

FRITH STREET GALLERY

Raqs Media Collective

Corrections to the First Draft of History

19 September 2014 – 31 October 2014

In the time when all the news that was fit to print got printed, Raqs decided to take things in hand. History, they decided, would no longer be destiny. Corrections were clearly necessary. The first draft of history would yield the next draft of whimsy. Everything and its shadow was re-run, banks were broken, trees were asked the time, and clocks followed strange instructions. The Raqs Media Collective's curiosity about what time does to the world and to our conscience lies behind the works and images that constitute Corrections to the First Draft of History.

Frith Street Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of new video, sculpture and wall-based work by Raqs Media Collective. This will be the artists' third solo show at the gallery.

The central, and eponymous work in the exhibition is formed from a selection of framed and manipulated daily newspapers collected from Britain and elsewhere. The papers' surfaces are partially covered in blackboard paint, obliterating some sections, and isolating others. The piece is at once playful and critical, acknowledging that we encounter history through its re-writing / re-drafting / censorship and in some cases total erasure.

Re-Run was inspired by a Henri Cartier-Bresson photograph taken in pre Communist China. In December 1948, in the lead up to Shanghai's capitulation to the People's Liberation Army, Bresson photographed a "bank run" in the city. The image shows a crowd of people desperate to withdraw their money in order to buy gold before an imminent currency collapse. Such actions of course precipitate bank failures and so cause becomes effect becomes cause. In Re-Run, Raqs have re-staged Cartier Bresson's photograph as a moving image. A large scale projection shows a heaving mass of figures in an unruly queue, the image is perhaps not so far from where we might be today, so the memory of one crisis is transposed onto the reading of another.

The Ecliptic is an inscribed tablet, a bespoke clock, altering the interval between moments with words, light and syncopated impulses of electricity. Time is constant, time is flux. The ecliptic marks the path of the sun in the sky. Along it the seasons change, along it the days unfold, along it time freezes and thaws. Its arc offers passage out of here, out of now, everyday, all the time.