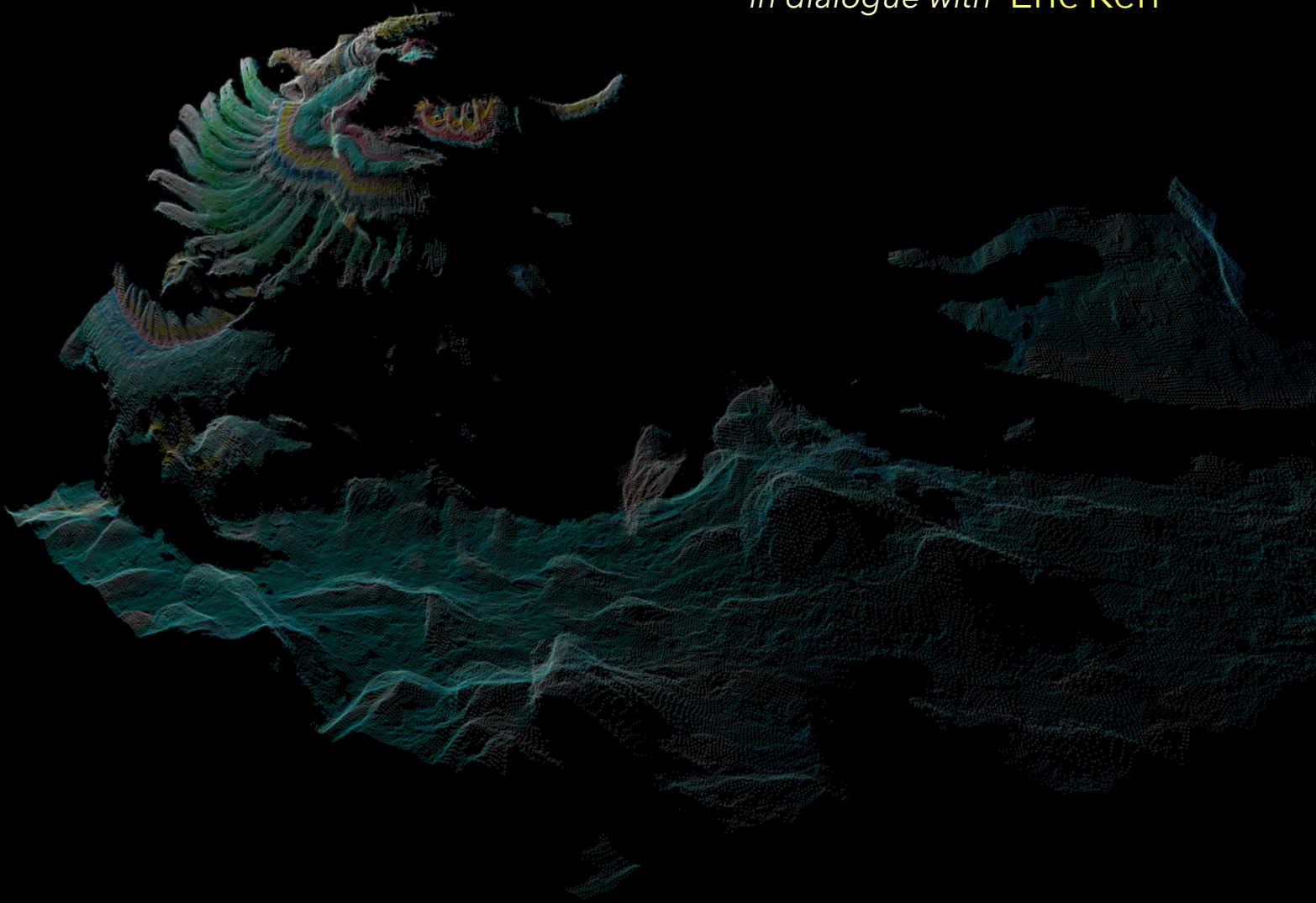# Rec: Haw Par Villa

Olivier Perriquet

in dialogue with Eric Kerr

Rec: Haw Par Villa

This project, at the crossroads of art and philosophy, explores and reimagines the sculptures, tableaux and dioramas of Singapore's Tiger Balm Garden through virtual reality, as a set of dematerialized miniatures, created from elements collected in the garden.

