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SCANZ

[introduction and thanks]

THIS TEXT IS THE RESULT OF THE WORK OF MANY PEOPLE, AND TO HONOUR AND REFLECT THIS INPUT, THE WORDS OF MULTIPLE AUTHORS ARE USED. THE IDENTITY OF EACH AUTHOR OR RESOURCE IS RECOGNISED BY THE USE OF DIVERSE FONTS. JUST AS THE LIVES, CULTURES, INCLINATIONS AND PROJECTS OF THOSE ATTENDING SCANZ OVERLAPPED, SO TOO DO TEXT AND IMAGE, IN THIS RECORD OF THE EVENT.

THIS STRATEGY DECENTRALISES THE VARIOUS ROLES OF ORGANISERS, WRITERS AND PARTICIPANTS AND PLACES ALL IN A STATE OF FLUX, JUST AS OCCURRED DURING THE RESIDENCY. SIMILARLY A DIVERSITY OF LAYOUTS ARE PRESENTED, REFLECTING THE WIDER AIMS OF EMBRACING DIVERSITY AND HYBRIDISED SOLUTIONS.

THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE TO THANK FOR SCANZ - CO-ORGANISER TRUDY LANE, ADAM HYDE, JANINE RANDERSON, JUSTIN MORGAN, KIM GREIG, BARBARA MORRIS, JILL WARNER, CHRISTINE LEE, GILLIAN FULLER, KATE ROBERTS, MERCEDES VICENTE, DEBORAH LAWLER-DORMER, ROD BENTHAM, CHRISTINE HOFKENS, GUNA NADARAJAN, NINA CZEGLEDY, AND SEAN CUBITT. ORGANISATIONS WITHOUT WHOM THE EVENT COULD NOT HAVE OCCURRED INCLUDE CREATIVE NEW ZEALAND, THE TSB COMMUNITY TRUST, THE ROYAL NETHERLANDS EMBASSY, THE GOVETT-BREWSTER ART GALLERY, THE WESTERN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AT TARANAKI, THE GOETHE INSTITUT WELLINGTON, THE MOVING IMAGE CENTRE AND 92.3 THE MOST FM. ABOVE ALL, THANKS GOES TO THE ARTISTS FOR WILLINGLY GIVING THEMSELVES TO THE SPACE THAT WAS SCANZ.

ian m clothier new plymouth 2007





NOTES TO THE TEXT-IMAGES

This booklet must be read as a partial record only. Multiple author voices, gaps and overlaps in presentation are used, as is appropriate to a contemporary artist residency where multiple creative approaches and personalities of diverse cultural origin cohabitate. Occasionally images overtake the text, speaking their own story.

A number of words used in the text are not English in origin and for the benefit of international readers these are given here at the start, to allow what follows to flow without the necessity to interrupt the text with references to definitions. These words are: Maori [indigenous people of New Zealand]; tangata whenua [the people of the land]; taonga [treasure]; iwi [tribe]; Aotearoa [Maori name for New Zealand]; pounamu [jade or greenstone]; Waitaha [South Island tribe]; whare nui [meeting house]; whare kai [eating house]; marae [village or place of residence, usually consisting of whare nui and whare kai which are separated, among houses and other dwellings]; powhiri [formal welcoming onto a marae]; Owae marae [marae of local iwi - Ngati XXX]; kaumatua [respected elders of the iwi].

Regarding font voice throughout the body text, contributions from Jan Clothier are in Savoye LET Plain; Myriad Pro Light indicates writing by Sally McIntyre; Ken Gregory's words are given in Georgia Regular; text in Gloucester MT Extra Condensed Regular is resourced from the SCANZ website, authored by Trudy Lane; and the use of Verdana Regular indicates that funding application documents were the source, written by both Clothier and Lane.

[start]

The notions of rhizome [1] and complexity [2] are so well embedded in discourses ranging from art to business, science and philosophy that they do not need analysis here. There is however one aspect of complexity that needs illuminating, and strangely SCANZ, an artists residency in New Zealand Aotearoa in 2006, may prove to be a good case in point.

When discussing aspects of the rhizome such as multiplicity, and the behaviour of complex systems such as storms, there is an underlying sense of energistic flux that is not necessarily stated specifically, but taken as read.





