

Octopus 19  
*Ventriloquy*



*Ventriloquy* is presented on the lands of the Woi Wurrung Peoples. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and pay our respects to their elders past, present and future.

Front cover: *Octopus 19: Ventriloquy*, installation view featuring works by Makiko Yamamoto, Eric Demetriou and Ceri Hann.  
Photo: Christo Crocker

*Ventriloquy*  
Curated by Joel Stern  
Gertrude Contemporary  
31 May - 20 July 2019

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## Preface

Now in its 19<sup>th</sup> year as an exhibition series, the relevance of the *Octopus* platform remains as critical for cultivating curatorial experimentation as it was when instigated in 2000. The mechanism remains remarkably simple and agile: an independent curator is invited to develop a project that draws upon their research interests and offered full agency in developing and determining the composition and manifestation of their project. Through this, Gertrude is able to provide a dedicated curatorial opportunity to an independent producer, or an opportunity for an institutional curator to realise a project that may exist outside of the scope of the organisation they are otherwise attached to. For Gertrude and its audiences, *Octopus* enables a different body of research, curatorial thinking and range of artistic practices to feature prominently within the artistic program, and to expand the scope of collaborators who define its exhibitions. For *Octopus 19*, Gertrude is delighted to have worked with Joel Stern, Co-Artistic Director at Liquid Architecture, to present *Ventriloquy*.

*Ventriloquy* takes amorphous form as an exhibition of newly commissioned and reprised works by a selection of Australian artists whose practices are informed by or integrate degrees of sonic experimentation, obfuscation of narrative perspective, voice, or delivery, or whose works rely upon a process of interchange or active engagement. The spatial and acoustic landscape of *Ventriloquy* is one that embraces the cacophonous, with the environment comprising various spectacles all simultaneously competing for our attention. In this setting, one is subjected to something of a sensorial assault, delivered from every possible angle, entangled together to create a disconcerting exhalation of energies.

Recognised and respected for his creative output focusing on experimental sound and performance, Joel Stern is a curator, researcher, and sound artist, concerned with theories and practices of sound and listening. With Danni Zuvela, he is the Artistic Director of Liquid Architecture, an organisation that stages encounters and creates spaces for sonic experience and critical reflection on systems of sonic affect, at the intersection of contemporary art and experimental music.

Gertrude gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support for the *Octopus* series by Proclaim. The firm's commitment to Gertrude's artistic program since 2002 remains one of the organisation's most valued partnerships. Thank you to Jon Broome and all of the team at Proclaim for remaining so engaged in and supportive of Gertrude's activities.

Gertrude would like to sincerely thank and congratulate Joel for such an energised iteration of *Octopus*, with *Ventriloquy* operating as an amplifier, in almost every sense of the term, for performative and sonic-oriented practices. Gertrude gratefully acknowledges the dynamic contributions by all of the artists involved in the exhibition: Mel Deerson & Briony Galligan, Gabriella D'Costa, Eric Demetriou, Danielle Freakley, Ceri Hann, MP Hopkins, Jake Moore, Steven Rhall, Jacqui Shelton (with Alice Heyward and Megan Payne), Makiko Yamamoto, and Simon Zoric; as well as the artists involved in the aligned performance programs: Mel Deerson & Briony Galligan, MP Hopkins, Ash Kilmartin, and Melody Paloma (*Anachronism Effects*, Gertrude); Tim Dwyer, Sonia Leber & David Chesworth, and Diego Ramirez (*Lifenessless*, West Space); Kate Brown, Jake Moore, and James Rushford & Rachel Yezbick with Jenny Barnes, Carolyn Connors and Sage Pbbbt (*Self by Proxy*, Meat

Market); and Ceri Hann, Jacqui Shelton (with Alice Heyward & Megan Payne), and Makiko Yamamoto (*The Puppet's Freedom*, Gertrude).

It has been a sincere pleasure to partner with Liquid Architecture toward the realisation of the performance programs for *Ventriloquy*, and Gertrude thanks everyone at LA, as well as presenting partners and venues, West Space and the Meat Market. Echoing the conceptual underpinnings of the project, *Ventriloquy* incorporates many voices, emanating from many locations. With it, curator Joel Stern has assembled a cast of artists to assume the roles of microphones, faced them off against one another, set them all on maximum volume, and exited stage right.

