

Subject: Announcing: Finitude (Mallee:Time): The New Interactive Installation
Date: Tuesday, 6 September 2011 1:22:39 PM AET
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To: NewWork@embodiedmedia.com

Dear Friends and Supporters

I am pleased to announce the first showing of my new interactive installation FINITUDE (Mallee:Time) [v01].

WHERE: Room 22, The Ka-Rama Motel, Deakin Ave, Mildura, Australia for Palimpsest #08.

WHEN: 10-11TH SEPTEMBER, 10AM-5PM

Created in close collaboration with senior sound artist/composer **Roger Dean** (austraLYSIS), artist/designer **Stuart Lawson** (ex Intimate Transactions/Knowmore House of Commons) and 3D programmer **Darren Pack** (ex.Knowmore House of Commons).

“Time is change, time is finitude. Humans are a finite species. Every decision we make today brings that end closer, or alternatively pushes it further away. Nothing can be neutral”. Fry, T 2010

SHORT STATEMENT: Finitude (Mallee: Time) v01 is a major new media art/sculptural/sound hybrid to be premiered at the Mildura Palimpsest. Acknowledging that we as a species are finite, the work re-positions ‘time left’ as a plastic medium that we can each choose to ‘give to’ or ‘take away’ from. Resting on a motel room bed with a semi-transparent touch screen above them, participants influence 3D imagery, the movement of dioramas glimpsed through the screen and an immersive soundscape.

BACKGROUND: Curated as a national premiere into this years' significant Mildura Palimpsest #08 (Australia's longest running site-specific art festival) by Kristian Haggblom and Helen Vivian, the work appears for this first version above a motel bed, in Room 22 of the ubiquitous 70's Ka-Rama Motel. The Palimpsest each year goes from strength to strength, this year featuring over 100 national and international artists including award winning writer and artist Paul Carter (AUS), Tracey Moffatt (AUS) the Chin Pom Collective (JPN) and Venice Biennial artists Ken and Julia Yonetani and Tuomas Laitinen (FI).

Situated on the main drag - the Ka-Rama is just like every other ubiquitous motel that you've ever stayed in: all 70s decor, floral linen and mistuned television sets. But this time the darkened room 22 contains a strange structure over the bed: a circular holographic touchscreen that participants can lie underneath on the clean floral sheets, revealing mysterious 3D landscapes and forms via a unique, circular touch sensitive screen, that also magically reveals a complex series of motorised dioramas, turning continuously high above the bed accompanied by 4 channel interactive sound.

Finitude (Mallee:Time) has been supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body and has received financial assistance from the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland, QUT Creative Industries Faculty, Mildura Arts Centre and Palimpsest #08.



FURTHER DETAILS

PRACTICALITIES: *Finitude (Mallee: Time)* is a major new media/sculptural hybrid work to be premiered in 2011 (at the Mildura Palimpsest) at the Ka-Rama Motel. Each participant/viewer lies comfortably on their back on the double bed of Room 22. Directly above them, supported by a wooden structure, not unlike a house frame, is a semi-transparent Perspex screen that displays projected 3D imagery and is simultaneously sensitive to the lightest of finger touches. Depending upon the ever changing qualities of the projected image on this screen the participant can see through its surface to a series of physical dioramas suspended above, lit by subtle LED spotlighting. This diorama consists of a slowly rotating series of physical environments, which also include several animatronic components, allowing the realtime composition of whimsical 'landscapes' of both 'real' and 'virtual' media. Through subtle, non-didactic touch-sensitive interactivity the participant then has influence over both the 3D graphic imagery, the physical movements of the diorama and the immersive soundscape, creating an uncanny blend of physical and virtual media. Five speakers positioned around the room deliver a rich interactive soundscape that responds both audibly and physically to interactions.

CONTEXT/THEORY: *Finitude (Mallee: Time)* has been inspired through a series of recent visits to Mildura and residencies in the surrounding Mallee country, particularly the Australian Wildlife Conservancy's Scotia Station. Further drawing on recent writings by post colonial author Paul Carter, the work is envisaged as an evolving 'personal topography' of place-discovery. By contrasting and melding readily available generalisations of the Mallee regions' rational surfaces, climatic maps and ecological systems with what Carter calls "a fine capillary system of interconnected words, places, memories and sensations" generated through my own idiosyncratic research processes, *Finitude (Mallee Time)* parallels Carter's concept of a "dark writing" of place, illuminated through outside eyes - an approach that imagines and develops a sense how things might be. This basis in re-imagining and re-invention becomes the vehicle for the work's more fundamental intention - as a meditative re-imagination of 'time' (and region) as finite resources: Towards this end, every object, process and idea in the work is re-thought as having its own 'time component' or 'residue' that becomes deposited into our 'collective future'. *Finitude (Mallee Time)* therefore suggests the poverty of predominant images of time as 'mechanism' to instead envisage time as a plastic cyclical medium that we can each choose to 'give to' or 'take away from' our collective futures.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY: KEITH ARMSTRONG has specialised for 18 years in collaborative, hybrid, new media works with an emphasis on innovative performance forms, site-specific electronic arts, networked interactive installations, alternative interfaces, public arts practices and art-science collaborations. His ongoing research focuses on how scientific and philosophical ecologies can both influence and direct the design and conception of networked, interactive media artworks. Keith's artworks have been shown and profiled extensively both in Australia and overseas and he has been the recipient of numerous grants from

the public and private sectors. For this work Keith partners with regular collaborators interaction designer STUART LAWSON and 3D games engine programmer DARREN PACK and for the first time renowned musician, jazz improviser and electronic sound artist ROGER DEAN of australYSIS. Keith Armstrong is a part time senior research fellow at QUT Creative Industries.

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Dr. Keith Armstrong

Interdisciplinary Media Artist
QUT Creative Industries Senior Research Fellow (p/t)
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Current Major Projects

*) Finitude (Mallee: Time), Mildura Palimpsest Biennale #8: 'Collaborators and Saboteurs', Room 22, Ka-Rama Motel, Mildura, VIC, Australia, September 9-11th, 2011.
<http://www.embodiedmedia.com/#/page/finitude>

*) Remnant Emergency Artlab
<http://remnantartlab.com/>
NEXT EVENT: Indian/Korean Residency Nov 2011

New Projects Under Development

)* The Bat/Human Condition 2: A new body of work exploring the bat-human continuum

Forthcoming Exhibitions
