

Ways of Perceiving

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‘Inheritance’

I intend to curate an exhibition, entitled ‘Inheritance’, featuring five artists. With its main focus on Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s psychoanalytic theory of Deterritorialization and Ecosophy, through exploring themes of human perception, subjectivity and the social boundaries of capitalism within the Anthropocene.

I propose to hold the exhibition in a metaphorical and objectives space, reusing and transforming a shipping container into a walk in modular cold room. I intend to use this specifically as a form of existentializing refrain within a diffuse spectacle, in reference to Guattari’s ‘The Three Ecologies’, within our current society “we are mentally manipulated through the production of a collective, mass media subjectivity’ (Guattari, 2000, p.6) and enveloped in fake news, it is imperative to confront it’s effects in the domain of mental ecology and our ability to shape individual subjectivities.

I wish to use a detachable space with the aim of being able to transport the exhibition and use it within public places, or in amongst the spectacle to which Debord defines as ‘The spectacle itself simultaneously as society itself, as a part of society, and as a means of unifications.’ (Debord, 2002, p. 63). I would ideally situate it within a busy city centre, the purpose of placement within a thriving social situation is crucial as I feel it will act as a rupture of habit, to that of the consumer and spectator whom would be stopped in their daily habitual passivity. This is defined as ‘Chaosmosis’:

Function of rupturing with forms and significations circulating trivially in the social field. The artist - and more generally aesthetic perception - detach and deterritorialise a segment of the real in such a way as to make it play the role of a partial enunciator. Art confers a function of sense and alterity to a subset of the perceived world ... the work of art, for those who use it, is an activity of unframing, of rupturing sense, of baroque proliferation or extreme impoverishment, which leads to a recreation and a reinvention of the subject itself (Guattari, 1995, p.6).

Within the spectacle of daily life, we are actively altering our perception through relations and interactions. Inevitably and perpetually being influenced by mass-produced media and interpretations of our desires, we are enslaved to the inexorable logic of the conforming consumer that capitalist culture demands of us. I believe through curation of a reflexive and indexical exhibition, I hope to create an affective refrain and resonance, ‘after the original reverberation, we are able to experience resonances, sentimental repercussions, reminders of our past. But the image has touched the depths before it stirs the surface and here expression creates being’ (Bachelard, 1994, p. 12). That acts as a rupture within the dictatorial subjectivity, fracturing our passive tendencies that act as the curtain of culture blindness of the spectacle’s contradictory qualities.

A connecting theme throughout the exhibition will be that of the affect of our society is having on the natural state of the world and how is now it is seemly clear that humankind and its increasing population and industrialization, has in a short period of time also become an factor of immense global change. Arguably, we are on the edge of becoming accessory to the sixth major extinction event. Most essentially, how our persistent perception and refusal to face the brutal reality has inherently been given to us through our production of subjectivity.



Exhibition Space –



Fig One -

Towards the end part of the central space within the exhibition I wish to place ‘your waste of time’ by Olafur Eliasson – Fig One. I chose this piece as literal encounter with reality, we have been conditioned and desensitized by the mass media subjectivity and in order to break the habitual production of it I pose a refrain and dissensus;

‘Dissensus is principally a call for the revival of individual compliance as a social force, for the development of new egalitarian, decentralized, participially democracies, orientated towards an environmentally sustainable way of living.’ (Guattari, 2000, p.15)

Taking what we perceive as the imaginable and thrusting it into our actualised perception, therefore breaking through the wall of ignorance which would normally cloud our consciousness and forcing us to face our fear, which is our wasting of time.



Fig Two -

Life of Objects, 2013

In the front of the central space I intend to place ‘Life of Objects’ by Mary Mattingly – Fig Two. I chose the piece as a representation of the importance of objective truth, I feel as though it poses as an explicit depiction of our current climate emergency and the weight it holds over us, but most importantly our acquisitive habits that have led us there. As summarized, ‘The increasing deterioration of human relations with the socius, the psyche and nature, is due not only to environmental and objective pollution but it is also the result of a certain incomprehension and fatalist passivity towards these issues as a whole, among both individuals and governments. Refusal to face up to the erosion of these three areas, as the media would have us do, verges of strategic infantilization of opinion and a destructive neutralization of democracy.’ (Guattari, 2000, p. 41)



