

True Self:

DAVID ROSETZKY
SELECTED WORKS

EDUCATION
RESOURCE



About this resource

This education resource is designed for teachers, middle and upper secondary students and teachers of the:

- Visual Arts
- Psychology
- English

It offers a range of starting points to consider in response to the *True Self: David Rosetzky Selected Works* exhibition.

Selected artworks and historical links are introduced with accompanying practical tasks and topics for discussion in relation to relevant curriculum areas.

In addition to learning activities, the resource includes an introduction to the:

- exhibition
- artist's biography
- glossary of key terms
- references

It is designed to be used in conjunction with the exhibition and the exhibition catalogue.

The Exhibition

One of Australia's finest video artists, David Rosetzky creates intensely beautiful lens-based works exploring identity, subjectivity and relationships. Increasingly, he collaborates with professionals from the fields of theatre, dance, film and sound. Drawing on fifteen years of practice *True Self: David Rosetzky Selected Works* presents early portrait and longer duration videos, photographs, photo-collages and sculptures, revealing telling relationships between these aspects of his practice. The exhibition not only allows us to see the consistency of Rosetzky's vision, but to engage with a trajectory in his video that moves from lofi, singular portraits that borrow advertising's aura, through to cinematic, long-duration work. Rosetzky bends our expectations of time—using duration and repetition, as well as novel exchanges of character and choreographed passages—to enhance the emotional and aesthetic register of his work.

Curated by Naomi Cass, Director and Kyla McFarlane, Associate Curator at the Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne.

Artist Biography

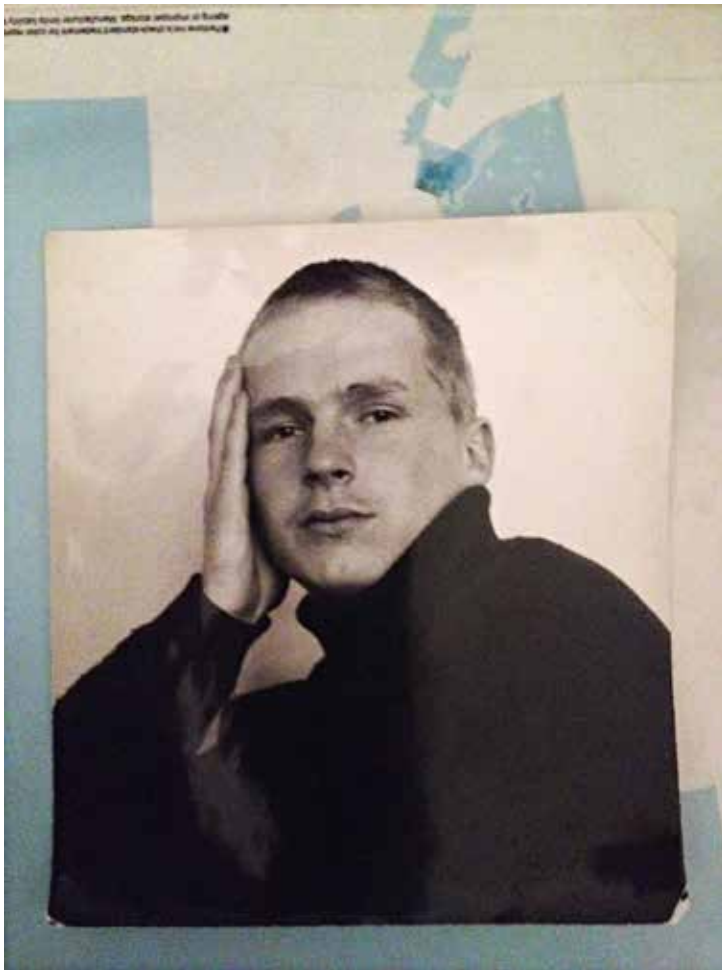
David Rosetzky works in a variety of media including video, installation, photography, sculpture and drawing. He studied painting at Victoria College, Prahran and recently completed a PhD in Fine Art at Monash University, Caulfield. From 1994-2002 he was the founding director of the artist and writer run gallery, 1st Floor Artists and Writers Space, Melbourne.

Rosetzky has presented his work widely in Australia and overseas in exhibitions including *We Used to Talk About Love*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, (2013); the Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art, (2012); *Dress Codes*; *The Third ICP Triennial of Video and Photography* at The International Centre for Photography, New York, USA, (2009); *Asian Art Biennale*, Taichung, Taiwan, (2009); *Crowds / Conversations / Confessions* at the Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada, (2006); and *Circle of Friends* at the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, (2008). In 2005 he was the winner of the inaugural Anne Landa Award for video and new media arts.

He regularly collaborates with professionals from the fields of theatre, dance, film and sound including choreographers Lucy Guerin, Stephanie Lake, Jo Lloyd and Gideon Obarzanek, composer and sound designer J.D. Franzke, cinematographer Katie Milwright, dramaturg and writer Margaret Cameron, and dancers Kyle Kremerskothen, Alisdair Macindoe and Charmene Yap. In 2008 Rosetzky was commissioned by The National Portrait Gallery, Canberra to produce a digital video portrait of actor Cate Blanchett.

