

PROPOSITIONS  
FOR A  
STAGE:

24 FRAMES OF  
A BEAUTIFUL  
HEAVEN

AMANDA BEECH

ZACH BLAS

RABIH MROUÉ

URIEL ORLOW

MING WONG

CURATED BY BRIDGET CRONE

29 JULY – 22 OCTOBER 2017  
INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS SINGAPORE,  
LASALLE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

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FOREWORD:  
BALA STARR

The Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore is dedicated to bringing forward contemporary artistic experimentation and research. Group exhibitions and the project of independent curatorial work have key roles in this venture; both are strategic in forging new attitudes and perspectives in art practice and exhibition making. In this context, *Propositions for a stage: 24 frames of a beautiful heaven* is an exemplary model that offers fresh insights and terms of inquiry into major works by five international artists: Amanda Beech, Zach Blas, Rabih Mroué, Uriel Orlow and Ming Wong.

*Propositions for a stage* is curated by Bridget Crone. Crone lives in London where she lectures in the Department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths—a LASALLE College of the Arts partner institution. Her academic output includes writing on the moving image in relation to performance, the body, and the space and time of the stage. The second, revised and expanded, edition of Crone's book, *The sensible stage: Staging and the moving image*, was released this year by Intellect and the University of Chicago Press.

*The sensible stage* was the genesis of our Singapore project. In early 2016, we invited Crone to develop her curatorial work and research through an exhibition. She was interested to plan an exhibition as a series of theatrical scenarios or micro-theatres, exploring how curating might be related to dramaturgy or stage design. Crone's exploration envisages time and space in unusual ways. She frames the body and the image as mutually dependent, thinking carefully about how we, as bodies, interact with and enter into the space or 'world' of an artwork.

Operating within the large, strikingly open space of Gallery 1, *Propositions for a stage* does not employ elementary demarcations of space, 'neutral' allocations nor 'grouping themes'. Here, display architecture is used not to confine nor protect art or ideas but to delineate new sensing zones. Crone employs nuanced gestures—light and image on a reflective floor, the 'wrong' side of a dividing wall, negative space—to

create her discrete stages. By example, in its immediate vicinity we experience Uriel Orlow's *The Reconnaissance (with Paused Prospect and Paused Retrospect)* as tightly configured, while at a distance it appears, island-like, isolated from the other artists' installations. Crone writes of anticipating 'thresholds between space-times' in Orlow's art. Through her exhibition scenography, she empathetically perceives the trauma of the site his work interrogates, and in so doing aligns the exhibition display with Orlow's conceptual project.

Crone extends the curatorial idea of the threshold throughout the exhibition, creating a perception that artworks' different worlds apply different rules and different cognitive maps, all of which need space to unfold in the exhibition design. The notional distinction between the installation of Amanda Beech's large paintings with stencils and cut-outs, and Rabih Mroué's *Duo for two missing persons*, which nominally about each other in the gallery, is a second instance of thresholding in *Propositions for a stage*. Crone construed Beech's work at the front, 'on stage' and in the light, and Mroué's immediately 'back of stage', in darkness. These two stages in the gallery, these worlds, mimic the subjects of the two artists' works, but also recognize that their conceptual positions are probably antithetical.

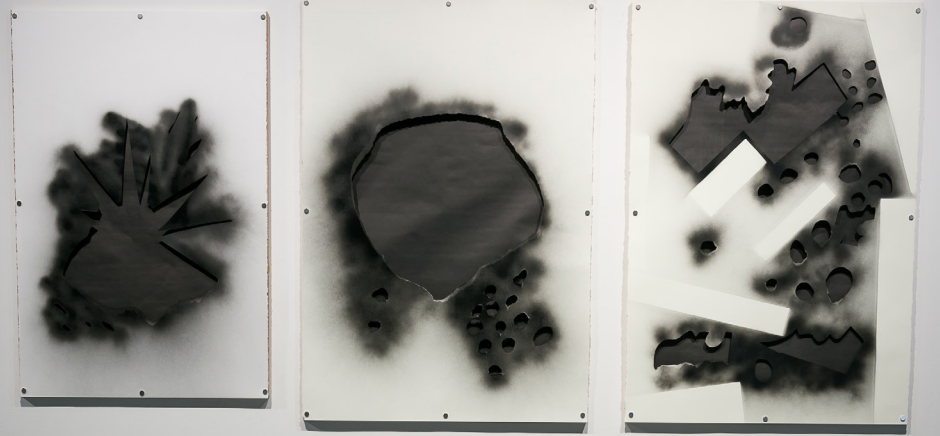
I am fascinated by the exhibition's beautiful and complex concerns, which Bridget Crone elaborates in her essay in the following pages. I warmly thank her for her curatorial insights, and for her enthusiastic collaboration with LASALLE and our ICA Singapore team. Artists Amanda Beech, Zach Blas, Rabih Mroué, Uriel Orlow and Ming Wong have each generously addressed both our context and our enquiries. We have been honoured to work with them all.

Bala Starr  
Director  
Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore  
LASALLE College of the Arts

# AMANDA BEECH

Amanda Beech's *Cause and Effect* series (2016) draws upon ideas of gaming, chance and causality. This can be seen most obviously through their brightly coloured, poster-like design using large block letters and bold type alongside shapes that resemble balls, dice and circuitry. Titles such as *No Horizon does not equal Progressive Future*, *Self Conception does not equal Self Transformation*, and *Capital does not explain Culture* suggest the hectoring, adamant tone of the self-help book, reality TV and advertising. The series comprises three separate groups or 'mini-series' of works on paper. Titles are repeated for individual works in each of the groups and many works look similar, but are rendered through different processes from various forms of painting, to stencils and cut-outs. Beech plays with tricks of the eye or brain in order to fool us into seeing connections where there are none. She has described this as engaging in 'a game system of faking cause'.

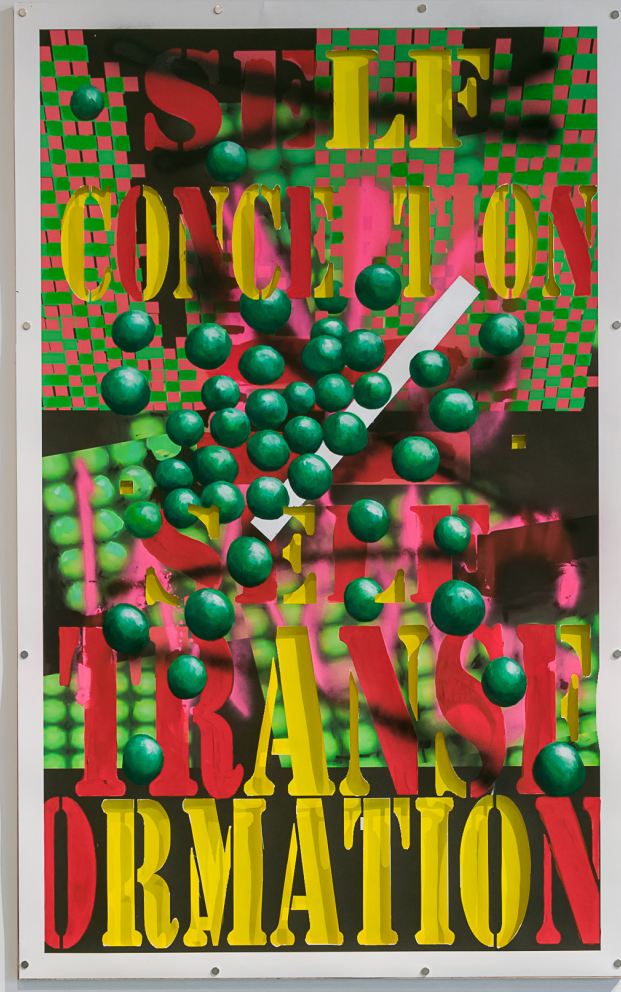
At first glance, *Cause and Effect* might be mistaken for a series of posters advertising a performance or event, and appear as if it were casually executed, yet it is highly worked through both technically and conceptually. These are again some of the many tricks that lie within the work but which are not hidden; rather it is our desire to construct causality that produces this trickery so that we see a connection between things where there is none. The work therefore announces the event of its own performance and suggests a connection with a game-system and the 'total' hermeneutic world of the video game, film frame or stage.