Fig Three -

On the first wall as you walk into the exhibition, I have chosen to place ‘Whale Bay, Antarctica no.4’ by Zaria Forman – Fig Three, who documents climate change through pastel drawings. I wanted to use this as a representation of the beautification and false perception we create to alleviate from reality. I believe that we are incapable of the suffering of reality, so in order to perceive it we create refrains that stem from our production of subjectivity which has been influenced by Debord and how he argues that ‘capitalism having already served our most basic survival needs, relies on fabricating new desires and distractions in order to propagate itself and maintain its oppression over the working class.’ (Debord, 2002, p. 33)



Fig Four –

Displayed towards the back of the exhibition, I have chosen to place ‘Dandora Landfill 3’ by Edward Burtynsky. A documentary photograph that captures the horrific results of our negligent western society and the affect that our consumerism has on other countries. This, I believe is a crucial part of the rupture within subjectivity, that I want to create within the exhibition space. Specifically referring to the title itself, ‘Inheritance’, I feel as though it poses significant questions such as “What world are we leaving for those who follow?” and “what are we doing to change this?” These questions would act as affective refrains, if we are able to see past our individual subjectivity that has become just as accustom to us as the continuous consuming. Burtynsky goes on to describe this potential perception as;

‘We feel that by describing the problem vividly, by being revelatory and not accusatory, we can help spur a broader conversation about viable solutions. We hope that, through our contribution, today’s generation will be inspired to carry the momentum of this discussion forward, so that succeeding generations may continue to experience the wonder and magic of what life, and living on Earth, has to offer.’ (Burtynsky, 2018)



Fig 5 -

https://youtu.be/5V_crz-rBA

Directly opposite the entrance of the exhibition, I have chosen my final piece as the moving image ‘Starving Bear’ by Paul Nicklen – Fig 5. I intended to incorporate a moving image piece specifically to make comment on our relationship with the cinematic spectacle. As defined by Adrian J. Ivakhiv, ‘the shimmering texture of image and sounds as it strikes us and resounds in us viscerally and affectively; this is the moving image that moves us most immediately and directly’ (Ivakhiv, 2013, p.15). The spectator is encompassed by the world of cinema, a current fault in production of subjectivity is based around that of images either taken from or surrounding the cinematic and televised world. Our relationship with our emotions can be based of encounters with simple narratives that we relate to through the depiction of life on a screen. But the undeniable subjective connection with moving image is not a flaw, it is that of the capitalist subjectivity that is coercively fed into our daily feed of images and our refusal to see the erosion of our individual subjectivity.

To amplify this point and separate to the five pieces of art within the exhibition, I intend to use a piece of music to enhance the reflexive perception of those who encounter the exhibition. The piece of music I have taken from a motion picture soundtrack within popular culture, it will invoke contentment and an emotional experience. Again, Adrian J.Ivakhiv summaries this experience, ‘we swim in a sea of images— visual representations providing “subject positions” for us to insert ourselves into, spatial configurations, habituated bodily comportments and cognitive schemata that shape the ways we think, move, look, and act. Images and pictures set us into motion, channel our emotions, and evoke and redistribute our desires, fears, and affects like so much viscous putty.’ (Ivakhiv, 2013, p.9).

Fig 6 – Audio – ‘Nearer my God to thee – I Salonisti’ <https://youtu.be/zjAJcOipNpY>

By connecting emotionally through image, sound and space; I believe and hope that the reflexive response of the spectator will give way to a therefore graspable perception of reality, as opposed to the habitual boundaries or capitalist subjectivity we are able to confront our current climate emergency with an empathetic rationality and the exhibition itself will act as catalyst for change and environmental awareness within an otherwise disconnected and oblivious society.

Figures –

Fig. One: Eliasson, O. (2006) *Your waste of time* [iceberg sculpture] neugerriemshneider gallery, Berlin.

Fig. Two: Mattingly, M. (2013) *Life of Objects* [Photograph, Digital C type print on aluminium] Robert Mann Gallery, New York.

Fig. Three: Forman, Z. (2016) *Whale Bay, Antarctica no.4* [Soft pastel on paper]

Fig. Four: Burtynsky, E. (2016) *Anthropocene: Dandora Landfill #3* [Photograph, Digital C type print on aluminium] Plastics Recycling, Nairobi, Kenya.

Fig.Five: Nicklen, P. (2017) *Starving Polar Bear on Iceless Land* [Digital Generated Moving Image] National Geographic Forum, YouTube.

Fig. Six: I Solonisti (2018) *Nearer my God to Thee* [Digital Generated Audio] YouTube.

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