

Intimate Transactions by The Transmute Collective
Overview: Technical Brief and Equipment List
www.intimatetransactions.com

Background:

Overview: *Intimate Transactions* www.intimatetransactions.com is an interactive installation that allows two people located in two different global locations to interact simultaneously using their bodies - connected through the Internet. The work arose from an investigation into new ways of creating embodied, performative and improvisational experiences for participants who are separated by distance, but connected by electronic networks. This is accentuated through a strong sense of presence of the other person that develops during the experience. *Intimate Transactions* uses these embodied experiences to engender understandings of 'ecological' relationship through connecting both participants within a global system of co-dependent relationships.

Intended/Realised Outcomes: Each participant uses an identical physical interface called a 'Bodyshef'. By gently moving their backs and feet on this 'smart furniture' they instigate 'Intimate Transactions', which influence an evolving 'world' created from digital imagery, multi-channel sound and tactile feedback. During a 30-minute, one-on-one session their actions allow them to individually and collaboratively explore a range of immersive environments. This includes animated and generative imagery, seven channels of real time generated audio and three channels of haptic feedback (felt in the stomach and back). Whilst each participant's interactions result in quite different results at their local venue, the affects of their every action also ripple through to affect the other site, and vice versa – profoundly affecting their collective experience. This allows both participants to gradually develop a form of sensory intimacy with the other, despite the fact that they are geographically separated and cannot physically see or hear each other. As this highly immersive experience evolves, each participant senses their place in a complex web of relations that connect them within the work.

Collaborators: The project was led over a 3.5 year period by artistic director Dr. Keith Armstrong (director of Embodied Media) in collaboration with the 'Transmute Collective' (performer Lisa O'Neill and Sound artist Guy Webster), working in collaboration with a large interdisciplinary team.

Research Process: The work arose from a deep collaboration between media artists, performance practitioners, sound artists, hardware and software engineers, a furniture maker and a scientific ecologist. The entire research process was informed by a practice-led approach to art making that stressed embodied connectivity and inseparability. This allowed the team to understand how participants might move within the constraints of a particular interface, allowing them to shape and form the overall phrasing and sensibilities of their experiences, whilst maintaining the unique nature of their collaborative experiences.

Industry Partners: The work was funded by multiple Australia Council For the Arts and Arts Queensland grants, the ACID Australasian Creative Industries Network project and a 2 year Postdoctoral Fellowship awarded to Keith Armstrong. Other partners included QUT Precincts, numerous national and international venues, international arts festivals, universities and research and arts residencies. To date the work has been show in fourteen major locations globally and won a prestigious honorary mention in the 2005 Prix Ars Electronica. In 2007 Keith Armstrong spent three months in California as a visiting professor CalPoly State University both showing the work and teaching the knowledge behind it in collaboration with Liberal Arts, Engineering and Architecture students and faculty. Intimate Transactions has been invited to represent Australia in the 2008 Olympics Cultural Festival in Beijing China at the National Art Museum of China and the Art Museum of the Imperial Palace, Beijing. It will then tour Australia for the second time on a prestigious 'Visions of Australia' touring grant.

A 140 page book, edited by Jillian Hamilton, *Intimate Transactions: Art Exhibition and Interaction Within Distributed Networked Environments* was published in 2007.

