participation
in BRANDON Virtual Court:
an experiment on joint decision
making and
conflict resolution on the Net

ON TRIAL
Cases of sexual assaults that blur
the boundaries between male/female
and actual/fictitious space.

CASE STUDIES
1234567
Research and script development at
Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue,
Harvard University

CALL FOR JURORS
Each Net trial session consists of 8
JURORS and a moderator. The Jurors
will be pre-selected after completing a
stress level test (provided by Gender
Identity Clinic) and are required to
study the documented cases that make

CALL FOR JURORS **BRANDON** **BODY OF EVIDENCE**

NOT AT ALL
SLIGHTLY
MODERATELY
MORE & MORE
EXTREMELY

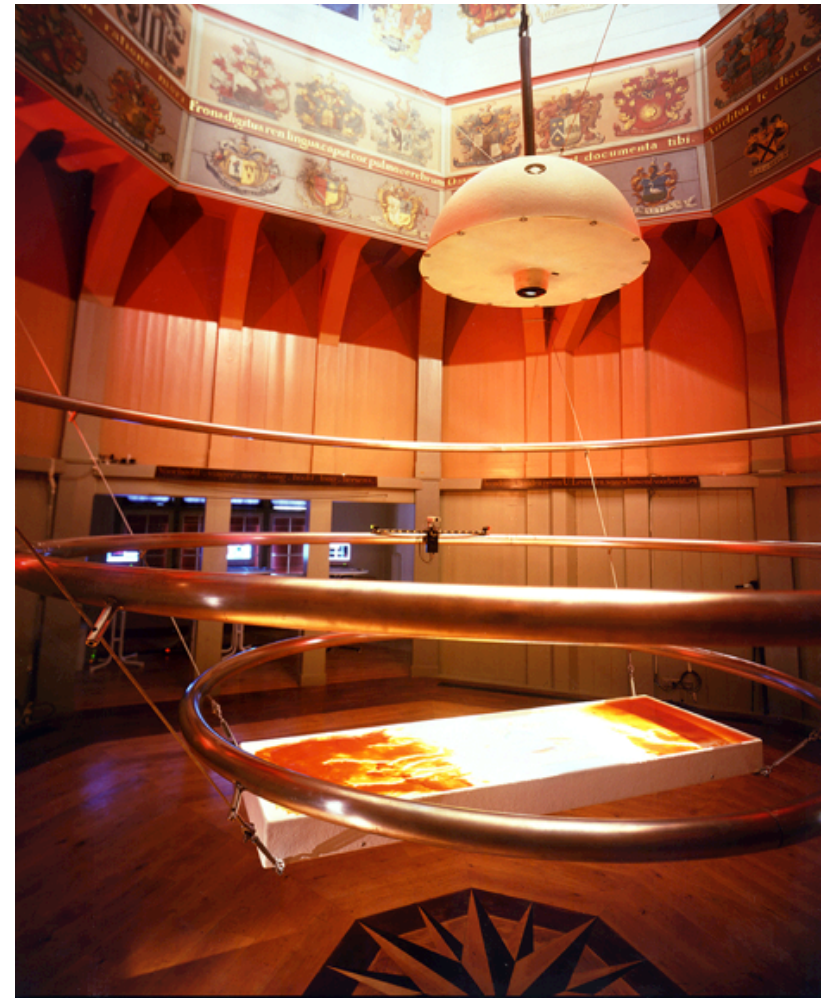
COMPLETE THE STRESS LEVEL TEST ←

SUBMIT YOURSELF AS A JUROR

- Headaches
- Nervousness or shakiness inside
- Repeated unpleasant thoughts that won't leave your mind
- Faintness or dizziness
- Loss of sexual interest or pleasure
- Feeling critical of others
- The idea that someone else can control your thoughts
- Feeling others are to blame for most of your troubles
- Trouble remembering things

> ↑ **SUBM** <

“Cheang's work has its own wild architecture: a fusion of testimony, chat, Web searches, puzzlelike interfaces, and a scrolling "highway" that constitutes the spine of the piece. With technical grace and an unprecedentedly epic scale, Brandon makes a bid to become the inaugural piece in the canon of online art.” - Fanning the Fame by Austin Bunn, Village Voice 1998