Amanda Beech, *Cause and Effect series 3*, 2016



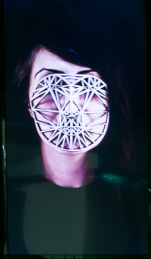
Amanda Beech, Cause and Effect series 2 (at left) and Cause and Effect series 1, 2016

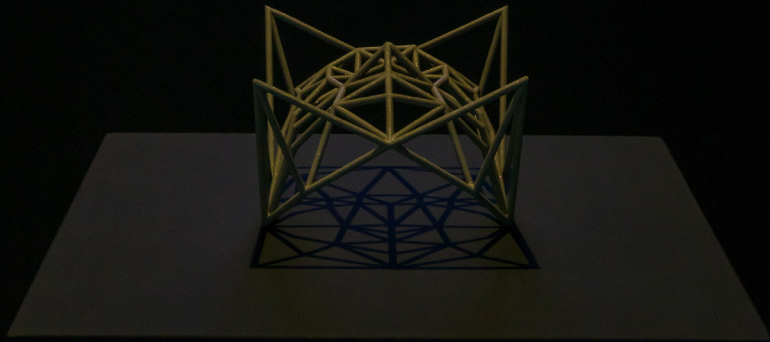
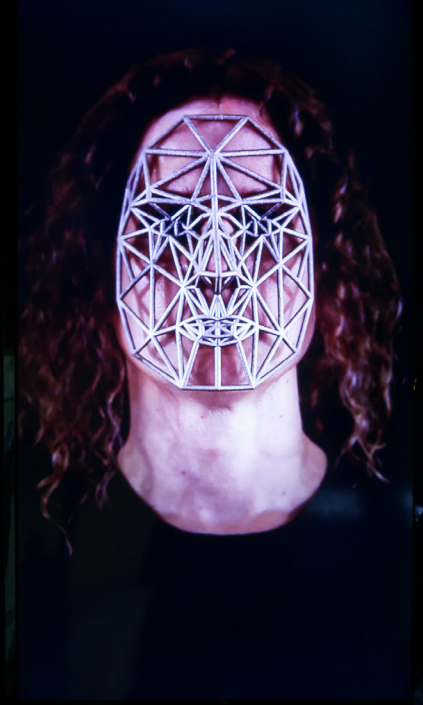
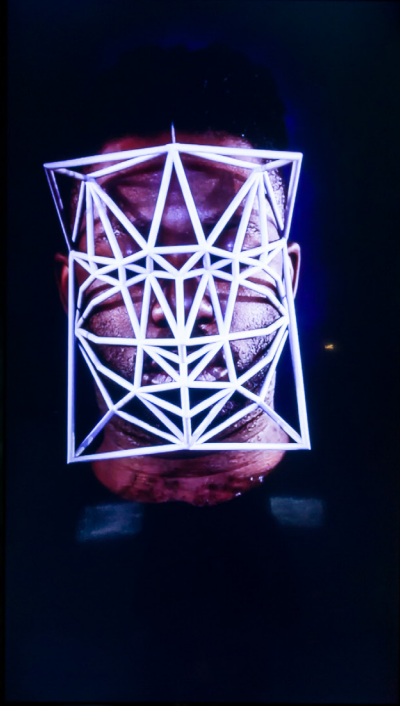




# ZACH BLAS

Zach Blas's *Face Cages* (2014–16) presents a series of what Blas calls 'endurance performances', in which four queer artists perform the wearing of their own biometric data. Dramatically presented, each performance is screened alongside the display of the corresponding mask or 'face cage'. This medieval-looking object, formally displayed on a plinth, has been produced from a three-dimensional rendering of the performer's biometric data collected using facial recognition software. Each performer wears their cage for as long as they can bear. This dual presentation of the image and the material actuality of the cage creates a complex staging of 'liveness' both in relation to the documentation of performance and the constitution of the body in relation to the image. Presented on screen as the documentation of a past action, the body of the performer is both present and corporeal, deferred and virtual; at the same time, the face cages are insistently present on plinths in the space of the gallery—they are real but they are also the representation (in data) of a so-called 'real'. Blas's work intervenes within contemporary technological processes of capture and control by responding to what Shoshana Amielle Magnet has identified as the unacknowledged failure at the heart of technology. It also draws upon the riotous history of queer performance, and the politics of theatre activated by groups such as the Electronic Disturbance Theater (EDT) to produce collective acts of resistance.





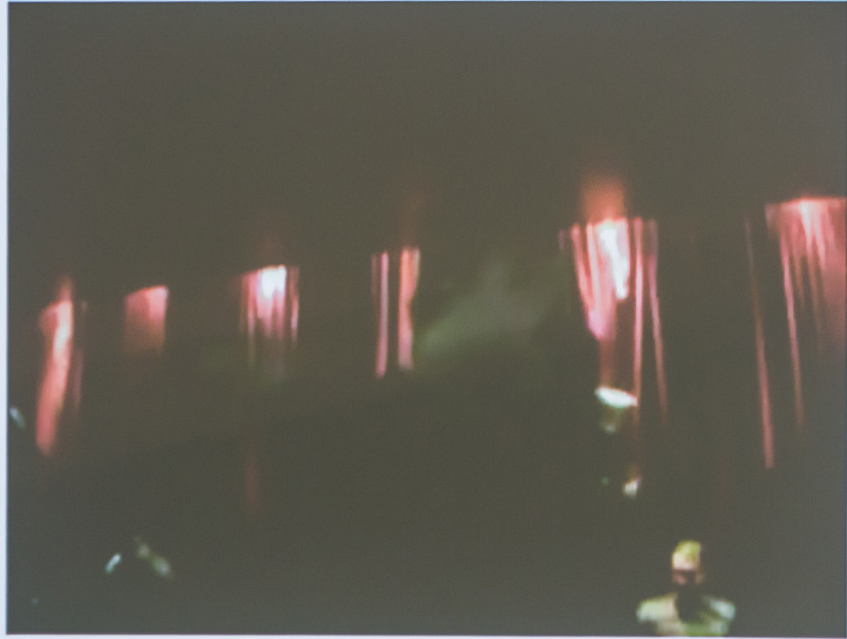
Zach Blas, *Face Cage 4*, 2016

Zach Blas, *Face Cage 3*, 2014

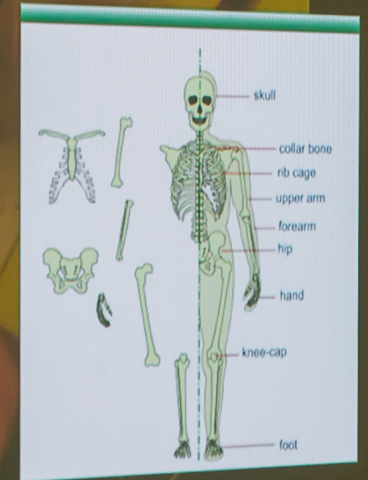
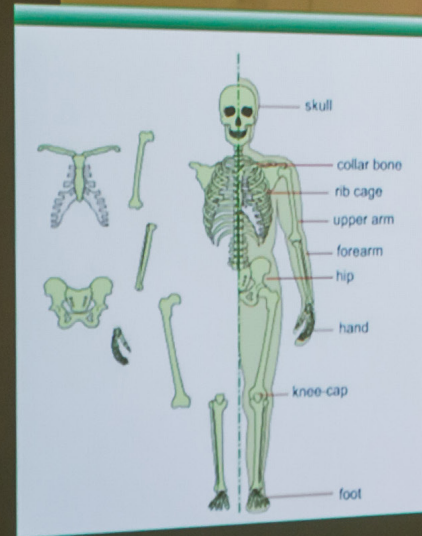
# RABIH MROUÉ

