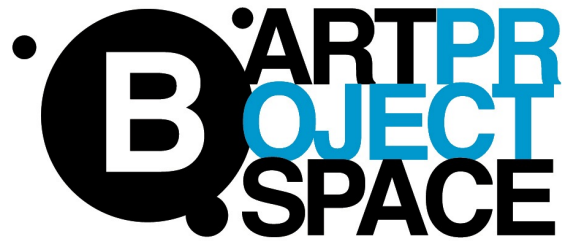


The Stars Have Always Risen

Ed Lust and Laura Marsh

22 - 28 June 2012

Puaka Matariki Ōtepoti Dunedin Festival



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Most of the time we labour under the misapprehension that the physical bounds of our immediate universe are unmovable and immutable. That the earth below and the sky above are the unchanging bedrocks of our existence. Lost are the moments of subtle transition and shift: the slow days passing between autumn and winter until a cold snap heralds the new season, or the daily growth of the moon through a progression of ever growing crescents until the day when it becomes full.

The Stars Have Always Risen seeks to celebrate the gradual change of year marked by the rising of the Matariki constellation.¹ The title of the exhibition also refers to the fact that although the Matariki constellation has signalled, and been celebrated as the beginning of the new year by Māori since pre-European arrival, large-scale celebrations of the event dwindled in the 1940s. In 2000 celebrations were reinvigorated and it is within this context that *The Stars Have Always Risen* provides a space for the contemplation of the importance of this time of year in our cultural history; suggesting that even if something is overlooked its significance does not change.

Ed Lust's video work is not an attempt to represent the rising of the Matariki constellation or its harbinger star, Puaka, directly; it is instead a poetic and lyrical display of the changing night sky in the Southern Hemisphere. Nebula pass and converge; their actions unfolding over time suggests elongated life cycles and seasons, but also encourages us to appreciate the place we are in now.

Laura Marsh's textile bivouac, mats and seats, are portable and draw obvious connections with camping, an activity characterised by constant uprooting and re-settling. Through her work she proposes that rather than continuing to gaze from South to North, we must make a conscious decision to shift our view of the world in a conceptual direction of 'South-South-South'. This shift will result in the re-centring of Aotearoa, New Zealand as a crucial site for the acknowledgement and celebration of our shared culture.

Laura Marsh graduated from AUT in 2010 with Master of Art and Design (Visual Art) and is the 2012 Olivia Spencer Bower artist in residence. Ed Lust graduated from the Ilam School of Fine Arts with a Masters in Fine Arts in 2010 and has recently exhibited in the Centre of Contemporary Art's *Window Projects* series. The exhibition is curated by Jamie Hanton, Director of The Blue Oyster Art Project Space.

The Stars Have Always Risen is kindly supported by the Dunedin City Council and Creative New Zealand.

¹ Matariki has two meanings, both referring to a tiny constellation of stars; Mata Riki (Tiny Eyes) and Mata Ariki (Eyes of God). Traditionally, depending on the visibility of Matariki, the coming season's crop was thought to be determined. The brighter the stars indicated the warmer the season would be and thus a more productive crop. It was also seen as an important time for family to gather and reflect on the past and the future.