

# THE SPACE

**ANNE LANDA AWARD**  
for video and new media arts 2013

# BETWEEN US

ART  
GALLERY  
NSW

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**ANNE LANDA AWARD**

for video and new media arts 2013

# BETWEEN US

CURATED BY CHARLOTTE DAY

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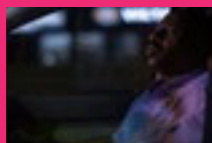
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Designed and produced by Branches in association with Art Gallery of New South Wales  
Branches is an offshoot of The Nest

# FOREWORD

**Michael Brand**

Director

Art Gallery of New South Wales

Artists continue to push the boundaries of video and new-media art, and in doing so reveal to their audiences new ways of understanding their place in the world, relationships with others, representations of culture, and how performance in life finds its correspondence in art. *The space between us*, the fifth biannual Anne Landa Award for video and new media arts, presents the work of seven artists living in Australia and overseas. Their respective artworks embrace broad definitions of video and new-media art, while pursuing unique approaches to performance in art. This exhibition – conceived and developed by guest curator Charlotte Day – boldly embraces live performance in and outside the Gallery, including daring stunts, unexpected encounters, and haunting renditions of songs, music and other sounds.

For the first time the Gallery has produced a digital publication to accompany the exhibition. This publication aims to provide users with an enriched experience of the exhibition by focusing on video, including artist and curator interviews, performances, and providing excerpts from new and recent artworks. Charlotte Day's insightful essay on performance in art is complemented by contributions on the individual artists by Natasha Bullock, Rebecca Coates, Robyn Davidson, Mark Feary, Jeff Khan, Kathrin Meyer and Mick Wilson.

A highlight of the Gallery's contemporary art program, the Anne Landa Award was established in 2004 to honour Anne Landa, whose passionate service as a trustee of the Gallery is still keenly remembered. The award is supported enthusiastically by her daughter, Sophie Landa, and I acknowledge and thank Sophie for her generosity. I also acknowledge the sponsorship of the publication by The Nest, whose digital publishing arm, Branches, has developed the publication in association with the Gallery. My thanks go to the artists, volunteer

performers, organisations, commissioned writers and dealer representatives for their engagement, time and effort on this project. The team of Gallery staff who have contributed to the exhibition, programs and publication also deserves acknowledgment for their creativity, professionalism and dedication. Combined, this support ensures the growth of contemporary art in the Gallery and provides artists a fitting context in which to exhibit brave art to the broadest possible audience.

# ABOUT THE AWARD

The Anne Landa Award for video and new media arts was established in honour of Anne Landa, a trustee of the Art Gallery of New South Wales who died in 2002. The award is focused on moving-image practices and the application of new technologies to contemporary art.

As an acquisitive award, the winning work enters the Gallery's collection and the artist/s receives prize money of \$25 000. For each exhibition a curator or team is invited to select the participating artists and their work/s. [More...](#)

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# THE SPACE BETWEEN US

Curated by Charlotte Day, *The space between us* considers the interrelation of video and performance through the work of the selected artists Lauren Brincat, Alicia Frankovich, Laresa Kosloff, Angelica Mesiti, Kate Mitchell, James Newitt and Christian Thompson.

The seven artists are connected through their interest in the artist as performing body, the artist as creator/director of performances, and the viewer's role in relation to the works and as active participant. This resurgence in performative art continues out of a desire to question and test established exhibition and viewing habits, as well as the relative distinctions and distances between artist, artwork and audience.

Charlotte Day is director of the Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne. *The space between us* is the fifth in the series of biennial Anne Landa Award exhibitions that began at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2004.



2004

*Anne Landa Award*  
curated by  
**Edmund Capon,**  
**Juliana Engberg**  
and **Wayne**  
**Tunncliffe**

Winner

**David Rozetsky**

2006

*Anne Landa Award*  
curated by  
**Natasha Bullock,**  
**Edmund Capon** and  
**Linda Michael**

Winner

**Monika Tichacek**

2009

*Double take*  
curated by  
**Victoria Lynn**

Winner

**TV Moore**

2011

*Unguided tours*  
curated by  
**Justin Paton**

Winner

**David Haines**  
and  
**Joyce Hinterding**

2013

*The space between us*  
curated by  
**Charlotte Day**

Winner

**To be announced on**  
**20 June 2013**



‘The space between us fills my heart with intolerable grief’, first wrote the enigmatic conceptual artist Bas Jan Ader for the back of a postcard work, showing a close-up of him crying, that he sent out to friends and acquaintances in 1970. After further contemplation he settled on the more reserved and mysterious message, ‘I’m too sad to tell you’.

# THE SPACE BETWEEN US

Charlotte Day

While both messages live on, by limiting what he said, he in fact ensured that the work would speak more loudly, creating a useful tension between the apparent sincerity of the raw emotion of his crying with the paradoxically obvious staging of the event.

Bas Jan Ader is admired for the simplicity and clarity of his ritualistic actions, his attempts at heroism, which often ended in classic slapstick failures, as well as, ultimately, his tragic disappearance, but most of all for the directness of his communications. A favourite of art students, the renewed interest in his work parallels a period of heightened focus on performative practices more broadly, the celebration of enduring performance artists such

as Marina Abramovic, and on a new generation of artists who are specifically interested in and engaging with ideas of performativity.

In the context of the exhibition for the Anne Landa Award for video and new media arts 2013, performance is being ascribed as the ‘new’ media, or maybe more correctly, the ‘renewed’ and expanded media. This fifth show in the biennial series of Anne Landa Awards provides the opportunity to focus on the contemporary interest in performance, which has undoubtedly built in momentum in the last fifteen years, resulting in new museum departments and university subjects, and a wave of new curatorial, exhibition and artistic models.

While having important roots in the performance/body art movements of the 1960s and 1970s, the performative turn is in fact a confluence of more complex networks of theories and practices. Such influences range from the early 20th-century avant-garde in Europe and later neo avant-garde; feminism, social movements and conceptual art of the 1960s and 1970s; identity politics of the 1980s; and immersive installation practices of the 1990s; to institutional critique and collaborations of 2000s, to name only a few.

This performative turn continues out of the desire to question and test established exhibition and viewing habits between institution, artist, artwork and audience, as well as, more literally, the inter-subjective *space between us*. Less a questioning of what can be art, the performative turn is central to debates surrounding art's agency and inclusivity, as well being the product of a growing interdisciplinary approach, in which the intersection of the visual arts with theatre and dance in particular is increasing. It is on this fertile ground between disciplines and between people that some of the most interesting works are being created. But the performative reach is in fact far greater, as Chris Salter introduces in his book *Entangled technology and the transformation of performance* (2010):

Performance as practice, method and worldview is becoming one of the major paradigms of the twenty-first century, not only in the arts but also the sciences. As euphoria for the simulated and virtual

marked the end of the twentieth century subsides, suddenly everyone from new media artists to architects, physicists, ethnographers, archaeologists, and interaction designers are speaking of embodiment, situatedness, presence, and materiality. In short, everything has become performative.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to looking at the continuum of the solo artist/performer, this exhibition looks to artists who work with other professional or non-professional performers, and/or those involved in setting up particular performative situations. These practices of enacting, doing and orchestrating create a site for exchange *between* subjects rather than a representation *of* the subject. The aspiration is for proximity to and connectivity with audiences and between audience members, and not necessarily only physically and in real time, although the live aspect is often important. These artists draw on ceremonial and ritualistic formats that enable sensory encounters which are designed to affect the viewer directly. An important tension is also being created through risk taking and by relying on contingency, unpredictability and the possibility of failure. As academic and performance curator Amelia Jones describes:

[We are forced to experience] ourselves as not only *in* the world, but as *belonging* to it and thus *owing it something*: as fully contingent bodies/selves who are responsible for the effects our behaviours and perceptions have on others and aware of our reactions to other subjects and objects in the world.<sup>2</sup>



Alicia Frankovich *Floor resistance* 2011–12

Through live and recorded performances as well as sculptural installations, Alicia Frankovich establishes a new set of encounters between the artist, artwork, institution and audience. On occasion, Frankovich has been the performer of her work: instigating brute physical contact with audience members in *Bisons* 2010–13, and an uncomfortable and precarious arrangement with a curator in *Lungeing chambon* 2009. Many of her more recent works have involved professionals and amateurs performing movements or being present in situations choreographed by the artist. The structure of these works remains open, within certain guidelines that may be repeated and with each reiteration having its own subtle differences.

For *The space between us* Frankovich takes the idea of the performing subject almost as a ready-made, involving individuals and groups of people (including joggers, hikers, yoga practitioners and readers) to undertake

activities they would ordinarily do but relocated in the gallery space. Her proposition is an occupation of the gallery space by active bodies, which requires active negotiation: Who is part of the performance and who isn't? How are we supposed to react to this? Does this event have a demarcated start and finish?

One of her works, *The opportune spectator*, will be presented at 12.30 pm each weekday of the exhibition, replaying as a video can be, but done live and via a schedule of volunteers filling approximately 1000 slots over the duration of the exhibition – some participating once, others on multiple days. *The opportune spectator* presents fifteen lunchtime joggers clad in sportswear, returning from an extended period of running and forming a loose line in the gallery foyer. What is viewed is not seemingly the main event, as their activity has taken place outside, before they enter the gallery space. Instead, the viewer is confronted with the aftermath of their



Laresa Kosloff *Eternal situation* 2013

action – the accelerated heartbeat, the heavy breathing and the hot bodies of the joggers – for the time it takes them to collectively cool down to their regular state of being. Like Martin Creed's runners who moved through the Tate Britain every thirty seconds (*Work no. 850* 2008), Frankovich's piece inserts the variable of live, moving bodies into the museum's usually more fixed space of representation. While Creed's runners are clearly defined as performers of a timed instruction, marking time and tempo in the gallery, Frankovich's interruption is a more ambiguous and unpredictable act, a construction of two temporal groups that are required to negotiate their roles and terms of reference in relation to each other. As well questioning accepted performance and exhibition formats, Frankovich's project is a study in post-Fordism itself, referring to the repercussions of increased flexibility, the requirement to self-manage and the influence of technology in a world in which we are essentially always working, our time divided up

into different jobs and responsibilities without clear delineation of a start and finish.

Laresa Kosloff is also interested in how bodies move through different spaces, and how they might be required to conform to set structures and architecture. Through an extended catalogue of performative videos in which the artist has featured and Super 8 films recording other performing bodies in public settings, Kosloff has juxtaposed the fallible and idiosyncratic body with aestheticised criteria, such as geometry, architecture and sport.

In her new work for the Anne Landa Award Kosloff has turned her attention to the behaviour of visitors in the museum. While the painting galleries of the 17th and 18th centuries were social spaces of lively conversation, with visitors looking at works together and translating what they saw to each other, the galleries of today are very different. Dorothea

von Hantelmann has argued that 'from the mid nineteenth century onwards – when collections opened up to the general public, visitor numbers rose continuously and the audience base became increasingly socially heterogeneous ... the silent and isolated visitor became standard in galleries'.<sup>3</sup>

In the 21st century, museums are more popular than ever before, yet if recent statistics are to be believed, visitors spend very little time looking at any individual artwork, let alone contemplating it, and museum fatigue is a common complaint.

