



EXPERIMENTA *VANISHING POINT*



EXPERIMENTA *VANISHING POINT*

experimenta.org

EXHIBITION:

BlackBox, the Arts Centre

September 1 – 30, 2005

Margaret Lawrence Galleries at the VCA

September 1 - 24, 2005

Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces

September 2 – October 1, 2005

The National Gallery of Victoria, International

August 27 – December 11, 2005

Frankston Arts Centre

August 31 – October 2, 2005

CINEMA PROGRAM:

Australian Centre for the Moving image

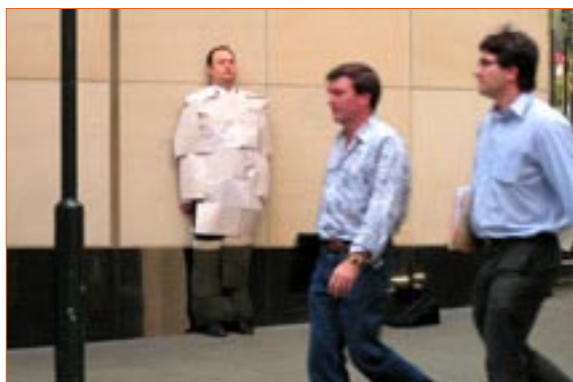
September 14 – 18, 2005

EXPERIMENTA VANISHING POINT

Introduction

"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed." - Albert Einstein

Experimenta Vanishing Point is a new media event that embraces the concept of illusion. In all its forms, illusion has been a source of fascination throughout time. The antecedents to cinema were such devices as the Magic Lantern - at the time providing a new magical experience of projected images. Escher's drawings create another type of illusion, as do lenticulars, holographics, special effects and virtual reality. At each point in history these innovations have led to technical developments



that have become part of our everyday life and offered different possibilities for our visions of the world and our future. What are our modern day illusions, how will they affect our lives and what perspectives can they provide on our current existence?

Experimenta Vanishing Point transforms the familiar reality of our everyday environment to reveal the hidden mysteries, the forgotten realm of the imagination, and opens up a space in which one may discover the extraordinary within the ordinary fabric of our world. With its unique presentation of interactive and screen-based works, *Experimenta* has proven the appeal of its exhibitions to art audiences, the general public, students and school groups, and all age groups ranging from small children to senior citizens.



Experimenta Vanishing Point Education Kit

Experimenta Vanishing Point provides an opportunity for upper primary and secondary teachers to bring together the Arts, Mathematics, Science, Technology, English and SoSE with an emphasis on illusion, perception, perspectives, patterns, feelings and responses.

Teachers may choose to have students engage with all or selected works from *Experimenta Vanishing Point*. The sug-



gestions that follow provide general introductory activities, ideas to introduce an excursion to the exhibition, focused activities to assist students to explore and respond to particular works and general concluding activities.

Before visiting the exhibitions

- Develop a class list of 'everyday objects' such as comb, doormat, computer, doorbell, toothbrush, spring, paperclip, mobile phone, sock, envelope, basketball, biro, radio, ipod, book, chair, television.
- Discuss how long each of the objects has been around, how it came to be developed or invented, who was responsible and why it came about. Place a star next to objects that transformed lives, even in a small way.
- Create a timeline showing when some of the most interesting or significant objects first came about or were created.
- Think, pair, share - Have each student refer to the 'everyday objects' list, and select three objects. Have students record two or three new uses for each of the three objects. Individuals then discuss their ideas with a partner. Ask each pair to then choose three or four interesting ideas to share with the class. Record these shared ideas on butcher paper for later reference.

From zoetropes to telescopes, computers to satellites, microscopes to mobile phones, new technologies have always opened doors to new worlds of possibility and transformed our lives in fundamental ways. Born out of a desire to push beyond the limits of the known world, technological innovation encourages us to reconsider our assumptions about reality, and reflects our innate curiosity to discover more, to venture into the unknown and to find new ways of seeing and understanding.

Down the rabbit hole... Experimenta Vanishing Point catalogue essay, September 2005.

- Discuss the quote above, then challenge pairs of students to investigate and present a technological innovation to the class that they believe has been one of the most significant innovations of all time. Work with students to guide them in formulating arguments or examples to justify their choice.

Experimenta Vanishing Point is described as a new media event that embraces the concept of illusion. In all its forms, illusion has been a source of fascination throughout time. The antecedents to cinema were such devices as the Magic Lantern - at the time providing a new magical experience of projected images. Escher's drawings create another type of illusion, as

do lenticulars, holographics, special effects and virtual reality. At each point in history these innovations have led to technical developments that have become part of our everyday life and offered different possibilities for our visions of the world and our future.

- Encourage students to find out how lenticulars (a 3D illusion process that does not require special glasses) work. There are two main types of lenticulars, 3D images and morphing images. While 3D images give an illusion of depth, morphing images change from one image to another. Some lenticulars combine both processes.

Students could begin investigations by visiting the website: <http://www.howardhallis.com/artgallery/lenticulars/what/>

- Assist students to locate books that demonstrate optical illusions or have them investigate websites such as the ones that follow:
 - <http://www.michaelbach.de/ot/>
 - http://www.sandlotscience.com/illusion_Jump_Main/Master_Jump.htm
 - <http://www.colorcube.com/illusions/illusion.htm>

Watch out for the surprise ending with this one!
http://www.liquidgeneration.com/sabotage/optical_sabotage.asp

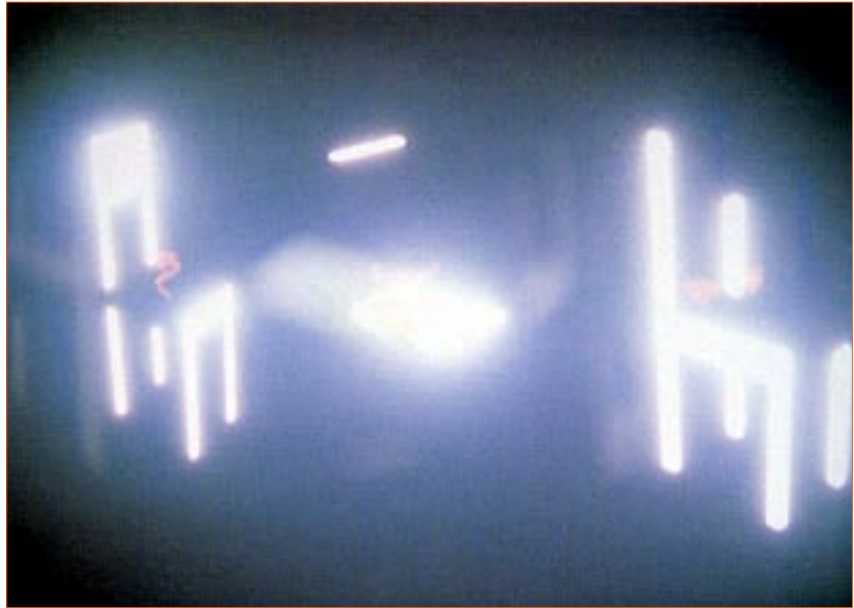
Students could send a friend an optical illusion ecard. Go to:
<http://www.sandlotscience.com/ecard.html>

- Have students share or demonstrate some of their favourite optical illusions.
- Create a class definition for the following words and phrases: illusion, optical illusion, reality, virtual reality, perception, perspective.
- As a class discuss: What are our modern day illusions, how will they affect our lives and what perspectives can they provide on our current existence?