KEY CONTACTS

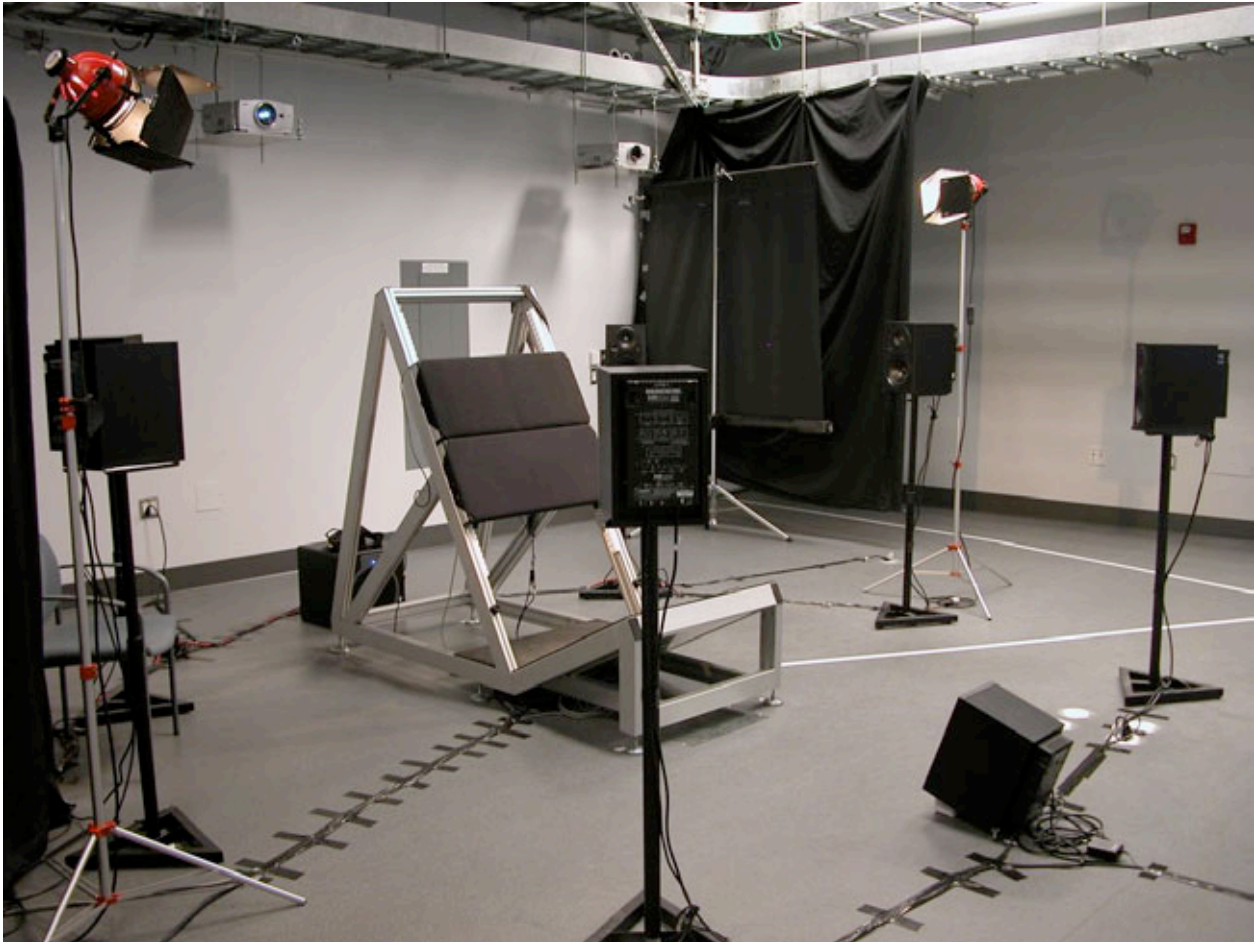
keith@embodiedmedia.com

www.embodiedmedia.com

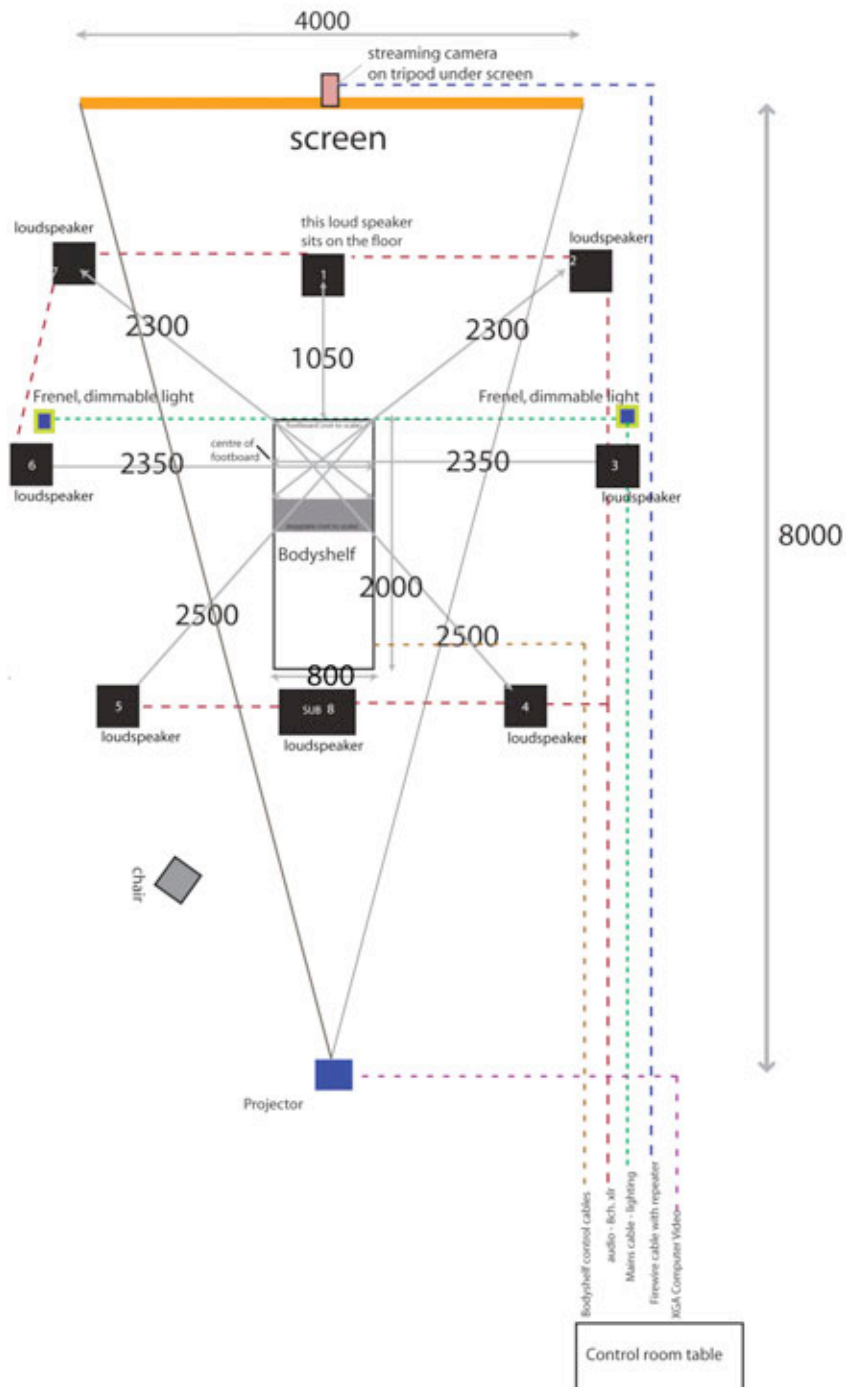
www.intimatetransactions.com

Spaces

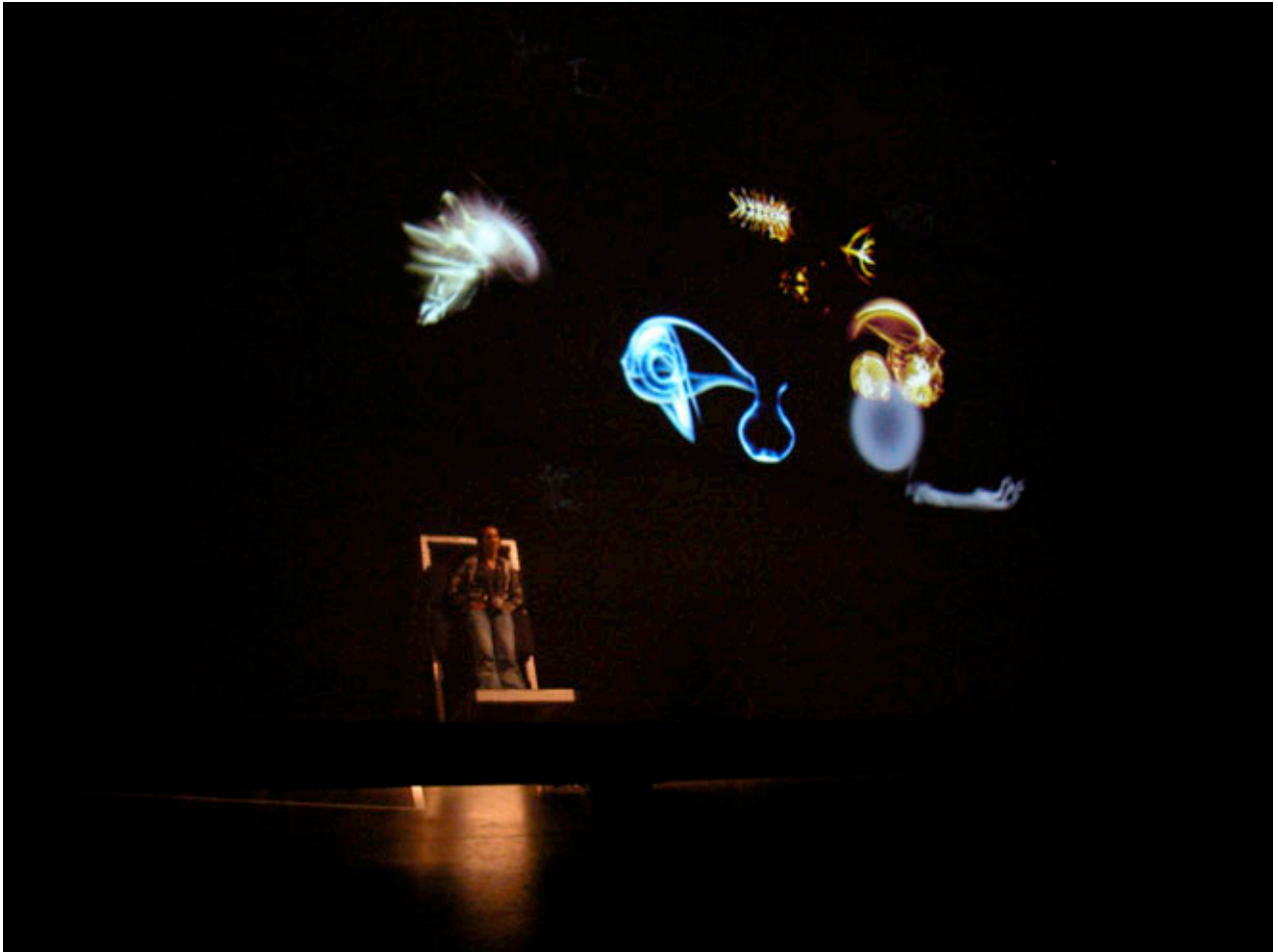
A full Intimate Transactions installation requires 2 identically set-up rooms at each of two venues - or alternatively two rooms in the same venue. These rooms must be minimum 4.5 metres wide by 3.0 (ideally 4 metres) high, by 5 metres long. Acoustically and spatially bigger is better. Room dimensions requirements are dependant on wide angle and keystone capabilities of projector. The projector should have a wide angled lens facility. The minimum base size of the projection should be 3 metres although it can be much larger.



Intimate Transactions: Venue at UCSB USA (George LeGrady's Lab)
– note speaker and light positioning



