

New Constellations: Art, Science and Society

Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney Australia

Conference Programme – Friday 17 March

8.30am – Registration

9:30am – Opening Proceedings

Welcome – Ms Elizabeth Ann Macgregor
Director, Museum of Contemporary Art

Welcome to Land – Mr Allen Madden
Cultural Education Officer, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council

Opening Remarks – Professor Hugh Durrant-Whyte
Professor of Mechatronic Engineering;
Research Director, Australian Centre for Field Robotics, The University of Sydney

10:15am – Plenary Address

Introduced by Ms Elizabeth Ann Macgregor
Director, Museum of Contemporary Art

Professor Elizabeth Grosz, *Vibration*

This paper is an exploration of the connections and resonances between philosophy, science and the arts, which share a common relation to chaos, the forces of the cosmos. If science orders chaos through the construction of formulae, and the arts frame chaos through the extraction of sensations, philosophy orders chaos through the constitution of concepts: each maintains and provides a mode of provisional order for chaos. Through creating a genealogy or ontology of music (and other art forms), this paper explores the sexual, bodily and artistic impact of vibration.

Elizabeth Grosz is Professor of Women's and Gender Studies at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, and Visiting Professor of Architecture at Princeton. She is a philosopher by training and has worked in English, Comparative Literature, French, Visual Arts and Architecture Departments in Australia and the USA. Her research has focused on rethinking the body and its relations to the ways we conceptualise space and time. She is the author, most recently, of *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution and the Untimely* (Allen and Unwin 2004) and *Time Travels: Feminism, Nature, Power* (Allen and Unwin 2005).

11:15am – Morning Tea

11:45am – Beyond Boundaries: Theory

Chaired by Dr Mitchell Whitelaw
Senior Lecturer, School of Creative Communication, University of Canberra

Karen Ingham, *Descartes' eye: Theorising the art and science of observation*

Chris Henschke, *Broken symmetries in art and science*

Jules Moloney, *Architectural science: Literal and notional force fields*

Response by Mitchell Whitelaw

1:15pm – Lunch

2:15pm – Beyond Boundaries: Practice

Chaired by Professor Ernest Edmonds

Artist; Professor of Computation and Creative Media;

Director, Creativity and Cognition Studios, University of Technology, Sydney

Trish Adams, *Experiments for vital force: A productive art/science collaboration*

Petra Gemeinboeck & Andy Dong, *Discourses of intervention: A language for arts collaboration*

Alexa Wright & Alf Linney, *The art and science of a long-term collaboration*

Response by Ernest Edmonds

3:45pm – Afternoon Tea

4:15pm – Risk, Failure and Legitimacy

Chaired by Professor Stuart Bunt

Scientific Director, SymbioticA;

Professional Fellow, School of Anatomy and Human Biology, University of Western Australia

Boo Chapple, *Sing dem dry bones, sing*

Shawn Bailey & Jennifer Willet, *Bioteknica: Soft experiments from the laboratory*

Mari Velonaki, David Rye, Steve Scheduling & Stefan Williams, *Sharing spaces: Risk, reward and pragmatism*

Response by Stuart Bunt

5:30pm – 7:30pm Reception for Delegates

Launch of Synapse International and National Interdisciplinary Projects

Conference Programme – Saturday 18 March

8.30am – Registration

9:30am – New Languages: Communicating with the Public

Chaired by Dr Anna Munster
Senior Lecturer; Deputy Director Centre of Contemporary Art and Politics,
College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales

Michael Goldberg, *The butterfly effect*

Jane Quon, *Synergies and tensions in the application of irreducible communicative paradigms to issues of marine ecology*

Michele Barker, *Exchanging information: metaphors of computation in neuroscience, genetics and new media*

Response by Anna Munster

11:00am – Morning Tea

11:30am – Panel Discussion – For the Benefit of Society?

Facilitated by Ms Linda Cooper
Project Director, Bragg Initiative, Government of South Australian

Oron Catts, Artist and Director, SymbioticA,
Department of Human Anatomy, University of Western Australia

Janne Ryan, Producer, ABC Radio National

Wilson da Silva, Editor, *Cosmos* magazine

1:00pm – Lunch

2:00pm – Plenary Address

Introduced by Julianne Pierce
Visual Arts Coordinator, Adelaide Bank Festival of Arts

Professor Steve Kurtz, *Crossing the line*

This lecture will explore the factors that make critical interventions within the intersection of art, science, and politics such a treacherous undertaking. Using the work of Critical Art Ensemble as a grounding focus, Kurtz will address issues such as the privatization of scientific knowledge and the militarization of scientific and medical institutions. He will go on to show that if these issues are used as framing devices for interventionist projects, they beckon a broad variety of disciplinary agencies.

