

## Colleen Ludwig

### Artist Statement

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My work combines materials and technology to create immersive environments. I often use natural elements such as light and shadow, sound, wind, water and movement to heighten sensation in my spaces. When I use video, it provides a tactile presence. The images are dynamic, repetitive and meditative, focused on rhythms of movement and gesture rather than specific activity. The goal is for the audience to engage on a level *beyond* the visual. I want people's bodies to be drawn into my work on an almost performative level, through enhanced awareness and sensitivity. Together, we create an atmosphere for contemplation and exploration. My work with the senses aims to highlight and discuss the psyche's constant negotiation between self and society.

*Circular Influences I* and *II* are a pair of environments that I mounted together in 2005. *Circular Influences I* experiments with computer-assisted interactivity with video. *Circular Influences II* is an immersive, animated, sculptural environment. Although their material quality is very different, the themes and goals of the two works are complementary. The multiple natural systems working within both works implies the organic ways in which people simultaneously co-exist on multiple levels, both as individuals and as members of culture. The environments converse with the audience and generate tension between a sense of internal *body* space and external *social* space.

My research interests are about the fragmented and mutable nature of human personalities within the context of society. I'm concerned with drawing awareness to the normally fleeting microseconds that occur in the body between thought and action. I'm interested in momentary relationships that happen between strangers in public space. How can we examine these normally subconscious interactions so that they might become more meaningful? I draw material for these questions from disparate fields, including psychology, sociology, neurology, engineering and computing.

I construct works from natural phenomena to heighten self-awareness in the audience. I place my practice in continuum with artists such as Alfredo Jaar and Olafur Eliasson, whose works are designed to engage the audience beyond the role of spectator and into participant and activist. Eliasson has referred to the moment when viewers pause to consider their experience as "seeing yourself sensing." This self-consciousness gives people additional responsibility for engaging with, and reacting to, the work. This is a key component of what I do as an artist.