



**WILLIAM
KENTRIDGE**
**THE REFUSAL
OF TIME**

6 September – 16 November 2014

A collaboration with
Philip Miller
Catherine Meyburgh
and Peter Galison

**City
Gallery
Wellington**
Te Whare Toi

citygallery.org.nz

PRINCIPAL PARTNER





WILLIAM KENTRIDGE

THE REFUSAL OF TIME

The Refusal of Time (2012) developed out of discussions between William Kentridge and science historian Peter Galison about the history of the control of world time, relativity, black holes, and string theory. The project is informed by their appreciation of the way science is riddled with poetic metaphors. The five-channel, thirty-minute video installation traces a history of our changing comprehension of time, from early understandings based on celestial bodies to Newton's mathematically precise time, from Britain's imposition of a universal time throughout its empire to Einstein's relativity.

The Refusal of Time explores nationalist desires to 'own' time and control geography. The 'refusal' is political and personal. Politically, Kentridge argues, it is a refusal of the European sense of order, imposed by time zones. Personally, he says, everybody knows they are going to die but resist the pressure that places upon them.

The work features projections of giant ticking metronomes and a pumping, breathing sculpture—'the Elephant'—which refers to Dickens's *Hard Times*, in which machines move 'like an elephant in a state of melancholy madness'. Expanding on Einstein's theory of malleable time, which refuted Newton's idea of absolute time, Kentridge's installation alternates between synchronicity and disjunction. Although time remains measurable, it is never totally under our control.

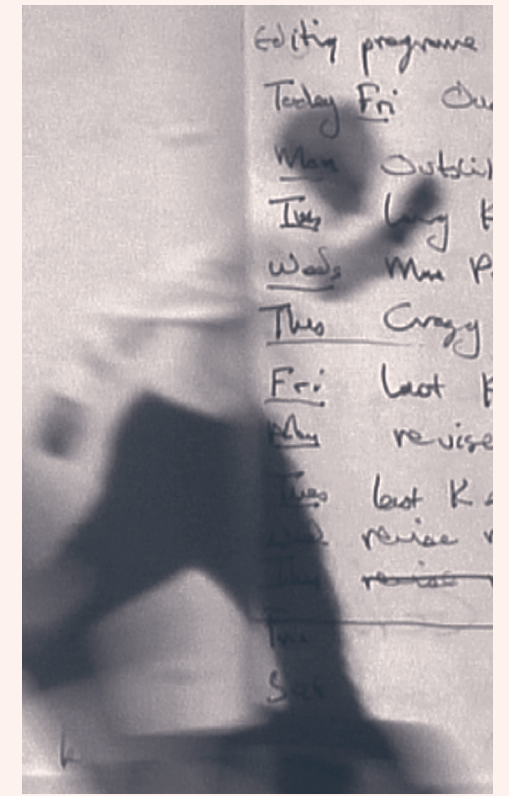
The Refusal of Time was commissioned for *Documenta 13*, Kassel, 2012. It is on loan from the State Art Collection, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, where it was purchased through the Gallery's TomorrowFund in 2013.

William Kentridge was born in 1955 in Johannesburg, South Africa, where he continues to live. He brings his experience of the dissolution of apartheid to bear on various subjects, turning political and cultural events into poetic allegories. He produces animated films, drawings, sculptures, tapestries, and theatre works that explore interwoven histories of science, colonialism, and globalisation.

Philip Miller is a South African composer known for synthesising diverse musical traditions, including classical music, modern atonal music, and the instrumentation and vocal harmonies of South African folk music. He has frequently collaborated with Kentridge.

Catherine Meyburgh is a South African film and television director and editor. She has collaborated with Kentridge since the 1990s, contributing to many projects, including *The Nose* at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, and *Carnets d'Egypte* at the Louvre, Paris.

Peter Galison is Professor of the History of Science and Physics at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. His work explores twentieth-century microphysics and the intersection of science with other disciplines, including how science historians and art historians share methodologies.



EVENTS

FULL EVENTS CALENDAR AT CITYGALLERY.ORG.NZ

Tuatara Open Late Exhibition Preview
Thursday 4 September, 5–10PM | Koha
Cash bar and supper treats
Tuatara Open Late takes place on the first Thursday of every month with a changing programme of after-dark events. This month, there is a special public preview of *The Refusal of Time*. It screens every half hour from 6.15PM. Last screening 9.15PM.
Also, at 6.30PM: *The Refusal of Time*'s designers Sabine Theunissen, Jonas Lundquist, and Gavan Eckhart discuss the work and collaborating with Kentridge. And at 7.30PM and 8.45PM: Screenings of Kentridge's *Drawings for Projection* (75 MINS).

Curators Tour
Sunday 14 September, 2PM
City Gallery curators Robert Leonard, Aaron Lister, and Kelly Carmichael give a tour of our Spring season exhibitions, introducing works by Kentridge, Hany Armanious, Ralph Hotere, and Cerith Wyn Evans.

Screening Drawings for Projection
Sunday 28 September, 2PM (75MINS)
Kentridge's ten early animated films document the struggle of his semi-autobiographical characters Felix Teitlebaum, an artist, and his alter-ego Soho Eckstein, a businessman, set against South Africa's changing social and political realities. The films demonstrate Kentridge's distinctive animation technique, based on erasing and altering drawings and filming their successive states.

Tuatara Open Late
Thursday 2 October, 5–10PM | Koha
Cash bar and supper treats
Art, music, film, books, beer, wine and food. Tuatara Open Late takes place on the first Thursday of every month with a changing programme of after-dark events. Check the website for details of this month's line up.

Screening Ubu Tells the Truth
Sunday 5 October, 2PM
After the abolition of apartheid, South Africa had to choose between truth and justice. It chose truth. Kentridge's film *Ubu Tells the Truth* explores the impact of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which heard from perpetrators and victims of human-rights abuses. It will be accompanied by other short films exploring related issues.

Lecture Elizabeth Rankin: Paradox and Politics: William Kentridge and the Human Condition
Thursday 16 October, 6PM
Professor Elizabeth Rankin (Art History, University of Auckland) charts Kentridge's development as an artist in the context of South Africa under apartheid, offering insights into his background and position as an artist of the resistance.

Screening Drawings for Projection
Sunday 19 October, 2PM (75MINS)
A repeat screening of Kentridge's short-film cycle.

Lecture Cheryl McEwan: Imperial Time
Thursday 13 November, 6PM
Professor Cheryl McEwan (Geography, Durham University) responds to *The Refusal of Time*, exploring how linear, European notions of time have been challenged by post-colonial thinking.

Tuatara Open Late
Thursday 6 November, 5–10PM | Koha
Cash bar and supper treats
Art, music, film, books, beer, wine and food. Tuatara Open Late takes place on the first Thursday of every month with a changing programme of after-dark events. Check the website for details of this month's line up.

Screening ART21: William Kentridge: Anything Is Possible
Throughout the exhibition, the 2010 documentary *ART21: William Kentridge: Anything Is Possible* will screen in the foyer (55MINS).

art21

City Gallery Wellington
Te Whare Toi

citygallery.org.nz

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



IMAGES William Kentridge *The Refusal of Time* 2012
COURTESY THE ARTIST

MORE INFORMATION AT CITYGALLERY.ORG.NZ

ALL EVENTS FREE, NO BOOKING REQUIRED.
INFORMATION SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

