Screen Worlds: Revolutionise the public offering at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) Melbourne, Australia 2009

Client: ACMI

Brief: Revolutionise the public offering at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) in Melbourne by re-designing the venue’s façade and public spaces and developing a exciting new permanent exhibition about moving image culture.

Drawing inspiration from the Australian terraces, we transformed ACMI’s ground floor into a fantastical, evocative landscape. Soft, lush green flooring spreads out across the space. Bamboo forms sweep into pillars and display cases, while remember cases house stunning film installations.

A key design challenge was working with the existing architecture of the exhibition space, which was claustrophobic, hard and angular. We painted the space out black, removing every extraneous part to tune the existing structure. Mirrored walls extend the space in every direction and soft, tactile materials and curvilinear forms give it an organic feel.

‘Laid out in curvaceous timber pods in a colourful hall of mirrors, the space feels more like a kids playground or a fairground ride than a dusty museum gallery.’

Mathieu Ravier, The Festivalists
The Screen Worlds project was more than just an exhibition - for ACMI it represented the centerpiece in the repositioning of the organisation, and we needed designers who were prepared to think beyond the straightforward.

Tony Sweeney, Director of ACMI

The process behind ‘Screen Worlds’ was radical in that content development and design took place hand in hand. We brought in collaborators including curator Michael Connor, interactive designer Dom Robson, and graphic collaborators GTF to work with the client on developing and communicating a storyline. The cross-pollination of design and content led us to develop a series of strong, physical interactives and installations that heightened the sensations of the moving image.

Working with our architectural consultant and graphic collaborators, we re-designed the venue’s façade to attract new hordes of visitors. Friendly green blobs dot the sidewalk, offering an array of videos and games; a vivid portal offers a tantalizing glimpse of colourful delights inside the building. The visual language of the gallery spills out onto the street, ensuring that the museum’s exterior conveys the identity and energy of the programme within.

Architectural Consultant: Denton Corker Marshall, DA.Studio
Graphic Collaborators: Graphic Thought Facility
Interactive Consultant: Dominic Robson
Coordinating Curator: Michael Connor