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## **About This Resource**

This education resource is intended for use as a starting point to generate discussion before, during and after visiting the exhibition *Seeing voices*. It is designed to be used in conjunction with information provided in the accompanying catalogue and wall texts.

The resource includes:

- ~ Planning your visit
- ~ Curriculum links
- ~ The curatorial rationale for *Seeing voices*
- ~ Key themes
- ~ A list of exhibiting artists
- ~ Exhibiting artists' practice and selected artworks
- ~ Starting points for discussion and learning activities
- ~ A glossary of key terms
- ~ Links to further information about each of the artists

## **Planning Your Visit**

Before visiting the exhibition *Seeing voices* it is recommended that you contact the venue to find out about:

- ~ Gallery opening times, public transport and parking options, cloakroom facilities and relevant admission fees
- ~ Scheduling a guided tour of *Seeing voices* during your excursion
- ~ Dates for live performances at the venue

Prior to your excursion you may wish to do the following with your students:

- ~ Introduce some of the key themes within *Seeing voices* using this education resource as a guide
- ~ Discuss expectations for appropriate behaviour in an art gallery

## **Curriculum Links**

*Seeing voices* is relevant to Australian Visual Arts curricula at all levels. It may also provide stimulating starting points for performing arts disciplines, including Drama and Dance.

The exhibition also provides excellent opportunities for teachers to collaborate on cross-curricula projects. For example, within the exhibition the artworks by Michael Cook and Clinton Nain are relevant to the cross-curriculum priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. The exhibition is also relevant to studies of Civics and Citizenship at levels 7-10 and History at levels 9-10.

Engagement with *Seeing voices* also provides students with opportunities to foster the following general capabilities:

- Critical and creative thinking
- Ethical understanding
- Intercultural understanding
- Personal and social capabilities

This education resource is broadly aimed at students from levels 4 through 10, however the material could easily be modified to suit students at other levels. The starting points for discussion and practical learning activities within this resource provide opportunities for students to learn as both viewer and artist. There are suggestions for discussing artworks in the galleries and making post-visit artworks in response to *Seeing voices*.

### **Visual Arts**

- **Explore and Express ideas**

Students view *Seeing voices* and make artworks in response to their experience in the galleries. They observe a variety of artworks and consider the ideas, themes and inspiration of the exhibiting artists. They experiment with techniques, processes, materials and technologies to express ideas in their own artworks.

- **Visual Arts Practices**

Whilst visiting *Seeing voices* students will encounter a range of contemporary art practices. They will develop an understanding of how each exhibiting artist conceptualises their work, and selects and uses an appropriate media or technology to produce their artwork.

- **Present and Perform**

After viewing *Seeing voices* students will discuss how each artwork has been presented in the galleries. They will consider the intentions of the artists and curators, and how these relate to the experience of the audience.

- **Respond and interpret**

Students reflect upon and speculate about the meaning of the artworks displayed in *Seeing voices*. Following the visit, they research how particular historical or cultural contexts have inspired the artists.

### **Civics and citizenship**

- Students view *Majority Rules* by Michael Cook and discuss how national identity can shape a sense of belonging, and they also examine different perspectives about Australia's national identity, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives.

### **History**

- Students view *Majority Rules* by Michael Cook and discuss how the work gives voice to the experiences and perspectives of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Students view *a e i o u – they have dispossessed you* by Clinton Nain and discuss how the artwork expresses his perspective about the teaching of English and Christianity to Aboriginal children at the expense of their traditional Indigenous languages and culture. Students can also identify the Acts of parliament that authorised these assimilation practices.

## **Touring Schedule**

14 October – 10 December 2017  
Horsham Regional Art Gallery  
Live performance artist: WrongSolo

1 March – 2 April 2018  
Mildura Arts Centre  
Live performance artist: Rosie Isaac

27 April – 17 June 2018  
Cairns Regional Art Gallery  
Live performance artist: Erik Bünger

13 July – 16 September 2018  
Riddoch Art Gallery, Mount Gambier  
Live performance artist: Sean Dockray

15 February – 7 April 2019  
Bathurst Regional Gallery  
Live performance artist: Hannah Donnelly

1 May – 30 June 2019  
Devonport Regional Gallery  
Live performance artist: Hannah Donnelly

## **Introduction to the Exhibition: Curatorial Rationale**

*Seeing voices* is a touring exhibition developed by Monash University Museum of Art | MUMA in partnership with NETS Victoria. Premiering in Horsham, the exhibition then tours to venues in Mildura, Cairns, Mount Gambier, Bathurst and Devonport. The exhibition draws on the curatorial expertise of staff across multiple galleries to present an engaging exhibition that offers increased access to the Monash University Collection for a broader Australian public.

