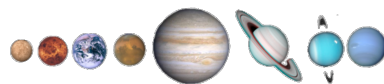
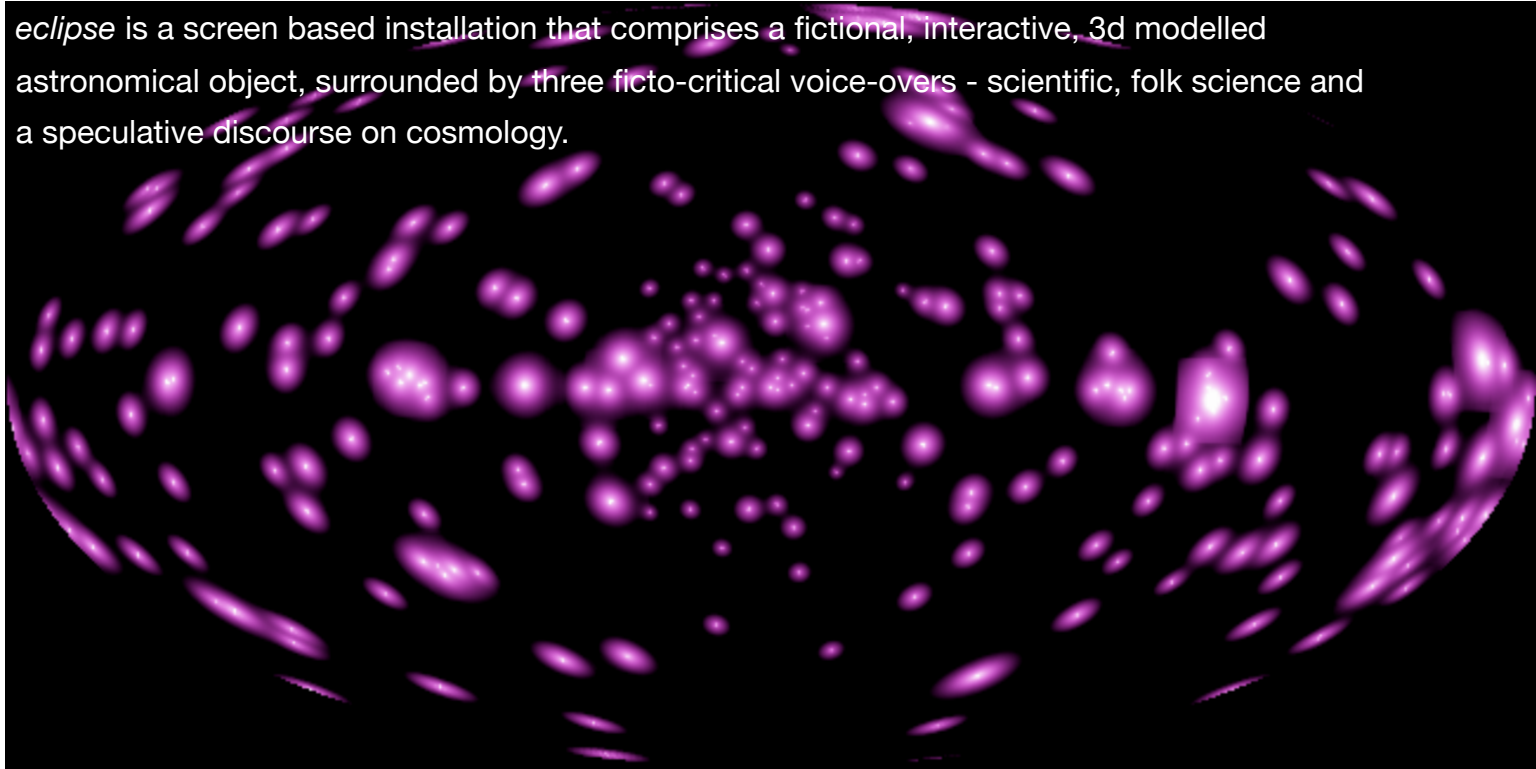


## ECLIPSE [WORKING TITLE]

*eclipse* is a screen based installation that comprises a fictional, interactive, 3d modelled astronomical object, surrounded by three ficto-critical voice-overs - scientific, folk science and a speculative discourse on cosmology.



## BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

The universe is complex and ecological in the sense that we understand generative systems – it is outcome and process, a work of art and an artist. A universe is not just an engineering equation but is informed by creative intelligence, by ordering principles, patterns, significance and aesthetics. Does it possess a kind of intelligence with moral and aesthetic qualities as well as mathematical ones? Is Earth one 'moving centre of meaning' in the universe? Does the universe care for the human project? How can we come to terms with a universe that is expanding and slowing down, and appears to do some from *each* point in itself?

In *eclipse* I am working experimentally with astronomical visualisations, scientific language, cosmology and folk sciences to creatively explore the gaps and connections between science and spirituality, fact and speculation. Making poetry of those gaps *eclipse* brings into play the act of desire at the foundation of folk sciences, the 'wanting to see'. *eclipse* experiments with visualisations and interactivity models that meld factual material into fictional forms, giving an opportunity for art and folk sciences to open up possibilities outside of the 'disenchanted universe'. This is not about belief, it's about how and why art can push us into areas science is unable or unready to explore, it's about the quality of the inquiry. In a return to visionary awareness, art takes the reins, reinvigorating its role to explore the future and report back.

