

**Jillian McDonald, MFA
Department of Art
Dyson College of Arts and Sciences**

Tunnel and the Radio Skies

Tunnel and the Radio Skies is a video artwork filmed in New York, Arizona, California, Colorado, and Newfoundland. The project is funded by the Canada Council for the Arts and Pace University and it began while McDonald was a visiting artist at Anderson Ranch in Colorado. The project was expanded in 2022 after a residency at Eastern Edge Gallery in Canada, with the incorporation of artificial intelligence technology.

Tunnel and the Radio Skies is inspired by isolation in the pandemic lockdown, radio as a messaging medium, and a desire to escape quarantine. In the work, a woman digs in an urban backyard and disappears down a hole, which serves as a portal between distant locations. She travels from place to place via an unseen tunnel, as the skies light up with visible radio waves. The skies are generated by artificial intelligence image generators and animated using video software. The source of this imagery is passages from an amateur radio manual about the electromagnetic spectrum that is absorbed by plants and bounced off the ionosphere, and the results are wild visualisations of radio signals and radio towers. The soundtrack was created at Wave Farm Transmission Arts residency in Summer 2023, and includes location-based sound and radio interference as well as underwater sounds generated by artist Zach Poff's pond radio. *Tunnel and the Radio Skies*, like many of Professor McDonald's films, is an experimental video artwork, that is, it is exploratory and made using improvisation techniques.