

Change - ARCADE GALLERY (Room overview)

Change in the Arcade Gallery can be found on Level 1 of MOD, to the left at the top of the stairs.

DIGITAL SIGNAGE BOX reads: *Would you want to stay the same forever?*

The image below shows a clipped version of the *Forever* logo, in predominantly greens, pinks and silver against a black background.

White text on black reads: *Time doesn't stand still. We know this, because we can see the constant changes that happen to us and around us.*

We may go through these changes individually, and at our own pace. But collectively we share in this experience of time moving forward.

Credits:

Design and Production - Featherweight

Research - Associate Professor Lyndsey Collins-Praino,

Associate Professor Katrina Jaworski,

Professor Grant Tomkinson

Consultation - Jilda Andrews

Lighting - Lachlan Turner

Decals - WTT

Portraits - Anonymous

Photographer - Aristo Ris

On entering the Arcade Gallery, high on the left or southern wall is a repeat of the provocation in large white text, ***Would you want to stay the same forever?***

This large dark gallery space is approximately 4metres wide by 12metres long and is populated with four separate zones or table displays which can be experienced in various ways.

Each of the four zones are set up with two slightly offset long wooden tables that are butted up to each other along their length. They are offset by about 30cms, so the tables appear slightly staggered, and are oriented lengthwise from the entrance to the back wall.

A row of long white banners hangs from the high ceiling, falling to end about 1m above the level of the tabletops. Hanging in a row each of the banners displays a photographic portrait of a standing person. The 15 portraits show a range of people

of diverse ages, genders, sexualities and ethnicity. At the upper left-hand edge of each banner is a vertically oriented number in blue coloured font, these numbers indicate the days that the person had lived at the time the photo was taken. The portraits are not ordered chronologically but grouped above the tables according to the theme or subject for each of the zones.

The four zones focus on different themes, the first is Body, the second Hormones, the third Cognition and the fourth Perceptions. Each of the themes are explored through personal interviews conducted with the participants. You are invited to listen to these interviews, and to read some of the additional photo stories which are included at each station. There are also several interactive activities. If you would like to be seated there are a number of small wooden stools in this room, however people tend to move around the tables from station to station.

Across the end wall of the gallery, to the west is a 1.5metre high pegboard, and a second pegboard sits on the right wall, to the north extending for another 2 to 3 metres.

At the end of zone 4 is a pile of prepped paper and a container of pencils, you are invited to ask for advice and/or to respond to the ideas presented in this exhibit by writing or drawing something on a piece of A5 size paper. There is a hole on top of the paper so that your piece of paper can be displayed on the round pegs of the display board at the end of the gallery.

You may also read the questions, responses and concerns from other visitors that already hang on the wall and feel free to respond with advice at the bottom of their paper. Please replace these pieces on the wall once you have added a comment or response.

Website text:

We can't all be Edward Cullen, a 104-year-old man stuck in a 17-year-old body. But would we want to even if we could?

The changes in our hormones, bodies, cognition, and social attitudes are proof that time is passing. The alternative of staying the same forever is less interesting. Without the bonus of sparkling skin and superhuman speed, eternal longevity might not be so enticing.

This exhibit is a balance of the personal and shared experiences we have around change and ageing. Facets of life which can be joyful, frustrating and inevitable.

In this gallery, a series of people provide their perspectives of change. Displayed throughout the gallery are portraits, handwritten and audio perspectives from diverse

people. Test your abilities through various age-related tests and interrogate your perceptions about ageing.

Artwork highlight (Complex artwork)

Each station or zone has an introductory black signage panel about 60cms square, that is propped up on the front edge of each of the four stations. These signs name the theme of the zone

At zone 1, white text on black reads: **BODY**

From the moment we're born, our bodies are in a state of constant change. Bones stretch, muscles strengthen, cells renew.

Ageing is more than a biological process; it is a journey of transformation that continues every day. Each shift tells a story: the wear and tear of time, the resilience of recovery, and the body's remarkable ability to keep moving forward.

Whether we're running, resting, or rebuilding, our bodies never stop evolving.

The three portraits hanging above this zone include a young child encountering sensory changes, a middle-aged adult with declining hearing, and an older person with a chronic condition. Their perspectives are included as handwritten labels. Working in a clockwise direction around this station, on the left near the Signage is a handwritten note by 5-year-old Sophie (1,825 days). It reads 'I lost 4 teeth and the tooth fairy came. A few weeks ago I learned to ride my bike without training wheels'. Next is an x-ray that shows a number of new teeth already formed in a young child's gums, about to push out the baby teeth. There is also a photo story of Sophie with Dusty and Anna, the family chickens.

Next is a written story of Tatum, 13 weeks old (or 94 days old) by his mum. Below this is a black sign that asks, 'How old are you, really?'

Your age might be measured in birthdays, but the atoms in your body tell a story that began billions of years ago. Here's how different parts of you measure up:

Carbon atoms: Formed in ancient stars over 7 billion years ago.

Hydrogen atoms: Originated from the Big Bang, making them around 13.8 billion years old.

Hair cells: Last two to three years before being replaced.

Red blood cells: Renewed every 120 days.

Skin cells: Replaced approximately every four weeks.