Mark Feary  
Artistic Director  
Gertrude Contemporary



## Narcissism and its Echoes: Notes from Steven Connor's Knee

Joel Stern and Danni Zuvela

*'The variability of the voice's origin, whether magically detached from the body, or erupting from illegitimate orifices, means that the ventriloquial voice is both an attempt to imagine and pit the speech of the body against the speech of culture, and an attempt to control that illegitimate speech, to draw it into discourse.'*  
Steven Connor

What we call ventriloquism is an effect, created in the mind of the spectator. (As Steven Connor says, 'The art of ventriloquism consists very largely in persuading the audience to do much of the ventriloquist's work [...] in enfleshing the voice from the skeletal approximations that the ventriloquist supplies.') Ventriloquy is as much a trick of the mind as it is a trick of the mouth. The sound is issuing from either the wrong time and place, or the wrong voice and body. Or from no body at all. The voice and its shadow, time out of place, a wrong time-place: ventriloquism is about being in-and-out of sync. It is an anachronism, or as Connor (again) says, a dissociation effect, the voice separated from its source, the source either known but not present ('clear, so to speak, to the ear, but not apparent to the eye'); or purely imagined (hearing voices where there are none). But the difference between these two, 'the difference between dissimulation and hallucination', may not always be objective. Speech itself may live as a state of ventriloquy, in 'there' talking within us as if we are spoken from elsewhere. Do we, like the doll, offer ourselves as a dummy location for the voice which cannot be located - a vessel for dummification?



Simon Zoric  
*Self Portrait / Self Portrait (incognito)*, 2009

*'I think it is in bad taste to quote myself,  
but here I must make an exception'*  
Mladen Dolar

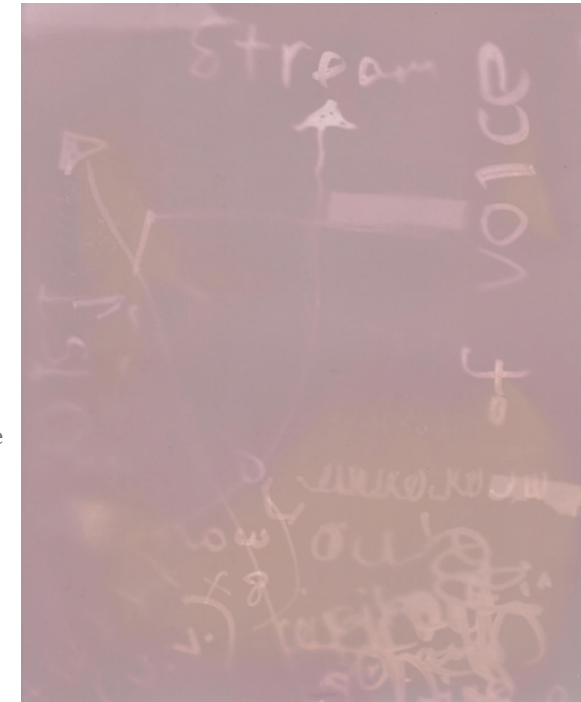
6 Hearing yourself speak, as Derrida first said, is fundamentally unsettling; we perceive this as an echo of our being, a 'signifier interrupting self-presence'. Your voice is literal, material - a real thing in the world. We can all sing (some actually in tune). You can recognise a cough. Your voice is recognisable, emulable, and now, printable. Your voice is unique; in Australia, my voice identifies me (as the Australian Tax Office makes us repeat when we call them). In Australia, my voice identifies me; that's why we conflate 'having a voice' with political agency. Those denied a voice are stifled, muffled, suppressed, oppressed. Those who get to have a voice are noisy - heard and overheard - powerful; their automatic amplifications part of what Jacques Attali calls 'the giant noise-emitting machine'.



Ceri Hann  
*Money Talks*, 2019

*'Ventriloquism is a technology and  
technique of deception, statecraft,  
and power'*  
Sarah Kessler

There are problems with assuming everyone's voice is entirely their own. Who hasn't picked up a saying here or there? We all - intentionally or obediently - parrot the views we feel are correct. It's an autotune everything world. What you hear are both your own thoughts, and also echoes from within the silo of your own making. Steven Connor says, 'the state or the socius enacts its authority through the process of speaking for and through other subjects. *Ventriloquism is both the guarantee of this system and a threat to it...*' David Goldblatt says, 'ventriloquism entails the effacement of the speaker, while he/she pretends simultaneously to listen ... while certain people speak for things (art and nature), persons also speak for other persons, those muted in the social diaspora; the mad, poor, sick, imprisoned.' People speak for *things*, people speak for persons - and *things*, perhaps, speak for people. Ventriloquism is an act in which *things* talk, and those *things* might be *people*. (Or not).



MP Hopkins  
*Internal Transcriptions #3*, 2019



mid 17th century: from modern Latin *ventriiloquium* (from Latin *venter* 'belly' + *loqui* 'speak')  
Oxford English Dictionary

Ventriloquism used to be a magical practice, aligned with gastromancy - a kind of divination-by-the-stomach. Contemporary gastromantics express their unique subjectivity through productions of distributed, dispensed and disclaimed authorship; performances which, paradoxically, may be read as personal, distinctive, voiced. Perhaps that is where the fantasies of speaking in tongues, the expressivity of the untrammelled id, come in. It is hard to abandon one's voice completely. But closed mouths and loose tongues can speak other truths too.

