



**THE  
CINEMAS  
PR | JECT**

A NETS Victoria commission, curated by  
Bridget Crone

**LEARNING GUIDE**

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# About this learning guide

This learning guide is intended for use as a starting point to generate discussion and activities before, during and after a visit to *The Cinemas Project*. It is designed to be used in conjunction with information provided in the exhibition catalogue, gallery wall texts and on the NETS Victoria website. You and your students may also be involved in some of the performative or research aspects of the project, please contact your local gallery to find out more about this.

This resource includes an extended introduction to the project with some information about the curator, Bridget Crone, suggested points for discussion, and references for further research. The introduction is followed by a section for each individual project in chronological order. You will be viewing one of five projects at your local gallery, so refer primarily to that specific project. However, it would be useful to study the other projects with your students to provide context and opportunities for comparison. You also might like to visit the cinema itself, or its site with your students. Three of the artists involved in *The Cinema's Project* (Brook Andrew, Bianca Hester and Tom Nicholson) have contributed work to the recent survey exhibition *Melbourne Now* at the National Gallery of Victoria – more information about this exhibition can be found at <http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/>.

The sections in this document about individual artists include some biographical information, directing you to relevant examples of previous works by the artist, and where possible provide links to articles that would be suitable as reference for [commentaries](#) relevant to the VCE Art curriculum.

## Author's note

At the time of writing, a number of the projects are yet to be completed and limited information is available about these projects. You will appreciate the challenge of providing useful commentary about art works that are not yet in existence. Especially in the cases of Mikala Dwyer, Bianca Hester, and to a lesser extent, Brook Andrew, please seek additional support from your local Education Officer for more detailed information about these projects.

# Planning your visit

Before visiting *The Cinemas Project* it is suggested that you contact gallery staff to determine the following:

- Opening hours, transport and parking options, cloakroom facilities and admission fees
- Suitability of content for the year level you intend to bring
- Staff availability for introductory talks and tours
- Education and public programs, artist talks etc. that coincide with the exhibition

Before your visit you may wish to discuss the following with your students:

- Various issues covered in the introduction of this guide
- Your expectations for appropriate behaviour at a gallery, in regards to the safety of both students and art works, and given that a gallery is a public space

# Curriculum links and themes

*The Cinemas Project* is relevant to many of the five Art subjects identified in the new Australian Curriculum: Visual Art, Media Arts, and Drama being the most obvious, however the project could also inspire Music and Dance units of study, given the inter-disciplinary nature of film (particularly in relation to Brook Andrew's project).

*The Cinemas Project* also draws on issues of community and cultural identity. Given this, *The Cinemas Project* provides an ideal starting point from which to explore cross-curricula projects, fostering collaboration between teachers and students.

This document is broadly aimed at students from years 4 through to 10 and VCE Units 1-4, however the material may be easily tailored to suit younger students. The material is organised according to the new Australian Curriculum for the Arts. The projects of Brook Andrew and Tom Nicholson directly relate to Indigenous culture and history. In Lily Hibberd's background section, there is reference to a work *The Phone Booth Project*, which directly engaged the Martu community of Western Australia.

Throughout the text, artists, groups and organisations are highlighted in blue to suggest starting points for further research.

## General capabilities

Engagement with *The Cinemas Project* provides students with opportunities to address the following general capabilities:

- Literacy
- Information and communication technology capability
- Critical and creative thinking
- Personal and social capability
- Intercultural understanding

## VCE Art/Studio Arts

- Artist's practice, ideas and inspiration
- Responding to Artworks: formal analysis, analytical frameworks and interpreting meanings and messages
- Exploring artists personal and cultural perspectives
- Exploring symbols and metaphors expressed in artworks
- Exploring possibilities for materials, processes and techniques
- Methods and consideration involved in the exhibition design

## Issues in art

A number of the participating artists from *The Cinemas Project* have been involved in the debate and protests around the 2014 Sydney Biennale. In an open letter, twenty-eight of the participating artists have called on the board to sever its funding ties with Transfield, the company which helped found the Biennale in 1973 and which has remained one of its most important sponsors. Transfield is contracted to the Federal Government to supply garrison support services and welfare services to the asylum seeker detention centres on Nauru and Manus islands. An excerpt from the letter, quoted in the Daily Telegraph (see below link) reads as follows:

*"The artists' opposition is on the grounds that mandatory detention is in contravention of Australia's binding obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and their concern about being funded by an arts organisation whose sponsor is profiting from the policy,"*

This issue would be a very interesting one to explore for Unit 4 of the VCE Art curriculum – Discussing and debating art. Here is a link to an article from 19 February 2014 in the Daily Telegraph by arts writer Elizabeth Fortescue. You will find lots of online discussion of the issue through various blogs and articles.

<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/entertainment/sydney-confidential/artists-demand-biennale-of-sydney-severs-ties-with-company-linked-to-asylum-seeker-detention-centres/story-fni0cvc9-1226831628130>

## Career pathways in the art industry

Throughout this resource there are examples of study pathways and professional experience that can be instructive in developing ideas for career pathways for students in a variety of disciplines.

# The Cinemas Project - INTRODUCTION

## The curator

Bridget Crone, the curator of *The Cinemas Project*, was born and grew up in Melbourne. She studied Art History at The University of Melbourne, before going to London to complete her MA in Curating Contemporary Art at Goldsmiths, part of the University of London. Now based in London, Crone works as a curator and a writer on contemporary art, with a particular focus on film, performance and the moving image. She also works in education, giving regular workshops on curating, and lecturing in the Department of Visual Culture at Goldsmiths. As well as her work overseas, Crone has curated projects at the Ian Potter Museum of Art (University of Melbourne) and Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, as well as working at the Melbourne International Biennial and RMIT Gallery prior to her departure in 2000. With such a diverse working life, it's not surprising that Crone was something of an all rounder at school, but she always had a particular love of art, music and reading.

*"For me, art, books and music are portals into other worlds and I think that's what's so appealing for me...this is why I think that my work as a curator is diverse and why I love working with contemporary art and artists. Much of what we do now is **interdisciplinary** - this means that an artist's project might include working with a composer or an actor in order to make their artwork or exhibition."*  
(Bridget Crone, interview with Kate Stones, 2014)

Crone has an unusual approach to the idea of curating. Rather than selecting artworks to exhibit around a theme or genre, she prefers to commission artists to create new work, working closely with them and offering them the opportunity to extend their research, experiment and take risks with their practice and ideas. She initiates large-scale projects, which are "enquiry based and speculative in nature." (Bridget Crone, *The Cinema's Project* Media Release) Many of her projects take place outside of the mainstream gallery environment.

