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Spring and Asura.02

Disturbance

Chris Bowman

With

Dr. Alastair Weakley and Doreen Ee

Kenji Miyazawa - Poetry

(translated by Hiroaki Sato)

22 October - 8 November 2009

Opening Night Launch Thursday 22 October 6-9pm

Curated by Deborah Turnbull (New Media Curation)

At The Vanishing Point – Contemporary Art (ATVP)
565 King Street Newtown

Spring and Asura is the result of creative work developed from an inquiry into process and prototyping, and supported by a longstanding collaboration between Chris Bowman and Dr. Alastair Weakley.

Spring and Asura.02 - Disturbance is an interactive artwork that explores the interconnectivity of the animate and the inanimate. The centrepiece to the exhibition is an interactive artwork that explores the relationship between video images of the natural world and the poem "Spring and Asura" written by Kenji Miyazawa (translated into English by Hiroaki Sato).

The work is further explored through the movement of visitors within the space and the recitation of one of the most important of Buddhist sutras: the Heart Sutra. The video sequences represent the artist's personal explorations of and reflections on the poem and have influenced the development of the software system.

Using a combination of image and motion capture technology the artwork explores the movement of light and shade within the video recordings, taking into account the disturbance of the visitor in the space. This self-generating interconnected system creates an ordering and re-ordering of the poetry text resulting in shifts in time, movement and abstraction through the viewing of the work.

Spring and Asura .01 (a prototype in development) was exhibited at the Powerhouse Museum (Beta_Space Gallery in 2008). At ATVP we see a more fully developed work that extends the form's interaction, enhances the work's responsiveness to the movement of visitors around it and in turn creates a greater sense of engagement between the visitor and the artwork. Importantly, *Spring and Asura* now exists as pool of images - a metaphor of a *chozubachi* or *tsukubai* (a water basin found at Zen Buddhist temples used for ritual purification) on which visitors are encouraged to contemplate the poem and the images. Such "interconnectivity" is an important metaphor for both the artist and Kenji and it informs every aspect of their artwork.

Also on display at ATVP are support materials created by the artist during the making of *Spring and Asura .01 and .02*, along with other relational works that serve as experiments with both



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the concepts and the tools surrounding and supporting *Spring and Asura*. These images consist of schematics and sketches, and manipulation of the artist's key medium, film, to demonstrate early prototype development by the artist and the technologist from 2005 – 2007. Collectively these images give the viewer an insight into the graphic representations of space and time (schematic drawings) and the prototype system development for the image capture technology that operates in *Spring and Asura*.

The Collaborators

Chris Bowman is an artist and Senior Lecturer at the University of Technology, Sydney. Chris is an experienced researcher/practitioner and works in film and convergent media display systems. Since the 1990's Chris's interest in film and video has extended into digital and convergent media technologies. This interest has resulted in a range of successful research projects and exhibitions funded by the Australia Council, the Australian Film Commission and Australasian CRC for Interaction Design, and subsequent research papers, publications and exhibitions of his own work. Chris was co-founder and Co-Director of the Centre for Digital Design at UTS (2006 – 2009) and is a current member of the Creativity and Cognition Studio, and the Centre for Contemporary Design Practice (UTS), and associate member of The Centre for Media Arts Innovation.

Dr. Alastair Weakley is a director of the Interaction Consortium (<http://interactionconsortium.com>). He has a background in product development and a PhD in computer science. When he is not building websites, or interactive artworks, Alastair teaches Web Technologies to Masters' students. He has previously worked as a Senior Research Assistant for the Australasian CRC for Interaction Design (<http://www.interactiondesign.com.au>), and as a Research Associate on the EPSRC-funded COSTART project in the UK.

Deborah Turnbull is a new media curator. Her first major curatorial project focused on the audience's role in interactive art, which fuels her interest in how technology can augment traditional art practice. Until recently, Deborah facilitated this interest by curating [Beta Space](#) through the [Creativity and Cognition Studios](#), a new media prototype exhibition space at the Powerhouse Museum.

Where this space focused on perfecting interactive artworks through audience feedback and a rigorous and academic evaluation process, Deborah has recently shifted her focus to becoming concerned with how artists take what they have learned in galleries like [Beta Space](#) and apply it to the next stage of exhibition: in finished gallery spaces.

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Doreen Ee completed her Masters of Interactive Multimedia in September 2009, with the Institute for Interactive Media & Learning at the University of Technology, Sydney. She has 10+ years of IT industry experience as system support, an application developer and a Business Analyst.

Doreen is interested in Human-Computer interaction, in particular user research and application design, and the use of multimedia in installation art and visual effects. Her aspiration is to collaborate with living artists. Her break through project in this area was *Magic Hopscotch* (2008), a collaboration with Viveka Weiley, a PhD student with the Creativity and Cognition Studios at the University of Technology, Sydney.



Kenji Miyazawa is one of Japan's leading writer/poets (1896 – 1933). His exploration into the subconscious and the 'order of space-time' as told through a lexicon of poems, novels and "mental sketches" illustrate his life-long pursuit of understanding and creative interpretation of the human imagination and the living world. His writing explores an indivisible unity between inanimate and animate phenomena.

Acknowledgements

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This project is supported in partnership by New Media Curation and the University of Technology Sydney.

For further information, to arrange artist interviews, photo opportunities or to receive high resolution images please contact Deborah Turnbull on 0400 920 761 or Brendan Penzer on the details below.

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Free Entry, All Welcome

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