

# Interview

IAN CHENG



LAUNCH GALLERY »

AGE: 31.

ORIGINALLY FROM: San Fernando Valley, CA.

CURRENTLY LIVE: Chinatown, Manhattan.

GALLERY: Pilar Corrias, London, and Standard (Oslo), Oslo.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK: I've been developing "live simulations," living virtual ecosystems that begin with basic programmed properties but are left to self-evolve without authorial control or end. It is a format to deliberately exercise the feelings of confusion, anxiety, and cognitive dissonance that accompany the experience of unrelenting change. I wonder if it is possible to love these difficult feelings, because when you love something and there is an abundance of it, you can begin to play and compose with it.

THE MOST SURPRISING REACTION TO YOUR WORK YOU'VE RECEIVED: "Your simulation gives me morning sickness" (guy at Frieze New York).

DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF A LONE ARTIST OR FEEL THAT YOU'RE WORKING IN A COMMUNITY OF PEERS? I am grateful to work with my producer, Veronica So. She is my mental gym coach, disciplinarian mom, angel on my shoulder, and portal to a community of talented engineers, composers, animators. I could not do this without her. Helpful advice you've received from another artist: "Brain-on blue green algae and concentrace mineral supplement" (Paul Hawken). "It's okay to say no" (Paul Chan).

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING AN ARTIST IN NEW YORK: Access to fresh produce. Badlands Unlimited. Rachel Rose. How quickly things change.

THE WORST: How quickly things change.

DOES THE CURRENT ART WORLD FOSTER OR DEVOUR TALENT? It's a game no better or worse than Washington or Hollywood or Silicon Valley. The degree to which it encourages free-agent work—i.e., choosing your own problems—already makes it a more futuristic ecosystem than many other old work worlds.

FAVORITE LIVING ARTIST: George Lucas, the independent filmmaker and imaginative ecologist.

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU REACH AN IMPASSE WITH A WORK? I go running or walking. Saying no to e-mails that confuse what matters.

DO YOU LIKE HOW YOUR WORK APPEARS ON THE INTERNET? Yes.

CURRENTLY WORKING ON: A video game/health app about corgi herding.