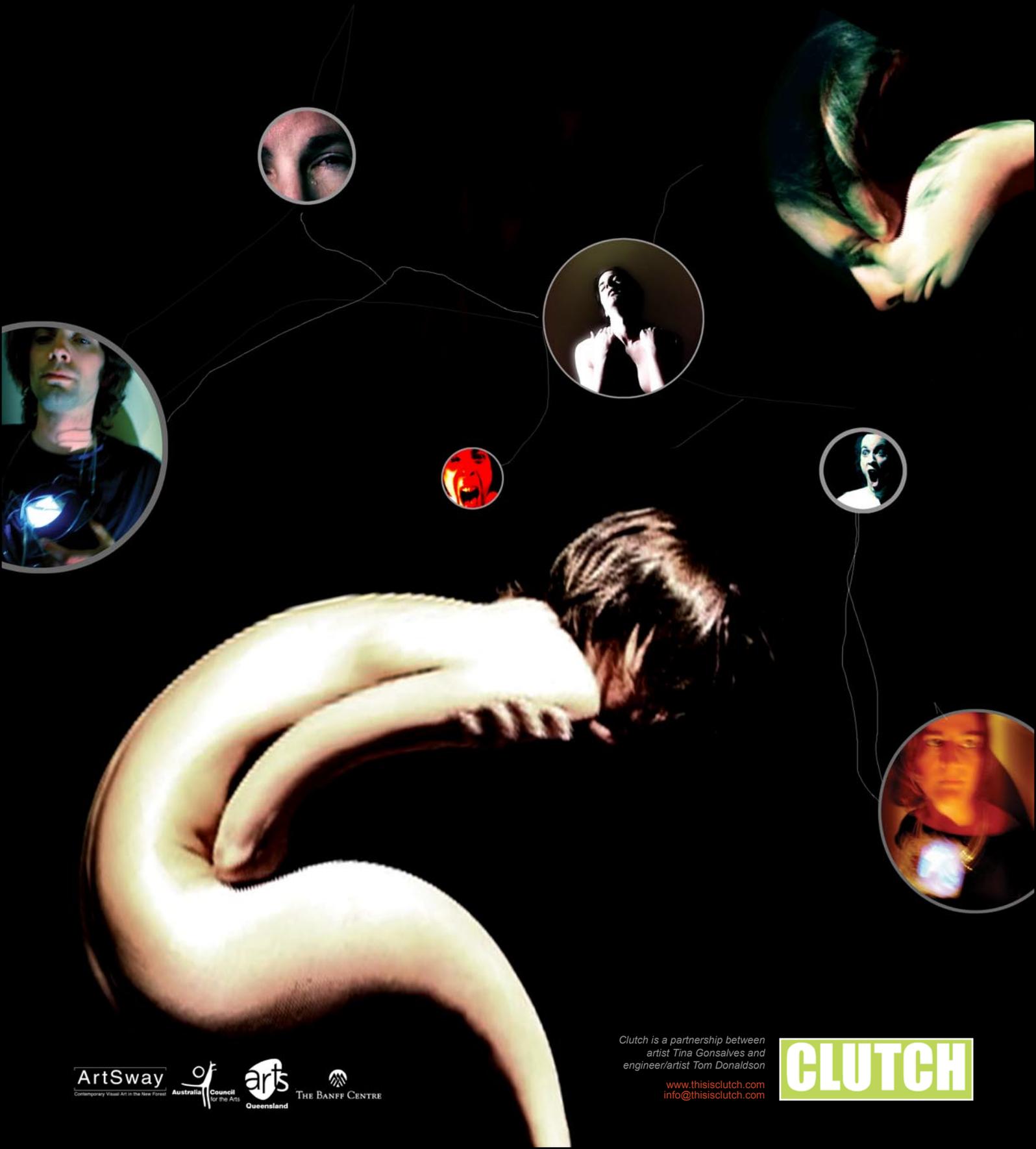


# medulla intimata

a responsive video jewellery project

new work by **CLUTCH**  
(Tina Gonsalves and Tom Donaldson)

[www.thisisclutch.com/medulla.html](http://www.thisisclutch.com/medulla.html)



ArtSway  
Contemporary Visual Art in the New Forest

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Clutch is a partnership between  
artist Tina Gonsalves and  
engineer/artist Tom Donaldson

