

The Shilo Project

STEREO

Shilo Neil Diamond



A NETS Victoria touring exhibition

developed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne

An education resource

The Shilo project

A NETS Victoria touring exhibition developed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne

CONTENTS

- About this education resource
- Introduction to the exhibition
- Starting points:
 1. Op shopping and the found object in art
 2. Painting by numbers
 3. Portraiture and The construction of celebrity
 4. Fan-tastic
 5. Graphics, art and the album cover
 6. The mystery and allure of redundant technologies
- End notes



*Shilo album cover
Courtesy Sony Music Entertainment*

Delivering the best
contemporary art,
craft and design to
regional Victoria
and beyond

NETS
VICTORIA

ABOUT THIS EDUCATION RESOURCE

This education resource is intended for use as a starting point to generate discussion and activities before, during and after a visit to The Shilo 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.

The resource includes an introduction to the exhibition, suggested points for discussion, practical activities for junior and senior students, definitions of key terms and references for further research.

Teachers may select relevant aspects of this resource to tailor their own response sheet for use in the exhibition.

Throughout this document, names of relevant [artists](#), [designers](#) and [filmmakers](#) have been highlighted to indicate potential starting points for research.

Pre-viewing Planning

Before visiting *The Shilo 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.

The Shilo project

A NETS Victoria touring exhibition developed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne

CURRICULUM LINKS AND CONNECTIONS

Use this list to generate ideas, activities and points for discussion, and where possible contact your local gallery for other ideas and suggestions.

Visual/Creative/Studio Arts

- Artist's practice, ideas and inspiration
- Responding to artworks: formal analysis and interpreting meanings and messages
- Exploring psychological symbolism expressed in artworks
- Exploring possibilities for materials, processes and techniques

Visual Communication and Design

- History of album design
- Understanding principles of design such as balance, form, scale, focal point
- Overall exhibition design – interior exhibition design and graphics that reflect a consistent theme and create a specific ambiance
- Influence of art on graphics and vice versa

Media Studies

- Cross pollination between art and popular culture

Music

- Study of pop music in the 1960s and '70s
- Structure of pop music
- Links between music, art and

The Shilo project

A NETS Victoria touring exhibition developed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne

CURATOR BIOGRAPHY: DR CHRIS MCAULIFFE

Dr Chris McAuliffe is Director of the Ian Potter Museum of Art at The University of Melbourne. Prior to that he was a lecturer at the University of Melbourne in the Department of Fine Arts.

Dr McAuliffe has researched and written extensively in the area of contemporary art, and is the author of *Art and Suburbia*, 1996, *Linda Marrinon: let her try*, 2007, and *Jon Cattapan: possible histories*, 2008.

He is a regular media commentator on the arts and has appeared on ABC TV's 'Sunday Arts' program since 2006. A graduate of the University of Melbourne and of Harvard University, Dr McAuliffe is currently researching the interaction of art and popular music.

In September 2011, he will take up a temporary position as the Visiting Professor of Australian Studies at Harvard University, USA.



Gary James a.k.a. Spook
Shilo sleeve: wool, sequins, cotton thread, glitter
2009
© Courtesy the artist

Delivering the best
contemporary art,
craft and design to
regional Victoria
and beyond

NETS
VICTORIA

HISTORY OF THE SHILO PROJECT

The idea for *The Shilo Project* was born in 2007 when curator Chris McAuliffe was browsing through vinyl records in an op shop in Rosebud on the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria. He came across two copies of the album *Shilo*, by singer Neil Diamond, released in 1970. The album cover was white, with the title at the top, and the rest of the design was simply a join the dot puzzle, that if followed in the correct order, revealed a simplified image of Neil Diamond holding the neck of his guitar. Only Neil's eyes stared out from the white space. One of the copies had been drawn on, and the other was pristine.

McAuliffe was intrigued to find out what artists might do given such a puzzle, and he decided to invite one hundred artists to respond to the cover in any way they wanted. The only specifications were that the work had to be flat, and in the 30cm x 30cm format of the album cover. Artists were selected if their work had some relationship to the project: either they were interested in portraiture; working in series or with the notion of puzzles; they were interested in minimalism or pop culture.

Copies of the *Shilo* album cover were reproduced and sent to the selected artists and the curator undertook to display each one in the final exhibition.

Shilo artworks from your region

As this exhibition tours around different galleries in different regions, local artists will be invited to submit *Shilo* sleeves to be shown along with the original works. Please include these works in your discussion with reference to the issues and questions outlined in this kit, or others that might be relevant.

STARTING POINTS:

OP SHOPPING AND THE FOUND OBJECT IN ART

The Shilo Project began in an op shop when curator Chris McAuliffe was on holiday and came across an old album cover that caught his eye.

Op shopping and browsing through garage sales on the weekend is a regular pastime for many Australians. The element of chance creates a sense of possibility and stimulates our curiosity.

We may feel **nostalgia**, coming across clothes, toys, books and other objects that remind us of our childhood or our youth. We relish the feeling of rescuing something that has been discarded, re-investing it with value and giving it new life.

The practice and process of op shopping is a great antidote to our contemporary world of **planned obsolescence** and rapidly changing technologies. Coming across objects by chance can stimulate our imaginations by creating new connections between objects, ideas and emotions.

Artists have been using found objects in their work for almost a hundred years. In 1912, **Picasso** extended his exploration of Cubism by pasting a piece of oilcloth onto the canvas surface of a painting. By incorporating the real world into the canvas, Picasso and his colleague **Georges Braque** questioned the fundamental meaning of art and challenged traditional methods and techniques. They termed this development in their work **Synthetic Cubism** (1).

