

Immersion and Emergence

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Primary Supervisor: Monique Redmond



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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of another degree or diploma or a university or institution of higher learning.

Signed

8 October 2013

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisors Monique Redmond and Fiona Amundsen for their inspiration, guidance and support. I would also like to acknowledge the academic team at the school of visual arts as well as the entire visual arts studio whose insights, help, peer support and artistic stimulation has been unstinting, and to whom this project owes a debt of gratitude. This work could not have been undertaken without the support of my partner Paul Hewlett and my beautiful children Theo, Rousseau and Zarina.

Abstract

Immersion and Emergence

This project explores the potential of the art encounter and how it can connect the viewer to interior feelings and imaginative associations to form a visceral, psychologically compelling experience. It experiments with a multi-sensory approach using photography, moving image and installation to investigate seeing as experience rather than solely observation. The investigation draws on work made from the artist's immersive encounters with bodies of water. This research is theoretically framed via the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari in particular their notions of 'becoming', 'smooth space' and 'affects'. Its central question asks if and how an imaginative transformation occurs as a result of an art encounter so as to lose the self – even for a moment – to open up new possibilities around a potential heightened awareness of the fluidity of life.

Introduction

The primary concern of this project is to investigate the idea of art as an encounter comprising a critical perspective of an immersive situation within which the viewer experiences multiple sensations through different materials, processes and realities, such as still and moving images, as well as sound, objects and architectural space. As a way of creating these immersive environments, the project seeks to create ambiguous spatial relationships between the viewer and the work, to engender a bodily affect whereby the viewer becomes a perceiving subject within a temporal and spatial environment. Throughout this exegesis persons encountering the work are referred to as 'the viewer', 'spectator' and 'audience'. However, the term 'the viewer' is to be considered not simply as the term implies, but as a 'perceiving body' or an active participant of the experience.

As a philosophical context, this exegesis explores Deleuze's notions of 'becoming', 'smooth space', 'plane of immanence' and 'affects', including 'haptic sensing'. This project explores the impact of these ideas on the art encounter, referencing Deleuzian notions that Colebrook encapsulates thus: 'art as an event within this plane of change through which the world, in that we make art about, is transformed and effected through it's happening, and the art is transformed through our perception of the world'. (Colebrook, 2002, p.52). More specifically, this project explores how an art encounter can engage the viewer's sensory experience more empathetically to potentially reach a place free from preconceptions, in order to reveal the body in space in new ways. As Colebrook explains, in discussing Deleuze, 'to become is to become other', or 'becoming is a direct connection, where the self that contemplates is nothing other than the singularities it perceives.' (Colebrook, 2002, p.155). The aim is to explore this philosophical notion of 'becoming' as a mode of sensation.

This exegesis discusses the exploration and investigation undertaken through a practice-based research. Before embarking on a discussion of the project, this exegesis presents a selection of photographic work undertaken throughout the three years of this Masters. This presentational

structure is to allow the reader to experience the work before reading about its methods and theory, in other words before being forced to thought. This has been done to ensure consistency with the project's objectives.

The exegesis then discusses the motivation and rationale for using bodies of water as a basis for the investigation. It then discusses a number of works to explore how Deleuze's ideas, as well as, other writers and artists, have shaped the work.

Photography Gallery



Figure 1 **Cathy Carter** Liquid Green # 1 2011 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm
400mm x 400mm



Figure 2 **Cathy Carter** Liquid Green # 2 2011 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm
400mm x 400mm



Figure 3 **Cathy Carter** Liquid Green # 3 2011 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm
400mm x 400mm



Figure 4 **Cathy Carter** Liquid Green # 4 2011 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm
400mm x 400mm



Figure 5 **Cathy Carter** *Adrift* 2011 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 1000mm x 1000mm x 2

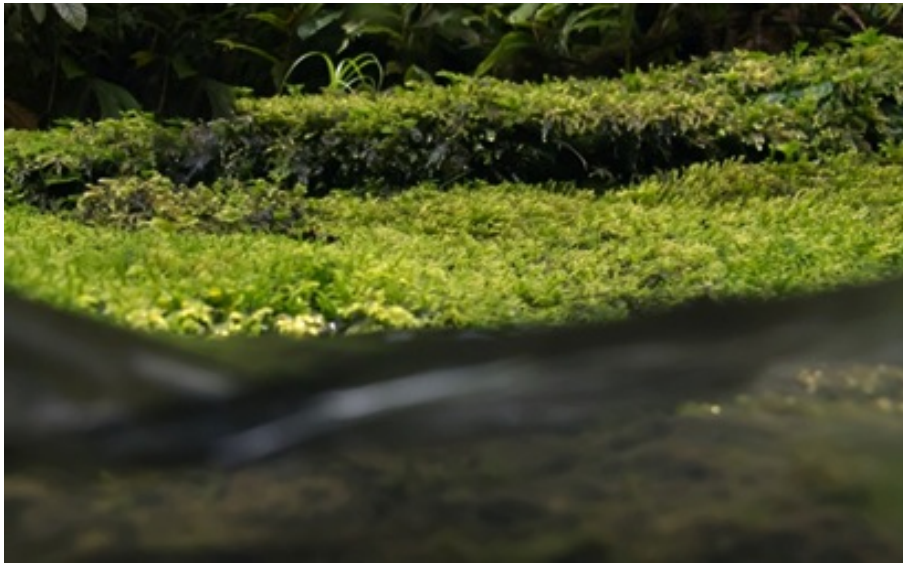


Figure 6 **Cathy Carter** *Merging Water # 1* 2011 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 400mm x 400mm x 2



Figure 7 **Cathy Carter** *Merging Water # 2* 2011 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhl Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 8 **Cathy Carter** *Immersion and Emergence # 1* 2011 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD. 450mm x 450mm



Figure 9 **Cathy Carter** *Immersion and Emergence # 2* 2011 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD. 450mm x 450mm



Figure 10 **Cathy Carter** *Immersion and Emergence # 3* 2011 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD. 750mm x 750mm



Figure 11 **Cathy Carter** *Immersion and Emergence # 4* 2011 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD 450mm x 450mm



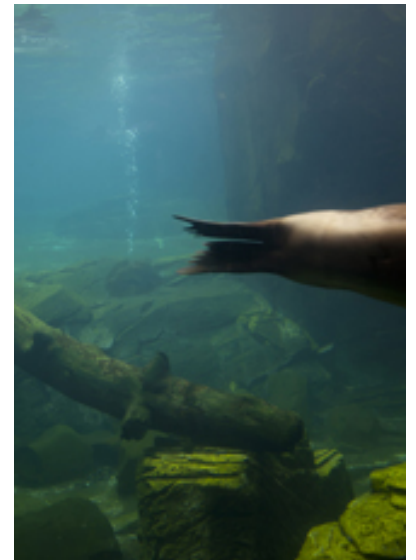
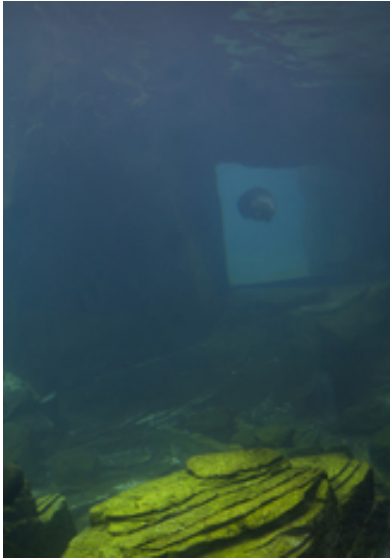
Figure 12 **Cathy Carter** *Immersion and Emergence # 5* 2011 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD 750mm x 750mm



Figure 13 **Cathy Carter** *Immersion and Emergence # 6* 2011 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD 855mm x 855mm



Figure 14 **Cathy Carter** *Immersion and Emergence # 7* 2011 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD 855mm x 855mm



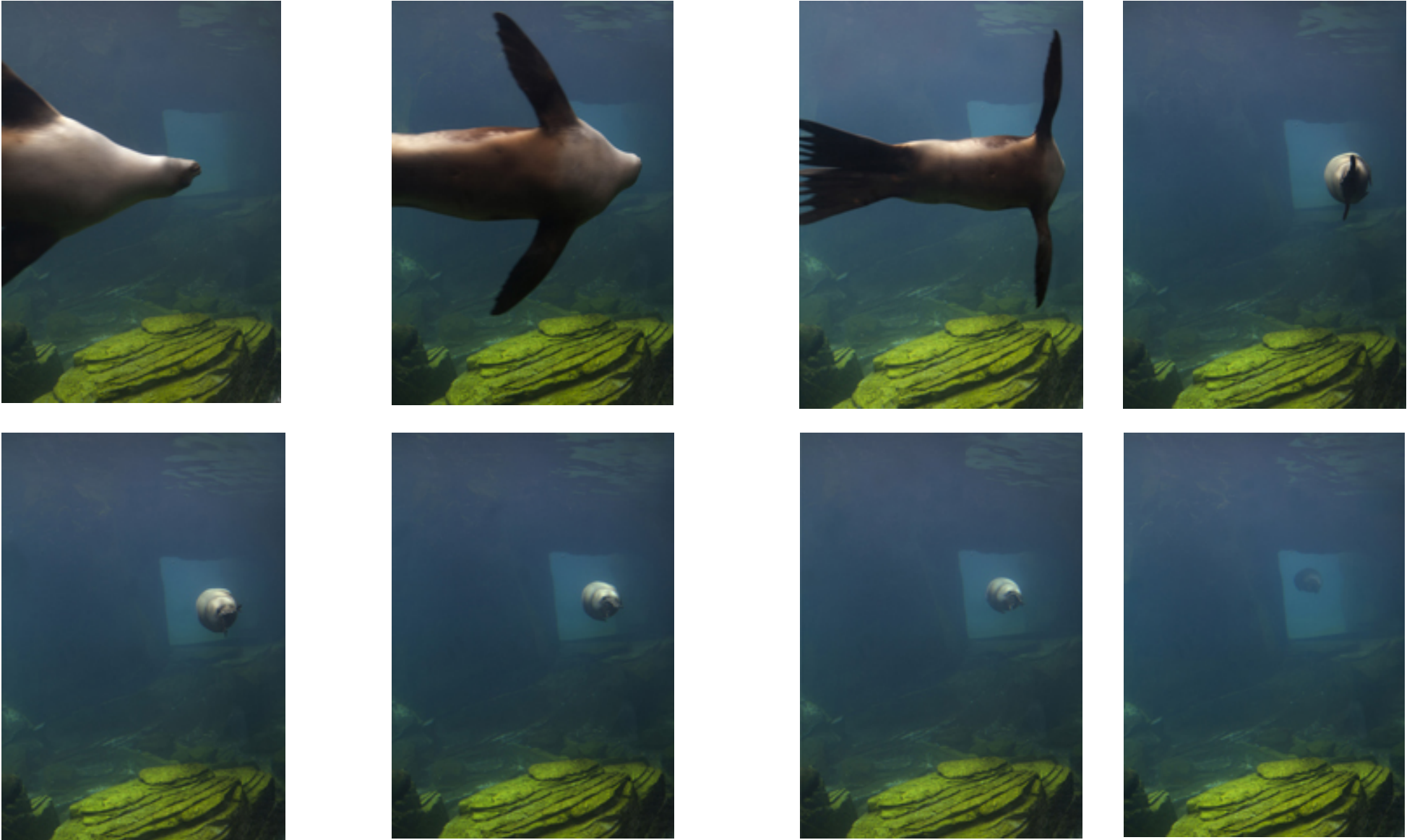


Figure 15 **Cathy Carter** *Line of Flight* 2012 Light projection, 15 still photos looped in same way the sealion loops the aquarium. Sea Lion Statistics : Length 2.3 metres , Weight: 270 kilograms, Speed : 40 kilometres per hour, Maximum time of held breath: 10 minutes



Figure 16 **Cathy Carter** *Liquid Time # 1* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 17 **Cathy Carter** *Liquid Time # 2* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 18 **Cathy Carter** *Liquid Time #3* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 19 **Cathy Carter** *Liquid Time #4* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 20 **Cathy Carter** *Liquid Time #5* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 21 **Cathy Carter** *Liquid Time #6* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 22 **Cathy Carter** *Waterways # 1* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 23 **Cathy Carter** *Waterways # 2* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 24 **Cathy Carter** *Waterways # 3* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 25 **Cathy Carter** *Fluid Fields # 1* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 26 **Cathy Carter** *Fluid Fields # 2* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm

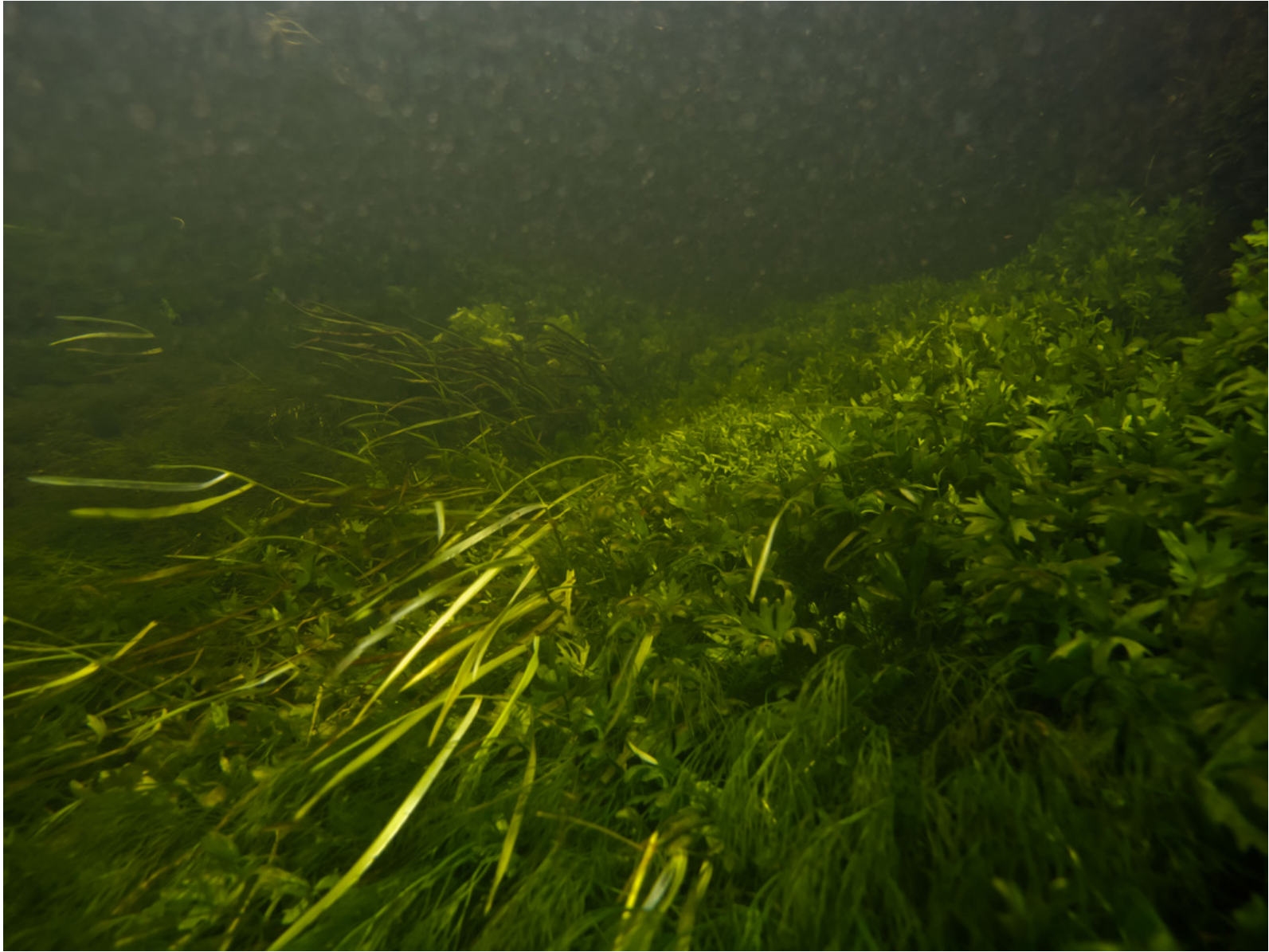


Figure 27 **Cathy Carter** *Fluid Fields # 3* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 28 **Cathy Carter** *Fluid Fields # 4* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 29 **Cathy Carter** *Zone of immanence # 1* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 30 **Cathy Carter** *Zone of immanence # 2* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 31 **Cathy Carter** *Zone of immanence #3* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 32 **Cathy Carter** *Zone of immanence #4* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 33 **Cathy Carter** *Zone of immanence #5* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 34 **Cathy Carter** *Zone of immanence #6* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm

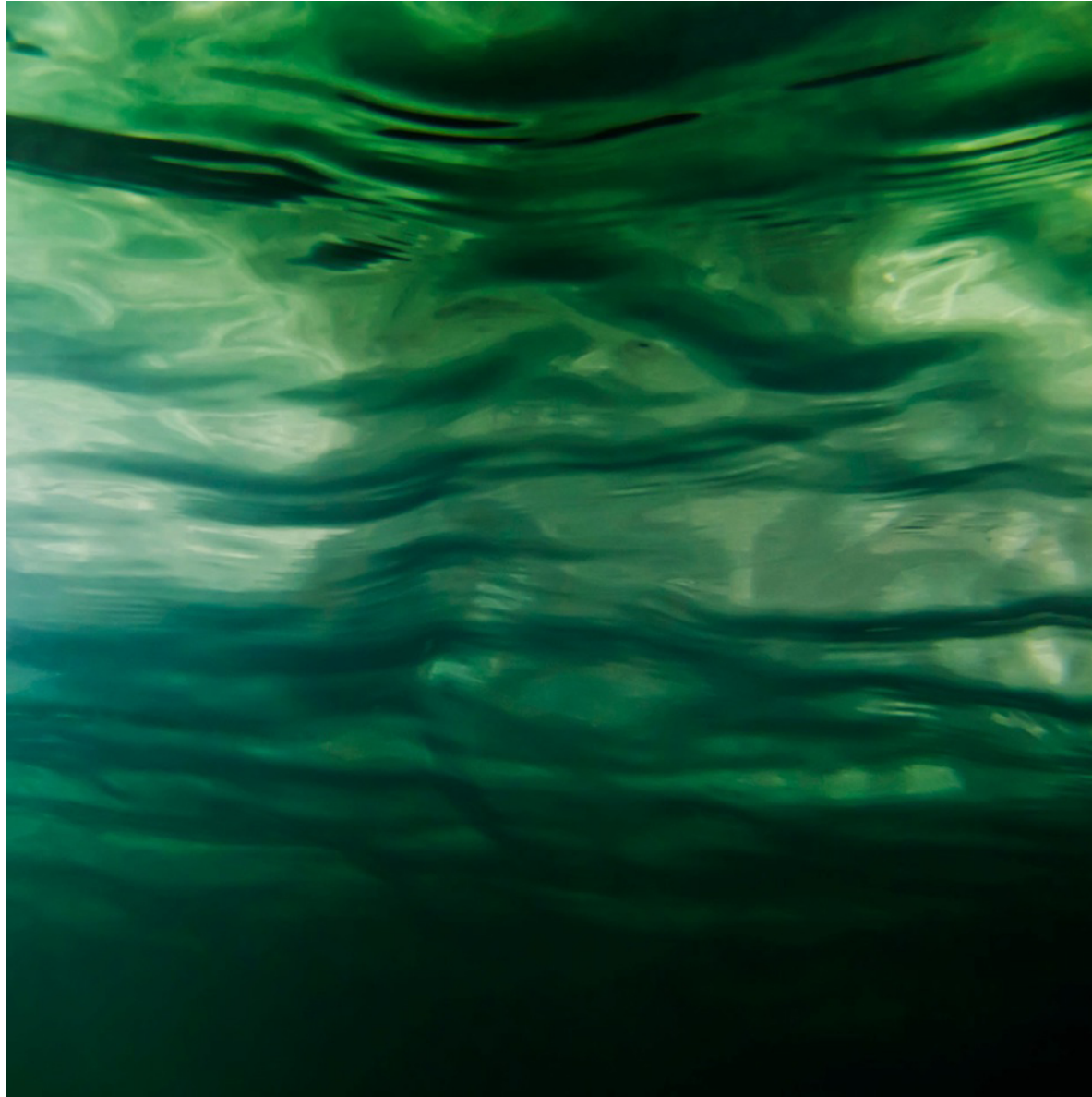


Figure 35 **Cathy Carter** *Imminence #1* 2013 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD 385mm x 385mm



Figure 36 **Cathy Carter** *Imminence # 2* 2013 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD 385mm x 385mm



Figure 37 **Cathy Carter** *Imminence # 3* 2013 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD 385mm
73385mm

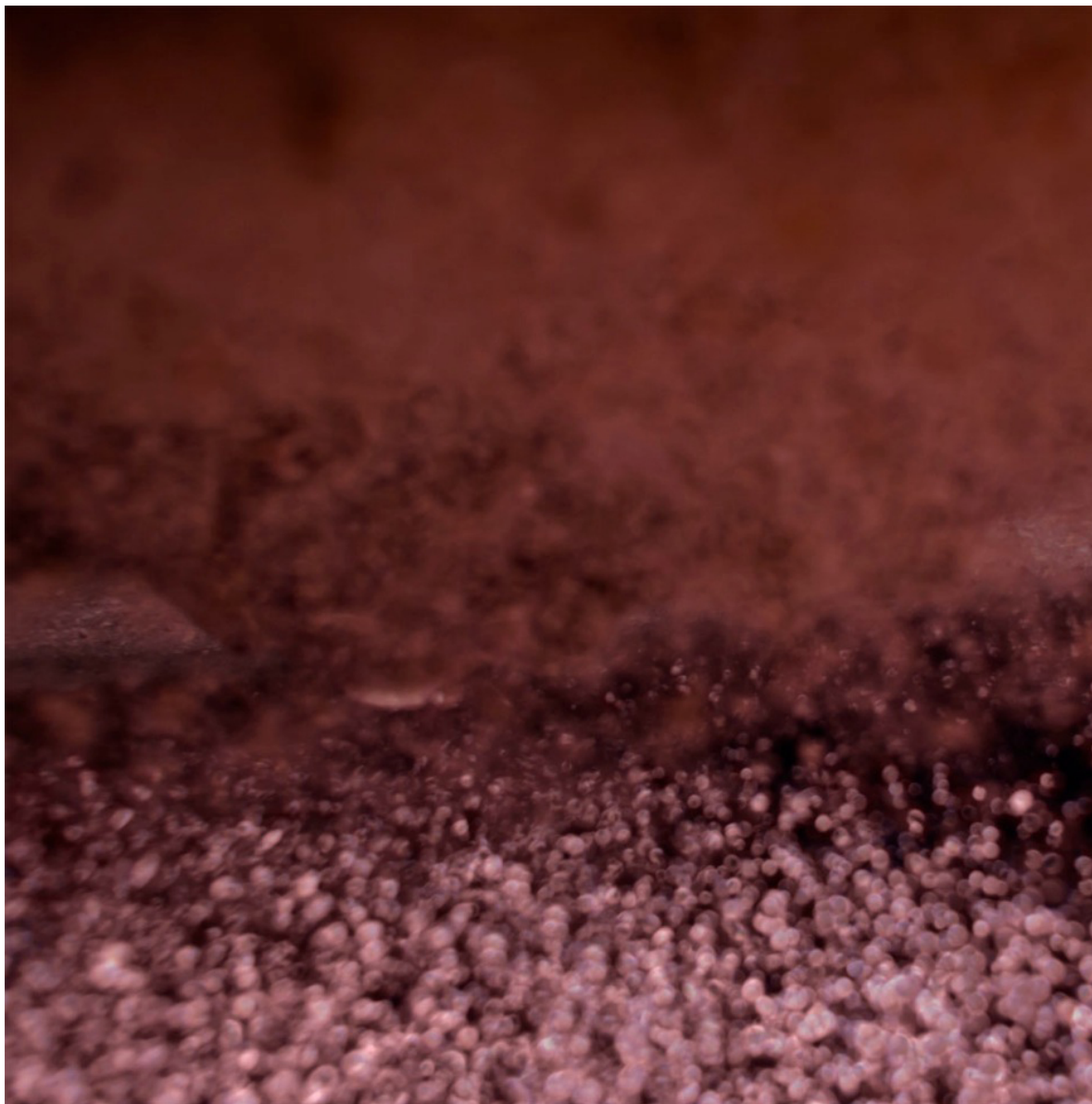


Figure 38 **Cathy Carter** *Imminence # 4* 2013 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD 735mm x 735mm



Figure 39 **Cathy Carter** *Imminence # 5* 2013 Pigment ink on backlit film, Light Box OD 385mm x 385mm x 2

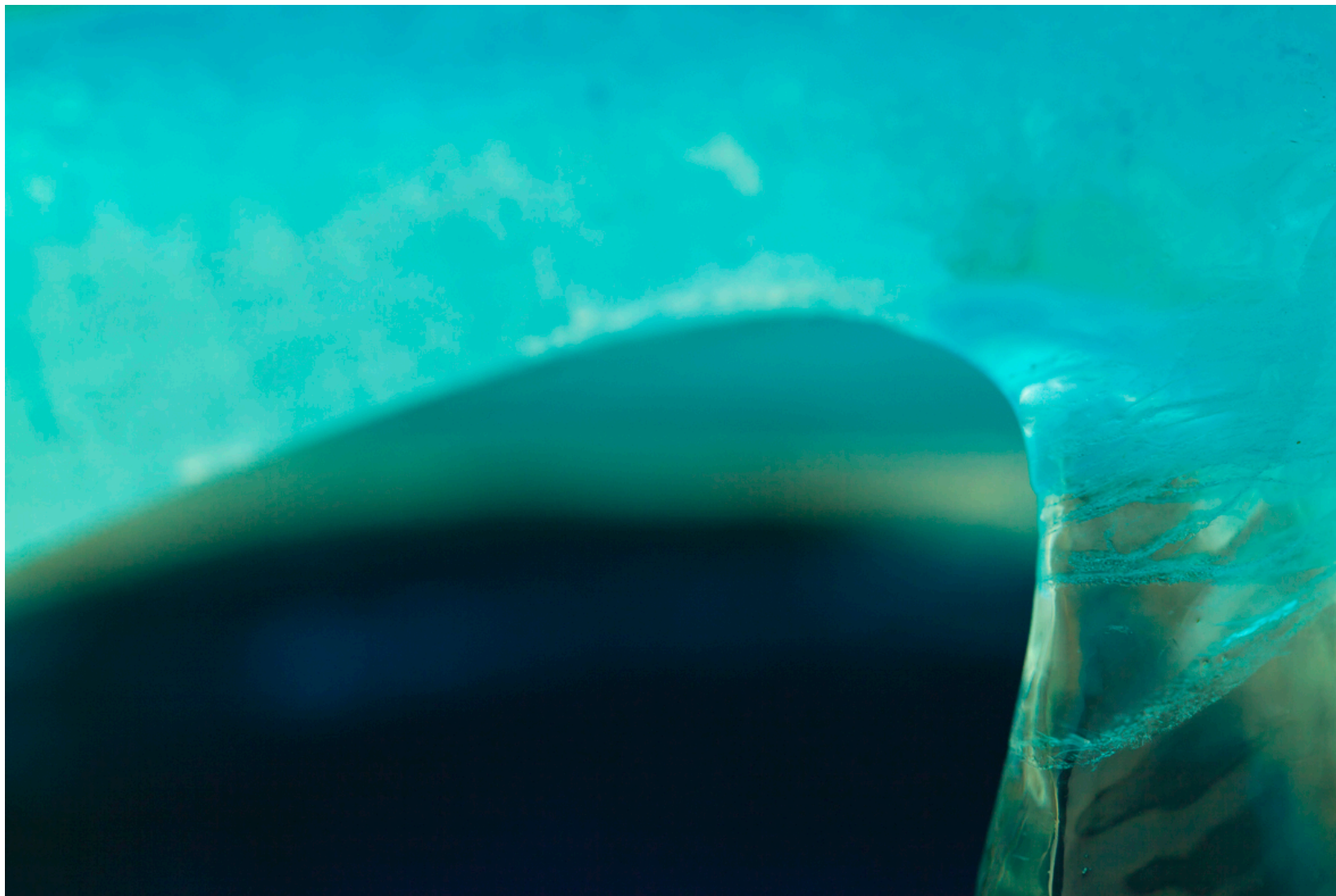


Figure 40 **Cathy Carter** *Shifting Encounter # 1* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm

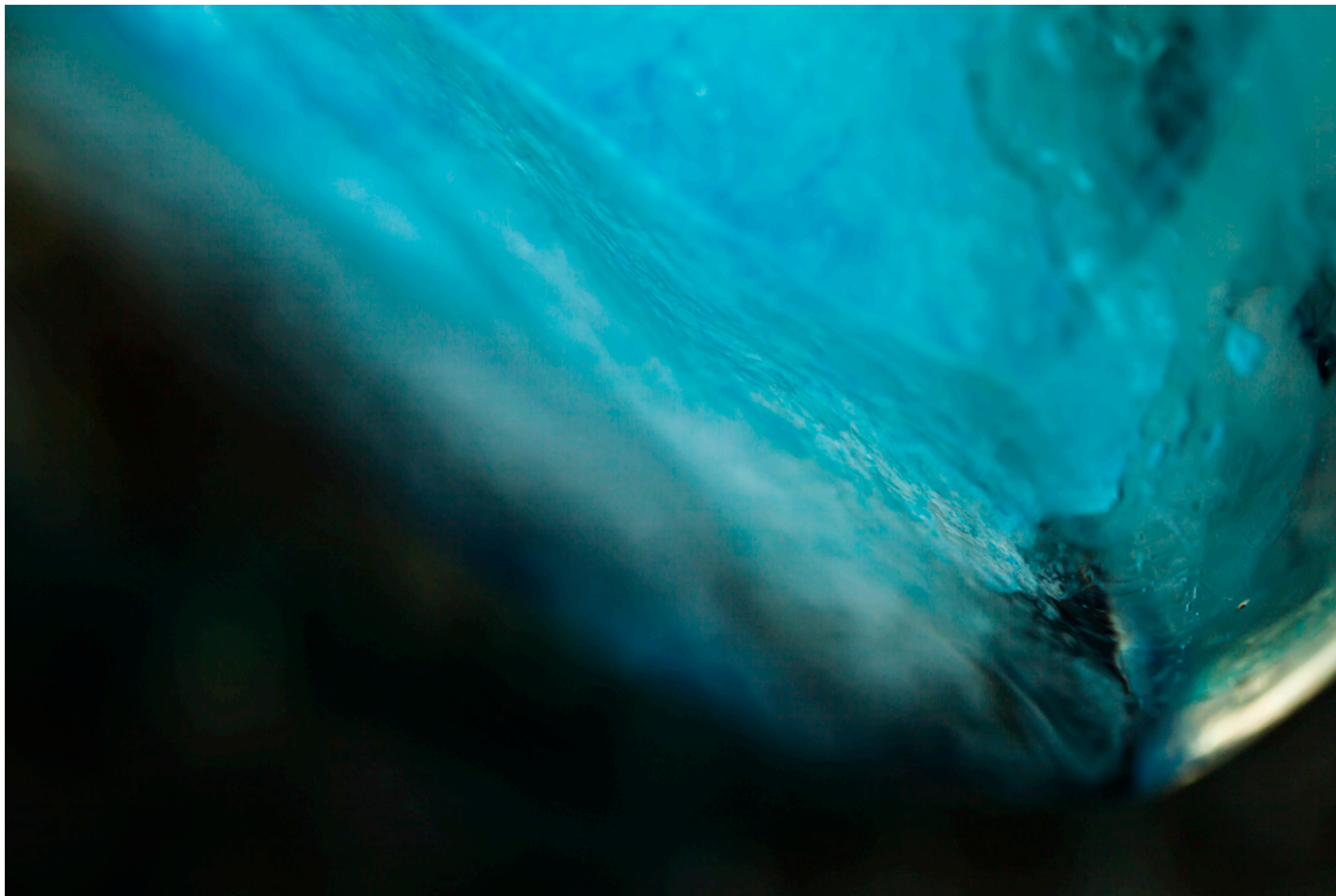


Figure 41 **Cathy Carter** *Shifting Encounter # 2* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 42 **Cathy Carter** *Shifting Encounter # 3* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 43 **Cathy Carter** *Shifting Encounter # 4* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 940mm



Figure 44 **Cathy Carter** *Shifting Encounter # 5* 2012 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 940mm x 705mm

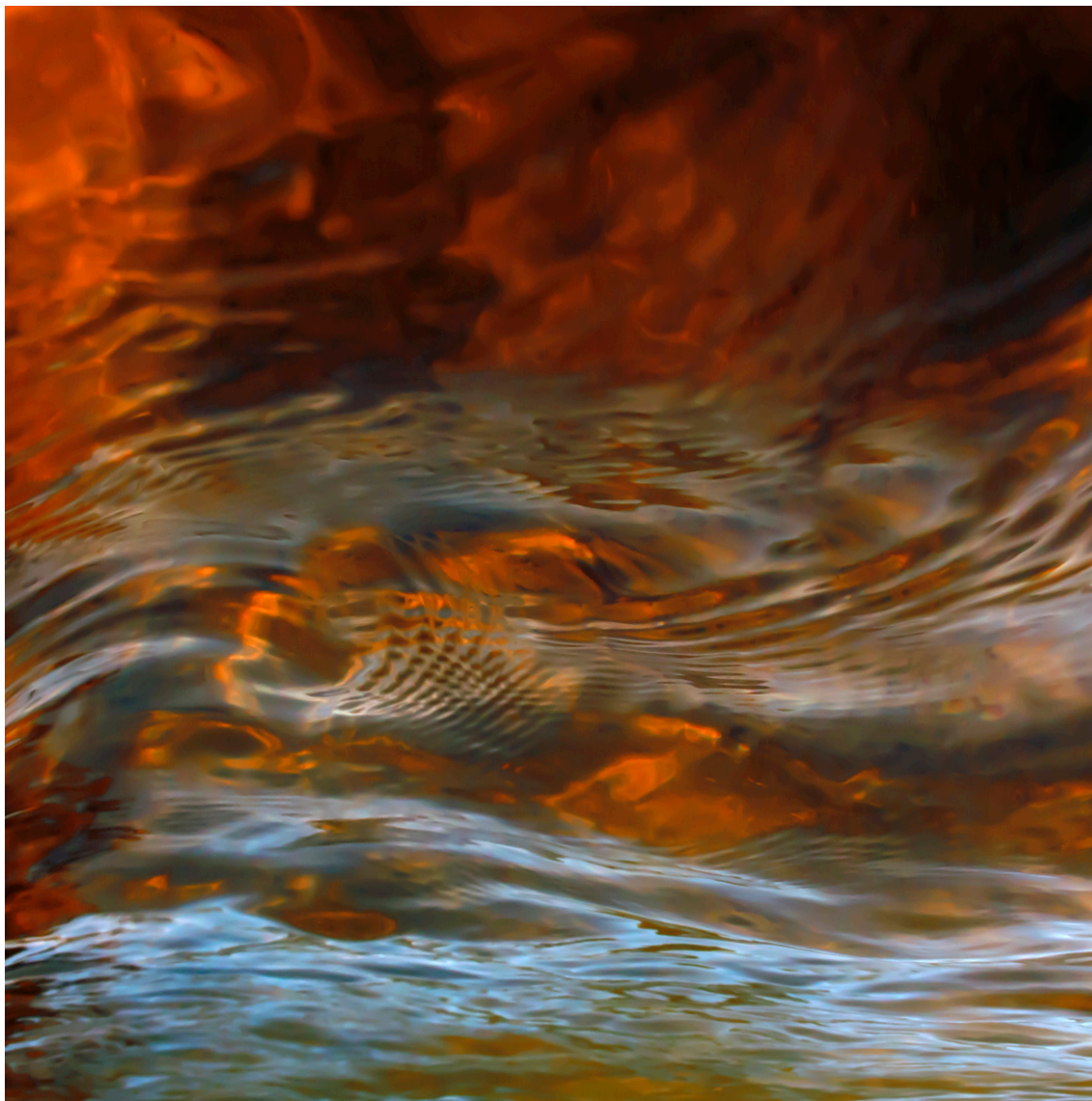


Figure 45 **Cathy Carter** Morphing Luminance # 1 2013 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 705mm



Figure 46 **Cathy Carter** Morphing Luminance # 2 2013 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 705mm x 950mm



Figure 47 **Cathy Carter** Convergent Time # 2 2013 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 370mm x 2594mm

Immersion Bodies of Water

The work has been created from a range of water - subject relationships. This reflects a kinesthetic curiosity in the artist to experience being in different bodies of water to make the work. As Warwicker (2008) observes, "The hours passed so quickly and I had lost all sense of the time and place, adrift within that special realm of otherness." (p.40). It also satisfies a desire in the artist to be absorbed in the sensations of being immersed in the natural world. Immersion in a particular place/space for an extended duration has proved a productive method for this project. To become immersed in the making creates a heightened awareness of a space and 'of being in the zone'. The project has explored spaces of water within Waitemata Harbor, Piha Beach, KareKare Beach, Leigh, Goat Island, Mt Ruapehu, Wanaka, Fiji, Rarotonga, and the South Pacific Ocean, also the Auckland Zoo. In each of these locations, the project identified particular spaces with the potential to form fluid open spaces of sensation; redolent with what James Elkins calls 'the post-modern sublime'. James Elkins in 'What Photography Is', describes the post-modern sublime as a "measured chill and reverberating emptiness". (Elkins, 2011, P.77/78). This post-modern sublime relates to inherent qualities within these spaces which are in part determined by the vastness of nature. In addition, the work seeks to approach these different liquid environments from new positions and perspectives that give the work sufficient force and vividness to achieve an impact, described by Baas and Jacob, as able to "momentarily cut through the ongoing conceptual mind" (Baas & Jacob, 2004, p.43). Both of these explorations seek to suspend the viewer in time, to promote greater reflection and contemplation.

Bodies of water also offer a space to work that holds an ambivalent potentiality. When the body is immersed in these environments there is an inherent sensuous vulnerability, a sense of destabilization and disorientation which can act to "...break the skin of existence in order to lay bare the generating axis of it's becoming" (Kearney, 1998, p.125). These places can help to rupture our expectations of our existence, and how our bodies operate in the world to emerge again with new frames of reference. Although these qualities of water in the natural environment are the

primary motivation for choosing it as a workspace and subject, working with different bodies of water has also caused the project to encounter ecological and socio-political questions relating to use of natural resources. These concerns are present in varying degrees within the work. However, the emphasis is to create a space of affect, a visceral physical response and with this in mind, it is important that the viewer is able to feel or experience the work before he or she looks for its intellectual or political context.

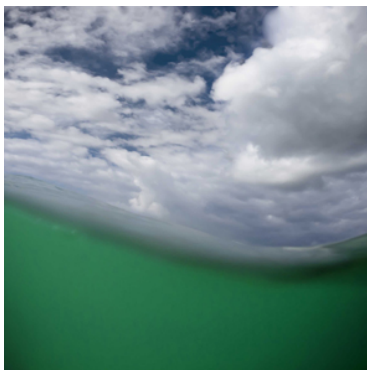
Water embodies what Deleuze and Guattari define as 'smooth space' - that is 'space that is nomadic and fluid and full of potential'. Deleuze and Guattari go on to say, "Smooth space is filled by events of haecceities, far more than by formed and perceived things. It is a space of effects more than one of properties. It is an intensive rather than an extensive space, one of distances not of measures and properties." (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004, p.479). Within this fluid context the body has the potential to transcend itself, becoming a vessel of sensing potential within a potentially limitless space, a void. In particular, immersion in water offers a sense of presence and a non-verbal immediacy, prior to an imagining consciousness, or as Gaston Bachelard puts it, "To give an object poetic space is to give it more space than it has objectivity; or better still, it is following the expansion of its intimate space." Water can be thought of as a space of 'becoming made visible', an impermanent space, ephemeral and fluctuating, even illusory, a space of action without limits. Water's ability to suspend matter due to its dilution of gravity as well as its mercurial, transformative nature (being found as, liquid, solid, gas and all the ephemeral iterations therein) are qualities that are central to the projects questions and explorations.