Rabih Mroué's single-channel video *Duo for two missing persons* (2015) is an elegiac meditation on the constituency of the body and its absence. It is centred upon the search for missing people, the discovery of mass burials and the constitution of dismembered bodies in the aftermath of Lebanon's civil war. *Duo for two missing persons* begins with Mroué and his mathematician father discussing the 'percentage of error and confusion that arises' in the assembly of bodies found in mass graves. The site of the grave is then associated with that of a nightclub, suggesting an elision between the dense physicality and collective ecstasies of the club environment and the haunting of bodies present but also absent. A series of graphs and equations further emphasizes the body's existence as both a material and an immaterial form—a patterning of data, an equation of parts to be assembled (or reassembled), or a mass of bodies in a nightclub or a grave. This relationship between the vitality of the lived body and its immaterial presence is translated in the film as a tension between stillness and movement. Choreography is also presented as the development of a system or pattern in which the body is the principal material.

Like Uriel Orlow and Ming Wong, Rabih Mroué is interested in the idea of the threshold—an in-between space that exists outside the conventional narratives of time. For Mroué, the space-time of the threshold also exists as a place in which bodies 'move seamlessly' between live and not-life, or between stillness and movement.



Rabih Mroué, *Duo for two missing persons*, 2013



PROPOSITIONS FOR A STAGE:  
BRIDGET CRONE

*Propositions for a stage: 24 frames of a beautiful heaven* centres around ideas of time, and time's relationship to the body, to technology and to spaces of performance. The individual artworks in *Propositions for a stage* are presented within the gallery as a series of discrete worlds—spaces, times and hermeneutic logics constructed by the works themselves. When entering the gallery, the viewer encounters a constellation of micro-theatres created by illumination, video projection, sculptural and architectural elements. Each work proposes its own 'thinking' about time and creates its own space, and these various approaches are highlighted within the exhibition.

The various space-times are theatrical in the manner in which they make possible an immersion into their world and create a space apart from which to reflect upon the everyday. As philosopher Samuel Weber has noted in his book *Theatricality as medium* (2004), the theatre is a place and a time where something takes place but it is also a place from which to reflect and think differently. The philosopher Alain Badiou similarly suggests that 'theatre is an assemblage ... of extremely disparate components' that are drawn together and made visible through the space of performance.<sup>1</sup> Both highlight the theatre—or stage—as a defined but temporary space in which something very particular takes place. In this way, *Propositions for a stage* is a constellation of proposals for reconsidering the relationship between space, time and the body.

## RETHINKING TIME AS 'STAGES'

In his essay 'The paradoxes of time travel' published in the *American Philosophical Quarterly* in the late 1970s, David Lewis suggests that we

<sup>1</sup> Alain Badiou, 'Theses on theater' in *Handbook of inaeconomics*, trans. Alberto Toscano (California: Stanford University Press, 2005), 72.

<sup>2</sup> David Lewis, 'The paradoxes of time travel', *American Philosophical Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (April 1976): 145.

<sup>3</sup> Lewis, 'The paradoxes of time travel', 145.

<sup>4</sup> Lewis, 'The paradoxes of time travel', 147.

<sup>5</sup> It is worth noting that HG Wells' novel *The time machine* was first published in 1895, the same year that the Lumière brothers and the English inventor Robert W Paul both projected film publicly for the first time.

should consider space-time as a whole divided into stages. This, he contends, means that time travel is possible as the movement between these different stages, and thus 'the paradoxes of time-travel are oddities, not impossibilities'.<sup>2</sup> This spatialization of time, the division of time into stages (spaces that we might inhabit), means that it is possible to consider time travel as simply an unevenness between stages, or as Lewis puts it: 'the discrepancy between time and time' or between different orders of time.<sup>3</sup> This could be a discrepancy between the time of departure and arrival such as we see in most versions of time travel (in science fiction, for example), in which there is an uneven interval or space between different measures of time. It could also be a mismatch between a personal experience of time and an external one, as Lewis suggests. This brings us back to the way in which the standardization of time—clock time—can be likened to the movement of the projector, which rotates the film strip through the projector gate at an interval of 24 frames per second. If we think of each film frame as a stage in time, then time is intrinsically connected to (or dependent upon) the mechanics of the projector itself. A very simple form of time travel might then be the variation of time between film frames as events separated by 'unequal amounts of time', that is time as it exists outside of the regulation that we impose upon it.<sup>4</sup> Following this line of thinking, we might also consider time travel as entering into the different spatial and temporal frameworks of individual artworks. While Lewis does not make this connection, there is much literature to suggest this link between the advent of film (particularly the experience of early film projection) and the possibilities of time travel.<sup>5</sup> This is highlighted by the exhibition title phrase *24 frames of a beautiful heaven*, which refers to

the novel *24 ge mei miao tian tang* [格每秒天堂] (2009) by the Chinese writer Pan Haitian. Haitian's book, like much science fiction, plays with the idea of time travel through film and by jumping through the different temporalities suggested by different film narratives. *24 ge mei miao tian tang*, which can also be translated as 'Paradise of 24 frames per second' or '24-second paradise' therefore plays with the contingency and manipulability of time in relation to technology.

*Propositions for a stage* extends Lewis's ideas in relation to art practice in order to propose that time is not continuous, but broken into a series of platforms or stages. Here the stage is considered a temporal space or limit, and a place of speculation. This spatialization of time is suggested by the title of the exhibition, which both highlights the temporality of the stage and its contingency: the possibility that time might be chopped up into pieces rather than run continuously in a linear manner. The second part of the title alludes to this idea by referring to the singularity of the film frame, which is set in movement by the apparatus of the projector. *24 frames of a beautiful heaven*, therefore, emphasizes the arbitrary standardization of time that is suggested by the movement of film through the projector at the speed of 24 frames per second. If we think of the film strip as a collection of discrete frames that can be chopped up, rearranged and layered, then we have an alternative to this standardization, where time might not always run forward but could jump backwards, forwards, and move at a faster or slower pace. If we think of time also as space or as having 'space-like dimensions' (as Lewis does) then time itself becomes a question rather than a fact. We might then think of the stage as both a temporal and spatial proposition that explores (and proposes)

differing approaches to time both within the artwork and more broadly.

In his new work *The bamboo spaceship* (2017), produced especially for *Propositions for a stage*, Ming Wong takes up questions of time and futurity in relation to Chinese modernity. *The bamboo spaceship* brings together a number of works that traverse different genres, forms and spaces of fiction, including elements that draw upon spaces of cinema and performance. These include images referencing the bamboo theatre structures used by Cantonese opera, a ruined Chinese cinema in Malaysia, the backstage of a *wayang* (Chinese street opera in Singapore), as well as images documenting Wong's own efforts to construct the scenery for a Chinese opera. Alongside these still images, which are displayed on temporary walls suggesting stage flats (the moveable scenography of European theatre) and digital screens, are videos documenting Wong's performances that explore the possibilities of producing a Cantonese science-fiction opera. These works, such as *Windows on the world (parts I and II)* (2012-14), and *Blast off into the sinosphere* (2014), fold together the ritualized form of Chinese opera with the futurity and speculation inherent to science fiction. There are precedents for this interweaving of historical and contemporary forms in both Chinese opera and science fiction. As the Chinese science-fiction scholar Wu Yan notes, 'contemporary China mixes a lot of pre-industrial, industrial and post-industrial factors' that are explored through science fiction, and which run concurrent with a need to re-examine the past and question the future.<sup>6</sup> We see this in effect today particularly through the rise in the number of science or speculative fiction narratives written by Chinese authors that deal with questions of

<sup>6</sup> Lavie Tidhar, 'A bull in a china shop on the moon: An interview with Wu Yan', *The Internet Review of Science Fiction* 3, no. 2 (February 2006), accessed November 19, 2016, <http://www.irosf.com/q/zine/article/10241>.

climate change and science. For example, Liu Cixin's very popular 2006 trilogy *san ti wen ti* [三体问题], in English, *The three-body problem*, explores environmental concerns and human avarice within a narrative that also engages with virtual gaming, the denial of fundamental laws of physics, and, of course, time travel. What is significant about *The three-body problem* is again the arrangement of the world into a series of discrete stages—portals through which one arrives and departs from a series of unrelated temporal zones.

