

Vibe Check

Transcript of “Episode 4: *Programmatic Stereoscopy*”

CFRC 101.9fm, Wednesdays bi-weekly 21 April–2 June, 4:30–5 pm

Neven Lochhead: You're listening to CFRC 101.

Check.

Point 9 FM.

Check one, two.

Located in the basement of Carruthers Hall on the Queen's University Campus in Kingston, Ontario.

This is the mic for the camera.

This is the mic for the performer.

You're listening to.

This is the mic for the camera.

Two, three, three. You're listening to. Two, one, two. Check. You're listening to *Vibe Check*.

This is the mic that will describe the images.

This is the mic for the performer.

And the movements of the camera.

Where the performer will ad lib, will pull thoughts together, will perform magic.

This is a recording.

The camera. The movements of the camera.

This is a re-recording of an event.

The setting of the scene.

This is a re-broadcast of an event called *Fieldnotes*, a performance that was streamed online for viewers.

This mic will give a live transcription.

On May 29th.

Of the movements of the camera. The images.

It.

The motions.

Was made as.

The transitions from one room to the other.

A closing gesture to.

It's going to give you everything.

The exhibition *From the vibe out* presented at Agnes Etherington Art Centre.

[Music]

It was recorded at my studio.

Everything.

On Brock Street, an empty space around which.

You're going to hear.

The exhibition.

See.

Orbited.

Sense.

For its duration.

Everything.

This broadcast and the *Fieldnotes* event were held.

Everything the camera thinks.

As a programmatic stereoscopy.

Describing everything it sees.

Two events.

You see. You make.

Dissonant. Intermeshed.

Intermeshed.

Making a three-dimensional.

Every image, image.

[Music]

Every fade.

[Music]

Just me in a room. With a camera. A mic.

Thirty seconds. I'm all tangled up.

Too many cables.

[Music]

The performance begins in complete darkness. All you see is black.

Thanks, everyone.

And you hear the sound of this voice.

For coming to *Fieldnotes*.

This voice that will describe the movements of the camera.

That anyone signs up.

As the performance develops.

For another Zoom call in this moment.

The darkness lingers for a while.

Is to me.

And it seems like it's some kind of technical glitch.

A major act of generosity.

Until the camera person takes off the lens cap, and the camera adjusts to the scene in front of it.

I'm speaking to you from my studio downtown.

It's a shot of a window. It's sort of midday.

I know it's a weird time to start an event.

Three o'clock.

But.

There's some kind of stairway in front of a large, horizontal window.

These logistics are a kind of.

A garage door kind of thing.

Vestige of.

And the camera instinctively starts to.

A prior hope.

Look for blue sky.

Back when my exhibition was still open.

And it zooms in on the parting of some clouds.

I had the naive idea that maybe.

And this makes the kind of images that you'd encounter in an opening credit sequence.

Some friends could visit from out of town.

You can sort of imagine names appearing over these soft images of.

Make a day trip.

The clouds and the sky. Maybe a bird flies by.

I imagined a procession of attendees.

You can imagine the names of people who contributed to the making of this project.

Friends walking from the gallery.

Their roles.

To this space where this performance would be unfolding.

After searching the sky for a while.

As it is.

The camera eventually pans down.

It's just.

Towards.

Me.

The floor.

And Matt.

And.

Here in this room.

And it reveals that the floor is.

Making this.

Covered in a kind of Astroturf-like.

Video broadcast.

Material.

A kind of dark green that's glittering underneath some overhead fluorescent lights.

This has left me with an unusual situation of closing an exhibition that.

Soon the camera encounters a kind of object.

Has already closed.

And it pans left, towards that object.

I know it's closed because.

Until it reveals the performer sitting on top of a large, grey box.

Because I'm sitting on top of it.

And it's sort of on its side.

These objects that you'll see over the next half-hour.

Geometric.

Are the screens that were made for the exhibition from the vibe out.

To speak.

And have been repurposed here for a new work, and possibly new types of presentations in the future.

As they continue speaking, they start to set up microphones and pull cables to a specific area on this large object, where there are two stacks of paper about an inch thick, containing a number of different types of papers they would see.

And so, the performer is setting up microphones in order to sit and speak right in front of these stacks of paper. And so, they set this up and they get into position.

This first part of the performance.

Where again they begin to speak and manipulate these, these documents.

Focuses on this collection of documents that I made during the pandemic. You know, it was a time of reading and, and, and, what I ended up doing was reading just a ton of PDFs.

[starts singing the words]

And I began to capture.

Began to capture.

Various screen captures of.

Various screen captures.

PDFs that I found to be.

Found to be.

Attractive.

Later, I took these pages and.

Took these pages and.

Turned them inside out.

Turned them inside out.

I took the title of chapters and.

The title of chapters.

Made them trip over themselves and.

Made them trip over.

Turned their meanings inside out.

The camera hovers over.

Through this act I assembled a collection.