The much discussed butterfly effect where a butterfly flaps it's wings, for example on Tonga, generating a storm in Los Angeles, is one case in point. While all involved appear to understand that fresh states of a complex system are nonlinear, and that this means one of several states might ensue from the butterfly flapping it's wings, trying to find someone who has written 'a butterfly flapping it's wings on Tonga generates a fine day in Los Angeles' or the equivalent is exasperating. There is a point to be made here: complexity can create calmness, as observed by official SCANZ blogger and writer Sally McIntyre.

The first thing I notice about the residency is simply how chilled out the atmosphere is, how comfortable, how pragmatic, and how collaborative. I have read that this has been a feature of the Polar/Solar





Circuit emphasis on informal space and peer-to-peer skill sharing, but it's interesting to see it. People are sitting quietly working at laptops in the main 'Lab' area, looking over or helping with each other's projects, and going off on, or planning various investigative forays into New Plymouth or into the Taranaki landscape. The room has an electronics area, with colourful wires and small insect-like transistors and capacitors strewn in an ordered chaos that only serves to offset the tables where titanium powerbooks hide their icons with an idiosyncratic-to-user array of stickers, spray paint and strips of X'd gaffer tape.

SCANZ

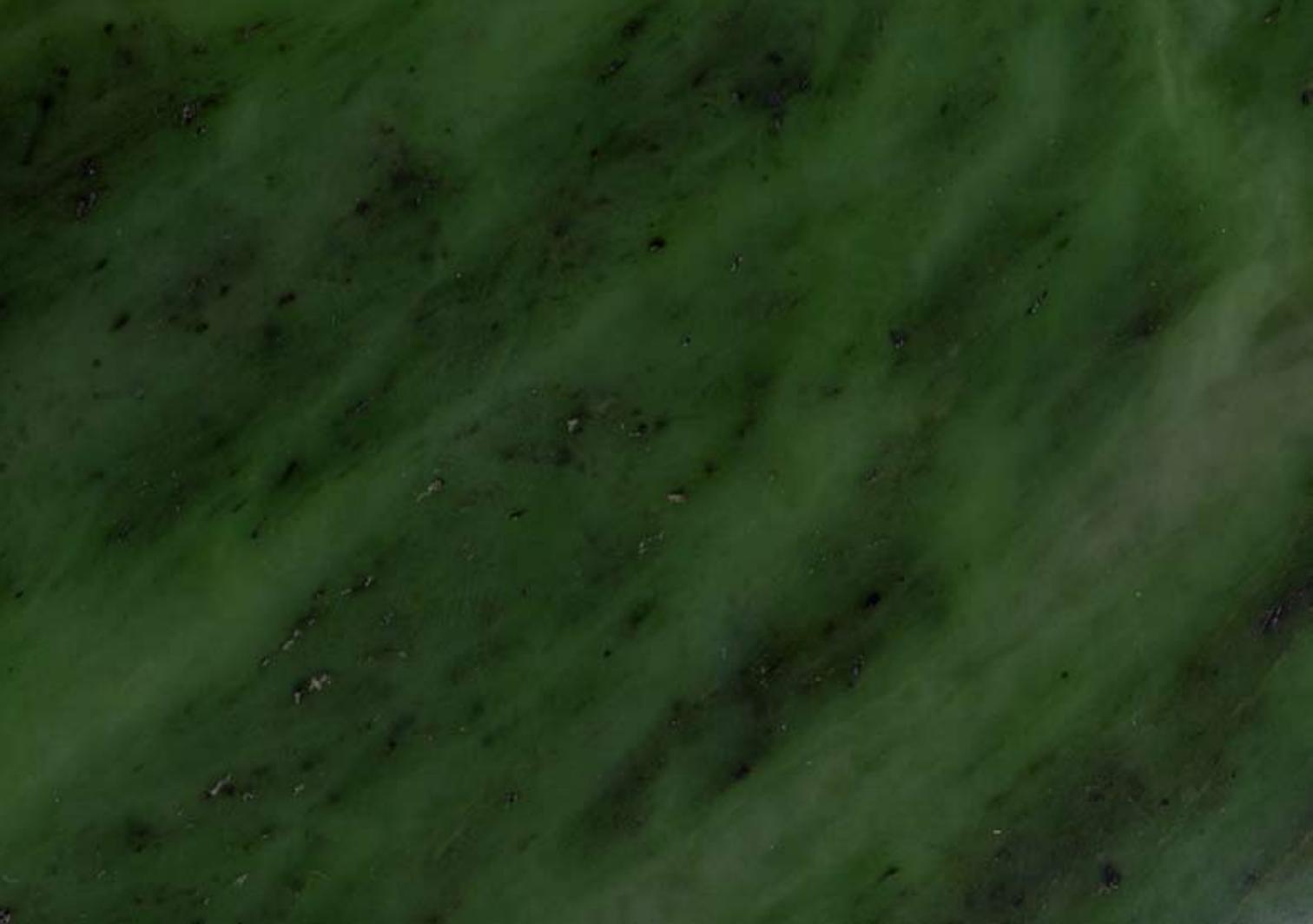


The cultural backgrounds of the participants presents an expanded diversity: there were New Zealanders living in New Zealand, and those based abroad; a Dutch artist with an American partner; one participant was born in Hungary and lived in Canada; one background included the triumvirate of Korean/Chinese/Canadian; there were two Americans from the West Coast and a German born artist who lives in New York; two other artists who also live in New York and two Australians; and those of Canadian origin. Multiply cultural background by media approach and personality, and there is all of the energy required for a full blown multiplicity and the energistic implications that follow. And yet, the opposite occurred: an amazing calmness, a heightened creative space where energy flowed freely and unobtrusively. There was a cascade of events that led to this condition, with the first impact on visitors being Taranaki's state of natural grace.



TE IKAROA-A-MA
1936







TE IKAROMA
1936

SCANZ

As Ken Gregory stated on his website: When I left for New Zealand everyone I mentioned the trip to was telling me how beautiful it is here. It's all true. Almost everywhere you look its postcard beautiful. Every morning as we wake up we are greeted by the wondrous songs of a bird singing. In the early morning air the sound echoes off the accommodation buildings and seems to come from several points at once. The volume and resonance that this bird is capable of is amazing. Yesterday I learned that it was a Tui and saw a pair of them in a tree.

