

Carol Burch-Brown and Ann Kilkelly (American, Contemporary), Imagery from *Salt Marsh Suite*, video stills. Courtesy of the artists.

Salt *Marsh Suite*, directed by Carol Burch-Brown and Ann Kilkelly, is a collaborative, inter-media arts installation and dance performance based in fieldwork, data collection, and close observation of a North Carolina coastal estuary. The project combines art, science, and technology in an immersive environment, engaging viewers in the beautiful, almost magical quality of the tidal marsh and the life within it, while giving a sense of the vulnerability of the marsh habitat.

Since 2010, Burch-Brown has been collecting imagery, sounds, and environmental data in tidal streams and mudflats, largely from a kayak or wading on foot. She uses close range videography and audio recording above and underwater, and

captures patterns of tidal currents with sensors in these same locations. Over time, she and Kilkelly have built a team of collaborators who have deepened and contributed significantly to the content of the project, particularly Tohm Judson in sound and composition, Joan Grossman in video editing, and Thomas Tucker in 3D laser scanning.

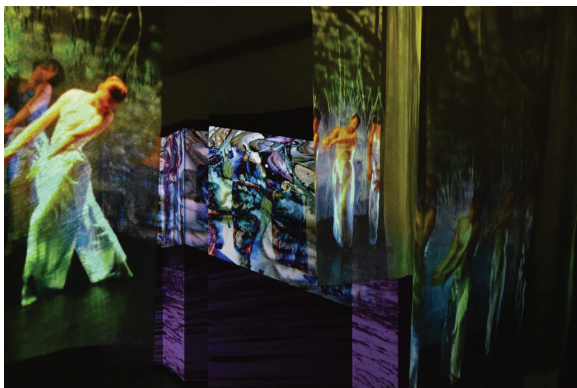
These materials are re-investigated and re-combined in multiple, exploratory ways both digitally and physically in the studio. They become elements of the installation and the basis of the live performance.

Salt Marsh Suite includes five overlapping "movements:" Water, Mud, Crabs, Birds, and Grass. Each movement weaves

together light, imagery, data and an ambient sound environment composed by Tohm Judson, hinting at the way attentive observation and presence becomes its own experiential reward.

Salt Marsh Suite is deeply collaborative. It depends on the talents and knowledge of individual artists, researchers, technologists, and students and on their ability to work across disciplinary and artistic boundaries. The Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology and the Moss Arts Center at Virginia Tech played an essential role in bringing together the ensemble and supporting the development the project.

Burch-Brown and Kilkelly are both professors in the Arts at Virginia Tech and Senior Fellows in the Institute for Creativity, Arts and Technology. Burch-Brown comments, "Close observation of phenomena sustained over time is at the core of both art and science. Technological tools extend our physical observation and also our capacity to give imaginative form to aspects of the world that we can't see or know directly. Our intention in *Salt Marsh Suite* is to create an immersive sensory environment that puts human actors (viewers and dancers) in an intimate and digitally created 'natural' world where the scale and the viewer's relationship to that world has been altered."



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The Salt Marsh Suite team includes:

Image and Sound Installation

Carol Burch-Brown (videographer, Max/MSP/Jitter design & visualization)
Tohm Judson (composer, Max/MSP/Jitter design & sonification)

Joan Grossman (video editor)
Thomas Tucker, Dongsoo Choi, David Mills (3D laser scanning & animation)
Dongsoo Choi (additional photography)

Choreography and Performance

Ann Kilkelly, Rachel Grant Rugh, Barbara Tait (choreographers and dancers)
danah bella (additional choreography)
Olivia Bowers, Mya Gallo, Saadia Rais, Julia Russo, Claire Constantikes, Kristin Kelly (dance ensemble)

Patrick Turner (bass)

MFA Graduate Assistants: Liz Liguori, Naphtali Fields, George Hardebeck, Kristin Kelly

Salt Marsh Suite is organized by Virginia Tech's Institute for Creativity, Arts and Technology in collaboration with the Taubman Museum of Art. Support is provided by the Moss Center for the Arts, the School of Visual Arts, the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, and the School of Performing Arts at Virginia Tech. Funding is provided in part by Arts@VirginiaTech through the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost. Additional support is provided in part by the Virginia Commission for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. This exhibition will be on display October 3, 2015 through January 10, 2016 in the Bank of America Foundation/Dominion Resources Gallery.



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