David Rosetzky is represented by Sutton Gallery, Melbourne.

Against Type, 2012



Against Type, 1960 Blue 290-A, 2012
pigment print, 62 x 47cm each
edition 1 of 6

Against Type is a modest set of images within David Rosetzky's oeuvre. Rosetzky often develops elaborate productions in consultation with others: a sound designer, a carpenter, a cinematographer, a costume designer, actors and models. However, this body of work was produced by assembling and photographing material found in the studio. A selection of printed matter and graphic design materials were used to create semi-abstract collages that have been composed and shot on a table-top.

The series pays homage to the artist's father who worked as a graphic designer. Many of the photographed objects, including the Pantone Sheets and cutting mat, were inherited from him. The key image is a re-photographed photograph of Rosetzky's father as a young man. This is the only image where a whole photograph has been

re-photographed. It stands out from the other images in the series which simply capture overlapping surfaces and partial details from the pages of magazines. The re-photographed photograph raises many questions about the original print and adds an enigmatic dimension to the series, which is otherwise concerned with the stylish elegance of designers' working materials and formal arrangements of shape and colour.

Rosetzky's practice regularly engages with the superficial contours of style and fashion, but dark uncertainties and incommunicable depths always haunt his visions: below the beautiful poetry of our superficial lives, the physical stuff of our existence is infused with mysterious forces.

- Melissa Bedford, adapted from Stephen Zagala, 'Against Type', True Self: David Rosetzky Selected Works, exhibition catalogue, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2013.

The Visual Arts

EXPLORING AND RESPONDING:

1. Identify and examine the way the formal elements of shape, materials and colour have been explored through the series *Against Type*.
2. Appropriating and re-photographing existing artwork is a process that has been utilised by artists since the 1970s. How has Rosetzky used sources of inspiration, materials and techniques to communicate a personal narrative through his artwork? What emotions are being explored?
3. What meanings are conveyed through the use of graphic design materials that David Rosetzky inherited from his father? Discuss.

English

LANGUAGE: EXPRESSING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS; TEXT ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE:

1. Look carefully at each panel depicted in this work. What do you see? Think of one word that comes to mind for each of the panels (Group discussion).
2. Choose one element in each panel and create a simile or a metaphor to correspond with it. Try to link your metaphor or simile to any particular mood or emotion evoked in you by this artwork. Spend a few minutes writing and then share with group at large. Eg: Lines like broken threads.

LITERACY: TEXTS IN CONTEXT; INTERPRETING, ANALYSING AND EVALUATING:

3. Why do you think the work is called *Against Type*? Discuss your ideas with your peers.
4. Focus upon the 10th panel. The artist rephotographed an old photograph of his father to create this image. How is it different from the other panels? When do you think the original photograph of the artist's father might have been taken? What makes you think this?
5. Why do you think the photograph is included in the work? Do you think the artist is nostalgic? If so how has he conveyed this? What are the connections between the photographic image and the other panels?

LITERATURE: CREATING LITERATURE:

6. Describe the image of the artist's father in as much detail as possible (10 mins writing). How would you describe the expression on the young man's face? What emotion do you think is being conveyed? What might have just happened to him? Create the

4. Compare and contrast Rosetzky's formal and discreet use of collage with another artist such as Hannah Hoch or David Noonan?
5. How does this work relate to nostalgia, grief, love and loss?

CREATING AND MAKING:

Collect a range of two-dimensional objects that appear to evoke a particular mood / individual / theme from popular culture. For example: postcards, posters, magazines & photographs. Assemble these objects on a table-top considering the interplay of formal elements such as shape, colour, and pattern. Compose a series of photographs by cropping, rearranging and rephotographing the objects. Review your compositions and select, print and present a series of 5 images.

conversation that has just taken place prior to this photograph being taken (15 mins writing).

7. Students are provided with an artefact or text and asked to relate the object/text to the artwork in some way – oral presentation. Objects might include, for example, recorder or other musical instrument, bar of soap, dried flower.
8. Choose a panel and tell the story of the objects that appear in the image.

TEXTS:

- *Objects in pictures should so be arranged as by their very position to tell their own story.*
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
 - *He needed me to do what sons do for their fathers: bear witness that they're substantial, that they're not hollow, not ringing absences. That they count for something when little else seems to.*
Richard Ford
 - *Every man's memory is his private literature.*
Aldous Huxley
 - *Pictures and shapes are but secondary objects and please or displease only in the memory.*
Francis Bacon
9. Think of a member of your family or someone close to you, whom you love dearly, admire or miss. Is there a photograph of them that comes to mind? If not, imagine a photograph that captures the essence of this person to you. Describe it in detail. Consider artefacts objects and images you associate with this person. Sketch these and provide a brief written description for each.

Luke, 1988

Luke, 1998 (still)
single channel digital video, colour, sound
3 minutes, 52 seconds



Luke is one of Rosetzky's first video works. It is a relatively short and simple work, but it establishes a number of the distinctive stylistic and technical features associated with Rosetzky's more ambitious later projects. The character Luke is shot in flatteringly even lighting in a frontal close up and in his casual wool jumper he is an exemplary 'metrosexual'.