Kosloff was interested to discover for herself what happens to artworks sometime down the track (after they have been created, first exhibited and collected). Set to Whitney Houston's hit the song 'I have nothing [without you]', Kosloff's video *Eternal situation* 2013 follows visitors through the Art Gallery of New South Wales' 19th-century and Old Masters galleries, with playful framing and edits producing a revelatory study of viewing habits, and shown from the unusual vantage point of the artwork. Taking on board the implicit assumption that each artwork is created by someone with an audience in mind, Kosloff shows the jostle for that all-too-brief moment of connection. Her project reconsiders the subject and object of art, and the plight of an artwork that 'eventually must learn to cope, as it were solo'.<sup>4</sup> Are some artworks more capable of performing than others? While celebrating the potential for participation and communality in the gallery, Kosloff encourages us to reflect

on the act of viewing and to appreciate the uniquely human endeavour that is art.



Christian Thompson *Lamenting the flowers* 2012  
(c-type print)

Christian Thompson has continually refashioned himself, his body acting as the armature on which to adorn materials from the Australian landscape, history and traditions of representation. An already politicised Indigenous body, his work sits deliberately between racial and gender stereotypes, and is concerned with a new kind of post-colonial theatricality. In his words, he creates 'an ancient skin for a new urban culture'.<sup>5</sup> Thompson's works are layered with associations – often referencing the context within which the work is constructed – and themes are remixed and reconfigured into strange and intriguing hybrid fashioned selves, portraying artists such as Andy Warhol and Bruce Nauman simultaneously,

in a wry tongue-in-cheek Australian take on 'international' art world icons.

In a number of his recent videos and sound installations Thompson has moved to the inherent lyricism of language itself, employing the Bidjara language of his father's people. He brings it into the physical space, the texture of the language ushering a visceral response and creating an opportunity for audiences to become aware of their own internal rhythm and to reflect on their personal relationship with the natural world. Rather than a nostalgic or museological record of something endangered, Thompson's emphasis is on revitalising language, making it a dynamic aspect of a contemporary present, a living language.

We rely on language to construct our world view, as is well known by institutions of power intent to quash cultural difference, but it is also the case that sounds and rhythms have always been used to bring communities together, in ceremonies, healing rituals and protest. For *The space between us* Thompson has worked with sound composer Carlos Vaquero. Using a singular Bidjara word chanted in Thompson's own voice, the recording has been manipulated into the rhythmic swirls of the traditional bullroarer, a device used to, literally, send messages on the wind. The resulting low-pitched, whirling soundtrack is not simply a sonic backdrop but an experiential space of time, language and ancient technology that is still capable of communicating over great distances, even seemingly great cultural divides.

There is likely some truth to Giorgio Agamben's claim that an age which has lost its gestures is, for this reason, obsessed with them. Lauren Brincat's performances, like those of Thompson, are often singular, intense actions; she, too, engages the viewer directly through her physical and psychological profile in the work. In this sense her practice has a direct lineage back to the work of conceptual artists like Bas Jan Ader. Oscillating between bravery and heroism, and more private moments of vulnerability or doubt, Brincat is seen in a continual process of navigating her physical and cognitive limits. While working predominantly in video performance, Brincat also orchestrates live events, often incorporating instruments that have a public significance, such as drums, bells and tambourines.

Her video *High Horse* 2012 documents a durational action, with Brincat standing on top of a horse, a tambourine in her raised hand, in a pose inspired by a statue of the most famous of heroines, Joan of Arc, which she came across near the Louvre in Paris. Recognising the statue as a rarity in the plethora of commemorative sculptures to heroic men, Brincat's reiteration is a test of her own abilities (she had no previous experience with horses), but it also opens up a dialogue with one of the few women in history celebrated for their bravery, and questions the representation of strong role models for women in public life more generally. Not content to get off her high horse, Brincat takes this project a step further in *Mexican Standoff* 2012, harnessing a group of women horse riders in Mexico City to join her in a

standoff in front of the commemorative statue of a man on horseback, located in front of the Museo Nacional de Arte. With a nod to the classic Western movie genre, Brincat's group of women navigate the congestion of Mexico City, their action itself and its symbolic effect a contestation of the status quo.



Lauren Brincat *High Horse* 2012 (production still)

Such symbolism has a particular resonance for the Art Gallery of New South Wales as well. In a perfect example of action speaking to the implicit authority of words, Brincat's *Pythagoras, Praxiteles, Anthemius, Michael Angelo, Donatello, Ghiberti, Pheidias, Cellini, Canova, Jean Goujon, Giotto, Raphael, Titian, Rembrandt, Murillo, Rubens, Andrea del Sarto, Botticelli, Bellini, Cimabue, Correggio, Leonardo da Vinci, Tintoretto, Velasquez, Vandyck and Gainsborough* 2013 involves a restaging of Mexican Standoff, with women on horseback lined up in front of the Gallery, confronting the line-up on the 19th-century facade of twenty-six significant male artists and thinkers. Flanked by two more bronze statues of men on horseback, the exterior facade of the Gallery commemorates a particular period in history, and has been politicised in Linda Nochlin's landmark essay of 1971, 'Why have there been no great women artists?' Brincat's performative action brings into sharp relief the questionable male hegemony imbedded in much public sculpture and architecture that still requires redress. Where are women artists and role models acknowledged and commemorated?

It is not a coincidence that bravery, risk taking, strength and endurance are recurring themes for many of the artists in *The space between us*. They foreground themselves as well as other bodies in motion in an attempt to break down the cultural barriers that disconnect people from each other, and art from everyday life. This can be seen, quite literally, in Kate Mitchell's work, in which she performs arduous, difficult and sometimes dangerous acts to prove her





Kate Mitchell *Fall Stack* 2012 (video still)

commitment and capability – piggybacking a man from his home to work one day, dragging a heavy log from the suburb in which it had been cut down to the gallery in which it was to be exhibited on another day, and falling through a series of life-size faux shop awnings in another memorable performance video project. Her actions are autonomous – as both creative director and performer no one is telling her what to do – and in this sense, like Brincat, she is a fully cognisant subject, producing her own form of representation distinct from historical precedents.<sup>6</sup> Mitchell's subject is always an action, produced by the artist in a single take and without a stunt double; we curiously watch her escapades and laugh all the while she puts herself in peril. There is a comic, slapstick quality in Mitchell's undertakings, but in true Beckett form, also an existential quandary.

Mitchell's scenarios parody work and life, and of course, the problem for the artist whose

work may not necessarily be productive in the conventional sense. Even with Mitchell taking on bigger challenges, working through the problems and continually testing herself, there always remains another floor to climb or barrier to overcome. The never-ending nature of her endeavour is made most evident in her new work *Lucky Break* 2013, in which she bravely smashes through a series of seven large coloured-glass screens, which together make up the colours of the rainbow. Presented as a video installation, the seven panels are fitted together as a heptagon. Consecutively, we see the artist jump through each coloured screen, creating a metronome of intense action. The artist is forever locked in the perpetual 'money shot', the familiar territory of blockbuster films, finding no reprieve as each panel of glass refreshes for the artist to jump through once again. Like a Ferris wheel that never stops, the viewer keeps watch, scrutinising each jump for its success or failure, the gravity of the situation



James Newitt *We Are The People* 2012 (production still)

slowly revealing itself as each glass panel shatters and falls in large chunks. There is a physical enthusiasm inherent in the work, an excitement that anything is possible, regardless of the situation or circumstance. However, this enthusiasm is wrapped in a wariness of the struggles and pitfalls that life dishes out. There is no lucky breakthrough here, no accessible pot of gold, just the relentless strive to get somewhere and to get ahead, which Mitchell so vividly enacts.

James Newitt and Angelica Mesiti's works in *The space between us* move the focus away from the artist as performer, and into the wider public sphere of the performative. Often incorporating elements of observation and orchestration in single works, the practices of both artists shift between the documentary and the constructed. And it is this very particular space between the two approaches that a sharply perceptive humanism can be uncovered.

In many of James Newitt's video projects people are brought together and observed, as well as being requested to perform certain scripted actions for the camera. In the well-known work *Saturday Nights* 2007 he invited locals from a small country town to come together for a Saturday night dance, marking the anniversary of tragic events at Port Arthur with a community event. The more recent work *If They Fall* 2010 is a study of the attitudes and behaviour of both conservationists and forestry workers in Tasmania's heavily contested wilderness. His new project for the Anne Landa Award, *Say it like you want it* 2013, is an ambitious dual video work undertaken during a residency in the English city of Liverpool in which he orchestrated for video a protest rally between two 'opposing' groups in a local theatre. Newitt was inspired in part by the marches of the Orange Order that regularly take place in Liverpool, and his protestors carry related trappings (such as masks, banners and flags) to



Angelica Mesiti *Citizens band 2012* (production still)

suggest nationalistic and patriotic allegiances. As in a number of Newitt's previous works, people are brought together to enact something staged, but the resulting video documentation goes far beyond the potential farcical aspect of the event. Groups are formed, energy builds and what begins as polite interaction between individuals develops into a cacophony of shouting voices. What is of interest is not what they shout, but rather the rhythm that builds as people take on roles in their group, and the event gathers its own momentum, with Newitt tapping into deeply embedded instincts and the organisation of power, all of which are exposed by the beat of the drum.

Paris-based Angelica Mesiti, like Newitt and a number of the other artists in *The space between us*, works between different geographical locations and contexts. Mesiti's four-channel video *Citizens Band 2012* documents four poignant and remarkable

performances by people she came across in Paris, Sydney and Brisbane. Each of the performers is an immigrant, having originated from somewhere other than where they currently reside. They carry their ties to their birthplace through their music: Geraldine Zongo from Cameroon practices water drumming in a Paris pool; an Algerian man, Mohammed Lamourie, sings and plays his Casio keyboard on the Paris metro; Mongolian throat singer Bukhchuluun Ganburged is seen recreating a time in which he busked on the streets of Newtown; and well-known world musician Asim Goreshi is shown whistling in his part-time employment as a taxi driver in Brisbane. We may speculate on the places they have left behind and on their life stories, but Mesiti is not directly concerned with creating portraits of these performers. Moving away from an emphasis on individual cultural 'actors', the participants of *Citizens Band* are brought together in time and across space to affect a wider reaching communication

and developing language of emotions.<sup>7</sup> Like other recent works by Mesiti, such as *Rapture (silent anthem)* 2009, and relating to Christian Thompson's *Healing Circle* 2013, also exhibited in the Anne Landa Award, *Citizens Band* is a study of the power of performance to be transformative, to simultaneously concentrate us in the moment and outside of the present, connecting us to each other in meaningful ways and to our deep histories. This is a dynamic, potent space that each of the artists in *The space between us* encourages us to inhabit.

## NOTES

1 Chris Salter, *Entangled technology and the transformation of performance*, MIT, Cambridge, MA, 2010, p xxi.

2 Amelia Jones, *Body art/performing the subject*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1998, pp 239–40.

3 Dorothea von Hantelmann, '30 July 2010 – 22 October 2010', in Karen Marta, Kathryn Rattee, Zoe Stillpass (eds), *Philippe Parreno: films 1987–2010*, Serpentine Gallery and Walther König Köln/Koenig Books, London, 2011.

4 Rebecca O'Dwyer, 'The iterable gesture', *das Super Paper*, 26 March 2013, p 15. This issue of the magazine focuses on performance.

