

JIM HOBBS – PANORAMIC DECELERATOR

- 23rd January - 21st February
- Stephen Lawrence Gallery



'Black Sun', 16mm B & W film transferred to digital, duration 15' 36" by James Hobbs

For his solo exhibition, *Panoramic Decelerator*, Jim Hobbs presents a selection of recent film, video, photographic and sculptural works completed over the past 2 years. The work moves across a wide variety of media, utilizing a combination of both digital and analogue approaches to explore complex relationships between place, memory and the fluctuations and materiality of time. Jim Hobbs received his MFA in Sculpture from the Slade School of Fine Art and is currently a Senior Lecturer and Artist in Residence at The University of Greenwich within the Department of Creative Professions and Digital Art.

In *Black Sun*, a 16mm black and white film installation, the work's visual imagery directs a pensive and concentrated gaze at the sun itself, forming a type of melancholic and abstract environment. The notion of staring at the sun has been linked throughout history with ideas of insanity, mortality, and depression, as such this act describes the desire to overcome rational thinking and lose one's self in vision. Shot in various locations, including Death Valley and the Virgin Islands, where the sun plays a dominant role, the film takes this act literally, capturing the sun's strength and enigmatic beauty as it burns its image onto the film; the imagery moving away from the portrayal of a locational identity and replacing "place" with a psychological state created by the sun and its effects. Rie Nakajima has composed a sound work in response to the film, where the audio acts not as a soundtrack, but rather as an additional presence within the space.

Black Sun II, acts as a type of counterpart to the more "narrative" structure of *Black Sun*. Hovering somewhere between installation, sculpture, kinetics, and image, a rotating mirror perched in front of a projector lens creates a darkened circular eclipse within the picture frame, while at the same time sending out a type of search light across the entire room. Here the reflected/refracted light beam slowly examines and measures the entire space, while the blackened void within the frame, in fact, becomes the image's subject.

Stretched out over 75 feet (23 meters) of the gallery walls, is *je me souviens*: 130 black and white silver gelatin photographs of landscapes taken during a 7 day walk through the Peak District. Obliterating the details of the "land", these new scapes are types of silhouettes where space, distance, and time are measured not in specific details, but rather the accumulation of variables that occur in the sky against an anonymous horizon. Halfway through the journey, the images revert/invert to the negative creating a type of black mirroring where the sky and land exchange place. The pace – the way in which one engages with long walks over days of time – is here, echoed again in the display of the works. On walks like this – long walks over days – the mind wonders, it recalls things, it floats in and out. Somehow the landscape becomes both the catalyst and the vessel for memories.

Metronomes: Ticking away in an endless loop, are two metronomes whose measure of time should be exact, but in fact, they seem to be caught up in an endless cycle of either leading or falling behind. The hypnotic image of the metronomes relentlessly ticking away is echoed by the mechanical sound of the 16mm projectors. These keepers of time are not the exact, precise, or accurate instruments often assumed, but rather, they are inconsistent elements highlighting our desire for synchronicity and symmetry. Time becomes a type of physical material.

Drawing has always been an integral component to Hobbs' practice, and this becomes the starting point for *forget this place*. Here, the artist tries to remember the exact shape of his home state, Ohio, spending hours in the studio trying to locate details in outlines and boundaries. These drawings are then digitized and laser cut on plywood, then finally hand worked with graphite and finished off with silver leaf gilding. Placed under the new shapes are lights that backlight the object and create a type of void, where the presence is absence.

1. *Black Sun*, 16mm black & white film transferred to digital, duration 15' 36", looped, 2013. Sound by Rie Nakajima.
2. *je me souviens*, 130 silver gelatin photographs, veneer pins, 230 cm x 13 cm, 2015.
3. *Black Sun II*, 16mm film, mirror, motor, aluminium rod, dimensions and duration variable, 2013-15.
4. *Metronomes*, 16mm black and white films, duration 6 seconds, looped, 2014.
5. *forget this place*, wood, graphite, silver leaf, LEDs, 45 cm x 45 cm each, 2015.

Jim Hobbs would like to thank David Waterworth, Andrew Hill, Robbie Munn, Phil Hudson, Viktor Krastev, Lisa Peachey.