Lynette WALLWORTH  b.1961

Duality of Light, 2009
single channel interactive video projection
Lynette Wallworth in collaboration with: Chris Watson sound, and Pete Brundle video processing and system design; lighting design: Bluebottle; technical director: Kamal Ackarie courtesy the artist, produced by Forma Arts and Media Ltd; commissioned by Adelaide Film Festival Investment Fund (2008)
This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body
Hold: Vessel 1 and 2, 2001–2007
3 channel video projection, multi-channel sound editor: Vivien Lee; consultant editor: Ravi Chad, visual artist: Emma Varga; sound designer: Greg White courtesy of and commissioned by the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne, Australia
This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body
Hold: Vessel 1, 2001
3 channel video projection, multi-channel sound editor: Vivien Lee; consultant editor: Ravi Chad, visual artist: Emma Varga; sound designer: Greg White
Original interface: Daniel Horwood
System design: Matthew Gardiner and Roberto Salvatore; single channel interactive video projection
Invisible by Night
courtesy the artist, produced by Forma Arts and Media Ltd; commissioned by Experimenta
Pete Brundle; original interface: Daniel Horwood
System design: Matthew Gardiner and Roberto Salvatore; single channel interactive video projection

list of works

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Lynette Wallworth, 2001
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Editor: Vivien Lee; consultant editor: Ravi Chad; visual artist: Emma Varga; sound designer: Greg White
Original interface: Daniel Horwood
System design: Matthew Gardiner and Roberto Salvatore; single channel interactive video projection
Hold: Vessel 2, 2007
Lynette Wallworth, 2007
2 channel video projection, multi-channel sound
Editor: Greg Ferris; glass artist: Emma Varga; sound designer: Greg White
Original interface: Daniel Horwood
System design: Matthew Gardiner and Roberto Salvatore; single channel interactive video projection
Duality of Light
Lynette Wallworth, 2009
3 channel video projection, multi-channel sound
Editor: Vivien Lee; consultant editor: Ravi Chad; visual artist: Emma Varga; sound designer: Greg White
Original interface: Daniel Horwood
System design: Matthew Gardiner and Roberto Salvatore; single channel interactive video projection

artist biography

Lynette Wallworth was awarded a Synapsis, Australia Network for Art and Technology residency in 2008 to develop new work with marine biologist Dr Anya Salih at the Coitac Bio-Imaging Facility, University of Western Sydney. In 2003–2004 she was awarded an Australia Council for the Arts New Media Arts Fellowship which enabled her to undertake residencies in Italy and New Mexico. In 2006 she completed an Arts Council England Fellowship residency at the National Glass Centre, Sunderland, UK. Her exhibitions include: Invisible by Night, commissioned by Experimenta for the 2004 Melbourne festival; Duality of Light, Van Driehuyzen Gallery, The University of NSW, as part of The Athens, which toured to galleries throughout Australia during 2005; the premieres of Duality of Light, ARCO Gallery, Bristol, UK, 2006; her first major European solo exhibition; Lynette Wallworth—Evolution of Fearlessness, New Crowned Hope Festival, Vienna, Austria, 2006; her first UK solo show, Lynette Wallworth: National Glass Centre, Sunderland, 2007; Auckland Triennial, New Zealand, 2007; Regarding Fear and Hope, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2007; Hold: Vessel 2, BFI Southbank Gallery, London, UK, 2007; 365 Waiting2, John Curtin Gallery, Curtin University of Technology; a solo exhibition, Evolution of Fearlessness, Festival International d’Art Lyrique, Aix-en-Provence, France, 2008; and Invisible by Night, Mostly Mozart Festival, Lincoln Center for Performing Arts, New York, USA, 2008. Evolution of Fearlessness was also presented at the Melbourne International Arts Festival 2008 and in 2009 at the Sundance Film Festival, Utah.

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Her installations, which engage the viewer in unexpected scenarios, frequently with intense human encounters, are profound and memorable. Wallworth is an outward-looking artist with an enduring interest in the human condition. She has travelled extensively with a spirit of openness to diverse cultures and worldviews, and has articulated the importance that, ‘we are in a global community that requires us to lift up out of our individual lives in order to get a sense of what we are participating in, whilst holding in our minds … the comprehension that our senses cannot tell us everything, that there is always more complexity to be revealed.’ Ultimately, she aims to ‘create a space for opening to what we do not know, rather than to present a known.’