Theatre Anatomicum installation view, 1998

05. LOCKER BABY PROJECT (MIXED MEDIA INSTALLATION, 2001 – 2012)

BABY PLAY (NTT/ICC, TOKYO, 2001)

BABY LOVE (PALAIS DE TOKYO, PARIS, 2005)

BABY WORK (ZERO1 BIENNALE, SAN JOSE, 2012)

The Locker Baby project conceived in 2001 reflects a time when science is accused of out of control and scifi fantasia fortells a future that is now. The quest for rechargeable robot labor continues, intelligent pets open up new markets and transgenic clones are among us. Versions updated, bodies unwired, behaviours dictated, what remain to be programmed are "memory" and "emotions".

The Locker Baby project proposes a fictional scenario set in year 2030. The DPT (DollyPolly Transgency) clones locker babies out of genes extracted from deep sea pearls harvested off Okinawa Island. Coin lockers situated in busy Tokyo train stations are breeding grounds for underworld test tube fertilization and the cloning of locker babies. The biobot babies "brewed" out of the lockers are the Clone Generation who are entrusted to negotiate human "memory" and "emotions". Locker Baby holds the key to unlock a networked inter-sphere of ME-motion (memory-emotion), a playing field of texts and sound that can only be triggered by human interaction.



BABY LOVE (2005), the second installment of the Locker Baby project, consists of 6 large size (170cm diameter) teacups and 6 clone babies (70 cm tall). Each teacup is an auto-driving mobile unit. Each baby installed with a mac-mini is wifi linked to the net depository of popular love songs. Baby Love situates human and its baby clones in a perpetual spin of fairground teacup ride. The teacup ride, its spinning wheel allowing direction maneuver and speed variation, shuffles and remixes the love songs in the baby engine. A gentle ride can turn into fast spin, the data jams and jammed, we are left to sort out the ME with the babies in the swirling teacups. The crash would eventually happen. <http://babylove.biz>



3D modeling of teacup mechanism



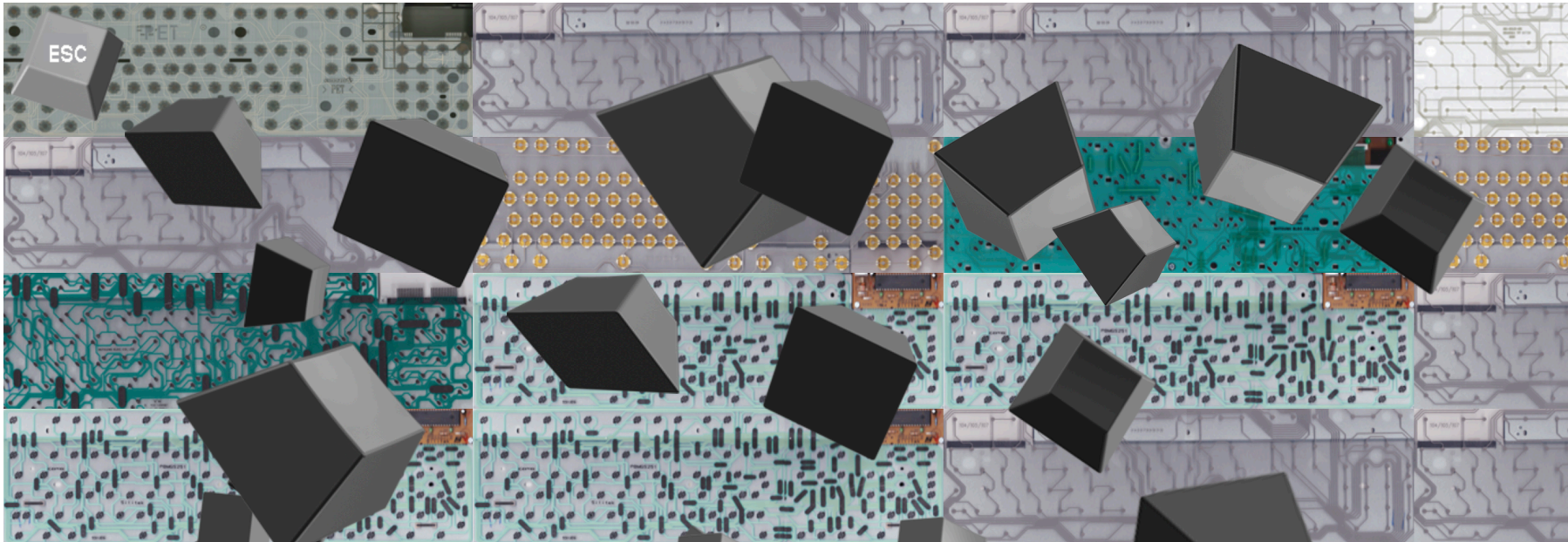
Public riding teacups at ZERO 1, San Jose 2006