A storm of controversy followed these experiments. The use of found objects and materials inflamed art critics, adding more fuel to the creative fires of experimental artists. The **avant-garde** adopted this new approach and quickly branched out.

Futurists and Dada artists incorporated typography into their work to make political statements and used found objects to connect art with the real world, bringing together outrageous combinations of materials.

One of the most famous examples is **Marcel Duchamps' Fountain** created in 1917 – a porcelain urinal, simply signed by Duchamp with a humorous **pseudonym** and placed in a gallery. This was the first **Ready-made** artwork (2).

Artists such as **Robert Rauschenberg** continued this practice of using found objects into the 1950s, '60s and '70s.

Rauschenberg termed his sculptures 'combines', but the practice of using found objects is also known as 'assemblage', a sculptural equivalent of collage.

One of the artists in *The Shilo Project*, **Gareth Sansom**, has used a collage of stamps that he has collected to create his work.

Sansom is known as a painter, but for *The Shilo Project* he has covered almost all of the album cover with stamps, strategically revealing certain areas.

TERMS

Found object

A natural object or an artifact not originally intended as art, found and considered to have aesthetic value. These can be presented as artworks in themselves or combined with other objects.

Nostalgia

A sentimental longing or wistful affection for the past, typically for a period or place with happy personal associations.

Planned obsolescence

A policy of producing consumer goods that rapidly become obsolete and so require replacing, achieved by frequent changes in design, termination of the supply of spare parts, and the use of nondurable materials.

Synthetic Cubism

Synthetic Cubism was the second main movement within Cubism that was developed by Picasso, Braque and others between 1912 and 1919. Synthetic cubism is characterised by the introduction of different textures, surfaces, collage elements, and a large variety of merged subject matter. It was the beginning of collage materials being introduced as an important ingredient of fine art work.

Avant-garde

New and unusual or experimental ideas, especially in the arts, or the people introducing them.

Pseudonym

A fictitious name, especially one used by an author.

Ready-made

A mass-produced object selected by an artist and displayed as a work of art. It is distinct from a found object in that it is not altered or added to.



Gareth Sansom
Shilo sleeve: collage of postage stamps
2009
© Courtesy the artist

JUNIOR

In the gallery

- What sort of stamps has Gareth Sansom used in his collage?
- Do the pictures on them have anything in common?
- Are the stamps arranged in straight lines?
- How are they arranged? Why do you think the artist decided to arrange them like that?
- What remains visible from the original image?
- Is there anything else in the gallery that might be called a 'found object'? It could be in other artworks or somewhere else.

In class

- Find out some facts about Robert Rauschenberg. When was he born? Where did he live and work?
- Find some pictures of his 'combine' sculptures and include them with your research
- Make a found object sculpture
- Discuss where you might find some objects to use – maybe ask your family if they have anything to throw out that you could use. Maybe you could use natural objects like seedpods or leaves. If you live near a beach you could find something washed up there. You could use rags or old socks.
- You will need to think about how to combine your objects – you might need some extra materials like string or glue.
- You could collect packaging from products and use it to make a sculpture or a flat collage.
- Look at the different object you have chosen. How do they affect each other? Seeing them together, do you get any new ideas or feelings about them?

SENIOR

In the gallery

- Look at Gareth Sansom's work and discuss why he has used stamps in his work.
- What do they represent? How does that relate to the original image?
- How have the stamps been arranged, and why?
- Where else in the gallery can you see found objects?
- Describe how the idea of found objects has influenced the exhibition in various ways.

In class

- Research the work of Robert Rauschenberg. What or who was he influenced by?
- What sort of work did he make apart from his 'combines'?
- Were other artists at the time using found materials?
- Describe the new meanings and messages created by the relationships between the objects in Rauschenberg's 'combines'.
- Research some contemporary artists that use 'found objects' in their work. You could start by asking staff members of the gallery at which you saw *The Shilo Project*. Installation artists often use found materials. Think of the word 'object' in broad terms. It could be packaging, clothing, or objects from the environment.
- In your own time, visit an op shop and see if you can find any objects – toys, clothes, books that remind you of your childhood.
- Consider how you might use those objects (or photographs of them) to create an artwork. Write down your feelings about the object in a journal. Discuss your ideas with your teacher.
- What meanings or messages does your artwork (or proposed artwork) express?

STARTING POINTS: PAINTING BY NUMBERS

Curator Chris McAuliffe has adopted an unusual role in this exhibition, providing the selected artists with a specific set of instructions that govern the structure and production of their work.

Curators may often commission new works by artists and provide them with a generalised brief, however McAuliffe has gone one step further by providing the same puzzle to each artist, to which they must find their own solution. He has undertaken to exhibit each work, which requires a level of trust on his part.

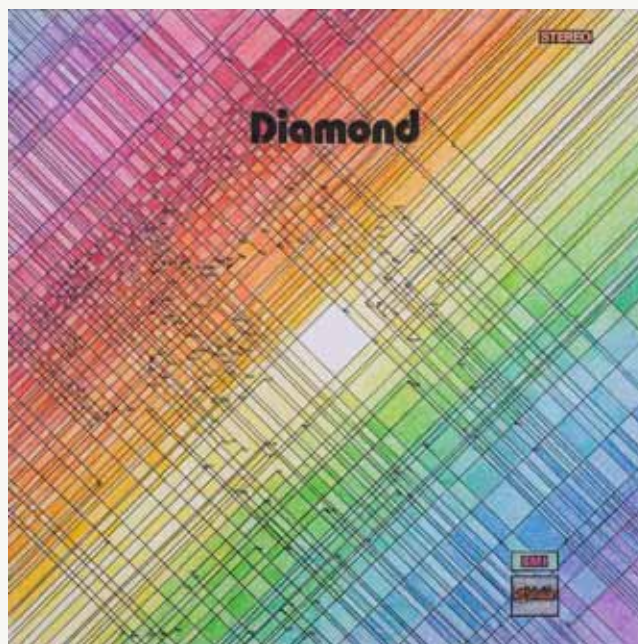
So, on the one hand, he is exerting more control than usual, and on the other he is relinquishing the control that curators usually maintain. He has set up a new set of relationships between the artist, the institution, the curator and the audience.

