2 . S l i p p a g e s **Abstract by Kathy Smith 2004**

The primary objective of this research is to create a digital multi-media animation entitled *Slippages* that explores the relationship between three-dimensional time and three-dimensional space and how this perception has naturally transposed to the evolution of digital technology.

The significance in general terms is that more than ever we can convey our perception of existence through art and technology. I want to show the correlation of three-dimensional time to the evolution of creative processes, such as painting, photography, installation, 2D/3D animation, sound and interactive media.

On a simple level the significance of three-dimensional time correlates as such:
Time one: the fourth dimension As described by Priestley: *"the fourth dimension is our waking ego conscious existence the before and after line past and future".[1]*
 This can be experienced through a gallery, installation or theater, the three-dimensional physical space in which we exist and interact in real time.
On a digital level 3D animation software emulates this correlation through the virtual three dimensional world of the X,Y and Z axis and the parallel timeline running across frames to indicate temporal experience or the fourth dimension.

Time two: the fifth dimension, as described by Priestley: "*the fifth dimension where dreams belong forms a surface in relation to this line. Along it is the perpetual now of any given moment. In this fifth dimension is the true eternity, not unending movement along the fourth dimension but all the perpetual nows." [2]*
"Time two might well seem at first an uncontrollable dream world through which consciousness wanders like Alice on the other side of the looking glass." [3]

Time two correlates to fine art and animation and the power of these media to convey dreamlike narratives through non-linear image processes. Further enhanced through digital effects and software development.

Time three: the sixth dimension as described by Priestley: *"the sixth dimension the sum of all possibilities. If we think of this line of material history really as a line, then as one possibility is actualized and others are not, this line cannot move up or down in two dimensions but must curve around in three. So on this theory of the two dreams we can accept Ouspensky's"[4] "The three-dimensionality of time is completely analogous to the three-dimensionality of space"[5] and J.G. Bennett's "This leads to the notion of the third kind of time connected in some way with power to connect or disconnect potential and actual"[6]*

Time three correlates to interactive media, *"the power to connect or disconnect the potential and the actual" [6]*

Slippages will use these structures to explore the mysteries of time, life and consciousness.

3 . S l i p p a g e s *Research Proposal by Kathy Smith*

Does digital media allow us to experience the non-linear narrative of consciousness, time and space?

I truly believe the art form of animation developed as a way to reflect our own physical and mental evolutionary process. The infinite connection to everything in existence is the underlying force that makes animation a powerful medium for conveying complex ideas, dreams and emotions.

As Alisdair Foster wrote in his paper Art in a Post-Newtonian Paradigm, *"Art is the language of perception and science has delivered perception as the only reality"[7]*
Through perception we are able to store memories, experiences and accumulate some sense of *being* in time. Images particularly represent emotional experiences that move us in a powerful and visceral way.

Art forms such as drawing, painting and photography have continually allowed us to draw on these memories and subconscious imagery and to re-express these experiences via our perception of existence. The advent of film and moving images, - animation, further opened up the potential for exploration of non-linear narrative that existed in static forms such as painting and drawing.

As an example, painting can define a concept by composition, color, and layering. What has always fascinated me about animation is its potential to capture or provoke a thought via kinetic energy and sound. Animation, by its very nature, adds another dimension to painting by adding temporal, spatial, and aural movement and space to static images. Constantly moving, animation allows the viewer to become part of an artwork's creation. The brushstrokes, shapes, and ideas are seen, passed by, and arrived at, - an animated film concretizes the thought process that creates a static work by incorporating the physical senses of movement and sound.

In a sense animation can convey the conceptual process of painting, which in turn reflects the multiple dimensions of time, not just the linear cause and effect of uni-dimensional chronological passing time or traditional narrative, as we know it.

So through this work I hope to explore this question. Is digital technology a natural evolutionary process of the human mind and a necessary development to experience multi-dimensional time and consciousness more fully?

*In terms of the research design as stated previously *Slippages* will be about the mysteries of time, life, and consciousness. It is illuminated through two elderly people a man and a woman who have passed on. The moments they experience in the fourth dimension [1] are poignant real time moments of their actual existence or what was.

The looping narratives that are depicted in the two dimensional black pen sequences are their combined "consciousness" traveling in the fifth dimension as J. B. Priestley notes the *"uncontrollable dream world"[3]*

Moments from each of their lives will be looped and repeated but the narrative will be randomly changed and at that point the image will potentially move into the three–dimensional world signifying the point at which the potential becomes the actual.

This succession of sequences will continue as a way to show the multiple dimensions of any one moment in anyone's existence, and even though the events may not have happened to either character it is a way to show what might have been, and what could be. This correlates to the sixth dimension as quoted by Priestley on page one.

Slippages is inspired partly by Chapter 18 of Joan Lindsay's '*Picnic at Hanging Rock'* and the commentary of Yvonne Rousseau. The structure of this piece will follow the three dimensions of time theory discussed by 20th century theorists, J.B. Priestley, P.D. Ouspensky, J.W. Dunne, and J.G. Bennett.

These theories inspire me most, as they explore the potential for conscious existence beyond the physical now. Underlying this is also the sense of time shifts that I often experience in the Australian landscape. It is as if you exist in a place whose dreaming state or virtual self is often revealed to us through the ancient environment. I also want to show the psychological link of humanity to the environment and how this permeates our sense of place.