Luke speaks to the camera as if to a diary, foreshadowing the kind of self-display that has become ubiquitous via YouTube since the artwork was made. Luke goes on to briefly explain, with apparent sincerity, his views on various everyday lifestyle issues such as money, personal style, fitness and grooming. Luke's dialogue is imbued with a self-conscious awareness of how he is perceived by others.

Rosetzky's interest in exploring personal style is clearly evident in *Luke*, extending Andy Warhol's idea of using his friends as subjects to perform in his screen tests and movies. Rosetzky knew Luke personally when he made the work, but we can assume that the character in *Luke* is a highly stylised version drawn from a manicured edit of an interview with the subject. Rosetzky blurs the line between documentary and a more idealised presentation of his subject to produce a slightly unsettling effect.

- Melissa Bedford, adapted from Daniel Palmer, 'Luke', True Self: David Rosetzky Selected Works, exhibition catalogue, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2013.

The Visual Arts

EXPLORING AND RESPONDING:

1. Compare and contrast the application of elements such as lighting, sound and composition in David Rosetzky's *Luke* with Andy Warhol's *Screen Test of Anna Buchanan*. Discuss how these formal elements work together to contribute to the aesthetic and emotions conveyed in the artworks.

2. The emotions we experience today have a long history. Once referred to as "passions", the construction of "emotions" emerged in the 18 and 19th century. Emotions are stirred both by internal and external forces and are fundamental to individual and social wellbeing. As such, witnessing and understanding them provide a portal in understanding ourselves and our actions. The face is one avenue for the externalisation of emotions. If we think of historical portraits, despite the static nature of the work, the sitter's persona was often conveyed,

whether it be dignified, powerful or commanding. In more recent times, and especially in advertising, the phenomena to "conceal" our authentic self, creating a mask like persona, has dominated.

Both Warhol and Rosetzky create compelling artworks that investigate both explicitly and implicitly emotions and personal identity. Emotions are temporal. They occur over time. Identify and examine the facial expressions within the artist's works. How has the face conveyed emotions? Consider the methods and processes each artist has used to convey affect and mood/s through the work.

3. Reflect upon and describe how viewing a time-based video artwork can impact on the audiences' gallery experience and reception. How would this compare to a static historical artwork within a gallery?

Andy Warhol
Screen test - Anna Buchanan 1964



Portrait of Cate Blanchett, 2008

Portrait of Cate Blanchett, 2008
single channel high definition digital video, colour, sound, 9 minutes, 56 seconds
National Portrait Gallery, Canberra



David Rosetzky's screen-based portrait of actor Cate Blanchett is a subtle and sophisticated mini-movie that explores the actor's persona. Rosetzky explains: 'I knew that I didn't want to present the portrait as a definitive representation of Cate Blanchett- but rather an exploration of shifting identities and inter-changeability'. Rosetzky was commissioned by The National Portrait Gallery to create the portrait, collaborating with professional choreographer Lucy Guerin and composer J David Franzke on the production.

The Cate Blanchett portrait was filmed on location at the Sydney Theatre Company where Blanchett works both as an actor and artistic director. It was filmed in the workshop where sets are made. This choice of backdrop adds to the idea of mutability within Blanchett's persona because it represents a place of construction.

Rosetzky employs a range of elements in this work: voiceover, gesture, sound and composition but explains 'the script was the starting point'. The artist met with Blanchett and recorded an interview with the actor at her office at the Sydney Theatre Company. Rosetzky was interested in Blanchett's relationship to the various roles she has played. He says 'I asked fairly general questions –such as "how do you see the roles that you play- what are they for you?" or "how do you prepare for a role?" and so on. Cate is extremely articulate and was very generous and open with her responses. Rosetzky selected elements from within an hour of recorded material to create a script for the work.

The portrait is contemplative and reveals an intimate attitude to the actor's roles, speaking to the layers of selfhood that we all hold.

- Melissa Bedford, adapted from Christopher Chapman, 'Portrait of Cate Blanchett', True Self: David Rosetzky Selected Works, exhibition catalogue, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2013.

The Visual Arts

EXPLORING AND RESPONDING:

1. Is viewing a video portrait different from viewing a traditional portrait painting in a museum or gallery? Discuss.
2. Historically for the rich and influential, portraiture has become more common and accessible for people overtime. Once made in media such as painting, etching and lithograph, today's portrait practices include photography and film. Think about the history portraiture in relation to Rosetzky's contemporary practices?
3. Rather than creating a static photographic portrait of Cate Blanchett, Rosetzky's has Cate *in motion* and *in thought*. What does the viewer learn about Cate through her portrait?
4. As a viewer, are we able to access the authentic Cate, or are we only seeing what is being performed? To what degree are all emotions performed? Discuss.
5. Describe the methods and techniques Rosetzky has drawn upon to convey Cate's emotions, inner essence and true personality?

CREATING AND MAKING – VIDEO PORTRAIT:

1. Invite a friend or family member to be the subject of your own video portrait.
2. Write a series of questions about topics that are relevant to your subject and interview them using the questions as prompts for discussion. Record the responses carefully.