The powhiri had an unexpected impact on the whole residency; it was the next fall in the cascade. In the middle of winter the sky was gorgeously blue and high sun soaked all it touched. The whare nui itself is an extraordinary taonga built during the high renaissance of marae building in the 1950's, under the programme arranged by Sir Apirana Ngata. The whare houses the ancestors of the iwi, a location where DNA and mythology meet. The architecture of Ouae marae is amazing, akin to the experience of being in a cathedral. Uplifting. At a point in the powhiri, the decision is taken to release from formal process so that all could speak and it turned out that the kaumatua were seriously interested in what the artists were up to. We were not just welcomed we were ushered into the arms of the wider iwi, taken under the protective cloak. It wasn't realised at the time, but an extraordinary connection had been formed.

The story of pounamu is quintessentially one of journey. Forged from the extreme energy of tectonic plate movement, pounamu is found in only a few places on earth. Having risen from the bowels of earth, chunks of the rock are extruded onto the surface of the earth, high up in mountain streams, locations that are held secret by both tangata whenua and jade carvers. According to the Waitaha, it was only after eight journeys to Aotearoa that ancestors penetrated the landscape into the mountains, and only after having then discovered pounamu, was the final decision to settle the territory made. Among the most highly treasured of materials among Maori, it was searched for, located, traded, carved and the possession of only the most senior and respected members of the iwi.

Walking (slowly) into N2, there is a group of artists clustered around the head of WITT's department of Maori Studies, Tengaruru Wineera. He has brought along various Taonga, including three Pounamu Patu, so old, that he doesn't know exactly how old, but to give us an idea, two have "been used", and have chips and cracks around the ridge of their blades, from, as he puts it, "bouncing off someone's skull". Derek asks to contact mic the Patu's surface, and soon we are listening to the sounds of a bone and fingernails rubbing over their highly resonant, glass-hard stone surfaces, which "sing". Then Derek takes all the Patu to a soundproofed room to record them more avidly. *Tengaruru gave a visual scan (p10) to this publication project.*

N2 was the main network space. ICT artist in residence Adam Hyde seen opposite standing on the left of the photograph, had arrived in New Plymouth early and done an extraordinary job of preparing the residency media lab, creating both a network and a place for creative engagement. The establishment of this space constituted a third step in the cascade toward freely flowing energy.





SCANZ

What was SCANZ? The letters of the acronym stand for Solar Circuit Aotearoa New Zealand. Polar Circuit was initiated by Tapio Makela in 1997. Hosted by the University of Lapland, an environment of healthy feedback, processes, problem solving and collaboration as a means of broadening concepts and networks for hybrid art production, was fostered.

