

Exhibition Announcement: Jerwood/FVU Awards 2017: *Neither One Thing or Another* Patrick Hough and Lawrence Lek



Geomancer, Lawrence Lek, 2017



And If In A Thousand Years, Patrick Hough, 2017

Jerwood Space, London – 22 March to 14 May 2017

www.JerwoodFVUawards.com #JerwoodFVUawards

The Jerwood/FVU Awards 2017 exhibition will premiere two newly commissioned moving-image works by selected artists Patrick Hough and Lawrence Lek, the recipients of the 2017 Awards.

In response to the curatorial theme, *Neither One Thing or Another*, Hough and Lek both employ pioneering, conceptually fitting, technologies to examine the steadily blurring line between the real and the artificial. Lek harnesses his trademark - the building blocks of computer gaming technology - to set the stage for an awakening of artificial intelligence. Hough's work takes us to the Californian desert, where the landscape was filmed and digitally scanned using LiDAR, to host a Hollywood-inspired merging of authenticity and replica. Both works delve between definitions of consciousness, and in the process invite us to look again at what we think we know and see.

Since their selection in May 2016, the artists have each received £20,000 to develop the works, with full production support from FVU. Following their debut at Jerwood Space in London, the films will tour as a series of screening events nationwide.

***And If In A Thousand Years* by Patrick Hough**

When the film-set for Cecil B DeMille's *The Ten Commandments* had had its day, it was, like the biblical civilisation it evoked, lost to the sands of time - in its case, deliberately buried, in an act of money-saving expediency, under the dunes of the Southern California desert where the movie

was shot. Over the years, though, those shifting sands have gradually exposed this piece of epic landfill, bringing souvenir hunters to gather where archaeologists (or Egyptologists) used to tread.

In Patrick Hough's video, shot on location at the site, it is not just fake fragments of the past that are disinterred. What hovers over the place is a spirit of uncertainty; one that questions bedrock values like 'originality' and 'authenticity' and dusts them with other layers of meaning: the extraordinary ease of reproducibility, the spray-on glamour of cinematic semi-celebrity. This spirit of uncertainty is encapsulated by the figure of a sphinx - once part of the décor of the majestic film-set, now wandering in ghostly limbo; haunting the nearby town like a wildcat on the prowl. The sphinx's hybrid form and cryptic, enigmatic presence is also a symbol of a blurring between the material and the virtual that Hough's video not only proposes but visibly enacts, using sophisticated digital scanning techniques to suggest the outline of a new technological horizon that is, even as we look back nostalgically at the remnants of earlier eras, writing its own name upon the sand.

Geomancer by Lawrence Lek

Heralded by the futuristic computer-generated cityscapes that have become a signature feature of his work, Lawrence Lek's mini-opus *Geomancer* is less inclined to map the building blocks of the urban architecture of tomorrow than to try and summon up the spirit of our rapidly dawning age - one whose characteristics, Lek implies, include the growing ascendancy of the cultural phenomenon of Sino-Futurism. As the geopolitical axis tilts further to the East, and as once-dominant economic/technological models are cast into doubt, Lek alights on a longstanding tension between the place of the human and the role of the machine, sharpened by contemporary hopes and anxieties around the rise of East Asia, and by speculations that new forms of artificial intelligence, already outperforming mere mortals in matters of automation and aggregation, will challenge us in more creative skills as well.

In Lek's video, one such AI awakens above Singapore on the eve of the city-state's centennial celebrations in 2065. Mindful of the apparent relegation of AI to subservient roles in society, it determines that, from all the possible choices available to it, by far the best thing to be is to be an artist. Already a prodigy with numbers, it seeks to feed the other side of its savant-like brain, gorging on the products of cultural history with a geeky frenzy that occasionally undermines its aspiration to the lofty coolness of a lotus-eating aesthete. Part philosophical reflection on where 'genius' resides, part playful inventory of how science fiction has dealt with these eternal human/automaton themes, *Geomancer* is provocative stimulation for both the eye and the mind.

The artists were selected from over 240 applications by; Steven Bode, Director, FVU; Duncan Campbell, artist and Turner Prize 2014 winner; Cliff Lauson, Curator, Hayward Gallery; Amy Sherlock, Reviews Editor; and Sarah Williams, Head of Programme, Jerwood Visual Arts.

