



LAS Art Foundation presents Shu Lea Cheang: *UKI*

21 - 22 JULY 2023
KRANZLER ECK, BERLIN

LAS Art Foundation is pleased to present the Berlin premiere of *UKI*, a feature-length science fiction film by artist Shu Lea Cheang (b. 1954, Taiwan). Developed as a sequel to Cheang's cyberpunk film *I.K.U.* (2000), *UKI* is the culmination of a 14-year artistic exploration into viral love, bio-hacking and queer futures. The film will be screened on two consecutive evenings at Kranzler Eck (21 – 22 July), and will be accompanied by a panel discussion and special performances from Aérea Negrot, Royal Dust, Mieko Suzuki, Dennis Gundlach, Saint Precious, Rey KM Domurat and Tobias Freund, among others.

Widely celebrated for her genre-bending contributions to queer cinema and media art, Cheang's multidisciplinary work deals with issues of institutional oppression, social inequality, sexual politics and global capitalism. Centring the lives of marginalised communities, Cheang often employs science fiction to project new social norms and alternative imaginaries surrounding bodily agency and autonomy. As an early practitioner of Net Art, Cheang has likewise explored the narrative potential of new technologies since the 1990s. Paying particular attention to technology's impact on the body and social interactions, her early interest in cyberspace and networked technologies has given way to a critical exploration of digital surveillance and biotechnology in more recent years.

UKI offers a timely look at how bodies are regulated, policed, optimised and exploited through a sci-fi narrative that echoes the recent pandemic. It looks at biomedical practices such as genetic engineering and data harvesting, as well as the effects of toxic waste pollution. Continuing the *I.K.U.* storyline, the film follows Reiko, a humanoid replicant created to harvest orgasm data by the biotechnology company GENOM Corp. Now a piece of obsolete technology, Reiko is dumped on a landfill site known as E-Trashville, where they attempt to rebuild and reboot their system. With help from the various mutants, replicants and transgenic creatures who live among the e-waste, Reiko re-emerges as the virus 'UKI' to save the population from GENOM Corp.



Alongside the screenings, LAS will present an accompanying installation and events programme to expand upon *UKI*'s cinematic universe. Installations and performances derived from scenes of *UKI* are restaged including: projection mapping of blood cells on the dome of Kranzler Eck and radio antenna installation by Elektra, *Coquette* sound objects performed by Ioana Vreme Moser, multi-screen display of GENOM Ads by VFX designer Gonzalo Martín Martín and a reenactment of E-Trashville's transgenic inhabitants performed by Mmakgosi Kgabi and members of the public, created with *UKI*'s virtual universe production team, Roland Lauth, Xiyue Hu and Xing Xiao. On Friday 21 July 2023, Cheang will be joined by queer cultural theorist João Florêncio to introduce the film ahead of its Berlin premiere. Special performances featuring the film's cast, Tyra Wigg, Asia-James Ryan Ryyves Thomas, Alan Chen, Jin, Bernard J. Butler and sound designer Sky Deep will take place after the screening. On Saturday 22 July 2023, a musical programme inspired by *UKI* and *I.K.U.*'s soundtracks will feature live performances and jam sessions by Royal Dust, Mieko Suzuki, Dennis Gundlach, Saint Precious, Rey KM Domurat and Tobias Freund, led by Aérea Negrot, a Venezuelan singer, electronic musician and producer who adapted the score of *I.K.U.* for *UKI*.

LOCATION

KRANZLER ECK, BERLIN
KANTSTRASSE 160
10623 BERLIN

Tickets will be available for purchase at las-art.foundation.

Film duration: 80 minutes

Friday, 21 July 2023

19:00: Doors open

20:00: Introduction and panel discussion with Shu Lea Cheang and João Florêncio

21:30: Screening of *UKI*

22:50: Performance

Saturday, 22 July 2023

20:00: Doors open

21:00: Welcome address with Shu Lea Cheang and LAS Art Foundation

21:30: Screening of *UKI*

23:00 until morning: DJ sets & sound performances



SHU LEA CHEANG: *UKI*, FILM STILL, 2023.

Notes to editors

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Press images can be accessed [here](#).

CREDITS

Event presented by
LAS Art Foundation
Curated by Julia Kaganskiy,
assisted by Zoe Büchtemann
Produced for LAS Art Foundation
by Nok Akt
Concept/Direction: Shu Lea Cheang
Producer: Jürgen Brüning
Production manager: Alex Demetriou
Make up: Nuria de Lario
Photographer: J. Jackie Baier

FILM CREDITS

UKI, a Sci-Fi Viral Alt-Reality Cinema,
Shu Lea Cheang, 2023. Produced by
Shu Lea Cheang and Jürgen Brüning
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ABOUT SHU LEA CHEANG

Shu Lea Cheang is an artist and filmmaker whose genre-bending, gender-hacking practice challenges existing structures and the boundaries imposed on individuals by society, geography, politics, and economies. As a net art pioneer, her project *BRANDON* (1998–99) was the first web artwork commissioned and collected by New York's Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Her feature length films, *FRESH KILL* (1994), *I.K.U.* (2000) and *FLUIDØ* (2017), collectively helped define a new genre of queer sci-fi cinema. In 2019, Cheang represented Taiwan at the 58th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia with her work *3x3x6*.

ABOUT LAS

LAS Art Foundation is a new type of arts organisation — one that interrogates our present and gives form to future imaginaries. Our mission is to explore the possibilities of tomorrow by working with visionary artists, thinkers and institutions to develop ground-breaking projects and experiences. Together with our collaborators, we investigate topics ranging from artificial intelligence and quantum computing to ecology and biotechnology — illuminating the intersections between art, science and technology.

Our diverse programme comprises both newly commissioned and existing exhibitions and performances, as well as educational programming, publications and research projects. Curiosity drives us to continually reimagine the role of an arts organisation as one that shapes and evolves with our collective futures.