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A World of Things

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A World of Things

Abstract

A World of Things is an experimental image-based collaborative installation composed of three image collections. Each collection approaches a set of objects via the photographic image. This wunderkammer makes references to natural history and scientific research, maquette theatre, and pre-cinema optical devices. The cyanotype series and photographic prints form ecologies between objects and draw attention to palpability of photochemical processes, things, and their ghostly image. While a set of ten miniature dioramas invite viewers to examine 'a world of things' on a number of spatial scales. The collections immerse viewers into the different physical, astronomical, and biological phenomenon, suggested by the multiple layers within the images. The title of the exhibition, A World of Things, refers to the woodblock series Momoyagusa by Kamisaka Sekka, where the artist depicted encounters between people, the seasons, everyday objects, and events in sixty prints housed in three albums. Analogously, employing a hybrid collection of visualizing technologies, A World of Things, instigates an encounter between the viewer, imaging processes, and the things they depict. The work was exhibited at the Huw Davies Gallery from 30 July to 23 August 2015.

Keywords

world, things

Disciplines

Arts and Humanities | Law

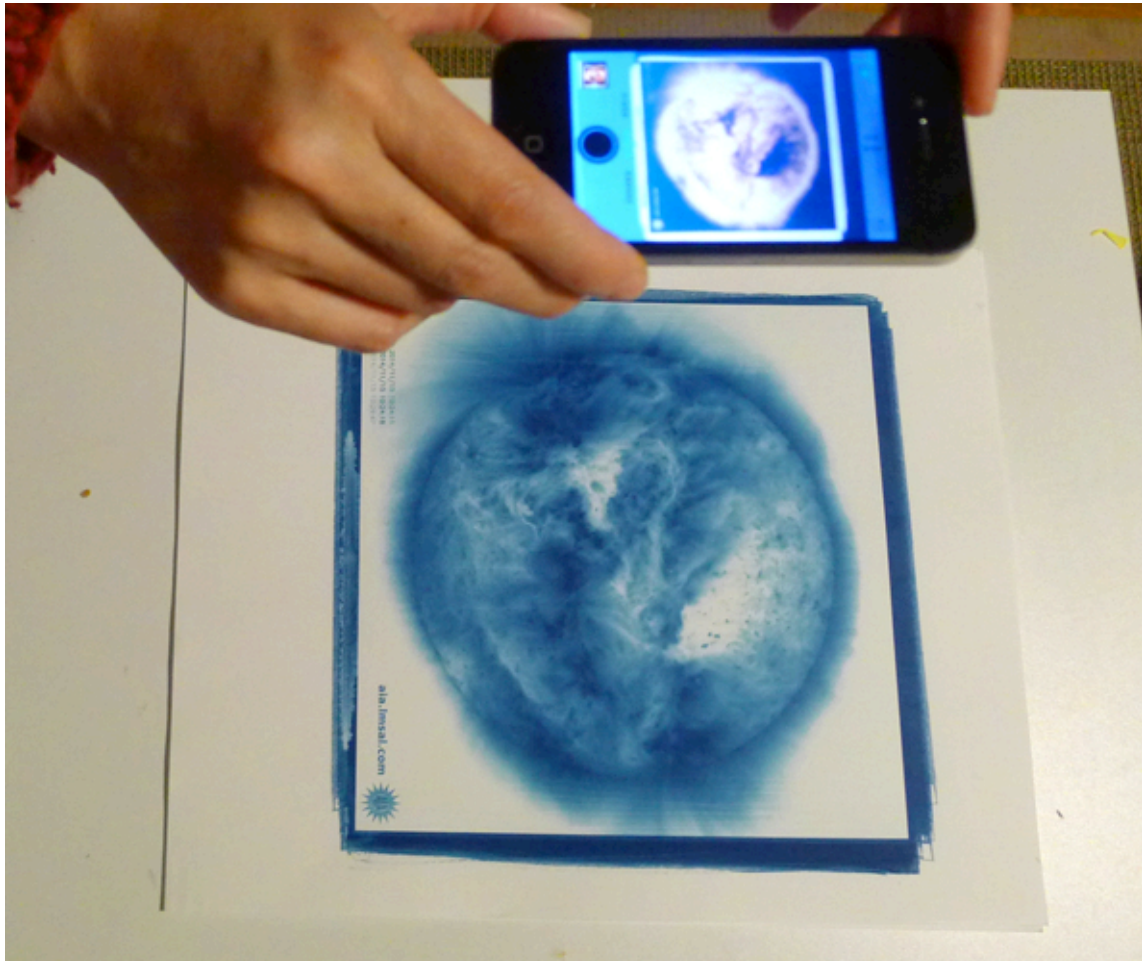
Publication Details

R. Bridgeman and J. Law 2015 A World of Things PhotoAccess Canberra Huw Davies Gallery 30 July - 23 August 2015

HUW DAVIES GALLERY

30 July – 23 August 2015

A World of Things | Jo Law and Redmond Bridgeman



A World of Things is an experimental image-based collaboration between Jo Law and Redmond Bridgeman. The exhibition is composed of a number of image collections. Each collection approaches a set of objects via the photographic image and converse with each other in their content, scale, and presentation.

Cyanotype and photographic prints form ecologies between objects and draw attention to palpability of photochemical processes, things, and their ghostly image. The dioramas, collectively titled 'Some Useful Values' invite viewers to examine 'a world of things' on a number of spatial scales. Playing with the form of perspective boxes of the 18th century and maquette theatres used in stage set design, these boxes immerse the viewers into the different physical, astronomical, and biological phenomena, suggested by the multiple layered photographic images.