Psychology

INTELLIGENCE, PERSONALITY AND SENSE OF SELF:

Part of developing an identity involves understanding one's personality. Psychologist Carl Rogers (1902-87) developed his Person Centred Theory of Personality. He believed that all people strive to reach their full potential (self-actualisation) and that we would all have the capacity to achieve this, but for a number of hurdles we may encounter along the way. Whether we reach self-actualisation depends on three factors: whether individuals are accepted or rejected by others, how they view themselves and how they deal with negative influences in their life that cause them anxiety or conflict.

Identity formation comes from understanding one's personality and according to Rogers, a person's self concept, that is, all the perceptions and beliefs an individual has about themselves, is crucial to understanding their personality and achieving self-actualisation.

3. Transcribe and edit the responses in order to develop a script.
4. Rehearse and refine the script with your subject. You may also choose to introduce movement or dance into their performance.
5. Prepare your film set:
 - Prepare your camera.
 - Choose a background environment and clothing in collaboration with your subject.
 - Light your environment appropriately. Different sources of lighting can create distinct moods and feelings. Experiment with lamps, natural lighting and/or fairy lights when considering the narrative of your portrait and the emotional sensibility you wish to convey.
6. Record the video portrait:
 - Start recording.
 - Ask the subject to perform their portrait script/ dance for the camera.
7. Save your video portrait to a computer.
8. If possible play the portrait in different scales to different audiences in different settings, ie intimate (on the computer screen), at a distance (on a larger screen). Note their response and reception. How did it vary? Did the portrait capture what you intended it to?

Rogers believed that in order to become a happy, well adjusted individual, our self image (the person we think we are), the ideal self (the person we want to be) and the true self (the person you actually are) should all match how we view ourselves across different situations.

The construction of personality could be considered when thinking about Rosetzky's work, *Portrait of Cate Blanchett*, 2008, as the actress analyses different aspects of her characters' personalities, their thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

1. Compare and contrast the strengths and limitations of Psychodynamic, trait and humanist theories of personality in relation to Rosetzky's work.

Nothing like this (Autumn), 2007

Nothing like this (Autumn), 2007
single channel 16mm film transferred to digital video, colour
10 minutes, 53 seconds, edition 2 of 6



In *Nothing like this (Autumn)* a man floats in a pool, trapped in a space that is his own; a private retreat and contemplative world that allows the audience merely to speculate on his inner thoughts and desires. The water, contained, almost pond-like, separates us from an encounter with this floating man. As the ripples span lazily outwards towards us, we are further distanced from him.

In David Rosetzky's artworks we are never really allowed to touch the characters; they ultimately remain elusive. The artist understands very well the emotional strength of desire and longing. Importantly, he also understands the audience is a crucial part of his practice; the work deliberately induces a sense of yearning in his viewers. The projection of strong emotions by his audience onto his works is a key to understanding the meaning of Rosetzky's practice.

Nothing like this (Autumn) is a self-contained and introspective work. Like Narcissus, who didn't understand he was watching his own image in a reflected pool and died before he would leave it, we linger next to this work, reluctant to leave this man alone. Again we understand how our presence is critical to the reading of the work in wondering if, perhaps, like Narcissus, we are gazing at ourselves.

- Melissa Bedford, adapted from Kate Daw, 'Without You I'm Nothing', *True Self: David Rosetzky Selected Works*, exhibition catalogue, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2013.

The Visual Arts

EXPLORING AND RESPONDING:

1. What is your emotional response to this work? Do you feel connected to the character being depicted? Do you think Rosetzky wants you to like his characters? Compare your response with those of your friends.
2. Reflect on Rosetzky's practice. Brainstorm and discuss the devices he uses to draw in the viewer to emotionally engage with the characters in his artworks. How do Rosetzky's aesthetic choices place the audience in relation to the people he portrays?
3. Italian Baroque painter Caravaggio painted the intense and sensual *Narcissus* portraying a young boy who fell in love with his own reflection. Research the tale of Narcissus. Compare and contrast Caravaggio's *Narcissus* with David Rosetzky's *Nothing like this (Autumn)*. What moods and emotions were conveyed in the works? How do those depicted in Caravaggio's artwork of 1597 compare to Rosetzky's work of 2007, 410 years later?
4. Our society is often criticised as being the most

English

LANGUAGE:

1. Describe the water in as much detail as possible. Consider words to describe light, movement and form. Then create three powerful metaphors or similes to describe the water. For example "Ripples like a lizard's flickering tongue" (simile)
2. As you watch the video, note your responses to it. How does it make you feel? Do your feelings change as the film progresses? How and why might that be?

LITERACY:

1. Compare the artworks *Nothing Like This* with *Ophelia*. What is similar? What is different? What makes you aware of the time and era in which the artworks were created? Discuss your responses with a partner. How do your views differ? Why might this be?
2. How does the silence which accompanies this film contribute to its meaning for you? Why might the artist have chosen to make the film silent?
3. *Ophelia* depicts the death by drowning of Ophelia in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Consider Gertrude's description to Laertes of Ophelia's death.

narcissistic and self absorbed ever known. It is thought by some that Caravaggio drew from Greek mythology to create his work to explore the notion of self-love, what do you think Rosetzky's intentions were in creating *Nothing like this (Autumn)*?

