



*TELEPATHY*  
**HAINES + HINTERDING**



## TELEPATHY

*Telepathy* (2008) was an installation commission by the collaborative team of David Haines and Joyce Hinterding. The commissioning process was initiated by Performance Space's former Associate Director, Sally Breen as part of a suite of new works by NSW-based artists, made specifically for the cavernous CarriageWorks environment and in relation to its history, former uses and present-day conversion. Haines and Hinterding responded to the visually layered, light-filled, busy and echoic building by considering a space for darkness, silence and solitude: an anechoic chamber.

Though it is located at a nexus for Sydney's railway network, surrounded by vibrations, speed and electricity, *Telepathy* is an environment created for the purpose of channeling energy inwardly, for slowing down and shutting out all other sound aside from the voice and the mind of the self. It is a space for the individual, sheltered within a reverberant environment, and a dazzling, high-chroma, monolithic object that houses a non-objective purpose and potential for experience.

Performance Space acknowledge the continued support of the Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy, an initiative of the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body and the New South Wales Government through ArtsNSW in making these commissioned works possible. Haines and Hinterding would like to acknowledge the skill of technician Steven Hamper in realising the structural integrity of the chamber.

Bec Dean  
Associate Director  
Performance Space

# ESCAPING INFLUENCE: RITUAL

In a ritual space, shoes off, you pass through the first threshold into the gallery space. Three small televisions are on the floor—with little videos that nudge your consciousness at its fringes. They display low res, fragmented images of a cottage on the site of Walter De Maria's *Lightning Field*, in the New Mexico desert. At first, however, they are probably passed by. There is a large, bright yellow triangular prism. You pass through the second threshold, into the prism. The door is closed behind you. The chamber is anechoic, blocking sound and absorbing all resonance. Just as significantly in these days of iPhones and Blackberries, it blocks electromagnetic radiation. Mobiles won't pick up a signal. Your body is still, "unradiated" for the first time in ages. The space is uninterrupted by information. It's a hot sweatbox—a directly physical space—at the same time as a highly technical, and self-consciously architectural space. Hundreds of foam cones absorb sound and turn it into heat, allowing for an impossible return "home": to a space of recovery, to one's body, to every tiny sensation or impulse, to sounds and sensations, thoughts and feelings neither diluted nor distracted by an outside signal, communication, or even somewhere else to go.

Yet the work is as open as it is closed. Who knows what people do, feel or think, there or afterwards? The effect can be surprisingly subtle, perhaps something like—but not quite—the sacred. There is certainly a questioning—as open as it is specific for each person—of what influences us, and how fundamentally. You perhaps re-emerge hesitantly from the chamber into the world. Or, is it that you return from the world, back into the imaginary experience of world that we take for everyday life? In fact, the two bleed into each other in the larger space, which now seems transformed. You are attuned to every subtlety in perception and structure.

For David Haines and Joyce Hinterding, *Telepathy* is a very different work. It blocks energy where their other works gather it. They feel it's more introverted, although this blockage also seems directly political in that it questions the constitution of subjective experience by influence.

## FALLING TO EARTH

Although not obvious at first, *Telepathy* is also in many ways a personal work. Hinterding and Haines have been concerned with architecture—with a questioning of structure—as never before during the past few years. For one thing, they have recently designed and built their own home in the Blue Mountains. The floor is wired as a house-sized radio antenna. So *Telepathy* is part of an ongoing exploration of the feeling/structure of "home", the reverse polarity of the artists' own home's openness to the electromagnetic.

