

GHOST TIME // FUTURE ANTERIOR // COSMIC TOOLS

SYMPOSIUM

3-5 march 2014

Room 5, Studio B, Barriedale Building

GOLDSMITHS

The ***GHOST TIME// FUTURE ANTERIOR// COSMIC TOOLS*** symposium juxtaposes takes on and from the future as they make a claim to the present. At a moment in time when the future is both unapologetically bankrupt and overwhelmingly omnipresent as a rhetorical and biochemical haunting, the three days of presentations, conversations, screenings, lectures and reports from within the research programme and with their guests, set up scenes from which to inhabit such projections. Animating research in artistic practice and military technology, corporate futurology and superstitious conspiracy material, the conversations are set between Ljubljana and Djibouti, post-Mayan cosmologies, drone skies and terrestrial ruins. Their shared concerns and contested claims are arranged across incompatible horizons in order to establish what can be gained from their improbable collisions.

3 MARCH, (10AM-5PM)

MORNING (10-1)

JOHN CUSSANS

'HAUNTED BY THE FUTURE, THE IDEOPLASMIC CONGRESS 1973 - 2003'

20 Minute Presentation // Respondent: TBC

Shortly after the Project VALIS event of March 2002 rumours began circulating within the Bughouse about a reputed gathering of parapsychologists in the former Yugoslavia that bore an uncanny resemblance to Stanislav Lem's 1971 novel *The Futurological Congress*. Between 2002 and 2004 Bughouse operatives made several visits to Ljubljana in Slovenia to research the substance of the story. The findings of these investigations were presented to a public audience in November 2003. Building on this material Monday's presentation will address the temporal and philosophical incongruities of soviet parapsychology during the Cold War from a retro-futurological perspective and discuss the role of hyperfictions as critical-theoretical tools for predicting and reflecting upon possible futures.

ANDY WEIR

'DESERT SCAN, ACCELERATING ABDUCTION, OURZAZATE VERSIONS'

20 Minute Presentation and discussion // Respondent: TBC

I will present some rough thoughts and artwork in progress around abductive reasoning (C.S. Peirce; Lorenzo Magnani) alongside recursive future sonic abductions (the despotic regime never sounded so good before—Kodwo Eshun). This suggests a method to model, and be compelled by, complex abstract entities (like the future, or deep time) as hypothetical fictions. The work, in collaboration with a neuroscience lab and some other more shady partners, draws on military accelerations of abduction for data extraction, and near- future conspiracies that feed on its pleasure.

AFTERNOON (2-5)

JACOB PARK

'FOUR FUTURES IS BEST' (SKYPE CONVERSATION)

1 hour video of Skype conversation with Ramon Bloomberg // 22 February 2014

Jacob Park is a futurologist and scenario planner in a broad practice that spans industries as diverse as fashion and energy. Park's futurological practice consists of the construction of multiple futures scenarios in a methodological framework that includes workshops in which the client is encouraged through various means, to shift their epistemic frame in order to more closely feel the avenir. In this wide ranging conversation Park discusses the genealogy of future studies in cold war military industrial theory, the methodologies of scenario planning, the challenges of complexity theory and quantum physics on the everyday practice of future studies, among other themes.

BEAU TRAVAIL

SCREENING OF CLAIRE DENIS' FILM

92 Minute Screening // Respondent: TBC

Beau Travail is loosely based on Herman Melville's novella *Billy Budd*. Denis has set the movie in Djibouti, where the protagonists are soldiers in the French Foreign Legion.

4 MARCH, (10AM-5PM)

MORNING (10-1)

GREGOIRE CHAMAYOU

THEORIE DU DRONE

Conversation between Ramon Bloomberg and Edgar Schmitz

Building upon his previous work on the manhunt doctrine, Gregoire Chamayou's recent book *Théorie du drone (Paris: La Fabrique 2013)* sets out to construct a philosophy of the drone as emblematic of shifts in the wielding of sovereign power from the battlefield over to the hunting ground, from armies to the individual body.

Théorie du drone has not yet been translated into English. This conversation aims to open up this work in anticipation of a translation becoming available.

