

Interview with Shu Lea Cheang

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'From the feminist upheaval to public art and ciberfeminism: the Far West of opportunities' research.

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ELENA TÓXICA: In 1997, in the book 'Mapping the terrain' published by the American artist Suzanne Lacy, you were included as a significant artist identified with the New Genre of Public Art. Your artwork follows similar procedures to many artists included in there. Many of them developed this creative procedure basing it on the spirit and demands of the feminist movement. But your political position and activist attitude seems to me quite different. How do you feel about this 'New Genre of Public Art' and the contents of 'Mapping the terrain'?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I do follow the debate on 'public art' and 'art in public space'. I do identify with The New Genre of Public Art's admission of an art form that takes up social/political issues. I am informed also by its confirmation of collaborative mode of working. If you sense certain difference of my political position, you are probably right. Taking up triple name tags - racial minority, woman and queer, I have to work extra harder to cover a few terrains. I also differentiate myself with the medium/media that of the 'borrowed' technology. Claiming myself a 'hi-tech aborigine', I do not own but gain access to high-end technology, from portapak to digital, from 56k modem to broadband.

ELENA TÓXICA: You disagree with the idea of art as the expression of your insight. For you that is a romantic category that considers the artist as a solitary, unique operator. On the contrary, art projects networked are for you the way to create. This is a clear connection with feminism and public art practices taken from the artist's point of view: the artist is a producer of these communities created around the art project. But, at the same time, I think that, as artist, during your projects, you are performing in a different context than people those who collaborate with you. You do not take part in the performances in the same way. You are behind the camera or the computer. Don't you think it is fair to say that it is more or less the same attitude that a landscape painter would have? In your work, your landscape could be the human process in progress.

SHU LEA CHEANG: A landscape painter is a passive observer. I consider myself more a film director when making art installation/performance. The installation as a set, the performance as mise-en-scène, the narratives unfold as players are situated. I make up fictional schemes and sketch the storyboards that engage multiple players, counting the onsite/offsite/online/offline public to play a part. My body moves as a dollied camera - no voyeuristic gaze, glance exchanged, body crashed, I am always part of the performance. In these works, there is no singular body, but a networked body dotted by mapped by nodes and bytes.

ELENA TÓXICA: I understand, but focusing on the importance of creating communities for feminism, could you explain a bit more if you feel you are creating communities during your projects and if this idea seems important for you? If yes, how do you feel these communities are?

You are describing something about this in question 3 but I would be interested in whether you feel responsible of improving these women's communities with your art projects, if it is one of your aims or not, or even if you think women's communities are needed to improve feminists demands and struggles.

Are you creating online communities with your art projects?

SHU LEA CHEANG: Through the process of collaboration, my art projects are much about creating networked communities. The micro-communities we are formulating can be specifically targeted.

In the case of laptopsRus (<http://laptopsrus.me>), we want to bring woman live performers for meeting/reunion with an electronic tournament performance setting. Through open call and online registration, we enlist a network (300+ members) of woman performers with links to their websites. With crisisRus (<http://crisisrus.laptopsrus.me>), we launch network|re:work for women to share their management of crises, personal or political. The website is designed as an open platform for data upload.

ELENA TÓXICA: Some cyberfeminist artists, like Faith Wilding for instance, do participate in their performances. You explained that you feel as a member of the communities created for the projects, but this is not represented in the project itself. Could you talk about your personal way of creating communities or conceiving collaborative processes from this point of view?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I cite a few projects to inform my collaborative process -

Color Schemes (<http://www.vdb.org/titles/color-schemes>) (installation, Whitney Museum of American Art, 1990) assembles 12 New York based 'non-white' performers to spin through the all color wash cycles – soak, wash, spin and rinse, literally inside the industrial washing machines. We share the stories of going to casting sessions at my kitchen table. Fragments of stories are reimagined and recomposed into scenes and acts.