*Seeing voices* draws upon the Monash University Collection as a springboard to think about the theme of the voice and the ways it can be seen, used and reimagined in contemporary art. The exhibition encompasses artworks across a range of media, including drawing, painting, video, sculpture and photography, creating a textured and layered environment in the galleries. In addition to selected artworks from the Monash University Collection, *Seeing voices* features loans from Australian and international artists. Live performance works will be presented at each venue, augmenting the program and taking the exhibition beyond the gallery walls.

Seeing voices  
**Learning Resource**

Damiano Bertoli  
*Silvia* 2015,  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Neon Parc,  
Melbourne.  
Photo: Christo Crocker



## **Themes**

In *Seeing voices*, the notion of voice is complex and takes on multiple symbolic tones and meanings;

- ~ Collective voice: the voice acts as a metaphor for collective action, speaking out against injustice and coming together in gestures of solidarity
- ~ Linguistic voice: the voice connects culture and geography through a common language
- ~ Endangered voice: the voice that speaks uncommon and endangered languages and dialects
- ~ Historical voice: the voice that enables audiences to travel through time and connect with the past through historic recordings and archives
- ~ Personal voice: the voice that connects our experience with those of others through conversation
- ~ Mechanical voice: the artificial voice made by a machine
- ~ Primal voice: a non-verbal voice that expresses emotions without words through grunts, screams, babbling and other abstract sounds.

## **Exhibiting Artists**

Damiano Bertoli  
Erik Bünger  
Catherine or Kate  
Michael Cook  
Fayen d'Evie and Bryan Phillips  
Léuli Eshrāghi  
Alicia Frankovich  
Susan Hiller  
Nina Katchadourian  
Alex Martinis Roe  
Angelica Mesiti  
Clinton Nain  
Rose Nolan

## **Performance Artists**

Erik Bünger  
Sean Dockray  
Hannah Donnelly  
Rosie Isaacs  
WrongSolo (Agatha Gothe-Snape and Brian Fuata)

## **Artists' Practice And Artworks**

### **Damiano BERTOLI**

Melbourne-based artist Damiano Bertoli's work directly references his Italian ancestry and the designs and politics of late modernism. Formally and conceptually his work draws upon designs by the famous Florentine architecture practice Superstudio founded in 1966 in Florence, and the Memphis Group, a radical design studio operating in Milan from 1981–88.

Time and production have particular resonance for the artist. Bertoli's drawings *Silvia* 2015 and *Renato* 2013 embody many hours of labour in applying coloured pencil to cover every centimetre of the A0 sheet of paper. These works reflect the political typography (block-capitals) and left wing political slogans drawn from the radical politics of the 1970s *Autonomia* era in Italy. *Silvia* and *Renato* are named after Italian Red Brigade (Brigate Rosse) revolutionaries Renato Curcio and Silvia Arancio, drawing a direct line of connection between political activism and the arts.

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<http://www.milanigallery.com.au/artist/damiano-bertoli>  
<https://frieze.com/article/damiano-bertoli>  
<https://neonparc.com.au/artists>

### **Erik BÜNGER**

Swedish born, Berlin based artist Erik Bünger is interested in the inherently slippery nature of language. He views language as humanity's first form of technology and believes the human voice has always been "inauthentic" because, unlike animals which make the innate noises they are born with, humans learn to speak. As we learn to speak in language it shapes our thoughts and controls our behaviour.

*The Girl Who Never Was* 2014 is a video work that exists as the final part of a trilogy by the artist. Also existing as a lecture performance, the work "considers the magic, and the inauthentic nature, of recorded voices".

The title comes from the 2008 discovery and digital playback of early experiments with sound recording...made in 1860. In 2009, however, it was proven that the historic recording was not, as first thought, that of a young girl singing the French lullaby *Au Clair de la Lune*. Replayed at the correct speed it turned out to be the voice of the male, adult inventor of this so-called phonautogram. Bunger argues that the advent of recorded technology meant we could no longer trust the voice.

