

Julia Crabtree and William Evans *Hyper Bole*
Text by Jessica Vaughan
7 February – 15 March 2014 | Private view 6 February 6.30 – 8.30pm

[BARREN WILDERNESS. HIGH NOON.]

A solitary rider appears, as if an apparition, emerging through the waves of heat given off by the scorched desert.

The only mark of civilisation is a sign creaking in the wind. It reads MalPaso.

Julia Crabtree and William Evans' collaborative practice is an on-going experiment in shared subjectivity. The pair examine collective cultural memory via myths derived from film and television. They reconfigure the cinematic image, reversing the two-dimensional transcription of space. Their project at Legion TV is twofold, consisting of a physical installation and virtual intervention on the surface of Legion TV's webpage.

Hyper Bole takes its title from the frequently mispronounced hyperbole; the use of rhetoric to create an intensified effect. Crabtree and Evans reconstruct different visual paradigms, both immersive and haptic, to interrogate our response to the illusionary realm of the screen and question whether it is a disembodied experience.

[DUSTY SALOON.]

Bartender
“What did you say your name was again mister?”

Man with no name
“I didn't.”

Western landscapes take us to familiar yet unknown spaces of uncanny terrain, where anonymous protagonists and juxtaposed themes of morality and lawlessness prevail. Set amongst searing canyons and boundless deserts, with *no line separating earth and sky*¹, they often reflect a curious slippage between the prosaic and the exotic. Crabtree and Evans subvert this recognisable backdrop, which has been distilled through images of cartoons and cowboys, by layering appropriated imagery until the original source material becomes cross-contaminated. The resulting environment is a copy of a copy, where the gravity-defying laws of cartoon physics are assumed and ornamental aquarium rock formations take on a human scale.

[RAVINE. DUSK.]

A rider on horseback is silhouetted against the horizon.

[PAN OUT.] Crack of a horsewhip. Harmonica solo.

The space of the screen operates as a heterotopia, simultaneously contesting mythic and real territory. It creates a field that is other, as perfect and smooth as ours is unruly and ill-constructed. For *Hyper Bole* Crabtree and Evans use a corporeal approach to rematerialise our perceptual shift. By treating material and virtual matter as equal, an initial reading of simulated space is destabilised. Dense stone and earthy red clay (also known as 'bole') become glossy and weightless, displaced and only partially resembling their physiological origins. Through varying degrees of distance and resemblance Crabtree and Evans attempt to invert the aesthetic conceptions of digital technology as immaterial and discarnate. With their consciously artificial staging they render space a construct- one that oscillates between embodied and perceptual.



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¹ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, Continuum Publishing Company, 2012, pg. 421