

Proposal for IZOLYATSIA AIR 2012  
DANIEL MALONE

Working Title:

*Mining The Future;  
Donetsk & Other Science Fictions*



Letter of intent, with a brief project proposal

Current CV and exhibition history (1 page approximately)

Artist Statement (500 words)

Documentation of relevant work (up to 5 projects)

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## **What can, then, today be the function of so ambiguous an entity as Utopia, if not as a forecast of political and empirical possibilities?**

**Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions (Poetics of Social Forms)*, 2005, pg 227**

In his wonderful exploration and mining of science fiction Fredric Jameson suggests that today's historical situation requires 'archaeologies of the future' and not forecasts of the past—meaning that instead of nostalgically clinging to the project of modernity we must take as our political signposts a potentially different future—even if that means radically rethinking the present and seeing it as an archaic relic. Jameson has pronounced Modernity, as a project, dead but simultaneously refuses to accept Post-Modernity as the only choice, which for him would be accepting the cultural logic of late capitalism.

It is a shame that Jameson did not include more in his account of the vast wealth of science fiction forms produced in the Soviet and post-Soviet worlds, especially as they are so relevant to concerns with utopian visions.\*

Donetsk itself, with its unlikely spontaneous emergence as a city from the needs of industry, its exemplary trajectory from imperial industrialisation through Soviet Modernism to post-industrial (and post-Soviet) precarity, appears as both a perfect setting and a perfect narrative in which to explore Jameson's vision of a future mined from the past and processed in the present, and what his concept of being anti-anti-utopian might mean.

My own long term interest and research into relationships between industrial cities and working class and collective forms of leisure culture, especially the aesthetics of industry and modernity encapsulated in music and collective activity around music, suggest many possibilities for a visual and aural project based on the particularities of Donetsk today, informed by the aesthetics of science fiction (writing and film, including its soundtracks), industrial (noise) and electronic (dance) music, and experimental collective activities (underground, d.i.y./punk, improv, rave, etc.).

I see exciting possibilities for creating an environment and an event, something between industrial and cinematic, with moving image and sound(track), part dance party, part installation, an individual and collective activity based on a visual and aural aesthetic particular to Donetsk today, based on its own social and artistic history and directed to thinking of its future.

I would welcome creating such an event/space in collaboration with others, musicians, film makers, writers, artists, etc. already working in some of these areas locally. I am already aware of a number of such people (see below), but know that a period of time spent in Donetsk would be invaluable in discovering and researching much beyond this surface and enabling me to bring many things together to form a surprising combination, a unique place from which to view the future.

Concrete starting points;

**Fyodor Berezin**, Ukrainian 'turbrealist' Sci-Fi writer and founder of "Strannik" (English: Wanderer), a Donetsk club of science fiction fans.

**"Novaya Scena"** - Early 90s underground music scene from eastern Ukraine, including experimental bands like Foa Hoka and numerous projects by individuals such as Sasha Panchenko.

**Ukrainian experimental electronic music** as found on local platforms such as Turbinicarpus Records (Submatuakana), Kvitnu Records (Dunaewsky69, Zavoloka)

**The Izolyatsia compound**, for its amazing (and 'abandoned') industrial architecture and its surroundings, as well as that of Donetsk in general, including both the 'distopian' spoils tips (terrikons) and 'utopian' Soviet Modernist architecture.

**Fredric Jameson's methodology** of using science fiction as a means of 'mining the past for the future', BUT importantly applying it to a tradition in which one might more properly place Donetsk's history and cultural production (19<sup>th</sup> century industrialisation and Soviet/Post-Soviet Modernism/Post-Modernity.) such as;

- **Science fiction writing** from the earliest utopian themes of Alexander Sumarokov's *A Dream of Happy Society* (1759), and utopias in form of imaginary voyages, Vasily Levshin's *Newest Voyage* (1784, the first Russian "flight" to the Moon) through the proto-socialist utopian futures of Nikolai Chernyshevsky's immensely influential *What Is to Be Done?* (1863) and the twin novels by Marxist philosopher and adversary to Lenin, Alexander Bogdanov in the early 1900s, to Soviet Union-era works including those by the Strugatsky's, Isaac Asimov's 1944 *Catch that Rabbit* (in which the isolation and alienation of mining is a central theme), and the widely read works of Polish writer Stanisław Lem, up to the Post-Soviet period which saw a huge wave of somewhat different Ukrainian writers (H. L. Oldie, Alexander Zorich, Marina and Sergey Dyachenko, Yuri Nikitinto) many of whom wrote collaboratively, and most recently the wave of turborealists writers from the 1990s to the present.
- **Science fiction film** including Yakov Protazanov's *Aelita: Queen of Mars* (1924), Pavel Klushantsev's *Road To the Stars* (1957), *Andromeda Nebula* (1967), *Aerograd* (also referred to as *Air City* or *Frontier*, 1935), by Ukrainian director Alexander Dovzhenko, and filmed in the Ukraine, *To the Stars by Hard Ways* (1982) centering on a Ukrainian astronaut, and *Kin-dza-dza!* (1986) Soviet distopian-comedy cult film.
- **Science fiction film soundtracks** primarily those using the ANS Synthesizer, *Stalker*, *Solaris*, by Eduard Artemyev (born 1937), as well as the film *Cosmos* with Stanislav Kreitchi (born 1936), and including Sofia Gubaidulina (Born 1931), both for her experimental tunings in compositions used for science documentary soundtracks (e.g. *On Submarine Scooters*, 1968), but also her work with the ANS synthesizer (*Vivente - Non vivente*, 1970) and co-founding of a folk-instrument improvisation group in the mid-70s. As well as works for ANS synthesizer by composers such as Alfred Schnittke (1934-1998) and his *Steam*, (ca. 1969).

