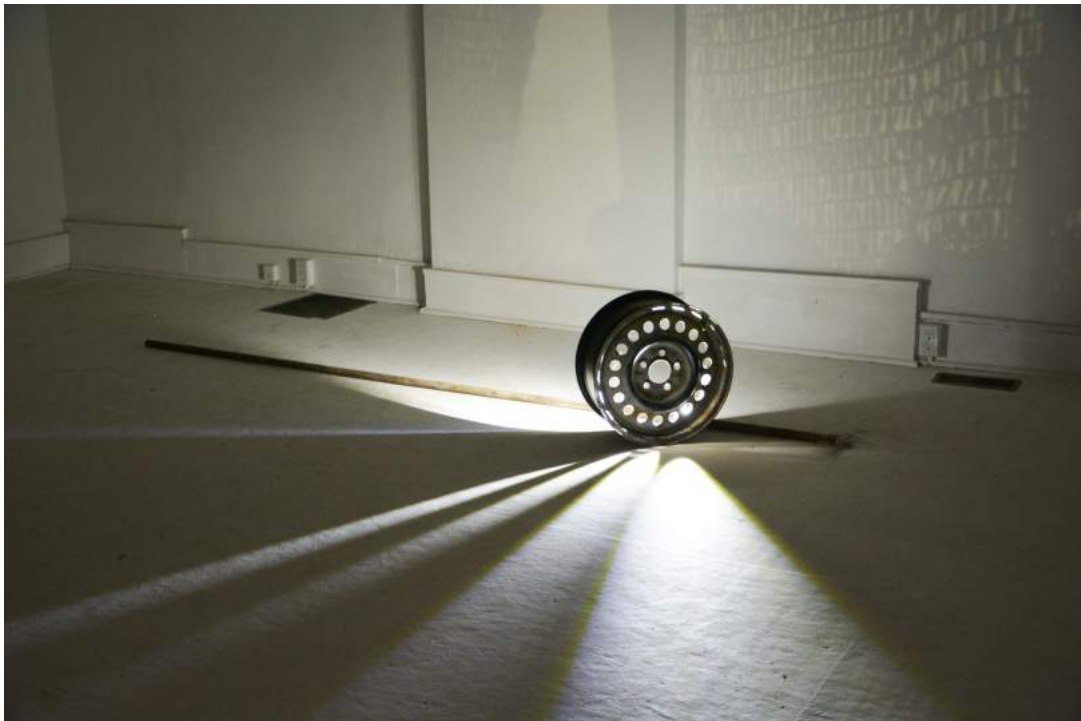
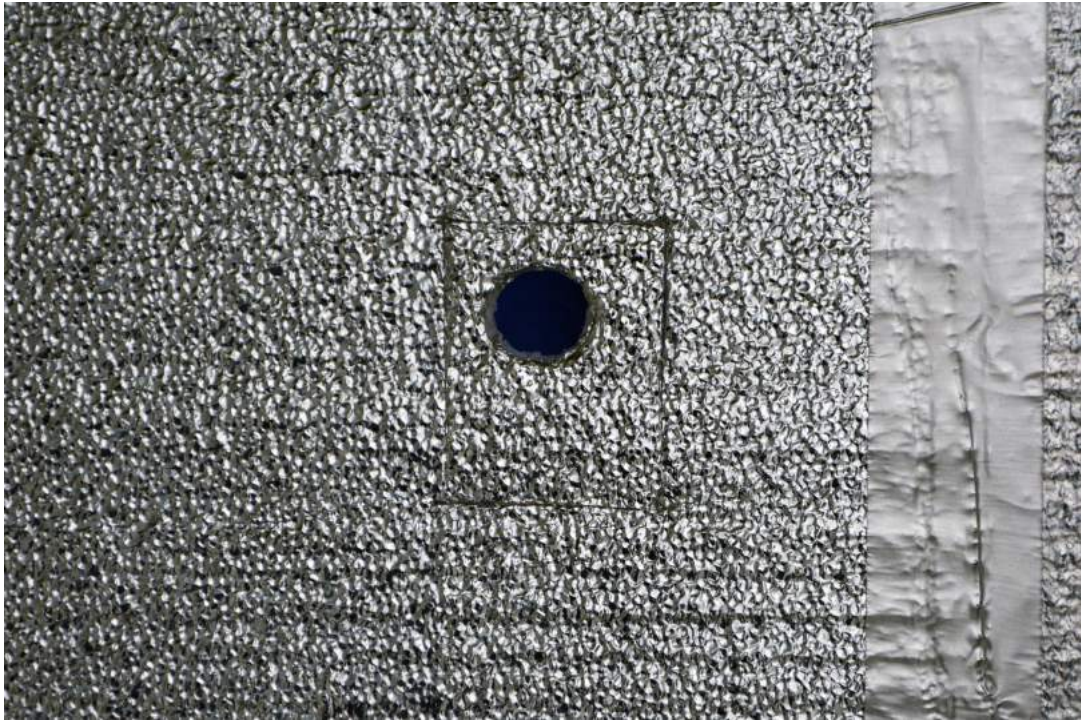


