

IMAGE CREDIT

Cover / Robert Andrew, *Data Stratification*, 2017. Image courtesy of the artist.

VOTE OF THANKS

The artists wish to thank;

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Metro Arts and the artist acknowledge the Jagera and Turrabal peoples, as the custodians of this land, recognising their connection to land, waters and community. We honour the story-telling and art-making at the heart of First Nation's cultures, and the enrichment it gives to the lives of all Australians.
Always was, Always will be.

METRO ARTS // EXHIBITION PROGRAM



DISRUPTIVE (ILL) LOGIC

ROBERT ANDREW

14 NOVEMBER - 2 DECEMBER 2017

DISRUPTIVE (ILL) LOGIC EXHIBITION BY ROBERT ANDREW

Essay By Jan Oliver

Robert Andrew's engrossing, kinetic mnemonic palimpsests offer a way to contemplate and inquire into issues, contradictions and paradoxes that are inherent in his own, particular heritage. While beginning in the personal, Andrew assists viewers to expand our questioning into the spheres of wider Australian and global issues with respect to mutable and subjective histories. We are able to place ourselves physically and socio-politically within the liminal spaces that he creates.

In moving around and through the complex work titled: *Disruptive (Ill) Logic*, there is the opportunity to become a dialogic participant. A private or collective conversation of questioning is stimulated. Questions on how the mechanisms are actually working can flow into questions of whether the water-based images are producing readable words. If so, whose words and from which language? The bleeds of ochres also stimulate the senses and create landscapes of memory that bring together the known and the unknown with the precisely controlled and the unpredictable random.

These conjunctions come from Andrew's immersion in researching materiality, open-sourced research possibilities, computer programming, conceptual analysis and the reality of the mutability of history. His archival research and lived experiences are based on the amalgam of acknowledged and hidden histories from his Yawuru people from Rubibi (Broome in the Kimberley Region of Western Australia) and his Philippino-Anglo heritage. Scraping back the historical and experiential layers both metaphorically and physically is part of the way that Andrew reveals and comes to understand his 'life writing'.

In describing this active 'life writing' as an opportunity to step beyond either biography or autobiography, Andrew sees this as a way to open up possibilities for multiple strands and voices of inquiry. In using Yawuru language words, he addresses what is held and what is lost in acts of translation. Andrew speaks of ways that the binary nature of computer language mirrors the binary control of colonising technologies such as written text. He takes control of the command-based nature of written, computer-text and creates new layers of use. He employs his competence in a new language of computer-text to act against the control that written legislation and written documents of colonising and invading forces have had on his Yawuru family and culture. *Disruptive (Ill) Logic* speaks to Andrew's experiences and influences of the unknown and the known and of uncertainty and certainty.

Andrew lives with, engages with and presents notions of parallel, mutable histories. In so doing he is constantly operating within and creating 'between spaces'. He is mapping space, place and experience for us. In the gallery, in order to map space he uses water, earth and metallic wires. These are materials that have all played important roles in his life. While raised in Perth, he frequently spent time in coastal, red-earthed Rubibi country. When living in coast-close Perth, from a young age, he manipulated machines and wires to create intercommunication systems between spaces in his family's home.

In the installation there is no divorce between the influences of his text-based, mechanical cultures and his oral-based, Yawuru culture. Rather he disrupts the illogic of historical impositions on his Yawuru culture and creates new visions. Using distinctly different materials, Andrew creates a vibrant conversation where each element or influence speaks across and to the other.

On the gallery windows there are soft, filmic, fluid, dissolving forms of whiteout that explore the between spaces of Andrew's experience. There is uncertainty about what is being dissolved and there is an uncertainty about what is behind and underneath the layers of ochres. In contrast to the unpredictable reveal, there is a geometric 'dance' of precisely placed and programmed, slow moving metallic wires. In both segments of the work, time is required to observe what is revealed and what is performed. While this performative work is not participatory in the purest form, of viewers being able to move and manipulate elements, it is participatory in the lure to inhabit the spaces and to watch and wait as elements change, morph and unfold.

Over the years, every iteration of Andrew's ochre, water and experimental mechanical work brings forward further meetings from different aspects of his life. New data is presented and transformed. Andrew offers engaging challenges and uncertainty about what is past, present or future and where, as viewer, one physically and politically positions one-self within the moving and mutable spaces created.

Jan Oliver has been a tutor and mentor of Contemporary Indigenous Visual Arts students since 1989.