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LEAP

1950-2009

情感汹涌

HOOKED ON
A FEELING

张慧/ZHANG HUI

艾德·阿特金斯/ED ATKINS

塞西尔·B·埃文斯/CÉCILE B. EVANS

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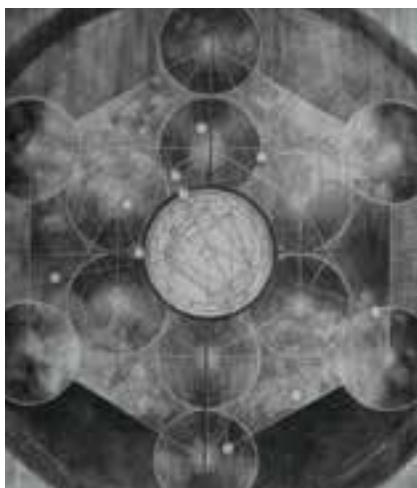


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Ed Atkins, *Happy Birthday!!*, 2014
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陈滢如: 不可见的连接

Yin-ju Chen: Invisible Links



段子迎
Duan Ziying



《超星鉴定》(局部)

2016年

四频录像, 水晶、文件、铁板等

主频录像8分27秒、次频录像4分、

其余录像循环播放

Extrastellar Evaluations (detail)

2016

4 videos, 36 metal plates, vinyl cut pattern,

28 framed photos, 1 handwritten letter,

24 clear quartz crystals

The main video 8'27", the minor video 4',

the rest videos are looping slides

Photo: Jeff Warrin

Courtesy KADIST San Francisco, Chi-Wen Gallery

and the artist



台湾艺术家陈滢如常常将自己置于一个危险又富有挑战性的位置：她以神秘学的方法，演绎推理宇宙与人类关系的叙事。当人们问她相不相信这些内容时，她总是笃定地点头。陈滢如的创作因此兼具两种特性，一方面她会极尽所能拓宽视野，阅读、采访调查她并不擅长的领域，从宇宙学横跨致幻剂的研究；另一方面，她的作品传递给人的信息就像她的回答一样，表现得不容置疑——如同假借艺术之名转述来自占星师或灵媒的信息，让人无从分辨虚构或真实，从而松动人的意志。

分析蒋介石星座的作品《共登世界大同之境》（2012）是陈滢如实践非科学方法的开始。据她所说，这种视点受到阿波罗登月（伪）纪录片《为了全人类》（1989）的启发。这件三频影像作品以冥王星的画面揭开序幕，因为1930年被发现的冥王星在占星学上具有“毁灭”和“重生”的双重特质，这与当时二次世界大战的动荡相吻合，它为整个作品奠定了永恒轮回不可抗拒的基调。在其他两个影像中，陈滢如在星空背景之下用文字说明星体如何影响蒋介石的一生，同时呈现二战和台湾民众簇拥着集体哀悼蒋介石的影像。

陈滢如试图用神秘学指认历史，很容易引向一种消极的宿命论，或者让观众一笑而过。她的作品值得推敲之处，在于她借用非科学研究的理论分析实证或思辨系统所争论的概念。比如《共登世界大同之境》抹去了已存在的、对具体人物形象和事件的讨论，通过星象来模糊极权主义和集体意识的根源。如果不是宇宙决定了人类命运，那么是什么？陈滢如阅读汉娜·阿伦特的《人的处境》时，发现人类对于宇宙的兴趣（1957年第一颗人造卫星的发射）可以解释为“逃逸地球的渴望”。她的作品就此提问：人类社会的造神是否也是一种逃逸的方式？被神化的领袖与人对宇宙的探索有什么关系？在此，陈滢如对于神秘学的兴趣并不指向一种对另类世界观的信仰，而是倾向于提示集体意识在多个层面存在的可能性。

2013年以来陈滢如的系列项目以多种角度再次试验了非科学的创作方法。多媒体装置作品《天一象、地一物》（2013–2014）运用中世纪炼金术士、占星师、医生帕拉塞尔苏斯的宇宙/身体合二为一的理论来构建作品材料，例如她用生命之树的图像描绘日、月、金、木、水、火、土跟身体、宇宙的对对应关系。在该作品的影像部分，她自己住院的场景与脑部解剖的黑白纪录片、天体系统、病毒侵蚀体内的动画交叉出现。这个手法规避了《共登世界大同之境》中对历史政治的跳跃性指涉，迂回地给观者构造一个微观宇宙的印象。直到下一个阶段的作品《屠学表》（2014），她用碳条绘制出五起近代亚洲政治清算和屠杀事件的星盘和曼陀罗图腾，才再次将“第三只眼”的方法推向了极端。这一系列的第三件作品《超距作用》（2015），借用量子纠缠理论连接上述作品中涉及的身体与政治。如果可以给陈滢如这套较为完整的创作方法加以图示，那么它将呈现出的是宇宙、国家统治、政府规训人民的体制（如医疗）、身体、量子从大至小，互相缠结、层层包裹的网络。

