

Simon Ingram, Monadic Device (2018), in collaboration with John-Paul Pochin

[The] skull represents the same infinity for the movement of conceptions. It is equal to the universe, for in it is contained all that sees in it. Likewise the sun and whole starry sky of comets and the sun pass in it and shine and move as in nature... Is not the whole universe that strange skull in which meteors, suns, comets and planets rush endlessly?

Kazimir Malevich, 'God is not cast down', Futurism, edited by Didier Ottinger, Centre Pompidou / 5 Continents Editions, 2008, pp 65.

An endurance-based artwork of sorts, Monadic Device is a five-day painting event in which Ingram's mental activity is recorded as a response to his own drawing and to the environment of Sydney Contemporary. Picked up by an EEG headset and interpreted by custom software, this data is then materialised as a series of paintings by a machine developed by the artist.

In this era of surveillance and the devastation of our private world of the imagination, the subconscious again features here as artistic enquiry. This project explores the contemporary finding that 98% of our minds are subconscious and far more responsible for the way the world is organised than the conscious 2% that plans and reasons.

In undertaking this project the artist brings together elements of his recent work at Germany's ZKM Centre for Art and Media where invisible cosmic energy was made visible as painting with a new, rekindled interest in subjectivity, people and politics. Simon Ingram is known for his systems, aesthetics approach and for collaborations with others to build sensing and visualisation frameworks that integrate with different artistic and nature/culture systems.

Typically his work makes invisible energy visible as painting, in an extension of it. The work pushes on the modernist notion of the self-reflexive/ self-identifying painted composition by creating objects and situations that sense and interpret aspects of their environment to reveal something about them. As such, it samples methods and approaches found in disciplines of radio astronomy, computer science, artificial intelligence, physics and engineering.

Simon Ingram has exhibited at ZKM | Zentrum für Kunst und Medien Karlsruhe, Frankfurter Kunsterverein, PS1 MoMA, Kunsterverein Medienturm, The Poor Farm, The Suburban, Artspace Sydney, Auckland Art Gallery, The Adam Art Gallery. He is a senior lecturer at Elam School of Fine Art at The University of Auckland and is represented in Auckland by Gow Langsford Gallery.

Aluminium, electronics, cable, motors, servos, EEG headset, software, computer, paint, brushes, linen canvases, dimensions variable.

The artist gratefully acknowledges the support of Gow Langsford Gallery, The University of Auckland and Kamahi Electronics in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Photo: Mikhaela Rodwell (below), Jacquie Manning (top right), all others by the artist.