JPW3: THE SUN IS SQUARE

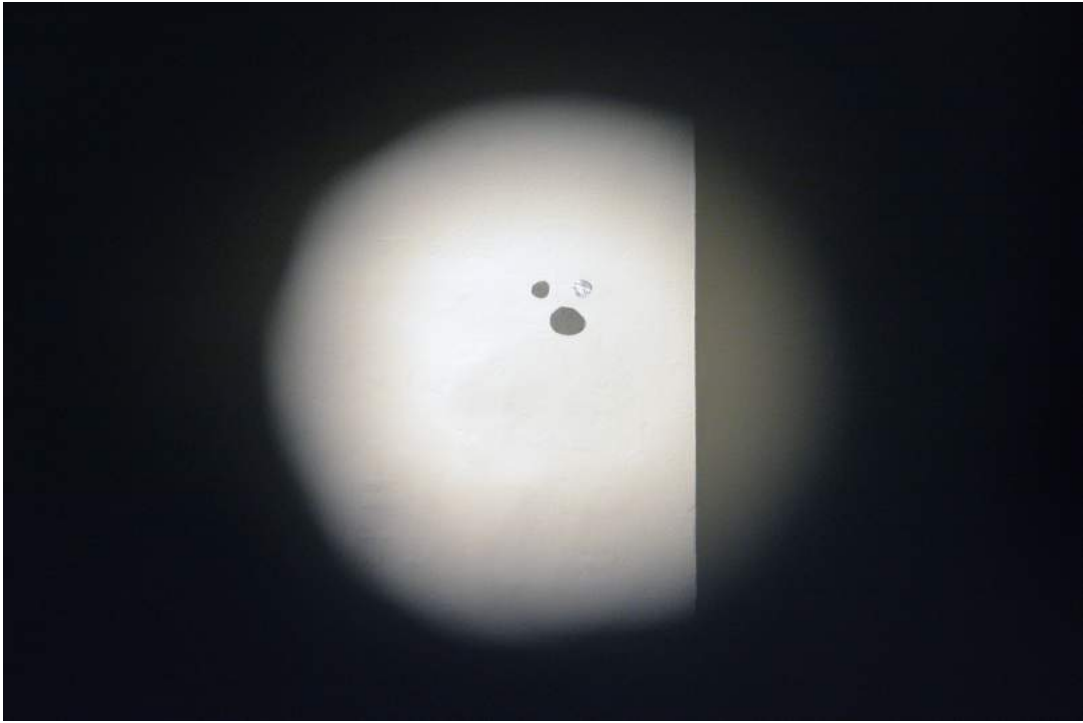












Shadow Thoughts

Before meeting JPW3, I assumed JPW3 was an artist collective. Although false, this first impression was productive and self-actualizing. Mistaking the singular for the plural became a useful way to think through JPW3's chorus of interconnected ideas and generative multi-dimensional approaches to making; approaches that activate properties to conduct a symphony of absorption, acceleration, combustion, and transformation. In light of this, *The Sun is Square* continued the artist's expansive yet direct method of tracing transmissions of energy. Light to plant, plant to psyche; JPW3's mapping and observing the recycling of energy makes concrete the interconnection of all life forms and elements.

