STUDIO505

WHITE NOISE EXHIBITION

PROJECT

"White Noise" Exhibition Design
Australian Centre for the Moving Image

ARCHITECTURE PRACTICE

Studio505

AWARDS

2006 Interior Architecture Award Vic RAIA

PRACTICE PROFILE

Studio505 is a multidisciplinary architecture and design studio directed by Dylan Brady, Dik Jarman and Dirk Zimmerman based in Melbourne and Sydney, Australia. In its short history Studio505 has created architectural designs which have been defined by the strong and successful integration of artistic elements. Its award-winning Australian Pavilion for World Expo 2005 in Aichi Japan won almost universal acclaim, and Studio505 has under construction a major façade in Suzhou China, an inner-city flagship clothing store in Melbourne and two animated television commercials emphasising the broad skill base and interests of the team.

PROJECT ARCHITECT

Dik Jarman

OTHER MEMBERS

Dylan Brady
Dirk Zimmerman
Bruno Pessoa

BUILDER

Showworks

LIGHTING DESIGN

The Flaming Beacon

PHOTOGRAPHER

Christian Capurro

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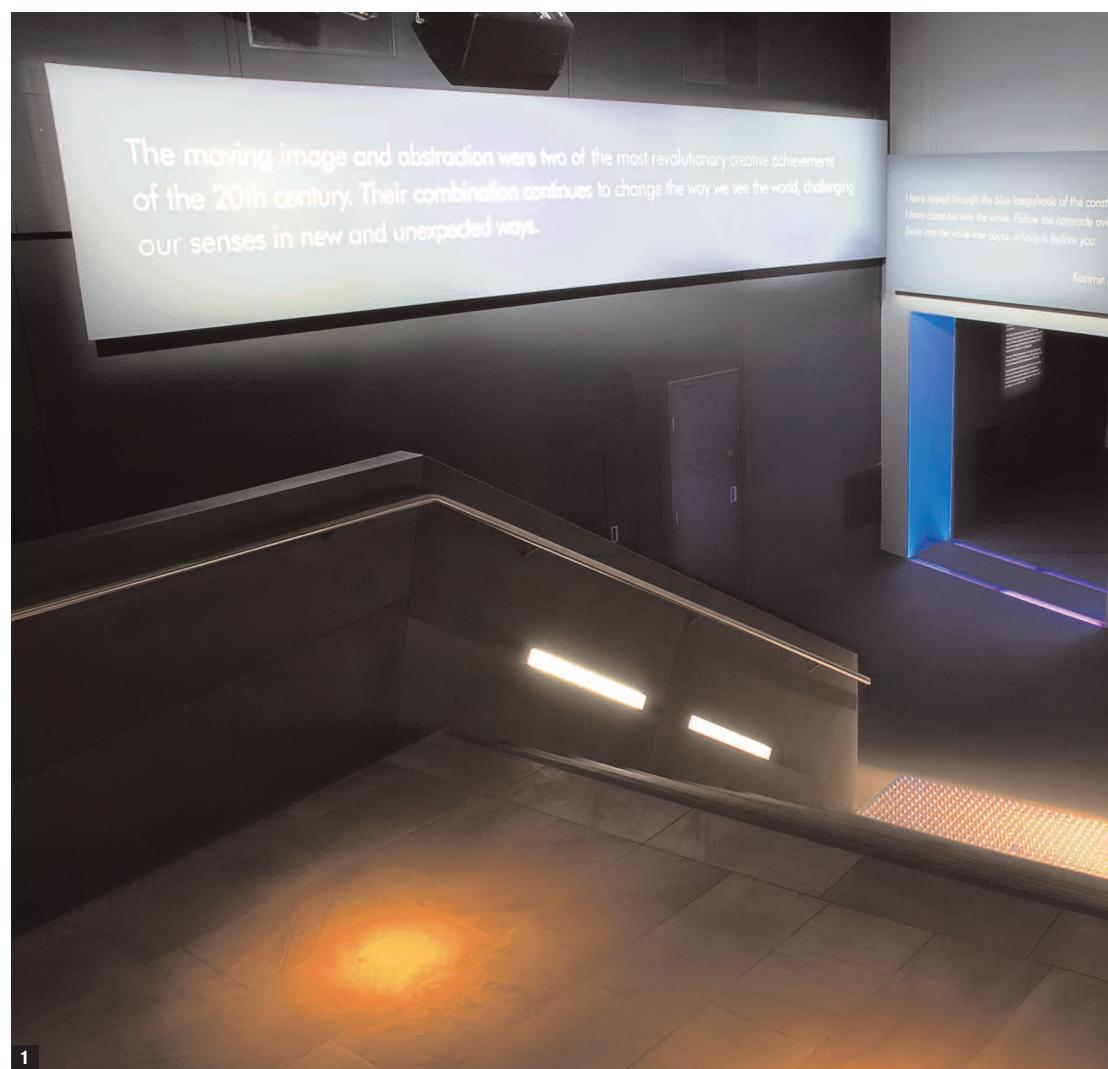
The exhibition was called 'White Noise', and the architects were encouraged with the understanding that darkness was their only friend. It sounded more like a big budget Hollywood horror flick than anything else, and, for acclaimed young architectural firm Studio505, it sounded like a lot of fun. The Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) employed Studio505 to create the exhibition space for 'White Noise' at Federation Square, and it is an immersive journey into the hiss and flicker of abstraction in the digital age. This large-scale international exhibition, featuring large-scale abstract works by Ryoji Ikeda and Ulf Langheinrich amongst an assembly of cutting edge artists, consisted of nine installations that challenged and seduced through perceptually intense modulations of light, sound, image, colour and rhythm. A media lounge program presented historical and contemporary moving image theory and practice, including structuralist, materialist, minimalist and abstract filmmaking, and video and digital media art. It also utilised ACMI's collection including Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Hans Richter and Walter Ruttman; and, there were also web-based interactive artworks.