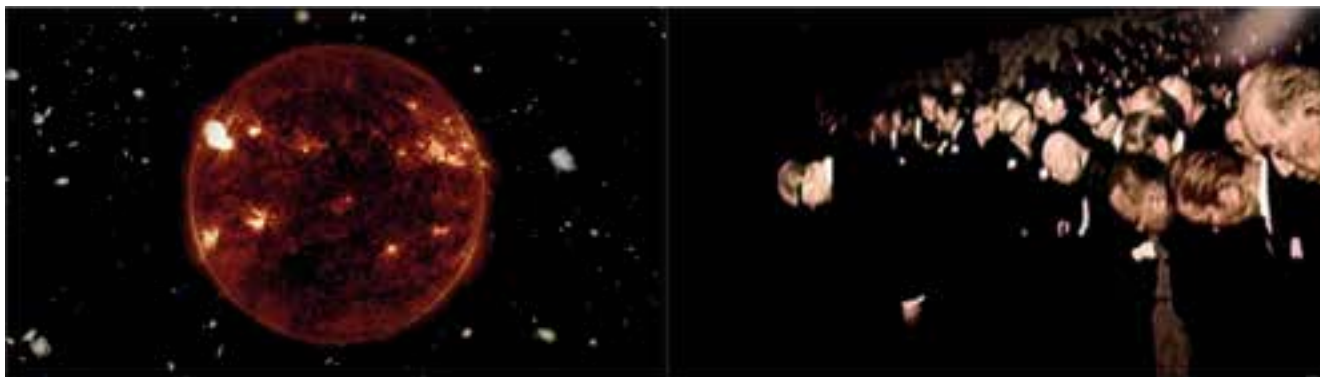
陈滢如上述作品中宏观与微观的关系经常被引申为权力机制对身体进行规训的隐喻，由此它们被归纳为整合历史档案的记忆工程作品之列。从神秘学出发来讨论这层关系不乏道理。神秘学、阴谋论与反乌托邦分享着相似的思考方式，它们都揭示不可见的控制力以及行动的秘密含义。神秘学体系本身不仅被反动政治、法西斯等运用，甚至它对现代主义和权力话语批判理论都有启发作用。¹但是，在方法上，陈滢如并非对神秘学体系进行考古，她更偏向于利用支离破碎的信息来重新演绎、再现不可见之物——不论是权力意识还是神秘学本身。在此，操演的道具（作品媒介）和材料（作品来源）、推演的过程、观众的现场感知变得非常重要。

在陈滢如正式探索神秘学方法之前，她与洪子健合作的作品《特纳档案》（2011）暗示了她演绎另类逻辑的潜在偏好，以及对极端思想的长期兴趣。《特纳档案》想像还原了小

说《特纳日记》（1978）中种族主义者艾尔·特纳的办公室，包括作战笔记等精致入微的物品，同时展出的影像借特纳之眼重新审视3K党、美国移民和美墨边境等议题，由此推理70年代末多元主义兴起时白人至上者的思维世界和日常。正如利用神秘学方法需要承担风险一样，《特纳档案》对于种族主义的考察不是站在旁观者角度进行批判指点，而是艺术家将种族主义的思维模式嵌套在自己身上，同时让观众也参与这一可怕的意识演练，尝试着冲破单线思维的桎梏。

身处陈滢如挑战伦理的氛围场域，难免让人觉得她是故意以耸人听闻的神秘主义来讽刺人类的工具理性或现代性。但是她对新材料的不断挖掘和对矛盾事物的反复求证，为她的作品赋予了不稳定的因素和可持续探讨的空间。例如她的最新项目《星际评估》（2016），虽然名义上从六七十年代极简艺术的角度探索了比亚特兰蒂斯更久远的利莫里亚古外星文明存在的证据（巧合的是这件作品研究的时间段与《特纳档案》相重叠），但从陈滢如为该项目创作的几何图表可以看出，神秘学在处于70年代新世纪运动高峰之时，太空实验、新技术革命、民主与暴力强权运动和大地、极简艺术潮流是同步的。如果进一步结合《星际评估》和《特纳档案》进行联想，科学与非理性这些貌似对立的因素，在同一时间滋长的现象或许是破解人类意识、并发掘自由意志的关键。在这一层面上，相对于陈滢如作品表面所宣扬的灵异信息，她对神秘学思维方法的强调胜过她对超验本体的追求。这示意了她的艺术在对神秘学的乔装演绎之下，试图想像、重组由神秘学所激发的意识与历史不可见的连接，而非揭示具有确定性的不可见之物。