Originally built in the 1930s and remodelled after the Second World War, Haw Par Villa is a syncretic patchwork of mythologies, religious instruction, and morality tales embodied by sculptures, dioramas, and gardens.

A unique site in Singapore, it can be thought of as a place situated in a paradoxical time and space.

Perceived by many modern Singaporeans as a relic of the past, of forgotten traditions and pastoral forms of entertainment, it appears as an anomalous vestige in the urban space of a city, geared towards the future, that changes at an extremely fast pace.

The garden exists today in varying states of disrepair.
Although there are also continuing efforts to preserve and maintain it, many of the original sculptures exist only in media and people's memories.

Taking for granted that things arise, exist, die, and persist in different forms, this project, by contrast, sees Haw Par Villa as very much alive and emblematic of a re-enchantment with the ineffable in contemporary Singapore.

It explores how a transportation of Haw Par Villa in the virtual realm translates the garden into a different world, preserving and losing some of its attributes but also adding new connotations that spring from the technology in use.

At the heart of the project is the technique of photogrammetry, an analogue of photography in the sense that it creates "frozen" recordings of reality.

The spatio-temporal ambiguity of the garden is mirrored in the raw 3D sceneries produced by photogrammetry, which convey an enigmatic nature.

Photogrammetry is inherently selective, filtered, incomplete, and productive of artefacts that are ambiguous. Are they ruins? Fragments from the past? Futuristic forms?

Haw Par Villa is a hearthstone to explore broader questions.

This project is currently a work in progress which involves the creation of an artwork by artist Olivier Perriquet in conversation with philosopher Eric Kerr, and the publication of a body of reflections resulting from this dialogue.
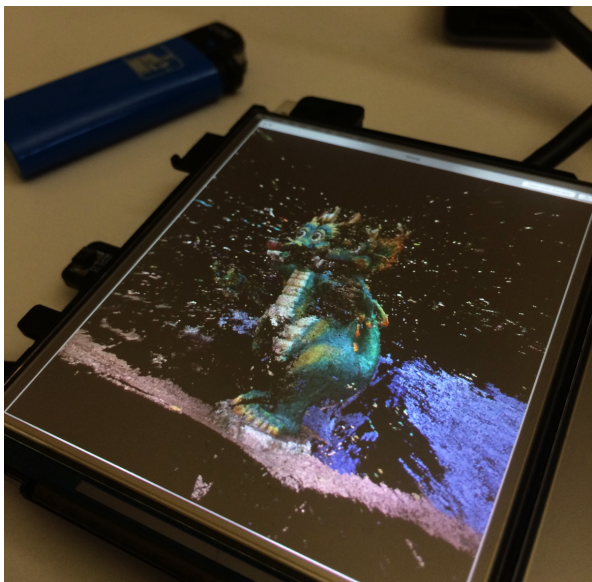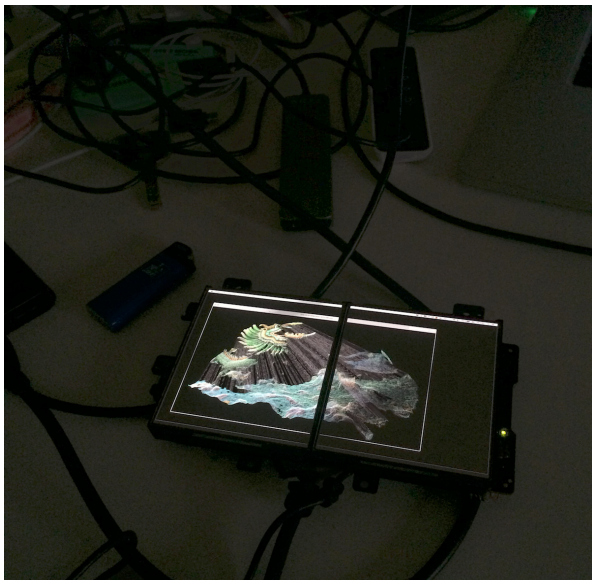
Visual samples *(work in progress)*

Snapshots: http://cesium-133.net/hpv/RecHPV-images.pdf
Animations: https://vimeo.com/album/5588159

Past timeline

12.17   Grant awarded (French government) and early prototypes developed
               https://bit.ly/2CLpHPh

03.18   Presentation of a position statement and exhibition of work-in-progress
               at international workshop, Asia Research Institute, NUS
               https://bit.ly/2BF5TwD
               http://cesium-133.net/hpv/perriquet-kerr-NUS-2018.pdf

