

## Shifting Intimacies (2006) – production specification

**THE WORK:** *Shifting Intimacies* is a new immersive interactive/media artwork by Charlotte Vincent (GB/Vincent Dance Theatre), Keith Armstrong and Guy Webster (AU/Transmute Collective) that invites the participant to meditate upon and witness the human body disintegrating and transforming, whilst in motion. It differentiates itself from other interactive installations by its strong emotive appeal influenced by performance practices, a rich use of multi-sensory design elements and an intimate, immersive experience designed for one participant at a time.

*'It was like an interior journey as I was all alone thinking about my life and my thoughts.'*  
Participant, ICA, London

Each participant enters a large, dark space containing two circles of projected film imagery presented within an immersive sound environment. One image floats on a disc of white sand, the other on a circle of white dust. This immersive work invites differing states of meditation, exploration, stillness and play, creating states of shifting balance that produce a heightened awareness of the body. Each person has 10 minutes alone with the work and their 'journey' is strongly influenced by the architecture of the space and the interactive script design. Their movement through the space continually affects speed, quality, balance and flow within the work. At the end of the experience they are invited to climb a lit platform and cast dust back onto the images below.

*'It made me feel lots of feelings and sensations. It seemed like birth, from the earth's womb.'*  
Participant ICA, London

### **GENERAL SPACE REQUIREMENTS: (Also see diagram/full tech spec)**

- Large darkened room or black box theatre, minimum dimensions 15x10x5.5m (please contact us for other feasible configurations)
- Floor covered with a thin layer of white dust (cooking flour)
- 1 circular down-projection onto a raised circular, wooden platform covered in a thin layer of white sand
- 1 circular down-projection onto the dust covered floor
- Raised platform/viewing area (2m min height, with steps)
- Seven powered loudspeakers (on stands or hung)
- Sensors/actuators mounted on posts around the room and in the roof
- Low level, wash lighting for safety/documentation, with dimmers

**EXPERIENCE:** On entry a body (projected onto the raised circular 'sand screen') is seen emerging from a watery substrate. On exit transformed and disintegrating bodies merge into dust (projected onto the dust-covered floor). During their 10 minutes with the work each participant walks freely throughout the entire space, moving around and between the two screens. Screen One (based around ideas of birth/emergence) loops endlessly and provides constancy within the space. Screen Two (based around ideas of evolution, death and the return to dust) develops in real time through a series of 'movements' that are choreographed by the participants' 'drift patterns' within the space. These physical movements also move the physical dust around the floor space.

At the end of the experience participants leave via an observation platform and are invited to cast a handful of dust down through the projection light onto a body below

slowly disappearing under a layer of visual dust.

This poignant and enveloping experience is supported by a seven channel interactive soundscape that makes extensive use of spatially shifting audio and granular synthesis, based upon found sounds that continually transform and re-orientate the space.

This subtle mode of interaction is framed and shaped by a soundtrack of poetically coded instructions, which each participant listens too immediately before entering the space.

**MODES OF INTERACTION:** There are no expectations upon audiences to 'perform' bizarre actions, move in particular repetitive ways or in other ways 'seek out the function of hidden sensors' – instead they are invited to simply 'be' with the work and let the experience evolve and emerge based upon their own intuitive, personally appropriate modes of movement or stillness.

These movements are read by a network sensors that the computer code treats as 'drift patterns' rather than Cartesian points in space, using them to evolve the projected digital imagery and enveloping sound, as well as driving a dust actuator that releases minute amount of dust into the projection light high above the 'dust screen'.

The software includes a controllable artificial life based algorithm (also responding to 'drift') that infuses itself deep within both the imagery and sound, creating a digital parallel to the work's physical dust.

**TECHNOLOGIES:** The work is based on interactive image processing (Max/Very Nervous System software), 7 channel real time digital audio signal processing (Max MSP software), networking software, real time show control protocols, a network of see-in-the-dark heat and movement seeking sensors and an infrared camera tracking system, custom interface electronics and an electrically controlled dust actuator. Both down video projections require circular masking, which may require angled mirrors/projectors depending on room height and rigging considerations.