Those Fluttering Objects of Desire (<http://www.vdb.org/titles/those-fluttering-objects-desire-short-version>) (installation, exit art 1992, Whitney Biennale 1993) tackles sexual politics by positioning woman performers in the coin operated viewing booths (a la porno watching at Time Square NYC) and phone sex apparatus. A unified filming method - a polaroid printing machine and a filmic camera, is established. The women conjure up their own 'acts', processed by the filmic mechanism. During the exhibition, the viewers

are conspired to watch the strip/stripe by inserting 25 cent coin in the custom-designed viewing booths. The coins acquired during the exhibition are artist fee split among participating women artists.

Bowling Alley (<http://bowlingalley.walkerart.org>) (installation, Walker Art Center, 1995) marked my first cybernetic networked installation. By 1994, I announced my relocation onto cyberspace while taking a residency in Tokyo. During the development of Bowling Alley, I worked with Minneapolis based woman performers remotely via extensive email communications. A question was posed to all performers – “what comes to your mind? your fingers holding the bowling ball the seconds before tossing it onto the bowling lane.” Filming scripts are generated from the email exchange that contains notes on politics, economics and sexual desire.

Jumping forward to 2009 at hangar.org in Barcelona, UKI (<http://www.u-k-i.co/>) (installation/performance, 2009 – 2014), conceived as a follow up of my cyberpunk cult film I.K.U. (2000), proposes to the performers a sci-fi post-crash mainframe and asks each of them to devise her own character as a defunct replicant dumped on the electronic wasteland by the evil GENOM corp. 18 performers from the very vibrant Barcelona post-porn performance community join the project. Each character is reviewed and scripted together to establish a somehow coherent narrative, which was then performed live and filmed for further viral processing.

ELENA TÓXICA: You talk a lot about your nomadism. Your physical nomadism, not staying at one fixed place. Your online nomadism, spreading your pieces all around the web. Moreover, I note your nomadism concerning your artistic proposals: your art project ranges from cinema to performances, video-art pieces, museum or galleries exhibitions including installations, net-art... You seem to have no limits. Is this because you feel more loyal to the art project itself trying to adapt your expression to the creative requirements it demands?

SHU LEA CHEANG: After 20 years in New York city, I took up digital nomadism willingly or unwillingly. For my art practices, it seems quite a natural flow switching genres, mediums, tactics and technique. We cannot overlook how economy and technology play a part in conceiving projects. I have to consider the available resources and access offered to me for each project. I work with the museums which provide proper channels reaching out to the general public. I take sponsorship for broadband, for mobile devices. With the net-based work, I imagine a vast net-public who may ‘stumble’ upon my art work. Mostly for any installations, I maintain a network connection, taking the work out of any confined 4 walls.

ELENA TÓXICA: Nomadism could be seen as a strategy to subvert patriarchal values. Do you think that cyberfeminist art needs this nomadic attitude? Do you think that feminists practices need it too?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I connect nomadism with tactical media and hackers' codes. To sabotage the big daddy mainframe (VNS matrix) calls for a coded script in motion. We have allowed ourselves to be part of the tracking scheme. If cyberfeminist/feminist movement still holds an edge, we have to consider more the in flux tactics?

ELENA TÓXICA: You explained your hacking is a way not to confront power face-to-face, spreading these attitudes among local communities. This is your way of 'hacking the system'. Suzanne Lacy explained to us that the art system has incorporate innovative feminist practices, which are now part of the mainstream and serving other interests that have nothing to do with their origins. Could it be nomadism considered as a strategy to differentiate attitudes? To avoid being 'swallowed up'?

SHU LEA CHEANG: Nomadism implies mobility. Mobility however has been co-opted to promote an upgraded 5G life style. To refer nomadism as an 'attitude', it is about shuffling oneself in and out of 'the system' in a tactical meditation.

ELENA TÓXICA: It is important to appreciate in your projects how you create strategies to bring the online experience close to the offline one. It seems as if for you, they both share the same sphere, with your own body or brain forming the link. Are you 'affected' by the online perception in the sense of becoming more nomadic?

SHU LEA CHEANG: The network we choose to situate ourselves within offers crossover references. Our online extension has become more a reality – how we perceive and perceived, track and be tracked. The nomadic guided not by GPS location ID. Back to the 'hood as one across borders.

