

Sam Cottington's newest performance *REID* unfolds entirely via text message, one-to-one. Upon registering, the recipient receives texts and images in real time on their personal mobile phone. Over the course of three days, participants are drawn into a series of ambivalent, at times intimate and explicit scenarios. The performance follows a script in which image and text alternately reinforce and undermine one another. What is conveyed through the forceful assertion of images is offset by the hesitation of language – opening at times onto the possibility of conversation before hardening again into statement.

Contrary to the divisions that typically structure theatre – audience here, stage there – *Reid* withdraws from the exhibition space entirely. It recasts the everyday as a stage and, like many of Cottington's works, turns to the mobile phone as a vernacular communication device and common tool for mediation in a museum setting. Emerging through subtle intrusions, the character of the speaker simultaneously seeks and repeats their audience's attention, transmitting an expansive, paranoid experience of the world generated largely by an overwhelming, even numbing logic of images.

*DEADLINE* consists of two identical red plates, one of which is mounted on the wall in proximity to the café, treated as an artwork – singular, static, and protected – while the other is used in the café's daily operations. This simple gesture assigns the two plates to the distinct regimes of value – that of the art object and that of the use object. The analogies to other art works as well as to the other plates in the café, highlight the various systems of labour that sustain and maintain the museum. Cottington instrumentalises the status of the artwork and the contradictory "reality" of objects to point to the contingent and mutually constitutive relationship between reproductive labour and the museum experience. This positions the café not as a peripheral service but as an active site of cultural production and performance, implicating us in its economy.

Hung in the museum's stage area, *IN MY RUN* is a metal plaque bearing the title *Total War* and inscribed with speculative statements on the future of war and life after 1930. Its language is situated in time yet contextually ambiguous: neither historically specific nor overtly didactic. It hovers between prediction, warning, and philosophical reflection. The work replicates an information plaque Cottington came across at the Imperial War Museum in London. Two

additions – a cyan *T* and the word *Thursday* – alter the original text, raising more questions than they answer. Reintroduced at Museum Schaffen, without a fixed point of reference, the function of the plaque shifts from a mediating device to a statement of piercing relevance and/or disquieting foresight.

Set on the meeting table on the museum's upper floor, the work + consists of two laptops recessed into plinths. The plinths occupy a fixed position at the table, which they share with the team and participants in workshops at Museum Schaffen. Both screens show the same video in a continuous loop: an actor, only partially in frame, in a backstage-like setting, reciting a monologue, intercut with recurring still images. Developed in collaboration with a performer from the New York-based theatre group The Wooster Group, the performance unfolds from a score, a layering of retracted score – a layering of restrained yet suggestive parts – conversational and staccato – through which a character emerges only sketchily.

The work offers no stable narrative whatsoever and is not oriented towards legibility. Rather, it mobilises inconsistency as a performative strategy – to interfere in both the logic of immersive, unified experience and the dynamics between actor, script, and audience. Installed within a backstage area of the museum, + suggests a threshold between the public and the operational.