

GHEBALLY

CANDICE LIN



Institut de Recherches
Agronomiques Tropicales
et des Cultures Vivrières

Textiles
Coton
(var. Gossypium div. variétés)
Malvaceae
Coton graine

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Plantes médicinales
Quinquina
(Cinchona Ledgeri)
Rubiaceae
Ecorce

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Stimulant
Café
(Coffea canephora var. Robusta)
Rubiaceae
Café en Cerises



REVIEW - 27 FEB 2018

A Different Light: Candice Lin's Sensual Elsewhere

Questioning the way that we interact with violent colonial histories at Portikus, Frankfurt

BY VIKTORIA DRAGANOVA

'A Hard White Body, a Soft White Worm', Candice Lin's solo exhibition at Portikus, Frankfurt, drops us into a sensual elsewhere, the space dim, humid and heavy with the odour of vegetation. We are, it seems, underwater: a dark plastic sheet marked with floral motifs stretches overhead, while another shimmers beneath projected lights, like the surface of the sea. Throughout the space are several low-rise archipelagos of bricks, wood and cardboard. Lit by faint bulbs, they function as makeshift display platforms for texts, objects, fluids, organisms and other materials associated with colonial history.

On one such display, an underlined passage in an open book reads: 'Life in that room seemed to be occurring underwater.' The extract is from James Baldwin's novel *Giovanni's Room* (1956), which evolves around precarity, social alienation and the politics of race, class and sexuality. Baldwin's text inspired this show's previous iteration, which was presented at Bétonsalon, Paris, last year, and included a bed of unfired porcelain (*A Hard White Body*, 2017). Porcelain sustains Lin's interest in multi-layered inscriptions of colonial legacy, attached as it is to a history of exoticism, Western desire and global trade.



Candice Lin, 2018,
installation view,
Portikus, Frankfurt.
Courtesy: Portikus,
Frankfurt;
photograph:
Helena Schlichting

This bed re-emerges at Portikus, although here it has been fired, broken into pieces and scattered. Its hard, white body is now fragmented, thereby conjuring the longing and loss of Baldwin's novel, as well as the fear of a life that will never comprise a whole. Within this same display is a drawing, *Here They Drown Algerians* (2017), based on a photograph of graffiti scrawled on the St. Michel Bridge in Paris, denouncing the bloody repression of peaceful Algerian demonstrations in 1961. Amid the ambiance of the show, such affinities of intimate, isolated questioning and covert violence appear even more suffocating.

Other characters are summoned through texts, drawings and objects, such as Jeanne Baret, expert botanist, the first woman to sail the globe and another who, like Baldwin, was entangled in complex negotiations of power. A draft text, co-written by Baldwin and Bobby Seale in 1975, that proposes the publication of a 'fantastic, analytical, almost blasphemous dialogue' on topics connected to black liberation, women's liberation, sexuality and pan-Africanism. Despite his politically active role, Baldwin was dismissed by the Black Panther Party for his homosexuality. Baret, in turn, was forced to borrow identity and dress as a man, as women were forbidden from boarding French naval ships. Her botanical knowledge was overshadowed by that of fellow botanist Philibert Commerson, both her employer and lover.



Candice Lin, 2018, installation view, Portikus, Frankfurt. Courtesy: Portikus, Frankfurt; photograph: Helena Schlichting

Lin questions the way that we interact with the past, something visualised by the video *The Beloved* (2017), which comprises images captured by the artist in various museums. History, here, is usurped by speculation, and additional components further stretch the potential of the exhibition as an apparatus to produce new genealogies. In one corner, a detox herbal tea is boiling, consciously linking the idea of purity of body to race and class. Silkworms, another colonial good that in the 19th century fell victim to a disease that threatened to destroy one of the major French industries, crawl everywhere, raising a whole ecosystem that is in need of constant maintenance.

Lin places a high level of importance upon cycles, accentuating constant exchange between environments and bodies while simultaneously forbidding hierarchies and classifications. 'People are out there today', reads a displayed text, which goes on to claim that a drowning body will never make it to the seafloor intact, as it will be eaten and processed, again and again. While such exchanges might prove as perilous as they are potentially supportive, presented here, within Lin's world of questioning, they bring solace. They suggest that, in spite of everything, dominant structures will continue to be challenged; that speculative thinking will forever represent a sensual elsewhere within which we can assess things in a different light.

'Candice Lin: A Hard White Body, a Soft White Worm' in on view at Portikus, Frankfurt until 8 April.

Main image: Candice Lin, 2018, installation view, Portikus, Frankfurt. Courtesy: Portikus, Frankfurt; photograph: Helena Schlichting

Draganova, Viktoria. "A Different Light: Candice Lin's Sensual Elsewhere." *Frieze*, February 27, 2017. <https://frieze.com/article/different-light-candice-lins-sensual-elsewhere>

Art in America

REVIEWS (/REVIEWS/) FEB. 24, 2017

Candice Lin^S

LONDON,
at Gasworks

Q

by Federico Florian



Candice Lin: *System for a Stain*, 2016, wood, glass jars, cochineal, copper still, hot plate, and mixed mediums; at Gasworks.

A DIY apparatus composed of pumps, glass jars, porcelain filters, plastic tubes, a copper still, and sundry other items was installed in the first room of Candice Lin's solo show at Gasworks. An intense, unpleasant smell filled the air. The installation—suggesting a mechanical digestive system—combined sugar, cochineal, and tea, all colonial commodities traded in early modern Europe, into a red fluid that gurgled in a rectangular basin, from which it was siphoned off through a series of tubes to the second gallery and deposited on marble-effect laminate flooring. The piece, *System for a Stain* (all works 2016), visualized the flow of bodies and materials in commercial trade—a flow that is historically connected to violence and imperialism, as the bloodlike stain on the floor seemed to suggest. A strong interest in the history of slavery and the cultural implications of colonialism has informed Lin's practice for years: in her 2012 solo exhibition at Ghebaly Gallery in Los Angeles, for example, she showed figurines reproducing Yoruba carvings of Queen Victoria among a series of dildo-esque sculptures under bell jars.

