

periastra

methodologies of curiosity within the fields of art and astrophysics

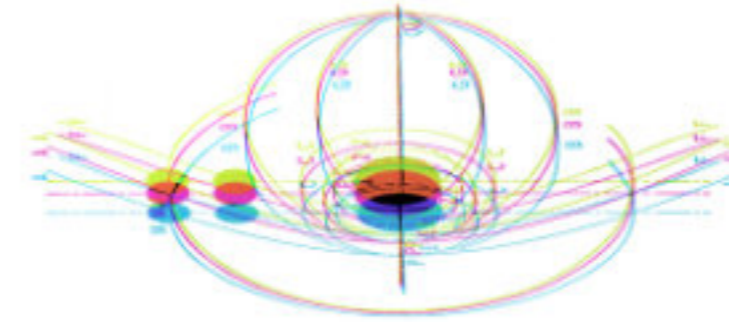
Periastra was a hybrid exhibition where artists and astrophysicists were invited to share each others' modes of exploring the world of celestial phenomena. Often thought of as mutually exclusive, there are sometimes surprising similarities in terms of the aspiration and expression of curiosity. The participants in this show have been identified through their interest in crossing this boundary and the result is an intriguing and visually rich interpretation of each others' fields of research.

The sky is a half of our environment and yet its nature remains elusive and a source of mystic inspiration. The very distance of its population removes our enquiry from direct interaction and launches out into the realms of speculation with barely adequate tools. Recent exploration by spacecraft and improvements in the operation of telescopes have returned vast quantities of data that require interpretation. This, in turn has required the adoption of models of increasing complexity and assumption. The advent of computing has accelerated this process but at the risk of losing that immediate contact with astronomical ontology.

The greatest telescope we possess is our ability to think imaginatively. What could the nature of this Universe be and how can we experiment in this grandest of laboratories? Is it at all possible to bring this realm into an Earthly laboratory let alone the enthusiast's shed? Little more than a century ago observational endeavours would result in, at best, the interpretation of a few grains of photographic emulsion. With every advance in technology, and the subsequent resolution in signal reception, has come an ever growing appreciation of the complexity we experience above our heads. This is a journey that has barely begun.

Curators note: In assembling this exhibition the interest has moved in the direction both of experiments in detection and demonstrations in the laboratory. Often, when thinking of astrophysics and the visual imagery that surrounds it, it is the overt phenomena that comes to mind; stars, galaxies and nebulae that we can see in the optical range.

However there exists a far more comprehensive electro-magnetic and particulate spectrum which provides us with a greater flux of information to hypothesize the mechanics of the Universe. And of course the biggest part of that 'detection of the invisible' is the procession of thought that emanates from the pursuit of curiosity.



periastra

www.cipango.co.uk/periastra

Periastra was an exhibition which took place between the 3rd to the 13th of February 2022 at the APT Gallery, Deptford, London.

Curated by Paul Malone



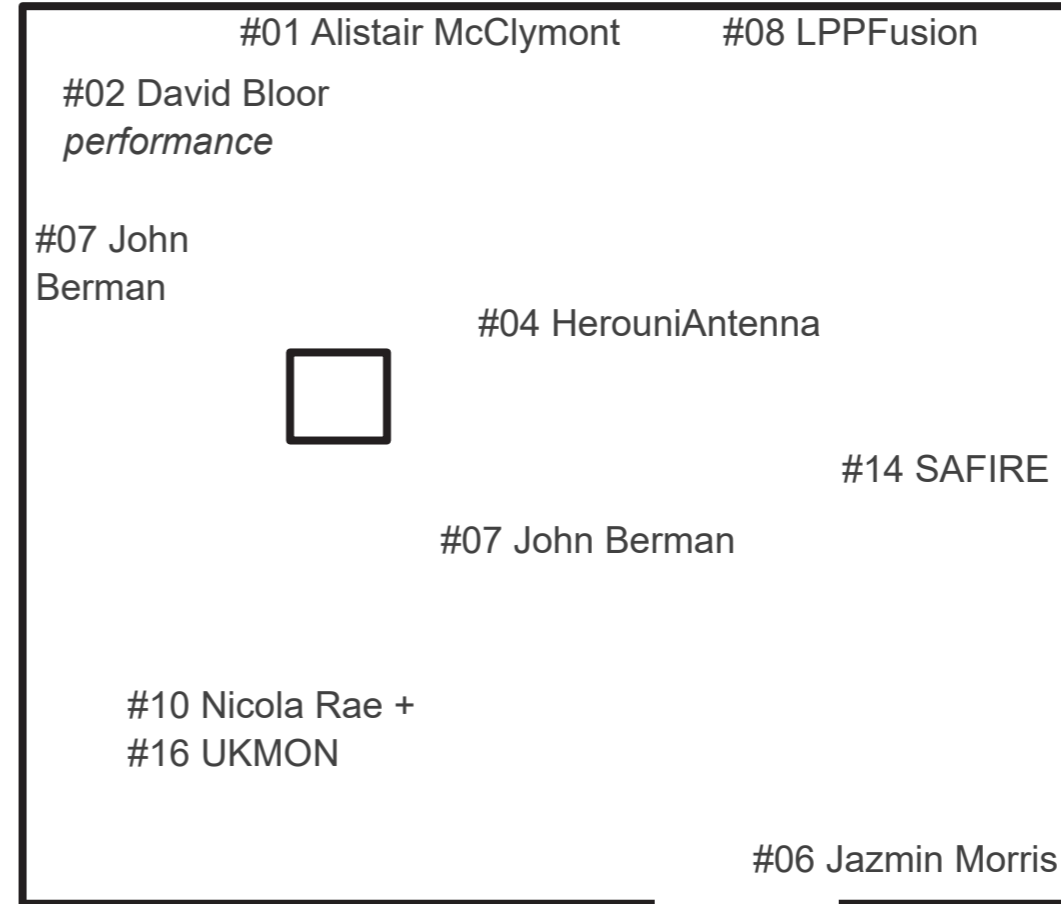
Participants

- Alistair McClymont multimedia art
- David Bloor sound art
- Els van Riel structural film
- Jean-Louis Rault, FRIPON fireball recovery
- Herouni Antenna, Armenia optical radio
- Jazmin Morris computational artist
- John Berman muon detection
- LPPFusion focus fusion research
- Miles Mathis maths, charge field theory
- Nicola Rae multimedia art
- Paul Malone multimedia art
- Richard Lawrence sculptor
- Rupinder Khaira multimedia art
- SAFIRE electric sun experiments
- Steven Scott multimedia art
- UKMON meteor detection



