



DRIFTING

Julia Burns

julia@juliaburns.com

0415 681 155

DRIFTING

As it surpasses the dominance of TV, internet-based video will give both established media channels and ordinary individuals the same stage from which to project video content. We have already seen the explosion of webcam and home video-based content on YouTube. This content, which in many instances glorifies the banality of everyday life, is published by the Public and for the Public. The personal view into homes across the world that it facilitates gives the anonymous public privileges that it never had before. In addition, these captured private events are broadcast side-by-side on the same platform as popular media content. This warrants a re-examination of the concepts of privacy and its deterioration under the public eye.

Drifting is an immersive, video-based installation. Its core themes of domesticity and public access to private space encapsulate the various concepts that I have been investigating in my artistic research. By immersing viewers into a private domestic setting within the public space of a gallery I challenge the division of the public and private domains, encouraging viewers to do the same. This merging of spaces is created within an expanded cinematic context, integrating real objects and full-scale interactive video characters. The theme of public access to private space has an interdependent relationship with the domestic and immersive format of this work. I use the same media that threatens privacy, to reproduce it.

Drifting represents an intimate moment in a couple's life. The couple in the artwork are not aware that they are being watched. Only after they realize their situation do they acknowledge their audience: The gallery viewers. Viewers are invited to watch this scene unfold in front of them as they sit on the couple's own living room couch.

THE WORK

Upon entering the installation, viewers will notice a bed mattress pinned upright against a wall, covered by a projection of a life-size couple lying on the same mattress. This set-up gives the impression that the subjects are sleeping directly in front of the viewer on a real bed, rather than a screen.



Julia Burns, *Drifting*, documentary footage still, 2009

Empty pieces of furniture: a kitchen cupboard and a chair, rest against the surrounding walls, lit up by the light of the overhead projectors.

An empty couch has been placed in the centre of the room facing the bed.

After the viewers enter the installation space, they watch the couple as they sleep before them on the mattress. A few moments pass, and then suddenly the erratic sounds of a cello can be heard and they watch as the sleeping male partner wakes up.



Julia Burns, *Drifting*, film stills triptych, 2009

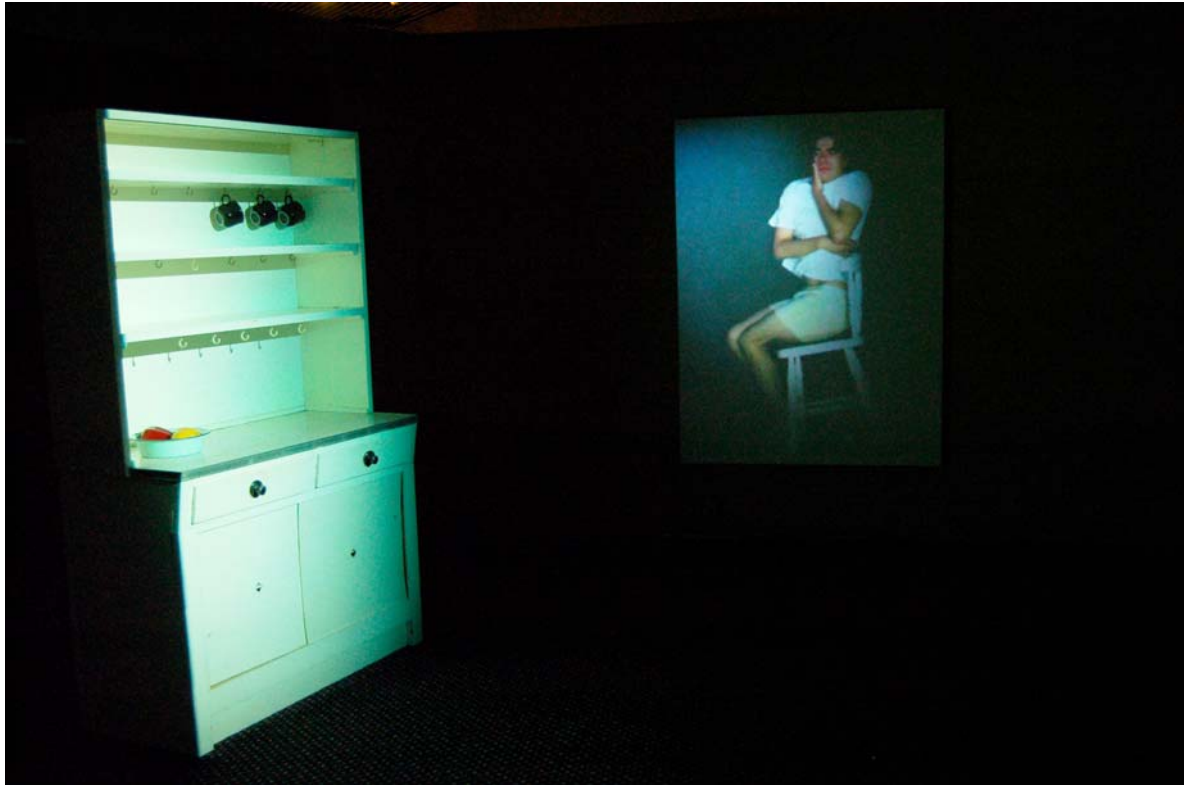
He gets out of bed and leaves the woman alone on the mattress, reappearing on the adjacent kitchen cupboard in the form of a shadow. The dramatic music drives his movement and expression as he slowly moves on towards the empty chair.