*Telepathy* is also structured around a series of swerves towards/away from the artists' influences. The ritual references the important of Carlos Castaneda for Hinterding, and a stay at De Maria's *Lightning Field* was crucial to her. The chamber itself arose from Haines' interest in Roeg's David Bowie film, *The Man Who Fell to Earth*, specifically a scene you see on the cover of Bowie's album *Station to Station*—Bowie the alien passing a threshold into an anechoic chamber. Then there are the references to Nauman's colour, ritual, and uncompromising exploration of the body, or to the difficulty minimalism faces in a world of maximum connection, activity, productivity, mobility. In *Telepathy*, minimalism has become combative. It requires a structure "that stops things", one built "like a tank", as Haines puts it. There is the gesture towards Cage's famous experience in an anechoic chamber, towards Louise Bourgeois' *Red Room*, or Ron Robertson-Swann's *Vault*. Hinterding and Haines say that "hauntings of influence" crept up on them spontaneously during the planning and construction of the work. However, one wonder exactly who is haunting whom. Hinterding and Haines seem to inhabit all these influences and rewire them from the inside. The bright yellow of the prism, for example, seems tamed by the experience of the chamber within it.

## UNDOING THE UNCANNY

*Telepathy*, then, undoes influence in several directions as intensely as it acknowledges it. In doing so, it brings you to a place that feels like the inner heart of "home". Yet this is not an easy place to be. "Home" here also feels uncanny—"un-homelike". It involves a return of the repressed, of origins as disruptive and disturbing within the familiar—that is, as upending a clear sense of my body, this space, the supposed safety of enclosure. The work demands courage, but with this promises much.

Here we can turn to artist and analyst Bracha Ettinger's rewriting of the Oedipal, or, we might say more generally the "anxiety of influence". Ettinger insists that the uncanny can be as much about discovering repressed pleasure as repressed anxiety (*The Matrixial Borderspace*, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2006). The inside of the yellow prism is womb-like after all, insistently, almost aggressively so. Although at the same time, in true *Man Who Fell to Earth* style, its hundreds of foam tentacles seem almost polysexual. If everyday, mediated experience is dominated by imaginaries that foster anxiety, in *Telepathy* your body, your "own" thoughts, begin to step outside of this. It feels a little uneasy at first, to the point that even standing still feels awkward. Yet in the prism there are hints of returning pleasures—of "subtle energies" as Hinterding puts it. These can only re-emerge now that the bombardment of the senses, of the imaginary, and also of the more refined energetics of the body has been subdued.

To block can be to re-energise. *Telepathy* undoes the anxiety of influence in part because it undoes much of what French thinker Bernard Stiegler sees as the profound intervention of media in the fundamental syntheses of experience. *Telepathy's* cutting off from media flows allows for structuring of experience that begins with terminus—an end before you've started. You will have to start over again, more interestingly, even in the way little habits of body and movement are organized in heavily mediated cultures. Here there is life in non-transmission, non-communication, in building as a medium that intensifies experience via a structure of subtraction.