Studio505's brief was to completely redesign the gallery space in a way which complemented and extended the focus of the artists' minimalist work within an extremely tight budget and short build time, and which showcased all the disparate exhibition pieces in an extremely long and narrow space - over 100 metres. Studio505 sought Suprematist artist Kasmir Malevich as inspiration for a

1. The entrance to the ACMI's White Noise exhibition, held from 18th August to 25th October 2005.

2. The artworks are arranged in separate but interconnected installations along the 100 metre spine of the gallery, defined by a series of glowing gates. Between the gates, each art space is tailored in scale and shape to produce its own unique micro-environment.

3. An interactive station, beside a threshold glowing gate, provides a space for contemplation beyond the exhibition's intense atmosphere. It fully exploits the gallery's six metre high space.

Purchase your White Noise catalogue
at the ACMI Box Office (Level 1) $26.95

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relevant architectural vernacular to bolster the exhibit.

The overall design had to anticipate the next international exhibition in its design allowing for an efficient retrofit at minimal cost. The budget constraint of $80 per square metre for a fitout in excess of 1400m2 and 6m high required the maximisation of efficiency of wall arrangements and materials, and the minimisation of expensive details. The design therefore focused on ensuring that the volumetric spaces were correct in their arrangement, scale and form, allowing a broad brush response to the gallery that satisfied the brief requirements in full. A contemporary enfilade was envisioned by Studio505 that coherently connected and separated the works from another and the viewer in a single, thread-like manoeuvre. The enfilade was the sole access to the nine international artworks, creating a controlled and powerful linear experience that was defined by the arrangement of Ultra Violet lit openings in the new walls of the gallery.

Each art space was tailored in scale and shape, creating unique environments to complement each work arranged in a plan inspired by Suprematist axial juxtapositions. For the first time the entire 100m length of the gallery was on display for the visitor, thereby revealing a spatial "truth" in a manner that complements the discourse of the artist's work; and at the same time the enfilade provided a ubiquitous ante-room sense of calm.

Each artist required their work to be viewed against black, so a colour scheme of blacks was devised to maintain and emphasise the elemental Suprematist forms; the choice of a mixed use of painted plasterboard and MDF on steel studs allowed the project to come in on time and on budget. A subtle hiss of aural white noise was broadcast with linear speakers along the line of the enfilade. Along with the black background, which left the sole colour of the exhibition to be the works themselves (and clearly separated the exhibition area from the information and kiosk areas), this completely cleansed the senses and intensified the visitors appreciation of not only the art but the silent, invisible structures that punctuate and harness it. Indeed, among reviewers and participating artists alike, the unofficial tenth artwork of the exhibition is the exhibition itself. ✚
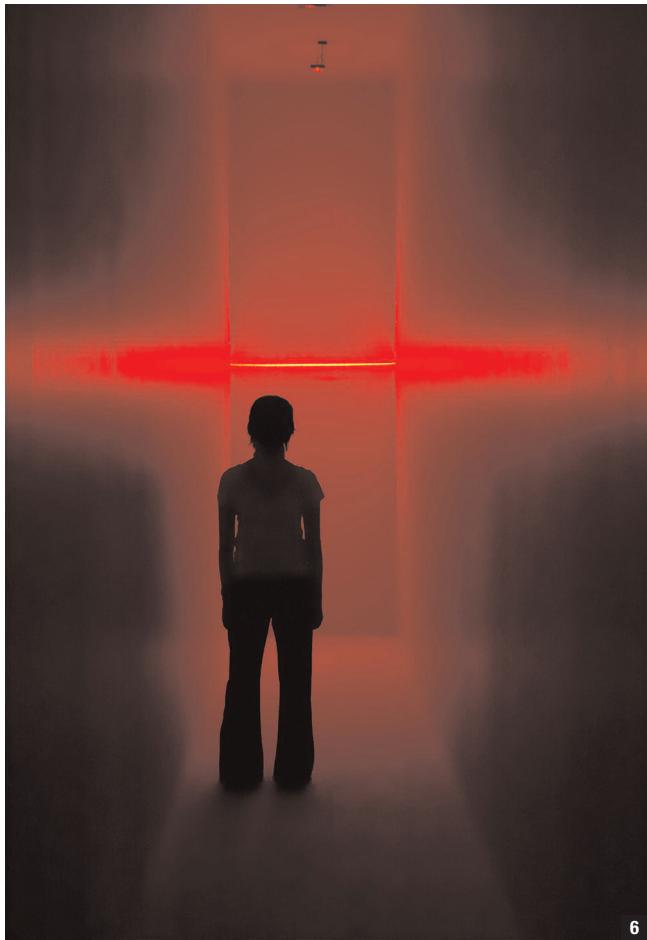
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MATERIALS USED
Wall structure Steel studs **Wall linings** Painted plasterboard; painted MDF