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DAVID YU is a multimedia, installation, and performance artist that currently practices out of Toronto. He received a Masters in Fine Art from The Slade School of Fine Art in London, UK (2008) and his Bachelors in Fine Art from the Ontario College of Art and Design (2006). Until recently David practiced in London, U.K., exhibiting work throughout Europe and abroad. His exhibition record includes: a one month durational performance during the exhibition Onderweg at Cultuurcentrum Zwaneberg, Heist-op-den-Berg, Belgium(2017); a solo exhibition at MART Gallery, Dublin, Ireland (2015); participation with Flux Night 2012 (Nuit Blanche Atlanta, Georgia) with a multi-channel video installation, Small Meteorites, projected within five vehicles; a city wide art installation commissioned and curated by the Duncan and Jordanstone College of Art and Design (2011), funded by the Scottish Arts Council; a solo exhibition at the Monster Truck Gallery in Dublin Ireland (2011); a Triangle Arts Trust residency and solo exhibition at the Kuona Trust Gallery in Nairobi, Kenya (2011). This summer David will be participating in a residency and organizing a solo exhibition with The Orleans Gallery in Ottawa.

THE SPACE AND ITS CONTENTS

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In the waiting room, there are more bodies than chairs. It smells stuffy and bored. There is only one seat available and a TV mounted just high enough to cause a quick kink in the neck. At least it is clear what we are supposed to do: enter the space, watch, wait, readjust, remain optimistic. This final point despite being forced to consume a fragmented over-saturation of too much information that is no information at all.

This space is not a space. This space reminds us of a space—here, and outside of here. A juxtaposition of several spaces forming a single, 'real' place. A break with traditional time.

We are uncertain of how to behave, in part, because the boundaries between here and outside of here are not entirely clear. Our presence furthers blurs these lines. We can act ourselves (real), or we can follow the instructions (construct). Maybe there is no difference. Maybe they are not instructions. Either way, we agree to perform in/voluntary inter-relations in a communal performance of 'here'.

Once inside, we sense that the room is ripe with reconfigured energy. Stability is just movement slowed down. Vibrational matter is battered from a methodic and meticulous labour; secure in its position of infinity between meaning and thing.

This space merges the visible and the immaterial. Like a phone call, or seeing your reflection in a mirror. It is real but not grounded. Like moving about an exhibition where each object refuses to remain in place. Activated by our presence but functioning non-hegemonically, the primitive cyborgs dictate, and are dictated by, our relative position. We dock ourselves as they do, when we run out of charge.

Between meaning and thing, an internal logic. It extends from within and in between the objects, the people, the actions. This site is all sites, defined by relations of proximity. This space is not that space due to fixed points between things. Every body has agency and purpose. It is our job to determine how we fit in.

We can see that our chance of remaining passive was abandoned unknowingly at the

entrance. We agree to participate upon entry. This is what we do every time we enter. We agree within reason to behave, to work, to absorb, to engage.

THE CONTENTS AND WHAT THEY TELL US

The objects prioritize how they relate to each other. They are busy activating their space, encouraging action, and effecting behavior. We speculate that the real differences in the world are not between humans and non-humans, but between objects and their relations. We cannot speak purely about an object being dropped or dragged. We can only speak to *our experience* of the dropping and dragging; to our experience of the evidence that remains. It is only when the object breaks that we notice its qualities.

This tension extends from the object's twisted banged up folds, out towards its framing mechanism. This is the truth of understanding our world through the things we share it with. They, like us, occupy space through a series of relations: boundaries unclear and definitions fluid. We are autonomous units with agency, defined by a unified reality. They remind us that it is the space *between* where we should direct our focus. The objects are committed to their belonging with such vigor that we begin to believe them. After all, they have purpose, place, history, and a future. We are only here momentarily to share their world. This anthropocentrism is the object's ontology. We are just passing through.

The experience which tests this theory is defined by relational action. Instead of proving that the objects are secondary, we can confirm, through a systematic setting up of chance, an activation of the space between. An action performed, or evidence of an action performed. These social experiments are orchestrated through a display of evidence where objects play the lead. The viewer's actions become both subject and substance of the art. Art becomes a cognitive model for philosophy—a place without a place; a place and a non-place where the space is not a space.

This is the art that you cannot see. It is the stuff of human environs. It is an interference with habit, a thing, tangible or not, created or found, that occupies a space outside of 'normal'. Its successes lie in how effectively it

takes us away from the familiar. It is a subjective pathway to objectivity. The further it pushes our modes of thought, the better it becomes.

SIDE NOTE ON THE MIRROR AS A MOST FASCINATING HETEROTOPIA

In 6000 BC, humans were polishing volcanic glass to create personal, portable reflective surfaces. We were dissatisfied from the start with our distorted portrait in water's surface, or second-hand descriptions from our peers.

The mirror space merges the visible and immaterial. It is everywhere and nowhere at once. It counteracts real space, reflecting and therefore increasing its depth, but is also a real space onto itself. It is in the mirror where we discover our absence from the place that we are: on this piece of the earth, in our head, a part of our mother, forever young. The mirror is my own gaze directed at myself. It reinforces my relationship with myself. It is the only way to see myself, and yet, I can only ever see myself inverted. It designates the space that I occupy: my body, my space, the inter-relations between. My reflection is an absolutely real, primordial, un-objectified 'I'. It is connected with all that surrounds it, complete with unique qualities that interrelate to make me whole. It is a window into the world where 'the entire picture is looking out at a scene for which it is itself a scene'¹.

An effective apparatus to establish perspective, and yet, everything is backwards. My reflection is equally unreal, a fictitious depth, because it cannot be touched, it cannot move unless I move, it is but the threshold to the visible world. It is isolating and penetrable at once. It is virtual, in a perpetual state of 'over there', oscillating between interior and exterior; a perpetual heterotopia that is indifferent to my gaze. It is a peering into Galileo's infinite void. It causes me to believe that I am an autonomous independent being, while causing me to question this very belief. It emphasizes my lack; causing me to yearn for that which I am not and seek profoundly a relationship between myself and the real. It is a point of connection that makes me aware of the space that surrounds my body. In private, it forces me outside of myself, in order to know myself socially. It is an exteriorizing tool, an extension of my cortex: 'I no longer see the eye that

looks at me and, if I see the eye, the gaze disappears"¹. Within the space of the mirror, the domain of vision becomes integrated into a field of desire.

- 1 Lacan, Jacques. *The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I and Of the Gaze as Objet Petit a*. In 'Philosophers on Art from Kant to the Postmodernists; A Critical Reader', Christopher Kul-Want, ed. pp.174
- 2 *ibid.* Lacan pp.158