Suspended

As a way of experimenting with an immersive encounter the project considered different aspects of suspension in space and time as it relates to the theoretical and actual positioning of the body. The work seeks to relate the physical body of the artist suspended in the liquid environment (during the recording of images), the imagined suspension of the viewer's body projected into the space depicted in the work, and the viewer's physical, sensing body in the space in which the work is installed.

Suspension was also examined through the notion of an immanent aesthetic, which Bergson described as a pause between action and reaction that allows for freedom and opens up a greater possibility of a creative response to the world. (O'Sullivan, 2006, p.45) Christopher Bollas refers to this as "a moment of awe ... a suspended moment when self and object feel reciprocally enhancing and mutually informative... we might see such times as the opening of a window into the fabric of the mind that underlies our usual worlds of self and other.' (Ed, Baas, Jacob, 2004, p32).

The different photographic series within this project all experiment with the imagination and the memory of the viewer to metaphorically suspend the body in liquid environments



Figures 48 **Cathy Carter** # 11, 12, 39 Photography Gallery



Figures 49 **Cathy Carter** # 17, 31, 26 Photography Gallery

The use of different sites and perspectives in the natural world was to look for a range of different responses to the experience of a sense of suspension. As well as site and perspective, the work experimented with light, colour, movement, time and climate. In these in between places where gravity is momentarily suspended or mitigated by the buoyancy of water, there are elements of uncertainty where the looking contains different degrees of ambiguity. Ambiguity between the ambivalent potentiality of the space captured and the actual physical state of the body imagined in the space. Within these fluid spaces, the question arose, can the perceived body transcend itself becoming a vessel of sensing potential. By placing the body in a space of sensuous vulnerability, destabilisation and disorientation, does this rupture our expectations of our existence, and ask questions of how our bodies operate in the world to emerge again with new frames of reference. For example, from a Deleuzian perspective, to become body suspended in water is to perceive the body, as if one were perceiving it's liquid world or to have a corporeal affect in the body of the spectator through the work.



Figure 50 **Cathy Carter** *Shallows* 2013 3 x single channel video (projections), 8.25 min loop Installation detail in Test Space AUT

Ideas of being suspended between sea and sky were also explored in a moving image work of the length of South Piha beach. Three cameras shooting with 24 mm lens on three tripods, were positioned at eye level in the shallows of the surf equi-distant from each other, along the beach. A time was chosen when surfers or swimmers were least likely to be in the water so as to record only the seascape empty of human activity. Low tide was chosen for choppy, messier conditions with the currents more apparent rather than big-wave, surf conditions. An overcast day in the early morning was also chosen for ambiguous atmospheric and light conditions. The tripods were positioned to create a perspective akin to the viewer's feet submerged in the shallows in the midst of this chaotic, intense environment of swirling currents and waves and the imperceptibly shifting atmospheric expanse above. In this way, the project investigates how perspective can enable an image to be experienced 'bodily', rather than simply 'seen' or merely 'read'. Can this use of perspective enable the image to extend into the space inhabited by the viewer? In this way the

totality of the work becomes not only the space depicted in the image, but also incorporates the space of the viewer. This encourages the viewer to 'step into' the space of the work as a bodily projection, further breaking down any notion of the separateness of spaces we inhabit.

Liquid Perception 2013, was installed as three large projections abutted to each other across two walls. The projected blue light of the video work emanated throughout the viewing space. This 'blueness' meant that some viewers had an initial response to the work even before entering the room, namely a sensation of coldness or chill. James Turrell explains this haptic response to light by saying, "We eat light, drink it in through our skins. With a little more exposure to light, you feel a part of things physically. I like feeling the power of light and space physically because then you can order it materially" (Ellingson, 2013, p.1).



Figure 51 **Cathy Carter** *Liquid Perception*, 2013 single channel video (projection), 5.22 min loop final Installation detail in Test Space AUT

The install of the projections went through many iterations before the final work was decided upon.

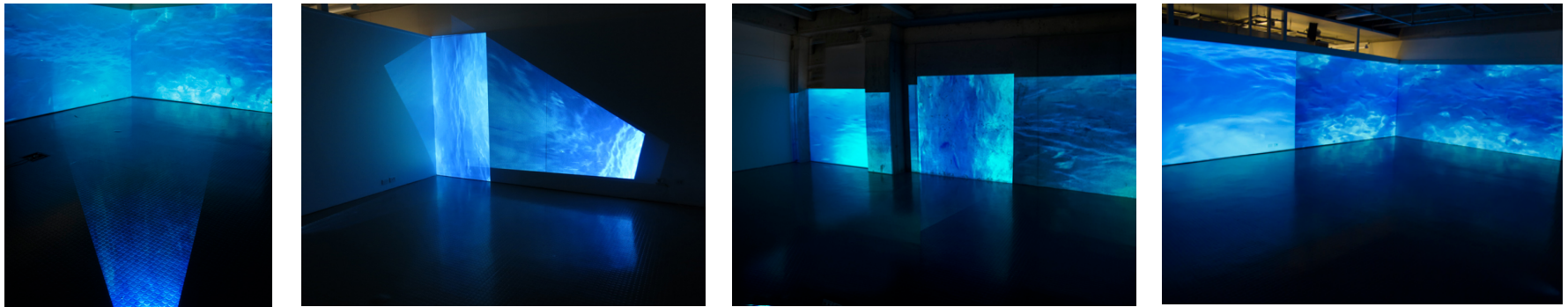


Figure 52 **Cathy Carter** *Liquid Perception* installation tests, 2013

Initially the projections in the final install did not reach the top of the walls. This framing created a separation between the viewer and the sea projected in the images. The resulting perception was not unlike that of looking into a large fish tank. By removing this ‘framing’ at the top of the walls the perception of viewers was changed considerably. The separation between water and the viewer was removed. The sea and the fish appeared to be moving into and through the space. Without the framing, the video appeared to dissolve into the surface of the walls, creating a sensation more like being under water.

By projecting three un-synchronized loops of the same video, the project investigated ways of collapsing time as past, present and future. Rather than creating a chronological duration, the work explores the idea of ‘smooth space’, which Bergson characterized as “qualitative, fusional and continuous”. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p.484). To investigate this concept of time, the work was looped seamlessly and continuously. Each projection began at a random interval in relation to the others. This created juxtaposition between images, abutted perfectly. The fish had the appearance of swimming through one projection to another, spatially collapsing the different projections. These considerations translated the

individual projections into a series of spaces with no clear beginning or end for the viewer, but a sensation of flowing through space. This suspension of time sought to present the past, the present and the future as visible in the potentiality of 'becoming'.

Photography

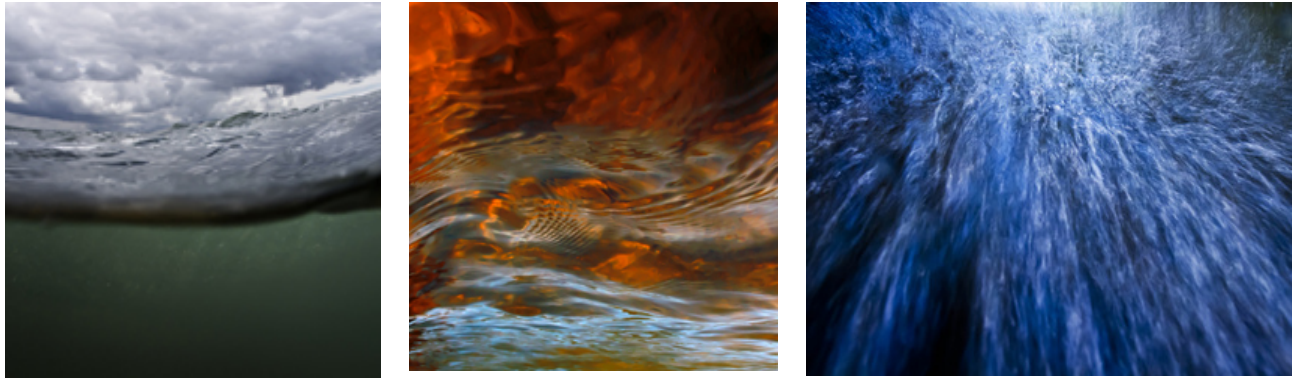


Figure 53 **Cathy Carter** Photography Gallery

The project is concerned with the notion of ‘seeing’ in a manner that is enabled by the camera. Ways of seeing that are not accessible to the naked eye are enabled by the use of the camera. For example, an ability to see simultaneously both above and below the surface of water: the surface that lies beneath and the surface exposed to the air. (Figure:14, *Immersion and Emergence*, 2011) The camera gives us access to what Walter Benjamin calls an “optical unconsciousness.... that which it is only possible to see with the aid of technology” (Wainwright, 2008, p.42). The project utilizes developments in digital technology, including the use of a Canon G12 within an underwater casing, to investigate spaces not otherwise visible. An aspect of optical unconsciousness of particular interest to the project is the ability of the digital camera to reveal, that which is not apparent even in the moment of capturing an image – especially with the use of continuous shooting at 3.9 frames per second. What this opens up is the possibility of the chance encounter from within a series of images recorded digitally in unusual settings. By extension, natural phenomena in the physical world can be revealed and experienced in new ways thanks to this optical unconsciousness. Gersht relates this experience of seeing through the lens as “the gap between the mechanical, attentive and unassumptive (unexpected) vision of the camera, and the presumptive and subjective vision of the human eye” (Victoria and Albert Museum, 2000, p.1).

This project seeks to harness the optical unconscious enabled by digital photography to create work that furthers its investigation. In other words, it does not seek to unlock these chance encounters or hidden views as a documentary tool to authoritatively reproduce or represent aspects of the natural world. Rather these images provide the starting point – like a canvas or toolkit – from which to create art encounters arising from further digital manipulation. The ability to edit and manipulate images as a means to create challenging and seductive spaces that offer a sense of illusion or disorientation provides a further extension of optical unconscious. This project's investigations centers on image and spaces only accessible through the digital technology and the expansion of the virtual world.

When thinking about the importance of duration in relation to ideas of 'Becoming', the question arose, how can artwork - particularly photographic work - encompass flow and 'becoming' when the physical act of the camera 'shutter' acts as a selector of a moment in time, which in its very nature is both reductive and finite. Deleuze defined becoming as,

“that which transforms an empirical sequence into a series: a burst of series. A series is a sequence of images, which tend in themselves in the direction of a limit, which orients and inspires the first image (the before), and gives way to another sequence organized as series, which tends in turn towards another limit (the after). The before and after are then no longer successive determinations of the course of time, but the two sides of the power, or the passage of the power to a higher power. The direct time-image does not appear in an order of coexistences or simultaneities, but in a becoming a potentialization, as series of powers ... Beyond the true or the false, becoming as the power of the false. (Deleuze, 1989, p. 275).

The project has experimented with these ideas working in series using both sequence photography and time-lapse photography. Sequence photography shoots a series of images, using rapid fire, in which the subject is captured intimately in successive motion. In *Waterways* 2012, images in the sequence taken have been removed to provide spaces of imagining



Figure 54 **Cathy Carter** *Waterways* 2012 # 22, 23, 24 Photography Gallery

A variation on this technique was to use screen shots, images taken from moving image to collect 'moments within the flow' at various intervals outside our usual perception. Time-lapse photography has been used to animate and alter the perception of the time in order to enable a contemplative visual experience. This is achieved by revealing a transformation in nature – a transformation that occurs over an extended period of time in nature but which, using time lapse photography, occurs 'before the eyes' of the viewer in a much shorter length of time.



Figure 55 **Cathy Carter** *Convergent Time #2*, 2013 Ink Jet print on Hahnemuhle Photo Rag 308gsm 370mm x 2594mm

A third variation on these techniques is the taking of photos from a particular environment over a number of days (Figure 55). These photos were then overlaid with each other in varying degrees of opacity into a series that was not linear in time or geography, but gave the sense of convergent time. These techniques have sought to create work of a time context that has no beginning or end, but rather, as Deleuze describes, ‘creative lines of flight’ as being those that lead somewhere, and can be returned to through a state of ‘becoming’.

Altering the perception of time as linear is a way to explore how the body senses space in different ways. “Time and space are contingent elements whose true reality is virtuality. Concrete reality can then be seen as a construction, which limits through definition, then expands through imagination. When we consider virtual reality within media such as photography, film, video, etc. we are perhaps more accurately embracing reality not as a copy but as the essence of our world as virtual”. (Rrap, 2009, p.1).

Sound

Sound has been part of the project's multi-sensory approach to investigate the art encounter. This includes the varying ways we perceive sound in different environments. For example, in natural settings, sound can go unnoticed due to its familiarity or it's belonging 'in place'. This sound brought into a gallery space can become something different – noticeable, even overwhelming in its intensity. Furthermore, the materials and spaces through which it travels alter sound. For example, the distortion of sound through water, or the way in which water creates sound that fills a space, such as the roar of waves. The project also explores dislocated or distorted sound of immersion, such as a sound perceived as coming from another room, element, or dimension. Roni Horn writes that, "In subverting expectations you increase the chance of offering a more direct experience; not one that simply fulfills the viewers desires or confirms their knowledge. It's more of a questioning." (Elderfield & Tempkin, 2006, p.21).

