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Visualizing post-human and cybersexuality: Lin Pey- Chwen and the *Eve Clone* series

ABSTRACT

This article takes post-human and cybersexuality as the main perspectives from which to contextualize the Taiwanese artist Lin Pey-Chwen's (born 1959) Eve Clone series, on which she has been working since 2006. It describes how Eve Clone's virtual body of Eve expresses Lin's perceptions of the symbols and imaginings of the post-human. The latest Eve Clone series explores issues of femininity, but is also related to the religious symbolism that Lin has adapted in the creation of her work. Although using science and digitality to create art, Lin criticizes technical civilization while reclaiming the importance of nature. In Portrait of Eve Clone, the cyborg body has been created from the main technical operation of digital technology, and this adaptation of a digital body examines the discourses of both the body and sexuality. Lin's Eve Clone has created a perfect being in cyberspace through artistic aesthetics and new media technologies.

KEYWORDS

cybersexuality
body
cyborg
post-human
Eve Clone
hybridity

In this article, I will explore the intersectional concepts of the post-human and cybersexuality, both of which contextualize the work of the Taiwanese artist Lin Pey-Chwen's (林珮淳) (born 1959) *Eve Clone* series, on which she has

1. More information about Lin Pey-Chwen's work can be found on her website <http://ma.ntua.edu.tw/labs/dalab/>.

been working since 2006. This series of digital works is inspired by the figure of Eve, re-imagined and reconstructed by the artist as a virtual cyborg.¹ The latest work in the series, *Eve Clone*, continues Lin's exploration of cyberfeminism and the post-human, drawing on religious symbolism, several aspects of which have been major recurring themes in her recent work. In work dealing predominantly with sexuality and digitality, the *Eve Clone* series can be traced back to Lin's earlier work when she first returned to Taiwan after having studied in Australia during 1995.

THE POST-HUMAN AND ITS COMPLEXITIES

Before examining specific works, it is necessary to outline the two key themes – namely the post-human and cybersexuality. Post-human as an academic term has been debated widely since the late 1970s. Ihab Hassan's *Prometheus as Performer: Toward a Posthuman Culture?*, published in 1977, contends that technology not only influences medical science but also governs our daily consumer culture. Meanwhile, Steve Nichols's *Posthuman Manifesto*, published in 1988, maintains that people today are already living in a post-human condition. Related critical theories began to flourish in the West during the 1970s and 1980s, while several other familiar terms prefixed 'post-' may all be related to the philosophical aspects of the post-human, which is a notion that concerns the 'other' while also inferring a sense of undecidability (Miah 2008: 71–94). Meanwhile, Judith Halberstam and Ira Livingston have described the proliferation of academic 'post-isms' as 'simultaneously the necessary or regrettable failure to imagine what's next' (1995: 2). Consequently, the phenomenon of the 'post-human' reveals a state of anxiety and uncertainty resulting from the condition of being between human and inhuman. The post-human takes the shapes of our bodies, but is a hybrid of our biological forms and technology, such as a cyborg, which according to feminist philosopher Donna Haraway is 'a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction' (1991: 69). Features of the 'post-human' in Lin's work may also be seen via her imagined Eve, which is itself a cyborg, a mixture of mechanical and biological organisms. Furthermore, according to Rosi Braidotti:

After the post-human, the postcolonial, the post-industrial, the post-communist and even the much contested post-feminist conditions, we seem to have entered the post-human predicament. Far from being the n^{th} variation in a sequence of prefixes that may appear both endless and somehow arbitrary, the post-human condition introduces a qualitative shift in our thinking about what exactly is the basic unit of common reference for our species, our policy and our relationship to the other inhabitants of this planet.

(2013: 1–2)

Lin's *Eve Clone* series may be related to Haraway's concept of the cyborg, where the post-human demonstrates a form of tension and undecidability between the human and the non-human and the idea of the phenomenon of combining the human body with technology. A cyborg is an organism in a digital domain, as well as the mixture of artificial and organic life, while it is also both a social reality and an element of science fiction (Haraway 1991: 149–81).

A cyborg as an individual transcends gender duality in the material world, and by rejecting gender duality cyborgs further deconstruct gender identification and re-present the bodily symbols of post-humanist desire. A cyborg may be fluid and virtual without a physical form, or it may be an image that exists in digital technology, or it may be presented in concrete forms via multi-media technology, such as in Lin's *Eve Clone* series.

In addition to the phenomenon of the cyborg, the concept of cloning has long been an essential element of Lin's work. A clone is produced asexually via technology or natural birth, and the birth of Dolly, the cloned sheep, signalled the moment at which humans could themselves become the subject of propagation via biotechnology. Lin's belief is that God created Eve, while a human (i.e. the artist herself) created *Eve Clone*, as a hybridized human or a cyborg. The post-human body is a cyborg body existing in virtual domains on the Internet, including the 'organic' body of hybridized organisms and the 'non-organic' body stemming from the combination of robots and technology. Lin's *Eve Clone* responds to this concept of the post-human body, and the ideas of cybersexualities.

Frederick Abraham stated that '[c]ybersexualities emerge from the confluence of postmodern cultural theory, feminist theory, and recent trends in science fiction, and extrapolations from fields related to artificial intelligence, which are largely due to advances in technology' (2010: 3). It is now evident that technology has realized people's imagination of science fiction and fairy tales from the past. Creating the perfect being is quite different from creating a Frankensteinian monster. Lin's *Eve Clone* series consists of several items including technology, screens, projected images and other materials, which are either virtual or physical, but which are non-biological, and are the imagined surfaces created by the artist.

