



a window on digital culture

# genart\_sys

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The Australia Council has a strategic priority to build arts content for the digital era.

We know that audiences are seeking creative experiences on a wide variety of digital platforms and are keen to connect with these live immersive worlds.

**genart\_sys** showcases 19 innovative artists, collectives and organisations supported by the Australia Council from a broad range of artforms. Theirs is a generative, ever evolving system of art-making, by which artists are innovating and sharing stories and knowledge over space and time, playing and interfacing with audiences across diverse platforms and communities.

Building digital culture, all these artists are connecting with us across real and virtual platforms, leading us into new territory with exciting examples of how technologies and content can converge.

It's all about exploring how Australians can differently experience and interact with the arts.

Kathy Keele, CEO, Australia Council for the Arts



### CURATOR'S TALK | Walk the talk - digital art making in Australia

Thursday 10 February, 2011 @ 12:30pm

Curator Deborah Turnbull, of New Media Curation, will give a lunchtime tour to discuss the over-arching theme of the exhibition: digital art making. This tour will be aimed at general members of the public and take on the qualities of a dialogue so as to encourage participation. Packed lunches are encouraged so that those who attend can eat together afterward.

### SEMINAR SERIES | Conversations in Digital Strategies 1.0

Topic | Convergence

Moderated by Fee Plumley, Digital Culture Officer for the Australia Council, this forum will be the first of four talks along the similar vein of discussing relevant topics in digital culture today.

### PARTICIPATING ARTISTS AND ORGANISATIONS

Lucas Abela | Bump Projects | Julia Burns | Critical Path | Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts, Australia (DADAA) | IAD Press with Ben Foley & Andre Castaldi | Matthew Gardiner | Tina Gonsalves | Aroha Groves | Leah Heiss | Chris Henschke | Kris Keogh & Brandon Williamson | Jessica Olivieri & Hayley Forward with the Parachutes for Ladies | Frederick Rodrigues | Erica Secombe | Stelarc | Adriaan Stellingwerff | Jason Sweeney & Fiona Sprott | Ken & Julia Yonetani

### 29 JANUARY – 16 MARCH 2011

Foyer, Australia Council for the Arts  
372 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010

### LAUNCH

Thursday 3 February 2011 @ 5.30 – 7.30pm

### PUBLIC PROGRAMS

@ Australia Council and in collaboration with Beta\_space @ the Powerhouse Museum throughout February and March.  
Visit: [www.genartsys.com](http://www.genartsys.com) for details and updates.

### www.genartsys.com

[http://flavors.me/genart\\_sys](http://flavors.me/genart_sys)

[http://artsdigitalera.com/#genart\\_sys](http://artsdigitalera.com/#genart_sys)

### BETA\_SPACE WORKSHOP | The Art of Prototyping

The Australia Council, New Media Curation and the Powerhouse Museum invite you to participate in a day of discussion and workshops examining how artists, organisations and audiences work with prototypes in media arts and digital culture. This program will augment the exhibition currently residing in the Australia Council foyer, **genart\_sys | a window on digital culture**, 29 January - 16 March 2011.

Under the banner of UTS research group, Creativity and Cognition Studios, the Beta\_space Gallery has evaluated the audience's role in interactive art making for the last six years. This has been done within a museum context famous for the celebration of design and the act of making, within an exhibition that celebrates digital artefacts.

With this event, we aim to draw out some of the innovation, practices, challenges and collaboration involved in the prototyping process that are relevant to all digital art-makers. How do we capture what a knowing/unknowing audience can provide for us in terms of feedback? How can we harness this dialogue and participation as a force for change and growth within our work? Programme available at [www.genartsys.com](http://www.genartsys.com)

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### Lucas Abela

*Vinyl Arcade* is a large-scale interactive installation combining sound art, sculpture, video art and competitive sports. It could be every kid and adult's dream-hybrid, a kinetic, immersive, participatory play-set that combines vinyl fetishism, video arcade mystique and the machismo of motor sports into a video game played within a real world setting. This smaller version provides a 'surround documentary' of the *Vinyl Arcade* – you can imagine racing remote control cars with styli attached to their chassis over a track constructed from a mass of disused vinyl records. Custom audio effects are built into the dash by Hirofumi Uchino, from Last Gasp Laboratories.

*Vinyl Arcade*, 2009-10, installation of two bumper cars fitted with screens, DVD players, video and headphones.

Lucas Abela developed and first presented *Vinyl Arcade* with support from the Australia Council's Digital Culture Fund in 2010 and is touring the game installation to the Donau Festival in Austria in April/May 2011.

