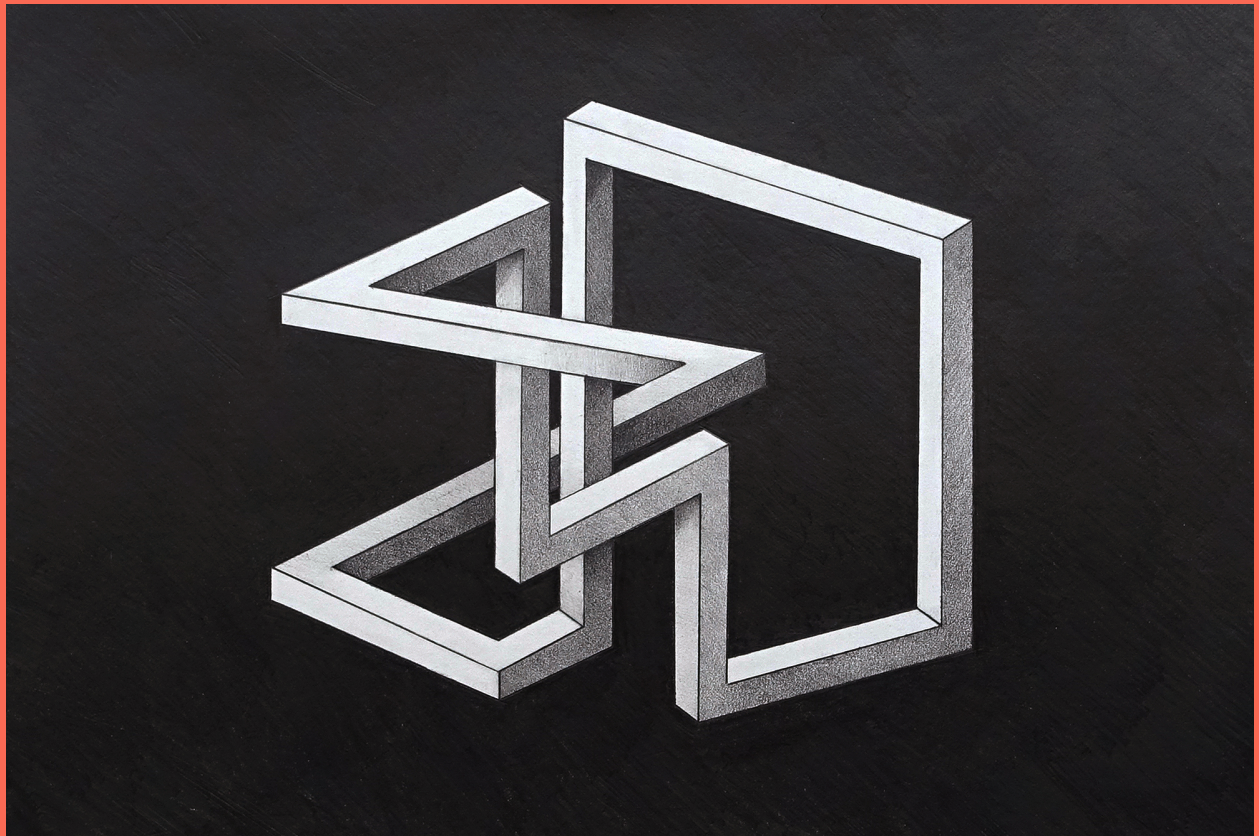


ADSR Zine

010



CONTENTS

010.1 ATTACK

010.1.1 <u>Surface Activations</u> / Mason Kimber.	3
010.1.2 <u>Muß es sein? Es muß sein!</u> / Kate Maybury	6
010.1.3 <u>At the other end of the house</u> / Jonathan Sisovic.	15

010.2 DECAY-SUSTAIN

010.2.1 <u>Annie [Kurt Schwitters (c. 1925)]</u> / Rainer Linz	18
010.2.2 <u>Self-portrait (big mouth)</u> / Jane Sheldon	19
010.2.3 <u>cooking metaphors</u> / Ira Ferris	23

010.3 RELEASE

010.3.1 <u>Creative Space, Creative Capital</u> / Elia Bosshard	28
010.3.2 <u>China Masks</u> / Scotty So	29

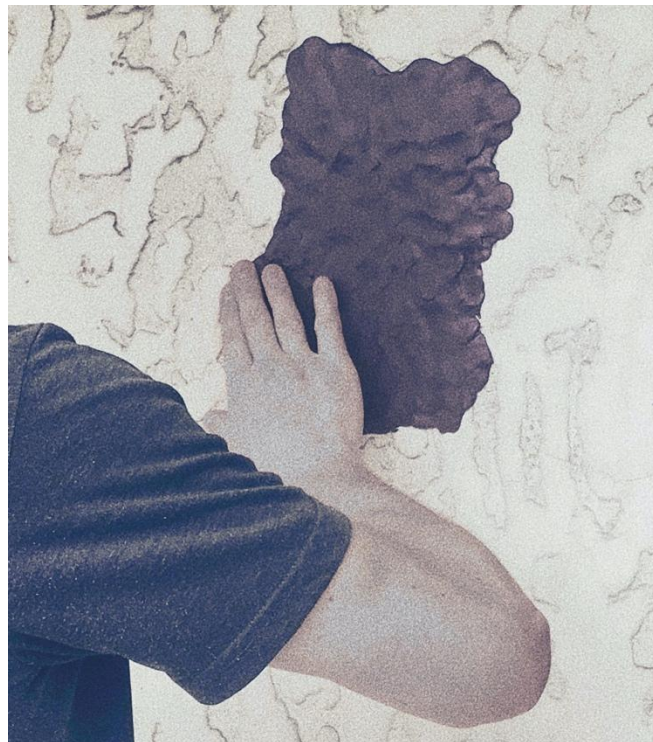
Surface Activations

Mason Kimber

It's one thing to observe a surface, but another to *feel* its presence. Much effort has been made recently to disconnect our touching bodies from the world around us: social distancing, masks, sanitization, isolation. The touching of surfaces has literally become a matter of life and death. As a studio-based artist who uses moulding and casting, this period has made me more aware of touching - not as a threat but as an intimate form of reading and understanding through material.

The process of moulding a surface involves slowly pressing silicone putty, which has the consistency of play-doh, into the crevices of an object's skin. Encountering its topography with the tips of your fingers allows you to develop an intimate understanding of the object and its location. By physically tracing these details, I exercise a subconscious form of bodily reading and memory-making, resulting in a direct engagement with the felt qualities of the object: its composition and temporality within a larger timescale. With heightened awareness to the sense of touch, fingers replace the eyes to temporarily perform the role of vision. Like navigating a pitch-black room at night, you see instead with your hands.

After the mould hardens into thick rubber, it's carefully removed to reveal two interrelated aspects of the site. The bottom side contains an almost perfect physical recording of the undulating texture beneath. In contrast, the top side tells the story of an encounter. Its forensic impressions trace the meandering fingers as they converse with the object's surface, finding their way across it. A physical transcription of this conversation is captured, channeled through the silicone putty itself. What results is a literal timestamp of the surface and the performing hand as it seeks to memorialise a place.



[Fig. 1](#) Pressing the silicone putty into the surface



[Fig. 2](#) Fingerprints embedded within the silicone

After the mould is removed, the process of casting begins back in the studio. This next stage involves a different form of material encounter, one with the facsimile. Various casting compounds (gypsum, resin, wax, sand, foam) are poured and left to harden, producing a physical copy of the object in all its detail. However, my interest lies not in this faithful index, but rather in the experimental reworking of fragments and processes of emergence that a studio-based practice allows.¹

One way to explore the inner qualities of an object is to provoke it and spring it into action. And the simplest way to achieve this is to break it. Usually, I use a hard tool, like a hammer, or I simply drop the casted object from a height and allow gravity to make the final call as a chance strategy. The pure act of breaking reveals certain behavioral qualities, similar to what architect Anne Holtrop refers to as "material gesture".²

Art is capable of rendering the invisible forces of the earth into visible form by extracting fragments of these forces and containing or framing them within the materials of an artwork.³ According to philosopher Elizabeth Grosz, one of art's defining features is that it "enables matter to become expressive...to intensify—to resonate and become more than itself".⁴ Grosz's understanding of artistic expression takes emphasis away from the determination of the human mind, and over to the inherent nature and forces held within matter itself. Testing these forces by observing and responding to a certain object's breaking point can be an effective way to expose its inner resonance.

