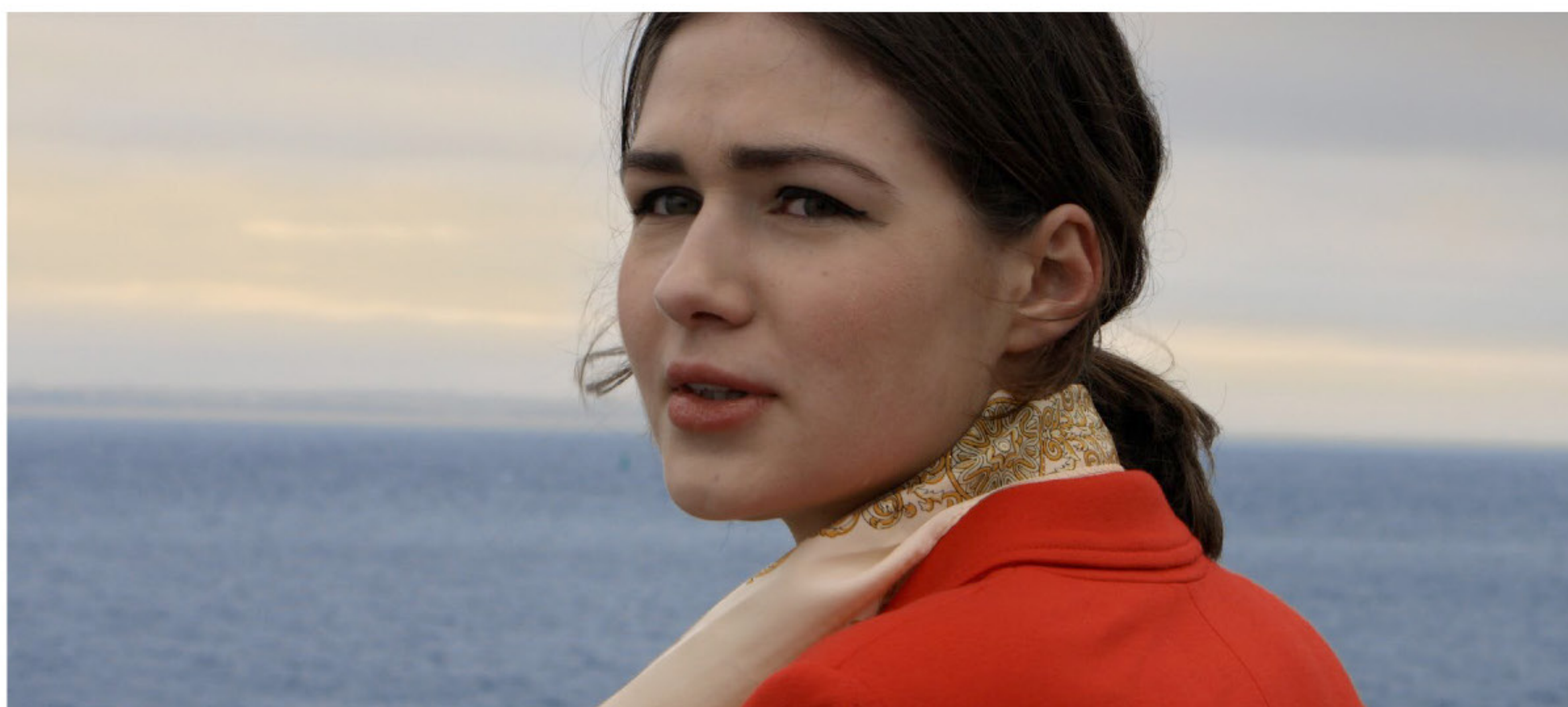


Liu Shiyuan

White Space / Beijing



In her second solo exhibition at White Space, Liu Shiyuan debuts *Lost in Export* (2015), a 33-minute single-channel video investigating the ways in which cinematic devices and imagery shape our perception of nature, beauty, emotion and romance. Stripped of any narrative context, the work is constructed like a collage: vividly stylized scenes of nature and the cosmos are juxtaposed with glimpses into the intertwining relationships of the film's four protagonists.

Liu's work develops through a process of quasi-scientific research. For *Lost in Export*, she combed through iconic films of the French New Wave, Hollywood, independent cinema and film noir to arrive at a selection of romantic scenes to appropriate. The actors reenact excerpts from films such as *The Beach*, *Band of Outsiders*, *American Gigolo*, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *My Own Private Idaho*, creating a fragmented representation of relationships: a first encounter, a tender moment on the beach, a reconciliation on a train.

Romantic clichés evoke a quiet feeling of familiarity deep in our collective consciousness. Liu knows this and isn't afraid to exploit it. She subtly distorts and reduces conventional elements of cinematography: a passionate, suggestive dialogue between lovers is replaced with deadpan and aimless existential reflections. Later on, she exposes clichés with laughable blatancy.

The exhibition also includes *Select the Next* (2014) and *Chair No. 2* (2015). The former features a screenshot of the artist's Instagram. The work postulates a decision to be made, the potential creation of an artwork. However, it remains frozen in place, lacking any conclusion. *Chair No.2* seesaws on its hind legs, rocked by two balloons inflating and deflating under its front legs. With these works Liu continues to transcend cultural and descriptive categories while challenging our preconceived understanding of the universal truths embedded in human experience.

by Sarah Sulistio

Liu Shiyuan

Both: *Lost In Export*
(video still; 2015)
Courtesy of the Artist
and White Space,
Beijing