During the research period for *eclipse*, my inquiries into astrophysics and folk sciences have inspired a creative outcome that piques our open minds, encouraging speculation and forays into the extraordinary, the extra-real. *eclipse* brings creativity, lateral inquiry, experimentation, soul and cultural history into the gallery.

*eclipse* has evolved out of my residence with the Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics at ANU, where I am working with Prof Brian Schmidt, co-discoverer of supernovae and dark energy, and leader of the Skymapper project.



## ABOUT THE PROJECT

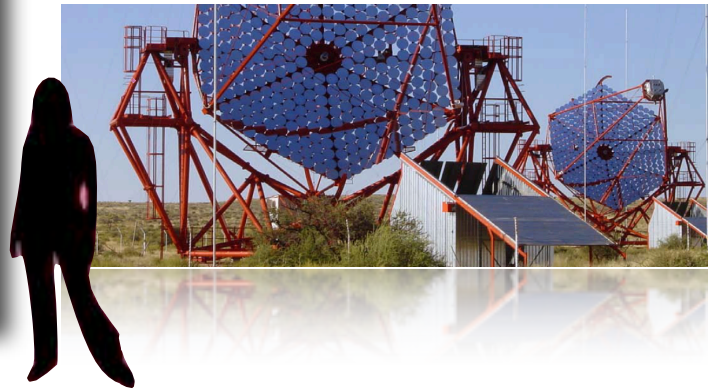
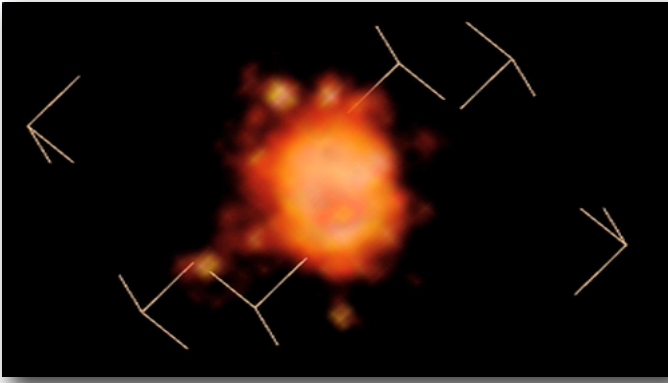
In creating a fictional astronomy 'object', *eclipse* engages with the current memes of astrophysics, including dark energy, the 'universal constant' that comprises 70% of the universe. My 'object' is modeled from real data, sourced from across the electromagnetic spectrum and derived from various data catalogues but strongly influenced by RSAA's Skymapper survey - during which they are mapping the entire southern skies. Aesthetically, *eclipse* mounts an ironic critique of the romanticised Hubble 'look' currently dominant in astronomical visualisation.

The 3d object I am making is intriguing and gorgeous - a galaxy with all of the elements known to contemporary astronomy: stars, nebulae, dark energy and dark matter, supernovae, planets and meteorites; pulsars; a black hole. It embodies the traces of the folk science that interprets it - objects, animals and human figures that characterise the various astronomical elements.

Three discourses surround the object and explore, illuminate and populate it. They are: a genuinely scientific astronomy (maths, molecular origins); a ficto-critical, symbolist folk science based on contemporary astrology and Aboriginal cosmology; and a deeply speculative discourse on the role of cosmology and our capacity to encounter the sublime in nature, based on my interviews with astronomers and the current memes in astrophysics. The nomenclature of the 'fictional object' link the 3 discourses.

I am currently working on 3 potential outcomes: an interactive 2 channel video installation; a non-interactive 2 channel video installation, and a virtual world with research partner VastPark.





### 2 CHANNEL VIDEO INSTALLATION WITH INTERACTIVITY

2 channels of immersive video - one with observational footage of the prosaic world of astronomy and stargazing in the field, the other with gorgeous footage of 3d modeled object laced with folk science outlines. Use the handheld interface to navigate and manipulate the model and move between the sound scapes.

**hardware** 2 x synchronised projectors; 5:1 surround sound; black box + interface (eg hacked wii)

**video** 16:9 with 5:1 surround sound

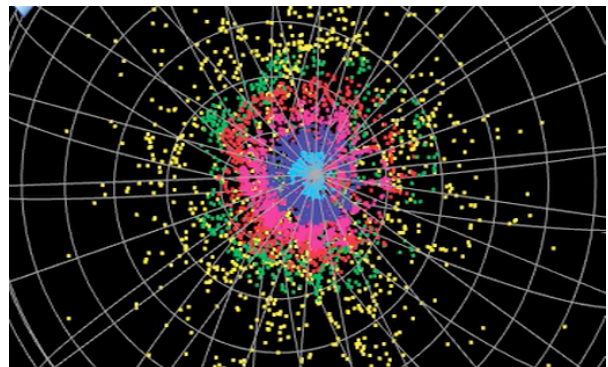


### 2 CHANNEL VIDEO INSTALLATION

2 channels of immersive video - one with observational footage of the prosaic world of astronomy, the other with gorgeous footage of 3d modeled object. Scientific, ficto-critical and folk science discourses tell the tale.

**hardware** 2 x synchronised projectors & DVD decks; 5:1 surround sound

**video** 16:9 with 5:1 surround sound



### SCREEN BASED VERSION IN VASTPARK

Work online with others to explore, modify and annotate the astronomical object

**hardware** networked computer and monitor/projector; 3d controller + keyboard

**software** VastPark