

ARTSPACE^{NZ}

Shelley Simpson



Subduction

4 May - 30 May 1997

A joint project with the Moving Image Centre

Digital technology is revolutionising the way movies are made. Not only is it invigorating existing forms like the feature film and the music clip, it is also making new kinds of moving-image work possible. Shelley Simpson works in one of these new areas, mixing video recordings and live feeds in real time to create moving-image accompaniments for performances by the techno band Unitone HiFi.

Subduction extends this work into an art gallery context. Simpson took her title from geomorphology, where 'subduction' refers to the movement of one of the Earth's tectonic plates underneath another. In a darkened room, a video wash of abstract monochrome mirror patterns is accompanied by an ambient bass drone. The mirror patterns, reminiscent of the old title sequence from *Doctor Who*, suggest by turns a watery vortex, heat waves, shadows playing on the wall, animated Rorschach blots, cross-sections of body or brain. The droning soundtrack is also ambiguous, in turn reassuring and ominous. The viewer can interact, injecting two-second audio-visual samples into the mix using a keyboard. By contrast, these samples are coded as either 'natural' and 'mechanical', but they also formally cross-reference: the opening of a bud resembles the opening of the circular door of a space station, a spinning reel of magnetic tape echoes a spinning seed.

Overlaying and interweaving sounds and visions, *Subduction* provides an immersive aporia. Opposites like 'nature' and 'technology' are subducted, losing their direct oppositional status. *Subduction* exemplifies rave culture's promotion of the dissolution of distinctions: between self and community, inside and outside, culture and nature.

<http://artspace.org.nz/exhibitions/1997/shelleysimpson.asp>

Go

JAN FEB MAR

◀ 17 ▶

2016 2018 2019



[14 captures](#)

13 Jun 2008 - 17 Feb 2018

▼ About this capture