The title of the Gasworks exhibition—"A Body Reduced to Brilliant Colour"—was a reference to the violent production mode of one of the most precious goods in sixteenth-century colonial trades: cochineal dye, which was exported from Mexico and Central America. Cochineal insects are the source of the dye: in order to get the brilliant red color, their bodies are pulverized.

Violence permeates two works that were shown in the first gallery, each of them a micro-environment housed in a glass tank. In *Warner for Survivalists: White Gold*, the tank is inhabited by a group of cockroaches. It also contains a sugar replica of a cobalt-colored

Chinese porcelain vase and some candied orange (again, products related to colonialism). The cockroaches must eat the sweets they are provided or eat one another (cockroaches can have cannibalistic tendencies). When I was there, some of them barely moved, looking exhausted. *The Worm Husband (Our Father)* is a terrarium hosting a silkworm colony. The captive worms slither on a turquoise ceramic sculpture, which spells out a few lines from the Lord's Prayer in a language invented by George Psalmanazar, an eighteenth-century Frenchman who claimed to be a native of Formosa (today's Taiwan) and presented his fabricated language as Formosan.

This eccentric figure inspired another work on view: an illustrated leather-bound book displayed on a shelf next to a pair of gloves. Written by Lin in Psalmanazar's language and designed to resemble a medieval bestiary, the volume, titled *Physiliogus*, tells the history of some colonial trade goods—including cochineal, silver, porcelain, and sugar—in a vivid narrative style (an English translation of the text was available at the gallery's front desk).

Finally, the sound piece *A Memory Blushing with Innocence* played in the second room, over the red puddle on the floor. The visitor hears a soft female voice delivering a monologue on loop. The speaker is the daughter of a fictional plantation owner, and recounts childhood memories. Talking about the servants who used to look after her, she says: "When I was born I was the most precious being in the world. A thousand disembodied hands would appear at night . . . smoothing the sheets around me, tucking in the blankets. . . . The hands were so gentle, or at least they tried to be, though their palms were so rough." In this exhibition, Lin perceptively portrayed colonialism from various angles, showing the complicated networks through which it operates and conveying both its effects on slaves and its seductive qualities for those in power.



INFLUENCES - 10 MAR 2017

Portfolio: Candice Lin

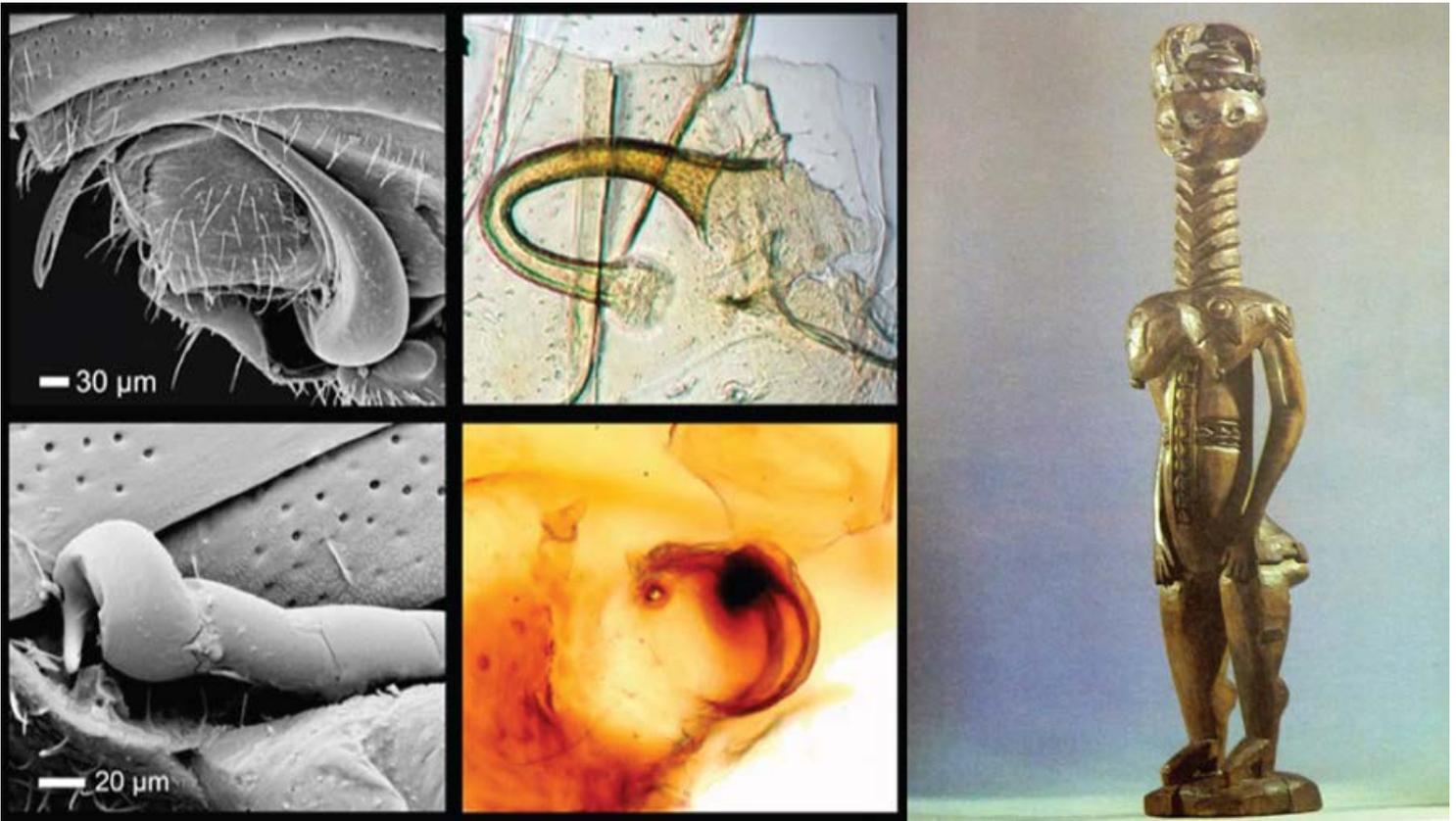
The body is a troubled thing ...