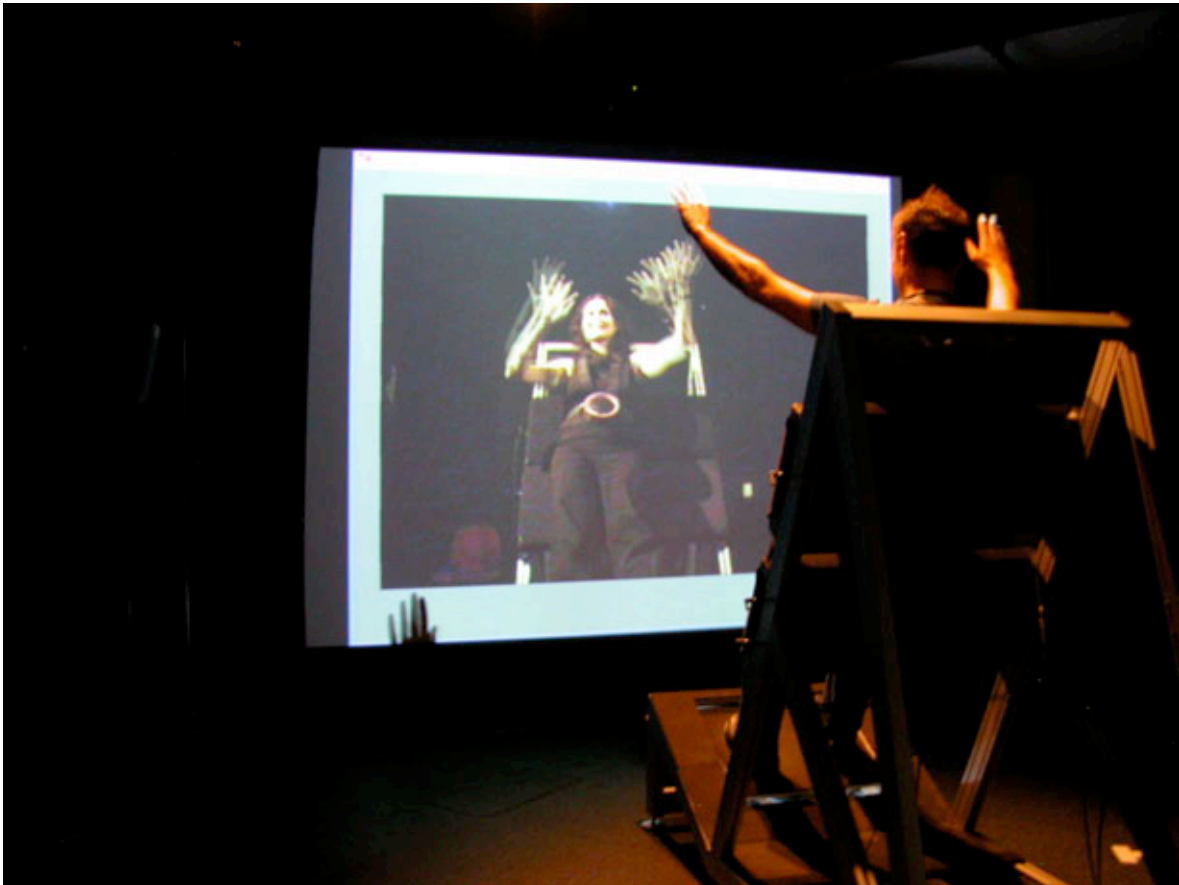
Intimate Transactions: Typical Large scale Detailed Floor plan. NB distance to projector mount point required is dependent on room size, projector type, lens type, roof height and angle



