



Dislocated Flesh, Julien Ottavi; Jenny Pickett, Tenderpixel Gallery, London



Text by Bethany Rex

Dislocated Flesh features the work of Julien Ottavi and Jenny Pickett. This new body of work stems from their long term collaboration exploring perception, memory and architecture. Considering physical and virtual space they are intrigued how these phenomenons influence the body, particularly in a post-human construction of society. Aesthetica spoke to Julien and Jenny about their collaborative practice:

A: When did you meet and how long after did you start to work together on your projects?

JP: Julien Ottavi and I met briefly in 2007 at DEAF – the Dutch Electronic Arts Festival. I was collaborating on a tactical media project with the artist Sunshine Frère which involved gifting hacked objects for the purpose of again reconfiguring or recording by peers. One of these objects ended up in the hands of APO33 and Julien Ottavi, we were subsequently invited to participate in ECOS rencontres in Nantes in 2007. Here Julien and I met again and go on like a house on fire. We began to exchange immediately and planning collaborations from early 2008.

JO: We are working all the time together, the ideas and projects that we come across circulate in a fast flow of exchange through practices. Our collaboration started really quickly after we met.

A: Your work explores physical and virtual space in a post-human construction of society. Does this mean that your work focuses on science fiction or the speculation on future developments in science?

JP: There is definitely an element of science fiction and/or technological, scientific futures that arise through the subjects and materials we work with, however as a focus we find the human condition or conditioning vastly complex, historically rich and still relevant to current social and political aesthetics.

JO: The concept of post-human is not only coming from science-fiction, unfortunately we are already post-human. We have somehow re-created a new environment, we are seeing the world through different filters: machines, digital, networked, speed, flying, and so forth. Our bodies have mutated through pollution, ready-made foods, GMO, preservatives, medication, prosthesis, machine parts that let us live longer and much more. The virtual space is already a place that has its own life, where odes, worms, viruses and other avatars “live”. Our work questions the “reality” that surrounds us, our future is



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embedded in the questions we assess in our artistic work.

A: What was the inspiration between *Possession*, a suspended human scale cocoon-like sound sculpture?

JO: This work has multiple roots but predominantly conjures the sense of an "in between" state of being. The cocoon is a form potentially containing all the others forms, it's a representation of what is coming, it's a gate between our past and our future through an instant (the flash), it is also a digestive system that transform one thing into another state. *Possession* is this state of becoming that goes beyond our inherent condition.

JP: The form, materials, sound and flashes of *Possession* could be read on a number of different ways and produce various narratives from protection, transformation, desire, aspirations and emergence. Our inspiration comes from a marriage of retinal traces, intestinal echoes and nature as we try to uncover or discover a transition, prolong an instant or discharge a reflection.

A: What experience do you hope this will create for the viewer?

JO: In *Possession*, there is an intense flash that almost blinds the viewer so quickly that he doesn't know what happening, he is attracted and is slightly afraid. The cocoon represents a hidden side of our psychology. It is also a beautiful sculpture hanging in the gallery, as mystery that suddenly hatched.

JP: *Possession* is a large looming and tactile object in the **Tenderpixel Gallery's** modest space. The sound is quiet yet intense and may cause some people to feel uncomfortable in the space, but it can also draw the viewer in to listen more closely. Then there is the light and the overall experience is perhaps perplexing but we would hope for visitors to spend a little time to contemplate this work, its ideas and meanings.

A: Moving on to the other work in the exhibition. Could you talk us through this?

JO: *Radotage* is a piece that brings the obsession of being in a loop, all those wigs turning endlessly, scratching the surface of a cymbal. It creates a space for listening that is both minimalist sound and repetitive visually creating a worrying strangeness.

JP: *Radotage* has a haunting appeal to it both sonically and visually. The piece is a reflection on aging, narrative memory and entrenched loops. Loosely translated *Radotage* means *drivel*. On another level *Radotage* plays with ideas of composing with these repetitive behaviours, live sampling and importantly the disturbances and difference.

A: What exhibitions are you looking forward to seeing in the coming months?

JP: I would like to catch the Anselm Kiefer show at **White Cube** (9 December 2011 – 26 February 2012) and Elsa Tomkowiak at **Le FRAC** (Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain des Pays de la Loire) in Nantes (19 November 2011 – 22 January 2012).

JO: For me it's *Memories of The Future*, the *Olbricht Collection* (22 October 2011 – 15 January 2012) at **La Maison Rouge**, Paris.

A: Finally, what projects can we look forward to from you in the future?

JO: For the coming year, we are preparing a couple of projects, residencies for the spring but nothing is official for the moment. We are also working with videos/film and one of our films will be shown in March 2012 at **Experimental Intermedia** in New York City. In addition we have lots of performances coming up: *Subtecture*, *Great Steaming Orchestra*, *Block2030*, *Apo33*, amongst others.

JP: In addition to our personal practice we are working on different projects with our **Association APO33**: Open Sound Group is a European sound art network with artist run organisations from seven countries: **Modus** (UK), **Live!Xem** (Italy), **Granular** (Portugal), **Audiolab Arteleku** (Spain), **Piksel** (Norway), **NK** (Germany) and **APO33** (France). We will also be working with *Upstage*, a virtual stage (online) along with other European partners we are collaborating on realising a new updated version of this platform which has been producing an annual online festival since 2007 for Live Networked Performances.

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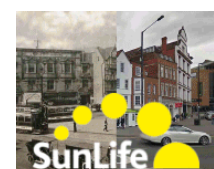
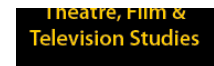
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Caption:

Courtesy the artist



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