RAMON BLOOMBERG

'A DRONE FICTION: THE BUCCANEER'S GAZE'

20 Minute Presentation // Respondent: Manuel Angel

In this presentation I will introduce the idea of Drone Fiction by unpacking a comment by David Cameron at the Lord Mayor's banquet in 2013. In his speech, Cameron proposed a permanent austerity accompanied by a return to the *buccaneering spirit*. What is a buccaneering spirit? Unraveling the buccaneering spirit will lead to the construction of the *Buccaneer's Gaze*, an optic that I will understand through a discussion of the 2009 hijacking of the Maersk Alabama container ship by Somali pirates. Reading Cameron's buccaneer's gaze as a *drone fiction*, will suggest the wide ranging impact of the *weltanschauung* crystallised into networked information machines.

AFTERNOON (2-5)

EMILY ROSAMOND

CHARACTER AND COUNTERFACTUAL TIME (A PRELUDE)

20 Minute Presentation // Respondent: TBC

This performance-lecture acts as a prelude to two forthcoming exhibitions, each of which explores non-linear conceptions of time: a collaborative residency/exhibition by Rosamond, Kate Pickering and Steven Levon Ounanian (ASC Gallery, 4 April 2014) and "From me flows what you call time", a group exhibition curated by Suzanne Caines and Wayne Binitie (Goldsmiths, May 2014). Dover Castle, in Kent, has been a key site for both real and counterfactual warfare. It was to be a battleground during the Napoleonic invasion of England, which (thanks to the Battle of Trafalgar) never happened. In World War II, it wielded inflatable rubber tanks and leaked fake intelligence to German spies, to make them believe that what were to become the D-Day landings were intended for Pas-de-Calais. In realist fiction, words spin lives both led and unled for their characters. Counterfactual, imagined lives – according to which characters might have acted differently, chosen differently, married differently – crowd around the consequences of their actual events and decisions. But what is the ontological status of these counterfactual histories – and what do they say about the future, as itself a continually rewritten fiction? What sites, which characters are most susceptible to counterfactual pressure upon the actual? Drawing from a diverse range of material – from fiction to board games, Bergsonian philosophy, vision quests and cooking – the lecture explores the precarious character as a flexible storage unit for counterfactual time. The "author" of this intellectual perspective is erosamond, a fictitious academic whose thought advances through erotic-conceptual processes somewhere between imagery and argument, poetry and claim.

5 MARCH, (10AM-5PM)

MORNING (10-1)

ELE CARPENTER AND SUSAN SCHUPPLI

AIRBORNE PHANTOMS, STEALTH SKIES

40 Minute Conversation and Discussion

MARK FEATHERSTONE

THE FUTURE IN RUINS: TECHNICS AND APOCALYPSE

20 Minute Presentation // Respondent: Ramon Bloomberg

In his paper Mark will discuss the relationship between technology, utopia, dystopia, and the collapse of the future into a kind of permanent apocalyptic present.

AFTERNOON (2-5)

GEORGE BARBER

THE FREESTONE DRONE, 2013

13 Minute Screening and discussion // Respondent: Ramon Bloomberg

George Barber's The Freestone Drone follows a mission from the point of view of the machine. The drone's camera surveys cityscapes, encounters individuals, reports, and in flight becomes aware of its own utility and destiny. Drone operators routinely study the washing to learn about their targets - it is foretold that the Freestone Drone is to die entangled in a clothes line.

The video combines found and made footage to produce an uneasy, seductive montage, anchored on the drone's private thoughts. Barber brings together war, love, life, death, and sends the drone over not only Waziristan, but also to New York and a London suburb. The drone then travels through time, projecting images of the past and possible futures. While narrative unravelled on screen resists easy categorisation, the artist draws the viewer to empathise with the antagonist. Engendered with human consciousness and independence, the drone is a poet who disobeys orders and does his own thing, a child within a machine.

FRANCOIS BUCHER

FRACTAL ACCESS TOTEMS

40 minute screening of his newest film // Respondent: Manuel Angel

The film is François' latest film. It explores surfacing and repressed mystical and conspiratorial takes on historical sedimentations, disjunctive time frames and contested geopolitical spaces. This intersection treats American materials on a broader scale, as (potentially) exposing modalities of thinking beyond, through and against south-of-the-border auto-immunisations of the North.