*'It may be that we are puppets - puppets controlled by the strings of society. But at least we are puppets with perception, with awareness. And perhaps our awareness is the first step to our liberation.'*

Stanley Milgram, *Cyranoids*

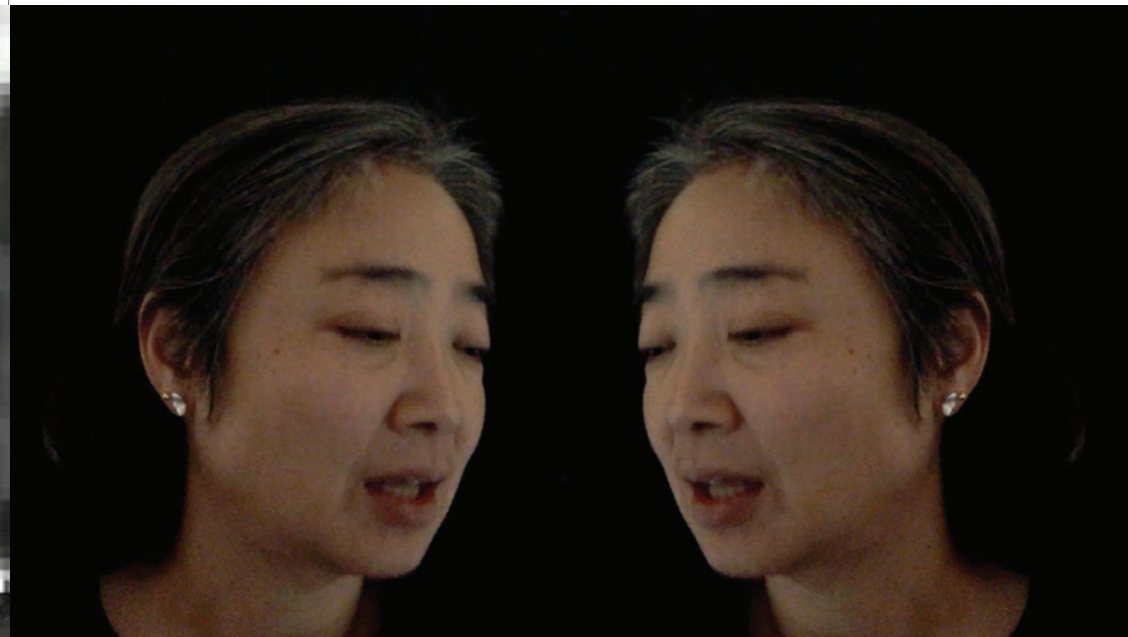
*'We suggested that he imitate his own voice, he said he could not do that.'*

Thomas Bernhard, *The Voice Imitator*

More Goldblatt: 'ventriloquism is illusion without deception - a truly deceived audience would undermine the nature of the act.' In other words, it's an illusion in which the audience is in on the act, a consensual, participatory, self-conscious illusion. The double agency at work here goes beyond modernist reflexivity - 'I'm IN this experience / I'm HAVING this experience'. Our (self-)awareness of the irreducibly ventriloquial condition of relations is more like 'This experience is IN me / This experience is HAVING me'. Conversing with oneself via a proxy, the tension is between dialogue and a schizo-monologue. Hello ventriloquist; hello dummy.



Jacqui Shelton  
*Crush*, 2019



Makiko Yamamoto  
*Ego as Echo*, 2019

## References

- Australian Tax Office, 'Voice Authentication: Benefits of Enrolling Your Voiceprint'.  
David Goldblatt, *Art and Ventriloquism*.  
Jacques Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*.  
Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*.  
Mladen Dolar, *A Voice and Nothing More*.  
Sarah Kessler, 'Karaoke and Ventriloquism: Echoes and Divergences'.  
Stanley Milgram, Cyranoids, cited in Kevin Corti & Alex Gillespie, 'Revisiting Milgram's  
*Cyranoid Method: Experimenting With Hybrid Human Agents*'.  
Steven Connor, *Dumbstruck; Panophonia*.

## Performance Program

Ventriloquy

Friday 31 May, 6-8pm at  
Gertrude Contemporary

12 Opening night featured performances by Jacqui Shelton in collaboration with dancers Alice Heyward and Megan Payne, Steven Rhall who lay inert in various corners of the gallery, and Danielle Freakley's social practice work invited the audience to ventriloquise each-other.



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Performance by Steven Rhall at the opening of *Octopus 19: Ventriloquy*.  
Video still: Robert Frantzeskos



*Anachronism Effects*

Saturday 1 June, 2 – 4pm at  
Gertrude Contemporary

Performances by Ash Kilmartin, Mel  
Deerson and Briony Galligan, Melody  
Paloma and MP Hopkins

14 The performance program, *Anachronism Effects*, explored the way ventriloquy performs a dislocation of body from voice in time and in space. The program borrowed its title from scholar Sarah Kessler's research into 'ventriloquial materiality' and ventriloquism's "enduring anachronism—its at once anticipatory and antiquated appearance." *Anachronism Effects*, featured new performances created for *Ventriloquy* by Ash Kilmartin; Mel Deerson and Briony Galligan; Melody Paloma; MP Hopkins.

