

Wrik Mead - Draw the Line

Canadian artist Wrik Mead's new work at Payneshurvell Gallery should be on the 'to do' list during Frieze week.

Known internationally for his short animations that follow the smoke of; Genet's *Un chant d'amour*, through endless poetic circles and spirals of desire. Mead's corpus signifies the resilience and seduction of queer culture as it navigates the gaps in mainstream culture. The straight description of the new work would be that it is a biographical treatise that fixes a year, 1975 as the point of origin for the artist's identity. A point not so much of birth but of becoming.

But of course a point, as we pay curators to know, is not to be dismissed as a full stop. Rather a point should be considered rather as circumference of flight, a space of pirouettes and erased periods of thought.

To decipher the smudged lines that Mead choreographs so eloquently to his original digital score, is to be stung by swarm of metaphors he releases into the field of vision. We must attend to the swarm rather than the meaning of the single insect; as through grammatical play we must insert commas and parenthesis to herd our meaning and chase the flow of the animation rather than the single frame: that can as he suggests get caught in an imaginary projector gate and burn...

The images in, *Draw the Line* create a symbolic border over which we stray at our peril to a point of no return, caught in the storm of narration beyond the yellow brick road, the signs are not readable in the linear sense but follow the complicity of thought after the seminal, *On the Line* of 1983 by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, into the groove, which is both a trap for sound and the architecture of sonic memory. Memory we should remind ourselves is synesthetic or promiscuous and remixes perception like so many lines over written on a blackboard, or should we say: that in caring for the image and reflecting *with the artist* on the inscription and the imposition of identify on our collection of records, (which might also be archives and subject the regimes of scrutiny of the police or state, depending on those other fictional lines which in cartography denote the territory.) we find ourselves in a space of periphery and resistance. A space of darkness where only aesthetics and the possibility of hallucinating a studio chalked onto the walls suggest this is an opportunity to imagine a line of flight. Experience is what you want it to be, so maybe price tags in Frieze Masters and the soft lighting will be a buzz but if the curious urge to go off piste overcomes you then simply head East wherever that is?

Mark Waugh / curator / author