

art

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LIQUID GOLD



DUCKS AREN'T THE ONLY ONES THAT LIKE TO PLAY WITH WATER. **TRACEY CLEMENT** REPORTS.

The exhibition *Hemispheres* is wet and wild – but don't get the wrong idea. Adam Laerkesen and Stephen Crane are artists, not sleaze merchants. The work of these two Sydney sculptors is different, but both use liquids in their mysterious objects.

Crane seems to have been channelling his inner geek-boy. Using metres of clear plastic tubing, various

goopy liquids and an air compressor, he has created fascinating sculptures that resemble school science projects gone out of control.

His bright red *Death Star* is like a miniature sci-fi movie set powered by a hydraulic experiment. In this luminous sculpture, air bubbles trapped in red liquid slowly rotate around a hemisphere of coiled tubing.

It lacks the menace of its *Star Wars* namesake, but it does capture a nifty, spacey vibe. The effect is mesmerising, like watching a traffic jam of flying cars spiralling round a tiny, space-age biosphere.

Laerkesen's *Spirit Cells* wall piece could be a bizarre machine designed for a ritualistic cult. Clear perspex boxes house strange white artefacts. A huge set of antlers protrudes from one box; in another, a cluster of horns mimics a giant mutant microbe. In another, a cluster of horns mimics a giant mutant microbe.

Linked by copper plumbing pipe, each box drips with condensation. It's part alchemy, part water-torture chamber.

In his *Phenotypes* series, the bright-blue or deep-red tree branches seem to be made from velvet. Lush and fleshy, they grow in impossible arcs and resemble enormous veins.

In Laerkesen's sculptures the eerie theatricality of American art-star Matthew Barney meets the understated eloquence of Australia's Hossein Valamanesh. It's a crazy combo that really works.

HEMISPHERE

Tin Sheds Gallery, 148 City Road, University of Sydney, 9351 3115. Last days, **today and Saturday**.

MMETROPICKS

IAN HAMILTON FINLAY

Old-school postmodernist Ian Hamilton Finlay is probably terrific at crossword puzzles; he does clever things with words. The Scottish artist's first Australian exhibition covers about 30 years of mainly text-based screen prints. His sophisticated humour is so dry it'll leave you gasping for a drink. **Boutwell Draper**, 82 George Street, Redfern, 9310 5662. **Wednesday-Saturday**, until November 12.

CHUN KWANG-YOUNG

Chun Kwang-Young's mixed-media collages are like three-dimensional maps of densely packed cities. The Korean artist tears pages out of antique Chinese books and folds them up into miniature parcels tied up with string.

Conny Dietzschold Gallery, 2 Danks Street, Waterloo, 9690 0215. **Tuesday-Saturday**, until November 23.

SCULPTURE BY THE SEA

Every year, Sculpture by the Sea serves up a cheerful mix of sun, sand and sculpture. Aussie artists such as Richard Goodwin mix it up with sculptors from as far away as Mongolia on the walk between Bondi and Tamarama. If you don't fancy the art, there's always the scenery. **Bondi-Tamarama coastal walk**. **Daily**, until November 20.

Tracey Clement



Chun Kwang-Young