ELENA TÓXICA: Your public art projects have always used digital resources online or offline. One of your last projects following your game project, 'UKI-enter the bionet', was an interactive audio visual installation at the Piksel festival in 2014. How do you decide whether to do it online or offline? Do art institutions affect your pieces approach?

SHU LEA CHEANG: With 'UKI-Enter the Bionet' (<https://vimeo.com/112516427>) I go back to a black box set up with self-contained network (BioNet). Imagine a post-netcrash future, the Genom Corp has taken human body hostage to initiate BioNet, a network made up of red blood (erythrocytes) micro-computing cells activated to recondition our desires. The installation situates the players as hackers infiltrating the BioNet to take back the orgasm data. Each player is equipped with a biosensor (GSR [galvanic skin response]) which detects body's blood pressure/emotion variants. The sensor data is then sent to a system control PD patch (a self-contained network). The installation (game) allows up to 8 players whose collective bio-data informs a game in progress.

BioNet is online!! And off.

ELENA TÓXICA: I insist a bit to clarify if your relationship with the art institution and its demands has something to do with your project design or not. Does the institution ask to you for some requirements about the online or offline design projects or you just feel completely free to plan it as you described?

SHU LEA CHEANG: Position myself as a net artist, most of my works do comprise of an online public interface. I make online<>on site networked installations - i.e. Bowling Ally (1995), Buy One Get One (1997), Brandon (1998-1999), Baby Play (2000), Baby Love (2005), MobiOpera (2007), Agliomania (2008-2010), Composting the city (2012), Seeds Underground (2013). I also create web work that is simply an interface, i.e. BURN (2003), MILK (2004), Composting the Net (2012). For many projects, I also create a website to state concepts/dissemination. I have the command to design the projects as commissioned.

ELENA TÓXICA: Your activism in all senses has been present throughout your life. During the 80's you participated at Paper Tiger Television, reaching visual and media alphabetisation and critical thinking through it. Afterwards you were co-founder of Deep Dish TV to look for a new and more democratic way for audiovisual distribution. You now participate as a guest chief editor of a French digital culture magazine, MCD. As far as I know, your activism is not in relation with gender or cyberfeminism issues. But, on the other hand, in your art projects you collaborate with women, lesbian or queer social groups concerned by their issues. Could you talk about what activism means for you?

SHU LEA CHEANG: To live a life as a whole. Surely my activism is very related to gender and cyberfeminism even I do not raise a flag as such. I do consider there are certain connections with various 'streams' of my work, being sexually provocative or seeding garlic, networking women or running along the tramlines... In the 80s, we were all out on the streets. Following virtual sit in, digital disturbance, we now adopt the social networks to tap into the 'masses'. The resistance front, however, is back on the streets as the prolonged multi-site occupy movement manifests.

ELENA TÓXICA: The impact 'Brandon' had in the art context, social movements and politics was very important. Could you talk about this impact more precisely from your point of view and what did 'Brandon' help to change?

SHU LEA CHEANG: BRANDON (<http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/collection-online/artwork/15337>) A One-Year Narrative Project in Installments explores issues of gender fusion and techno-body in both public space and cyberspace. There were two actual incidents occurred in 1993 that informed the making of BRANDON - the story of Brandon Teena, a transman who was raped and murdered in

Humboldt, Nebraska and a rape in cyberspace reported by Julian Dibbell in the Village Voice. Brandon is confined in a gendered body, while the cyber-rape is in full public view taking place at virtual living room of LambdaMOO.

BRANDON marked the first web art commission from the Guggenheim Museum New York in 1998. At this time - Virtual Museum is under construction, expanding the Museum's property limit; MCI announces the internet's erasure of race and gender (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ioVMoeCbrig>); the high hope for super highway crashes in multi-lane racing; the dotcom bubble predicts its inevitable self-collapsing. This is also the decade of 'net art' in the making and the tactical media on the rise. On the other hand, the trans communities are having their own field days with sutures marked and theories articulated. I travelled from San Francisco to Amsterdam to Tijuana Mexico. There are borders to cross, gender to switch and body to glitch.