By using a join-the-dot puzzle from a piece of graphic design as the basis for the exhibition, he is playfully **transgressing** the boundaries between fine art, 'hobby' art and commercial art.

[Kerrie Poliness](#) is one of the artists selected for *The Shilo Project*. She has a history of working with the notion of puzzles, mathematics, and geometry, in the form of drawings made directly onto walls. Poliness distributes her work by providing galleries with a box including a book, some Textas, and a set of instructions on how to construct the drawings, which are then made by gallery staff.

American artist [Sol Le Witt](#) (1928-2007) has worked in a similar way. Both Le Witt and Poliness work with geometric abstraction, which lends itself to clear formulas for construction. Providing a join-the-dots puzzle that potentially creates a representational image, allows room for the artists to interpret the task and select how they follow instructions.

Elizabeth Gower
Shilo sleeve: colour pencil, ballpoint
pen
2009
© Courtesy the artist





This page:
 Kerrie Poliness
 Shilo sleeve: fibre-tipped pen
 2009
 © Courtesy the artist

Opposite page clockwise from
 top left:
 Caroline Kennedy
 Sweet
 Shilo sleeve: cotton thread, pins
 2009
 © Courtesy the artist

Gemma Smith
 Shilo sleeve: liquid ballpoint pen
 2009
 © Courtesy the artist

Robert Jacks
 Shilo sleeve: perforations, coloured
 paper, pencil
 2009
 © Courtesy the artist

Rose Nolan
 Shilo sleeve: fibre-tipped pen
 2009
 © Courtesy the artist

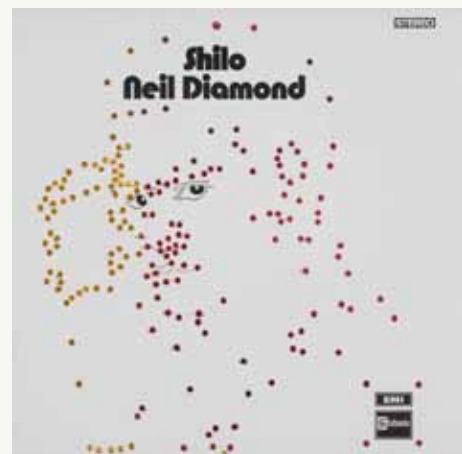
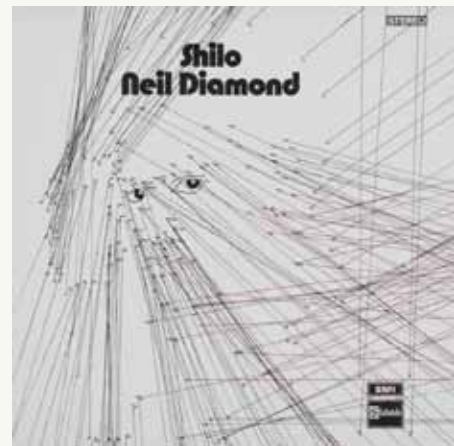
TERMS

Transgress

Infringe or go beyond the bounds of established protocol or standards of behavior

Geometric Abstraction

A form of abstract art based on the use of geometric forms combined together with a focus on formal qualities such as colour harmony and dissonance, rhythm, repetition, line, and shape. The focus is on the form of the composition, without attempting realistic representation. Artists include Piet Mondrian, Kazimir Malevich, Bridget Riley, Frank Stella.



The Shilo project

A NETS Victoria touring exhibition developed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne

JUNIOR

In the gallery

- Count how many of the artists in *The Shilo Project* have completed the join the dot puzzle correctly. Have any?
- Have any used the dots, but not in the expected way? How many?
- How many artists have ignored the dots completely?
- Is one way more popular than another?
- Which approach do you prefer, and why?

In class

- Have you ever completed a join-the-dot puzzle?
- Where do you usually find them?
- Create your own join the dot puzzle from a photograph. You could use an image of a celebrity, or someone you know, or perhaps a pet.

Photocopy your picture onto an A4 sheet of paper. Place a piece of tracing paper over your picture and draw the image using just simple lines. Make dots on your lines and number them as you go.

The more dots you make the more detailed and smooth your image will be, but if you make too many then the picture won't be a surprise. Hold your tracing paper up to a window with another sheet of plain paper on top so that you can see your dots.

Trace them off onto to plain sheet, remembering to put the numbers on too.

- Give your puzzle to some of your friends to complete.
- Do the finished puzzles look the same? How are they different?

Delivering the best
contemporary art,
craft and design to
regional Victoria
and beyond

NETS
VICTORIA

SENIOR

In the gallery

- Discuss the role of the curator in *The Shilo Project*.
- How does the exhibition design of *The Shilo Project* differ from other exhibitions you have seen?
- What is the impact of these differences?