Ming Wong's interest in science fiction from China and the non-Western world (exemplified by his repeated reference to Tarkovsky's 1972 film, *Solaris*) is precisely the manner in which this popular form reflects the present and opens up a space for questioning both the past and future. Thus he emphasizes the importance of science fiction in creating a space to 'reimagine societies and identities, and extend an idea or the repercussions of that idea on a society ...'<sup>7</sup> At the same time, the transience of this space-time is important for Wong, in particular a transience that is echoed in the temporary and transportable space of the Cantonese opera's bamboo theatres: a form characterized by its mutable and fugitive nature. This is particularly emphasized by the *wayang*, a Singaporean form of Chinese street opera that was brought to Singapore by Chinese migrants in the nineteenth century but which also refers to Indonesian and Malaysian forms of street theatre. The Malay word *wayang* refers to a form of street theatre that involves puppets and human actors, though in its Indonesian form (*wayang kulit*) it is most commonly a puppet show. In Singapore, however, Chinese *wayang* involves all sorts of performance, from musical performance

<sup>7</sup> 'Windows on the world (part I)', Ming Wong, accessed August 16, 2017, <http://mingwong.org/windows-on-the-world-part-1>.

<sup>8</sup> See 'Wayang (Chinese street opera)', National Library Board Singapore, accessed August 16, 2017, [http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/infopedia/articles/SIP\\_1218\\_2011-06-28.html](http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/infopedia/articles/SIP_1218_2011-06-28.html) for more information on the history and various forms of *wayang*.

to acrobatics, and it takes different forms according to the region from which it originates. The Cantonese form of *wayang*, which is known in Chinese as *yueju* [粤剧], is known for its reference to history as well as myths and legends, and relating them to everyday life. This is the form of Cantonese opera that has the closest relationship to Wong's work.<sup>8</sup> Yet what *The bamboo spaceship* highlights in its reference to the *wayang* is the manner in which these temporary structures intervene in daily life and create a space that is both inside and outside at the same time: in the street but also in the fictional space it creates on and through its stage. The fragility of this gesture should be noted, as the *wayang* might be performed on a simple wooden stage, suggesting that the threshold between the daily life of the street and the fictional spaces of the stage are similarly fragile.

Wong's photographic images of the backstage area of a contemporary Singaporean *wayang* highlight the transformative power of the threshold in creating the space of the stage. Indeed, we are drawn into the space of *The bamboo spaceship* through a series of thresholds or portals. As suggested earlier, these are created through elements that act like stage sets, and include a large freestanding photographic image of a traditional bamboo theatre that could be a backdrop to a stage, but which stands at the forefront of the installation. The image, printed in large scale, beckons us into its space—a vast, cavernous space with a cathedral-like arched ceiling. These portals proliferate in *The bamboo spaceship*, acting as constant invitations to cross a threshold into another world. They both construct a sense of a world apart (which we are invited to enter) and present us with a border to be crossed.

<sup>9</sup> There is not space here to discuss the individual elements that make up *The Reconnaissance*. However, it is worth noting that the sandbox presents a metaphor for the timelessness and the vastness of the desert: 'a model desert' a voice announces in the sound piece in the work. Yet this metaphor is immediately curtailed by another voice in the work which states: 'the grain of sand is a dead metaphor for timelessness, and to decipher such metaphors would take you nowhere'. This trick of opening and closing the vistas or possibilities of space and time is evident elsewhere in the work, such as in the three photographic prints, which present views from the mountainside village of Deir Yassin across the valley. In the prints, space opens out before us. A contrary view is then presented in the intimate views of details of plant life across the site presented in the accompanying slide show.

Another piece of scenography suggests that we are entering the space of Wong's installation through the backstage area, proceeding through the reverse side of a stage set onto the stage itself. Yet another screen, this one a video projection, shows a figure leading us through an endless silver tunnel. The video is an extract from Wong's work *Windows on the world (part 1)*, in which he presented the tunnel in the space of a gallery (Para Site, Hong Kong) for visitors to walk through while an aria from the opera *Princess Zhaojun crosses the border* is played. In the aria, the beautiful concubine Princess Zhaojun laments her departure from the Han court to exile in central Asia after she is overlooked by the Emperor Yuan. The aria speaks of exile and transformation; these are states that are echoed in the work itself—Wong has remade the work to show a silver cosmonaut leading us through the tunnel towards the threshold to another space-time. Here not only is there a change in state from the work taking a materially tangible form to being an image projected (and therefore spectral in nature), but also an invitation to us—the viewer—to cross a border, beckoned by Zhaojun's lament. This transposition of states from the live scenario to its documentation, and from the material form to the projected image, speaks to Wong's interest in the transient spaces of the stage.

Uriel Orlow's work similarly deals with thresholds between space-times and their layering or projection upon one another. *The Reconnaissance (With Paused Prospect and Paused Retrospect)* (2012–13), part of a larger body of work titled *Unmade Film*, addresses place, memory and futurity in relation to the site of Deir Yassin. The work comprises a number of different elements, it is an assemblage of disparate parts.<sup>9</sup> Time is

<sup>10</sup> There is much to be said here about the temporality of catharsis in relation to the Palestinian situation. As Orlow highlights in his interview with Yoa'd Ghanadry of the Palestinian Counselling Center, the continuation of trauma, violence and dispossession and the associated loss of hope (loss of a future) impacts upon clinic definitions and understandings of treatment. Continuation means that there is no 'post', rendering the definition of 'post-traumatic stress disorder' (which many Palestinians suffer from) unusable. This continuation of trauma without an end also questions the temporality of psychoanalysis itself based as it is in the 'after'. The popular image of the Freudian scenario depicts the patient not in the midst of trauma but in the midst of recounting or remembering trauma after the event. Similarly, we might consider the way in which catharsis—one of the bases of theatre—emphasizes a temporal format that is anticipatory; the crisis is resolved so that there is always an end, a post-trauma as is discussed in the interview with Ghanadry, in eds. Uriel Orlow and Andrea Thal, *Unmade Film* (Zürich: edition fink, 2014).

constantly unfinished in *The Reconnaissance*; it is unpicked and unravelled (Orlow says, 'I see particles', but we could also say that he sees ghosts) and is as continuous and unresolved as the conflict that forms its basis.<sup>10</sup> As a voice in *The Reconnaissance* suggests, highlighting the porous relationship between different temporal spaces: 'The future is a planet that had a map of this place drawn over it, a rather imperfect map at that'.<sup>11</sup> The Palestinian village of Deir Yassin overshadows the work in every way, but aside from the large photographic image of the site that adorns an entire wall of the gallery, it is strangely ungraspable and constantly slips from view. Its presence suggests the 'unsaid and the unsayable', as Orlow has observed, as well as announcing a temporality that is always also slippery—continuous and unfinished but also porous and indivisible into the categories of past, present, future.<sup>12</sup>

