

SPECTRUM

A SURVEY OF ARTISTS' MOVING IMAGE

GESTURE & DIRECTION

31ST January 2017

RCA Dyson Building, Battersea. SW11 4AN

Katherine Fishman, Benji Jeffrey, David Theobald, Anna Zett

Guest Curated by Léa Herbeth

Guest Artists

Karen Mirza & Brad Butler

This screening brings together five works that provide a frame to examine the significance of a physical gesture in contemporary life and society. These videos assess real and simulated human gestures and actions that we encounter in life, Hollywood films and digital gaming. Be it in the way we carry a backpack or project ourselves to a public audience, the state in which we encounter and assess gestures become increasingly complex and blurred, particularly as progression is made in digital technologies and encourages a state of 'refinement' in human action. What becomes apparent in these works is a need to review physical gestures, large or minute, human or digital. To what extent are we being directed and how does the lens or digital mediums allow for reflection and 'progress' in contemporary life?

Running Order:

The High Life 2015, 3min 05

David Theobald

Somewhere Between an Act and an Actor 2016, 4min 20

Benji Jeffrey

Instructional Posture 2016, 7min 29

Katherine Fishman

DINOSAUR.GIF 2014, 20min 59

Anna Zett

Hold Your Ground 2012, 7min 57

Karen Mirza & Brad Butler



Katherine Fishman *Instructional Posture* 2016, 7min 29

Focusing in the act of regularly carrying a rucksack, Katherine Fishman's 'Instructional Posture' centres around a bespoke workshop run by a trained physiotherapist for a group of six participants. It involved learning a new rucksack-carrying technique designed to relieve unnecessary strain on the neck and shoulders, how to pack a bag, stretches to improve posture, and a Q&A session discussing relevant postural experiences. As the previously unquestioned activity of walking with a rucksack is made to feel unfamiliar, the processes of re-adjustment, attempts to recognise subtleties and move naturally again are documented. *Instructional Posture* is part of the video project *Out of Alignment*.

katherinefishman.tumblr.com



Benji Jeffrey *Somewhere Between an Act and an Actor* 2016, 4min 20

Benji Jeffrey's 'Somewhere Between An Act And An Actor' uses found and reconstructed footage to investigate the micro gesture. An actor reviews and recreates moments from a Robert Downey Jnr. interview, one he infamously walked out of. Visually the work hones in on specific moments with text and spliced then repeated footage prompting the viewers focus. As multiple personas crumble together the delicacy of non cognitive facial movement allows a moment of access to the process of personal mediation.

www.benjjeffrey.com

I

Blink, blink,
Again, one more blink
He stutters, I stutter,
Pause, to think, pause
To think
Again, shall we try again?
Hesitating long enough to collect our thoughts
Deep breath,
Deep breath,
Between the gaps in the lights
A flicker of reality,
He draws a wry smile
In mimicry I pursue

II

The antagonist presses up
A face, to the mirror
The mirror's face
Forgets itself

III

See his face,
In the picture it owns
See your face in his picture
Truths are told in twisted expressions
Blank propositions,
Directed by pre-rehearsed expectation
A combination of what will come
And what is coming

IV

Elegantly the master commands his voice
Washing away the wilting pressure
His eyes wide
Posturing to his own indignation
In his defence they do come
His own face, his own betrayal

V

Cut the pieces of his actions
Into the miniscule
Where words do tell
Another tale
To his breathing
Becoming, bit by bit,
Another member
In his arsenal
Of preconditioned
Positions
Repeat, return,
Repeat, return,
Pause here for a moment
Sink into the figure
Swallow, not once, but twice,
Singular moments binding
To become composite,
All the while
Never to disturb the act
They bely

VI

To know you, is to see you
To hear you, is to play you,
To feel you, is to have you,
All of which, I desire
And in one act
I cannot have

VII

Floating from above the hierarchy
This figure, which
Commands a knowledge,
We are sold

In his selling pitch
Our dreams do dream
Yet, to the watchful hawk
Such acts have no means

Sold on sorry stories
The grandiose voice
Flattens when facing
An honest proposition

Noting all the while
The movements in his transitions
For glitches in his trial
Clasping at the hopeful omissions

His audience sighs
His inquisitor pushes
Resisting the hesitation
The line forever ruined

VIII

The division of two
Negates the clarity
In his voice
Split eggs burn the throat
No more needed
Than in this second, and in this space
Unveiling the fist
Behind the saint

IX

With the waft of the left
Our positions change
And your lyrics delay
Biding your time,
For wanting to wait
I can merely follow
For this left is now yours
And my noise too

X

Doubtful though I am,
I am certain,
I am certain,
Or if not then I possess certainty

XI

And with one cunning
Flick of the eyelids
I defy you.