However these technologies are made essentially invisible to the participants who focus upon image, sound, their body, and the movement of the digital and physical dusts with the space.

**AUDIENCE FEEDBACK TO DATE:** Shifting Intimacies seeks to promote a state of embodied immersion through its compelling, interactive interplays of movement, sound, image and physical and virtual dust circulation, inviting states of meditation, exploration, stillness and play that over time produce a heightened awareness of the body. In feedback sessions conducted during the preview showing of this work the experience has also variously been described as "sublime", "immersive", "meditative", "invigorating", "timeless", "calming" and "inspiring". These responses concur with our aim to create an experience that draws upon the strong emotive power inherent within live performance, but that is often missing in contemporary new media, interactive installations.

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS:**

Comprehensive DVD available on request (Documentation Video, show imagery, stills)

<http://www.embodiedmedia.com/projects/SI> (Still Images, descriptions)

<http://www.vincentdt.com/curshifting.htm> (Further images, descriptions)

Technical Inventory and Budget (Attached)  
Sample Space Layout (Attached)

**CREDITS:** Shifting Intimacies was awarded an Institute of Contemporary Art/Arts Council England Capture4 co-commission in 2005. The creation of Shifting Intimacies was generously supported by the Centre for Media Research (CMR), the University of Ulster, Arts Queensland and Site Gallery, Sheffield.

**KEY CONTACTS:**

**In Australia:** Keith Armstrong, keith@embodiedmedia.com, tel. +61 412 749 729, [www.embodiedmedia.com](http://www.embodiedmedia.com)

**In England:** Jane Whitehead, Vincent Dance Theatre, The Workstation, 15 Paternoster Row, Sheffield S1 2BX, England, jane@vincentdt.com tel. +44 114 221 0369, Fax: +44 114 2212589, [www.vincentdt.com](http://www.vincentdt.com)

## ARTIST RESUMES:

**Keith Armstrong** is an interdisciplinary artist and researcher currently based in Brisbane Australia. He has specialised for 12 years in collaborative, hybrid, new media works with an emphasis on innovative performance forms, site-specific, networked interactive installations and art-science and arts-health collaborations. These works are focused upon ideas, concepts and practices of scientific and philosophical ecologies. \_\_\_Keith is a creative director, media designer and system integrator within multidisciplinary teams and is the founder and director of the interdisciplinary collective, 'Transmute'. The collective members specialise in Interactive Media, Performance/Dance, Interactive Sound Composition, Communication Design, 3D Animation, Furniture Design, Sustainability Science and Hardware and Software Engineering.

Keith is currently an Australia Council New Media Fellow. He was formerly a Postdoctoral New Media Research Fellow at Queensland University of Technology's (QUT) Creative Industries Research and Applications Centre and a lead researcher in the Australasian Cooperative Research Centre for Interaction Design. He is a Queensland editor for the Australian national arts newspaper Realtime.

He has been awarded numerous national and internationally competitive grants, prizes and commissions and his artworks/creative publications have been shown and profiled extensively both in Australia and overseas for over a decade. His most recent work Intimate Transactions, with the Transmute Collective, received an Honorary Mention in the 2005 Prix Ars Electronica and featured in the 2005 Ars Electronica Festival, Austria. Keith's latest project Shifting Intimacies, a dance/interactive media collaboration with a British choreographer Charlotte Vincent was presented in preliminary form at the Institute of Contemporary Art, London in February 2006.

**Charlotte Vincent:** Charlotte Vincent graduated from Sheffield University in 1989 with a first class Honours Degree in English Literature and Drama. She trained in contemporary dance via trapeze, release technique and contact improvisation. Charlotte founded Vincent Dance Theatre in 1994. She has conceived and directed all of VDT's live and film works to date, regularly collaborating with set designer Richard Lowdon (Forced Entertainment), composer John Avery, lighting designer James Harrison and performer/devisers TC Howard, Aurora Lubos, Patrycja Kujawska and Janusz Orlik.