BRADON as a multi-artist/multi-author/multi-site collaboration is an endless roadtrip, a chatroom run by bots, a theatrum anatomicum that dissects, a panopticon that watches and finally court trial days arrive.

ELENA TÓXICA: Being more specific, do you think Brandon public or even the art institution that bought the piece became closer to the trans FTM issue after the production of the piece? Do you have any information or personal intuition about whether it changes something in their minds? Even if your pieces project you into a sci-fi future, do you have an opinion about the social impact?

SHU LEA CHEANG: BRANDON parallels the trans issues with ID/handle/avatar mask play we parade ourselves in the cybersphere. This as a starting point for the public to grasp the tragic event of Brandon. Along its one year narrative development on the web (1998-1999), we hold chatlines, hospitalization, imprisonment, streams, forums and courts where global public participation takes place online. There is a forum session, *Digi Gender Social Body: Under the Knife, Under the Spell of Anesthesia* [<http://brandon.guggenheim.org/credits/interface/TA/index.html>] where the trans bodies are 'dissected' and 'read'. With such art projects, I do find it necessary to create platform for dialogues, to help the public navigate through the issues. I do hope my art work is socially/politically relevant.

ELENA TÓXICA: Do you believe in gender or race change utopia as many ciberfeminist activists do as regards the internet or technological empowerment?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I do believe in internet's networking power and technology advance people. The gender/race erasure utopia, however, does not exist for me.

ELENA TÓXICA: Suzanne Lacy talks a lot about this idea of social change coming from art. But in my opinion, she is explaining it as a lobbyist. You, on the other hand, are politically positioned in a different way. Could you explain how you conceive this social

change coming from art?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I do not set out to make art for bringing social change. The social conditions and political realities that inform my work are sometimes unbearable and prompt me to project into scifi future/now/past.

To cite a few of my work - In I.K.U. (<http://i-k-u.com/>) (2000) and UKI (<http://u-k-i.co>) (2009-2014), I have set up this big evil corporation, GENOM Corp, who produces replicants to collect human orgasm data, who dumps defunct replicants onto e-waste scape and holds human body hostage to configure BioNet. In my 3 part series Locker Baby project (2001-2012), (<http://www.babywork.biz/proposal/lockerbaby-3parts.pdf>), (Baby Play, Baby Love, Baby Work) (http://www.ntticc.or.jp/Archive/2001/BABY_PLAY/index.html), (<http://babylove.biz/>), (<http://babywork.biz/>) clone babies are entrusted with human emotion and memory. It is for the human (the public) in the exhibitions to negotiate with the clone babies the retrieval of data stored in the virtual lockers.

There are also bio-diversity issues - I advocate urban composting, food waste management in ‘composting the city’ while review our data commons with ‘composting the net’. I denounce GMO food by holding underground seeds party... If art is to catch up with social change, there are many areas to devote oneself.

ELENA TÓXICA: On many occasions you have had conflicts with institutions you have worked with and even they have had to be conservative with you to be sure the result would be acceptable. How have the negotiations had to be with institutions taking into account the social criticism you are engaged in?

SHU LEA CHEANG: There have been various forms of censorship imposed on my work. Citing a few examples - Bowling Alley (1995) at Walker Art Center, I was asked to edit out ‘dirty words’ from the submission of my collaborators; ‘Elephant Cage Butterfly Locker’ (<http://brandon.guggenheim.org/shuleaWORKS/ecbl.html>) (1996), I had to face the representatives of Tokyo government concerning the display of documents that reveal US military violation in Okinawa island; In 2006, my scheduled performance was shut down by the theatre Volksbuhne during the Post Porn Politics conference in Berlin. All these incidents arrived as surprise for me. The negotiation process to justify myself became rather painful – i.e. in Tokyo I was demanded to confess myself either as artist or activist, in Berlin I was pressured to guarantee that there would not be “sexual stimulation” during the performance.

