ADA Artist Interview with Lin Pey Chwen
      Archive of Digital Art
      Text & Interview by Alejandro Quiñones

What are your current projects?
      I will continue working on *Making of Eve Clone II*, which is an interactive work for learning human facial expressions. I am developing a new work making Eve Clone to not only learn human's expressions but also human body motion in real-time. A new 3D model will be rebuilt in Unity software. My lab artists and I are working with a company to develop a facial and body motion capture system. This work can even invite people from all over the world to interact with Eve Clone through the internet, and she will be evolving into a more anthropomorphic learning database. The work reflects the attempt and ambition of humans to develop artificial intelligence to challenge God.

What path led you to digital art and what fascinated you about it initially?
      When I studied for Doctor of Creative Arts at the University of Wollongong in Australia from 1993 to 1995, I experienced the creative process of video art and digital sound in some courses and realized the potential and new trend of technology media for creative arts although my works were still in painting and mixed media. After I finished my studies, I tried setting up new courses in multimedia and animation art in the Department of Commercial Design at Chung Yuan University when I became the chairwoman there. In 2001 I was hired as the head of the Graduate School of Multimedia and Animation Arts at National Taiwan Arts University because of my vision to promote digital art and design courses. I had more opportunities to work with digital art professors and students together there.
      At that time, the computer technology industry was booming in Taiwan. Acer Computer even hosted the first international seminar on technology art in 1999. I held the Siggraph Taipei conference and invited many international scholars and artists in order to have more understanding and interest in digital arts. I even went abroad to visit many important new media art schools, labs, and art festivals, such as Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP) and the I Beam laboratory in the USA, the Linz Electronic Arts Festival in Austria, ZKM in Germany, etc. After that, I was invited to join the symposium in the exhibition "25 Years of the LINZ Electronic Arts Festival "held at the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts. I had more exchanges with international digital artists personally and even made some interviews with them. I was very surprised to know that most of them were teamwork and many of them were majors in computer science. So I became more and more aware that a good digital project cannot be done by one person, it must be the cooperation of the technology and art team. So I set up my own "Digital Art Laboratory" to lead students to experiment with our works together. Since then my work "Eve Clone Series" was created possible to present Eve Clone's artificial life interacting with audiences through 3D animation and interactive installation. Therefore, my interest in digital art is due to the environment in which I teach and the needs of my works.

How did the development of the Eve Clone series start and what was your initial inspiration? What impression do you want to awake in the viewers? Is there a certain kind of feeling associated with the Eve Clone series?

On September 21st, 1999, the greatest earthquake throughout Taiwan's history hit the island. I saw the immense power of nature pouring back toward us, and this earthquake shocked me and let me realize how tiny humans are and how great God is. As a Christian, I began to care about the issues of man and God and the issues of all mankind because of the enlightenment of the Bible and the spiritual messages delivered by the prophet of All Nations, Elijah Hong. Since then, my works have no longer expressed only my personal feminist perspective. I become aware of all the problems of mankind such as the inequality between men and women, wars and miseries, social disorders, natural disasters, and calamities. These are all caused by man's selfishness, pride, and conceit, failing to revere God, to the extent of violating the law of nature and challenging God by developing technology civilization. Therefore, in my works of art, I begin to ponder over the relationship between man and the great Lord creator, as well as the link between civilization and nature. The Prophet revealed the truth of Return to Eden, Return to God's Dominance, and Return to Nature, emphasizing that humans must walk away from civilization in order to reach the state of prospering with everything and becoming one with nature.

The Prophet preaches on Mt. Zion, and he tells humans of this era:

> In Eden, everything is created by God without the contamination of technological civilization. However, after humans became fallen and were banished from the Garden of Eden, people deviated from God and could not receive God's blessing. Later, Satan incited people to use their intelligence to develop various technologies and stopped relying on God. Their reliance on human intelligence resulted in endless disasters… Once we are back at Zion, we have tried to return to Eden, return to God, and return to Nature. We must walk out of culture, the Atheist culture, to cast aside fallen humans… These are from God's revelation. It is hard to be accepted by contemporary people because fallen humans live in a Godless culture, worshiping a fallen culture and being superstitious in artificial science. However, God's word is forever steadfast in Heaven!