Once broken, it ceases to be an object and instead becomes a *material*. With objects, we usually attach an understanding of the stillness of form and make sure not to break them. Materials, on the other hand, are



Fig. 3 Casted fragment (before being broken)

¹ Grosz, Elizabeth. *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008, 1.

² "Material Gesture." Anne Holtrop, 2019, accessed 1 July 2020, <https://holtrop.arch.ethz.ch/Material-Gesture>.

³ Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth*, 22.

⁴ *ibid*, 4.

usually handled and allowed to perform and transform.⁵ This slight shift of understanding opens the fragment up to further possibilities of reconfiguration or bricolage. In Claude Levi-Strauss's idea of the term, a bricoleur "works with his hands in devious ways, puts pre-existing things together in new ways, and makes do with whatever is at hand".⁶

By treating fragments as material to excavate and recompose, the artist positions themselves as a quasi-archeologist digging through ruins to uncover hidden forces. Instead of treating archaeology as something purely obsessed with the past, "the archaeological act thus becomes an engagement with the present's surface: the mediation of the past as a creative engagement with the present and future".⁷ This same strategy of excavating and reconfiguring disparate fragments, or *breaks* is echoed in early hip hop music, enabled by the invention of the electronic mixer and sampler.

In recapturing, remixing and recasting fragments, a series of actions and gestures can accumulate and embed themselves on and within the growing material. This generative, conversational approach to making is contingent on the behavior of the materials themselves as they undergo transformations, from liquid to solid and back again. Forming into larger panels through a process of growth, it places the maker "as a participant in amongst a world of active materials".⁸

By moving beyond the limiting view of the artefact as an object of human association, the history of the fragment is then seen as the history of forces, of activations. It reframes archaeology as an open, creative act rather than a purely historical one.



Fig. 4 Broken fragments embedded within layers of casted material

Similar to the capturing of two corresponding temporalities within the silicone mould (surface and fingerprints), these processes both carry forth and reimagine the object's past by recasting its traces firmly into the present.

⁵ Ingold, Tim. *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture*. London;: Routledge, 2013, 18.

⁶ "Claude Levi Strauss' Concept of Bricolage." *Literary Theory and Criticism*, 2016, accessed 22 July 2020, <https://literariness.org/2016/03/21/claude-levi-strauss-concept-of-bricolage/>.

⁷ Harrison, Rodney. "Surface Assemblages. Towards an Archaeology in and of the Present." *Arch. Dial.* 18, no. 2 (2011): 160. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1380203811000195>.

⁸ Ingold, *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture*, 21.



I began to form a brand new relationship with my hands and eyes. I was learning to look at the screen while I moved my hands to the right key spot on the piano, all the while having the main peripheral view of my student on the screen – a new dimension of proprioception was developing quickly. The good old quick glance-down-glance-up between the student's hand and their music was suddenly no longer an option, this set didn't allow for that luxury. The dual focus was exhausting, and I could feel a back of the eye migraine beginning to niggle!! This was only 2 hrs into my 5 and a half hour teaching afternoon. Two days prior I painted my nails in bright purple nail polish. Not just to brighten my day as I spent the time looking at my hands artificially on a screen, but as a learning aid for my students to see the exact placement of my fingers on the checkerboard keyboard of black and white that filled their screens. Screens... didn't Gen Z have enough of this already? Now this is their only way of communicating and learning! To quote Beethoven: *Es muss sein*¹. *sigh*

Beautiful, organic acoustics must now be broken down into code, transmitted across the World Wide Web and entering students' ears, along with (you guessed it!) – my beautiful vocals. Who knows what sort of quality they would receive and if their connection was steady enough to deal with the back and forth video quality needed for online lessons? All was revealed very soon by the end of April which families would be needing to take a step back from lessons. For the beginner students who had started piano earlier this year, parents were very understandably stressed and feeling overwhelmed as they still adjusted to practice schedules and all the things learning an instrument entails... let alone the absolute chaos of immediate online home school, cancellation of 'normal' existence as we know it and a virus we anticipate is so potentially deadly in a nation that lacks the availability of Hand Sanitiser, enough medical respirators, and to much surprise, toilet paper, toiletries and Panadol of all things?!?

Never before had my back become this stiff so quickly nor my vocal chords become so hoarse. Hours of sitting on a backless piano bench, yelling over the sound of both mine and my students' pianos echoing through my tiled living room. I suddenly felt less alone somehow. This level of connection had to become our new 'normal.' *Normal, now there's a thought. What is that anymore?*

¹ Beethoven in a letter to Moritz Schlesinger, 1859 with regards to his String Quartet, Op. 135: *"You can translate the Muss es sein as showing that I have been unlucky."* Perhaps this is appropriate given our current circumstances with Covid-19.
<https://thebeethovenproject.com/must-it-be-must-what-be/>

I was soon going to need a hot beverage in my scheduled break. Rarely did I ever take my break even after leaving an extra 15 mins for each student's lesson in case of tech issues. *Am I crazy I would rather be certain they understand their work for the week, and give them a bit of extra time? An act of service for all?* But onward with gusto – perhaps for many students, my face might be the only one-on-one personalised lesson they would be receiving for the foreseeable future? No pressure, but show up with a smile and a positive attitude to lessons and we will be sure to glean a speck of some new skill or understanding from this. Right? Onward together we must go. *Es muss sein!*

The first lessons online were spent configuring sound settings and setting up the laptop/tablet at the best height next to the piano. What to use to prop that up a tad higher? – grab some books and a chair! Did they have a pencil and eraser at the ready at the piano? Likely not... somehow. Had they emailed me their theory homework in advance to check? And fingernails.... good lord the fingernails!!! *I may just scream if I have to mention this basic one one. more. time.!! Breathe Kate, be calm.*

Hopefully, they would remember these things for next lesson, so I didn't become an endless broken record of outwardly calm but inwardly screaming reminders.

"Why don't you take a photo of the settings screen and the setup, just in case you ever need them again? *smile* Thanks, (parent)." The tedious nature of this task for some needed guidance, and for others the kids grabbed the phone: "Here, I'll do it!!!". I chuckled to myself as I grappled with the idea that one day that will likely be me - *muss es sein?!*

In all their honest glory, seeing my lovely students' home piano setups flung the lid wide open to Pandora's box. I began to see where many technical issues were growing from. *Why have I not been able to see this earlier?!* The numerous collapsed wrists, stretched fingers, misaligned forearms, squishy fingers, and backward posture were on full display, having grown comfortable in their usual practice caves. I began to use similar phrases with many parents about seat height and its importance in our lessons. For many, this was not the first time they'd heard this. *For goodness sake*, I thought. *The fourth student in a row! How long has this been like this?! Let it go...* I reminded myself. *it's not within your control. They will hear it when they are ready to listen.* Amongst all of these intruding frustrations, I began to ponder: *how can I get my students to feel they are heard and supported in their lessons? ...Would parents pull the plug if we aren't getting through enough content? Extra time per student it is then! Es muss sein!*

"Look at the screen and check where my 5th finger is... I'd like you to copy me and put your right hand in the exact same spot where mine is," I said with an over-exerted tone as I tried to screech softly over the sound of my grand piano. I let the key go, and said it again suddenly realising I probably didn't need to overexert my poor vocal chords if I wasn't competing with the sound of the piano – probably the 40th time that day I had done that! This was my 4th lesson of the day, and I had my overhead webcam set up for an aerial view of the keyboard.