This collaborative installation makes references to natural history and scientific collections, curiosity cabinets, the tradition of the *wunderkammer*, maquette theatre and pre-cinema optical devices. The title of the exhibition refers to the woodblock series *Momoyagusa* by Kamisaka Sekka. In three albums, consisting of sixty prints in total, Sekka depicted encounters between people, the seasons, everyday objects, and events. Employing a hybrid collection of visualizing technologies, *A World of Things* instigates an encounter between the viewer, imaging processes, and the things they depict.

List of Works (all works are for sale, price on application)

Some Useful Values, 2015

This series of 10 dioramas titled 'Some Useful Values' derives data from chemistry textbook. Each of the 10 dioramas presents a scene that incorporates a set of values denoted by powers of 10 using images of significance sourced from the public domain.

Diorama 01

10 to the power of -15 m, radius of proton; 10 to the power of -10 m, diameter of hydrogen atom

This diorama presents animated views of 'the first direct observation of the orbital structure of an excited hydrogen atom, made using a newly developed "quantum microscope" captured by Aneta Stodolna of the FOM Institute for Atomic and Molecular Physics and her colleagues in 2013.

Diorama 02

10 to the power of -7 m, wavelength of visible light ($5 \times 10^{-7} \text{ m}$)

This diorama replicates Isaac Newton's experiments of 1671 in miniature, when he separated sunlight into a colour spectrum using a glass prism. The background image is an illustration drawn by Newton which was included in his letter to the Royal Society of 1 January 1671 when the colour spectrum was recombined back into white light using a lens and a second prism.

Diorama 03

10 to the power of -6 m, diameter of human blood corpuscle ($7.5 \times 10^{-6} \text{ m}$)

This scene stimulating a view inside a human blood vessel is created using 'a scanning electron microscope image of normal circulating human blood'. The scan was created by Bruce Wetzel and Harry Schaefer for the National Cancer Institute. The image description reads: 'One can see red blood cells, several white blood cells including lymphocytes, a monocyte, a neutrophil, and many small disc-shaped platelets, showing leukocytes, red blood cells and platelets.'

Diorama 04

10 to the power of -4 m, diameter of single strand of lighting flex; 10 to the power of -3 m, diameter of single stranded 5A conductor

This scene is created using the illustration *Lighting through the Ages* by Maurice Dessertenne. The small document pinned on the right of the box is a reproduction of U.S. Patent 0,223,898 by Thomas Edison for an improved electric lamp, dated 27 January 1880. Incandescent lighting is the mechanism of passing electric current through wire filaments installed inside a bulb filled with inert gases. Both Edison's and Joseph Swan's bulbs used carbon filaments.