An assembled collection.

Of unruly and fictional scholars and researchers.

Scholars and researchers.

I made this lexicon.

I made this lexicon.

An operative vocabulary.

Vocabulary.

It transformed my research practice. I learned to read sideways.

Soon, the camera begins to lower itself until it's right down at the surface of the object. And it's from this position that we can see that the object is, in fact, hollow. And that one side of the object is completely open. And so, instinctively, the camera begins to explore this strange interior. And they peer inside the object, where they're confronted with a dizzying array of materials. There are stacks of books. There are instruments for playing music and cooking. But most centrally and most disturbingly, is a large seashell that seems to be hovering and aglow.

Listening to this, I inferred one from the joy driven, post-anxiety, para-academic, persistently-persistent. I inferred an institute that was sceptical about the academicization of artists that had no limit concept. It functioned at and beyond the site of exhaustion.

Behind the performer, there's a door that's opens up into the neighbouring room, and this room is very dark. But as the camera turns its attention to this doorway, a video projection begins playing on a large rectangular screen which goes all the way to the floor. And this sort of mesmerising image of pages flowing into each other draws the camera into the other room as it leaves the performer, and enters this second space, and begins to observe this image, and it hears its sound emanating from inside of it.

[Natural sounds]

The image seems to contain thousands of pages, pages, pages. Like the ones just manipulated by the performer in the other room. The pages are in motion, and a spine separating them seems to be pulling them in as they fall into this crease, this fold, this shadow.

What's going on in here? I was just in the other room.

The performer reappears to the right of this video projection, and they're peering again inside this object.

What's in this object?

They look towards the camera and signal for it to follow.

Why don't we go in?

As they begin to climb inside the object, an action which the camera instinctively follows.

Instinctively follows, follows, follows.

I'm in the object. Are you getting this, Matt?

Now huddled deep inside this object, the performer begins to speak as they also pour water onto their hand.

I was trying to think about.

And rub that water onto their forehead.

You know, what would be an appropriate thing to talk about here in this image inside the projection. And I thought I might try to address this idea of, of "vibe" and this type of.

The performer grips the mic that they are holding and positions it on their right temple. And as they do this, they begin to move the microphone across their forehead from right to left.

One second.

[Music]

With every pass of the microphone on their forehead.

Its this idea that.

The sound seems to emerge like the groove

A literary text has.

Of a record.

Has. One second.

[Music]

Within it a kind of magma.

The performer.

A kind of.

Washes their forehead with water one more time.

Vibe that can.

Before looking at the camera

Project itself.

And saying.

Let's get out of here.

The performer and the camera begin to climb out of the object. And re-emerge into the room of the video projection, projection, projection.

[Natural sounds]

The camera travels far into the space, revealing the full width of the room. There's a brick wall on the right. There's wood floors. And as the video begins to fade away, the lights to the space begin to turn on and illuminate the full dimensions, dimensions, dimensions of this room.

It's more spacious here.

As the camera.

Pans and explores its various walls.

It's more spacious outside the vibe.

And contours.

The performer moves to a large vertical garage door.

Let's go outside.

At the opposite end of the room. And they pull open the curtains to reveal a sunny mid-afternoon light.

It's so bright out.

And they pull open the garage door. Taking their microphone, they walk.

Well listen.

Outside about 10 feet from the garage door. And they kneel on the pavement just outside the space.

We're kind of reaching the end of our radio show and our, our performance here. And I just, I just had one last trick to show you. It's, it's what I've been working on the most. And I've been reading a lot about seashells and the physics of seashells. And I've found a way to make my hands into a shape that creates the illusion of the ocean being in your hands. And, well, for you, it'll be in your ear. I'll show you.

The performer places the microphone on a small strip of Astroturf.

All you have to do is.

And they begin to.

Is listen, listen, listen.

Cover the microphone with their hands. As if putting it in a bowl.

You don't even have to watch.

Or trying to warm it up.

I'm just going to show you this trick.

And the microphone disappears.

Thanks for listening and watching.

In this interweaving of.

And being here this whole time.

The performer's hands.

It'll just take a second.

[Natural sounds]

[Muffled, ambient sound of ocean fades in]

[Distant roaring of ocean fades in]

[Ocean waves crashing on beach]

[Music fades in]

Immersion. Impression. Immersion. Impression. Immersion. This is your immersion.

Vibe Check.

Vibe Check.

Episode four.

For and with, with, with, with, with, with, with, with, with, with.

Immersion. This is your immersion.

A trajectory resulting from a three-way assemblage: the work in the making, the one who puts to work, and that which calls for its own existence. And in doing so, keeps the one who puts to work guessing. Not in the sense of a secret to be discovered. But in the sense of a tension between succeeding and failing. And in the sense of a situation that is questioning, that obligates us. Isabelle Stengers.

Featured Songs:

Julia Govor: Drama C (2021)

Nun: Immersion (Enderie remix) (2011)