LIN'S EARLIER WORK AND THE FEMINIST IDEOLOGY

When examining Lin's early experiences and inspiration for her art, it is evident that a consciousness of feminism influenced her artworks from the outset, and across Lin's twenty-year career as an artist it is not difficult to see several repeated concerns and themes in her works. In 1989, she returned from studying in America and commenced her energetic participation in the activities and exhibitions of the alternative art space, Apartment 2, where she began to develop a new approach in her work,² while at the same time as working as a busy and productive artist and teacher, she also had to negotiate the dual roles of being a wife and a mother. Lin then began to be influenced by western feminism while in Australia during 1993 when she studied for her Ph.D. in Creative Arts. After returning to Taiwan once more in 1995, she attended several Taiwanese organizations and activities related to feminist art. Although Lin is deeply influenced by feminism from the 1980s and early 1990s, it is worth noting that her recent artworks using digital art do not initially appear to directly criticize patriarchal ideology. On the contrary, with a more macroscopic view, it appears as though there has been a shift in the issues within her works from an emphasis on feminism to caring about life and nature in more general terms.

Lin was inspired to create the beautiful, sensual body of Eve in the *Eve Clone* series by her earlier work, *Antithesis and Intertext* (1995) (Figure 3), displayed at the Taipei Biennial 1997 held at Taipei Museum of Fine Arts.³ In *Antithesis and Intertext*, Lin arranged five images inside water lilies, depicting

2. Apartment 2, the earliest artist-run alternative art space in Taiwan, was established in March 1989 by a group of 22 contemporary artists in Taipei. The initiative of establishing Apartment 2 came from the need for an exhibition space among the artists themselves. Lin Pey-Chwen was one of the artists who initiated the project. Apartment 2 closed in 1995 when Taiwan experienced a recession that affected the art market on the island (Liao 1992).

3. E-mail correspondence with Lin Pey-Chwen, received on 10 December 2014.

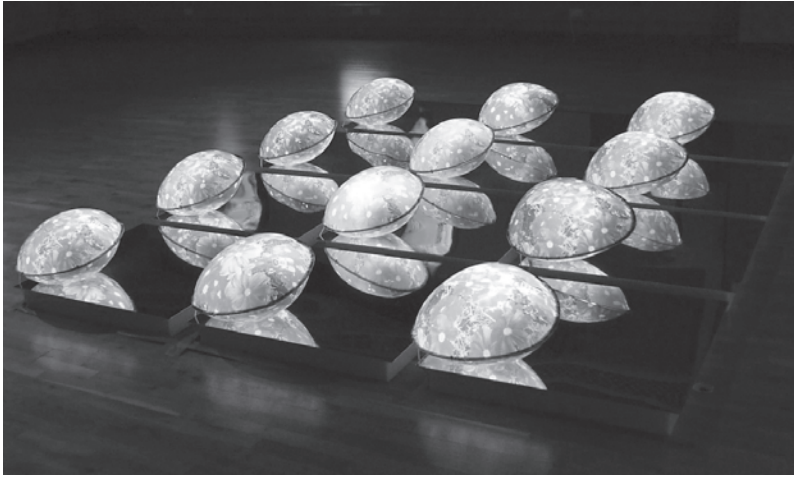


Figure 1: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Treasure: Back to Nature*, 2004, digital screen printing, acrylic board, 60cm x 50cm x 40cm x 12 pieces.

a conventional notion of beauty in women's faces in contemporary Taiwan. However, these are western women's faces with large blue eyes, thick eyebrows, blond hair, high noses and full lips. In the bottom left-hand part of the work, large-breasted western women are shown, while high-heeled shoes are represented in the water lilies above. In the top right-hand section of the work, five representative Oriental women's faces grow from the water lilies, illustrating a stereotypical view of ancient beauty. Such Oriental beauties were said to have 'willow eyebrows, apricot eyes and a cherry mouth' (these are the terms used to describe beautiful women in classical Chinese Literature). In *Antithesis and Intertext*, she criticized 'materialized female bodies' and the male gaze in modern society, which has long been restricted under Confucian values. Being one of the first Taiwanese feminist women artists, Lin's earlier works were created primarily to challenge patriarchal values in Taiwan, and her recent works also follow this route, yet with more critical views about the impact of technology on people's lives.

Such characteristics are part of a broader ecofeminist philosophy with which she is engaged, in which it is generally asserted that capitalism and patriarchy take both nature and the female as colonized objects. Karen Warren has asserted that 'Ecological feminism [takes] the position that there are important connections between how one treats women, people of colour, and the underclass on one hand and how one treats the nonhuman natural environment on the other' (1997: 4). She further argues that 'What makes ecofeminism distinct is its insistence that nonhuman nature and naturism (i.e., the unjustified domination of nature) are feminist issues' (1997: 4). In other words, among the wide variety of feminisms (liberal feminism, Marxist feminism, radical feminism, postcolonial feminism and so on), ecofeminism considers non-human nature and naturism as feminist issues. Consequently, in an ecofeminist vision, the freeing of nature and women will lead to a return to a more caring relationship between human beings and the natural world around us. Criticizing the superego and exploitation of nature is replaced by a caring/custodial approach towards the natural environment, and this approach may be traced in Lin's 1999 artwork *Treasure*:



Figure 2: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Eve Clone II*, 2006, interactive 3-D video installation, size varied.