Alex* was unsure where to start on the keys, where to look, or what to focus his attention to. In our years of lessons together in person, I've noticed he is very sensitive to environmental noises around him. I asked him if he wanted to start with his favourite song he'd been working on just the week earlier, when we had our last in-person lesson in what was now suddenly a 'pre-Corona' world.

Skipping forward in time, we were ten minutes into our fourth Zoom lesson, and for Alex, this lesson was still anything but usual or familiar. I have suspected for awhile that Alex is very likely on the autism spectrum, so with this new mode of communication I tried patiently to get ourselves into the same place to begin the first song of the lesson. The song title didn't hold significance for Alex, so this was getting tricky to communicate.

The child was looking anywhere but at the computer screen, and who could blame him, the wall was probably more interesting at this point than the speckle of black and white notes in his music book, or the repeated strophic strains of my voice coming artificially through the computer speakers as we tried multiple times to get into starting position! Or more likely – sensory overload.

It became clear that too much talking, instructions or reminders began to unsettle him more than usual in our online lessons. I couldn't gently guide his hands to the right place anymore, subtly adjust his seat to a more appropriate place, or speak softly from our usual side by side learning position. The queasy look on his face said it all. *Ok, I thought. Less talking, more demonstration instead.* I played the first two Gs together once and then began the first 3 bars of the song, thinking this might give him the much needed aural cue to begin and carry on himself. Nope, not yet... I took a second to pause and remembered we had a screen sharing function.

"Ok Alex", I said in a very calm tone. "Would it help if you could see the music on your screen?"

"Yep."

I shared the photo on-screen on my iPad. "Oh that one!", Alex exclaimed. He grabbed the appropriate book immediately, one of four new books he had just graduated to. It became obvious in that moment he identified the song in some other way – the cartoon next to the title perhaps? Sometimes Alex thought titles of things were 'pointless' or 'non-sensical' – his own words, at age 10. He played the song with mostly correct notes and rhythm, with some stopping and starting as he struggled to catch up after a horrific page turn (the book was so new the pages stuck together!). He hadn't noticed the key signature at all and was playing so far outside of the black keys it was no wonder every single F-sharp was missed! Perhaps if we were more acquainted with key signatures this might have been a good opportunity to discuss modes with Alex, but this would have to wait until later when key signatures had settled in his mind first. *An idea for aural learning for later! Remember this and write it down after his lesson!*

I reminded myself to breathe. *Teach the child, not the curriculum. Patiently adjust.*

"Nice job Alex! I really liked your performance", I said with a smile looking directly at the screen. Looking mostly at his music, he smirked, then his eyes darted back and forth across the music book pages.

He said with anxiety: "Thanks, but-I-got-the-timing-wrong-after-turning-the-page-and-that-messed-up-the-entire-piece-and-" I see restless leg start as he begins to play with his hair between his thumb and index fingers.

“Don’t worry Alex”, I interject. “I know you can play this piece, I saw you do it last lesson! Let’s move on to something new about this piece and talk about character for a bit now. How do you think this song would sound if we imagine going back in time 200 years, to a royal court of men and women dancing together to this song?” I proceeded to demonstrate the quality of character we were looking for in a Minuet and rhythmic and key signature corrections all at the same time – the less words the better!

Alex went quiet. Was he processing it all? Was it too much information in one hit? He seemed previously bored by the basic-ness of listing singular instructions last lesson. It couldn’t hurt to try it.

“Alex?” I asked.

“Yesss”.

“What was different about the second bar when I played it?”

“It sounded different.”

“Good, that’s right”, I said. *Don’t use the words right and wrong*, I thought. *Say something different next time*. “This time I want you to watch me play it on your screen, and say STOP! when I’ve reached the note that sounds different to you”. I played it slowly again.

Alex said something, but I didn’t catch it clearly the first time because Zoom setup only allows only one person to speak at a time.

“What was that Al-?”

“I said, STOP!” he interjected.

I paused, not wanting to interrupt, but his answer was clearly finished to my very specific question.

“Excellent, on which note Alex?”

“The F”, Alex said and went quiet again.

“You’re spot on!”, I said with a smile and tried to connect with his eyes on the screen. Eye contact failed, and I half expected it to. “So which note would sound like it fits more nicely – this one (I played F), or this one (I played F#)?”

“The F#.”

“And where is my 4th finger sitting on the piano now? He turned towards the screen ... I continued: “the tip of my 4th finger is sitting on the edge of F# from the start of the song. Can you show me that slowly with your right hand now?”

“Yep”, he said in a peppy tone and began the right hand immediately on the right key spot with 4th finger sitting on the edge of the F#, just as I had asked. *Bingo! I thought. Now he’s getting the hang of the ‘watch and copy’ side of things after 3 lessons*. He played it once and began to put the hands together straight away, speed increasing, as was usual for Alex. I admired his enthusiasm, as my frustration began to rise inside. I couldn’t blame him, I did infer it would be only one time he would need to play it in my last sentence. I let him finish to the end of the song. I had tried in previous lessons to bring his attention back to the singular focus task at hand, but enough experience in the past 3 online lessons had taught me to just wait, let him finish and be patient. More interruptions only seemed to make him more anxious and unsettled.

He finished the piece. I paused a few seconds.

“Excellent! Your rhythm was much better that time and you played every F#. I’m wondering in your imagination what kind of sound might you make if we want it to sound like the King and Queen are watching the Court dance?”. I played two completely different and inappropriate renditions of the first 8 bars.

Alex paused in thought.

“Dignified.”

“YES!”. I proceeded to play the piece more *allegretto* than his previous *allegro molto* for demonstration. “Why don’t you try it again in a dignified manner then, Alex?”

“Ok”, he said in his usual tone of voice. What came next was much closer to ‘dignified’ than I had anticipated!

“Well done Alex, that was exactly what I was hoping for you to do with this song today! Grab a post-it note, and write down: “Start R.H. (right hand) with 4 on F#” and underneath it “dignified” in big capital letters. Those are your two main things to practise this week for this piece.”

“Yeah Ok.”

A rustling sound interrupts our focus – chips from the snack cupboard! Jonathan looks sheepishly at me on the other side of the room, my furrowed, annoyed glare ripping a laser hole through his forehead with my teacher concentration. Just kidding, I don’t mean it, not after that face: his mouth full, crunching ever so quietly as possible, his eyes apologetic in silence with that too-cute-to-be-angry-at expression. ☺

One piece down, three to go! Looking at my watch: *That took 8 minutes... oh my! Oh well, mission accomplished!* Next, we started a new fairly easy piece together. He could sight read it well, but the learning goal was to differentiate articulation and it needed some ‘sorting’.

“Close your book Alex, and now listen to how I am playing the first few bars. I played it once, then added a description to the second time:

| |: “Two short!, two joined, two short!, two joined” :| |

After honing it, he got it. “Grab a post it note, and write that down Alex!”

Onward our journey went from here, both flying by the seat of our pants from lesson to lesson, letting go of what wasn’t useful and focussing on the positive of each small victory as it happened. It was as much a learning experience for Alex as it was for me with all these online ‘walls’. Eventually those walls helped to build a new ‘house’ once we got used to the new rhythm and groove of our lessons – not quite steady and somewhat syncopated at times.

“Is your Original Sound setting turned on?” I ask.

Student looks confused “uuummmm, I’m not sure...”

“Look to the top left of the Zoom window – can you see the words “Turn Original Sound Off”?”

“Nope. It says ‘On’ instead of ‘Off’”, student says.

“Click right on the text where it says that, and that will turn it on, darling.”

“Got it! What does that setting do anyway?”

“It allows us to hear the piano more smoothly and our singing voices clearer,” I say, for the 6th time today.

