

Case study

The Night Fall project

Details

What:

The Night Fall project developed a series of audiovisual site-specific interactive installations presented throughout Queensland, nationally and internationally.

The installations explored seasonality, biodiversity and environmental issues through large-scale, reactive and seasonally-specific installations.

Through the installations artist Keith Armstrong and his team experimented with form, location and scientific method. This involved innovative techniques such as robotics, outdoor immersion, new animation techniques and the use of 3D printing.

When:

January 2014 to March 2015

Where:

Brisbane, Cairns, Bundaberg, Beijing, Bundanon (NSW)

Key stats:

- 51,000 attendees
- 5 new works created
- 3 full time artists and 120 volunteers

Arts Queensland contribution:

\$19 000 – Projects and Programs Fund



Tai Inoue, Dark Cartographies, Solo Show for KickArts Cairns, 2014

Contact for further information:

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Links:

Night Rage/Fall:

<http://embodiedmedia.com/homeartworks/night-rage>

Temporal:

<http://embodiedmedia.com/homeartworks/temporal>

Black Nectar:

<http://embodiedmedia.com/homeartworks/black-nectar>

Light of extinction

<http://embodiedmedia.com/homeartworks/light-of-extinction>

Dark cartographies:

<http://embodiedmedia.com/homeartworks/dark-cartographies>

Outcomes

- Keith and his team created several works using new techniques including robotics, 3D printing, sonic developments and visual illusions using optical effects. Patching software developed during the project will be used in future productions.
- The series of works all embodied and demonstrated a strong environmental message, and encouraged active participation in debates about how to sustain the future - outdoor showings which engaged the public in active dialogue were particularly successful in this regard.
- The project has led to future collaborations with project partners and opportunities for further arts/science partnerships. For example the work at Bundanon NSW led to a conference panel in Phoenix, Arizona and a paper on creative robotics.



Keith Armstrong, *Light of Extinction*, curated for 'thingworld': International Triennial of New Media Art, National Gallery of China, 2014

Audience feedback

I found myself surprised at how immersed I became.

How fabulous, could spend hours, slowly moving positions, interacting: great space and showing.

No one wanted to leave. It felt like a unique adventure, an encounter with an unknown presence.

Learnings and reflections

The Night Fall project marked a step forward in Keith's capacity to produce powerful, large scale reactive and seasonally specific installations. Keith had the following reflections on the project:

- *The power of the readymade is inherent in site specific locations, and it's not necessary to add too much to create very powerful experiences.*
- *By depriving audiences of some senses (i.e creating the work on a moonless night or in a very dark space), other senses are heightened - especially the use of sound - which can be used in powerful and manipulative ways.*
- *Elements added into a large dark space can be thought of as 'imaginating thresholds' - simple forms that in themselves appear to reveal more than they actually are - and thus allow people to heighten their own sense of the complexity and density of a space and its seasonal elements.*
- *Experiences should be crafted in ways that take care of audiences who may be feeling out of their depth or in an unknown environment - and that care will in turn inspire a commitment from audiences to go the extra mile in their interaction with the events.*
- *Strangeness, uncertainty and ambiguity are all powerful elements to be carefully used.*
- *The removal of a sense of depth – i.e planes of hearing and seeing, allow for disorientating yet powerful outcomes.*