5 Email correspondence with Christian Thompson, 15 April 2013.

6 For an informative discussion of the importance of the moving body as a methodology in contemporary practice, see Helen Hughes, 'Sketching: bodies in motion', *UN Magazine*, 6.2, December 2012, pp 54–59.

7 Of relevance here is Christopher Braddock's description of the concept of the artwork as 'contagious' and affecting audience on multiple levels; *Performing contagious bodies: ritual and participation in contemporary art*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2013.



MUNAL

MUSEO NACIONAL DE ARTE

NO A LA REFORMA

Sciores L

Basta de reformas  
En beneficio de

No al marco jurídico  
Trabajadores

LAUREN  
BRINCAT



Swipe image >

# LAUREN BRINCAT

HIGH HORSE 2012

MEXICAN STANDOFF 2012

BLOOD AND FIRE 2013

PYTHAGORAS, PRAXITELES, ANTHEMIUS, MICHAEL ANGELO, DONATELLO, Ghiberti,  
Pheidias, Cellini, Canova, Jean Goujon, Giotto, Raphael, Titian, Rembrandt,  
Murillo, Rubens, Andrea del Sarto, Botticelli, Bellini, Cimabue, Correggio,  
Leonardo da Vinci, Tintoretto, Velasquez, Vandyck and Gainsborough 2013

Bridging the romantic and the conceptual, Lauren Brincat's actions are an investigation into subjectivity, or a search for selfhood. She ventures into the unknown and out of sight when she walks slowly through a picturesque landscape of dense fog in *Steady as she goes* 2011. The video documentation is a wonderful evocation of the ideas informing her practice, from the romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer above a sea of fog* 1818, to Richard Long's *A line made by walking* 1967 and to Bas Jan Ader's ultimate act *In search of the miraculous* 1975.

# IMPULSES AND ACTIONS

Natasha Bullock

Another way to describe Brincat's artistic process is as an inward and outward exploration, a tension that perhaps defines the emotional side of conceptual art.

In Brincat's case, it is not simply the rigour of repetition that denotes physical endurance and tests her own cognitive capacity, it is also, in other examples, the subtle assault, the tense, aural effect of music on the senses. From drum kits to tambourines, these sounds remind the viewer of the space within her work and, in the case of *Blood and Fire* 2013, of the relationship to their own body and the space in which they stand. Space structures sound and vice versa; like concrete objects it can be occupied and infiltrated. In *Blood and fire*, produced in collaboration with Bree van Reyk, fifty people stand in five

lines of ten and play the tambourine in the Grand Court of the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Is the sound an affront to our senses? Or even our sense of propriety? Is it with equal amounts of 'blood' and 'fire' that the space of this work lives?

Over and over again a musician plays the same notes until the pitch and sequence is right. Musical instruments are a recurring feature in Brincat's art, and her early works incorporated a drum kit, a heavy symbol of rock-and-roll masculinity. In *It's a long way to the top* 2009 she walked a drum kit to the top of a dry grassy hill and let it roll to the bottom. And in a work for the Anne Landa Award 2013 exhibition, *High Horse* 2012, inspired by a statue of Joan of Arc on horseback, the artist stands for some time on the saddle of a horse, with an outstretched

arm, holding a tambourine. In another work for the exhibition, a brass gong sits precariously on top of a triangular structure that is the exact height of the artist. The triangle is a symbol of strength. This association between formal structures, self-portraiture and the potential for failure – the gong could topple, the horse could bolt – navigates the productive movement in Brincat's practice between intuitive impulses and deliberate actions.

To push the limits of *High Horse* further, Brincat created *Mexican Standoff* 2012. Seven women ride horses through the streets of Mexico City, coming to rest in a straight line in front of a statue of a man on a horse. This is where history and the art-historical past permeate Brincat's thinking. It is easy to understand why a solitary statue of Joan of Arc in Paris stood out among a sea of monuments celebrating male heroism, and why the patron saint's acts of determination and fortitude resonate for Brincat. The feat of exploration and progress of human civilisation, as represented often by statues of men riding horses, is the conceptual lynchpin of this work. In *Mexican Standoff*, the 'stand-off' between the women on horseback, in united formation, and the male horse rider represents a deadlock, or at the very least a provocation that silently observes the leadership and strength of women.

Brincat performs a related work in Sydney for the 2013 Anne Landa Award. Women riding horses will once again 'stand-off', both in front of Gilbert Bayes' *The offerings of peace*

and *The offerings of war* 1923, two bronze sculptures of men on horseback that notably guard the entrance of the Gallery; and opposite the male artists' names and base reliefs emblazoned in bronze across its architectural facade. By inscribing herself in relationship to this art history, the work performs a type of institutional critique that is also examining the very historiography of art itself. Brincat mines the past, drawing on these histories that are external to her, to reflect and inflect their meaning. She has little experience with horses, and thus the performance is as much a feat to stretch her physical and emotional self as it is an affront to the overt masculinity on display at the Gallery. Her work resounds with 'blood' and 'fire', both within and outside the architecture of the building, throwing into relief the historical construction of representation. ●





Lauren Brincat *Steady As She Goes* 2011. Excerpt 2:30 min

# RECENT WORK

Next >



ALICIA  
FRANKOVICH



*The Opportune Spectator 2012, performance. Excerpt 2:25 min*

# ALICIA FRANKOVICH

FREE TIME 2013  
THE OPPORTUNE SPECTATOR 2013



What do we usually do in an art gallery?  
We walk – slowly, climb some stairs  
or wait for an elevator ... look around,  
focus, squint, step back from an object,  
circle it, step closer, examine surfaces and  
figures, sit down – lean against a wall,  
perhaps lie down to watch a video or film.  
If you are alone you might take notes;  
if you are in a group you might talk from  
time to time, sharing your findings.

# THE SPECTATOR'S UTOPIAN BODY

Kathrin Meyer

Eventually you might get a bit tired, and wonder what you might eat later on. Continuing the walk, slowly – you look around, seeing other people behave in similar ways. In his survey *The birth of the museum* (1995) Tony Bennett describes the museum as an institution that civilises and domesticates the gaze and behaviours of the people in its bounds. There is no running or shouting in museums, and hardly ever sweating or panting. It is a place for looking, quietly, and for contemplation.

In her performances Alicia Frankovich introduces some elements that draw attention to this very setting of quiet contemplation and its rules. In *Free time*, for the duration of around 20 minutes just before the exhibition opens, the large foyer on the ground floor becomes a place that seems to have suspended its firm definition as a place dedicated to hosting large numbers of

people who are about to buy tickets, check their coats and bags, and enter the galleries to look at artworks. Suddenly a group of runners enters the foyer, sweating and panting, apparently just finishing their training and using the gallery as the place to cool down. Some other people are in the middle of a conversation, sitting on the floor, drinking wine, chatting. Some individuals are reading books, Kindles or iPads, some at the feet of the viewers, some sitting up or moving around. Others are working on laptops, as if they were in a library or cafe.

Next some middle-aged people dressed in hiking gear enter. They walk with a steady, imperturbable stride, pausing momentarily. There are yet more people in different types of sporting gear warming up: stretching, running a bit, jumping. Some cyclists arrive, out of breath, with their bikes thrown over their shoulders.

A few minutes into these 20 minutes of *Free time* earplugs have been handed out to the visitors. The sound is thereafter muffled, each viewer more isolated, and the attention to the events taking place is heightened. However, what is it that they see? The actions have not been rehearsed prior to the event and it is not necessary or even possible to see everything that happens or everyone who enters. The 'actors' have a starting point but when and how do they end? Has the performance already started? It has, indeed, and it consists of these different sets of actions that demarcate the beginning, the middle or the end of something and that have been chosen by Alicia Frankovich to take place inside the museum, where they are totally out of place.

By transposing these actions Frankovich generates an experimental set-up or game that addresses institutional conventions and their constitution. There is no finite answer or end to it, rather it consists of negotiating one's own role either as a participant who is warming up for an unrealised routine – reading, chatting or carrying a bike through the space – or as participant who has just come to see the performance. Here the notion of spectatorship, in the sense that it might be passive 'bystandership' or simply 'seeing', becomes difficult to argue. In this mingling of different actions from a range of contexts our own behaviour appears as subjugated to a set of rules or conventions, too. Aren't those people who have entered the gallery to warm up, cool

down or chat with colleagues also witnessing a performance consisting of the act of watching?

This question of different roles is also articulated in Frankovich's piece *The opportune spectator*, which takes place every weekday during the show and is exhibited in the form of written accounts by participants from earlier iterations under the title *Between us and them*. For this piece Frankovich asks a group of runners to end their route in the space where the spectators have gathered previously. The runners enter together, and there is a showdown as both groups face each other for several minutes in silence, watching and perceiving, time slowing down. One of these groups has already been in the space, their bodies relatively calm and subdued; they have talked and waited while tension has built in the expectation of the arrival. The other group enters this situation from outside after heavy physical activity, their bodies very present with their loud breathing, sweat, and heightened pulses and levels of adrenaline. The accounts of both the runners and non-runners describe how attention was drawn onto one's own body, its role in this setting and how the roles were established through behaviour and clothing – and how fragile they were. As one of the runners writes: 'I look at you as you watch me; oh how I would love to take a picture of you right now.'

In Michel Foucault's radio lecture 'The utopian body' he ponders whether the body is absolutely present or if it is, on the contrary, constantly

elsewhere, a true non-place. He comes to the conclusion that it is 'always elsewhere', tied to all elsewheres in the world, as only in relation to it there is a below or an above. 'There, where paths and spaces come to meet, the body is nowhere. ... [My body] has no place, but it is from it that all possible places, real or utopian, emerge and radiate.'<sup>1</sup> The utopian bodies of the participants in Frankovich's performances or situations are bodies that are rendered visible as site and constituent of power relations, conventions and negotiations of notions of passivity, activity, participation and spectatorship.<sup>2</sup> The situations she sets up draw attention to the fact that there is no stable ground or division in social relations, that everybody is both subject and object in every moment. ●

## NOTES

1 Michel Foucault, 'The utopian body', in Caroline A Jones (ed), *Sensorium*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass, 2006, p 233, (orig 'Le corps utopique', 1966).

2 The title of the piece *The opportune spectator* is reminiscent of French philosopher Jacques Rancière's text 'The emancipated spectator'. In this text Rancière argues for an understanding of the spectator as being active per se, as the activity of looking already encompasses translating and interpreting. 'Spectatorship is not a passivity that must be turned into activity. It is our normal situation. We learn and teach, we act and know, as spectators who link what they see with what they have seen and told, done and dreamed ... We don't need to turn spectators into actors. We do need to acknowledge that every spectator is already an actor in his own story and that every actor is in turn the spectator of the same kind of story.' Jacques Rancière, 'The emancipated spectator', *Artforum*, March 2007, p 277.

Swipe image >



Alicia Frankovich  
*Human Trophies* 2012  
Excerpt 3:46 min



Alicia Frankovich  
*Floor Resistance* 2011-12  
Excerpt 1:37 min

# RECENT WORK

Next >

A close-up, high-angle shot of a lion lying on its back on a stone-paved ground. The lion's eyes are closed, and its mouth is slightly open. Several people are gathered around the lion, with their hands resting on its body. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is somber and poignant.

L A R E S A  
K O S L O F F





Swipe image >

# LARESA KOSLOFF

ETERNAL SITUATION 2013



In many Latin countries the early evening *passegiata* is an established part of life. Participants in this well-dressed ambulatory stroll are both objects of a collective gaze and viewers looking on; as much as one is there to check out the scene, one also becomes part of a larger system of object and gaze. This cultural practice has its parallels in the act of viewing art in art museums.

