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Move hands like clouds

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Abstract

This thesis describes the processes and outcomes of my Master of Design Project, **Move hands like clouds**. It explores the connections between social sustainability, design, somaesthetics and Taoist Tai Chi. The designed outcome, a film, expresses the inclusive design of Taoist Tai Chi, its group activity within a community and its priority of focus on the internal origins and stance of its practice. It uses LED light drawings to trace the movements of multiple practitioners. It is an experience design response to the belief that we experience the world and our place in it through an integrated mind, body and spirit – all the senses – the rational and the intuitive. This stance is shared by the philosophies that underpin social sustainability, somaesthetics, Taoist Tai Chi, and design for sustainability. Mindful attitudes and behaviours with a focus on the wellbeing of the individual and the community is integral to these disciplines and to my film.

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The title of this research project – Move hands like clouds – is the name of a set of movements in Taoist Tai Chi. It is a gentle command, instruction or suggestion to take action, to make a movement. Clouds are soft and shifting, constantly in a motion of ebb and flow as they race across the sky, and float and linger and mingle through each other. They are an integral feature of our natural world. To move hands like clouds, is to move with an attitude of naturalness – softly, flowing, merging and joining with others, gently but with intention. These are the attitudes of thinking and doing, reflected in the spirit of this project.