– Dylan Rainforth, 2015

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<http://www.erikbunger.com/>

**I was late.** I felt confused meeting Alicia coming out of the gallery as I squeezed myself into it. I found a spot at the back of the room, which was packed and somehow I remember feeling steam in there like a gym after an aerobics class. After a few strange suspended minutes people started leaving the room. I stayed and watched what I thought was the something I went to see. A group of 20 or so people wearing jogging outfits sat down with little white paper bags. They were peeling fruit and the steamy room started to smell of mandarins, it was quite beautiful. It looked like there was some kind of choreography in what they were doing. Overlapping this were two musicians making some sound. I don't know who they were or what they were doing, they were somehow separate but part of what I was watching. The *joggers* sat on the floor and watched as well, heads sometimes tilted on angles, snacking on mandarins and sipping water. Sometimes they looked at us too.

### **Catherine or Kate**

Brisbane based artists Catherine Sagin and Kate Woodcroft met while studying fine art at Queensland University of Technology, and work together as a collaborative duo named 'Catherine or Kate'. For a decade the pair have worked in close partnership to create performance, video, photographic and sculptural artworks that highlight the inherent tensions within collaborative practice. Negotiation, doubt, disagreement, competition, comfort, disconnection, support and consensus all fuel their artwork. Catherine and Kate defy categorisation as best friends, sisters, lovers or even legal business partners. They continue to process and examine their relationship through public presentations.

Brickbats and bouquets 2014 epitomises Catherine or Kate's practice. During a performance at Kate's 26th birthday party, Catherine brings out a birthday cake, hugs Kate and they remain in an embrace as they recite scripted insults and compliments back and forth to one another. The lines are all appropriated from popular Hollywood movies.

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<https://catherineorkate.com/>

<http://unprojects.org.au/magazine/issues/issue-6-2/what-s-in-a-name-catherine-or-kate-or-catherine-sagin-or-fiona-mail>

### **Michael COOK**

Brisbane-based Michael Cook of Bidjara ancestry is one of Australia's leading contemporary Indigenous artists. Working primarily in photo-media, Cook began his career in commercial photography before turning to art in 2009. The change in direction reflected a desire to explore his own Aboriginality. Cook was born in 1968 in Brisbane and raised by his white adoptive parents. Although non-Indigenous, his adoptive parents were heavily involved in supporting Indigenous rights and imparted a strong understanding of his Bidjara heritage.

'Majority Rule' reflects Cook's interest in the impact of Australia's colonial history on its first peoples, asking the viewer to speculate about an Australia where Aboriginal people are the majority. He photographs and presents one Indigenous figure numerous times in each work using layering and digital imaging processes. The series reverses history, creating an Australian Parliament and High Court full of Aboriginal, instead of white, Australians. Cook acknowledges the discriminatory nature of Australian society, and his choice of locations for the works was deliberate, as they signify the places where many laws discriminating against Aboriginal Australians were made.

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<https://www.michaelcook.net.au/>

<http://thisisnofantasy.com/artist/michael-cook/>

### **Léuli ESHRĀGHI**

Léuli Eshrāghi is a Sāmoan and Persian artist, curator and academic. His work orbits around notions of identity and language. Currently a PhD candidate at Monash University Art Design Architecture (MADA), Eshrāghi's approach to art-making is multidisciplinary, encompassing video, photography, painting and installation. He has an abiding interest in using art to process intergenerational trauma and the legacy of colonialisation on First Nations people.

*Absences* 2016 invites the viewer to imagine Wurundjeri Country and waterways along the Merri Creek and Yarra prior to colonialisation, and to consider how colonialisation has



Michael Cook  
*Majority rule (Senate)* 2014  
inkjet print on paper  
104 x 144 cm (framed)  
Monash University Collection

impacted First Nations people both in Australia and across the Pacific. This text work is written in a trio of languages including Sāmoan, Wurundjeri and English, and printed on fabric that is suspended within the gallery space. The artist has deliberately placed the work away from the gallery walls as a subtle act of resistance and rejection of architectural signifiers of European occupation.

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<http://leulieshraghi.com/>

### **Alicia FRANKOVICH**

Berlin-based, New Zealand-born artist Alicia Frankovich's practice moves across disciplines and between performance and other artforms. She is interested in choreographing the body in her work – drawing upon her early training as a competitive gymnast.

