

Assembly Point

A series of mechanical thaumatropes in each of the vitrines which are activated by a motion sensor. The thaumatrope is a 19th century toy which involves a paper disk with a drawing on both sides, when the disk is spun quickly the two images combine to create one image. A popular example is an empty bird cage on one side of the disk and a bird on the other, when the disk is spun the bird appears to be inside the cage. On each of the disks are marks, when spun these marks will combine to create letters, these letters will spin in unison combining to create words and phrases. Words and phrases activated by the motion of the viewer.

The unique nature of the vitrines which make up Assembly Point position artworks in a different context altogether, the spaces create a moment of stasis like that found in a museum, the term vitrine denoting a display case where artefacts are safely positioned so that they may be studied out of context. In contrast to this stasis however, Assembly Point sits in a public courtyard and thoroughfare, the artworks inside the vitrines can engage the passer-by, the public directly. Not being a museum or even necessarily an art gallery which the viewer enters with a degree of expectation, the works in these spaces can interrupt the passer-by's day, infiltrating their consciousness. By creating a spinning motion activated by the passer-by's movement, the intention is that the thaumatropes will engage the viewer in a game, where the text must be deciphered. Then given the nature of the phrases move beyond initial recognition to think more deeply about what the text might be speaking to.

There are phrases or quotes in our recent past which conjure both the present and the past but also speak to the future. These quotes which at the time of their entry into the zeitgeist functioned as the lines of a song or poem or a campaign slogan, but when looked upon in retrospect represent epochs in their own streams of history. The statement "It's time." For example, by being stated in the present tense immediately refers to the now, claiming *now* is the time. Secondly, the phrase speaks to the past by referencing the now famous slogan for Gough Whitlam's Labor party election campaign from 1972. And thirdly, the nature of the statement refers to the future, suggesting *It's time* for something to be done, its time for change. Similarly, the line "Hey! Ho! Let's Go!" speaks to the moment of now, a rallying statement for movement, but again it also refers to a radical shift in the history of music, the phrase taken from the lyrics of the Punk Rock song *Blitzkrieg Pop* (1976) by the Ramones. And again, the phrase speaks to the future, suggesting movement towards something.

Having said this these phrases taken out of their context can lose their meaning and can appear as inane statements or worse still be relegated to the plethora of motivational quotes. This is of course a risk the work *Revolutions* takes, perhaps even more so when engaging directly with the public as Assembly Point does. But it is also this lack of original context which frees them to become active as statements for now in the viewer today signalling the present, the future and the past.