Back to Nature (1999–2004) (Figure 1), which shows the transformation of her artistic concerns in this direction. *Back to Nature*, consisting of billboard light boxes of digitally printed skies, seascapes and grass in the shape of square boxes, ovals, balls and other irregular forms, creates a kind of artificially fictitious landscape. Since then, Lin has been producing virtual images via technology, which often interact with the audience, yet she also exhibits sculpture-based objects, such as *Eve Clone Hands*, which are physical objects displayed in the gallery space. Her interest in ecofeminist patterns of thought moved to another level in 2001, after beginning teaching in the Department of Multimedia and Animation Arts at the National Taiwan University of Arts. Here, her direct engagement with science and technology to create art led her to a digital rendition of the female body of Eve. Lin remains critical of a technocratic vision of civilization as transcending and improving upon nature and rather seeks to reclaim the importance of nature, using the problematic figure of Eve to reconceive our relationships in a digital and technological world.

Any analysis of works of art made with new technologies cannot be undertaken merely by focusing on innovations in the use of technology in art. The cultural and symbolic meanings behind artworks, and their relationship with society, remain the most significant elements requiring interpretation during the analysis of a contemporary work. The analysis of Lin Pey-Chwen's work also needs to follow this kind of method. Lin's earliest work in the series, *Eve Clone II* (Figure 2), was created in 2006. Eve is represented here as a perfect female without any body hair, an unreal and quasi body, wholly created by the artist. It is a digital human situated somewhere between the real and the fake, between the organic and the inorganic. Lin combined the portrait with images of butterflies and pupa

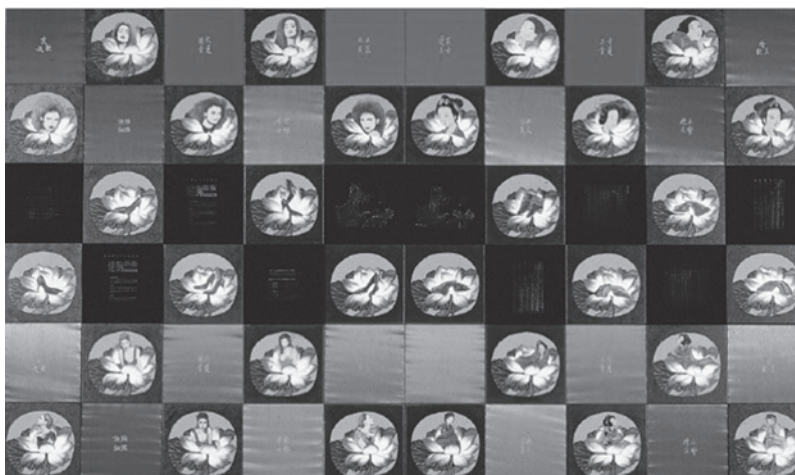


Figure 3: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Antithesis and Intertext*, 1995, mixed media, 420cm x 270cm.

4. E-mail correspondence with Lin Pey-Chwen, received on 10 December 2014.

to create a human body like a butterfly's pupa, and through the interaction between the audience and a computer program/screen using the effects of sound and light the butterfly becomes animated and begins to flap its wings. Through her colourful lighting effects and sounds, the artist explores issues of artificial life in a digital world, while suggesting a conflict in the relationship between science and nature by her juxtaposition of (the perfect) Eve and the short life cycle of a butterfly. *Eve Clone II* was an interactive installation, comprising an interactive device, three-dimensional (3D) computer-generated animation and webcams. In this piece, Eve Clone was created like a cloned human living in a laboratory tube, while the tube in which Eve Clone is hidden also resembles a larva and she looks as though she is in the process of metamorphosing into a butterfly. Lin's statements about *Eve Clone II* explain how

there are many bubbles in the tube, which can be seen as the nutrients (the computer programmes) for Eve Clone. When audiences view this work, the webcam will be operated to capture their images, which will then be integrated within the bubbles.

(Chiu 2009: 15)

In *Eve Clone II*, we are confronted by a living cyborg undergoing the process of cloning, and, with the aid of technology, Lin invites visitors to take part in this process, through which the computer generates images of the cyborg Eve Clone, and those of people who are hybridized together to create a unique interactive piece of art.

The form of a larva was first seen in Lin's earlier solo show, *Larva Series*, held at the National Taiwan Museum of Arts in 1993. Lin has explained that 'in that exhibition, [she] illustrated round shapes to resemble larvae and to depict the desire of breaking through "restrictions", which were [employed] to describe [her] yearning to challenge the patriarchal ideology of Taiwan's society'.⁴ Thus, for Lin, larvae have strong symbolic connotations with the suppression of women in patriarchal society.

THE EVE CLONE SERIES AND ITS BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM

To re-emphasize how the work uses both technological and substantial views of feminist ideas, the concepts of the post-human and cybersexuality are used here to offer a different narrative of Lin's work *Portrait of Eve Clone*. While formally innovative in her development of a figure created through or displayed via a post-human creation, Lin also explores how religion (specifically Christianity in this case) offers a different dimension to her portraits. The religious theme is not visualized in traditional iconography, as Lin transforms the religious theme into her art, which is not predominantly a religious reading of Eve. The artist herself was keen to point out that she was recently interviewed and featured by IGNITE, a US-based organization that features stories of women and girls who are leading and innovating in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.⁵ IGNITE picked up on the religious text evident in the work and described Lin's *Revelation of Eve Clone III* (Figure 4), exhibited at 'Post-humanist Desires', curated by myself and held at the Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei in 2013/2014, as follows:

The clones are distinguished by various Biblical references: skin tones based on materials referred to in the Bible; hymns as backing music; and a line from the Book of Revelations translated into multiple major languages. [...] Eve Clone is presented as the 'Great Image' of human desire as well as a testament to human greed and attempts to gain virtual power through technological civilisation.