*"Working closely with artists to do something new is a process of conversation so being curious about people and ideas is an important part of a curator's work. I also need to be able to talk with other people such as technicians or other experts in order to work out how something might be achieved. Conversation and imagining something new are definitely my favourite part of the job."*

*I am passionate about contemporary art because I think that it enables us to think about and see the world differently... You might ask me what is different between an artist making a film and a regular film shown on the TV or in the cinema? For me the answer is that often artists make abstract films that have little narrative, and often just allow us to delight in seeing, or challenge us to see something differently or ask us to enter into an imaginary world. The space of the gallery or of art itself allows this to happen as it has traditionally been a place of imagination, ideas, beauty, fantasy...**I see curating as this process of conversation and reflection, a process of communicating and combining thoughts, knowledges and ideas initially between curator and artist, then between the artwork and audiences.**"*  
(Ibid.)

Crone selects artists for her projects through this process of conversation, by articulating her ideas as a starting point, and researching the ideas of artists around her. For *The Cinemas Project*, she spent time in Australia, talking to various artists about her ideas, before finalising the five participating artists. She visited various locations in regional Victoria with old cinemas or cinema sites and considered the relationship between the artists and the site, and how the aesthetics and ideas expressed through their practice, might best suit the different locations.

# The project

The idea for *The Cinemas Project: Exploring the Spectral Spaces of Cinema* arose out of Bridget Crone's partnership with English photographer [Sam Nightingale](#). Nightingale is interested in the moving image, the history of cinema, and especially the architecture and cultural context of cinema buildings. Nightingale had been undertaking a project to explore and photograph old and abandoned cinemas and cinema sites in the inner London Borough of Islington. This ongoing project is called [Islington's Lost Cinemas](#). As well as documentary photography, it also includes guided walks and the collection of oral histories from older residents. In late 2011/2012 Nightingale and Crone travelled to Australia together to search out and discover the 'spectral spaces' of cinema in rural Victoria. A spectral space can be a space that is real or imaginary, it could be an empty space that holds a trace or ghost of something past. Sitting in a cinema in the dark, and entering the world and narrative of the film, is in itself entering a spectral space. A spectral space can be woven from the memories of those people in a community that shared the space, and its magic.

Because of Crone's relationship with Victoria, and her professional background, she was keen to expand the research project into a curatorial one, in which contemporary artists would be commissioned to make new work in response to the idea of the spectral spaces of cinema in selected locations in Victoria. These historic cinema sites are structures that still exist today or exist only in memory, as is the case where the original structure has been knocked down or replaced.

The contemporary artwork produced for *The Cinemas Project* takes the form of live performance or film and video, and sometimes both at once. In this way, the work replicates the nature of the activity that took place in many of these early cinema buildings, which were at once a meeting place, a theatre, a dance hall as well as a cinema.

# Cinemas in Victorian regional communities

Through their research, Crone and Nightingale have uncovered the historical development of cinema in Regional Victorian communities. Crone says: "What fascinates me about cinema in regional Australia is how it is a way of understanding and seeing history...cinema buildings show a patterning of development..."

Films were being screened in Australia from the earliest days of moving image history (c. 1896-1905). Originally in Victoria, many cinema sites were not dedicated movie theatres at all, but public buildings that would only show films once a week or less. In the very early days, family dynasties of travelling picture showmen operated across particular districts. A showman would drive up with all his equipment – screen, projector, film reels etc., and set up in a Shire Hall or Mechanics Institute. In this way everyday spaces were turned into something theatrical and magical, creating a space where a community would come together and watch images dance into life. As the industry became more established, magnificent dedicated cinema buildings were constructed, and some of these still stand today. However most have been repurposed or demolished. In larger towns or cities (such as Sale for example which had many cinemas) the original buildings have disappeared whereas in the Western District (where populations of small towns tend to migrate to larger centres) many still stand.

Much of Victoria's cinematic history has been lost. Temporary cinema spaces have come and gone with little documentation, except perhaps for a random entry in 'Film Weekly' or an old photo found in the town's library. Drive-in cinemas, so popular in the 1950s and 60s, lost their heyday long ago, abandoned for nature to reclaim the land or to become the newest housing estate on the edge of town.

# Artists and community engagement

*The Cinemas Project* invites the possibility of working directly with communities. It's not an essential aspect of the project – some artists have chosen to engage very actively and directly with the community through their Cinema's Project project, and others less so. However the idea of working with local regional Cinemas and their history, by definition infers a community involvement.

During the 1990s contemporary artists began exploring different ways of engaging with their audience so as to break down the established relationship between the audience, the artist and the artwork itself. Traditionally the audience doesn't interact with the artist, and they view the artwork from a safe distance (think about the alarm systems installed in big galleries, which send an alarm if you get too close!) and with hushed reverence. In 1998, French writer and curator, Nicholas Bourriaud coined the term [Relational Aesthetics](#) to group together and describe the activities of these artists who were exploring new ways of engaging with their audience. These new kinds of projects often involved collaboration, and placed the audience in the role of co-creator of the artwork, in this way artists sought to question the role of the professional artist as the individual author of the artwork. They also emphasised the social role that art could play, bringing people together to share meaningful experiences. Art in this context began to be defined more in terms of projects, as opposed to artworks.

The concept of Relational Aesthetics is strongly linked to collaborative projects, performance and interdisciplinary practice – it often deals with social or political issues. In the last 20 years, many artists have begun to work in groups or collectives (for example Melbourne based groups, [A Constructed World](#), and [DAMP](#); and the Perth based [pvi collective](#)).

Because these projects are process based, and therefore often occur over an extended time period, the work that ends up being exhibited is generally documentary, for example a film of an event, or a series of photographs, or text. Projects can take many forms, such as meals, meetings, parties, games, workshops, discussions and other types of social events. Because of the development of new communication technologies and the ease of international travel, artists now have an increased ability to create projects that transcend national boundaries. *The Cinemas Project* is a good example of this trend.