- In groups of four, have students investigate one of the antecedents of cinema (e.g. magic lantern, zoetrope, thaumatrope), or alternatively Escher's drawings, lenticulars, holographs, visual or special effects. Encourage each group to present what they have learned to the class in an interesting way.

At Experimenta Vanishing Point

- Ask students what they expect to see in this exhibition. How have these expectations been created? Read the introduction to the exhibition provided at the beginning of this kit. What suggestions does it create about this exhibition? Again what do students expect to see?
- Suggest that students think about the placement of each the artists' works. Explore how the placement of a work enhances or contributes to your experience of that work? Before entering the exhibition, flag possible areas for class discussion at the conclusion of your exhibition experience. You might consider:
 - Is the work near the entrance, in a separate room or placed in a particular way?
 - What is near to the work? How does the placement of one work in relation to other works affect your experience with each piece? Do they enhance each other or detract from one another?
 - Do works that are placed near to each other have some relationship? If so, what is it?
 - Do all the works have something in common? Do selected works have things in common? If so, explain what you mean. What are the differences between works?
 - How and why do you think decisions were made about the placement of each work?
- Provide each student, or groups of students with the focused activity pages provided to assist them to explore and respond to particular works related to the exhibition venue/s (BlackBox and/or Margaret



Lawrence Galleries VCA) you are visiting. These can be found at the end of this kit.

After visiting Experimenta Vanishing Point

Responding to the exhibition

- Ask students what they like most/least about the exhibition. Follow-up the questions posed at the beginning of the excursion about the placement of each of the artists' works. Ask for ideas about why students think the exhibition is called *Vanishing Point*.
- Share and discuss the responses recorded by students, while they engaged with the exhibition, on their focused activity pages.
- Discuss or have students write

several sentences, responding to questions such as:

- What surprised you about the exhibition and why were you surprised?
- What shocked you and why were you shocked?
- What other reactions did you have? What created these reactions?
- Which of the works would you most like to have in your own home? Why?
- Some students may wish to extend or build upon some of their responses, such as their ideas for short stories.

Media or digital art changes along with developments in technology, for example, in the 1990s the CD Rom was a significant media art medium, more recently the interactivity of media art reflects modern computer games. Many media art creations involve communication and 'body-in' experiences.

- Read the above description to students, then ask them to write several sentences describing the works selected for *Experimenta Vanishing Point*. Ask students what they think the curators might have been looking for in making their selections.
- Many people think of galleries as places to exhibit static works such as paintings or sculpture. Create a 'postcard' promoting a new digital

or media art gallery. Find imaginative ways to explain the multi-user, interactive and innovative nature of many digital or media art works.

- As a class select four of the works from *Experimenta Vanishing Point*. Discuss what might have inspired the artists to create each work. What ideas are explored in each work?
- Working in groups of four, set up an overhead projector or other bright light source to shine onto a screen. Experiment with shadows and shapes of everyday objects and discuss what you observe. In what ways are you able or unable to create the effects that Minim++ created in *Tool's Life*?
- Investigate the practice of Korean traditional singers who in the pursuit of "duk-eum", the highest grade of training, stand under waterfalls and sing.

Use Powerpoint or other presentation software to present your findings.

The work *Journey to the Moon* pays homage to early experimental filmmaker Georges Melies, whose film of the same name employed magical experimentations and conjuring tricks to create the first cinematic science fiction experience.

- Encourage students to investigate the work of Melies and share their findings.

The artists from *Experimenta Vanishing Point* have taken familiar or everyday objects or activities and made them extraordinary or unfamiliar.

- Read the statement above to students then ask them to explain whether they agree or disagree with it. Place students in groups of three or four according to their opinion and ask them to provide three examples from the exhibition to support their views.

Vanishing points, perspective and patterns

Vanishing point is referred to as the point or points to which the extensions

of parallel lines appear to converge in a perspective drawing.

- Assist students to use a variety of sources to create class definitions of 'perspective', 'perspective drawing' and 'vanishing point'.
- Draw some everyday objects, such as a cardboard box, TV or table to show what you understand about perspective and vanishing points, so the objects appear realistic and as though they have the correct dimensions.
- Investigate the works of Escher. In particular find out about his work *Drawing Hands*, in which two hands are shown drawing each other, and *Ascending and Descending*, in which lines of people ascend and descend stairs in an infinite loop, on a construction which is impossible to build and only possible to draw because of oddities of perception and perspective. Escher's work has a strong mathematical component. Many of his drawings involve impossible objects, and often use repeated tilings, or tessellations. The following website offers more insights into Escher and his works: <http://www.iproject.com/escher/teaching/teaching.html>

This site commemorates M.C. Escher's birth in 1898. M.C. Escher has fascinated young and old with his unique interpretation of the world around us in his drawings and prints. From impossible worlds to repeating pattern tessellations, Escher shows us the unique harmony and beauty that are in simple things in our surroundings. The site contains information about exhibitions, educational resources, and links to other Escher sites. It is maintained by Imagination Project, manufacturer of the Lizards of M.C. Escher SoftPuzzle.

Other useful sites:

<http://www.mathacademy.com/pr/mini-text/escher/>



<http://www.mcescher.com/>

<http://www.iproject.com/escher/teaching/beyondcraft.html>

- Use dictionaries, encyclopedias and websites such as <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tessellation> to define tessellations and how they are used in everyday objects such as tiles, paving, stained glass windows and mosaics.
- Provide students with several sheets of paper and encourage them to find out what pattern of shapes they can use to produce a tessellation, that is, they are to cover the paper with a pattern of shapes having no overlaps or gaps.

