

EXPERIMENTA

where creativity and technology meet

Experimenta Playground:
International Biennial of Media Arts

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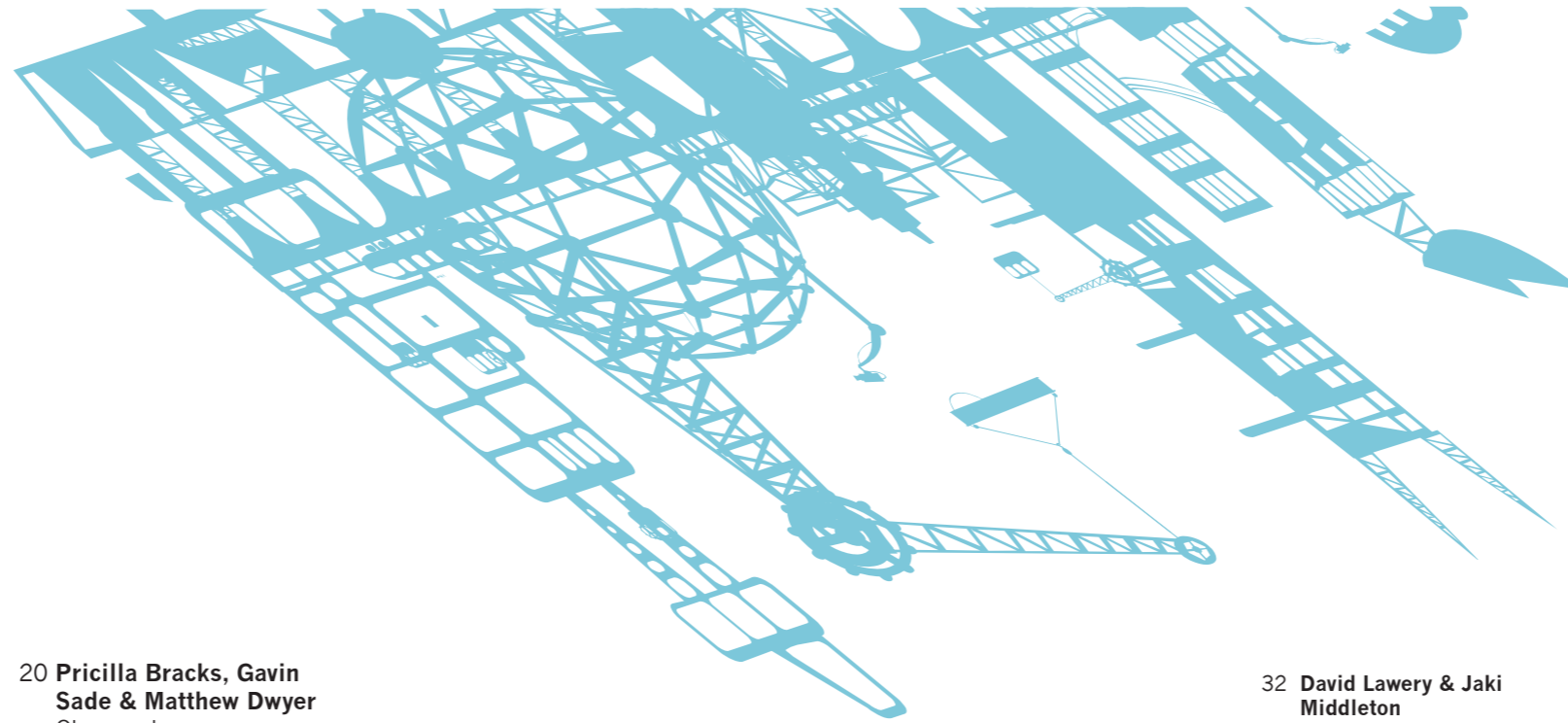
>interactive artworks>video installations>short films>extreme art on screen

Curators

Liz Hughes and Emma McRae

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Still image from video installation.
Copyright: Peter Fischli/David Weiss.
Courtesy Monika Spruth Philomene Magers,
Cologne/Munich/London..

Pricilla BRACKS, Gavin SADE
& Matt DWYER,
Charmed (2007).
Still image from interactive installation.
Courtesy the artists.

Angela BARNETT, Andrew BUCHANAN,
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& Chris MACKELLAR
Immersion (2007).
Still image from an interactive installation.
Courtesy the artists.



ABOUT EXPERIMENTA

Experimenta: Where creativity and technology meet

Experimenta is Australia's leading contemporary arts organisation dedicated to commissioning, exhibiting and promoting art and creative technology that is engaging and accessible. Since its inception in 1986, Experimenta has developed a world-wide reputation for fostering creativity that extends the aesthetic and conceptual potential of new art forms and our exhibitions have been the launching pad for many high profile Australian contemporary artists.

Experimenta continues to provide support for the development of Australian art through its New Visions Commission program, commissioning the next generation of ground-breaking media artists. In addition, Experimenta focuses on developing community-based projects through ExperimentaLAB, a project that sees the unearthing of innovative new media projects in regional communities.

Every two years Experimenta launches a major thematic exhibition of the best and most innovative of Australian and international media art and then tours this exhibition throughout Australia and overseas.

Recent exhibitions include *Experimenta House of Tomorrow* (2003), an exhibition of Australian and international media artists' visions of the future. This exhibition toured to nine venues in Australia and was seen by record-breaking audiences at each venue, culminating in over 160,000 people viewing the exhibition. *Experimenta Vanishing Point* (2005), an exhibition including works that explore fantastic and illusionistic takes on the quotidian, was launched in Melbourne in September 2005 and is currently touring around Australia. In 2006, *Experimenta Under the Radar*, an exhibition of contemporary Australian media art, toured to two venues in the UK; the Foundation for Art and Creative Technology

(FACT), Liverpool and the Institute of Contemporary Art, London. Other international projects have included curation for Seoul International Media Art Biennale (2004) and Multimedia Art Asia Pacific (2004 in Singapore and 2002 in China).

Experimenta's exhibitions showcase innovative media art forms, have themes that capture the imagination of audiences and provide a viewing context that is fun, accessible and allows audiences to engage with the artwork on a physical and emotional level. Focusing on artworks that take a step beyond technological innovation, Experimenta's exhibitions show how technology can be combined with creativity to produce powerful, memorable and enjoyable experiences that resonate long after the exhibition closes.

Enter the Playground

EMMA MCCRAE & LIZ HUGHES

Make a move, play the game, take a chance. When we play, we act and this action is essential in our lives, not only within the realm of games and entertainment but as an attitude to life. It is an attitude that keeps us reinventing, re-imagining, recreating anew. In *Experimenta Playground*, action is what you give, and action is what you get. The exhibition draws together a collection of artworks that encourage playfulness and place the audience in a central role in bringing the exhibition to life.

The light-hearted side of play brings a childlike sense of discovery through action that fills us with wonder and delight. That this sense of discovery is always so closely aligned with childhood is both telling and deceptive. It reveals that discovery and creativity come through an open mind and open eyes, through the desire to understand, to know and to dream. Yet, by relegating this experience to childhood it encourages us to consider this way of interacting with the world as immature, irrational and unsophisticated. Discovery and creativity are anything but!

The advanced world of technology within which we live exists thanks to the dreams and discoveries of many a “grown up” playing throughout the centuries. Whether you consider such

discoveries to be beneficial or destructive, they are the results of imaginative creativity and bring continual change in our world. Who hasn't felt the delight of having a new toy to play with, whether that is a bulldozer in a sandpit, a PlayStation2, an iPod, or a guitar? The artworks in *Experimenta Playground* reawaken this sense of playful discovery, melding the imaginations of both artist and audience through action and interaction.

Toying with Fantasy

The dynamic principle of fantasy is play, which belongs also to the child, and as such it appears to be inconsistent with the principle of serious work. But without this playing with fantasy no creative work has ever yet come to birth. The debt we owe to the play of imagination is incalculable.

C.G. Jung

Playfulness is often driven by a sense of hope-fuelled fascination that sees the stuff of dreams brought to life through invention, acting-out, or representation. Childhood dreams and adult dreams merge in the works *Double Fantasy* by Jennifer & Kevin McCoy, *Shadow Monsters* by Philip Worthington, *The Manual Input Station* by Tmema, *Immersion* by Angela

Barnett, Andrew Buchanan, Darren Ballingall Christian Rubino, & Chris Mackellar and Guy Ben-Ner's *Moby Dick*. Some of these works encourage us to fantasise about living out our dreams, even if this means recreating them as small-scale realities in a miniature diorama or in a homespun game of make-believe in our kitchen. Others invite us to use our bodies and actions as a source of creation, showing us how our physical movements can affect space and cause unexpected interactions. These works engender in us a sense of innocence and security whilst playing that encourages us to draw upon associations from childhood and reminds us of the ongoing importance of a playful attitude.

When seemingly innocent play is consigned to the childhood era of our lives, it becomes invested with a sense of nostalgia, and we have a yearning for a lost world in which anything was possible. This wistfulness is beautifully captured in Sawatowasi's *Unseen Park*, where an animated fairground is brought to life within the remains of a deserted landscape, reminding us that the world of wonder is not lost to us, if only we stop and look closely through the lens of our imagination. Roderick Buchanan's *Traffic* humorously plays with nostalgia by animating the kitsch, miniature dioramas of souvenir pens to create short-lived narratives of our travel memories.

In Shu Lea Cheang's *Baby Love*, love songs are remixed to produce new soundtracks for the pertinent moments in our lives, and nostalgia contains an undercurrent of fear as we sense the futuristic possibility of clichéd and randomly generated emotions.

Offside

What happens when real life invades the computer game, or art infiltrates a sporting match? Can our zones of interaction be kept separate when we're playing out of bounds? Competition occurs within a distinct environment, with tightly focussed concentration, intentional and precise moves, all structured by the rules of the game. In *Experimenta Playground*, several of the works toy with the games we play, even taking the games out of their comfort zones so they're still immediately recognisable but conspicuously different. Guillaume Reymond's *Game Over Project*, playing on many a computer gamer's desire to live the game, re-creates the graphics of early computer games using people as pixels. These videos pull 'real' life into the computer zone and replace intentional action with pre-programmed behaviour. Eugenio Ampudia's *En Juego* (In Play) conflates sport and

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When we play, we act and this action is essential in our lives, not only within the realm of games and entertainment but as an attitude to life. It is an attitude that keeps us reinventing, re-imagining, recreating anew. In *Experimenta Playground*, action is what you give, and action is what you get. ”

art by making famous footballers battle it out using a book. *Puzzle 3* by June Bum Park questions the ways in which people can be played as a game, as school students become pieces in a traditional puzzle to parody the social organisation within Korean society.