Solar Circuit 2K2 was held in Tasmania, Australia in 2002. Partners included the University of Tasmania and the Tasmanian Museum. The residency portion was held on Maria Island, a wildlife sanctuary [3].

SCANZ: a visual arts new media residency and workshop for leading international and New Zealand practitioners to be held in New Plymouth from July 3rd – 16th 2006 [4].

The residency had two main themes: Connection/Disconnection and Environmental Response. These themes mapped onto the project, and national and international practice in many ways. The role of globalisation and diaspora in shaping contemporary cultural life has been remarked on in many contexts. SCANZ artists include international artists, New Zealand artists – those that live within this territory, and New Zealand international artists – those that reside beyond the territory. This is one way that Connection/Disconnection maps on to the project. Another way is the sense in which SCANZ artists as a group are usually connected via technology and disconnected in terms of geography. The project will bring artists together, under one sky where interaction is triggered and dynamic nonlinear associations forged in an environment where a generated sense of community is shared and paramount.

[projects]

Tengaruru then talks with Steve from C5 about comparative cultural notions of mapping and geographic locatedness in relation to people and objects. He explains that the mountain, Taranaki, is both a spiritual and geographic orientation gauge for its local people. We discover that a pool in the region C5 are leading a group to tomorrow morning has an intriguing history, specifically that when the diseases which attended colonization swept through local populations, this pool served a cleansing, even a purging function. Even now, newborn babies are taken to be washed in the pool. Although not everyone remembers this practice, Tengaruru says.

“Get lost with C5 searching for invisible waterfalls with a GPS receiver”, the wry sign Steve put on the notice board states. Technology and mythology met here. Later I read a post on Norie Neuemark and Maria Miranda’s blog which reads: “The work poses the question: is it possible to bring something that does not exist into existence by searching for it?”

Into this loosely interactive environment stepped the artists, an easy give and take driving proceedings. In such an atmosphere talk around the projects can be as engaging as the projects themselves.





Yesterday I tagged along with Alex who had organized a video shoot at a farm deep in the NZ sheepland with a top notch sheep-herder and his dogs. Before I left home I had a meeting with TRIP Contemporary Dance concerning doing a sound score for a dance work called Herding Instinct which is concerned with herding dogs and sheep. What a coincidence. So I shot some footage myself (with Alex's permission) as part of my research. It was a lucky day all around. Most of the time it is raining and/or cloudy (NZ winter). It was sunny all afternoon, then as we drove back it poured buckets.

"My process is far simpler than most of the artists here", Alex Monteith explains, before going on to talk about formal aspects of the work she is developing. Last Saturday, four video cameras were set up side by side, marking out a delimited visual area. A space, roughly that framed by the camera, was physically pegged out in the landscape. The local farmer Alex has been working with, who has won dog-trial competitions for his work, choreographed a flock of sheep, by using his voice to guide his three dogs, across the static space the cameras were recording. "It's essentially a meeting of two different sets of skills", Alex says. I listen to the voice of the farmer and the barking of the dogs echoing in the clear, still air, communicating something wordless about how clean and open that air is, and of the wideness of its attendant landscape.

That, alongside the long, unbroken shot which traverses the four frames, the rigidly formal framing, and the intent focus on gestural simplicity, bring a dignity and grandeur to the farmer's activity which is unavoidably readable as filmic-Russian. It is, in other words, like an episode of

Country Calendar as if it were filmed by Bela Tarr, Tarkovsky or Alexander Sukarov, although its reality is far from an exercise in auteurship, as Alex's shoot involved some of the other SCANZ artists volunteering their expertise, in a manner which seems the rule rather than the exception in SCANZ's open, skill-sharing environment (on her monitor is a still of Derek Holzer caught mid-stride, carrying a great big grey fluffy microphone...).

Meanwhile, the flock, in miniature on the other monitor, seems amoeba-like. In the gallery it will be a projection taking up an entire wall. There is something particularly compelling about the white blob of sheep, its individual animals subsumed, traversing the terrain so fluidly, as the tiny oscillating black dots of the dogs rocket at high speed around its doughy mass, snapping at its spillage. Sometimes the flock, like biscuit dough in a mould, seems to take the shape of other things, certain geographic landmasses, for instance. The contours of the green-on-green landscape are flattened by the camera into invisibility until the flock spills across its valleys and curves, revealing and, in a sense, mapping them. It's a nice idea, to set this farmer, his vernacular local knowledge, and his exuberant dogs alongside the more mathematical data mapping of the area being enacted by other SCANZ participants.