1. 马可·帕西，《神秘学的现代性：某些重要特征的反映》，发表于由乌特·哈内格拉夫和乔伊斯·皮内伯格所编的《学院中的密学：阿姆斯特丹大学西方神秘学研究十年》，阿姆斯特丹大学出版社2009年出版。



《共登世界大同之境》，2012年，三频录像，17分钟

One Universe, One God, One Nation, 2012, 3-channel video, 17 mins, Courtesy Chi-Wen Gallery and the artist

Taiwanese artist Yin-ju Chen often places herself in a position both perilous and challenging: by means of an approach based on mysticism, she deduces and infers narrative relations between mankind and the universe. Upon being asked whether she does or does not believe in these matters, she always nods confidently. As a result, her works present two coexisting attributes—on the one hand, she strives to enlarge her field of understanding through much reading and researching, and by interviewing people working in fields of knowledge unfamiliar to her, ranging from astronomy to psychedelics; but on the other hand, the information conveyed by her works resembles her own answer, in that it expresses absolute certainty—as if she were reporting this information on behalf of astrologists or psychics in the name of art. She makes the viewers unable to sort out truth from fiction, and thereby undermines their resolve.

Chen's 2012 work *One Universe, One God, One Nation*, which is based on an analysis of Chang Kai-Shek's astrological horoscope, was her first experimentation with unscientific methods. She claimed to have been inspired by the 1989 documentary *For All Mankind*, about the Apollo missions of NASA. This three-channel video installation opens on a prologue featuring an image of Pluto, which was discovered in 1930, due to the fact that this planet is considered by astrologists to possess a double essence of

“destruction” and “regeneration.” These characteristics correspond to the state of upheaval of the Second World War, and make Pluto stand within this work as a symbol of the inescapable cycles of history. In the two other videos, against the backdrop of a starry sky, Chen explains in writing how heavenly bodies influenced Chang Kai-Shek's life, while displaying images of the foundation of the Republic of China, of the Second World War, and of Taiwanese people crowding together in public mourning at Chang's death—as if his leadership had been a God-given attribute.

By using mysticism in her attempts at identifying history, Chen might easily be led to a form of gloomy fatalism, or else she might lead the public to dismiss these attempts with a laugh. The reason her works are worthy of examination is that they make use of unscientific theories to analyze concrete evidence, or concepts debated within systems of intellectual enquiry. *One Universe, One God, One Nation*, for instance, discards the existing discourse on the topic of a factual historical figure and certain events, and through astrology, blurs the origins of totalitarianism and of the collective consciousness. If the universe doesn't decide the fate of mankind, what does? When reading Hannah Arendt's *The Human Condition* (1958), Chen discovered that the human interest in the universe (the first artificial satellite was launched in 1957) might be understood as “the craving to escape from the earth.”

Her work queries: is mankind's creation of gods, too, a form of escape? What relation is there between a divinized leader and the exploration of outer space? In this regard, Chen's interest in mysticism doesn't denote a faith in alternative worldviews, but rather points at the possibilities that exist at several levels of the collective consciousness.

Since 2013, Chen's series of projects have been investigating unscientific creation techniques from multiple angles. The materials that make up her multimedia installation *As Above, So Below* (2013–2014) are based on the alchemist, astrologist and doctor Paracelsus's theory of the union of the body and the universe. For example, she uses an image of the tree of life to depict the corresponding relation between the sun, the moon, metal, wood, water, fire, water and earth, on the one hand, and the human body and the universe, on the other hand. The video part of this work features footage from her own stay in the hospital, mixed with a black-and-white documentary of a brain dissection, images of celestial bodies, and an animation of a virus eating away at the inside of an organism. This method avoids the abrupt references to political history that are found in *One Universe, One God, One Nation* to provide the spectator, in a roundabout way, with the impression of a microscopic universe. In *Liquidation Maps* (2014), representative of the next phase of her work, she used charcoal lines to draw

the star charts and mandalas of five political massacres or liquidations that took place in the recent history of Asia, to push her method of the “third eye” to the extreme. As for the third work of this series, *Action at a Distance* (2015), it makes use of the theory of quantum entanglement to connect the bodily and political elements touched upon in the previous works. To provide an overall picture of this rather coherent technique of Chen’s, we could say that it forms a web in which the universe, national politics, governmental disciplining of people (through medicine, for instance), the human body, and quantum physics are mutually connected and form a multitude of overlapping layers.