Friend 00

Friend 00 originated in JPW3's 2011 performance organized by Action Bureau (Catherine Taft, Parker Davis, and Paul Waddel) that took place in Los Angeles' Bronson Cave. More accurately, Friend 00 originated in a dream had by JPW3, the artist recalls; "Friend #00 came to me in a dream; he was wearing a football jersey, with the last name Friend and his number 00. At a distance I could see him walking towards an opening to a cave, or a portal. He drifted quietly through the night. I saw this figure as one of zero reflection, anything he communicated or transmitted was absorbed by the outside world but he desired echo. In my dream I knew he had been searching for a reflection and like myself had started his search in an anechoic chamber known for its testing of cellular communication. This performance continues the search for his reflection from the man made echo less chamber to the man made echo chamber of Bronson Cave, which appeared as the "bat cave" in the classic television show "Batman." A series of communication devices will be installed such as sonar and sculpture along with spoken texts that will attempt to echo back at Friend #00."

The Sun is Square

Performed on November 2nd, 2019 *The Sun is Square* continued the search for the artist's shadowy double with a new approach to light, shadow, reflection, and absorption, calling forth our friendly yet mysterious counter-point, Friend 00. The performance engaged the energies-cum-mediums of sound and light. An audio recording of sonar and spoken word from the 2011 performance was played; repeated to jog Friend 00's memory of the cave 8 years prior. Other objects around extended an open invitation to 'Friend' such as two banners; one in cardboard and the other a clone of the cardboard, cast in aluminum.

Looming near the center of the installation was the tree veil. With an umbrella-like top nearly touching the ceiling, flaps of black mesh fit neatly to encase the top and cascade down. I'm told this contraption is literally used to shade a tree from direct sun damage, but the ghostly absence of a tree under the black veil instantly suggested a more somber mourning of something lost. There was also trashcan with gravel and a pole that held up the tree veil, candles near the base, another metal pole to the side, a tire rim with flashlights fixed inside, and people trickling in the door. Recyclable mylar-coated insulation boards covered the window panes and in November were put to use keeping the space warm with bodies. With the last light of dusk shining through Styrofoam boards, the shadow of R-TECH logos patterned the windows. As the sun fully set, so too the R-TECH shadows faded and the boards went from translucent and glowing from the outside, to reflective and silver, glowing from the inside. Phone flashlights were sacrificed to the base of the tree veil and lit it like a lantern. The mesh veil projected a delicate web of shadows encasing the room like walls of a cave - a space of primitive allegory where projection and shadow gave birth to representation and enlightenment.

Through a distorted microphone JPW3 made some inquiries to Friend 00's whereabouts as if coaxing a cat out from under a car. He then used the metal pole as a rudder-like stick in the holes of the metal tire rim to push and steer it across the floor. As the tire rolled the flashlights inside made circles of light spin around the

room. First with the guidance of JPW3's metal pole, then without, the tire rim glided across the floor. When control of the tire rim was relinquished it rolled toward the viewers, most directly me, and in an intuitive call-and-response instinct I pushed the tire back with an equal and opposite force. JPW3's second push of the tire was eagerly met by two children who pushed the tire rim back with much more heart and vigor than my first push. The performance spontaneously divulged the sport of the game. With every push of the tire, two pairs of hands and knees scampered to meet it with a dutiful return. This game of rolling "catch" inspired a playful negotiation of the performance's boundaries and the moment expanded outward before reigned back in.

JPW3 switched off the cell phone lights illuminating the tree veil and lit tea candles to take their place. As viewers' eyes adjusted to the natural light of the small flames, delicate shadows danced on the walls as the group sat in an impromptu meditative state just before the performance came to a end.

The Son of the Sun

Like the binary code, darkness can be determined only by light and lightness determined by darkness generating endless nuances, difference, and distinctions. Alternatively, pure light and pure darkness are two in the same void; a disorienting, depth-less echo chamber; a non-place beyond representation. Although the dark spot of a shadow confirms a specific presence through absence, the shadow remains a surrogate, the subject's double, the origin of representation. If tracing a shadow's ephemeral profile is an attempt to keep the surrogate in the subject's absence, then *The Sun is Square* kept light and shadow in exile, only to be experienced in the cross-hairs of time and place. Whether a tree or a performance we rely on our immediate surrounding and the present moment to witness unmediated liveness.

It's clear now that Friend 00 was present through ghostly absence on the November evening. When light filled the space of a missing tree and projected through the black veil of mourning, the symbiotic relationship between light and shadow resonated deeply with the threatened symbiotic relationship between oxygen and carbon dioxide.

Friend 00, our counter point of consciousness, is revealed to be our cousin, the tree.