

The Sydney Morning Herald

***Embedded In You* by Lucas Davidson at Canberra's ANCA Gallery:
A universe where time stands still**

Sasha Grishin
September 2015



Embedded In You 2015 Photo: Courtesy of the artist

The show, *Embedded In You*, is a three-channel video installation, where polychrome kinetic patterns are projected onto multifaceted mirror-like surfaces which cast reflections on the walls. The soundtrack accompanying the piece belongs to the general tradition of neo-minimal drone music, and when taken together with the moving images, it creates a trance-like state.

It is effective as a mood piece and visually has the quality of a lunarscape installation, where the polished abstracted shapes have the power to draw you into the space and allow you to dissolve into the created illusion. The lack of a clear narrative and no definite indication as to when the visual loop on each of the three videos commences or concludes does erode our understanding of the shape of time. Being provided with so few clues by the artist, it becomes the responsibility of the viewer to make sense of the whole experience.

Davidson writes about his intentions for this installation: "Mirrors are used as a device to reflect and distort the moving image, creating an environment that requires the viewer's firsthand experience. By loosening conventional narratives associated with the moving image, the viewer has to take a self-directed approach to the reading of the work."

I did not find the creation of this illusory universe into which you could lose yourself completely seamless and the presence of the three projectors casting their beams onto the mirror surfaces, as well as the exposed girders in the ceiling above, constantly reminded me that I was standing within an improvised white cube looking at an art installation, rather than experiencing an encounter with the unknown, where it was up to me to make sense of it all.

We have been spoilt with world class colour and light installations in Canberra and Sydney during the past couple of years. One only needs to think of the James Turrell exhibition which has just concluded at the National Gallery of Australia or the *Vivid* festival in Sydney or the spectacular *Light Show* from London's Hayward Gallery, which recently closed at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney.

Lucas Davidson's *Embedded In You* is a credible exhibition, which is attractive and engaging, but still needs some way to go before it challenges for serious attention in what has become a very fashionable area of art making.

***Embedded in You* opens at the ANCA, Canberra, August 19, 6pm.**