Indeed, ever since humans were banished from the Garden of Eden, they have gradually distanced themselves from God, and they have used their fallen knowledge to develop Atheist culture and technology to the extreme. They have used their intelligence to construct the Tower of Babel, developing human nations of politics, the military, economy, culture, technology, and education under a patriarchal society, but the result is them being trapped in more disasters and pain.

The subject of my works changed from "women and culture" to "human and nature" as well as "human and God" ever since. Such works include the "back to Nature" series from 1999 to 2005 and the "Eve Clone" series starting from 2006 till today. These series of works are my representative artworks criticizing the destruction of nature by humans and modifications of God's original creations.

Through my "Back to Nature" series including *Substantial Life*, *Viewing Views* I

attempted to represent the metropolitan culture and artificial nature humans constructed far away from nature, so I adopted billboard lightboxes and colorful signs to create a contrast with nature. At that time, I spent a lot of time in discussions with sign manufacturers to apply the sign production method to present my work. I used the digital prints of natural patterns such as flowers, sky, and ocean views to past on acrylic lightboxes, creating various geometric patterns such as squares, cylinders, cones, scallops, and chrysalis-shaped geometric nature. I placed them within nature such as parks, trees, grass, or indoor spaces to create ridiculous synthetic scenery. Paradoxically, this series attracted strong attention from viewers. The viewers did not find anything wrong with synthetic, fake nature. Rather, they loved these illuminators. When I saw the bizarre scene of the audience lingering in front of these works, my criticism was further confirmed: That people find delight in synthetic nature explains the crisis of nature being invaded by fallen culture.

In 2001, I began teaching in the graduate school of Multimedia and Animation Arts, the National Taiwan University of Arts, where I had more opportunities for contact with the media of computer technology. Therefore, I started to use 3D animation to represent the virtual illusions constructed by technology. For example, in the 2004 *Un-Natural* and the 2005 *Fascination & Frustration* solo exhibitions, the work *Flower Pillars* consisted of garden-like acrylic lightboxes with four poles. In the middle, a lower lightbox was installed with a small screen, in which a 3D animation butterfly was presented, symbolizing that the flower and the butterfly can communicate their affection across a distance. In my solo exhibition *Catching* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei (MOCA Taipei) in 2006, I used 4D glasses and double projection to display 3D butterfly animations. Although the butterflies seemed alive on the screen, the viewer could not capture them. The exhibition space also displayed many animations of specimens created by optical illusions. This work illustrated that synthetic butterflies could be stored, saved, reorganized, and deleted in digital systems. Later, I was invited to the 798 Art Village in Beijing to hold a solo exhibition, "The Beautiful New World," where I boldly created my first interactive installation piece, *Virtual Creation*. The interactive platform invited the viewer to paint their own butterfly patterns. After the viewer completed a creation, they would see the butterfly image they painted slowly fly into the projection of the seafloor in front of them, and the butterfly would shortly disappear. This work satirized the virtuality and transience of manmade objects, inspiring thinking on philosophical topics such as true vs. fake, real vs. virtual, and permanence and transience.

After 2007, I witnessed that humans not only used computer technology to construct smart cities but daringly challenged God's original creations, developing extreme technologies such as genetically modified crops, gene replication organisms, and embryo hybrids. To represent this artificial act of cultivating life, I created a four-piece work, *Cultivation*. I constructed it around a petal shape with acrylics. In the middle, a small screen displayed a female body, which turned from 3D animation grids into an image of the female body. Then, with motors running and LED lights shining, I presented the artificial cultivation process through technology.