Julia Burns, *Drifting*, 2009

Photo: Aram Dulyan

He comes to rest on the chair, acting remorseful and agitated. Viewers can see both the sleeping woman on the mattress and the insomnia-affected man, as they restlessly move in unison with each other on opposite sides of the room.



Julia Burns, *Drifting*, 2009

Photo: Aram Dulyan

Slowly the man acknowledges the presence of the gallery viewer, looking directly at him/her. The music subsides as he stares at the viewer, going in and out of focus, as if he is underwater or viewing from another dimension. The woman wakes up, and then too stares back at the viewer. The music recommences, in a calmer state, as the man drifts slowly back across the cupboard to re-join his partner on the mattress. They gradually fall asleep together, the music subsides, and the lights turn off.

This embedding of 'real' characters that perform both scripted and unscripted actions affords a link for viewers to form a comparison to their own lives. This method also offers viewers the luxury of observing an event from another's 'life' as if watching a scene in a movie.

EQUIPMENT

3 good quality data projectors with key-stoning capabilities

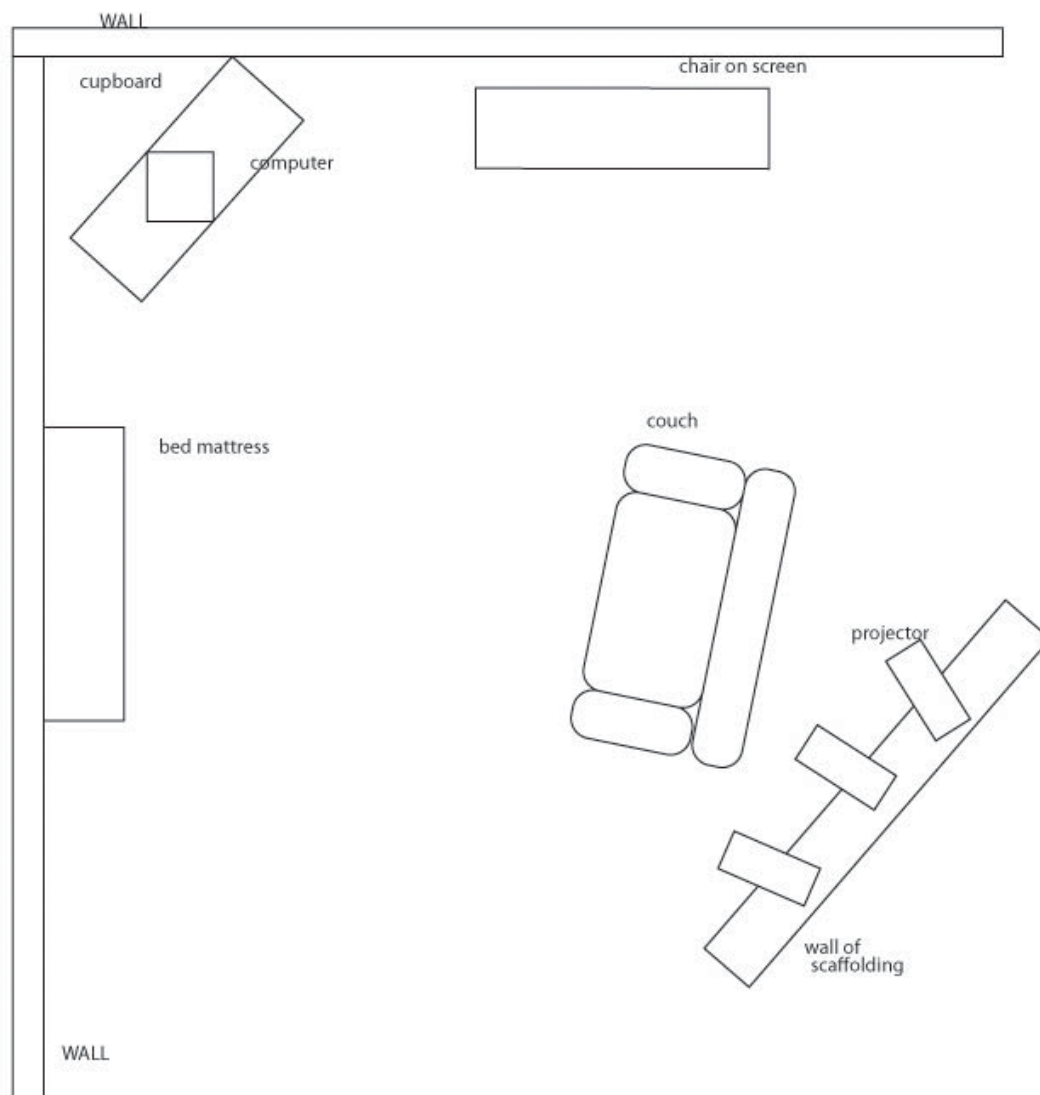
1 G5 Apple computer with keyboard, monitor and mouse

1 video card for 3-way display output

scaffolding for supporting wall

INSTALLATION

Below I have included an installation view of the work:



TRANSPORTATION

Below I have included a list of the items that will need to travel with the show:

Cupboard
Double bed mattress
Wooden screen and chair
Couch
1 Computer
3 Projectors
Scaffolding for wall

VIDEO DOCUMENTATION