The Messages of Henry Bacon,
presented by Joshua Leon

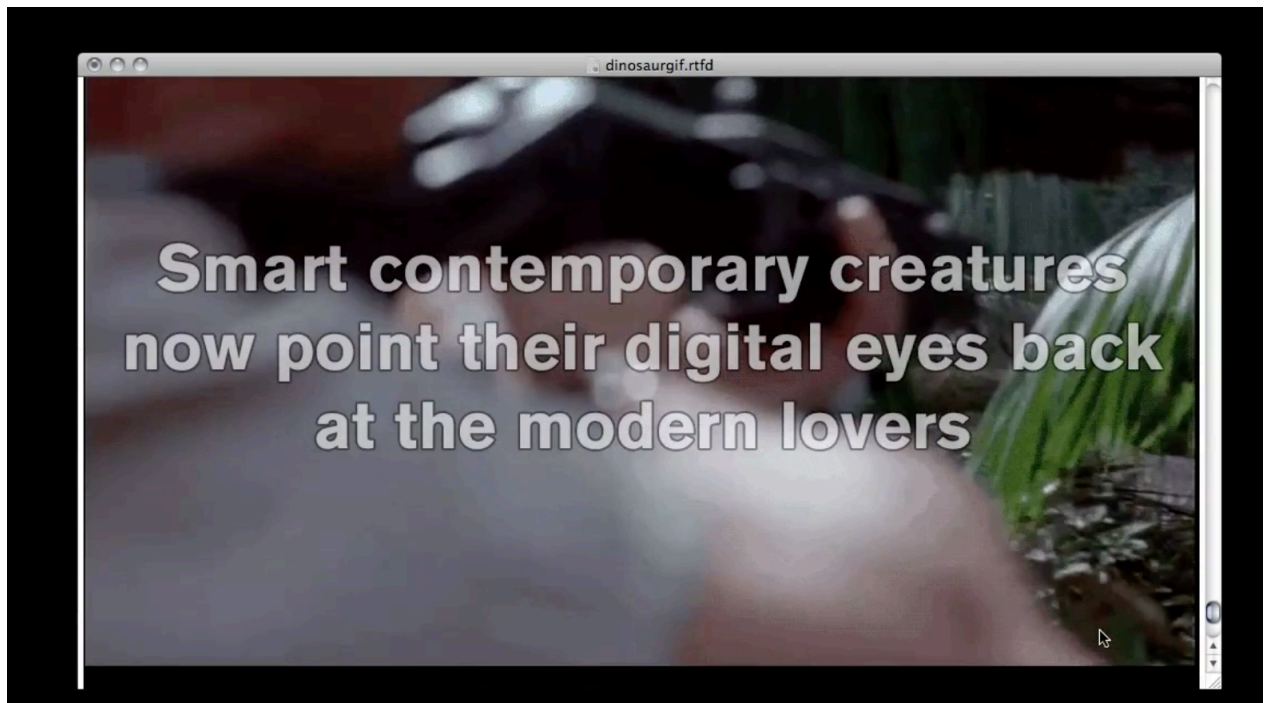
*All 10 poems are available on our website.



David Theobald *The High Life* 2015, 3min 05

Named after the BA magazine, David Theobald's 'The High Life' is a computer emulation of the on-board experience of flying on Concorde complete with in-flight catering. A flight simulator from the perspective of a passenger. As an encounter that is no longer directly accessible to any (and was only ever accessible to few), digital animation seems an apt medium to use in its recreation and redistribution. Theobald's work captures a perpetual state of transit, simulating human gestures to regard disposable cultures that are often regarded as progressive.

www.davidtheobald.com



Anna Zett *DINOSAUR.GIF* 2014, 20min 59

In Anna Zett's *DINOSAUR.GIF* we are looking at utopian image objects that are expected to dwell behind the horizon of colonial capitalism, waiting to be reanimated for profit or ideology. Animated screengrab-GIFs from US-American dinosaur films of the past 100 years are scrolled down in a text editor. It turns out that revealing and concealing are inseparably connected when the dinosaur, the spirit animal of technological progress, appears on screen. Through moving image, narrative and performance, Zett's work negotiates the comedy of technology and the tragedy of science. This has led Zett to the look for new gestures to grasp this ambivalence and to the invention of a film genre Zett calls research drama – a narrative tool attempting to bridge what Zett perceives as a prevailing gap between experience and knowledge.

www.annazett.net

GESTURE & DIRECTION is the second event of the 2016-17 screening program curated by Spectrum. Initiated by Alex Culshaw and Rachel Wilson the curatorial project arose from a want to research and provide a platform for artists currently working with moving image. Spectrum has formed from two annual open calls, the screening events are curated from the entries received and tailored to the entries rather than prescribing a particular 'theme' beforehand. A guest curator is invited to respond to each screening by contributing the work of another artist who is listed as the guest artist. All previous screenings and further details can be found at www.artistsmovingimage.net

Thanks to the artists involved, guest curator Léa Herbeth, Anne Duffau, Josh Leon for his poems and the RCA for hosting us.