In class

- Review your discussion of the role of the curator in *The Shilo Project*.
- How is it different to the usual role of a curator? Consider *The Shilo Project* and compare it to a more conventional group exhibition of contemporary art such as the *Australia Pacific Triennial* at the Gallery of Modern Art in Brisbane.
- How has it changed the audiences' relationship to the artworks and the artists themselves?
- Research the work of Kerrie Poliness. Find some images of her work. What would happen if the gallery staff in her exhibitions decided to interpret her instructions in a new way? Who would be credited as the artist?
- Create your own puzzle or set of instructions that you can give to someone else to complete. Think about the complexity of the task. If it is too complicated or difficult to complete, your artist will lose interest the task. If it is too simple, they will find it boring.

STARTING POINTS:

PORTRAITURE AND THE CONTRSTRUCTION OF CELEBRITY

Portraiture, in the form of paintings or photographs, has been a primary method of communication used by royalty, politicians, artists and celebrities to inform their audience about their status in the community and personal qualities for hundreds of years.

One of the most elaborate and inventive historical examples of this phenomenon is the so-called *Rainbow of Elizabeth I of England* c1600, by [Isaac Oliver](#).

Elizabeth's bodice is embroidered with wildflowers, to symbolise her connection to her land and to nature. Her cloak is decorated with eyes and ears, implying that she sees and hears all.

Elizabeth's right hand holds a rainbow with the Latin inscription 'Non sine sole iris' ('No rainbow without the sun'). The rainbow symbolises peace, and the inscription reminds viewers that only the queen's wisdom can ensure peace and prosperity.

Elizabeth was in her late sixties when this portrait was made, but for [iconographic](#) purposes she is portrayed as young and beautiful, almost immortal. (3)

Artists utilise settings, props, costume, gesture and colour symbolism to point to the subjects perceived attributes. Sometimes the subject of the portrait can control this (for instance if they are commissioning the portrait), and sometimes they cannot (if they are a celebrity being photographed by paparazzi).

On record and CD covers, the face of the artist is usually the dominant image – their identity is crucial in the marketing of the music. The image of Neil Diamond on the cover of *Shilo* is unusual for a portrait and there is speculation as to what message the designer intended to give about Diamond.

In 1966 and 1967 Neil Diamond recorded a number of his early compositions with record label *Bang*, a subsidiary of *Atlantic Records*.

Bang were churning out pop hits in the same way that [Stock Aitken Waterman](#) did in the 1980s and '90s, and by the end of 1967, Neil Diamond wanted to foster an image of greater artistic credibility.

He announced that his next single would be "far out", and then went on to write the introspective, somewhat melancholic track *Shilo*. However *Shilo* was too far out for *Bang* and they refused to release it as a single as they did not consider it to be commercial enough.

Disillusioned with *Bang*, Diamond decided to leave them and sign up with EMI. His career went from strength to strength and in 1970 *Bang* released an album of his early hits, to which they still held the rights, calling it *Shilo*.

There are two theories about the nature of the album cover, one is that *Bang* intended to minimise or even dismiss the importance of the personality of Neil Diamond, implying that the music was the important thing, which they had fostered.

Alternatively, the design shows great innovation, firstly asking the audience to accept an album cover with no glamorous photograph of the artist, and secondly to then deface the cover with their own mark making. (4)

TERMS

Iconography

The use or study of images or symbols in visual arts.

The visual images, symbols, or modes of representation collectively associated with a person, cult, or movement