## STRUCTURE ITSELF

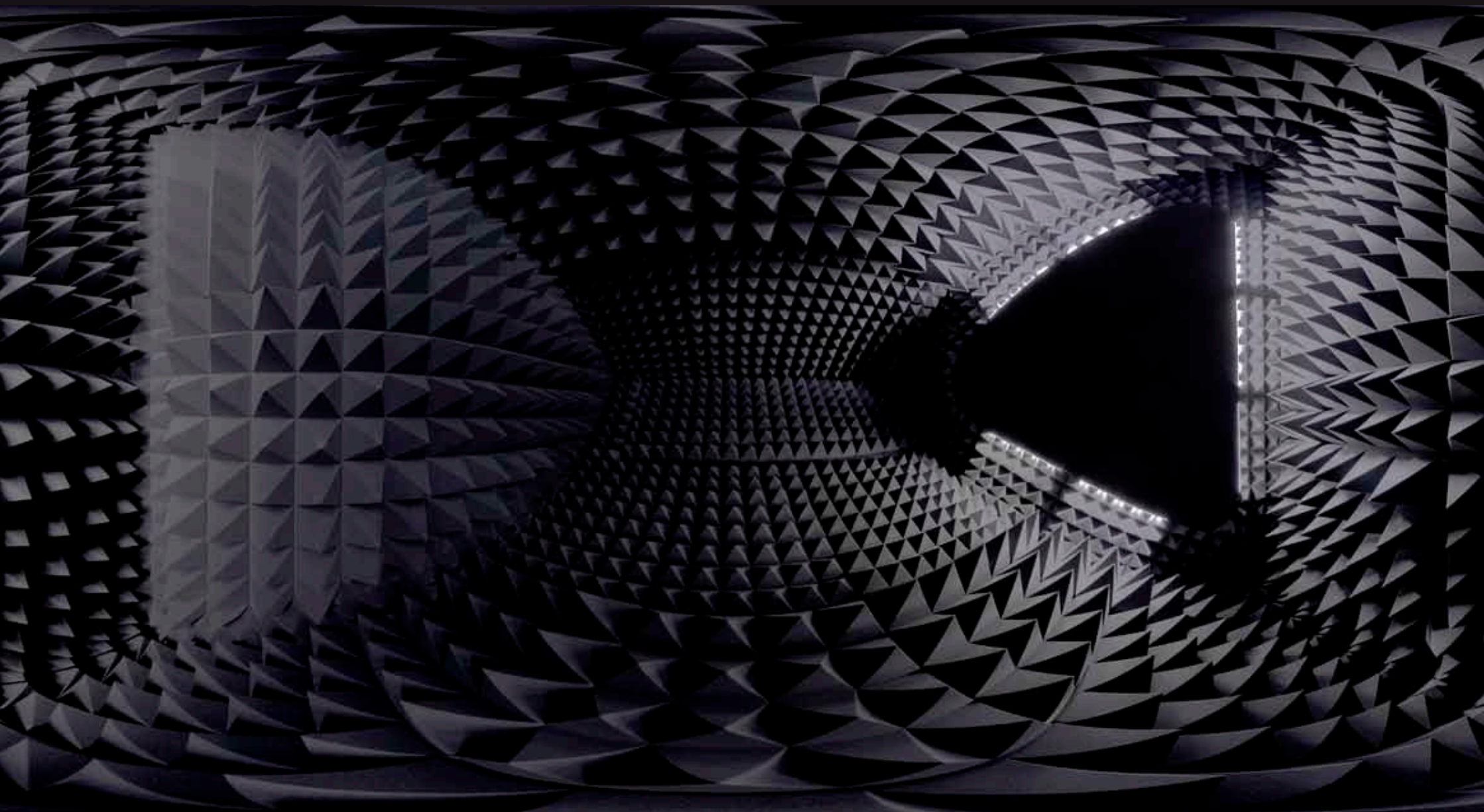
*Telepathy*—as sculpture—is finally an interrogation of structure itself, of the literal if complex relations between building and experience, of organization in the most profound and intimate of senses.