BY CANDICE LIN



The body is a troubled thing. Parts of it wander the world in fragmented forms as pilgrims in search of the ecstasy that religion and a dirty joke can deliver. Sometimes, one body becomes nestled into another, as in, 'hello my pet, hello my familiar'.

Sometimes one body reshapes another through repeated violence or an attempt to eat the other. Full absorption is thwarted by the indigestible; new bodies are formed.



Left: Microscope images of the *Coridromius* bug showing penises (left) and the corresponding fake and real vaginal sheathes that have grown all over the female's body in response and defense to repetitive traumatic insemination through random fissures in her carapace. Right: Yoruban sculpture of Queen Victoria, 19th century (made during the British rule of then Colonial Nigeria).

There were times when I was King Charles VI, the Beloved one, when my body was made of glass. And all the courtiers would gather around with pillows stuffed with goose down, wrapping me in heavy woven blankets and rugs, protecting my fragility. It reminded me of the time I went inside my aunt's dress on the day that we were wild men, dressed in pitch and lit on fire.

Four of the others died, their flaming genitals melting from their bodies into a puddle, but inside my 15-year-old relative's dress there was a whole other cosmos, governed by a different sense of time, where clocks did not exist, and the burned colour of our skin signified 'bygone', though I was right here shouting 'coeval' to you across the muffling skin of glass. But you could not hear me; I was somewhere in the future or the past.



Left: Edward Curtis's photo, *In a Piegan Lodge* (c. 1910) before retouching; Right: The same photo in its well-known version: a nostalgic, sepia-toned print with the clock erased

It seemed at times that I was the woman whose skirt enveloped me, and that, like Daniel Paul Schreber, the upper and lower gods, Ormuzd and Ahriman, conspired with fleetingly-improvised men to make my body into a woman's, voluptuous and soft. Birds with little girls' names would come and inject their corpse-poison and rays into my skin until it was the right satin consistency.

When I became this soft and pliable I was reshaped into a beast of burden, a non-human, and my mass was condensed into a single stone. During the British colonization of Egypt, an Egyptian labourer, angered at his stubborn donkey, threw this rock. It broke open to reveal the profile of Geoffrey Chaucer, the Father of English literature.



Chaucer stone, pictured in a vitrine located in the British Museum's Enlightenment gallery, London.
Photograph: Candice Lin

Speaking of fathers, there was this other one, Franz Boas, the father of American anthropology. In the archives at the Smithsonian, I read the notes of his colleagues belittling him, his Jewishness, his insistence on contextualizing other cultures. Context: a gesture of some presumed equality in the other, though it led a divergent path to atrocities like the display of human beings in zoos, museums and World Fairs. Boas intended it as a way to consider other cultures within a richness of parallel context, rather than placed within a continuum of European evolutionary Progress: a glimpse into the past, a time machine.

Boas made these slides of himself demonstrating a Kwakiutl Hamatsa dance as pragmatic models for those building a diorama for the US National Museum in 1895 that would include mannequins of indigenous peoples in the same poses. Perhaps unable to find or unwilling to ask indigenous people to pose for him, Boas nestled his body into that of the Hamatsa cannibal spirit, trying to fit his 'distinguished ethnologist' self into the emotional flesh of

the other through the gestures of his arms, raised eyebrows, open mouth. In this slide he has on his full suit. In the next he is suddenly almost naked, wearing only some long underwear.



Franz Boas demonstrating the Kwakiutl Hamatsa 'Cannibal Dance', 1895. The photograph was exhibited at The United States National Museum the same year.

Black Panther Party leader Eldridge Cleaver wrote that James Baldwin was 'a white man inside a black body'. According to Cleaver, Baldwin's homosexuality (and the way it infused his writing) expressed a 'sycophantic' relationship to whites, hatred for his own black people, and a 'racial death-wish'. By using the rhetoric of misogyny and homophobia, Cleaver conflated queerness with whiteness, an idea Baldwin perhaps internalized in *Giovanni's Room* (1956), compressing his own personal experiences into a love story enacted by white characters.



A prototype of Toshiba's female android Ms. Aiko Chihira performs sign language to a visitor during the annual CEATEC Japan advanced technologies show in Chiba, 7 October, 2014. Photograph: AP Photo / Koji Sasahara

Perhaps this is the internalized colonialism that Frantz Fanon speaks of, of imagining or longing for oneself to be part of the whiteness that is represented as the World. Sometimes I believed in my whiteness until confronted. Sometimes others believed and colluded in it too. When I moved into Echo Park years ago with a roommate who was a video artist, she wanted the iron bars outside her window to be repaired because she was nervous that the mostly Latino neighbours would see 'two white girls moving in with all this gear'. 'But I'm not white,' I said, 'and your gear is a bunch of old thrift store TVs no one is going to want.' 'Oh, you know what I mean,' she replied. She wanted so much for us to be the same.