BABYLOVE Palais de Tokyo Shu Lea Cheang (2005)

Installation photo: Florian Kleinferrn

installation view at Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2005



BABY WORK (2012) as a performative installation situates the public as BABY who works to align the lost ME data. Set in a post-keyboard E-trashscape, BABY WORK collapses keys and rewires junked keyboards to put the baby/public at work. A toy claw crane machine is installed in the middle of a mountain of broken keys. The keys are thrown about while the public adorned in worker's white cotton gloves collect the scattered keys. Picking up keys, the public arrange randomly the keys on the intelligent wall made up by the rewired used keyboard matrix. Each key placed triggers a sound note. With many babies (the public) at work, keys with sound notes are patched, (a)synchronized into a sonic expression of lost memory and emotions.

YOU ARE THE BABY. WORK.

<http://babywork.biz>



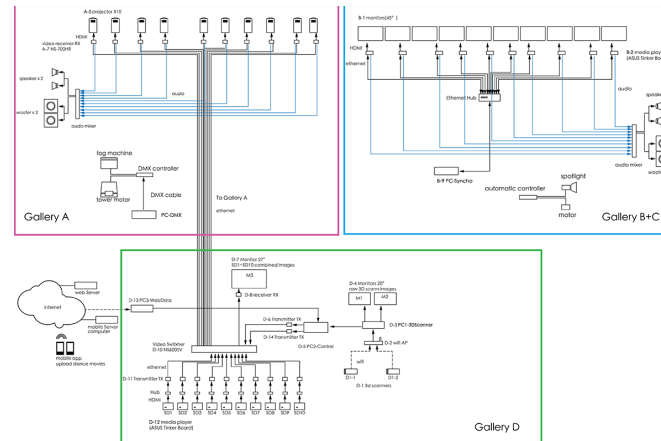
installation view, ZERO1, San Jose 2012

06. 3x3x6 (mixed media installation, 2019)
<http://3x3x6.com>



Palazzo delle Prigioni, installation view, Venice Biennale 2019

Reflecting upon the transformation of surveillance techniques since the panopticon to include contemporary 3-D facial recognition, AI, and the Internet, Shu Lea Cheang's 3x3x6 restages the rooms of the Palazzo delle Prigioni - a Venetian prison from the sixteenth century in operation until 1922 - as a high-tech surveillance space. Taking as its starting point the story of libertine writer Giacomo Casanova, imprisoned in the Prigioni in 1755, Cheang has conducted in-depth studies on ten historical and contemporary cases of subjects incarcerated because of gender or sexual dissent, including Marquis de Sade and Michel Foucault, as well as contemporary cases from Taiwan and South Africa. Their fictionalized portraits become part of the exhibition's system; the title of which refers to today's standardized architecture of industrial imprisonment: a 3 x 3 square-meter cell constantly monitored by 6 cameras.....Cheang uses the site of the prison to create a glitch in its histories and to create a real-time dissident interface that the visitor is invited to join. Involving legal documents, fake news, historical reports, myths and fantasies, as well as the data retrieved from 3-D surveillance cameras and the images uploaded by visitors, the exhibition constructs a collective counter-history of sexuality, where trans-punk-science fiction, queer, and anti-colonial imaginations provide visual and critical frameworks to think through the histories of subjection and resistance and to activates a critical proliferation of poetic and



floor plan, installation sketch

hardware software, network wifi connection

installation view



07. U.K.I. (80:00, 2023)

<http://u-k-i.co>

a Scifi Viral Alt-Reality Cinema

premiered at Filmfest München

Shown at Las Art Foundation (Berlin), Centre Pompidou (Paris),
MoMA (New York) among other venues

Set your electric sheep free range.
It is 2060, what do you do with expired humanoids?