In terms of placement in the relevant literature of the field my previous work is noted for its experimentation with concept, structure and sound. With *Slipppages* I want to incorporate traditional media with new media, not for purely aesthetic reasons, but to show the evolution of consciousness through time and the physical perception of information and how this is stored. I am interested in cognition and how we perceive based upon our own set of experiences and emotions. Structurally I am interested in the infinite possibilities of any one moment, the inner experience of time running simultaneously with the concurrent or divergent time of outer happenings. As Maurice Nicoll states in 'Living Time'
"Remember that we do not live only in this little visible moment but in a world extended in every direction, visible and invisible [8]

The work will comprise of a series of installation spaces or theaters with objects in the physical world that can be recorded by the brain and experienced in the fourth dimension.

The second component, which is the main focus of this application and research, will be a series of organic and digital animations looping and repeating various narratives that incorporate elements of the physical installation space. This will represent the fifth dimension or dream experience.

The final component will be an interactive installation that will allow the viewer to physically interact with actual objects that will trigger a series of new potentialities. Allowing the viewer to connect or disconnect these.

I believe these are important hypotheses/questions to address contextually so that it is clear how traditional art forms and animation in particular developed to digital media as a way of exploring the mystery of existence. New media is *new* in its technology but not in the conceptual processes of creation, this has existed since early artistic expression. What I hope to address is that digital media is giving us a more complete understanding of how we perceive and how we experience time.

In terms of significantly advancing a field, I would like to give an example of why digital media-animation is such a powerful means for expression. Indigenous cultures such as the Aboriginal people of Australia are now finding a way to voice their philosophy, which is perfectly articulated through digital media and animation. Why? Because their dream time stories were never a written text or monumental buildings. It relied on pictorial metamorphosis and oral translation, ritual and

song to explain what is primarily an ongoing continuum or belief system. As Patrick Dodson an Aboriginal leader describes:

"The Dreaming or The Law includes past and ongoing activities of creative and life-giving forces which always retain a sense of imminence and transcendence, of the actual and the potential" [9]

It is interesting that a culture, which never had monuments to destroy, has survived by a philosophy that is tied to the landscape and the unconscious understanding of our existence and place in the world. As we advance in digital technology through perception this is possibly the discovery of a higher understanding of existence, which was previously thought to be primitive.

It also reflects as Alisdair Foster wrote: *"The world where perception is the new reality, the role of the artist and the place of visual art are increasingly important. Already in the more hard-nosed areas of business artists are at the heart of research. Commerce is increasingly about the flow of information, of ideas, rather than the production of material objects."[10]*

My research plan and design methods will follow the outline described on pg.2* in terms of the structure of this work. As I previously stated the ultimate goal would be to exhibit this in three parts, however at this point I am only concerned with creating the second component, as it will provide the research and hopefully the funding for the other two sections. It is through my documentation of these elderly people's experiences that I will be able to construct the other environments or places in time.

In the arts and particularly in my own research I follow a basic and applied approach. After years of hand creating works I learned a way to combine and re-use my painting and drawing in a collage and re-arrangement process that I would then draw out into image-movements. My image-movements differ from storyboards in that the sequential movement or narrative is not driven by a descriptive text or storyline, but by the images themselves. The arrangement of visual elements flowing into, or connecting with, new images presents surprising, dream-like narratives.

This free flow of ideas based upon the characters memories will allow me to express the multiple dimensions of time and consciousness. And through digital technology, which is the animation of all media, we can slip back and forth between the potential and actual connecting and disconnecting as we choose.

I intend to interview six elderly couples about their understanding of existence and time. I will ask common questions to evoke a memory or response. I intend to overlap and merge the narratives as a way to show the multiple dimensions of anyone's existence and what might have been or could be. It will hopefully illuminate universal themes regardless of race or culture.

The sort of obstacles I anticipate dealing with will be the technology and how to present this variety of media and ideas in a cohesive format that creates a successful artwork.
In the past I have struggled independently with no technical support and it is this past experience that motivates me to seek assistance with this project. My 23 yrs of fine art practice and 10 years of experience in working with 3D software have already given me a strong conceptual and technical background in how to utilize this media. However, I am always striving through my work to allow the ideas and emotions to transcend the technology. Support such as this will help me to further my research and successfully seek further funding.

Sources

1. Priestley, J.B. *"Man & Time"* Bloomsbury Books, 1989 pg. 302

2. ibid, Priestley, J.B. *"Man & Time"* Bloomsbury Books, 1989

3. ibid, Priestley, J.B. *"Man & Time"* Bloomsbury Books, 1989 pg. 302

4. ibid, Priestley, J.B. *"Man & Time"* pg. 296

5. ibid, Ouspensky, P.D *"A New Model for the Universe"* Dover Publications New York 1997 pg. 425

6. ibid, Priestley, J.B. *"Man & Time"* pg. 296 quoting from J.G Bennett's *"The Dramatic Universe"*

7. Foster, Alisdair *"Art in a Post-Newtonian Paradigm"* pg. 3. Art of Sight Art, of Mind paper 1999 National Association for Visual Art Conference

8. Nicoll, Maurice *"Living Time"*

9. Ryan, Veronica *"From Singing Sticks to Writing Sticks"* Catholic Education Office of Western Australia 2001, quoting Patrick Dodson Aboriginal leader (1998:1) pg.33

10. ibid Foster, Alisdair *"Art in a Post-Newtonian Paradigm"* pg. 3