This attentive and bright 13 year old begins her lesson, listening ears pricked up at the ready. *Ahhhhh.... Time to relax into this one a little more*, I think to myself, as I switch the camera angle to the aerial view and smile.

She busts out the Tarantella she’s been working on for her exam, the slurring much improved since last week. The praise practically falls out of my mouth.

Adrian’s fingers glided over the keys expressively, his ancient piano singing. Ready-ing for a video exam, it was all about the final touches. Getting Adrian to focus solely on these was a somewhat difficult task for this gifted and talented student, he needed so much more to satisfy his musical hunger than any student I’d known before! *So good to hear the piano’s been tuned! But I need to find another way to make this relatable...*

“That was beautiful Adrian. I really liked about how you just played that piece. What colours are you seeing in your mind?”

“The A section is... Here, let me show you.” He whipped out his phone and started tapping and dragging on the screen with gusto.

I waited patiently. “Sending it through to you now!”. *He seems really excited. I’ll remember this visual technique for the future!!*

I grabbed my phone and looked at the picture message: a tapestry of intricately layered colours. *Wow, this is amazing – all of that for one bar or is this the overall picture?!* “That’s amazing! Now I can finally see what’s happening in your mind. We took a second to discuss the composition of the picture for a moment. “Is this for the entire A section or a particular bar in the A section?”

“Hmm,” Adrian paused in thought. “For most of the A section.” We both thrived on specificity – so we kept feeding off each other as this went on.

“I’m wondering if perhaps we can tweak the colour scheme though, since the piece is *Andante con moto* and has a dream-like quality – perhaps we can make the colours more pastel to convey this more? Would you like to try from bars... 9-15 for me again?”

“Sure!!”

Adrian took a second to prepare, and launched himself into the piece like a duck taking to water. Adrian’s tone colour was immediately different, more subtle – *success!* – though we now needed to stick that small ‘*ritardando*’ back in, along with a few other details.

I demonstrated how we could stretch the *rubato* in a slightly different place – Adrian’s musicality was exceptional, so bringing him back to this idea needed to somehow be giving him something new to chew on. “Let’s try bringing out the middle voice here a little more”: *I played.*

He mimicked me well, but tone production was not Zoom's forte. This went on for a little longer as we tried to hear each other's musical intentions.

"What's the climax looking like in your mind, here in bar 49?" I asked.

"It sort of changes between colours, but I'd say a mix between purples, blue and a hint of orange", he said.

We tried tweaking the colours again to a different hue, artists with our finger brushes. *Perhaps we need another analogy instead.*

We changed pieces, and tried doing this all over again.

I paused for a moment. "Perhaps we can think of this moment here like the climax to a symphony? Bah, doo-doo-dahh BAAAHHHHHH!! – if you get my drift?

..I know, I'm a super talented singer," and winked at the screen.

Adrian chuckled. "Yes indeed!! I'll try that now?"

That would be lovely.

Lesson minutes were imbued with a new precious-ness than ever before. I looked forward to connecting with my students and hearing what was happening in their world as the weeks of lockdown went on, headlines about China being gradually drowned out by our own Australian ones: Jobkeeper, Jobseeker, "all jobs are essential", ha-ha good one Scomo, that's not at all confusing!

Becoming one with the tech, lessons developed an elegant choreography of click-etry back and forth between the side-on view of me and the aerial view, as students tried to grasp more detailed description/demonstrations of the task we were trying to accomplish. They were suddenly considerably more responsible for their own learning – a welcome addition for me as students honed their listening skills! Much holding of their own fingers, wrists and forearms developed over the coming weeks and many exclamations of: "ohhhh, now I get it!" – that thing I'd been harping on about for months: the thumb releasing behind the second finger in scale motion.

Perhaps I should be bringing my tech equipment into regular in-person lessons once they resume so students can see for them-- "Slow down Christina!* Let's repeat what you did so brilliantly a few more times so your second brain (the hand) can get it too," I exclaimed with a smile. She had mastered triplets in all their glory in her Heller study for her last fourth grade exam, now we were progressing upward and smoothing out a technical issue affecting speed in her scale passages. I felt grateful to be teaching the intricacies of this at this hour of the night, than trying desperately from afar to teach note reading and recognition with my younger students!!!

I collapse in a heap on the couch, not wanting to utter another word nor hear any more bar-by-bar music for at least the next few hours. Jonathan would be waiting for me in the other room and would already have heard my last few lessons of the evening. He probably didn't need to ask how I was since it was obvious – overcooked, and no longer *al dente*!

engulfed in a long hug with Jonathan

SILENCE > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > > >

was blissful for a little while!

“How was your day darling?” I ask. “Trying to get things organised with all this Corona crap!” he says exasperatedly. I know better than to ask for specifics at this point in time.

We sit on the couch next to the grand piano, he with a bit more pep than I. Afterall, he's had time to get food. FOOD!

More glorious quiet...

Bing! Until the announcement that Australia Chamber Orchestra would be cancelling their concert season for the year, nestled itself in the email inbox. I let out a body dragging sigh. Well I guess that was bound to happen at some point. The tears welled – when will I be able to set foot in a concert hall again, how long will this form of 'silence' go on for?!??!

I glance at the Hi-Fi.

Jonathan asks “shall we listen to that Rachmaninov record of yours?” Piano Concerto #2 – that old '59 record I grabbed from Vinnies years ago I've never listened to.

“Yeah, that'd be lovely,” I say with a glimmer of enthusiasm. Jonathan grabs the record cleaner and thoroughly cleans her up.

On goes the *Adagio* second movement... *crackle, pop* *Oh Richter, how you slay me!*

I feel somewhat guilty that today, again, I have felt too exhausted to practise piano for myself, knowing well enough by now how I will feel after Tuesday (my longest teaching day of the week).

Where has my “creativity” retired to? Why have I not been making online videos about amazing pieces, tips and tricks for teaching said pieces, making Facebook promo videos and re-vamping my website? And the coda from Chopin Ballade number 4 I have been meaning to learn for the longest time – why is that not happening? Now we are home, all the time, shouldn’t I be having more time than ever to cultivate new projects and skills? This is what I keep hearing somehow. Am I not an ‘artist’, after all? Should I be punching out some positive spin video to help lift humanity’s spirits with some spiffy, upbeat piano song? Should that burden land on us creatives? Is it expected?

I suppose it is. No one has much else to do and happy to enjoy the fruits of artists’ labour on Netflix, Spotify, Amazon and such. All the while our Government is trying to practically dismantle us down into the Department of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development & Communications, along with a good portion of Arts funding.

New Zealand, can we adopt Jacinda, pretty please? I can’t promise we can return her... not for a while anyway!

No, enough self-questioning of my artistic status. I live and breathe music, my teaching *IS* my creative practice. And right now, it is enough. I am enough; I have achieved enough for today. I have talked enough, thought enough, been patient enough. Screamed internally enough. Passed on enough musical legacy for today – dare I call it that? Perhaps tomorrow if I feel up to it, my head may have enough space for some ‘personal’ black and white notes of my own.

• • • •

At the other end of the house

Sunday night text message: “The office is closed to all staff tomorrow due to COVID-19 precautions and safety measures. All staff are to work from home until further notice. Construction sites are to remain open and all government mandated precautions are to be strictly adhered to by all construction staff”.

Great, love the good intentions, and if things are escalating as quickly as they are (which they certainly were – remember how it all seemed to have arrived out of nowhere, all these things happening “over there”) I would have made the same decision as the owner of a company. What does that mean on Sunday night however? It means getting into the ute and travelling to head office to pack up my whole desk, the computer, monitors, cables, keyboards – everything – put it in the ute and get home and set it up. I go to sleep at 1:30am in the morning.

