

MEDIA RELEASE

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Beyond keyboard, screen and mouse to bright new world of digital art

An exciting use of new technology on the frontiers of art is on show at the University of Tasmania's NEW Gallery at Newnham.

In DIGI, Launceston artist Brad Allen uses a broad digital palette to explore the sculptural potential of coastlines, mountains and the microscopic inner space of the body.

DIGI's detailed designs have been brought to life in collaboration with UTAS' specialist information technology centre, the Human Interface Technology Laboratory (HIT Lab Au).

Exhibition curator Louise Reid Davies predicts viewers will be transported by Allen's art, which uses the latest augmented and virtual reality techniques.

"Brad has used cutting edge technology to develop this emerging aesthetic, giving the viewer insight into the bright potential of the new world of digital art," she said.

A Tasmanian trained in pre-press graphic art at the Croyden Institute of TAFE in South Australia, Brad experimented with computer-aided design and 1999 opened *Scarab*, his own commercial and new media design house, in Launceston.

"My fascination with creating imaginary worlds has been a lifelong passion," he said.

"As a 10 year-old I drew pictures of spacecraft and planetary communities; now I work as a 3D landscape artist."

The director of HITLab AU, Associate Professor Aaron Quigley, said the exhibition is exemplary of the type of new media activity fostered and supported by the HITLab.

"With computation ever more interwoven into our lives, it's important for artists like Brad to challenge our preconceived notions of human computer interaction," he said.

"We are moving into a world of ubiquitous computing where rather than having a single computer we have a 'computational edifice' consisting of many devices and services you can access at work, at school and at home.

“ In this context, our job is to move beyond the classical keyboard, screen and mouse interface to provide more natural forms of inputs and outputs for systems we expect to support your life 'in the wild'.”

Exhibition Dates: 10 February – 26 March 2010

Information Released by:

**UTAS Communications and Media, University of Tasmania
Phone: 6226 2124/2691 Mobile: 0417 517 291
Email: Media.Office@utas.edu.au**