I did successfully stage FLUID (<http://fluidthemovie.com/>) casting session ‘I AM YOU ARE ON MILK HIGH’ with Feminismo Porno Punk at Arteleku, Spain and UKI viral performance at Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia. Both shows contained explicit sex and were curated by Preciado. In these cases, the curator was courageous enough to present my work properly to the institutions and the public.

ELENA TÓXICA: Do you think feminist art practices have helped art institutions to change towards more collaborative ways of exhibiting or proposing art to the public?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I cannot confirm such statement that feminist art practice changes certain institutional way of exhibition. I do consider every institution show is a chance to bring my own troupe of women. Note that as a woman or racial minority, we seem to bear more responsibilities for reaching out to the communities for the 'educational', 'social engagement' mandate of the museums.

ELENA TÓXICA: Do you think that art institutions understand the collaborative ways of working in art projects? Or do you think they continue to be engaged with traditional or patriarchal ways? (the unique piece, the name of the artist as a brand, the value of the masterpiece...)

SHU LEA CHEANG: It is hard to generalize many types of art institutions that operate with missions of their own. Surely the art world has its own brand name artists, the market value, the INs and OUTs to obsess them with. For BRANDON with the Guggenheim, I was able to bring in various forms of collaboration, including other institutions - Banff Center for the Arts in Canada, Waag Society in Amsterdam, Institute on the arts and civic dialogue at Harvard university. Within its one year installment, there were also many artists making contributions.

With media technology work, usually inter-disciplinary collaboration and active participants are called for. Back in 2007, I exhibited MobiOpera (<http://www.mobiopera.mobi/>) with the New Frontier at Sundance Film Festival, the first generation of 3G nokia mobilephones (sponsored by Nokia) with camera feature were given to the public for making short movie segments. For this project I set up a timeline to stream the mobi-narratives. The public 'engagement' as required does command artists to work in collaborative ways.

ELENA TÓXICA: I understand what you mean... but, do you feel the way institutions listen to your projects has changed over the years you have been working with them? Do they understand your proposals better? Are they more ready to provide resources to put your pieces in place nowadays than 10 or 20 years ago?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I feel more and more drifting away from the institutions. The process of working through a project/funding takes time to plan/negotiate. There are also human factors concerning the curators I work with. I am joining smaller showcases where I am quite free to propose and design. I.e. Currently I am planning infoCRASH@stwst48, a 48 hour of all-comprising events hosted by the art center Stadtwerkstatt (<http://stwst.at>) in conjunction with Ars electronic for September 2015. We are tagging into Ars resources (its international festival goers and the Linz Public) to channel our many activities.

ELENA TÓXICA: The cyberfeminist movement itself has sought to be defined, and many theorist have made classifications about the different kinds of ciberfeminist artists. What do you think about these differences in the cyberfeminist art movement?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I do follow certain threads in cyberfeminist movement and consider myself part of it with many of my contemporaries. As I never create works bearing the label, I am also not quite on track with the differences in the movement.

ELENA TÓXICA: Continuing on this subject, and taking for instance your interview with Kim Sawchuk (<https://vimeo.com/112134868> min 15:41) she defined you as an artist as a ‘social worker’ but you do not accept this term. You prefer ‘networker’. Other articles like the one written by the Spanish journalist Montserrat Boix and the researcher Ana de Miguel (<http://www.mujeresenred.net/IMG/pdf/ciberfeminismo-demiguel-boix.pdf>) tried to do a classification of ciberfeminist artists (taking Alex Galloway's conclusions: they talk about VNS Matrix as being more radical because of their frontal confrontation with patriarchy; or about OBS as being more academic, less activist; or a third group more interested on antiglobalisation movements, human rights defenders and technologies beseeching users to transform the social context. They call this group ‘ciberfeminist social artists’) Don’t you think your profile and personal career could be defined in this third group: ‘ciberfeminist social artists’? If not, what differentiates you from them?

SHU LEA CHEANG: Certainly I can be the third group, cyberfeminist social artist.