Fool Around Town

One will only be free when one plays and one's society will become a piece of art.

– Herbert Marcuse

In the more uncertain terrain of play as mockery (of both self and other), artists who play with our social conventions challenge us to look at our own behaviour in a different light, and recognise the humour in our actions and laugh at our own absurdities. Our familiar worlds become realms for playful reinterpretation. In *The Systematic Life*, Kuang-Yu Tsui chooses not to break the rules of social convention but to play them out

to such an amplified degree that they become ridiculous. Tsui moves through the world of social conformity like a chameleon, showing us that when you recreate yourself, you recreate your actions and your interactions with others, opening up new possibilities and effectively rewriting the rules of engagement.

We fear being trapped within our social identities, restricted by routine and the expectations and pressures from others. The contradiction between the frustration and potential comfort of these entrapments is felt through *What's Yours Is Mine* by David Lawrey & Jaki Middleton and *Charmed* by Priscilla Bracks, Gavin Sade & Matthew Dwyer, where the role of the voyeur takes on different meanings and empowers us in different ways. Outside of interpersonal interactions, when we play with the very physicality of our social spaces we learn to remap our movement through our environment and reshape these spaces for our own, perhaps slightly devious, purposes. Shaun Gladwell, in *Guide to Recent Architecture: Fountains*, and Daniel Crooks in *On Perspective and Motion – Part II*, take on the urban landscape and invert the rules of action within the architectural and pedestrian realms. Naoto Fukusawa's *Emergency Exit* messes with society's functionality, manipulating a symbol of safety that is usually only brought to our

attention in the case of danger, showing us that playfulness lurks everywhere, if we only look with a playful attitude.

Flirting With Danger

Once we've learnt the rules of engagement both practically within the physical world and ethically within society, we can experiment with how these rules can be bent and broken. Play can be educational, productive, constructive and fun, but it can also be hazardous and lead us down paths fraught with danger. Sometimes we risk taking the game too seriously, and sometimes the play is serious. One small move can have major repercussions, and a game-play attitude in some areas of life can have disastrous and destructive ramifications.

The very essence of physicality becomes a threatening reality in Peter Fischli and David Weiss' *Der Lauf Der Dinge* (The Way Things Go) where a chain reaction of fire, acid and precariously balanced objects is put into play and allowed to follow its own course of chaos and destruction. Innocuous household objects, imbued with their own intent and pur-

pose, suddenly seem dangerous and remind us that play is risky business. Pushing risk-taking to the extreme, Marina Abramovic, Stelarc, PES, Roman Signer and Kuang-Yu Tsui all put themselves in the line of fire, testing both their endurance and ours. These artists literally play with life and dare us to see just how dangerous the game can be when all the rules have been broken.

Your Move

In *Experimenta Playground*, the artists and the audience both play. At times, we are playing with the artworks, causing them to spring to life through touch or action, and at others the artworks are playing with us, testing our preconceptions and daring us to confront our expectations head on. Either way, these artworks ask us to shrug off the wet blanket of seriousness and indulge in the adventures and potential misadventures of play. Take this chance to let your imagination go and see where the adventure takes you!

Reinventing Interactivity

DANIEL PALMER

The world of ‘mainstream’ art (MA) has a reputation for being suspicious of technology-based art (TBA). We know the usual reasons: MA generally doesn’t like seeing the tools, prefers expression to technique, and believes art is innately interactive, etcetera. These excuses usually betray a series of assumptions about what art should be, inspired by a market-oriented fixation on precious objects, sheer laziness, and galleries’ inherent conservatism. (It took Bill Viola for galleries to embrace video installation). There are those who long for galleries to be technology-free zones. But there are always parks and churches for quiet contemplation. The only legitimate reason for despising TBA is genuine aversion – particularly from those who spend their working days perched in front of a computer screen and don’t care to see yet another one in a gallery. For their part, TBA enthusiasts have often made the mistake of assuming that interactive art is necessarily more interesting than ‘traditional’ art. Those who propose this line of argument tend to have little knowledge of recent MA. TBA artists who present themselves as members of a self-proclaimed avant-garde – in which, Futurist style, their work represents the only path – usually have little sense of reality, let alone history. Meanwhile, paying customers – judging by the popularity of the Impressionists – seem to prefer a romanticised image of the past. And the fact that our ever

more mobile and personalised digital screens are increasingly punctuated by sublime visual experiences makes the task of TBA that much harder.¹

Understandably, many artists who make TBA want to be part of MA. But while MA is slowly incorporating elements of TBA, like the walls between the neighbouring National Gallery of Victoria and the Australia Centre for the Moving Image at Federation Square in Melbourne, MA and TBA still struggle to communicate – even though they are intertwined. This is one of the reasons that the exhibitions of Experimenta over the past few years have been important. With a mission of presenting the space ‘where creativity and technology meet’, TBA and MA are presented together without a sense of two separate cultures. In the process, Experimenta have, in recent years, essentially focused on mediated theatricality in visual art. (The real-time and dramatic dimension of such art is the antithesis of the instantaneous presence that the modernist critic Michael Fried desired.²) So it is fitting that their major exhibitions, bringing together recent examples of international practice, begin their tour at the darkened Black Box space in Melbourne – at the rear of a performing arts centre. The exhibitions are always highly embodied, audience-

focused experiences. This year’s exhibition, curated around the theme of ‘Playground’, is no exception.

TBA is now closely associated with the idea of interactivity, which, according to art historian Michael Rush, has emerged as “the most inclusive term to describe the type of art of the digital age.”³ Now feels like a good time to reconsider the place of this interactivity, given recent rumours of its demise.⁴ Of course there is a long history of spectator participation in art practice, well before the invention of the mouse. While these precursors have been extensively mapped out, what is still needed is an inclusive and critical way of thinking about interactivity.⁵ Neither participation nor interactivity are necessarily dependent on technology. As Darren Tofts has pointed out in relation to the historical avant-garde in fields such as literature and music as well as visual art, computer-mediated interactivity is more of a modification than a revolution in aesthetic experience.⁶ And yet, as Margaret Morse has argued, “the interactive user/viewer corporeally influences the body of a digital text itself – that is, a database of information and its manifestation as a display of symbols – in real time.”⁷ In the process, something in the nature of

our aesthetic expectations is changing. More and more, for better or worse, audiences want art that responds.

As the cliché goes, kids love interactivity. They’ve grown up on a diet of computer games, so they know what to do. They are naturally inclined to touch, and like to see cause-and-effect results. These are the kind of things that curators and educators talk about when they show PowerPoint slide documentation of art installations invariably peppered with pictures of happy children. A child interacting with an artwork is presented as the ultimate sign of its success, which of course translates as “this art is accessible to all ages, therefore good”. Now I like kids, but I don’t want them to be our art critics. Art should not have to aspire to universal accessibility. In fact, I understand the ‘kid-factor’ as a defensive strategy on the part of TBA, a kind of internalisation of arts funding agencies’ desire for accessibility and, if we want to get Freudian, a regression. Because another way of interpreting this enthusiasm for children as ideal audiences is that we are infantilised by interactivity – just as Theodor Adorno warned that popular culture infantilises because it removes our critical capacity and eventually banishes seriousness itself.⁸

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‘Playground’ cleverly engages with play’s ambivalent status in our culture, as at once infantile and potentially able to liberate us from the routines of everyday life.⁹ It’s an increasingly fine line between the fun park and the conceptual display of utopian logics, as revealed by debates around Carsten Höller’s recent *Test Site* (2006), a gigantic series of slippery slides at the Tate Modern’s Turbine Hall. In the current exhibition, Shu Lea Cheang’s *Baby Love* (2005) raises similar questions, with its customised musical bumper cars. And what is immediately clear in ‘Playground’ is that interactive art increasingly engages the body in space in unexpected ways, moving beyond what Ian Haig has dubbed ‘button-pushing literalism’.¹⁰ And this emphasis on embodied social poetics could be read as a critique of actually-existing interactivity, akin to a less technophobic variant of what the French curator Nicolas Bourriaud has called ‘relational aesthetics’, in which the sphere of human relations constitutes the work and these in turn operate to repair social bonds.¹¹

Often simple and game-like – artist statements includes words like ‘magical’ and ‘playful’ – other works in this exhibition extend a grand tradition of optical illusions (such as Philip Worthington’s digitally-enhanced shadow-puppets). Even where the artworks are not directly affected by our movements, they seem to require an

empathic viewing position due to the repetitive and ritualised emphasis on the body. Thus Marina Abramovic’s manic stabbing in *Rhythm 10* (1973–93) is a performance art precursor to the witty game-based logic of Taiwanese artist Kuang-Yu Tsui trying to guess the objects thrown at the back of his head in *Eighteen Copper Guardians in Shao-Lin Temple* (2002). Likewise, the emphasis on cause and effect relations within interactive art is linked here to Peter Fischli and David Weiss’ classic video *The Way Things Go* (1987), which relies entirely on gravity (and whose aesthetic was shamelessly borrowed by Honda for one of their recent commercials). While these latter works do not require us to physically interact, their constructed fictions produce imaginative responses, inviting us to participate in an engagement with representation itself and thus the way the world is presented to us in general. To participate literally means to take part or share in something, while to interact is to act reciprocally. Here, MA and TBA meet. Even where it appears to infantilise, resemble a consumerist logic, or simply reproduce the dumb humour of recent MA, interactivity in art usefully draws attention to the performative, interdependent and embodied basis of our social relations.