18th century New World Spanish Casta paintings (*pinturas de castas*) mapped out a visual taxonomy of miscegenation to contain and organize the anxiety such hybrid mixtures produced. Bodies are always losing themselves in unlike bodies – the bodies of other humans, non-humans, and the bodies of things. The boundaries are porous and this must be contained by terms that denigrate the other to the animal – *mulato* (mule), *lobo* (wolf), *chino* (from cochino, pig). But even such anxious systems fall apart at the seams, and the terms

themselves begin to express befuddlement, confusion and a lack of clarity: *torna atrás* (return backwards), *tente en el aire* (hold yourself in mid-air), *no te entiendo* (I don't understand you).



Juan Patricio Morlete Ruiz, *De español y torna atrás, tente en el aire* (From Spaniard and Return Backwards, Hold Yourself Suspended in Mid Air), c.1760. Courtesy: LACMA

Main image: Franz Boas demonstrating the Kwakiutl Hamatsa 'Cannibal Dance', 1895. The photograph was exhibited at The United States National Museum the same year.

CANDICE LIN

Candice Lin is an artist who lives and works in Los Angeles, USA. Recent solo exhibitions include at Gasworks, London, UK; Commonwealth & Council, Los Angeles, USA; and Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles, USA; and she has

had work included in group exhibitions at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, USA; Galeria Fortes Vilaça, São Paulo, Brazil; and Sculpture Center, New York, USA. In May, Lin will present a collaborative project with Patrick Staff at Human Resources, LA, USA, and will have a solo exhibition at Bétonsalon, Paris, France, in September.

Candice Lin

GASWORKS

155 Vauxhall Street

September 22–December 11

Central to Candice Lin's current exhibition, "A Body Reduced to Brilliant Colour," is *System for a Stain* (all works cited, 2016), a distillation apparatus where popular colonial commodities, such as tea and cochineal, form a dark-red liquid in a shallow wooden tank. Slim plastic tubing emerges, snaking its way to a neighboring room, where it coils onto a floor covered with white marble laminate. As the red fluid gathers in puddles, an audio work, *A Memory Blushing with Innocence*, reveals the physiological and psychological effects of colonialism for both master and slave, as told through the macabre memories of a plantation owner's daughter. On the fate of Indians working in the mines, for example, she recalls their skin turning white, their veins silver, and their eyes blue. "They believed they finally understood what it was to be European," she notes, "as they crawled out of the earth . . . sick and slowly dying."

But the critique of the capitalist system that facilitated this history does not remain in the realm of abstract representation. *A Warner for Survivalists: White Gold* presents a small fish tank in which about fifteen giant Madagascar hissing cockroaches are offered only candied fruit and a Chinese vase made of sugar to feed on—sugar being a colonial commodity that some breeds have evolved to avoid, given its use in traps and its detrimental health effects. Horrifically, this controlled environment thus offers a limited set of choices to its inhabitants—submit, starve, or cannibalize. (When I visited, the majority appeared either dead or comatose.) In this microcosm of violence, the viewer is implicated in the cruelty: guilty of seeing something wrong within a locked structure and incapable of breaking it.



Candice Lin, *System for a Stain*, 2016, wood, glass jars, cochineal, poppy seeds, metal castings, water, tea, sugar, copper still, hot plate, ceramic vessels, mortar and pestle, Thames mud, jar, microbial mud battery, vinyl, dimensions variable.

— Stephanie Bailey

ARTILLERY



Candice Lin, *Female Penis/Beast of Burden*, 2015, courtesy of the artist and Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles, image credit: Jeff McLane

CANDICE LIN

Francois Ghebaly / Los Angeles

Kristen Osborne-Bartucca | November 3, 2015

One measure of a contemporary artist's success is that he or she allows us to view the world, our history, or ourselves differently; Candice Lin is notable for doing all three. Her mixed-media work upsets epistemological meta-narratives, conflates binaries and revels in slippages. Distinctions such as those between male and female, life and death, and parasite and host are useless in her *Weltanschauung*. "You are a spacious fluid sac", Lin's new show at Francois Ghebaly, is a veritable cabinet of curiosities, but one with an abiding and meticulous sense of purpose—to upend the way we construct and consume knowledge.

The strongest works in the show are five collages, each containing a dried plant, a snippet of text, and a printed image. *Female Penis/Beast of Burden* (all works 2015) contains an image of a female neotroglia, a genus of barklice in which the female has a penis. The accompanying quote concerns Jeanne Baret, the first woman to circumnavigate the globe, doing so while dressed as a man; clearly, gender is a social construct. *Animal within the Animal* contrasts pregnancy with a fungus growing on a tarantula that causes it to produce antler-like protuberances. There is a sense of horror, of the alien, of the uneasy similarities between these situations of bodily inhabitation. *Cannibalizing* features the planarian, a flatworm that can regenerate body parts, as well as a quote from anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss concerning criminals in society; it is clear that civilization struggles more than the natural world does when it comes to mending broken appendages.



Candice Lin, *Cannibalizing Cultural Memory*, 2015, Courtesy of the Artist and Ghebaly Gallery, Los Angeles, image Credit: Jeff McLane

Tucked in a dark corner of the gallery is the eerie *Recipe for Spontaneous Generation: Baby Mice*, a glass jar with dead baby mice suspended in alcohol, complete with shamanistic elements such as copper pipe and dried wheat. With its companion piece *Recipe for Spontaneous Generation: Baby Scorpions*, it suggests pre-Enlightenment attempts to probe the boundaries of life and death. The fluid in which the once-living creatures are suspended is an apt metaphor for Lin's practice, as it suggests sex, intermingling and immersion, and the futility of separation and hierarchy.