For Orlow, Deir Yassin is a place that is unknown but also familiar. It is a place he visited as a child not knowing that it was the site of the 1948 brutal massacre of Palestinian villagers. Deir Yassin subsequently became Kfar Sha'ul and the site of a mental hospital built to house survivors of the Holocaust, the site thus subject to the 'superimposition of multiple traumas'.<sup>13</sup> Here space—or place—is intimately tied to time as *The Reconnaissance* (and *Unmade Film* as a whole) seeks to trace the landscape of Deir Yassin while declaring it unrepresentable and manifesting 'an abandoned set of futures'.<sup>14</sup> *Unmade Film* therefore shows Orlow's attempt to represent the unrepresentable (as suggested earlier) not simply because the events are unfinished but also because they are being constantly remade. As cultural historian Hanan Toukan notes,

11 Uriel Orlow, *The Reconnaissance (With Paused Prospect and Paused Retrospect)*, 2012-13.

12 Andrea Thal and Uriel Orlow, 'A conversation about *Unmade Film*', trans. Fiona Elliot in eds. Uriel Orlow and Andrea Thal, *Unmade Film* (Zurich: edition fink, 2014), 154.

13 Orlow and Thal (eds), *Unmade Film*, 154.

14 Uriel Orlow, *The Reconnaissance (With Paused Prospect and Paused Retrospect)*, 2012-13.

15 Orlow and Thal (eds), *Unmade Film*, 16.

representation is made 'perilous' by the constant rewriting of history by the dominant, occupying power (somewhat similar to what has become familiar to us recently as 'fake news'). As a result, place, memory and image become fraught by their inconceivability and by trauma. *Unmade Film* therefore brings together a huge body of research and art practice (including sound, performance, photography) as a series of proposals for a potential film: it is 'a pretext for something that has yet to occur. It points to the potential of a film, a future film.'<sup>15</sup>

## EMBODIED SPACES

Exhibited alongside *The Reconnaissance* is a single-screen video taken from another of Orlow's large multipart projects. This work, *The Fairest Heritage*, forms part of *Theatrum Botanicum* (2016), a project that explores the botanical world as a stage for politics. *The Fairest Heritage* uses a film that Orlow found while conducting research in South Africa. This archival film documents the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of Kirstenbosch, the national botanical garden, and shows the country at the height of the Apartheid era. Yet rather than simply presenting the film as a document of a past, Orlow problematizes temporal boundaries by reinhabiting and remaking the image of apartheid with the actor Lindiwe Matshikiza imposing herself upon the image and into the film. Matshikiza's presence remakes the film, projecting it into a possible future made anew. Thus, in *The Fairest Heritage*, time is a complex, porous and unfinished business. Exhibited in a large empty space and projected on a wall dissecting the space, *The Fairest Heritage* restages and repeats Matshikiza's re-embodiment of the image at each viewing; its size and presence,

and the echo of the image across the reflective floor of the gallery draws the viewer into its world. This immersion into the theatre-world of the image is not an act of relationality or equivalence but instead produces an embodied questioning of the politics of race, through the staging of acts of inclusion and exclusion, and activity and passivity, as we consider our potential role within the film itself.

This notion of entering into the world of the image (whether that world is actual or imagined) is a key aspect of Rabih Mroué's work. His 2009 performance lecture (what he prefers to term 'a non-academic lecture'), *The inhabitants of images*, muses on the question of what happens to photographic subjects after death.<sup>16</sup> Through the weaving of an elaborate scenario, Mroué develops the idea of a world in which the inhabitants of images choose which image they might inhabit and with whom they might cohabit after death. Rather than being simple flights of fancy, Mroué's conjectures are based in the very real conditions of a country still reeling from the effects of civil war as well as its situation in a region mired in uncertainty and conflict; through them he seeks to create possibilities for other, unrealized futures. In this way, Mroué's work seeks to open a space from which to question actual events and histories by confronting them with fictions that shock or jolt the certainty of existing knowledge. As philosopher Gilles Deleuze suggests of the idea of 'fabulation': it is a form of storytelling that is opposed to straightforward fiction because it has an import in the real but is not real (yet is equally not not-real). Mroué observes this also when he describes his intention to 'put the world of the real and the world of fiction together'. 'For me', he says, 'this shock or clash will produce a reaction

16 Anthony Downey, 'Lost in narration: a conversation between Rabih Mroué and Anthony Downey', *Ibraaz* (January 5 2012), accessed August 21, 2017, <http://www.ibraaz.org/usr/library/documents/main/lost-in-narration-a-conversation-between-rabih-mrou-and-anthony-downey.pdf>.

17 Downey, 'Lost in narration'.

from the audience in terms of creating a kind of distance' from real events and allowing a space of questioning, or reconsidering or of not-knowing to emerge.<sup>17</sup> In the context of *Duo for two missing persons* (2013), exhibited as part of *Propositions for a stage*, these fictions—or fabulations—that Mroué presents have a complex relationship with ongoing and unanswered questions of war, principally the unrecorded or undeclared dead, who exist in a liminal zone as neither officially recorded 'deceased' but missing and missed by their friends and families.

Mroué's single-screen video *Duo for two missing persons* is an elegiac meditation on the constituency of the body and its absence. It confronts the body as both material and spectral such that it is alternately parts of a puzzle to be assembled, data to be recorded or choreographed, and an intangible haunting form. Centred upon the discovery of mass burials and the constitution of the dismembered bodies contained in these sites, *Duo for two missing persons* begins with Mroué and his mathematician father discussing the 'percentage of error and confusion' that arises in the attempted reassembly of these bodies.<sup>18</sup> Ideas of assembly and re-assembly, as well as stillness and movement, go on to be the main preoccupations of the film as Mroué consults with his father and, later, a choreographer regarding the possible reconfigurations of the body. Creating a tangle of fact and fiction, *Duo for two missing bodies* moves through a range of possibilities from mathematical formulae to diagrams of Baroque dance, and then to a personal narrative in which Mroué tells of the collective experience of haunting at BO18, a Beirut nightclub that we are told is situated on the site of a mass grave. This nightclub always seems over-full even when it is not, and the doorman keeps

18 Rabih Mroué, *Duo for two missing persons*, 2013.

a tally on the numbers of people that enter but they always seem to be fewer than those inside. In recounting this story, Mroué further creates a narrative in which there is a porous relation between the past and present, and between the worlds of the living and the 'not living'.

The manner in which *Duo for two missing persons* simultaneously creates and speaks about a liminal other space—a space apart from but within the everyday—is echoed in the manner of its exhibition. *Duo for two missing persons* is exhibited within a space that mimics the publicness of an auditorium yet is at the same time nestled behind a large barricade wall that dissects the entire gallery. On its front face, this wall displays works from Amanda Beech's *Cause and Effect series*. The rear side of this wall is open, showing its struts and supporting sandbags. It is a backstage area—a place of ghosts and uncertain happenings—and it is here that we find Mroué's video. Beech's *Cause and Effect series* is unassailable in its presence. Comprising nine of a series of large-scale works on paper, it is unequivocally present; it simply is and announces that this is so, and in this way it contrasts with the 'fabulations' inherent to Mroué's work. As the philosopher Robin Mackay has written of another of Beech's works: 'Image-force, word-force. It pinned you down like a nail gun. After a while you're just registering it blindly, feeling the impact'.<sup>19</sup>

19 Robin Mackay, 'Foreword' in Amanda Beech, *Final machine* (Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2013), vi.