Daniel Palmer is a Lecturer in the Theory Department at Monash Art & Design

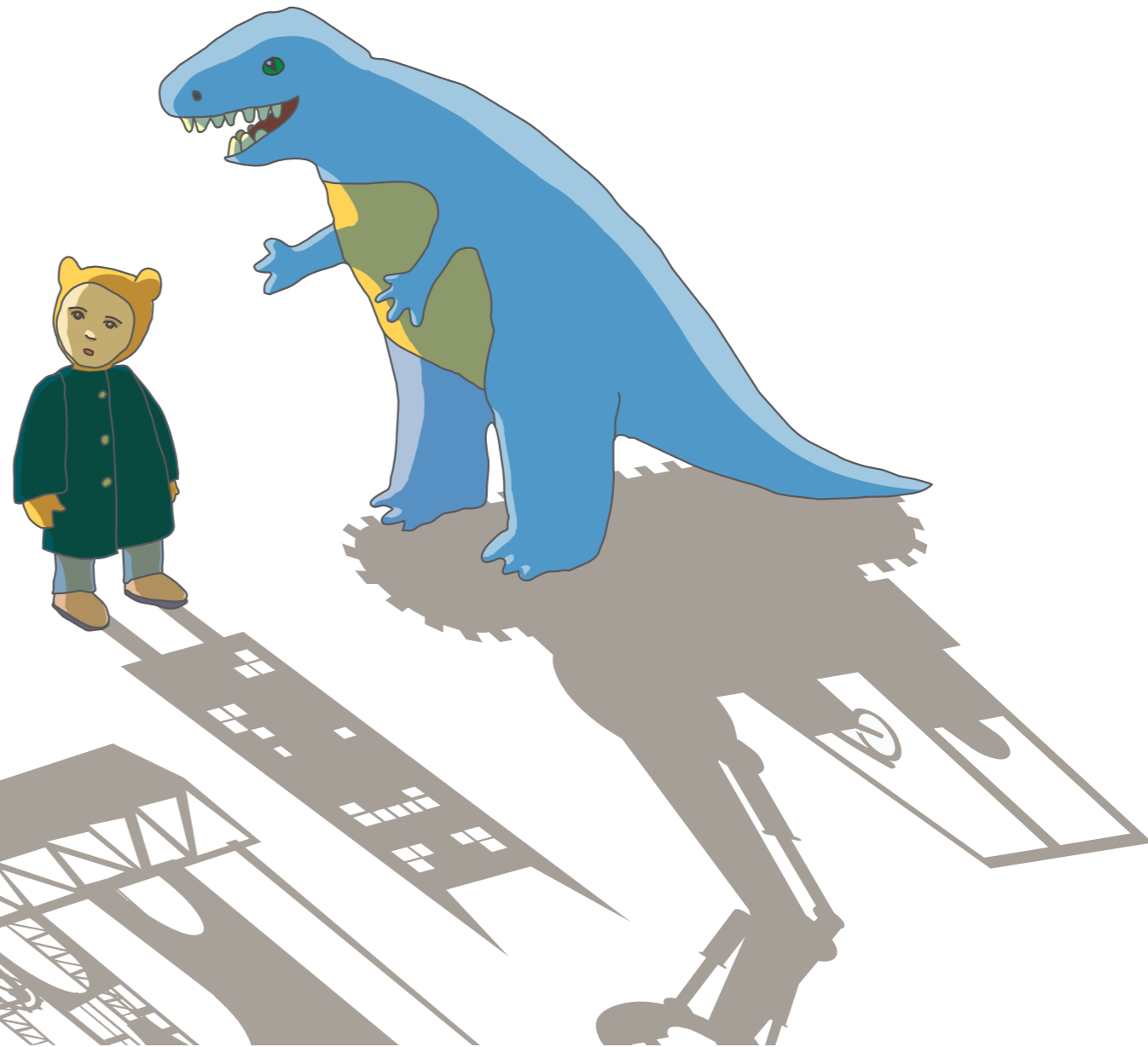
- 1 Perhaps this explains why many media artists have moved from CD-ROMs and net.art in the 1990s to various forms of installations, mobile and wireless art practice and games.
- 2 See Michael Fried’s famous critiques of Minimalist art, ‘Art and Objecthood’ [1967], in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 148–172.
- 3 Michael Rush, *New Media in Late 20th-Century Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999), p. 171.
- 4 The fate of the Australia Council’s New Media Arts Fund and the direction of exhibitions at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image’s Screen Gallery have helped to secure a sense of loss.
- 5 See, for instance, Söke Dinkla, ‘From Participation to Interaction: Towards the Origins of Interactive Art’ in *Clicking In: Hots Links to a Digital Culture*, edited by Lynn Hershman-Leeson (Seattle: Bay Press, 1996), pp. 279–290.
- 6 As Darren Tofts puts it: “Interactivity, as a phenomenon of electronic media, has modified, rather than revolutionised, the symbiotic relationship between art-work and consumer that any communications medium of aesthetic experience necessitates.” Darren Tofts, *Parallax: Essays on Art, Culture and Technology* (Sydney: Interface, 1999), p. 11.
- 7 Margaret Morse, ‘The Poetics of Interactivity’ in *Women, Art and Technology*, edited by Judy Malloy (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), p. 18. Emphasis in original.
- 8 Consider Susan Sontag’s late writing in which she bemoaned the loss of seriousness in public culture. Sontag described herself as a “zealot of seriousness” and her 1969 essay ‘The Aesthetics of Silence’ described how seriousness was at the heart of the struggle the artist has with their audience, that to stay serious is always to risk alienating the public.

9 See Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. Helene Iswolsky (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1968). Play was one of the tropes of postmodernism: from from the high seriousness of ideals of purity and depth in modernism (think abstract painting, modernist architecture), postmodernism ushered in irony and the play of surfaces via appropriation, and so on. Just as postmodernism was deeply influenced by Duchampian play, Duchamp also produced some of the first interactive artworks. His early kinetic works (Rotoreliefs) and various gallery interventions such as string and bags of coal, not to mention the rhetorical interactivity of the readymades in which “the viewer completes the work of art”, all attempted to shift the viewer away from a passive experience of the exhibition space.

10 Self-styled bad-boy Melbourne media artist Ian Haig has frequently questioned the rhetoric of technology and interactivity both in his art practice and his writing. This comment was made at the Vital Signs conference in 2005 at ACMI. His work *Excelsior 3000 – Bowel Technology Project* (2001), presenting the toilet as an interface, was shown in Experimenta’s 2001 ‘Waste’ exhibition. Another artist who has taken up the bloated rhetoric of digital interactivity is Philip Brophy. His *The Body Malleable* (2004), commissioned by the Digital Media Fund, made parallels between button pushing and ‘digital’ sexual penetration.

11 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*, trans. Simon Pleasance and Fronza Woods (Djon: Les Presses du Réel, 2002). Bourriaud optimistically proposes that by presenting art as a relational activity, in which the viewer builds contexts through interaction with the work, today’s artists are working against the ideology of mass communications; not against conformity as such, but against the social isolation induced by television and other mass media.

EXPERIMENTA playground



Marina Abramovic NETHERLANDS

RHYTHM 10 (1973)

Marina AMBRAMOVIC,
Rhythm 10 (1973).
Still image from electronic
sculptural installation.
Courtesy the artist.



In *Rhythm 10*, Marina Abramovic stands behind a podium covered in white paper. Stretching one hand out across the surface, Abramovic takes a knife and begins to stab the spaces between her fingers. As the rhythm increases, the risk of injury or even amputation is heightened. The long take mirrors the artist's fixed view, as both the camera and the artist remain transfixed as the daring ritual increases in pace. The white surface highlights the effect of the knife's impact on the soft skin, revealing blood from the cuts. The imagery of *Rhythm 10* is underscored by an audio track recording Abramovic's erratic breathing, combined with sounds of anticipation and anxiety expressed by the live audience. Identification emerges from an anticipation of error as performer and viewer become bound in a dangerous but mesmerising ritual. This video represents the infamous extended performance of *Rhythm 10* where Abramovic uses 10 knives to test the impact of this violent ritual on the body.

Marina Abramovic lives and works in New York City. Beginning as a painter in the early 1970s, Abramovic subsequently moved her focus to conceptual work, sound pieces and performance art in which she uses her body as her medium of artistic expression. Abramovic was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Art Institute of Chicago in 2004. Her numerous solo performances have included *Seven Easy Pieces*, Guggenheim Museum, New York, (2005); presentations at the Venice Biennale (1997); and Documenta (1992). Three of her works, *Lips of Thomas*, *Rhythm 0*, and *Cleaning the Mirror*, were included in *Guggenheim Collection: 1940s to Now*, New York – Venice – Bilbao – Berlin, National Gallery of Victoria, (2007). She won the Leone d'Oro at the Venice Biennale for *Balkan Baroque* in 1997.

Eugenio Ampudia lives and works in Madrid, Spain. Ampudia is interested in the presence of the spectator in the work as one of the keys to understanding the consumption of culture and modern art today. He is known for the actions and incursions that he has been performing since 1987, his internet-based activities via the website www.eugenioampudia.net and his work as an independent exhibition curator and artist through digital art, video and installation works. He has exhibited internationally in Switzerland, Germany and Singapore, with a retrospective, *...sólo una idea devoradora*, at ARTIUM, Spain 2007. Ampudia is represented by Galeria Max Estrella, Madrid.

Robert Hughes' *The Shock of the New* has never seen so much action as it does in *En Juego*. In this video, Eugenio Ampudia digitally replaces the ball with a copy of the book in a 2002 World Cup soccer match between Brazil and Germany. In this dynamic context, the hard edges of the book take on both graceful and slightly dangerous qualities as it flies through the air, skids along the ground, becomes trapped between legs and is even headed by a player. On the field, the book becomes a fluid projectile as it spins, flips and bounces, seemingly liberated from the weight of its three dimensional form. Ampudia playfully parodies its authority by relocating *The Shock of the New* within a game. But whilst soccer stars kick around art theory, ultimately Ampudia doesn't allow it to score.