Ash Kilmartin performed *You, as a paragraph*, a monologue for mediated voice, engaging the ventriloquial tropes of possession, dislocation, and the excessive physicality of the (at times seemingly autonomous and absurd) speaking voice.

Melody Paloma de- and re-coded a suite of *Code Poems* by Hannah Weiner, master ventriloquist and psychic host to corporeal and non-corporeal bodies alike, in collaboration with retired seafarers Neil Butt and Leigh Webster.

Mel Deerson and Briony Galligan traversed the theatre curtain separating heaven from hell.

MP Hopkins read through himself some texts about speaking/voice/language and heard himself doing this reading to himself.



Performance by Mel Deerson and  
Briony Galligan in *Anachronism  
Effects*, performance program at  
Gertrude Contemporary.  
Video still: Lara Gissing

*Lifenessless*

Monday, 17 June 2019, 6pm-8pm at  
West Space

Performances by Sonia Leber and  
David Chesworth, Diego Ramirez  
and Tim Dwyer

16 The performance program, *Lifenessless*, took place at West Space. It explored the way in which voices resonate and remain productive in the space between worlds of the dead and the living, what Jason Stanyek and Benjamin Piekut have called the 'intermundane'.

'In late capitalism, the dead are highly productive. Of course, all capital is dead labor, but the dead also generate capital in collaboration with the living. What is "late" about late capitalism could be the new arrangements of interpenetration between worlds of living and dead, arrangements that might best be termed intermundane' Jason Stanyek and Benjamin Piekut *Deadness. Technologies of the Intermundane*

Artist duo Sonia Leber and David Chesworth presented a new audio performance, *Unseen Light : Prologue (Split open the atom in ourselves)*, featuring sound collected from over 90 hours of séance tapes, purchased from a deceased estate, recorded by a New Zealand family in Auckland, and later Australia, between 1958 and 1972.

Diego Ramirez performed a musical 'audition' for a Mexican vampire part in the upcoming Buffy The Vampire Slayer reboot, which has been remediated to incorporate greater 'diversity'.

Tim Dwyer presented an audio cut-up piece for the end of civilisation made from samples of debates, murmurs, proclamations, cries and shrieks in the voice of a black hole.



*Unseen Light: Prologue (Split open the atom in ourselves)* by Sonia Leber and David Chesworth in *Lifenessless*, performance program at West Space. Photo: Keelan O'Hehir

*Self By Proxy*

Tuesday, 9 July 2019, 6pm-10pm at Meat Market

Performances by James Rushford and Rachel Yezbick, Kate Brown, Jake Moore, Carolyn Connors, Sage Pbbbt, Jenny Barnes.

*Self by Proxy* took place in multiple spaces at the Meat Market Stables and featured new performances created for *Ventriloquy* by James Rushford and Rachel Yezbick, Kate Brown, Jake Moore, Carolyn Connors, Sage Pbbbt, Jenny Barnes. The works, as a suite, explore the idea of the self as always at the outset delegated, substituted, prosthetic, and other.

Melbourne composer James Rushford and Los Angeles-based moving-image artist Rachel Yezbick premiered a new collaborative performance titled *And Laid Him On The Green* for multiple projections, live conversation, prerecorded sound, and vocal ensemble. The work was an experiment in misheard, barely-caught, and residual moments occurring at the intersection of technical capture and human interpretation. Vocalists Kate Brown, Carolyn Connors; Sage Pbbbt; and Jenny Barnes performed alongside Rushford and Yezbick.

Sydney artist Kate Brown also presented a solo work exploring the sonic flow between internal (as in inside the body) and external architectures and structures. The performance continued Kate's long running practice of turning (and tuning) the voice inside out, and outside in.

Melbourne artist Jake Moore presented a new work drawing on appropriated recordings of iconic American vocalist and composer Joan LaBarbara, filtered through two speakers, two chairs and a talkbox.

*Self by Proxy* took place at the Meat Market, with the performances occupying multiple discrete spaces within the warehouse-style venue.



James Rushford and Rachel Yezbick, *And Laid Him On The Green*, performed by vocalists Kate Brown, Carolyn Connors; Sage Pbbbt; and Jenny Barnes alongside Rushford and Yezbick.  
Photo: Keelan O'Hehir



*The Puppets Freedom*

Saturday 20 July, 2-4pm at Gertrude Contemporary

Performances by Jacqui Shelton (with Alice Heyward and Megan Payne), Makiko Yamamoto, Ceri Hann

*The Puppet's Freedom* drew the project to a close at Gertrude Contemporary and featured new performances by exhibiting artists Jacqui Shelton (with Megan Payne), Makiko Yamamoto and Ceri Hann.

