Lai Chiu-han, Linda is a research-based interdisciplinary artist, seeking extension of her doctoral training in Cinema Studies at New York University to relevant artistic and theoretical endeavours, whose artworks of experimental videos and digital/mixed-media installations have been exhibited in Singapore, Oberhausen, Barcelona, Paris, London, Shanghai, Taipei, Seoul, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong and more. Currently an Associate Professor in critical theory and intermedia arts at City University of Hong Kong's School of Creative Media, Lai is also the founder of the Writing Machine Collective and the pilot project, "Floating Projects". In Indi-Visual at the Experimental Film & Video Festival 2017 in Seoul, a multitude of her videographic works, including her latest work in the year, Micro Narratives, a Visual Poem, was screened. Lai has also curated arts projects, namely Levitated Potentiality: Moving Images at Art Central 2017 Media X MUMM in Hong Kong and Orientations: Boundaries Surveyed at the Experimental Film & Video Festival in Seoul. A total of 26 of her videos (2000-2015) have been archived by Video Bureau in Guangzhou and Beijing in 2016-17.
「多年來，我在不同的時間按下（錄影機）紅掣，都出於當下的直覺：I really want to remember this.（我真的想記住）」黎肖卿形容這是與眾不同的衝動。「我從小就會做一些動作，像塗畫喜歡的『公仔』，這一本是圖書館的即興想像，讓自己記着身邊的事件。這不是客觀的『記着』，而是留下一些痕跡，讓我以後可以記起身邊的事。」

避走記憶寶山錄像庫

因此，黎肖卿的錄像藝術創作，會不會在創作之初就已經決定成績的規模，而是一幅又一幅搜羅自大記憶庫的瞬間圖畫。過程中充滿不斷而過的驚喜。「我每次創作都是玩兩個遊戲：一是久不久接獲自己的錄像資料庫有否新增，二是以外人的眼光翻開自己的錄像資料庫，看看一些之前不曾為意的新事新感受。」

一塊她在2017年的錄像新作《微事，詩變》，這個作品源於她在多年前做書，當時在創作歷程經常想起的一首詩一首詩：年間採用了大量她的錄像資料庫，時間間接橫跨18年（1999-2017），蘇聯香港多個地區以及香港海外城市的吉光片羽，重接合詩歌的片言隻語，構成作品的歷史片段，手塗塗鴉等，利用黎肖卿的方法，在各種看似斷裂的時空開闢出不為人察覺的敘事視角。詩歌即組對世界的想像力與專注力。

蒙太奇下的普通人歷史

這位擅長於資料存取的圖書館管理員，同時也是把握另類時間裏的歷史家：「如果我寫歷史不只是用文字，而是用影像，歷史會是如此樣？」

「影像有個奇怪的特性，當你用攝影機記下一個影像，記著的是『現象』的本身，是表面的面貌。影像為我們存在下的，真的就是那些光影和質感，若有因果關係或起承轉合的歷史，那是我們後來強加於影像上的。當我記得有一個這樣的影像，同時又有另一個影像具有另一種模樣，兩個畫面拼貼出的『關係』就是具時間性的活動。蒙太奇於我構成出一些『可能的關係』或者想的構建因果關係。」

主宰大歷史離開記政書的大寫大義，每件事起承轉合得來得去所當然。黎肖卿謂深信現代現實往往是繁雜積碎複雜的，不按邏輯邏理，無法解釋，無名言狀，由碎片組成的日常生活史，History of everyday life is from the bottom，脈絡彼此交織的歷史，相對於詩論式大歷史、政治舞台為本的歷史，我們講的是普通人生活的累積，媒體記憶的流連。

鼓勵藝術資源共享

「今今時講做藝術家，不可能只是做創作，還應該去追尋和澄清自己在做甚麼——不是因著怕失去自已所享有的位置，而是媒體藝術是一條如此精彩卻又常被誤解的路徑，其他人怎可以不知道？鼓勵多人明白我們，也是鼓勵觀眾培養，同時可供助資源。」

藝術之路上許許樂樂，資源或許匤匤，然而自1998年發展城市大學創意媒體學院至今的黎肖卿經常教導學生，在豐富的年代更要選取追求一種能力：把丁點資源變大，探索事物的潛在性。

她在2010年成立，2015年組成的實驗空間「點點」合作十位年青藝術創作，提供創作空間之餘，也一同在探索這個「藝術工場」在拓展空間以外更多可能性。「我們要認識資源，知道甚麼人甚麼時候可以跟自己合作。」

「點點」也在於這信念，讓不同才能的人走在一起，在不同的創作計劃裡互相幫助......當中思考的是如何生存，同時在生存裡保存夢想、友誼、互助是必須的條件。」

「點點」及將於今年秋季邁入新階段，除了實體空間轉移 barcelona，亦將繼續實體資源共享的意味。空間的租金轉而由年青藝術創作者共負負荷，黎肖卿則把資本投放於其他發展方向，例如投資新媒體、支持藝術家駐留計劃、增聘全職員工等。蒙波哥，從一個想法跳躍成一個體，再一個個身體跳躍到力量凝聚的創意空間，以至更廣闊更多未知的未來想像。可否不是黎肖卿以生命實踐的個人蒙太奇？這對她來說也是活在新媒體氛圍當中必須的心態和方向。

全面的策展人、藝術家及教育工作者，長期專注推動媒體藝術發展，具有影響力。除個展創作、教育和進行研究外，更營辦「點點」創作空間，提供發表和交流平臺，培育新一代年青媒體藝術家。黎氏對本地媒體藝術發展建有貢獻，其藝術成就有目共睹。

《記憶存庫：流散的碑石》 Mnemonic Archiving: a Dispersive Monument
“An intuition really want to remember this’ drives me to press my video camera’s red button over the years,” Lai describes it as a born instinct. “Even as a kid, I would make mementos of what happened around me, drawing characters I liked or making a portrait collection of my classmates in writing, to leave traces of what impressed me.”

