



(PROJECT)

DORMITORIUM:  
COMMUNAL SLEEP SPACE

DR MATTHEW BIRD  
DR MARCUS MCMAHON

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THE  
INTERDISCIPLINARY  
IMPACT OF  
CREATIVE PRACTICE  
RESEARCH  
(SYMPOSIUM)

(VENUE)  
MADA,  
MONASH  
UNIVERSITY

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DR MATTHEW BIRD  
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01. Images 1-5: Dormitorium, McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park (Langwarrin), 2017  
02. Images 6-8: Sarcophagus, Venice Architecture Biennale, Palazzo Mora (Venice, Italy), 2016  
03. All photography Peter Bennetts

## DORMITORIUM

Dormitorium is the latest interactive sculptural project by Melbourne-based architect and artist Matthew Bird. Well known for his progressive and experimental methods Bird draws across and unites numerous creative disciplines from architecture and interior design to installation art, photography and performance to realise projects that challenge traditional modes of living. A distinguishing feature of his work is the seamless integration of prosaic objects into highly finished constructions.

Bird's recent research navigates the changing traditions of sleep spaces and the potential these have to profoundly affect the way we rest and rejuvenate. One in three Australians suffer from sleep disorders, which can be influenced by sleeping partners, psychological factors and the ubiquity of technology, which ultimately impact the way we participate in daily life and society. In response to these concerns Bird created Sarcophagus (2016-17) which was first exhibited at the Palazzo Mora as part of the 15th International Architecture Biennale, Venice, Italy. Sarcophagus is imagined as a nomadic vessel where individuals can experience the transformative and meditative environment of the sarcophagus' interior, which is heightened by the cyclical film sequence viewed by visitors lying within the vessel.

Extending this solitary experience, Bird's Dormitorium at McClelland Gallery playfully critiques our every-day sleep rituals and sleep patterns in a more social setting. Through this project Bird has engaged sleep research specialists alongside digital and performance artists to create a hypothetical, futuristic sleep environment. Visitors are invited to lie in the sheepskin lined cots, with friends or strangers, to experience the animated light projections that simulate a range of natural lighting conditions from sunset to sunrise, which are enhanced by the slow calming movement of the bed turntable.

Bringing together these ideas, Dormitorium is presented as a communal sleep chamber and exploratory environment that encourages audiences to engage with a complexity of sensory propositions, from textures and materials to the immersive effects of moving light and sound technologies.

Dormitorium has been created in collaboration with Respiratory & Sleep Disorders Physician Dr Marcus McMahon from Austin Health and Professor Shantha Rajaratnam and Professor Sean Drummond from Monash University's Sleep Program, Monash Institute of Cognitive and Clinical Neurosciences. With contributions from architect and designer Caitlyn Parry, choreographer/performance artist Phillip Adams and choreographer/dance artist Shelley Lasica.

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body. This project is supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.

Matthew Bird is a practicing Architect and Senior Lecturer within the Department of Architecture at MADA, Monash University Melbourne.