



forum

MARGARET WERTHEIM

BEING THERE: VIRTUAL REALITY FROM GIOTTO TO TODAY

3 May 2017 @ 3pm



Building H, Level 6
Monash University
900 Dandenong Road
Caulfield East 3145

sensilab.monash.edu

We are used to thinking of virtual reality (VR) as a technology of the computer era, but in this talk science writer Margaret Wertheim will trace its roots to the Middle Ages. In the 13th century Roger Bacon championed a new form of representation he called “geometric figuring” and argued for artists to adopt this style. Soon Giotto was painting the Arena Chapel, a medieval environment consciously designed to make visitors feel that they had been projected into a 3D simulation of Christ’s life. Following the development of

what later came to be called “perspective,” Wertheim will discuss a lineage of visual verisimilitude from Giotto to *Grand Theft Auto*.

BIOGRAPHY

Margaret Wertheim is an internationally noted science writer, artist and curator whose work focuses on relations between science and the wider cultural landscape. She is the author of six books, including *The Pearly Gates of Cyberspace: A History of Space from Dante to the Internet*, and has written for

the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Guardian and many others. Wertheim has designed science+art exhibits for the Hayward Gallery (London), Science Gallery (Dublin), Art Center College of Design (Pasadena), and Mass MoCA (USA). By inviting audiences to play with ideas, her work offers a radical approach to maths and science at once intellectually rigorous and aesthetically aware. Her Crochet Coral Reef project is now the world’s largest participatory art+science endeavour.