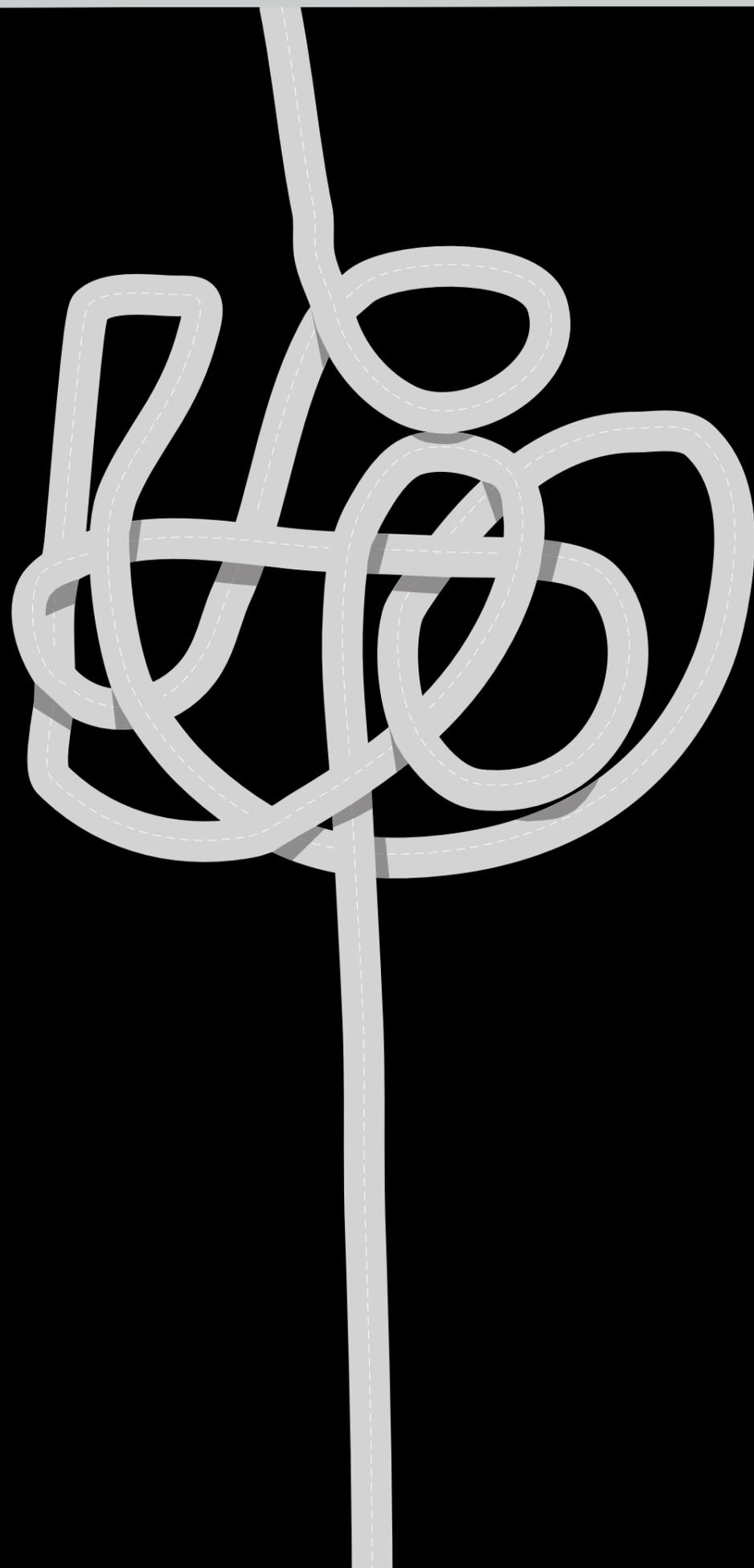


"No-one loves the messenger who brings bad news."
From *Antigone* by Sophocles



Messengers come from many places bearing a variety of news, good bad and indifferent. They tell us of experiences and events that we haven't witnessed, that happened in a remote or inaccessible location. They bear witness and we have a choice whether to trust to that witnessing. Like Hermes (messenger of the Olympians and the patron of boundaries and those who cross them), these messengers can also bring knowledge of things unknown to humanity. Alien abductees bringing tales of galactic peace or disaster, mediums interpreting voices from the other side, these are the messengers who claim contact with exotic and impossible places but the words they bring lack exoticism and impossibility.

To launch the GPS Higlett has produced a body of work to accompany his converted car that will offer messages that are intrinsically inaccessible and the incomprehensible, conversations that are closed cycles between two others that we aren't meant to overhear or understand. Cyclical dialogues from other worlds that are witnessed and misinterpreted by the audience.

Stationed outside for the preview, the GPS broadcasts a manufactured conversation "..." between the HAL computer from Kubrick's film of 2001: A Space Odyssey. HAL is duplicated and talks to himself, the human is removed from the equation and becomes an inhuman internal dialogue, computer to computer, the Olympians talking to each other through the GPS. In the back window of the car is a faded picture of the Apollo 13 astronauts, long since disregarded, an unimportant part of the equation. After the preview the speaker system will be removed from the car and placed on the gallery floor, silent thereafter, the dialogue resolved. Alongside it will be the 'stealth hood', a lozenge shaped cover for the speaker mainframe, perhaps to conceal the messenger when it carries bad news.

Immediately as you enter the space there is a projection of an interview with Hapus, a cat. Referencing Marcel Broodthaers' 'Interview with a Cat', Hapus is interviewed about her existence and she replies in her native tongue, she understands the interviewer in order to answer but her responses are meaningless to anyone other than another cat.

On the wall behind this is another video piece "All these Worlds are Yours Except.." documenting the first outing of the GPS. Mirroring the Great Bear constellation using roundabouts in Cardiff the GPS circumnavigates whilst from inside the car the sonic artists Bear Man respond musically to what they see outside. We the audience are witnesses to a dialogue between the sound emanating from the car and the urban spaces it resonates in. Next to this film is a new text by Leona Jones entitled 'Frere Jacque' that creates a first page from a fictional academic text discussing the origins of singing in the round, a musical form that intends more than the words it contains and those that describe it.

Bear Man will recreate this process for the preview, a sonic response from a figurative underworld signified by drawn back AstroTurf to an above ground drummer. On the wall to one side of this is a street map of Cardiff where all of the roundabouts have been marked from memory and colour graded like stars according to magnitude of brightness. Accompanying this is a watercolour of discarded road signs, removing any traditional sense of direction or purpose the map may have had. This feeling is repeated in the three torturous road maps painted on card by the entrance, there are no starting points or destinations journeying these roads, no arrivals.

Finally in the back of the space is an enlarged photograph of Mars at the closest point to Earth it has been in recorded history. Enlarged from a digital photograph where the planet appeared only two pixels large the image has been further magnified. We are forced into close proximity to a heavenly body that we are unable to fully encounter, only through this heavily mediated version.

The messenger that truly has the most interesting of news is the one we probably won't be able to or don't want to understand. Maybe only when it is too late.

text by Mike Cousin Curator g39