

Sat, 09.09.2017 – Sun, 28.01.2018

The Art of Immersion

ZKM_Atrium 1+2

Press conference: Thur, 07.09.2017, 11.00 am

Opening of the exhibition: Fri, 08.09.2017, 7.00 pm

A fundamental aspect of new media in its different manifestations is its immersive character. This has already been seen in the history of the panoramic painting, of Cinerama and of installation art and has achieved a new level of transforming experiences of reality with the immersive, digital visualisation systems of *virtual reality* and of *augmented reality* since. This development has been promoted by many renowned media artists. The exhibition *The Art of Immersion* offers an overview of some of the most important examples of the “art of immersive experiences”. It comprises an inhomogeneous selection of significant works, which have been developed by Jean Michel Bruyère, Neil Brown, Dennis Del Favero, Kurt Hentschläger, Sarah Kenderdine, Ulf Langheinrich, Matthew McGinity and Jeffrey Shaw, for the panoramic projects and represent milestones in the conceptual and aesthetic development of contemporary immersive art. In their work, the artists investigate themes, which are situated between abstraction and narration as well as archive and society and focus on an intensive involvement of the public and on strong proprioception in their realisation. Countless innovations in the field of immersive empirical worlds have been promoted significantly at the ZKM | Karlsruhe by Jeffrey Shaw, employees of the ZKM | Institute for Visual Media and guest artists who were active here. An overview of the periods of the individual pieces of work can be found on the ZKM website.

An overview of the displayed work

***The Infinite Line*, 2014**

Sarah Kenderdine, Jeffrey Shaw, Edwin Thumboo

Interactive installation for a panoramic projection environment

The Infinite Line designs a new form for the performance and reception of lyrics. The interactive installation, which refers to the literary movement of *OuLiPo – Workshop of Potential Literature*, which includes authors such as Georges Perec and Oskar Pastior, makes it possible for visitors to reconstruct the poetic work of Singaporean poet Edwin Thumboo. A polyphonic recitation of 27 of his ground-breaking poems creates new lines of meaning and possible interpretations through a deconstruction and reconstruction of the original work. In an immersive, panoramic 360° projection environment, visitors can interact with 27 video projections, in which Thumboo recites his

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poetry. Through the application software, visitors can have key texts recited “live” and can put together individual lines of the verses into a new matrix: From the 27 poems, free assemblages of sequences of Thumboo’s work are developed, which create new visual impressions and infinite interpretations of the poetry and the person.

Production: SCM/ACIM City University of Hong Kong

T_Visionarium IV, 2008-2017

Neil Brown, Dennis Del Favero, Jeffrey Shaw, Peter Weibel
Interactive installation for a panoramic projection environment

T_Visionarium IV is a 3D computer graphics installation, in whose immersive full-panoramic 3D visualisation centre users can interact with a database, which comprises about 22,000 video files from Australian television programs. Equipped with 3D glasses, users interact with the data through a mobile interface, with which images can be rearranged and assembled in relational clusters. Important findings have resulted from the *T_Visionarium* project for both international theory formation in the field of interactive narration as well as for specific use in multimodal media systems. What is now the fourth version of the project enables users in *T_Visionarium IV* to compile and save up to eight micro-narrations, during which you can select as many video files as you like from the total of 22,000. The subsequent users can then modify these narrations in turn.

Production: UNSW iCinema Centre and ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, funded as part of the Discovery Grant Scheme of the Australian Research Council

Nebula II, 2017

Dennis Del Favero with Peter Weibel and Elvira Titan
Interactive installation generated with algorithms of artificial intelligence (AI)

Nebula II is an experimental cinematic adaption of *Lenz*, the story published in 1835 by Georg Büchner. While traditional interpretations see the story as a description of the last days of the author Jakob Lenz, in which he increasingly goes mad during a hike in the Alps, *Nebula II* interprets the story as a dream work and investigates the conflict-laden and yet unresolvable relationship between man and nature. *Nebula II* accompanies a protagonist interactively on her journey through a series of interconnected dream worlds, which are generated by a system for particle visualisation with integrated artificial intelligence (AI). The scope ranges from worlds, which are made up of microscopically small cells of the body of the protagonist to such worlds, which exist of macroscopic particles of the atmosphere, in which the protagonist is suspended 30,000 kilometres above the earth.

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mARCHIVE, 2014

Tim Hart, Sarah Kenderdine, Jeffrey Shaw
Interactive installation for a panoramic projection environment

mARCHIVE is an interactive and immersive 360° installation in 3D, with which users are immersed in the inhomogeneous databases of 19 museums of the city of Melbourne and can assemble these into new narrative formats. In the international research, the sectors of database architectures, visualisation and interaction are among the central challenges of digital development and innovation. *mArchive* is the only platform of its kind in the world, with whose original potential interactions the handling of data can be flexibly designed in an unparalleled way. The project opens up new opportunities for the organisation and visualisation of museological data. By allowing user actions to be tracked within the environment, there exists the opportunity to analyse patterns in the exploration of the virtual sphere and the recombination of data as well as of the handling of complex forms of digital information. On this basis, it is possible to explore how aesthetic significance emerges from interaction – a central field of innovation for digital aesthetics.