In 2006, I saw that human beings used genetic engineering and cloning techniques to transform God's originality. By using 3D computer animation, I created a digital female figure with a hybrid texture named, Eve Clone, in order to criticize humans' desire of playing the role of God. I named it Eve Clone as God created Eve, and humans want to play the role of God and created a cloned Eve. I created a large-scale image projection to show a butterfly–

woman species. To illustrate her artificial life, I used an interactive computer program and sensors to invite the viewers to participate. When people interacted with her, Eve Clone turned from a chrysalis into a beautiful butterfly-woman and then an image of human beauty. The more viewers presented, the greater the degree of her transformation. Once all viewers left, she immediately returned to the chrysalis shape. This interactive installation mocked the fact that this species could only evolve with human intervention and could not exist alone. Therefore, she was only a fake, artificial life. By contrast, only God's original creations are natural and true life.

From 2007 till today I have developed many pieces of the Eve Clone series to represent the technological production of artificial life, just as the Dolly sheep, cloning genes, AI and etc. I also took many references from the Book of Revelation and the Book of Daniel into my works, defining Eve Clone's evil and power, but eventually, she will be burned and crushed by God. Eve Clone evolved in each generation, from the human–chrysalis integrated female body in *Eve Clone II* to Eve Clone the Whore of Babylon that was marked with 666 in the series of *Portrait of Eve Clone*, to *Revelation of Eve Clone*, in which she became the Great Image referred to the Book of Daniel in the Bible. This evolutionary process depicted the codependent relationship between humans and technology. In the Eve Clone series, I want to unveil how the Atheist culture and technological culture constructed by humans became an evil power that fights back and controls humans and their challenge against God's original creations, and that she had existed in every corner of daily life. In the *Making of Eve Clone* series, I integrated Eve Clone with da Vinci's manuscript, showing that Eve Clone was the creation of humans' ultimate development with their fallen intelligence. Finally, in the *Making of Eve Clone II*, these texts of the important revelation of the Bible prophecy and the Proclamation of God's Kingdom are projected throughout the entire exhibition space, making a powerful statement.

The Prophet of All Nations, Elijah Hong, has repeatedly warned, "The amount of disaster that humans suffer from humans' fallen intelligence has reached saturation. If we still indulge in worldly intelligence that being controlled by a fallen power, we can never have peace." This is why I used art to represent the Eve Clone that humans are developing. I used this piece to deliver the revelation and notification of the end of the world: Only if humans return to Eden, respecting and obeying nature, can they avoid apocalyptic disasters.

Arrogance has led people to alter the original creations of God. Although technological products have their attractive aspects, technology can turn against humanity and end up controlling it, which would result in dire consequences. Through my latest solo exhibition titled "Revelation of Eve Clone" at Tainan Art Museum in 2020, I wish to send the message to notify that the artificial technology seduces humans, and the technology further controls humans if humans try to develop technology civilization to challenge God. Humans will not be able to escape from the great tribulation according to the Bible.

How could interactive installations develop a critical thinking on contemporary society and its culture?

I used the language of "representation" to present the essence behind the attractive external features of artificial life. I used sarcasm for the viewer to reflect on the trap behind the beautiful sugar coating. The interactive installation is a work created by using the sensors, technology, and interactive program to communicate with the audience which is necessary

and crucial to my works. I utilized the technology of media such as holograms, interactive sensors, computer programming, facial identification, and motion capture system to represent Eve Clone as an artificial life with the capability to be reproduced. Her omnipresence living with humans in the same time and same space, and vividness allow her to interact with humans and even learn from human motion expression. The audience is just like the creator giving life to Eve Clone. She can be more alive and more vivid when audiences interact with her, but when audiences leave the exhibition site, Eve Clone will lose her vitality.

For example, in the large installation work *Revelation of Eve Clone III* and *Great Image of Eve Clone* I mastered various high-tech skills, such as the software and techniques of merging three projectors into a curved projection, real-time control of the Time Code in milliseconds, a sculpture of a golden head with a sensor system enabling it to interact with the audience in real-time, the use of a computer "delay" program to reproduce Eve Clone images, and the control of a static Eve Clone in black and white images that gradually became colorful images. Also, the *Making of Eve Clone II* interactive installation learns to mimic human facial expressions through audience participation. When viewers stand in front of the mobile phone, they will be surprised to find that the facial expression of Eve Clone is exactly the same as their own expression on the mobile phone screen. It is to criticize how technologies become an all-seeing eye and possesses the desire to create artificial life with emotions.

