

hokus pokus

Michele Barker and Anna Munster

Saturday 14 April - Sunday 20 May 2012
Daily 12 noon – 9 pm

Exhibition seminar (New Media Art and Illusion) and opening launch: Saturday 21 April, 3.30 – 8.30 pm



HokusPokus, 2011. HD multichannel, audiovisual interactive installation, Michele Barker and Anna Munster

HokusPokus is a new interactive artwork that examines illusionistic and performative aspects of magic to explore human perception, senses and movement. It takes inspiration from recent neuroscientific interest in magic as a way of unravelling the relations between vision and movement in human perception. A magician appears on 3 separate screens performing tricks that use sleight-of-hand and deception. How the tricks unfold over time and across the screens depends on the participant's movements and reactions in the space.

HokusPokus visually references 19th century magic, early cinema and travelling science shows, alluding to the proximity between the history of magic and the genesis of both optical time-based media and the brain sciences. The installation continues Michele Barker and Anna Munster's artistic research into perception, neuroscience and the histories of visual culture and media.

Michele Barker and Anna Munster have collaborated since 1995 in new media arts, exhibiting extensively both in Australia and overseas. Their work integrates photographic, video and interactive installation practices and has addressed issues relating to processes of perception, embodiment and scientific/medical visualization.

Their work focuses on the relationship between digital technologies, medical and scientific applications, and end-user responses. The 'art-science' nexus is a very prominent aspect of new media practice and research, and they have been actively involved in this dialogue for over a decade. Most recently they have been investigating multiple points of view for user-interaction using multi-channel projections and immersive environments specially addressing issues of the relationship of neuroscience to magic.

Michele Barker is a senior lecturer at the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney Australia. Anna Munster is an Associate Professor, the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney Australia. She is the author of *Materializing New Media: Embodiment in Information Aesthetics* and the forthcoming *An Aesthesis of Networks*.

HokusPokus is exhibited at Watermans as part of the International Festival of Digital Art 2012

<http://www.watermans.org.uk/exhibitions/exhibitions.aspx>

<http://sensesofperception.info/>

Credits

Magician: Ben Orson

Director of Photography: Tania Lambert

Interaction Development and Programming: Ardrian Hadjono

Hardware Design and Programming: Robert Lawther

The artists also wish to thank: Chris Bland (camera assistant), Roy Aston (location sound), Trish Barker (costume), Emily Hayward (hair and make-up).

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body. Michele Barker and Anna Munster are supported by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.



Watermans 40 High Street Brentford TW8 0DS Box Office 020 8232 1010 www.watermans.org.uk

Watermans is managed by Hounslow Arts Trust Ltd (No 1164904) Registered as a charity (No 267426) VAT No 422352977



Supported by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**