# ON LOOKING AT LOOKING

Rebecca Coates

Both the *passegiata* and art museums have an inherent aspect of spectacle involved. In both the movement, method and intent are consciously and unconsciously choreographed. Like the social tradition of the *passegiata*, gallery visits are bound by their own set of procedures and rules – both written and unsaid. While the art museum of old was often governed by a set of don'ts – don't run, don't touch the art, don't yell – behaviours today are less clearly defined, largely due to the changing role of the art museum and its audiences.

Laresa Kosloff's video made for the Anne Landa Award, *Eternal situation* 2013, offers a new perspective on the age-old tradition of looking, and looking at art. How do people look at art, what do they see, how do they behave in the gallery, and why do they go? She humorously engages with the broader questions

inherent in a form of institutional critique. A much-used term, institutional critique has evolved since the 1990s to describe an analysis of the role and function of the gallery and art museum in contemporary art.

Over a period of days Kosloff observed and filmed visitors to permanent collections of the colonial and 19th-century Australian works and European old masters in the Grand Courts galleries of the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Using an SLR camera, and indistinguishable from many visitors similarly kitted out, Kosloff became part of the museum frame, virtually invisible to fellow users of the gallery space. She captured both the pathos and the ordinariness with which visitors look at art. Against a background of masterpiece paintings, Victorian narratives, scenes laden with sentiment, ponderous sculptures and landscapes of *sturm*

*und drang* (storm and stress), the actions of visitors can appear poignant, amusing, pedestrian or simply absurd. It is not a cruel gaze, however. Kosloff set the repeating footage of visitors looking – and not looking – at works of art to the musical refrains of Whitney Houston's 1990s classic love ballad 'I have nothing [without you]'. Houston exhorts, 'Don't walk away from me ... Don't you dare walk away from me-e-eeee! ... I have nothing, nothing, nothing, if I don't have youooooo ... you-oooo-oooo-ooo-ooooo!' The sentiments are appropriate, not only for the newly animated works on the Gallery's walls, but also perhaps for the artist herself.

Kosloff brings the very business of looking at art to the fore. Visitors' studied and unconscious gestures and actions, from posing in front of sculptures to the act of simply walking away from works of art, are all captured through her lens. Similarities of form and shape, action and gaze are emphasised and brought into sharper relief through the editing and framing processes that create narrative emphasis and momentum.

Storytelling has always been part of our lives. Kosloff's weaving of digital images through the editorial process acknowledges our contemporary obsession with narrating our subjective days through social media, capturing the minutiae of experience on cameras, smart phones and other hand-held devices. Collaged images accompanied by music are a well-established format for both amateur and professional videos of weddings, birthdays

and other significant personal events. Kosloff acknowledges these recent filmic histories, and creates a video 'performance' of life in the museum that questions the provisional nature of the video medium itself.

YouTube, image-sharing websites and online social networks have all given amateur and non-professional reflections about art and other subjects newfound prominence and weight. But how much time is spent actually looking? One recent Tate Gallery (UK) survey revealed that the average viewer looks at a painting for less than two seconds, spends another ten seconds on the wall text, looks briefly at the painting again and then moves to the next. New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art established that their visitors' average was a little longer, at 23 seconds. A similar survey at the Louvre found that people look at da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* 1503–06 for an average of 15 seconds. In all, time spent looking is distressingly brief.

Looking at art still matters, though the motivations are not always pure. A recent Tate Gallery survey found that the experience of viewing great works of art, including paintings by 18th-century English landscape artists JMW Turner and John Constable, or the 15th-century Florentine Sandro Botticelli, *could* give viewers the same pleasure as being in love; but it's not always so. Beyond the experience of viewing art, visitor surveys reveal that art museums and galleries also have social functions – they are ideal places to catch up with friends, to spend time as a family or even to conduct a first date.

The role of the institution, the museum's taxonomy of collections, its hierarchy of objects, modes of display and forms of audience participation have all been challenged and explored. Marcel Duchamp's first readymades raised these questions, as did his *Boîte-en-valise*, created between 1935 and 1940. His exhibition *First papers of surrealism*, held in New York in 1942, which was tied up in miles of white string, also challenged notions of the exhibition and modes of display. Marcel Broodthaers similarly questioned the role of the museum and the status of objects and their installation through ongoing projects, such as *Musée d'Art Moderne (Section XIXe Siècle) Département des Aigles* (The Museum of Modern Art, Department of Eagles) 1968. It began as a semi-fictional museum in Broodthaers' Brussels apartment, and was later redisplayed in other institutional settings, in an evolving series of 'selections' that included prints, signage, photography, drawings and artefacts. The artist not only consciously created the role of 'artist' for himself, but adopted the role of 'museum director' and 'curator' as well.

Martin Creed took another angle: for *No. 227, the lights going on and off* 2000 he notoriously turned the lights on and off in an 'empty' gallery space. The reductionist experience was a visual equivalent of John Cage's minimalist sound piece *4'33"* 1952, a 4-minute, 33-second composition of silence. Creed's humorous work elicited both amusement and surprised disbelief, and encouraged visitors to unpick their expectations about the nature of a work of art and really look. Subtracting physical

art, the artist lifted the gallery itself out of the unconscious background.

Kosloff has chosen to capture intimacy and boredom, affinity and disregard. She gives each gesture and moment ironic significance through the soundtrack overlay. The viewing that Kosloff depicts, however, shows a public engagement with exhibitions and looking at art that is somewhat different to the aspirations of promotional video material for blockbuster shows.

'Don't walk away from me', the soundtrack to Kosloff's piece pleads. She exhorts us to look, and to look again. ●

## NOTES

1 Lyrics by David Foster and Linda Thompson-Jenner, 1992.



Laresa Kosloff and Andy Thomson, *The Green Text* 2011. Excerpt 2:17 min

# RECENT WORK

Next >

A close-up, profile shot of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a blue button-down shirt. He is looking out of a car window at night. The background is dark with blurred lights, suggesting a city street. The text 'ANGELICA MESITI' is overlaid in white, sans-serif font in the lower center of the image.

ANGELICA  
MESITI





*Citizens Band* 2012 (production still). Excerpt 2:57 min

# ANGELICA MESITI

CITIZENS BAND 2012



A handsome young woman is standing in waist-high water. The swimming pool, indeed the whole sports complex we are in, is otherwise empty. The cavernous space is brightly lit but we don't know if it is night or day outside. She is wearing swimmers with a blue trim that matches the colour of the pool. She gathers herself, takes a breath, and begins to drum the water, producing percussive sounds of different pitch and timbre.

# CITIZENS BAND

Robyn Davidson

She loses herself completely in her performance, while the camera remains still and watches respectfully. She learnt the technique from her grandmother back in Cameroon. All the women would drum together in the river – a ritual to celebrate it as a source of sustenance. The girl now lives in Paris. She comes to the pool on her own, bringing that little fragment of elsewhere with her, keeping it alive. But for what purpose?

It is night in a city. An Asian man, possibly Mongolian, in any case with Khan blood in his veins, sits on a corner and plays a stringed instrument. His throat singing accompanies it. I heard a story once about the origins of throat singing: herders out alone with their animals longed for company, so they devised a way to sing in two voices (overtones). The man is surrounded by manmade surfaces; there is not a shred of nature to be seen. No one seems to

be listening to him. As far as human connection is concerned, he might as well still be out with his herds. Except for the camera; again it gives full attention to the music and the performer. All external noise seems to have melted away.

Next we are inside a taxicab. The driver, dressed in long-sleeve shirt and trousers, sits relaxed behind the wheel of his cab, looking straight ahead. Outside the abstract colours of urban lights swish by. He whistles the most poignant melody – music he learnt as a boy in Sudan. It is an atom of his previous life, of memory closed off from this new place, this new time.

Again it is night. I recognise the Paris Metro. Tired, preoccupied people get on or off a train. Some wear ear pods. No one seems to take much notice of the Algerian man playing a Casio keyboard that has seen better days.



He could be blind, this man. Did he find the keyboard on a pavement somewhere, by a rubbish bin? He sings in Arabic. Like the others we have seen he gives everything to his music, he seems to live inside it. Why aren't the people on the train as moved, as undone, as we are?

These images can be easily read as loss, the remnants of cultural forms wrenched from their origins; their meaning is lodged like fragile splinters in a homogenising modernity. They are casualties of cultural collisions – those splintering catastrophes that transfigure the world from top to bottom. In this view the performers are uprooted and alienated in a strange environment. They have lost the familial traditions that were woven into the fabric of everyday life.

If this was the only way to read the images of Angelica Mesiti's *Citizens Band* the elegiac mood would be merely nostalgia. But none of the performers appears victim-like. Surviving as a minority requires grit and skill. Transcending both prejudice and tradition is a difficult accomplishment, but a worthy aspiration.

Certainly there is loneliness here, as if these people have been swallowed up by a vast indifference. But one could also view them, not as remnant splinters, but as seeds. They are carrying something on, communicating something. Doesn't that attentive camera prove it? Doesn't our willingness to listen prove it? The camera is recording that most ancient of human capacities, to communicate value.

Each of us lives intensely inside the boundary of skin. From within we are constantly assimilating past and present, responding to new circumstances in a world of continuous change. We forge a narrative and vision that are unique to us, and yet are transmissible. Words might fail in this transmission, but music – the language beneath all languages – does not. Music takes us back to 'the cry of the other', so said Rousseau.

We are embedded in this reef of shared subjectivities, all that humankind has thought and done, the record that has been left for us to receive and modify. Fragile and peripheral, easily overlooked or ignored, these immigrant fragments nevertheless pose challenges. When we leave our place of origin (as almost all humans do, whether forced or by choice, in this era characterised by upheaval), what can be let go of and what must be kept?

Can what we keep belong to the new place, too? What might each have to give up to really accommodate the other? When we watch and listen – really listen – to these performers we are reminded of the intrinsic complexity of human subjectivity. What we are is always an open question.

Mesiti finds these fragments, and presents them to us with a profound and quiet respect. In her formality there is a certain distance, which confers the esteem one artist feels for another. The intimacy is not presumptuous. And when she weaves the four strains together at the end, is it cacophony, or is it a dissonance that might resolve towards harmony? ●



KATE  
MITCHELL



Swipe image >

# KATE MITCHELL

LUCKY BREAK 2013



In 1956 Murakami Saburo, of the Japanese avant-garde movement the Gutai group, hurled himself through forty-two stretched paper screens as part of the group's second exhibition presented at the Ohara Kaikan hall in Tokyo. The performative gesture embodied much of the spirit of the group's ideological concerns that encompassed destruction as a creative force, material experimentation, and a dramatic reconsideration of the temporal and spatial possibilities of art beyond the object.

