Image: Cloudscape. Artist and photographer: Cameron Robbins

Gauge is an investigation by a group of artists and scientists into weather, water and scale.

Created by **Madeleine Flynn** and **Tim Humphrey** with **Graeme Leak**, performer/composer/inventor; **Rosemary Joy**, miniature percussion designer; **Cameron Robbins**, visual artist, sculptor; **Dr Michael Roderick,** Senior Fellow and Associate Professor Research School of Earth Sciences & Research School of Biology ANU and **Dr Adrian Pearce** Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science and Systems Engineering, University of Melbourne. The investigation is expressed through the disparate processes of five artists working in contrasting ways across the disciplines of sculpture, music, sound and new media.

This research/development showing in the **Gauge** process sees artists responding to discussions, readings and field trips that the group have undertaken together over the last eight months culminating in a two week residency at the Meat Market.

www.gaugeresearch.org.

Creative development showing:

Arts House, Meat Market

5 Blackwood Street, North Melbourne

Sunday 18 December, 2011

3pm

Lighting Design by Jen Hector

Thanks to the ArtsHouse team, and particularly to Jim Stenson, who has gone up and over to help us during our time here. The artistic team would like to thank Dr Adrian Pearce and Dr Michael Roderick whose willingness, curiosity and openness to the creative process has been greatly inspiring. This project has been supported by the Inter-Arts Office of the Australia Council of the Arts and CultureLAB

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Notes from each of the artists follows:

Cameron Robbins

How old is a glass of water?
From the astronomers we know that enormous volumes of water reside in different parts of the cosmos, and all through our galaxy. Water ice can be found on many of our planets and moons in the solar system, and also in the comets. Water can be created from hydrogen and oxygen in the shockwaves of exploding stars, where many of the heavier elements and minerals are created. From these metamorphosed star ashes, clouds of material eventually condense to form planets such as the Earth. This means that our drinking water is older than 4.5 billion years. When we see water bubbling out of the ground in hot springs and volcanoes, part of it has been percolating from the hot interior since the planet was born.

My works for Gauge reflect the upward motion of water from within the earth to the clouds.

1. *Plutonic Waters (Bubble Chamber).* materials: 160 litres rainwater, Acrylic, compressor, gauges, timber, lightbox, dimensions approx 180 x 180 x 180cm
2. *Cloudscape.* materials : 2,700 litres rainwater, vinyl pool, ultrasonic humidifier, fan

Graeme Leak

Drip Installation v2.3, 2011.

Three microphones, galvanised downpipes, hydrophone, melting ice, water

Drip Installation converts everyday sound into music via tube resonance. Microphones are suspended in the ends of tubes, 'listening' to the world through drain pipes. Two are focused into the outside world, delivering a two-note constant drone that underpins the soundscape [they are in the kitchen if you want to have a look]. A third is focused on the drips from melting ice, while a hydrophone listens to the drips from under the water.

The sonic beauty of water has been central to my work since 1980's. It is both a medium for sound waves and a sound source in itself. It can also play the piano. The interaction between the five artists and two scientists in GAUGE has been a wonderful source of inspiration, shared experience and conversation. As well as contributing my dripping water piece to this creative development I have also adopted the role of sound designer, which I wasn't expecting, pulling together the range of disparate inputs to an orchestrated whole. The individual pieces keep surprising us in the way they work together sonically and visually. The aural landscape that you are listening to is totally live, combining acoustic events with live electronics. I love it. It's a very nice playground.

Rosemary Joy

Inspired by Dr Michael Roderick's compelling depiction of the Murray Darling problems, the water cycle and public perceptions of it; and after reading Michael Cathcart's account in *The Water Dreamers* of the decline of Sydney's first freshwater supply, the Tank Stream, I have been playing with mud and devising a piece for percussion based on scale representations of London and Melbourne's water storage capacity and the rainfall in each city.

1. *Water Storage Capacity* materials:African rosewood, danish oil, beeswax.The score uses Melbourne's daily rainfall statistics for December 2010 -2011 and average monthly rainfall levels in London. With thanks to Adam Stewart for construction of the boxes.
2. *Wallowing* materials: clay, packing sand, water, aluminium trays

Madeleine Flynn and Tim Humphrey

What's yours is mine?

The amount of freshwater in the world remains constant. Uneven distribution and increased demand for freshwater creates scarcity. Our works for Gauge are inspired by the downward fall of water in the cycle from the cloud to the watertable. Complementary with Cam's work, we imagine a closed system where the amount of water in the system is allocated and constant, but dispersed in distribution. Inspired by the water cycle description from Dr Michael Roderick and ongoing discussions with Dr Adrian Pearce re orchestration in music/sound and process.

1. *Waterpiano* materials: Beale 1942 piano, bitumen paint, on-site 2400 L water tank collecting water from Meat Market roof, pump, hose, drip irrigation system, water container modulated by live weather data from installed on-site weather station via a custom made *Pure Data* electro-acoustic patch.

2. *The Gauge* materials: Gauge, falling numbers generated live from installed on-site weather station. (with Cameron Robbins). We have also worked with the team to create the living, breathing soundworld.