UKI's storyline unfolds as we follow a defunct replicant REIKO dumped on Etrashville - a vast dump for tech - who tries to pull themselves back together with the help of its transgenic inhabitants. A virtual BioNet owned by GENOM Co. has occupied human bodies and re-engineered red blood cells into nano-computing self-generated orgasms. Parallel to REIKO's trajectory is that of an infected city in which a besieged diner gathers the infected to exchange own orgasm data for fresher, intenser, mutual orgasm. The diner is also the meeting-place for hackers who traverse time andspace, bringing in news of protest and manifestation while uncovering GENOM's bio-engineering scheme. As the plot thickens, REIKO's body is coded, recoded and finally collapses to re-emerge as UKI the Virus. Setting back GENOM's plans, UKI the Virus seems on the brink of swarming through the infected city to liberate the red blood cells. Through virus Becoming, viral Love, we find a way to reclaim our viral bodies.

"This extraordinarily visually intense film moves from 3D graphics to game engine generated cinematic mise en scène to visual effects enhanced live action scenes in an extraordinary tour de force of contemporary digital collage." - Matthew Fuller, Cultural Studies, Goldsmiths, University of London



We are part of a [science] fiction playing out with bio-informatics, bio-engineering and mobile digital media. We have forsaken the prostheses cyborg-bodies and made kins with microbes. Bacteria, fungi, archaeobacteria, protists, green algae, plankton, planarians, amoebas are put under the microscopes as we study them, adopt them and embed them into our collective Open Source Body. We have departed from gender binary and deviated into transgenic discourse. To live with the virus is to trans-mutate our bodies, teleporting our viral bodies into a brave new Eco-System.

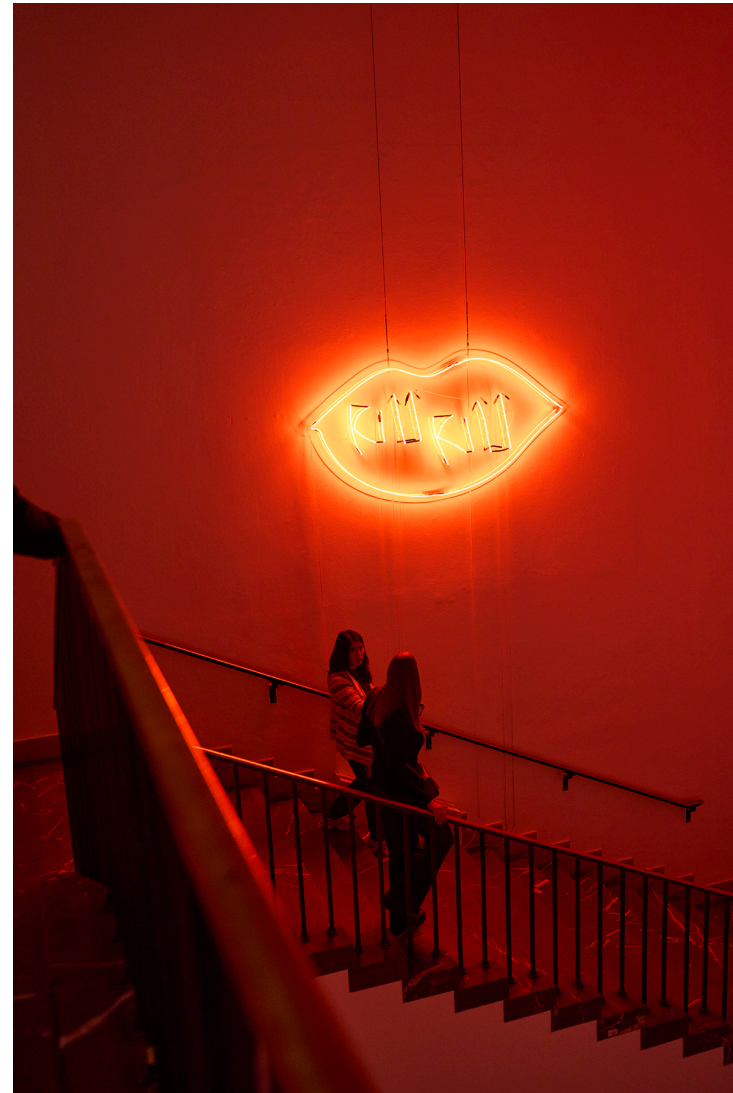


08. KI\$\$ KI\$\$ (2025)
mixed media Installation
Haus der Kunst, Munich

I am activated and in motion, virtually playing a part [in a] real life motion capture yet to be rendered.

