Passen-gers

Disinformation
Language [as] Meta-Technology

1. 'Language [as] Meta-Technology'
   digital prints, 1100 × 1500 mm, 2018

2. 'Theophany', sound installation,
   0.083 seconds, 2001

3. 'Portrait of Jean Genet' and
   'Portrait of Derek Bentley',
   digital prints, 420 × 594 mm,
   2011

4. 'Language [as] Meta-Technology',
   sound installation, 5 minutes, 2018

5. 'Ammonite', video installation,
   15 minutes, 2009

6. 'Spellbound', video installation,
   3 minutes, 2001

7. Scan-King discone WBD-40
   radio antennas, 1997

8. Archive material

SLUICE HQ

GAULD ARCHITECTURE

Disinformation
'Language [as] Meta-Technology'
+ other works

Wed 21 Nov – Sun 02 Dec 2018
Opening Event: Sat 24 Nov, 6–9 pm
Opening hours: Fri–Sun, 12–5pm or by appointment
Address: Sluice HQ, 171 Morning Lane, Hackney Central,
London E9 6JY

For the inaugural exhibition of the Passen-gers off-site series, artist project Disinformation responds to the site of Sluice HQ, formerly 'Vision Signs', a commercial sign-maker in Hackney, East London.

The philosopher C W Morris defined semiotics as 'the science of signs', the writer Umberto Eco stated that 'semiotics is in principle the discipline studying everything which can be used in order to lie', and the telecommunications theorist Colin Cherry remarked that 'information can be received only where there is doubt'. The book *Rorschach Audio – Art & Illusion for Sound* states 'the earliest form of sound recording technology was not a machine but was written language'.

Disinformation's site responsive installation *Language as Meta-Technology* draws from the above references in using a variety of speech recording, speech synthesis, psychoacoustics research and speech coding technologies

to articulate, among other propositions, the hypothesis that 'language is the technology that contains all others'.

A selection of other works which resonate with the revelatory and religious associations of the former name of the premises, 'vision' 'signs' will be also exhibited. *Spellbound* (2001) is an installation which alludes to ethical dilemmas similar to those explored by the plays *Copenhagen* (1998) by Michael Frayn and *Oppenheimer* (2015) by Tom Morton-Smith. *Spellbound* is an allegorical portrait of nuclear scientist, J Robert Oppenheimer – the 'sign' being an image of Robert Oppenheimer's eye, which appears in an aerial photograph of the 'lake' of glass melted into desert sand by the world's first thermonuclear test. *Theophany* (2000), meaning the 'voice of God' - is a recording of VLF-band radio noise radiated by a single lightning strike: 'The voice of the Lord strikes with flashes of lightning' Psalms 29:7. Theophany is the world's shortest sound installation, lasting just 0.083 seconds.

In keeping with the interpretation of the words 'signs' and 'theophany' as indicating 'manifestations of the divine', naturally-occurring ammonoidea (fossils) or 'shaligrams' are regarded in Hinduism as direct manifestations of the god Vishnu (and the former Sanskrit scholar Robert Oppenheimer famously invoked Vishnu, in saying 'now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds'). *Ammonite* is a 15-minute split-screen video installation, created by Disinformation in collaboration with the film-maker Barry Hale. *Ammonite* was created using standard-definition TV and video equipment, in conjunction with a 632.8nm helium-neon research laser. Versions of the technique employed in making *Ammonite* have been employed by artists as far back as the early 1960s, *Ammonite* is unique among video-feedback artworks however, in being a work of representational (rather than abstract) art.

The *Rorschach Audio* book also states that 'art is not necessarily science, but science is always art'. So, as a demonstration of the aesthetics of communications technology and of the notion of the artist's readymade, and in direct allusion to the geometry of Marcel Duchamp's readymade *Bottle Rack* (1914), this exhibition also features two Scan-King WBD-40 discone radio antennas, used in Disinformation installations and performances since 1997.

Disinformation is an electronic music, arts research and installation art project, whose work focusses on communications, electricity and language – exploring the creative potential of electronic messaging technologies, investigating psychology of perception and illusion, and examining relationships between auditory signs and their visual representations. In describing research that informed the development of early Disinformation artworks, the Australian art journal *Discipline* described how 'while other young artists were subscribing to *Artforum*', Disinformation producer, 'Joe [Banks] was devouring journals on defence electronics and communications psychology'. Disinformation artworks have been described as being 'visually sophisticated' and 'distinctive and intelligent' by *Art Monthly*, as 'actively thrilling' by the *Financial Times*, and as 'mesmerising' and 'sublime' by *Aesthetica Magazine*. *Sound Projector* magazine described Disinformation recordings as producing 'potent drug-like trances of utter black mysteriousness', while the *Metro* newspaper described Disinformation as 'the black-ops unit of the avant-garde'. Disinformation has exhibited at the Hayward Gallery, Freud Museum, ICA and Domo Baal (London), Kettle's Yard (Cambridge), Talbot Rice (Edinburgh), CCCB (Barcelona), Kiasma (Helsinki) and NIMK (Amsterdam). Disinformation producer Joe Banks has held AHRC funded research posts at the University of Westminster and at Goldsmiths College. rorschachaudio.com

Passen-gers is a site-specific, curatorial initiative by artist Julie F Hill that explores the historical, social and material context of various sites and architectures. It does this through a core series of site-specific exhibitions and events within the architectural studio of Gauld Architecture in the Brunswick Centre – a grade II listed Modernist residential and shopping centre in Bloomsbury – as well as an off-site series and public programme. www.passen-gers.co.uk

Gauld Architecture is an architectural practice interested in encouraging wider discussions about the built environment. www.gauldarchitecture.com

Sluice – run by artists and curators – assumes the form of a collaborative, provocative artwork. The authors of which are everyone that comes into contact with the project. Sluice strategically adopts structures in order to showcase artist, curator and emergent discourse, projects and galleries. sluice.info