

General Credits

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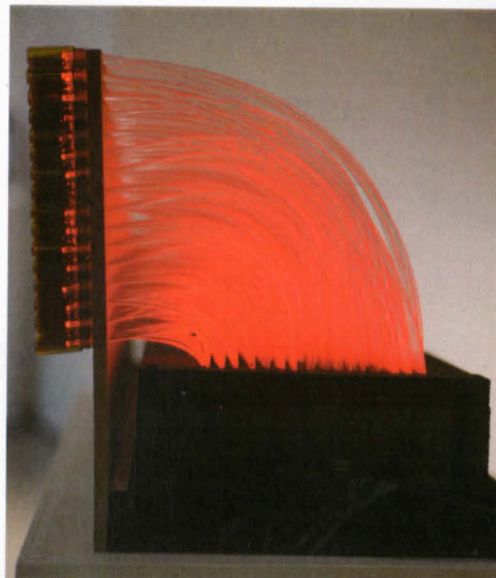
Keith Armstrong is Associate Director of the Creative Lab Research Centre, QUT Creative Industries, Brisbane, Australia.



Johannes Stegmann Art Gallery:

17-22 July 09:00 - 18:00
24 July - 11 August, Mon - Fri 08:30 - 16:30
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O Tswellang

Glass, fibre optics, wood, LED display

Text: Thabang Mofokeng

Acknowledgements: Dr. Ricardo Peach & Angela de Jesus, Programme for Innovation in Artform Development (PIAD), Anita Venter and Qala Phelang Tala (Start Living Green), Centre for Development Support, UFS

A small-scale hybrid form, created from a matrix of miniature cut glass bottles, glass-diffused text animations, presented in English and Sesotho languages.

There is no time to complain, the only remaining time is to start implementing change. If not we will perish.

Ha ho na nako ea ho chacheha ka mohono, nako e setseng ke ea hore re fetohe eseng moo re tla timela.

This urgent call to action is contributed by Thabang Mofokeng, a social change agent and leader of the HOT Rural Workers Collective - based in Mangaung and Botshabelo, South Africa, where Armstrong is working on a project called *Seven Stage Futures/ Re-Future*. The work's form draws upon the 'hybrid building processes' of NGO Qala Phelang Tala - who use glass bottles in their innovative, mud brick, shack replacement constructions to create truly viable, affordable housing.



