

---

**Tactical Space Lab launches Sydney's first studio for Virtual Reality (VR) experimentation**

*A joint collaboration between Dr Josh Harle and renowned Australian artists Alex Seton, Jason Wing, Joan Ross and John A Douglas*



VR study (detail), Joan Ross & Josh Harle, 2018

**17 January 2018 – Sydney:** Research initiative **Tactical Space Lab** in the next five months will transform its exhibition space into an experimental Virtual Reality (VR) lab in collaboration with renowned Sydney-based artists **Alex Seton, Jason Wing, Joan Ross** and **John A Douglas**, supported by Create NSW & Australia Council for the Arts.

**Opening Friday 25 January**, the ‘incubator’ style experimental studio will facilitate collaborations between each media artist and Tactical Space Lab Director, **Josh Harle starting with artist Joan Ross**, to explore virtual reality and other emerging technologies, experiments and develop collaborative studies related to their practice.

In the role of director, curator and artist, Harle considers this exhibition a natural extension of Tactical Space Lab’s defining purpose.

“Tactical Space Lab is a research initiative focusing on the intersection of art, technology and critical theory, and we are always looking for new ways to explore culture through new technologies and create more opportunities to exchange critical dialogue.

“Despite their diverse and unique practices, what each of these artists share in common is an examination of the relationship between bodies and spaces,” he said.

“This is something that’s fundamental to room-scale VR, where the user is walking around and interacting with the virtual space they inhabit. Trying to figure out this relationship is what the most interesting VR experiences to date share in common, and the studio is a great chance to bring the artists’ extensive knowledge into the conversation.”



Joan Ross, M'lady's Ikebana 2015 Handpainted Digital mock video still 90 x 60cm.  
Courtesy of Artist and Micheal Reid Sydney

**Joan Ross** is a multi-disciplinary artist whose practice spans drawing, painting, installation, photography, sculpture and video. Her experimental practice investigates the legacy of colonialism in Australia and its effect on Indigenous Australians. As part of the studio, Ross will experiment with extending her animated collage aesthetic into a 360 degree and 3D context through Augmented Reality technology.

**Alex Seton's** artistic practice spans multiple mediums, including his distinct use of marble. For this exhibition, Seton is interested in the power of augmented reality to create sculptural works and spatial interventions that break material and engineering constraints and would be impossible in the real world.

Known originally for his street art and examination of his joint Chinese and Aboriginal heritage, **Jason Wing's** work now spans from photomedia and installation to painting and explores the challenges that impact his wider community. As part of the VR studio Wing will be exploring the use

of virtual environments combining modeled and 3D scanned/reconstructed elements from real sites, as well as the technology's potential for capturing and playing back 3D figure motion extended with dynamic visual effects.

**John A Douglas** is an interdisciplinary artist whose work spans video, performance, live art installation, photomedia, sound and objects. Identifying as an artist with disability, his practice, which investigates his ongoing experience with chronic illness, will be extended through 3D capture, mixed reality performance and video. As part of his Circles of Fire research, Douglas will explore the use of existing aerial drone footage shot in Canada and video and stills shot on location in Italy and Turkmenistan to create new 3D models with photogrammetry. The studio will also be an opportunity to experiment with forms of VR experience to augment his real time choreographed live performance work.

### **Key Dates**

#### **Joan Ross**

VR Lab Collaboration Period: 2 Jan – 18 Jan

VR Studio Showcase (Exhibition): 25 January 6 – 8pm\*

#### **Alex Seton**

VR Lab Collaboration Period: 29 Jan – 10 Feb

VR Studio Showcase: TBA\*

#### **John A Douglas**

VR Lab Collaboration Period: 2 – 14 April

VR Studio Showcase: TBA\*

#### **Jason Wing**

VR Lab Collaboration Period: 30 April – 12 May

VR Studio Showcase: TBA\*

**\*This is a free event open to the public**

### **Tactical Space Lab**

4 Lackey St

St Peters 2044

NSW, Australia

**Website:** <http://www.tacticalspace.org>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/tacticalspacelab>

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/tacticalspacelab>

### **Media Contacts**

For further information, visits, images and requests of artist or director interviews, please contact:

[media@tacticalspace.org](mailto:media@tacticalspace.org)

### **Media Images:**

<http://bit.ly/2Dcp6E4>

**Tactical Space Lab**

Tactical Space Lab is a research initiative focusing on the intersection of art, technology, and critical theory. It is conceived as a space to host, nourish, and nurture artistic practices and projects that critically explore emerging technology – particularly through innovation in the field of mapping and spatial representation – and was founded by Dr Josh Harle in 2013 as a platform for the continuation of doctoral research projects.