The centerpiece of the show due to its enormous size is the unsettling *You are a parasite*, a massive sculpture of the head of a Kafka-esque insect, its gaping maw revealing a pink rug, twinkling candles, tea and other offerings laid on the floor. The intersections of sex and violence and the human and the animal in this piece seek to collapse our own tenuous claims to supremacy and evolutionary progress.

Her summative work, *5 Kingdoms*, is a handmade book of pages depicting the five classifications of living things; rather than strictly separating them, Lin celebrates overlap and connection. An apt way of understanding her work, then, is through Deleuze and Guattari's rhizome; for her there are many pathways to knowledge, many entry and exit points and multiple truths. A fetus is a parasite, a woman is a man, and a dead animal is poised to come back to life.

Review Candice Lin explores the unruliness of the natural order at Francois Ghebaly Gallery

By **Sharon Mizota**

OCTOBER 16, 2015, 1:12 PM

Candice Lin's latest exhibition at François Ghebaly advances a new world order, or at least an alternative worldview: Relationships we think of as transgressive or parasitical are really just expressions of universal oneness.

The gallery's front room is dominated by a large, gray sculpture of a hollowed-out insect head. On the floor inside are flesh-colored rugs with candles and a small offering tray. Titled "You are a parasite," it not only situates us as the invasive presence, but does so within the trappings of a sacred space.

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Lin also riffs on the Golden Record sent into space on the Voyager spacecraft in 1977. In an illustration etched on her disc's surface, she replaces Voyager's human-centric view with one in which bacteria is central, and in which animals are intertwined with one-celled organisms, fungi and plants.

Article continues below ↓

The most affecting pieces are mixed-media collages highlighting natural phenomena that defy our attempts to classify them. There's the female insect with a penis that penetrates the male to extract sperm, human males who have been known to lactate, and a fungus that grows inside a tarantula, completely overtaking its body.

The collages are little windows into nature's unruliness. From the bacteria in our guts to the way we are gutting the planet, we are already both hosts and parasites. Lin asks us to own it and succumb.

François Ghebaly Gallery, 2245 E. Washington Blvd. (323) 282-5187, through Oct. 24. Closed Sundays and Mondays. www.ghebaly.com

ARTFORUM

Candice Lin

FRANCOIS GHEBALY GALLERY
2245 E Washington Blvd.
September 12–October 24

If Western historians like to imagine phallic arrows of progress, Candice Lin offers a circular, organic, and panbiological corrective. Her current show infects the authority of didactic forms familiar to ethnographic museums. One lushly illuminated manuscript, *5 Kingdoms (book)* (all works 2015), unfolds a mythology that accounts not just for animals, plants, and people, but also germs and fungi. Small stones and a desiccated paw support its folds. Nearby, a series of framed panels incorporate samples of dried herbs, archival images, and quote passages that unsettle the pat platitudes of patriarchal civilization. *Minimizing the Male*, for example, features apocryphal citations of lactating men, including one who claimed to have nursed eight children.

Other pieces translate the dark realities of the animal kingdom into all-too-human artifacts. A pair of alien steel weapons, decorated with kangaroo lace, portray the sex organs of insects that reproduce via traumatic insemination. *Recipe for Spontaneous Generation: Baby Mice* is a jar of vodka infused with, indeed, tiny dead rodents. Such are the cruelties of reproduction—a compulsion that, Lin suggests, we might recognize in others and so adapt in ourselves. Through a deep, fetid bio-awareness that counters the outsize importance of, say, the male of the species, or the colonial/alchemical tendencies of science, Lin's show retools our rituals as counterhumanism. And if there is any doubt, climb inside *You Are a Parasite*, a giant fiberglass ant head, where a cave-like ambiance appointed with pink fun-fur rugs and battery-powered candles might make us feel uncannily at home—like the parasites we are.



View of “You Are a Spacious Fluid Sac,” 2015.

— Travis Diehl



Dildos (Corn Hill, Queen Victoria, Bird in Space), 2012. Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly, Los Angeles

Candice Lin

by PATRICK STEFFEN

Patrick Steffen: *I think of you as wild and prolific.*

Candice Lin: Wildness, or “going gaga” (to use a relevant concept from Jack Halberstam’s book *Gaga Feminism*), in my work is a way of erupting closed, normative systems. It is too senseless and boring to live and make work without wildness. Being prolific is another word for being very engaged and interested in the world. Because I live in a world I choose and make, and not some world I am given by others, then of course I’m deeply interested in this world, and have torrents of ideas I’m constantly thinking and making. I think the wild and the prolific are linked.

PS: *The mark of the hand is strong in your work. Is this an inclination or a positioning?*

CL: I don’t think inclinations and positions are separable. I make things myself because I have a deep satisfaction and pleasure in the physicality of materials. But because of this process and my investment in materials, the things I make take on specific meanings because of my markings. They would not have the same meaning if they were made by another person or machine. But the materials also always escape me. They are never fully in my control.

PS: *How do the strategies of anthropology relate to your interest in fantastic narratives?*

CL: The founding narrative of anthropology — the physical and mental superiority of white men — is

about the most fantastical (and least believable) narrative there is. I’m interested in the way in which an anthropologist’s own anxieties and projections are bound up into the texts themselves. This relationship forms twisted, snarled offspring that embody the fascinating problems of representation politics. I also love to read anthropology as a kind of science fiction. The anecdotes in anthropology texts produce such haunting, rich images in my mind. I don’t concern myself with their truth value.