Of her work *Crush*, Jacqui Shelton wrote: 'Last year, I commissioned Alice Heyward and Megan Payne to produce a movement work for a project related to the viral spread of interior emotions via crowds, *Crush*. Given the implication of the body in both instances of crushing—to be crushed, to have a crush—I needed a language of physical movement, but was not trained or physically fluent in this myself. We discussed how movement spreads virally between "bodies", and many forms bodies and movements take, and collaborated on actions directed towards crowd control and disorder. Each instance and context of the performance re-evaluates these relations anew. In this final performance, Megan, Alice and I will rework the score for an audience, rather than a crowd, and explore how proximity and distance operates in the production of bodied relations.'

Live presentations by Japanese conceptual artist Makiko Yamamoto are rare and always beguiling listening experiences. Her performance here brought the artist into dialogue with her installed video work, *Echo as Ego* to produce a new work exploring the ownership of the voice - 'Echoes of the artistic ego in conversation'.

We asked the ever-mercurial Ceri Hann what he'd be doing and he replied that it will be a 'de-formance' entitled *The nurture of reality*, in which the artist will extract, through demonstrable means, the teething problems of said technology.



*The nurture of reality*, performance by Ceri Hann  
Photo: Gertrude Contemporary

Gabriella D'Costa

Mel Deerson and Briony Galligan

Eric Demetriou

Danielle Freakley

Ceri Hann

MP Hopkins

Jake Moore

Steven Rhall

Jacqui Shelton  
(with Alice Heyward and Megan Payne)

Makiko Yamamoto

Simon Zoric



Gabriella D'Costa

*Bureaucratic agency/Agents of Bureaucracy*

2019

bollards on plaster bases, appropriated

policies and procedures

Photo: Jacqui Shelton

The voice of governance, policy, and compliance form a framework over all other frameworks in a society and thus set the tone of the ideal voice to achieve. This particular voice is generally instructional, operational, or legal.

Mel Deerson and Briony Galligan

*Theatre curtain for heaven and hell, 2018*

velvet, polyester curtain

Photo: Christo Crocker

*Hell-o and Limb-o, 2019*

gouache on paper

*Hell/o*

or

*Angels in love with their bodies, 2019*

performance, 15 minutes



Eric Demetriou

*That Syncing Feeling*, 2019  
interpretation booth, horse  
(scratched), audio  
Photo: Christo Crocker

Himmel! the roof of your mouth is like the dome of the Panthéon; there is room in it for 'toutes les gloires de la France,' and a little to spare! The entrance to your throat is like the middle porch of St. Sulpice when the doors are open for the faithful on All-Saints' day; and not one tooth is missing—thirty-two British teeth as white as milk and as big as knuckle-bones!

Danielle Freakley

*Your Second Hand*, 2019  
clothes, tags, labels  
Photo: Joel Stern

In wearing this garment you will unconsciously inherit certain thoughts and behaviours from its previous owner. Prices as marked. Take one item only. Please choose carefully. No return.

*I Anticipate Your Every Breath*, ongoing  
Lanyards, notes, business cards

A retrospective of paraphernalia, instructions, and signs from various works that bleed into one another.

*Equal Opportunity To Be A Dictator*, 2017

Use the word 'SAY' to ask anyone to say anything you want them to say. Take what someone asks you to say and say it the way you want to. It's an exchange. Nobody has to say anything they don't want to say. Please give me something to say. Feed me the words, I beg you.



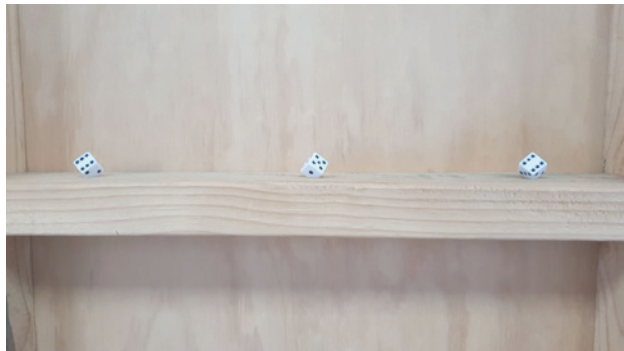
Ceri Hann

*Money Talks*, 2019  
scattered coins, overhead projector  
Photo: Jacqui Shelton

Re-facing the currency of opinion,  
money talks, the punchline speaks  
for itself.

