

In The Belly Of The Beast

In The Belly Of The Beast is an interactive installation and performance work created by Max Brading and Miles Dunne in collaboration with Robert Rowland. The initial development and first performance took place in August 2023, with a further development in the works with performances to take place during the Adelaide Fringe in 2024.

The Beast is an intergalactic creature with no corporeal form that travels the universe in search of connection. It finds itself trapped in the wires and mechanisms of The Lab, a multimedia venue in Adelaide.

The audience is guided through the work by our Intergalactic Zoologist, Rob, who has been obsessively studying The Beast for many years.

The Beast sleeps, dreams, wakes up, dances and sings before leaving the venue, not unlike an observation of an animal in the wild.

Each state of the installation has unique interactions driven by a complex generative system coded by Max with visual art elements created by Miles. The walls move and shift as audiences play in the space, lights alter colour, sounds are generated from vocalisations and movement. Participants find themselves in a dance as their movements and sounds are absorbed by The Beast. A call and response with a composition of music unique to each audience.

On a technical level the installation was achieved using a mix of generative visual art, Artificial Intelligence, interactive sensors and a bit of smoke and mirrors thanks to Roberts performance. Essentially the installation is a room sized interactive modular synthesiser.

AI is used to generate musical notes and melodies in response to the audience. Drum machines are activated as people move around the space, visuals respond to a passing hand wave or loud sound. Sensors are fed into other sensors creating feedback loops where one response is distorted and altered.

The installation poses the question, how do we empathise and communicate with entities that do not resemble humans? It acts as a distorted mirror, reflecting the energy of the audience and creating emergent behaviour through generative interactivity. Participants interact with echos of themselves and the other participants.

The next stage of development will further explore how algorithms can be used to influence behaviours using machine learning and AI tools, creating unique interactions with each audience.

A documentation of the performance can be viewed [here](#)