Intimate Transactions in Cairns: showing 5 metre base, rear projection

General Operation

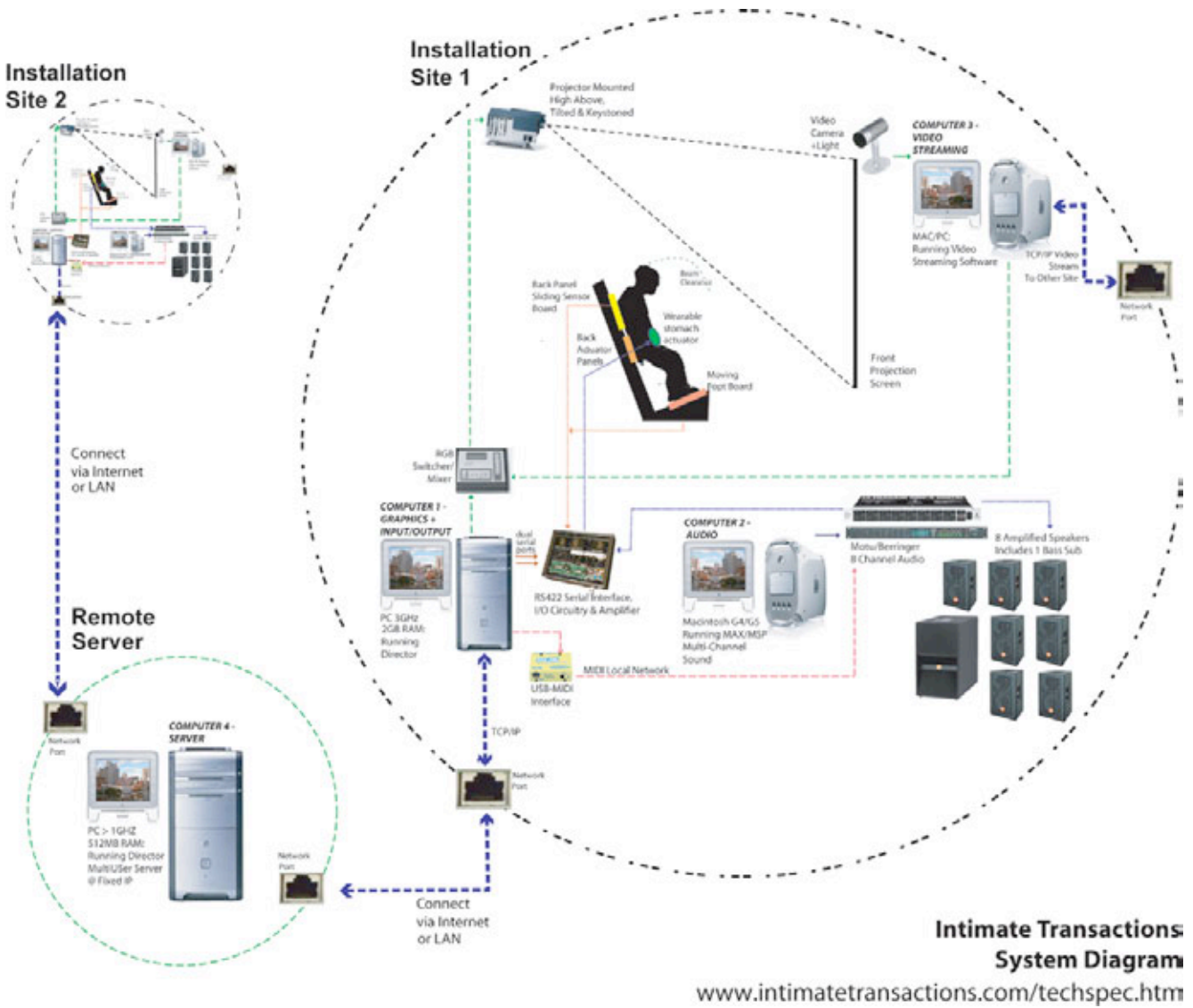
During a one-on-one interactive session the two participants only sense each other's effects through a range of abstracted visual, audible and tactile feedback cues. Throughout the session a point-to-point video stream runs invisibly in the background. At the end of each session lights are brought up on each participant, and the video stream of the other person on their shelf is simultaneously appears on the projection in front of them (allowing them to see (but not hear) each other for approximately 20 seconds).



Two participants greet each other only at the end of the work.

Network

The two Bodyselves are coordinated by a server, which is run in the same physical location as one of the two sites. Each Bodyself main computer communicates with the other via TCP/IP network coordinated by this server– THIS NEEDS A FIXED IP that is externally visible. There is also an additional video streaming connection in use. Therefore a fast Internet connection is required (50kB/sec guaranteed absolute minimum). Firewall access to port 1626 (TCP outbound) must be granted for the PC workstation and appropriate ports for the streaming services. In this case the server must have a fixed IP, accessible anywhere on the Internet.