I am back up at 5:30am – shit, shower, shave, breakfast, coffee - and at my desk...at home...by around 6:15am. What does keeping construction operations look like when all the management team are separated and at home, very likely still setting up their computers as well, having either read the text message last night on Sunday, or reading it this morning and wondering what is going on. Invite is sent at 6:30am for a catchup with the whole team at 7:00am. Everyone is online at 7am, and apart from some issues getting microphones set up, cameras working, and internet connections lagging, we are all able to share our collective bewilderment at what is going on for a good portion of the first half hour of the meeting. We all understand that this is going to be a new normal, and that the major change we face will be getting used to working apart from each other whilst doing exactly the same thing. We all quickly realise that working so separated from each other and coordinating our own teams will likely mean a whole lot of the dreaded “micro-management” that we all hate. We draft up a set of minutes and actions, and list that we will be making lists for our teams to carry out. The meeting is concluded, there are messages on Microsoft Teams about details, there are emails, some phone calls,

The day henceforth then becomes one long drawn out video conference. The executive team of the company want to have their own crisis meeting to determine how each business unit is going to go about keeping things moving, we discuss government requirements, safety precautions, we share strategies and stories, software problems, revenue concerns, guesses at the duration of how long the whole fantastic new world that started on Sunday will really go on for. Trips are cancelled, physical meetings are cancelled, everything is put online.

A week goes by in much the same fashion – the working day actually becomes longer because you realise that you are no longer getting up to go walk around the office, there is no longer any office banter, jokes, asides, “what are you doing on the weekend”. You realise it is 6pm, and when you get up your hips are stiff from being in the same position the entire day. Going to work actually afforded some exercise.

The days repeat – and I see that my partner Kate has had to reorganise her entire work existence as well. In the same first week, she shares stories about worried parents and their kids still going to school, setting up webcams, setting up chairs in front of pianos, hearing pianos that sound like they have not been tuned in 50 years, term fees, term cancellations, an end to in-studio lessons, less driving, staying indoors. I do admire the alacrity with which Kate dives into setting everything up online – I at least had a whole company of back office admin that helps that process along.

Another week.

Kate knocks on the door and asks “What is my bub doing? Do you want to have breakfast?” It is 9:00am and I say that I am actually booked out until lunch around midday. Kate is going to start teaching at around 1pm. I reply, “Ok, let’s eat at around 12 then”.

At work (at home) in between arguments, lists, bottled frustration, Zoom meeting after Teams meeting after Google meetup meetings, awkward pauses, safety alerts, financial reports, dropped connections...I can hear music come from the other end of the house.

I am catching up with a Project Manager over the status of a project in Bondi, laughing at the incursion of her Great Dane into the meeting (which are very calm dogs albeit the size of a small horse) and at the same time I hear the slow plodding up the (what must be C Major) scale, faintly, from the back of the house.

In another meeting with a Project Engineer on site in the Blue Mountains, I am told she will need to take some time off in the afternoons for the foreseeable future to take care of her grandfather. “Outcomes not presentism” I am happy to advise in my sage new “woke” management speak, “do what you need to do”. I realise that over the course of the hour, I have heard the same doodle of a tune at the start of that hour - and at the end of that hour.

In a telephone conversation with yet another Project Manager, we moan about the poor quality of a subcontractor’s work, bureaucracy, the days when “projects were fun” – I realise that I have walked into Kate’s lesson – my wireless earbuds in my ears, mobile phone in hand, I slowly back away with a sheepish nod and soundless “sorry”, and go back to my home office the same way, in the same manner I had strolled around talking into the air.

After another day of letters, emails, reports, “human management” – I am happy to turn off my computer in the evening, happy that I don’t have to drive home. I wander downstairs and Kate is still teaching – I can see she is frustrated, even in the higher pitched “I’m not condescending, I’m explaining” teacher voice that automatically arrives when the camera is turned on. I think I have heard stories about each of her students, and what her concerns (and her peeves) are with every single one. I look over and she is describing how she is holding her

hand above the keyboard, about the amount of pressure needed for that note, the direction of the phrasing in that bar, the seat height, a lack of practice, interactions with parents (oh the parents). These occurrences continue and repeat well into the evening, I listen aloofly, scroll on my phone, watch a video, read an article.

We have a routine now, and it happens that we are spending all our time at home, except to go out for “essentials”. We laugh out loud when we have gone from one aisle in the supermarket to the next and come across an entire “end to end” empty shelf where the toilet paper would be. This is ridiculous.

The routine continues. Another week. Music comes up from the other end of the house. I wonder what is going on in her mind, what was her day like.

Jonathan Sisovic is a Construction Manager.

Annie

Kurt Schwitters (c. 1925)

translation Rainer Linz

Normally I never do this, repeat something bad about someone, but our new Annie... one doesn't live to see this often. Anyway she's gone now, so I can write what I like. She had a very friendly smile, but for that her hands were large and completely red. At eight o'clock on the first morning as I get up, my big cup is broken, through the middle, in two halves, and carefully put back together again so that I wouldn't notice and think I had broken it by picking it up. If only I hadn't poured instead, I wouldn't have had to change my clothes. So I call Annie, and in fright she lets a full tray of dishes fall, everything broken. Then Annie comes in smiling. So I do what I don't usually do, to thoroughly scold and recite all the animal names. As I finally calm myself, I ask why she didn't at least pick up the pieces and throw them away, so that I wouldn't have to get upset about the broken cup. So Anna begins to cry, and it was monstrous, because she let out so many high-pitched squealing sounds, and protested that she absolutely did not break the cup, that I broke it when I picked it up. Now I break down completely and reflect upon the most unheard of combination of animal names, and Anna promises me that she will in future throw the pieces away regardless of whether she broke the thing or not. So I sit comfortably down at the kitchen table with what was then my last cup, drink my tea and read the sport pages. But one does listen with one ear into the next room, where the girl is dusting. I hear nothing, everything is quiet. Only that Anna is calling the cat. Then everything is quiet again. Suddenly Anna screams "The beast, the beast!" I don't hear anything more. Well, I think maybe she feels guilty about the broken cup and wants to blame the cat. Ridiculous, he can walk between my crystal vases without the slightest disturbance. Now Anna screams again "The arm, the arm!" Well, I did think her a bit silly anyway. I think as long as she is still talking, there can't be anything wrong. Suddenly she continues "Both arms, both arms!" Then she says "Oh god, oh god, poor me!" I think to myself, "harmless silliness", and smile. Surely she means my cup, a souvenir from my best friend, and says "Both arms". At least one can have a bit of a laugh over the funny things she says. Now she is moaning and gasping next door, as if she is dragging something heavy. No problem, she should exert herself a little. Surely she wouldn't lay her hands on my writing desk. She opens the window. Now I get up, because if she falls out I will at least be able to call the police immediately. I'm sorry for her guilty conscience over my broken cup. It's actually an endearing characteristic. As I hurry to the door I can hear the dull thud. She can't be dead? On the one hand I'd be a little glad for the loss. It's always better than a protracted dismissal. And I didn't want to keep this girl, that much had become clear to me. Whoever falls from the fourth floor onto the hard pavement is dead. I open the door, and there is Annie smiling, her hands at her side. "What have you done now?", I say, and Annie continues to smile and claims "I honestly didn't do it, but I did throw the pieces away, you really don't need to be upset." "What pieces?" I ask, and I can already see the empty pedestal. Annie says "I couldn't find the arms..." I look at her reproachfully and she says shyly "It seems the cat broke both the lady's arms off, and you said I should always throw the pieces away, regardless of whether I broke it or not, so..." Now I lash out like a wounded lion. Consider what's happened here. I have a magnificent reproduction in marble of the Venus de Milo. Original size. The work was finished by old Thorwaldsen himself. A true masterpiece. The best copy that's ever been made of the armless Venus. I've been offered large sums by collectors for it, but I have never wanted to part with it. And here this lamb has claimed the cat broke the arms off, and because she feared I would have something to say about it, she threw the pieces out the window onto the street since I told her she should at least throw the pieces away whether she had broken it or not. Naturally everything is in pieces down there. Lucky no one was walking by. Naturally I dismissed her without notice.