[www.thisisclutch.com](http://www.thisisclutch.com)  
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**CLUTCH**

# medulla intimata

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(Tina Gonsalves and Tom Donaldson)



**Australian artist Tina Gonsalves and UK artist and engineer Tom Donaldson, founders of Clutch ([www.thisisclutch.com](http://www.thisisclutch.com)) have created 'Medulla Intimata', video responsive jewellery. Medulla Intimata introduces a new form of non-verbal communication: a real-time generated video stream reflecting and commenting on your conversations. As your conversations become more intimate, the jewellery becomes less of a shield and more of a wound, exposing your inner body and emotions to the world.**

## Overview

Medulla Intimata extends traditions of video portraiture. While wearing the jewellery, software monitors the tone and intonation in the wearer's voice. These measurements help the software select video sequences appropriate to the emotional state of the wearer. The source video is drawn from a database of self-portrait video clips of the wearer, with different imagery and visual styles reflecting different moods. Once selected, the appropriate piece of video is broadcast to the jewellery using wi-fi technology in real time. Real time effects, pacing and transitions are used to amplify or subvert the social moment. The jewellery is individually designed for each wearer. The narrative of the piece, from how it interprets conversation through to the moods that become the most important, to the generation of the output video, is all designed to reflect and interpret the wearer. It subverts straight-forward self expression by disclosing intimate details of the wearer, providing an interpretive rather than a representational commentary. The overall character and content of the piece and the video content reflects the overall character and content of the wearer and thus portrays a true living portrait.

Medulla Intimata explores how video can be made more intimate by embedding it in objects that have rich symbolic and cultural associations. Jewellery plays a wide range of social roles, from signifying attachment (through wedding rings, for example), denoting wealth or class (diamonds and pearls, for example) to attraction and self-expression.



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Professor Bill Seaman writes, "One must point out that Medulla Intamata, is a new hybrid form that intermingles performance, mobile video, jewelry, digital media, and wireless transmission technology, is quite unique. The ability to fuse poetic content and portraiture/self-portraiture is also a fascinating development in the field.

The work elaborates and repositions notions of portraiture, drawing on a unique responsive loop that is set up, intermingling artist and/or portrait performer, responsive hardware/software and participant. The work draws on the use of a specific database created for particular "performers". The participant engages with the work through language (intonation) and delicate body relations- through open dialogue and response with both the "portrait | performer" and the system. It is potentially a highly charged sexual work in that it brings intimate linguistic/behavioral attributes into play and disrupts interpersonal social norms by questioning the ongoing historical spatial relations that have been previously socially constructed. It displaces these social norms and thus presents a meta-behavioral situation. The participant both engages with the "portrait | performer" and their own set of norms which have been delicately repositioned through technological and human agency".

Katherine Moriwaki writes, Where as TGarden and Whisper construct installation environments within which particular garments function, other Medulla Intimata chooses to work with the syntax of everyday activity in its natural setting. In Medulla Intimata, a project by Tina Gonsalves and Tom Donaldson, galvanic skin response drives a small video screen embedded in a piece of jewelry. Designed to look like "normal" jewelry, the project consists of a deliberately ostentatious necklace. The video display consists of the wearer's image - but, depending on the affective input of the wearer (biometric measurements of their emotional state, or the dynamics or tone of their conversations), the video doppelganger expresses contradictory or unintentionally revealing emotions. The uncontrollability of this alter-ego highlights the dual nature of one's public persona and private emotions, creating an accessory which disrupts conditioned ways of presenting the self. The artists refer to Medulla Intimata as both a "foil" to the wearer and, perhaps most tellingly, a "wound" - for its expression of the way repressed and hidden emotions can leak into the managed world of "polite" conversation, creating undercurrents of unspoken thoughts and accusations. In most cases, wearable computing applications attempt to assist the individual in covering such lapses. Medulla Intimata posits instead that these small, everyday deceptions might be propelled toward a forced reckoning by a fashion accessory. Ultimately, the artists are asking whether a greater control over, or ability to manage, perceptions is indeed better in the end.