(IGNITE n.d.)

Furthermore, Eve represents a kind of avatar that strongly re-presents different concepts of the body in Lin's work. The adaptation of a cyborg-like

5. 'Eve Clone Series: Female beauty, technology, God and nature explored through 3D cloning of the ideal woman. Pey-Chwen Lin, Taiwan', <http://ignite.globalfundforwomen.org/gallery/eve-clone-series>, accessed on 13 December 2014.



Figure 4: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Revelation of Eve Clone III*, 2013, interactive installation, moving image 3D animation, interactive systems, computers, projectors, stereo system.

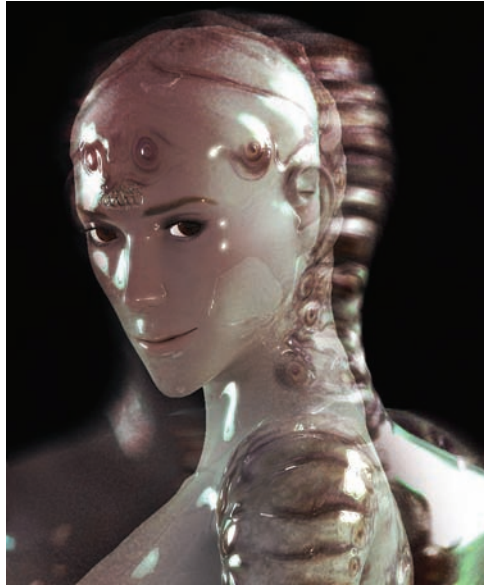


Figure 5: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Portrait of Eve Clone*, 2010, 3D animation, moving hologram, acrylic frame, spotlight, 46cm x 57.5cm x 4cm (each).

6. E-mail correspondence with Lin Pey-Chwen, received on 14 July 2011, and an interview with Lin in Taipei on 15 April 2012.

7. Lin Pey-Chwen's solo show at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei (MOCA) was on display from 24 March to 1 May 2011.

body in her work seems to relate to technophiles' dreams of uploading themselves onto the Internet, refashioning their own bodies, or developing a perfect avatar in cyberspace. Lin's *Eve Clone* may appear to create the perfect being in cyberspace through artistic aesthetics and new media technologies, but she shows both its dark and strange sides simultaneously. Another critic who has taken an interest in Lin's work is the Australian curator currently based in Taipei, Antioanetta Ivanova, and she has also described the Eves in Lin's work as 'alien beauties' (2011: 9–10). Lin's 2010 version of *Portrait of Eve Clone* (Figure 5) is very different from *Eve Clone II*, as this Eve was specifically inspired by the line in the book of Revelation: '13:18. God prophesied that the mark of the beast, 666, will be marked on people's foreheads'.⁶

Another significant body of work in Lin's *oeuvre* is *Portrait of Eve Clone* series, which was exhibited in The Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei, in 2011, and which expresses a sense of evil through the half-human-half-beast body.⁷ It mocks the potential damage to mankind by its progressive development of technology, and in an active and direct way it reveals social restrictions upon the female body as a trapped beast. Lin explains how:

I have attempted to represent the luxury and urbanization of artificial landscapes. The frames, glass medical tubes and medical jars show the process of the birth of artificial life, and how it is preserved and experimented upon. The numbers, symbols, sounds and images in my works describe an important 'appropriation' concept. The number shown on the specimen insects, *Eve Clone*, 666 (the mark of the best), computer time codes, tattoos, scriptures from the book of Revelation in the Bible and holy songs define the artificial life's character and status.

(2011: 4)

Eve's head is hybridized with many kinds of beasts through Lin's use of 3D dynamic holograms, so the body is rendered in different colours and the textures of minerals. Thus, the skin of Eve, with its diverse textures and colours, displays several possible hybridized forms of human and beast. The number 666 is shown in various languages, including Chinese, Japanese, German, Arabic, Egyptian and Hungarian, all of which are mentioned in the Bible. Through this work, the artist expresses her fears about the negative effects on humans that result from the extreme development of technology.

This particular series is also important because it continues and develops the concept of an earlier work, *Specimen* (2006), in which the portraits of Eve, which have been placed in black frames made of transparent acrylic material, are reminiscent of specimens of dead bodies. Eve's eyes move strangely and follow the viewer as they walk past the frame, and in this movement she seems to be alive and watching her human audience. The work generates a sense of tension and unease, similar to that between science (inorganic) and nature (organic), which is what the artist is asking us to question. As a result of the viewer walking back and forth in front of the work, the figure appears to be seen through a 360-degree image effect. Here, again, the rendering of Eve's skin is critical: the hybridized epidermis is made of different patterns, colours and textures and is presented in a form of cyberspace within the frame of the screen, thus utilizing Lin's dream of presenting her post-human Eve via the lens of digital art forms and holographic technologies.

