In Occult Geometry Jennifer Tee’s visual and sculptural language captures and re-activates themes within western art history imbued with eastern philosophy. The composition and geometrical arrangement of objects conveys a deep interest in the notion of sculpture exploring the possible fluidity of a structure, the transparency of a solid surface paired with the possibility of concealing matter inside it, and the transitional quality of shifting function and becoming a stage for a choreography of future actions and movements. These are simultaneously formal and intellectual concerns that amalgamate in an attempt to visualize the fragile relationship between mind, body, and spirit. In conjunction with the exhibition Occult Geometry, Tee collaborated with dancer and choreographer Marjolein Vogels to develop a group choreography for 20 dancers for the courtyard at Kunsthall Charlottenborg. Tee made a series of collages (diagrams) combining and transforming elements from Tao Magic, the secret language of diagrams and calligraphy; Shuudan Koudou, the Japanese sport of precision walking; and ideas on geometrical abstraction articulated in the work of artists Hilma af Klint (1862-1944) and Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944). This set of diagrams, which incorporated materials such as pigments, herbs, ceramic domes and swirls, stones, crystals, matches and gunpowder, functioned as a score to be interpreted in the choreography, aiming at visualizing the magical in abstraction.
"The life of the spirit maybe fairly represented in a diagram as a large acute angled triangle divided horizontally into unequal parts with the narrowed segment upper most... Slowly moving, almost invisible, forward and upward."

From: Concerning The Spiritual in Art, Wassily Kandinsky, p.6
This diagram combines floating triangles with a Tao Magic drawing, a talisman to vitalize the lungs.

“Sienkiewicz, in one of his novels, compares the spiritual life to swimming: ‘for the man who does not strive tirelessly, who does not fight continually against sinking, will mentally and morally go under.”

From: Concerning The Spiritual in Art, Wassily Kandinsky, p.6
These life giving talismans seem to have been used in many different ways, including spiritual power which was closely connected with the ancient cult of Earth Spirit.


The kidneys symbolize the female sex organs and the two shapes suggest a pair of dancers with yin receptacles.
After "The Seven Pointed Star + Nine Points in Ascent"

Diagram series 2b, plate 1
45 × 65 cm

The Seven Pointed Star is the title of a drawing by Swedish artist Hilma Af Klint from the US Series (1908). This drawing might be a reference to the Seven Pointed Star, a constellation of stars used in antiquity for navigation. This constellation of stars is also known as Seven Sisters or Pleiades, the daughters of Atlas and Pleione in Greek mythology. The septagon or seven-pointed star is also used in occult symbolism and in antiquity had different meanings to cultures all around the world.

After "The Seven Pointed Star + Nine Points in Ascent"

Diagram series 2b, plate 2
45 × 65 cm

Nine points in ascent refers to a diagram of Wassily Kandinsky in Point in Line to Plain, his follow-up book to Concerning the Spiritual in Art. Kandinsky developed theories about the dematerialisation of an object and used his own unique terminology about the point in nature, music and dance, and the combination of point and line resulting in a unique visual language in which he touches on the role of painting, texture, colour and the element of time.
Diagram with red pigment, executed in sharp lines. This drawing is reminiscent of ancient cave drawings, or a sand drawing made with a stick.

Tao Magic diagrams are regarded as most potent talismans, believed to be charged with universal command over spiritual forces. These diagrams of shamanistic origin are meant to meditate on, and to evoke the harmonizing influence of yin-yang and Eternal Change. In a world aflame, retracing these ancient Chinese drawings with vibrant pigments shows a gesture of a will to revive these potent talismans, to recall and express a longing for a Pattern of Change and to meditate on harmonizing the world or the possibility of a different unfolding of universal events.

Diagram with indigo blue pigment, rolling clouds (heaven).