5. Research the social context of the time each artwork was produced. How does context contribute to meaning of each artwork? How has society's understanding of narcissism changed overtime- from Greek mythology, Freud, to current day.

CREATING AND MAKING:

1. Develop a folio of creative visual responses using the myth of Narcissus as a starting point:
 - Investigate historical images of Narcissus.
 - Search for the contemporary equivalent in ads, film, art and real life. Compare and contrast with the Greek narcissus.
 - Explore a range of materials, techniques, processes and art forms.
 - Document thinking and working practices through annotating your ideas.

Caravaggio, *Narcissus* 1597-1599
oil on canvas 110 x 92 cm
Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Rome



John Everett Millais, *Ophelia*, c.1851
oil on canvas 76.2cm x 111.8cm
Photo: Tate, London, 2011



QUEEN GERTRUDE

There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes;
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element: but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Gertrude did not necessarily witness the drowning and it is not depicted on stage. Why might Shakespeare have decided to have Gertrude describe it in this way?

Literature:

1. Write your own detailed description of the scene depicted in *Nothing Like This*, using Gertrude's speech as a model. Recreate the scene for someone who was not there/did not witness it, paying special attention to point of view and voice.
2. The subject has his eyes closed. What might he be thinking? Write an internal monologue. What pictures might he be seeing? Describe, draw or photograph them.

Weekender and Commune (Group portraits)

Weekender, 2001
single channel digital video, colour, sound
16 minutes, 18 seconds, edition AP2



Weekender

Art history abounds with images of bohemian poets, writers and artists grouped together at the beach. Not in a sun-bronzed way, but in a detached and languid way that sets them apart from the fun and frolics of ordinary people. They are not there for surfing, but for quiet, angst and ennui.

David Rosetzky's *Weekender* continues the tradition of bohemians at the beach and illustrates the self-conscious languor and rites of passage for introspective types.

Rosetzky establishes the inner thoughts of each of the participants as they narrate soliloquies about themselves. The video artwork references the film *The Big Chill*, in which a group of protagonists are grouped together to explore identity. Devices such as mirrors become a metaphor for a kind of twenty-something narcissism while the beach symbolises the identity in flux.

- Melissa Bedford, adapted from Juliana Engberg, 'Bohemians Love the Beach', *True Self: David Rosetzky Selected Works*, exhibition catalogue, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2013.



Albert Tucker
Me, John, Sun, Nolan, Sweeney 4 [and a half] months
old, Back beach Point Lonsdale, June 1945 1945
gelatin silver contact print, 4 x 5 cm
State Library of Victoria

The Visual Arts

EXPLORING AND RESPONDING:

1. Rosetzky is interested in addressing and questioning modern life. *Commune* and *Weekender* explore the dynamics of a social group and individualism. Compare and contrast the types of relationships depicted in each artwork. How does the medium selected by the artist impact on the messages conveyed by each artwork?
2. Going beyond appearance and surface, Rosetzky provides a portal for audiences to access young people's intimate and internal dialogue. What emotions are his protagonists exploring? What might these suggest about the group identity and dynamic?

Psychology

Interpersonal, Group Behaviour and Conformity: Conformity is the tendency to adjust one's thoughts, feelings and behaviours in ways that are in agreement with those of a particular individual or group (Grivas and Carter, 2010). Solomon Asch (1907-1996) conducted a series of experiments in 1951, which investigated group pressure to conform. His findings showed a number of key factors that influence conformity. The factors included group size, unanimity, informational influence, normative influence, culture, social loafing and de-individuation.

Some of these factors seem to be evident through various works by David Rosetzky. In photo installation *Commune*, 2003 and video *Weekender*, 2001 the individuals are dressed in a very similar fashion and wear similar expressions, suggesting conformity or the need for individuals to conform to a group. The paradox here is that while these people appear to be conforming in order to establish relationships within the group, something Psychologist Erik Erikson proposed to be important for establishing a strong sense of identity, they are not actually interacting with each other in any conceivable way. These works create a sense of de-individuation (that is the loss of individuality), or the sense of anonymity that can occur in a group situation.

In the video *Weekender*, 2001 the dialogues also depict individuals analysing themselves, confessing secret thoughts, feelings and behaviours and making comparisons to others, in a quest to find their individuality. Participation in groups is an important part of understanding our individuality, forming our identity and giving us a sense of communality.

3. As a class, discuss how the technological connection between each individual in *Commune* might be seen as a metaphor for the type of relationships that are possible via contemporary social media.

4. Rosetzky's work encourages audiences to examine their own emotions and actions. Art has always reflected the human condition, and as such Rosetzky's work examines the recent phenomena of individualism, self absorption and self criticism. Think to William Shakespeare's Sonnet 62, "Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye." Contemplate how the themes of vanity and self love explored in Shakespeare's text relate to Rosetzky's artworks?