08.18   Excerpt of FishEye Magazine and Revue Trait d'Union
               http://cesium-133.net/hpv/fisheyeMag-HS2018.pdf
               http://perriquet.net/docs/perriquet-traitsdunion-2018.pdf

08.18-12.18   *Haw Par Villa* – Undergraduate Research Opportunity
               Module taught at Tembusu College, NUS

Small hi-resolution displays *(work in progress)*

Photographic prints *(work in progress)*
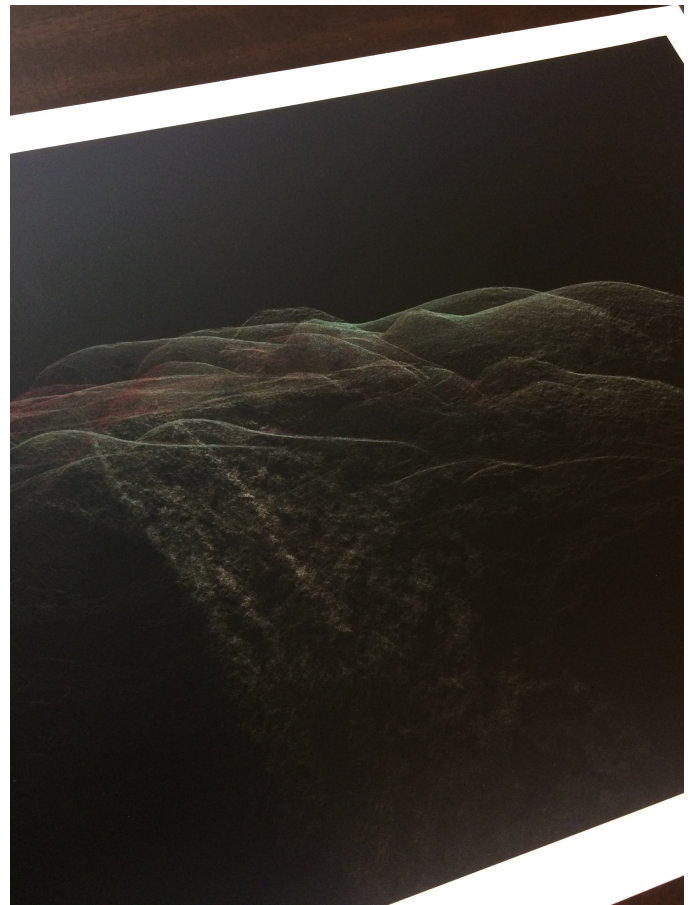
Biographies

Olivier Perriquet is a researcher and visual artist whose work crosses various fields, including experimental and expanded cinema, video, new media, live performance or installation, and makes frequent and implicit references to scientific language or imagination.

With a special affinity for optics and vision machines, he has been experimenting for about fifteen years with live cinema and installation using home-made capture and projection systems.

Working alone or in collaboration, notably with sound artists and musicians, he explores the relationships between images, thoughts and bodies through their most mysterious manifestations, in imaginary worlds that seek to be out of time, where archaic images or images referring to childhood often unfold.

Graduated from Le Fresnoy-National studio of contemporary arts, after a PhD in computational biology, he currently teaches as a Professor of visual arts at the media/arts school e|m|a|fructidor in France and he heads research at Le Fresnoy.

http://olivier.perriquet.net
http://perriquet.net/docs/portfolio-2018.pdf *(portfolio)*

Eric Kerr is a philosopher of technology based at the National University of Singapore where he is a Lecturer and Research Fellow at Tembusu College and the Asia Research Institute.

His work is primarily at the intersection of the philosophy of technology and epistemology with a particular focus on Southeast Asia. He has published on topics including Internet culture in Singapore, the epistemology of technology, and cross-cultural philosophy.

He is Associate Editor at Social Epistemology and Book Reviews Editor at the SERRC. He is a co-founder and board member of the Society for Philosophy of Information. He received his PhD from the University of Edinburgh and has been a visiting scholar at the University of Vienna and TU Delft.

https://ari.nus.edu.sg/Peoples/Detail/672
http://www.eric-kerr.com

Contacts and support

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