

### ***Between Iran, Peter Hore and Australia***

Peter Hore is famous for his interventions at media events, from Sara O'Hare fashion parades to Michael Hutchence's funeral. But perhaps he is most famous for a lengthy interruption during the Iran-Australia World Cup decider in 1998. Since that time Alex Kershaw has used Hore as a subject in a series of work. In many ways with the arrest of Hore (for aiding the escape of detainees at Woomera) this series has come to a significant point in its development.

The work is the third in a series begun by the documentary video *Between Iran, Peter Hore and Australia*. This work made on study in Iran, interviewed Iranians in response to the Peter Hore incident of 1998. The second work *P Hore Letters* comprised of letters mailed to every P Hore in Australia. The letters placed on a bed of jam made a pun on his activities as a cultural "jammer". Both these works are finalists in this year's Helen Lempriere Traveling Art Scholarship. Hore for Kershaw, in this series, has become a symbol of a break from the everyday and a disruption to the televisual spectacle. Hore is also the subject in a mythology of his own creating, a mythology that Kershaw explores and is committed to expanding upon.

When in Iran Kershaw found the most well known Australian was Peter Hore. There was a sense of outrage at his involvement in the soccer match, which was seen by them as a political attack against the Iranian government. Although this was clearly unintended by Hore the concept of the place of reception, and the mediation, of the televisual creating strange myths connected to broadcast material interested Kershaw. The irony that recently Hore was arrested for helping Iranians, among others, escape from detention is an element that adds to the past work in the series.

In the context of Woomera Kershaw extends Hore's project of disrupting the norm. Kershaw's questioning of the controlling institutions in our society takes on a pointed immediacy. In a country where forms of social control are based on consensus rather than force, the apathy surrounding the plight of the refugees was a foregone conclusion. It is a cultural and political hegemony attained through the individual's assimilation into a consumer and media society, a society of the spectacle. Hore's interest in disrupting the televisual spectacle and now indeed becoming directly involved in political protest marks Hore as the perfect example of cultural jamming for Kershaw.

Kershaw suggests that alternative media and use of media technologies can be used against the existing society and culture. In this work Kershaw tries to re-engage Hore in a personal dialogue away from the mediation of communication technologies. The anachronistic messenger pigeon is a symbol of the time before such mediation.

The video, televisually, transforms the everyday of the Art Box into an approximation of a pigeon's loft and becomes in itself a disruption of the norm of the everyday and mediated experience. The style of the video itself separates it from the commodified society of the spectacle, used to documentaries, by a number of hiatuses in the normal video documentary form. The work is part documentary, part narrative with the pigeon as hero

and interspersed by footage of Hore's stunts. It is a work which is romantic in tone, at once subversive but also hinting to the sadness of this strange man arrested for what could be seen as a brave, if foolhardy, social and political comment.

*Oliver Watts 2002*