

James Alec Hardy: Some Things are Clearer in the Dark at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

British artist James Alec Hardy's first solo show 'Some Things are Clearer in the Dark' completely lights up the Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery.

James Alec Hardy focuses his art creations on the notions of knowing and not knowing, fact and fiction, and what he refers to himself as "perception management". 'Some Things are Clearer in the Dark' explores the concept of what Hardy refers to as 'doors in doors in doors', which serves as a reminder to viewers that there is always more than one way to go in life.

The exhibition explores the use of portals and false doorways. Portals contain an unknown certainty that entering one could either take you to your intended destination, or take you somewhere unexpected. Portals contain the potential to lead us into an infinite amount of places unknown.

Portals in architecture are used as openings for buildings or gateways, often appearing as grand entrances to important structures. The surface of these portals may be made with simple building materials but they are decorated with the most exquisite ornamentation. In fantasy, portals generally refer to magical doorways that connect to distant locations separated by spacetime, taking users to magical places, other worlds and dimensions, the past or future and and other plains of existence. Hardy's "portals" have an air of fantasy about them, leading viewers to wonder where, if they could, would they travel to should they step through the hypnotic mass of colours and lights presented by the artist.

False doors on the other hand represent the exact opposite to portals: solid, hard and sealed shut. False doors usually have no obvious point of entry and need to be opened for us by some higher power or hidden keyhole. The Ancient Egyptians believed false doors were a threshold between the world of the dead and the living, through which a deity or deceased being could enter and exit. The exhibition gives viewers hints and machinery and cables connected to the artworks, not dissimilar to having a peek behind the curtain in the Wizard of Oz, revealing to the viewers the honest way in which the effect of the "portals" is created.

Hardy's work features a heavy usage of geometry, opting for the use of optics rather than HD projectors, paying homage to the theory suggesting that grand painting masters of the 17th century used lenses to attain the incredible, innovative way in which they depicted the world around them.

Hardy built bespoke steam-punk video projectors, making the videos a little fuzzy. These projectors are best seen at work in the 'dark room' of the exhibition, which cements the exhibition title, "Some Things are Clearer in the Dark".

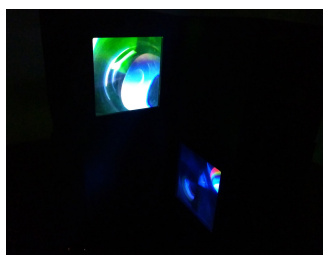
The 'dark room' is a small room in the gallery closed off by a thick, black velvet curtain, which allows absolutely no natural light into the room. Once inside, viewers could lose themselves for days (or at least until the gallery closes), watching the projectors cast stunning displays of light on the walls, creating completely unique geometric patterns and images, accompanied by trance-inducing low humming music. The immersive experience of the room, wrapped in darkness while being surrounded by faint flickering lights, creates moments of magic for viewers enjoying the illusions. The 'dark room' also calls for a sense of trust from viewers who disappear behind the curtain, into a room where they're blind, relying solely on the small lights and sound to guide them, not knowing what lies on the other side - much like entering a portal.

The darkness of the experience makes it difficult to capture the images and the experience on a phone or a camera, giving viewers the chance to select what they deem shareable on social media. However, that is exactly the point of this exhibition, for you to go and see it for yourself, and lose yourself as you step through the portal into James Alec Hardy's hypnotic world of colour emerging from the void of darkness.

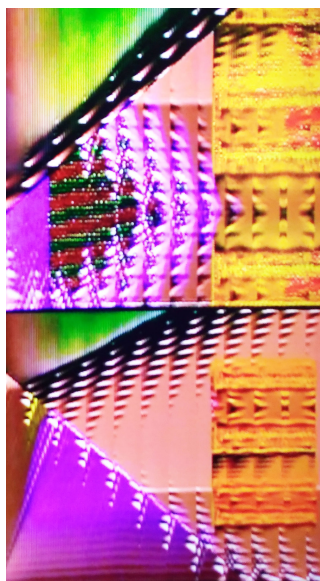
'Some Things are Clearer in the Dark' is on show at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery until 11th November. More information may be found [here](#).



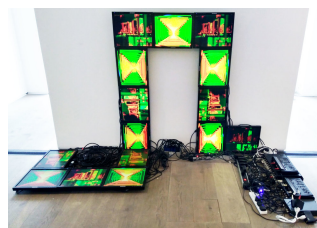
James Alec Hardy: 171012PTAHL, 2017
3 Channel Digitalised Analogue video playback system
270 x 258 x 12 cm



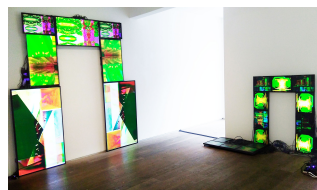
James Alec Hardy: N.E.W.S., 2017
4 Channel Digitalised Analogue video on optical video playback system
Variable



James Alec Hardy: 171012PTAHL (Close-up), 2017
3 Channel Digitalised Analogue video on playback system
270 x 258 x 12 cm



James Alec Hardy: 170916cc, 2017
2 Channel Digitalised Analogue video on playback system
Variable



James Alex Hardy: Works from 'Some Things are Clearer in the Dark' exhibition at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery (Left)
171012PTAHR
2017
3 Channel Digitalised Analogue video on playback system
270 x 258 x 12 cm

(Right)
170916cc
2017

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