The *Drifting* video documentation presents the original video content that provided the basis for the work. This includes three separate scenes that play simultaneously, making the interior ‘set’ of the main characters’ home visible at all times. In the beginning of the first scene, we can see the main characters sleeping upright on a bed mattress. Cello music begins to play and the male character wakes up from his sleep. He leaves the bed, walks in front of the cupboard (2nd scene), and sits down on the empty chair in the third scene.

At this point, the documentation video jumps to footage of *Drifting* during its exhibition at beta_space, The Powerhouse Museum, 2009. After a slow pan of the installation space, the camera focuses on the same scene of the man sitting on the chair. He looks directly back at the camera, the music calms, and then the man walks back across the scenes to return next to his partner in bed. The couple falls asleep and the lights turn out. The camera pans out and we can see gallery viewers watching from the couch; the viewers are the final and integral element of this installation.

ARTIST BIO

Education

2009 Masters by Research “Public Access to the Private Sphere: An Artistic Interpretation” Creativity and Cognition Studios, The University of Technology, Sydney.

Exhibitions

2010 “Drifting” DLux Media Arts, regional tour, Australia, curator: David Cranswick

2009 “Gaze and Desire” Osage Gallery, Hong Kong, curator: Iris Lo

“Drifting” beta_space, The Powerhouse Museum, curator: Deborah Turnbull

2007 “The Musicians” beta_space, The Powerhouse Museum, curator: Deborah Turnbull

“The Gaze” First Draft Gallery, Sydney, curator: Michaela Gleave

2005 “Disordine/Disorder” Spazio Gheroarte, Milan, curator: Gabriella Bella

“Banquete” MediaLadMadrid and ARS Electronica, El Conde Duque, Madrid, curators: Karin Ohlenschlager and Luis Rico