More information: <http://tacticalspace.org/about/>

**About Artist & Tactical Space Director, Dr Josh Harle**

Josh Harle is a multidisciplinary researcher and new media artist with a background in Computer Science, Philosophy, and Fine Arts. His research investigates the virtual spaces generated by emerging technologies, our encounters with the world through them, and their social and political impacts.

Harle's doctoral thesis formed part of an Australia Research Council linkage grant with the Emergency Information Coordination Unit, developing approaches to spatial representation in crisis contexts in collaboration with CSIRO's WASP team for which he received the 2011 Young CAADRIA (Computer-Aided Architectural Design Research in Asia) Award.

Harle has exhibited locally and internationally, including for Vienna Art Week, Organhaus, Chongqing, and Today Art Museum, Beijing, and locally for solo and group shows at Firstdraft, the International Symposium on Electronic Art, AGNSW's Contempo program, and Brisbane Powerhouse's 'IRL: Digital Festival'. In 2015, Harle was Australia Council ECAP resident artist with UWA's Centre for Rock Art Research and Management and the iVEC Advanced Visualisation Lab, working with rangers at Murujuga national park, Pilbara to explore the development of culturally appropriate digital reconstructions of Indigenous rock art sites.

In 2016 Harle was a MuseumsQuartier, Vienna resident artist and Research Fellowship, hosted through the Research Institute for Arts and Technology. He is editor of an upcoming Australia Council-funded collection of essays 'Decolonising the Digital', which showcases examples of culturally diverse digital media practices in Australia. Harle is also a Visiting Fellow at UNSW Art & Design.

More information: <http://www.joshharle.com/>

**Support**

Tactical Space Lab has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

Tactical Space Lab is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.

**Partners**

**Artists**

**Joan Ross**, Glasgow, Scotland. Lives and works Sydney.

Joan Ross works across a range of mediums including drawing, painting, installation, photography, sculpture and video. Her bold and experimental practice investigates the legacy of colonialism in Australia, particularly in regard to its effect on Indigenous Australians. In just 2017, Ross won the Sir John Sulman Prize, AGNSW, the Inaugural Ravenswood Woman's Art Prize and was awarded a New Work Grant, Visual Arts Board from Australia Council for the Art. Previously, she has won the 2016 Glennfiddich Artists Residency Prize. Ross' work is held in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, Museum of Contemporary Art and a number of regional galleries, university and private collections.

Represented by Michael Reid Sydney and Bett Gallery Hobart.

<http://www.joanross.com.au/>

**Alex Seton**, Born 1977, Sydney. Lives and works Sydney

Alex Seton is a multidisciplinary artist working in sculpture, photography, video and installation, best known for his use of marble carving. He maintains an interest in materiality and the performative object, inviting interplay and exchange between objects, bodies, and ideas. His work is held in collections including the National Gallery of Australia; Artbank; Art Gallery of South Australia; Australian War Memorial; Newcastle Art Gallery; Bendigo Art Gallery; the Danish Royal Art Collection, Copenhagen; HBO Collection, New York; and numerous other private and public collections.

Represented by Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney and Singapore.

<http://www.alexseton.com/>

**Jason Wing**, Born 1977, Sydney. Lives and works Sydney

Jason Wing is an artist who strongly identifies with his Chinese and Aboriginal heritage. Wing began as a street artist and has since expanded his practice to incorporate photomedia, installation and painting. Influenced by his bi-cultural upbringing, Wing explores the ongoing challenges that impact his wider community. Calling into question our understanding of history and of our current socio-political reality, Wing repurposes everyday objects and imagery, creating works that are both visually confronting and deceptively simple.

<http://www.jasonwing.net/>

**John A Douglas**, Born 1960, Sydney. Lives and works Sydney

John A Douglas is a Sydney-based interdisciplinary artist working across video, performance, live art installation, photomedia, sound and objects. His practice investigates his ongoing experience of chronic illness through scientific and collaborative, immersive performance approaches. Douglas is the recipient of the inaugural 2017 CreateNSW Artist With Disability Fellowship and has been the recipient of numerous Australia Council Grants including New Work, Creative Development, Artist Initiated Residency (AIR) and Arts Projects. He identifies as an artist with disability.

Represented by Chalk Horse, Sydney

<http://www.johnadouglas.com.au/>