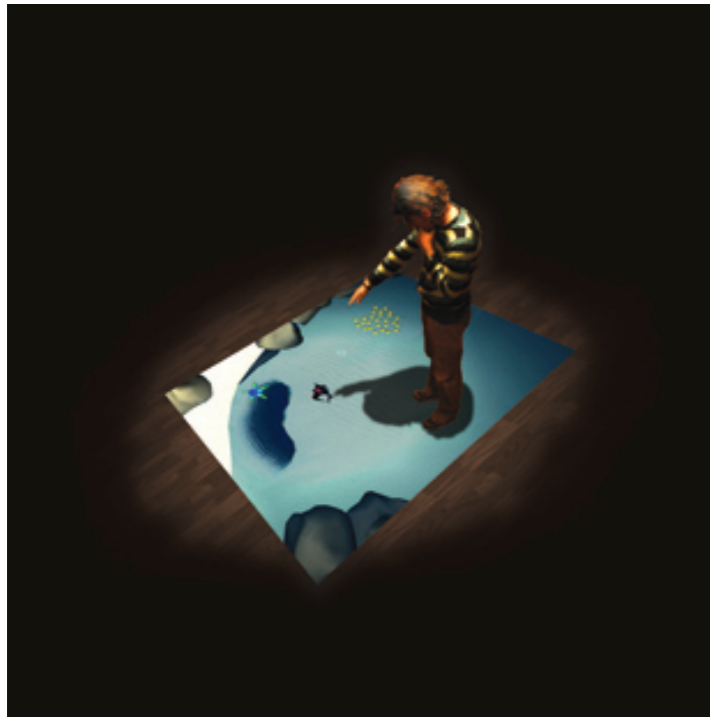
Eugenio AMPUDIA,
En Juego (2006).
Still image from video installation.
Courtesy the artist.

Eugenio Ampudia SPAIN

EN JUEGO/IN PLAY (2006)

AN EXPERIMENTA NEW VISION COMMISSION
**Angela Barnett, Andrew Buchanan,
 Darren Ballingall, Christian Rubion
 & Chris Mackellar** AUSTRALIA
 IMMERSION (2007)

Angela BARNETT, Andrew BUCHANAN,
 Darren BALLINGALL, Christian RUBION
 & Chris MACKELLAR
Immersion (2007).
 Still image from an interactive installation.
 Courtesy the artists.



An underwater scene projected onto the floor invites us to step into the ocean and interact with vibrant animated sea creatures. With *Immersion*, the seascape projected presents an interactive 3D real time experience where we can connect with a range of animated creatures from the deep. The movement of our shadows causes schools of fish to scatter and individual sea creatures to transform in shape and colour. Responding to shadows, electric eels generate lightening bolts, jellyfish glow and puffer fish swell. Virtual contact also produces an underwater symphony as each sea creature is distinguished by a specific sound. *Immersion* provides an imaginary experience of descent to three levels of the sea, including a shallow rock pool, an underwater cave and the dark depths of the ocean. As we descend towards the dimly lit ocean floor, creatures become increasingly vibrant and captivating. *Immersion* offers an interactive oceanic experience without getting wet.

The *Immersion* team live and work in and around Melbourne. They all studied together at the Centre for Animation and Interactive Media (AIM) at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology in 2005.

Angela Barnett is a multimedia artist and film-maker.

Andrew Buchanan is a 3D animator, artist and film-maker.

Christian Rubino is a 3D animator, game developer and digital artist.

Darren Ballingall is an animator and interactive media artist.

Chris Mackellar is a sound artist, composer and audio engineer.

Guy Ben-Ner ISRAEL
 MOBY DICK (2000)

Guy BEN-NUR,
Moby Dick (2000).
 Still image from video installation.
 Courtesy the artist.

Guy Ben-Ner is a video artist based in New York and Berlin. Ben-Ner's video works since 1999 are centred on his own performative presence and his relationship with his family. He studied art at Hamidrasha B.E.D. art school in Tel Aviv, and at Columbia University (MFA Program). In 2001 he relocated from Tel Aviv to New York. Ben-Ner has taken part in the 4th skulptur projekte münster (2007); represented Israel at the 51st Venice Biennale (2005); and won the Main Prize in the Oberhausen International Competition (2005).

With *Moby Dick*, Guy Ben-Ner and his daughter Elia shift the proscenium arch into the kitchen, extending the home video into an enchanted realm of dress-ups and play as they recreate Melville's novel. Kinship is identified early as father and daughter address the camera directly, revealing similar smiles complete with blacked out teeth. As a bricoleur, Ben-Ner is ultra-resourceful in updating trick cinematography inspired by George Méliès. Ben-Ner creates an illusion of turbulent seas by using a rocking camera to shoot a plate that perilously skids from left to right across a table. Father and daughter enact cycles of love, guilt and punishment as Elia repeatedly slams the fridge door on her father, kicks out his peg leg and smashes a bottle across his head. Inspired by Buster Keaton's slapstick, Ben-Ner shaves his chest hair to delineate his heart, attaches pegs to his skin and, in the darkest vision of all, fantasises about cannibalising Elia. *Moby Dick* combines the attractions of early cinema with classic literature to explore the vicissitudes of paternity and creation.



AN EXPERIMENTA NEW VISION COMMISSION
Priscilla Bracks, Gavin Sade
& Matt Dwyer AUSTRALIA
CHARMED (2007)

Priscilla BRACKS, Gavin SADE
& Matt DWYER,
Charmed (2007).
Still image from interactive installation.
Courtesy the artists.



The touch sensitive screens of *Charmed* offer intimate views into a virtual world accessed via three glowing resin pods. Each pod provides an entry point to inhabitants of suburban neighbourhoods, apartment buildings and city spaces. Within these highly evolved snow domes, a black and white linear aesthetic depicts a world populated by mesmerised figures carrying out the routine tasks required of their environments. Haptic gestures, like touching or tapping, provide a pathway into the spaces and a connection with the cultures, uncovering the diminutive details of the lives of these animated figures. Touching the screen can break the spell and provoke change. Repeated tapping can cause chaos, disrupting lives, forcing computers to malfunction and causing traffic accidents. Tapping can directly impact inhabitants, even causing a man to drink so much that the inevitable happens and he wets his pants. In *Charmed* each portal offers an impression of omnipotence as private lives and public spaces are exposed and controlled by our touch.

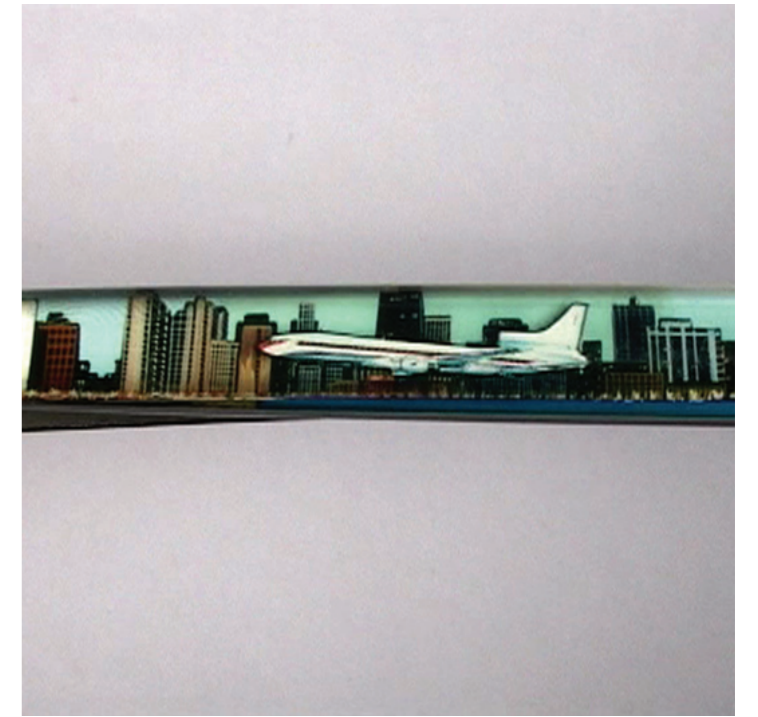
Priscilla Bracks, Gavin Sade and Matt Dwyer all live and work in Brisbane. Priscilla Bracks is a visual artist practicing in photography, illustration, installation and new media. She has had solo exhibitions of her work in Melbourne and Brisbane and has participated in exhibitions in Dubai, Lille and St Tropez, France. Gavin Sade is an educator, researcher and designer in the field of interactive computational media, with a background in music and sound. He teaches interaction design and new media at the Queensland University of Technology. Matt Dwyer is a jewellery, lighting and object designer. Matt has exhibited his work nationally, and internationally in exhibitions in Barcelona, Shanghai, Bangkok and Singapore.

Roderick Buchanan UK
TRAFFIC (2001)

Roderick BUCHANAN,
Traffic (2001).
Still image from interactive installation.
Courtesy the artist.

Roderick Buchanan lives and works in Glasgow, Scotland. Buchanan is an artist who works with video and whose practice often investigates issues of race, nationality and cultural identity through formal sports and informal games. His solo exhibitions include *Histrionics*, Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow (2007); *Inside Out*, Lisson Gallery (2001); and *Players*, Dundee Contemporary Arts, Scotland (2001/2000). His work has appeared in *We all laughed at Christopher Columbus*, Stedelijk Museum Bureau, Amsterdam (2006); *Garanti Contemporary Art Center*, Istanbul (2006); *Words and Pictures*, National Gallery of Victoria (2006); *Game On*, Ian Potter Museum, Melbourne (2006); and the 49th Venice Biennale 2001. Roderick Buchanan won the Becks Futures Prize and The Spirit of Scotland Prize (2000).

Roderick Buchanan's digital video offers a mesmerizing montage of tiny figures floating across the miniature backgrounds inside souvenir pens. *Traffic* highlights the charm of these souvenirs as tiny vehicles are transported across miniature panoramas by the fluid inside the pen. Ships, cars, buses, even a gondola, travel across these imagined landscapes. The traffic seems to sail against the forces of gravity, as the souvenir pens in this film remain horizontal. Cities are represented as a condensation of urban attractions, historical architecture, entertainment spaces and sight-seeing destinations. Stuck inside the souvenir pens, the cities become a miniature pastiche of iconic signifiers. In Buchanan's video, the notion of traffic is extended to include imagery of the Last Supper and even Tweety Bird sailing beyond the clutches of Sylvester the cat. *Traffic's* montage of scenes inside kitsch souvenir pens highlights the charming connection between the floating figures and their static backgrounds.



Shu Lea Cheang FRANCE/TAIWAN

BABY LOVE (2005)

Shu Lea Cheang,
Baby Love (2005).
Still image from interactive installation.
Photo courtesy Florian Kleinfenn.



