

Racheal Crowther, *Gebrauchsmusik*  
curated by Ben Broome  
24.01. – 01.03.2025

*Gebrauchsmusik* presents installation and sculpture by Racheal Crowther.

*Close Call Only (10783, DE)* — the second iteration of a work originally conceived for the Royal Academy of Arts, London — comprises a Diamond D-777 receiving antenna installed on the roof of Kulmer Str. 17 tuned to receive civilian airbands ranging between 120 - 300MHz. A 50-metre military spec coax cable connects the antenna to a Whistler TRX-2 radio scanner which, installed in the gallery, sweeps un-encrypted frequencies for live transmissions largely used in relation to commerce and industry. Private discussions that design and manage the experience of a city — radio chatter from security guards, taxi drivers, couriers, construction workers, air traffic control — play out into the gallery in real time for the exhibition's duration. Parameters are set up to materialise these immaterial signals after which the artist relinquishes control. The work responds only to real life.

Crowther surveilles the unseen labour greasing the wheels of the modern metropolis but the hardware employed by the artist is distinctly un-modern. Radio and its associated technologies exist on the precipice of obsolescence: a hangover from a pre-digital world. The possibility for information leakage from this antiquated technology is what allows the work to function.

*Gebrauchsmusik* (translating literally as 'utility music') is a German term for music composed with a distinct and identifiable purpose: music conducive to productivity in factories, music composed to accompany a political rally or for beginner musicians in need of simple melodies to play. The textural sounds of the intercepted radio transmissions embody utilitarianism. These are the sounds of workers maintaining a city and its occupants; a new kind of *Gebrauchsmusik*.

CCTV cameras installed on the roof offer a visual of Crowther's receiver, broadcast in real time on a monitor housed inside a high security anti-ligature TV cabinet. These cabinets are used in places of confinement — prisons, care homes, psychiatric hospitals — to protect the screen from damage, unauthorised access, or weaponisation. Hung opposite the gallery's entrance, *Pipedream® (2024)* introduces the exhibition: pipes as a conduit for sound, pipelines carrying communication cabling, the pipedream aspirations of a labouring class. Crowther borrowed this logo from a nurse's fancy dress costume, the fake branding roots the costume within the healthcare industry but without the necessity to deliver actualised care. In this work and across her practice Crowther examines how people, often vulnerable, are monitored under the guise of safe-guarding and how the aesthetics and apparatus associated with places of so-called care maintain a palpable unfreedom. The line between welfare and penalisation is often thin.

Racheal Crowther (1991, Dublin, Ireland) lives and works in London where she has completed her MFA at the Royal Academy of Arts in 2024. Her recent solo and group exhibitions include *Managed Decline*, 243 Luz (Margate, UK, 2023); *Qualified to Care*, Ginny on Frederick (London, UK, 2022–2023); *Hard Shoulder*, Peak Gallery (London, UK, 2019); *Royal Academy Schools Show*, Royal Academy of Arts (London, UK, 2024); *Arcadia Missa: Open Office*, Online Viewing Room (London, UK, 2023); *The Reactor*, The Sunday Painter (London, UK, 2023–2024); *Devotional Cache*, House of Seiko (San Francisco, US, 2023); and *This is Nowhere & It's Forever*, Galerie Louise (Brussels, BE, 2023).