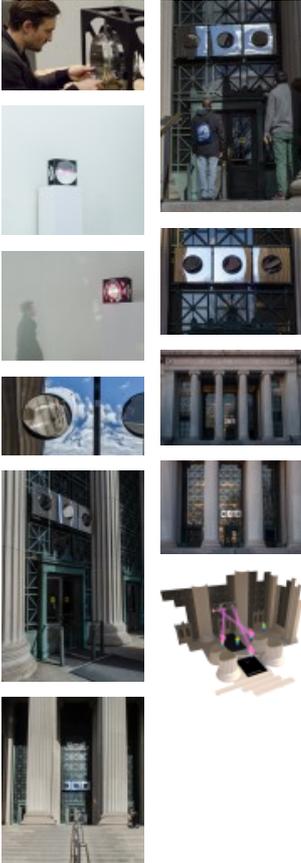


june 6,
2014

thesis project by 2014 graduate leigh christie appearing at venice biennale



Seanseable City Lab, Local Warming, 2014

Leigh Christie testing the device. Principal Investigator: Carlo Ratti. Project leads: Leigh Christie (Artistic Concept); Matthias Danzmayr (Design + Software); Cagri Hakan Zaman (Software).

Val Grimm | MIT Program in Art, Culture and Technology

Local Warming, an MIT Senseable City Laboratory project led by Leigh Christie, a 2014 graduate of ACT, has been selected for inclusion in the *Elements of Architecture*, one of the three interlocking exhibitions at the 2014 Venice International Architecture Biennale. The overarching exhibition is entitled *Fundamentals* and is directed by renowned architect Rem Koolhaas. Founded in 1895, the Venice Biennale is one of the most important venues for artists and architects, hosting pavilions from over 75 countries and welcoming over 475,000 visitors in 2013.

The installation is composed of robotic lens assemblies that, in a way reminiscent of drones and other recent autonomous technologies, track the viewer using sophisticated motion-sensing methods. However, unlike their hostile siblings, they offer comfort instead of a threat, emitting, Christie says, “a ‘bubble’ of heat energy” that follows them wherever they walk within range.

In addition to these prototypes one day potentially serving a real-world purpose in civic environments where energy efficiency is best served by the localized delivery of heat, they are, Christie argues, “an example of how energy-technology development can seem threatening and can also be interpreted as the exact opposite: a system that provides us with direct control over our own energy. This serves as a metaphor for our relationship with energy on a global scale. While we may feel that anthropogenic existential threats, such as global warming, are beyond our control, I would argue that these threats are actually opportunities to improve our own understanding of the universe around us. Ultimately, the presence of a global risk can act as a common-cause around which humankind can rally and thrive.”

Three more members of the ACT community are also involved in the 2015 Biennale. Emeritus Professor Joan Jonas, a pioneering figure in performance art, will be representing the United States in 2015, creating a new multimedia installation for the U.S. Pavilion, which is curated by Ute Meta Bauer, a former colleague of Jonas and founding director of ACT. [Click](#)

Seanseable City Lab, Local Warming, 2014

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Thesis project by 2014 graduate Leigh Christie appearing at Venice Biennale - News
[here to read more about Joan Jonas at the 2015 Venice Biennale.](#) Alumna Alia Farid is curating the exhibition *Acquiring Modernity* in the Kuwait Pavilion, which explores the effects of modernity on the country's culture, architecture, and history. [Learn more about Acquiring Modernity...](#)