Further analysis of *Portrait of Eve Clone* through iconography is revealing, specifically because, prior to the emergence of what we now identify as modern art, iconography was the dominant method employed by art historians to analyse religious artworks, focusing on the symbols used and how they were deployed and depicted in the picture plane. Although Christian religious imagery as a direct source of inspiration has not been widely adopted by contemporary artists, it remains valid as it is undeniable that Christianity is still taken as a source of motivation and inspiration for creating critical forms of contemporary art. For example, the Swedish photographer, Elisabeth Ohlson, created her controversial *Ecce Homo* series based on Christianity. Ohlson employed people who were lesbian, gay, trans-sexual and transvestite and placed them in religious settings, such as the crucifixion of Jesus and the Last Supper. Ohlson's *Ecce Homo* deliberately raised issues of sexuality with strong biblical references to challenge people's views towards sexuality and Christianity (Artsfreedom, 2012). The religious references in Lin's works are both direct and indirect; however, the focus on the number imprinted on Eve's forehead is widely recognized as a symbol of the Devil. This is another crucial element, revealing Lin's management of how the work should be read, since, like many works using specific religious symbolism, the audience needs to be able to understand the specific iconography of the images. Members of the audience need to have prior relevant knowledge to understand the particular symbolic transformation or the artist's interpretation of familiar images, or they will easily become immersed in the visual effects of the technology of the artworks, thereby overlooking any meaning the artist wants to express. While the work is undeniably clever in its use of digital technology, the central motif of the three sixes indicates the artist's intended interpretation.

At this point, it is worth commenting on Eve's place in Christian beliefs. Eve is recognized both as the first and as the ideal woman, but she was also manufactured from a part taken from a man, and her creation implies a sexual hierarchy in which she is a lesser being who is always placed second in the

scheme of life. In modern society, Eve has often been seen as the *ideal* woman for man, and is also seen as the purest fantasy form of a woman by scientists who have ostensibly taken the place of God and can now fashion their own Eve if they so wish. Consequently, *Eve Clone* has been created by Lin to challenge and re-interpret Christianity's estimation of Eve, women and the role of scientists in fashioning human beings.

Sexual hierarchy is a part of Christian theology, and not only is Eve the second sex but, through her disobedience, she is also marked as distinctly inferior to Adam and, thereafter, all men. Thus, the universal bias in the Judaeo-Christian tradition began with the story of Adam and Eve. The objectification of women can also be seen in Greek stories, such as *Pandora's Box*, in which Pandora removes the lid of the box and unleashes all evils into the world. As Gerald Kreyche states, 'women long have been honoured in theory, but debased in practice' (2004: 82). Kreyche goes on to give an example from the Catholic Church in which Mary, the mother of Jesus, is also called the Queen of Heaven, and yet the Pope will not allow women to be priests. Nuns perform second-class duties for the priesthood, by being house-keepers for pastors, maintaining flowers on the altar, teaching youngsters, etc. Earlier feminist literature challenges this form of sexual inequality, and attempts to offer another picture of Eve, who has long been regarded as second to Adam. Phyllis Tribble provides an inspiring and ingenious re-reading of *Genesis* 2 and 3, and creates a form of mutuality between the sexes (1978: 72–143). She argues that the creation of Adam in *Genesis* 2 is not necessarily the creation of the male sex, but rather it is the creation of an 'earth creature', which does not identify sexual differences (Tribble 1978: 79–82). Sexual identity only appears when woman is created and the 'earth creature' becomes two mutually companionable beings of male and female sexes. Following such perspectives on gender, it is evident that Lin's work is heavily influenced by the ideas of sexuality and gender. Lin's reinterpretation of Eve has gone beyond her earlier feminist criticism of sexual dualism (e.g. *Antithesis and Intertext*). Rather, she is more interested in the symbolic signs carried by her Eve created through artificial life and new technologies, because she represents a threat to our living environment, life and society.

Alongside the various appearances of Eve, made with 3D dynamic holograms, Lin has also created *Eve Clone III* (Figure 6), which makes use of interactive images. Six Eve Clone faces are presented through the combining of six different mineral colours and textures with interactive images within a hexagonal site, made through the use of digital imaging technologies. When the viewer moves in front of the artwork, Eve's appearance seems to change continuously. Sometimes the image shows a frontal view, sometimes the back, and sometimes the image appears to be turning around. After Eve turns around, the image moves up and down as though it is about to leap out of the frame. *Eve Clone III* was shown with six interactive projection devices when it was first exhibited in The Museum of Contemporary Art in 2011, and then at the 2012 Taiwan Biennial at the Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts. Lin used 3D computer animation technology and kinetic sensors in an interactive computer system to create the mysterious Eve Clone faces. With ambient sound, this work takes flowing water, light and shadows as its background. Eve's appearance continues to change with the movement of the audience, while the reflection from the water and the light also changes. The changes to Eve's image result from people's physical presence in the space and their interference as they move, combining the



Figure 6: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Eve Clone III*, 2011, *Interactive Installation in 6 Projection Panels*.

interaction between humans and technology in a new way. However, it is a relationship of ambiguous, mutual influence and blindness being emphasized in this work, as explained by Lin: 'God created Eve [but] humans created the Eve Clone'.⁸ Lin's emphasis on the fact that a human (i.e. the artist) created the Eve Clone indicates the God-like creativity of people resembling the capability of Creator. The Eve Clone image is the result of human creation through technology, while the strange beauty of the Eve Clone reflects the negative influences of artificial and technical civilization on nature. At the same time, Lin expresses the unique characteristics of Eve through a mix of human and beast. There can be little doubt that this interactive work creates stronger sensory effects than those of her 3D dynamic holograms.

