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Thinking of Corona, SS 2020  
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The short film “Jiang Shan Jiao” is made of three videos : ERRORS, Name & Alias, Dead Women Gallery.

This project started from November 2020, when people had to be isolated at home and face their four walls everyday during COVID-19. The ideas for the project can be traced even earlier. When the “unknown virus” first attacked China, I began paying attention to the series of social chain events in China starting from November 2019.

“Jiang Shan Jiao”, a virtual female idol created by the Chinese Communist Youth League in February 2020 as part of its political propaganda, when China was in the first Corona lock-down. She only survived for 4 hours on the internet, receiving not welcome and idolatry as planned, but thousands of aggressive comments, for example :

„Jiang Shan Jiao, are you a virgin?“

„Jiang Shan Jiao, do you need to shave your head for your country?“

„Jiang Shan Jiao, will you lose your name and become someone’s daughter, someone’s wife, someone’s mother ?“

„Jiang Shan Jiao, do you work hard so that you little brother has the money to buy his house?“

“Jiang Shan Jiao, you are lesbian because no man wants to fuck you?”

The comments have turned “Jiang Shan Jiao”, this virtual image of a pure, perfect and adorable young woman into an ugly, desperate and filthy one, not to attack her as a woman, but to reveal the tragic facts and cliches that women in China face in reality, and to criticise the political situation and the inappropriate propaganda during the COVID-19. Unexpectedly, by calling her name and commenting on her, people gave „Jiang Shan Jiao“ a „herstory“—— an untold and ignored history of

women, which in turn makes „Jiang Shan Jiao“ alive. At the same time, propaganda to the people turned into protest from the people .

My research interests came from the two seminars “Thinking of Corona” and “Sex and Gender”. I start to think about the questions : What has the global pandemic done to women in unequal power relation/ LGBTQ/ underprivileged people? What does “being in home-quarantine” mean to people in different social classes/ races? Meanwhile, an association with Ophelia’s soliloquy in *Hamletmaschine* came to my mind. Heiner Müller built Ophelia as a revolutionary, who smashed the “prison”--her home, and became a new woman. As the “outside world” gets unsafe, domestic violence also increases. I question myself, what if “Ophelia” cannot leave home in corona time ? The third video is named “Dead Women Gallery”, this was inspired by the seminar “white, heterosexual male gaze”. I read lots of articles about how women were killed during corona time, this reminds me of “Hamletmaschine” again. Hamlet enters the “gallery of the dead women” as a theater goer, the dead women bodies are under his gaze, he couldn’t find Ophelia, because dead women have no difference. In corona time, human beings are easily killed by both viruses and social inequality.

In the period of writing and rehearsing, I always think about how our “collective memory” is shaped and by whom “ the public history” is written. I worried that oneday people would forget the pain and the series of tragedies that happened in Corona time. So I decided to use my fresh feelings and questions to do an artistic project. I wrote 10 texts and did dance improvisation for the texts. Later I chose the most important texts from them to do this series of videos “Jiang Shan Jiao”.

### **(1) “ERRORS”**

The first video is called “ERRORS”, my writing materials come from the censored articles that I re-posted in my WeChat page (like twitter in China). As I decided to do this project, I wanted to read the articles in my WeChat again, and found lots of them disappeared with “ERROR 404”. Fortunately, while I was reading the articles and pictures, I did screen-shooting and saved lots of videos and pictures. All of those

events made me cry and made me think about how corona revealed the painful situation in China about internet censorship, gender issues under pandemic and “unknown history of women” in the “big” history narrative.

I am pretty much interested in doing choreography and movement on the stage. During the home quarantine, I started to think about : What has embodied my body and how is my movement shaped by the specific time, when the body is in the limited space? I tried dancing in the narrow space, for example, on my sofa, in the toilet, on my chair, etc. This image of being stuck in the narrow space appeared in my mind, so that's why in the first video “ERRORs”, we made the blackness surrounding and created a virtual space with only one chair and internet (the computer). As I want to approach the information through the screen, the “ERROR 404” in virtuality pushes me back to my chair.

## **(2)Name & Alias**

I was inspired by one song called “Xiao Juan”, it's a common female name in China, like lots of girls are named “Mary”. When women in China get murdered / killed / raped... the newspaper won't use their real name but an alias like “Xiao Juan”, to keep the last dignity. So behind the alias, there are lots of unknown stories from women whose real names are untold. This brings to this image: lots of chairs are on the stage, each chair represents a ghost / dead woman, who was killed and became a number without identity.

“Jiang Shan Jiao” is a name with good blessings, but when people use this name to address those women under the suffer and treated unequally, “Jiang Shan Jiao” becomes an alias like “Xiao Juan” which bears a heavy meaning and lots of untold “her”stories.

## **(3)Dead Women Gallery**

The texts and poems in this video are all about Ophelia. I quote the poem “About the Downed Girl” from Bertolt Brecht, which is also a poem depicting the death of Ophelia but rather talking about Rosa Luxemburg. I also quoted Ophelia's soliloquy from Heiner Müller “The

Hamletmachine". I like the energy from the revolutionary Ophelia who wants to smash her prison and evolve as a new woman. I imitated Heiner Müller's writing style and wrote the ending, through Ophelia's mouth, I speak my mind :

*I am not Ophelia anymore,  
the world doesn't need a Ophelia but a Medea,  
I play no role in the drama,  
Which is about a man whose father was killed  
And killed my father*

*From that day on,  
Ophelia is not Ophelia anymore  
She clothed in her blood  
went onto the street  
and was burned in that fire  
However  
She must reborn and do it again,  
Cause,  
in that solid castle  
Hamlet is still that Hamlet  
Denmark is still that Denmark*