

A gesture. A corresponding receptacle. A message, and an envelope of sorts.

Traversing a segment of land, measured in footsteps. Traversing the space between the parameters of one body and another. Data traverses space through tightly wrought copper cabling. Spectral figures traverse converging decades: slippery temporalities intersect with one another.

726 kilometers of heaving waves and craggy rock.

c3 Signal: A Magnet for Projectiles Late at Night connects two places across a vast expanse of distance; for a fleeting moment two different communities are together ‘in’ the same space through a labyrinth of code, bathed in the glare of a pulsing beacon. Time is metered out through a cycle of impossibly minute alterations: a force unseen like the charged ‘negative’ space between bodies. *c3 Signal* is a responsive, hybrid conceptual work that acts as a curatorial construct. An atmospheric tableaux. An amphitheater for fluctuating discourse: a symbol for reciprocal conversation between artist-run spaces and their visitors. In its midst is Arini Byng’s ever-evolving performance *Before Taking Any Action*: a meeting place between sculptural installation, relational exercise and durational delegated performance. The sinew of contorting bodies, enquiring limbs and hard-edged geometric sculptures progress in an open circuit which seems to have an autonomous logic: prosaic action becomes something else. In her fiction *Baayay*, Hannah Donnelly speculates on a future in which our relationship to land and place is interrogated through post-colonial dialogues by an enigmatic ‘representative for future sovereignty.’ For *c3 Signal: A Magnet for Projectiles Late at Night*, it is the correspondence between these three projects that creates a vehicle for dialogues between vocabularies, histories, practices and geographies.

Katie Paine



A CONVERSATION WITH JON BUTT ON *c3 SIGNAL*

What is c3 Signal?

c3 Signal is a closed loop signaling device that consists of two Internet-enabled RGB LED beacons situated at c3 and any other chosen site (in this case Salamanca Art Centre) that will remain connected at all times. A sensor in each space activates the system. If you are in one space, you will set off the sensor, send a signal through a number of internet pathways and the light beacon will pulse at the other space. You are both in this space and the other space. *c3 Signal* also acts as a platform for sharing and presenting curatorial projects.

What provided the genesis of c3 Signal?

c3 Signal was created for a curatorial project developed by Annabelle Lacroix and Maria Miranda titled *An Act of Showing*, held at Testing Grounds in May this year. The project bought together ARI’s from Australia and South East Asia to meet and discuss ideas around localism, place and connectedness, both through dialogue and works shown. Much of the initial inquiry of Annabelle and Maria’s project revolved around how localised notions of place or space influenced an ARI’s curatorial, communal and operational practices. c3 is located at the Abbotsford Convent Arts Precinct, a site completely saturated with ‘place’, almost too much to refer to in one small project. For *An Act of Showing*, I wanted to focus on the ‘space for practice’ that the abbotsford convent’s c3 opens up to artists, a space that supports open, ambitious (or quiet), collaborative, individual, personal and critical approaches. This is visible through the way we work together, not through concrete physical space.

Tell me about your vision of c3 Signal as an ongoing curatorial construct.

c3 Signal is both an artwork and a curatorial construct. The two beacons act as material markers for conceptual and physical links between two sites and these links function to compress time and space -between each site- so that they become one site for us to work within. It also works as an actual signaling device that c3 can use to network and tour curatorial projects. We can use c3 signal to connect to any art space, pretty much anywhere in the world that has an Internet connection. The beacons are designed to be portable and simple to install so we can easily tour the work or maybe even ship it with instructions to international sites. Each connection will come coupled with a curatorial project developed specifically around the concerns of the two sites. Our aim is to always compress time/space and make c3 and the corresponding site one place to work within. This is key to the project, as c3 is interested in developing relationships with other organisations or collectives that encourage site-based thinking, responses and methodologies grounded in shared interests and ideas that connect and situate.

Tell us about the progression the project has undertaken translating it to Kelly’s Garden

Kelly’s Garden is a very complex site on many levels. It is essentially a massive void space that has been created from acts of reduction. Built structures from previous lives no longer exist. The scars and layers of the past are extremely present, the adjacent buildings containing the space like a vessel. There are so many variations of material and finish spread over the surface of the site. Even the large rocky gravel spread over the ground is unique in its over-scaled and acoustic materiality. The curatorial provocation that I’m working with came from the info pack given to artists exhibiting at Kelly’s Garden, asking exhibitors to consider logistical factors such as the wind “*Even highly experienced artists have underestimated the power of the wind in this space...*” and light sources “*...being a magnet for projectiles late at night*”. I was immediately struck by the incidental poetry of these statements referring to obscure and unseen forces and I started to consider ways of capturing or articulating these forces. There may be some additional sculptural elements to the core *c3 Signal* work that do this. I was interested in working with Arini [Byng] for very specific reasons. Arini’s recent work at c3, a sculptural installation and performance piece, was very fluent in moving with and through the space. These trajectories became visible via the subtle actions and everyday movements between performers, objects and the gallery. I wanted to see how her language would alter my perception of the phenomena and residue present at the site. Similarly, being introduced to Hannah’s writing by Katie Paine, I saw that Hannah’s work could attune to similar and significant things, but through the material of time. Both Arini and Hannah have produced beautifully circular readings of the project and the space/ time it resides within.