Encourage students to begin by exploring tessellations using only one shape that is a regular polygon. This is known as a regular tessellation. (A regular polygon is a shape with all sides of equal length and all angles of equal measure.) Students may progress to exploring semiregular tessellations, formed by combining two or three polygons; and irregular tessellations, in which shapes have equal line segments but different angles.

Students could also try using block capital letters. Challenge them to find out which letters work and which ones do not.

Escher's works also featured reflections, mirror images, positive and negative designs, reversals, inversions, metamorphosis, repetitions and distortions.

- Encourage students to select an

everyday object and transform it or create a stylized version of it within a drawing or new media art form. Students could experiment with tessellations, reflections, mirror images, positive and negative designs, reversals, inversions, metamorphosis, repetitions and distortions.

- Work in groups of four to investigate the principles of perspective drawing that were described by the Florentine architect F. Brunelleschi (1377 – 1446). Create a poster to show the class what you have discovered.

Perception

- Have pairs of students use the Exploratorium website <http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/snackintro.html> to investigate experiments related to perception. Relevant examples include:

Afterimage: A flash of light prints a lingering image in your eye: <http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/afterimage.html>

Anti-Gravity Mirror: It's all done with mirrors!: http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/anti_gravity.html

Far Out Corners: Your experience of the world influences what you see: http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/far_out_corners.html

Jacques Cousteau in Seashells: There's more to seeing than meets the eye: http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/jacques_cousteau.html

Moire Patterns: When you overlap materials with repetitive lines, you create moire patterns: http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/moire_patterns.html

Persistence of Vision: Your eye and brain hold on to a series of images to form a single complete picture: http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/persistence_of_vision.html

Proprioception: Even with our eyes closed, we have a sense of body position - where our arms and legs are, for example, and that we are moving them. Muscles, tendons, joints and the inner ear contain proprioceptors, also known as stretch receptors, which relay positional information to our brains: <http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/proprioception/index.html>

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/proprioception/index.html>

Seeing Your Retina: You can use a dim point of light to cast a shadow of the blood supply of your retina onto the retina itself. This will allow you to see the blood supply of your retina, and even your blind spot: http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/seeing_retina/index.html

Size and Distance: A clueless way to determine the size of an object: http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/size_and_distance.html

Squirming Palm: This illusion makes the palm of your hand appear to squirm and twist: http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/squirming_palm.html

Thread the Needle: Using two eyes gives you depth perception: http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/thread_the_needle.html

Vanna: A face seen upside down may hold some surprises: <http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/vanna.html>

Whirling Watcher: When you view short bursts of moving images, you see interesting effects: http://www.exploratorium.edu/snacks/whirling_watcher.html

- Ask the pairs of students to use what they discovered from the Exploratorium website to explain how they think one of the works from *Experimenta Vanishing Point* might have been created or how it might work. They can then share and discuss ideas with another pair of students.
- Working in pairs have students create multiple copies of either a crossword or word find that includes each of the following words: lenticular, holograph, illusion, optical, reality, virtual, perspective, vanishing, technology, innovation, mysteries, perception, sensory, imagination, gravity, haptic, reflection, immersion, shadow, spectres. (You may wish to add other relevant words that have arisen during your excursion or prior activities)

Have groups of students swap and complete one another's crosswords

and word finds.

Who are the artists?

Filmmakers, digital media artists, designers, scientists and architects come together in this exhibition, exchanging skills and ideas to create a dynamic and relevant exhibition. *Experimenta Vanishing Point* demonstrates that while new technologies are integral to daily life we often take them for granted.

Experimenta Vanishing Point re-presents familiar, everyday objects, activities and rituals and gives us a completely new way of 'seeing' them. It shows us the remarkable, even crazy possibilities that media, digital and other new technologies offer in our everyday lives. We see the ordinary become the extraordinary.

- Read the two paragraphs above to students and invite comments and discussion.
- Ask students to read the information describing many of the *Experimenta Vanishing Point* works and providing biographical information about the artists involved in their creation. In particular, have them read the short biographies for each artist, then as a class list all the jobs engaged in by the artists. Ask students: What do you notice about their jobs? What conclusions can you draw about the artists' interests? As a class discuss hobbies the artists might have? How might their hobbies and work be related?

Many of the artists have been or are studying. Studies include Graphic Design, Audiovisual Studies, Computer Science, Psychology, Architecture, African Studies, Media and Governance, Applied Physics, Politics and Fine Arts.

- Have students make a list of other studies engaged in by artists. Select one or two and investigate where these could be studied and what is required for selection to these courses.

From ordinary to extraordinary

Technological developments allow us to reach beyond our own human capabilities, amplifying and extending our bodies, and radically changing the way we live in the world. As medical technologies change the ways we give and take life and artificial intelligence transforms our understanding of consciousness, the constant emergence of new technologies continues to challenge our assumptions and carry us on a mental and moral roller coaster ride through life. As we grow accustomed to each new world created by these tools, the technologies that were once mind-blowing inventions eventually become the ordinary objects of our daily lives, forming the basis of our world view until something else emerges to unhinge our expectations.

Engaged in re-imagining and re-presenting the world, artists have always been a significant driving force behind discovery and technological development.

From: *Down the rabbit hole . . . Experimenta Vanishing Point* Catalogue Essay, 2005.

- Discuss the above excerpts from *Down the rabbit hole . . .* then have students work in small teams to create their own works that present the ordinary in an extraordinary way, or create their own illusions using either drawings, still photographic images or moving images created with a video camera, animation program or other means.
- Have the teams of students plan a campaign to 'sell' their work to the *Experimenta* exhibition curators.

Down the rabbit hole . . .

Absurdity lurks around every corner in *Experimenta Vanishing Point*, taking you by surprise with an ironic, humorous and sometimes gently mocking representation of the world around us. Many of the works play on the regularity of our daily lives to provide us with opportunities to laugh at the oddness of our rituals or routine behaviours or perhaps to reconsider our practices.

- Physical shifts in perspective offer us extreme vantage points that distort our relationship to the environment as a whole. Did any of the works encourage you to see your world through fresh eyes? If so, in what ways? If not, why not? Were physical shifts in perspective involved?

Some of the *Vanishing Point* works are playful, creating worlds of enchantment and illusion, capturing the delight of childhood, playing with our expectations as in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, showing us that nothing is quite what it seems.

- Do you agree? Discuss the above statement.

The world of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* involves passing through a portal that transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary, enabling you to pass into a world of curiosity, wonder and nonsense

- Work in groups to list other works that involve being transported into other worlds via portals of some type. Examples include:
 - The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
 - The Indian in the Cupboard
 - The Harry Potter series.