The interactive installations I presented in the *Eve Clone* series both represented the virtuality of artificial life and became the key language through which I criticized the essence of technology. All of these show that Interactivity is the critical language to interpret my concept. Without these technologies, I could not have presented Eve Clone so vividly, virtually, and mystically. She could both communicate with people and be reproduced, and she seemed to be able to keep living in virtuality.

How do you think your works should be preserved?

My video art and interactive works with the interactive program can be preserved on the computer or a hard disk. Many of my works are collected by museums or private collectors such as *Making of Eve Clone* was collected by the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts and the *Portrait of Eve Clone series* was collected by the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts. Of course, some software needs to be updated, for example, one of my pieces *Virtual Creation* interactive installation was created by flash originally, but when flashes were no longer available, I needed to make another new program in another software.

What is your experience in using 3D modeling software? How did you start?

I am the director of "Lin Pey-Chwen Digital Art Lab" and work with my lab members together such as animation artists, computer programmers, video artists, etc. Although I have not personally operated computer software, I am like a movie director to direct my team members to make artwork completed and successful. My experience in using 3D molding software is very different from most 3D animation designers for movies or games. I am particularly interested in the formation of modeling from the wire-frame to the texture when most 3D animation designers only present their modeling in perfect color and textures as they think wire-frame is the unfinished work. However, I use the process of 3D modeling

formation as one of my creative concepts. I make this formation similar to the process of how humans create Eve Clone in the laboratory step by step. In the *Making of Eve Clone I*, I looked back and represented the process of me creating Eve Clone and the evolution of her body in each period. From the original drafting of Eve Clone, which recorded my inspiration for drawings, to using computer 3D Maya software to construct wire-frame, the pictures of each stage were as follows: human-like skin tone, metal-like color, holograph-like green, and a body depicting the Great Image with a golden head, silver body, bronze belly, iron feet, and half-iron, half-clay feet. I specifically presented the actual record of how to inspect the body ratios and shape of Eve Clone in the computer software by showing the computer interface, 360° space, camera, and timeline. I also intentionally kept the patterns, symbols, icons, and images that only the 3D software can create. I think it is a very unique way to interpret my concept in the *Making of Eve Clone I* , and I titled this series "Making of Eve Clone" to show how I make Eve Clone in 3D molding software. That maybe is one of the reasons why I was awarded the First Prize in the New Media Art Category at the 2019 Florence Biennale in Italy.

How do you judge the interest in digital art in your surroundings, i.e., in your country?
There are about 200 departments and graduate schools of "Digital Media Design" in Taiwan besides three national art universities that have set up "New Media Art and Animation Art" departments and graduate schools.

They have cultivated many digital artists and designers. Also, the Ministry of Culture provides lots of grants for young artists and teams of digital arts. It also commissioned the museums of fine arts to establish the Taiwan Digital Art Achieve, "Digital Ark" exhibition space as well as sending artists overseas for exchange and residency programs. The Taipei City Government has also set up the "Taipei Digital Arts Center", which launches the "Taipei Digital Arts Festival" and competitions every year to encourage potential artists and teams. During the festival, foreign artists are invited to Taiwan for exhibitions and conferences to input lots of concepts and experiences to artists in Taiwan.
In addition, many art awards have also added the category of new media art. Many traditional museums and festivals have started to put lots of budgets to make large interactive projects, for example, the projects from the Palace Museum, Science Museum, Lantern Festival, Public Art, Flower Expo, etc. Therefore, many new media art studios, artists, and companies are needed because the environment is getting more popular and dynamic.

Do you consider yourself as an ecofeminist?
I can also be called an "ecofeminist" because I think that humans plunder nature resources to develop the economy, technology, and political power, and even try to challenge God. In the past, my works reveal the various problems that patriarchal culture brought to women from a feminist perspective. Now I use Eve Clone to reveal the face of technological products which have become a power that controls, seduces, and invades humans and nature's environment.

