

## FLORIAN HECKER

23 November 2012 – 19 January 2013  
69 South Audley St London W1

Florian Hecker's second show at Sadie Coles HQ takes the form of three ambitious new sound works. The pared-down appearance of his installations of audio equipment is countered on a sonic level by the works' complexity, intensity and extensive duration. In each piece, a nexus of different sounds, both human and synthetic, develops into an intricate and quasi-narrative structure.

In the main gallery, a trio of speakers suspended from the ceiling plays two works in sequence: *Chimerization* (which was premiered at 'DOCUMENTA (13)' in Kassel this summer) is followed by *Hinge*, a sequel which deepens and extends the concepts, investigations and structure of the first work. Hecker defines these works as "text sound pieces". He invited the Iranian writer and philosopher Reza Negarestani to contribute two librettos –

essays analysing the schism between topology and sounds, nature and culture – and this forms the aural and conceptual basis of each work. The essay was recited by a number of narrators in sound-proof, anechoic booths which produce a markedly different quality of sound from that produced in conventional space. Hecker describes the experience of speaking in these booths – lined with open porous foam shapes in order to eliminate audible reflections – as one of "alienation", subtly affecting the readers' performances so as to produce unusual intonation and rhythms.

This effect of alienation is extended and magnified by the subsequent process of "chimerization" in which different time correlations are swapped and exchanged, extracting qualities from one voice and projecting them onto a different one. The process has its origins in the research undertaken in the development of cochlear implants – devices which analyse sound entering the ear, separating vocal and non-vocal elements. *Chimerization* and *Hinge* dramatise this technology with the counterintuitive aim of disrupting and distorting perception. There is an oscillation throughout between human voices and electroacoustic sound, which itself has undergone a process of chimerization, with the two elements repeatedly conflated.

Negarestani's texts take as their central motif the chimera – the hybrid, three-headed beast of Greek mythology composed of serpent, lioness and she-goat. This serves as a metaphor for the complex concretions of information found within and between the realms of nature and culture, synthesis and decomposition. Hecker's three-part exhibition mirrors the tripartite form of the chimera, while the notion of an 'unnatural' hybrid underpins Hecker's conflation of the verbal and non-verbal, the human and synthetic. The metamorphic form of the chimera finds a parallel in the transformation of sound in Hecker's works: an overall level of intensity is maintained, while the precise sounds being transmitted are in constant flux. Through repeated phases, the import of the essay gradually becomes clear beneath the pandemonic incoherence – yet it demands a sustained and focused act of listening in order to be deciphered.

Downstairs is a three-channel piece titled *3 Channel Chronics*. By contrast with the works upstairs, it is an entirely synthetic electroacoustic creation. The installation is again highly minimal, comprising individual speakers on each of the walls, with a small photograph placed in close proximity to each speaker. The processed images, which are scaled in proportion to the corresponding speakers, document an installation of the same work at MUMOK, Vienna. In this way they entail a kind of visual "feedback" or self-reflexivity. Each image has been warped through a process known as SIFT Flow which is similar to the sonic chimerization: the spatial composition of one image is mapped onto a different image so as to distort and twist it, hence complicating the depiction of the sonic.

Hecker (b. 1975, Kissing, Germany) had exhibited and performed internationally. In 2012 his work was featured in *DOCUMENTA (13)* in Kassel, Germany. Recent solo exhibitions include *Articulação*, Lumiar Cité & Jardim Botânico, Lisbon; Mehringdamm 72, Berlin; *Event, Stream, Object*, MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, Germany; Chisenhale Gallery, London and Ikon, Birmingham (both 2010). He has been included in numerous group exhibitions including *In the Holocene*, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge, MA, USA; and *No night No day*, collaboration with Cerith Wyn Evans, 53rd Venice Biennial, Italy (2009). Recent live performances include *Speculative Solution*, Nouveau Festival, Centre Pompidou, Paris (2012); *Tate Modern Live: Push and Pull, A Two-Day Performance Event*, Tate Modern, London (with Mark Leckey) (2011); and *INSTAL 10*, Tramway, Glasgow (2010). In 2009, a major publication on his work was produced in conjunction with *Event, Stream, Object* at MMK, Frankfurt. In addition, he has an extensive discography, with three new vinyl recordings of *Chimerization* being released to coincide with this exhibition. In February 2013 Primary Information will publish an artist book by Florian Hecker.

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Opening hours Tuesday – Saturday 10 – 6pm