*Tokens from the Knowledge Casino*,  
2009 - ongoing  
Photo: Joel Stern

Serial art works, objects altered and  
gifted as mnemonic hyper links to 'real  
world' encounters

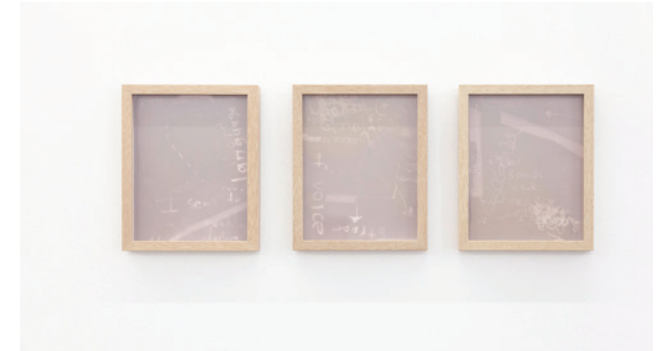
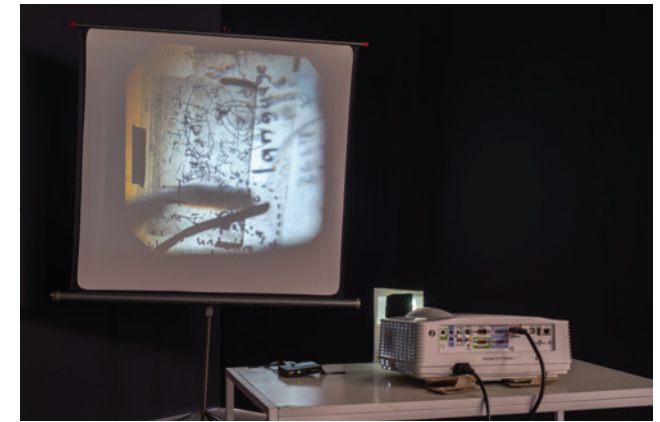


MP Hopkins

*Internal Transcriptions #1-3*, 2019  
lumen prints  
Photo: Jacqui Shelton

I heard myself reading to myself. Inside  
somewhere – behind eyes/nose/mouth  
(in head?) – the reading through me  
thinking about reading about speaking  
was voiced. I said it. I spoke it into  
another dummy and they turned it  
back into writing.

*Internal Projections*, 2019  
Video, sound + performance  
Photo: Keelan O'Hehir



Jake Moore

*Phonism*, 2018  
three-channel generative audio installation  
Photo: Jacqui Shelton

Voice heard, evoked, not uttered.



Steven Rhall

*Aboriginal Art Affects*, 2019  
fan, ribbon, sensor  
Photo: Jacqui Shelton

Gallery, artwork and audience on a figurative stage borne by frameworks of hierarchy and power. Sensor, fan and ribbon as brain, breath, tongue.





Jacqui Shelton (with Alice Heyward  
and Megan Payne)

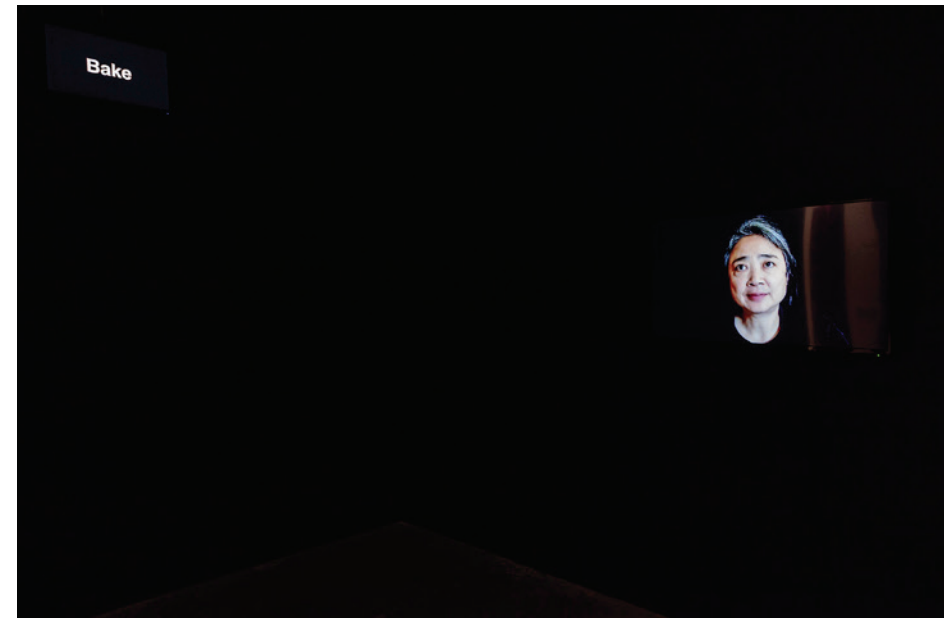
*Crush*, 2019  
Video installation + performance with  
Megan Payne and Hilary Goldsmith  
Photo: Christo Crocker

The condition of having a crush is  
similar in its corporeal and spatial  
sensations to the disasters that result  
in 'crowd crush': shortness of breath,  
sweating, feeling unmoored, scattered,  
beside oneself, not in control  
of oneself.