## exhibition

At exhibition stage, Medulla Intimata is a subtle public intervention. Tom and Tina wear the jewellery within social space such as galleries, bars and clubs as well as public spaces. From a distance, a viewer only sees a highly personal piece of jewellery. As they approach, they notice the video, and approaching closer still, the content of the video. The video screen in Medulla Intimata becomes a jewel-like as the video radiates colour, changing the texture of the jewellery and the mood of the whole piece. As they enter into conversation with the wearer, they become aware that the video is responding to their conversation, and begin to play with the piece while trying to maintain a natural conversation with the wearer. Every interaction in a social setting starts as a performance of selves, a formal dance of introduction and a search for expression. Medulla Intimata provides a medium in which to visualise this informal social performance, allowing the interactors to monitor and feed off their mutual performance, and others to act as sporadic audience.

The piece explores vulnerability as it opens up the wearer to scrutiny and continual observation. It displays private responses in public, taking the audience along a journey right into the neuroses of the wearer, who must fight to maintain a normal social interaction while their body and mind is openly on display. As you chat with Tom or Tina, Medulla Intimata distracts, leads and confuses the conversation, leaving both you and the wearer discomforted by its playful but intimate voyeurism. To add to the sense of voyeurism, the video output can also be projected on the walls of the space, allowing others in the room to look-in, judge and resolve that their conversations will be more interesting or more intimate. Despite the informality of the intervention, everyone in the room becomes very aware that they are watching and being watched, judging and being judged, in the process of simply making friends and flirting with strangers.

In August and September 2004 Medulla Intimata will be exhibited at:

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Banff Centre for the Arts, Canada ( <a href="http://www.banffcentre.ca">www.banffcentre.ca</a> ): | 31 July - 8 August 2004             |
| ArtSway, Hampshire, ArtSway, UK ( <a href="http://www.artsway.org.uk">www.artsway.org.uk</a> ):   | 28 August 2004 2pm - 4pm            |
| ISEA, Tallinn, Estonia ( <a href="http://www.isea2004.net">www.isea2004.net</a> ):                | 17 August 2004                      |
| Institute of Contemporary Art, London, UK ( <a href="http://www.ica.org.uk">www.ica.org.uk</a> ): | 10, 17, 24 September 2004 8pm - 1am |

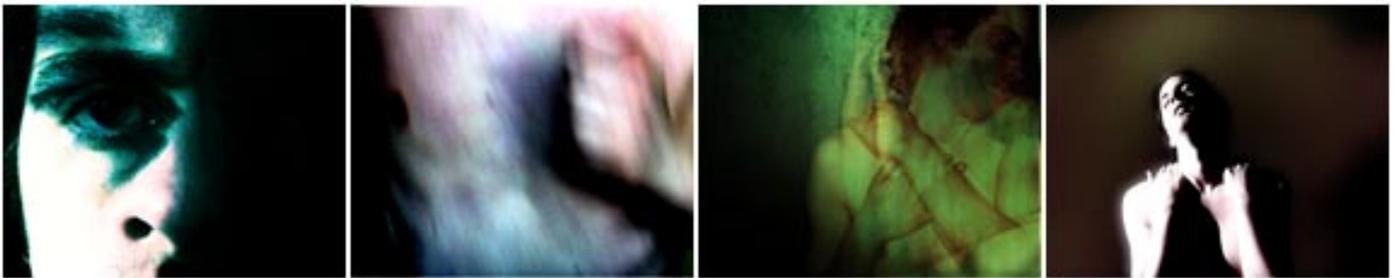
*(Please contact each organisation for details)*

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## Technical Requirements

Performance of Medulla Intimata require the following technical components:

- 2 Video servers (laptops), minimum specifications 3.0GHz Intel Pentium 4 with Hyperthreading Technology and 800MHz Front-side bus, 1GB RAM, 100GB hard disk storage configured as a 2-drive RAID-0 array using SATA-150, Windows XP Professional (supplied)
- 1 Archiving server of minimum specification 2.0GHz Intel Pentium, 500MB RAM and 30GB hard disk, Windows XP and Windows Media Player 9.0 (supplied)
- Dedicated 802.11b wireless network covering the entire space in which the performance is to be held (supplied)
- SVGA data projector



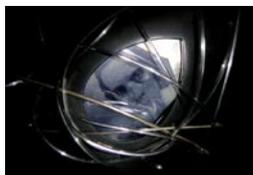
above: selection of video stills from Tom Donaldson's Medulla Intimata

below: Tom Donaldson's and Tina Gonsalves' wearing Medulla Intimata

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## Budget

- artist fee
- technical requirements
- shipping
- international travel



**Tina Gonsalves** artist *Australia*  
<http://www.tinagonsalves.com>

Over a decade Tina Gonsalves has been using the fluid and malleable medium of video to explore complex emotional landscapes. Rich, painterly video abstractions evoke intimate associations with personal space, supernatural forces, and intense experiences of transformation in times of trauma.