SOCIAL ATTITUDES:

The quest to understand ourselves in order to develop a strong identity or self-concept is influenced by social norms created by the groups we socialise with and the society in which we live. The subjects portrayed in Rosetzky's works depict western culture. Whilst western culture values individuality, it also does its best to establish social norms, especially through the medium of advertising. As a consequence individuals in western society often feel compelled to conform to those norms in order to obtain a secure sense of self and belonging. These concepts seem to be illustrated by Rosetzky's methods employed by the advertising industry. The works are all of high quality resolution making the imagery and the subjects within seem more idealised or desirable. All of these images depict desirable, young, healthy, good-looking people, so in a way Rosetzky is making use of models in order to attract the viewer. Once the attention of the audience has been arrested, they are encouraged to look further into the images or pay closer attention to the dialogues in the videos. This invites the viewer to form opinions and attitudes about the subjects and to find meaning in the works, perhaps inviting the viewer to compare their own identities or personalities with the subjects depicted.

1. Define what a group is and explain in detail why it is important to self-concept, identity and individuality.
2. Often belonging to groups involves an individual conforming to the social norms of those groups. What are some of the factors that influence conformity within groups and what impact can this have on someone's sense of identity?
3. How have these themes been explored in the works of Rosetzky?

4. Research social attitudes and the factors that influence them. In *Weekender* dialogue is spoken by different people. How do social attitudes influence our sense of identity and our sense of communality?

5. Regulating emotions: thinking of your own group experiences, what role do emotions play (group and individual). What sort of emotions? Can you see any examples of these anywhere in Rosetzky's work?



Commune, 2003
type C photographs mounted on composition board, flexilight
120 x 290 x 450cm
Photo: Catherine Martin
Collection of Dr Dick Quan, Sydney

Kiah, 2008



Kiah, 2008
type C pigment print collage, 66 x 52.5 cm, edition 6 of 6
Photo: Catherine Martin

David Rosetzky's portrait of Khia is part of a series of photo-collages depicting young women (Kiah, Eden, Caroline) and exploring the notion of identity. Eden has been photographed in a traditional three quarter view and avoids gazing at the camera. Despite her youth and beauty, she appears apprehensive and fearful.

Rosetzky has used a scalpel to make incisions into the photographic print to cut away some of Khia's flesh and clothing. The cuts are strangely disturbing for the viewer, presenting a literal expression of identity as multi-layered and complex. Areas of skin and fabric have been peeled away to reveal other peoples' clothes, hair, skin and jewellery. When viewed alongside the other portraits in the series, connections between each of the subjects are tangible; the hair of one subject falls upon the shoulders of another.

Through the use of collaged elements, *Kiah* simultaneously connects and breaks the links between individual identity and physical appearance. The portrait represents the conscious act of constructing an individual identity in a world of endless influences.

- Melissa Bedford, adapted from Rosemary Hawker, 'TogetherApart: Portraits by David Rosetzky' in True Self: David Rosetzky Selected Works, exhibition catalogue, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2013.

The Visual Arts

EXPLORING AND RESPONDING:

1. What artistic methods, materials and techniques does David Rosetzky apply in his portrait of Kiah? How does this artwork express contemporary ideas about the complexity of self-identity? Discuss.

2. Emotions can be described textually, performed, projected, painted and drawn. However the locus for both projecting and representing emotions is the face. The face both expresses and withholds emotions. Looking at the tradition of portraiture is valuable when thinking about Rosetzky's *Khia* as it offers the opportunity to think about the patterns of facial representation and the changing ways in which the face mediates human emotions as a means of studying differences and similarities between past and present.

Italian Mannerist painter Agnolo Bronzino portrayed the etiquette of the Grand Duke's court in Florence during the 1500s. Research Bronzino's art practice and examine the social and cultural context in which he painted his portrait of Lucrezia di Cosimo. Discuss how these influences may contribute to the meaning of the artwork.

3. In an essay compare and contrast David Rosetzky's *Khia* with Agnolo Bronzino's *Lucrezia di Cosimo*. Select and apply analytical frameworks to the interpretation of each artwork, drawing out the feelings and emotions that may have been contained within the restricted affect of the sitters? What have the artist's individual methodologies and techniques revealed about the

artist's preoccupations and concerns? Substantiate your interpretations with evidence from the artworks themselves and with reference to a range of resources.

4. What meanings and messages about the fashion and style of young women are explored through the portraits of Khia and Lucrezia di Cosimo? While their faces seem to speak, they don't. How have their identities been constructed? What can we tell about each of these young women through the way they dress, their body language and affect? What might each woman be thinking or feeling?

CREATING AND MAKING:

At school collaborate on a series of photo-collages representing each member of your art class. Each student in the class should be photographed by another class member.

Make sure each individual is photographed at the same distance from the camera from a three-quarter view, with the same lighting. Consider what make up and clothing you will wear on the day of the shoot. Then print two copies of each of the photographic portraits at exactly the same size.

Each student can then develop their own self-portrait by using the collage techniques explored by David Rosetzky in *Khia*. Work together to swap the cut out shapes from your portrait with those of your classmates to produce a composite image. Present the series of portraits together.