Art projects that engage with the community or audience are able to question the role of the artist in society and the meaning and purpose of art. For some suggestions of further research to pursue, see the section below, 'starting points for research', and the 'references' section at the end of this document.

# Interdisciplinary practice

Interdisciplinary practice or cross-disciplinary practice is a term used to describe art projects that involve collaborations between artists from different backgrounds with different areas of technical expertise. These could be practitioners from different areas within the arts (film and media, music, visual arts, theatre, dance) or from more broadly diverse areas of research, for example architecture, science, literature, design, or engineering. Not all interdisciplinary art is collaborative, sometimes an artist has multiple skills or areas of interest, they may have changed careers from arts to science or vice versa, and so their practice can be interdisciplinary if they choose to draw on multiple aspects of their experience.

One of the artists who participated in the recent White Night Festival 2014 in Melbourne describes himself as a 'science artist'. [Drew Berry](#) created a spectacular light installation (Molecular Kaleidoscope) projected onto the walls of the LaTrobe Reading Room at the State Library of Victoria. Audiences watched an animation of massively magnified images of human viruses, such as influenza, HIV, polio and smallpox wriggling over the walls and the huge dome of the Library. Every two minutes images of immune defence cells appeared to be released from the floor of the room, as fluttering antibodies or hormone swarms, attacking the infection overhead. Australian composer and producer, [Franc Tétaz](#) created a musical score for the artwork. This project is an example of an interdisciplinary installation that is both collaborative and draws on the multiple skill set of a single artist.

## Themes for discussion

- Do you live in a small town or a large city? Is there a cinema where you live? Are there many? How often do you go to the cinema?
- In the past, people went to the cinema as often as once a week. Is there a place or building that you visit regularly, and see your friends and maybe enjoy some activity or entertainment together?
- What are the different ways that your community stays connected, and shares experiences? Do these things happen in physical spaces or buildings?
- Imagine you are in your seventies or older...what places, spaces or technologies do you think you might feel nostalgic about? What would you reminisce about with your friends? What things do you think that young people might want to come and talk to you about?
- Are there any old buildings in your area that have been demolished, that people feel nostalgic about?
- Try to think of all the places in our contemporary environment that we can see moving images.
- Images are everywhere in our world today. What are some of the impacts of this? Consider how you think, move, communicate, and understand the world in relation to this issue.
- Do you think artists should engage directly with the

community? Why?

- What do you think might be some of the positive outcomes of community participation in art projects?
- Might there be any negative outcomes? For the artworks, the artist, or the community/audience?
- If so, how could these be avoided?
- What sort of actions, performances or participatory projects would be relevant to the community where you live?
- What is the role of new technologies and social media in collaborative, interdisciplinary and participatory art forms?

## Starting points for research

For some examples of artworks, groups and projects that could be classified as Relational Aesthetics look at:

- Melbourne based artist Stuart Ringholt's *Anger Workshops* recently shown at dOCUMENTA 13 in Kassel (NB some of Stuart Ringholt's work involves nudity and drug references)
- French based artist Lucy Orta
- Central Victorian Live Arts organisation Punctum
- Perth based pvi collective
- Russian Feminist Punk group Pussy Riot



# The projects

Brook Andrew at Bendigo Art Gallery,  
12 April – 1 June 2014



rare and old, some from more recent times. Andrew has a particular interest in the way that information and artefacts are arranged in museums and collections, and how these affect the reading of the information. His research has taken him to many different locations internationally to examine different institutions. He has travelled to France, The Netherlands, Lithuania, India and Chile. This gives his work a broad, global perspective. Whether in photography, neon, sculpture or screen-print, Andrew explores power relationships in society, especially in race relations and globalism.

## Artist's background

Brook Andrew was born in 1970 and grew up in Sydney. Since 2004 Andrew has lived and worked in Melbourne. He is of Wiradjuri and Scottish descent. Before settling in the area of visual art, he spent a brief time studying Interior Design, and his work as a visual artist reflects an innate sensitivity to space and environment. His artwork utilises a broad range of materials to explore themes of memory and culture, historical amnesia, power structures and stereotyping. Brook Andrew is represented by Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, and Galerie Nathalie Obadia, Paris/Bruxelles.

*"My work challenges cultural and historical perceptions, using installation, text and image to comment on local and global issues regarding race, consumerism and history. Apart from drawing inspiration from public media and found archival collections, I travel nationally and internationally to work with communities and museum collections and displays to comment and create new work reflecting objects, concepts and local thought."* (Brook Andrew)

Andrew works at a variety of scales, creating large-scale installations in public sites such as Sydney International Airport Terminal (22 neon boomerangs titled *Wilbing (to fly)* 1999-2000); he uses neon tubes to create suspended sculptures that can subtly inhabit gallery buildings, blending into interior design features or drawing attention with their eerie glow. Other materials utilised include existing images from postcards, and other found cultural material, from different periods in history – some very

Andrew's recent work *Vox:*

*Beyond Tasmania* is included in the *Melbourne Now* exhibition, which was presented at the National Gallery of Victoria over the summer of 2013/14. *Vox: Beyond Tasmania* brings together archival records, 'de-contextualised anthropological artefacts' and sculpture. It uses a large traditional museum case to present the archival material. The 'anthropological artefacts' referred to are the bones of Indigenous Tasmanian people that have been taken from their original resting place and collected and traded. The bones are set out in the museum case in the shape of a person, and outside the case, a giant gramophone horn seems to amplify their voice. Andrew reflects on the work:

*"Vox: Beyond Tasmania reflects on a 1909 book on Tasmanian Aboriginal Skulls documented from mainly personal collections by Richard Berry from the University of Melbourne. These skulls were collected as trophies and recorded by Berry as a great concern, as Tasmanian Aboriginal people were seen as becoming extinct. The other archival material and human skeleton tie together a concern for the international trade in human remains amongst other topics. The gruesome stories of how Aboriginal people were treated, their bones traded internationally, is the main focus of this sculpture."* (Brook Andrew, wall text for *Vox: Beyond Tasmania*, NGV 2013)

*"Brook Andrew's work with archival material has created debate and new thought surrounding contemporary philosophies regarding memory, its conceptual and visual potency linking local with international histories. By co-opting the tools of advertising, the media, museums*

and Wiradjuri language and culture, Brook Andrew's art challenges the limitations imposed by power structures, historical amnesia, stereotyping and complicity." (Laura Murray Cree, 'Artist Profile' Issue 11, 2010)

Find another article about Brook Andrew's work by Anthony Gardner, here [http://www.artandaustralia.com.au/article.asp?issue\\_id=191&article\\_id=242](http://www.artandaustralia.com.au/article.asp?issue_id=191&article_id=242)

## Brook's Cinemas Project: De Anima

Brook Andrew's work *De Anima* will be his first extensive exploration of filmmaking. The work takes the form of a two channel video installation presented alongside a series of photographic images, postcards, mural-painting and sculptural forms. The video work is a collage of archival film footage, and new footage filmed by the artist. Brook has collaborated with performers Mama Alto and Justin Shoulder and composer Theodore Wohng. The installation aims to immerse the viewer in a world of sound and images, and encourages this feeling of immersion.