# SMASHING RAINBOWS

Mark Feary

Murakami Saburo's dramatic gesture is revisited within Kate Mitchell's most recent project, *Lucky Break* 2013, which draws on Murakami's exigency, yet with a heightened appearance of personal jeopardy. In this work the artist propels herself through a series of seven glass panes, presented within the gallery on a series of small, glass-thin screens positioned circuitously so that the action appears endless, being relentlessly re-enacted. Whereas Murakami's *Tsuka (Passage)* 1956 was performed live and the torn screens remained as a signifier for and residue of the action, Mitchell doesn't allow us the opportunity for respite from the turbulence. Indeed, it is not initially apparent where the 'luck' referenced in the work's title might lie, for the action is reminiscent of a lab rat entrapped within a momentum toward no discernable purpose. That the windows should be approached with such velocity suggests a similar urgency

to *Tsuka (Passage)*, one of liberation, even if Murakami's gesture sought to challenge the conventions of art and its hegemony in painting as did numerous artists in the decades following World War II. Mitchell's veracity bears evidence to a defiant commitment to 'smashing through' barriers, in this instance through the colour spectrum in its most ubiquitous form – the rainbow. It is either the embodiment of total optimism or a destructive challenge to its possibility. This is familiar territory within Mitchell's practice, creating a tension between that which may be magical and what might be required in its pursuit, revealing luck as a folly, yet one that has an allure which cannot be resisted. Intrinsic within her testing ground is the recurring question, 'What if?'

*Lucky Break* is flanked by another project, *Some extra luck (documents)* 2013<sup>1</sup>, taking form as a series of framed A4-sized documents.

The work assumes a presence akin to the type of official registration requiring public display, indicative of some form of bureaucratic compliance. *Some extra luck (documents)* functions as a record of a project undertaken some months previous, whereupon Mitchell attempted to shift the odds of chance, yet it also moves beyond the realm of straightforward documentation, as a signifier of what *could* happen as opposed to something that *has* happened. In a minuscule park in the inner-Sydney suburb of Erskineville, Mitchell sewed a crop of four-leaf clovers, dramatically shifting the natural probability (or improbability) of chancing upon this talisman of good fortune. Of this project Mitchell would quip, 'It is like having the coordinates to the end of a rainbow.'

The piece nods to the aesthetic of instructional works that gained traction within conceptual art, but proposes the transformative possibilities of enabling luck, rather than encouraging the performance of a task or the restaging and activation of an 'artwork' by instruction. As Hans Ulrich Obrist suggests in his contextualising text for the ongoing generative project *do it*<sup>2</sup>, Marcel Duchamp is arguably the originator of the instructional artwork; he encouraged audiences to undertake such tasks as to 'make a picture or a sculpture, as one who would unravel a roll of cinema film; buy a dictionary and strike out the words that can be stricken.'<sup>3</sup>

*Some extra luck (documents)* sits somewhere between the directive nature of the formal instructional artwork and the problematising

realm of documentation presented as art. A reading of the project could be of the stacking of odds in an audience's favour, through increasing the probability of chancing upon a talisman as a precursor for enhancing luck. Is Mitchell a leprechaun clad in a work-worn denim ensemble or a charlatan peddling positivity through the manipulation of superstition?

This is the slippage within Mitchell's work, elucidating a dichotomy between aspiration and contentment, as she reminds us of our undeniable optimism for positive change while reiterating the inevitability of the sustained efforts required in its attainment. This destabilises the very notion (or hope) of luck as something entirely random to be chanced upon, as opposed to something that must be painstakingly laboured for. Mitchell's practice pivots between a position of youthful exuberance, in which anything might be possible, and a more sceptical world outlook, insofar as life is more often a series of ever-conspiring hurdles. Both *Lucky Break* and *Some extra luck (documents)* embrace a discernable naivety and enthusiasm tempered by a wearied acknowledgment of the drudgery, boredom and Sisyphean monotonousness that is so probable in life, like a never-ending Ferris wheel ride. ●

## NOTES

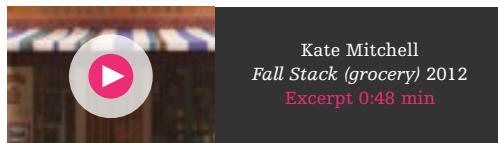
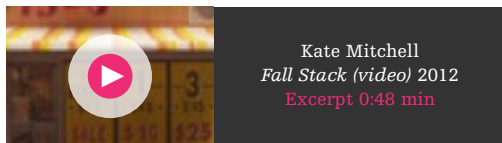
1 *Some extra luck* was first presented within *Micro parks*, a project developed by Performance Space, Sydney, in early 2013.

2 Coincidentally, British artist Tacita Dean's instructions within the expansive and evolving *do it* project is titled *Finding a four leaf clover on a sunny day*, with instructions to:

- Wait for a sunny day
- Look for a field full of clovers
- Make sure there are no sheep or cows grazing in the field
- Walk slowly into the field
- Keep your eyes absolutely focused on the clovers
- Try not to tread on them
- See the clover with the four leaves
- Pick it
- Press it in a book

3 Marcel Duchamp, cited in Hans Ulrich Obrist, 'Some fragments on the history of do-it-yourself art', in *do it* at e-flux, [www.e-flux.com/projects/do\\_it/notes/notes.html](http://www.e-flux.com/projects/do_it/notes/notes.html) (accessed April 2013).

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## RECENT WORK

Next >



JAMES  
NEWITT







*We Are The People* 2012, (production still). Excerpt 1:30 min

# JAMES NEWITT

SAY IT LIKE YOU WANT IT 2012  
WE ARE THE PEOPLE 2012



*The space between us* presents new works by the artist James Newitt, emerging from a three-month residency in Liverpool. The two-channel video work *Say it like you want it* and the single screen work *We Are The People* (both 2012) are installed so that they may be read discretely or taken together as an integral, multi-channelled installation. When looked at either way, these works comprise an elegant, concise and subtle reflection on forms of public collective demonstration.

I PROTEST,  
WE  
PROTEST,  
THEY  
PROTEST...

Mick Wilson

Formally the works use a documentary mode of visual address but are edited within a terse rhythmic structure, punctuated by abrupt cuts through black, with a tightly constructed audio track. These elements combine to compel the viewer's attention. This allows the artist to maintain a minimal narrative structure while elaborating a complex *mise en scène* that foregrounds the theatrical strategies of street marches and protest actions. In terms of the events depicted, both works have a particularity of place marked by the distinctive Liverpoolian accents in the opening scene of *Say it like you want it* and by the 'Star of Toxteth, Liverpool' emblazoned on the marching band's drum in *We Are The People*. However, the particular sites of class and race conflict referenced

are not the substantive content of the works. In the two-channel work it becomes apparent as the scenes unfold that the performances enacted by the thirty or so players in the modest theatrical space are not anchored in any clear political project or cause. The montage of elements – chants, slogans, masks, scarves, flags, banners and gestures – are formally integrated by the carefully orchestrated camera work, the simple choreography of bodies evenly paced in the tight circles of the theatre space, and the precise editing. These strategies combine to distil the general form of protest rhetoric and gestures from the unlikely collision of ethno-nationalist, anti-fascist and class-war references. On the other hand, the insertion of the second work, with a very

singular depiction of an Orange Order band in the streets of working-class Liverpool – namely a place linked notoriously to a series of riots in 1981 – ensures that we do not see this as an arbitrary composition of ideological positions and rhetoric.

There is a particular problem being worked through here, the problem of collective political mobilisation and the production of public identities in an era that is often decried as ‘post-political’ and as an age of ‘cynical reason’, or at a time of ineffective, insincere and complicit dissidence (à la philosophers such as Slavoj Žižek).<sup>1</sup> It is very important that neither of these depictions – the avowedly ‘staged’ performances in the theatre nor the ‘unstaged’, though rigorously planned and theatrically orchestrated, Orange marching band – are presented in a fully detached manner. Both works, in different ways, balance the camera’s tendency to objectify the persons and actions depicted so as to interrupt any casual presumption by the viewer to pass easy judgment on the folly of protest or the predictable territorial reflexes and anxious antics of identities under threat.

The inclusion of moments of rest within the theatre performances and the rhythmic pull of the chants both work, albeit in different registers, to draw the viewer affectively into the scenes depicted. The opening frame of the short, single-channel work presents the viewer with an out-of-focus street scene that is broken into by the marching band moving past.

The unmoved camera suddenly re-positions the viewer as being simultaneously intruded upon by the marchers and enfolded into the scene as someone standing close by, part of the crowd drawn out to the street by this parade. These subtle devices work to balance the artist’s impulse to critique with an ambivalent recognition of more diffuse identificatory longings.

In this way the works open out from the specificity of their place of production – a particular post-industrial, dis-invested and politically abandoned inner-city urban scene – to a globally dispersed, contemporary political doubt. Following on from the western media’s zealous over-hyping of the Arab Spring, in the wake of the seemingly implosive organisational strategies of the Occupy Movement, and with the accomplished cooption as media spectacle of the anti-austerity protests that marked the most recent cyclical crisis of capital, there is doubt as to whether there are viable strategies of dissent, protest and collective mobilisation available in this historical juncture. But the energy and vitality of Newitt’s work is precisely the degree to which it can resist the temptation to abandon the potential for public identification and political agency while rehearsing a radical doubt as to their inherited forms. This then is the saliency of Newitt’s poetic moving-image works; these tightly condensed and rhythmic meditations call us out into the streets, asking us to think carefully again: With whom, for what and how shall we identify and give ourselves agency? ●



CHRISTIAN  
THOMPSON



Video of performances to be added in June 2013 update.

# CHRISTIAN THOMPSON

HEALING CIRCLE 2013  
TREE OF KNOWLEDGE 2010–13



*Here was a world always transmogrifying,  
always seeking form as people and  
things amalgamated and separated within  
the larger, flowing influence of an  
ever-integrating grammar of existence.*

Ross Gibson<sup>1</sup>

# SOUND WORLDS

Jeff Khan

In his recent writings on the life and work of early British settler William Dawes, the Sydney-based author and artist Ross Gibson poetically meditates on the power of language. Describing Dawes' efforts to catalogue the language of the Indigenous peoples he encountered around the nascent settlement of Sydney, Gibson proffers a glimpse of the shifting properties of the language Dawes transcribed, and its transformative influence: 'the fluid nature of speech patterns, the baffling capacity of sounds to change their meaning from context to context became for him not a frustration but a source of revelation'. In effect, Gibson speculates, Dawes' open-ended engagement with the language that became known as Eora enabled him to step beyond the sharp-edged reality defined by his native English and achieve a more holistic, immersive understanding of the Indigenous worldview.

In recent years, language and its transformative properties has become a central preoccupation in Christian Thompson's works. Thompson is perhaps best known for his striking photomedia

work exploring hybrid cultural identities, and the tension between western and Indigenous modes of representation. Lately, though, he has been turning his attention to sound as a primary artistic medium. This focus on the aural has opened a way for Thompson to experiment with, and draw attention to, the unique textures and nuances of Bidjara, the language of his own Indigenous cultural heritage. Dealing with spoken and sung Bidjara – the primary means of transmission for both language and culture in most Indigenous Australian traditions – Thompson's works foreground the lyrical, undulating qualities of his language, and its potential to invoke an altered sense of space and time.

Thompson's memorable video work *Gamu mambu (Blood song)*, created for the 2010 Sydney Biennale, features a Dutch opera singer performing a traditional Bidjara song, which had been composed into a western operatic arrangement. The collision of these sonic structures from immensely different meaning systems transformed both the Bidjara song

and the operatic libretto into something else entirely: a hauntingly memorable reverberation of cadence and melody that carried an ancient language and culture into a contemporary moment of globalism and flux. Also in 2010, Thompson collaborated with Spanish/Dutch sound designer Carlos Vaquero to create *Decent extremist*, a purely sonic work that transmuted the utterance of the words 'muna' and 'nguwal' – the singular and collective Bidjara words for bee – into the literal sound of a swarm of bees. With this work, Thompson and Vaquero created something that was almost equally threatening as it was beautiful, an auditory swarm that gave the language a sculptural presence and established a physical, kinesthetic relationship to the viewer.