PS: *In the genre of suppositional fiction, a world is constructed and the narrative is constrained by the consistent logic of the world’s rules. Your work pushes the logic in particular narratives to their conclusion. What is your approach with these world-building rules when appropriating narratives to bring about their timely end?*

CL: Deceptive familiarity is important in my work to an extent, to ground the broadest form of imagining a new future where social interactions and power structures might be very different. For instance, in *A Future Ethnography of Power* (2012) I wanted to reference the familiar ethnographic displays found at natural history museums colliding with the undulating organics of sci-fi forms. The collapsing of two familiar makes it possible to wonder without being overwhelmed. To envision a future in which patriarchal power is just a castrated, shriveled relic that we look at with odd fascination.

Patrick Steffen is Los Angeles Editor of Flash Art International

Candice Lin was born in Concord, (MA), in 1979. She lives and works in Los Angeles

Selected solo shows:
2012: “It Makes the Patient See Pictures,” François Ghebaly, Los Angeles; “Inanimism,” Hudson D. Walker, Provincetown, (MA). 2010: “Holograms,” François Ghebaly, Los Angeles. 2009: “The Sexual Life of Savages,” Chung King Project, Los Angeles

Selected group shows:
2012: “Plus ou Moins Sorcières,” La Maison Populaire, Paris (curated by Anna Colin); “Shapes and Forces,” Quadrado Azul, Porto, Portugal (curated by Oscar Faria); “Los Angeles-Contemporary Tendencies,” Hélène Bailly, Paris

candice lin: in front of our dumbfounded eyes is a world savagely and skillfully hallucinated

Geraldine Gourbe | March 26, 2013

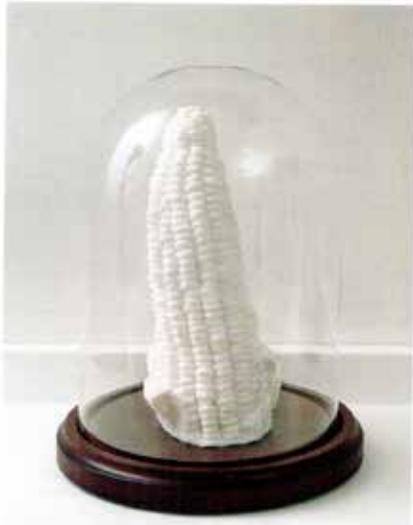


In front of our dumbfounded eyes, the young artist Candice Lin displays a savagely and skillfully hallucinated world where we simultaneously embody the three main characters in *I Walked with a Zombie*: the nurse, certain of her own good will, who tries to understand the nature of relations between white settlers and slaves imported from African coasts (*The Investigator*), the white colonial North American plantation owner who thinks that nature culturally arranges a bi-polar world (*The Conservative*), and a zombie woman with romantic and gothic curves who goes from one world to another without belonging to either one (*The Drifter*). In her film *Holograms* (2012, 19mn), Candice Lin copies and pastes film clips from a variety of B movie classics, and combines them with photographic archives of primitive and anthropological art and cartoon and stop motion sequences that she created herself. Like William Burroughs's cut-up cassette tapes, Lin's moving images hallucinate a savage world where different views of the Other as an object of theorization contaminate themselves. Here, anthropology, Black Nationalism, psychoanalyses, country music and science fiction all come into play. Language about the Other is a virus. A pyrotechnician of animated experimental cinema, Candice Lin rubs shoulders with sad-eyed, carnivorous-toothed stuffed animals, asexual ET figurines and activist pigs made of modeling clay (film and installation *Inanimism, Bacium, Sub Cauda*, 2012, 6mn47). Here we are led to think of another West coast artist specializing in experimental cinema, Kenneth Anger, who summoned actors of black magic rituals, Hells Angels, androgynous Caucasians and virile homosexuals etc. in an overall psychedelic illusion.

Candice Lin

FRANÇOIS GHEBALY GALLERY

Candice Lin's latest solo show awkwardly fractured the slick, guided exploration of the typical history exhibit and awkwardly reassembled it across François Ghebaly's two-tiered space. The sixteen sculptures and videos that comprised "It Makes the Patient See Pictures" excreted



Candice Lin, *Corn*
Hill (White), 2012.
platinum body-grade
silicone, bell jar,
8 x 5 1/2 x 5 1/2"

tar, silicone, even dead fish. There were no talking heads or lengthy wall labels to provide context; instead, an informational stop-action animation was projected from a pig's asshole. *Bacium Sub Canada (Kiss Under the Tail)* (all works 2012 unless otherwise noted) presents an allegory about the mass killing of the domestic pig's hardy, adaptable brethren in Haiti, Cuba, and Egypt, and its subsequent replacement by coddled European varieties—through the subtitled snorts of black, spotted, and pink clay swine. (Quips one pig, "Hmph, some Arab Spring. More like Harvest Slaughter.") Elsewhere, another video, *Inanimate Object*, related a Yoruba legend of a golden woman (a recast Queen Victoria), while a greatly enlarged Xerox of a field ethnographer's image (*Framing Device*, 2011) doubled as a scrim. Lin pro-

vided a surfeit of art-historical and ethnographic interconnections here, most of which likely evaded the casual viewer. But the deeper one plunged into the show, the more its weird, crude museology asserted its terrible hybridization of concepts.