In Shu Lea Cheang's *Baby Love*, giant mobile teacups offer an invitation to ride alongside dummy-sucking cloned babies. Together, babies and riders glide through space, gently colliding with other teacups, shuffling and exchanging love songs with the bump. The music is sourced from a Memory-Emotion database, updated with love songs uploaded by the public and wirelessly transmitted to the babies. Set in 2030, *Baby Love* references both past and future as teacups evoking the nostalgia of amusement park rides create a contrast with the futuristic vision of cloned babies. Cheang's clones were inspired by scientific research into the development of biobots. The cloned babies of *Baby Love* are an updated version of the central figures in Ryu Murakami's *Coin Locker Babies*. In the novel, twins born from lockers at a Yokohama Station spend their lives haunted by the sound of their mother's heartbeat. *Baby Love* offers a kinetic and sonic experience where romantic nostalgia collides with the futuristic fantasy of clones holding the key to emotion and memory.

Shu Lea Cheang is a media artist who is based between Paris and New York. Cheang regards herself as a mobilised digital artist working in net-based installation, social interface and film production fields. She has a distinctive embrace of art and technology, interweaving social issues, aesthetic concerns, interaction and collaborative modes of production. She explores modes of subversion, collaboration, and collectivity. Her work has been permanently collected by the Guggenheim Museum; NTT[ICC] Tokyo; and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and has appeared in the Venice Biennale (2003); the Taipei Biennale (2000) and the Whitney Museum Biennale (1995) and (1993). Her film work has been shown at the Sundance Film Festival (2000) and the Berlin Film Festival (1994) among others.

Daniel Crooks AUSTRALIA

ON MOTION AND PERSPECTIVE – PART II (2006)

Daniel CROOKS,
On Motion and Perspective – Part II (2006).
Still image from interactive installation.
Courtesy the artist.

Daniel Crooks lives and works in Melbourne. He practises across a range of time-based media including digital video, photography and installation. Crooks has undertaken residencies nationally and internationally, including at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam (2004–05); and at the Australia Council Studio, London, UK (2005). He has had solo exhibitions at Remo, Osaka (2006); Level 2 Project Space; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2005); and was included in *Experimenta Under the Radar*, UK (2006); and *Experimenta Vanishing Point* (2005–2007). Daniel Crooks is represented by Sherman Galleries, Sydney.

In *On Perspective and Motion – Part II*, Daniel Crooks produces a digital panoramic installation that effectively reconfigures the time/space continuum. Thin slices are excerpted from a moving image stream depicting Sydney's Martin Place, and are then recombined to highlight temporal displacement across space. This meticulous experiment with time and motion refuses the seamless illusion of space and time conventionally depicted on film. Instead, the panorama creates a magical sense of distended time by depicting warped movement and blurred figures, some who appear to float magically across the screen while others appear and disappear within the frame. The elaboration of varying types of movement reveals an underlying temporal and spatial complexity, highlighted by multiple viewpoints, creating a polyocular perspective. Within a larger context, *On Perspective and Motion – Part II* reveals an underlying temporal and spatial complexity, developing new ways to perceive continuity and creating innovative ways to imagine the world.



Peter Fischli &
David Weiss SWITZERLAND
DER LAUF DER DINGE/THE WAY THINGS GO (1987)

Peter FISCHLI & David WEISS,
Der Lauf Der Dinge/The Way Things Go (1987).
Still image from video installation.
Copyright: Peter Fischli/David Weiss.
Courtesy Monika Spruth Philomene Magers, Cologne/
Munich/London..



Peter Fischli and David Weiss dramatise the laws of gravity, chemistry and physics as the artist's studio becomes a science laboratory in *The Way Things Go*. This classic video captures the charm of a backyard science experiment. Household objects are combined with natural and unnatural elements including water, fire, light and air alongside acid, fuel, explosives and even fireworks. Objects and elements combine to create elaborate sequences linked by cause and effect. Ingeniously, Fischli and Weiss rely on gravity, weight and synchronicity to force movement and create change. Everyday objects become animated as ladders appear to walk down ramps, balloons fly through the air, a pivoting stick forces a carpet to unfurl and knife-wielding roller skates are propelled through space. Science also creates beauty as a spinning fiery ball trails a comet tail and fragments of metal light up, erupting into small volcanic explosions. Experimentation with the domino effect in this kinetic sculpture tests the limits of control and reveals our fascination with images of destruction.

Fischli and Weiss live and work in Zurich, Switzerland. Their work explores the poetics of banality and the sublimity of the objects and events constituting everyday life. They have been working together since 1979 and had their first solo exhibition in 1981 in Zurich. Solo exhibitions include *Flowers & Questions: A Retrospective*, Tate Modern, London (2006); *Le Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris*, Paris (2006); *Kunsthalle, Zürich*, Deichtorhallen, Hamburg; exhibitions organised by the *Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona* (2000); and the *Centre Georges Pompidou*, Paris (1992). Their work was included at the *Venice Biennale* in 2003 and 1995 and at *Documenta* in 1997 and 1987. In 2003 their work was awarded the *Leone d'Oro* in Venice.

Madeleine Flynn, Tim Humphrey and Jesse Stevens live and work in Melbourne. Madeleine Flynn and Tim Humphrey are sound artists, composers and performers working collaboratively in the area of sound for stage and space since 1993. They received a Green Room Award for Outstanding Soundscape Design in 2003; an Asialink Residency at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in 2005; and the Melbourne International Arts Festival Award for Sound Design for *Source/Sauce* (2006). Their work has recently featured in performances in Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia. Jesse Stevens has used his skills in audio production and computer technology to collaborate on the creation of numerous performances and contemporary artworks over the past ten years in Australia.

Kneel down on the mat and lean into this gigantic green megaphone to listen to the sounds of disembodied voices. *Human Canon* is an interactive sculptural installation that offers a public space for listening, amplifying and projecting sounds. It also invites your response as it records your utterances and noises, adding these to an expanding collection of sounds created by previous participants. Inside the space of the megaphone, participants can interact by listening and responding to sounds that are simultaneously captured and replayed by custom-made software. Responding to the sounds within, the megaphone builds a large time-texture. *Human Canon* builds a soundscape incorporating a polyphony of disembodied voices inviting participation in a play of call and response. This sculptural installation resembles a giant cornucopia, overflowing with an abundance of sounds. *Human Canon* is part of The Megaphone Project, an elaborate exploration of interactive play combining listening and sound creation within a public space.

Madeline Flynn, Tim Humphrey,
& Jesse Stevens AUSTRALIA
HUMAN CANON (2007)

Madeline FLYNN, Tim HUMPHREY,
& Jesse STEVENS,
Human Canon (2007).
Still image from electronic
sculptural installation.
Courtesy the artist.



Nato Fukasawa JAPAN

EMERGENCY EXIT (2003)

Nato FUKASAWA,
Emergency Exit (2003).
Still image from interactive installation.
Courtesy the artist.



Naoto Fukusawa's video focuses on the familiar symbol of the running figure caught in mid movement, signifying the direction for escape in emergency exit signs. In *Emergency Exit*, this pictogram is given a surprisingly new form. In green and white light, the figure breaks free of his static pose and springs to life. He moves around in space, creating entertaining and unexpected micro narratives. He runs, jumps, dances and finally sits down to take a rest. This figure not only develops mobility, but also expresses personality, desire, even fatigue. The movement of the figure functions to erase our preconceptions and to expand the possibilities of this pictogram beyond conventional symbolism. The animation reveals an uncanny shift from static to mobile, attracting our gaze and creating a sense of wonder. In this ironic play, Fukusawa's design redefines the familiar figure as a potentially magical presence just waiting to spring to life within emergency exit signs.

Naoto Fukasawa lives and works in Tokyo. Fukasawa is an esteemed product designer and Design Director of the +0 product range. He lectures at Musahino Art University and Tama University. He has designed for companies such as MUJI, B&B Italia, Driade, Magis, Artemide, Danese, Boffi and Vitra. One of his works, MUJI's CD player, is part of the permanent design collection at MoMA, New York. He has won over fifty awards, including the American IDEA Gold Award, the German if Gold Award, the British D&AD Gold Award, the Mainichi Design Award and the 5th Orbe Award.

Shaun Gladwell AUSTRALIA

GUIDE TO RECENT ARCHITECTURE: FOUNTAINS (2007)

Shaun GLADWELL,
Guide to Recent Architecture: Fountains (2007).
Still image from video installation.
Courtesy the artist and Sherman Galleries, Sydney.

Shaun Gladwell lives and works in Sydney. Shaun Gladwell critically engages personal history, memory and contemporary cultural phenomena through performance, video, painting and sculpture. His work has been exhibited in numerous national and international exhibitions, including the 52nd Venice Biennale (2007); the Sao Paulo Biennale, Brazil (2006); *Experimenta Vanishing Point* (2005-2007); and the Yokohama 2005 Triennale of Contemporary Art, Japan (2005). Shaun Gladwell is represented by Sherman Galleries, Sydney.

Filming his travels across Sydney on a skateboard, Shaun Gladwell produces a video that presents a challenge to traditional cartography. In *Guide to Recent Architecture: Fountains*, maps of Sydney's urban spaces are created through movement and performance as Gladwell re-imagines architectural surfaces experienced through the wheels of his skateboard. Black and white cinematography highlights the play of light across surfaces, defamiliarising and transforming architecture. Slow motion is used to detail textures, highlighting the beauty of their design. Through Gladwell's skateboarding, fountains become surfaces to experience kinetically. The impression of Sydney's recent architecture is rebelliously re-imagined as spaces, textures and angles for the skateboarder. Curved surfaces become slopes to ride, rails become edges to slide across and water spouts become obstacle courses. Gladwell's movement across public spaces results in the creation of 'psychogeographic zones', a sensory, kinetic mapping of urban spaces and surfaces experienced on wheels.



AN EXPERIMENTA NEW VISIONS COMMISSION
Jaki Middleton & David Lawrey AUSTRALIA
 WHAT'S YOURS IS MINE (2007)

Jaki MIDDLELTON & David LAWREY,
What's Yours is Mine (2007).
 Still image from interactive installation.
 Courtesy the artist.



