

Shadows, Ghosts & Defects
James Dean Diamond
Curated by Samia Ashraf

Shadows, Ghosts & Defects

James Dean Diamond's abstract metropolis features ghostly figures emerging from the shadows of a city. A displaced population have become outlines of their former selves, leaving traces across time as they intertwine between their past, present and future existences.

'Shadows, Ghosts & Defects' is an exhibition comprising 14 colour photographic pieces, each measuring 104cm x 58cm. This alternate reality conflates two thoughts, the philosophical and the scientific, in which 'the self is not a single, simple, unified entity but a ... collection of thoughts, feelings and sensations'¹ coexisting among the palpable physical, mechanical and kinetic energy of the city. The urban landscape is characterised as a place of multiple journeys, as well as an environment to interpret ideas relating to the 'multiverse' concept – where many universes with different properties are present.

Diamond's imagination is captured by the subject of parallel existence and how this develops into a scientific issue, in part to dispel the belief that we are in the company of a spirit world of spectres. During the 1950s the American scientist Hugh Everett began to apply the laws of quantum mechanics, undertaking a double-slit experiment using photons and, later, atoms, to demonstrate that at any given time a particle exists in two places. This breakthrough became an inspiration for a generation of eminent scientists, including Stephen Hawking², Michael James Duff³, Alan Guth⁴, Andrei Linde⁵, Neil Geoffrey Turok⁶, Max Tegmark⁷ and Clifford Victor Johnson⁸. Subsequent research led to findings such as 'wormholes', 'time offsets', 'string theory' and 'membrane theory', which conclude that, at any given point up to 11 separate dimensions exist. Further examination suggests that the multiverse may coexist in the form of floating bubble membranes of space and time. On occasion, these parallel-universe membranes collide and ripple against each other – resulting in time shifts and wormholes, as energy transfers from one dimension to another.

Diamond's work encompasses these leading theories through the experimentation of layering a single frame with a collation of the 360-degrees of a moment. The camera acts as a device to observe the traversing energy of steely greys unfold into washes of shimmering ochre, red and golden light and to capture the fleeting moments of an unidentified population.

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Simplifying, deconstructing and merging the elements 'in camera', the architecture and protagonists are recast into a beguiling translucent state of vaporised remains.

The artist's multivalent oeuvre also draws from the field of cinema, particularly to articulate his interest in narratives that hold an emotional resonance. His practice makes reference to the filmmaker Wong Kar-wai's captivating cinematography in '2046' (2004), echoing its mood and temperament, and the fragmented episodes captured in 'The Diving Bell and the Butterfly' (2007) by the filmmaker/artist Julian Schnabel.

Diamond's work meditates on man's ephemeral presence amid an infinite cosmos and seeks to transform the viewer's experience of the world.

¹ Antonia Macaro and Julian Baggini, 'The Shrink & The Sage,' 'The Financial Times Weekend Magazine', March 22/23 2014, p51

² Stephen Hawking: (b1942 UK), theoretical physicist and cosmologist

³ Michael James Duff: (b1949 UK), theoretical physicist, pioneering theorist of supergravity, string theory and M-theory

⁴ Alan Guth: (b1947 USA), theoretical physicist and cosmologist, Professor of Physics, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

⁵ Andrei Linde: (b1948 Russia), theoretical physicist and cosmologist, Professor of Physics, Stanford University, USA

⁶ Neil Geoffrey Turok: (b1958 South Africa), theoretical physicist

⁷ Max Tegmark: (b1967 Sweden), astrophysicist, MIT Department of Physics, USA, 'Our Mathematical Universe', published 2014

⁸ Clifford Victor Johnson: (b1968 UK), theoretical physicist, research focus on superstring theory and particle physics

The 14 works from the series 'Shadows, Ghosts & Defects' are each 'Untitled'
Dimension: 104cm x 58cm

Medium: C-TYPE

Edition: Eight per piece

2008–2009

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