For the 2013 Anne Landa Award, Thompson has again collaborated with Vaquero to delve deeper into the visceral, affective capacities of sound. Significantly, *Healing Circle 2013* gives no translation of the single Bidjara word it utilises, instead foregrounding the experiential, aesthetic qualities of the language to a non-Bidjara audience. The work amplifies and reconstructs this spoken word into the sound of a double bullroarer that whirs and resonates across the gallery space in a dizzying sonic spiral. The double bullroarer is a traditional musical instrument, variations on which can be found in diverse cultures around the world, including a number of Indigenous Australian cultures. Used for ceremonial purposes as well as to communicate across vast distances, its deep, rich timbre – here reconstructed by Thompson and Vaquero from the sonic substance of Bidjara itself – reverberates

outwards, seemingly passing through the gallery's window, across the valley of Farm Cove and Woolloomooloo.

The ideas of transmission and communication that the sound of the bullroarer invokes become a powerful lens through which to consider Thompson's treatment of his Bidjara language. The survival of the language – which is considered in some official records to be extinct, but which is spoken fluently by Thompson's father and a number of his relatives – becomes analogous to the continuation of Bidjara culture into contemporaneous times. Says Thompson, 'if one word of Bidjara is being spoken somewhere, anywhere in the world, then our language is alive, we are still here and we are part of a global economy and discourse.' What occurs through his work, though, is more than just a straightforward process of education in the classical western sense, or a passing on of Bidjara verbatim. Thompson's sculptural transformations of Bidjara position it as a life force, a powerful, living entity that bears a tangible impact on both subject and landscape. It seeps into us, envelops our senses and transposes them into a different kind of consciousness.

As Gibson argues so eloquently in his writings on Dawes, language is a slippery, quicksilver phenomenon that operates on a sensory, unconscious level even more than it serves as the vehicle of particular, fixed meanings. Through the transforming lens of his artistic practice, Thompson offers us a fantastically reimagined version of Bidjara, one that powerfully re-orientates us beyond the

binary realities of the colonial worldview. As Thompson posits, 'perhaps this is what art is able to do, perform a "spiritual repatriation" rather than a physical one, fragment the historical narrative and traverse time and place to establish a new realm in the cosmos, set something free, allow it to embody the past and be intrinsically connected to the present.' With his sonic sculptures, we are transported. ●

## NOTES

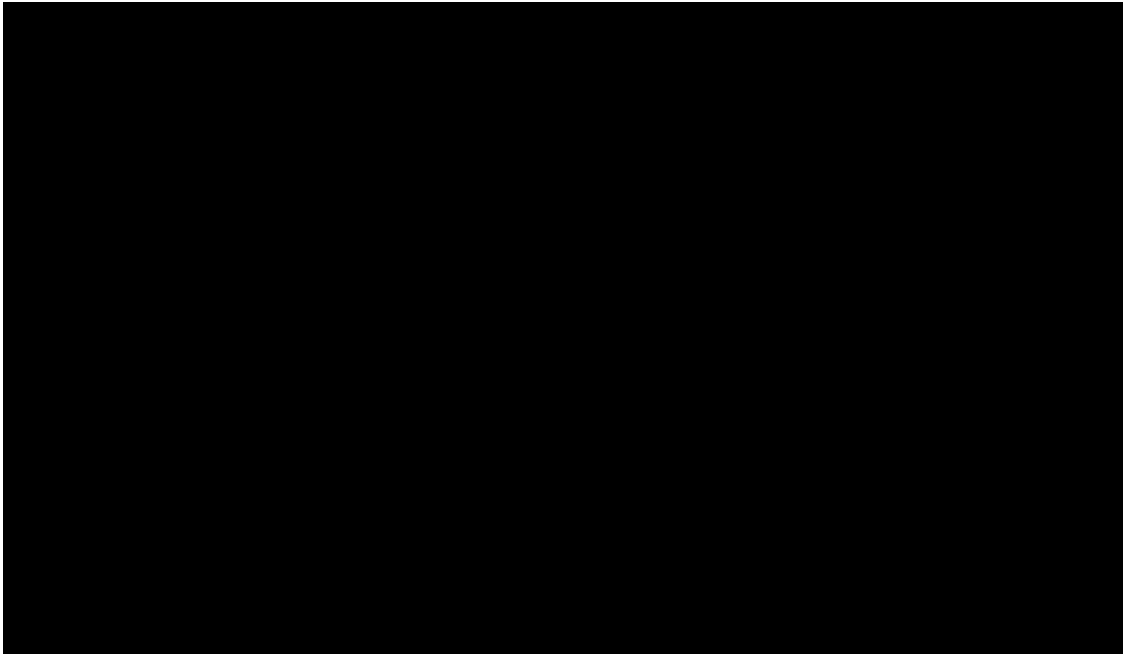
1 Ross Gibson, 'Event-Grammar: the language notebooks of William Dawes', *Meanjin*, vol 68, no 2, 2009, pp 91–99 (available at: <http://meanjin.com.au/editions/volume-68-number-2-2009/article/event-grammar-the-language-notebooks-of-william-dawes/>)

2 *ibid.*

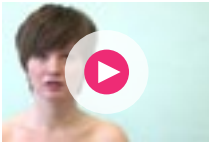
3 Christian Thompson, correspondence with the author, March 2013.

4 N Forrest, 'Aboriginal Artist Christian Thompson Digs Oxford University', 2013. [online] Available at: <http://au.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/862061>

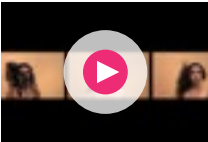




Swipe image >



Christian Thompson  
*Gamu mambu*  
*(Blood song)* 2010  
Excerpt 0:38 min



Christian Thompson  
*HEAT* 2010  
Excerpt 0:45 min

# RECENT WORK

Next >

# ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



LAUREN BRINCAT



ALICIA FRANKOVICH



LARESA KOSLOFF



ANGELICA MESITI



KATE MITCHELL



JAMES NEWITT



CHRISTIAN THOMPSON

# LAUREN BRINCAT

Born 1980, Sydney, Australia. Lives and works in Sydney

## Selected solo exhibitions

*It's not the end of the world*, Anna Schwartz Gallery Melbourne, 2013

*Shoot from the hip*, Anna Schwartz Gallery Sydney, 2012

*Grand standing*, Bundaberg Regional Gallery, Bundaberg, Qld, 2010

*Shine on you crazy diamond*, Museum of Old and New Art, MONA FOMA, Hobart, 2010

*The whole kit and caboodle*, Sherman Galleries Art Box, Sydney, 2007

## Selected group exhibitions

*The wandering: moving images from the MCA Collection*, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, touring, 2013

*Basil Sellers Art Prize*, Ian Potter Gallery, Melbourne, 2012

*Bo Australia*, Matucana 100, Santiago, Chile, 2012

*Contemporary Australia: women*, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2012

*TarraWarra Biennial 2012: sonic spheres*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Healesville, Vic, 2012

*Nothing like performance*, Artspace, Sydney, 2011

*Social sculpture*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, 2011

*Helen Lempiere Travelling Scholarship*, winner of finalists exhibition, Artspace, Sydney, 2009

Liquid Architecture Festival of Sound Arts Australia, Performance Space, CarriageWorks, Sydney, 2009

*Make a scene*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, 2009

## Selected bibliography

French, Blair. 'Forcing performance into the exhibition format', *Eye Contact*, 3 December 2011, (accessed 13 February 2013)

Fuller, Rachel. 'Brincat in Sydney', *Eye Contact*, 11 May 2012, (accessed 13 February 2013)

Kent, Rachel. 'Social sculpture', *Art Asia Pacific*, July/August 2011, (accessed 13 February 2013)

Medina, Cuauhtemoc. 'Congestion aesthetics', *Dasplatforms*, 1 December 2012, (accessed 13 February 2013)

Richards, Bree. 'Doing, being, performing', *Performa Magazine*, 24 January 2013, (accessed 13 February 2013)

Richards, Bree. 'Embodied acts: live and alive – an email round table', *Contemporary Australia: women*, exh cat, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2012, pp 173–82

Starr, Bala. '10 metre platform', in *Basil Sellers Art Prize*, exh cat, Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, 2012, pp 12–13

Wallis, Pip. 'Shine on you crazy Diamond', *Text Camp Reader*, 13 May 2012, (accessed 13 February 2013)

Yang, Amy. 'Artist interview: Lauren Brincat', *Australian Art Collector*, 27 March 2012, (accessed 13 February 2013)

# ALICIA FRANKOVICH

Born 1980, Tauranga, New Zealand. Lives and works in Berlin, Germany

## Selected solo exhibitions

Kunstverein Hildesheim, Germany, 2013

*Bodies and situations*, Starkwhite, Auckland, New Zealand, 2012

*Gestures, splits and annulations*, Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany, 2011

*Effigies*, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Dunedin, New Zealand, 2010

*A plane for behavers*, ARTSPACE, Auckland, New Zealand, 2009

*Super segue*, Artspace, Sydney, 2009

## Selected group exhibitions

*Nouvelles vagues: the real thing?* Young curators season 2013, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France, 2013

*The Walters Prize*, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, Auckland, New Zealand, 2012

*Dublin contemporary 2011 – Terrible beauty: art, crisis, change and the Office of Non-Compliance*, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin, Ireland, 2011

*NEW010*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2010

*Picturing the studio*, The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, United States, 2009

## Selected performances

*Contact*, Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany, 2012

*A program of artistic interventions ... and they installed the office in the tavern, organized by The Office (Berlin) and Le Bureau/ (Paris)*, 2012, 'Drei Schwestern', Berlin, Germany, and Gaité Lyrique, 'Bar du foyer historique', Paris, France, 2012

*Why lame ducks when dogs can fly?* Arratia Beer, Berlin, Germany, 2012

*Floor resistance*, Hebbel Am Ufer, HAU 3, Berlin, Germany, 2011

*International Prize for Performance*, 4th edition, Galleria Civica di Arte Contemporanea, Trento, Italy, 2008

## Selected bibliography

Blumenstein, Ellen. 'Behavers', in Emma Bugden (ed), *Volume 2*, Artspace and Clouds, Auckland, New Zealand, 2011, pp 52–61

Boenzi, Francesca & Dominic Eichler. *Film/Body/ Gesture Alicia Frankovich: book of works*, Künstlerhaus Bethanien GmbH, Berlin, 2011

Braddock, Christopher. *Performing contagious bodies: ritual participation in contemporary art*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2013

Braddock, Chris. 'Random entrant and the force of failure', *Frakcija Performing Arts Journal*, no 50, 2009, pp 26–33

Bywater, Jon. 'Review: Alicia Frankovich', *Artforum*, May 2012, p 329

Cormack, Emily. 'Alicia Frankovich', *Frieze*, issue 147, May 2012, p 240

Delany, Max. 'Alicia Frankovich', in *Artists' Proof #1*, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2012, pp 14–21