Statements

On the two works, panelist and Reviews Editor Amy Sherlock commented:

"Both selected artists, Patrick Hough and Lawrence Lek, use a temporal framework to approach the question of indeterminacy: one looking forward to a future where machines may write their own histories; the other considering the imaginative leap involved in looking backwards, and the ways in which, narratively and materially, we fabricate the past. I am excited not only to see the results of these two ambitious projects, but also how they will sit alongside one another in the Jerwood/FVU Awards exhibition."

On development and production of the works, FVU Director Steven Bode commented:

"It is always wonderful watching an artist's work transform from an idea on paper into tangible, polished reality. Even more so in the case of Lawrence Lek and Patrick Hough, whose approaches to this year's Awards have been so formally exciting and conceptually audacious. Not to mention technically original, with their mobilisation of leading-edge digital imaging and voice synthesis. It has been a pleasure helping these exceptional works reach fruition."

Jerwood/FVU Awards 2018: Call for Entries

Jerwood/FVU Awards 2018 will open for entries 14 February - 4 April 2017, with the curatorial theme *Unintended Consequences*. More information available at www.jerwoodfvuawards.com

- Ends -

For further information on the Jerwood/FVU Awards, please contact

Anna-Maria Pfab E: pfabanna@gmail.com M: 077 9434 7633

Project credit

The Jerwood/FVU Awards are a collaboration between Jerwood Charitable Foundation and FVU: Film and Video Umbrella. FVU is supported by Arts Council England.

Social media

@FilmVidUmbrella
@JerwoodJVA
#JerwoodFVUawards

Listing details

Artists: Patrick Hough, Lawrence Lek
Title: Jerwood/FVU Awards 2017: *Neither One Thing or Another*
Dates: 22 March to 14 May 2017
Address: Jerwood Space, 171 Union Street, SE1 0LN
Opening times: Mon–Fri from 10am–5pm, Sat & Sun from 10am–3pm
Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays
Admission: Free
Nearest tube: Southwark, London Bridge or Borough

Nationwide screenings

27 March 2017: CCA, Glasgow
28 March 2017: HOME, Manchester
17 May 2017: Phoenix, Exeter
Arnolfini, Bristol (date to be confirmed)
FACT, Liverpool (date to be confirmed)
Phoenix, Leicester (date to be confirmed)

(More to be announced)

Artists' biographies

Patrick Hough works with moving image, photography, sculpture and installation. His recent work questions the relationship between humans and objects; exploring links between cinema, technology and museology through archives of historical film props. Hough is a graduate of the National College of Art and Design, Dublin and the Royal College of Art, London. He has a forthcoming solo exhibition: *Hierophanies* at The Swiss Church, London, in March 2017. Recent solo exhibitions include; *Unobservables* at Narrative Projects, London; *An Archeology of Cinema* at Dagestan Museum of Fine Arts, Russia; *Once More, with Feeling!* at MOT International Project Space, London and *Ouarzazate* at Photolreland Festival, Dublin. Group shows include; *Crab Walk* at NGCA, Sunderland; *Levitate* at Museums Quartier, Q21 INTERNATIONAL, Vienna; *Verto* at Studiocur/art, Paris; *HYPERCONNECTED* at Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Moscow and *Above The Black Line* at ArtPort Gallery, Tel Aviv, amongst others.

www.jerwoodfvuawards.com/artists/patrick-hough

Lawrence Lek creates speculative worlds and site-specific simulations using gaming software, video, installation and performance. Often based on real places and fictional artists, his digital environments reflect the impact of the virtual on our perception of reality. Contrasts between utopia and ruins, desire and loss, and fantasy and history appear throughout his work to symbolise this exchange. Lek is a graduate of the Cooper Union, the Architectural Association, and Trinity College, Cambridge. His work has been featured in recent exhibitions at Tramway, as part of *Glasgow International 2016*; Seoul Museum of Art, as part of *Seoul Mediacity Biennial 2016*, KW Institut, Berlin, Germany; ICA, London; Cubitt Gallery, London; Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge and the Delfina Foundation, London. Prior to the Jerwood/FVU Awards, he received the Tenderflix/Tenderpixel Artist Video Award and the 2015 Dazed Emerging Artist Award.

www.jerwoodfvuawards.com/artists/lawrence-lek

About Jerwood/FVU Awards

The Jerwood/FVU Awards are a major annual opportunity for moving-image artists in the first five years of their practice. The open application programme invites artists to make proposals for ambitious new works, two of which are selected each year by a panel of experts. The selected artists are given a £20,000 award to create the proposed work over a 10-month period. Each recipient also receives full production support from FVU. Finished works are exhibited at Jerwood Space, London, before touring nationally.

