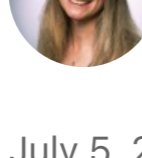




Liquid code – reflections on Anne Scott Wilson’s fugitive states



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Open Immersive Reader

Upon arriving in Melbourne and realising that my timetable had been freed thanks to the time differences between Melbourne and Finland, I reached out to my wonderful long-term acquaintance, artist and former Head of School at the School of Contemporary Art, Edith Cowan University, [Domenico DeClario](#) to see who in the arts I should contact while here in Melbourne. Domenico sent me a list that I intently engaged in. One of the artists and academics on the list was [Anne Scott Wilson](#). Anne wanted to chat via telephone, and I tried to call, I really did. But, to be frightfully honest – I’m shy. I suffer social anxiety and for some reason telephones can be the worst thing in terms of interacting with people you don’t know. My mum actually used to force me to order the family’s pizzas when I was a child, because not even the pizza munchies could bite her phone anxiety.

So, I had been thinking about the phone call I needed to make. I was even thinking that maybe, in fact, I had met enough people. Maybe, I didn’t need to make that phone call. If our meeting will be, then it will be.

One Saturday while my family was in Cairns, I decided to venture into the eclectic suburb of Fitzroy. I was looking for the arts, and even had a tip that a [Gordon Bennett exhibition](#) was somewhere in the area. But, as I was walking, I looked to the right. There, on a window, were the words/letters, “Anne Scott Wilson”. I had to blink, and blink again. I walked on thinking ‘noooo can’t be’. Then, walked back thinking, ‘well, yes, there it is’. So, well, I took that as a ‘Yes’, I did need to speak to Anne. And after figuring out how to get in through the automatic door (sometimes it’s just not easy for an academic), I walked in. Here are some of my reflections on her exhibition and our discussion afterwards.

Defying material and re-purposing purpose. These are the words that come to mind when reflecting on Anne Scott Wilson’s solo exhibition, [fugitive states](#), at the [ACU Gallery](#). Or, as ChatGPT states,

“Fugitive States” is an extraordinary art exhibition that transcends traditional boundaries, captivating audiences with its innovative approach to storytelling and visual expression. Curated by the enigmatic artist, Anne Scott Wilson, this exhibition takes viewers on an emotional journey through the torn and suspended painted canvases and digital printouts, expertly executed by an ex-ballet dancer and photographer.

I would add more. The suspended works perform a whimsical dance between the domains of the virtual, physical and spiritual. Anne Scott Wilson’s work (click on the [link](#) to see what I’m talking about) speaks of the extended realms of lived experience afforded by contemporary online-offline existence. There is a play between atoms and bits, whereby digital printouts on canvas have been manipulated with paint, and further modified by scalpels. Images turn into sculptures, which further transform into impressions as you walk within the space.

There is also an intersection of identity that becomes apparent, not only by what Scott Wilson says in her video installation about augmented consciousness through virtuality, but through who she is. We are reminded of her presence as a ballet dancer, with a body that has been trained to defy the natural biomechanics of bodies versus gravity. This body is now embedded within the photography, mark-making, and curation that was once physical, then film, then code, then physical, then code, then physical...

At the end of viewing the exhibition I had the privilege to speak to Wilson about her work. We began by discussing the diminishing of boundaries that the virtual space affords. Literally, our conscious experience, subconscious experience, and conceptualisations of space and place can be seen as either transformed or obliterated. Our conversation soon moved on towards the issues of Generative AI, and as we are both university educators, the role of [ChatGPT](#) in learning. It is in relation to this exhibition that we can see that treating ChatGPT as a modern day Grammarly, word processor, or Google results synthesizer, is an over simplistic way of viewing what the tech can afford.

Instead, against *fugitive states* and her work as a Senior Lecturer (Deakin University), Wilson demonstrates that even Large Language Models (LLMs) have the potential to alter our perception of place, space, and time, and invert what we once understood as the art making process. To think of the text prompts is an art in itself. To intentionally manipulate the technology and its output to produce something that is refreshingly novel, yet profoundly human, is what will also rest at the heart of forging human value and worth in the world of artificial intelligence (AI). To embrace the transfigured nature of emerging human embodiment and creative enterprise will provide the path to human and humane fulfilment.

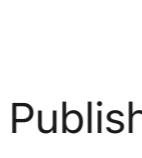
To this end, I would like to pick up a few more points that ChatGPT considerably mentioned as he/she/it/they was reflecting on Scott Wilson’s work. Firstly, ChatGPT mentioned that the gallery itself becomes a stage, and that the walls adorned with vibrant and evocative artworks seem to come alive. This mimics the intangible states of being. And, as I stated above, this intangibility is coupled with a concrete tangibility as the two dance between media, dimensions, and curation. The torn canvases lay testament to a dancer’s raw visceral expression, mimicking a fluidity and grace that is that of the dancer’s body weaving in and out of code. And, ChatGPT goes on to explain that the interplay between the delicate and chaotic brings about a powerful tension that holds the viewer’s gaze while challenging the mind. The fragmented canvases evoke a bitterweet sense of beauty and vulnerability. And that the, “exhibition serves as a testament to the power of art to transcend the confines of mediums and connect with the depths of our human experience.”

It’s eery isn’t it? The depth of linguistic expression and entanglement of emotions expressed by ChatGPT in relation to an exhibition it hasn’t even see itself. It hasn’t seen this with its very own eyes, and hasn’t walked in the space with its very own legs. Yet, taking the discussion in another direction, the millions of people and texts that have informed the development of these LLMs have experienced these artistic engagements through their diverse bodies, which are then aggregated in the algorithms. AI sees, hears, and feels. Then, through the fluidity of our bodies that emerge in fugitive states, we become one with the consciousness, subconsciousness, and unconsciousness of the masses in a way that we only dreamed before.

Thank you incredibly much [domenico de clario](#)! I really value your support and openness after all these years.

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Suspended, fluid, expansive, yet confining. Conceptualising consciousness and human existence in the era of virtuality is all engulfing. [Anne Scott Wilson](#) manages to capture this experience as a dancer and photographer within her solo exhibition *fugitive states*, in Fitzroy. I am so glad I was led to see this exhibition. Here, you can read why. Thank you [OpenInnoTrain](#) (at [RMIT University](#)) for these incredible possibilities for chance meetings and liquid interactions while dancing across disciplines. 🥰🥰 And, thank you incredibly much [domenico de clario](#) for introducing me to such an insightful community of artists! [#university](#) [#experience](#) [#experience](#) [#thankyou](#) [#photographer](#) [#art](#) [#virtuality](#) [#dance](#) [#material](#) [#digital](#)

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