In the exhibition *Waterways 2013*, a work '*Untitled (Wai Horotiu)*', 2012 comprised a video projection of the Karekare Waterfall combined with a sound track of water running rapidly over rocks. Installed under the stairwell at Second Storey Gallery, the sound that emanated from somewhere below the viewer was not the actual sound of the waterfall, which within the gallery space had sounded like white noise, but instead the recorded sound of water running over rocks. Not only did this reference the Wai Horotiu stream's location now underground in close proximity beneath the site of the gallery, but it also experimented with what Marks wrote about sound and sensation. "Sound is a sense perception that is "closer" to the body than sight. Sound brings us closer to the image, almost close enough to smell. Interestingly off screen sound also emphasizes the sensuous quality of an image." (Marks, 2002, p.117). It was this sensuous quality of sound that was the emphasis, rather the actual sound recorded at the making of the video. The sound also sought to further unfold the work by making connections to the gallery site. This choice was made after experimenting with other mixed sounds; sounds which reverberated emptiness overlaid with the distorted sounds of the ocean.

Site Specific Installation

Waterways is also an example of this project's experimentation with site specific work to consider Deleuze's notion of 'becoming' in the context of urban landscapes. As a site-specific work, *Waterways* references instances of natural flow and processes subverted or hidden beneath the urban mantle. The recontextualisation of natural imagery within the gallery space was used to reference historical and ecological perspectives. There were two dimensions to this site that was of interest. Firstly, the gallery's proximity to Meyers Park, source of the Wai Horotiu stream that has now been diverted to run beneath Queen Street.¹ Secondly and with this context in mind, the gallery's steep narrow stairs lead up to the two gallery spaces. The work addresses these stairs as a metaphoric waterfall.

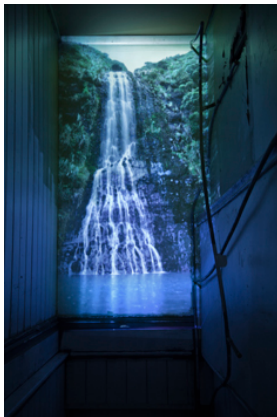


Figure 56 **Cathy Carter** *Untitled (Wai Horotiu)*, 2013 installation detail.

¹ This metaphorical and imaginary uncovering of the Wai Horotiu stream, is also a reminder of New Zealand's radical destruction of wetlands — of which, the wetland at what is now Aotea Square, fed originally by the Wai Horotiu stream — was an early example. In less than two centuries, New Zealand's wetlands have been reduced to just 10% of their former numbers.



Figure 57 **Cathy Carter** *Untitled (Wai Horotiu)*, 2013 single channel video (projection), 1.22 min loop installation detail of *Waterways* at Second Storey Gallery.

The intention was to both connect the gallery space to its hidden natural history and also prompt a new way of experiencing the built form of the stairway that forms the entrance into, and exit from, the gallery – itself a space of transition. A full visual encounter is offered to the viewer only once she has climbed the stairs, and turned back or around to look down the stairs. The placement of the projection also created a portal or connection to the outside location of the waterfall. By chance the old, yellowing paintwork onto which the video was projected added an atmospheric element, making it seem less like a projection and more like a view into the natural world, thereby enlarging the space of the work. This enabled the work to investigate what Deleuze and Guattari talk about when they further describe smooth space as ‘both the object of a close vision par excellence and the element of a haptic space (which may be as much visual or auditory as tactile). (Deleuze, 1987, p.493).



Figure 58 **Cathy Carter** *Waterways*, 2013 Installation detail of *Waterways* Exhibition at Second Storey Gallery

The work was completed by a series of three photographs inside the gallery space. These three photographs were made using rapid-fire photography of a wave breaking over rocks, referencing the fact that all waterways flow eventually to the ocean. For the viewer, her encounter

involved a point in time, a moment of recognition, where the subject became object. The intention of creating an experience of 'becoming wave' became instead a perception or 'percept' of a wave at different points, and rather than a 'smooth space' of sensation, it generated a 'striated space' or object orientated experience. Massumi in discussing these ideas wrote, "When we think of space as 'extensive', as being measurable, divisible and composed of points plotting possible positions that objects may occupy, we are stopping the world in thought. We are thinking away it's dynamic unity, the continuity of its movements. We are looking at only one dimension of reality." (Massumi, 2002, p.7).

The Haptic

These ideas of a haptic space were further investigated in the work presented for Talk Week, *Shifting Encounter* 2013. The emphasis of this work was to create a physical awareness for the viewer's of her own sensual body moving through a series of metaphorical spaces. The work consisted of four elements: three blocks of ice, three ink jet prints, an underwater video, and the sound of cracking ice on a frozen lake. Each element within the installation sought to form a part of an inextricable web that transformed the other, aiming to reinforce the haptic sense of encountering forms of ice.



Figure 59 **Cathy Carter** *Shifting Encounters* ,2013 installation detail AUT foyer

The blocks of ice melting in the space referenced the photographic images created from blocks of ice melting over time, taken through a macro lens, creating an experience of close vision within blocks of ice and the miniature worlds therein. The video work, taken by a camera submerged in a river of ice melt, was another reference to the ice melting in the space. These melting blocks of ice brought a haptic affect of coldness to the install.

The presence of blocks of ice in the install reinforced the close vision in the photographs. The blocks of ice weren't completely frozen solid. Each had a liquid core, which, as the ice melted, became a cave-like cavity, from which water eventually seeped out. This made visually explicit the active transformation of ice to water. These spaces were revealed as places of imagination or affective places of 'becoming', seemingly mesmerizing in their potentiality, as they dissolved and dissipated onto the increasingly wet floor.

The photographic works sought not to depict ice in its literal sense, but to create spaces open to, and inviting of, the viewer's imagination. The photographs used perspective and colour intensification to depict spaces suggestive of something other. Through this abstraction of form and close vision the intention was to experiment with the affects of an ambivalent potentiality and a haptic optic. The role of the haptic optic is described by Zepke as, "The creation of a haptic space deforms the eye which sees it, liberating the eye from its role in the organism as the apex of optical space. Haptic space implies a new vision and a new visibility, "a haptic vision of the eye" (FB,1 61/151), coextensive with the sensation." (Zepke, 2005, p.194).

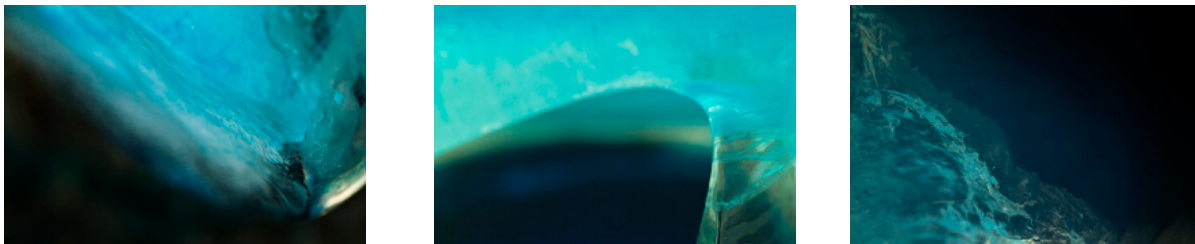


Figure 60 **Cathy Carter** *Shifting Encounters*, 2013



Figure 61 **Cathy Carter** *Shifting Encounters* , 2013 still from single channel video (projection), 2.02 min loop

The moving image of ice melt was taken during spring in the river below the Tawhai Falls (in Tongariro National Park). The video work metaphorically submerges the viewer's body in the stream, moving forward through the water as bubbles and particles of organic matter flow toward and around the body in a visual dance. The lack of an anchoring context that a rock or bank would have provided was an intentional consideration in creating a sense of disorientation and destabilization, even a sense of danger, as bubbles form, mix and mutate, then dissolve and reform in a continuous flow of substance and time.

Each element in the install also relates to notions of time. The video shows the flow of a river slowed down. The photographs depict a microscopic moment frozen within the ice. And the blocks of ice melting in the space are themselves like a clock or timer running down, dissolving in time as

they turn from ice to water. Cold water moves imperceptibly more slowly than warm water, a sensation underscored by the slowing down of the moving image. The temporal manipulation of movement enabled the viewer to be freed from actual time, able to spend time in contemplation

Within this submerged space, to experience the intensity and vividness that would otherwise be missed in the rapid flow and chaos of this river. The video work was installed at the same height and dimensions as the photographs on the opposite wall of the exhibition area. It was projected onto a grey painted screen/ rectangle to intensify the image projected within the lit space. The placement of the projection was to create movement through and around the three elements. The separation within the transitional space of the foyer created a disjuncture, which meant that the projection was not necessarily seen as part of the same installation. The interruption of viewing presented by the plinth that the data projector sat upon broke up any experience of being immersed in the event unfolding through the projection.

The project further explored Deleuze's notion of the Haptic Optic in a work entitled *Il Desserto Rosso*². In particular this work investigates the role of colour. *Il Desserto Rosso, 2013 (The Red Dessert)*, is a video work that encounters the sea as an immense space of isolation and destabilization, energy and emergence. It references what Simon O'Sullivan noted, in critiquing Deleuze, about the freedom of stepping beyond our form, making 'perceptible the imperceptible'. O'Sullivan sees, "... art as a deterritorialisation, a creative deterritorialisation into the realms of affects ... a magical and aesthetic function of transformation, less involved in making sense of the world and more in exploring the possibilities of being in and becoming with the world." (O'Sullivan, 2006, p.52).

The viewer's experience of the movement of the waves is transformed through an inversion of the colour of the waves (predominantly red and orange ochre instead of natural blues and greys). "It is colour then that is able to transform the space of action into a space of virtual construction a space opening out into a void of the sensory motor indiscernible from the unthinkable plenitude of life." (Zepke, 2005, p.111)

² The title of the work is taken from Michelangelo Antonioni's film, *Il Desserto Rosso* (1964). The choice of title relates to the colour red and the transformation within the work of wetness to dustiness that relates materially to the desert.²

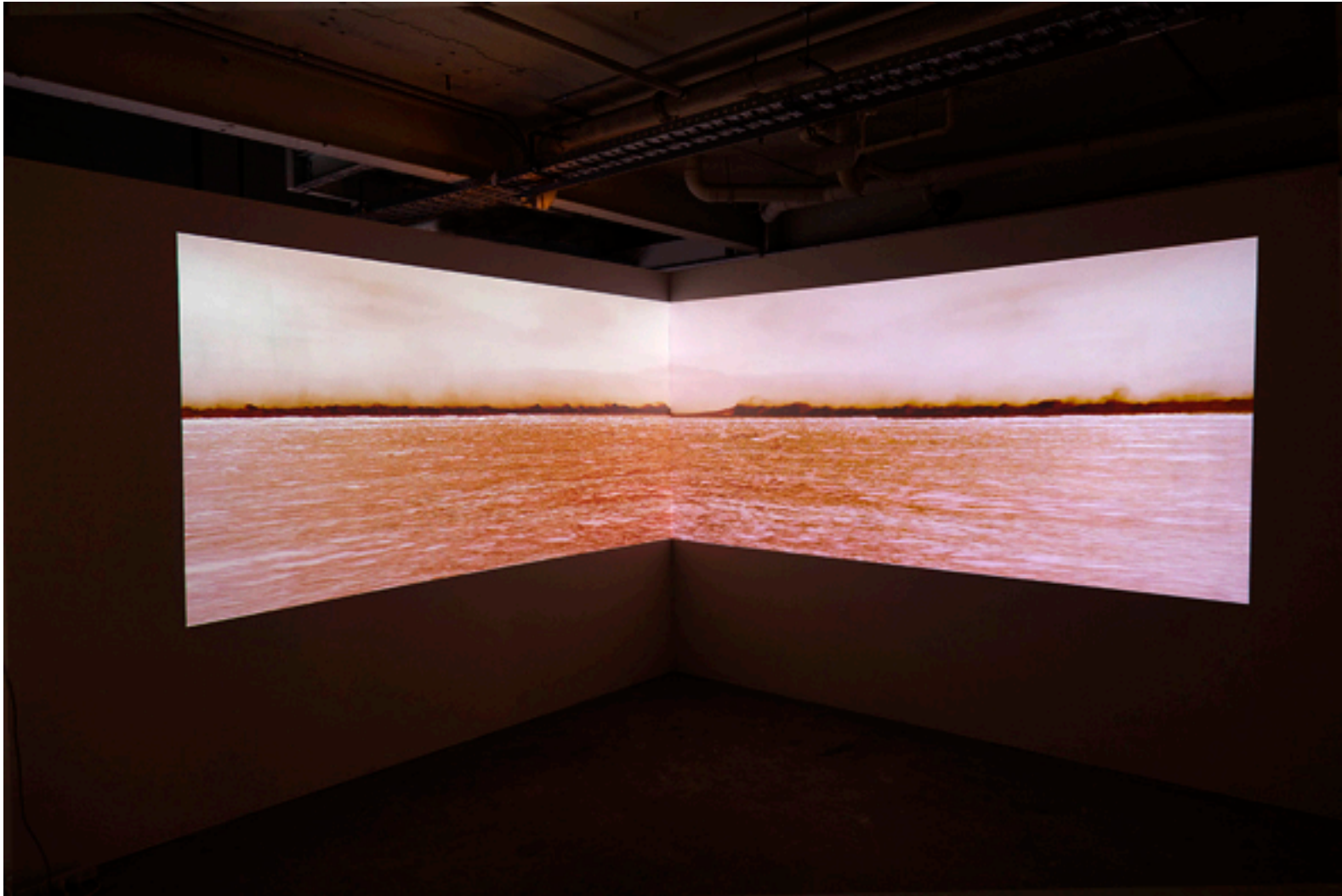


Figure 62 **Cathy Carter** *Il Desserto Rosso, 2013 (The Red Dessert ,)* 2013 single channel video (projection), 2.02 min, installation detail at *Transitions*, St Paul St Gallery 3

In the work, the red ochre colour performs the action of a wave through a virtual slowing of time that reveals and describes through dynamic emergence. A tentative, ephemeral line of red ochre expands and thickens both in length and depth to then flow seemingly as diaphanous material down the face of the wave's wall to explode in a collision of surface meeting surface, to once again become linear colour — whilst in the distance, the emergence of a new line forms to break again — as in a series repeating, but with difference, the experience again. A hypersensitivity to the motion of the wave emerges as the dusty ochre pigment of the foam of the cresting-then-crashing-wave meets time and again in a series of composition and decomposition of broad fluid tones of monochromatic colour. The work is thus constructed to explore the pushing of colour to its functional limits, and the decomposition of matter by dis-associating it from its natural colours, and superimposing new or pure colour onto otherwise recognizable natural forms. In this way, the project investigates the role of the haptic optic, through colour as a sense, to transform the viewer's sense experience in an art encounter. Considering Pollock's painting, Deleuze writes, "...this line trait and this colour patch will be pushed to their functional limit: no longer the transformation of form but a decomposition of matter which abandons us to lineaments and granulations." (Zepke, 2005, P 139).

