Dane Mitchell

New Zealand Pavilion

POST HOC
Dane Mitchell's projects heighten awareness of alternative and otherworldly knowledges. Generating spoken lists of phenomena that no longer exist, Post hoc speaks curiosity about the past in the present. The names of millions of bygone things ranging from dead words to extinct species, ghost towns and former nations are broadcast from the Palazzina Canonica on the Riva dei Sette Martiri, the former headquarters of the Institute of Marine Sciences of the National Research Council of Italy (CNR-ISMAR), to four sites across Venice. Line by line, the archival lists of lost and extinct entities are announced continuously by an electronic voice from within an echo free chamber in the stand alone building at the Palazzina to various points in the grounds and beyond. A poetry of the bygone, this inventory is transmitted to commercially produced ‘tree’ cell towers situated at the Palazzina and in specific locations throughout Venice. These poorly disguised, artificial pine trees are nodes in a communication network, each tree communicating audibly to listeners who can also connect to the unceasing signals via their phones.

Post hoc forms an invisible but audibly unique historical record that needs to be experienced in multiple locations. Beyond the Palazzina the transmitters are stationed at locations that relate to ideas of invisibility, transformation and loss. One receiving tower is situated in a green open-air courtyard of the working hospital and clinic Ospedale Civile di Venezia, an operating hospital in a notable building imbued with intangible infections and medical cures and containing a Museum of Anatomy and Library. Another tree is found infiltrating the entrance to Università Iuav di Venezia, the university of architecture, a site of speculative knowledge. One tree stands amidst the remains of Venetian maritime history in the North Arsenale and another broadcasts from within Parco Rimembranze, Sant’Elena in a garden originally planted to commemorate the fallen in World War I. The regular electromagnetic transmissions of entries in the lists emitted from the tree towers comprise an intangible sculptural field across Venice, a quality shared by many of Mitchell's projects.

Yet Post hoc will remain forever ungraspable and inconclusive. To hear the work in its entirety would require listening eight hours a day over the entire seven months of the Biennale Arte 2019. Post hoc is also incomplete in nature, unrelenting new losses and extinctions occurring as the present becomes the past. The digital tree towers also exemplify this obsolescence by becoming outdated in the face of the accelerating pace of technological development.

The enormous scale of Post hoc's content is evident in the empty library on the second floor of the Palazzina, where the measure of loss is visible in the lists that are being printed in sync with the broadcasts. The printed paper slowly scrolls and fills the historic library over the duration of the exhibition, making the printed contents of the lists almost impossible to view over time. Overall, Post hoc confounds any empirical census or rationale and the listener is left to determine their own relationship to this invisible or lost past.

A Latin phrase, 'post hoc' translates as 'after this' and is a term used to disrupt the idea of a logical relationship between occurrences. Mitchell's Post hoc decouples any causality between extinction events or vanished 'past things', leaving aside responsibility or judgement for cause. In indexing an aftermath that endures, proliferates and accelerates, Mitchell's Post hoc provokes a larger question, that of the recalibration of our confidence in Western epistemologies and beliefs.

"From our current perspective, the history of progress looks more like a history of obsolescence, in which case a retrospective gaze gains a particular importance.

POST HOC LEAD CURATOR
DR ZARA STANHOPE AND PROJECT CURATOR CHRIS SHARP

The Institute of Marine Sciences of the National Research Council of Italy (CNR-ISMAR) is a public research institution. It conducts research in the field of marine sciences across polar, oceanic, and Mediterranean regions. The institute is part of the Italian National Research Council (CNR), a public organisation committed to carry out, promote, spread, transfer, and improve research activities in knowledge growth for the scientific, technological, economic, and social development of the country.

It is the first time the institute has partnered with a National Pavilion at the Biennale Exhibitions. Its focus on the marine world — including the risks it currently faces — forms the basis for a shared interest.

Palazzina Canonica

The Palazzina Canonica, located on the Riva dei Sette Martiri close to the Giardini, is the former headquarters of the Institute of Marine Sciences of the National Research Council of Italy (CNR-ISMAR). The Institute is a public organisation committed to undertake and promote research that develops the scientific, technological, economic and social advancement of Italy.

While the Institute’s library is left empty on request for Post hoc, it contains significant holdings including maps and pilot books from the 17th and 18th centuries, and manuscripts, watercolour sketches and engravings detailing the Adriatic Sea, and Venice and the Lagoon in particular, dating back to the 18th century.

Università Iuav di Venezia, The Architecture School

Established in 1926, the Università Iuav di Venezia specialises in the research and teaching of architecture and is one of the earliest to be dedicated to this field in Italy. It provides architectural design and urban and regional planning programmes which now also encompasses visual arts, fashion and theatre. The building is one of three warehouses used by the university which originally provided storehouses for the port. The site also overlooks the 12th century church of San Nicolò dei Mendicoli, which appeared in the 1973 film Don't Look Now.

Ospedale Civile di Venezia, The Hospital

The historic precinct of the Ospedale Civile di Venezia is a working hospital and a museum. Entered through the museum of Scuola Grande di San Marco facing the Campo SS Giovanni and Paolo (Church of Saints Giovanni and Paolo), architecturally, it is part of a campus of Renaissance buildings that date back to the 15th century. In the 19th century it was an Austrian military hospital and today the museum includes a renowned medical library, a permanent exhibition on history of medicine, an historical pharmacy, and a Museum of Pathological Anatomy.

