

GERTRUDE STREET PROJECTION FESTIVAL

Transcription James Raftopoulos - Alive/Opaque,

Hi, my name is James Raftopoulos, and I have created the work Alive/Opaque, which is part of the Gertrude Street Projection Festival.

I'd like to acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, the traditional owners of the land on which my work is presented. This work explores a couple of ideas I've been thinking about for a little while, specifically how we connect to the natural world and finding those places and moments that inspire uncertainty. And also how these places speak to us. Shift our perspective and blur the line between myth and reality. By spending time outside in the dark, urban, rural, and coastal areas of Victoria I wanted to push my understanding of how these places truly made me feel. In the day, certain places impose themselves upon you, being able to see clearly it means processing information immediately and understanding your surrounds is easy.

However, at nighttime, I think you have to give yourself over to the space and push parts of yourself outwards, and experience more by feeling. I think in this sense we can drift and things become a little fuzzier, our perspective shifts, and perhaps we're peeking into something a bit bigger and more unwieldy. Through layering text fragments, images, and footage, this work was created with this sense of disorientation in my mind. It also speaks to an idea of absolute clarity, a point where these feelings coexist, where things are alive and opaque at the same time. This work exists at the threshold where we jettison our waking reality and routines, and toy with the idea of accepting the disorder of the subconscious.

I do wonder whether 500 years from now, whether there will still be places on earth where you can stand on this threshold. My artistic practice has generally explored these fuzzy edges of what outlines the human experience, or specifically my experience. I like to hone in on the chaotic nonsense or trivial detail of day-to-day life. As there is often buried something worth exploring. In 500 years I hope that maybe all that exists as a sentient projection of myself, floating up and down Gertrude Street in the middle of a cold Melbourne winter. Perhaps we will be the festival this far into the future.