Self-portrait (big mouth)

by Jane Sheldon

A platitude floating about our zeitgeist says, “wherever you go, there you are.” Google says it’s actually the title of a meditation book written in 1994. Repeatedly painting self-portraits must really shove this mantra down one’s throat. What I’m considering here is not selfies. And I’m not thinking of the central presence of the artist in the work of photographers like Cindy Sherman or Omar Victor Diop. I’m talking about the self-portraiture of the figurative painter: year after year, settling yourself before a mirror and laboriously pushing paint around on a canvas until what you have before you is some kind of representation of yourself, true of that moment in time. Perhaps if you want to be sure a portrait is representative of that moment *only*, you need to paint several, so that we can all read into their differences. If you spend two decades painting self-portraits looking away from the viewer, and then one day you paint one in which you direct your gaze right out at us, I, for one, will feel compelled to divine what this means.

When Lucian Freud died in 2011 and the media were trawling over the personal lives of all the women he’d knocked up (and I was reading every word), there was a lot of pity directed toward the artist Celia Paul, and not a lot of notice taken of her own large body of work. It came as a total surprise to her how she was seen by the public, how she was portrayed in the press, and it provoked her to make a change in her next painting. “A lot of the articles didn’t even mention that I was a painter, yet I’ve dedicated my life to painting, really since I was fourteen. I had never realised how I was seen in the world and so I thought I’ve got to make a statement about this.” In 2012, she created *Painter and Model*, a response to Freud’s painting of her and Angus Cook from 1986, which bears the same title. In Freud’s painting, Cook reclines nude, legs splayed, on a dilapidated leather couch and Paul stands looking over him, wearing a paint-covered smock, paintbrush in hand. There are tubes of paint on the floor and one foot exerts pressure on one of the tubes, pushing out a worm of dark paint. It was a decisive shift in Freud’s depiction of Celia, whom he had previously painted as passive, always. In Paul’s own 2012 painting, in which she is the only person in the frame and looks out at us directly, “I am both subject and I am the artist and in that way I have all the power.” (This is the part of the essay where I might naturally discuss the feminism of a direct gaze of this kind. But I think it’s not to be simplified, and neither does Paul, who is just as interested in the potential power of the averted gaze: “I think it’s something that hasn’t been fully explored within feminism, this power that can be unlocked through what might seem abject... looking down, self-enclosed...”)

Since 2012’s *Painter and Model*, she has more frequently been her own subject. “The first self-portraits that really worked for me was when I did five almost identical self-portraits where I’m dressed in the same black jumper, head and shoulders, and my head looking in the same direction. Quite small, square paintings... There was something really very eerie about the five of them. They were almost like a conceptual work of art and I wanted people to wonder if they were all the same [person]... I’ve always had this kind of precarious sense of my identity and I felt this was a true way of depicting myself.” The best way she could find to capture herself with any accuracy was to refract herself onto multiple canvases.

Throughout 2018, as her marriage was coming apart, Chantal Joffe created a vast series of small self-portraits, rendered at speed. Unlike Paul’s ‘almost identical’ self-portraits, these capture a range of states and attitudes, all variations on unhappiness, with no apparent concern for replicating an expression or relationship to the viewer. Writer Olivia Laing registered the faces in the series as making up “a chorus. They are so wildly specific, peering at you sideways, each one differently unhappy, each one concrete, present, original as in not a copy of the last.” Comparing Joffe’s painting-a-day pace to the slower process often chosen by other artists, Laing says, “Joffe’s

strategy of small and fast might be a better route if what you want to capture is not a permanent or solid self but rather instability, the way that moods temporarily tighten muscles or slash fresh grooves..."

For Joffe, self-portraiture is inevitable for the figurative painter: "I think there are points in painting when there is literally nothing else you can do. You've got you, and you've got paint." It's how Frida Kahlo got started, her own lifelong practice of self-portraiture initiated while confined to her bed, limited to just these two ingredients. In the reiterative practice of both Joffe and Kahlo we see them record encounters with immense pain, but it's registered differently. In Joffe's series, we see a great variety of ways in which pain plays on the face of the painter over the course of a year; in Kahlo's vast body of self-portraiture, when the multiple ways in which pain shaped her life show up in a painting, it is almost never shown in her face. As Peter Schjeldahl says, even when the painted Frida weeps, as she does in 1944's *The Broken Column*, a painting explicitly about the pain of her multiple surgeries, "tears flow from her eyes, but her face is dispassionate, as always. Her pain is not her." In painting after painting her gaze is sure, unwavering, and while it appears that her gaze addresses us, what is more salient to me is that she is not really looking at us, she is looking at herself. In Schjeldahl's words, "Kahlo's self-portraits are about her gaze, as subject matter, technique, and content. They dramatize sheer attentiveness. She makes eye contact not with the viewer but with herself—watching herself watch herself, in an extended but closed loop.... Looking at the pictures, you're not there." (And here we have another opportunity, which I will not take, for a long digression into the feminism of this closed loop.)

In Ben Quilty's self-portraiture, it seems clear that the viewer is most definitely there. When he appears in his own paintings these are depictions of himself, yes, but often he is just as much a stand-in for a larger collective of people and their registration of the historical moment, or their complicity in it. This is particularly explicit in a work like *Inhabit* (2010) in which his own portrait appears as one of a sequence of images, including a demon, a portrait of Captain James Cook, a skull, and more. Taken in sequence, they function together like an animated portrait of the dark colonial spirit broken into multiple frames, where what is revealed is both an essentially demonic energy and a sampling of the persons through whom this brutal energy passes, wreaking a malign, distortive effect on each canvas as it goes by. It's one of several works in which Quilty's palette is that of "a bruise two days in," as Lisa Slade beautifully put it. It could be said of Quilty as of Kahlo that "his pain is not him." But that's not because he is defying it or transcending it or portraying endurance of it. It's because it is not his pain alone. He so often uses his own face as a stand-in for a larger state of being, characteristic of some group in the broader community at a given moment in history, that his self-portraiture no longer really registers as portraiture of just the man himself.

When I found myself a couple of months ago with support from the Australian Music Centre's Peggy Glanville-Hicks Commissioning Initiative to create some compositions in response to paintings by Quilty, I had not expected to be plunged into quite these depths of contemplation about self-portraiture. I had chosen three paintings, each dominated by a gorgeously grotesque mouth, and decided to create works for mouth and electronics, the musical resources at hand much-reduced by pandemic lockdown. It also seemed the right time for a work so much of the body, since we were being encouraged by our extreme circumstances to fear it, or at least to find it disgusting, even more than we usually seem to. I had meant to create these pieces from a visceral impulse, to make a noisy, mouthy, toothy, wet goo to sink the ear into, something derived from mimicking these mouth postures with my own face, from observing closely details in the application of the paint, and taking my lead from the cartoonish-ness of these outsize mouths, tongues, teeth. I rather dumbly thought I wouldn't be explicitly addressing the psychological material suggested in the paintings. But the third painting in particular, *Self portrait at 43* (2016), led me to think more about the act of self-portraiture, especially its reiteration, and the sound of the works changed considerably.

It had been important to me to decide on the order of the pieces before composing them. I quickly came to feel I was in some sense curating an extremely small exhibition and that where we start and where we finish, even with just three paintings, shouldn't seem arbitrary.

The first two paintings (*Self-portrait (big mouth)*, 2013; and *Straight white male, self-portrait (tongue)*, 2014) both belong to a 2013-14 series whose overall tone is tragicomic, each face given cartoon treatment of one kind or another (according to Justin Paton, Quilty invited his kids to choose which facial feature to distort). And plenty of these paintings definitely make me laugh, like *Dick nose* from 2013, which is fairly self-explanatory. But in the particular images I chose to look at for this piece, where the mouth is what has been distorted, I wasn't really inclined to laugh. They seem very disturbed to me. Paton has identified in them "the sense that [these paintings'] distortions flow from an attempt to comprehend distortions in the wider world", and certainly the second painting makes this explicit in its title, naming the 'straight white male' as the target for ridicule. To me they seem to present a wall of distress, a wall barely holding back a roiling psychology, panicked in the first image, full of disgust in the second.

