

THURSDAY 12 JULY 2007

VILLAINS STEAL THE LEAD ON MELDING OF ART AND SCIENCE

An exhibition born of an unusual collaboration between artists, archaeologists and natural scientists at The Australian National University will open at Gorman House in Canberra tomorrow.

The Contextual Villains, also known as ANU fine arts graduates Rachel Peachey and Paul Mosig, have created multimedia artworks after a three-month residency at the Department of Archaeology and Natural History at ANU. Their show, *Filtering Remnants*, will open at the Canberra Contemporary Art Space at Gorman House tomorrow night at 6pm.

The collaboration was funded by the Australian Network for Arts and Technology's Synapse program, which builds new creative partnerships between artists and scientists. The Contextual Villains spent twelve weeks with researchers in the lab and the field, and were exposed to diverse activities like pollen collection and terrain mapping.

"Using flexible mediums like light and sound, we have tried to create multiple layers of narrative that can simultaneously look at samples of the physical environment and visual and aural documentation of the cultural landscape," the artists have written. "We are interested in the different types of stories that various academic disciplines, oral histories, mass media and folklore can tell about the same place."

As part of the residency, the artists accompanied researchers on field trips to the Snowy Mountains and Woomera in South Australia. But it wasn't all a one-way exchange, with researchers saying that they too benefited from having the artists participate in their projects.

"In many ways, archaeologists and other scientists who are trying to work out what things were like in the distant past must think a little like artists, using our imaginations to build up pictures from different pieces of evidence," said Dr Simon Haberle, the Director of the Centre for Archaeological Research in the Department that hosted the Contextual Villains.

"It was a great learning experience for us to have these talented artists interpreting our work, as it gave us some fresh perspectives on our research projects."

WHAT: Filtering Remnant launch (exhibition runs from 13th July to the 25 August 2007)
WHERE: Canberra Contemporary Art Space, Gorman House, Ainslie Avenue, Braddon, ACT
WHEN: 6pm, Friday 13 July 2007

To arrange interviews prior to the launch:

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