

## STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

THIS IS THE FUTURE OF AN UNINHABITABLE INSTANT...IT IS A PROGRESSIVISM IN WHICH IT'S NOT SO MUCH A MATTER OF LEAVING IN ORDER TO GET THERE SAFE AND SOUND, ANYMORE, AS IT IS OF GETTING OUT IN ORDER TO CLEAR THE TERRAIN AND HEADING FOR A FUTURE 'TWILIGHT OF PLACES'.

PAUL VIRILIO, STOP EJECT, NATIVE LAND. 80 – 81.

The contemporary, fluid field of capital and post-object brand speculation necessitates a practice that responds to the increasingly conceptual arraignment of everyday life. The open-ended opportunities for dissent or optimistic intervention require an awareness of the ambiguous systemic institutions of travel and mobilities. There is no doubt that both will remain an aspect of the world's largest industries such as tourism, mining and forestry but it will increasingly need to respond to a call for the ethical management of resources, local workforces and national branding in relation to political sensitivities. The leveraging of mobility capital is becoming an increasingly problematic endeavour and artists have responded by encouraging encounters with a well-planted look at same, beyond the general consensus of pleasure.

In mobility theory self-reflexive, performative and embodied philosophies are those that draw upon the premises that cultures intersect across borders both into the centre from the margins and from the centre to the margins. This exchange owes to the rise of so-called post-human digital interactivity and digital discourse, suggesting that humans and post-human relationships are affected by feedback from their surroundings and therefore that one cannot remain unaffected by the other. Nonetheless, postmodern, post-structuralist philosophy, digital technology and their assumptions have altered how human circulation can be depicted and how it functions. In the exhibition: STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE, the collective >3, Victoria Lawson and collaborative duo Vaughan and Vincent Wozniak-O'Connor tackle these assumptions in their artworks, researching the histories of the future and their ontologies.

>3 is an experimental art and design initiative comprised of Caroline Austin, Fiona Jeanne Grisard, Mabel Frautschi and Peter Thiedeke. It is focused on generating dialogue and bringing together practitioners from different fields to explore how trans-disciplinary creative strategies can be used to address wide-ranging issues related to complex, disruptive events through projects, exhibitions, discussions, workshops and participatory artworks. >3 discusses how the manifestations of such myths as Astrology and popular culture are explored in the writing of French Philosophers Roland Barthes and Michel Serres. Michel Serres contends that the noise or temporal interruptions of the new digital electronics (the digital environment and its parasites) allows different elements to emerge (new possibilities for programmers) and for new combinations to open up dialogue on the breakdowns of the seemingly impermeable electronic field.

The work being exhibited at c3 artspace includes a light installation. For this piece >3 collaborated with Argentinian Astrologer Corina Mascotti to present an astrological map of the planets. The map uses the location of the planets, along with the signs of the zodiac and their symbolic meanings, to reveal the astrologic future and examined the impact and significance of disruptive events in an interconnected world. See below for a transcription of Mascotti's reading. This critical moment transmits a general intelligence allowing the culture of mobility to be deconstructed. The veil of perceptions that this exhibition discusses can be intervened within and artists can use these moments to write a different interpretation of this history. The installations and documentation of previous participatory workshops provide the opportunity to consider new pathways to potentially bring us closer together as individuals and they suggest, invites participants to pause and reflect on the role they play in contributing to collective problems.

In *Hermes: Literature, Science, Philosophy*, Serres discusses the eradication of the demon or genius via intimacy between individuals. The artworks in this exhibition interrogate a field of seemingly apoliticised behaviour and ideals that had developed around an increasingly influential economy

system of Empire and culture. Victoria Lawson's artworks enquire into interventionist strategies of artistic practice to create embodied moments of dissent against the neo-colonial efforts of touring culture. Lawson's work shows ways in which artists can materially intervene within this abstract, ubiquitous field and the growing influence it has, becoming increasingly politicised internationally owing to ongoing terrorist interventions in this site and their ramifications. Lawson's recent research has returned to the history of mobilities and classicism to develop an understanding of contemporary tourist codes and their reactivation as a site for terrorism and future war.