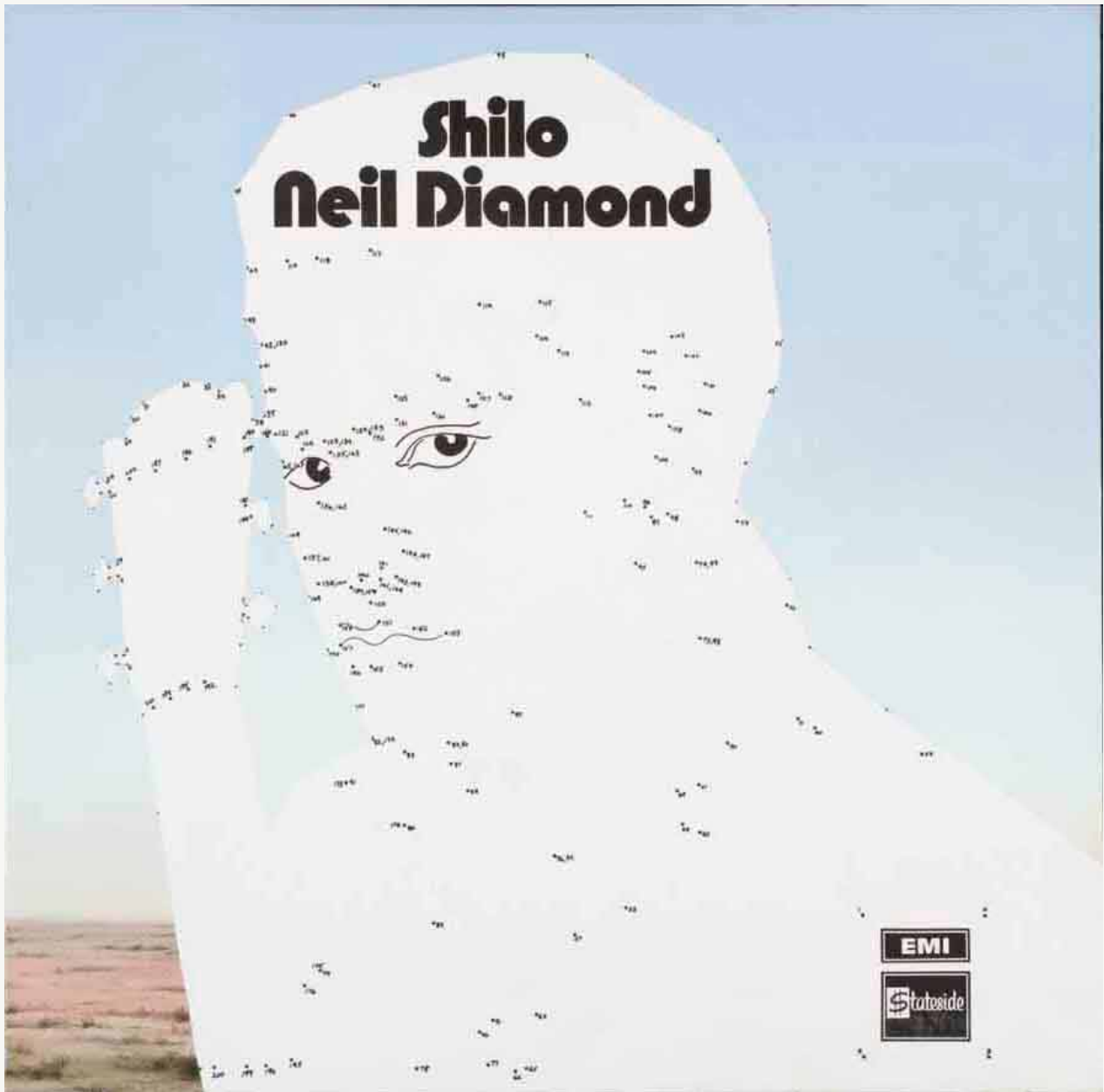
Stock, Aitken and Waterman

Stock Aitken Waterman was a UK songwriting and record producing trio consisting of Mike Stock, Matt Aikten and Pete Waterman.

They had great success during the mid to late 1980s and early 1990s, producing Kylie Minogue and Jason Donovan among others. The three are considered to be one of the most successful songwriting and producing partnerships of all time, scoring more than 100 UK top 40 hits and selling 40 million records.



Paul Wrigley
Shilo sleeve: synthetic polymer paint
2009
© Courtesy the artist



Juan Ford
Shilo sleeve: oil paint
2009
© Courtesy the artist

Delivering the best
contemporary art,
craft and design to
regional Victoria
and beyond

NETS
VICTORIA

JUNIOR

In the gallery

- Why do you think the designer of the original *Shilo* sleeve left the eyes in the image?
- What might eyes symbolise?
- Look at Matthys Gerber's sleeve. Who is the picture of?
- Why do you think the artist has used the image of a contemporary musician?

In class

- Research the *Rainbow Portrait of Elizabeth I* mentioned in the text.
- What other symbols are contained in the painting, aside from the ones mentioned in this text?
- If you were famous and you could commission an artist to make a portrait of you what would it look like? What would you be wearing? What materials would the artist use? Oil paint or something else? Artist [David Rosetzky](#) made a digital video portrait of actress Cate Blanchett in 2009, a work that was commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra.

SENIOR

In the gallery

- Look at Juan Ford's sleeve Do you think that this work is a portrait?
- How can you tell?
- Does it tell you anything about a particular person? Or about humans in general?
- What comment does this work make about the original *Shilo* puzzle image?

In class

- Look at portrait artists and discuss how the formal qualities in the painting or photograph inform the audience about the subject of the portrait.

A good website to look at portraits is the National Portrait Gallery in Canberra.

- Research philosophical ideas about presence and absence.

You will find a useful web page from the University of Chicago in the End Notes of this document.

- How do these ideas relate to Juan Ford's work, and to *The Shilo Project*?

Peter Westwood
Shine on you crazy Diamond
Shilo sleeve: gouache
2009
© Courtesy the artist

Fiona McMonagle
Shilo sleeve: watercolour, pencil
2009
© Courtesy the artist

★ STARTING POINTS:

FAN-TASTIC



Artist [Sue Dodd](#) has created her version of the *Shilo* sleeve by cutting into the cover. The holes that Dodd has cut away reveal images of Neil Diamond's audience photographed during a live performance. The image of the audience is inserted into the sleeve to create a second layer to the work. Only the faces are revealed, just like little dots themselves.

Sue Dodd creates performances that reveal (and revel in) the fakery of pop culture and gossip magazines. Her work highlights the role of the audience or 'fan' in constructing the image and identity of an artist or celebrity, and the addictive nature of gossip – the desire of the fan to, in some way consume the object of their 'fanhood'.

It has been suggested that celebrity worship may be similar to religious fervour.⁽⁵⁾ In each case the construction of a personal relationship with the object of adoration is very important. This can be achieved by drawing connections in different directions. In the case of 'warts and all' gossip articles, the celebrities are shown to be just like the readers; struggling with relationships, looking dishevelled first thing in the morning, putting on weight from time to time.

Conversely an impersonator, for example an Elvis Impersonator, is a fan that re-creates themselves in the image of the celebrity, mimicking their voice and style. In either case a sense of personal connection is the desired result. *Shilo Project* artist [Peter Westwood](#) has painted an image of a Neil Diamond impersonator on the *Shilo* cover to highlight this relationship.