The third painting I chose, *Self-portrait at 43*, from 2016, comes as a shock after the first two. I had selected this third work simply for its wonderful teeth, brittle and dirty. But when seen next to the first two what you notice most is the erasure of so much of the rest of the face and head, recalling Francis Bacon. As with the dramatic change in Celia Paul's approach to depicting herself, you are provoked to wonder, "what happened between these bodies of work to inspire such a decisive change in style?" Paintings one and two precede painting three, and they therefore lurk in the history of painting three, and so it seemed essential to present the compositions in this order, and write them with this order in mind.

There were several consequences for the musical work. For one thing, it became an overall more static work than I had initially realized it would be. The first painting, *Self-portrait (big mouth)*, suggests a kind of frozen horror and this had downstream effects. Schjeldahl wrote about Bacon that he "mobilized an emotion of energetic, strangely energizing despair." These paintings by Quilty all do this same thing, but I would add that they also suggest to different degrees a particular kind of highly energized paralysis, something like locked in syndrome, where the impulse to communicate is thwarted by the condition of being unable to speak or move.

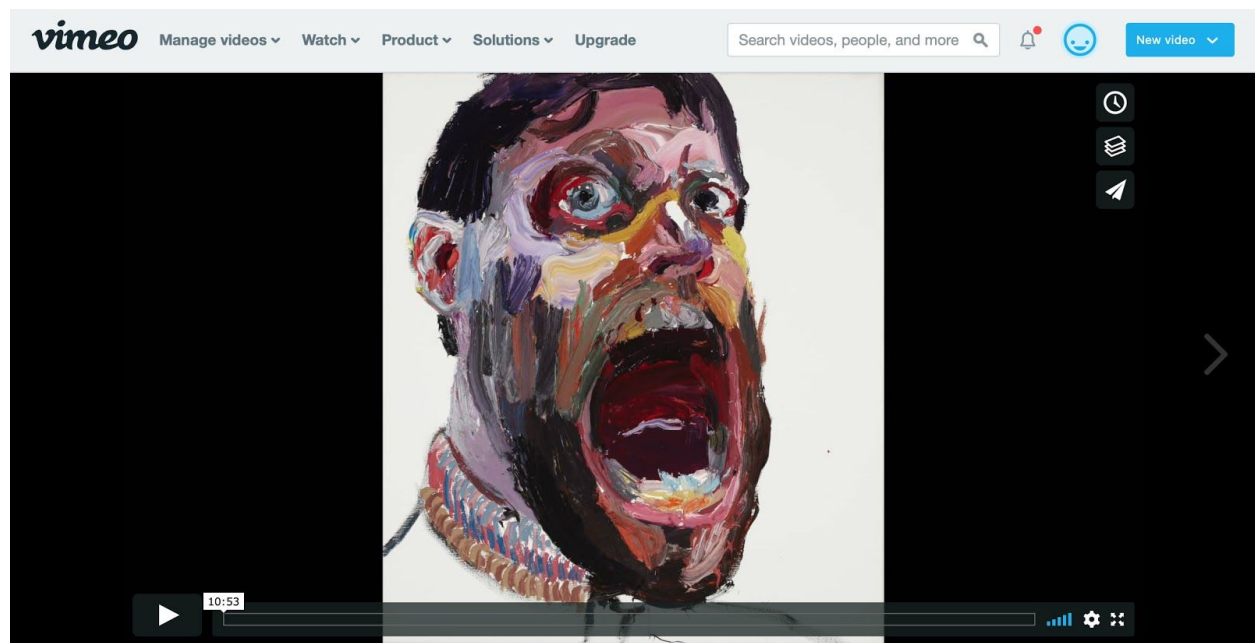
I wanted a constantly developing, articulating 'stasis' present throughout, and for it to open out more for the third painting, as though we have broken through to some altered plane. I also wanted a kind of clattering, scratching of the spirit, a counterpoint to the stasis. For the first painting, *Self-portrait (big mouth)*, I constructed the stasis from layers of inharmonic noise, reversing on themselves at different rates, trying to create a kind of veiled scream, like wind in a tunnel, or in this case in the cavern of his jaw, and for the scratching spirit I used rain.

For the second painting, *Straight white male, self-portrait (tongue)*, the 'stasis' was constructed from layered recordings of myself singing clustered pitches with my mouth mimicking the mouth in the painting. This was preserved from my earliest ideas for the work, this notion of creating certain vocal sounds in which the vocal production is constrained by mimicry of Quilty's mouth positions. This was not undertaken solely as an acoustic experiment but as an affective one also. But one of the changes brought about by finding myself with a deeper registration of what the paintings were about, beyond mouths as mere objects, was the decision that these vocal layers needed to be dropped several octaves, well out of my natural register. The grotesquely extended tongue originally seemed to beg for a cacophony of wailing, a kind of vomit of vocal mess. But when I recorded wails in my soprano range, I realised that due to the painting's title these seemed not like a purely sonic glorification of that amazing tongue, but rather as a spectacularly unsubtle female answer to the title. And that's not at all what I wanted to create. So I dramatically altered the register of my own vocal samples. What I kept

unaltered was a vocal ‘burr’ (thank you to Liza Lim for that useful label), among the lowest sounds I can make. This was one way of giving the scratching spirit more presence than in the first painting. I also made several improvised stretches of frantically bowed polystyrene, derived from the quality of activity in the earlier rain sound, to further foreground, but also transform, the clattering animal behind the canvas.

By the third painting, *Self-portrait at 43*, this animal energy is no longer hidden, and is ranging around, having somewhat broken out of its confinement. This painting looks like a formidable attempt at erasure, but the mouth won’t stop chattering away. Here this energy is represented by sounds from the mouth itself, with rapid glottal stops releasing little fricative pops of air, and brief wisps of phonation breaking through occasionally. This sample also appears at a much slower rate, where these moments of phonation transform themselves into grunts or short moans, the animal yet more foregrounded. As for stasis, in the third painting there is a constant sub-bass tone, but the ‘articulating stasis’ lies in sine tones weaving in and out of each other’s way. These microtonal paths I drew by hand in *SPEAR*, in the range of human whistling. A particular stretch recurs with small changes made, each repeat fairly obvious, as if we are stuck in a loop that is distorting slightly as we travel. Much, though not all, of the variation in this register comes from a real whistle solo weaving around the synthetic layers, hopefully unidentifiable.

By the time I was working on the music for this third painting, the stasis foremost in my mind was not the energized paralysis of the affect captured in the paintings, but the articulating stasis of reiterative self-portraiture itself, revealed in *Self-portrait at 43* as something rather nightmarish. Wherever you go, there you are.



Three Mouths by Ben Quilty

Jane is grateful to the [Australian Music Centre](#) for their support and for Ben Quilty's generous permission to reproduce his paintings as part of the work.

c o o k i n g metaphors



IF: Yeah, I mean, I'm thinking...

NC: You are using the cooking metaphors.

IF: Yeah... Cause, I was thinking how I was talking about cooking with TM when we were doing residency and he loves cooking and was saying that every artist is a good cook which I... I know artists who are bad cooks but cooking analogy for me is ... I really rarely use recipes when I cook because it is boring for me to follow a recipe ...

NC: Yeah

IF: ... And... at the beginning when I was learning how to cook, which is actually a good analogy for training in the arts, I was following the recipes but then eventually I learned what ingredients go well together and now I follow intuition when I cook...