Makiko Yamamoto

*Ego as Echo (monologue dialogue)*, 2019  
two-channel video installation  
Photo: Jacqui Shelton

Hello, I am George it's me.  
Makiko is my collaborator in this work.  
She challenges me to take over my  
existence. Just to let you know I am not  
her inner voice or echo. She says things  
like "I am not a subject, the more I  
speak more I become an echo."





Simon Zoric

*Simon*, 2009  
Ventriloquist's dummy  
Photo: Jacqui Shelton

The whole time I was making the work  
I was too embarrassed to try and  
make him 'talk'.



Curator and Artist Biographies

Joel Stern – Curator

Joel Stern is a curator, researcher and artist concerned with theories and practices of sound and listening. With Danni Zuvela, he is Artistic Director of Liquid Architecture, an Australian organisation for artists working with sound. Other initiatives include the artist collective OtherFilm. and Instrument Builders Project, instigated with Kristi Monfries in 2013. In 2018, with James Parker, Stern curated *Eavesdropping*, an exhibition and research project exploring the politics and ethics of listening. Stern has been curated festivals, events, exhibitions, screenings and concerts in Australia and internationally since the early 2000s. He is a PhD candidate in Curatorial Practice at Monash Art, Design and Architecture, where he teaches Sound (in the Space of Art).

Gabriella D'Costa

Gabriella D'Costa is the name given to a particular collection of thoughts, feelings, reactions and interpretations localised into a body-interface which they acknowledge as the default mechanism they can utilise for tangibly manifesting a collection of thoughts, feelings, reactions and interpretations.

Mel Deerson and Briony Galligan

Melissa Deerson is a Narm/Melbourne-based artist using text, performance, drawings, props, sound and video. In her work, she explores different ways of negotiating language, place and the body, often in a playful, absurd way.

Briony Galligan is a Narrm/Melbourne based artist working with textiles, installation, video and performance work. She looks at points where personal, social and art histories intersect or collide with work concerned with how the construction of the past, in archives, buildings and gestures, is continually remoulded and revolving through collective and individual bodies.

#### Eric Demetriou

Eric Demetriou is a Melbourne based artist and musician working with sound, sculpture and performance. Hunter gatherer retooling various gleaned object and found materials to transform them into industrial-sized instruments of noise and silence.

#### Danielle Freakley

Danielle Freakley mostly works in performance, social practice, interactive systems and sculpture and is Seychellois Australian. Her works can distort social communication and relationships, exposing lurking historical and private subtexts in day to day life. People can often accidentally collaborate with her, just through bumping into her socially in daily life.

She is a first selection finalist of the Arte Laguna Prize - Venice Arsenale, exhibited at Tate - Liverpool Biennial, PERFORMA - Performance Biennial of New York and in various other biennials, triennials, national galleries, state galleries, contemporary art spaces, kitchen floors, snake temples, theme parks, clothes, bins, beaches, conversations, trainstation toilets and graves.

#### Ceri Hann

Ceri is a multidisciplinary arts practitioner who develops participatory art forms intended to enhance the conditions for collective idea generation. This approach to practice often avoids categorisation, as the outcomes are intentionally defused in the wonder/wander of everyday life. Over the past ten years Ceri has been a sessional tutor and guest lecturer in the School of Art and School of Architecture and Design at RMIT and has an ongoing engagement within the Art in Public Space and MFA post-graduate programs. Ceri has presented work at Melbourne Comedy Festival (2017), Liquid Architecture (2015), RMIT Project Space (2014) and run workshops at West Space, Blindsight Sound Series and Testing Grounds. Ceri is also one half of Public Assembly.

#### MP Hopkins

MP Hopkins is an artist from Sydney who works across audio, performance, installation and text. Central to Hopkins' practice is an exploration of inner speech as a disjointed acoustic space; a blend of voices and disparate sounds that oscillate between interior and exterior, intelligibility and incomprehensibility. MP has released recordings via Penultimate Press, Canti Magnetici, Tahalamos, Albert's Basement, Mappa Editions, Aussenraum Records and Regional Bears, has performed locally at events organised by the NOW now, Liquid Architecture, and Avantwhatever, and internationally at Café Oto, UK; LaSalle College of the Arts, Singapore; Les Ateliers Claus, Belgium; TUSK Festival, UK; and Colour Out of Space Festival, UK. Hopkins has exhibited work in various artist-run, commercial, and public institutions such as Firstdraft Gallery, 55 Sydenham Rd Gallery, Knulp, Artspace, the MCA, SCA Galleries, Private Projects, Gertrude Contemporary, Margaret Lawrence Gallery, and TCB Gallery.

