

THE FALL

(ADVANCE COPY)



2015 | Experimental Documentary | 25 minutes 40 seconds

The Fall (advance copy) is an experimental documentary that investigates the global manufacturing industry through the act of falling. Materials from crashed and abandoned airplanes get recycled and made into electronic commodities while some workers in Foxconn, iPhone factory in China, attempt to commit suicide by jumping off of buildings. The kinetic energy of falling seems to be constantly transformed into a horizontal force of global trading and shipping.

In the film, the death of the proletariat in the class society is analogous to the violent dislocation of crashed airplanes' materials. Within a ceaseless cycle of distribution and deterioration, recycled materials, workers, and their representations become the debris of the audiovisual industry.



KASSELER DOK FEST



Producer/Director: Chen Chenyu | Music: Pi-Hsuan Huang, Arp | Cinematography: Chen Chenyu, Tzu-Tung Lee
Sound Mixing: Ze Don, Jason Chen | Sound Design: Yuting Chiu
Cast: Mai Yang, Ava Chen, Ji Yang, HanXiong Bo, Weijia Ma, Echo Wu, Yuan Zheng

2015 © filmmakersforfoxconnworkers

Film Title:

THE FALL (ADVANCE COPY)

Year: 2015

Length: 25 min 40 sec

Color video

Director: Chen, Chenyu

SHORT SYNOPSIS

THE FALL (ADVANCE COPY) is an experimental documentary that investigates the global manufacturing industry through the act of falling. Materials from crashed and abandoned airplanes get recycled and made into electronic commodities while some workers in Foxconn, iPhone factory in China, attempt to commit suicide by jumping off of buildings. The kinetic energy of falling seems to be constantly transformed into a horizontal force of global trading and shipping.

In the film, the death of the proletariat in the class society is analogous to the violent dislocation of crashed airplanes' materials. Within a ceaseless cycle of distribution and deterioration, recycled materials, workers, and their representations become the debris of the audiovisual industry.

HOW DID THIS FILM COME ABOUT

I grew up in an industrial area in Tucheng, Taiwan, at where Foxconn's headquarter is located. While witnessing Foxconn shaping the landscape of Tucheng's industrial district with its growth growing up, my knowledge of its world-wide production network was however gained from the investigations and representations of it through screens. In contradiction with Foxconn's headquarter, a quiet and modern-looking building, how the bonding between hundreds of thousands of factories and millions of workers and its global production system became a tumult complex structure really fascinated me.

I am interested in the contemporary unsettlement - a ceaseless cycle of distribution and deterioration of materials, labors, and information. Under an immense construction of neoliberal policies, different production phases in this vertical integration act like the bottomless sea in philosopher Michael Oakeshott's famous dictum, "Men sail a boundless and bottomless sea: there is no harbour for shelter nor floor for anchorage, neither starting-place nor appointed destination." The worker's body and its representation goes on and off in the production lines, and in and out of the screens, where all becomes the debris of the audiovisual industry.

The process of making this film allows me to navigate through this landscape of debris - By stepping back and re-analyzing the phenomena through the medium of media, both the images and I are able to figure out our stands as well as perspectives in the audio-visual society.

LONG SYNOPSIS

THE FALL (ADVANCE COPY) is an experimental documentary that investigates the global manufacturing industry through the act of falling. Using the falling as a metaphor of the reaction to a contemporary unsettlement status, the film probes into this status and questions the consequences of a rapidly growing Chinese digital-technology market and the construction of neoliberal international-trading policies.

The film follows the thread of crashed airplanes' after life: the life after falling. Valuable body parts are recycled to be later used in electronic chips. Simultaneously, the film narrates the testimonies of worker's condition at Foxconn, the world's largest manufacturing contractor and the biggest supplier for Apple. The repetitive tasks in austere working environments and the embodiment of alienation of labor in our modern times seem to cause workers attempt to commit suicide by jumping off of buildings. Reflexively and constantly confirming with each other about the fall, the bodies of airplanes, workers, and electronic devices are placed in the film to be metaphorical witnesses of a recycle-production abyss. The film questions another sufficient recycle loop in this capitalist abyss. While social force pumps the physical falling, the vertical kinetic energy simultaneously gets transformed into a horizontal movement of global trading and shipping. In the film, the death of the proletariat in the class society is analogous to the violent dislocation of crashed airplane materials.

Through strategies of re-enactments, the film not only challenges the authenticity of documentary making but also undermine the filmmaker's authority. Partial of the footage are captured by iPhone, it even places the filmmaker at a more interesting position in this producing-consuming-representing complex. iPhone footage accompanied and edited along with an extensive online video archives, The Fall (advance copy) embraces the conditions of image economy within which both the workers and images become copies in motion, in a ceaseless cycle of distribution and deterioration. Within this cycle, both materials from the airplanes and the workers become the debris of audio-visual technology industry.

FILM FESTIVAL PARTICIPATION

- 2016 II-FICAE – Diseases International Short Film and Art Festival, Valencia Spain
Lisbon International Film Festival, Lisbon Portugal
- 2015 Kasseler Documentary Film and Video Festival, Kassel Germany
Denver Film Festival, Denver USA
Kasseler Documentary Film and Video Festival, Kassel Germany
Denver Film Festival, Denver USA

CREDITS

- Producer/Director: Chen Chenyu
Cinematography: Chen Chenyu, Tzu-Tung Lee
Music: Pi-Hsuan Huang, Arp
Sound Mixing: Ze Don, Jason Chen
Sound Design: Yuting Chiu
Cast: Mai Yang, Ava Chen, Ji Yang, HanXiong Bo,
Weijia Ma, Echo Wu, Yuan Zheng

FILM STILLS and PRODUCTION PHOTOS



Stills from film

Foxconn, Longhua Science Industrial Park, Shenzhen China

People taking off form work at Foxconn. TV board screen is replaced by found footage of UPS cargo plant



Stills from film

Assembling line Choreography - "Three whistle blows before work starts. When we hear the first whistle, we should stand up, and put our stool in position. We then sit and get ready to work when we hear the second. Third whistle, we must sit and start working. Leaning on the chairs is absolutely not allowed."