The number 666 appears again on Eve Clone's right hand. In 2011, Lin produced *Hands of Eve Clone* (Figure 7), six pairs of hands all made of resin, which she placed in the type of glass jars that are commonly used to store organs in hospitals. The skin on the hands is composed of snake skin, tree bark, pupa skin, shell, metal, ore and other materials, representing the genetic mutations of Eve Clone.⁹ The properties of Lin's work can be seen in the artist's statement for her solo show held at MOCA Taipei in 2011, in which she quoted Roland Barthes: 'The best weapon against myth is perhaps to mythify it in its turn, and to produce an artificial myth' (2011: 4). The Eve Clone hands are a complex creation. First, Lin made sculpture moulds and then transferred the work into transparent resin. The artist arranged blue-green lasers and bubbles on the hands in the glass jars to invoke a more mysterious atmosphere. Looking closely at the hands with their strange textures and images, it seems that they symbolize the same concept as Eve – a body, or part of a body, which is a hybrid of human and beast. Displaying the hands as 3D objects placed in glass containers emphasizes their properties as specimens, which is to strengthen the idea that Eve Clone is artificial, responding to the impact of technology. Similarly, in Lin's *Fingers of Eve Clone* (2011) (Figure 8), she has placed transparent resin finger sculptures into

8. Interview with the artist in Taipei on 20 September 2011.

9. Artist's statement sent in e-mail correspondence from Lin Pey-Chwen, received on 10 December 2014.

medical test tubes, and then exhibited them in black acrylic frames. As with *Hands of Eve Clone*, Lin illuminated the fingers with green light. Through this more recent work, Lin again offers a view of Eve in the process of creation, emphasizing what is artificial and produced through scientific endeavour, rather than something that is natural. Rather, the artist proposes going 'back to nature' through science and technology. Via Eve's inorganic, artificial genes, the work again criticizes digital technology and artificial life as



Figure 7: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Hands of Eve Clone*, 2011, medical glass jar, poly sculpture, laser, 25cm×25cm×43cm×6 pieces.



Figure 8: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Fingers of Eve Clone*, 2011, medical glass tube, poly sculpture, acrylic frame, spotlight, 60cm×30cm×5cm×6 pieces.



Figure 9: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Mass Production of Eve Clone*, 2011, 3D animation, digital photo frame, eighteen pieces.

transcending nature, while calling for an eco-feminist approach to a new relationship working with nature.

In Lin's solo show, held at the Gallery Grand Siècle in Taipei in August 2011, she exhibited three new works, *Mass Production of Eve Clone* (Figure 9), *Revelation of Eve Clone I* and *The Inspection of Eve Clone*. *Mass Production of Eve Clone* consists of eighteen digital frames of Eve Clone, hung on a wall. *Revelation of Eve Clone I* is a multi-media interactive installation and *The Inspection of Eve Clone* is a body of digital images. Eve Clone spreads the fingers of her right hand and gently touches her breast. Her left hand is placed in front of her eyes, which look downwards. The eighteen images show the same Eve Clone, but like the earlier works they are expressed in different colours and textures. At the same time, across the sequence of works, the figure rotates through 360 degrees, with each frame showing a different angle. The work is extremely similar to *Hands of Eve Clone*, in that the figures look as though they are immersed in liquid and placed in medical tubes or jars. For this work, Lin explains how 'mass production and normalisation represent the production process, through which it creates something which is completely the same as the original, using a cloning technique'.¹⁰ Eve Clone's character is exposed in this work as both artificial and mechanical. Expressed through its neat presentation of eighteen digital frames, the work provides a metaphor for artificial and inorganic life characters in a clone factory.

The Taiwan-based critic and curator Hongjohn Lin reviewed Lin's *Eve Clone* series, arguing that 'the installation creates a situation of a sci-fi laboratory to archive and preserve the cloned version of Eve, as if ruins of technology' (2011: 7). It is interesting to read that, despite the fact that Lin's Eve Clone is created with advanced technology, the work itself actually embodies the idea of the 'ruins of technology'. This concept can also be seen in *Revelation of Eve Clone I* which was shown through a huge interactive display system using two synchronized projectors. With such means, the artist attempted to overlay different and sometimes overwhelming images of Eve Clone. Through a

10. Interview with the artist in Taipei on 20 September 2011.

11. An e-mail correspondence from Lin Pey-Chwen, received on 14 July 2011.

special computer program, Lin displayed against each image an accumulating number, calculated in milliseconds. The accumulation of the number was triggered each time an audience member entered the exhibition space. When the viewers left the space, the number automatically stopped accumulating and the colour of the image would gradually turn to black and white. Lin's works use such techniques to construct her criticism of the confrontation between the artificial and the natural, by showing how each element both parallels and resists the other, and this has been evident since her early work, the *Back to Nature Series* from 1999. The transformation of numbers and images caused by the presence of the viewers of *Revelation of Eve Clone I* again responds to the artist's attempts during the past ten years to represent different versions of artificial life. In addition, the background music creates an uncanny atmosphere, adding to the viewer's perception that on entering the installation space they are being immersed in an unreal world. Eve Clone's beautiful but evil image and the continuously changing Bible scriptures and the eerie music offer the audience a haunting yet rare sensory experience, designed to stimulate the audience's imagination and perception towards sexuality, the body and virtuality.