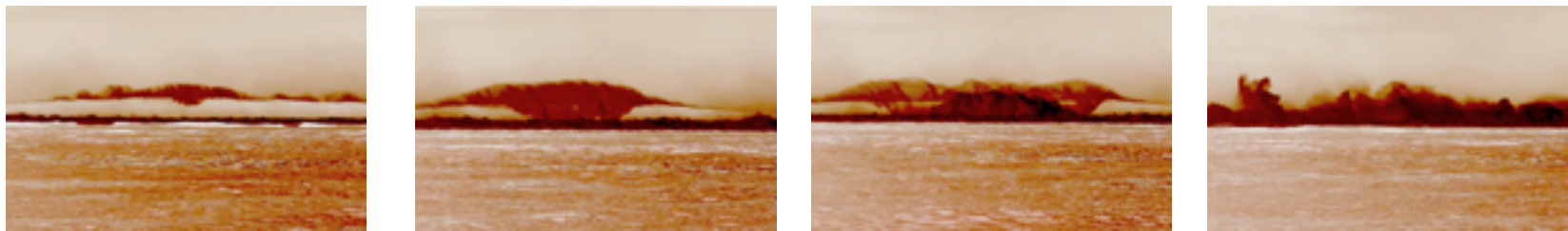


Figure 63 **Cathy Carter** *Shifting Encounters*, 2013 stills from single channel video projection, 2.02 min

The work uses a monochromatic colour in reference to Deleuze's observations on the work of Francis Bacon. Deleuze describes monochromaticism as 'comparable to a homogenous and fluid mass', in describing how colour is sensed. Deleuze explains, "There is indeed a creative taste in colour, in different regimes of colour, which constitute a properly visual sense of touch, or a haptic sense of sight". (Deleuze, 2003, p.123).

Public Project

Waitemata 'Obsidian Waters' 2013, created new ways of investigating Deleuze's ideas of 'becoming' and of 'smooth space'. This work was a public art project that was part of a group exhibition for AUT's "Transforming Topographies" in the Auckland Art Gallery space 'The Lab', part of the 5th Auckland Triennial.³

The intention was to develop ideas of a fluid space of creation and immersion through a blurring of the hierarchies between art and life. The approach to this idea came from John Cage who stated that he wasn't interested in destroying the barrier between art and life, or even blurring it. He was interested mainly in observing that there is no barrier between the two. (Baas & Jacob, Ed, 2004, p.62). The emphasis was on opening up new relationships, and new experiences as well as ways of seeing and being, with the Waitemata Harbor that envelopes Auckland City and is part of its identity. The aim was to highlight a collective contemplative awareness to this body of water that stretches from Riverhead in the north-west to Tāmaki River in the east. Members of the public were invited to reflect upon their relationship with this water during time spent planning, and photographing a stretch of water close to where submitters lived or worked.

³ The Transforming Topographies Project Leaders/Curators envisaged this space as being, "a space of mergence, debate and negotiation. A space continuously dismantled, repositioned and energised by groups and individuals in conversation within a fluid and open state of oscillation. As a group of thinkers, collaborators, makers and designers we intend to rethink the role of 'the social' and 'the public' as real spaces of continuous exchange and encounter that engenders our imagination and community values." (Transforming Topographies AUT Project Team: Albert Refiti, Elvon Young, Lars Jerlach, Monique Redmond and Emily O'Hara)



Figure 64 **Cathy Carter** *Waitemata, 'Obsidian Waters'* 2013 installation details AUT's "Transforming Topographies" in the Auckland Art Gallery





Figure 65 **Cathy Carter** Waitemata ,‘Obsidian Waters’ 2013 installation detail at AUT’s “Transforming Topographies” in the Auckland Art Gallery

The photographs of the surface of the water in the harbor were digitally transported into the gallery through a website, Jotform, where they were printed and installed on a wall in the gallery. Submitting members of the public were also asked to respond to a question, “What does this body of water mean to you?” Lines of text printed from response to this question were cut up and installed below the wall of images as a metaphor for sea foam left by the tide. As well as being printed and installed in the exhibition space (The Lab), they were also projected onto an adjacent wall as another way of experiencing the images of this water.

The action of making and installing the work extended throughout the duration of the exhibition, as photographs continued to be submitted. The entire wall was completely filled with photos the day before the exhibition was to be dismantled. The final install of 144, A2 photo’s used scale and repetition to create a visually immersive experience of this elemental space of water.

The experience of making this work produced a sense of vulnerability because of a dependence on public submission of work and a lack of control over the act of taking and editing the photos. In addition, the images arrived in the order in which the public submitted them. Active public participation was paramount to the impact and success of this work. However, with this vulnerability came freedom and joy at the diversity and richness of the photographs, as well as a sense of connection to each individual who took part. For the artist, there was a sense of being immersed in an open-ended process, as well as the viewer’s immersion in the physical actualization of the work.⁴

⁴ A brief history around the naming of the waters:

Wai-te-matā means ‘obsidian waters’ – the glassy surface resembled volcanic obsidian rock. In Te Arawa tradition, the harbour was named by the ancestor Tamatekapua, when he placed a volcanic stone as a mauri (talisman) in its waters near Birkenhead. The Ngāpuhi people called it Te Wai-o-te-mate (the waters of death) – a reference to battles to control the Tāmaki isthmus. (McClure, 2012, p.9)

Moving Image

In researching ideas behind moving image as material for installation, this project draws on Sobchack's writing about film and cinema. Sobchack proposes that cinema and film move beyond a traditional, 'deterministic cinematic apparatus'. This project investigates how moving image can likewise break out of the notion of vision and a spectator to a relationship that liberates the viewer by recognizing a multiplicity of presences. This project sought to experiment with this notion of intensifying the affect of a work by collapsing the space between the work and the viewer physically, imaginatively and metaphorically

"Through the address of our own vision, we speak back to the cinematic expression before us, using a visual language that is also tactile, that takes hold of and actively grasps the perceptual expression, the seeing, the direct experience of that anonymously present, sensing and sentient "other". Thus, the film experience is a system of communication based on bodily perception as a vehicle of conscious expression." (Sobchack, 1992, p.4).

In particular, the project includes work that explores how to increase the intensity of experience that this medium brings to an encounter. By incorporating the viewer's body within a projected image, does this further activate the viewer to experience a Deleuzian sense of 'becoming other', of being immersed within the experience of the work? These experiments included immersing the viewer's body within the projected moving image, so that both the viewer's body feels light from the projection, and the shadow cast by the viewer's body becomes part of the work. The intention is to apply to moving image installation what to Sobchack observes about film: "In its presence and activity of perception and expression, the film transcends the filmmaker to constitute and locate its own address, its own perceptual and expressive experience of being and becoming." (Sobchack, 1992, p.4).

Installation / Mirror -Reflection

Another device experimented with to incorporate and activate the viewer's body in the work, is the mirrored reflection. This project has experimented with light projections in conjunction with reflective floor to collapse the space between the sensing viewer and the work.

Merleau-Ponty (1964) describes how the mirror works to change our perception of our self or our body within a space wherein the body is objectified. To use Lacan's terms, "I am captured, caught up by my spatial image". Thereupon I leave the reality of my lived me in order to refer myself constantly to the ideal, fictitious, or imaginary me..." (Merleau- Ponty, 1964, p136). In Lori Hersberger's work, *The Hollow Sky*, 2004 the fractured floor of mirror inverts the projected moving image on the wall and reflects the surrounding environment, opening up new ways of entering the image.

Robert Smithson (1996) talks about the idea that another dimension of time operates with the introduction of the mirror as an object. 'The mirror itself is not subject to duration, because it is an ongoing abstraction that is always available and timeless. The reflections on the other hand, are fleeting instances that evade measure' (Smithson, 1996, p.122). The mirror as an area of investigation offers different notions of 'being', without privileging or resolving any of these into a static notion. Smithson's thoughts on reflections as evading measure were tested by projecting moving image onto a black tray of shallow water that then reflected the images onto the wall and visa versa projecting the image onto the surface of the water that then was mirrored in the surface of the water. The results of the image on the reflective surface were to create, a virtual space without measure, a metamorphosis of space.

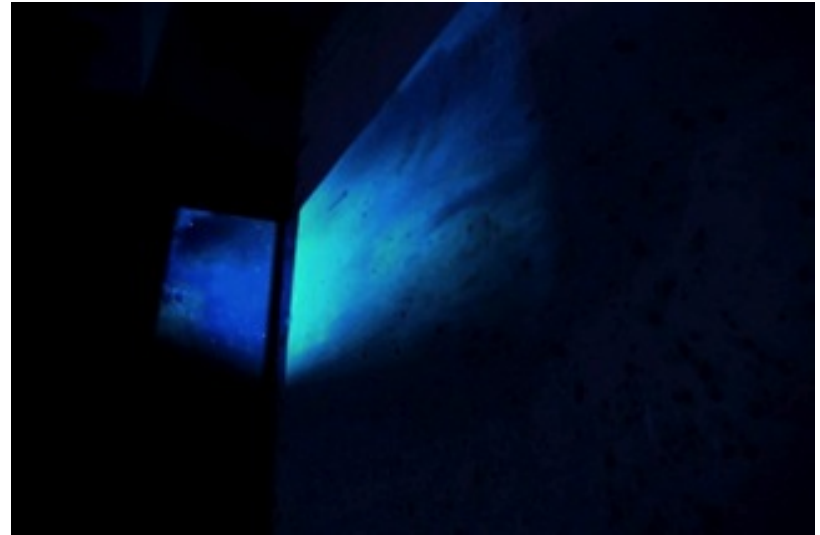


Figure 66 **Cathy Carter** installation tests: video light projections, water tray

Conclusion

This project's concerns about the 'art encounter' flow from Merleau-Ponty's philosophical inquiry into phenomenology, in a delayed tandem with the philosophical precepts of Deleuze and Guattari which extend notions of the senses beyond the subjective experience posited in 'Phenomenology of Perception'. O'Sullivan, in discussing Deleuze and Guattari's notions of 'an object of encounter', suggest that in an encounter our habitual ways of being are confronted, "Our typical ways of being in the world are challenged, our systems of knowledge disrupted. We are forced to thought". (O'Sullivan, 2006, p.1). Stephen Zepke discusses in 'Deleuze and Guattari's Aesthetics', sensation is not of my sensation or your sensation but that 'sensation is itself a living being' and 'the work of art is an autonomous organism that develops from it's own immanent rules' (Zepke, 2009, week.8). This project has considered how can these ideas develop the terms on which art is made, and to what extent art evoke or intensify 'pure experience' or connection beyond a solely subjective response.

If Deleuze's 'plane of immanence' is a location for this practice and his 'smooth space' a marker for the terrain of this project, his discussion of 'affects' is central to notions about the work's relationship to the viewer. Relevant to these investigations on affect is the question, how can the viewer be brought into an experience of possibility and potentiality as a ground of being, subverting the hold of the actual and the everyday consciousness that is carried into the gallery or the space of artistic encounter? A Deleuzian perspective on 'percepts' and 'affects' means that the work and the viewer must be regarded as intrinsically linked and that each influence and develop the other.

"Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them. Sensations, percepts, and affects are beings whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived. They could be said to exist in the absence of man because man, as he is caught in stone, on the canvas, or by words, is himself a compound of percepts and affects. The work of art is a being of sensation and nothing else: it exists in itself". (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p.164).

This project has informed the art practice in such a way as to locate its operation within the flow of being, so that works are made conscious of the relationship between the viewer and the interconnected spaces, real and virtual, inhabited bodily and imaginatively. In this way, work is constituted as 'being', not solely to reflect or depict but to activate affects of sensation, and, in so doing, contribute to 'becoming', recreating and reconstituting the viewer's being through the artistic encounter. As Colebrook observes,

"Affect is not the meaning of experience but the response it prompts. (19). To perceive some thing is to be affected; what a thing is, is nothing more than its range of affect or response. When I perceive something I do not take a mental picture of it, I am prompted to respond or become. This affection is not some mechanical or predetermined response. For each being can only be affected in a becoming that is specific to its own power and capacity for imaging. I am nothing other than this becoming through affection, but there are distinct powers of becoming". (Colebrook, 2002, p174).

Intentions for Final Exhibition

November 13-15th

As an extension and continuation of this project's areas of exploration, the plan for the final show is a large-scale, immersive installation that activates the viewer through their interaction with an environment, created within the gallery space. The install to date has experimented with suspending translucent bodies (plastic tubes) of seawater within a grid.

