

## KEITH ARMSTRONG: LONG BIO. (10/10/19)

Keith Armstrong is an experimental artist profoundly motivated by issues of social and ecological justice. His engaged, participative practices provoke audiences to comprehend, envisage and imagine collective pathways towards sustainable futures. He has specialised for over twenty two years in collaborative, experimental practices with emphasis upon innovative performance forms, site-specific electronic arts, networked interactive installations, alternative interfaces, art-science collaborations and socially and ecologically engaged practices.

Keith's research asks how insights drawn from scientific and philosophical ecologies can help us to better invent and direct experimental art forms, in the understanding that art practitioners are powerful change agents, provocateurs and social catalysts. Through inventing radical research methodologies and processes he has led and created over sixty major art works and process-based projects, which have been shown extensively in Australia and overseas, supported by numerous grants from the public and private sectors.

His interdisciplinary work *Intimate Transactions* received an Honorary Mention in the 2005 Prix Ars Electronica in Austria, represented Australia at the National Gallery of China for Media Art China (*Synthetic Times*) during the 2008 Olympics Cultural Festival and was shown in 22 venues including the ICA London and is now held in the permanent collection of ZKM Centre for Art and Media, Karlsruhe Germany. His interactive installation, *Shifting Intimacies*, developed during an Arts Council England residency, was premiered at the ICA, London. His interactive installation *Knowmore (House of Commons)* was shown at the Mediations Biennial in Poland in 2010. In 2011-12 he directed the *Remnant Emergency Artlab* project in Australia, New Zealand and India with outcomes including the high-profile *Bat-Human Project* in Sydney. His work *Finitude* was featured in the 3rd Art and Science International Exhibition and Symposium, Beijing, China at the China National Museum of Science and Technology. *Media Works Night Rage and Long Time, No See?* featured in ISEA 2013 Sydney, and in 2014 *Light of Extinction* was featured in *Thingworld: International Triennial of New Media Art* at the National Gallery of Art in Beijing, China.

Through 2011-15 he forged important new collaborative partnerships with a range of social justice and biodiversity conservation organisations across the Australian continent and globally. This resulted in a series of major commissions for works, including Sydney Powerhouse Museum, the Queensland Museum, Media Art China and Siteworks Festival at Arthur Boyd's property, Bundanon, Australia. In 2016, he presented a major solo show of five new works in Sydney at UTS Gallery - the *Over|Many|Horizons* project - collaborating with an international team of marine scientists, climatologists and cultural activists. That year he first travelled to South Africa to instigate a socially-engaged project around sustainability and poverty reduction called 'Re-Future', funded by the prestigious Andrew Mellon Foundation. This came to fruition in 2017/8 with the presentation of three festival events co-created with township residents, under the banner *Seven Stage Futures and Staging Change*. In 2017, he mounted a major solo show of five works in South Africa (*The Mesh*), exhibited his art/science work *Eremocene (Age of Loneliness)* at the prestigious Ars Electronica Festival in Linz Austria and *Experimenta Make Sense: International Triennial* at RMIT Gallery, Melbourne. In 2018 his exhibition *Change Agent* was the focal show of ISEA 2018, at Durban Art Gallery, South Africa, and his works *Staging Change* were featured in the *Vrystaat Kunstefees International Arts Festival*. In 2019 his new work *Elegy for Life, Anthem for Artifice* is curated in the 5th International Art and Science Exhibition and Symposium: *The Integration of Art and Science in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*, at the National Gallery of China.

Keith was formerly an Australia Council New Media Arts Fellow, a lead researcher at the ACID Australasian Cooperative Research Centre for Interaction Design and Associate Director of QUT's flagship Creative Lab Research Centre. He is an actively practicing freelance media artist.