Beech is well known for her video works. These are often long-form and multiscreen, and exhibited within specially designed environments. These specifically constructed spaces, along with the rapid imagery, fast-paced dialogue and music that Beech utilizes, have led to her work being described as producing a 'force field', as Mackay's

20 Robin Mackay describes Beech's *Final Machine* (2013) as: 'A force field produced, reproduced and consumed; desirable, seductive images that assure political right by mobilising aesthetic might'. Amanda Beech, *Final Machine*, v.

words above also suggest.<sup>20</sup> Like her videos, *Cause and Effect series* uses a very direct visual language and maximizes the impact of that language, which shares the terse positivity of management-speak and the self-help manual. Similarly, and as we find in her video works, the image-force that is present in the *Cause and Effect series* can be traced to now ubiquitous boardroom PowerPoint presentations (through the use of bullet-points, capitalized announcements, headlines, news-bites and so on), as well as to the pattern systems found in gaming, computation and mathematics.

## IMAGE FORCE AND A THEATRE OF OPERATIONS

The appearance of the work on a 10-metre long temporary wall that runs diagonally across the gallery space stresses its emphatic effect. Beech's interest in directness is also apparent in the bold statements that the work makes: 'Capital does not explain Culture', 'Self Conception does not equal Self Transformation', 'No Horizon does not equal Progressive Future'. In speaking about the *Cause and Effect series*, Beech has noted the straightforward lack of irony in the work.<sup>21</sup> Yet at the same time, and upon closer inspection, there is an underlying trickery at work here, which Beech has described as engaging in a 'game system of faking cause.'<sup>22</sup> This 'trick' is constructed by both the production of the work itself and its display. For example, the artwork comprises a set of poster-like works on paper. These seem to be produced using repeated and mechanized print processes yet, in fact, there are no machinic relations between them. This is the 'trick' that lies at the heart of the work. The stencils are not standardized repetitions; the seemingly

21 Amanda Beech, exhibition tour (July 29, 2017), Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE College of the Arts.

22 Amanda Beech, conversation, February 20, 2017.

repetitive forms display differences across the series, revealing that they have in fact been individually produced and embellished. Similarly, the display of the artwork on a wall which, like the hoardings of a building site, reveals the means of its construction, lulls us into a false focus on the processes of construction. *Cause and Effect series* therefore tricks the eye or brain in order to fool us into seeing these connections, preying upon our tendency to draw connections and identify cause where there are none. Production too becomes a kind of system in which our assumptions about the machinic nature of repetition, cause and effect are refuted.

Like all the works exhibited in *Propositions for a stage*, Beech's works on paper corral and command the space of the gallery. What is unusual is that Beech's *Cause and Effect series* is the only work that does not involve any aspect of moving image or video. The commandeering attitude to space that is integral to the work not only results from its method of display but is an inherent aspect of its concerns. While Beech is interested in the hermeneutic game-worlds of the crime novel or computational system, there is also a concern in the work with the systems and logics of neo-liberalism. Here, through this system, a very particular attitude to space is revealed—the collapse of space and of time. These space-without-space and time-without-time urgencies of neo-liberal systems have produced a world that is governed by speed, endless production and closed loops. This is a world of no space and no time for most of us as we work harder and longer, and leisure becomes infected by the immaterial forms of labour we perform for the likes of Facebook, for example.

We also find these ideas in Beech's multiscreen video, *Final Machine* (2013), where intermittently the space of the screen becomes violently imposed upon by a circular form that suggests both the aperture of a gunsighting mechanism, and the insistence of a bullet point. Both operations—the gunsight and the bullet point—act to organize space and impose upon it, as Beech's script for the video articulates: 'It's the collision of matter', the voice-over states: 'We executed our own veracity with ruthless systematic contact'.<sup>23</sup> As Mackay has noted: 'You can't reason with bullet points'.<sup>24</sup> There is, therefore, a violence in the way that the artwork organizes space as we see in the way that *Cause and Effect series* assertively commands attention and in the imposition of the bullet point or gunsight onto and into the image in *Final Machine*. Time and space are therefore no longer evenly distributed but commanded and possessed. This aspect of *Cause and Effect series* relates to Beech's long-term investigation into the architectures and forces of neo-liberalism; for example, in an interview concerning her meeting with the American architectural photographer Julius Shulman, Beech notes that he presents a world 'that is authored by us ... which impresses on us the power of will and mastery'.<sup>25</sup>

23 Beech, *Final Machine*, 103.

24 Mackay, 'Foreword', vi.

25 Amanda Beech, *Sanity assassin* (Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2010), 16.

The tension between the theatre or stage as a place where events can take place and a site of absolute force or unequivocal belief is emphasized by Weber. In exploring the contemporary uses and importance of theatricality, Weber addresses the relation of the term to its militaristic use, 'a theatre of operations' being the most obvious example.<sup>26</sup> Here theatre becomes less a concern of re-enactment, stylization and excess but a question of the way in which power is exerted over bodies. He writes: 'the allusion to nuclear

26 Samuel Weber, *Theatricality as medium* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 98.

weapons brings to the fore one of the striking and distinguishing factors affecting the notion of 'theatre' and 'theatricality' today, namely the preponderance of energy over matter, of force over bodies, of power over place'.<sup>27</sup> What this means in terms of our thinking about theatre and its possible uses is a move away from theatre as a place of experimentation and play, towards an understanding of theatre as the operation and display of power, as we see in the works in *Propositions for a stage*. Beech's work follows this trajectory by demonstrating the intense force of its didactic, visual language; 'it is what it is', as the artist has stated.<sup>28</sup> Weber also speaks about the exertion of power inherent in the notion of theatre in its militaristic use. This exertion of power (or 'force') over bodies is addressed through Zach Blas's ongoing work on the use of biometrics and surveillance, or more precisely 'capture'.<sup>29</sup>

27 Samuel Weber, *Theatricality as medium*, 98.

28 Exhibition tour (July 29, 2017), Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE College of the Arts.

29 Blas has stated that he prefers the use of the term 'capture' to 'surveillance' as it more adequately describes the use and intention of the gathering of personal and biometric information for both commercial and governmental purposes.

Blas's *Face Cages* (2014–16) presents a series of what the artist has termed 'endurance performances', in which four queer artists wear a mask—or 'cage'—of their own biometric data. Dramatically lit, each *Face Cage* is displayed on a plinth in front of a screen presenting a video of the performer wearing the relevant cage. This display of cage and performance paired together and exhibited using conventional museum furniture heightens the likeness of the face cages to medieval armour through their 'museumification'. This doubling of the presentation of the cages—on the one hand, as an object or artefact displayed on a plinth, spotlighted and thus exercised through the disembodied language of the museum collection and, on the other hand, enlivened through performance—highlights a disjuncture between the body as autonomous and 'alive', and the measurement and representation or 'capture' of that body. Blas

further complicates this dichotomy: the screen documents and mediates a performance of the body, while the plinth bears the data of this body, itself mediated and transformed through 3D modelling into a mask or cage. This adds a complexity to common debates in performance art—questions concerning when a body is ‘live’ and when it is mediated, concerning what constitutes the real and the virtual body, and concerning the status of the documentation of a performance in relation to the performance itself. These are also considerations of time, as the descriptor ‘endurance performance’ also suggests. Blas’s use of the term ‘endurance’ points to performance art’s canonical concern with the physical (spatial) and temporal limits of the body extended through duration—the extended present. Thus, the performers in *Face Cages* each wear their cage for as long as they can endure it. Despite being constructed from a digital mapping of their own face, the cages are reputedly very uncomfortable to wear and each performance lasts approximately 12 minutes. Yet this is not the only consideration of time in the work: while the performance points to the elongation of the present that is commonly found in much performative ‘body art’, it also addresses questions of the past and its relation to the present through both the presentation of the cages as artefacts—static forms that have only a tangential relationship to the present—and the performances presented as documents of something that has taken place.

