



Courtesy of the artist and Chi-Wen Gallery

Chao ju zuo yong

Action at a Distance

Yin-Ju Chen

2015, 3-channel video installation, black/white & color, 9 min., Mandarin, English. **Producer** Yin-Ju Chen (Taipei, Taiwan). **Written and directed by** Yin-Ju Chen. **Sound design** Yin-Ju Chen. **Editor** Yin-Ju Chen. **World sales** Chi-Wen Gallery.

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Action at a Distance is the third chapter in Yin-Ju Chen's recent practice of addressing the body, governments, and state violence. Like the previous chapters, *As Above, So Below* (2013–2014) and *Liquidation Maps* (2014), the three-channel video installation expands and summarizes the metaphysical threads connecting invasive surgeries and instances of state violence.

Using found footage of medical procedures, educational films on quantum physics and news footage of violent confrontations between state forces and citizens, *Action at a Distance* elaborates the relationship between the macrocosm and the microcosm by exploring the philosophical consequences of quantum entanglement and the principle of correspondence.

Einstein called quantum entanglement "spooky action at a distance." *Action at a Distance* and its previous iterations ultimately describe a cohesive and interwoven universe, where science and pseudoscience are merely two complementary routes to understanding human life.

Despite mainstream astronomers' negative views on astrology, I combine ideas from astronomy with those of astrology. The physical sciences focus on empirical facts and verifiable theses, whereas pseudoscience deals with illogical predictions and unavoidable destinies. In my mind, they work together perfectly. It is this combination that informs my art.

*Yin-Ju Chen in "Yin-Ju Chen's One Universe, One God, One Nation,"
art4d.asia*

Chen uses a massive amount of scientific and objective materials to support a scientifically indefensible point of view. This is exactly how most contemporary artists often frustrate; you cannot comprehend what a work really means by glancing at its surface. However, with the development of cybernetic epistemology, champions of scientific objectivity and verifiability might need to recognize "interdependency" in the quantum age (or what you might want to call the "Age of Aquarius"). Or, perhaps the individual/collective dichotomy is false. To really consider this, we may still need to objectify ourselves, and perhaps if scientists were able to experiment on and vivisection their own souls to really see how they work, then we might finally combine objectivity and subjectivity.

Whether or not the universe has a purpose, *Action at a Distance* is related to the varied and enigmatic Pluto – the rock that often gives the astronomer and the astrologer headaches. It also seems likely that this wide-ranging and insightful investigation into the self/collective split will not be her last, otherwise she would not fulfill Pluto's mysterious reputation. Chen reminds me of C.G. Jung, who also wandered into different disciplines, some very different from his own. In fact, C.G. Jung's theory of individualization could help us understand Chen's unconventional cosmic vision. His views on causality, teleology, and synchronicity are in fact critical to fully deciphering this artist's intentions and works, and his theories reveal that a shortcut to understanding the purpose of the universe is also a path to our own hearts and souls.

Excerpt from: Rikey Cheng: "The Only Insight is Discrepancy: The Trinity in Yin-Ju Chen's Action at a Distance," Artist Magazine, vol. 479, 2015, Taiwan

Yin-Ju Chen was born in 1977 in Taipei, Taiwan, where she is also currently based. Chen studied at the Taipei National University of the Arts (1996–2000) and the San Francisco Art Institute (2001–2003). She was a resident artist at Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam (2010–2011). She has participated internationally in group and solo exhibitions. Her primary medium is video, but her works also include photos, installations, and drawings. In the past few years she has focused on the function of power in human society. Her recent projects also engage in the relations between cosmos and human behavior.

Films

2006: *Zi ben zhu yi wan wan sui/Suprematist Kapital* (in collaboration with James T. Hong, 5 min.), *San shi chi/Three Decades of Statics* (4 min.). 2007: *Jiu yang/CH3CH2OH* (5 min.). 2008: *Cai feng/Transactions* (8 min.). 2010: *Jie mi wai xun/End Transmission* (16 min.). 2012: *Gong den shi jie da tong zhi jing/One Universe, One God, One Nation* (17 min.). 2015: *Chao ju zuo yong/Action at a Distance*.