The project aims to question the way in which representations – pictures of those around us – are produced, digested and reproduced. How are images constructed to influence our perception of different races and cultures? By manipulating film footage Andrew aims to address the politics of representation – and the ever-present confusion of who can represent whom – in order to encourage the exploration of how we view history and who has the right to comment, argue and own that of the past. The installation asks audiences to reflect on our immersion into a world of images, and how those images are used to indoctrinate. He challenges the viewer to read the 'semiotics of life' – the meanings and messages encoded into everything that we experience in the world around us, in order to question a dominant Western gaze. Brook aims to destabilise the usual **viewpoints** that are used by this dominant gaze such as the horizon line, patriarchy, war propaganda and racial voyeurism.

*De Anima* engages with the contemporary conflict of who can represent whom, which is particularly relevant to Indigenous cultures. The project encourages an exploration of how we view history, and whose history and ideas we are really consuming, and can we trust them? Fictions created by stereotyped ethnographic depiction are interrogated, and it is subtly suggested that many of these representations were based on fantasy and romance mixed with the desire for cultural erasure.

## Responding

(address these questions as extended written answers, dot point answers, group discussion or discussion in pairs with reporting back to the group)

- The installation/performance *De Anima* is made of a number of different elements. What are they and how do they relate to one another?
- Study each aspect of the work separately, and



analyse the meanings and interpretations for each one. Now look at the work as a whole. How do the meanings blend together to create a broader message?

- What are all the different art disciplines drawn on in this work?
- Has documentation been used in this installation? How?
- Andrew's video work uses found footage, and newly filmed footage. What are the different cultural and historical viewpoints that the work represents? What happens to the meaning of the artwork when multiple viewpoints are represented in the same work?
- How has the meaning of the original images been changed through the artists' manipulation of them?

## Making

- Explore the different cultures and experiences of the people in your class or your broader community. How many different perspectives or viewpoints can you identify? Different perspectives are formed from different traditions, different life experiences – someone with a disability may have a different perspective on life to someone who does not.
- Gather images that represent these different viewpoints. They can be objects, photographs, drawings, paintings, video clips – they could even be performances, live or documented.
- Collaborate with your classmates to design an artwork that incorporates these images together – you may decide to use all of them, or select a few to work with.
- Organise a public viewing for your project.
- Reflect on how you can create an environment in which everyone in your community has their perspective represented fairly.

## VCE Art/Studio Arts

- How has Brook Andrew's personal and cultural background has influenced his practice? How has it influenced his choice of materials? How has it influenced his subject matter?
- How would you approach a formal analysis of *De Anima*? What formal elements would you discuss?
- Look at the overall design of the installation. How do the physical structures of the artwork interact with the architectural space, and with exhibition signage? How do these element affect each other?
- Discuss the meanings and messages implied by *De Anima*.
- What political and cultural issues/questions does the artist raise in this work? How are those ideas communicated, and made clear to the audience?



# Lily Hibberd at Latrobe Regional Gallery and The Regent Theatre, Yarram 12 April – 8 June, 2014



## Artist's Background

Lily Hibberd was born in 1972. She gained her Bachelor of Fine Art at Monash University, followed by a Masters of Fine Art at the Victorian College of the Arts, and her PhD back at Monash. She has worked as a lecturer at both institutions, and at the Victorian University of Technology. As founding editor and publisher of *un Magazine* she is actively involved in arts publication and writing. Hibberd has exhibited nationally and internationally and is represented by Galerie de Roussan in Paris and by Karen Woodbury in Melbourne.

Hibberd's projects are prompted by a specific experience, story or phenomenon, which is used to explore various collective, historical, philosophical and psychological aspects of the topic. Many of these deal with perceptions of memory, time and narrative, like ice and the breakdown of time; fire and memory loss; and sunglasses and recollection. Hibberd uses combinations of lighting, painting, photography, performance and sound to dramatise these works. Various literary texts and scripts are frequently included in her installations.

Over the summer of 2012/13 Hibberd exhibited the results of a research/film project, *The Phone Booth Project*, in the

form of a video installation at Freemantle Arts Centre as part of the large group exhibition *We don't need a map*. Lily was commissioned to do a project about the special function and meaning that phone booths have for the Martu - The Martu people are the traditional owners of a vast area of Western Australia's Western Desert. Hibberd had concerns about ethical and cultural sensitivities, and so she invited Martu filmmaker Curtis Taylor to collaborate with her. Through interviews with the community, *The Phone Booth Project* explored the ways that the Martu have communicated with each other over the generations and how that has changed, from the use of fire ('Waru') to send messages, through to radios, phone booths, and slowly the introduction of land lines.

Around the same time Hibberd completed a project for an exhibition at The Australian Experimental Art Foundation in Adelaide. This was part of a group exhibition called *Build me a City* that was part of the 2012 Adelaide Biennial of Architecture. For *Build Me a City*, artists were invited to make work that directly related to the architectural history of Adelaide. Both these projects, along with Hibberd's writing and publications are fully documented on her website, and you can also download an article about Lily's practice written by Zara Stanhope in 2004 <http://www.lilyhibberd.com/>.