What's Yours Is Mine is a sculptural installation that explores the intersection between physical and virtual space. Inspired by childhood mythology, a hyper-real magic faraway tree holding portals into a simulated forest sprouts from a patch of Astroturf. Peering into the windows captures the attention of a bear at the centre of the forest who begins jumping up and down, yelling 'no, no, no'. This is a homage to Bruce Nauman's nihilistic, anti-art performance video 'No, No, New Museum' (Clown Torture series, 1987) depicting the artist dressed as a knave, furiously jumping up and down, yelling 'no, no, no'. Like Nauman's work, *What's Yours is Mine* initially confronts and later evokes an empathic relationship with the figure expressing fury. This installation uses absurdist humor to create a complex connection to illusory worlds. Using glass and light, *What's Yours Is Mine* combines the magical Pepper's Ghost technique with motion sensing equipment. New and old technologies combine to expose the slippage between the illusory forest environment and the real world.

David Lawrey and Jaki Middleton live and work in Sydney. They have been collaborating since 2005. Their collaborative practice draws on popular culture, art history, childhood mythology and vintage optical phenomena. Their work has been included in *Vertigo*, Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Perth (2007); *Eyes, Lies and Illusions*, ACMI, Melbourne (2006-7); *Locating the Photographic*, Plimsoll Gallery, Hobart (2006); *The sound before you make it*, Wollongong Art Centre, NSW (2006); and *Phatspace*, Sydney (2005).

The McCoys are video and installation artists and live and work in Brooklyn, New York. In their artworks, various disjointed worlds represented in diorama form become interlaced as they are turned into filmic narratives. Their works have been shown in solo exhibitions including *Tiny, Funny, Sad, and Big*, the inaugural exhibition at BFI Southbank, London (2007); *Soft Rains*, Postmasters Gallery (2004); New York and Galerie Guy Bartschi, Geneva, Switzerland (2003). Their works have been included in *Our Grotesque*, 5th International Biennial, SITE Santa Fe, New Mexico, (2004); *Open House: Working in Brooklyn*, The Brooklyn Museum, New York, (2004); *Future Cinema* ZKM, Karlsruhe, Germany (2002). The McCoys are represented by Postmasters Gallery, New York and Gallerie Guy Bartschi, Geneva.

The wonder of Jennifer and Kevin McCoy's *Double Fantasy* emerges from the exhibition, connection and projection of two tiny, disparate worlds fragmented and frozen in time. *Double Fantasy* incorporates miniature dioramas positioned back to back, surrounded by a matrix of flexible metal arms containing small cameras and pinpoint lights. One scene reveals a bloodthirsty medieval battle whilst the other features a tranquil, romantic kingdom of brides and grooms. These miniature worlds are a recreation of each artist's childhood dreams suspended in time. The illusion is deconstructed and reconstructed by exposing sets, lights and cameras, showing the technology as well as its projection. The apparatus becomes as much a part of the spectacle as the effect in this exhibit. Customised software selects camera angles and edits scenes to produce the 'live' montage. Exposed and hidden technologies create the illusion of movement and narrative, resulting in an enchanting dynamic fairy tale. *Double Fantasy* is presented courtesy Sara Torazzi Collection, Italy.

Jennifer & Kevin McCoy USA
 DOUBLE FANTASY (2005)

Jennifer & Kevin MCCOY,
Double Fantasy (2005).
 Still image from electronic
 sculptural installation.
 Courtesy the artist.



June Bum Park KOREA

PUZZLE 3 (2006)

JUNE BUM PARK,
Puzzle 3 (2006).
Still image from video installation.
Courtesy the artist.



Puzzle 3 is a screen-based installation that recasts sixteen students as two-dimensional, blue and yellow puzzle pieces. June Bum Park's video imagines the classroom as a hand held puzzle, requiring students to slide themselves and their coloured pieces into lines of similarity in order to achieve the optimal working arrangement. An aerial view captures students from above, framing them and erasing traces of their identity. As puzzle pieces, students begin to embody the mechanical aspects of routine activity. The accelerated speed of playback highlights the clash between the chaotic pace of youth culture and a desire for order imposed from above. *Puzzle 3* reflects an image of rigid social behaviour. In its subject and speed, it parodies the imposition of highly organised rituals, involving systems of repetition and problem solving, dominating the worlds of students. The result is a harmonious, but perhaps temporary, alignment of students according to matching patterns of colour and conformity.

June Bum Park lives and works in Seoul, Korea. In his video works Park manipulates scale and speed to produce digital videos that play with perception. Exhibitions of June Bum Park's work include *Pascual Sisto & Junebum Park*, Bitforms Gallery, New York (2007); *Thermocline of Art New Asian Waves*, ZKM, Karlsruhe (2007); *Elastic Taboos*, Vienna Kunsthalle (2007); *New Generation ARCO '07*, Madrid, (2007); the Busan Biennale, Korea, (2006); *A tale of two cities*, pariscinema, Entrepôt, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, (2006); *Experimenta Vanishing Point*, (2005-2007); the 3rd Seoul International Media Art Biennale, Korea, (2004/5); and the Shanghai Biennale (2004).

PES lives and works in Harlem, New York. Since winning the Best First Film Award at the Annecy Animation Film Festival in 2002, PES has become one of the most sought after stop-motion directors in the world. Best known for his animation with objects, his short films have been viewed millions of times online (www.eatPES.com) and have garnered multiple plaudits and awards across a broad spectrum of publications, festivals and groups. PES' work was recently featured in The Animation Show, RESFest, and at the Cinema Massimo in Italy; in The New York Times, Time Out, Print Magazine and Wired; and on the front pages of Youtube, Boing Boing and Metafilter. He also directs television commercials for clients including Bacardi, Diesel, Sprint, Orange Telecom, Playstation and Coinstar. PES is represented by ICM and Anonymous Content.

Human Skateboard is a dynamic example of the collision of art and advertising. Maven animator PES replaces a skateboard with a human as classic and innovative tricks are performed across various locations and obstacles throughout Los Angeles. In this advertisement for Sneaux skate shoes, rider and skateboard perform flips, jumps and acrobatics. At one stage the human skateboard slides dangerously beneath a car as the skater jumps over it. In *Human Skateboard*, PES uses a process of pixilation where the human form is used as a stop motion prop. By highlighting the speed and the impact of the ride on the body, the viewer is given an impression of the effects of g-forces, the grind of road surfaces, revealing both the danger and the exhilaration of the ride. Sustained focus on the human skateboard provides a vicarious experience of his pain as well as his euphoria.



PES,
Human Skateboard (2006).
Still image from electronic
sculptural installation.
Courtesy the artist.

PES USA

HUMAN SKATEBOARD (2006)

TMEMA
[Golan Levi & Zachary Lieberman] USA
 MANUAL INPUT STATION (2004–2006)

Tmema [Golan LEVIN & Zachary LIEBERMAN],
Manual Input Station (2004–2006).
 Still image from electronic
 sculptural installation.
 Courtesy the artist.



The Manual Input Station presents a series of audiovisual vignettes which probe the expressive possibilities of hand gestures and finger movements. These interactions take place on a combination of custom interactive software, an analogue overhead projector and a digital video projector. The analogue and digital projectors are aligned so that their projections overlap, resulting in an unusual quality of hybridised, dynamic light. During use, the visitor's hands are analysed by a computer vision system as they move across the glass top of the overhead projector. In response to these postures and gestures, the software generates synthetic graphics and sounds that are tightly coupled to the forms and movements of the performers' actions. The synthetic responses are co-projected over the organic, analogue shadows, resulting in an almost magical form of augmented-reality shadow play.

Tmema is the collaborative team of Golan Levin and Zachary Lieberman. Golan Levin is an artist/engineer interested in the exploration of new modes of reactive expression. Zachary Lieberman's work uses technology to explore the nature of communication and the delicate boundary between the visible and the invisible. Working since 2002, Tmema develops interactive performances and museum installations, web-based information visualizations, reactive commercial environments, and experimental software systems that meld high-end computation to deeply-rooted sensibilities in human-centred arts and design.

Born in London in 1977, Philip Worthington completed his Masters in Interaction Design from the Royal College of Art in 2006. Focussing on large scale and tactile interactive experiences, Worthington's work has been selected for exhibition at the V&A and Design Museum in London, overseas design festivals, and features in industry publications, such as *Icon*, *Creative Review* and *Design Week*. With a focus on design, Worthington founded his own interactive/branding design studio, and has been a guest lecturer at the several leading Art and Design schools in London.

Slithering from beneath your bed and the dark corners of the room, the shadow monsters have come out to play. Reminiscent of childhood light puppets, *Shadow Monsters* transports you to a new realm of play as your shadows transform into mischievous manifestations of teeth, scales, hair and horns at your direction. Using the simplicity of a light box and the complexity of computer programming, *Shadow Monsters* by British artist Philip Worthington offers magical interactive experience which captures harmless shadows created by clothes, body and accessories and transforms them into wondrous creations. With the ability to interact with each other, these intuitive and playful characters will forever change the way we look at shadows.



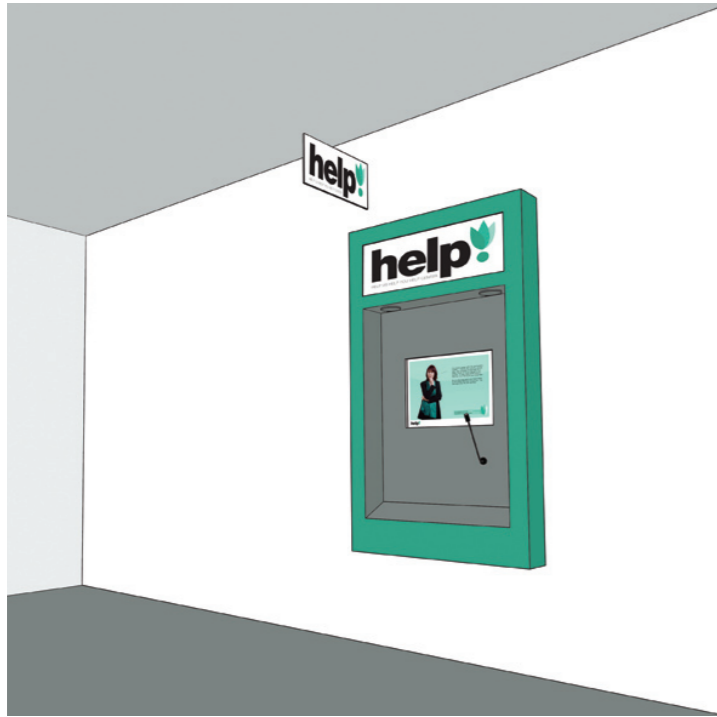
Tsui Kuang-Yu TAIWAN
 THE SHORTCUT TO THE SYSTEMATIC
 LIFE: SUPERFICIAL LIFE (2002)
 EIGHTEEN COPPER GUARDIANS IN SHAO-LIN
 TEMPLE AND PENETRATION: THE PERCEPTIVE (2005)

Tsui KUANG-YU,
The Shortcut to the Systematic Life: Superficial Life (2002).
 Still image from video installation.
 Courtesy the artist.

