

DESCENT INTO YARRAGADEE

ARTIST EXPOSES ANCIENT AQUIFER IN CITY CRACK

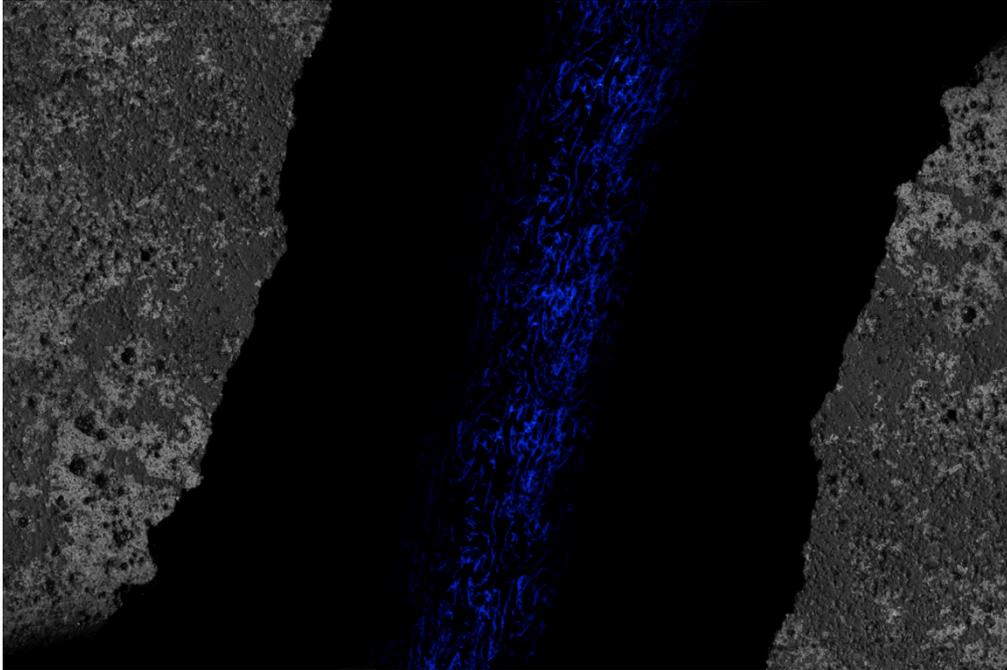


Image: Sohan Ariel Hayes, *Descent into Yarragadee*, 2017. Image courtesy of the artist.

Perth-based media artist, Sohan Ariel Hayes, has discovered an abyss that may connect with the ancient Yarragadee aquifer in the collapsed foundations of a shop in Perth's Murray Street Mall, the cause of which remains unknown. The continual gush of water from the fissure is hampering Urban Authority of Water* (UAW) investigations and surrounding stores may also be forced to close.

Water samples analysed indicate a likely match with the Yarragadee aquifer, showing the water to be more than 40,000 years old. The aquifer is estimated to contain 1,000 cubic kilometres of water, with the upper region beginning close to 1,500m below Perth City.

Black water diver, Stella Flux*, descended into the crack to discover a continuing network of limestone caverns more than forty metres below the surface of the crack. Flux said, *"The only other ground level link to the Yarragadee aquifer I could find was the old Dalkeith hot spring located near the Sunset hospital*. It was a hot spot for around 30 years before it was concreted over in the early 1950s."*

The discovery of this potentially unique link to the aquifer, was made by Hayes after he leased the prominent location at 255 Murray Street, Perth for his upcoming exhibition from 9 to 17 December 2017. Hayes said, *"This is like the tip of an iceberg. Perth people need to witness this mystery. I was dumbfounded by the reality of this enormous water body below Perth City. The idea of the thing gripped me liked the tractor-beam emanating from a*

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black hole. I found myself reading UAW's sample results over and over, pouring over Perth's geological history. A sense of vertigo overcame me as I stood at the edge of the crack and stared into the abyss. Here is a great opportunity to experience the Yarragadee and consider its relationship to this place".

While local business owners are hoping to seal up the crack, Hayes has instead illuminated the dark abyss with an array of submersible drones equipped with LED lights and invited the public in to experience the immensity of the underwater caverns extending far below the foundations of the city.

Authorities have confirmed the situation on site has stabilised and is safe for public access.