The sixteen texts that make up *Between us and them* are the personal accounts of participants and audience members following their experience of *The opportune spectator*, a live performance work that the artist organised in both Berlin and Melbourne in 2012. To create this work, Frankovich instructed a group of performers to dress in activewear and jog together for several kilometres before running into the gallery, where an audience was waiting. The texts written in blue are the testimonies of the performers and the red texts are the experiences of those in the audience. There is confusion in the voices of both the performers and audience members about who was observing who, implying that the performance cannot exist without an audience and vice versa.

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<http://www.aliciafrankovich.com/>

### **Susan HILLER**

Susan Hiller is an internationally renowned American-born, London-based artist. Over a number of decades, Hiller has developed a practice that encompasses installation, video, photography and performance. Her work is influenced by the visual language of Minimalism, Fluxus and Surrealism, and an abiding interest in archaeology, anthropology and linguistics, which she studied prior to becoming an artist.

*The last silent movie* is a poignant durational work that reveals the enormous diversity of the world's languages at a time when many languages are rarely given voice and are increasingly under threat. She presents a collection of sound recordings of endangered or extinct languages drawing on old archival recordings that transport the audience back in time to hear these languages spoken fluently.

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<http://www.susanhiller.org/>

### **Nina KATCHADOURIAN**

Nina Katchadourian is an American-based artist of Armenian descent who is interested in how the sound of our voice and the language we speak can reveal our personal history. Her work expresses a personal understanding of the pressure upon immigrants to lose their accent in order to adopt the mainstream voice of their new home. Inspired by the paradoxical notion of improving one's accent as a means of assimilation while still attempting to sustain one's cultural identity, she writes:

My foreign-born parents who have lived in the United States for over forty years both have distinctive but hard-to-place accents that I have never been able to imitate correctly (and have not inherited). Inspired by posters advertising courses in 'accent elimination', I worked with my parents and professional speech improvement coach Sam Chwat intensively for several weeks in order to 'neutralise' my parents' accents and then teach each of them to me. The very existence of these courses points to the complexities of assimilation and self image, and the tricky manoeuvring between the desire to preserve the distinctive marks of one's culture, on one hand, and to decrease them in order to seem less foreign, on the other.

– Nina Katchadourian (<http://www.ninakatchadourian.com/language/translation/accent.php> )

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<http://www.ninakatchadourian.com/>

### **Alex MARTINIS ROE**

Melbourne-born, Berlin-based artist Alex Martinis Roe's work *Megaphone for anti-vertical demonstration* 2010 was created following commemorations for the 150th anniversary of the eight-hour working day. The achievement of this condition was one of the great successes of the Australian working class during the nineteenth century, demonstrating that it was possible to successfully organise, agitate, and campaign for a better quality of life. Today the eight-hour day seems a thing of the past for many Australians, but the megaphone serves as a reminder that voices can still be raised in protest.

To view Alex Martinis Roe's *Megaphone for anti-vertical demonstration*, one must look down. There, on the gallery floor, appears her sculptural assemblage, a bright cherry-red and white flag and matching megaphone. There's another object – a brick – but it's been obscured, hidden by the draped flag. We know intuitively what class of objects these are: they are objects of protest – or, as the artist puts it, objects of resistance. The flag is intended to be carried in a demonstration, as is the megaphone. Both are

Seeing voices  
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Alex Martinis Roe  
*Megaphone for anti-vertical  
demonstration 2010*  
Monash University Collection

Angelica Mesiti  
*Silent Polyphony 2015*  
Monash University Collection



tools to proclaim a slogan, a position, a politics, a demand, or a refusal – one via visual means, the other through verbal address. They go together, a comfortable and recognisable pair. The brick is a bit more sinister. It conjures the violence, or at least the destruction, of the riot. In the context of a demonstration, as it is placed here, its function is to be thrown. This may be why the artist chose to hide it, to place it within the symbolic realm of a latent threat. It signals the potential for social breakdown in the face of profound, often desperate injustice or extremism.

– Tara McDowell (<https://www.monash.edu/muma/collection/level-2-page/First-languages-of-the-Collection/2019/Alex-Martinis-Roe> )

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<http://www.alexmartinisroe.com/>

## Angelica MESITI

Sydney and Paris-based artist, Angelica Mesiti, employs familiar cinematic conventions to create an accessible and engaging experience for audiences. Although she directs and edits the work herself, she engages a cinematographer to produce high-quality footage for her videos.