The following images are drawings of test ideas for this final installation. Seven plastic bag tubes were filled with differing volumes of seawater. This created a variety of horizon lines throughout the space. The seawater was collected at different tidal times resulting in variations in the visual qualities of the water. Test Space was used as a trial space, because it can be darkened to create a space in which light projection can be used in combination with these suspended 'bodies of water'. It also supports an immersive, experiential art encounter, being a confined space that lends itself to lead the viewer through the installation rather than observing it as an object from the outside.

The work uses suspension of objects to investigate Kearney's observation that suspending an object reveals its essence. In writing about Husserl's philosophies, Kearney suggests that the act of suspending an object has the potential to reveal the essence of an object through an imaginary process. "By suspending a thing's actual or empirical existence and allowing it to float freely as an 'imaginary irreality' amidst an infinitely open series of possibilities, ideation (the process of creating new ideas) discloses the essences of the things themselves." (Kearney, 1998, p.23). It also further investigates notions of haptic experience. Within this suspension, the bodies of seawater offer experiences of differing opacities and qualities to create an ephemeral space of sensing.

The proposed spacing between each object within the grid would be the width of the artist's body from shoulder to shoulder. This is intended to allow the body of the viewer to touch the objects as they move through them. The test install includes light projections of slowly moving water that play on the floor and walls as well as across and through parts of the contained bodies of water. The movement of viewers through the installation and the suspended objects create a play of overlapping shadows on the floor and walls. The install also references the relationship between the sea and plastic waste. Ecological concerns about the number of plastic bags and amount of plastic waste are brought into the conversation through their material relationship to the site, that being the sea (ocean).

Eliasson's work provides reference of how an art encounter can shift perceptions about spaces and the natural world. It provides an art context of work that is steeped in sensation. In his work, ".....focused projections of light, mirrors and natural elements such as water, stone, moss has the ability to 'shift the viewer's perception of place and self, foregrounding the sensory experience of each work. By transforming the gallery into a hybrid space of nature and culture, Eliasson prompts an intense engagement with the world and offers a fresh consideration of everyday life". (MCA, 2009, p.1).

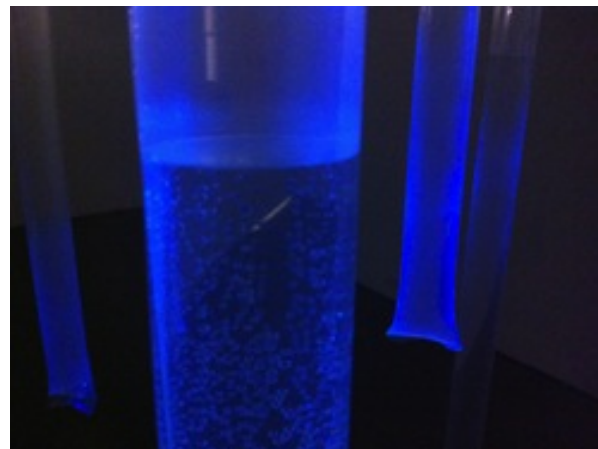


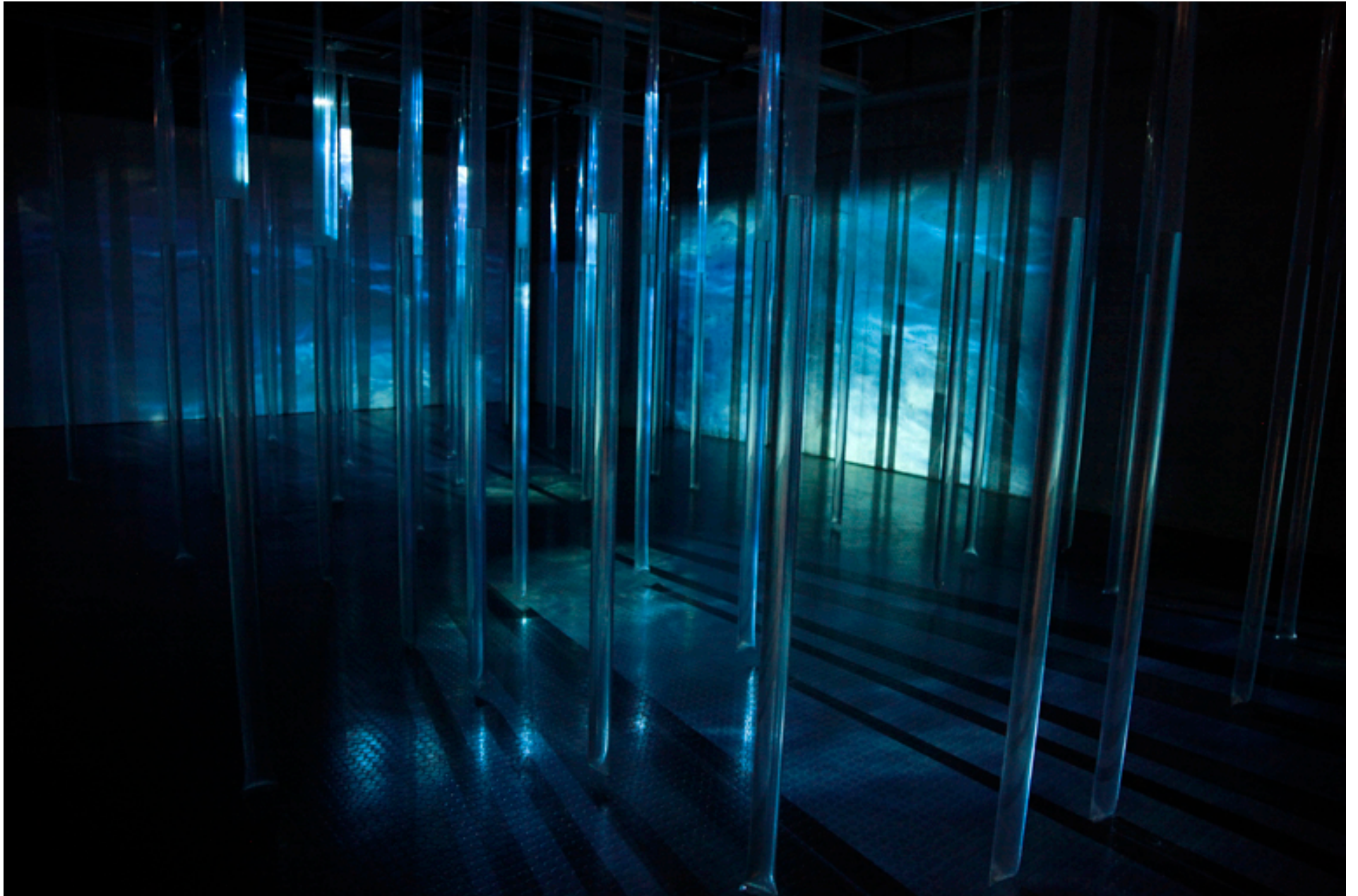
Figure 67 **Cathy Carter** two video light projections, seven plastic tubes with sea water Installation tests for final exhibition in AUT's Test Space

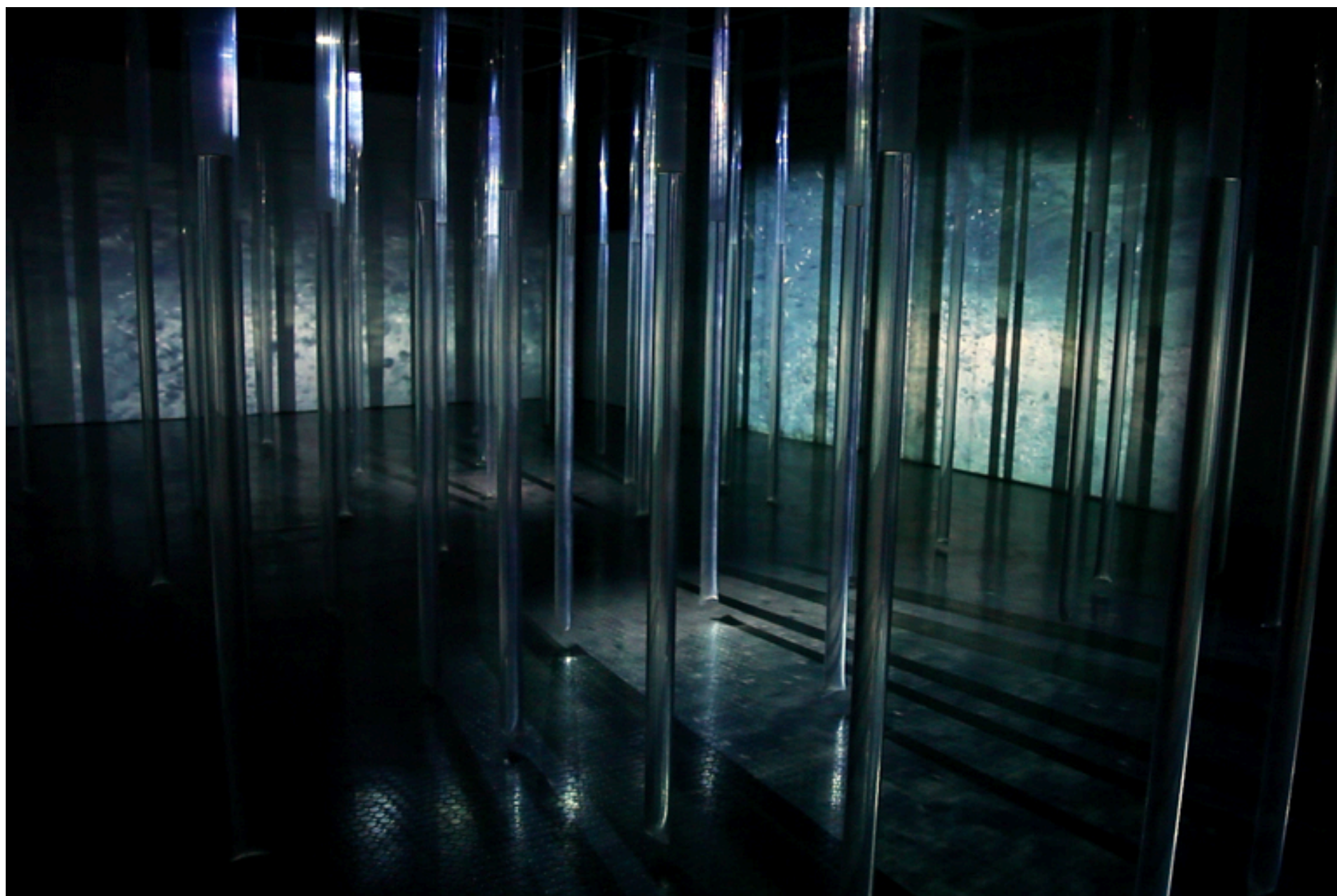
Final Exhibition 2013

Untitled (installation), 2013

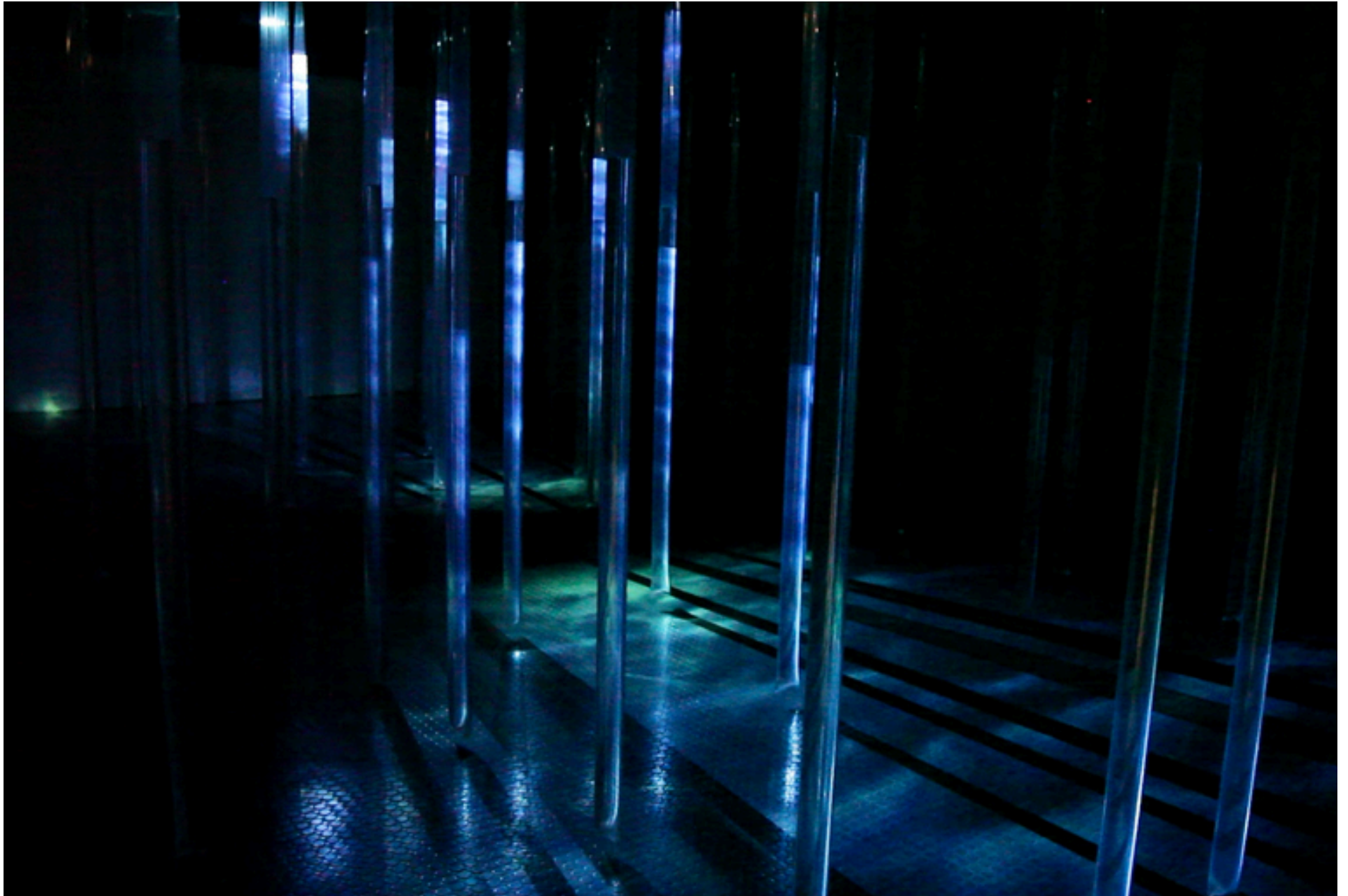
4 HD single channel video (projections), 8:48 minute loop

