

# Spheres of Influence

Contributed by Deborah Turnbull  
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By Andrew Johnston and Benjamin Marks

<http://www.betaspace.net.au/>

Now till November 6th 2006

Free with entrance to the Powerhouse Museum

Spheres of Influence is an interactive music work in which live audio affects animated virtual sculptures. The work exists as both an installation for public participation and a composed work for solo trombone. The installation provides a playful and creative environment in which audiences can experience the sound of their voice transformed into evocative patterns of movement and sound. With practice, they may even be able to play the virtual sculpture as if it were a musical instrument - an extension of the voice. The performance presents a unique audio-visual composition in which sounds and visuals merge to create a duet between the senses.

The same software is utilized for both forms of the work, but with differing emphases yielding different results. The work is an exploration of the relationships between sounds and physical structures. The underlying physical model that forms the basis of the work could not exist in the real world. However, because it is programmed to obey the laws of Newtonian physics, it nonetheless retains a kind of physical plausibility.

The audience's interaction with the work will help inform further research in this area. Artists Biographies

Andrew Johnston has a background in both music and computing. As a trombonist, he has performed professionally with many ensembles, including the Melbourne and Sydney Symphony Orchestras, the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra and many others. He also has experience and academic qualifications in computing and is currently working as a Lecturer in the Faculty of Information Technology at the University of Technology Sydney. Through works such as Spheres of Influence, he seeks to combine his knowledge of the aesthetic, cultural and collaborative practices of music with technical skills to produce well crafted and artistically interesting artworks.

<http://www.andrewjohnston.net/spheres-gallery.php>

Benjamin Marks is a composer and musician based in Brisbane. He is a member of ELISION Ensemble and specializes in the performance of contemporary music, including collaborations with visual artists (Keith Armstrong, Adam Donovan) and free improvisation (Particle Moves, and with John Rogers as part of TULP). Ben currently teaches trombone and runs various ensembles at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music Griffith University and also teaches trombone at the Queensland University of Technology. He has lectured at Adelaide University and the Victorian College of Arts.

<http://www.ensembleoffspring.org.au/>

Ben will also be performing Spheres of Influence at The Studio in The Sydney Opera House on Tuesday 8 August as part of a concert by Ensemble Offspring. For further tour dates and contact information, please visit:

<http://www.newmusicnetwork.com.au/ensoffspring/upcoming.htm>