The next piece to consider is Lin's *Inspection of Eve Clone* (Figure 10), which reveals two aspects of her quasi skin. First, Eve Clone is constructed from digital skin and, second, the tattoos on her quasi skin show some of the many ambiguities surrounding both body and technology. The tattoos selected by the artist include a rose, a dragon, a phoenix, a snake and a scorpion. The patterns of the tattoos connect to the idea of taking a specific iconography and transforming its symbolic connotations. Both the tattoos and Eve Clones signify a 'beautiful trap', something alluring and at the same time repulsive, but they also combine within the installation to produce an atmosphere laden with references to hidden danger and evil. *Inspection of Eve Clone* is presented through digital prints, each of which shows different angles and parts of Eve Clone's body using infrared rays. Lin marks the number, date, time and the artist's name at the top and bottom of the work, as though the artist is like a doctor, examining and diagnosing Eve Clone's physical appearance with a medical device. For Lin, 'the tattoo's pattern symbolises and reveals the hidden danger of the beautiful Eve Clone under the inspection of infrared rays'.¹¹ In other words, through the infrared rays, the artist reveals the negative symbolic meaning of Eve Clone's beauty.

In 2013, Lin exhibited *Revelation of Eve Clone III* (2013) (Figure 11) at 'Post-humanist Desire', a group exhibition held at the Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei. Installed in an independent gallery room, this work was a large multi-media and interactive installation, comprising moving 3D animation, interactive systems and a stereo system. When the audience walked into the gallery space, they were confronted with a bank of curved and wide projection screens that showed a series of computer-processed images of Eve Clone, which is created with a simultaneously activated and interactive system, resulting in the movement of Eve Clone and the playing of some calm, religious music in the background. Eve Clone represents an existence that is both beautiful and dangerous, and yet worshipped. Her body echoes the concepts of cloning, reproduction and cyborgs. The ideas of the post-human reveal a state of anxiety and uncertainty resulting from the condition of being between human and inhuman. Features of the post-human in Lin's work can be seen via her imagined Eve, which is itself a cyborg, a mixture of mechanical and biological organisms.



Figure 10: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Inspection of Eve Clone*, 2011, digital image, 76.5cm × 53.5cm x 2cm (each) × 6 pieces.



Figure 11: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Revelation of Eve Clone III*, 2013, interactive installation, moving image 3D animation, interactive systems, computers, projectors, stereo system.

Lin's *Eve Clone* may appear to create the perfect being in cyberspace through artistic aesthetics and new media technologies, but at the same time she shows its dark and mysterious side. *Eve Clone* is represented as a perfect female without any body hair, an unreal and quasi body, created by the artist. It is a digital human situated somewhere between the real and the fake, between the organic and the inorganic. The dark and haunting beauty of the

Eve Clone reflects the negative influences of artificial and technical civilization on nature via a woman's hybridized body. Here, there is a remarkable similarity to the robot-shaped woman featured in Fritz Lang's celebrated early Science Fiction film, *Metropolis* (1927), about which Claudia Springer makes thought-provoking comments on cybersexuality and the connection between sexuality and technology:

[*Metropolis*] combines celebration of technological efficiency with fear of technology's power to destroy humanity by running out of control. This dual response is expressed by the film in sexual terms: a robot shaped like a human woman represents technology's simultaneous allure and powerful threat. The robot is distinguished by its overt sexuality, for it is its seductive manner that triggers a chaotic worker revolt.

(1999: 36)

Lang's use of the robot in the form of a human *woman* (who is a fake and evil copy of the character of Maria, a beautiful and essentially well-meaning woman) is particularly telling and interesting in the context of the threat and allure of technology. It is also interesting to note the similarity between the motivation of Lin's creation of Eve Clone (itself another fake and evil copy of an essentially beautiful or perfect woman) and the thrust of Springer's statement. Collapsing the boundaries between humans and technology is often exemplified via sexuality (especially via women's bodies) in postmodern culture. To further illustrate this point, Andreas Huyssen also argues that modernist texts tend to juxtapose machines with women, displaying and projecting fears of overpowering technology onto patriarchal fears about female sexuality (1981–82: 221–37). Thus, it is evident that when humans interface with computer technology in postmodern culture and creativity, the process is not simply about adding external robotic prostheses to bodies; rather, human identities are integrated within the mechanized human forms.

Lin's latest animation, *Great Babylon* (2015) (Figure 12), continues the artist's style of utilizing a sensual, yet artificial Eve Clone as the primary

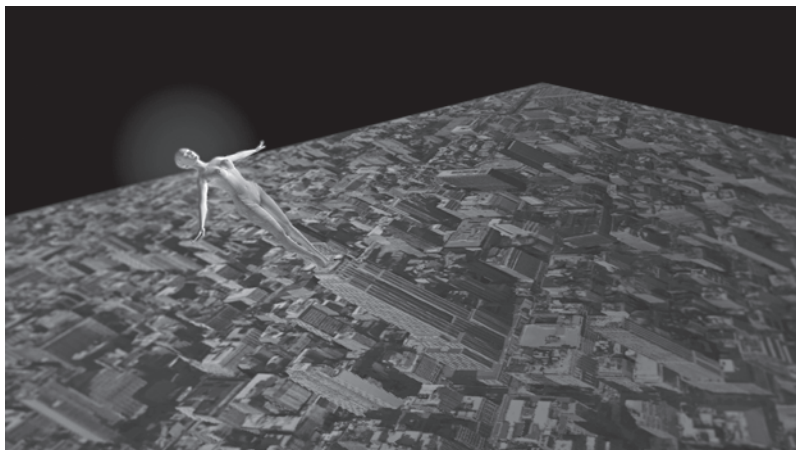


Figure 12: Lin Pey-Chwen, *Great Babylon*, 2015, 3D computer animation, digital sounds, four minutes and seven seconds.