## Lily's Cinemas Project:

*4 Devils – Hell and High Water*

**(Performance: 24 April, 7.30pm, The Regent Theatre, Yarram)**

*Twin Cinema – 4 Devils and a Woman in Red*

**(Exhibition at Latrobe Regional Gallery)**

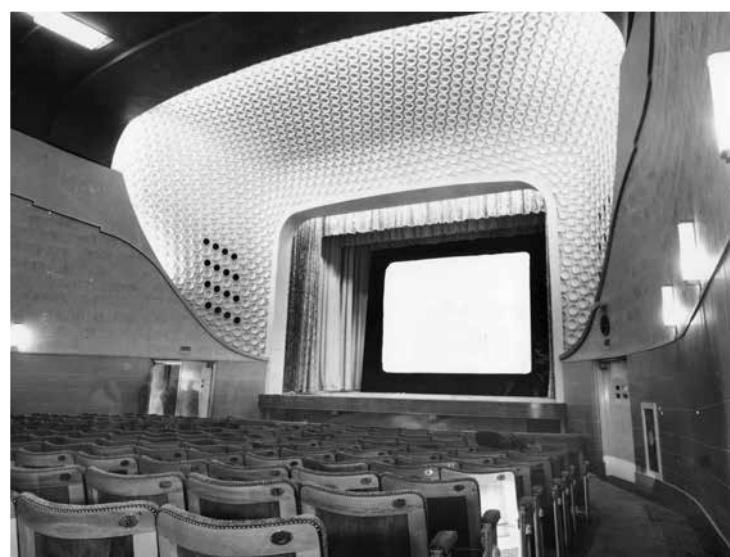
Lily's Cinemas Project exists in two distinct parts: A performance at The Regent Theatre in the small Gippsland town of Yarram – one of the cinemas selected for *The Cinemas Project* that still stands today; and an exhibition at Latrobe Regional Gallery in Morwell.

In the lead up to creating her work, Lily spent 14 months researching the project, living in Yarram itself for about 8 weeks. During this time she gathered together an archive of research material concerning cinemas and theatres, memories of cinema, photographs of interiors and exteriors of old cinemas, articles, stories and story fragments. Yarram is a small community located in an isolated area of Gippsland, over the other side of the ranges from 'The Valley', which is the most populated area of Gippsland. Originally it had two purpose built theatres, both built by the enterprising and intrepid Margaret Thompson – The Strand, built in 1914, and the Regent, built in 1930. Margaret 'Ma' Thompson also ran two pubs, one of which she also built. Lily had a particular interest in the Gippsland area, as her grandmother grew up in the Gippsland town of Yarragon, and she is interested in the lives of strong women from previous times.

On the 25th January 2013, Lily's archive was presented to the community of Yarram in the form of a 'Memory Day' held at The Regent. The community was able to view all the materials and information that Lily had gathered, and also had the opportunity to share more of their memories of cinema going in Yarram.

In following months, Lily developed her research into a script for a one-hour play, which tells the story of Yarram. The title *4 Devils - Hell and High Water*, refers to the frequent floods and fires that have beset the community down the years. (Fire is an ongoing theme in Lily's practice – when she was nine years old she experienced the death of her father's best friend and his two children in a fire, her memories of this traumatic event formed the basis of her masters exhibition, *Burning Memory*). The play is performed by local actors from the community, and produced and directed by a director from Sale. The play includes a 'play within a play' in which the characters recreate the first film ever shown at The Regent – a famous film called *Four Devils* directed by FW Murnau. *Four Devils* was a black and white, silent film made in 1928, set in a circus. The film is famous because it has been lost, no copies are known to exist. A sound version, incorporating sound effects, music and dialogue sequences, was made without Murnau's cooperation. Lily was able to locate the script and used it as a basis for the relevant sequences in her play.

The building that now houses Latrobe Regional Gallery used to be Morwell Town Hall, the auditorium of which



projectionist Peter Ricketts, providing a view 'from the bio box' – the small room at the back of the cinema which houses the projector.

Throughout her research, Lily engaged with various Gippsland communities in a number of different ways, through personal interviews (many of the people she interviewed are now in their nineties), and local historical societies. She also found Facebook to be a great tool in her research. She created networks in which people could post comments very easily, and in this way was able to gather a great volume of material relatively quickly.

In a recent interview, Lily addressed some of the underlying issues that have arisen from her research. She spoke about how the idea of the missing/lost/raised building site is central to her project and to Bridget's curatorial concerns, and how that idea is a metaphor for memory itself. She noted how physical sites where something has been lost, become repositories for memories especially in the case of marginalised communities. They become sites where what has been lost can be reclaimed, or reconstructed through memory. She observed how in Yarram, although it is the Regent that still stands today, the cinema that the community wanted to talk about most, was their lost cinema – The

Strand. Lily sees Gippsland and the Latrobe Valley as a marginalised community:

*"Gippsland – the Valley – produces 90% of Victorias power, we all use power, but we don't want to actually talk about the people that produce it, or even know about these coal mines and power stations. People don't want to address this place because it's unseemly, it's dirty."* (Lily Hibberd)

The *Twin Cinemas Project* focuses our attention on film technologies, and how they have changed over the generations, how that affects people who have dedicated their lives to a specific technology that eventually becomes redundant (such as Peter Ricketts). Through the presentation of her research, Lily can bring the stories of these people to a new generation. In order to do that effectively, and in a way that will be meaningful, she uses the tools and technologies of a new generation, through digitising the information she has gathered so it can be viewed on the Internet. Lily reflects:

*"Finding a way through a rich and layered history to make some meaning of it...make some kind of interpretation – I think that's where artists and archives are working together in some really interesting ways...Every show is a new project, and you have to find the best way to do it. Each time I do a show I think, how can I make this work better? I've become more and more interested in interaction...it's a case by case challenge...one of the issues with participation that needs to be constantly interrogated, questioned and remade each time you deal with it – how do you serve the interests of that community?"*

## Responding

(address these questions as extended written answers, dot point answers, group discussion or discussion in pairs with reporting back to the group)

- Discuss the formal elements that are used in Lily's installation at Latrobe Regional Gallery? How has she utilised space in her installation? What effect does this have on the meaning of the work?
- Community engagement is a central aspect of Lily's project. Discuss the possible impacts on the community of this engagement.
- Research Lily's *Phone Booth Project* referred to earlier. Compare her strategies for community engagement in *The Phone Booth Project* and in *Twin Cinemas*. How are they similar and how are they different? Discuss the differences in the artists' relationship with each community?
- The artist has spent a lot of time archiving and documenting the past and peoples memories. What aesthetic choices has she made in the display of her research, and how have they influenced the meaning of the installation?
- Discuss the meaning of a marginalised community. What sectors of the community are marginalised in Australia?
- What impact have new technologies had on the realisation of this project?