The relation between a macroscopic and a microscopic vision in the works of Chen’s described above has often been understood as a metaphor of the disciplining action of power structures on the body, and therefore, these works have been filed under the category of art aiming at carrying out “memory engineering” in regard to integrated historical archives. Taking mysticism as a departure point to discuss this sort of connection is meaningful. Mysticism, conspiracy theories, and dystopias are all based on the same frame of mind—they aim at revealing invisible controlling forces, and the secret meanings of people’s actions. Besides having been used by reactionaries or fascists, the framework of mysticism also presents evocative functions within theories critical of modernism or of power discourses.¹ However, on the technical level, Chen certainly does not engage in an archaeology of mysticism, she rather uses fragmented information in order to deduce and represent certain invisible matters anew—be it power consciousness, or mysticism itself. In this case, the performative tools (the medium of the work) and materials (the origin of the work), as well as the deductive process and the spectators’ emotional response on the spot, are crucial.

Before she started seriously exploring mysticism as an approach, Chen produced a collaborative work together with James T. Hong that

signaled her potential preference for pursuing alternative forms of logic, as well as her lasting interest in extreme ideas: *The Turner Archives* (2011). This work features a reproduction of the office of Earl Turner, the racist character from the novel *The Turner Diaries* (1978), including war plans and other minute and detailed items. The videos on display simultaneously re-examine such themes as those of the Ku Klux Klan, American immigration, or the US-Mexico border through Turner’s perspective, thus recreating the mental world and daily life of white supremacists during the rise of pluralism at the end of the 1970s. In the same way that making use of mysticism is not devoid of risks, the investigation and condemnation of racism in *The Turner Archives* is not carried out from a spectator’s point of view—on the contrary, the artist adopts a racist way of thinking, and makes the public participate in this frightening thought experiment, in order to break free from the shackles of stereotypical mindsets.

When entering a place suffused with the atmosphere of Chen’s ethical challenges, it is hard to escape the feeling that she is deliberately employing a sensationalist brand of mysticism to satirize mankind’s utilitarian rationality, or contemporaneity. Nonetheless, her continuous search for new materials and the confirmations she repeatedly seeks from contradictory elements infuse her works with elements of instability, and with the space for sustained inquiry. For instance, her most recent project *Extrastellar Evaluations* (2016) nominally aims at examining the proofs of the existence of the ancient extraterrestrial civilization of Lemuria—more ancient than Atlantis itself—from the angle of 1960s and 70s minimalism (coincidentally, the research phase of this project overlapped with that of *The Turner Archives*); nevertheless, from the geometric charts that Chen created for this work, one may notice that at the time when mysticism was at its peak with the New Age movement of the 1970s, experiments in outer space, the advent of revolutionary new technologies, as well as democratic and violent power

struggles all concurred with the new trends of earthworks and minimalism. If we go one step further in bringing together *Extrastellar Evaluations* and *The Turner Archives*, the fact that such apparently antithetical components as those of science and irrationality thrived simultaneously might be the key to understanding human consciousness, and to unearthing free will. Chen’s works, the emphasis she lays on the mystical approach outshines her pursuit of the transcendent thing in itself. This shows that under the guise of mystical deductions, her art strives to imagine and reorganize the invisible links that exist between the consciousness aroused by mysticism, and history—not to reveal any explicit and invisible matter in particular. (Translated by Dorian Cave)

1. Marco Pasi, “The Modernity of Occultism: Reflections on Some Crucial Aspects”, Wouter J Hanegraaff and Joyce Pijenburg, *Hermes in the Academy: Ten Years’ Study of Western Esotericism at the University of Amsterdam*. Amsterdam University Press, 2009.

《屠杀表——红色高棉 1975-1978》，2014年，
碳铅笔画，125 × 125 厘米
Liquidation Maps / Khmer Rouge 1975-1978, 2014
Sketch on paper, 125 x 125 cm
Courtesy Chi-Wen Gallery and the artist

