

Interpassivity within a Clone

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A work of art shows not only its interiority— subject and content—but also reveals its exteriority, border, and extremity. The situation where a work can signify from without is most pronounced by the practice of media art, where the work cannot do without the technology, and *vice versa*. Therefore, media art can be a technology-specific art to require a certain technique from the outside. In other words, media art reflects the condition of technology of the times, that is, a requirement for producing a technology-specific work. It is, then, the ontology from perspective of the technology discloses much in line with what Bruno Latour has claimed that the human is *homo techno* instead of *homo sapiens*. Media art can show the condition of technology, revealing a Hegelian dialectical interdependency of the master and the slave, and, of the human and things.

Lin Peychwen has been creating visual reality to simulate in her previous works as a commentary for the condition of technology. Her recent “Eva Clone Series,” using hologram in dimly lighted installation to fabricate amorphous satanic images of women in a synaesthetic environment where biblical texts are juxtaposed. Morphing identities from women to prostitutes, from Satan to heretics expose the diabolic nature of the pluralistic singularity. The installation creates situation of a sci-fi laboratory to archive and preserve the cloned version of Eva, much as ruins of technology. These images are gazing at spectators even when they are about to leaving the exhibition. A glance of looking away produces a reversal gaze that projects from the images.

This reversal gaze, as Lacanian psychoanalysis asserts, is not something that can be merely accomplished by the act of looking, nor the seduction from the gazed objects, but rather, an inverted situation between the subject of gazing and the object of the gazed. In Lacan’s words, a “passive voice” that fixes the subject within the picture that s/he is gazing, that is, an uncanny intersubjective relation where the self becomes the other even when there is no actual act of looking involved. The big Other fixes the self in the picture as an object, as Lacan once notes “the Other knows the ego know himself as an object being looked at.” Within the drive of the gaze, not only exist the active voice and the reflexive voice—I see myself, but also affirmed and accomplished by the passive voice that *I see myself being seen*. In other words, from the passive mode of gaze can the position of subject act.¹

“Eva Clone Series” traps the viewers into a passive mode of looking. These images, being holographic, mimicking the 3D effect, are simulacrum bearing no original but only modules, that is, a copy without the origin *par excellence*. Moreover, because these images are partially imitated—what is being watched is the image of the clone not the actual one—viewers attend the verisimilitudes produced by the technological effect. Therefore, what Lin creates in her work is to feign to beget the system of objects orbiting the simulacrum as a relational indication of its myth, ideology, and reality, as “the object of art is established in a certain relation to the Thing and is intended to encircle and to render both present and absence.”² We can even go as far as to render the big Other asserted in Lin’s work as Technology *per se* that makes the Progress possible to present the thing-ness of the human world.

That is the precise reason that the relation to the thing-ness world cannot be the interactive one, but rather as Žižek and Robert Pfaller have said, be interpassive one.³ It is not the situation of waiting for participants to accomplish the art work, but rather the work has already finished the act, no more participation needed, and the loop of meaning is finished. That is the paradoxical expression why “inter” and “passive” can co-exist. In Lacanian psychoanalytical term, the lack that opens to the gaze, which traps the viewers to remind the subject of the human not from within but without, i.e., the system of things, Technology, as the very lack of the human. Lin’s work has marked the site of technology the other place--the ruin. At the same time, it shows the chain of signifiers of the incomplete, such as woman, Satan, prostitute, clone. Lin creates a situation to traverse the fantasy of technology with the

1, Jacques Lacan, The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book I. edit Jacques-Allain Miller, trans John Forester (New York: Norton Co., 1988), 215.

² See Jacques Lacan, The seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book VII. edit Jacques-Allain Miller, trans Dannis Porter (New York: Routledge P, 1988) 141

³ Robert Pfaller, Backup of Little Gestures of Disappearance: Interpassivity and the Theory of Ritual. <http://www.csudh.edu/dearhabermas/interpassbk01.htm>, June, 30, 2011

art of media—how can we clone the Lack? The answer lies in only when a partial simulacrum completes itself as the passive situation of “I saw myself seeing Technology, ” for a revelation from the clones, the absolute world of thing-ness that gazes back the human.