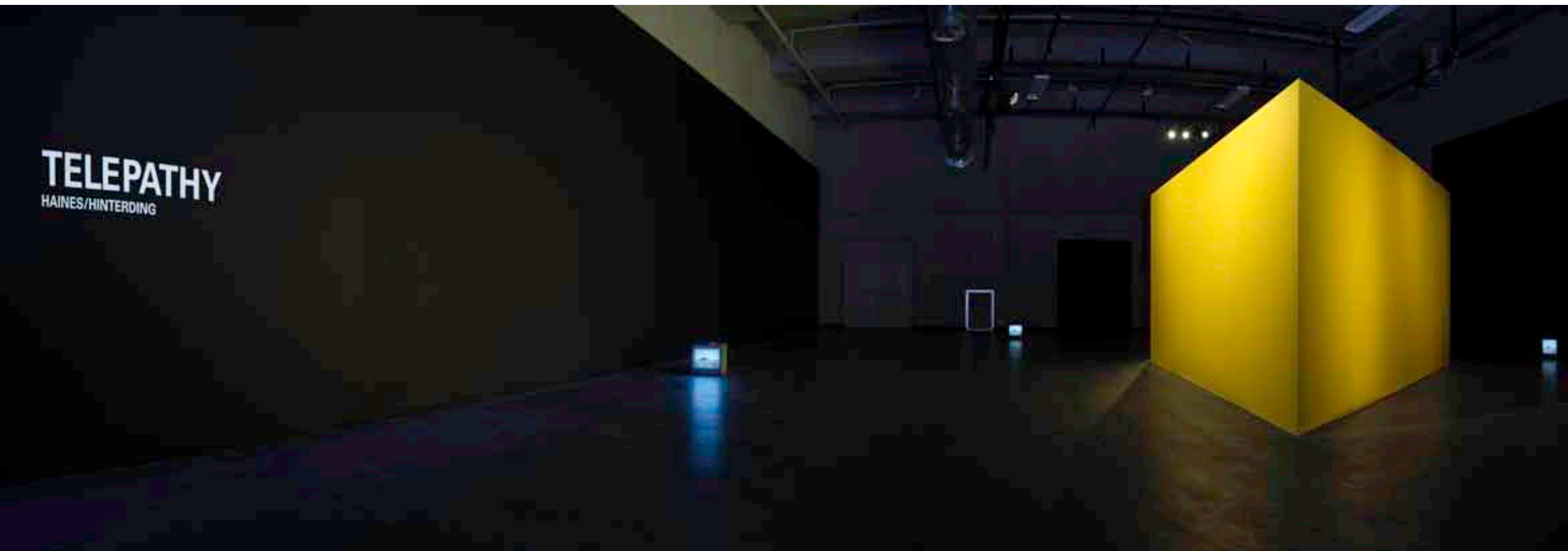
Freud's description of the uncanny—and let's be clear, Haines and Hinterding are resolutely anti-Oedipal—accounts for an ambivalence within the foundations of "home" that could apply to any consideration of structure. The uncanny arises from within that which seems most familiar, because of the return of the repressed of "castration" upon which the bringing into being of the familiar is based. We can reframe this less Oedipally. "Home" can draw attention to one's lack of power within the organization or structure of the world, even and especially where one dwells. At home (in the middle of the night perhaps), unsettling feelings can arise. One sees more clearly that one is subject to powerful influences, deep within experience, that always come from elsewhere. In response, *Telepathy's* intense questioning of home—of the relations between structure, influence and potential—marks the return of the power of the body, of its subtler energies. To experience *Telepathy* is to renew the experience of a different organization of thought, one found not only in dreams, but in a courageous rethinking of material structure itself as the basis for dreaming differently.

