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Contemporary Arts Practice and Outer Space: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach (4)

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'LES TEMPS FANTÔMES' - TIME CAPSULE PROJECT FOR ASTRONAUTS

Abstract

March 19, 2015. At nightfall, in a remote desert area of the planet, a group of astronauts open what appears to be a time capsule. Containing unknown data, this object progressively transforms their own mission and experience of space-time, making this particular evening the starting point for an energetic journey across cosmic distances - a long art translation process transfiguring spaces, situations and processes, for a generalized meditation on light, time and human space exploration. This project, proposed by artist Ludwig, develops across a variety of mediums, places and forms - through exhibitions, remote explorations, public lectures, film shootings, web and mail art pieces, tagging and data dissemination. With *LES TEMPS FANTÔMES*, invitation, hacking and surprise become the materials of an extended artwork triggering new types of artist-astronaut collaborations and multiple transformation processes on widened spatiotemporal scales.

Being part of the project itself, this paper reviews and explores the first spectral movements of this artwork around the planet: from the experience of a crew engaged on a Martian simulation in the Utah desert, to performative exhibitions and lectures in London, Bordeaux and Jerusalem, to unpredictable emails and appearances on the web. With the aim to create a new territory for both astronauts and artists, *LES TEMPS FANTÔMES* will foster cross-disciplinary pollination and nurture surprising encounters. For its launch, Carole Nosella, a video artist and researcher, is invited to co-produce and glitch the content of the time capsule, while a space crew (guided by Mehdi Scoubeau and Mohammad Iranmanesh) invents its own ritual and art practice in the desert, becoming thus the source for original radiophonic art pieces created in collaboration with several musicians and sound artists.

This fluctuating rhizome, growing in several directions - and within several temporalities - becomes a way to question the nature of time, the nature of space, and to probe unforeseen interactions. As a topological manifold could bend, curve, fold and unfurl, *LES TEMPS FANTÔMES* is an art experience that multiplies its dimensions of existence - becoming, from mission to mission, exhibition to exhibition, performance to expedition, spaceflight to lecture, what Timothy Morton would call an 'hyperobject' - meaning thereby an extended object made of particles widely dispersed in space and time - a time capsule for future astronauts.