Occupying the 3 rooms in North gallery, KI\$\$ KI\$\$ is made up with 3 titles - Home Delivery, Spoken Words and Portal Porting. The exhibition updates works and artefacts into new landscape formations extending through four gallery spaces. Trash appears as a primary theme that leads the investigation into the entanglement of biosphere and technosphere. Each gallery is its own world in which internet-based installation, software interaction, and multiplayer performance invite the audience to explore and play.

Employing science-fiction narratives focus on non-human intelligences, both natural and artificial. "KI\$\$ KI\$\$" reimagines the exhibition as a transformative journey or a "machine of experience."



KI\$\$ KI\$\$, installation view, Haus der Kunst, 2025



HOME DELIVERY, installation view, Haus der Kunst, 2025



SPOKEN WORDS, installation view, Haus der Kunst, 2025



PORTAL PORTING, installation view, Haus der Kunst, 2025

09. HAGAY DREAMING (2020 -2026)

Theatre Performance

World premiere: Tate Modern, London, 2025

Taipei Performing Arts Center, 2026

A Techno-Fantasia Guided Theater of Revival
in collaboration with Dondon Hounwn
<http://hagaydreaming.net>

Derived from a fabricated legend recounted by Dondon Hounwn, an artist and a practicing shaman, *Hagay Dreaming* recounts a story based on an ancient legend connected to the Truku indigenous culture of Taiwan. In her dreams, a hunter meets a group of spiritual non-binary beings called 'Hagay' and they pass on ancestral knowledge of living, weaving and hunting to the hunter. The hunter returned to the tribe and continued sharing Hagay's knowledge.

The stage design coverts the pouring rain, the transfer of knowledge in knitting and hunting into dazzling projections of laser beams. Applying the digital technology of motion capture and image processing, the multiplicity of genders are constantly transitioning. The tribal totem "dowriq" with the spectra of laser light beaming through summons the ancestral spirits to watch over us, guiding us forest walking, chanting, dreaming, weaving, hunting, gender hacking, leading us to the spiritual other-world.





Hagay Dreaming, Taipei Performing Arts Center, 2026

10. LOVER LOVE, 2026

Four-channel digital film (color, sound, 28:00)
with movable screens and interactive speaker system

In memory of Aérea Negrot (1980–2023)



LOVER LOVE, screen grab of 4 channel video preview

LOVER LOVE, a new commission for the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, begins with a portal. A window is flung open and the gray wall of an apartment block dissolves into a turbulent, overcast sky, against which a smoky being is enveloped by a six-winged seraphim—an angel of the highest order. This opening transition is both a gesture to Cheang’s longtime collaborator, musician Aérea Negrot (1980–2023), who died by suicide, and a marker of our entry into a hybrid space of documentation and imagination. For this film, presented as a four-channel installation, Cheang worked with eight intergenerational performers in Tucson, Arizona, all of whom contributed their own experiences, narratives, and dreams of and for trans and gender nonconforming life in today’s United States. This collaboratively scripted film moves between physical and virtual space: between performances in a motel room, a junkyard, and city streets amid surrounding nature, we can see desert plants blooming anthropomorphic appendages and souls escaping inhuman oppression to take transhuman flight.

The gallery’s four screens, themselves portals to the film’s world, can be shifted by viewers into and out of the path of each projector. Each movement triggers a segment of Negrot’s 2011 track “It’s Lover, Love”—a dreamy, minimalist meditation on the lingering traces of broken promises and vanished love. These aural and physical shifts create new compositions, morphing the installation into an active landscape in which to navigate agency, survival, and intimacy in a time of escalating political precarity.





LOVER LOVE, installation view, Leslie Lohman Museum of Art, 2026