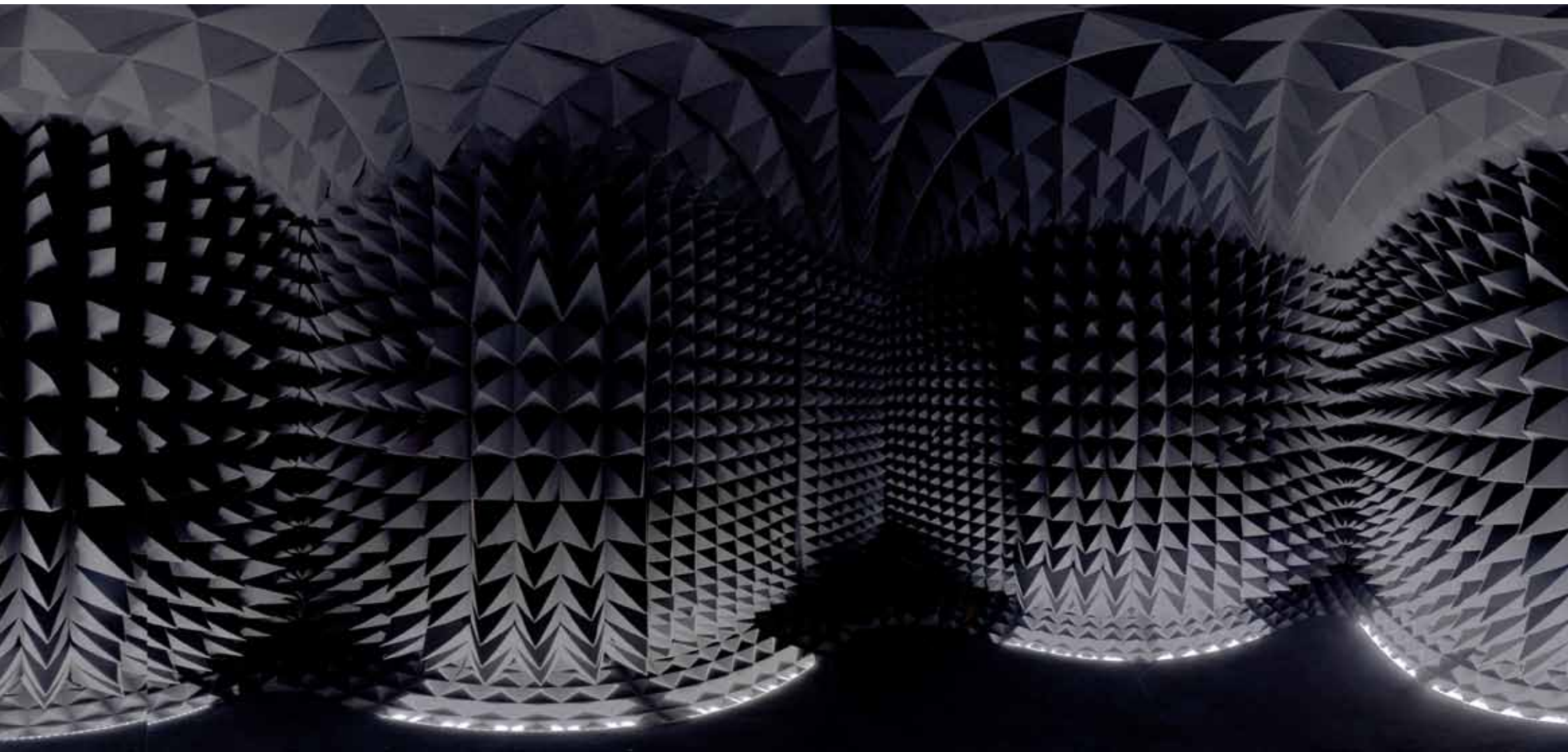
It is only by stripping things back as far as *Telepathy* that we are forced to confront our own powers of reorganisation, the other powers with which they interact, and the way in which both mutually draw upon each other. This is the charm, and the fear, of constructing a space of silence and stillness, one in which to feel the chatter of the body as it communicates with itself, or with the cosmos via something like *Telepathy*.