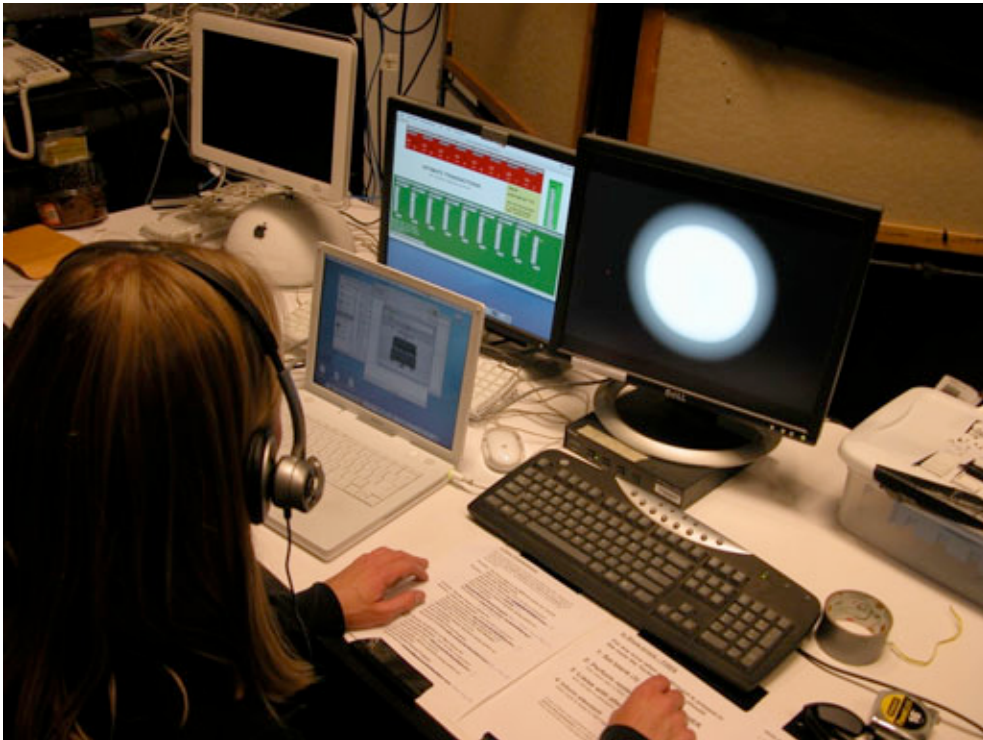


Tech desk Communications System

Each site has a space where the tech operator can sit and coordinate their side of the show – this must be curtained off from the main space but with adequate viewing.

A networked communications system (with headsets) allows both technical coordinators at each venue to coordinate the running of the show with each other vocally.

(As patrons enter each site, coordination is required to ensure each patron starts at approximately the same time, and finishes EXACTLY at the same time so that the video stream of each other can then be switched in).



Intimate Transactions Operators Desk – note multiple monitors



Intimate Transactions at Artspace



Intimate Transactions At UCSB USA

Sound

Each room must be as sonically isolated as possible as the work uses 7 identical amplified speakers and one amplified bass sub driver.

Lighting

Each space requires 100% blackout. Walls should be black (or coloured as dark as possible). The screen provides all required light, except at the end of each session when two small directional lights are faded up on each participant when the web camera is in use. – the screen needs to be framed by black paint or curtaining. If using a wall (preferred) it is ideal to paint the screen exactly after everything else is placed.



Intimate Transactions At Artspace – note dense black curtained space and outlined screen

Audience Waiting Area/Foyer

A DVD player (with repeat function) and screen presents pre-recorded screen images of the work to give a 'taster' of the experience.



Intimate Transactions at Artspace – note black curtained audience entry and documentary running on DVD/TV

Viewing Area

Typically each space is curtained off and made private for each separate audience member. In some cases however (eg high throughput festivals) audience viewing spaces may be also possible. Also a live projection of the work can be shown outside of the venue.

Personnel Requirements

For the Setup . . .

TRANSMUTE COLLECTIVE

- 1 member of the Transmute Collective will supervise each venue: setup, training and procedures at each of the two venues or rooms.
- When funds allow a third member supervises audience training and assist in setup.