Shifting Dusts

Video, wood, beach sand, stereo sound

Choreography: Charlotte Vincent

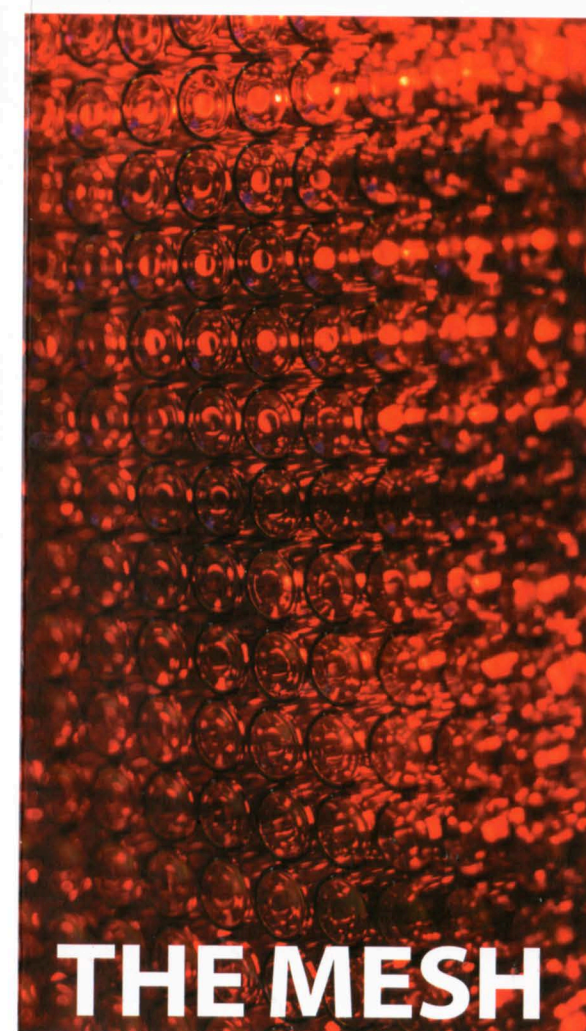
Sound: Guy Webster

Dancer: TC Howard

Acknowledgements: Vincent Dance Theatre

Our world is literally and figuratively turning to 'dust'. Like many minute things, dust is an often-unnoticed residue, with planet-size consequences. *Shifting Dusts* seeks to acknowledge decay and renewal, and the transitional, cyclical natures of interrelated ecologies whilst also suggesting advanced levels of degradation potentially beyond reparation.

In a darkened space a human form is projected against a dust-strewn surface inviting differing states of meditation, stillness and renewal. Originally commissioned as part of a larger work for the Institute for Contemporary Arts (ICA) London in 2006, this video installation invites the viewer to meditate upon and witness the human body disintegrating and transforming whilst in motion.



THE MESH

Keith Armstrong

Johannes Stegmann Art Gallery
17 July - 11 August 2017

The Mesh

The Mesh is an interactive, experiential solo exhibition by Australian artist Keith Armstrong. The five artworks on exhibition each investigate how the 'mesh' of environmental, social and cultural ecologies form our worlds, asking how might we re-imagine our place and actions within those networks as 'refuturing' (i.e. concerted actions that help increase time left in the future). *The Mesh* seeks to shine a light upon the silent, shadowy barriers of cultural misunderstanding that prevent us from re-inventing ourselves as a future-sustaining species.

Each work embodies a deep reflection upon the ecological mesh – those myriad, binding relationships that profoundly entangle everything and everybody. In the lives we lead, nothing is individual; nothing exists alone. And so, whilst we may choose to remain unaware, misunderstand or deny ecology, we can never avoid the effects of its gradual destruction.

The interactive, experiential artworks in the show suggest the existence of a complex interplay of worlds, a network of environmental, social and cultural ecologies. There are five invented parts that contribute to the greater ecological Meshwork, and each one casts a distinctive light on questions of futuring, responsibility and perception.

Tim Morton writes in *The Ecological Thought* (2010:2), ecology "has to do with love, loss, despair and compassion... It has to do with capitalism and with what might exist after capitalism. It has to do with amazement, open-mindedness and wonder.

It has to do with doubt, confusion and scepticism. It has to do with concepts of space and time. It has to do with delight, beauty, ugliness, disgust, irony and pain. It has to do with consciousness and awareness. It has to do with ideology and critique. It has to do with reading and writing. It has to do with race, class and gender. It has to do with ideas of self and the weird paradoxes of subjectivity. It has to do with society. It has to do with existence".

Morton, Timothy. 2010. *The ecological thought*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.



Eremocene

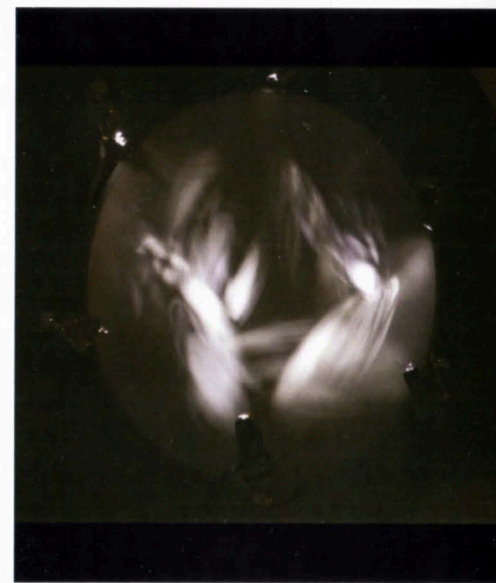
Glass, fibre optics, electronics, computers, water, lighting, common mechanics, five-channel sound

