

# THE HIDDEN IMAGE LIFE OF LENSES

**DEIRDRE FEENEY**

PRESENTED BY METRO ARTS AND ISEA2024



08 - 29 JUNE 2024



# The Hidden Image Life of Lenses

'The Hidden Image Life of Lenses' is an optical image system artwork which emerged from an encounter with a series of telescopic lenses made by the Dutch natural philosopher Christiaan Huygens in the seventeenth century.

Witnessing these historical objects, they seemed to hold an invisible charge. As I contemplated the image-light inadvertently captured by these lenses as they looked towards the night sky over three centuries ago, all that they had seen seemed to be looking back at me.

In response to this experience, I developed my optical system as a speculative tool for making visible the charge I had sensed emanating from Huygens' lenses. The making of the work explored different elements contributing to this charge-the agential seeing of the lenses; the stored memories of all that they had seen over centuries of time; the invisible transfer of light, and the source object directly observed by the lens but perceivable only to the human viewer in the form of the lenses' auratic charge.

The installed work brings visibility to a placeless place where object and human meet. It creates a dreamscape scenario where we witness the lenses dreams, an interaction which enables the charge of the lens be transferred from its material holding form into the perceptual realm of the viewer.



## Deirdre Feeney Bio

[www.deirdrefeeney.com](http://www.deirdrefeeney.com)

Deirdre Feeney is a cross-disciplinary artist and lecturer of Contemporary Art at The University of South Australia. Her research interests include the materiality of image making, media archaeology and the history of optics. Deirdre's practice-based research collaborates across disciplines of physics and fabrication and electronic engineering to develop optical image systems. These optical systems serve as perceptual tools for generating awareness of technologically mediated experience.

Her creative works are hybrid systems incorporating old and new technologies and technological ideas, from Renaissance natural magic to nineteenth century optical mechanics. With a background in glass-making and the projected moving image, Deirdre uses materials such as glass and mirror to develop image systems that physically and emotionally engage the viewer. Deirdre's works have been exhibited nationally and internationally and she has been the recipient of several Australian residencies and artist fellowships.

The artist thanks: Dr Dale Otten, Laser Physics and Photonics Devices Laboratories, UniSA; Mark Cherrill, Australian National Fabrication Facility; Rodney Pratt, Future Industries Institute, UniSA, and Rahul Sathiyamoorthi and Matt Cook, STEM, UniSA.

Genevieve Trace - Executive Director | Daniel Clifford - Artistic Associate | Annelize Mulder - Curator (Exhibition Program)

[metroarts.com.au](http://metroarts.com.au) | [info@metroarts.com.au](mailto:info@metroarts.com.au) | 07 3002 7100  
97 Boundary Street, West End Qld 4101  
Find us on Facebook and Instagram

Metro Arts acknowledge the Jagera and Turrbal peoples, as the custodians of the land we work on, recognising their connection to land, waters and community. We honour the story-telling and art-making at the heart of First Nations' cultures, and the enrichment it gives to the lives of all Australians.

Image courtesy of Sam Roberts

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