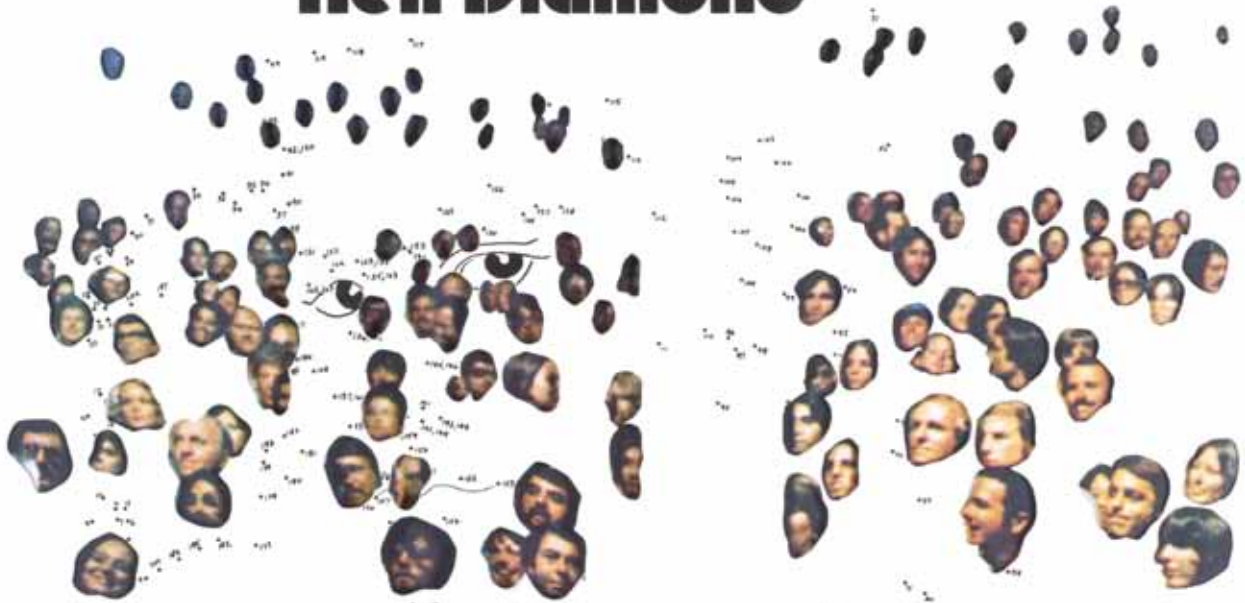
In the past being a fan has meant buying posters and other merchandise, going to concerts, maybe getting together with other fans for special events. As there were a limited number of celebrities 'on the market' as it were, their popularity swept through populations quickly and pervasively.

With the advent of the Internet and sites like Myspace, Facebook and Twitter, the structure of fanhood has changed. We have access to a vast array of artists, and anyone with a personal blog can potentially become a celebrity.



STEREO

Shilo Neil Diamond



Sue Dodd
Shilo sleeve: collage of holographic
adhesive tape on colour
photocopy, cut-out
2009
© Courtesy the artist

JUNIOR

In the gallery

- Look closely at Sue Dodd's work in the exhibition.
- Describe how you think the image has been created.
- How do you think the people in the image are feeling? How can you tell?

In class

- Are you a fan? Do you have a favourite football team or celebrity?
- How do you express your enthusiasm for them?
- Draw a picture of yourself dressed up as your favourite celebrity, actor or musician. You could do this as a collage if you like, by finding a picture of your celebrity and cutting out their face and putting a picture of your face in its place.

You could find a way to do this on the computer.

- Does the image look strange? Or funny? Why?



Geoff Newton
Shilo sleeve: synthetic polymer paint
© Courtesy the artist



Matthys Gerber
Shilo sleeve: collage of paper
2009
© Courtesy the artist

The Shilo project

A NETS Victoria touring exhibition developed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne

SENIOR

In the gallery

- Look around at the design of the exhibition space. Why has it been set up in such a way?
- How do you think that technology has changed what it means to be a fan since the time that *Shilo* was released?
- How has it changed what it means to be a celebrity?
- How has 'reality television' impacted on our sense of celebrity?
How does the gossip 'industry' affect our feelings about famous people?

In class

- Discuss the relationship between the celebrity and their audience. What are the qualities of that relationship?
- How does the celebrity affect the audience and the audience affect the celebrity?
- Do you think it is important to have celebrities in society? Why? What function does it serve?
- What is your opinion of gossip magazines and websites?



*The Shilo Project
Installation shot
Courtesy The Ian Potter Museum of
Art, The University of Melbourne*

STARTING POINTS:

GRAPHICS, ART AND THE ALBUM COVER

Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, artists have incorporated typography, logos and commercial graphics into their work, in order to make commentaries about consumerism or popular culture, or to highlight the formal qualities of typography and graphic images. This has given rise to extensive cultural 'feedback' between the disciplines of the graphic and fine arts.

In 1909, just before Picasso's early experiments with Synthetic Cubism, Italian writer and thinker [Tomasso Marinetti](#) wrote the *Futurist Manifesto* which called for radical new ideas to be courageously expressed across diverse art forms including painting, sculpture, literature, architecture, theatre, cinema and music.

Futurists experimented with poetry and typography to express their ideas about modernity and to challenge traditional art forms. Writers in the 1950s were influenced by the experiments of Futurists and the later Dadaists ([Kurt Schwitters](#) and [Tristan Tsara](#) in the 1920s), coining the term [Concrete Poetry](#) to describe writing wherein the layout of a poem became an expressive element of the writing itself. The work of the early Futurists influenced graphic designers of the 1960s and '70s especially in the context of radical protest movements like the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). (6) The influence of this period was also felt in the 1990s with magazines such as *Ray Gun*, produced by art director [David Carson](#).

In the '50s and '60s the Pop Art movement evolved, with artists such as [Richard Hamilton](#) using collaged images from print advertising, and others like [Roy Lichtenstein](#) making paintings that mimicked the style of graphic art. Pop Art arguably reached its zenith in the work of [Andy Warhol](#), who started his career as a designer and made the Campbell's Tomato Soup can and the Brillo Box into art icons. His immersion in popular culture was so extensive that he in effect became a brand himself,

famous as a personality and socialite, as much as an artist.