\* Jameson does look at the Strugatsky's famous **Пикник на обочине** (Roadside Picnic), which provided the figure and the narrative (they wrote the screenplay) for Tarkovsky's **Сталкер** (Stalker), important also to my research for its soundtrack by Eduard Artemyev, using the ANS Synthesizer, (named after Symbolist composer and synesthete Alexander Nikolayevich Scriabin) arguably the first 'playable' synthesizer, developed from 1937 through into the 50s by Soviet optical engineer Evgeny Murzin using early film sound technology also first developed in the Soviet Union in the 1920s).

Likely outcomes;

- **Collecting**, exploring and consolidating research material (local histories of relevant music, film, events as well as wider soviet/post-soviet influences).
- **Sharing** this history and discussing it comparatively with those from other social contexts that might be unexpectedly pertinent (Manchester, Sheffield, Munich, Detroit, Baltimore, etc.) as well as avant-garde and experimental cultural production such as Italian Futurism, musique concrète, electronic sound synthesis, etc.
- **Working with musicians** and or dj's to create or collect experimental sound-scapes for use in performance or environment.
- **Working with writers, artists, activists** or other (as collectives or individually) to discuss, explore and create, a visual (moving-)image language relevant to Donetsk's industrial past and an imagined future.
- **Working with the curators** and the above collaborators to consider an appropriate means of presentation and audience for such material - presumably timed for the 'return visit / exhibition'.

**Video — Electronic sound — Installation / Environment — Performance — Collaboration**

## Current CV and Exhibition History

Born Aotearoa/New Zealand

Currently living and working between Auckland, New Zealand and Warsaw, Poland

Completed a degree in Art History at the University of Auckland in 1990. Spent 1991- 92 at the Elam School of Fine Arts and two years between 1993 and 1995 travelling in North and Central America and Europe and has subsequently travelled regularly throughout Asia. Completed degree in Intermedia (Time Based Arts) at the University of Auckland in 1996.

Was a founding member in 1992, and administrator from 1996-97, for *TESTSTRIP*, New Zealand's first Artist Run Space, and is one of five artists and critics who founded *Cuckoo* in 2001, a Contemporary Art Project that worked critically and transiently through existing galleries. In 2007 co-founded the country's first Artist Run dealer gallery, *Gambia Castle*.

In 2002 took a break from solo exhibiting to concentrate on projects including recording a hip-hop album and consolidating own music label, AoAtearoa Records and spent five months studying Mandarin at Beijing Language and Culture University, Beijing, China.

Held teaching positions between 1998-2001 lecturing in Photography and Contextual Studies at the Manukau Institute of Technology, School of Art and Design and in 2003 took a position as lecturer in Intermedia (Time Based Arts) and later in 2004 also in Sculpture, at the Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland, eventually holding position as Discipline Head of Time Based Arts at Elam.

In 2007 re-located to Warsaw to consolidate practice in Europe from there.

### **Selected projects and shows since 2006**

#### **forthcoming; 2013**

*My Solaris*, solo show curated by Romuald Demidenko, Galeria Foksal, Warsaw

*Bau Neuer Einsturz / Building New Collapses*, curated by Marcin Szczelina, Program Initiative for Art and Architecture, Berlin

#### **2012**

*Made Active - The Gesture of Performance*, curated by Natasha Conland, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland

*Measure the City With the Body*, curated by Stephen Cleland, St Paul Street Gallery, Auckland and The Physics Room, Christchurch

*Epicurios for an Other CV or, The Geophagy of Europe & its Autochthonous Peoples or, A Communist Kiosk in a Common Market*, Hopkinson Cundy Gallery, Auckland

#### **2011**

*Burn What You Cannot Steal*, curated by Rueben Keehan, Galeria Nova, Zagreb

*Eyes Looking for a Head to Inhabit*, curated by Aleksandra Jach, Katarzyna Słoboda, Joanna Sokołowska, Magdalena Ziółkowska, Muzeum Sztuki Łódź,

*Projekty wybrane / Selected Projects*, curated by Romuald Demidenko, Centre for Art Exhibitions, Zielona Góra, Poland

