

## When the Bird Leaves Shanghai

When the Bird Leaves Shanghai is a digital video artwork about bodies, media, and politics. Taking glitch as its core metaphor, it asks how bodies are produced under the discipline of power and media in networked life today—and how, through strategies of glitch and silence, they might slip the codes that bind them.

In Legacy Russell's *Glitch Feminism*, glitch is a stance of resistance: it lets the body be rewritten and remade in networked space, escaping the given disciplines of gender and identity. Placed in today's online environment, however, this vision turns complicated. The internet is no longer a pure space of resistance. What counts as "glitch" is often immediately commodified and tagged, converted into raw material for platform algorithms, repackaged and redistributed, even repurposed to generate new entertainment and capital. In other words, glitch is no longer only a gesture against power; it is also something to be marketed and penalized. It still carries disruptive force, but it is simultaneously tamed as a new component of order. Under these conditions, glitch feminism must widen its frame: glitch is not only a metaphor of refusal, but also an ongoing struggle against being swallowed and sold.

The work proposes the figure of the Mouthless. The Mouthless are not deprived of language; they choose silence. Here, silence is not a passive absence but an evasive tactic against platform logic. In an age when any utterance is immediately translated into data and consumed as traffic, to speak is to be absorbed at once. Platforms encourage endless expression, display, and declaration; even anger, pain, and protest are re-encoded by algorithms as countable clicks and spread. In this sense, silence becomes a new glitch: not the explosion of noise, but the absence of signal—not the clamor of overload, but a break in the datafication of life.

The work also invokes the "oracle." The oracle names a continuous mechanism of authority in network society. It speaks in an unquestionable tongue; it is both a technical regime of discipline and a device for reproducing the leader's image within a political context. The oracle fortifies the fantasy of a "god's body," a body above the ordinary and beyond dispute. Opposed to it stands the "pure body"—the mass body that, under the double bind of network and politics, is asked to remain orderly, surveillable, and normalizable.

Through simulated evolution, lesions, and fusions, *When the Bird Leaves Shanghai* stages the emergence and collapse of glitch-bodies. Its digital life-forms mix human and insect traits, as if growing and dividing without end, yet always on the brink of instability. The images present the chill logic of algorithmic generation while pulsing with an alien organicity—a neural-media texture in which the body on screen is both a product of code and a being liable to error at any moment.

Today, glitch is rapidly commodified, platformed, and consumed—yet never entirely absorbed. Precisely for this reason, glitch and silence form a duet in this work: glitch as the derangement of signal, silence as its deliberate suspension. Together they point to a posture that cannot be fully captured. In a noisy, saturated network society, they open another way for bodies to exist—not by offering answers but by creating intervals, moments in which the system's grasp is felt to loosen, if only for an instant.