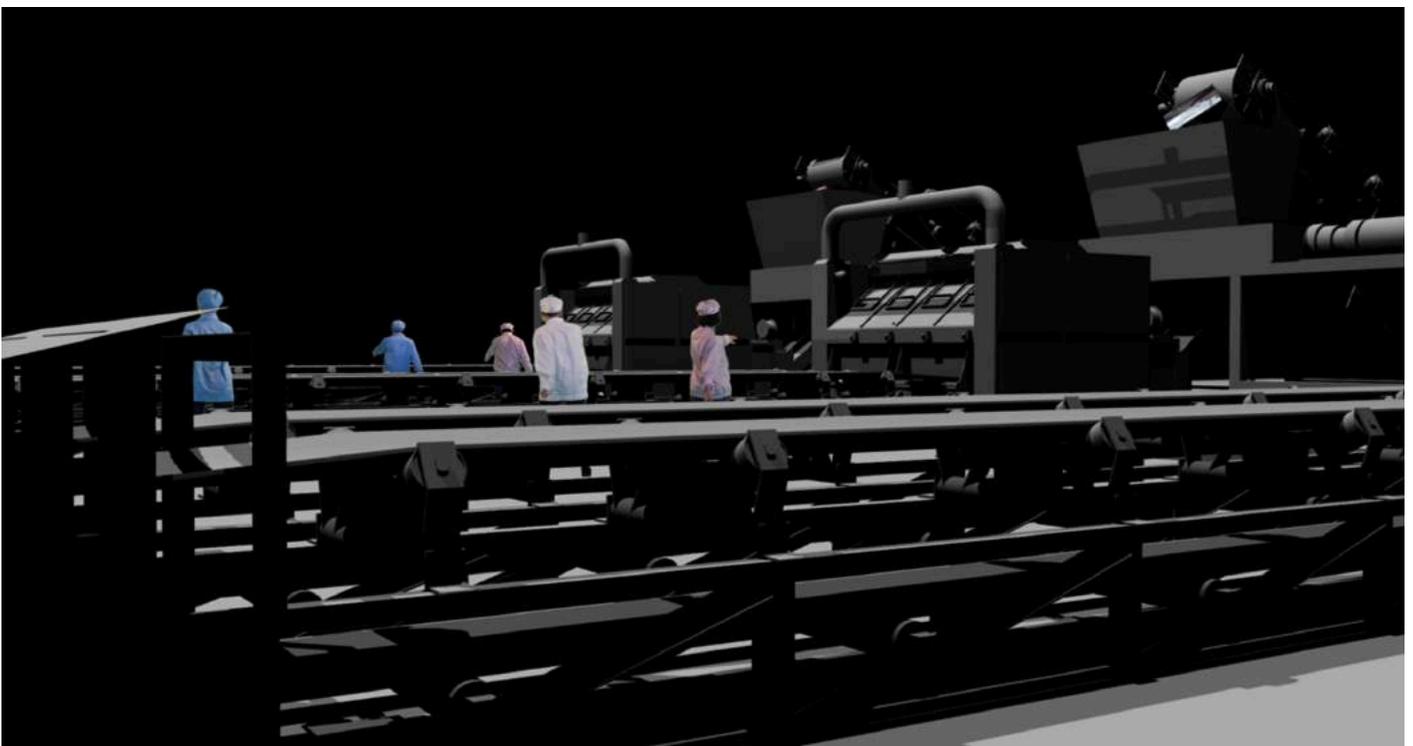


Stills from film

Left: airplane crashed in Taipei City Taiwan in February 2015; found footage

"Airplanes lose their orientation while falling. They lose the ability to follow their designated coordinates. Their bodies are dragged by the immense force of gravity. If the ground they hit is the origin of the vertical coordinates, would that be the end of their journey?"

Right: air traffic simulator; found footage



Stills from film

Up and Left: Choreography in recycle factory; Green screen with 3D animation

*"They live in the dorms with seven strangers. 6 days a week, repeating the same task, again and again."
 "Metallica aluminum is incredibly stable. That means it can be melted down and reuse, again and again forever."*

Right: Flipping footage on iPhone

Part of the film is shot on iPhone 5, which is manufactured by Foxconn workers



Production photos

Left: Re-enactment of interview with Foxconn worker; Cast: Yuan Zheng

"One afternoon after work, I was playing basketball in the factory's basketball court. My line manager saw me and criticized me afterwards. he said, "You are no longer allowed to play basketball at noon anymore., If you get hurt, the factory has to pay for it."

Left Up and Mid: Re-enactment of interview with Foxconn worker; Cast: Weijia Ma, Ji Yang

"If people from the same training program were assigned to the same department, it'd be easier to build a sense of unity. Protests don't go big if people are dispersed. So I think separation is the key to why people choose to jump off buildings instead of protest."

"Of course it's very tiring work. We don't get much rest. Everyday we just repeat the same simple task., One action, like this. Life for me has become quite meaningless. I just feel empty, like a machine."

Left Down: Recycle Choreography; Cast: Ava Chen

CONTACT INFO

<http://www.chenchenyu.com/thefalladvancecopyfilm/>

Chen, Chenyu
ccychenyu@gmail.com
+1 917-587-3373