There are many other tales, both print based and screen-based, that rely upon illusion or invite you to suspend disbelief, allowing you to imagine the unimaginable, or to enjoy a sense of extraordinary adventure. Examples include *Fairytale: A True Story*, *The NeverEnding Story*, *The Princess Bride*. Encourage students to make further suggestions.

Going further

Pataphysics, Vitruvian Man and Modular Man

- Find out more about pataphysics by using books, other references or websites such as <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pataphysics>
- Students might work in groups to explore one or more of the follow-

ing: Vitruvian Man, Modular Man, the work of ImantsTiller. Some starting points are provided below. Encourage each group to report findings to the class.

Vitruvian Man is a famous drawing with descriptive notes by Leonardo da Vinci from around the year 1490. The drawing shows a naked male figure in two super-imposed positions with his arms apart and simultaneously inscribed in a circle and square. According to Leonardo's notes in the accompanying text, which are mirror writing, it was made as a study of the proportions of the (male) human body as described in a treatise by the Ancient Roman architect Vitruvius.

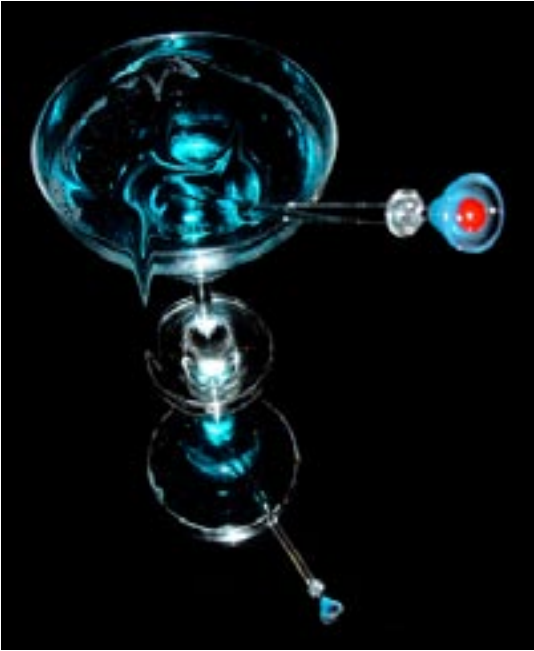
Taken from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vitruvian_Man

- Use books, other references or visit websites such as the one above to investigate Vitruvian Man. Find out about the mathematical proportions and the measurements of the human body as described by Vitruvius, the part of the body considered the centre of gravity, and how many poses could be created using the combination of arm and leg positions shown.
- Use the mathematical proportions described by Vitruvius to sketch your own person.
- Find out how Le Corbusier used notions of modular man and the 'golden ratio' in his work.

Since 1981, Imants Tillers' work has been characterised by his practice of drawing a grid over a reproduction of another artist's work and transposing each square of this grid onto a small canvas board. The image is then assembled on a grander scale for exhibition.

Taken from: http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/visual_culture/projects/diva/itillers.html

- As individuals, then as a class think about the *Experimenta Vanishing Point* work *Pataphysical Man* and explain how it can be compared or related to Vitruvian Man, Modular Man and Tillers' Pataphysical Man.



THE COCKTAIL PARTY EFFECT

Stephen Barrass and Chris Gunn, Australia, 2005. An Experimenta New Visions Commission.

THEY say seeing is believing, but this invisible installation has us questioning whether we can trust our eyes. Picking up the swizzle stick in *The Cocktail Party Effect*, we can feel a cocktail glass and hear the tinkling of ice cubes in what appears to be an empty space. Working between art and science, Barrass' previous works, including *ZiZi: the Affectionate Couch* and *Op-shop*, used sound to confound our expectations of familiar environments and re-position our relationship with objects around us. Continuing this exploration, Barrass and Chris Gunn use haptic (touch) technology to create a sense-bending work that confuses visual orientation and challenges our reliance upon sight to understand the world in which we live.

- Which of your senses are confounded (or upset) as you engage with *The Cocktail Party Effect*?

- How do you think *The Cocktail Party Effect* works?

- List three questions *The Cocktail Party Effect* raises for you:

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

> Stephen Barrass is an Associate Professor in the School of Creative Communication, and Co-Director of Sonic Communications Research Group (University of Canberra). With a Ph.D. in Auditory Information Design (Australian National University), his research interests include mixed reality, interaction design, interactive museum exhibits, multimodal information displays, soni-

fication, generative art and new interfaces for musical expression. His work has been exhibited at *Experimenta Prototype*, 2002, *Experimenta House of Tomorrow*, 2003, the Sydney Opera House Studio, 2004, and the National Museum of Australia. > Chris Gunn is a researcher at the CSIRO ICT Centre, Canberra. Specialising in the introduction of haptic technology into virtual environments,

Gunn has worked with virtual reality for seven years. His work involves building systems that allow people to have the sensation of touch within computer-generated scenes. He has also worked on projects that enable sculptors to work with virtual clay, and developing systems for training surgeons on virtual patients.

DISLOCATION

Alex Davies, Australia, 2005. An Experimenta New Visions Commission

As we peer into the portals of *Dislocation*, we see and hear scenarios play out behind us, but when we turn around the room is empty. The simultaneous presence and absence of these phantoms defies rational thought or experience creating a haunting atmosphere. Meticulously mapped, and programmed to layer pre-recorded sequences with real-time footage, *Dislocation* builds an environment of deception and uncertainty. Its subtlety and cunning displaces our reliance upon, and trust of own distinct emotional responses to the presence of others



- Jot down key words to capture your feelings as you engage with *Dislocation*.

- Which of your senses are confounded (or upset) as you engage with *Dislocation*.

- Why do you think Alex Davies may have created *Dislocation*?

- From whose perspective do we 'see' the world of *Dislocation*?

Born in 1977, Alex Davies lives and works in Sydney. Awarded a Bachelor of Fine Arts with Honours from the College of Fine Arts, University of NSW in 2001, Davies has since been researching, developing and presenting audio-visual installations. Davies' practice spans a diverse range of media including film, network, real-time audio-visual

manipulations and responsive installations; his current practice is based around the development of evolving audio-visual installations in which individuals and dynamic environmental factors shift the conditions of a controlled space. Davies work has been exhibited nationally and internationally including: *drift*, ISEA, Helsinki, Tallinn, & Stockholm,

2004; *Swarm*, 2004 Australian Culture Now, ACMI, Melbourne, 2004; *Filter Feeder*, Primavera, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2003; and *Radiotopia*, Network Event, Ars Electronica Festival, Linz, Austria, 2002.