Production: UNSW iCinema Centre and ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, funded as part of the Linkage Grant Scheme of the Australian Research Council

La Dispersion du Fils, 2008-2017

Jean Michel Bruyère / LFKs
Generative installation for a panoramic projection environment

The work *La Dispersion du Fils* draws from the immense collection of images and sounds, which were collated by Jean Michel Bruyère and the Marseille-based LFKs collective between 1999 and 2007 relating to the tragedy of the Greek hero Actaeon. In doing so, the materials are assembled into a unique, giant object: the innards of a dog; a type of writhing, endless stream of images. The work is made up wholly from existing films and film footage – nothing was specifically produced for the project: Creations are made from almost all films about the tragedy of Actaeon, which Jean Michel Bruyère designed during the past ten years for LFKs and which he directed. However, a major part of the material was reedited by Delphine Varas for *La Dispersion du Fils* and provided with a new soundtrack by Thierry Arredondo. The piece is made up of over 600 films and has been rearranged by Jean Michel Bruyère and Matthew McGinity, the software developer of the AVIE system, such as into the intestines of dogs, a sidereal ogre or a meteorite shower.

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Production: LFKs, Marseille; Epidemic, Paris; UNSW iCinema Centre, Sydney; Le Volcan – Scène Nationale, Le Havre

***iData*, 2017**

Dennis Del Favero, Peter Weibel

Interactive installation for a panoramic projection environment

iData is an interactive installation with which an inhomogeneous database, more precisely the archive of the former ZKM | Media Museum, can be immersively explored and compiled into new narrative formats. In the international research, the sectors of database architectures, visualisation and interaction are among the central challenges of digital development and innovation. Similar to the *mARCHIVE* project, *iData* opens up new opportunities to organise and visualise museological data. In this case too, this is facilitated by the only application or platform of its kind in the world, with whose original potential interactions the handling of data can be flexibly designed in an unparalleled way.

Production: UNSW iCinema Centre and ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, funded as part of the Linkage Grant Scheme of the Australian Research Council

***Deluge II*, 2016**

Dennis Del Favero

Interactive installation for a panoramic projection environment

The interactive computer graphics installation *Deluge II* is made up of the events concerning the record-breaking cyclone *Yasi*, which plagued the Australian state of Queensland in 2011. The work follows a young woman in her exploration of various sites after the cyclone. In one scene, she frantically searches a landscape, in which everything has been washed away by the storm, for something that she has lost. In another, she tries to stand completely still during squalls which tear her clothes. While the protagonist explores the limits of her physical and mental resilience, she asks herself what she can still believe in, if that which she had believed in no longer exists.

Production: UNSW iCinema Centre, funded as part of the Discovery Grant Scheme of the Australian Research Council

***ALLUVIUM*, 2010**

Ulf Langheinrich

Immersive audio-visual environment

ALLUVIUM is a computer-generated acoustic and visual landscape. The

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piece is based on research into pixels and particles, which give rise to fields from sound material. It is defined by parameters, such as consistency, density, fluidity, voltage and opacity. With all these properties, the noise is not only the obvious visual manifestation of moving points, but also the starting point of its distribution in the virtual, three-dimensional space. Metamovements, such as rotation and zooms, act as an undercurrent, while the attention of the observer is focused on the reconfiguration of the points, on its various states and properties. Langheinrich's interest applies to the aesthetic potential of media machinery, of software and hardware: the contradiction between the promise of the perfect illusion and the limits of a specific presentation device.

Production: Epidemic, Paris and UNSW iCinema Centre, Sydney

<360>, 2002

GRANULAR-SYNTHESIS (Kurt Hentschläger and Ulf Langheinrich)

Immersive audio-visual environment

<360> is an abstract composition, an analogue and digital architecture, which allows the public to plunge into light, colour and sound modulations. The piece, which is designed as a hybrid structure, merges material and immaterial elements into an ambiguous space, which illustrates the potential for digital technologies to create a liminal state. The overall structure and the length of the piece contribute to the impression of an endless continuum. Absolute darkness and silence in the presentation room are the fundamental requirements of the piece. The surrounding video projections act as the light source for <360>. <360> reflects the rapid developments in computer technology in 2002 and concentrates on the cinematographic parameters, such as size and dramaturgy, in order to create an abstract and theatrical experience, in which the electronic parameter replaces the traditional actor and redefines the physical space.

Supporting program to the exhibition

Sat, 09.09.2017, 17.00

**GRANULAR-SYNTHESIS (Kurt Hentschläger & Ulf Langheinrich),
<360>**

Performance as part of the *The Art of Immersion* exhibition
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