Fite-Wassilak, Chris. 'Alicia Frankovich', *The 4th Auckland Triennial: last ride in a hot air balloon*, exh cat, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, Auckland, New Zealand, 2010, pp 72–73

Keehan, Reuben. 'Double agents: complication in recent performance', *Art and Australia*, vol 47, no 1, 2009, pp 147–53

Lagnado, Lisette. *Ice cream: contemporary art in culture*, Phaidon Press, New York, NY, 2007

Müller, Dominikus. 'Body-object: on performances by Alicia Frankovich', *Be Magazin*, no 18, 2011

# LARESA KOSLOFF

Born 1974, Melbourne, Australia. Lives and works in Melbourne

## Selected solo exhibitions

*The Russian project*, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Melbourne, 2012

*CAST*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne, 2011

*Sensible world*, Artspace, Sydney, 2009

*Solidarity for a metaphysic*, ACCA @ Mirka, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2008

*New diagonal*, Ocular Lab, Melbourne, 2007

## Selected group exhibitions

*Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art*, collaborative work with Andy Thomson, part of the

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) Pop-Up Program, Glasgow, Scotland, 2012

*Made active: the Chartwell show*, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, Auckland, New Zealand, 2012  
*ACCA pop-up program*, Vernissage of the 54th Venice Biennale, 2011

*Social sculpture*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, 2011  
*In which the wind is also a protagonist*, La générale gallery, Sèvres, France, 2010

*Last ride in a hot air balloon*, 4th Auckland Triennial, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, Auckland, New Zealand, 2010

*Still vast reserves*, Magazzino D'Arte Moderna, Rome, Italy, 2009

*What I think about when I think about dancing*, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Campbelltown, NSW, 2009

## Selected bibliography

Bell, Andrea. 'Interview with Laresa Kosloff', *Runway* magazine, no 19 'Life', 2011, pp 20–25

Braddock, Chris. *Performing contagious bodies: ritual participation in contemporary art*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, NY, 2012, pp 35–59

Engberg, Juliana. 'Signing a work of art is passé these days', *CAST*, exh cat, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne, 2011 (also see artists website: [www.laresakosloff.com](http://www.laresakosloff.com))

Gardiner, Anthony. 'Of time and the body', *Column 5*, Artspace Visual Arts Centre Ltd, Melbourne, 2010, pp 16–20

Keehan, Reuben. 'Double agents: complication in recent performance', *Art and Australia*, vol 47, 2009, pp 149–53

Mathews, Hannah. 'Laresa Kosloff', *Art #2*, exh cat, ACCA Melbourne, 2011, pp 28–31

Thomson, Andy. 'Big other land', *The Russian project*, exh cat, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, Melbourne, 2012 (also see artists website: [www.laresakosloff.com](http://www.laresakosloff.com))

Thomson, Andy. 'Laresa Kosloff', *Last ride in a hot air balloon: the 4th Auckland Triennial*, exh cat, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, Auckland, New Zealand, 2010

Vasiliou, Liza. 'Spirit and muscle', *NEW '06*, exh cat, ACCA, Melbourne, 2006, pp 10–15

# ANGELICA MESITI

Born 1976, Sydney, Australia. Lives and works in Sydney and Paris, France

## Selected solo exhibitions

*The line of lode and death of Charlie Day*, 24HR Art, Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art, Darwin, 2012

*Rapture (silent anthem)*, Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2012

*The begin-again*, C3West Project commissioned by the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, and Hurstville City Council, 2011

*Rapture (silent anthem)*, Centre for Contemporary Photography (projection window), Melbourne, 2011

*Heritage Park*, Heritage Week Film Commission, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Campbelltown, NSW, 2010

*Natural history*, Gallery 9, Sydney, 2010

*The line of lode and death of Charlie Day*, Broken Hill Regional Gallery, Broken Hill, NSW, 2008

*The rockets red glare*, Mori Gallery, Sydney, 2003

## Selected group exhibitions

*5th Auckland Triennial – If you were to live here*, Auckland, New Zealand, 2013

Sharjah Biennale 11, United Arab Emirates, 2013

*We used to talk about love: Balnaves Contemporary Photomedia*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2013

Kochi-Mizuris Biennale, Kerala, India, 2012

Montevideo Biennial, El Gran Sur, Uruguay, 2012

*NEW12*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA), Melbourne, 2012

*Volume one: MCA collection* (permanent display), Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, 2012

17th International Contemporary Art Festival SESC: Videobrasil, Southern Panoramas competitive exhibition, São Paulo, Brazil, 2011

*South by southeast: recent video from Australia and New Zealand*, 3rd Yebisu International Festival for Art and Alternative Visions, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo, Japan, 2011

*Rencontres internationales Paris/Berlin/Madrid*, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Auditorium of the Ministerio de Cultura, Madrid, Spain; and Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany, 2010

## Selected bibliography

Baxter, Virginia. 'Re-inventing the city: Hurstville, Singapore, Blacktown, Manila', *RealTime*, vol 103, June–July 2011, pp 2–3

Engberg, Juliana. 'Rapture and rupture: Angelica Mesiti's Citizens Band', *NEW12*, ACCA, Melbourne, 2012

Kent, Rachel & Abigail Moncrief. *Angelica Mesiti: the begin-again*, exh cat, C3West and Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2011

Millner, Jacqueline. 'Decentralising cultural capital', *Broadsheet: Contemporary Art and Culture*, vol 40, no 2, June 2011, p 141

Rule, Dan. '[Immersive censory and spatial environments at NEW12](#)', *Broadsheet*, 22 March 2012, (accessed 14 February 2013)

# KATE MITCHELL

Born 1982, Sydney, Australia. Lives and works in Sydney

## Selected solo exhibitions

*Magic undone*, Artspace, Sydney, 2012  
*Don't touch my rocks*, Chalk Horse, Sydney, 2009  
*I am not a joke*, Chalk Horse, Sydney, 2008  
*They guard it so carefully you'd think it were gold*, Chalk Horse, Sydney, 2007  
*I could be your big dipper*, collaboration with Marley Dawson, Firstdraft Gallery, Sydney, 2006  
*Chop wood carry water*, Gallery Wren, Sydney, 2005  
*No visible peculiarities*, collaboration with Todd McMillan, Gallery Wren, Sydney, 2003

## Selected group exhibitions

*Micro parks*, Performance Space, Sydney, 2013  
*Contemporary Australia: women*, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2012  
*Error and judgement*, Arts Project Australia, Melbourne, 2012  
*NEW12*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2012  
*Primavera 2012*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2012  
*Social sculpture*, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, 2011  
*Your thoughts with external displays*, TCB, Melbourne, 2011  
*Friends*, TCB, Melbourne, 2010  
*The grip / La Mainmise*, Kadist Art Foundation, Paris, France, 2010  
*Wall work*, collaboration with Michaela Gleave, Next Wave Festival, Melbourne, 2010  
*The horn of plenty: excess and reversibility*, Para/Site Art Space, Hong Kong, China, 2009  
*The night of the sunglasses*, Manzara Perspectives, Istanbul, Turkey, 2009

## Selected performances

*Some extra luck*, Sydney, 2013  
*A log dragged from its origin to here*, Bronte to Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, 2011  
*Lost a bet*, Darlinghurst to Sydney CBD, Sydney, 2011  
*Wall work*, collaboration with Michaela Gleave, Next Wave Festival, five locations in Melbourne CBD, 2010  
*Wrong solo*, collaboration with Brian Fuata, Fraser Street Studios, Sydney, 2010  
*Magic minute*, Chalk Horse, Sydney, 2009  
*Small time genie*, Chalk Horse, Sydney, 2009  
*I could be your big dipper*, collaboration with Marley Dawson, Firstdraft, Sydney, 2006  
*Chop wood carry water*, Gallery Wren, Sydney, 2005  
*No visible peculiarities*, collaboration with Todd McMillan, Gallery Wren, Sydney, 2003

## Selected bibliography

Elliot-Jones, Rachel. 'Game is good', *Two-Thousand Magazine*, 12 December 2009, (accessed 14 February 2013)  
Feary, Mark. '50 things collectors' need to know: #3 Kate Mitchell', *Art Collector Magazine*, January 2013, p 91  
Feary, Mark. 'When good magicians go bad', *Column 10*, Artspace Publications, Sydney, 2012  
Fuller, Rachel. 'Self help for the super hero', *Runway*, no 14 'Futures', 2009, pp 16–21  
Gleave, Michaela & Kate Mitchell. 'Wall work' (artist feature), *Runway*, no 16, 2010, pp 58–63  
Kent, Rachel. 'Social sculpture', *Art Asia Pacific*, issue 74, July/August 2011, p 112  
Melick, Tom & Ivan Rhules. 'Career change', *Un Magazine*, 2010, pp 34–38  
Olding, Rache. 'Rewind to the days of photos on film', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 February 2011  
Phillips, Dougal. *The grip/la Mainmise*, exh cat, Kadist Art Foundation, Paris, 2010  
Tovery, Josephine. 'Game is good', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17–18 January 2009

# JAMES NEWITT

Born 1981, Hobart, Australia. Lives and works in Lisbon, Portugal

## Selected solo exhibitions

*Silent protests*, Criterion Gallery, Hobart, 2011

*To catch a tiger*, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, 2011

*James Newitt*, Gallery of Fine Arts/Galerija umjetnina, Split, Croatia, 2010

*If they fall*, Rosalux: Berlin Based Art Office, Berlin, Germany, 2010

*Show me the truth and I'll show you more of the same*, Moorilla Scholarship, Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, 2009

*Stories of celebration and dissent*, Rosalux: Berlin Based Art Office, Berlin, Germany, 2009

*Urgent care*, Criterion Gallery, Hobart, 2009

*I notice these little things, how they change*, Faculty Gallery, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2008

## Selected group exhibitions

*Sonic spheres: Tarra Warra Biennial 2012*, Tarra Warra Museum of Art, Healesville, Vic, 2012

*Social networking*, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2012

*Iteration: again*, CAST (Contemporary Art Spaces Tasmania), Hobart, 2011

*In the balance: art for a changing world*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2010

*Primavera*, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney; Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane; Freemantle Arts Centre, Freemantle, WA; Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart, 2010

*Australia?*, Mildura Arts Centre, Mildura, Vic, 2009

*Immense views* (with Justy Phillips and Lucy Bleech), Linden Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2009

*What I think about when I think about dancing*, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Campbelltown, NSW, 2009

*Handle with care*, 2008 Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2008

*Eternal beautiful now*, Sherman Galleries, Sydney, 2007

## Selected bibliography

Abell, Judith. 'The write/here project: signs of the times', *RealTime*, no 78, April/May 2007, p 13  
Clement, Tracey. 'Eternal beautiful now', *Artlink*, vol 27, no 3, p 88

Gibb, Susan. 'Altered state', *Artlink*, vol 31, no 1, pp 48–50

Hawthorne, Lucy. 'Public art and its audience', *RealTime*, no 106, December 2011/January 2012, p 46

Judd, Craig. 'Altered state', *Handle with care: 2008 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*, exh cat, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, pp 44–45

Kent, Rachel. 'In conversation: art and activism in a changing world', *Art and Australia*, vol 48, no 1, pp 34–39

Routledge, Elise. 'James Newitt', *In the balance: art for a changing world*, exh cat, Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, pp 124–27

Woodward, Margret. 'Messages from the city's soul', *Eye*, no 64, 2007, pp 84–85



# CHRISTIAN BUMBARRA THOMPSON

Born 1978, Gawler, South Australia; Bidjara, north-east region, Australia  
Lives and works in Oxford, England