PATAPHYSICAL MAN

Shaun Gladwell, Australia, 2005. An Experimenta New Visions Commission

PATAPHYSICAL *Man* represents the dynamics of a break-dancer in the tradition of Da Vinci's Vitruvian man and Le Corbusier's modular man. The video appropriates the title of a painting by Imants Tillers from 1984. Tiller's painting and Gladwell's video both attempt to demonstrate Pataphysics, a term coined in 1893 by the French writer Alfred Jarry to articulate "the science of imaginary solutions, which symbolically attributes the properties of objects, described by their virtuality, to their lineaments" (*Gestes et opinions du Docteur Faustroll, II, viii*). The absurdist logic of Pataphysics operating within the work is juxtaposed with the symmetry and harmony of Da Vinci and Le Corbusier's men.

- What is your immediate reaction to *Pataphysical Man*?

- What laws of logic and physics do you think *Pataphysical Man* defies? Give examples to support your ideas, for example, law of gravity — the man's pants are falling up!

- From whose perspective do we observe *Pataphysical Man*?

Shaun Gladwell is an accomplished painter, sculptor and video artist whose work encompasses images and ideas that cross cultural and historical boundaries. A Samstag scholar, Gladwell recently completed postgraduate studies at Goldsmiths College, University of London, following three

months at the Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris. Recently, Gladwell's work has featured in several major exhibitions, including *2004: Australian Culture Now*, Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne; *Home Sweet Home: Works from the Peter Fay Collection*, National Gallery of Australia,

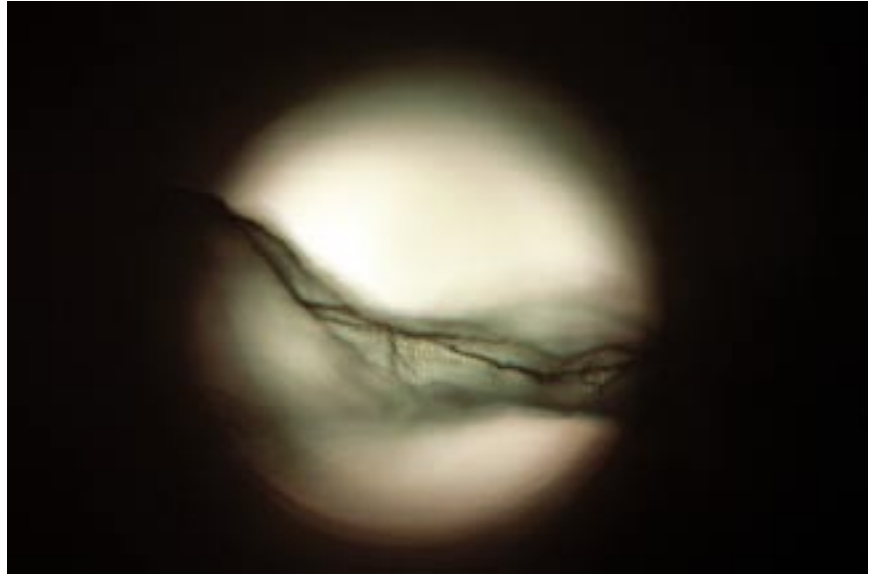
Canberra; and *Primavera 2003: Exhibition of Young Australian Artists*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney. Shaun Gladwell is represented by Sherman Galleries, Sydney

4

WIRE 1

Wu Chi-Tsung, Taiwan, 2003

BOTH mesmerising and beautiful, the smouldering landscape of *Wire 1* slowly traces a journey through time. Combining a simple piece of wire mesh with an oscillating magnifier, Wu Chi-Tsung has transformed these basic elements through projection, to create a burning wave of illusion. The warmth of the projected image contrasts with the cold industrial materials of the equipment, and each fold of the wire leaves behind a trace. The simple grace evident in the disintegration of this mystical landscape reflects the eternal wisdom of traditional Chinese calligraphy, as it tells an ancient story.



- What does the image make you think about?

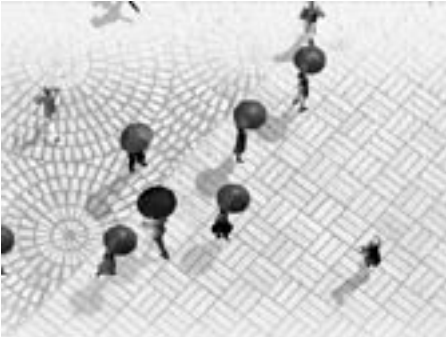
- List words to describe the image.

- List words to describe the materials and equipment used to create the image.

Wu Chi-Tsung was born in Taipei, Taiwan in 1981. After 11 years of fine art education in painting and sculpture, Wu began experimenting with video in 2002, and is currently undertaking graduate studies in architecture. Awarded the Taipei Arts

Award in 2003, Wu's recent work explores the notion of "image" through various mediums such as video, photography, and mechanical installation. Recent exhibitions of his work include: *The Elegance of Silence: Contemporary Art From East*

Asia, Mori Art Museum, 2005; *Eye Dream*, City Hall Art Gallery, Ottawa, Canada, 2005; *City_net Asia*, Seoul Museum of Art, Korea, 2003; and *Streams of Encounter – electronic media based artworks*, Taipei Fine Arts Museum, 2003



PEDESTRIAN

Shelley Eshkar and Paul Kaiser, USA, 2002

In *Pedestrian* a video image is projected downwards to merge with the rough surfaces of the pavement on which we walk, creating a trompe l'oeil illusion of a city. > The tiny denizens that wander through this miniature metropolis congregate and disperse: standing, watching, starting, stopping, sometimes running, or perhaps even lying down. > Created through a process of 'motion capture' the inhabitants of this 3D world mimic our own daily movements with uncanny accuracy. Their actions are pedestrian – but

with longer observation, the patterns they form seem oddly co-ordinated, as if they are unfolding in a story or deriving from rituals particular to their world but mysterious to us, remaining to be discovered.

- How did you react when you first encountered *Pedestrian*?

- What did you think you were seeing?

- What tessellations and patterns do you see in this work? Draw some.

- In what ways are the characters in this miniature world like humans?

- From whose perspective do we 'see' the world of *Pedestrian*?

- Think of a story about one of the characters seen in *Pedestrian*. Jot down some key words and phrases to remind you of your story.

Shelley Eshkar and Paul Kaiser are digital artists who have been collaborating in the creation of exhibition and stage works since 1997. With artists including Merce Cunningham, Bill T. Jones, and Marc Downie they have produced works that combine motion capture with dance, including *Ghostcatching* (1999), *BIPED* (1999) and *Loops* (2001).

