

'Vampire – Junkie'

Samuel Guerrero

Hampus Hoh

Callum Jones

Scott Keightley

14 Mar – 27 Apr 2024

Rose Easton

We understand that ordinary men and their clumsy instruments are transformed by an art of possession. We are aware that he is not really making the music, it is making him – if he is relaxed, open and attuned, then the invisible will take possession of him; through him, it will reach us.
– Peter Brook, *The Empty Space*, 1968

a painting depicts a stadium-cave-UFO launchpad [transcendental light beckons, as do the stadium lights – a red herring]; another[-ish] with a stain, residue of an image or several hundreds [faintly imprinting or soaked and pooling on the page]; a pane of glass, studded with dead bolts and wooden horns – together circuitry, or an instrument; music stands, encrusted in ornaments and objects, fused with music sheets and digital metronomes, standing together awkwardly: these are novel inventions, crystalline and pure.

The works in *Vampire-Junkie*¹ are objects, frozen: visual articulations that implicate the prospect of sound.

Samuel Guerrero documents a stadium. The space conjures images of performers-athletes-cavemen huffing and pursuing feats of human greatness. Foregrounded is the absence of bodies, where ancient rituals [a roaring cacophony of voice, the echo of music, of chanting] are replaced by modernity [a tinnitus, an empty building, the drone of machinery].

Hampus Hoh's assemblage is adorned with studs, tips of wind instruments and lock mechanisms bisecting the glass, deploying them as subtle utilitarian gemstones. We expect to hear the slow swivelling of machinery. Memory beckons with the desire to blow into the mouth pieces. The sculpture bastardises the architectural-industrial in service of a quiet gesture – glass is no longer to see through, locks are no longer to be dead-bolted. Within Hoh's instrument is romantic subversion, the search for harmony.

Scott Keightley presents us abruptly with music stands, punctuated with spherical glass finials and knobs. Implicated are complex scores for an instrument not-yet invented. The spheres slide off the stand and, caught in free-fall, become tear-shaped in motion. We pause to hear a foreign song, or at least, the crash.

Callum Jones autocannibalises. Machine becomes an extension of flesh. The printer is exploited, ink bunches and paper jams only to be erased and regurgitated once more. But, preserved delicately in these itinerant layers is an artefact, weathered and trampled on. Run-off ink bleeds from the original to the copy. The relief left behind reverberates, entombing fugitive, atemporal visual relics within paper.

The gallery gathers the quartet in dissonant harmony. In concert, the works reverberate off some larger, looming 'invisible': the contemporary condition. Consider Morton's *Hyperobject*, a thing of such scale and magnitude that it cannot readily be understood beyond the theoretical [i.e., an auditorium's capacity may say 60,000 – we can't visualise that number but we believe it to be true]. The contemporary condition follows the same logic: it is a pervasive atmosphere more-so than a material thing. Its perfume lingers as a residue on the collar of the Vampire-Junkie.

In 1977, NASA sent its twin Voyager spacecrafts into the unknown, armed with the Golden Record. Inscribed with image and sound, the record indexed the essence of life on earth, held in time, floating through space. Similarly, *Vampire-Junkie* is a catalogue of works that act as artefacts of the contemporary as it accelerates into the unrecognisable post-apocalyptic.

The works are:
Contemporary Hieroglyphs
noun

- 1 asserted so completely in contemporaneity that they are in a state of speculative fiction. The present has been pillaged, strip-mined under the regime of a neoliberal world order. The expansion of the universe is matched only by the net of consumption that steadily nips at its heels: pure Fordism. In the face of such depletion, one must turn to the future to say anything about the present. The Contemporary Hieroglyph is charged at once with prognostication and historicism. Affirmative mutations galore.
- 2 defined by acceleration. The essence remains a symbol. As hieroglyphs become networked and fragmented, they risk implosion: Only this can produce such bastardised things in the first place. *Vampire-Junkie* concerns controlled demolition, the works exist at the edge, locked in a volatile position on the brink of cataclysm. There is a paradox in the human urge to (1) suspect the end and (2) build for a future that lies beyond it. The Vampire-Junkie is innately speculative. It gambles. The Vampire-Junkie pursues to the bitter end. It is an unsated addict.

[Aside]

Capitalism-incarnate, the Titanic was swallowed whole by the ocean. Sticking 22 degrees above sea level, a string quartet stood on the foredeck playing. As they held their violins to their chins at their posts, looking into the unknown with a sense of duty, they too were swallowed up, holding their breath, waiting for one last note.