Visit: [www.dualplover.com/vinylarcade.html](http://www.dualplover.com/vinylarcade.html) for more.

### Bump Projects

Bump Projects' *Bloodbath* project is a distributed artwork developed in association with the Sydney Roller Derby League. It features five media artists working with live data visualisation and mediated performance at an all-girl flat track roller derby game. They capture live data via Wii sensors on the player's helmets generating digital elaborations of the moves and collisions on track.

**Artists** | Linda Dement | Nancy Mauro-Flude | Kate Richards | Francesca da Rimini | Sarah Waterson

*Bloodbath*, 2010. DVD compilation of machinimas and documentary footage of a performance on 9 October, 2010 at the Hordern Pavilion, Sydney.

*Bloodbath* was developed with support from the Australia Council Digital Culture Fund in 2010.

Visit: [www.bumpnp.net/](http://www.bumpnp.net/)

### Julia Burns

*At Home At Work* is an installation and performance that has been staged in very public spaces around Sydney, exploring public/private issues surrounding the use of Facebook and Twitter. Julia Burns' performances grew out of residencies and exhibitions at galleries such as Firstdraft, Dorkbot and Beta\_Space. This installation displays a livingroom in a share house, a representation of the environment where Burns lives and works as an artist.

*At Home At Work*, 2010. Installation and performance.

*Public Access and the Nature of Followers*, 2009. Looped video documentation of Twitter performance.

*Data Miner*, 2010. Looped video documentation of Facebook installation and performance.

*At the End of Each Day*, 2010. Looped video.

Julia Burns 2009 Firstdraft residency was part of the Firstdraft Emerging Artist Studio Residency Program supported by the Australia Council for the Arts.

<http://juliaburns.com/>

This window installation also presents video works and sculptures by artists participating in residency programs supported by the Australia Council, including the Firstdraft Emerging Artist Studio Residency Program and the Australian Network for Art and Technology (ANAT) Synapse residency. The artists are: Erica Secombe, Chris Henschke, Ken and Julia Yonetani.

### Critical Path with Margie Medlin

Critical Path supports innovative research by NSW choreographers. In 2010 their SEAM symposium, workshop and performance program explored how interactive technologies transform notions of embodiment, agency and audience engagement within the performing arts.

Critical Path director, Margie Medlin, first developed *Personal Space* as part of the Quartet Project performance experiments in London in 2007 and was commissioned to present this work at the 2009 SEAM program. In the work, a dancer wears three motion sensors connected to a real-time robot camera controlled by her movement. The robot has three 'joints' mimicking the proportions of a human being and is very sensitive to the dancer's movement. The dance unfolds through an almost eerie

closeness as the robot's gestures acquire a visual plasticity according to her dancer.

*Personal Space*, 2009. DVD, 6 mins.

Funding partners include the Wellcome Trust, the Arts Council of England, Arts Victoria Cultural Exchange Program with New Media Arts and the Australia Council's Inter-Arts, Visual Arts, Community Partnerships and Market Development sections. Critical Path received an Inter-Arts grant for a series SEAM2009 commissions and Dance Board funding in 2010. Margie Medlin also received Australia Council funding for the Quartet Project 2004/8.

Visit: [www.criticalpath.org.au/](http://www.criticalpath.org.au/) | <http://www.quartetproject.unsited.org/space/Project+Outline>

### Lost Generations

For **Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts (DADAA)**, community cultural development is about putting cultural development into community hands. DADAA has a focus on creating opportunities and significant social change for people who have a disability and/or a mental illness in 46 communities across Western Australia. The 'Lost Generation' refers to a group of people with intellectual disabilities who have been institutionalised for most of their lives and have little or no connection to their community. For *The Lost Generation Project*, DADAA, the Disability Services Commission Accommodation Services Directorate and the community are collaborating to reconnect individuals through art and digital storytelling.

*The Lost Generation Project*, 2007-10. Selection curated by Jacqueline Homer and Simone Flavelle from DADAA, Western Australia. Video 16:25 mins.

Participants are: Victor Clynk, Patrick Carter, Sophie Melrose, David Broderick and Clinton Halden.

**Disability in the Arts Disadvantage in the Arts**, Western Australia DADAAWA is a key producer, supported by the Community Partnerships section of the Australia Council.

