



Sometimes an ART ROMANCE! Sometimes an ART TRAGEDY...

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Pattern Completion

LEAVE A COMMENT

MAY 21, 2010

by Phil

tags: Art, installation, glass, London, memory, projection, pattern completion, images, science

If you happen to be within meandering distance of Mayfair this weekend it's well worth taking a trip to Davies Street and popping in to the **Gimpel Fils** gallery. Downstairs, in the back room, you will find Pattern Completion – an installation exploring the process of memory.

Different aspects of a forest scene are projected onto semi-frosted glass baubles which dangle from the ceiling. The projector cycles through a selection of videos composited from photographs while an accompanying collaged soundtrack of forest sounds taken from different times of day play through headphones.



Pattern Completion, 2010

Pattern Completion is a collaboration between an artist (Michaela Nettell), a sound designer (Tom Simmons), and a neuroscientist (Dr Hugo Spiers). The name comes from the process by which traces are inscribed in neuron connections when memories are created and then reactivated during recall. The installation aims to echo that process via the sounds and images, their fragmentary nature referencing the fact that memory is non-linear

The accompanying booklet pursues these ideas in greater detail but even without delving too deeply into the science the installation itself is fascinating. The sounds are mainly soothing but the odd howl serves as a reminder that the forest as a concept is one often associated with childhood fear as well as babbling brooks and whispering leaves. There is a certain emotional ambiguity about the experience which leaves room for your own projections and references. There are a lot of little bits of the experience purposely left unconnected and which invite the viewer to connect the dots for themselves and recreate the memory. An interesting effect which complements this is that of the projection on the sphere so that the images of forests with paths appear to recede and invite the viewer to move into that space.



Pattern Completion (detail), 2010

I really enjoyed the work and think it's well worth a look if you're in the area. I also think there's scope for further exploration. Something I would have been interested to see as a result is how the basic set-up works with a less ambiguous scenario – one where the associations were more obviously positive or negative to see how that affected the experience.

I believe there's some sort of a talk happening on Saturday (4pm) so that might be interesting to catch. You can find more info [here](#). Let me know what you think!

PS As a complete aside, if you're interested in ambiguous forests you might like to check out indie horror game **The Path** on Steam.

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