Your body is a mix of ancient atoms and constantly renewing cells- a timeline of the universe, alive within you.

To the left of this are two handheld devices, they are a grip-strength test. Ask someone to help you follow the directions to test your hand strength and compare your results to the charts.

Handgrip strength has been called the “will to live” meter because it’s so tightly linked to overall health. It’s a much better predictor of fitness and health outcomes than bodyweight, fat percentage, or even blood pressure.

And here’s some good news, it’s something you can improve. Building strength doesn’t always mean going to the gym, everyday activities like household chores or walking the dog can help keep your grip strong!

Moving around to the other side of the Body zone, there is a light box displaying a hip x-ray, and a handwritten story from 71-year-old Jim (25,185 days) about the physical and mental challenges presented by an aging body.

Also in this zone is an interactive hearing activity, ‘What can you hear?’ Screen 1 prompts the visitor to pick up the attached round black earphone, place it over their ear and touch the button on the screen to experience how the ability to hear high-frequency sounds diminishes with age. At the end, the final screen has a range that indicates the average hearing range of different ages. This is called age-related hearing loss.

At zone 2, white text on black reads: **HORMONES**

Hormones drive the body’s biggest shifts – puberty, reproduction, ageing. They set the pace, sparking physical changes and emotional highs and lows.

But it’s not just about the body. Hormones influence how we think, react, and connect with the world around us.

Constantly at work, they shape life’s turning points in ways we don’t always see coming, sometimes making us feel out of control. How much can we really control the changes they bring?

The four portraits in this zone include 15-year-old Casper (5,485 days old) moving through mood changes, a 26-year-old transgender adult Clare (9,467 days old) moving through a second puberty and identity changes, 36-year-old Johnny (13,159 days old) a non-binary adult who has experience with how hormones contribute to a changing understanding of self, and 51-year-old Katherine (18,635 days old) experiencing mental changes in perimenopause. Short video interviews with each of the participants are displayed on small screens, each with an attached earphone. Excerpts from the interviews have been transcribed onto cards alongside their photographs. There is also a photo story by Casper about his puppy, Freddy.

At zone 3, the signage, white text on black reads: **COGNITION**

The brain is in constant flux. Thoughts shift, memories evolve, and new ideas ignite – it's always adapting. Each challenge rewires the mind, forming new connections and shaping how we understand the world.

The brain's power lies in its ability to continuously transform, from split-second decisions to deep reflection.

With our brains always changing, can we ever say we're the same person twice?

The four portraits hanging above this zone include a teen, 16-year-old Jaylah (5,840 days old) experiencing adolescent cognitive development, 22-year-old Mansis (8,039 days old) at peak cognitive development discusses trial and error learning, 46-year-old Sonia (16,725 days old) is on (Hormone Replacement Therapy) HRT and experiencing brain fog, and 81-year-old Peter (29,678 days old) is managing age-related cognitive changes.

There is also a photo story by Sonia, of her Nonno. Activities in this zone include a word recognition test on the left-side at the end of zone 3 and an interactive navigation challenge, across the table on a screen. The word recognition test is an A3 size piece of plywood, on which a list of words is printed in black ink across two columns. *Are these real words or made-up ones? Test your instincts – can you tell which ones are part of the English language.* Once you have decided, lift the plywood sheet to reveal the answers beneath. The same lists are repeated, this time the made-up words have a strike-through line scored through them.

At zone 4 white text on black reads: **PERCEPTIONS**

Age: it can be celebrated, feared, or ignored. Our interpretation shapes beauty ideals, social expectations, and how we regard life experience. In some cultures, ageing brings greater respect, while in others, it's seen as something to fight against.

These perspectives vary across generations and communities, revealing deeper beliefs about identity and worth.

The four portraits and handwritten stories in this zone include 36-year-old Stavroula (13,870 days old), exploring invincibility and denial about ageing, 'we are always being sold something'. 51-year-old Riaz (18,693 days old) who migrated from Pakistan exploring cultural practice and attitudes towards aging. 26-year-old, Yulin (9,494 days old) who is reckoning with when they are considered an adult and feel agency, and 78 years old, Auntie Lynette (28,119 days old) a First Nations elder observing cultural attitudes towards ageing and wisdom.

Activities on this station include a memory sequence test in which a series of cards sit upright in a wooden holder. A list of white numbers is printed vertically in the centre of each black card (the numbers are non-sequential, and different numbers appear on each card). Pair up with a friend or another visitor. One person reads the sequence aloud. The other listens and repeats the sequence back from memory. How many did you get right? Try again with a new card.

There are also several wooden analogue sliders which can be moved by visitors to note how they feel in response to the perspectives shared about ageing by the participants.

At the end of zone 4 is a photo story by Stavroula and the interactive activity space and display pegboards, which also continue along the northern wall for several metres.

Access note

If you would like to experience any of these interactive components and you are visiting solo, please ask a moderator staff member for assistance.

WHERE TO NEXT?

This concludes the audio description track for “Changes” in the ARCADE Gallery on Level 1, by Access2Arts for MOD. To continue, exit through the door to the east and along the walkway on Level 1 to find the next exhibit “Perspectives of Universe” in the Foyer Gallery, before progressing to further Galleries on level 1 or exit via the stairs or lifts to the downstairs area.