1 An insatiable subject that pursues "their desires up to the point of self destruction, [...] never crossing the line into annihilation. The junkie chooses to be addicted – the desire to get high is only the ostensible motivation for the drive, just as "winning money" is only the official alibi for the gambler's enjoyment." (Mark Fisher, *K-Punk*, 2018)

Samuel Guerrero (b. 1997, Mexico City, Mexico) lives and works in Mexico City. He received his BFA from Centro Nacional de las Artes, Mexico City. Recent solo exhibitions include *Obsesionados con encontrar señales*, Cordova, Barcelona, ES (2023); *Destino vas muy rápido*, Lodos, Mexico City, MX (2021); *Observatorio*, Ladrón galería, Mexico City, MX (2021); *Flor del valle*, with Sterling Hedges, Rudimento, Quito (2020); and *Samuel Guerrero, Antes de Cristo*, Mexico City (2019). Selected group exhibitions include *Equis, I Griega, Zeta*, Anonymous Gallery, Mexico City, MX (2024); *Body without Organs*, Chapter NY, New York, USA (2023); *Esfíngico Frontal*, Mendes Wood, São Paulo, BR (2023); *Les Urbaines*, Espace Arlaud, Lausanne, CH (2022); *The Beyond*, Agon Projects, Los Angeles, USA (2022); *Contramundos*, Lodos, Mexico City, MX (2021) and *Marea*, Sólida, Oaxaca, MX (2021).

Hampus Hoh (b. Stockholm, Sweden) lives and works between London and Stockholm. He received a BA in Fine Art from the Slade School of Fine Art, London in 2023. His work is concerned with technologies embedded in the built environment and their influence on the psychosocial body. By taking from the world and stripping back its layers, Hoh reveals the role of information, metaphor and action patterns in the fragmentation and recomposition of designated environments. Recent group exhibitions include *Opening*, Soft Commodity, London, UK (2023); *Autoluminescent*, St Giles Barbican, London, UK (2022) and *Titanic4u*, Riddarholmen, Stockholm, SE (2021).

Callum Jones (b. 2001, London, UK) lives and works in London. He is currently completing his BFA at Central Saint Martins and will graduate in 2024. His practice examines the expanded history of automation through print-making, drawing and painting. Using a combination of mined imagery, his personal photography archive, mechanical and digital drawing processes, Jones methodically constructs sentiment. Through exhaustive application, erasure and repetition, Jones illudes the image, disguising its atemporality as contemporary artefact. Selected exhibitions include *Cabin Fever*, Usual Business, London, UK (2022) and *Making Moore*, Henry Moore Studios & Gardens, Hertfordshire, UK (2022).

Scott Keightley (b. 1987, Boston, USA) currently lives and works in Atlanta, GA. Solo exhibitions include *Response*, Metropolitan Structures, Baltimore, MD (2016); *Tomorrow is Already Here*, 247365 Gallery, Brooklyn, NY (2016); and *Daybreak*, Lana's, Brooklyn, New York (2015). Select group exhibitions include *1,000,000,000 – 4,000,000,000*, Hawkins HQ, Atlanta, GA (forthcoming); *A Broad Private Wink*, curated by April April, Nicelle Beauchene, New York, NY (2023); *Burning the Wheel of the Year*, curated by Erin Jane-Nelson, HiLo, Atlanta, GA (2022); *Look Again*, curated by Mike Mosby, Hudson Opera House, Hudson, NY (2021); *Well/Being: An Exhibition on Healing and Repair*, University Art Museum, Albany, NY (2021); *Field Report 11: In Case*

of *Emergency*, Incident Report, Hudson, NY (2019); *The Dose Makes the Poison*, Baba Yaga, Hudson, NY (2019); *Simile Stone*, La KAJE, Brooklyn, NY (2018) and *Crane Game*, Cul De Sac, Brooklyn, NY (2018). Keightley was the recipient of a Basilica Hudson grant in 2020. He is the founder of Baba Yaga in Hudson, New York and co-founder of Violet's Cafe in Brooklyn, New York (2013–16). His work is in the Rare Prints and Manuscripts collection of the New York Public Library.

Blue Marcus (b. 2000, Portland, USA) is a London-based curator, artist and writer. She is currently completing her BFA at Central Saint Martins in 2024. Her curatorial practice concerns the assemblage of networked images and objects. Marcus methodically constructs a thesis substantiated by critical academic theory, and observes the ensuing choreography that takes place between the works. Her research marries disparate methodologies from the scientific method to the spiritual and poetic. Marcus is defining a new term in her homonymous book, *The Contemporary Hieroglyph* (2024), to be released alongside her curatorial debut *Vampire-Junkie*, Rose Easton, London, UK (2024).

List of works

Samuel Guerrero
Prayers of the million inhabitants, 2024
Acrylic on canvas
51 × 111 × 5 cm

Hampus Hoh
Auxiliary Scape, 2024
Reinforced glass, door locks, pear wood French horn and trumpet mouth pieces, stainless steel bolts
190 × 99 × 12.2 cm

Callum Jones
The exact moment Kim Deal's voice cracks, 2024
Ink on Hahnemühle Etching Paper
47 × 60 cm

Scott Keightley
Amid a Place of Stone, 2021
UV print on Manhasset music stands, finials, knobs, chandelier crystal, LED stand lights
158 × 53 × 46 cm

Scott Keightley
Quintet (Samuel Coleridge Taylor), 2021
UV print on Manhasset music stands, finials, knobs, chandelier crystal, LED stand lights
Dimensions variable

Private View, Wednesday 13 March, 6 – 8pm
Open, Wednesday – Saturday, 12 – 6pm

The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of live events and activations.

Artist talk

Conversation between
Hampus Hoh, Callum Jones,
Scott Keightley and Blue Marcus
Friday 15 March, 7pm

Sound

An evening of listening
with Callum Jones
Thursday 11 April, 7pm

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