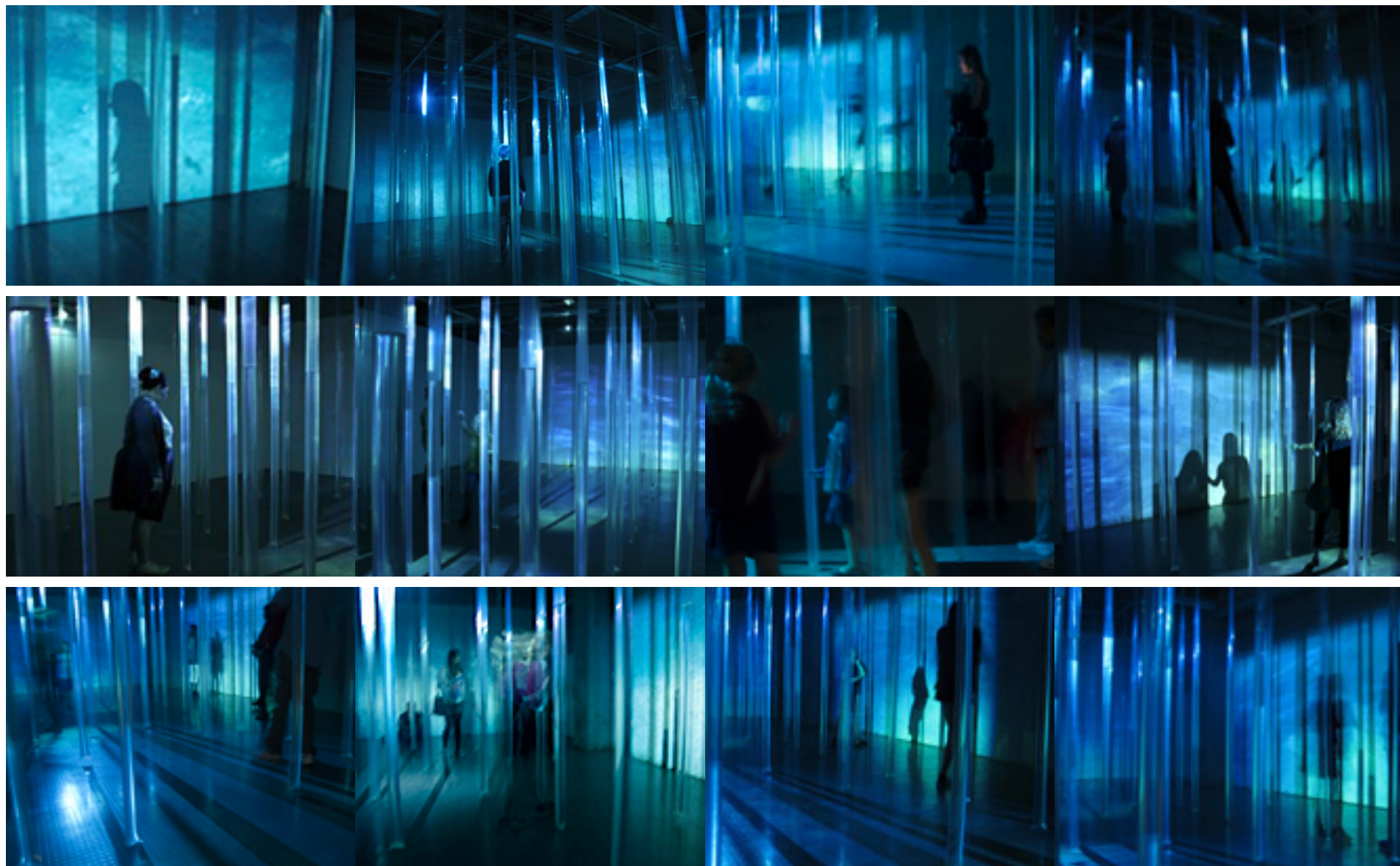
42 sealed plastic tubes, 295 litres of seawater collected from the Waitemata Harbour at 6 different tides











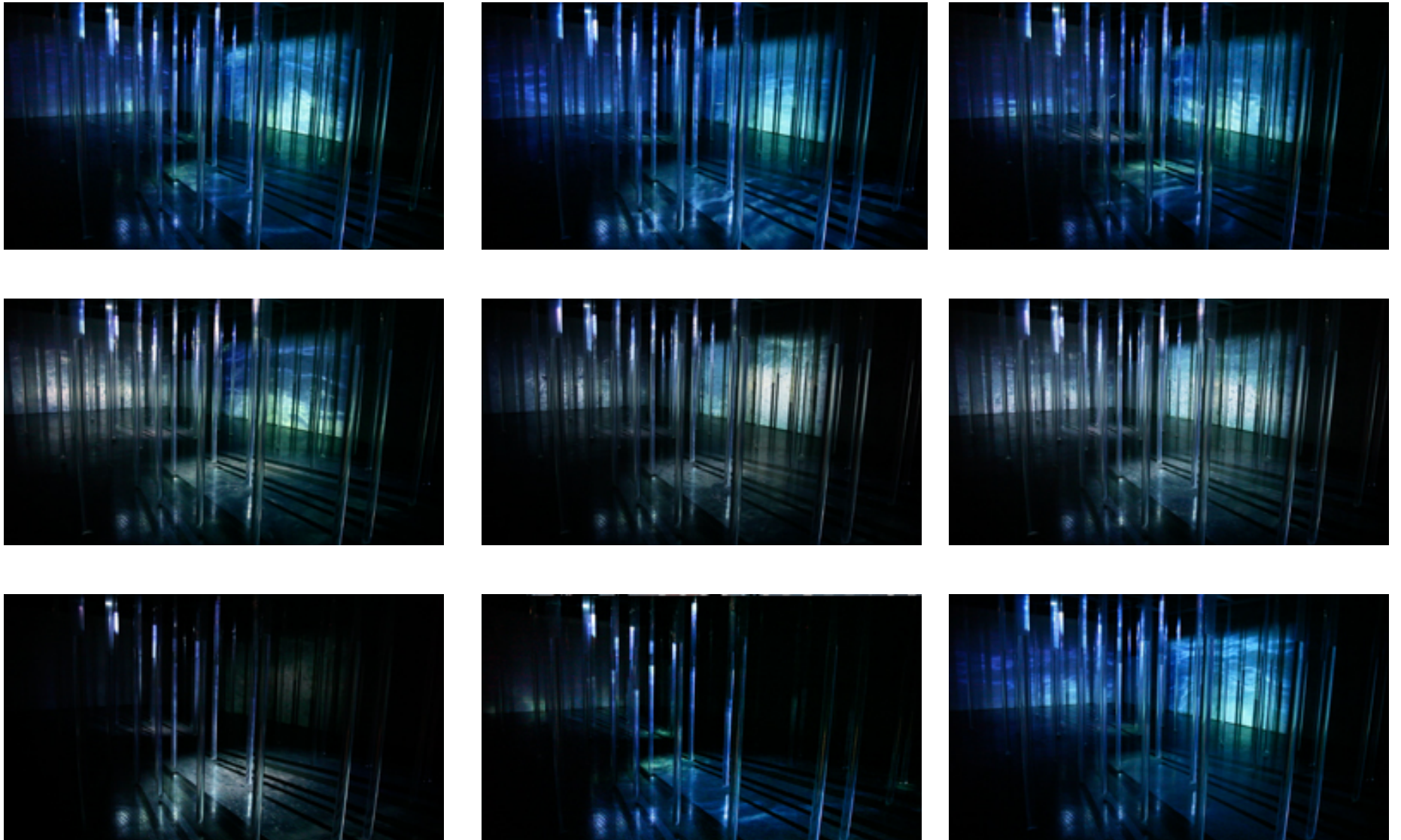


Figure 68 Screen Shots showing the different fazes of the video loops

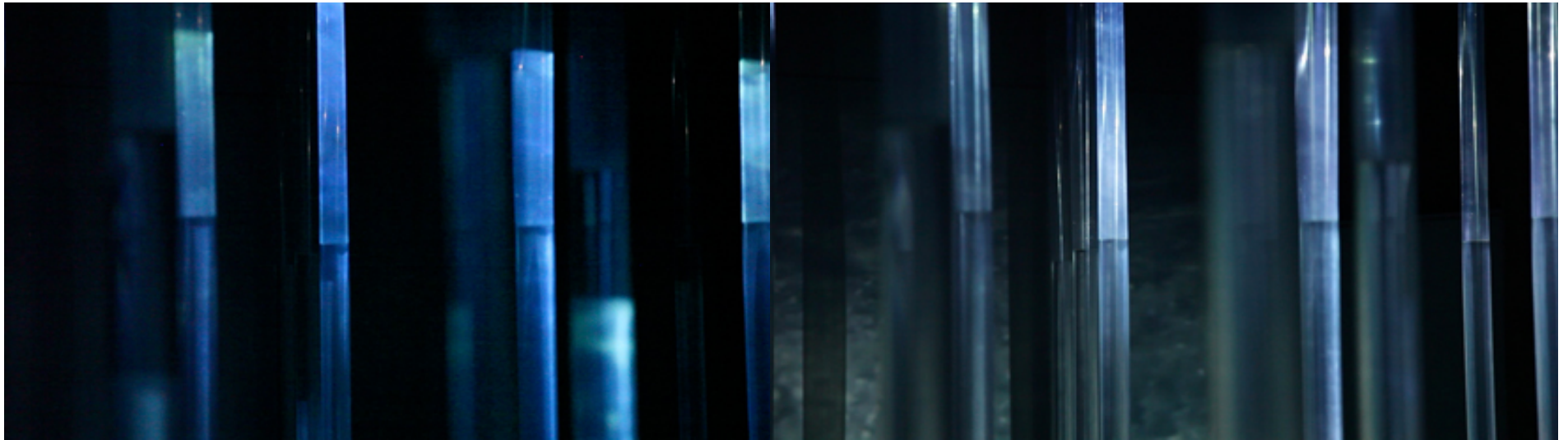


Figure 69 Detail of different moving image playing on water and air in the plastic tubes



Figure 70 20 litre buckets filled with water collected from the Waitemata Harbour/ Scaffolding/ Water filled to create a horizon line/ Deinstallation of plastic tubes



Figure 71 Detail of layout of seawater in tubes

The previous images document the culminating installation 'Untitled (installation) 2013' in the gallery site 'Test Space' as part of the Art and Design graduation exhibition of 2013.

Forty-two plastic tubes were hung throughout a gallery space of eleven meters by seven meters, and filled with sea water to a level at the height of the artist's eye line to create a horizon line and through this a sensation of a body of water. The ritual of collecting the sea water over six high tides became an event that contributed to the sense of connectedness to this environment which was being transported into the gallery space. Four projectors were mounted in the ceiling and directed across two walls and the floor. The affect of walking into the site was of a sensation of coolness created by the water temperature, this actual change in temperature was also enhanced through the perceived coolness of the colour blue, and the darkness of the space. Many viewers reached out and touched and squeezed the cool tubes as they moved between them. The light played over their bodies and through and off the reflective surface of the suspended columns of plastic and water. Shadows cast from the tubes were of varying opacity depending on the distance from the architectural surfaces. Viewer comments about these shadows, overheard in the space, included suggestions they were suspended lengths of seaweed growing up from the ocean floor, or shadows cast by the pillars of wharves.

The four videos were edited to create an environment of water moving across the walls and floor from one projection to another through a sea of fluid perception. The videos were edited from two moving image works. One, taken of the surface of the ocean, captured the gentle rhythm of the swell flowing towards and away from rocks. The other moving image was recorded with the camera submerged below the surface as water rushes over the rocks and back into the sea towards and around the camera. The bubbles created through this action spill towards the viewer and through the space of the installation. By sequencing these two moving images the viewer experiences both the more reflective, contemplative motion of the sea, as well as the faster, more turbulent sensations.

During the project sequence, the walls of the space merge to black for a period of minutes. This is to evolve the work from an expansive to a more intimate space, enabling the viewer to experience the water pulsing beneath them on the floor while the walls are dark. This transition alters the viewer's relationship to the space, exposing a sense of the sublime through expansion and intimacy. The haptic nature of the space and the sensation of light playing on the body allows the viewer to lose herself in the space, thereby, at the same time, revealing the body as a sensing agent.

“What interests me is the opportunity for all of us to become something different from what we are, by constructing spaces that contribute something to the experience of who we are.” (Serra, 2013, p.1).

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