There were a variety of responses to the people, places and environments of Taranaki. Andrea Polli utilised weather data from the Taranaki coast, as data input into a live animated video projection, seen in the still image opposite.



SCANZ

Maria Miranda and Norie Neumark collected breath - the breath of wind, the breath of humans and even the breath of dogs with the contemplative aim of impacting global warming via the aforementioned butterfly effect; Wolfgang Staehle collected 24 hours of video of Taranaki the mountain, as part of an ongoing project interrogating the notion of surveillance;

Derek Holzer and Sara Kolster amended their online collaborative project 'Soundtransit' expanding it's sound library, and including Taranaki as a departure point, stopover or destination [6]; Raewyn Turner gathered samples of green, creating a reference library ranging from natural mosses to the colour of storage tanks at a chemical processing plant, spanning nature and politics; Jim

Bell collected audio from the environment and Brit Bunkley created 3D animations of cows and sheep, with early sampling including shots of Mt Taranaki, the final views being evocative of rural New Zealand.

The second theme related to Connection/Disconnection, a theme mapped in many ways. Xiu Li Young (aka Lyllie, Lyl, Su) gathered information about the early settlement of Taranaki, meeting descendants of Chinese New Zealander Chew Chong as part of ongoing interrogation into Chinese diaspora. Stella Brennan research the role, history and stories surrounding the use of radio and radiology in the Pacific during the Second World War. Avatar Body Collision had an entirely connected but disconnected, online offline, in car out of car, onsite offsite, documented and implied experience among members Helen Varley Jamieson, Vicki Smith, Leena Saarinen and Karla Ptacek. Becca Wood and fellow online performer Omaha used a dual camera split screen split geography set up to unite two disparate spaces, one in New Plymouth the other in Auckland 600kms away. Completing a substantial presence of artists working with online interactive performance was Caro McCaw, who developed her online hotel project. Diana Burgoyne worked on fashioning a digital quilt, which responded to the presence of the audience with changing audio, while Chuck Varga developed characters for future projects.





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This is not to say that artists had to complete projects at SCANZ; in fact, none had to. Some came with not much plan and made a project, some came to be in the atmosphere, to collaborate and share, while others had specific plans, which could not be achieved. C5 members Steve Durie and Bruce Gardner came to Taranaki with the aim of climbing and mapping by GPS, the mountain. This turned out to be not possible, mainly due to the weather. Revising their plans, they continued to research the mountain and talk to tangata whenua, identifying a pool and a waterfall that turned out to have mythological and customary practice importance. On locating the place, Bruce dipped his head in the water. This turned out to be an appropriate thing to do according to Tengarurū. Some of the alignment was also provocative, as Ken Gregory recorded.

“Did you see any Ancients?” We all looked around at each other in silence a little stunned at hearing such a provocative question and not really sure what he was asking. “Either you do or you don’t have the ability to see them.”