How does the reading of the Bible inspire your artistic practice?
My works are based on the truth in the Bible through the enlightenment of The

Prophet of All Nations, Elijah Hong. I even directly quote Bible chapters to define the feature of evil, power, and the final destiny of Eve Clone. I integrate the elements of the human chrysalis and human beast to shape the double identities of Eve Clone, who was both charming and evil. I quoted the Whore of Babylon recorded in the Bible "With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Revelation 17:2) as well as placing the Number of the Beast, 666, the mark of the Beast, on Eve Clone's forehead and right hand as a symbol of evil ("And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads" (Revelation 13:16)) to show that technological culture is like the Whore of Babylon and the Number of the Beast, which seduce and control humans.

The Prophet of All Nations, Elijah Hong said, "The days in the world are numbered. When there is still something left, what is to come will come. The Great Image recorded in "The Book of Daniel" seen by the king has a golden head, silver chest and arms, bronze belly and waist, iron legs, and half-iron, half-clay feet. You observe and see a stone not sculpted by human hands hit the half-iron, half-clay feet, breaking it into pieces. Then the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold were shattered and became like chaff on the threshing floor in summer. The wind carried them away, and not a trace of them could be found. The stone that smashed this image became a great mountain filling up the world." He also said, "The old world was decayed, and God used the flood to destroy it. Now God no longer resorts to flood but uses fire to burn. The world has come to an end."

I realized that Eve Clone was to present not only cloned humans or artificial species, involved in the representation of technological culture but further to criticize man's kingdom that humans developed with their fallen wisdom and Atheist culture, which is the Great Image prophesied in the "The Book of Daniel" that was against God.

- "And the second beast required all people small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their forehead" (Revelation 13:16).

- "so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark—the name of the beast or the number of its name" (Revelation 13:17).

- "Here is a call for wisdom: Let the one who has insight calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and that number is 666" (Revelation 13:18).

- "Then one of the seven angels with the seven bowls came and told me, 'Come, I will show you the punishment of the great prostitute, who sits on many waters'" (Revelation 17:1).

- "The kings of the earth were sexually immoral with her, and those who dwell on the earth were intoxicated with the wine of her immorality" (Revelation 17:2).

- "On her forehead a mysterious name was written: BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Revelation 17:5).

- "Then the angel said to me, "The waters you saw, where the prostitute was seated,

are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues" (Revelation 17:15).

- "And the woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth" (Revelation 17:18).

- "All the nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her immorality. The kings of the earth were immoral with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown wealthy from the extravagance of her luxury" (Revelation 18:3).

- "As you, O king, were watching, a great statue appeared. A great and dazzling statue stood before you, and its form was awesome" (Daniel 2:31).

- "The head of the statue was pure gold, its chest and arms were silver, its belly and thighs were bronze," (Daniel 2:32).

- "its legs were iron, and its feet were part iron and part clay" (Daniel 2:33).

- "While you were watching, a stone was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them" (Daniel 2:34).

I followed the ending of the Great Image prophesied by The Prophet of All Nations, Elijah Hong to interpret the final destiny of Eve Clone in my work *Revelation of Eve Clone IV*. This work illustrated Eve Clone being submerged by seawater in a ruin. The water was dyed red, like blood from the dead. Although she strived to escape from the water, she was hit by a stone from the sky not sculpted by humans and smashed, becoming like the chaff on the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them ("The Book of Daniel" 2:31–35). At the end of the film, the stone that smashed the Great Image became a huge mountain, filling up the world. Finally, I used verses from "The Book of Revelation" from the Bible as the ending, which echoed the background hymns to deliver the final fate of technological culture. This work reminded people that the technological culture they worship and the Big Image of the human country's authority and system will eventually be destroyed by God. The image of the stone in the film referred to the huge stone sign on Mt. Zion because Mt. Zion refers to God's Kingdom. The Bible verses used in this work were as follows:

So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and loathsome, malignant sores broke out on those who had the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. And the second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it turned to blood like that of the dead, and every living thing in the sea died. Then the third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and springs of water, and they turned to blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say: "Righteous are You, O Holy One, who is and who was, because You have brought these judgments. For they have spilled the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink as they deserve" (Revelation 16:2–6).

