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Luke Shaw is an artist and musician based in Ōtautahi. He holds an MFA from the Ilam School of Fine Arts. Recent exhibitions include; *Artspace New Artists Show 2020*, *Artspace Aotearoa, Tāmaki Makaurau, 2020*. *Domino Domino*, The Physics Room, Ōtautahi, 2020. *Sympathetic Resonance*, The Suter Art Gallery Te Aratoi O Whakatū, Whakatū, 2019.

Based in Canterbury, Phoebe Hinchliff completed a BFA(Hons) at the Ilam School of Fine Arts in 2019. Her research-based practice and fieldwork is currently concerned with investigating the connections between bodies, the places they occupy and what occurs in the space between them. She is also interested in the conversation between language and land. Last year she showed in *Domino Domino* at The Physics Room.

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Luke Shaw & Phoebe Hinchliff

**Somewhere
Between Nothing
and Nowhere**



Somewhere between Nothing and Nowhere records movements through landscape and architecture. The landscape is specific—the almost straight line between Ōtautahi Christchurch and Ōtepoti Dunedin. For this project, Hinchliff and Shaw have journeyed this section of State Highway 1 via car to document the course of the rail line which runs parallel to the road. The architecture is also distinct—16 Dowling Street—Blue Oyster Art Project Space's home of eight years. In both spaces Hinchliff and Shaw consider points of transition and way-finding as they offer a catalogue of attempts and journeys.

Hinchliff and Shaw developed the work in *Somewhere Between Nothing and Nowhere* collaboratively, often while driving between sites, and both artists note these periods of travel and transition as settings for their most fruitful and explorative conversations. The liminal car-space is not a pause in activity but a place where ideas expand: Hinchliff remembers, "on our way back from measuring the Norwood sign we stopped for a coffee to discuss and unpack ideas around what we had just been doing. Nothing about the project was discussed but as soon as we were back in the car/on the road the conversation opened up. This is the generative site, the in-between."

Somewhere between Nothing and Nowhere explores this notion of the in-between while experimenting with vanishing and recomposing—transposing places and layering histories. Beginning with a shared interest in Western films, both artists seek to unravel ideas around 'the journey'. In the main gallery space Hinchliff and Shaw present a series of works: *As The Crow Flies*, an architectural intervention and audio work; *Between a Hawk and a Mountain*, a two channel digital slideshow; and *You Ain't Goin' Nowhere* and *Nothing Was*

Delivered, two pairs of galvanised steel pole steps. An additional work, *Pepper's Farce*, is presented in Blue Oyster's back office and storage space where the MDF cladding has been removed and one of 16 Dowling Street's original windows exposed.

Hinchliff and Shaw have made two significant architectural amendments to the gallery space, the first, titled *As The Crow Flies*, removes a section of the wall dividing the front and back gallery spaces. The remnants of the wall take their dimensions from the sign for Norwood rail station marking the route from Ōtautahi to Ashburton and opened in September 1882 and before closing in December 1970. The resulting architectural intervention becomes an aperture for viewing a dramatically reconfigured space. These physical changes are augmented by an audio work composed of two sustained notes—A and G—which acts as a non-visual point of transition and aural cue linking the two gallery spaces.

Between a Hawk and a Mountain, a two channel digital slideshow, is presented in the front space of the gallery and viewable from the interior and the street. Playing 24-hours a day, this work cycles through photographs from the artists' journey between Ōtautahi and Ōtepoti offering a slow build of tension and release. Charting Hinchliff and Shaw's movements along the road, *Between a Hawk and a Mountain* focuses on sites where the road and rail intersect—considering points of significance and transition both visible and invisible, seen and unseen. The image pairs offer twin perspectives of the same site—looking forward and backward along the road and expanding and contracting within and between sites.

Also visible in the front gallery space are *You Ain't Goin' Nowhere* and *Nothing Was Delivered*,

two pairs of galvanised steel pole steps recovered from rotting power poles. These footpegs perform the role of dowsing rods—poised to search or ascertain and installed as if held in the artists' hands. Collected from one of Hinchliff's walking routes, the footpegs echo the doubling of rail and road as lines running parallel, oblivious to one another but vital for way-finding and searching. Harvested from power poles (the urban cactus) the footpegs are appropriated as props or divining rods which tempt the viewer to interact.

Situated 'off-stage', the second of Hinchliff and Shaw's architectural amendments is not visible in the gallery space. Located instead in the back storage space and office, *Pepper's Farce* exposes one of 16 Dowling Streets original windows. Hinchliff and Shaw's title references their initial investigation into the theatrical convention 'Pepper's Ghost', an illusion which uses a glass screen set at an angle to catch a reflection from an actor hidden from the audience and project their reflection as a ghostly figure on the stage. The title, *Pepper's Farce*, is a nod to this failed attempt to recreate the theatrical effect in the gallery space. Previously concealed behind MDF cladding, the newly exposed window becomes a site of release and a counterpoint to the intervention in the front gallery wall. The front window becomes an entry, the back an exit. In-between exists a transitional space where pressures build, un/balance, and release. This in-between becomes a ghostly body that assists in directing Hinchliff and Shaw's search for what lies between two sites.

Through careful consideration of site and space *Somewhere between Nothing and Nowhere* works to subtly shift points of pressure and tension within the gallery.