#### **2010**

*Łodz Biennale: From Liberty Square to Independence Square*, curated by Ryszard Waśko, Łodz

*The Secret Circles of Toruń*, for *A Subjective Map of Toruń*, curated by Agnieszka Pindera and Marta Kołacz, Centre for Contemporary Art, Toruń

*Barbarian In The Garden*, Sue Crockford Gallery, Auckland

**2009**

*For Keeps: Sampling recent acquisitions 2006-2009*, Curated by Natasha Conland, Auckland City Art Gallery, Auckland

*Cross Colouring*, an exchange between Gambia Castle (NZ) / Joint Hassles (MEL)  
Curated by Harriet Kate Morgan and Sarah Hopkinson, Hell Gallery, Melbourne, Australia

*The Future Is Unwritten*, curated by Laura Preston, Adam Art Gallery, Wellington,

**2008**

*Third Guangzhou Triennial*, curated by Gao Shiming, Sarat Maharaj, Chang Tsong-zung, Guangzhou, China

*Uprising / Downrising / Upadajac / Powstajac*, curated by Magda Kardasz, Kordegada, Zacheta National Gallery, Warsaw, Poland

**2007**

*No Chinatown*, in collaboration with The Long March and Kah Bee Chow, for the *Auckland Triennial*, curated by Victoria Lynn, Auckland

*Earth Works*, The Physics Room, Christchurch

**2006**

*TransVersa*, curated by Danae Mossman and Zara Stanhope Galeria Metropolitana, for South Project, Santiago, Chile

*SB2006 - Singapore Biennale*, curated by Fumio Nanjo, Roger McDonald, Sharmini Pereira, Eugene Tan, Singapore

*Local Transit*, curated by Christian Ratemeyer and Brian Butler, Artists Space, New York City

*High Tide*, curated by Simon Reese and Magda Kardasz, Zacheta National Gallery, Warsaw and Vilnius Centre for Contemporary Art, Vilnius

*Single Currency*, curated by Danae Mossman and Zara Stanhope, Victoria College of The Arts Gallery, Melbourne

## Artist Statement (500 words)

Malone draws upon social, political and cultural contexts of place, often folding in layers of reference to prior art practice. His work could be seen to investigate the interrelationship between objects and their systems of production and consumption with a seriously provocative playfulness that is refreshing and destabilising in equal measures. (...) Even at its most sculptural, its feet are planted in action/performance. Malone is attracted to objects or symbols where not only multiple readings are at play, but where there is a degree of collision or paradox in the mix

**Heather Galbraith, from *Speculation: New Zealand at the Venice Biennale, 2007***

Alongside a re-reading of Modernism, especially in a dialectical critique of its two canonical 'event points' (1920s and 1960s), Malone has for some time also been engaged in re-reading the history of dance music, specifically in the electronic form that developed in the post-disco convergence of black american rhythm and european electronic synthesis. Malone finds the surprising combination of these histories useful in thinking through the collapse of modernism's twin utopia's of Capitalism and Communism.

**Marcin Szczelina, from proposal for *PROGRAM: Initiatives in Art and Architecture, Berlin, 2011***

Among many younger artists and his colleagues and peers (including me), Daniel Malone's work commands the highest respect. (...) These pieces all sample a body of work that has raised deeply thoughtful and sometimes radically unexpected questions about art and identity in a period where many artists succeeded with significantly less imaginative takes on such issues. (...) On the other hand, there's something about the sorts of things he does, the work itself, that has never lent itself to easy sale or display: Malone is known for the element of performance in his practice. Consistent with this, his pieces are often more like events, however much physical stuff they involve. Picking up on this fastidious awareness of where he's doing what he's doing is key to seeing the seriousness and intelligence of his work. (...) Such simple gestures, one by one, might appear flippant, but it is out of the flatness of such everyday actions that Malone works a kind of precise conceptual origami, folding them together to produce an intricate, multi-faceted whole. The often simple – punning, inverting – but thorough-going inventiveness of his work requires patience to follow, but has a consistency that can only amount to dazzling rigour.

**Jon Bywater, review of *malone@artspace retrospective, New Zealand Listener, 2003***

Jon Bywater's phrase 'conceptual origami' does justice to the grace and exactness of Malone's gestures; it should only be added that the origami doesn't stop at the concept. With scandalous sharpness it also enfolds the crumbling clay of physical bodies (the artist's, the audience's, the gallery floor and adjoining car park, etc.), and more improbably still, the institutions whose enforceable concepts dispose of bodies concretely in space and time.

**Matthew Hyland, *Dirty Passport, from the forthcoming monograph *Malone's Muddy Footsteps*, Clouds publishing, 2012***

Documentation of relevant work (up to 5 projects)

BWA Zielona Góra, 2011

Museum Sztuki Łódź, 2011

Sue Crockford Gallery, 2010

Łódź Biennale, 2010