Visit: [www.dadaawa.org.au/](http://www.dadaawa.org.au/)

### IAD Press with Ben Foley and Andre Castaldi

The Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD) Press has the mandate to preserve, maintain and promote Indigenous languages and storytelling. This includes actively supporting Indigenous writers of all ages and, as such, is recognised as a leader in managing Indigenous cultural and intellectual property.

Ben Foley is the IAD Press Geek-in-Residence charged with redesigning the current website to improve community outreach and support the storytelling tradition. For **genart\_sys** Foley and IAD Press have selected images of community activity and storytelling surrounding their centre. Along with media maker Andre Castaldi of Converse Media, they present insight into the design of the forthcoming IAD website.

*IAD Press web sketch*, 2010. DVD on flatscreen.

IAD Press and Ben Foley have been supported by the Australia Council's Geek in Residence Program, 2009/10.

Visit: [www.iad.edu.au/press/iadpresshome.htm](http://www.iad.edu.au/press/iadpresshome.htm)





## Matthew Gardiner

Gardiner is an artist best known for his work with origami and robotics. He coined the term Oribot 折りボト and developed a new field of art/science research called Oribotics which 'thrives on the aesthetic, biomechanic and morphological connections between nature, origami and robotics'.

Gardiner first prototyped his Oribot in 2003 using a Lego Mindstorms kit, some rubber bands and a sheet of cardboard. Since then the technology used to create the works has evolved significantly. The artist is currently using 3D printing, moulding, laser cutting and hand-craft fabrication techniques to produce oribotic kinetic sculptures. The core idea of the work carries on in each generation; that of pure oribotics, as self folding material.

*Oribotics [the future unfolds]*, 2003-10,

Three Kinetic sculptures: ABS Plastic, Aluminium, polyester, electronics, plexiglass, servo motor.

Matthew Gardiner was funded by the Australia Council's Visual Arts Board through a New Work grant in 2010.

Visit: [www.oribotics.net/](http://www.oribotics.net/)

## Tina Gonsalves

*Perculate* is a playful, shared work exploring intimacy. As a phone call begins, a captured video of the conversants' eyes is transmitted to each conversant via the eye display. They share an intimate phone call that breaks down usual social ritual of body space, cultural difference in gaze, frequency and duration, looking probingly into each other's eyes as they communicate. *Perculate* has been developed with Nokia Research Center, Finland.

*Perculate - Hear and Now Series*, 2010, 3 mins looped DVD sketch designed for Nokia, shown on iPod Touch.

Tina Gonsalves received Australia Council funding for research and creative work in this area, including an Inter-Arts Artist Initiated Residency (2010), a project grant (2010) and a Connections Residency (2009).

Visit: [www.tinagonsalves.com/](http://www.tinagonsalves.com/)

## Aroha Groves

*Connections2* is an online game - a Second Life experience navigated by a joystick/screen interface. Aroha Groves is an Indigenous artist working in media arts and virtual spaces. In this groundbreaking work she investigates the links that bind our continent together, her people's connection to country and the expansion of these connections via digital mediums. Groves wants to demonstrate that Indigenous art does not exist only in the traditional, but resonates in the digital as well. In 2010, *Connections2* was shortlisted and received a highly commended award in the inaugural New Media Category of the 27th Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards.

*Connections2*, 2010, online Second Life game installation

Aroha Groves was a participant in the 2009 Australian Centre for Virtual Art (ACVA) Lab, supported by the Australia Council's Digital Culture Fund.

## Leah Heiss

Leah Heiss' practice is located at the nexus of art, design and science - utilising advanced technologies to develop potent, human-scale projects. Her process is deeply collaborative and she works with experts from nanotechnology through to fashion design. The outcomes include therapeutic jewellery and electronic garments through to hand-held devices and large scale installations.

Heiss has a passion for next generation materials and her toolkit houses items including shape memory alloys, magnetic liquids, electroluminescent cables and electricity conducting textiles. Her work has been exhibited widely and presented at conferences and festivals nationally and internationally.

*Poppy*, 2009 and *Field*, 2009 - *Shape Change Jewellery*, mounted to plinth top. NiTiNiol and sterling silver, 300x300mm (approx 80mm high).

*Polarise*, 2009. Flex print mounted on aluminium, 420w x295 high. Photography by Narelle Sheean.

*Polarise \_Series*, 2009. Flex print mounted on aluminium, 700wx297 high. Photography by Narelle Sheean.

*Shape Change Jewellery*, 2009 DVD, 2 minutes.

Leah Heiss was supported by an Australia Council Visual Arts New Work grant in 2008/09.