*Silent Polyphony* is one of a suite of video works that Mesiti developed during a residency at Lilith Performance Studio in Sweden in 2015. The studio is the first of its kind in the world, encouraging practical artistic research with a focusing on visual art performance. *Silent Polyphony* depicts members of a sign language choir performing a sequence of gestures that sign words including snow, harmony, laughter and gold. The moving hands combine to create a visual equivalent of loud simultaneous voices, even though the work is silent.

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<http://www.angelicamesiti.com/>

## Clinton NAIN

Melbourne-based artist Clinton Nain is of the Meriam Mer, Erub, and Ugar peoples of the Torres Strait and the Ku Ku people of far North Queensland. Working primarily as a painter and performance artist, Nain's compelling work shares difficult stories of colonisation and grief from a personal perspective using sophisticated symbolism to represent the dispossession and metaphorical scars endured by the Indigenous peoples of Australia. Nain's life has been shaped by Aboriginal politics, having attended his first Aboriginal land rights protest with his activist mother when he was just one month old. His canvasses are often built up in layers of bitumen, household paint and bleach to embody complex and subtle meanings about identity and power.

The work *a e i o u - they have dispossessed you* 2006, begins like a lesson about the five vowels and then morphs into a reminder of what the English language implies for many Indigenous Australians. The painting looks like a blackboard covered in white chalk letters and crosses, motifs that recall the assimilation policies of successive governments and the Mission Schools established to teach Aboriginal children English and Christianity at the expense of their traditional Indigenous languages and culture.

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[http://shermangalleries.sherman-scaf.org.au/artists/inartists/artist\\_profile.asp%3Fartist=nainc.html](http://shermangalleries.sherman-scaf.org.au/artists/inartists/artist_profile.asp%3Fartist=nainc.html)

<http://www.portrait.gov.au/portraits/2004.222/clinton-nain>

Seeing voices  
**Learning Resource**

Rose Nolan  
*Help me to do things better /  
Help me to do better things* 2003  
Courtesy of the artist and  
Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne  
Photograph by Zan Wimberley



**Rose NOLAN**

Melbourne-based artist Rose Nolan has built her practice around an abiding interest in twentieth-century avant-gardism and the formal and linguistic qualities of words and their relationship to architectural space. She works with text as a readymade - transforming words and phrases overheard in public places into graphic artworks that clearly recall Constructivist imagery from the early-twentieth-century. Nolan's flag designs also refer to the encouraging antics of cheer squads. The series of small flags that make up the artwork, *Help me to do things better/ Help me to do better things* 2003 are painted directly onto hessian - a humble material often used by the artist, possibly to emphasise the humility of the statement she is making. Nolan has abbreviated the second line of flags with ditto marks in a contrary gesture, as if to emphasise the point.

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<http://annaschwartzgallery.com/artists/rose-nolan/>

## **Performance Artists**

### **Sean DOCKRAY**

Sean Dockray is a Melbourne-based artist, writer and anti-copyright activist. His artworks often take the form of a facilitated dialogue, learning or exchange between individuals, many of whom are often strangers to each other. Dockray's previous live performances have explored the ways in which software and technology companies use people's voices. He has conducted experiments with Google Voice, to explain how a user's voice is translated to data, sent across the world through subterranean cables, then converted into text and sent back to the user's screen almost instantaneously.

### **Hannah DONNELLY**

Hannah Donnelly is a Wiradjuri woman from New South Wales who writes 'cli-fi' – or 'climate change fiction' – that draws on Indigenous environmental practices and activism. In a recent sound and installation work Donnelly voiced a narrative about a future environmental catastrophe and Indigenous responses to it. This sound piece was presented on headphones in a darkened gallery alongside an installation of dried native flora decorated with glitter, nail polish and stickers, as a manifestation of human presence and interaction.

### **Rosie ISAAC**

Rosie Isaac is a Melbourne-based artist whose work addresses the 'acousmatic' voice in public space, such as the concealed voice of the Wizard in The Wizard of Oz, whose disembodiment conjures a strong sense of authority. In this way, Isaac is interested in how commands issued by acousmatic voices in public spaces can direct traffic and otherwise shape civil behaviour. Isaac develops scripts that are performed in various ways such as working with a professional voice-over artist, using computer software to digitise the voice, or engaging performers to recite her scripts.

