THE HIDDEN GALLERY

Australian National University

School of Cybernetics

NGA

BOHO INTERACTIVE

A collaboration with the Australian National University's School of Cybernetics, National Gallery of Australia and Boho Interactive.
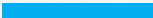
UN-TOUR

We acknowledge, celebrate and pay our respects to the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people of the Canberra region and to all First Nations Australians on whose traditional lands we meet and work, and whose cultures are among the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

UN-TOUR THE HIDDEN GALLERY

CONTENTS

I am the gallery - a cybernetic system that learns and changes over time. I am a collection of many things working together - including you - to achieve a shared goal: to create meaning from art.

As people change, as culture transforms, and as our national identity is renewed, I am re-formed through this ongoing dialogue.

I morph to become digital as well as physical as people relate differently to art through technology over time.

I change to be part of the environment where I sit. As the environment adjusts to the ways people use this place, and as our local and global ecologies change, I adjust too.
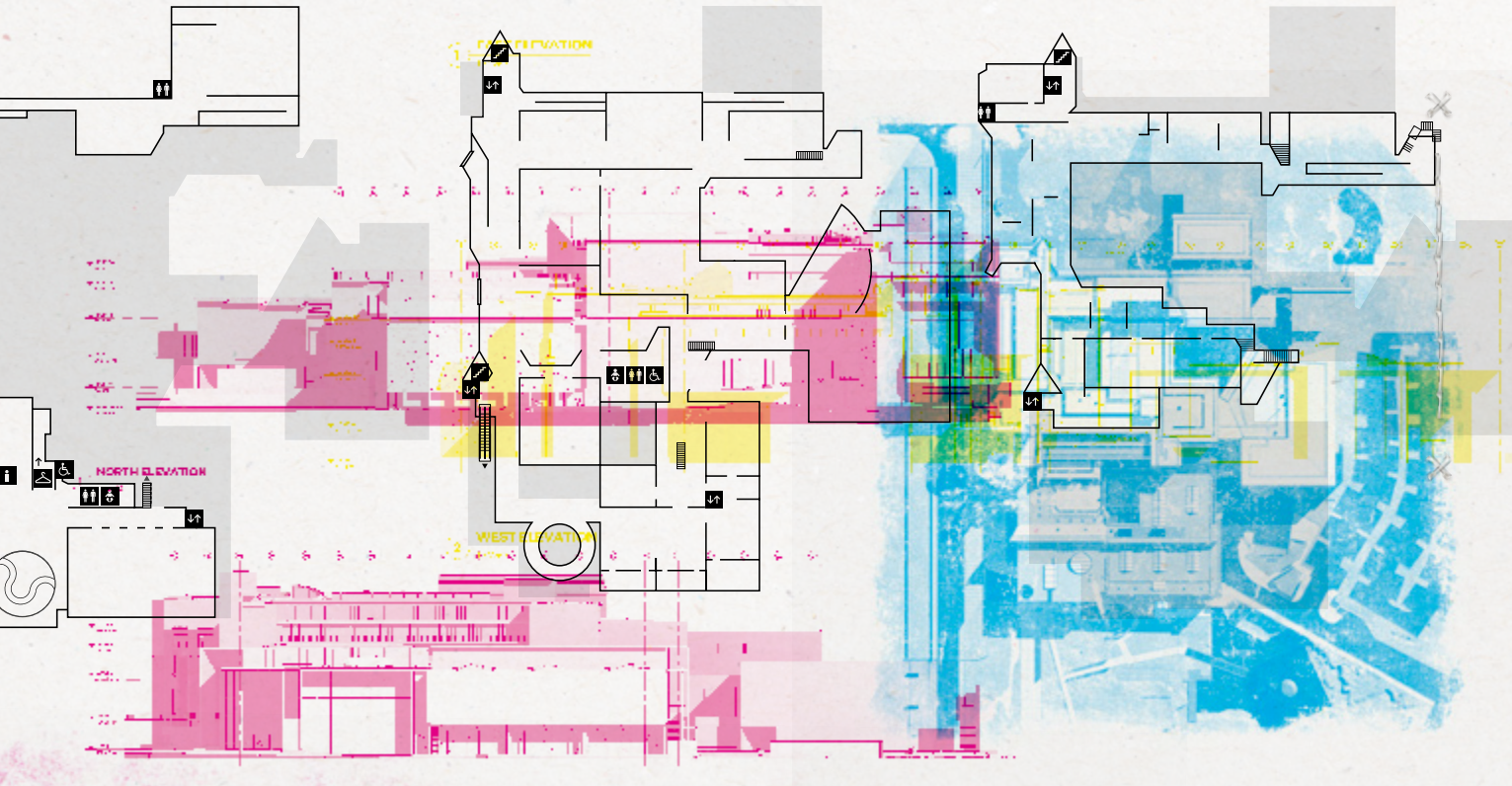
I am shaped and transformed by the systems that are part of me and that surround me, just as I have shaped them to remake this site, inform our culture, and recreate how people experience art through technology.

01

PART 01:

THE
HIDDEN
GALLERY

SOUTH ELEVATION

NORTH ELEVATION

WEST ELEVATION

Within the National Gallery, there are many overlapping and interacting systems.

To create the right conditions for the artwork, every minute 12,742 tonnes of air is circulated around the gallery. This air travels through filters that are as fine as two human hairs. Over 100,000 kg of dust - 5 humpback whales worth - is removed from the air each year.

These systems are controlled by sensors and data that flows through the building, triggering changes to the settings. People in the gallery monitor and help correct these systems if they go off course. These systems adjust to changes in the environment outside: to bushfire smoke, to weather, to the amount of air that comes through the entry as visitors flow into and out of the building.

The air that you breathe at the National Gallery is supported by these complex, hidden systems.

02

PART 02:

THE
COLLABORATION

The collaboration between the National Gallery and the School of Cybernetics to make *Un-Tour: The Hidden Gallery* began as a set of conversations about how to steer technology systems safely through the world. As our world is increasingly data-driven, and digital, we need ways of navigating complexity with purpose, and this matters in the context of art, including how we access meaning from art, and how we imagine possible futures for and through art in Australia and the world.
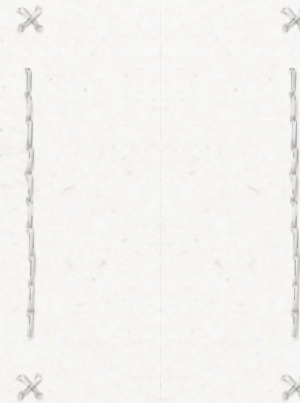
Un-Tour: The Hidden Gallery is an experience designed to show what it looks like to wrangle with this complexity. Working with Boho Interactive, the School of Cybernetics imagined the National Gallery as a cybernetic system: as a set of components and relationships that adapt to and shape one another toward a goal.

To show the National Gallery as a cybernetic system, we explored the many-layered and interacting systems that make up the gallery: the physical and digital infrastructure; how these systems interacted with people in the gallery including staff and visitors; how the art, the environment and the physical setting all interact to create a dynamic system that is the National Gallery. By tracing a path through the gallery into the hidden parts of the building, we are exposing all of these interacting systems to the public for them to experience what it means to steer autonomous systems.

To find out more about the work of the School of Cybernetics visit: https://cybernetics.anu.edu.au/

03

PART 03:

ACKNOWLEDGE –MENTS

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