subject. Lin has placed Eve Clone in a real-life setting (i.e. the photograph of a bird's eye view of the Empire State Building in New York City) to warn people about the desires and sins they acquire when they vigorously and selfishly pursue success in politics, economics, culture, technology, religion, etc.¹² Opening her arms wide, and standing straight and firmly on top of the Empire State Building, Eve Clone seems like the great creator, a God, looking down on the twisted and surreal streets, which is the world in which we live. Lin's exploitation of a sensual and erotic woman's body to question the 'sins' people are experiencing suggests a kind of human fear about the future, echoing both Springer's and Huyssen's views on cybersexuality.

12. From an e-mail correspondence from Lin Pey-Chwen, received on 24 November 2014.

CONCLUSION: TRANSCENDING THE RELIGIOUS EVE?

Long before the terms post-human and cyborg had even been coined, artists, philosophers, authors and scientists imagined and interpreted the phenomena in diverse, complicated and multiple ways. Examples include the mechanical bird in the fairy tale *The Nightingale* (1843) by Hans Christian Andersen, the monster in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), and the robots in Isaac Asimov's science fiction novels, all of which are imaginary creations between biological bodies and technology. Arguably, there is also a contemporary example of a cloned Eve, in the shape of Repilee, a female robot made by Professor Hiroshi Ishiguro at Osaka University in Japan. It is indeed fascinating to examine the connection between woman, technology and cyborg, and the connection between the female cyborgs of Lin's Eve Clone, Lang's Maria and Ishiguro's robot Repilee, all of which suggest that technology's fantasized other is often in the shape of a woman. Undeniably, the evolution of technology is still an integral part of our interpretation of post-human issues today. Through Eve Clone, Lin demonstrates her own particular interpretation of the post-human, the transformation of the human body, mixed with organisms, robots or nature.

It is worth emphasizing that in any analysis of Lin's works it is hardly possible to separate her religion and faith from the art, because these are at the root of her work. Any valid reading of Lin's work should acknowledge the strong Christian references, but it is not appropriate to analyse Lin's works solely in terms of its religious connotations. This is a crucial truth of Lin's *oeuvre*, since it is underpinned with a maker's skill in the exploitation of cutting-edge media, where the aesthetics, techniques and the professionalism of the construction in her art undoubtedly surpass any religious meanings in the images and works. This is perhaps the major paradox; the heavy reliance on direct symbolic connotations from the Bible, which for some could make Lin's work appear rather traditional and restricted, stands in stark contrast with the use of twenty-first-century technology, and yet this is precisely what is at the root of the message.

Considering the work from a retrospective viewpoint, it is evident that Lin has been challenging the patriarchal order from within the value system itself. Lin created her Eve Clone series (and her earlier works) under a patriarchal ideology. That is, Eve's body represents easily recognizable stereotypes of women found in works of art across the centuries; however, it is interesting to consider whether Lin's post-human and hybridized Eve transcends the religious and symbolic cultural connotations of Eve. It is also evident that there is clear transition in Lin's work from the earlier period when she focused predominantly on a feminist approach to the representation of women in the patriarchal culture of Christianity, to her recent critique of technology.

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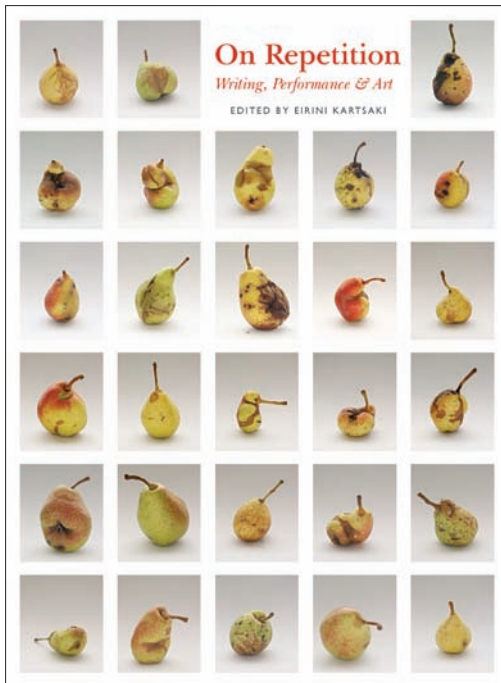
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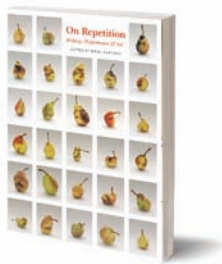
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On Repetition

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On Repetition aims to unpack the different uses and functions of repetition within contemporary performance, dance practices, craft and writing. The collection, edited by Eirini Kartsaki, explores repetition in relation to intimacy, laughter, technology, familiarity and fear – proposing a new vocabulary for understanding what is at stake in works that repeat. Drawing on psychoanalysis, philosophy, linguistics, sociology and performance studies – and employing case studies from a range of practices – the essays presented here combine to form a unique interdisciplinary exploration of the functions of repetition in contemporary culture.

Eirini Kartsaki is a teaching fellow in theatre and performance studies at Queen Mary, University of London.



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