Agnolo Bronzino
Lucrezia di Cosimo c. 1560
oil on tin, 15 cm x 12 cm
Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, Italy

Psychology

LIFESPAN PSYCHOLOGY:

The construction of personality could be considered when thinking about Rosetzky's work. According to Erikson, a strong sense of personal identity, independence and the feeling of being secure in the world is essential to forming good, intimate relationships with others. Those who are successful at this will form relationships that are committed and secure. However, those with a poor sense of self tend to have less committed relationships and are more likely to suffer emotional isolation.

One's "sense of self" is worth considering when looking and thinking about the collage of *Khia*, 2008. The way the young woman avoids looking directly at the camera, averting the viewer's gaze carries a slight sense

English

LANGUAGE: EXPRESSING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS; TEXT ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE:

1. Describe the colours used in this work. Why might the artist have chosen this colour palette? What feelings are evoked through the use of colour?

LITERACY: TEXTS IN CONTEXT; INTERPRETING, ANALYSING AND EVALUATING:

2. Focus on the direction of Khia's glance and her facial expression. What do these suggest to you? Why might the artist have asked the subject to look this way rather than directly at the viewer?

3. Collage is used in this work. How does it add to the impact of the work on the audience? What is the artist trying to portray through collage and different textures?

4. This work is one of several in a series. If possible, look at the series of works and discuss with a partner the ways in which each work connects to the others.

LITERATURE: CREATING LITERATURE:

5. Consider any portraits you have seen (Group discussion). Many portrait painters aim to show not only their subjects' physical characteristics, but also something of their characters, personalities, achievements and interests.

of uncertainty in her expression possibly reflecting the incongruence of the self image, the ideal self and the true self. The way that Khia is wearing a montage of another's clothing, hair and skin, creates a confusion of identity, drawing attention to the identity versus role confusion and/or the intimacy versus isolation stage of psychosocial development proposed by Erikson. It could also suggest the tension between the strive for individuality versus the need to conform.

1. Research Eric Erikson's Psychosocial Stage Theory.
2. Explain what happens at this stage of life according to Erikson and how this relates to a person's sense of individuality and communality.
3. How has Rosetzky explored the concepts of Intimacy versus the Isolation Stage through his works?

Discuss how they do this with reference to portraits you have seen. For example, particular objects or artistic devices depicted or used to create a portrait may represent an affecting connection between the sitter and the creator and/or tell us something about the sitter.

6. Keeping in mind responses from the previous discussion, create a self-portrait or a portrait of someone you know well in writing. Consider colours, clothing, objects and gestures associated with the subject. Do a sketch of a visual portrait first if this helps and then describe it. The following sentence examples may assist you to get started:

I am standing in the centre of the space, looking downwards. The wall behind me is painted a muted blue...

My body is positioned awkwardly as I lean on the side of the old couch, but my gaze is direct.

My grandmother's necklace is the focus of this portrait. My fingers are entwined around its chain...

The most striking aspect of this portrait is the way in which I appear engulfed by the scattered objects in the room...

Justine, 2000



Justine, 2000
single channel digital video, colour, sound, 4 minutes, 42 seconds
edition 3 of 6

Justine is an example of controlled economy within David Rosetzky's practice. The whole film is under five minute long and contains just four shots. The compositions are the kind of carefully styled and framed photographs found in lifestyle magazines.

Justine's self-analysis throughout the work is relentless. She critiques her appearance, her relationships and her anxiety: "I feel like I have to create my whole lifestyle but there are too many variables to coordinate. Does the music match my mood? My décor? My hair? Does it matter?" While the rhetorical mode of *Justine* is confessional, she is not emotional. She recounts these stories with attention to detail, detachment and wry self-awareness.

- Melissa Bedford, adapted from Anna Zagala, 'Justine', True Self: David Rosetzky Selected Works, exhibition catalogue, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2013.



The Visual Arts

EXPLORING AND RESPONDING:

1. We know that facial expressions provide emotional information. Expressions like a slight smile, a furrowed brow or even a blank stare can convey a sense of contentment, anxiety and preoccupation. They are important in communication. Research suggests that facial expressions of emotions are innate rather than a product of cultural learning. Compare and contrast the character's emotional expressions in Rosetzky's *Justine* with Da Vinci's *Lady with an Ermine*. What might each woman be thinking or feeling? Why is there an absence of emotion visible?
2. How does the presentation of each portrait reflect or challenge the artistic and social traditions of the period within which they were produced? Research the depiction of animals in portraits throughout art history. Do you think the cat and ermine represented in Rosetzky's *Justine* and Da Vinci's *Lady with an Ermine* are used symbolically? Why?/Why not?
3. How does sound contribute to the meanings and messages explored through *Justine*? How might you interpret the work differently if it were silent? Do we feel empathy for the women?