Shelley Eshkar's research explores drawing, computer graphics, and human motion; one of his primary tools is motion capture, a technology that digitally captures the movement of human motion. Eshkar has received awards from the New York State Foundation for the Arts, New York State Council for the Arts, Bessie, and Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts. > Paul Kaiser's

work has featured in numerous venues including the Lincoln Center, MASS MoCA, the Pompidou Centre, The Whitney Museum and the Barbican Centre. The first digital artist to receive a Guggenheim Fellowship, Kaiser has also received the ComputerWorld/Smithsonian, and Bessie Awards and an Osher Fellowship at the Exploratorium.



JOURNEY TO THE MOON

William Kentridge, South Africa, 2003

JOURNEY to the Moon pays homage to early experimental film maker Georges Méliès, whose film of the same name employed magical experimentations and conjuring tricks to create the first cinematic science fiction experience. Blending Kentridge's unique style of hand-drawn charcoal animation with live action performance, this film takes us on a surreal journey through outer space; from the launching of the space-gun to the landing on the moon and beyond, the artist's studio becomes at once the

external space for exploration and the inside of the rocket-ship. *Journey to the Moon* shows that Kentridge is a master of animation whose imagination can lead us on unbelievable journeys.

- What did you think as you engaged with *Journey to the Moon*?

- What fascinated you most about this work?

- Explain how science and imagination come together to create *Journey to the Moon*.

William Kentridge was born, lives and works in Johannesburg. In 1976 Kentridge earned a B.A. in politics and African studies from the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, before studying fine art at the Johannesburg Art Foundation, and completing a course in theatre in Paris. Since the mid 1970s Kentridge has been active in film and theatre, working as a writer, director, actor,

and set designer for numerous productions, including several collaborations with Handspring Puppet Company. Kentridge's films and drawings have featured extensively in solo and group exhibitions at numerous festivals, galleries, and biennales around the world, including *Faces in the Crowd / Volti nella Folla* Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 2004; *61 Mostra Internazionale*

d'arte Cinematografica, Venice, Italy, 2004; and *New Identities: Contemporary South African Art*, Museum Bochum, Germany, 2004. A major retrospective of Kentridge's work, shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney in 2004 is currently touring internationally.

8

TOOL'S LIFE

Minim++, Japan, 2001

TOOL'S *Life* is a playful interactive installation that gives us a glimpse into the secret lives and hidden personalities of everyday objects. With one touch, the shadows of various seemingly passive objects suddenly spring to life, begin to grow, dance gleefully or skitter away. Driven by custom software and triggered by a system of touch sensors, *Tool's Life* responds to our interaction with delightful animations that reveal the inner desires of objects that populate our daily lives. Slightly cheeky and wonderfully entertaining, this work allows us to discover the potential for surprising experiences within the most ordinary of settings.



- What was your immediate response to *Tool's Life*?

- Draw a shadowy shape to represent one of your inner desires or your dream for the future.

Kunoh and Chikamori have been creating artworks together as minim++ since 1996. Their works have been exhibited extensively throughout Japan and also internationally at *Siggraph*, *Ars Electronica*, the *International Film Festival Rotterdam*, and the 3rd *Seoul International Media Art*

Biennale. > Kyoko Kunoh was born in 1972 in Tokyo and graduated from Keio University, Faculty of Policy Management in 1995, later completing a Master's degree in Media and Governance..> Born in 1971 in Tokyo, Motoshi Chikamori graduated from Keio University, Faculty of Environmental

Information in 1995. He completed his Master's degree at the University of Tsukuba in 1998. With support from the POLA Art Foundation in 1999 he went to Hochschule fuer Gestaltung Karlsruhe, Germany to study.



MEMORIAL PROJECT NHA-TRANG VIETNAM - TOWARDS THE COMPLEX – FOR THE COURAGEOUS, THE CURIOUS, AND THE COWARDS

Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba, Japan/Vietnam/USA, 2001

WORKING with local fishermen without any diving or breathing equipment, Nguyen-Hatsushiba wanted to capture a scene that is ‘performed’ but is simultaneously a pure act of survival. Representing a seemingly impossible human struggle, this film by Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba creates a dreamlike reality that evokes echoes of human determination and hope. The fishermen struggle to peddle a cyclo across the ocean floor, occasionally rising to the surface to catch gasps of air in order to stay alive. Like Sisyphus eternally pushing his boulder up the mountain, this film is timeless in its resonance; an everyday scene from Vietnam, transported to an underwater world, becomes a memorial to humanity depicting both the futility and the dignity of persistence in the face of adversity.

- How does the audio track contribute to this work?

- What do you think the artist who created this work is trying to say to audiences? Why do you think this?

- Explain what you think the title of the work means.

- From whose perspective do we ‘see’ this watery world?

Born in 1968 in Tokyo, Japan, Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba has resided for equal periods in Japan, the USA, and Vietnam, and currently lives and works in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Nguyen-Hatsushiba was awarded a Masters of Fine Art from the Maryland Institute, College of Art, Mount Royal School of Art

and a Bachelor of Fine Art from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Brookhaven College, Dallas, Texas. Nguyen-Hatsushiba has received numerous awards, and his work has been exhibited extensively internationally including, recently, 51st Venice Biennale, Arsenale, Venice, Italy, 2005;

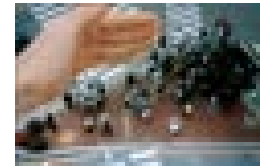
1 Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art, Moscow, Russia, 2005; MAM Project 002: Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba, Mori Art Museum, Tokyo, 2004; MACRO, Museo d’Arte Contemporanea Roma, Italy, 2003; and 13th Biennale of Sydney: (The World May Be) Fantastic, Sydney, Australia, 2002.

I PARKING, III CROSSING

June Bum Park, Korea, 2002

LIKE a boy playing with his toys, June Bum Park guides and protects the people in the miniature play worlds of his video works with touching tenderness. Through a clever shift of perspective, the most ordinary of environments are transformed into extraordinary scenes in which the artist's hands interfere with the forces and currents of our everyday lives in a way that is both comic and comforting. > In *Parking* a regular car park becomes a playmat for matchbox-sized cars and miniature people as the artist guides the movement of cars and pedestrians, holding back cars to let people pass and maneuvering vehicles into safe positions.>

Crossing shows Park's ever-attentive hands directing the flow of traffic and pedestrians at an intersection. With devotion and patience, these omnipotent hands prevent accidents and betray the choreographed randomness of our daily movements. > Played back at high speed, the ant-like actions of the people in these video works provide a humorous perspective on our lives and portray an undeniable affection for humanity.