In recent times a group of designers have published the magazine *Adbusters*, creating fake ads to highlight social and ethical issues. They use the term 'culture jamming' to describe this practice, which has influenced the changing style of political activism.

With the appearance of vinyl records and the flowering of graphic design in the '50s, '60s and '70s, album cover art became a whole new genre in itself.

The cover became an important part of the culture of music at the time. Gatefold covers (a folded double cover), and inserts often with lyric sheets, provided designers with an inspiring canvas upon which to make their mark and sell their product.

Famous album covers include *Sargent Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967 designed by British Pop artist Peter Blake) by *The Beatles*, *Fragile* (1971) by *Yes*, and the debut album by the *Velvet Underground and Nico* (1967, designed by Andy Warhol).

In the spirit of Pop Art, *Shilo Project* artist [David Wadleton](#) has used the logos of the warring record companies EMI and Bang Records very prominently in his work for this exhibition. The commercial aspect of the relationship between artist, audience and those who broker that relationship – the record company, is highlighted by the use of logos in the work.

TERMS

Concrete Poetry

Concrete poetry or shape poetry is poetry in which the typographical arrangement of words is as important in conveying the intended effect as the conventional elements of the poem, such as meaning of words, rhythm, rhyme and so on.



John Aslanidis
Shilo sleeve: digital print
2009
© Courtesy the artist



David Waderton
Shilo sleeve: oil paint
© Courtesy the artist

JUNIOR

In the gallery

- Daivd Wadleton has used two record company logos in his work.
- Can you find another work in the exhibition that incorporates a logo?
- How are the works similar to each other?
- How are they different?
- Are they giving the same message?



Jeremy Kibel
Shilo sleeve: spray-paint, fibre-tipped pen
2009
© Courtesy the artist and Block Projects, Melbourne

In class

In the 1980s people could buy twelve inch, vinyl records of their favourite single and hear a special extended mix of the song.

Choose your favourite song and design the cover it would have, if it were a '12 inch'. The cover will be the same size as the *Shilo* cover, 30cms x 30cms.

Remember to put the name of the artist and the song on the cover – you could invent your own record label and include their label in your design.



Giles Ryder
Shilo sleeve: collage of gaffer tape,
electrical tape and spray-paint
2009
© Courtesy the artist

SENIOR

In the gallery

- Which artists have featured and enhanced, or added to the graphic elements of the original *Shilo* design?
- How do you think that the graphic design, including the image and the typography, of the original *Shilo* sleeve has influenced the artists in the exhibition?

In class

Create your own culture jam, by taking an existing advertisement and re-designing it to make a social comment. See if you can incorporate a word play in your design, like the ones used by *Adbusters*.

STARTING POINTS:

THE MYSTERY AND ALLURE OF REDUNDANT TECHNOLOGIES

Technologies for making images and sound recordings are continually evolving. In the 18th and 19th centuries the printing technique of copper plate **etching** was used as a means of commercially reproducing images for books and newspapers. Today etching is still used, but only in the context of a fine art practice. In the late 19th century photography was the latest technology, and now, although we still use cameras, using a dark room for developing and printing is a thing of the past. Once a technology becomes commercially redundant, the skills associated with that technology become rarefied and mysterious. The objects and paraphernalia of those technologies become representative of lost innocence and lost skill.

Vinyl records were superseded in the 1980s by CDs, which are now losing ground to the *iPod* with endless possibilities for Internet downloads. However commentator Jim Richardson wrote in 2008 that:

“While the mass market gave up on vinyl records, serious audiophiles and club DJs never did. Audiophiles argue that high quality vinyl records played on a high quality stereo system sound better than CDs or MP3 files. For up-and-coming artists, releasing a vinyl record is way to stand out from the crowd. Writing for *Electronic Musician*, journalist Markkus Rovito said,

“These days burning a CD is so simple that it no longer automatically indicates that an artist has a serious commitment to the music. Pressing a 12-inch record, on the other hand, shows at the very least a financial sacrifice and suggests that time was taken mastering the music to a high standard.”

“Putting an LP on a turntable is an act that signifies a single-minded dedication to focusing on the music,”

Robert Harley wrote in his book *An Introductory Guide to High Performance Audio Systems*.

“When playing a record, you sit down in the listening chair, often with full-sized liner notes and cover art, and with no remote control to skip tracks. The process makes a statement that you are about to give the music your full attention for an entire LP side (at a minimum).”⁽⁷⁾

The design of *The Shilo Project* exhibition space reflects an affectionate nostalgia for the golden age of vinyl. Beanbags and a turntable invoke a 1970s lounge room, and vinyl records are displayed in compartments as if in a record store, where audiences can take out the vinyl and study the grooves and the feel of the record itself. The audience can even see audio cassette versions of the *Shilo* album.

Audio cassettes have not survived in the same way that vinyl has – very few people still have cassette players and they are no longer produced. Information that exists only on cassette will soon be lost forever.

Contemporary artist **Ricky Swallow** references nostalgia for redundant technologies in his sculptural works. Swallow grew up in the 1980s and in his early works he used turntables from old record players as the structural basis for a series of works. Later he made painstakingly carved and constructed sculptures of BMX bikes, old sneakers and the helmet of *Darth Vader* from the *Star Wars* movies.