Lin's objects advance a contentiously puerile analysis, obscurely tied to rituals surrounding their materials. A desiccated, life-size Eskimo figure, *The Lingering Smell*, hiding out in the back hallway, wore a coat quilted with anchovies and shriveled roots carved into fertility fetishes. The figure's fur leggings were decorated with salt cod, while a chili pepper and a pair of dates, covered with plastic wrap, formed his exposed cock. The postcolonial critique behind Lin's theatrico-primitive aesthetic was most rawly apparent in *Exploited Painting*—a veiny sculpted penis dangling from a verdant Haitian landscape painting, dribbling into a punch bowl on an antique table. Related iconography reappeared in a set of nine individually titled dildos lined up on a white ledge and encased in bell jars. The three models on view (each produced in pink, white, and black—hyperbolic "skin tones") were based on a nineteenth-century Nigerian carving of Queen Victoria, an ear of corn, and Brancusi's *Bird in Space*, respectively. Without supporting reference material, these works came across as bad jokes—modernist sculpture as erection, for example. But such crossbreeding contributed to the nuanced history finally described in *A Future Ethnography of Power*. Its components laid out in small mounds on a fleshy white silicone mat, this tabletop piece incorporated a collection of fabricated artifacts, including three maquettes for the aforementioned dildos, a mouth and tongue sculpted from chewed Wonder Bread, various roots and tubers carved into (even more) phalluses, and two herbs (one medicinal, one deadly), also placed in bell jars. A short text embedded in the mat noted the prohibition of plants that gave women control over their own bodies or over their masters. Allusions to such historical episodes as the New England witch trials and the 1791 Haitian revolution, during which female slaves poisoned their overlords with herb-laced stews, suggested that the objects Lin displayed were not just shocking or revolting, but linked by deeper psychosexual themes.

These dream-logical connections may be less than rigorous, but no matter. We believe them just the same, as the exhibition's savage metaphors subsumed any single line of political didacticism, confronting

various colonialist and patriarchal figurations on their own twisted terms. In *Displaced Pig (Cornfield)*, cornstalks are covered in dark hair and tar. Eerie little rows of canines and molars sprout from the leaves—a humanoid, GMO nightmare, a vision of molecular colonization. And Lin, mercilessly and crucially, offers no way to act on her work's provocations—no cause to support and no agitprop to cram into a backpack. Nothing, in short, to assuage our conscience or to otherwise distract from the cruel fantasies of our ancestors and descendants. Instead, we get acres of blackened, toothsome corn and the stink of tar.

—Travis Diehl



by Geoff Tuck | Nov 10, 2012

Dear Candice,

Twice I saw your show, *It Makes the Patient See Pictures* before it closed at Francois Ghebaly's space. It was a profound experience each time and I think I recommended the show to everyone I know. The first time was early after the opening, on a Saturday in September. I was seduced by your hot and sexy humor, in the first room I found your silicon sculptural dildos hilarious (there is something delightful about imagining Brancusi's *Bird in Space*, or an Africanized Queen Victoria engaged in such pleasure). *Exploited Painting* however, and *The Lingering Smell*, pointed me away from simplistic yuk-yuk jokes and toward something darker, less funny and more sad and, because I am white, harsher.

The second time I visited I was just angry. I watched the "pig" movie, I sat on the floor, near the pig's ass, and stared at the small projection on the wall for three or four cycles of the film. It was horrifying. It was sad. Pigs are people, too, and they were being killed, oh fuck, just like people, in this case black people. Part of the strength of this work for me is the unavoidable directness of your metaphor, you show no fear in being reductive.



Honestly Candice, I have been and am intimidated to write about your show. When I began to make notes in the gallery my sentences grew longer and more tortured and my language soared on the gossamer wings of literary fluff, or of my literary pretensions. I drew back, alarmed at my foolishness and at the lack of connection my words had to anything of yours in the space.

In an idle way I wonder how many of the fetish objects in your show you made yourself, the twisted root penises and difficult to identify organic matter vagina, they all seem fingered, you will excuse my pun, lovingly and with care and you present them in a way that makes me think how subjective are the sciences of anthropology and ethnography and archaeology, and how subject to our earthy desires. I suppose if we're lucky we bring an awareness of this to our reading in these subjects, and if one is a scientist it would be well to recognize how in the way you are, and your parts are, to any pretense of objectivity.

What I felt strongly from your show, and this may be a coincidence of our place in time and the US calendar, is how very white-centric much accepted knowledge remains, and how male-centric, and how self-serving is the de-racination of these sciences, and the de-sexualization also. Your description of the rites of early Christians and also of witches, in that time and since, makes me think that taking pleasure in the human body, when it is denied – as when the early church banned ball-sac shaped communion wafers, and that historically civilization has condemned and hunted the Wiccan, or base cults – it grows twisted and weird and it warps everything it subsequently touches; and pleasure touches a lot.

My recourse in similar situations of writing about exhibitions has been to return to what sticks with me; not to the ideas I formed in the space or in the time after, but to my record, unmediated by afterthought.

HARVEST SLAUGHTER

WHY DOES EVERYTHING BAD COME FROM AFRICA?

THEY CAME ACROSS THE SEA WITH THE SPANISH, THEY HAD 500 YEARS TO ADAPT

(PINK PIGS PROBABLY EAT CORN)

DON'T USE PIG-IMPLIED LANGUAGE

HI-QUALITY AMERICAN PIGS

HATING WHITES DOESN'T MAKE YOU A RACIST

And now I am silenced, Candice. I can't wait to see more of your work.

Sincerely yours,
Geoff

Candice Lin, *It Makes the Patient See Pictures* September 8 – October 27, 2012



“Review: Candice Lin's unsettling take on contemporary society”

Mizota, Sharon

October 15 2012



Candice Lin's unsettling new installation squeezes some big ideas into the tight spaces at François Ghebaly Gallery. It opens with a row of small sculptures encased in bell jars: an ear of corn, a Brancusi and a Yoruba carving of Queen Victoria.

They are made of a spongy material that's oddly familiar — oh wait, they're dildos. Haven't you always longed to take America's signature crop, high modernism, and the colonial encounter to bed? In one way or another, Lin suggests, we already have.

