

Anna Barham
Liquid Liquid



Liquid Consonant, 2012

Elaborating on her interest in the mutability of language and semantics, Anna Barham's second solo exhibition at Galerie Nordenhake explores the synthesis of sound and meaning in two video works and a suite of holographic prints. The works in the exhibition build a dialog between the "fleshiness" of the physical world and the ethereal nature of meaning, creating a metaphor for analogue and digital, hardware and software.

Liquid Consonant, 2012, draws on Plato's *Cratylus*, the Socratic dialogue which examines the origins of language and sites mythology and the poets as the ultimate etymological authorities, and was written during the time when Ancient Greece was shifting from being an oral to a literate culture. *Liquid Consonant* marks a similar shift, although in the reverse direction - from written to oral - within Barham's own preoccupations.

The short video presents a digitally animated head 'speaking' sounds. As it rotates the sensually modelled lips give way to a cold synthetic cavity where tongue and teeth form Greek words containing the rolled r sound of the letter rho. In *Cratylus* Socrates conjectures that the gestures of the mouth forming different letters are the grounds on which language might 'imitate reality' - in particular that the rolled r signifies motion because the tongue is so 'agitated' in its production. In the video blocks of sound issue from the mouth in place of words, circularly questioning the possibility of a correspondence between the sounds made by a fleshy orifice and 'meaning'.

The focus on the physical production of language as sound carries through into *Double Screen (not quite tonight jellylike)*, 2013. The 2-channel video shows a sequence of images which slide from one screen to another as they are repeatedly edited to a voiceover. The script was edited from many mutations of a text about cleaning a squid that Barham appropriated and then processed through voice synthesis and voice recognition software over and over again, creating a strange kind of feedback loop between herself and the computer. The images are used as an oblique code and syntactical key to track the transformations of sounds and words within the script. Together word and image are an exploration of the squid as a metaphor for transformation and the continual production of image, language and self.

Alongside the video works are a series of UV prints on holographic paper made on the same large format printer which is the main protagonist of *Double Screen (not quite tonight jellylike)*. The holographic panels carry images of a fossilised squid, a 'breath mark' or comma, close ups of squid skin, a cloud of squid ink in water, a Superconducting Quantum Interference Device, a QR code which links to a soundcloud page. The images and their titles pun and cross reference each other, drawing out similarities and associations between camouflage and display, modes of material information and communication.

Anna Barham (1974) lives and works in London. She studied Maths and Philosophy at Cambridge University before going on to study art at the Slade. Her work is represented in prestigious collections including Tate, London and CGAC, Santiago de Compostela. Forthcoming projects include a performance at the Rotterdam Film Festival and participation in group shows at Centre Pompidou, Paris and Eastside Projects, Birmingham, all 2015. Recent solo exhibitions, performances and commissions include those at Hayward Gallery Project Space, London (2014) Site Gallery, Sheffield, MK Gallery, Milton Keynes (2013), Art on the Underground, London, 176 / Zabudowicz Collection, London (2012) CCA, Glasgow (2011). Group exhibitions and screenings include venues such as STUK, Leuven(2014), South London Gallery, London, Turner Contemporary, Margate (2013) FRAC Lorraine, Metz, Matt's Gallery, London, The Drawing Room, London (2012), MHKA, Antwerp (2011) Le Plateau / Frac Ile de France, Paris (2010). In 2010 she published a book Return to Leptis Magna, written entirely from anagrams of the title.

Vernissage: January 15, 2015, 17.00 – 20.00

Exhibition period: January 16 – February 21, 2015

Opening hours: Tuesday – Friday 11.00 – 18.00, Saturday 12.00 – 16.00

Installation views are available after the opening at www.nordenhake.com

Please contact the gallery for further information and press images

Upcoming exhibition: **Hreinn Friðfinnsson**, February 26 – April 2, 2015