

Hauntology Now

The Museum of Garden History, Monday 12th May 2008

Day 3 of the Atmospheres 2 festival

In the past two years, the concept of 'hauntology' has emerged as a name for the zeitgeist. The shades of the past become more vivid than anything turned up by the present.

The spirit of the times is itself spectral. Faced with the apparent triumph of global Capital and the collapse of cultural innovation, artists and critics impatient with postmodern culture's 'nostalgia mode' are forced back to a time before the End of History. They engage in mourning and melancholia for what has disappeared and what never came to be. Everyday life becomes ghostly... a saturated culture is unable to forget that things were not always like this.

Coined by Derrida in his *Spectres Of Marx*, 'hauntology' now has an unlife of its own. It is in relation to sound, in particular, that 'hauntology' has gained its second – or should that be third life.

Recent releases by Burial, the Ghost Box label, Mordant Music, The Caretaker, Philip Jeck, Gavin Bryars and Chris Watson have in their different ways exemplified a hauntological sensibility. The revival of attention upon the post-vinyl status of groups like Joy Division, The Gang of Four, The Fall etc. presents a parallel narrative that conditions development in the present.

This May 12 event will be the first to deal with the relation between sound and hauntology, and will focus in particular on the role of space in generating hauntological effects. Why do certain places retain the traces of past sonic events? Why is so much hauntological music tied up with particular spaces? What has the disappearance of the concept of public space to do with hauntology?

The day will be divided into afternoon and evening sessions. The afternoon will be devoted to theoretical explorations of sonic hauntology, with presentations by Mark Fisher (The Wire, k-punk weblog), Jon Wozencroft (Touch, Royal College of Art), Paul Devereux (author, researcher into Archaeoacoustics, Royal College of Art), and Steve Goodman, better known as Kode9 (University of East London). The evening will be given over to performances and interventions, with The Caretaker, Kode9 and The Spaceape and Philip Jeck headlining. More details to be added.

Day session: £8.00

Evening concert: £12.00

Combined ticket: £15.00