## Making

- Find stories of people in your community who have been there a long time – these could be your teachers, your parents, or people in the wider community. Maybe there is a Senior Citizens Centre where you could arrange to go and talk to some older people in your community about their memories. What are the things that they remember that have been lost? Maybe these are technologies, or buildings or community activities.
- Explore ways that you could tell their story – write it down, improvise some scenes, write a script, collaborate with other classes e.g. Music or Drama to create a performance work.
- Hold a memory day at school – it doesn't have to be for adults, you can explore your own memories. What are the themes that come out of your research?

## VCE Art/Studio Arts

- What relationship does *The Twin Cinemas Project* have to Lily's life and experiences?
- What processes has she applied to the project that reflect her personal philosophy?
- Some audiences for *Twin Cinemas* would have participated in the creation of the project, maybe in a small way, or maybe in a very significant way. Some audiences will be viewing the exhibition with no previous knowledge of the project. Discuss the different perspectives of these different audience groups, how will their experience of the exhibition vary?
- Compare the audience experience of those visiting the exhibition at Latrobe Regional Gallery, and those watching the play *Four Devils – Hell and High Water*
- What are the political and social implications of *The Twin Cinemas Project*?

# Mikala Dwyer at Mildura Arts Centre, 26 June – 24 August 2014



## Artist's Background

Mikala Dwyer was born in 1959, and lives and works in Sydney. She is well known for her sculptural and installation-based work, and also makes live performances and videos. She completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts (Sculpture/Sound) at Sydney College of the Arts in 1983, studied at Middlesex Polytechnic in London, and went on to complete her Masters of Fine Arts in 1993 at the College of Fine Arts, University New South Wales. Dwyer is represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery in Melbourne, and Roslyn Oxley9 Gallery in Sydney. Internationally she is represented by Hamish McKay Gallery in Wellington and Hamish Morrison Galerie in Berlin. She has had solo shows at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney and the Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa. She has also participated in the Sydney and Adelaide Biennales.

Influenced by ideas from science, architecture and mythology, Dwyer's work is full of uncertainties and contradictions, it has been described as 'profoundly sociable'; she asks viewers to come in, participate, and find their own meanings. She draws our attention to the unseen – to invisible materials such as helium, or the spaces between her forms, and also to hidden histories and our own personal relationships with the mysteries of magic, memory, sexuality and ritual. The materials she favours (fabric, inflatables, ceramic, paint and organic matter) give her works a playful feel, but they often suggest something darker beneath the surface.

In 2013 Dwyer was invited to create a large-scale installation for The Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. The exhibition formed part of an on-going series of exhibitions titled *Influential Australian Artists*, which celebrates the works of artists who have made a significant contribution to the history of Australian art practice. Her exhibition, *Goldene Bend'er* occupied all three gallery spaces at ACCA, with new works that explored the body, transition and transformation, using a variety of materials and a performance component.

For the 2010 Sydney Biennale, Dwyer collaborated with artist [Justene Williams](#) to create a video work that explored some of the buildings, such as the old print works at Cockatoo Island in Sydney's Harbour, an old penal colony. The work was titled *The Captain Thunderbolt Sisters*. Williams and Dwyer documented a humorous performance piece in which the artists climbed around the walls of the space in strange costumes.

Find some images and information about The Captain Thunderbolt Sisters here:

<http://arprojects.com/project/justene-williams-and-mikala-dwyer/>

A video interview with Mikala can be found here: <https://www.accaonline.org.au/exhibition/mikala-dwyer-goldene-bender>

An Age article about Mikala's exhibition at ACCA by Andrew Stephens, (25 May 2013) can be found here: <http://www.theage.com.au/entertainment/art-and-design/pushing-boundaries-with-public-look-at-private-act-20130524-2k6lz.html>



## Mikala's Cinemas Project: Cinema-noir and spectres of place

Mikala's project is a new film-based work, partly shot on-location in Mildura, with assistance from filmmaker, Alejandra Canales and including a soundtrack composed by filmmaker and composer, Kevin Sheehan. It explores the power of images to distort and disorientate, relating to Mikala's ongoing interest in obsidian mirrors and [spirit photography](#).

Mikala's project takes the form of a single screen video projected within an installation of objects. The film references the architecture of cinema as an immersive space of suspense. Mikala researched staircases related to Mildura and Redcliff's cinema history, and spent four days filming in those locations. By compiling footage of the movement down staircases, Mikala interprets the image of film as one of a descent into the space of the film-frame itself. At the same time, the downward movement of the images suggest a descent into the depths of the material – a movement towards or into the earth, as a base material for all life. Here the immateriality of the image – confronts the dense materiality suggested by the earth itself. In this way, Mikala poses questions concerning film's materiality and presence – do images have a presence? Can we be haunted by images?

## Responding

(address these questions as extended written answers, dot point answers, group discussion or discussion in pairs with reporting back to the group)

- What elements are at play in Mikala's film? How is sound used? Repetition? Space?
- Discuss how the film impacts the audience physically and emotionally.
- How would this work impact the way that local people view the architecture of their familiar buildings?

## Making

- Explore ways that you can create an artwork in which you take the viewer on a journey through space. Consider what sort of space, compressed or expansive? Familiar or strange? What does this journey mean?
- You could use film, but if you don't have access to a camera, perhaps you could use drawing, or installation, or a combination of different techniques – use a mind map to help you think laterally - 'outside the square'.

## VCE Art/Studio Arts

- Explore the meanings and messages that are expressed in Mikala's work.
- Look at the overall design of the installation. How do the physical structures of the artwork interact with the architectural space, and with exhibition signage? How do these elements affect each other?