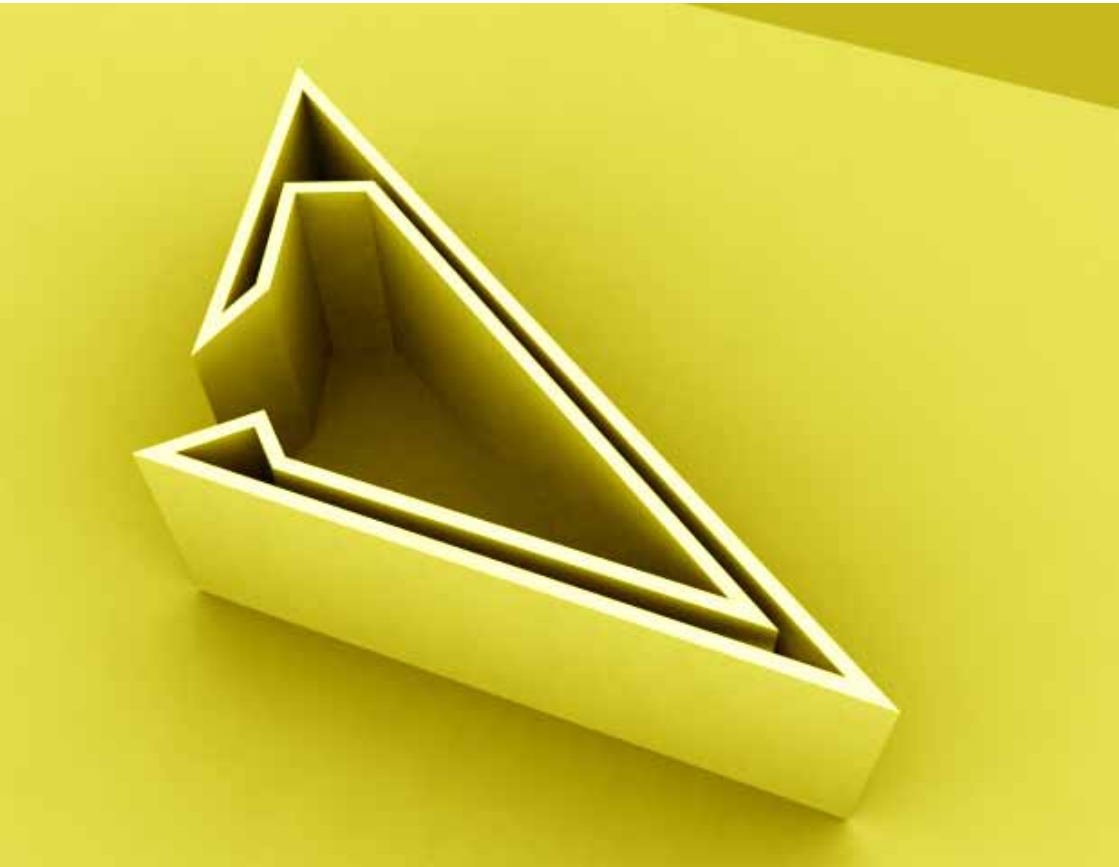
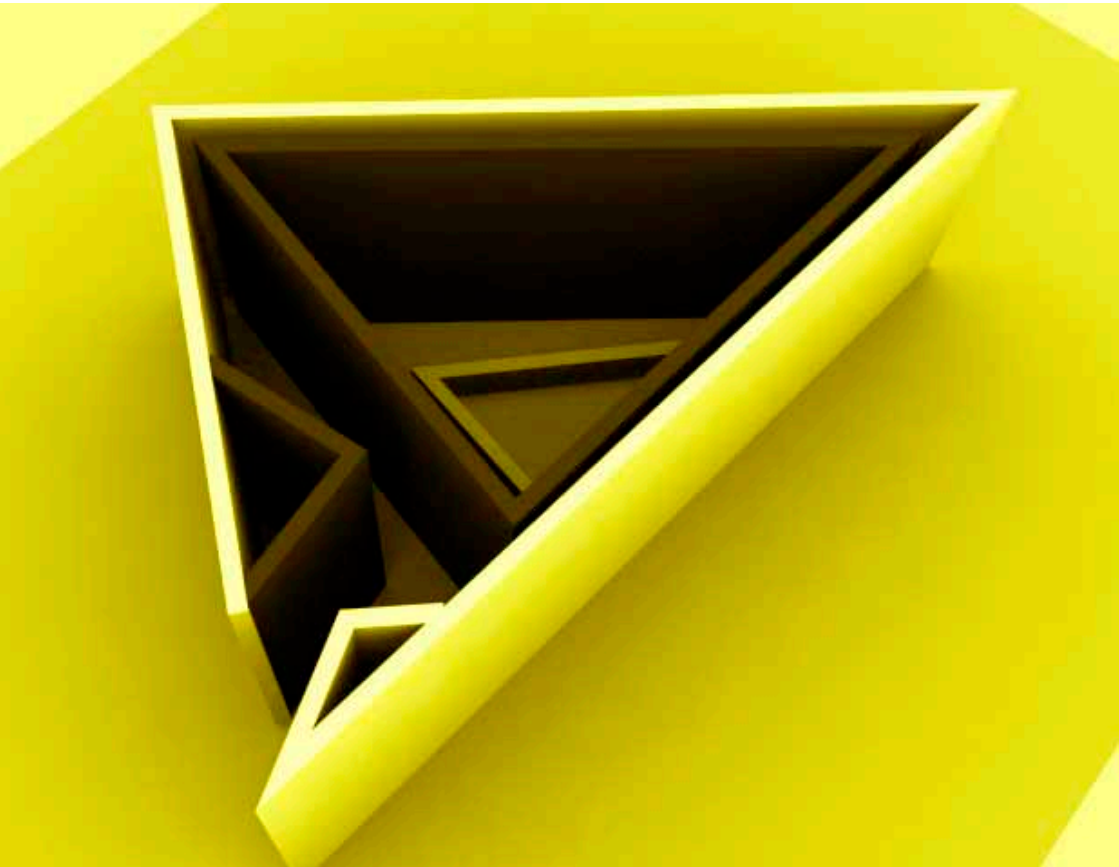
Andrew Murphie