ELENA TÓXICA: How was your relationship with VNS Matrix? Did you collaborate frequently? (As for instance your collaboration with Francesca Di Rimini for the ‘Brandon’ interface: ‘Mooplay’)

SHU LEA CHEANG: We showcased VNS Matrix’ work at Mix Festival NYC back in 1994. In 1995, I made my way to Australia and met with the four wonderful gals. With Francesca Di Rimini, we were engaged passionately in finger fucking across the Atlantics for sometime. Francesca contributed one stream of bot chat in Mooplay. In 2012, she joined me again reading Linda Dement’s texts for ‘Moving Forest’, (<http://movingforest.net>), a 12 hour extravaganza event in London.

ELENA TÓXICA: Do you think your opposition to patriarchy is done in a different way than VNS Matrix used to do? Could you explain why?

SHU LEA CHEANG: The brave Cyberfeminist Manifesto (<http://adanewmedia.org/files/2014/07/VNS.png>) names Big Daddy for direct

confrontation. The statement is loud and clear. I do work differently. I consider my work *Bowling Alley* (1995) a strike down to patriarchy. (<https://jerichoattrition.wordpress.com/2014/02/17/on-the-origins-of-the-term-hacktivism/>) The networked installation works at 3 sites – an actual bowling lane, a gallery installation and a website. The act of striking down the pins in the bowling lane directly interferes with the gallery projection and sends scrambling signal to the website. This act of bowling by the general public triggers the ‘disturbance’ inside an institution and unknowingly hacks the web. The networked environment is set up that permits intervention by the public members. In a poetic gesture, the public is conspired in the knock out scheme against patriarchy.

ELENA TÓXICA: Many authors are not confident on the power of the net to create a new race or gender order. In ‘Utopía Promesas-Net Realities’ Critical Art Ensemble exposes the other face of the web related with marketing and the government's control over users. More precisely about gender, their expression is that it is “limited to gender reassignment on chat lines”. Faith Wilding explains in many different texts the necessity for cyberfeminist artists to resist to this pancapitalist wave or racist attitude existing on the Internet. In that sense, in the French digital culture magazine, MCD (Changer L'argent – ‘We grow money, we eat money, we shit money’ <http://www.digitalmcd.com/mcd-76-changer-largent/>) you even invite people to “depasser la monnaie” due to the economic crisis, building alternative proposals. Are you optimistic about the net's chances of redefining gender or other terms of the patriarchy?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I consider the Net is over and done with. Let them run the Ads, the cookies, the pop ups, the tracking of my buying power. The fight against patriarchy is back on the streets – the student Emma Sulkowicz who carried around on campus the mattress in which she was raped; the Afghan artist Kubra Khadem who donned a suit of armor with large breasts and buttocks walking down the streets in Kabul.

I migrated to the cyberspace in its early stage. Currently many of my work are set in post-netcrash era. Much of my activist work focuses on means and devices to reboot the net(S) - freeWifi, DIY/DIWO electronics, P2P sharing, open source hard/soft ware...

ELENA TÓXICA: Could you sum up the real transformation the cyberspace is doing in that sense?

SHU LEA CHEANG: We do need to consider the social network and its phenomenal popularity. A generation of smartphone users fixated on their connections. The sprouting of message/chat apps split the Net into small unit of nets. The circle of friends share photos, life stories, dumping data into the icloud off the sky. The smartphone upgrade, the OS update is observed religiously. Willingly and unconsciously we check into the INSTITUTION of Big Daddy mainframe. We help build it [patriarchy|empire] by feeding our data to its insatiable appetite for privacy and intimacy.

ELENA TÓXICA: Do you think pancapitalism is blocking this transformation?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I do not see the Net as a site for transformation, I cannot testify the argument of pancapitalism.

