

The annexe

Jack Lavender *Tired but Wired*

10 September – 23 October 2021

Opening preview: Thursday 9 September, 6-9pm

Taping black Proplex panels to the floor and wall, Jack Lavender has transformed The Approach into a crepuscular stage set, creating an uncanny black box theatre dimly lit by the cold strip light overhead. Employing non-hierarchical display strategies, a few objects lurk in the space, sculptural remnants from past events, or signifiers of an impending future. A dead eucalyptus tree stands at one end of the gallery, deflated party balloons limply hang off a branch; a box of spent fireworks suggest celebrations been and gone; a disconnected KX100 phone box towers lugubriously, once the zenith of technological innovation, now an outdated and outmoded form of communication. All of these objects carry an ominous significance, spectres of a lost future.

Lavender's concern with time has been apparent throughout his practice. He has an instinctive impulse to collect usually forgettable souvenirs from the everyday and preserve them as relics of a particular moment or era, as if they are destined for induction to a time capsule, ready for some distant future generation to discover. To quote Mark Fisher, what Lavender's work shows us is how: "In the last 10 to 15 years, the internet and mobile telecommunications technology have altered the texture of everyday experience beyond all recognition. Yet, perhaps because of all this there's an increasing sense that culture has lost the ability to grasp the present [... E]veryday life has sped up but culture has slowed down."¹

Combining the concept of the "slow cancellation of the future"² in cultural terms, with the more urgent threat of global warming and climate catastrophe, Lavender employs gallows humour as a kind of salvation. In his collages – a few exhibited in the gallery, but mostly viewable via his concurrent online presentation *Tired but Wired 2* – Lavender takes his images from found printed material magazine and newspaper clippings, old books and flyers, with a particular focus on the '90s and '00s new age and raver subcultures. In these works, the world is on fire, both culturally and literally. Images of planet Earth are symbolically interchanged with clock faces, counting us down until the moment it's all over.

Jack Lavender (b. 1983, Canterbury, UK) lives and works in Margate, Kent. Selected exhibitions include: *Baggy to Bootcut*, The Annexe, London (2018); *When We Look Outwards in Space We Look Backwards in Time*, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK; *A Hardcore Stomping Flashback*, The Approach, London, UK; *Stones*, Recent Activity, (2017); *Teen Paranormal Romance*, The Renaissance Society at The University of Chicago, Chicago (2014); *Jack Lavender*, Mihai Nicodim Gallery, Los Angeles (2014); *Dreams Chunky*, The Approach, London, UK (2013); *Paradise Garage*, Eighty One, London (2013); *Chimera Q.T.E.*, Cell Projects, London (2013); *Young London*, V22, London, (2012); *Jack Lavender, Oliver Osborne, Marco Palmieri*, The Approach, London (2012).

For further information and images, please contact Alba Herrero at alba@theapproach.co.uk

¹ Mark Fisher, 'Ghosts of My Life: writings on Depression, Haunting and Lost Futures', Zero Books, London, 2014

² Franco Bifo Berardi, 'After the Future', AK Press, Chicago, 2011