Artsource Art Consultant, Katherine Wilkinson, said *"Visual artists provide us with a unique perspective on the world around us and we can't wait to see Sohan Ariel Hayes highlight the significance of what on any other given day would simply be the ground beneath our feet. His experiential concepts engage us in new ways and allow us to reconsider our relationships with the urban landscape, a vital means of providing connection to our community."*

Perth Public Art Foundation, Executive Director, Nathan Giles, said *"Temporary public art interventions are an important addition to the public realm as they have the flexibility to address the 'here and now' whilst enlivening spaces and enhancing opportunities to directly engage our communities. Commissions such as Descent Into Yarragadee supply the dynamism needed to fuel cultural growth whilst enriching the pedestrian experience. Cities are in constant flux and artistic responses can harness new energy to make us think again about the mutable world in which we live. perthFLUX is a program designed to support experimental work for mid-career artists and we are delighted to have the brilliance of Sohan Ariel Hayes executing this installation."*

Sohan Ariel Hayes' *Descent into Yarragadee* is presented by the Perth Public Art Foundation for *perthFLUX: Radiant Energy*, in partnership with the City of Perth and Artsource.

*may or may not be a real person, place or organisation.

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CONTACT

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EVENT DETAILS

- > **OPENING NIGHT:** 6pm to 8pm Friday 8 December. RSVP essential to: rsvp@artsource.net.au
 - o **Descent into Yarragadee continues:** 9 to 17 December 2017.
Wednesday to Saturday: 11am to 3pm and 5pm to 8pm. Sunday: 12pm to 4pm.
 - o **Where:** [255 Murray St, Perth WA 6000](#)

- > **ARTIST IN CONVERSATION:** Join Hayes in conversation with artist and creative producer Erin Coates as he unravels our relationship with the ancient Yarragadee aquifer.
 - o **When:** 2pm Saturday 9 December 2017
 - o **Where:** [255 Murray St, Perth WA 6000](#)

NOTES FOR EDITORS

About Perth Public Art Foundation and perthFLUX

The Perth Public Art Foundation (PPAF) is an independent not-for-profit charitable organisation that develops corporate partnerships and fundraising initiatives to develop public art projects in the City of Perth. The PPAF has a principal partnership with the City of Perth.

perthFLUX is a program of temporary public art projects commissioned by the Perth Public Art Foundation (PPAF). *Descent into Yarragadee* is a part of the third installment; *perthFLUX: Radiant Energy*. Previous commissions have included Snapcat (Renae Coles and Anna Dunnill), *Tiny Parades* for *perthFLUX: Interchange - Trade* (2015); and Philip Gamblen - *TOAST*, and Chris Cobillis - *Ghost of Record Store* for *perthFLUX: Tone - Timbre* (2016).

About Artsource

[Artsource](#) is the peak membership body for visual artists in Western Australia. We have over 700 members sharing our vision of a world in which culture and the arts are valued as vital and where visual arts flourish. [We support artists](#) and help to build their practice and careers with practical, affordable and relevant services, opportunities and represent their interests. Artsource champions the value of the visual arts to a growing audience around Western Australia, our nation and internationally.

Our expert Art Consultants develop small to large-scale art projects by engaging artists across a range of mediums to create temporary or permanent artworks that enliven exterior or interior spaces. Matching your project goals with artwork of the highest calibre, we ensure outcomes reflect client values and aspirations. Our [Artsource Associates](#) include a diverse range of clients including: developers, builders, architects, landscape architects, interior designers and local government.

Sohan Ariel Hayes

Sohan Ariel Hayes is a Perth-based media artist known for large-scale projection installations. Hayes' practice is defined by the ability to open pockets of wonder within the world and at the same time push the envelope to engage with darker sensibilities. In 2010, he collaborated with Yindjibarndi Traditional Owner, Michael Woodley, and Juluwarlu for International Art Space, producing *BirndiWirndi-Worlds Apart*, a site-based digital projection in Roebourne. In 2012, Hayes collaborated with senior Martu painter, Yunkurra Billy Atkins, to create the acclaimed animation *Cannibal Story*, which toured nationally with *We Don't Need a Map* and *Experimenta*, and was screened in numerous international film festivals including, Tampere Film Festival, Finland (2014); Edinburgh Film Festival (2013); and Origins: Festival of First Nations, London (2013). Hayes was the Media Artist in 2016 and 2017 for the Perth Festival opening events. *HOME* in 2016 was followed by *Boorna Waanginy: The Trees Speak* in 2017, which saw 110,000 visitors walk through an immersive art experience as the trees of Kings Park were transformed into a cathedral of light and sound. Recently, Hayes animated the blazing landscape paintings of Martu artist, Ngamaru Bidu for *Walyja Ngurra* at Fremantle Arts Centre; and worked with acclaimed Director, Lynette Wallworth, on the short film *Cloud Story* (2016).