Diorama 05

10 to the power of 0, length of standard brick (0.25 m); recommended 'module' for house building (0.3 m); height of man (1.8m); height of modern two-storey house to eaves (5.0m)

This is human scale. It is interesting that the chemistry textbook has chosen these objects as examples. Thinking about these standards, modern architecture comes to mind. Walter Gropius is the standard man here and his Bauhaus building in Dessau is the standard modern building built with the standard brick.

Diorama 06

10 to the power of 1, length of cricket pitch (20 m)

The image is a painting dated 1817 by an unknown artist. It shows view of Geneva's Plaine de Plainpalais with cricket players. The format of the box is of a simple diorama, also known as a perspective box. The image is separated into four pictorial planes digitally and installed evenly through the depth of the box.

Diorama 07

10 to the power of 2, length of R.M.S Titanic (269 m), wavelength of radio waves (1 MHz 300 m)

The foreground and background of these dioramas are two photographs of icebergs that were suspected to have been responsible for the sinking of the Titanic. The background image is of an iceberg floating near the site of the disaster. The author of the image is unknown and the photograph is kept at the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. The foreground image was taken by the chief steward of the liner Prinz Adalbert. It is titled *How Large was the Iceberg that Sank the Titanic* and archived at the Navigation Center, United States Coast Guard.

Diorama 08

10 to the power of 3, height of Mount Everest (8,848 m); 10 to the power of 4, maximum depth of the ocean, Mariana Trench (10,971 m)

The format of this box references the portable moving panorama popular from the late 17th to early 19th centuries. This box, however, only consists of a single rotating view rather than a scrolling painting controlled

by two winders. Two images are on view: German cartographer Otto Krummel's map of the Mariana Trench from 1907, and an image taken by ASTER (Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer) instrument aboard NASA's Terra satellite. Krummel's map is believed to be the first standalone map of the Mariana Trench, discovered in 1875. NASA's photograph shows glacier lakes in the Bhutan-Himalaya which are 'wasting at alarming and accelerating rates'. The background image was created by NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center Scientific Visualization Studio and shows the Earth drained of water.

Diorama 09

10 to the power of 6, radius of Moon (1.7×10^6), radius of Earth (6×10^6); 10 to the power of 8, distance Earth-Moon (4×10^8);

This diorama is a composite of 3 images:

1. The lunar surface in mid-ground is from the photograph known as 'Earthrise', taken from the Lunar Orbiter I in 1966, by astronauts, Commander Frank Borman, Command Module Pilot Jim Lovell, and Lunar Module Pilot William Anders. The lined texture of the image originates from the photograph being transmitted back to Earth on 24 December 1968 during a live broadcast when the module was in orbit.
2. The foreground is extracted from photograph of the astronaut Charles M. Duke Jr. taken during Lunar Module pilot of the Apollo 16 mission by John W. Young at Station no. 1, the Descartes landing site on 21 April 1971.
3. The moving image at the back is a contemporary visualisation of NASA's fleet of 18 earth-observing satellites and the International Space Station as of February 2015. NASA's description reads, 'These satellites measure rainfall, solar irradiance, clouds, sea surface height, ocean salinity, and other aspects of the global environment. Together, they provide a picture of the Earth as a system.'

The composite in the diorama captures human scale in relation to the celestial bodies closest to us by referring to shared memories and public imagination of our physical experiences of these places.

Diorama 10

10 to the power of 15, 1 light year (9.5×10^{15} m); 10 to the power of 16, distance of nearest star (4.6×10^{16} m); 10 to the power of 21, radius of local galaxy (Milky Way); 10 to the power of 22, average distance between galaxies; 10 to the power of 26, radius of observable universe (3×10^{26} m)

The observable universe is defined as all that can be observed from at any one point in time. As light travels at a limited speed (of roughly 3×10^8 ms⁻¹ in a vacuum), this spherical view changes over time and the observable universe of each location in space differs. The image in this diorama is known as Hubble Ultra-Deep Field, composited from data collected by the Hubble Space Telescope from 24 September 2003 to 16 January 2004. This image presents a view in time (approximately 13 billion years ago). The Hubble Space Telescope celebrated its twenty-fifth birthday in April 2015.