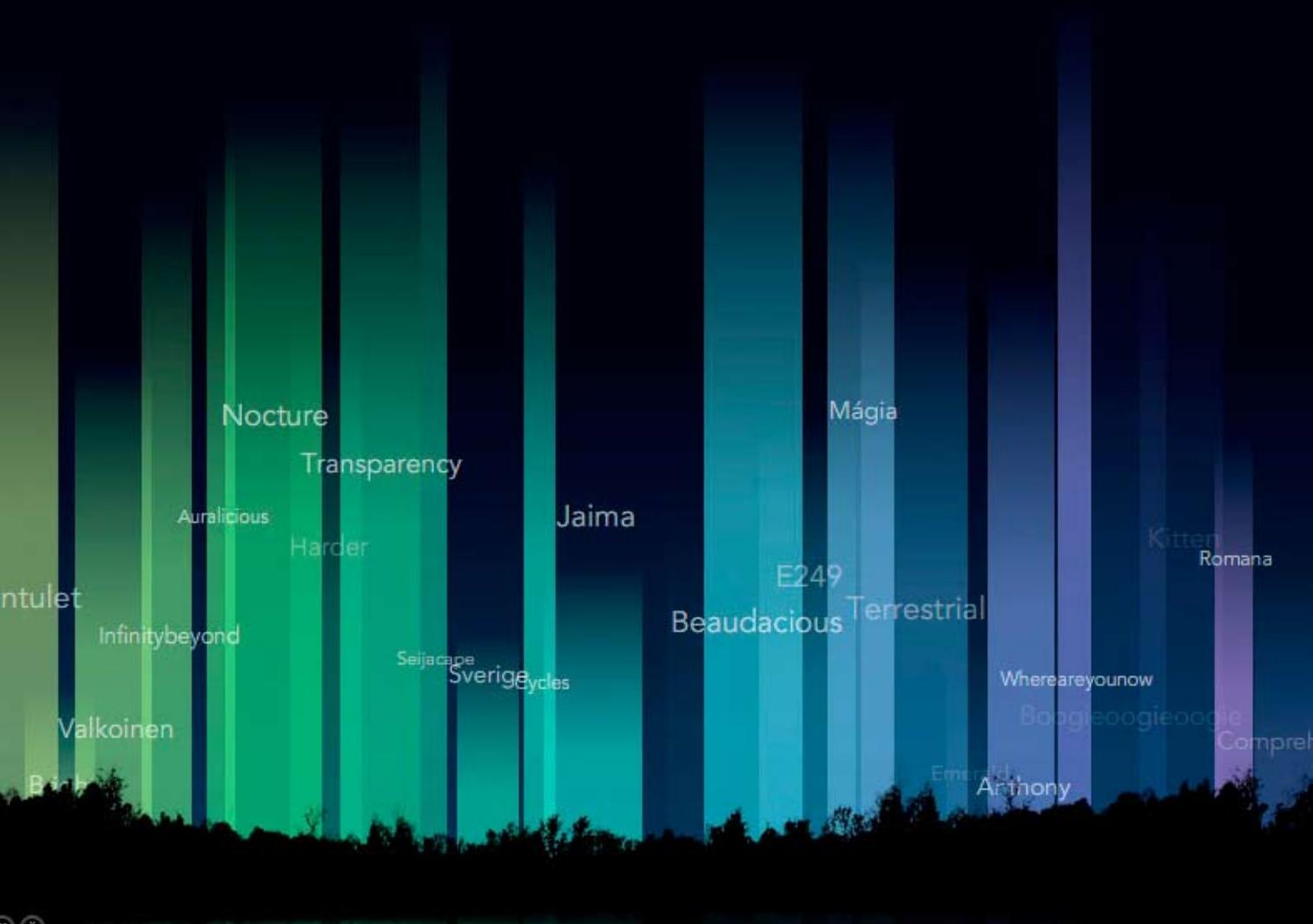
After spending the afternoon hiking to a remote less travelled part of the forest on Mt. Taranaki we were sitting in the little tea room/cafe near the visitors centre eating a nice lunch and drinking coffee waiting for Jim and Lyllie to return from the forest. The older gentleman who asked the question continued on telling us a little bit of his experience with the spiritual aspects and the history of the mountain. His family had been connected

with Mt. Taranaki for over 150 years. He talked about seeing the Ancients faces in the mist above Dawson Falls, of having to step aside as an ancient war party passed by in the forest, and of feeling pushed aside by the “angry energy” around the north side of the mountain.

The stormy rain and wind accompanied us as we left wondering what to think of what he said. We had already been introduced to the idea that we were interfacing with the ancestors of the Maori people as we made our way around the Taranaki region. It was interesting to hear more perspective on these ideas.

Ken Gregory’s SCANZ research intersected the energies of tangata whenua, taranaki, technology and art. The project involved combining technology, location specific ethics, and the craft of kite building. A recording of the extinct bird, the Huia, will be played from the kite as it sails aloft. The night kite, which is hand-made from transparent gossamer-thin material, has a long streaming tail, and its surface is scaled with a spiral of LEDs. These are Kingfisher blue and once lit up look uncannily like a question mark. The kite begins to levitate higher and higher, until it is a ghostly presence hovering far above the tallest trees at the end of the field. There is much speculation among the assembled artists about how the local rag, the Taranaki Daily News, will report on the UFO sightings. Ken valiantly battles the kite in the high winds, and it begins to look as though he is interacting with an animate presence. The LEDs are at this point the only stars in the cloudy sky. I have a go and it is like trying to steer a Manta ray. The wind becomes something physical that I am interacting with, and the kite a gauge for its elemental force. As Te Huirangi’s said to Ken, Trudy





and I on Monday, that a kite flyer needs a kite mentality, that of "waiting for the fish to bite". Well, this fish certainly bit!...