Psychology

IDENTITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT:

Justine grapples with the sense of both alienation and belonging. She defines her identity through her relationships. Psychoanalyst Erik Erikson (1902 – 94) believed that social development occurs through a combination of psychological processes taking place within individuals and a person's life experiences, particularly with regards to their interactions with others. As such, he developed a theory of psychosocial development, which suggested that people progress through eight sequential stages at different periods throughout the lifespan and that each stage carries with it a psychosocial crisis that individuals need to attempt to resolve in order to adjust to society.

Each crisis involves resolving a struggle between the individual's personal needs and the demands of society. Our personality and how we interact with others depend heavily on how we deal with or resolve these crises. One stage may not be completely resolved before a person experiences the next stage.

The characters in David Rosetzky's works, all appear to be in either the late adolescence or young adult phase of life, which according to Erikson, would place them in:

- Stage 5: Identity versus Identity confusion (12-18 years) and/or
- Stage 6: Intimacy versus isolation (18 – 25 years).

Identity refers to the overall image individuals have of themselves (Grivas and Carter, 2010). Erikson believed that the search for identity is a need for all people, which first becomes a focus during adolescence and continues over one's lifetime.

During adolescence, individuals explore their independence, which helps to develop a sense of self. Those who receive positive reinforcement through personal exploration will develop a strong sense of self, personal identity, security and a feeling of independence and control. Those who remain unsure of their beliefs and desires will feel insecure and confused about themselves and the future.

Rosetzky's character's continually self-analyse their own personalities and at times compare themselves to others, as well as express their wishes to be different from what they are.

1. Explain what happens at each stage of life according to Erikson and how this relates to a person's sense of individuality and communality.
2. How has Rosetzky explored these concepts through his works?

English

LANGUAGE: EXPRESSING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS; TEXT ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE:

1. Describe in as much detail as possible the ways in which Rosetzky has constructed this artwork. Consider props, costume, facial expression, framing, light etc.
2. Construct three alternative titles for this artwork. Now imagine that they are all song titles and write the first line of each song.

LITERACY: TEXTS IN CONTEXT; INTERPRETING, ANALYSING AND EVALUATING:

4. Consider your responses to Question 1 and the ways you described the construction of this work. For each aspect you described, consider its impact and meaning, for example, you might consider the way meaning and feeling is created through the use of sound and camera movement.
5. Devise three questions that you would ask the artist about his intention for this work.

LITERATURE: CREATING LITERATURE:

6. Think of a member of your family or someone close to you whom you love dearly, admire or miss. Is there a photograph of them that comes to mind? If not, imagine a photograph which captures the essence of this person to you. Describe it in detail. Consider artefacts, objects and images you associate with this person. Sketch these and provide a brief written description for each.
7. Write a scene from Justine's childhood. Read your scene to a partner. Discuss with your partner the ways in which this memory might have shaped the person she is today.

Glossary

AFFECT:

a general term used more or less interchangeably with emotion, feeling and mood.

APPROPRIATION:

to adopt, borrow, recycle or sample aspects (or the entire form) of man-made visual culture.

ASSEMBLAGE:

the process of making artistic compositions by putting together found objects.

COLLAGE:

a technique of an art production where the artwork is made from an assemblage of different forms, thus creating a new whole.

CHOREOGRAPHY:

the art of designing sequences of movements in which motion, form, or both are specified.

CONFORMITY:

the tendency to allow one's opinions, attitudes, actions and even perceptions to be affected by prevailing opinions, attitudes, actions and perceptions.

DIALOGUE:

a literary and theatrical form consisting of a written or spoken conversation.

EMOTIONS:

derived from the Latin word *emovere*, translating as to move, excite stir up and agitate. They refer to a subjective, affect-laden state, for example love, fear, hate, terror, joy, disgust and pity; can be accompanied by levels of arousal and desire to act.

INDIVIDUATION:

any process in which the various elements or parts of a complex whole become differentiated from each other, progressively more distinct and "individual."

IDENTITY:

it is a person's essential, continuous self, the internal, subjective concept of oneself as an individual.

PROJECTION:

the display of an image in the gallery/museum by devices such as; film projector, digital projector or video projector.

SOCIAL NORM:

any pattern of behaviour that occurs so often within a particular society that it comes to be accepted as reflective of that society and taken as sanctioned by members of that society.

SOUND DESIGN:

the process of specifying, acquiring, manipulating or generating audio elements.

SUBJECTIVITY:

a philosophical term used to refer to the condition of being a subject and the subject's perspective, experiences, feelings, beliefs, and desires.

TIME-BASED MEDIA:

art that is dependent on technology and has a durational dimension. Usually time-based media are video, slide, film, audio or computer based and part of what it means to experience the art is to watch it unfold over time.

TEMPORAL:

relating to, or limited by time.

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www.historyofemotions.org.au

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It was written by Melissa Bedford, Helen Anne Kent, Penelope Lee, Catherine Reid and Maryanne Sammut.

TRUE SELF: DAVID ROSETZKY SELECTED WORKS

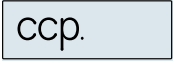
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True Self: David Rosetzky Selected Works will be toured by NETS Victoria to venues across Australia from 2013 to 2015:

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- Cairns Regional Gallery, QLD
- Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, NSW
- Latrobe Regional Gallery, VIC
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