Photographic prints

1. *The Sun* 2014, collodio-chloride printing-out paper, 49.5 x 49.5cm
2. *RGB (1-3)* 2015, cyanotypes, 55 x 45cm. Original image: NASA SDO/A (Solar dynamic observatory/ Atmospheric Imaging Assembly)
3. *The Moon* 2014, cyanotype, 55 x 45cm
4. *Ghost Nebula, Hubble Telescope* 2014, collodio-chloride printing-out paper, NASA, Hubble Telescope, 56.5cm x 49.5cm
5. *Hawk Moth, NSW* 2014, 48 x 33cm
6. *Escarpment, Illawara NSW* 2013, silver gelatin photograph, 54.5 x 44.5cm
7. *Kai Tak Airport, Kowloon City, Hong Kong* 2011, silver gelatin photograph, 47 x 37cm
8. *Two Peoples Bay, Western Australia* 2010, silver gelatin photograph, 55 x 30cm
9. *Water, Two Peoples Bay, Western Australia* 2013, silver gelatin photograph, 47 x 37cm
10. *Fire Finch, NSW* 2011, silver gelatin photograph, 47 x 37cm
11. *Jarradale, Western Australia* 2013, silver gelatin photograph, 40 x 30cm
12. *Kowloon Tong, Hong Kong* 2013, silver gelatin photograph, 44 x 34cm
13. *Mantis* 2013, silver gelatin photograph, 54 x 44cm
14. *Hand Gestures (1-9)* 2014, cyanotypes, 50 x 40cm

Please Note: The images of the sun are negatives. To view them as positives with an iPhone or iPad, go to Settings/General/Accessibility and turn on 'Invert Colours'. Other devices have similar functions, such as camera setting 'Colour Effect - Negative'.

Hand Gestures (9) can be changed into gifs using an app such as Cinemagram or Giffer. You will need a smart phone and an app. You can choose an app. and find out more at www.pocket-lint.com/news/129760-how-to-make-animated-gifs-directly-from-your-smartphone

About the artists

Jo Law works with divergent media and materials to develop a cartographic aesthetics of experience. She has a wonderful breadth of practice that spans moving images, drawings, animation, kinetics, and electronics.

She draws upon a wide range of sources from her cultural heritage, immediate environment, to science and mathematics. Her works were screened at *No Trans-national—Liquid Borders and Empty Promises* at the ISE Cultural Foundation, New York (2012), Loop Festival, Barcelona (2015), and *Both Sides Now 2* which toured Hong Kong, China, and Britain in 2015. Her installation works were included in *Awfully Wonderful*, Performance Space in 2011 and in *BEAPworks* at the Perth International Art Festival 2004. Her collaborative projects include *Slowing Down Time* with Louise Curham, Michele Elliot, and Sue Healy, and *Sixty Second Thoughts* with writer Ali Jane Smith.

Redmond Bridgeman is an artist and researcher working in the area of para-photography. In his practice, he explores a number of alternative and antiquated photographic techniques including cyanotypes, salted paper prints, and collodion emulsion in parallel with conventional silver gelatin prints and digital imaging. He completed a PhD in 2014 entitled *From Beyond: A Speculative and Realist Photography?* which examined the status of the photographic image, with reference to occult and spirit photography, in the light of emergent new materialist and speculative realist philosophies. His creative works have been exhibited in *Photochemical Games*, Belconnen Art Centre in 2013, and *Experimenta* in 1996. His previous collaborations with Jo Law have been included in 'Fremantle Stories', *Yellow Vest Syndrome* at the Fremantle Art Centre in 2008, *The Films of Jo Law + Redmond Bridgeman* at the Teaching and Learning Cinema in Sydney in 2006, *Interactiva: Multimedia and CD rom exhibition* at Museum of Contemporary Art, Mexico in 2000, and *Drive by*, multiple sites around Perth Metropolitan area in 2000.

www.redmondbridgeman.net

Public program

Sunday 23 August, 12pm

Artist talks



Redmond Bridgeman, *The Sun* (detail) 2014, collodio-chloride printing out paper, 49.5 x 49.5cm