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Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Science and the arts intersect at IMAS during National Science Week

Two unique and fascinating collaborations between IMAS scientists and Tasmanian artists will see two free events held at the IMAS waterfront building this month as part of National Science Week.

Opening today and continuing throughout August in the IMAS foyer exhibition space, “*Oceans of the Unknown*” will bring seafloor mapping to life through art, funded by a University of Tasmania Cross Disciplinary Incentive Grant, with support from the National Environmental Science Program Marine Biodiversity Hub.

The exhibition features works by IMAS Senior Research Fellow and spatial analyst Dr Vanessa Lucieer and artists Jan Hogan and Annalise Rees from the Tasmanian College of the Arts.

And on Friday 19 August, Annalise Rees and choreographer James Batchelor will discuss their participation in this year’s IMAS *Investigator* voyage in “*Into the Unknown: an Artistic and Scientific Voyage to Heard and McDonald Islands*”.

In “*Oceans of the Unknown*” Dr Lucieer’s videos, models, etchings, sculptures, prints and videos draw from her acoustic data and engineering plans to contribute to an understanding of what is in the new Commonwealth Marine Reserve network, while her armada of tiny porcelain ships communicates the challenge of defining Australia’s ocean habitats.

Jan Hogan’s prints were created in the environment of the Derwent, her inks and papers transformed by saltwater contact.

Drawings by Annalise Rees were done on-board the CSIRO’s Marine National Facility RV *Investigator* during the IMAS voyage in January and February this year to research the link between active volcanoes on the seafloor and the mobilisation of iron which enriches and supports life in the Southern Ocean.

Together the artworks explore the use of line and image to communicate ideas about the unseen.

“Our efforts to define the ocean test our ability to capture data using sound, vision or light with robotic technologies that spread our sensory reach hundreds or even thousands of meters below the surface,” Dr Lucieer said.

“I use these data to draw seafloor landscapes, often revealing their contours and structure for the first time. I try to see what the patterns of seafloor shapes and textures can tell me about the habitats and lifeforms they embrace.”

Dr Lucieer said a perpetual challenge is to understand the scale of mapping required for this relationship between the seafloor and its biology to come into focus.

To explore this challenge, each of her artworks plays on the concept of scale.

“Through my artworks I have tried to show how complex, dynamic and unique this environment can be.

“Each artwork has accompanying text, video or graphics to put the work into a scientific context and answer an important question: ‘Why is collecting this data important for society?’,” Dr Lucieer said.

Annalise Rees and James Batchelor’s discussion of their work on the IMAS *Investigator* voyage in “*Into the Unknown: an Artistic and Scientific Voyage to Heard and McDonald Islands*” will be free to the public in the **IMAS Aurora Lecture Theatre on Friday 19 August from 1pm - 2pm.**

James and Annalise’s presence on board *Investigator* as official voyage artists continued a long historical tradition of artists being associated with voyages of scientific discovery.

Their presence opened up a dialogue between the artistic and scientific disciplines, questioning how it is that we come to know and understand the world we live in.

Both James and Annalise explored their encounter with the unknown through movement and drawing based practices.

In their talk James and Annalise will discuss their artistic investigations to consider how creative research extends and expands perceptions of knowledge and information gathering.

IMAS Media Contact: Andrew Rhodes (03) 6226 6683 or 0417 239 537, email: ajrhodes@utas.edu.au

Information released by:

Communications and Media Office, University of Tasmania

Phone: 61 3 6226 2124

Email: Media.Office@utas.edu.au