The media theorist Shoshana Amielle Magnet has described the capture of the body through its biometric data as producing ‘a cage of information’.<sup>30</sup> This cage is produced by the so-called ‘perfect’ measurement and ‘accounting’ of the face enacted by facial recognition processes.

<sup>30</sup> Shoshana Amielle Magnet, *When biometrics fail: Gender, race, and the technology of identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 15.

<sup>31</sup> Magnet, *When biometrics fail: Gender, race, and the technology of identity*, 2.

It is also a static and unchanging portrait that reduces ongoing lived experience, networks and relationships to a single constant measurement. As Magnet has observed: ‘Biometric science presupposes the human body to be a stable, unchanging repository of personal information from which we can collect data about identity’.<sup>31</sup> Yet the assumption that this data ‘snapshot’, reliant on tropes and surface information, would reveal the ‘core’ identity of a person goes to the heart of what Magnet has identified as the failure of biometrics. This is its failure to fully see an individual life that is forever mutable and collective, and it is the failure of facial recognition technologies and other biometric measurement processes to recognize bodies marked by difference: whether those that lie outside of gender norms or dominant (white) racial characteristics. It should be noted, however, as Magnet does, that the failure of biometrics is also its success, as theatre becomes pervasive (whether successful or not). The exertion of the threat of ‘capture’ upon bodies suggests the form of contemporary technological theatre that Weber alludes to in his suggestion of ‘a theatre of operations’ as the exertion of power over bodies. Yet what is significant about Blas’s work is the identification that this ‘failure’ enables the possibility of resistance. Here Blas’s work such as *Facial Weaponization Suite* (2012), which involved the collective making of masks using a mash up of individuals’ biometric data and the joyous parading of these masks, draws upon the resistance that we find in the history of gay and lesbian performance, as well as through the strategies utilized by groups such as the Electronic Disturbance Theater.

## THEATRICAL METHODOLOGIES AND EXHIBITION MAKING

There has been much recent commentary regarding the ‘flattening’ of the world that has resulted from the connectivity of the digital, the standardization and monopolization of international supply chains, goods, services, and most particularly systems of control. This produces an image of the world in which we live as a single, vast, interconnected space; a total ecology in which every part fits together and everything has its place and its part to play. *Propositions for a stage* responds to this situation by attempting to think about time and space differently; that is, by considering the way in which both time and space might be broken up into discontinuous and discrete parts. We might call these parts ‘stages’ or we might refer to them as ‘worlds’ (as distinct from the world—the singular conjoined entity suggested earlier). By connecting this discontinuous space–time to the stage, I seek to draw upon ideas of theatre where theatre is understood not simply as a style connoting flamboyance, repetition or excess but as a means for organizing space and time differently. For me, the idea of theatre offers the possibility of a discrete world—a place set apart from the everyday but not separate from it. It is not a place of escapism but of seeing, thinking and ordering the world differently. The stage (or theatre) is, therefore, a place where events take place and a place from which to reflect or to see, as the connection to its Latin root *thea* suggests. Visualizing a theatrical stage, we picture an illuminated space; we picture a place and a time that has a particular intensity. This theatrical stage of our imagining might as much be a proscenium arch as the ad hoc gathering of a street performer who draws people together through the

production of an intensity, and the illumination and delineation of a space through this feeling of intensity that is shared by those gathered together. In both cases we are drawn into an immersive relationship with that space—it corrals us and envelops us (perhaps only momentarily) in its world. As Lewis suggests, this is time broken up into stages, where these stages might be of different shapes and sizes so that time is uneven and not uniform.

*Propositions for a stage* is therefore an exercise in thinking about forms of social organization and ways of seeing the world not as an unending flatness but as discrete and separate spaces and times. The exhibition is an exercise in thinking where the artwork does the ‘thinking’, providing—as the title suggests—a series of propositions. As such the artwork acts or performs—it does things in the space. *Propositions for a stage* begins with the idea of the stage and of theatre not as stylistic categories but as an ‘operation’. My focus is on thinking about what might happen in the space and the time of the stage, and what this special space and time enables. The stage creates a space–time that is temporary, and organized around our own experience and encounter with it. The exhibition begins from the question of what these methodologies and structures can bring to the way in which we think both about exhibition making and the way that we engage with, or encounter artworks. Following this logic, *Propositions for a stage* is conceived not as a ‘group exhibition’ in the usual sense but rather as a series of individual ‘theatres’, where the theatres in question are the artworks. However, it is important to point out that these artworks—all substantial projects by the artists rather than individual works or collections of works—are not all theatrical in style

in the conventional sense. They are not solely concerned with qualities often associated with 'theatricality', such as high drama, camp, repetition and enactment (although some of these things find their way into the work). Instead theatre and most significantly the stage designate a particular means of engagement and the outcome of that engagement. The exhibition proposes that the artists' work produces an intensity of space and time within the gallery; it seizes time and occupies the space of the gallery by demanding our attention and our involvement or participation with it. Here I think of the individual artists' projects as producing their own discrete worlds within the gallery; these are worlds (particular spaces and times) and logics that we enter into, albeit momentarily. To think of the exhibition in this way—as a series of worlds and encounters with these worlds—is to rethink our expectations of exhibition making, and of time and space itself.

These possibilities are played out through a series of proposals that are enacted by the individual artworks exhibited, so that, crucially, *Propositions for a stage* is not an exhibition about theatre or about staging; instead, it is a space in which the artworks are presented as a series of worlds—discrete spaces or stages, if you like, that each have their own propositional logics. This approach to the task of curating is markedly different from the usual approach towards group exhibitions, where each individual artwork is contextualized in order to fit within the overall thematic of the exhibition. Too often this results in a closed loop of statements in which both the viewer and the works are constrained within a space of demonstrated 'truths'. Words such as 'about', 'demonstrated' and 'show', for example, are words that are often used in this approach.

Therefore, one of the overriding concerns in curating *Propositions for a stage* has been the question of making space for the participation of both artworks and viewers as active bodies or agents within the exhibition itself. A visitor to the gallery enters into and encounters the space of the artwork itself as a momentary immersion; the artwork does not simply show or represent but is considered for what it does or what it proposes to us—it is itself a propositional form.

# URIEL ORLOW

Two different projects by Uriel Orlow are exhibited together for the first time in *Propositions for a stage*, highlighting the very particular consideration and treatment of time in his work.

Orlow's *The Reconnaissance (with Paused Prospect and Paused Retrospect)* (2012–13), and *The Fairest Heritage* (2016–17) are taken from two large projects respectively titled *Unmade Film* and *Theatrum Botanicum*. Orlow undertakes extensive research and engages carefully with questions of site, history and memory, producing complex bodies of work. The project *Unmade Film* (2012–13) was developed around the complex site of Deir Yassin, the location of a massacre of Palestinian villagers in 1948, which later became the site of the Kfar Sha'ul mental health centre for survivors of the Holocaust. Rather than offering any kind of resolution to the conflicted histories of the site, Orlow sets out to make its traumas and contradictions visible, thus engaging with history as an event that is unfinished and ongoing. *The Reconnaissance* sets the scene for these inquiries by presenting an imagined conversation between the poet and filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini, the artist Robert Smithson, and an unidentified third person. Time is evoked here as 'a set of abandoned futures'; place and the future both lie in ruins, and time might as well run backwards as forwards into the future.

*The Fairest Heritage*, a single-screen film from Orlow's *Theatrum Botanicum* project (2016), explores the botanical world as a stage for politics. In the work, the history of South African colonialism is replayed through the 50th anniversary celebrations of Kirstenbosch, the national botanical garden. Orlow discovered archival film that documented the event of the celebrations, and worked with actor Lindiwe Matshikiza to re-embodiment the footage, remaking it and projecting it anew into the future.