Down in the lower gallery is a diorama of sorts, consisting of hairy, black corn stalks that sprout kernel-like brown teeth, and a black pig from whose orifice — you can guess which one — a video is projected. It portrays a conversation between two clay-mation pigs about a U.S.-funded program in which hardy, black Caribbean swine were killed and replaced by their more fragile, pink, U.S. cousins. The references here come fast and thick, from GMOs and relentless profiteering to international "aid" and racism.

This tableau is accompanied by another video in sign language, a large image of a Navajo talisman, a sculpture of a desiccated man, a table full of phallic plants, and a perversion of the Manneken Pis fountain. It's a bit much, and at times feels like a crazed attempt to expose all that's wrong with contemporary society. Yet striking connections emerge, collapsing the macro into the micro in one hot stew of burbling desire.

Candice Lin: Holograms

Sat, Dec 04, 2010

Lin uses the medium of video and sculpture to continue her multifaceted inquiry into the racial and gendered structuring of power. Closing December 11 at François Ghebaly Gallery.



In *The Moon*, a ceramic and mixed media sculpture, Lin's sculpture references anatomist William Hunter's plaster models and etchings and inverts the histories of Duchamp's *Étant Donnés* (1966) and Courbet's *L'Origine du monde* (1866). In *The Moon*, a viewer cannot avoid implication, but must sit with his head between the female body's truncated legs, pressing his eye against the vulva to witness the animation howling within. *Inside Out*, the animation within *The Moon*, plays with the contradictory racial and female assignments of soul and soulless-ness, unknowable interiority and impenetrable surface.

In the main space, *Holograms*, a twenty-minute video projection, further delves into these ideas of subjectivity using a combination of found footage, animations, and hypnosis. Using the trappings of science fiction, *Holograms* deconstructs the science and the fiction of colonialism.

Formally, the video embodies taxonomic impossibilities—drawings used sculpturally, a trance-inducing “impossible object,” and animated educational didactics which fail to impart any coherent information.

In both the exhibition and the video *Holograms*, the idea of authentic identity is continually thwarted and remains holographic itself. If myth resolves the void left by cultural disavowal, *Holograms* posits that the mythic denial of subjectivity to persons made “other” through national, racial, religious, or gendered difference is a type of cultural “magic” that we knowingly and unknowingly perform.



Candice Lin has exhibited internationally, a selection of venues include the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; China Art Objects, Los Angeles; the New York Underground Film Festival; Milliken Gallery, Stockholm; Valenzuela Y Klenner Arte Contemporaneo, Bogota; and has an upcoming solo exhibition at the Khyber ICA, Nova Scotia in 2012. Lin has been awarded several residencies, grants, and fellowships including the Banff Centre Artist Residency, Canada, 2010; the Department of Los Angeles Cultural Affairs CEI grant, 2010; the Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, 2009; AIR at CESTA, Czech Republic, 2004; as well as an upcoming residency in 2011 at the Sacatar Foundation in Brazil. She lives and works in Los Angeles, California.

ARTslant

“Looking into L’Origine Du Monde”

Review: *Holograms* at François Ghebaly Gallery

Wolf, Kate

November 23, 2010

Despite its heavily researched investigation into the various branches of post-colonial thought and theory, there’s still actually a great amount of black humor, however uncomfortable, in the work of Candice Lin. At Lin’s current solo show at François Ghebaly Gallery, I entered the gallery to see a white ceramic sculpture of the bottom half of a female form sitting on a platform, *The Moon*, 2010. You must look directly into the genitalia to see the video playing inside, literally putting angle as central to viewing experience. With a squint of the eye pressed up against the vulva, I watched a short animation sequence: from behind a wood door, the famous splayed pubis of Gustave Courbet, alive with green eyes, is drawn over and reclaimed by another female form drawn by Lin. Headless, it floats into a different scene— ogreish men sit behind succulent trees and a woman’s head waits on a branch. The body grabs the head and a man grabs her, pushing himself inside. She then grabs his head and keeps his penis for her own after he falls away. She retains all three as she copulates with a wolf. The video’s last shot— a clip from the film *Something’s Gotta Give*—casts a strange echo to this scene as Marilyn Monroe, naked in a swimming pool, releases a wild and primal howl.



The Moon, which, according to the gallery’s press release makes reference to the plaster models and etchings of the murderous 18th century anatomist William Hunter, is a first course for the more ambitious and densely packed video, *Holograms*, 2010—the show’s centerpiece—but it still manages to present in condensed form many of the larger themes at play: myth, race, gender, science, violence. In *Holograms* especially, Lin braids in diverse sound clips and found footage, at times almost imperceptibly, and her drawing over and animation of Courbet’s *L’Origine du Monde*, 1866, is a metaphor for the aim of her authorship in using found material underneath or alongside new animation sequences, often constructed with the use of clay. When the specter of the original peeks through it

feels completely intentional and when it is overtaken or dissolved into the larger context of Lin's work you may notice it only in the form of a visual or audio footnote. They build up over time and the list of sources is long.



The video is set around the pillars of three main characters—a schizophrenic king, a magical machine and a holographic man and woman who reflect in a sci-fi chamber/time machine manned over a mechanized African woman. In other scenes, a clay alien is dissected and remade into a blonde bombshell; a computer screen reads: “People get on my nerves sometimes.” The amount of disparate material gave me the feeling that the video’s meaning has the power to grow exponentially upon successive viewings. Still, there is a visual poetry and rhythm present immediately.

And, again, despite the seriousness of the content, some humor too.

- Kate Wolf

Candice Lin, "Holograms," 2010, Film Still. "The Moon" 2010, Ceramic with video display, 16 x 13 x 8, "Holograms," Film stills. 2010. Courtesy the artist and Francois Ghebaly Gallery.