Visit: [www.elasticfield.com](http://www.elasticfield.com)

## Chris Henschke

In 2007 Chris Henschke staged a residency at the Australian Synchrotron, supported by Arts Victoria's Innovation Residency program and the Australian Network for Art and Technology (ANAT). He continues to build his understanding of the Synchrotron facility and has strengthened his relationships with the resident scientists. This project, *Lightbridge*, aims to create an audio-visual interface to explore the nature of the Synchrotron's 'tune' - the complex frequency harmonics generated from the Synchrotron beam status and position data - and to make this real-time data available to other artists and researchers.

*Lightbridge*, 2010. Documentary footage, Synchrotron residency. Video, 4 mins 45 secs.

Chris Henschke is a 2010 Synapse Residency recipient at the Australian Synchrotron. The ANAT Synapse initiative is supported by the Australian Council.

Visit: <http://henschke.anat.org.au/>

## Kris Keogh and Brandon Williamson

*Super Happiness Beatbox Mayhem* is a music production tool with a game-like control interface. Designed for simultaneous real-time musical performance and visual projection, music is created and mutated by performing dance moves with animated characters. This is an early-stage alpha version with the final application released for the iPhone/iPad/iPod Touch in April, 2011.

*Super Happiness Beatbox Mayhem*, 2011. iPad application.

Interface and sound design by Kris Keogh, implementation by Brandon Williamson.

Kris Keogh received an Australia Council Music Board New Work grant in 2010 to develop this project.

Visit: <http://sites.google.com/site/thestarswillneverfall/>

## Jessica Olivieri and Hayley Forward with the Parachutes for Ladies

'The dance of death unites us all' is a Danse Macabre late-medieval allegory.

*Dance of Death* is an investigation into the de-humanising effects of crowds and the way this changes individual behaviour. Here the artists place the audience within the work to decide whether formation dancing really is the greatest act of conformity.

*Dance of Death*, 2010, Wall text: Introduction instructions for a participatory activity based on audio guidelines.

Jessica Olivieri and Hayley Forward with Parachutes for Ladies were supported by the Australia Council's Theatre Board in 2009/10 to develop and present new work at 2010 Next Wave Festival.

Visit: [www.parachutesforladies.com/](http://www.parachutesforladies.com/)

## Frederick Rodrigues

*The Heavy Metal Work Orchestra* consists of a 12-piece computer-controlled ensemble of power tools and appliances hijacked to perform a 25 minute composition. Here we see just one of those instruments, a dormant chainsaw encased in a rabbit hutch, augmented only by a silk-screen poster and documentary footage of the orchestra in

session. This new ensemble is made possible by a revolutionary new instrument created by Frederick Rodrigues - the DeMiXerphone. This instrument allows composers and musicians to have precise control over the pitch timbre and rhythmic potential of almost any electrical appliance.

*The Heavy Metal Work Orchestra*, 2010. DVD, 29 mins, cage, chainsaw and screen-printed poster.

Frederick Rodrigues received an Australia Council Inter-Arts Artist Initiated Residency grant in 2010 to develop and perform with the DeMixerphone with PIPS:Lab, Holland.

Visit: <http://heavymetalworkorchestra.com/>

## Erica Seccombe

*GROW* is a project in its formative stages. Here, Erica Seccombe aims to capture the dynamic process of propagating agricultural seeds from embryo to first leaf stage by visualising the process using microscopic 3D data. In essence, this work is in 4D (3D data + time). Through *GROW* Seccombe attempts to transcend conventional time-lapse images of seeds germinating and to create new work that has meaning beyond a purely scientific interpretation of data. Micro-CT can now capture movement as an object is transformed; such as a seed sprouting from an embryonic state. This data is visualised through a unique scientific volume exploration tool, Drishti.

*GROW: visualising nature at nanoscale (work in progress)*. Digital animation, QuickTime file, 3 mins.

3D Micro CT dataset of a sprouting mungbean, 2010. Erica Seccombe works with Associate Professor Tim Senden, Dr Andrew Kingston, Dr Ajay Limaye at the Australian National University's Department of Mathematics, School of Physical Sciences and Engineering and the Super Computer Centre.

Erica Seccombe is a 2010 Synapse Residency recipient with the Department of Applied Mathematics, Australian National University. The ANAT Synapse initiative is supported by the Australia Council for the Arts.