Uriel Orlow, *The Fairest Heritage*, from the project *Theatrum Botanicum*, 2016–17  
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Uriel Orlow, *The Reconnaissance (with Paused Prospect and Paused Retrospect)*, from the project *Unmade Film* (detail), 2012-13  
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Uriel Orlow, *The Reconnaissance (with Paused Prospect and Paused Retrospect)*, from the project *Unmade Film* (detail), 2012-13  
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# MING WONG

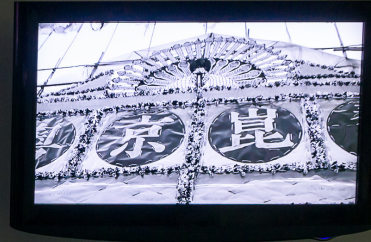
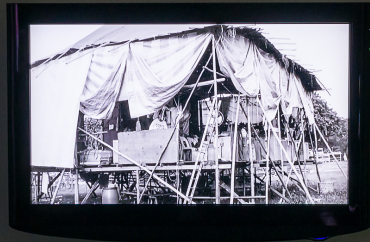
Ming Wong's *The bamboo spaceship* (2017) re-presents a number of his recent works that explore the concept of the future in Chinese modernity. Together in a single installation they produce an intensity that traverses different genres, forms and spaces of fiction.

Wong's installation is constructed as an immersive space into which the viewer is seduced using the reveal-conceal strategies that lie at the heart of theatre. Through the use of documentation, performance and narrative, it presents us with the mutability of time and form. A large wall-size photograph of the interior of a bamboo theatre invites us into the installation. It references the bamboo theatre structures used by traditional Cantonese opera. These transportable structures highlight the precarity of the traditional form and its nomadic nature, as well as the transient spaces of fiction. A series of photographs of a ruined Chinese cinema in Malaysia and the back stage of a *wayang* (Chinese street opera in Singapore) also present these spaces of performance—thresholds into other worlds.

*Windows on the world part I* (a single-channel video) similarly suggests the entry into a space apart from the everyday. Initially presented as an installation in which the audience is invited to walk through a science-fiction like tunnel while an aria from the opera *Princess Zhaojun crosses the border* is played, Wong has re-edited the work to show a cosmonaut in silver leading us through the tunnel and perhaps across a threshold into another space-time. Classics from science fiction (particularly from the Soviet era) are also present, most obviously in the documentation of *Looking at the stars* (2015), an experimental opera that was produced with young actors and musicians in Hong Kong who worked with Wong to reinterpret and realise Andrei Tarkovsky's 1972 film, *Solaris*, in this form.



Ming Wong, *The bamboo spaceship* (detail), 2017





Ming Wong, *The bamboo spaceship* (detail), 2017

CATALOGUE OF WORKS  
IN THE EXHIBITION

Amanda Beech

born Congleton, Cheshire, United Kingdom, 1972; lives Los Angeles

*Cause and Effect series 1* 2016

1 *Capital does not explain Culture*

spray paint, print and synthetic polymer paint on paper with cut-outs, paper, wood  
157.5 x 98 x 2 cm

2 *Self Conception does not equal Self Transformation*

spray paint, print and synthetic polymer paint on paper with cut-outs, paper, wood  
157.5 x 98 x 2 cm

3 *No Horizon does not equal Progressive Future*

spray paint, print and synthetic polymer paint on paper with cut-outs, paper, wood  
157.5 x 98 x 2 cm

*Cause and Effect series 2* 2016

4 *Self Conception does not equal Self Transformation*

spray paint on paper with cut-outs, paper, wood  
150.5 x 106 x 2 cm

5 *Capital does not explain Culture*

spray paint on paper with cut-outs, paper, wood  
150.5 x 106 x 2 cm

6 *No Horizon does not equal Progressive Future*

spray paint on paper, wood  
150.5 x 106 x 2 cm

*Cause and Effect series 3* 2016

7 *Capital does not explain Culture*

spray paint on paper with cut-outs, paper, wood  
101.5 x 67 x 2 cm

8 *Self Conception does not equal Self Transformation*

spray paint on paper with cut-outs, paper, wood  
111.5 x 77 x 2 cm

9 *No Horizon does not equal Progressive Future*

spray paint on paper with cut-outs, paper, wood  
111.5 x 77 x 2 cm

Courtesy the artist

Zach Blas

born Gallipolis, Ohio, United States of America, 1981; lives Los Angeles and London

*From the series Face Cages* 2013–16

10 *Face Cage 1* 2015

endurance performance with Zach Blas, single-channel, high-definition digital video, 9:16 aspect ratio, colour, silent, 12:01 minutes  
custom-fabricated stainless steel object, 16.5 x 15.5 x 9 cm

11 *Face Cage 2* 2014

endurance performance with Elle Mehrmand, single-channel, high-definition digital video, 9:16 aspect ratio, colour, silent, 10:02 minutes  
3D printed stainless steel object, 12.5 x 13.5 x 8 cm

12 *Face Cage 3* 2014

endurance performance with micha cãrdenas, single-channel, high-definition digital video, 9:16 aspect ratio, colour, silent, 12 minutes  
3D printed stainless steel object, 18 x 13 x 8 cm

13 *Face Cage 4* 2016

endurance performance with Paul Mpagi Sepuya, single-channel, high-

definition digital video, 9:16 aspect ratio, colour, silent, 12:02 minutes  
3D printed stainless steel object, 19.5 x 16 x 11 cm

Courtesy the artist

Rabih Mroué

born Beirut, Lebanon, 1967; lives Berlin

14 *Duo for two missing persons* 2013

single-channel, high-definition digital video projection, 16:9 aspect ratio, colour, sound  
8:33 minutes

Courtesy the artist and Galerie Sfeir-Semler, Hamburg and Beirut

Uriel Orlow

born Zurich, Switzerland, 1973; lives London and Zurich

15 *The Reconnaissance (with Paused Prospect and Paused Retrospect)*, from the project *Unmade Film* 2012–13

Voices: Dyfan Dwyfor, Christine Entwisle, Paul Hamilton  
wallpaper (340 x 500 cm, variable), stereo audio (7:30 minutes), 3 chromogenic photographs mounted on Dibond (each 85 x 100 cm), sandbox, 27 projected slides  
installation dimensions variable

16 *The Fairest Heritage*, from the project *Theatrum Botanicum* 2016–17

With Lindiwe Matshikiza  
single-channel, high-definition video projection, 16:9 aspect ratio, colour, silent  
4:18 minutes

Courtesy the artist, Mor Charpentier, Paris; and LaVeronica, Modica, Italy

Ming Wong

born Singapore 1971, lives Berlin

17 *The bamboo spaceship* 2017

excerpts from *Looking at the stars*, 2015, single-channel, high-definition video projection, 16:9 aspect ratio, colour, sound (12:47 minutes); video from the installation *Windows on the world (part 1)*, 2014, high-definition video projection, colour, sound (3:02 minutes); 3 single-channel, high-definition digital video collages (various durations) of photographs of an old cinema, a bamboo theatre and backstage of a wayang (Chinese street opera in Singapore) presented on screens; *The bamboo spaceship*, 2017, digital print on adhesive vinyl on wall (224.5 x 300 cm), image from *Scenography for a Chinese science fiction opera*, 2015, digital print on adhesive vinyl on wall (225.2 x 127 cm)  
installation dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist, carlier | gebauer, Berlin; and Vitamin Creative Space, Guangzhou



Detail of temporary wall in *Propositions for a stage: 24 frames of a beautiful heaven*, Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, 2017

Propositions for a stage: 24 frames of a beautiful heaven

Published as an e-book by the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore on the occasion of the exhibition *Propositions for a stage: 24 frames of a beautiful heaven*, 29 July to 22 October 2017.

Curator: Bridget Crone

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Bridget Crone