## BIOGRAPHIES

David Haines and Joyce Hinterding live and work in the Blue Mountains, NSW Australia and work both collaboratively and independently. Their collaborative work has produced large scale immersive video and sound works that explore the tension between the fictive and the phenomenal. These works incorporate Joyce's investigations into energetic forces and David's concern with the intersection of hallucination and landscape. Their specialisations allow for the production of assemblage style works that explore the possibilities for physical and virtual dynamics to coexist in the gallery space.

Most recently their collaborative work *EarthStar* received an Award of Distinction from *Prix Ars Electronica* (2009), *Linz Austria in the Hybrid Art category*. Their recent exhibitions include; *Royal Institute Australia, Science Exchange Adelaide* (2009), *Energy, ART+COMMUNICATION 2009 XI International festival for new media culture 2009 Riga, Latvia, The Dwelling* curated by Juliana Engeberg at *ACCA Melbourne* (2009), *Modern Ruin, GOMA Queensland Art Gallery* (2008), *The Premier of Queensland Inaugural New Media Art Award, GOMA Queensland Art Gallery* (2008). *Telepathy, Performance Space Sydney*(2008), *Turn and Widen, The 5th Seoul International Media Art Biennale, Seoul Korea* (2008), *Superlight, The 2nd Biennial 01SJ Art on the edge, San Jose Museum Art, California, USA, (2008), (in)visible sounds, Montevideo, The Dutch Institute for Time based Art, Netherlands* (2007), *V2 Zone, Act interact, The Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei, Taiwan* (2007). *ReSearch, The Sendai MediaTech in Sendai, Japan* (2006), *Waves (Electromagnetic Waves as medium for Art), Riga, Latvia* (2006), *They were the Australian National representatives at the 26th Bienal de Sao Paulo, Brazil* (2004) and exhibited in *Liquid sea, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney* (2003); *MAAP - Multimedia Art Asia Pacific, Art Museum of China, Millennium Monument, Beijing* (2002); *st@rt up, new interactive media, Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa* (2002); *Space*

*odyssey: sensation and immersion, Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne and Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney* (2002-01 and *The Levitation Grounds, Artspace, Sydney* (2000).

