

Transcription Rory Daniel - The Oracle,

GERTRUDE STREET PROJECTION FESTIVAL

I'm Rory Daniel and I'm presenting The Oracle in the Gertrude Street Projection Festival, 2021. The Oracle started life as a made up story around a mysterious Oracle that allowed our descendants 500 years in the future to communicate with us. I imagine they would be delighted to communicate with their ancestors just as we'd be excited to send messages, to say Ferdinand Magellan, who sailed around the world 500 years ago, or Martin Luther who lived in 1521, except our descendants would probably have a lot of questions and accusations about how we treated the earth and other species way back in an indulgent 2021. But first and foremost, I think they would have been keen to show us their religious beliefs before asking questions and to show us their culture as a sort of pride that they had survived the mess that we had left them a new place in the world that they had created for themselves.

And so the Oracle sends us glitched and echoed images of one of their people performing some sort of religious ritual. We don't recognize the ritual or his clothes because after the devastation, they inherit from us with rising seas and the loss of fertile land. They've abandoned our religions. In their place, they have developed a new religion. They have returned to their more primitive state in touch with nature, and they worshiped the sea and its inundating power. I imagine that as technology and modernity is stripped from us, a different kind of paradise will emerge. One depicted here in the Oracle, now descendants have become closer to animals with the hierarchy between human and animals breaking down. We are animals after all and in this future, humans are now just another part of the Earth's carefully balanced ecology.

My art practice often combines performance with video installation and photography. I've recently introduced Butoh inspired dance as a way to express my inner animal. The movements taught by Butoh invoke a kind of trance that allows me to forget that I exist for a short time to immerse myself in a place outside myself and to drop the human mask.