

'Yuri Pattison at mother's tankstation London', *eatthehipster.org*, 29 November 2019

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Yuri Pattison's latest show at mother's tankstation gallery explores cycles in the military-industrial-academic complex. Upon entering the gallery, viewers are faced with a computer simulation of sunrises and sunsets at the seaside. The sim runs on a single Dell rack-mounted server, which has been customised with a graphical-processing unit (GPU) made by NVIDIA. In an example of intertwined skeins of war and consumerist capital, the GPU, used in gaming consoles, is based upon vector-processors originally developed in the 1970s to model nuclear weapons tests, and used today in high-performance supercomputing. Moreover, thousands of similar GPUs power crypto farms, engaged in a perverse cycle of burning energy to solve mathematical problems, the so-called 'proof of work' which creates the scarcity-value underpinning trust-less distributed currencies like Bitcoin or Ethereum.

At the other end of the gallery, a Chinese-made replica of a high-end power amplifier is connected to an atomic clock, driving faintly audible sound from an electrostatic speaker. Development of this type of miniaturised clock was funded by the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), which also led development and promotion of the internet as a commercially viable proposition (the internet was originally envisioned as a distributed, node-based communication network tolerant to Soviet nuclear strikes, and was used to connect several military-academic supercomputer installations). In this case, DARPA's clock, developed with universities such as Caltech, could be deployed on drones or computationally-enhanced field assets (such as special forces operating in urban environments, where GPS access may be spotty or actively jammed).

What might it mean to wire up a military-grade atomic clock to a fake bit of audiophile kit? To one sceptical of globalisation or an impending Thucydides trap, this is the cycle of innovation, reverse engineering, and replication that is steadily eroding centuries of Western technical and military dominance. A related cycle sees Chinese copies of western products, sometimes improved, often inferior, fed back into Western markets, paid for in borrowed-money (lent by net creditor nations in Asia like China), a contemporary version of the petrodollar recycling of earlier decades.

The overall aesthetic effect is of a complex commentary upon (much like Pattison's 2016 Chisenhale show), if not quite a pointed critique of, contemporary capital cycles, elegantly presented through elaborately sourced and documented objects and writing. There is a muteness to the presentation that is refreshing in a time of droning, didactic voice-overs upon the evils of late capitalism. There is much to pore over and the work is not fussily set out: wires loop around and chip cards are casually placed, as if freed from the tight confines of an actual computer housing. The Dexion angle lends lightness and transparency, and alludes to the foot-loose portability of modern capital.

Some reservations remain – the three works (simulation, atomic clock, and Perspex pieces) didn't quite come together in a single, punchy impression. In addition, the Chisenhale show also carried an affective charge in the dust and dead skin fragments within the gallery. This show felt comparatively sterile, intellectually-framed, slightly reliant on the press release for explication.

A few other elements spoke, presumably unintentionally, as much to the economy of images and tropes, amplified and accelerated through social media, within contemporary art. The Dexion angle, deployed as exhibition armature, is not so different from the galvanised building studs in Hilary Lloyd's exhibition at Sadie Coles HQ – but in the latter case it feels more of a unified, sculpturally successful decision. WangShui at the Julia Stoschek Collection (Berlin) similarly uses mass-market bathroom fixings to host a silkworm colony, footage of which is then immersively projected within the gallery. Again, a sense of *gesamtkunstwerk* and conceptual unity comes across; versus a sense of product-in-gallery in the Pattison case. Lastly, the lock-lights, which reflect Pattison's interest in locks (and echo with other locks in the installation), unfortunately correspond with the heavily-instagrammed Ghislaine Leung mushroom lights at KW Institute (Berlin).