*Later ...*At around 10:00, we leave for Oakaura beach to witness Ken's second night-flight kite test. The wind is not particularly good but the sound of the crashing, tumultuous sea and the moonlit silhouettes of spiky native vegetation are striking. Adam is videoing the test, and everyone else has a digital camera. This kite hovers momentarily in the air twice before drifting back to earth, its trail of blue LEDs and shape rendering it even ghostlier than its predecessor...

*Much later...*Tengaruru then stays for an hour, first he talks to Ken about his kite project and the spiral which decorated the night flying kite, which he identifies as a Koru. The trans-cultural nature of the spiral is on Ken's mind....

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These then are some of the cascades of energy that lead to the extraordinary sense of space generated at SCANZ. For one evening, this energy beached on the shore of the Govett-Brewster lecture room where artists presented work - the image opposite is from Nina Czegledy's project, where the audience in the gallery could text one word live, to create a form of moving poetry on screen. The presentation evening featured all of the artists who wished to talk about their projects, to a packed room, an event that followed the exhibition opening at the Govett-Brewster of work by Norie Neumark and Maria Miranda, Derek Holzer and Sara Kolster, Wolfgang Staehle and Andrea Polli.





FEMALE

Car

FEMALE

FEMALE









Notes and references, image captions and credits

[1] See Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. The relationship between the rhizome and the internet is laid out in Hamman, R. (1996). *Rhizome@Internet. Using the Internet as an example of Deleuze and Guattari's 'Rhizome'*. <<http://www.socio.demon.co.uk/rhizome.html>>. Accessed 17 May 2007.

[2] An introduction to complexity in it's many references is given in Butz, M. (1997). *Chaos and Complexity: implications for psychological theory and practice*. Washington and London: Taylor and Francis.

[3] See Lane, T. (2006). *SCANZ*. <<http://www.scanz.net.nz>>. Accessed 15 May 2007.

[4] The source for this and the following paragraph of the text is the funding application sent to various organisations.

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Image captions and credits

P 2-3 This kiwi was procured by Adam Hyde and lurked in the background of N2. Source: Ken Gregory.

P 3-4 Photo of Taranaki with accomodation units in foreground. Source: C5.

P 6 A rare photo of all members of Avatar Body Collision? The car's name is Lucy. Source: Helen Varley Jamieson.

P 7 Images from Alex Montieth's shoot. Above: from right are Nina Czegledy, Derek Holzer, sheep dog farmer, Monteith and Gregory. Below: camera set up. P 20 - the flock and dogs. Source: Alex Monteith.

P8-9 Te Iakaroa Maui - Owae Marae. P 12 the artists gathered in front of the whare nui Te Iakaroa Maui at Owae Marae. To the right of the central pole stands Te Huirangi. P 34 bottom right - photo of workshop presentation by Derek Holzer and Sara Kolster. Source: Stella Brennan.

P10 Scan of a pounamu patu taonga.

P11 Screen shot of Stella Brennan's research for her South Pacific project.

P15 View of N2, the residency media lab, discussion space and lounge. Source: Sara Kolster.

P16 Media artists in the wild. P 19 Taranaki was often partly hidden. P 26 Bruce Gardner dunks his head. Source: C5.

P 23 Screen capture from Andrea Polli's project.

P 25 Screen capture of Brit Bunkley's project.

P 29 Photo from Ken Gregory's first tri-

al of the night kite. P 32 Ken, Tengaruru and friend. P34 top right SCANZ at lunch. Source: Ken Gregory.

P 30 Screen shot from Nina Czegledy's project.

P 33 Lyllie, Lil or Su and Te Urutahi, partner of Tengaruru and daughter of Te Huirangi.

P 34 Top left: a 'Faces' gathering - for women involved in digital media practice. Women substantially outnumbered men at SCANZ. Source: Nina Czegledy.

P 34 Bottom left. Co-organisers Trudy Lane and Ian Clothier either side of ICT Artist in Residence Adam Hyde.

P 35 The final weekend saw workshops by artists, top and bottom left; the Govett-Brewster presentation evening (top right) and an ADA symposium, bottom right. Source: Trudy Lane.

P 36 The last meal of the residency group was a ground cooked hangi on the farm of Christine and Stuart Lee.