A distinguishing feature of the Awards is their prominent curatorial theme, which changes each year. Timely, but always future facing, this theme provides a framework that applicants are invited to respond to, lending the project a wider contemporary resonance. Further information can be found at www.jerwoodfvuawards.com

Jerwood/FVU Awards so far

2017: *Neither One Thing or Another*

Winners: Patrick Hough and Lawrence Lek

2016: *Borrowed Time*

Winners: Karen Kramer and Alice May Williams

2015: *What Will They See of Me?*

Winners: Lucy Clout and Marianna Simnett

Shortlist: Kate Cooper and Anne Haaning

2013: *Tomorrow Never Knows*

Winners: Ed Atkins and Naheed Raza

Shortlist: Emma Hart and Corin Sworn

FVU: Film and Video Umbrella commissions, curates, produces and presents artists' moving-image works that are staged in collaboration with galleries and other cultural partners. Since the late 1980s, FVU has been at the forefront of this vibrant and expanding area of practice, promoting innovation through its support of some of the most exciting figures on the contemporary scene. During this time, the organisation has commissioned and produced nearly 200 different artists' projects, ranging from ambitious multi-screen installations to shorter film and video pieces, as well as numerous online commissions. www.fvu.co.uk

Jerwood Charitable Foundation is dedicated to imaginative and responsible revenue funding of the arts, supporting artists to develop and grow at important stages in their careers. It works with artists across art forms, from dance and theatre to literature, music and the visual arts. www.jerwoodcharitablefoundation.org

Jerwood Visual Arts is a national programme supporting visual arts practice, through which Jerwood Charitable Foundation works with early career artists to commission and present new work. Artist opportunities run throughout the year alongside a programme of related exhibitions, events and commissioned writing taking place online, in London and across the UK. www.jerwoodvisualarts.org

JERWOOD CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION



JERWOOD VISUAL ARTS

JERWOOD SPACE



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

JERWOOD/FVU AWARDS

Curated by FVU

Images: *And If In A Thousand Years*, Patrick Hough, 2017
For use with "Courtesy of Jerwood/FVU Awards"



Image 1:
And If In A Thousand Years,
Patrick Hough, 2017
Courtesy of Jerwood/FVU Awards



Image 2:
And If In A Thousand Years,
Patrick Hough, 2017
Courtesy of Jerwood/FVU Awards



Image 3:
And If In A Thousand Years,
Patrick Hough, 2017
Courtesy of Jerwood/FVU Awards

JERWOOD CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION



JERWOOD VISUAL ARTS

JERWOOD SPACE



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

JERWOOD/FVU AWARDS

Curated by FVU

Images: *Geomancer*, Lawrence Lek, 2017

For use with "Courtesy of Jerwood/FVU Awards"

Images 4, 5 & 6 are available in landscape, portrait or square, upon request.



Image 4:
Geomancer, Lawrence Lek, 2017
Courtesy of Jerwood/FVU Awards

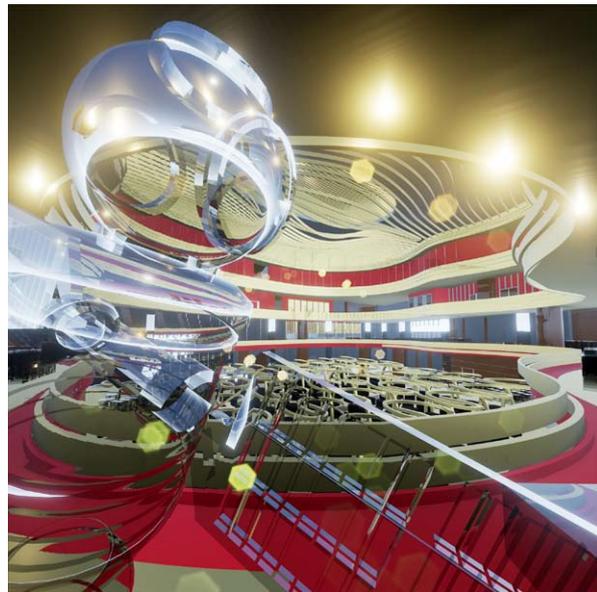


Image 5:
Geomancer, Lawrence Lek, 2017
Courtesy of Jerwood/FVU Awards



Image 6:
Geomancer, Lawrence Lek, 2017
Courtesy of Jerwood/FVU Awards

JERWOOD CHARITABLE FOUNDATION



JERWOOD VISUAL ARTS

JERWOOD SPACE



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND