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## Present Space Expansion

A fake universe created by minimal means is the subtle installation by Irena Lagator, titled *Present Space Expansion* (2009), a continuation of the works *Near Universe* (2006) and *How Small Is the Universe* (2007). The visitors enter a box, a pitch-black dark space, becoming dizzy and disoriented until their eyes get accustomed to the darkness. Then thousands of tiny light dots start to emerge, like a starlit night. This impression is created by innumerable hand-made pinpricks perforating the black polyethylene sheets that form the walls and ceiling of the box, lighted from behind. This three-dimensional universe becomes accessible, and seemingly stretching into eternity. In relation to their movements and the time spent in this surroundings the viewers experience changing sensations, as the artificial universe enfolds before their eyes. Other – equally atmospherical – interactive exploration of space and time structures are site-specific installations using thin threads in the colours of the rainbow, or in gold and silver (a.o. *Please Wait Here*, 2005, *Own Space*, 2006, *What We Call Real*, 2008). Coloured threads hang freely from the ceiling of the space; the perception of the colours is ever-changing, depending on the light situation and the movements and perspective of the viewer. These minimalistic installations are a play with light, colour, and movement, oscillating between materiality and immateriality, void and presence. The ephemeral structures, haptic and versatile at the same time, are almost transcendental in their fleetingness. This blurring of boundaries, the transformation of reality, but also the relationship between the private and the public, of individual and collective memory, are recurring features of Irena Lagator's artistic practice.