David Haines' selected individual exhibitions include: *Illume: Projections after dark, Cambelltown Regional Gallery* (2009) "*Tokyo-Floating Worlds*", *Plimsoll gallery, Hobart Tasmania Australia* (2007), *Who's afraid of the Big Bad wolf, Te tui centre for the Arts, New Zealand* (2007), *The irrational, Scott Donovan Gallery Sydney* (2005), *Contemporary Projects VI, Contemporary Art Centre South Australia* (2005), *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art* (2004), *Biennale of Sydney, (the world may be) fantastic, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney* (2002), *Atomic, The Blue Oyster Gallery, Dunedin, New Zealand* (2000), *Re-worked, The Film Centre, Wellington, New Zealand* (1999), *Avatar, The Physics Room, Christchurch, New Zealand* (1998), *Medievalism: musical & non musical kingdoms, Artspace, Sydney* (1997); *Eccentric orbit, Museum of Modern Art, New York* (1995); *Words became stars, Z.A. Moca Contemporary Art Foundation, Shinjuku, Japan* (1995); *SOUNDWATCH94, Artspace, Auckland, New Zealand* (1994); and *VIDEOPOSITIVE93, Tate Gallery, Liverpool, England* (1993). David's live solo audio performances include, *SCARPA Auckland NZ* (2004), *Tonic, NYC, USA 2004, Sigmaeditions European Tours in (1999 & 2000) including , Gebaude9 Koln, Germany, Klub Dodo Rotterdam, Holland.*

Joyce Hinterding's selected individual exhibitions include: *Aura, Breenspace Sydney* (2009), "*Aeriology*", *AV festival, Reg Vardy Gallery, Sunderland, England, (2008), Biennale of Sydney, (the world may be) fantastic, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney* (2002), *Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art, Converge: where art and science meet* (2002); *The 7 Istanbul Biennial, Yerebetan Cistern, Istanbul, Turkey, (2001), Aeriology, V2 Institute for Unstable Media, Rotterdam, the Netherlands* (1998). (2001), *Aeriology, V2 Institute for Unstable Media, Rotterdam, the Netherlands* (1998), *Voltage, The Physics Room, Christchurch, New Zealand, I-TONE aeriology, Artspace Sydney*

(1997), *Ich Phoenix, Ein Kunstereignis, Gasometer, Oberhausen, Germany* (1996), *Sound in space: Australian sound art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney* (1995), *Australian sound art meridian, Xebec Hall, Kobe, Japan* (1993); and *Biennale of Sydney, The Boundary Rider, Sydney* (1992). Joyce's live solo audio performances include, *The NowNow* (2008) *Sound and Electricity, The Performance Space* (2006), *Audiotheque, The night air, ABC radio national* (2005), *Tonic, NYC, USA 2004* and the *What is music Festival, Opera House Sydney* (2002)

They are represented by Breenspace:  
[www.breenspace.com](http://www.breenspace.com)

Their sound work is released by sigmaeditions and Antiopic and is available from Antiopic:  
[www.antiopic.com](http://www.antiopic.com)  
[www.sunvalleyresearch.net](http://www.sunvalleyresearch.net)



Performance Space is an international contemporary arts centre based in Sydney. It is a hub for artists and audiences committed to research and development, to imagining new possibilities for groundbreaking work across media and pushing the limits of contemporary arts practice. Working with independent artists, companies and peer organizations nationally and internationally, Performance Space presents a curated program of installation, performance, live art and new media events and facilitates forums, training opportunities, laboratories and residencies.

Performance Space is supported by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, and initiative of the Australian State and Territory governments, the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body and the New South Wales Government through ArtsNSW.

Performance Space is a member of the Contemporary Art Organisations (Australia) network [www.caos.org.au](http://www.caos.org.au)

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Produced for the installation *Telepathy* at Performance Space 25 October–29 November 2008

#### **Image Credits**

Michael Myers: Cover, pages 6–11, 16  
Garth Knight: Pages 5, inside cover and back cover  
Haines + Hinterding: Pages 12–13

#### **The Artists would like to Acknowledge**

Bec Dean, Sally Breen, Acoustica–Philippe Doneux, Steven Hamper, Michael Myers, Andrew Murphie, Brad Buckley, Sydney College of the Arts and all at the Performance Space.