"As you, O king, were watching, a great statue appeared. A great and dazzling statue stood before you, and its form was awesome. The head of the statue was pure gold, its chest and arms were silver, its belly and thighs were bronze, its legs were iron, and its feet were

part iron and part clay. While you were watching, a stone was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay, and crushed them." (Daniel 2:31–34).

In late 2014, I was invited by the Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning, New York, to participate in the "Culture Capsules" international exhibition. Thinking that the top of the world culture, New York City, symbolized contemporary Great Babylon and that the Bible states that Great Babylon is the Great Whore of Babylon, I intricately integrated the virtual image of Eve Clone with the virtual image of New York constructed by Google Maps. Eve Clone proudly stands with open arms on top of the Empire State Building. The video shows Eve Clone and the entire city from parallel to a bird's-eye view from the sky, as if she is arrogantly looking down from high above, attempting to control everything and the world. This great city symbolizes the center where people are busy pursuing activities such as politics, economics, culture, technology, religion, education, and arts. It symbolizes every human desire, and it is the Great Image people worship. According to the Bible's prophecy, God will get angry and send down fire to burn down this great city, and the smoke that burns the Whore of Babylon will ascend. The Bible verses quoted in this work were as follows:

- "And the woman you saw is the great city that rules over the kings of the earth." (Revelation 17:18).

- "After this I saw another angel descending from heaven with great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his glory. And he cried out in a mighty voice: 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a lair for demons and a haunt for every unclean spirit, every unclean bird, and every detestable beast'" (Revelation 18:1–2).

- "After this I heard a sound like the roar of a great multitude in heaven, shouting: 'Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God! For His judgments are true and just. He has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality. He has avenged the blood of His servants that was poured out by her hand.' And a second time they called out: 'Hallelujah! Her smoke ascends forever and ever.'" (Revelation 19:1–3).

- "Then the seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and loud voices called out in heaven: 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever'" (Revelation 11:15).

In *Making of Eve Clone III*, I continued to select scriptures from the *Book of Daniel* and *Book of Revelation* in the Bible and also included the Proclamation of God's Kingdom by the Prophet, Elijah Hong. These texts are projected throughout the entire exhibition space, which was made possible by the use of mesh wrapping and perspective technology for digital images. Videos featuring large, bold fonts slowly flow outwards, gradually expanding, and then they start to emit light. With digital spiritual music in the background, the artist creates a kind of immersive space that transcends the print frames, forming an irresistible tension. Finally, the videos "Great Babylon" and "Revelation of Eve Clone IV" have been carried by the screen monitors and installed in the space. The plot of the films and the projected texts intersect and resonate with each other, making a powerful statement about the important revelation of the Bible prophecy and the Proclamation of God's Kingdom.

Looking back on my creations, it is as if God guided me to understand and deconstruct the reality of man's kingdom. Because of the enlightenment of the Word from The Prophet of All Nations, Elijah Hong, I understood that humans must "return to Eden, return to Nature, and return to God" to be able to respect God and love people. And only then could the various problems derived from the human Atheist culture be resolved. I shaped Eve Clone as the desire of humans to challenge God's original creations.

Lastly, how was your experience working with ADA, what characteristics do you think are valuable and what could be improved?

I think ADA is a great international platform for digital artists to share their works and research. I can upload many photos and videos of my works, and even upload statements and papers and articles about my works. I appreciated and valued it very much.

There are many good characteristics such as the section on self-introduction is clearly displayed, and the section on news can be automatically placed in date order (for example, the latest date will be placed first). Also, the section of the exhibition can be linked to other sections as long as you add a page. However, there are two parts that could be improved such as URLs cannot be hyperlinked. Also, the section of keywords is too many and detailed to be selected which might become a heavy work for artists. Also, I hope that videos and pictures can be uploaded at the same time.