Most recently Gonsalves has been working with responsive video installations. Currently/recently, her work is screening/exhibiting at the Pompidou Centre in Paris, the Barbican in London, The European Media Arts Festival, Dlux at the Sydney Film Festival, the St Kilda Film Festival, INVIDEO in Italy and Senef in Korea. Most recently Gonsalves has just completed a co production at the Banff Centre, on a digital responsive jewellery using bio-sensors. This is a collaboration with artist/engineer Tom Donaldson. This has been supported by the Australia Arts Council and Arts Queensland. In 2004, Tina will be exhibiting projects at the Banff Centre for the Arts, ISEA 2004 in Tallinn, a solo exhibition at Artsway in the United Kingdom, 291 Gallery in London, The Institute of Contemporary Art in London and the Biennial of Electronic Arts in Perth.

In 2002/2003 She took part in Artist in Residence programs at The Banff New Media Institute in Canada, the Centre for Contemporary Art in Prague and a four-month Asialink artist in residence at the new media faculty Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. Currently, Tina is undertaking the (Pro) duction residency at Artsway, in the New Forest, in the United Kingdom.

Works by Gonsalves have been screened at many prestigious international and national festivals and events, and her music videos for labels BMG, EMI, and Festival Mushroom Records have been frequently televised worldwide.

Tina's single channel video is represented exclusively by Novamedia Arts and 2D prints are represented by the Helen Gory Galerie in Melbourne, Australia.



**Tom Donaldson** engineer/artist *United Kingdom*

After graduating from Cambridge University with a Bachelors and Masters of Engineering, specialising in electronics and information theory, Tom worked at Scientific Generics inventing new product technologies for major blue chip corporations including Rollerblade, Nike, Speedo, Procter and Gamble, and Johnson and Johnson. He created a wide range of new technologies in areas such as smart fabrics, biometric sensors and advanced materials; and he exploited these and more standard engineering techniques in products ranging from Intra-Aortal Balloon Pump Catheters and wrist-based ECG to rollerblade brakes and hair-care products.

After his stint there, Tom felt it was time to explore the more experimental realms of technology innovation. He moved to New York where he set to work as an inventor/artist. He privately (and on a shoe-string) explored a number of new areas of technology, including object-based video compression, magneto-encephalography, and deep personalisation in music selection. He quickly became increasingly interested in the creative and artistic uses of technology. He developed a subconsciously-interactive film system using eye-monitoring of the viewer to guide video sequence generation. He designed an enhanced-reality gaming system, incorporating computer-vision elements into a head-up display; and he worked on haptic systems for virtual sculpture. Tom was commissioned by ARCH, an Austrian cultural heritage foundation, to design a mobile museum for interactive, distributed artworks. The design incorporated a wide range of interactive and multimedia technologies into a framework able to express the beauty and importance of cultural heritage through a range of new media artworks.

While in New York, Tom became director of CTNY, a software development company that reached the Deloitte Touche Fast 50 index of rapidly growing technology companies. He initiated a project ThinAirMail, a multi-platform mobile messaging solution, which became the company ThinAirApps, successfully sold to Palm Inc.

Moving back to London, Tom founded Escape Velocity. Tom created ground-breaking artificial intelligence technology, recognised as a leader in highly personalised services. Tom established the company, drew significant investment from 3i and grew the team to nearly 20 people over 3 years. The company (and Tom himself) received recognition from Business Week, the Financial Times, CNBC and many other investment monitors. Escape Velocity also launched the Sessami mobile internet entertainment channel - a channel that Tom not only conceived, branded and managed, but also wrote the first software for. Sessami was nominated for a WAP award for best consumer application. Through Escape Velocity and Sessami, Tom became a noted speaker in the mobile Internet and personalisation industries.

Tom has been in a (short) residence at the Banff Institute, where he has contributed to their intimate technologies and artificial intelligence / artificial stupidity programmes.

Currently, Tom is working privately in the technical field in areas of artificial intelligence and complexity, and in the creative arena in a number of technology-based artworks.