In Wallworth’s work, light is both physical phenomenon and metaphor, alluding to heightened states of mind and the human desire to communicate, seek knowledge and explore the unknown. This understanding is significant for Duality of Light, a new work commissioned for the 2009 Bigpond Adelaide Film Festival, and the culmination of a trilogy which includes two previous works, Invisible by Night, 2004, and Evolution of Fearlessness, 2006. In invisible by Night, touching a video screen generates a moment of connection with a woman, a stranger, who occupies a melancholic space. The woman, filmed behind a layer of condensation, ceases her pacing in response to a woman, a stranger, who occupies a melancholic space. The works, film and installation, are profound and memorable. Wallworth is an outward-looking artist with an enduring interest in the human condition. She has travelled extensively with a spirit of openness to diverse cultures and worldviews, and has articulated the importance that, ‘we are in a global community that requires us to lift up out of our individual lives in order to get a sense of what we are participating in, whilst holding in our minds … the comprehension that our senses cannot tell us everything, that there is always more complexity to be revealed.’ Ultimately, she aims to ‘create a space for opening to what we do not know, rather than to present a known.’

Invisible by Night, 2004, photographed by Colin Davison, image courtesy National Glass Centre, UK

Invisible by Night offers a reflection on the ‘other’. We live in a world where constructed dichotomies continually inform social and cultural perceptions. It was Edward Said who convincingly asserted the Orient was one of the West’s, ‘dippest and most recuring images of the Other.’ In a wider context, the ‘other’ may be understood as that which the self regards as foreign and inconceivable. Proposing an avenue out of this binary conflict, Said suggests seeing, ‘the entire world as a foreign land.’ Instead, Wallworth’s installation, which brings the viewer to a moment of ‘uncanny strangeness’, seems to suggest, ‘the foreigner lives within us: he is the hidden face of our identity, the space that wrinkles our abdos, the time in which understanding and affinity founder… A symptom that precisely turns “we” into a problem, perhaps makes it impossible. The foreigner comes in when the consciousness of my difference arises, and he disappears when we all acknowledge ourselves as foreigners.’

A desire to move beyond the self/other dichotomy in an engagement with cultural difference is inflected in the video installation Damavand Mountain, which developed from the artist’s residency in Iran in 2004. The visual poetry between a woman clothed in a chador, the fragile existence of a poppy flower and the tender draping of clouds across a snow-covered mountain peak seduces the viewer into seeing the world through the eyes of another, through a visual dialogue between the strange and the familiar, change and continuity. A sense of journey through contemplation of the enduring and the transient is also intimated in the video Beautiful Sunset, where the focus is an almost imperceptible process of natural light transformation against the silhouette of a river red gum in the Flinders Ranges, South Australia. Wallworth’s fascination in the interconnected nature of the world is related to her fascination with the human desire for knowledge, especially via scientific research. This is epitomised in the installation Hold Vessels 1 and 2, 2001–2007, which reveals to the viewer, who enters with a glass bowl, the brilliant complexity of the marine life in the viewer, who enters with a glass bowl, the brilliant complexity of the marine world and solar system. Comprising microscopic imagery of the Great Barrier Reef and rare imagery of the 2004 Transit of Venus, the work evokes wonder of the planet’s ecology.

The art of Lynette Wallworth, which describes a profound enquiry into what it means to be human in the 21st century, has resonated with audiences around the world. In 2006, she held a solo exhibition at the New Crowned Hope Festival in Vienna, and her London debut was at the BP Lowsky Bank Gallery in 2007. Last year, her work featured at the 60th International Festival of Art Lyrique, Aix-en-Provence, followed by the Mostly Mozart Festival at the Lincoln Centre for Performing Arts, New York. This is a valuable opportunity to experience more than one of the artist's works in an exhibition in Australia.

Catherine Wilson, BA(Hons), Dip World Art, is a writer based in London.