Narinda Reed AUSTRALIA

HELP YOUR SELF (2007)

Narinda Reed,
Help Your Self (2007).
Still image from electronic
sculptural installation.
Courtesy the artist.



The “Help Us Help You Help Centre” is an ATM-style kiosk that provides self-help for a convenience driven society. Lydia, a slick, corporate self-help guru with a short temper and strong opinions, guides you through this interactive installation with a series of questions, prompting you to respond by speaking into a microphone. As a voice-activated character, Lydia is prone to misinterpretation. She will probably get your name wrong and doesn't hesitate to berate you if she thinks she hears you swearing in a public place. She asks very personal questions, and her comments, assumptions and attempts to give you advice are not only unhelpful but also often amusing. *Help Your Self* parodies the potential for self-help gurus to prey on our vulnerabilities and plays with the increasingly blurred line between public and private in our society. Taking two ubiquitous ideals of our culture, self-help and self-service, to an absurd level, we are offered a particularly inconvenient convenience and some unhelpful and potentially damaging advice.

Narinda Reed lives and works in Melbourne. Reeders' practice involves integrating digital video, photography, performance art, computer programming and electronics to explore urban dystopia and the increasingly blurred line between public and private. She was an artist in residence at Kola Art Institute in San Francisco (2006). Her work has been included in *Experimenta Under the Radar*, UK (2006); the *Next Wave Festival* (2006); and *Experimenta Vanishing Point* (2005-2007). Her photo-documentary series titled *Middle Managed* was selected for the Leica/CCP Documentary Award (2003).

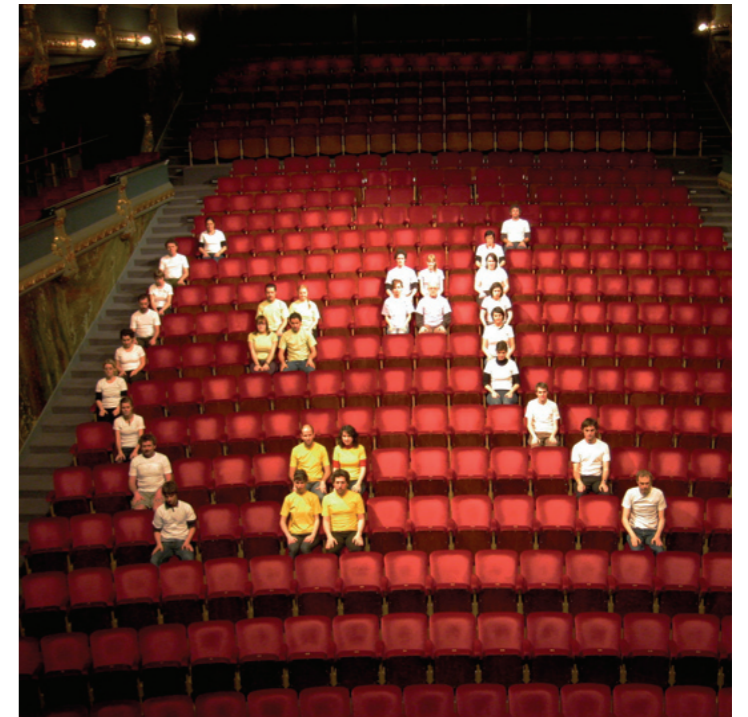
Guillaume Reymond SWITZERLAND

GAME OVER PROJECT: PONG, SPACE INVADERS AND POLE POSITION (2005–2007)

Guillaume REYMOND,
Game Over Project: Pong, Space Invaders and Pole Position (2005–2007).
Still image from interactive installation.
Courtesy the artist.

Guillaume Reymond lives and works in Vevey, Switzerland. He is a graphic designer, video artist and multimedia creator with a background in architecture. He is the Director of a multimedia and graphic design agency.

Pong, Space Invaders and Pole Position originated as part of the *Game Over Project*, a series of live performances where video games were re-enacted by humans. Tiny game pieces dramatically increase in scale as humans form familiar shapes including: bats, balls, aliens, space ships, rockets, formula one cars, even the contours of the race track. Armed with the rules of the game, human pixels select their movements from one seat to another, participating in and advancing this interactive game. Whilst *Pong* took two hours to shoot and seven participants helped to create 277 images, *Space Invaders* required 67 players and *Pole Position* was played over six hours, producing up to 400 stills. Using human pixels and producing movement with stop motion animation synchronised to human vocal sounds, Guillaume Reymond creates a captivating illusion of games that appear to play themselves. The simulation of game environments offers a nostalgic parody of iconic video games as flesh recreates the virtual environment in this series.



Sawatohwasi [Hiraki Sawa
& Tomoyuki Washio] JAPAN
UNSEEN PARK (2006)

Hiraki SAWA & Tomoyuki WASHIO,
Unseen Park (2006).
Still image from video installation.
Courtesy the artists.



With *Unseen Park*, Hiraki Sawa and Tomoyuki Washio collaborate with children from Taipei to create an apprehension of the world from a child's point of view. Fairgrounds, sea scenes, a sandpit and a valley constitute deserted backgrounds across which they layer strolling elephants, twirling birds, slithering snails, a spinning table, even a rocket ship that blasts off into the sky. The revolving movement of these charming hand drawn two-dimensional creatures transforms the desolate, impressionistic spaces. The mobile magical creatures represent the possibilities of imagined cyclic journeys. A fairground is a place of circular travel, where any ride only ever takes you back to where you started. This idea of a cyclical journey which always comes back is the basis for the rhythm and movement of *Unseen Park*. The Sawatohwasi team adopt a constructivist approach, building spaces across which they layer miniature creatures, inviting us to look closely to realise the potential for microscopic detail to uncover the fantastic in otherwise ordinary worlds.

Hiraki Sawa lives and works in London. Tomoyuki Washio lives and works in Nagoya, Japan. Hiraki Sawa uses video animation to create poetic visual dreamscapes that are meditations on ideas of time and movement, innocence and alienation, and dislocation and displacement. His works have shown internationally since 2003 appearing in numerous solo and group exhibitions, such as *Six Good Reasons to Stay at Home*, National Gallery of Victoria (2006); the Seoul International Media Art Biennale (2006); and *Experimenta Vanishing Point*, (2005-2007). Tomoyuki Washio is an illustrator and graphic designer. His work has been exhibited in venues in Germany and Japan and Taiwan including the Adidas Flagship store in Berlin.

Roman Signer lives and works in St. Gallen, Switzerland. His videos document carefully planned and enacted performances involving explosions, collisions and the projection of objects through space. His works have shown in numerous exhibitions including *Kunstpreis Aachen*, Ludwig Forum für Internationale Kunst, Aachen, Germany (2007); *Aller/Retour 3*, Centre Culturel Suisse Paris (2006); Galician Centre of Contemporary Art, Santiago de Compostela, Spain (2006); *One Second/One Year*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2006); *Roman Signer – Werke*, O.K Centrum für Gegenwartskunst, Linz, Austria (2005); *Camera/Action*, Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago (2004); *Documenta 8*, Kassel, Germany (1987); and the 37th Venice Biennale (1976). Roman Signer is represented by Galerie Martin Janda, Vienna.

Roman Signer's history of painstakingly organising, exhibiting and documenting temporal sculptures is represented in the elaborate complexity behind this deceptively simple test. Signer sets 'traps for nature' as he experiments with space, gravity, explosives and time. In *Hat*, Signer carefully places his hat over a bucket of water on the street outside his third floor apartment. Once upstairs, he drops precisely weighted balls of plasticine from his window, igniting an explosive that forces the water to propel the hat through the air. Twice it rises, and twice Signer fails to catch it. Once the hat lands on the roof, completely out of his reach. Time is tested and manipulated in Signer's sculptures. Whilst the explosion propels the water upward, focus falls on the hat flying skywards towards Signer's outstretched arms. Slow motion extends time, producing poetic imagery of the hat gliding through air, controlled by invisible forces. The final images show Signer at his window, surveying the vista, perhaps contemplating his next trap.

Roman Signer SWITZERLAND
HUT/HAT (1997)

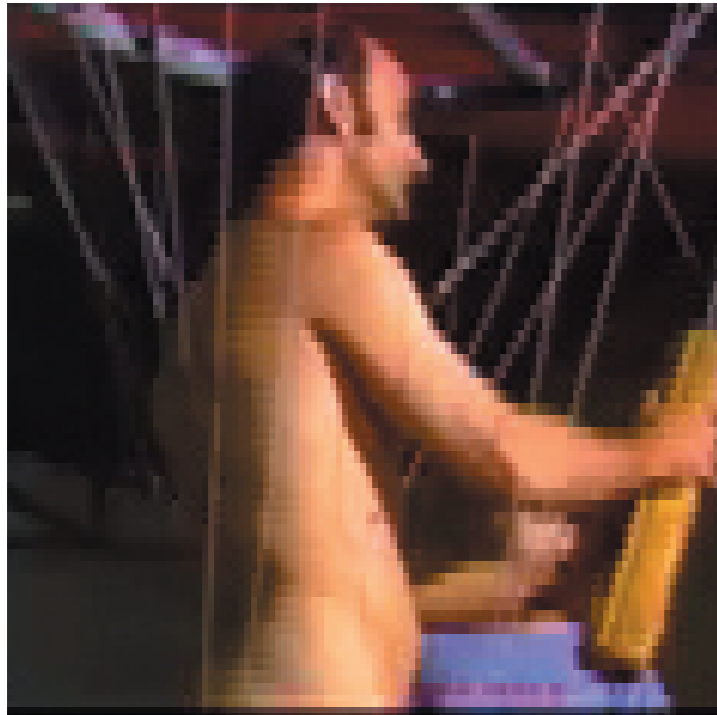
Roman SIGNER,
Hut/Hat (1997).
Still image from interactive installation.
Courtesy the artist.