VENUE LOCAL CREW

- 2 or more dedicated assistants in each venue – \ help with all tasks including video hanging, screen, set & scenography and establishing Internet connectivity
- One of these crew members **MUST** be present the de-install .. so they are trained how to break down the Bodyshelves and pack the crates

For the Show . . .

- We need three trained **3 Technical Coordinators** (If show is running for 8 hours we strongly advise 4 hours per day for each operator with 1 hour changeover period at lunchtime)
- We need **6 assistant / patron support persons** (At any one time two will be working , one inside the room with the audience member and the other working at the entrance with the public. One of these front of house persons could also be the gallery minder if the geography of the setup is appropriate. If show is running for 8 hours we strongly advise 4 hours per day for each operator with 1 hour changeover period at lunchtime).

These 9 personnel **MUST** commit to stay with the show for the whole run - as Transmute collective will not be able to train new people so quality control issues will arise. If this is impossible - a training supervisor must attend all sessions and take over responsibility of this task.”

Each session runs for 30 mins. Thought needs to be given to how bookings are taken at each site and how they are also coordinated across the two sites – the backup plan is that the work assistant will operate one node if there is a no show or no booking – but clearly both venues need to work together to collectively fill pairs of timeslots.

Training Processes

The Transmute Collective will train the three technical coordinators **AND** the six assistant/patron support persons. This normally requires 1 whole day allocated specifically to this task **BEFORE** the public showings start. This can only start after everything else is completely set up, tested and in

running order.

Technical coordinators and assistant/patron support persons must be capable of running the show before it opens. – Transmute members will supervise At minimum on the first day of showing and then rely on local crews to run the show from that point onwards.

Key Timeline

PRESETUP

- Communication checks with the venue – are web streams working fine?
- Before we start we expect the enclosing structures/rooms for each of the two spaces - as, - to be fully built and prepared. Projector hanging would normally happen after Bodyshelf is built though this may be pre-specified if exact details of room, projector type and hanging system is known

SETUP - 2 DAYS (long days) (ideally 3)

TRAINING 1 DAY

- We require all technical coordinators to be present (i.e. 3 people)
- All 6 assistant / patron support persons to be present (i.e. 6 people)
- Any front of house people.
- Curators, technical managers may like to attend the first hour of introductions

The schedule will be

- Morning - general orientation and learning work operation
- Afternoon - hands on practices, fine tuning and dress rehearsal

OPENING STAFFING

SHOW DAYS Transmute members will be on hand for the first day of showings (minimum) to fine tune each local team's processes.

TRANSMUTE SUPPLIED Equipment

Each venue /room will receive all specialist equipment in a comprehensive package: packed in custom touring cases.

IF the VENUE SHOWS BOTH SITES, THESE QUANTITIES ARE DOUBLED.

1 X Rack, Computers Case

estimated weight 70kg

52cm x 70cm x 120cm on wheels

1 X Speaker, Lights Case

estimated weight 115kg

140cm x 60cm x 70cm on wheels

1 Bodysshelf Case

estimated weight 160kg.

100cm x 100cm x 50cm (no wheels)

VENUE SUPPLIED Equipment

Each venue supplies the following –

IF the VENUE SHOWS BOTH SITES, THESE QUANTITIES MUST BE DOUBLED.

EQUIPMENT	Notes	Model	Qty PER ROOM OR VENUE
Data Projector	Image at base 3 metres or greater	Suggested model Sony PX32 or equivalent with Wide angle lens 2 or 4 point key-stoning ability >2500 Lumens	1
Projector ceiling mount			1
Projection screen		For image > 3m base – Ideally paint smooth, black wall with white paint once system is setup	1
DVD Player	Any		1
TV		Large	1
CABLES			
Video Projector VGA cable	RGB	RGB M – RGB M	Various
Cat 5 fly lead	Cat 5 UTP	RJ45	
DVD/TV Lead	3-way RCA	RCA Male	1
Power lead	Appliance (IEC)	-	10
Power outlets		-	4
Power Distribution	4-8 point power board	-	4
Network	CAT 5	50kB/sec guaranteed absolute minimum. Access to port 1626 (TCP) Fixed IP – externally accessible, no firewall	