These diagrams are based on Tao Magic talismans and are to be interpreted in movement by a group or even a mass of people, preferably simultaneously around the world on public squares, courtyards and parks, ultimately becoming a thought provoking phenomenon evoking a Pattern of Change.
Diagram series 3b, plate 1

75 x 57 cm

the manifestation of tao, or the origins of the cosmos as described in the Tao Te Ching, a fundamental text for both philosophical and religious taoism ascribed to lao tzu (6th century BC):

The unnamable is the eternal real
Darkness within darkness,
the gateway to understanding.

the whole verse translated by gia-fu feng & jane english (1972):

The tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.
The name that can be named is not the eternal Name.
The unnameable is the eternally real.
Naming is the origin of all particular things.

Free from desire, you realize the mystery.
Caught in desire, you see only the manifestations.
Yet mystery and manifestations arise from the same source.
The gateway to all understanding.
The whole verse of Lao Tzu in the Tao Te Ching, as interpreted by Stephen Mitchell (1992):

Since before time and space were, the Tao is.
It is beyond is and is not.
How do I know this is true?
I look inside myself and see.
These plates were inspired by the Japanese sport of precision walking called Shuudan Koudou, meaning collective action. In this series hand-crafted, glazed ceramic domes and swirls are activated in the diagrams.

These spheres and swirls refer to the origins of abstract art as manifested in Af Klint's The Atom Series and Series II and Kandinsky's Concerning the Spiritual in Art and Point and Line to Plane, and their endeavor to unite abstraction with mystical concepts, thereby creating meaningful images combined with esoteric thought.

The research into the origin of abstract art was extended into the secret language of diagrams in the Tao, an aspect of Chinese art dating from the Tao-Tsang in the early Ming dynasty (1368–1644).
p. 3, 5
THE MOVEMENT OF THE TRIANGLE
Diagram Series 1
These diagrams function as mental visualizations.
Keywords for performance interpretation:
• Formation of a (spiritual) triangle
• Slowly moving, almost invisible, forward and upward.

p. 7
TALISMAN TO VITALIZE THE KIDNEYS
Diagram Series 2a
Keywords for performance interpretation:
• Female • Duality
• Vital • Mirroring
• Energy • Splitting

p. 9
AFTER "THE SEVEN POINTED STAR + NINE POINTS IN ASCENT"
Diagram Series 2b
These diagrams are a floorplan to interpret for the performance, in which the yellow and blue areas represent the location of the two female dancers. In these diagrams, precision walking and a group action is suggested.
Keywords for performance interpretation:
• Walking diagonal lines
• Walking wave lines
• Inner square/courtyard
• Yellow and blue areas for solo performance
• Flames/fire
Movement quality solos:
• Spiral Inward & spiral outward

p. 11
TAO MAGIC
Diagram Series 3a
These diagrams are to be interpreted in movement by a group or even a mass of people, preferably simultaneously around the world on public squares, courtyards and parks, at some point becoming a thought provoking phenomenon.
Movement quality plate 1:
• Sharp and swirling turning lines
• Think of charged electric matter
Movement quality plate 2:
• Tai-chi, slow fluent movement

p. 13, 15
TAO MAGIC
Diagram Series 3b
Movement quality plate 1:
• Walking in a large circle, or two half circles, group action
• Use of fire/flame and wooden bow, line to plane

Keywords for performance interpretation plate 2:
• Cosmos | Micros
• Internal space | Outer space
• Sensual space
• A split (persona) or the fractured whole
• Mirroring

p. 17
SHUUDAN KOUDOU (collective action)
Diagram Series 4
Three sequential diagrams, keywords for performance interpretation:
• Activating abstraction in geometry through motion, by walking with a group of dancers geometrical shapes and patterns, like circles and squares, triangles and lines.
PERFORMANCE OCCULT GEOMETRY
Kunsthall Charlottenborg
October 26th, 2014
Duration: 17 minutes
Concept: Jennifer Tee
Choreography: Jennifer Tee & Marjolein Vogels
Thanks to all the dancers for making this performance possible.

THE MOVEMENT OF THE TRIANGLE / THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

SHUDDAN KOUDOU (COLLECTIVE ACTION)
ETHER PLANE/MATERIAL PLANE

TAO MAGIC / THE PATTERN OF CHANGE

TAO MAGIC / CHIEN
IN TUNE WITH TIME AND CREATIVITY