Sound: Luke Lickfold

Video: Matt Davis

Acknowledgements: UTS Life Sciences (Prof. William Gladstone), Living Data, UTS Institute for Sustainable Futures (Tania Leimbach)

A mysterious, internally glowing creature, witnessed from several vantage points moves uncannily in fluid motion within dense blackness. Enveloping sound, vision and movement are as one as a 'life-like', 'bio-morphic' form fades continually in and out of perception. The idea of the 'extinction of human experience' expresses our projected fear for all that will be rendered senseless, when ancient, intelligent, biodiverse worlds have descended into permanent darkness. But as one series of conceptions slip into extinction, so others flow on in. Eremocene suggests that we might instead embrace artificially intelligent 'things', with little need for dated legacies such as excess light or the long-extinguished sounds of biological life. Philosopher/Biologist EO Wilson calls such possible futures the Eremocene - our Age of Loneliness.



Seasonal

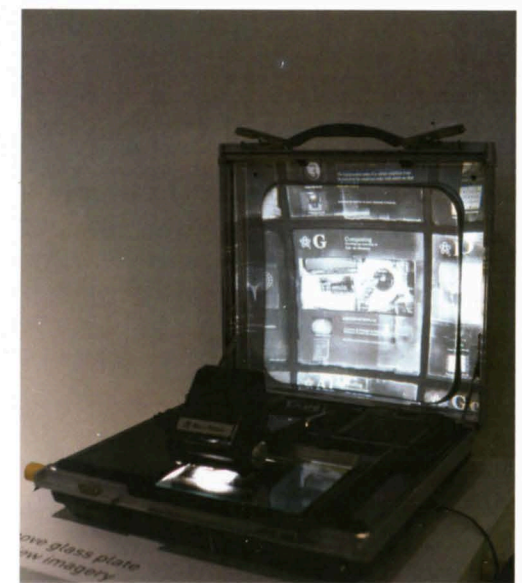
Metal, mechanics, motors, lights, 3D printed forms, organic materials, video, four-channel sound, interactivity

Co-direction/sound: Lawrence English

Coding: Luke Lickfold

An installation of custom interactive and robotic systems, illusionary techniques, and real time spatial audio processes that draw upon a rich array of media, including seasonal, nocturnal field recordings and detailed observations of foliage and flowering phases sourced along Australia's eastern seaboard.

By drawing inspiration from the subtle transitions between what Europeans once named 'Summer' and 'Autumn' and the multiple seasons recognised by indigenous cultures, and by including audience 'disturbances' within the work, *Seasonal* creates a compelling environment that wraps audiences in luscious, yet ominous atmospheres beyond sight and hearing. By amplifying and shining light upon a myriad of mysterious lives lived in blackness, the work presents a sensuous, deep engagement with nocturnal seasonal forms: whilst hinting at a far less comforting background increasingly framed by anthropogenic climate change.



Inter-State

Microfiche, microfiche reader, LED Signboard, transparent print, headphone sound

Sound: Prof. Roger Dean

Original Imagery: Stuart Lawson

Quotes drawn from Tony Fry's refuturing philosophies

Inter-State conjoins and contrasts the thinking of science and 'futuring' philosophies, presenting a re-imagined version of the scientific periodic table of elements.

The installation comprises three related components: a large-scale print mounted on a light box and an interactive microfiche-based image presented on an old-fashioned manual viewer, and a vibrant, connecting soundscape played through headphones. These three components allow audiences different ways of interacting with the work – either through examining the structural detail of the light box print which sets all of the 'elements' in relationship to each other, or through instigating slow scans across the table via the arcane database reader. In all of these ways the work seeks to actively contrast modern scientific ideas and processes of elemental organisation with the relational thinking of selected contemporary artists and philosophers.