- In what ways are *I Parking* and *III Crossing* similar to and different from *Pedestrian*?

- Create a diagram showing how you think the artist was able to film his hands along with his subjects.

- What perspectives or ideas do these works give you about people and their relationships with each other?

- From whose perspective do we 'see' each of these worlds?

June Bum Park was born in Seoul in 1976 and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Art from the Department of Art Education at Sungkyunkwan University in 2003. Park's video works have been shown extensively internationally, with solo

exhibitions including *videos*, Gallery Koch und Kesslau, Berlin, Germany, 2004; and *crossing*, Gallery Jungmiso, Seoul, Korea, 2003; and group exhibitions including *The 3rd Seoul International Media Art Biennale*, Korea, 2004-5; *Art Forum*

Berlin 04, Berlin, Germany, 2004; *The Cobweb*, (CGAC) Centro Galego de Arte Contemporanea, Galicia, Spain, 2004; *bizart video festival*, Bizart Center, Shanghai, China, 2003; and *reality bites*, Alternative spaces LOOP, Seoul, Korea, 2002.



FRONT PORCH

William Wegman, USA, 1999/1974

IN the wry performance video *Front Porch*, Wegman's dog Chundo sits in a rocker, reading the newspaper. Dressed in a flannel shirt and jeans, Chundo's mournful expression and disregard for the paper in his hands mock our human obsessions with news and media, and the pride we take in our civilisation. > Mirroring us in this animal role-play of domestication, Wegman allows us to laugh at ourselves and offers an ironic perspective on daily life. > Note: Another of Wegman's works, *Dog Duet*, features as part of *Experimenta Vanishing Point* at Margaret Lawrence Galleries at VCA

- What was your reaction to *Front Porch*? Why did you react this way?

- What things sprang into your mind as you engaged with *Front Porch*?

- What messages or meanings do you see in this work about the everyday lives of people?

William Wegman was born in 1943 in Holyoke, Massachusetts and currently lives in New York and Maine. He received a BFA in painting from the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston in 1965 and an MFA from the University of Illinois Champagne-Urbana in 1967. In the early 1970s Wegman began a long and fruitful collaboration with his dog, Man Ray, lasting twelve years. Con-

tinued collaboration with his dogs has resulted in a proliferation of video and photographic works. Wegman has created film and video works for Saturday Night Live and Nickelodeon and his video segments for Sesame Street have appeared regularly since 1989. Wegman's photographs, videotapes, paintings and drawings have been exhibited in museums and galleries internationally,

including a major retrospective of his work that has travelled throughout Europe and the United States including the Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. His most recent exhibitions include travelling retrospectives in Japan and in Sweden as well as the exhibition *William Wegman: Fashion Photographs* which travelled throughout North America.



SPOTTER

Hiraki Sawa, Japan, 2002.

SPOTTER transforms the interior domestic setting of an ordinary apartment into a world inhabited by miniature people and aeroplanes. > From our perspective as viewers, the huge machines that usually dominate the skies are reduced to harmless toys; but for the tiny people milling about on bench tops or on the edge of a bathtub, studying the planes with binoculars from their lookout points, the planes have become fascinating flying creatures - wild animals that have been captured and placed in an enclosure for human observation. > The planes fly through the apartment, landing and taking off according to their nature but are trapped within this domesticated environment. > By miniaturising human life within what is a very recognisable, ordinary world, *Spotter* reflects our vulnerabilities and our ongoing attempts to understand a world that we struggle to control.

- In what ways is *Spotter* similar to and different from *I Parking*, *Ill Crossing* and *Pedestrian*?

- What ideas does *Spotter* give you about people and their relationships with other people, with the built environment and with technology?

- What meanings or questions do you think the artist may have been trying to create for audiences?

- From whose perspective do we observe?

Born in Ishikawa, Japan in 1977, Hiraki Sawa received a MA in Sculpture from the Slade School of Fine Art, University College, London in 2003, after having completed a Bachelor of Fine Art with Honors at the University of East London. Through the use of simple editing techniques, Sawa's works

create contemporary juxtapositions that recall early Surrealist collages. Exhibitions of Sawa's work include solo exhibitions at James Cohan Gallery, New York and Ota Fine Arts Gallery, Tokyo, Japan, and group exhibitions including *Akimahen*, Lille 2004, Lille, France; Creative Time's *The 59th*

Minute: Video Art on the Times Square Astrovision, 2004; *Wing of Art*, Kunsthalle Darmstadt, Darmstadt, Germany, 2003; and *Lyon Biennale*, Lyon, France, 2003.

DOG DUET

William Wegman, USA, 1999/1974

In *Dog Duet*, two of Wegman's Weimaraners intently follow the movement of an off-camera object with the perfect synchronicity of people watching a tennis game. > Their actions as they track the object are intensely comic and ironically reflect our own eye movements as we become transfixed by the action in the video. > The dogs' unswerving fascination with the hidden object teases us and we find ourselves caught between curiosity and comedy right up to the end, when the object is finally revealed.

> Note: Another of Wegman's works, *Front Porch*, features as part of *Experimenta Vanishing Point* at BlackBox.



- What are you thinking as you observe *Dog Duet*?

- Watch *Dog Duet* again, this time imagining the dogs are people watching a tennis game.
- What are your thoughts about the relationship Wegman has with his dogs?

- From whose perspective do we observe?

William Wegman was born in 1943 in Holyoke, Massachusetts and currently lives in New York and Maine. He received a BFA in painting from the Massachusetts College of Art in Boston in 1965 and an MFA from the University of Illinois Champagne-Urbana in 1967. In the early 1970s Wegman began a long and fruitful collaboration with his dog, Man Ray, lasting twelve years. Con-

tinued collaboration with his dogs has resulted in a proliferation of video and photographic works. Wegman has created film and video works for *Saturday Night Live* and *Nickelodeon* and his video segments for *Sesame Street* have appeared regularly since 1989. Wegman's photographs, videotapes, paintings and drawings have been exhibited in museums and galleries internationally,

including a major retrospective of his work that has travelled throughout Europe and the United States including the Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. His most recent exhibitions include travelling retrospectives in Japan and in Sweden as well as the exhibition *William Wegman: Fashion Photographs* which travelled throughout North America.