## Selected solo exhibitions

*We bury our own*, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, 2012

*King Billy*, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, 2011

*Lost together*, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, 2010

*Australian graffiti*, Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne, 2009

*The sixth mile*, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, 2006

## Selected group exhibitions

*unDisclosed: 2nd National Indigenous Art Triennial*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2012

*Contemporary Indigenous art in Australia: the Sordello Missana Collection*, Valencian Institute of Modern Art, Valencia, Spain, 2012

*Hijacked III*, QUOD Gallery, Derby, UK, 2012

*Close encounters: the next 500 years*, Plugin Institute of Contemporary Art, Canada, 2011

*The beauty of distance: songs of survival in a precarious age*, 17th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, 2010

*Culture warriors: Australian Indigenous Art Triennial*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, touring exhibition to Katzen Arts Centre, American University Museum, Washington, DC, Washington, 2009

## Selected bibliography

Bright, Susan. *Autofocus: the self-portrait in contemporary photography*, Thames & Hudson, London, 2010

Cubillo, Francesca & Carly Lane (eds). *unDisclosed: 2nd National Indigenous Art Triennial*, exh cat, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2012

Day, Charlotte & Sarah Tutton. *Before and after science: 2010 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art*, exh cat, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 2010

Gilchrist, Stephen. 'Shifting identities', *Art & Australia*, vol 46, 2009, pp 616–25

Marsh, Anne. *Look! Contemporary Australian photography since 1980*, Macmillan Art Publishing, Melbourne, 2010

# LIST OF WORKS

**Lauren Brincat**

## EXHIBITION WORKS

*High Horse* 2012

documentation of an action  
single-channel video projection  
HD video, 16:9, colour, sound  
26 sec, looped

*Mexican Standoff* 2012

documentation of an action  
two-channel digital video; sculpture  
16:9, colour, sound  
8:20 min, looped

*Blood and Fire* 2013

performance with Bree van Reyk

*Pythagoras, Praxiteles, Anthemius, Michael Angelo,  
Donatello, Ghiberti, Pheidias, Cellini, Canova, Jean  
Goujon, Giotto, Raphael, Titian, Rembrandt, Murillo,  
Rubens, Andrea del Sarto, Botticelli, Bellini, Cimabue,  
Correggio, Leonardo da Vinci, Tintoretto, Velasquez,  
Vandyck and Gainsborough* 2013  
performance

All works courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

## RECENT WORK

*Steady As She Goes* 2011

documentation of an action  
single-channel digital video  
16:9, colour, sound  
2:40 min

© the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

## Alicia Frankovich

### EXHIBITION WORKS

*The opportune spectator* 2012–13

performances: Mon - Fri 12.25 pm, 16 May – 28 July 2013

durations variable

*The opportune spectator* 2013

two adhesive labels, 21 cm × 29.7 cm

*Free time* 2013

performance: 6.30 pm, May 2013

duration variable

*Between us and them* 2013

16 framed archival inkjet prints on Hahnemühle Photo Rag 188 gsm

42 x 29.7 cm, sheet size

46 x 34 cm, frame size

With the support of Creative New Zealand Toi Aotearoa

All works courtesy the artist and Starkwhite, Auckland

### RECENT WORKS

*Bisons* 2010 (still)

HD video

16:9, black-and-white, sound

3:11 min

*Floor Resistance* 2011–12 (still from performance)

*Human Trophies* 2012 (still from performance)

*Human Trophies* 2012 (video)

performance as part of '*...and they installed the office in the tavern*', organised by The Office (Berlin) and Le Bureau/ (Paris), 2012

duration variable

© the artist and Starkwhite, Auckland

*Floor Resistance* 2011–12 (video)

performances

kinetic sculpture: wood, engineered mechanism, string and hook, HD videos, Barco monitors, didactic stickers, Michael Dahl *King George I* c1714 (painting from the collection of Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki), PVC, steel, music stands, rope, tape, musical scores  
dimensions variable

## Laresa Kosloff

### EXHIBITION WORK

*Eternal situation* 2013

single-channel, HD video, sound  
4:50 min

Courtesy the artist

### RECENT WORK

Laresa Kosloff and Andy Thomson

*The Green Text* 2011

HD video

13:28 min

## Angelica Mesiti

### EXHIBITION WORK

*Citizens Band* 2012

four-channel HD video installation

16:9, colour, sound

21:25 min

edition of 3, 2 APs

**Performers**

Loïs Géraldine Zongo

Mohammed Lamourie

Bukhchuluun (Bukhu) Ganburged

Asim Gorashi

**Crew – Paris**

Cinematographer – Bonnie Elliott

Sound Recordists – Alessandro Angius, Gerald Ladoul,

Maciek Hamela

Production manager – Martine Caron

**Crew – Sydney**

Cinematographer – Bonnie Elliott

Camera assistant – Elena Sarno

Sound Recordist –Richard Boxhall

Executive producer – Bridget Ikin

Producer – Jodie Passmore

Editor – Angelica Mesiti

Composer for 'Cacophony' – Stefan Gregory

Sound mix – Liam Egan

Colourist – Trish Cahill

Angelica Mesiti was awarded a Creative Fellowship from the Australian Film Television and Radio School to support this project. This project was commissioned for the exhibition *NEW12* at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art Melbourne 2012. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

## Kate Mitchell

### EXHIBITION WORK

*Lucky Break* 2013

seven-channel synchronised video installation  
dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist and Chalk Horse, Sydney

### RECENT WORKS

*In a situation* 2011 (production still)

single-channel standard-definition video  
16:9, colour, silent

*I am not a joke* 2007 (production still)

single-channel standard-definition video  
4:3, colour, sound

*Getting through it* 2012 (production still)

single-channel standard-definition video  
16:9, colour, silent

*Get into it* 2012 (production still)

single-channel production

*Lost a bet* 2011 (production still)

single-channel standard-definition video  
16:9, black-and-white, silent

*Fall Stack (video)* 2012 (video)

five-channel synchronised video installation  
HD, 16:9, colour, silent

*Fall Stack (grocery)* 2012 (video)

five-channel synchronised video installation  
HD, 16:9, colour, silent

## James Newitt

### EXHIBITION WORKS

*Say it like you want it 2012*

two-channel HD video, colour, quadrophonic sound

7:40 min

**Performers** (who have indicated to be identified)

Victoria Blasco

Jason Castle

John Dermody

William Riding

Jennie O'Brien

Mark Sharkey

Ben Phillips

Chris Mitchell

Penny Whitehead

Paul Davies

Ken Francis

Shauna Courtney

Maddie Hall

Kevin Foy

Michael Smith

Victor Guerrero

Britt Jurgensen

Natalie Hughes

David Rowan

Thanks to Sarah Jones, Ben Phillips, The Black-E,  
Liverpool, and the Tasmanian College of the Arts

This project has been assisted by the Australian  
Government through the Australia Council for the Arts,  
its arts funding and advisory body.

*We Are The People 2012*

HD video, colour, stereo

1:35 min

Both works courtesy the artist

## Christian Thompson

### EXHIBITION WORKS

#### *Healing Circle* 2013

eight-channel speakers, sound  
sound design: Carlos Vaquero

#### *Tree of Knowledge* 2010–13

performance with double-bed mattress, DVD player/  
media player and remote, plasma screen on stand, CD  
player, extension cord, head set, mike, PA, vocal effects/  
sound desk, spotlight  
45 min

Both works courtesy the artist and Gabrielle Pizzi  
Gallery, Melbourne

### RECENT WORKS

#### *Invaded dreams* 2012

c-type print on Fuji pearl metallic paper  
100 x 100 cm  
edition of 10

#### *Energy matter* 2012

c-type print on Fuji pearl metallic paper  
100 x 100 cm  
edition of 10

#### *Desert melon* 2012

c-type print on Fuji pearl metallic paper  
100 x 100 cm  
edition of 10

#### *Three sisters* 2012

c-type print on Fuji pearl metallic paper  
100 x 100 cm  
edition of 10

© the artist and Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne



*Forgiveness of land* 2012

c-type print on Fuji pearl metallic paper

100 x 100 cm

edition of 10

© the artist and Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi, Melbourne

*Down under world* 2012

c-type print on Fuji pearl metallic paper

100 x 100 cm

edition of 10

*Gamu mambu (Blood song)* 2010 (video)

single-channel DVD, sound

2 min

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## CURATOR

I have greatly enjoyed working with the artists Lauren Brincat, Alicia Frankovich, Laresa Kosloff, Angelica Mesiti, Kate Mitchell, James Newitt and Christian Thompson, and would like to thank them for their commitment to the Anne Landa Award 2013 exhibition. I also thank them for their considered and creative responses to the specificities of the context, and their significant and thought-provoking projects. I would like to acknowledge Sophie Landa for her vision and generosity in establishing and supporting the Anne Landa Award, which provides an important public platform for reviewing moving-image and new-media art in Australia.

Thank you to Sophie, along with Michael Brand, Anne Flanagan and Wayne Tunnicliffe for engaging with the concept of the exhibition in the first instance, and for supporting its development – joggers, horses and all! Special thanks to Jacqueline Strecker and Joel Mu for their fantastic support and faultless exhibition management. Joel and intern Thomas Cole have done a magnificent job recruiting and managing performers, horses and other logistical issues, a huge job that they approached with great spirit and practical know-how. Thank you also to the many other Art Gallery of New South Wales people who have contributed to the exhibition in such important ways, including Natasha Bullock,

such important ways, including Natasha Bullock, Nik Reith, Mark Taylor, Claire Martin and Charlotte Cox. The digital publication is a new frontier for many of us, and thanks go to the Gallery team – Matt Nix, Julie Donaldson and Penny Sanderson – and to The Nest.

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## ARTISTS

**Lauren Brincat** wishes to thank Bree van Reyk, Poppy Stockell, Adrian Feirer, Claudia Feirer and Charlotte Day.

**Alicia Frankovich** wishes to thank Charlotte Day, Joel Mu, Alex Martinis Roe, Tim Coster, Ash Kilmartin, Aleksandra Domanovic, Adela Yawitz, Pablo Pijnappel, Lou Hubbard, Fiona Geuß, Anne Marsh, Helen Hughes, Melanie Sehgal, Dave Hall, Lucy McMillan, Aude Pariset, April Melnick, Konstantin Bühler, Sophia Heyrichs, Naemeh Shirazi, Sara Stern, Oliver van der Lugt, Alison Lasek, Mark Soo, Holly Childs, Julia Neuberger, Nicholas Chilvers, and all of the other runners and participants.

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# CREDITS

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Kate Mitchell © Chalk Horse Gallery, Sydney;  
Christian Thompson © Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi,  
Melbourne

Commissioned essays © the authors

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Lauren Brincat *High Horse* 2012, documentation of an action

Alicia Frankovich *The Opportune Spectator* 2012, still from video of a performance

Laresa Kosloff *Eternal situation* 2013, still from a video

Angelica Mesiti *Citizens Band* 2012, production still

Kate Mitchell *Lucky Break* 2013, dark blue production still

James Newitt *We Are The People* 2012, production still

Christian Thompson *Desert Melon* 2012, c-type print (detail)

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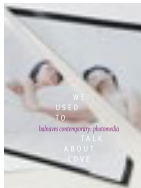


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