

FRENCH RIVIERA

Horizon Hypnotique

18 February – 13 March 2011

Friday – Sunday 12 – 6pm

Gabriel Coxhead: You've turned your studio into a gallery space. Do you see putting on exhibitions as an extension of your practice as artists?

Samuel Levack and Jennifer Lewandowski: Very much so. We are interested in the act of collaboration and for us, right now, the idea of running a gallery is an extension of this. The shop has been our studio for the past three years, most recently a testing ground for shooting films of friends dancing. Playing with coloured filters and white lights, still and moving, the magical hypnotic rhythm of dance was the inspiration for the exhibition's title.

GC: Can you tell me how you came to choose the other artists for the inaugural show, and explain a bit about their work?

SL & JL: When choosing the artists for 'Horizon Hypnotique', we were thinking less about the art they make and more about their aesthetic.

Richard Parry is a solo artist who also works under the name The New Dome, part lie, part truth, he appears to tease the public with works of a performative nature drifting in and out of collaborations.

GC: The exhibition seems to centre around notions of imagination, fiction, and enactment. What is it, both in terms of your work and the other artists', that draws you to these themes?

SL & JL: Escapism through dream, whilst awake or in sleep, can be a truly uplifting experience, it is a form of fiction allowed to ourselves through our imagination.

Tai Shani's cast of dreamlike characters elaborately dressed, perform in fantastical cinematic productions. Playing with notions of time we travel through eras and back once again, forwards and back, over and over, her titles demand imagery that is both historical and futuristic, science fiction suspended searching for the beauty and horror, creating mythology from a neo-contemporary American landscape.

Kris Emmerson's film shows a calming vision circling our hemisphere. Allowing us to gaze sideways, we observe the mechanical genie spinning endlessly through the astro heavens, a new illusion of what might be out there.

GC: Finally, let's discuss the names of the gallery and show. 'French Riviera' – that's very romantic and escapist, isn't it? And will exhibition titles always be in French?

SL & JL: To travel to French Riviera, Alex Ressel's voyage takes us along the pathways surrounding Bow Creek, the union of the River Lea and the Thames, a bleak yet colourful romance of old Limehouse. Roaming onwards from the English Avon via a paradise island somewhere off the forgotten coasts of New Zealand. Around the world we journey only to find ourselves again under the blue neon of tonight's horizon. This is our romance. Et oui, bien sur.

Gabriel Coxhead is an art critic and curator.

Samuel Levack and Jennifer Lewandowski are artists and curators of 'Horizon Hypnotique'.

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Alex Ressel

L'Homme. N'est pas là, il est pourtant toujours présent.
Ses constructions, œuvres, destructions, et son gâchis.
Au milieu de cette nature autrefois si belle,
Il est une sorte de parasite, de maladie
Qui, insidieusement, aurait bousillé le corps.

Beatriz Olabarrieta

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uuirXgyT_-s&feature=related

Kris Emmerson

My work is inspired by modes of simulation within the digital realm. Our perception and understanding of the world around us is being constantly re-presented and re-defined by computer generated imagery within TV and film media. By releasing these 'fantasies' from the limitations of a narrative driven context they can exist as autonomous entities, offering a momentary sense of wonder; a time and place outside of the now.

Lucy Woodhouse

I Cannot See The [...] Caught In The Forest, 2011 is a portrait of Bethnal Green inspired by the surrealist work of the same name by Andre Breton; *Je Ne Vois Pas La [...] Cacheé Dans La Forêt, 1929*. The portrait is set against the branded colour design of a local shop, while the closed eyes of the participants subvert the idea of the passport portrait and suggest another subconscious space.

Richard Parry

"Most of what's passing for information right now is total fiction," Parry remarked. "I try to turn the lie back on itself". In doing so, he also challenges the traditional role of the artist as creator, and the very meaning of creation, while presenting an alternative definition of what an art space can be.

(R. Parrish, "People Keep Asking: –*What's Art Zimbabwe?*" London 2010, p.27)

Tai Shani

Tai Shani is an artist living and working in London. Fantastical and televisual, Tai Shani's performances and films contain cartoon props and extravagantly costumed large casts of archetypes and pseudo-historical characters drawn from popular culture and counterculture mythologies. Referencing early science fiction, Greek tragedy and theatrical spectacle they are accompanied by voice over soundtracks reminiscent of radio plays that alternate between familiar fictional styles and narratives and self-reflexive texts that delve into the mechanics of simulatory channels and their agency. Often dramatising historical phenomena, Shani seeks to underpin the axis point of their transformation from historical to fantastical. Chaotic, a-historical and non-linear in form, Shani's work explores fictional strategies, the cinematic corruption of memory as well as conflicting temporal structures in the 'real' and the mediated.