THE SHY PICTURE

David MacLeod and Narinda Reeders, Australia, 2005. An Experimenta New Visions Commission

A small photograph hangs on the gallery wall; quiet, unobtrusive, mysterious. > As we approach, the figures in the picture appear to sense us coming, they take cover, running and hiding; sneaking back only when they feel it is safe. > Custom software and motion sensing enables *The Shy Picture* to detect our movement, allowing the characters in the picture to assess the presence or absence of intruders. > Combining Reeders' and MacLeod's photographic, video, and programming skills, *The Shy Picture* resembles an early black and white film still which comes to life, but refuses to disclose the plot.

- How does *The Shy Picture* make you feel?

- Write four to six sentences to create a short story about one of the shy characters.

- From whose perspective do we observe?

> Stephen Barrass is an Associate Professor in the School of Creative Communication, and Co-Director of Sonic Communications Research Group (University of Canberra). With a Ph.D. in Auditory Information Design (Australian National University), his research interests include mixed reality, interaction design, interactive museum exhibits, multimodal information displays, soni-

fication, generative art and new interfaces for musical expression. His work has been exhibited at *Experimenta Prototype*, 2002, *Experimenta House of Tomorrow*, 2003, the Sydney Opera House Studio, 2004, and the National Museum of Australia. > Chris Gunn is a researcher at the CSIRO ICT Centre, Canberra. Specialising in the introduction of haptic technology into virtual environments,

Gunn has worked with virtual reality for seven years. His work involves building systems that allow people to have the sensation of touch within computer-generated scenes. He has also worked on projects that enable sculptors to work with virtual clay, and developing systems for training surgeons on virtual patients.



UNFURL::PROJECT

Martina Mrongovius and Sruli Recht, Australia, 2005. An Experimenta New Visions Commission.

UNFURL::PROJECT brings together Martina Mrongovius' expertise in the field of physics and Sruli Recht's talents in garment design to create a beautiful holographic work that goes beyond photography to capture the dynamics of space and light. > Two hundred images, created using a stereographic process are stored on a single sheet of film. > The old-world yet

almost post-human characters of *Unfurl* are like memories of another time, brought to life before our eyes. > Captured moments in time, they turn towards us as we approach as if to beckon us into their enchanting world, yet remain forever elusive, suspended in light.

- How do you think *Unfurl::Project* works?

- Create a diagram showing how you think *Unfurl::Project* works.

- Arthur C. Clarke said "The limits of the possible can only be defined by going beyond them into the impossible." What do you think he meant? Do you think these artists have gone beyond the limits of the possible with *Unfurl::Project*? Explain why or why not.

A graduate of Applied Physics at RMIT University, Martina Mrongovius is a Melbourne-based artist who has specialised for the last few years in holographics. She has been working and researching at the cutting edge of this new technology with specialists and professionals around the globe. Mrongovius' artworks have been diverse, ranging from short films and animations to comic books

and holograms. Recent exhibitions of her work have been held at Experimedia, State Library of Victoria, 2002, The Foundry, London, 2002, and as part of Next Wave, Melbourne, 2004. > Sruli Recht is a Melbourne-based artist working in garment design and construction, creating tailored and unique one-off fitted pieces heavily inspired by process and context. With education in sewing,

fine arts and music Recht works in areas of costume design for film and film clips, designs ranges for independent labels, and is a consultant on range development. Having established his made to measure label in 2000, Recht's work has been shown on numerous occasions both nationally and internationally.

Experimenta Vanishing Point: what else?

Experimenta will also present a Cinema Program at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, featuring short films, videos and animations from Australia and around the World that confound our expectations of narrative and normality to take us on surreal journeys through someone else's imagination.

Experimenta will also present French artist Julien Maire who will perform his projected theatre *Demi-Pas* at the Australian Centre for the Moving image, Screen Pit.

Along with the Experimenta exhibition and screenings catalogue, is MESH 18, Experimenta's signature journal of critical writing. In MESH 18, each of the essays draws our attention to the illusory and spectacular nature of media arts and the ways in which we are affected by them.

About Experimenta

Experimenta drives the development of Australian contemporary media arts. For almost twenty years Experimenta has fostered innovation in Australian film and media arts by providing a creative and interdisciplinary context to bring together artists and audiences in new cultural environments. In a society powerfully driven by the vehicles of technological change and an information economy, Experimenta's relevance to the national creative community has become increasingly significant. The intersection of creativity and technology where the organisation operates, has become the face of the 21st century, bringing hybrid vigour to both creative and commercial practice.

Experimenta supports and exhibits the work of artists experimenting with digital media, film, video, installation, performance and sound art through a variety of projects. Recent projects include:

Invisible by Night, an interactive projection work commissioned by Experimenta for a public space in the Melbourne CBD; House of Tomorrow the 2003 biennial Interactive Media Exhibition in Melbourne; House of Tomorrow national tour 2004/05 to nine venues across Australia and regional Victoria; and Internationally Experimenta presented work at Multimedia Art Asia Pacific (MAAP) Singapore and Media City Seoul International Biennale, Korea. Experimenta Lab Warrnambool, was the first in a series of regional arts development projects that will see collaborative partnerships developed between media artists, local communities and industries in regional Australia.

In addition to exhibition events, Experimenta facilitates the production of new media projects through its New Visions Commissions program. This initiative allows artists to collaborate with industry partners to creating innovative opportunities for developing and resourcing the production of new work and aims to find meaningful frameworks for collaboration between business and the arts sector in the new media arena.

As part of its ongoing commitment to the development of the media arts sector, Experimenta provides a vehicle for discourse and critical and critical examination via forums, discussions, a fortnightly email bulletin and MESH, a yearly publication of critical writing.

Experimenta reflects, celebrates and stimulates the dynamic convergence of

multiple media across technologies and in various spaces of engagement, challenging and extending the aesthetic, formal and conceptual potential for experimental art forms.

Executive Director: Caroline Farmer
Artistic Director: Liz Hughes
Project and Communications Coordinator: Charity Bramwell
Administration: Lucy Griggs

EXPERIMENTA
PO Box 1102
St Kilda South VIC 3182
AUSTRALIA
Ph +61 3 9525 5025
Fx +61 3 9525 5105
Email experimenta@experimenta.org
To find out more visit www.experimenta.org

This study guide was produced by ATOM. For more information about ATOM study guides, The Education Shop, The Speakers' Bureau or Screen Hub (the daily online film and television newsletter) visit our web site: www.metromagazine.com.au or email: damned@netspace.net.au

Notice: An educational institution may make copies of all or part of this Study Guide, provided that it only makes and uses copies as reasonably required for its own educational, non-commercial, classroom purposes and does not sell or lend such copies.