ELENA TÓXICA: We personally met in Madrid in 2009 in Matadero Madrid Contemporary Art Center. I started my artist residency there and the Center decided to put you and me in contact. That day you were with Diana Pornoterrorista and just some days before, you had been in Barcelona for the Hangar performance. A few weeks after this meeting, I participated at the Laptopsrus you did in Matadero. We met again at 2011 in Medialab during one of the processes you created for 'UKI'. At that time, I was working with the BDSM hardcore community in Madrid. Some members and myself were participating in your Medialab workshop. In fact, I told them to come with me to your workshop. They knew you mainly because of your 'IKU' film. The workshop was during the day and we invited you to a big performance party I organised with this community that night. It was an explicit sex performance like yours in Hangar (Barcelona 2009).

You use explicit sex frequently, introducing practices in your films or performances in relation with Queer theory. In your case, and for these projects as 'UKI', community is not created by dialogic shared process or political engaged performances, as many public art artists tend to do, but by their sex practices or gender convictions. The metaphor used at the Hangar performance, using the cibernetic trash as compost to transfer energy to bodies living and being sexualized in a new way, could it be your idea about what ciberfeminism would bring to society?

SHU LEA CHEANG: I.K.U. tells the story of GENOM Corp, an internet porn enterprise who dispatches I.K.U. coders to collect orgasm data. Made into mobilephone chip, GENOM introduces orgasm on the go and makes a huge profit. In post-netcrash UKI, the data deprived I.K.U. coders are dumped on the Etrashscape where coders, twitters, networkers crush and crashed. Exchanging sex for code, code sexing code, UKI as virus emerge while GENOM retreats to BioNet. Taking human body hostage, GENOM reformats blood cells into microcomputing ORGANISMO (organic orgasm). UKI, the virus, enacted to infect a city, propagated, mobilized to infiltrate BIONET, sabotage ORGANISMO and reclaim the lost orgasm data.

This is the concept I prescribed for UKI. I then seek performers to devise 'roles' for themselves - setting into a pre-conceived overall narrative while allowing a well-defined self to grow. The players placed amidst the e-waste-scape offer me the (non) human materials to mold, bend and tweak into a scenario. A live performance with live patching was staged around/on top of the 4 tons of e-trash during my Hangar residency. I also filmed intertwined narrative sequences with the players. The resulted 70 minutes filmic visuals were then viralized by a PD (pure data) patch for the touring viral performance LIVE CODE LIVE SPAM sessions. During 2009- 2014, I performed these sessions live with invited local noise jammers in 10 cities.

The shared commons here is virus, that of hardware, software and body virus. The sexual

intercourse is cursed with viral contagion that recalls AIDS epidemic. The digital contagion transmitted via code/sex exchange is redeemed as possible salvation. Certainly I can see the connection of this work with cyberfeminism in the viral self-empowerment.

ELENA TÓXICA: From 'Brandon' 16 years ago, to the performance you did with Wendy Delorme at Porn Film Festival Berlin 2008, Fisting Club (<http://mauvaiscontact.info/fistingclub/>) How do you think your role has changed: as an artist and as a citizen?

SHU LEA CHEANG: BRANDON is a large scale endeavour. It presents itself a challenge for a major museum like the Guggenheim, in terms of its subject matter, the requirement for technology upgrade, the inter-institutional collaboration, multiple authorship and its ever-developing (no preview/pre-approval is possible) narrative streams. Fisting Club, on the other hand, is a very intimate piece which builds on mutual trust among the players - me, Wendy and the clubbers. I conceived it as a film script, a diversion of the male bonding Fight Club.

Over the years, I have learnt to swing between large scale (with a budget) and guerilla style (no budget) production. Since relocated to EuroZone, I have also co-founded several collectives to pursue cross-disciplinary collaboration. I.e. TAKE2030 (London based, since 2003) that shifts the social media mission into hypermedia playing fields; Mumbai Streaming Attack (Zurich based, since 2004) that focused on networked performance with mobile interface; LaptopsRus (net-based, since 2009) that networks woman live performers. These collectives allow me to work with an assemble of artists, engineers, programmers, cultural workers to pursue technical experiment and expand the networking possibilities. They also reach out to a very different kind of audience with the public performances.

I am at a point that I need to catch up with many unrealized/ever developing thoughts and projects. I move along hoping tracks are marked.