Visit: [www.ericaseccombe.com.au/](http://www.ericaseccombe.com.au/)

## Stelarc

A pioneering performance artist, Stelarc has used medical instruments, prosthetics, robotics, virtual reality systems and the internet to explore, extend and enhance the body's parameters. He has performed with a third hand, a virtual arm, a virtual body and a stomach sculpture. He has filmed the inside of his lungs, stomach and colon - approximately two metres of internal space. Stelarc's work in *genart\_sys* is an animated sketch for his six-legged microbots, where he visualises an insect-like micro-robot robust enough to climb up his tongue and into his mouth. This simulates what will be an actual performance when the robot is physically engineered.

*Micro-Robot*, 2010. Animation sketch.

Stelarc was supported by an Australia Council Visual Arts New Work grant in 2010.

Visit: <http://web.stelarc.org/>

## Adriaan Stellingwerff

Adriaan Stellingwerff and his creative team think there's more to travel than package deals and visiting seven cities in a week. Unplanned experiences such as chance meetings and the discovery of strange places not found in any guide book are the most valuable. *Windy & Winding* is an augmented reality project that involved launching a virtual balloon that goes where the wind blows it, based on real time wind data. You can follow your balloon on a map, point your phone at the sky to see your balloon (virtually) and receive updates about your whereabouts through Twitter. Your balloon determines your trip and if you get close enough to where your balloon lands, you'll get your balloon back - ready to kick-start your next travel adventure.

*Windy & Winding*, 2010-11, iPhone application and associated website.

Adriaan Stellingwerff developed *Windy & Winding* with support from the Australia Council Digital Culture Fund in 2010.

Visit: [www.windyandwinding.com/](http://www.windyandwinding.com/)

## Jason Sweeney and Fiona Sprott

*Download the Dead* is a noisy online portal for the 'nearly departed' - a band of misfits who all seem to have come to an untimely end, but just won't shut up. Enter this dark, comic, sonic world of the dead where the deceased get to speak back. Sweeney and Sprott have been working together across interdisciplinary art projects since 1993. Their collaborative work maintains a commitment to the flexible screen, installation and web-based outcomes. As such, they have deliberately set out to create a mess of ideas; an overload of artistic provocations - textual, sonic and visual excesses that are all anchored in the ways in which we tell our stories to others and develop intimacy in an era of globalisation.

*Download the Dead*, 2010, 5 mp3 webisodes, 20 mins each, 100 mins in total.

Jason Sweeney received an Australia Council Music Board New Work grant in 2010 to develop this project.

Visit: [www.downloadthedead.net/](http://www.downloadthedead.net/)

## Ken and Julia Yonetani

The groundwater salt that is such a problem for the Murray-Darling Basin is the material and subject matter of the Yonetani's new works. On show are preliminary salt works and accompanying video which are part of a larger installation. These salt works bring us back to the environmental cost of agricultural production and the historical associations of salt - as a powerful, sacred substance that maintains life by enabling food preservation, but also induces the death of ecosystems. Death through salinity is mixed with the everyday in the form of a fruit bowl on a coffee table, ready to eat but morphed into salt, and a video in which the genre of still life painting has been reduced to its modern, digitised, salinised equivalent. Their multimedia work is inspired by close-up images of stomata from the leaves of trees near the Blue Mountains National Park, NSW, acquired using electron microscopic technology from the Australian Microscopy and Microanalysis Research Facility at the University of Sydney. The work reveals the hidden process of photosynthesis and respiration of plant life to the naked human eye, asking us to once again begin a lost conversation with trees as living and breathing spirits.

*Still Life: The Food Bowl*, 2011, Salt sculptures, objects are life-sized.

*Still Life: The Food Bowl*, 2010, Video, 2 mins, 34 secs.

*Imagine tree*, 2010, Video, 7 mins, 48 secs.

Ken and Julia Yonetani are 2010 Synapse resident with the Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre in Mildura Victoria supported by the ANAT Synapse initiative. Ken Yonetani represented Australia at the 2009 Venice Biennale. These initiatives are supported by the Australia Council.

Visit: [www.kenandjullayonetani.com/](http://www.kenandjullayonetani.com/)

## What makes me

The Australia Council launched the *What makes me* project in 2010, inviting all Australians to share their stories about what the arts add to their everyday lives and to identify the contribution of the arts to our society. There are personal accounts about the art of cooking and gardening, performance in school bands, amateur comedy and circus. The project invites participants to build their own interactive video and audio cubes to add to this collaborative artwork. *What makes me* encourages us to connect with art, and celebrates how art enriches us as communities and as individuals.

Visit: [www.whatmakesme.com.au](http://www.whatmakesme.com.au)