

outoftheCUBE

is an online exhibiting platform designed specifically for South African artists to share their work in the form of structured exhibitions.



Gwen Miller, *Lab*, 2015

A recent addition to the outoftheCUBE website has been the *transcode* link. This innovative page is dedicated to exhibitions that emphasise thinking and making processes, and new media works. An online platform offers an alternative solution for artists wanting to show the often more intangible aspects of their creative working methods, as well as providing a logical space for digital and video work, and for the documentation of installation and performance. One exciting project that was made possible on the site was the live-streaming of Nelmarie du Preez's 3-week residency at Arebyte Gallery in London, UK, in June 2015 - www.arebyte.com

transcode on outoftheCUBE was inspired by curator Gwen Miller's ground-breaking exhibition *TRANSCODE // dialogues around intermedia practice*. This exhibition featured 12 artists whose work investigated the cross-over between new and traditional media. According to Miller, "The art project, *TRANSCODE*, frames the conversation between digital and analogue media. Here, one medium's characteristics may be seen to operate within another's, such as a digital work enacting painterly motions, or a sculpture reflecting the qualities of an animation."

The build-up to Miller's *TRANSCODE* allowed for the manifestation of individuality in the artists' ways of working, and for fluid connections – both literal and metaphorical - to develop between the selected artists. They each undertook responsibility to record these different dialogues, and these documentations formed a necessary part of the physical exhibition.

Miller called for artists who worked both in traditional and new media, but whose creative processes were more and more influenced by digital technology, and consequently had come to include the reconstructing of 'grey areas' and the overcoming of rigid classification.

This exhibition, held at the UNISA Art Gallery in 2011, formed the most significant practical phase of Miller's practice-led research Doctoral process.

Moving forward from that point, and in keeping with the pivotal *TRANSCODE* concept of traditional structures morphing into the new, Miller and outoftheCUBE director Mandy Conidaris negotiated that appropriate aspects of the physical exhibition be encompassed by the virtual realm, which resulted in *transcode on outoftheCUBE*.

In an ongoing collaboration, these two curators will revisit the creative output of those original *TRANSCODE* artists who are available to participate on the *transcode on outoftheCUBE* page, as well as introduce the work of other artists who have an experimental and exploratory approach to artmaking. To date, the *transcode* page features the work of Colleen Alborough, Janet Botes, Nelmarie du Preez, Frikkie Eksteen, Sello Mahlangu, and Emma Willemse, as well as Millers' own artwork.

Miller's father-in-law was a scientist, and during her research period, she inherited his laboratory equipment. This triggered her path forward into investigating methods of experimentation, and as a visual arts lecturer, she sensed that scientific exploration mirrored creative processes. One of her early artworks around

this theme was *Wanderer* (2010, fig 1). This has clear references to the Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich's seminal work *Wanderer above a Sea of Fog* of 1818. Like the Romantics of that era, Miller had a fascination with the philosophy of the sublime, and this digital print represented a threshold of new discovery for her.

The subsequently executed *process work* (2011, fig 2), along with her contemplation of various sentiments around the notion of family, led to the sculptural work *Key to the family* (figs 3 and 4), where she 'showcased' locks of her twin sons' hair, collected over the years.

Between 2011 and the present day, Miller has explored various mixed media techniques, from freestanding assemblages to acrylic painting on digital prints. Visually, she uses the laboratory space and equipment as subject matter, which symbolise creative catalysts and incubators. *Lab*, *Studio Mindmap*, *thinkbox* and *Sketchbook* (figs 5 to 8) are examples of this. These works are featured in Miller's outoftheCUBE solo exhibition on the *transcode* page.

But as importantly, in a spirit of mutual respect and co-operation, and as former colleagues, Miller and Conidaris have offered each other the opportunity to extend the first physically tangible *TRANSCODE* blueprint into an ongoing virtual project that will be stimulating, unpredictable - and constantly accessible online.

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