# Bianca Hester at Coles Car Park, site of the former Liberty Cinema, Warrnambool, 4-5 July 2014



## Artists Background

Bianca Hester was born in Melbourne in 1975, and now lives and works in Sydney. She recently began a three-year Post-doctoral research fellowship at the Sydney College of the Arts (University of Sydney). Before then she taught in the department of Sculpture and Spatial Practice at the Victorian College of the Arts (University of Melbourne) between 2005-2012. She completed a PhD by project in sculpture at RMIT in 2007. She was a founding member of [CLUBSproject Inc.](#) (2002-2007), a member of the collaborative group [OSW](#). Hester was awarded the Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture in 2011, and has held solo exhibitions at The Showroom, London, 2008; Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2010; and Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art, 2012. Her work was included in the group exhibitions *Primavera 10*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2001. Hester is represented by Sarah Scout Gallery in Melbourne. Alongside this practice she teaches, writes and generates publications.

Hester's practice is motivated by a desire to experiment with and explore the built environment, and the ways in which people interact in those spaces. Her projects are process-based and change over time by incorporating the involvement of participants and viewers. Central to her practice is the body in relationship to social space. She is interested in investigating the many rhythms at play within particular physical sites, and in experimenting with overlaying other rhythms (movements, objects, actions and durations) to create new possibilities for these spaces. She often collaborates with a number of different artists from different disciplines to create events, imagery and video. Recently, she has been developing projects that explore possibilities for new definitions of contemporary public sculpture.

Hester's extended project, *Hoops, sound tests, performances, documents*, 2011-13, was included in the recent exhibition *Melbourne Now* at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne (summer 2013/14). This installation documented Hester's 'Hoops' project, in which she creates actions and performances by spinning and rolling metal hoops in various locations both in Australia and internationally. The video documentations of these events/performances emphasise the sound and rhythms that the hoops create in the concrete spaces of a cityscape.

View documentation of Hester's Hoops project here <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/melbournenow/projects/016>

Hester's work *A world fully accessible by no living being* at Federation Square won the Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture in 2011. The project comprised a series of propositions that occurred in various sites around Melbourne, ranging from: the installation of a cinder-block wall on the steps of the Victorian Parliament; annexing a patch of land in the Fitzroy Gardens; installing a cast copy of a meteorite at 80 Collins Street; a sound performance in car parks, a nightly projection upon an exterior wall in the city, and a daily action involving collecting sticks from the city's pavements that were deposited back at Federation Square – an action to which the public were invited to engage. Each proposition was "performed" and documented in a printed broadsheet, which was distributed to the public from the cinder-block wall built at Federation Square. The wall formed a central hub for the project, connecting the various propositions together.

Find more information about *A world fully accessible by no living being* here: <http://melbourneprizetrust.org/prize-for-urban-sculpture/#2011>



## Bianca's Cinemas Project: Sounding Out

Bianca's Cinemas Project comprises a film that features a series of "hidden" sites across Warrnambool. These sites have been suggested by local residents and are used as the location for a set of performances in which of a number of metal hoops are set in motion within each site. The material and movement of the hoops creates a specific set of sounds according to the ground conditions of the site in which they are performed. The project consists of the various performances, their documentation on video, and subsequent screening.

Bianca's project seeks to bring to life the hidden history of these sites through the movement and sound produced by the hoops. The looping movement of the hoops can be equated with the movement of film spools and the subsequent activation of images and sounds. Bianca's work can also be connected with the late 19th Century enthusiasm for the use of the new technology of film to depict life in the "colonies".

## Responding

(address these questions as extended written answers, dot point answers, group discussion or discussion in pairs with reporting back to the group)

- How has Bianca engaged with the local community in her project?
- How do you think that Bianca's project has impacted on the relationship that the participants have with their local environment?

- How does Bianca's project relate to the idea of cinema? What are the connections? They might be physical or conceptual.

## Making

Explore a space through sound. Find an internal or external space where it is safe to experiment with different ways that you can 'play' the space as if it were an instrument.

- Do you need to bring in other objects to help you?
- Try 'playing' your space with different numbers of people. How does it feel with four people? How does it feel with twenty?
- What are the sonic qualities of the space? Does it echo? Does it absorb sound?
- Does this process make you view the space differently?
- How will you document your work?

## VCE Art/Studio Arts

- Discuss the formal qualities of Bianca's work and explore the way in which they impact the meanings and messages inherent in the work?
- How has Bianca's choice of subject matter, materials and techniques reflect or challenge artistic or social traditions?

# Tom Nicholson at Geelong Gallery 6-9 July 2014



The text goes on to poetically describe an imagined action in which the Melbourne monuments are transported to the city of Beersheba, now a bustling modern metropolis, and placed in a line across an eight-lane highway. To create the work, Nicholson collaborated with photographer Tristan da Roza, designers Dennis Soba and Brad Haylock and translators Tamara Tamini, Jack Persekian and Lara Khaldi.

In an earlier work, *Lines Toward Another Century*, (2008), Nicholson collaborated with a New York-based composer, Andrew Byrne. This work incorporates a live performance of Byrne's composition by contemporary classical music ensembles.

## Artist's Background

Tom Nicholson was born in 1973, and lives and works in Melbourne. He majored in Drawing at the Victorian College of the Arts and he now teaches Drawing and the Honours program in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture at Monash University. He has exhibited nationally and internationally, and is represented by Milani Gallery, Brisbane. Nicholson's practice includes performance and interdisciplinary projects. He explores themes associated with archival material and the visual languages of politics, often using public actions and focussing on the relationship between actions and their traces. He has also made a series of works engaging aspects of Australia's early colonial history, using combinations of drawings, monumental forms, and posters to articulate these histories in relation to the present.

Recently his work has featured in *Melbourne Now*, a huge survey of contemporary art and design practice by Melbourne-based artists at the National Gallery of Victoria. The title of the exhibited work was *Comparative Monument*, (2012). It took the form of 9 different posters in 9 separate piles lined up across the floor of the gallery, and audiences were invited to take the one of the posters home with them. Each poster showed a photograph of a different war memorial around Melbourne, bearing the name 'Palestine'. Text on the posters described the process of the project, and the text was also translated into Arabic. The monuments commemorate the presence of Australian soldiers in Palestine during World War 1, and their role in the capture of Beersheba. Later during World War 2, Beersheba was captured and cleared by Israeli soldiers, becoming part of the new state of Israel.

The exhibition includes a huge list of all the national boundaries that were created during the twentieth century. This work has been exhibited/performed all over the world.

