

SCHOOL  
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創意媒體學院



CENTRE FOR  
APPLIED  
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# SCM | ACIM RESEARCH

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## LINDA CHIU-HAN LAI

### HONG KONG ARTIST OF THE YEAR IN MEDIA ARTS, 2018

It is the belief that art must be society's location for radical thinking, and therefore that art deserves promotion and preservation for the advancement of society, which informs all Linda Lai's academic writing and artistic research-creations. Her research activities are based on her commitment to rethink the terrain of art and culture rather than simply be a stakeholder in it.

Dr. Lai's artistic-research practice is specifically engaged in historiography and how we remember and engage with the past. She takes a "media archaeology" approach to technology in order to understand the place of technology in our everyday life and art making and this is the subject of her GRF/SRG-supported research that resulted in the first comprehensive survey ever made on the history of HK video art. Lai is also interested in examining the traditional forms in which we tell stories about the past in favor of what she calls "micro-narratives" that break open encrusted ways of thinking.

The many years of her research-based intermedia and videographic work found mature convergence in 2016-17. Video Bureau (Guangzhou and Beijing) completed the archiving of 26 of her video art pieces (2000-2015), elevating her frequent festival appearances in international venues to permanent access for researchers worldwide. Two of her new experimental videos, *Micro Narratives* and *Ordinary Women*, were published in more than one event, alongside 6 other

works formerly made in festivals and exhibitions.

This recognition was echoed in July 2017 in her solo screening, "Indi-Visual: Linda Lai," with the theme "Montage as Critical Strategy: Fragments, Networks, Theory" at EXiS 2017 (14th Experimental Film & Video Festival in Seoul), co-organized by the Korean Film Archive, where her works were shown in a dedicated program alongside other world-class artist features. Previously, in 2015, the Experimental Film & Video Festival in Macau had presented her solo show titled, "Writing the Fracture and Immersion of Memory Texts: Linda Lai Video Art Solo Screening."

Since 2016, her artistic practice has taken a new turn. She now examines moving images not just as screened events but also as vibrant objects. Premised on new materialism, she builds her own films and found moving images into everyday objects, creating "memory objects" that embody and reveal the lived experiences of history. Such is the core of her artistic experiments in two site-specific installations, "Mnemonic Archiving: a Dispersive Monument," which was staged at the Pearl Lam Galleries in Singapore (2016) and, in a revised form, in Hong Kong (2017).

Lai leads the Floating Projects Collective, which was launched in 2015 with numerous recent SCM graduates to explore modes of sustainability in art-



making and implement an “economy of contribution.” In this collaborative art experiment, an artists’ collective occupies an 1800 square-foot disused factory unit in Wong Chuk Hang where the young artists exchange roles as curators, makers, organizers and writers for each other instead of exchanging payment. Exhibitions take place in an open studio format and artists are given the chance to discuss their work and receive feedback from experienced curators. Floating Projects also has an online forum where emerging and established artists write about moving images, contemporary art, cultural events and sound practices.

Lai considers Floating Projects as the ‘afterlife’ of SCM’s push for discovery -- now in the form of the young artists’ first solo shows, curatorial experiments, and opportunity for shared critique, as well as networking with domestic and overseas artists: “Young people do not have enough space to enact their artistic aspirations. This concrete place to gather to make dreams happen also creates a horizontal structure of association that encourages collaboration as much as individuation,” she says.

Lai is also the Artistic Director of “The Writing Machine,” founded by her in 2004, which is an HK-based media art collective with a research-based orientation and theoretically engaged in new media issues. This collective explores computational thinking and contemporary art. The Writing Machine Collective (WMC), since its inception, has published five funded exhibitions (2004, 2007, 2008, 2011, and 2014) in Hong Kong.

Linda Lai speaks at many international art and media venues, most recently at London’s Tate Britain and, in

recognition of her outstanding accomplishments as an artist and her contributions to art education and culture in Hong Kong, she has just been honored by Hong Kong Arts Development Council with the Hong Kong Artist of the Year Award in Media Arts. Congratulations Dr. Lai!



Dr. Linda Lai’s Performance with the Floating Project Collective performed at the 22nd International Symposium on Electronic Arts 2016