

A.R. Hopwood *False Memory Archive*

Freud Museum, London 11 June – 3 August

Carroll/Fletcher Project Space, London 6 June – 12 July

Going to China, seeing a dog humping a coconut, flying over the Sahara, being bitten by a venomous snake – these are some of the memories recounted anecdotally to camera by two people using FaceTime. Their recollections, both of which look to have been filmed at the Freud Museum, are shown on adjacent screens in its video room. It's one of several site-specific works created by A.R. Hopwood for this fourth and final exhibition in his project *False Memory Archive* (2012–14). Just as the people telling their tales are one stage removed from the actual people whose experiences they're retelling (we are told in the accompanying information that they are actors), so the stories themselves are one stage removed from real events. As the performers reveal, they're all examples of False Memory Syndrome, memories of events that an individual believes he or she has experienced, but becomes aware are either a distorted version of the truth or didn't happen at all.

At each venue Hopwood (who also founded fantastical life-solution organisation WITH Collective, withyou.co.uk) has included works that begin as collaborative and site-specific proposals, enlisting the help of art professionals, experts in the field of human memory and the

public. At the Freud Museum these also include a series of large-scale closeup colour photographs of damage caused to the walls by previous exhibitions – hung over what we're told is the location of the now repaired damage, and accompanied by a framed fax from Hopwood to the museum's curator, outlining his proposal for the work. There are also plaster casts of crash helmets with video cameras attached and a series of framed photographs of found images of UFOs, with the evidence of the UFOs removed, inviting the viewer to play 'spot the ball' in the blank skiescapes.

The museum was of course Sigmund Freud's last home (1938–9), and where he recreated his famous study, complete with psychoanalyst's couch shipped from Vienna. It's an obvious location for the culmination of this project, as filled with Freud's objects and documentation relating to his and his daughter Anna's own investigations into the workings of the human mind, it heightens the awareness of how reality is, in many ways, a construct that the mind not only creates but can easily manipulate.

These elements become more apparent at the show's second venue, Carroll/Fletcher Project Space. Here the works, in the form of images, objects and video, are the result

of a variety of projects that relate to specific psychological research into memory, each accompanied by their own framed fax from Hopwood detailing the proposal. There are lightbox images of children in Westfield shopping mall (with the other shoppers digitally erased), after a 1994 experiment in which memory expert Professor Elizabeth Loftus was able to persuade 25 percent of her subjects to believe that they'd once got lost in a shopping mall as a child. There's also an entire wall of the erased-UFO photographs and a replica of the Chanel suit worn by Jackie Kennedy when President Kennedy was assassinated, installed in a cupboard and peeked at through a spyhole. The suit was commissioned by Hopwood from a tailor in Vietnam and, with the original out of public view in the US National Archives, presumably reconstructed from a collage of archive images and film.

It's this thought that the exhibition, through the accumulation of works, cleverly reinforces: that a memory, much the same as this review, is a creative process, constructed from an amalgamation of impressions that have been experienced, noted down, recalled, read about, suggested, made up and received in discussion with others. *Helen Sumpter*



False Memory Archive: Erased UFOs
(A collection of found UFO images with all evidence of the UFOs removed, presented in 242 used frames),
2012–13, framed photographs. Courtesy the artist and Carroll/Fletcher, London