



Jan
21

Memorsion at Paved Arts *Upstairs!



Have you ever had a dream that you were inside of a television.. and the TV was playing *Blade Runner*?

That's how I felt as I explored the new video installation "Memorsion" by Manuel Chantre at Paved Arts Center. It's like a strange techno dream that you are trying to sort out what is reality, what is virtual and what is memory. Chantre chose images that feels like a grimy industrial future. Empty of inhabitants his images explore something lost but still there: weathered concrete overpasses, abandoned office buildings, empty doorways, littered alleys and dirty graffiti. Most of the video and imagery has disfiguring shadows, light strobing and filtered effects so that you are trying piece together what you are actually seeing. It's predominantly in black and white, but there's an occasional blast of colour that shocks you. There's also occasional close up images of people performing daily rituals of washing their faces and brushing their hair. For me, seeing people in the video created a more enriching inner narrative as I put these places into a human-relation context.

During the artist talk, Manuel mentioned that he was inspired by some of the grand abandoned architecture from the 1936 Berlin Olympics. I loved that idea and I could feel his inspiration in his work. Something about humans' grand plans, hubris and

impermanence..reminded me of poem *the Statue* (of Ozymandias) but this statue being the city.



With 16 -10 foot screens, and stirring soundtrack; Memorsion is truly an immersive experience. Manual Chantre has transformed the upstairs event space: the walls disappear while the screens' projected material seems to float. The screens are well engineered: they are transparent enough to allow light to pass through them but opaque enough to keep a clear image. The space has a transformative effect on the viewer. Viewers become ghosts as they wander the space sometimes appearing as shadows or another projected surface. Then there's the coolest part: it's a dynamic video that changes with gallery traffic. There are infrared cameras that

trigger different video sequences that are spliced into the program if there are people in the infrared area. Besides the video changing, the space feels differently with depending on the amount of people in it.

When I visited Memorsion, I first explored the space finding different vantage points and layers of screens. But I found staying in a fixed position, sitting and staring through the exhibit to be the most enjoyable. I could see a screen clearly as the rest of the screens blurred and warped around my periferal views feeling more immersive.



Memorsion is upstairs at Paved Arts until Feb 21. Paved Arts is open Tues-Fri (12-6) and Saturday (12-4). Head to 20th Street to check it out!