Some useful articles on Tom's work include:

Tom Nicholson: Following the Event, by Blair French, Art and Australia, Spring 2009

[http://www.artandaustralia.com.au/article.asp?issue\\_id=188&article\\_id=193](http://www.artandaustralia.com.au/article.asp?issue_id=188&article_id=193)

In Tom Nicholson's Shadow, by Tony Birch, Broadsheet issue 41.1, March 2012

[http://www.cacsa.org.au/?page\\_id=1809](http://www.cacsa.org.au/?page_id=1809)

## Tom's Cinema's Project: Indefinite Substitution

Tom's project is based around the area of Geelong. The Cinema that he has been incorporating into his work was called *The Joy Ark*, a beautiful 'Picture Palace' built in 1912 that no longer exists today. The Joy Ark extended out over the water at the end of a pier at The Eastern Beach in Geelong. By the 1920s it had become a roller-skating rink, dance hall and concert hall. When it was removed in 1926, its framework was used to build the Palais Royal Theatre in Moorabool Street, which is now used as a bingo hall.

Tom has drawn on the themes of water and history to create his project, *Indefinite Substitution*. He has used the story of historical figures William Buckley and John Batman to weave together the idea of journeys over water, and of 'spectral' histories and stories. The way that we imagine or picture history is influenced by the endless

circulation of images, like the images on a cinema screen.

The project takes the form of a performance involving the moving of two clay busts of famous historical figures of William Buckley, and John Batman between different locations along the Victorian coastline between Sorrento and Geelong. The busts will be swapped or substituted for one another in the locations. The busts are made of unfired, wet clay, and so in the act of transporting them, they are impacted physically, to the extent that they may become unrecognisable.

In the first leg of the performance, the busts are swapped between Sorrento and Indented Head – these journeys will be made by boat. On the second day the busts are moved by ute between Indented Head and The Eastern Beach (site of The Joy Ark). On the third day the busts are moved by trolley between The Eastern Beach and the Geelong Gallery, finally the busts are moved between two colonial landscape paintings in the Geelong Gallery.

William Buckley was a convict who was transported from England. He escaped from his captors at when they landed at Sorrento in 1803. He walked through the landscape around Port Philip Bay, and eventually settled with an Indigenous group called the Wathaurong people, who lived around Geelong, Melbourne and the Bellarine Peninsula. He lived with them for over thirty years. Buckley emerged from his life with the Wathaurong at a meeting on the 6 July 1835 (Tom's performance begins on 6 July) at a camp at Indented Head, which had been established by John Batman earlier that year, as a base from which to explore and colonise Victoria.

In the making of this project Nicholson has engaged in dialogue with senior members of the Wathaurong people to discuss the meaning of the project, and the way that historical information about Buckley and the Wathaurong is shared with a broader public audience. Once the work is installed at the Geelong Gallery, public talks are given by Wathaurong elders, and in this way images of historical figures give way to living people and living voices.

## Responding

(address these questions as extended written answers, dot point answers, group discussion or discussion in pairs with reporting back to the group)

- Tom's busts have made a long journey throughout this performance/project. Describe in detail the physical impact on the sculptures of their movement between different locations.
- Why do you think Tom chose to use wet clay to create his busts? How does his choice of material impact the meaning of the work?
- As a historical figure, what does William Buckley symbolise?
- Do some more detailed research about what happened at Indented Head. Why was Batman there? What does the site represent?
- Consider the various ways in which Tom's performance differs from other more traditional forms of performance, make a comparison.



- How is the element of rhythm used in *Indefinite Substitution*?
- How does *Indefinite Substitution* relate to the history of cinema?
- Explore the relationship that this project has with the landscape or the seascape. How is this expressed throughout the action/performance?
- How has the action been documented and displayed in the space?

## Making

- Think about how you can create an 'ephemeral' artwork, in which the physical appearance of the work is impacted by time or by a performance/action.
- What meanings will you seek to express in your artwork? Plan what sort of materials you might use. How will your choice of materials assist in expressing your meaning?
- If it's not practical for you to make the artwork, then make a series of drawings or photographs that represent your idea.

## VCE Art/Studio Arts

- Describe the political and cultural contexts in which *Indefinite Substitution* was made. How do they contribute to its meaning?
- How have historical and contemporary events shaped Nicholson's intention and the audiences understanding of the meaning and messages expressed in *Indefinite Substitution*?

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Much of the material in the Introduction is drawn from an interview with Bridget Crone conducted by Kate Stones in February 2014.

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# IMAGES

**p.9** Brook Andrew, *De Anima*, 2014, two channel video (still)

**p.10** Brook Andrew, *Thinking (man)*, 2014, detail from *De Anima* installation

**p.11** Brook Andrew, *Feeling (man)*, 2014, detail from *De Anima* installation

**p.12** Lily Hibberd and Curtis Taylor, *The Phone Booth Project*, 2012-13, Commissioned for *We Don't Need a Map*, Fremantle Arts Centre

**p.13** Lily Hibberd, *Morwell City Hall theatre interior (with a woman in red)*, 2014, Photo c1936, courtesy Morwell Historical Society

Yallourn Theatre interior, date unknown, Photographer unknown, Photo courtesy Old Brown Coal Mine Museum

**p.15** Mikala Dwyer, *The Silvering*, 2011, installation, Image courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

**p.16** Mikala Dwyer, *Swamp Geometry*, 2008, installation, Image courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

**p.17** Bianca Hester, *approaching and departing four grounds*, 2013, detail of a performance at the Lithuanian Club, North Melbourne, commissioned for action and response (curated by Hanna Matthews) – Arts house, North Melbourne  
Image credit: Kay Abude

**p.18** Bianca Hester, *a world fully accessible by no living being*, 2011, detail of performance held upon the rooftop of the Wilson carpark on Russell Street, Melbourne. This performance was a component of a three part project consisting of an architectural alteration at Federation Square, a broadsheet (2000 copies) and a series of actions staged across a two week period, exhibited for The Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture. Image credit: Bianca Hester

**p.19** Tom Nicholson, *Evening shadows*, 2012, Elder Wing, as part of the Adelaide Biennial, now held in the collection of the AGSA

**p.20** Tom Nicholson, *Action for 2pm Sunday 6 July 1835*, 2005, postering action over 10 consecutive nights, Melbourne, with 2000 pairs of off-set printed posters

Tom Nicholson, *Documents from a banner marching project*, 2004-2007, 2004-7, Collection of the National Gallery of Victoria