The APT Gallery, Creekside, Deptford, London

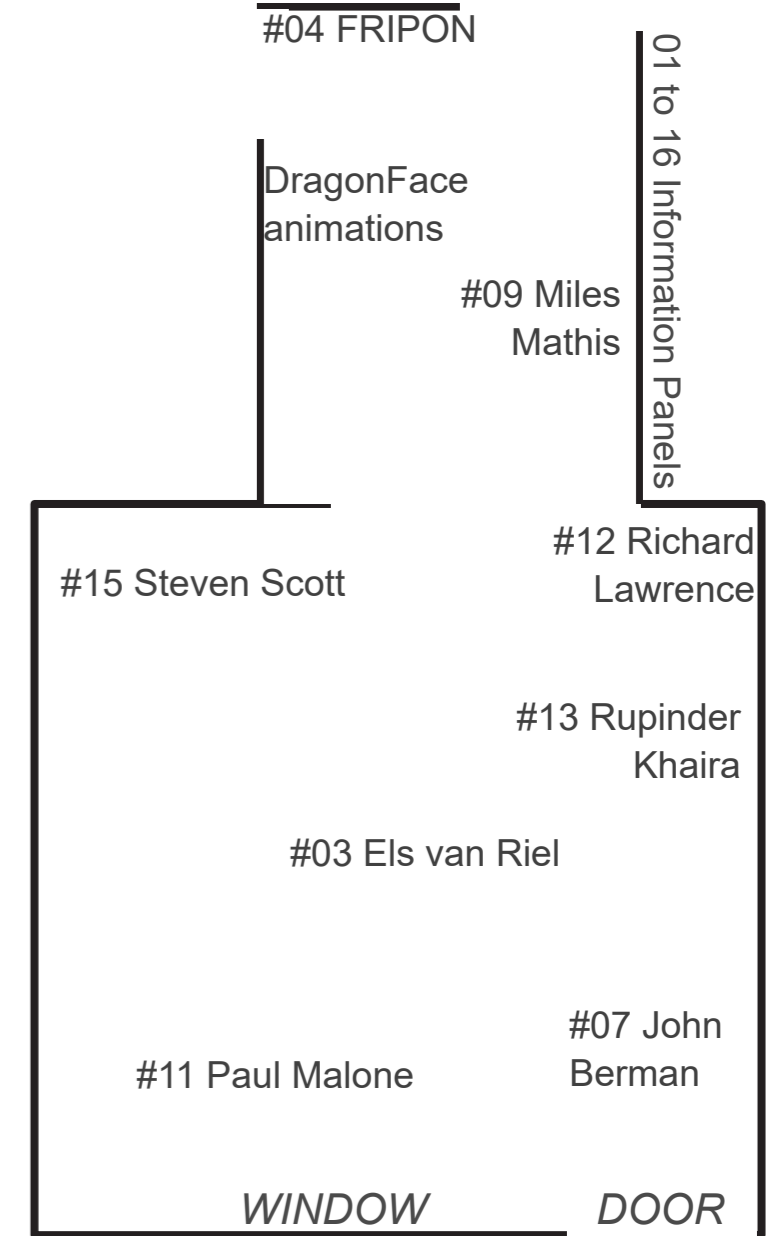
Periastra at the APT Gallery



Above: Plan of rear darkened space

Right: Plan of front daylight space and 'Link' information hub

Layout of the exhibition



About the artwork

A feeling of solitude

This work is based on a quote from the astronaut Michael Collins

"I don't mean to deny a feeling of solitude. It is there, reinforced by the fact that radio contact with the earth abruptly cuts off at the instant I disappear behind the moon. I am alone now, truly alone, and absolutely isolated from any known life. I am it.

If a count were taken, the score would be three billion plus two over on the other side of the moon, and one plus God only knows what on this side. I feel this powerfully-not as fear or loneliness-but as awareness, anticipation, satisfaction, confidence, almost exultation. I like the feeling. Outside my window I can see stars-and that is all. Where I know the moon to be, there is simply a black void; the moon's presence is defined solely by the absence of stars."

(from "Carrying the Fire: An Astronaut's Journeys" by Michael Collins)

About the participant

Alistair McClymont is an artist working across a broad range of materials and methods. His work is a continuing process of discovery and experimentation, each piece follows the last in a continual journey of investigation into cultural and physical phenomena.

<https://alistairmcclymont.com>



'A feeling of solitude'. 2022. HTML, CSS, JavaScript'. Looking up at the projection

About the artwork

Universe

The work takes inspiration from 'The Universe Symphony' an unfinished work by American classical music composer Charles Ives.

Ives' work was conceived in 1915 and revisited in 1926. In a quote on one of the scores Ives imagines the work "striving to ... paint the creation, the mysterious beginnings of all things known through God and man, to trace with tonal imprints the vastness, the evolution of all life, in nature, of humanity from the great roots of life to the spiritual eternities, from the great unknown to the great unknown."

Much of life is unpredictable, using Ives's ideas around indeterminacy and musical quotation the work uses a self built 'slippery clock' to trigger events within a modular synthesizer. A system of action and reaction, appropriate response or equally appropriate non response or marginally appropriate inappropriate response.

About the participant

David Bloor is an artist and musician interested in how people respond to limitations, each other and their environment. His work includes installation, performance and recordings under the name 'Dirch Blewn' with releases for labels 'Linear Obsessional', London and 'Game of Life', Athens and a forthcoming release on 'Soft Error'.

He works with kinetic sculpture, analog assemblage, modular synthesisers and a self built, 63 channel, 8bit, surround sound, off grid recording studio which forms the basis of '24hr Community Composition' which will be at Sanctuary Lab 2017 in the Galloway Forest.

He is currently an APT graduate studio award winner and co curating the APT summer exhibition - 'Touchstone'

www.dirchblewn.com



David Bloor in Performance: 'Universe'. Periastra 12th February 2022



About the participant

Lives and works in Brussels, Belgium. Studied photography and cinematography, and worked as a photographer, editor and producer for various photo, film, video and theatre productions.

Her films, video's and installations explore the impact of detailed changes in moment, movement, matter, light and perception.

With links to the tradition of structural film making, the work by the Brussels based film-and videomaker, Els van Riel, explores the basic elements for cinema - time and light - and develops a form for new aesthetic pleasure, bypassing any symbolism and narrativism.

For van Riel the projector is a central figure in the cinematographical act of giving form to a screening, performance or installation. The mechanical image source becomes actively present as if it were a living object.' (L'ART MÊME, April 2009)

About the artwork

Infinite² A small spatial composition touching the limits of physics and the need for unlimited imagination.

<https://elsvanriel.be>