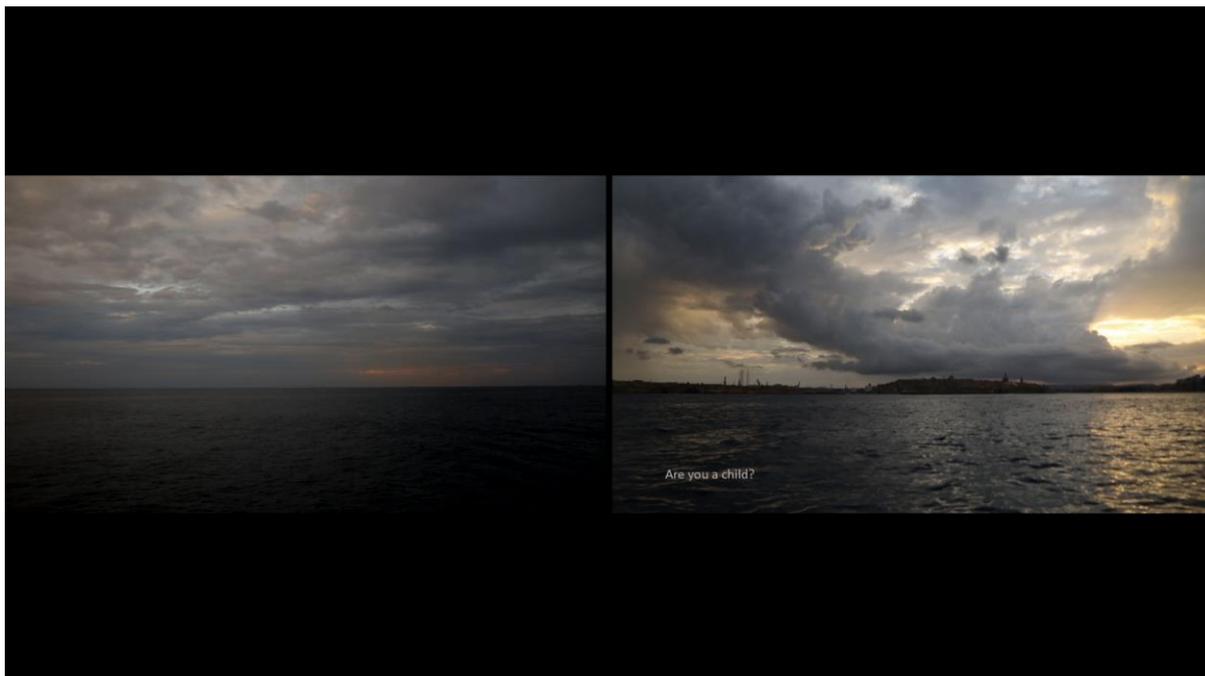


## David Cotterrell *Empathy and risk: three mirrors and a wall*



David Cotterrell *Mirror III: Horizon* 2016  
Collaboration with Ruwanthie de Chickera

**25 February - 1 April 2017**

**Private view: Friday 24 February 6 - 9pm**

For his fourth solo exhibition at the gallery, David Cotterrell presents three works from the *Mirror* project: a series of two-screen works produced in collaboration with Ruwanthie de Chickera considering polarised perspectives, drawing alternatively on assumption and objectivity. This evolving project is designed to explore the common human characteristics that could provide a stronger empathetic bridge between strangers than their contexts, roles and attire might suggest. Portraits of individuals are constructed in a manner that transcend or challenge place, prejudice, projection, assumption and fear of the other – while at the same time providing insight into nuanced internal negotiations and narratives.

*Mirror I: Hierarchy* is the first work of this series devised to explore the anxieties and thought-processes of two protagonists within the world of surgery – the patient and the surgeon. The installation considers the concerns and devices by which an impending operation is philosophically contextualised and the way the mind might wander under the catalytic pressure of approaching professional or personal risk.

*Mirror II: Distance* examines the distances between individuals who occupy, protect and work in worlds that they may not own or belong to. It is inspired by observations of the Diplomatic Enclave in Islamabad, a heavily gated expat community living in the capital city of Pakistan. Entry into the enclave and then, within the enclave, entry into the various demarcated territories inside is monitored by local Pakistani guards. In this installation, two such men observe each other across a distance as they listen to the visitors, the experts and the specialists discuss Pakistan, its people and its future.

*Mirror III: Horizon* examines what might transpire between two strangers if their communication was reduced to the language of lights. Filmed in Malta, set against the dramatic edges of the island's stunning coast and contextualized by the island's deep historical experience of visitors who arrived repeatedly by sea, the installation draws on the fluctuating paranoia of the current refugee crisis. *Mirror III* examines what might possibly be communicated between strangers if their words were reduced to beams of light and their faces need never be revealed.

**Danielle Arnaud**

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Opening times: Thursday, Friday and Saturday 2-6 pm and by appointment

Within the exhibition *The Wall* piece - a home installable table-top defensive barrier with an ensemble of miniature figurines - offers a playful interaction with the debates regarding walls, borders, and functions as an introduction to a conversation around xenophobic paranoia.

An accompanying essay by Sri Lankan playwright and theatre director **Ruwanthie de Chickera**, with whom David collaborated for the piece *Mirror III*, will be available as part of the exhibition.

**David Cotterrell** is an installation artist working across media and technologies to explore the social and political tendencies of a world at once shared and divided. Encapsulating the roles of programmer, producer and director, Cotterrell works to develop projects that reveal complexity, challenge linear narratives and embrace the quiet spaces that are overlooked as the sites for action. Cotterrell's work has been commissioned and shown extensively in museums, galleries and the public realm within Europe, North America and Asia. He has worked in conflicted landscapes, has been a consultant to strategic masterplans, cultural and public art policy for urban regeneration, healthcare and growth areas. He is Professor of Fine Art, Director of Research and Development for the College of Arts and Humanities at University of Brighton and a recipient of the Philip Leverhulme Prize.

**Ruwanthie de Chickera** is a playwright, screen-writer, theatre director and cultural activist. Her work explores the politics of culture, religion, sexuality, education, violence and art and how these impact on the personal and the public. De Chickera has a strong belief in the practice, politics and philosophy of 'devising' – a theatre approach of collective creativity and leadership that challenges existing structures of authorship, power sharing and change. Her award winning film *Machan* has been screened in over 50 countries. De Chickera is artistic director of Stages Theatre Group, an ensemble theatre company that produces socially and politically conscious original Sri Lankan Theatre. She is an Eisenhower Fellow and head of Research and Writing of the Arts and Cultural Policy Desk in Sri Lanka, a citizens initiative, mandated to draft the National Arts and Cultural Policy for Sri Lanka.

**For more information and images please contact us.**

**NEXT: VOLTA NY with Polly Gould**  
**Private view: Wednesday 1 March 7 – 10pm**  
**1 – 5 March 2017**

**Eyal Sasson and Abraham Kritzman**  
**Private view: Thursday 4 May 6 – 9pm**  
**5 May – 3 June 2017**