In *Parallel Affect* Lawson is exhibiting a series of projections of found YouTube footage of black box flight recordings including Malaysia flight MH17, and videos of a hacker discussing the possibility of bringing down an aeroplane; a 20cm x 15cm squared 3d print of a flight recorder. Lawson will also enact the basis for contemporary coding and the skills required to enact navigation, Euclidean and Elliptical geometry, within the space, over a period of a week beginning from the first week of the exhibition. These technologies—YouTube, Quicktime and projectors—return the seemingly banal to the computerised militaristic-entertainment that they once were. Acting alongside the contemporary weapons of an ongoing war these works highlight the tools used to create an 'ecology of fear' (Mike Davis, critical urbanist) they provide an insight into an ontology of noise created by the Futurists during World War I.

It is this ontology that Vaughan and Vincent Wozniak-O'Connor question in their work *Millionth Acre* (2017). In STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE, the Wozniak-O'Connors will exhibit a number of small works (20 cm x 20cm each) attached to the wall of the gallery examining audiospatial and geospatial relationships and objects. Their work focuses on developing tools for using trees as microphones allowing for the natural sounds of pine plantations across the Oberon plateau, drone technology and shattered holograms that registers an interest in the incomplete environment, highlighting the traumatic and the inability of VR to take us to a complete spatial experience. The objects draw upon the ambient sound of the plant vibrations (or silviculture) and those of the exhibition space to create dynamic installations or 'fragmented maps' that highlight the vibrations of our exhibition and broader ecology. This relationship to place and landscape draws on spatial imaging formats such as Virtual Reality and digital holography. They also use methods that draw from early Aelian instruments and timber-working; from DIY bioacoustics and electrical tinkering their practice uses vegetation as a way of filtering and encoding our spatial knowledge (recognising sound bouncing off of walls) as well as a means of discussing the deeper effects of logging on the Blue Mountains environment. The Wozniak-O'Connors' work creates an intimacy with this pine environment that we would otherwise dismiss. Forestry destroys the delicate Indigenous ecologies of the Oberon Plateau replacing it with an introduced species that is destroyed in a mirror of the genocides taken place in the area. It also draws upon a history and sensitivity to a European ontology whereby the pine forests could be used as navigation and thus enters the domain of mobilities theory, discussed previously (John Muir, Douglas Kahn, *Earth Sound Earth Signal: Energies and Earth Magnitude in the Arts*) and its sound considered a song called Matsukaze (or song of the pines). This recognition of pine forests' earlier history rather than just its contemporary capital reminds us that we are continuously negotiating with an anthropocene present and future. The multiplicity represented in this media project highlights the 'simultaneity offered by the spatial experience' (Vaughan Wozniak-O'Connor).

In *Sonic Warfare: Sound, Affect, and the Ecology of Fear*, Steve Goodman reads Jacques Attali and reminds us that in sound

anticipation, sensing the future, has always been more a preoccupation of the ear, of audio culture. The ear probes the future through listening for those clues that pass so quickly they could not have been present: phantoms, hallucinations, initiated by affect, or anticipation, or perhaps dread... "by the time we get to cyberpunk, reality has become a case of the nerves—that is, the interfusion of nervous system and computer matrix, sensation and information—so all battles are fought out in feeling or mood with dread exteriorised in the world itself"

Istvan Scicery-Ronay Jr in *Storming the Reality Studio: Casebook of Cyberpunk and Postmodern Science Fiction*. In STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE we are reminded that we have a possible future where we do not destroy ourselves, if only we listen for it.

*This text was written by Victoria Lawson for the exhibition Strategies for the Future at c3 Contemporary Art Space in August 2018.*