### **WrongSolo**

WrongSolo is a performance duo comprising Sydney-based artists Brian Fuata and Agatha Gothe-Snape. Their work often aims to make viewers aware of their own conditioning around the act of looking at art, and especially performance art. In the past, Wrong Solo have presented 'cruises' through museum and gallery spaces. Unlike a curator-led tour, which would dictate information about certain works in the show, a 'cruising' tour asks the viewer to become more emotionally, psychologically and physically attuned to their own presence within the gallery.

# Starting Points for Discussion and Learning Activities for Visual Arts

## 1. Respond and interpret

1. Select an artwork from *Seeing voices* to discuss as a class, guided by the following prompts:

- Describe the media and process used by the artist to create the artwork.
- Consider the way the artist engages the idea of voice through the artwork. Describe the voice (Is it verbal, non-verbal, emotional, gendered, human, animal, mechanical, collective and/or individual?) What is the voice saying? Does it have a political agenda? Is the voice making a comment about contemporary society?
- How does the artwork engage the audience? Is the work immersive or participatory?
- Has the artist used any recording technologies within the work? If so, how?
- Speculate on the intention of the artist. What do you think they are communicating through the artwork?
- Back at school, research any influences from art history, contemporary or popular culture within the work.

2. Attend one of the live performances during *Seeing voices* and discuss the following:

- Describe the context or situation where the performance takes place.
- Who is the audience? What is their role during the performance?
- What kinds of thoughts or emotions does the work evoke?
- Discuss how the work employs any of the following elements - voice, script, improvisation, silence, sound, choreography, body language, gesture.
- How many people appear in the work? Does the artist appear within the work themselves and/or do they have any other people performing in it?
- What meanings and ideas does the artwork suggest to you?
- What questions does the work raise in your mind?
- Did anything unexpected happen during your encounter with the work?
- Does the work make you think differently about viewing art? If so, how?
- Did the work disrupt your expectations for 'normal behaviour' in the gallery in any way? If so, how?
- How has your understanding or expectations of art shifted since viewing the work?
- Following your experience in the galleries, research the history and development of performance art.

## Present and perform

1. What does the gallery need to consider when preparing and presenting an exhibition such as *Seeing voices*?

2. Describe the types of methods of presentation the gallery used to present the exhibition?

3. Discuss some of the ways that an artist can document a performance so that it continues to exist beyond its first iteration as a live event?

4. Do you think this performance art requires documentation in order to be considered "a work of art"? Why/why not?

### **Explore and Express**

Experiment with voice through these art activities:

#### **1. Collective Action**

- Collaborate with a small group to choreograph a repetitive movement pattern that expresses an idea without using words.
- Film your group repeating the gestures.
- View your own and/or others' recordings.
- How did it feel to repeat your collective action for the duration of your performance?
- How did it feel as an audience member to watch these performances?
- What part of this process do you think should be considered art? The performance itself or the recording?

#### **2. Linguistic and primal voices**

- Write down the first sounds you make and words you say each day when you wake up and last sounds and words before you go to bed at night. Do this for a week.
- Then, at the end of the week, write and edit a poem incorporating your morning and evening 'voice'.

#### **3. Sound-poetry**

- Research the history of sound-poetry and view online some historical examples by Hugo Ball.
- Record sound in your day-to-day experience and make a sound diary of your acoustic environment.
- See if you can replicate a selection of sounds with your voice.
- Construct a sound poem by reconfiguring these abstract sounds.
- Animate your sound poem using found imagery and text to create a video artwork that combines voice and image.

#### **4. Accents**

- View Nina Katchadourian's work Accent elimination and reflect on the following:
- Do you believe there is a similar pressure in Australia as in the United States for migrants to lose their accents? Why/why not? Reflect and share your own thoughts and experiences.

## Visual Arts Practices

### 1. Text-based practice: Rose Nolan

Rose Nolan's practice engages with text as a readymade – often transforming casual phrases overheard in public into artworks that can be read or experienced as abstract graphic designs.

#### Activity

- View Rose Nolan's work *Help me to do things better* in the exhibition.
- While you are at the gallery or in a public space, write down a list of phrases you overhear being said by other people.
- Select one of the phrases and experiment with geometry and typography to develop the phrase into a flag design.
- Use simple materials such as hessian, cardboard, white and red paint to develop a suite of flags that can be displayed alongside one another.

