

Out Of The Labyrinth Of The Mind: Manifesting A Spiritual Art Beyond Dualism



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Doctorate of Creative Arts

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Abstract

This Doctorate of Creative Arts thesis consists of a raft of creative arts projects bound together by a critical essay which examines their intersections and situates them within the evolving body of the artist's creative work and a broader context of critical thinking and creative ideas and practices. In particular, the essay focuses on the spiritual as a throughline between a group of art works which explore the media of poetry, dance, film, digital media, performance, and poetic fiction. Addressing some of the artistic and critical challenges arising out of working across this range of different forms, the philosophy and practice of Yoga is the primary system of thinking utilised to articulate a linking or underlying aesthetics.

Six works make up the whole:

1. The critical overview essay:

Out Of The Labyrinth Of The Mind: Manifesting A Spiritual Art Beyond Dualism.

2. An anthology:

Performing the Unnameable: An Anthology of Australian Performance Texts

3. A poetry book:

Thursday's Fictions

4. A short comic dance film:

Rubberman Accepts The Nobel Prize

5. A short dance drama film:

No Surrender

6. A work of poetic fiction:

The Kamikaze Mind

By placing these six works in relationship to each other in one larger presentation, the aim is to create, in its overall structure, as well as in the interrelations between and within its multi-layered parts, a thesis which suggests a model of knowledge, experience and consciousness characterised by the movement between things rather than the static stand-aloneness, separate wholeness, of things. Given that this approach implies that meaning is in the spaces between things – or in the energies across the spaces between things - as much as in things themselves, it is not necessarily linear, obvious or direct, but just as often lateral, oblique or circular. The content, form and mode of address of each of the works is individuated, but by collecting them into a cluster of hybridised artistic works and their critical commentary, this thesis proposes a dialectic between knowing, intuiting and becoming. The juxtaposition of art works seeks to demonstrate how seeming oppositions and contradictions are brought together into a larger, dynamic, multi-dimensional, and never finally resolved art practice, animated by paradox. This Doctorate of Creative Arts thesis is an invitation for the reader and audience to participate in a multi-directional spaciousness in which there ultimately are no boundaries to the dynamics of creativity. The critical essay, in particular, which reviews the artist's evolution as a writer, performer, choreographer and filmmaker, and which explores themes in his current interests in Yoga and meditational philosophy, addresses core issues in a multi-form idea of creative practice.

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I would also like to acknowledge my co-supervisor Dr Ross Gibson and my guest supervisor Dr Marilyn Chin for their valuable input at key stages in the process. In addition, it is important to point out that the creative works presented as part of this Doctorate of Creative Arts involve numerous artistic collaborators, sponsors and supporters without whom the visions of these works could not have been realised. These individuals and organisations are acknowledged in the credits and special thanks sections of each particular work. Since *The Kamikaze Mind* is as yet unpublished I would like to acknowledge a particular debt of gratitude to Judith Beveridge for her belief in this work.

I dedicate this thesis

*to my first Yoga Gurus, Sharon Gannon and David Life;
to Ram Dass, whose words are always with me;
to my mother, Jocelyn Allen, who has always stood by me;
and to my wife, Karen Pearlman, who is my rock;
to our children, Samuel and Jadzea, with boundless love,
and to my father, Robert Allen,
who died during the final stages of its preparation:*

He lived in the moment, he lives in eternity.¹

Namaste.

¹ This line is slightly adapted from Richard James Allen, "Headstone", *The Kamikaze Mind*, unpublished typescript, Sydney, 2004, p. 51.

Out Of The Labyrinth Of The Mind:

Manifesting A Spiritual Art Beyond Dualism

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