Installation shot
Courtesy The Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne





The Shilo project

A NETS Victoria touring exhibition developed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne

TERMS

Etching

A means of reproducing an image by printing from a plate (metal, plastic or card). Grooves are created in the plate by cutting into it with a needle or with acid. Ink is rolled over the plate and wiped back so that it remains in the grooves. The plate is then impressed onto paper by passing it through a printing press. The paper picks up the ink from the grooves in the plate and so the image is transferred to the paper.



Richard Tipping
Shilo sleeve: record, button, needle,
cotton thread
2009
© Courtesy the artist

Delivering the best
contemporary art,
craft and design to
regional Victoria
and beyond

NETS
VICTORIA

JUNIOR

In the gallery

- Lie on the bean bags and listen to the recording of *Shilo*. Is this how you listen to music at home?
- Look through the vinyl records in the boxes in the exhibition. You can carefully remove them from their sleeves and touch them.
- Gently feel their texture with your finger. How do you think the sound is created? Discuss this question with your classmates.

In class

- Research how the grooves on vinyl recordings create sound coming from the record player's speakers.
- How do you hear the sound with your ears?
- What technologies do you use regularly in your life now, which might be redundant in five or ten or twenty years? What do you think will be the same?
- What will archaeologists of the future find to tell them about you, your friends and family and your culture?
- What technologies do you think those archaeologists use to gather information?

The Shilo project

A NETS Victoria touring exhibition developed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne

SENIOR

In the gallery

- Discuss the overall design of the exhibition. What elements have been used aside from the artworks themselves?
- Explore the interactive elements of the exhibition. Listen to the recording of Shilo, look at and touch the vinyl records.
- Make a floor plan of the space.
- How does the design of the exhibition impact on your enjoyment of the experience?
- What do you think the designers intend to communicate?
- How do the graphics of the catalogue and other written material add to the overall look and feel of the exhibition?
- How have the works been grouped together on the walls?

In class

- Think of an idea for a themed exhibition that you would like to curate.
- How would you approach the design of your exhibition?
- How would the graphics look?
- Would you sell merchandise to go with your exhibition?
- Make a floor plan for your show.
- If you were to propose this exhibition to a gallery director, what methods and technologies would you use to communicate your ideas?

END NOTES

Useful Websites and References

1. Op Shopping and the found object in art

<http://www.artchive.com/artchive/P/picasso_syntheticcubism.html>

<<http://www.marcelduchamp.net/>>

<http://www.johnbuckley.com.au/downloads/sansom2009_catalogue.pdf>

<<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/episodes/robert-rauschenberg/about-the-artist/49/>>

2. Painting by numbers

<<http://www.annaschwartzgallery.com/works/works?artist=34&c=m>>

<<http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/exhibitions/305>>

3. Portraiture and the construction of celebrity

<<http://www.marileecody.com/gloriana/rainbowlarger.jpg>>

<<http://www.portrait.gov.au>>

<<http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/absencepresence.htm>>

4. Fan-tastic

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

<http://www.gertrude.org.au/studio_artists_template.php?id=82>

<<http://www.usask.ca/relst/jrpc/art12-secularvsreligious-print.html>>

<<http://perezhilton.com/>>

5. Graphics, art and the album cover

<<http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/2006/dada/techniques/collage.shtm>>

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

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

<<http://www.chris-ashworth.com/ray-gun-publish/ray-gun-magazine-covers/>>

<http://www.eisnermuseum.org/_albums/index.html>

Grant Scott, Barry Miles and Johnny Morgan, *The Greatest Album Covers of All Time*, 2005, Music Sales America

Michael Ochs, *1000 Record Covers*, Taschen

6. The mystery and allure of redundant technologies

<<http://www.wisageek.com/what-are-vinyl-records.html>>

<http://community.crutchfield.com/blogs/av_tips/archive/2008/10/15/why-are-vinyl-records-making-a-comeback.aspx>

The Shilo project

A NETS Victoria touring exhibition developed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne

REFERENCES

- (1) <http://www.artchive.com/artchive/P/picasso_syntheticcubism.html>
- (2) George F. Brommer, *Collage Techniques: a Guide for Artists and Illustrators*, 1994, Chapter 1
- (3) <<http://www.marileecody.com/eliz1-images.html>>
- (4) Chirs McAuliffe, interview with Amanda Smith for Artworks, ABC Radio National, 6/12/09
- (5) <<http://www.usask.ca/relst/jrpc/art12-secularvsreligious-print.html>>
- (6) Alan Bartram, *Futurist Typography and the Liberated Text*, 2005, The British Library
- (7) Jim Richardson 2008, <http://community.crutchfield.com/blogs/av_tips/archive/2008/10/15/why-are-vinyl-records-making-a-comeback.aspx>

Installation shot
Courtesy The Ian Potter Museum of
Art, The University of Melbourne

Delivering the best
contemporary art,
craft and design to
regional Victoria
and beyond

NETS
VICTORIA



Delivering the best
contemporary art,
craft and design to
regional Victoria
and beyond

NETS
VICTORIA

The Shilo project

A NETS Victoria touring exhibition developed by the Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne



National Exhibitions Touring Support (NETS) Victoria is supported by the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria and the Community Support Fund, by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and through the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments. NETS Victoria also receives significant in-kind support from the National Gallery of Victoria.

Exhibition & Tour supporters

The development of this exhibition was assisted through NETS Victoria's Exhibition Development Fund (EDF), supported by the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria and the Community Development Fund. This exhibition is supported by Visions of Australia, an Australian Government program supporting touring exhibitions by providing funding assistance for the development and touring of Australian cultural material across Australia



Delivering the best contemporary art, craft and design to regional Victoria and beyond

