

*"If you see something, say something"*

"If you see something say something," was pasted on bus shelters and train stations around the world in the wake of the 9/11 bombings asking us to view those around us with fear and suspicion. But do we *see* this government sponsored vision of the world or do these advertisements move us to *say* something very different? In the state of exception produced by the war on terror we are asked to accept a consensual vision of fear, war, scapegoating and state sponsored violence. Yet many are moved to dissent from this.

*Dissensus* can mean widespread disagreement, a failure to reach consensus or a consensus only among those who dissent. Jaques Ranciere uses the term to describe rare moments of genuine democracy whereby new social actors force themselves into the political landscape demanding that their voices, which hitherto have been silent, are finally heard. While what we consider politics is often a ritualised confrontation between opposing parties, armies, or forces, with a known set of protocols on how this resolution will play out, a moment of *dissensus* allows a reconfiguration of how we understand the notion of politics itself by opening up pre-existing assumptions of social agency.

*If you see something, say something* will be a discussion, exhibition and publishing project in Sydney in February 2007. Principally this will revolve around an exhibition that will involve a small number of International and Australian artists. Artists will be invited whose work has explored aspects of *dissensus* – by either questioning prevailing notions of consensus or by exploring new possibilities of social agency. Rather than being an exhibition of political art this exhibition will aim to question how we actually understand the connections between politics and aesthetics. The exhibition will be complemented by a workshop and a newspaper project.

Of particular interest will be the role of the artist as a researcher. In Argentina during the crisis and uprising of 2001 the term "militant researcher" was popularly used to describe an engaged approach to seeking an understanding of reality. As the research group *Colectivo Situaciones* explains the researcher-militants' "quest is to carry out theoretical and practical work oriented to co-produce the knowledges and modes of an alternative sociability, beginning with the power (*potencia*) of those subaltern knowledges." In engaging with social realities artists have increasingly become archivers, publishers and researchers. This exhibition will bring together some of these research projects which have informed both how these artists have tried to engage with social realities and encourage forms of alternative knowledge and resistance.

Keg de Souza and Zanny Begg

“If You See Something Say Something” Sydney 2007

Artists:

Dmitry Vilenksy/Chto Delat? (Russia) [dvilensky@yandex.ru](mailto:dvilensky@yandex.ru)  
Contra File (Brazil) [contra\\_file@yahoo.com.br](mailto:contra_file@yahoo.com.br)  
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Richard Dedomenici (UK) [richarddedomenici@hotmail.com](mailto:richarddedomenici@hotmail.com)  
Aissa Deebe (Palestine) and Al Fadhil (Iraq) ?  
Arlene Texta Queen (NY/Australia) [textasforever@gmail.com](mailto:textasforever@gmail.com)  
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Astra Howard (Australia) [astra\\_howard@yahoo.com](mailto:astra_howard@yahoo.com)  
Keg de Souza (Australia)  
Zanny Begg (Australia)

Newspaper project:

Editors: Keg and Zanny  
Sub-editor: [jenjen\\_jen\\_twice@yahoo.com.au](mailto:jenjen_jen_twice@yahoo.com.au)  
Design: Tom Civil Breakdown Press [info@breakdownpress.org](mailto:info@breakdownpress.org)  
**Deadline for submissions: December 5<sup>th</sup>.**

Contributors:

Brian Holmes (Paris)  
Gregory Shollette (NY)  
David McNeill (Sydney)  
Love Pumps (Sydney)?  
Marni Cordell (Sydney)  
Lucas Ihlein (Sydney)  
Tom Civil - poster  
And the artists

Events/openings:

Mori Gallery: opens February 7<sup>th</sup>  
Chrissie Cotter Gallery: Opens February 5<sup>th</sup>  
Gallery 4a: opens January 26<sup>th</sup>  
Workshop with Contra File (Portuguese with English translation): Chrissie Cotter Gallery February 10<sup>th</sup>  
Workshop with Etcetera (Spanish with English Translation): Mori Gallery February 11<sup>th</sup> (planning cultural responses to APEC Summit and George Bush visit to Sydney)  
Film Screening: Sunday Feb 11<sup>th</sup> 8pm Squatted venue (text “sedition” to 0428 477 128 for venue details)  
Closing party: Lanfranchis Feb 10<sup>th</sup> supported by Dual Plover (fund raiser for Taring Padi ticket)