

NCM open/high/low/close
2001

Bathurst Regional Gallery, New South Wales

Auriferous - The Gold Project, curated by Amanda Lawson and Craig Judd

This installation/performance was produced for Auriferous - The Gold Project commemorating the sesqui-centenary of the discovery of gold in Australia. The town of Bathurst, where the exhibition was staged, was the site of the first significant gold find in the country.

Situated just outside Bathurst, Newcrest Mining Company operates the largest open-cut gold mine in Australia. For four weeks NCM open/high/low/close tracked the international gold price and corresponding fluctuations in the share price of Newcrest Mining.

I began each performance day at the stock exchange in Sydney checking the day's prospects and then flew to Bathurst (some 200 kms away) via a regional airline. Using data from the internet and direct feeds from the Australian stock exchange, floor to ceiling charts and graphs were drawn directly onto the gallery walls, giving an accurate representation of trading patterns as the work unfolded. I also provided viewers with a daily report of expected market activity.

Stock movements were updated every fifteen minutes, and while waiting for changes I would look up and write out all the references to gold in the Old and New Testaments using an online Bible. These notations were po'ted on the gallery walls. Thus 'profane' activity was balanced by the 'sacred'.

I carried out my market surveillance from the top of a 3-metre platform in the gallery while a CCTV camera relayed my activities to a monitor in the lobby. When ready to update charts, I would leap off the platform onto a padded high-jump mat below.

At the end of the trading day I would fly back to Sydney and begin the cycle again. The detritus of my time in the gallery was allowed to build up: financial newspapers, pencil shavings, take-out cartons, etc. The project's title derives from the stock exchange code for Newcrest Mining, NCM, and the standard terminology used for the recording of a stock's daily movement - the opening price, the high and low price reached, and the closing price.