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Mark Peter Wright / 30 Minutes of Listening

2nd November – 2nd December 2012, IMT Gallery Cambridge Heath Rd., London

Exhibition Review by Salomé Voegelin

Mark Peter Wright's work *30 Minutes of Listening* composed from field recordings in South Gare in Redcar, Cleveland UK, currently showing at IMT Gallery in Cambridge Heath Rd., comes in three parts: an installation comprising of a video, slag stones, two speakers and an engraved mirror in the front room; a split screen video and two slags on a shelf in the middle gallery, and an invitation to do this all yourself in the very back. All of these parts are inherently connected through the site, the notion of site, the idea of the object, a plethora of facts as well as through the gallery walls, which deliberately let each part permeate the other.

In the main gallery space the real site of South Gare circles as a massive video projection round and round, in 30 minutes from dust till dawn. The slightly curved gallery wall responds to the circling motion and a small round mirror at the back completes the loop. These architectural and installed features extend the draw of the image, which is spread out inexhaustibly through the sound - ostensibly the sound of all the things engraved in the mirror: Herring Gull, Seaweed, Swallow, Boat, Engine, which however sound so very differently than their source. Sound is not a noun it is a verb, it is the action rather than the locus of perception, representing not that site specificity but producing the specificity of our site: incorporating the contingent moment here on Cambridge Heath Rd.

It is these complex shifts and turns of reality, contingency and responsibility over site that makes this work so compelling and relevant, aesthetically as well as politically. Wright develops the potential of field recording and confronts the notion of land art too. He challenges us not only to think about the actual site, its historical, aesthetic and political reality, but to generate an aesthetic and political consequence in the gallery, inviting us to create the site as a passing moment produced not by dwelling in its actuality but by moving through its contingent possibilities, configured, built and rebuilt in every turn of our listening engagement.

In the next room a split screen video shows Wright's torso, once on site in South Gare, once in the gallery space, hitting together two slag stones, while the same sit silently on a little white shelf to the left. This sound sounds not the object of the stones, but the environment of the site, that of IMT gallery and that of South Gare. The video holds a mirror to the source of the sound, reflecting back not a name but a latency, the dormant thinging of the thing awoken in Wright's own movements that convey his sincerity.

Every detail of Wright's work is sincere, there is a fervour and earnest desire to persuade us of its worth, not its value as a piece of art but as an endeavour, a thing to do and know the world by. This impression is confirmed in the very back room of the gallery where on an A4 sheet of paper he gives us instructions how to do it ourselves: how to do 30 minutes of listening to our site. It is a call to a kind of "musica practica" of field recording, an invitation to share in Wright's sincerity and the socio-political as well as the aesthetic relevance of his endeavour.