Sant’Elena, Parco Rimembranze

Once an island, Sant’Elena has been transformed into the eastern point of Castello, Venice due to receding water levels. The pines in the garden facing the water and adjacent to the Giardini were originally planted to commemorate the fallen in World War I.

North Arsenale, Internal Garden

The Arsenale, with its crenelated walls, was established in the 13th century as a dock connected to the basin of San Marco through a stream. It is a site of testimony to the powerful maritime mercantile trade and navy of the Republic of Venice that was founded on technical knowledge of ship construction, which has now been consigned to history.
Join the posthoc wifi network on your phone by connecting when near a cell tower tree. Once you have joined the network, open any browser, load posthoc.co and listen to any list.
extinct languages  
regions of lost darkness  
former trade routes  
silent radio stations  
extinct reptiles  
discontinued fragrances  
closed and destroyed museums  
obsolete meteorological terminology  
discontinued publishers  
archaic and fossil words  
former colonies  
things that melted  
obsolete software  
extinct fishes  
lost lunar samples  
unpublished books  
anthropogenic objects to have left the solar system  
former supercontinents  
extinct prehistoric mammals  
disappeared sounds  
discontinued operating systems  
subduction zones  
lost islands  
abandoned oil platforms  
obsolete calendars  
past geological supercontinents  
voids  
obsolete medical terminology  
missing artworks  
former nations, states, empires and monarchies  
cured diseases  
solids that sublime  
recessions  
obsolete tools  
archaic nomenclature for metals  
radio quiet zones  
unassigned country calling codes  
drying lakes  
former national anthems  
images to have left the solar system  
black holes  
collapsed oceanic habitats  
lost archives  
extinct volcanoes  
dissolved political parties  
destroyed mosques  
dinosaurs  
defunct submarine telegraph and communications cables  
discontinued photographic films  
decommissioned nuclear facilities  
data deficient species  
superseding scientific theories  
tornados  
lost literary works  
lost and closed libraries  
obsolete aeronautical machines  
tax havens  
extinct birds  
impact craters on Earth  
sinkholes  
future solar eclipses  
destroyed artworks  
discontinued video game consoles  
extinct microorganisms  
non-military explosions  
former national parks  
failed banks  
extinct sign languages  
defunct horology companies  
machinery  
obsolete media formats  
tar pits  
former steel producers  
destroyed churches  
ghost ships  
former bodies of water  
prohibited food additives and preservatives  
banned pesticides  
aver busts  
anthropogenic sounds to have left the solar system  
destroyed comets  
discontinued railroad companies  
tunnels  
banned and forbidden foods  
former capital cities  
missing and destroyed manuscripts  
lost counties  
retired typhoon and cyclone names  
discontinued burial techniques  
repealed acts  
lost scores  
tsunamis  
discontinued automotive fuel retailers  
cancelled military projects  
defunct non-renewable resource companies  
obsolete astronomical instruments  
unidentified flying object sightings  
missing aircraft  
dead religions  
former communist states and socialist states  
anthropogenic objects left on extraterrestrial bodies  
vulcanic eruptions  
former tectonic plates and cratons  
dust storms  
extracted minerals  
lost palaeontological sites  
defunct clean-tech companies  
extinct foraminifera  
obsolete utensils  
extinct prehistoric fishes  
obsolete audio formats  
droughts  
abandoned hamlets and parishes  
enigmas  
abandoned military sites  
obsolete meteorological instruments  
extinct prehistoric invertebrates  
obsolete agricultural techniques  
failed utopias  
defunct universities and colleges  
haunted locations  
dam failures  
failed insurance companies  
outmoded forms of telecommunication  
lost continents
names given to the wind
discontinued still cameras
defunct search engines
derecho events
oil spills
lost cities
objects of lost provenance
palaeontological sites
wildfires
sunken lands
past geological ages
protected frequencies
common expressions of death
former country names
lost and destroyed fossil specimens and sites
discontinued film cameras
hurricanes
ghost stations
discontinued printers
closed cinemas
defunct glassmaking companies
banned films
retreating glaciers
floods
contaminated sites
former tributaries
razed theatres
defunct hard disc manufacturers
looted antiquities
discontinued airlines
deleted world heritage sites
superseded technological terminology
typhoons
abandoned train routes and lines
banned political parties
obsolete international call prefixes
heat waves
defunct software companies
destroyed synagogues
space debris
phantom islands
vanished wonders of the world
former international organisations
extinct prehistoric reptiles
hypothetical solar system objects
chimerical, fugitive, fictional, forbidden and impossible colours
vanished borders
inundated villages, towns and cities
theological deities and gods
fossil algae
past geological epochs
defunct magazines
destroyed temples
lost poems
destroyed and removed monuments
stolen artworks
planetary occultations
censored films and broadcasts
extinct marine plants
closed paper mills
banned building materials
discredited substances
former feudal states
extinct amphibians
obsolete low temperature technology
former anarchist communities
past geological periods
TeTouch Aotearoa New Zealand's paleontological record
discontinued projectors
past geological cons
extinct domestic animal breeds
former lighthouses
extinct prehistoric plants
discontinued mobile phones
abandoned airports
former stock exchanges
ghost, lost and ruined towns, villages, settlements and cities
timekeeping devices
extinct mammals
former town and city names
lost minor planets
extinct musical instruments
lost plays
extinct prehistoric amphibians
lost television series
fast radio bursts
extinct invertibrates
obsolete print technology
abandoned cosmological epochs
hypothetical chemical compounds
past geological eras
extinct prehistoric fungi
analogue shutdowns
ocean currents