A CONVERSATION WITH ARINI BYNG ON BEFORE TAKING ANY ACTION

Your past few exhibitions have involved site-specific installation and delegated performance; each iteration of your current project has the potential to vary infinitely- what is it that you think lies at the core of these works? What do you think ties them to one another?

Maybe space - it appears as a vast ‘container’ which closes us and the objects that surround us. Around us always, are countless material things - our bodies use objects and derive tactile sensations from their shape, texture and content. We perceive our body in two ways: as an external material object and as an embodied space, which “carries” our “internal” sensations. The perception of our body as a material thing is always fragmentary. We can see or touch parts of our body; we always see some side of it, but we can never grasp the wholeness of it.

How do you see “Before Taking Any Action” building upon “The Sound in the Form of a Word”?

I am attempting to build form from the immaterial: from processes of observation, of slowing down and working-through, and from sustained thought and the hazards of chance whose effects persist through time. My interests focus on the interaction between the human body, architecture and objects and the question of how this interplay shapes and determines our material and immaterial environment. It seems that before our reflection comprehends an object from the perceptual field, our body already understands its surroundings. It understands our position referred from the things around us. It disposes of knowledge based on spatial relations like direction, distance, and the size and shape of objects. This time there is a destination - we are travelling to a predetermined place - the actions will need to advance across a set path in an urban environment that cannot be controlled.

What have been your current concerns when developing this project?

I am interested in the aesthetics of everyday movement and how it is understood as something embodied and practiced, not just as an abstract form of consciousness. I have been looking at movements such as walking, stumbling, sitting and leaning and to ideas of connection and place. I have been looking at the ‘active’ presence of the performer-drawn from the emphasis of their body as spectacle; their physicality. The performer is displayed as an active image that does not necessarily need dialogue or discourse to explain or make sense of them. The project will endeavour to illustrate a haptic or tactile phenomenology of the body as it encounters the physical world – a felt or lived experience of corporeality. For this project, I will develop new work that expands on my investigation into the individual and collective experience of everyday encounters with objects. Considering the transient nature of experience – individual and collective – and the multiple ways our various experiences are recorded, translated, interpreted, described, fragmented and ultimately visualised through form and material.

Your practice first started with photography: can you tell us more about how and when your practice began to expand to other fields?

For many years I studied dance and trained as a contemporary dancer. At the age of 18, I gave it all up as my focus turned towards photography. I took pictures of people and intimate objects in controlled environments - I would choreograph the scene, moving limbs and objects just as I would a dance. I had an interest in ideas of material juxtaposition and sculptural choreography. Later on, I began making sculptures that existed outside of the photograph - the forms invited participation - this is when I looped back to movement. In 2014 I ran into Helen Hughes and Joel Stern at a Chunky Move performance. We got to talking about my dance background and they mentioned they were curating an afternoon of performances in a couple of weeks and did I want to make a work for it. Two weeks later I performed Functional Background Music: Actions for five objects at Slopes in Collingwood. Five friends were given an everyday object and asked to interact or move with it.

What is it that attracts you to delegation?

I see delegation as verbal propositions used whilst practising. I often use the term ‘score’ for the words and sets of words conveyed verbally. The score offers endless possibilities within a movement. Improvisation plays an important role within my practice. Improvisation is a tool through which we can refigure subjectivity and form connections to others in physical, spatial and temporal terms. We are able to see the ‘working-through’ of a performance problem in real time even though we don’t know what that problem is. This approach

puts the performer in a situation where they are attentive; they are focussed on the unfolding of their performance in the present. In my current research I keep coming back to Andre Lepecki’s words on performance: *It is as if the organic and the inorganic have re-found a possibility for intimate partnering. In this partnering, things reveal their subjectivity, while humans reveal their thingness, to the point where it becomes hard to say who moves whom, who choreographs whom, and who is choreographed by whom.*



c3 Signal: A Magnet for Projectiles Late at Night Hobiennale - November 2nd - 11th 2017

The Abbotsford Convent’s c3 Projects:

Jon Butt + Arini Byng

Publication : Hannah Donnelly + Katie Paine

Kelly’s Garden, Salamanca Art Centre, Hobart

Opening Saturday November 4th from 4-5:30pm

10am - 5pm weekdays and specific performance times

on November 4th +5th

This publication has been produced as part of “c3 Signal: A Magnet for Projectiles Late at Night”, c3 Contemporary Art Space’s contribution to the 2017 Hobiennale facilitated by Constance ARI. c3 would like to acknowledge that this project has been produced on unceded Wurundjeri and Lutruwita lands, and pays its respects to elders past, present and emerging.

c3 is the Abbotsford Convent Foundation’s artist-led contemporary art space, located in Narrm/Melbourne. Established in 2008, c3 supports artists and artistic practices which encourage risk, experimentation and direct audience engagement through open, ambitious, quiet, critical, collaborative or individual making and experiencing of contemporary art. The six-room gallery is housed in the main Convent building facing expansive gardens, Birrarung (the Yarra river) and adjacent bush parkland within its inner city location. The site has a multi-layered and complex continuing historical journey: a meeting point for the Wurundjeri and Kulin Nation peoples, settler occupation, a convent, a university, a large multi-practice creative precinct. The gallery has a reciprocal relationship with community, in that it simultaneously builds and is built by community, allowing for an open, nimble and active curatorial vision.

Performance schedule:

Saturday 4th November

TMAG + SALAMANCA ARTS CENTRE

c3 Signal: A Magnet for Projectiles Late at Night

Before Taking Any Action: A Performance by Arini Byng

Performance starts at 3.00 PM from TMAG courtyard and traversing through the city, to arrive at Kelly’s Garden.

3.00 PM – 4.00 PM

Sunday 5th November

SALAMANCA ARTS CENTRE

c3 Signal: A Magnet for Projectiles Late at Night

Before Taking Any Action- Performance by Arini Byng

2.00 PM – 3.00 PM

www.c3artspace.com - @c3artspace - www.abbotsfordconvent.com.au

www.hobiennale.com - www.salarts.org.au

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Baayay

She looks around at today's assignment and binary data spills around her, projected onto sandstone. Here surveyors have marked a remnant post and a brick pier. She comes across a structure of three-story brick and stone walls. 'Where are you from?' she wonders. Colonial encroachment has been logged here.

Slowly entering the uneven terrain, she can see a group of people are shifting the data grid back to the land. They carry country like parcels in coolamons. She approaches and waves. A fella from the nexus looks up. He approaches her dusting off his hands.

'Yaama,' she says passing over her photo identification card. 'I'm here representing future sovereignty. Do you have a few minutes to answer some questions?' She speaks slowly, sometimes these first encounters take time to process, depending on the subject.

'Yeh no worries' he reckons, as if he was always expecting this to happen.

They stand together for a moment watching the movement of the nexus pull together and disappear. Smoke rises from the ground; it looks like misty rain in the distance. The power of the wind abruptly disintegrates the signal.

'Who are you?' she asks gesturing to him and the people.

'We came here to figure out where we belong.'

'What are you doing moving all this country between places?'

'The history of this place must be un-told so we can re-cover the truth. Do you wanna see?' he points past her shoulder. She turns and looks at where he is pointing towards a light.

'So it's a meeting place?' she asks.

'More like a vessel,' he says and walks away.

Now the light was gone. Switched off. The phenomena of the lights concern her. She doesn't want to get closer if it's min min taking her for being at the wrong place.

She stares a couple of seconds to see if the light returns. Nothing happens and she follows after him to continue with her questions.

'Do you consider yourself to have a creator?'

Nodding he says 'I suppose.'

'Why are you still here?'

'We just want to tell the story of this place.'

'What's that?'

'Stolen history.'

Satisfied she has enough information for her report she reaches into her pocket. 'Well thanks for your time. Here's a token for future sovereignty. It's very unlikely, but if other explorers come past this way just show them this.' She places the token in his hand.

He thanks her and walks back towards the smoke.

She returns to her body with a small convulsion. She moves the lever forward on her chair and pulls out the connections tangled over her head. Her eyes adjust in dim office light. It is quite unusual to find connection to place existing simultaneously she thinks. She can't delete this code logged by colonisers. She starts packing up to go home and quickly writes in her notes; 'Baayay'.

Baayay: Meeting Place of two parties/ a tryst.

Translations based on resources developed by the Wiradjuri Study Centre / RegenR8.

Hannah Donnelly

Hannah Donnelly is a writer and the creator of Sovereign Trax. Her work experiments with Indigenous futures, speculative fiction and responses to climate trauma. Sovereign Trax is an online platform promoting First Nations music through energising decolonisation conversations and community in music. Hannah is currently working at Next Wave as an Associate Producer.