

Unhomely Street: The unconscious and the city

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***Unhomely Street* was exhibited as part of:**

SPECTRE OF THE REAL

Social Art about the REAL that lies beneath our everyday reality



April 17, 2019

THE SPECTRE OF THE REAL: SOCIAL ART AT SEAS BRIGHTON: 13-21 APRIL 2019 CURATOR'S GUIDELINES

“The Real is an idea of what lies beneath the ideological construct of our culture. The Real was a concept of French philosopher **Jaques Lacan** in the 1960s, who described it as Nature before classification and symbolisation – how a newborn would see the world. The Real was given a new context by British philosopher **Mark Fisher** in 2014, who said it is what lies beneath the ideology of ‘capitalist realism’ – an example quoted is environmental disaster lurking beneath the happy face of consumerism. Entries to this exhibition might be abstract, cartoonish, photographic, painterly, figurative, or performative, any media or subject, but they refer to the idea of the Real. The Real is a subject or theme of **Social Art** – which in my view is art that engages with understanding of culture or social transformation. It includes activist art by individuals, and art that engages communities or is produced by communities. The qualities of understanding, transformation or activism may need to be described in titles or documentation, to place the art in a social context. Social art is specifically not: pure aesthetics.

Russell Honeyman, February 2019, *“The kingdom of culture is superimposed on that of nature ... the world of words creates the world of things.” In the realm of the Real, our union with the mother is experienced as perfect and complete.*’ Jaques Lacan quoted and paraphrased in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture* Eighth Edition by John Storey. *“The Real is what any ‘reality’ [or ideological construct] must repress... the Real is an unrepresentable ... traumatic void that can only be glimpsed in the fractures and inconsistencies in the ... apparent reality.”* Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism* (2009). *“When you come to think of it, all forms of representation are ghostly. Works of art are haunted, not only by the ideal forms of which they are imperfect instantiations, but also by what escapes representation.”* Mark Fisher, *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures* (2014).