As a director/choreographer Charlotte has been commissioned to make new work by x-IDA Dance Company (Austria), Teeside Dance Initiative (Newcastle), Emanon Dance (Newcastle), Welsh Independent Dance (Cardiff), Senza Tempo (Barcelona) Tai Pei Crossover Dance (Taiwan), Cloud Gate 2 Dance Theatre (Taiwan) and Anjali Dance Company (Banbury).

As a performer Charlotte has worked with Dance Republic (directed by Gregory Nash and Sue MacLennan), Side-by-Side Dance Company, Volcano Theatre Company and Stan's Cafe (reconstructing Impact Theatre's The Carrier Frequency). Retiring from performing in 2002, she performed a role created by TC Howard in VDT's spring tour of Broken Chords.

Charlotte has taught in the UK and Europe including Yorkshire Dance, Dance4, Bruckner Conservatory (Linz) and the Baltic University of Dance (Poland) amongst many others. She has led professional development workshops in the UK, Switzerland, Spain, Taiwan and Austria and is regularly invited to mentor emerging dance artists in the UK and Europe. In 2005 she was awarded the ICA/Arts Council England Capture 4 Award in collaboration with Keith Armstrong.

**Guy Webster** Guy Webster is a composer, songwriter, sound designer, performer and teacher. His major works in sound design and interactive composition have featured at numerous festivals, galleries, conferences and theatres in Australia, Japan, UK and Europe. Recent seasons include The Transmute Collective's "Intimate Transactions" at the Cyberarts 2005 exhibition in Linz, Austria as part of the Ars Electronica Festival 2005 for which it received an Honorary Mention and a dual-site exhibition between the ICA in London and BIOS in Athens.

Shifting Intimacies Technical Specifications/Budget

**SHOW EQUIPMENT**

			<b>GBP</b>
<b>Sound</b>	Motu 828 Firewire audio interface- hire		100
	Behringer multi output audio card - hire		100
<b>Hardware</b>	Infrared Firewire Camera/mount		400
	Infrared spotlight/power supply		25
	10 metre firewire cable, incl repeater		35
	Sensor receiver pairs		80
	Heat sensors (roof mount)		40
	Dust actuator		50
<b>Freight</b>	International Freight		250
<b>Travel</b>	International Flights - Aus-UK		1000
	UK local Travel		130
<b>Accommodation</b>	Local accommodation		200
<b>Fees</b>	Perdium/ Work development fees keith/Guy		1000
<b>Admin Costs</b>	Vincent Dance Theatre		500

**VENUE PROVIDES**

<b>Space</b>	Light tight, approx 20x10x6m high		venue
	Roof mounting facilities (truss or screwed fixtures) for camera, projectors, sensors, dust actuator		venue
	Curtaining/partitioning		venue
	Mounting posts for sensors		venue
	Audience platform, rostra or similar 7mx1.5m X 1.8m high minimum (or higher)		venue
	Lighting Rig – ambient, even cover for audience safety, entry and documentation		venue
	Lighting Controller		venue
<b>**Personnel</b>	Technical Installation Assistant/Rigger	2	venue
	Usher/Operator during show hours	1	venue
<b>Sound</b>	Matched powered PA speakers on stands or hanging	6	150
	PA Sub	1	50
	incl. balanced cabling for all speakers		
	Headphones	1	30
<b>Computing</b>	* G5 Mac (1GB RAM)	1	0
	G5 Mac computer, Quadcore 2.5GHZ (4GB RAM)-hire	1	1000
<b>Projectors</b>	* Projectors with wide angled lenses	2	400
	* 45 degree roof mounts for projectors	2	60
	* Mirrors/Masks	2	150
<b>Screen</b>	* Custom Wooden Flat Screen, 30mm ply, 3m Diameter, cut with jigsaw	1	80
	40cm legs for above		venue
	White Sand-20kg inc. freight	2	70
	Flour - 1kg bags	50	70
	* Mounting plinth/box-flour dispenser on platform	0	0
<b>DVD Player</b>	* Domestic or computer player	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>5970</b>

\* Total costs include Vincent Dance Theatre in kind contribution

\*\* Vincent Dance Theatre to assist with setup

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