#### Jake Moore

Jake is a conceptual artist based in Melbourne. They have worked on a number of short films and music videos, presented talks on subjects such as Noise, Rhythm, and Entropy, and contributed work to various group exhibitions and online publications. Their practice engages with both qualitative and quantitative methods in an effort to collapse the clear distinctions perceived between various subjects and objects.

Working with drawing and panting, process and instructional work, programming, sculpture, composition and sound design, installation, robotics, video and animation; Jake's goal is ultimately to raise questions that encourage conversation between different disciplines allowing the formation of new ways of understanding and engaging with the world.

#### Steven Rhall

Steven Rhall is a post-conceptual artist operating from a First Nation, white-passing, cis male, positionality. Rhall's interdisciplinary practice responds to intersections of First Nation art practice and the Western art canon particularly concerning the contextual frameworks supporting historical, contemporary and future presentation of art by First Nation peoples. Within the space, Rhall interrogates ideas of the curator and is interested in the generative methodologies aligned with notions of the artist-curator, exhibition/gallery as form and related expanded fields.

#### Jacqui Shelton

(with Alice Heyward and Megan Payne) Jacqui is an artist working and based in Narrm, Melbourne. Her research driven practice uses performance, film-making, photography, and writing to produce temporary relations between people, sites, or histories, that are then pushed to a limit and examined for intimacies and conflicts that develop. She used the potential within the spoken or written word, and how this manifests in a body, to think about ways of approaching political and social difference. She holds a PhD from MADA, Monash University, where she lectures, and has exhibited at a number of galleries in Australia and overseas.

#### Makiko Yamamoto

Makiko Yamamoto's performances of awkwardness exposes the vulnerabilities of the social and ideological codes underlying spoken language, communication and understanding.

#### Simon Zoric

Simon Zoric completed a Master of Fine Art at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2014 and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2009. He has exhibited at Gertrude Glasshouse, Gertrude Contemporary, TCB Art Inc, West Space, Neon Parc, Deakin Gallery Burwood, The Centre for Contemporary Photography and Orgy Park in New York. He has undertaken residencies in Woodside, California and Reykjavik, Iceland.



Installation view of *Octopus 19: Ventriloquy*, featuring work by Ceri Hann. Photo: Jacqui Shelton

Installation view of *Octopus 19: Ventriloquy*, featuring work by Simon Zoric, Danielle Freakley, Gabrielle D'Costa and Jacqui Shelton. Photo: Christo Crocker





Ceri Hann, *Money Talks*, 2019.  
Photo: Christo Crocker

Danielle Freakley, *I Anticipate Your Every Breath*, ongoing.  
Photo: Jacqui Shelton



Installation view of *Octopus 19: Ventriloquy*,  
featuring work by MP Hopkins and Mel  
Deerson and Briony Galligan.  
Photo: Jacqui Shelton

Installation view of *Octopus 19: Ventriloquy*,  
featuring work by Makiko Yamamoto, Eric  
Demetriou, Ceri Hann and MP Hopkins.  
Photo: Christo Crocker





Installation view of *Octopus 19: Ventriloquy*, featuring work by Ceri Hann, Eric Demetriou, MP Hopkins and Mel Deerson and Briony Galligan.  
Photo: Christo Crocker



Jacqui Shelton, *Crush*, 2019.  
Photo: Jacqui Shelton







Opening performance by Ceri Hann  
Photo: Charlie Freedman

Opening performance by Ceri Hann.  
Video still: Robert Frantzeskos



Ash Kilmartin, *You, as a paragraph*, 2019  
performed for *Anachronism Effects*  
at Gertrude Contemporary.  
Photo: Lara Gissing



Melody Paloma in collaboration with retired seafarers Neil Butt and Leigh Webster, performance still from *Anachronism Effects* at Gertrude Contemporary.  
Photo: Lara Gissing

Performance by Tim Dwyer in *Lifenessless* at West Space.  
Photo: Keelan O'Hehir





Performance by Diego Ramirez in  
*Lifenessless* at West Space.  
Photos: Keelan O’Hehir



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Sonia Leber and David Chesworth *Unseen*  
*Light: Prologue (Split open the atom in ourselves)* in *Lifenessless* at West Space.  
Photos: Keelan O'Hehir



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Kate Brown performance still from *Self by Proxy* at Meat Market, North Melbourne.  
Photo: Siobhan Sloper





Performance by Makiko Yamamoto  
in *Puppets of Freedom* at Gertrude  
Contemporary  
Photos: Gertrude Contemporary

Performance of *Crush* by Jacqui Shelton  
(with Megan Payne) in *Puppets of Freedom*  
at Gertrude Contemporary  
Photos: Gertrude Contemporary



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*Octopus 19: Ventriloquy* is presented in partnership with Liquid Architecture.





*Octopus 2019: Ventriloquy*

Curated by Joel Stern

31.05.19 – 20.07.19

All works courtesy of the artists unless otherwise stated

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