

# Drifting

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Drifting, by Julia Burns

## General Information

### Exhibition Dates:

28 January - 9 March 2009

### Exhibition Location:

Beta\_space, Cyberworlds Gallery, L1 - Powerhouse Museum, Sydney

Launch event: Monday 2 February, 2:30-4pm @ Beta\_space

## Introduction

This interactive video installation is a prototype work exploring the themes of immersion and interaction through the metaphor of insomnia at the different stages between wakefulness and sleeping.

The premise consists of a man and a woman sleeping on an unmade bed. They lie next to each other, drifting between states of sleep and consciousness in the early hours of the morning.

The viewer in the gallery encounters this couple in their bedroom, and can see the view from the couple's bedroom window projected on an adjacent wall. The viewer's presence disturbs the couple and wakes the male partner. Despite all attempts he cannot fall asleep and is plagued by thoughts of the next day. To escape his waking reality, the man enters a dream sequence in which he appears tormented by his inability to sleep. His anguish is accompanied by musical composition and colour. He travels between screens searching for sleep.

## Research Aims

For this piece, Burns has pulled from both personal and external experiences to connect with the viewer. This work allows the viewer to act as a voyeur as they watch the personal lives of others and are led to reflect on their own.

The placement of three surrounding projections on screens and real objects creates an immersive experience and should help to enhance the 'presence' of the characters in the real space. Although the interaction of the viewer is minimal, it is enough for them to disrupt the flow of the fictional characters' lives and thus play a part in the narrative.

Burns' research into interaction design, immersivity, engagement, and narrative are explored through this installation, and the research performed here in the form of public evaluation will be utilised as data for her Masters thesis.

## About the Researcher

Currently enrolled in a Master of IT at Creativity and Cognition Studios, UTS, Julia gained artistic experience from her studio residency at MediaLabMadrid Spain and Spazio Gheroarte, Milan. She did an internship at the Guggenheim Museum in early 2005, subsequently exhibiting at El Centro Cultural Conde Duque for Banquete 2005 under the umbrella of MediaLabMadrid and ARS Electronica. Her latest residency and second exhibition at First Draft Gallery as well as her more recent piece at beta\_space, Powerhouse Museum, have welcomed her return to Sydney.

Julia Burns is an interactive and multimedia artist. She has exhibited in galleries and institutions in Spain, Italy and the United States, including MediaLabMadrid and ViSLAB at The University of Sydney. She uses software-based interfaces and multimedia art to create a confronting experience for the audience. Her aim is to challenge the viewer by not only demonstrating a context-driven system that reacts to the viewer's motions and decisions, but additionally influences the choices that they make.