### 2. Multidisciplinary practice: Alicia Frankovich

The texts offer the viewer an insight into the experiences of performers and audience members on the night of the event.

#### Activity

- View the text-based artwork *Between us and them* by Alicia Frankovich in the exhibition.
- Work in groups of 8-10 students to create your own scenario and develop a collaborative performance work that involves performers as well as an audience.
- Perform the work to the class.
- Ask participants and audience members to write a short reflection on their experience after the performance.
- Create your own text-based artwork based on a selection of the written comments. Consider typography, colour and layout in your work.

### 3. Collaborative practice

In *Brickbats and bouquets* 2014 Catherine or Kate recite compliments and criticisms back and forth through a scripted work. The script was compiled from scenes in popular cinema.

Except from the script for *Brickbats and bouquets*:

#### Kate

I came alive when I met you. You're the epitome of everything I have ever looked for in a human being.

#### Catherine

For me you're somewhere between a cockroach and that white stuff that accumulates at the corner of your mouth when you're really thirsty.

I bet you're the kind of guy that would fuck a person in the ass and not even have the common courtesy to give him a reach-around .

Seeing voices  
**Learning Resource**

Catherine or Kate  
*Brickbats and bouquets* 2014  
Video still  
Courtesy of the artists



Kate

You make me want to be a better man. You are the most beautiful girl in the world, and it's not because of your brains or your personality it's because you're beautiful, inside and out.

Catherine

You're just the afterbirth, just slithered out on your mother's filth. They should have put you in a glass jar on the mantelpiece.

Kate

I know I have a heart because I feel it breaking. Waiting for you is like waiting for the rain in this drought, hopeless and disappointing.

Catherine

People that talk in metaphors oughta shampoo my crotch.

Kate

So it's not gonna be easy. It's gonna be really hard. We're gonna have to work at this everyday, but I want to do that because I want you. I want all of you, forever, you and me, everyday. Will you do something for me, please? Just picture your life for me? 30 years from now, 40 years from now? What's it look like?

- View *Brickbats or bouquets* in the galleries.
- Did you recognise any of the film quotes? Recall some of the lines and do some research to find out which movies Catherine or Kate have appropriated to construct their scripted dialogue in *Brickbats and bouquets*.
- Apply this method of appropriation with a colleague to develop a scenario and script using lines from popular culture or other sources.
- Rehearse and perform the work for the class.

## Glossary of Key Terms

**Acoustics:** qualities of a space that determine how sound is transmitted within it.

**Archive:** a collection of historical documents or records providing information about a place, institution, or group of people.

**Art documentation:** A recording, photograph or video of a work of art that makes it clear that the original work is no longer present.

**Colonialisation:** the process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area.

**Constructivism:** an austere branch of abstract art founded by Vladimir Tatlin and Alexander Rodchenko in Russia around 1915.

**Contemporary art:** The art of today, produced by artists who are living now. Contemporary art provides an opportunity to reflect on contemporary society and the issues relevant to ourselves, and the world around us.

**Non-verbal communication:** communication without words. It includes facial expressions, tone of voice, body language as well as mannerisms, gestures, posture and spatial distance between two or more people.

**Participatory art:** an approach to making art in which the audience is engaged directly in the creative process, allowing them to become co-authors, editors, and observers of the work. This type of art is incomplete without the audience interaction.

**Performance art:** a live performance presented to an audience within a gallery context. Performance art involves a performer or performers, a site and an audience. It can combine music, dance, poetry, theatre, visual art and video. The art work resulting from a performance event might be the event itself or its documentation in photographs, videos or objects. Performance may be either scripted or unscripted, narrative driven, random or carefully orchestrated; spontaneous or otherwise, carefully planned, and with or without audience participation.

**Phonautogram:** An early sound recording made using a device called a phonautograph.

**Primal sounds:** emotionally-motivated sounds that all humans make from birth including things like sighing, whimpering, crying out and yelling.

**Sound poetry:** An art form in which the phonetic sounds of human speech are privileged over conventional language. Sound poetry is intended primarily for performance. Some early sound poets of the twentieth century are the Futurist artist Hugo Ball and Dada Kurt Schwitters.

**Text based art:** Art that employs words or phrases as its primary artistic element.

**Verbal communication:** Using the conventions of language and words to communicate.

**Video Art:** Art that involves the use of video and /or audio data and relies on moving pictures.

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