The installation at the Swiss Church London

Hierophanies

A **Hierophany** is a manifestation of the sacred. The word is a formation of the Greek adjective *hieros* (ἱερός; sacred/holy) and the verb *phainein* (φαίνειν; to reveal / to bring to light).
Hough's digital artefacts discuss the absence of the materialized object, while the agenda of the object remains within the predominant theoretical construct. In reference to reformation, the idea of the virtual artefact takes the place of the transcendental within the church. In both cases the boundaries between the elements of the earth and the sky, the past and the present, and the dead and the living are blurred and explored. This makes the context of the Swiss Church London not just an interesting exhibition space, but part of the artwork itself.

The installation in the main church hall consists of a matt-black flat screen in portrait orientation, mounted on a simple stand in the centre of the room, accompanied by six freestanding speakers. A looping 3D animation plays on the screen depicting an artefact from the ancient ruins of Palmyra that was destroyed by the so-called Islamic State militants in 2015. Departing from a jpeg published online by the IS as part of their iconoclastic propaganda. The artefact is digitally reconstructed through the interpretive framework of a film industry visual effects specialist. The animation depicts the slowly rotating object (set against a black background) forming itself out of black liquid to become a sold object, intermittently fading in and out of darkness and then disappearing back into liquid. The result is to draw attention to the specificity of the digital artefact, its non-fixed identity, and break the illusion that we might be witnessing an image of a physical artefact. The video is accompanied by a multi channel sound installation that moves between a range of genres, forms and atmospheres - from site specific field recordings within the church to composites of archive sampling and atmospheric foley, creating both a highly cinematic and reflective experience. It also lends an animistic quality to the digital artefact, in a sense bringing it to life. The aim is to allow us to think about the multiple registers of meaning digital artefacts can operate within (from cinema to the museum) and to question the ontological status of these 'things' that are set free from the burden of words such as "history" and "originality".

Accompanying the installation in the great church hall, a sculptural installation namend **Funerary Relief**, consisting of an object and a spotlight, will be positioned in the upper gallery space, in which the meditation classes take place.

Funerary Relief is a sculptural work that as well focuses on the reconstruction of an artefact from the ancient ruins of Palmyra, which where destroyed by the so-called Islamic State militants in 2015. Again Patrick Hough used the jpg data published by the IS, and this time reconstructed it first digitally through 3D modelling. The object was then made physical again at a major film prop production workshop in South West London where the 3D model was CNC milled in polystyrene and hand finished by an expert team of prop makers. This opens up a new critical avenue in the work, questioning the thin line that lies between the preservation and forgery of history.
By including the virtual as well as the analogue artefact in the installation, two experiences for the visitor are created, which can be the starting point for an internal and external investigation of object, matter and meaning relations within digitalization, history, reformed theology and the personal life.

Funerary Relief,
CNC Milled Polystyrene, plaster, acrylic
74 x 43 x 42 cm, 2016