Steve Kurtz is a founding member of Critical Art Ensemble (CAE). CAE is a collective of tactical media practitioners of various specialisations, including computer graphics and web design, wetware, film/video, photography, text art, book art, and performance. Formed in 1987, CAE's focus has been on the exploration of the intersections between art, critical theory, technology, and political activism. The collective has performed and produced a wide variety of projects for an international audience at diverse venues ranging from the street, to the museum, to the Internet. Critical Art Ensemble has also written five books, and is about to release its sixth work *Marching Plague: Germ Warfare and Global Public Health*. Kurtz is an Associate Professor of Art at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

3:00pm – Small Group Dialogue Sessions

In five flexible groups, session Chairs and contributors will lead more informal discussions arising out of the conference presentations.

4:00pm – Afternoon Tea

4.30pm – 6:00pm *Syren for Port Jackson*

Syren is an immersive sound experience of Sydney Harbour aboard the ferry *Regal*, which departs from Man O'War Steps adjacent to the MCA throughout the New Constellations conference. A collaboration between artist Nigel Helyer and scientists Chris Rizos and Daniel Woo of the University of New South Wales, *Syren* is open to the public. Each tour is 90 minutes in length and limited to 30 participants.

Bookings essential (Mon – Fri): +61 2 9245 2484 or education@mca.com.au

For more information visit <http://www.mca.com/events>

6.00pm –7:30pm *Syren for Port Jackson*

Conference Programme – Sunday 19 March

9.00am – Registration

10:00am – Plenary Address

Introduced by Professor Hugh Durrant-Whyte
Professor of Mechatronic Engineering; ARC Federation Fellow;
Director, Australian Centre for Field Robotics, The University of Sydney

Professor Ruzena Bajcsy

Information technology in service to humanities and social sciences

In this presentation I shall outline the opportunities and challenges for collaboration between information technologists (IT) and humanities and social science.

Opportunities arise for IT researchers as follows: The humanities and social sciences are generating more and more data (terabytes and petabytes) that need to be archived, preserved and searched based on content; there is a need for fast networking, visualization of large data sets in real time; there is big problem with security and privacy and intellectual property of the information that will be considered.

Opportunities for humanists and social sciences are as follows: The ability to preserve and archive multimodal information for future generations; the ability to share widely data/information with researchers and users around the world; the ability to examine/analyse spatial and temporal evolution of the historical and present data available and make lessons learned.

The challenges for both communities are the cultural divide. I will give two concrete technologies that demonstrate all the above problems and opportunities. One example is on the use of interactive technology for virtual museums and other is about the use of tele-immersive environments to collaborate with dance performers who may be local but also geographically distributed across some distances.

Professor Ruzena Bajcsy is Founding President of CITRIS, the Centre for Information Technology Research in the Interests of Society, and a Professor in the Electrical Engineering and Computer Department of the University of California, Berkeley. A pioneering researcher in machine perception, robotics and artificial intelligence, she is renowned not only for her research contributions but for her cross-disciplinary leadership in the fields of engineering and cognitive science.

11:00am – Morning Tea

11:30am – Value and Success: Collaboration and the Market Place

Introduced by Ms Lizzie Muller
Creativity and Cognition Studios, University of Technology, Sydney

Mr Chris Powell

Chair, National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, UK, in conversation with

Dr Mandy Thomas

Executive Director for the Humanities and Creative Arts, Australian Research Council

1:00pm – Lunch

2:00pm – 3.30pm Dialogue and Summing Up

Introduced by Dr Melinda Rackham
Executive Director, Australian Network for Art and Technology (ANAT)

Professor Hugh Durrant-Whyte, Director, Australian Centre for Field Robotics, The University of Sydney, and

Ms Lisa Colley, Strategist, will lead a general dialogue and summary session at the conclusion of the Conference.

4.30pm – 6:00pm *Syren for Port Jackson*

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