Image archive: mountains of precious memories to ramble in

This explains Lai’s videographic works. Rather than planning and scripting a work to be executed through production, she seeks to “see what happens” through making collage out of images from her massive image archive, a method that premises on the process of artistic discovery and journeys of surprises. “My artistic projects are a 2-step game: an occasional curious scan of my image archive to see what I’ve got, followed by purposeful interpretation and formation of hidden moments and sentiments unknown to me when the images were captured. Usually, something pops up when I look through the archive from a stranger’s perspective, and this is how several of my artworks were inspired.” It takes a meticulous explorer to comb through the enormous image archive, and Lai compares herself to a librarian. “Media arts, especially when it comes to new media, premise on data, their sheer quantities and creative potentials. Technical advancement accelerates the amalgamation and accumulation of data in ways that create mnemonic systems that surpass the limits of human memory. What to do with tremendous amount of data, how to form libraries and navigate through databases become extremely important to media artists.”

The inception of her latest work, Micro Narratives, a Visual Poem in 2017, followed the path she described. Inspired by a poem she wrote many years ago, which emerges time and again in her creative moments, she searched video diaries of the past 18 years (1999 – 2017) and found different locations in Hong Kong and seven other cities abroad, still photographs, found footage and doodles and so on. Re-ordered fragments of the poem then organised the montage treatment of the diverse raw material. The work transported sight-and-sound fragments through time and space with syncopated accents. Fractured narrative calls for new modes of attentiveness, stretching the sensible and the imaginary.

A montage of the history of common people

The adept archive librarian also aspires to be a historian with an unusual kind of time capsule. “What would history look like if represented primarily through sight and sound?”

“There’s something unique about images. Our camerawork facilitates access to the surfaces and appearances of a phenomenon. An image is light and shadows, and texture and forms, preserved for direct perceptual experiences. Causal relations are what we impose onto or between images. As I see an image, I may associate it with another. Juxtaposing them is a creative act, an artistic decision. In this way, montage invents possible relations, and constructs new meanings.”

Grand historical narratives hinge on cause and consequence, which form the plots. Loose events are assumed to cohere as a chain of cause and effect relationships. But Lai finds lived reality to be often chaotic, complex, full of chance encounters and defies being reduced to rational rules and tidy principles. Our daily life is composed of abundant and loose details, demanding rich description without complete, logical explanation. “The history of everyday life is bottom-up and its many strands crisscross. It stands against monumental history biased towards the change of political regimes and government alone. My experimental historiography seeks to highlight the accumulation of the quotidian, how it is preserved in mediated records and in what specific ways they are handed down to us.”
Facilitating shared resources for arts

"Being an artist today takes more than creative endeavours. You have to articulate what you’re doing to others. This is less due to self-enhancing justification, but more because media arts requires more holistic understanding in contemporary society. It is also about audience development, which subsequently connects with resource sharing." Artistic pursuits can be a thorny path aggravated by the lack of resources and care. But Lai, since teaching at City University’s School of Creative Media in 1998, has always incorporated into her artistic pedagogy an economy principle: despite living in an age of affluence, always make the most out of what we have, and maximize the potentials of our tools and other material resources.

Founded in 2010 and reformed in 2015, Lai’s “Floating Projects” (FP) has connected more than ten emerging artists over the years by providing them with a base for deep conversations on their creative pursuits. The young artists also explore the potential of an art production site beyond white cube principles. "We should understand our resources so we may effectively partner with each other in different projects at different moments. This is also the mission of "Floating Projects": bring together artists of different talents to complement one another in order to explore alternative forms of cash. Survival is no banal issue in Hong Kong today; we learn to survive in order to learn sustainability, and in turn to keep each other’s dreams alive. In this context, an inter/cross-media orientation is essential."

"Floating Projects" will enter phase 2.0 this fall as the group relocates to a new district to further its experiments. As such, FP artists will share the rent whereas Lai will shift her support to developmental projects such as equipment acquisition, artist-residency programmes and re-structuring the staff-team. "Floating Projects" is the montage of an idea, a community, multiple resources, conceptual vibrancy, and a future-oriented space anticipating the questions and prospects of living in a digital milieu.

Lai is acclaimed as a curator, artist and arts educator. Over the years, she is committed to enhancing the development of media arts and is influential in the field. Besides artistic pursuits, teaching and conducting research, Lai also runs "Floating Projects", an arts space for emerging media artists to exchange views and publish their works. Lai’s contribution to the development of media arts in Hong Kong is immense, her artistic achievements are widely lauded.