Stelarc AUSTRALIA

REMOTE CONTROLLED SUSPENSION (1987)

STELARC,
Remote Controlled Suspension (1987).
Still image from electronic
sculptural installation.
Courtesy the artist.



Remote Controlled Suspension is a video document of Stelarc's live performance, testing the physical and psychological limitations of the body. In this video, Stelarc's naked body is pierced by stainless steel hooks and vertically suspended with cables from a gantry crane in an abandoned warehouse. Holding a control box, he is able to hoist himself up, and propel himself forwards, backwards and sideways, navigating the space for approximately 30 minutes. An additional part of the choreography was the swinging initiated by starting and stopping suddenly. Close-ups reveal detail of the skin stretching and blood trickling from the insertions. It also reveals Stelarc's calm expression, without a hint of pain. For Stelarc the body becomes obsolete, empty and indifferent as he explores the limits of embodied experience and sensory dissociation. But for the audience of the live performance and the video, physicality is doubly emphasised as we vicariously feel Stelarc's pain.

Stelarc lives and works in Australia and the UK. He is a performance and installation artist who uses prosthetics, robotics, Virtual Reality systems, the internet and biotechnology to explore alternate, intimate and involuntary interfaces with the body. Recent projects include *Ear on Arm* (2006–2007); *Walking Head* (2006); *Partial Head* (2006); *Prosthetic Head* (2003); and *Exoskeleton* (1997). He has been appointed an honorary Professor of Art and Robotics at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh (1997) and an honorary Doctor of Laws by Monash University (2002). He was awarded a New Media Arts Fellowship in 2005 and 2006. Stelarc's art is represented by Sherman Galleries, Sydney.

Philip Worthington lives and works in London. He is a designer whose practice focuses on creating large-scale tactile interactive installations. He completed his Masters in Interaction Design from the Royal College of Art, London. As well as founding his own interactive/branding design studio, he has been a visiting lecturer to art and design schools around London and done research with IBM's Collaborative User Experience group in Boston. Worthington's work has shown at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London and the Design Museum, London as well as being included in international design festivals and industry publications.

Shadow Monsters offers a platform for our imagination to run wild, using digital technology to update conventions of traditional shadow play. This interactive exhibit invites us to step in front of a light box that immediately recognises outlines cast from our bodies, gestures, clothing and accessories. These outlines metamorphose into monsters with the addition of horns, hair, scales, beaks, eyes, teeth, tongues and claws. Movement continually transforms the monsters, some resembling wolves or crocodiles with razor sharp teeth, others taking on a more monstrous form. *Shadow Monsters* uses vision recognition technology, augmented by a soundtrack layered with animal noises to project an audio-visual impression of human shadows as monsters. This transformation invites competitive posturing and encourages narrative interaction as we are offered a temporary license to disregard social etiquette and become involved in intuitive play. Happily, the monstrous dematerialises and order is restored as soon as the participant steps away from the projection box.

Philip Worthington UK

SHADOW MONSTERS (2005)

Philip WORTHINGTON,
Shadow Monsters (2005).
Still image from interactive installation.
Courtesy the artist.



VIDEO WORKS



Donna Conlon USA
COEXISTENCE (2003)

Coexistence features leaf-cutter ants, common to the artist's home in tropical Panamá. Cutting bits of leaves from plants, leaf-cutter ants carry them to their underground nests to be used as compost to feed their young. Into this system, the artist interweaves small artificial leaf-fragments, painted with peace signs and the flags of the 191 countries that belonged to the United Nations at the time to stage an ant parade of nations.



Julie C. Fortier France
MECHANICAL RODEO (2000)

In *Mechanical Rodeo*, Julie C. Fortier's hair is pulled back, and her face is whitened and tightly framed to emphasise the precise detail of her expression. Generating the sound of a wind up toy, her face becomes mechanised as Fortier's eyes begin to move and roll independently. Fortier delightfully reinterprets the possibilities of mime by producing asynchronous movement within an otherwise immobile expression, created by a simple animation technique. These surprising ocular circumventions create the beguiling effect of playful, burlesque slapstick.



Simon Green UK
AQUA GYM (2003)

In *Aqua Gym*, Simon Green explores the chlorine-soaked world of synchronised swimming, as two athletes demonstrate acrobatic control while they move through their routine. Seen from above and below the water's surface, gravity becomes uncertain and our sense of direction is confusingly reversed as the swimmers move gracefully between the two atmospheres. This illusion serves to accentuate the swimmer's control as their environment becomes weightless, creating a work of beauty and wonder.



Yu Seock Hyun South Korea
THE CHAMBER (2005)

The Chamber is a 3D animation starring a figure resembling a salesman who discovers a link between a human scaled room and its miniature model. This curious salesman inserts his hand into the model, uncovering a surprising link across spatial planes. In Yu Seock Hyun's film, the figures are used to explore the relationship between the body and the void. *The Chamber* uses a combination of computer graphics and industrial design to animate spatial folds, highlighting the connection between visible and invisible space.



Irene Iborra & Jossie Malis Spain
SOPA/SOUP (2006)

In *Sopa/Soup* Irene Iborra and Jossie Malis use stop motion animation to create a unique parody of cooking programs. Bare cupboards force his resourcefulness as the protagonist throws a variety of unexpected ingredients into the mix. He slices a cork, decapitates a doll, shaves bristles from a scrubbing brush and chops a mobile phone, all of which he combines with lightly sautéed keys. An ironic parody of consumer culture, *Sopa/Soup* reverses the notion of materials transforming humans as technology and household items become tasty ingredients in this soupy mixture.

DONNA CONLON LIVES AND works in Panamá City, Panamá. Beginning her artistic career as a sculptor, in recent years she has worked with video, installation, photography, and performance art. In 2005, Conlon participated in the 51st Venice Biennale (Italy) in the exhibition *Always a Little Further*. In 2003 she was awarded the Residency Prize at the Caribbean Biennial (Dominican Republic) and in 2001 she was selected for the exhibition *Sculptors at Work* at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C..

Aqua Gym received the Final Cut Express Special Award at the 2003 Portobello Film Festival in Glastonbury; the 2004 York University Award for Best Student Film; *Aqua Gym* was screened at the 2006 Leeds International Film Festival.

YU SEOCK HYUN LIVES and works in Seoul, South Korea. Hyun studied Industrial Design at Hanyang University. His third film, *The Chamber* was named Best Animated Film at the 2005 Tehran International Short Film Festival in Iran, and won an award for animation at the 2006 Dong-A International Competition in Korea.

JULIE C. FORTIER DIVIDES HER time between Rennes, France and Montréal, Canada. Drawing from cartoon slapstick and the ironic stylings of burlesque, Fortier has been performing and exhibiting her works internationally since 1998. *Mechanical Rodeo* was shown in 2001 at the International Film Festival in Asolo, Italy, at the MediaArtLab Festival in Moscow, and the Estavar-Llivia Video Festival held in France and Spain.

IRENE IBORRA AND JOSSIE MALIS live and work in Barcelona, Spain. Iborra and Malis have developed a widespread reputation for award-winning animation, production and illustration. After being featured in an MTV International Art Breaks segment, Malis won the Best Film award at the 2006 Animation Film Festival Nontzeflash in Bilbao, Spain, and a Jury Special Prize at the 2007 AniFest in Tebo (Czech Republic). One of Iborra's short films won an award at the 2nd Festival Internacional del Audiovisual Para La Ninez y La Adolescencia, Cuba in 2006.

SIMON GREEN LIVES IN Sheffield, England and works in Sheffield and London. Green's short films cover a diverse range of subjects, from an underwater ballet to a dreamlike anticipation of rescue from a papier-mâché boat in a cardboard sea, as well as a plumbers' educational institu-

FILM PROGRAM

Co-curated by Experimenta and ACMI Cinemas, Australian Centre for the Moving Image



Hell on Wheels

Dir: Bob Ray, 90mins, USA, 2007
Courtesy: The Filmmaker, unclassified 18+

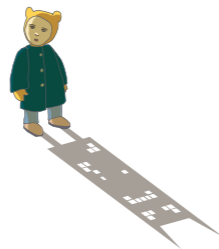
The once forgotten sport of Roller Derby has made a comeback with the Texas Rollergirls' league. More than just a documentary about the resurrection of this bad-ass all-girl sport with its hard edged Russ Meyer aesthetics, this excellent low budget feature charts something special. Here, the filmmakers accidentally capture a surprisingly gripping story in and out of the rink as relationships and dreams fall apart.



Sick: The Life and Death of Bob Flanagan, Supermasochist

Dir: Kirby Dick, 90mins, USA, 1997, 35mm, Courtesy: The Filmmaker. Rated R 18+

A breakthrough documentary from Oscar nominated Kirby Dick, *Sick: The Life and Death of Bob Flanagan, Supermasochist* kicked and screamed its way through the international festival circuit accruing multiple awards including the coveted Sundance Grand Jury Prize. The film paints an engrossing portrait of Bob Flanagan who, at that time, was the world's oldest known person with Cystic Fibrosis. Rather than be defeated, he turned his condition into an experimental artistic statement.



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Artlink

screen deep

Artlink magazine's themed september issue looks at the real innovators in moving image and screen-based art.

guest editor Julianne Pierce examines the take up of these forms in the major museums and biennials of the world and asks where are the boundaries between art and cinema.

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Josephine Starrs and Leon Cmielewski, *Seeker*, Artspace (Sydney), 2007



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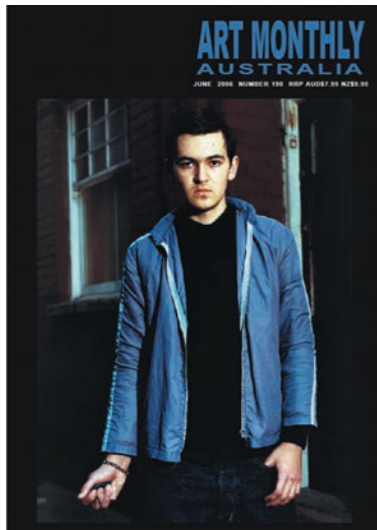
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Image: Liu Jiahua, detail *Yiwu Investigation*, 2006. Mixed media installation, Shanghai Biennale. Courtesy the artist and the Shanghai Biennale.

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