NC: Yeah

IF: And knowledge... Like intuition is always based on some kind of knowledge I have from before and from the previous experiences. Like, I know how hot the oil needs to be because I've learnt by exploring that ...

NC: mmm mmm

IF: ... But ... now I'm not... ... Now, I'm mixing the spices followed by a feeling I have in that particular moment...

NC: mmm mmm

IF: ... I don't enter the kitchen thinking... knowing how exactly I am going to do it.

NC: Yeah, like having a reference.

IF: A reference?

NC: Yeah you don't enter the kitchen with a clear ref.... like ... like something on your mind that you wanna make... Like, I'm gonna make a You look at the fridge, you look at what's there and then you sort of ... Then you look is it off, is it...

IF: Yes!

NC: ... is it... There's lots... There's no... ... You *improvise* in that sense.

IF: Yes! So, there are two things there. One is that I work with available materials; what is in my fridge, what is in my kitchen. But the other thing is also that I won't plan today... ... Unless I have guests... But see that's when you wanna please. That's such a good analogy actually. Cause if I have guests tomorrow, it's likely I'm gonna start planning what I'm gonna cook today because I want to make sure they are satisfied...

NC: Yeah

IF: ... But if I'm cooking for myself and there is nobody I need to please, then it's unlikely that today I'm gonna decide what I'm gonna make tomorrow...

NC: Yeah

IF: ... Because tomorrow I'm gonna listen to what my body feels like eating ... You know, like at 11am I might be like: 'Oh, I really feel like a tomato soup.' Today, suddenly... And then, if I don't have those ingredients in the fridge I'll go and buy them. Or I will simply look, as you said... ... and I'm not gonna even think what I feel like, but will see what's in the fridge and make something out of that. So, these are two different things but there is a main underlying thing there, and that's that you are listening to what your body's needing at the moment and you are not preoccupied with anyone outside of your body; I guess...

NC: Yeah. Yeah. You are not thinking about: 'Oh, what is this person thinking;' "Who's gonna be there." ... It's more... ... What's gonna fill me up.

IF: Yes, yes... mmmm

NC: mmmm

IF: And... It's like if you were, mmmm.... ... So, the difference is. Or the sameness... If you have a concert tomorrow ... Especially if you are still a bit nervous about your performances You will be planning it ahead very minutely, like: 'I will be doing this tomorrow and then that.' But more comfortable you become with it... Or less caring.... I mean, not caring but less preoccupied about opinions of others, you will be able to just come on the stage and play what feels good at the moment ...

NC: mmmm mmm

IF: ... And that is a totally different experience, for you ... And, if you really managed to do it, I think it is a really good experience for the audience as well. I think that the audience can pick that up. That's that 'flow' thing.

NC: mmmm

IF: But it's based on structure of some sort.

NC: Yeah. I think, I guess it de... ... I guess if you trust in yourself and your abilities to cope with the situation, that you don't really know what is going to happen and You also trust in others; you trust in the audience and that they are not gonna judge you, not gonna criticise you or you know, throw tomatoes on stage... Then you're Then you probably not gonna think about your performance as much and you're going to have a different experience ...

IF: Yes.

NC: That was in reference to something you were saying... and I just can't remember what it was... mmmm ... Yeah, so... Yeah, you are confident in those things and you are confident in the audience, you're confident in yourself and ... You know... You are probably less likely to change or be as reactive because you know that whatever is going to happen you can deal with it.

IF: I think you are reactive. I think that the point is that you are. Cause being intuitive is about being reactive. Like, you are not... Oh! Maybe you are thinking about different kind of re... Like, you are not sensitive to opinions, in the sense of feeling critiqued. But you are responsive in the sense of listening. Let's say you are on the stage doing that kind of improvised performance; you are constantly listening to what's happening in the space – inside of you, around you, and... You are responding to that information. So, you are ... Like you are not... There is something that is not selfish about it. ... If you are sharing it with

others. If you are doing it in your own room, then you can ... But there is still listening; you are listening to yourself.

NC: mmmm

IF: But if you are sharing the space with others then ... I mean it would be awful if you were: 'I'm just gonna do my own thing, I won't even ...' You know, you are offe... Like, whenever you play for others, it's an act of offering, I feel.

NC: Yeah... And, it feels good to have some give and take; to have some interactivity. It's ... yeah, it's... You know, if you just went up there and it felt you were playing to no one and that they are not reacting or showing some appreciation, that would feel really bad. Cause, you know... You are playing to something, that you are not really sure what that is. And you are feeling you are not doing a good job cause I mean, in some situations that is good. Like, in a classical performance everyone is really quiet and passive and don't really do anything because they don't want to distort the music or the performance that's coming to their ears; they just want to hear everything ... In another situation it's totally different – a lot of interaction, a lot of talking, and that sort of becomes the performance, ... It's more about the audience and the performer, rather than just the performer...

IF: Yeah... Well, I think that even when you are quiet you can ... I think... ... Well, it's hard but you can sense what they are feeling or how... And it's very... You would have to be very... ... You would need to be very sensitive in a sense, I guess to... mmmm... pick up the vibes in the room.

NC: Absolutely. I believe you can telepathically communicate with people ...

IF: Yeah, I think so too. ... Let's just start This movement stuff... We can keep talking, but we can also do this stretching. If you wanna, go up on your toes and do this stretching from side to side ... You are lifting your arms upwards, pulling sideways, still trying to keep your shoulders relatively relaxed so you are not creating stress around that area And then coming to the centre, yawning with your arms, pushing things away and opening the chest and really, Like a big yawn. Coming through the chest and opening your arms up. Big big big stretch. Pushing the room away. And then rolling your head, releasing the tension around the neck. Our heads tend to feel really heavy from all the thoughts and stuff, and neck is carrying that weight of the heavy brain. Notice how as you move your neck, you take your head with you, your shoulders slightly move, and you allow the body to respond to this movement of the neck in any way... So everything is pretty soft...

NC: Oh, shit that's so fucked!

IF: What?

NC: Well, my neck is... ... My shoulders are really bad.

IF: Yeah, well do it gently, so you are not feeling much pain, ... Even if you don't move much.... Just imagine... If the movements are really small, and maybe they don't even exist,

just visualise yourself releasing that tension where you feel it, so you are imagining the range of movement rather than performing it ... Bringing the breath to that area where the pain is and feeling how your breath massages that space, and softens it, and heals it. And... ... Then, coming to the centre with the head and just turning head slightly from side to side, big or small movement. Sometimes small is really good, as well. It's all about listening to where the body wants to go today. ...

[continues: 15'38'' – 37'22'']

(took place on 18 May 2020)

CREATIVE SPACE, CREATIVE CAPITAL

Search results: 15-20 July 2020

Location: Sydney Region > Ultimo, Alexandria, Surry Hills, Pyrmont, Chippendale, Camperdown, Redfern, Darlinghurst

Sort results by: Highest value >

CREATIVE TO THE MAX

PREMIUM CREATIVE SPACE

SUPERB CREATIVE WORKSPACE

HI-TECH CREATIVE

UNIQUE CREATIVE

HIGHLY CREATIVE

SLICK CREATIVE

CRACKER CREATIVE

QUALITY CREATIVE

IDEAL CREATIVE WORKSPACE

CREATIVE CHARM

CREATIVE VIBE

CREATIVE WAREHOUSE

CREATIVE OFFICE

ADAPTIVE CREATIVE SPACE

CREATIVE CONVERSION

CREATIVE FIT-OUT

INDUSTRIAL LOOK

WAREHOUSE FEEL

LOFT-STYLE

DESIGNER

LOVELY PRECINCT

BLANK CANVAS

Creative space is potential space.

Creative space is a utopia for uniqueness, productivity and success.

Creative space is an ideal place.

Creative space stimulates whole brain thinking.

Creative space is a place for innovation, invention and industriousness.

Creative space is a harbour for safe-play and imagination.

Creative space is a concept. The definition of creative space becomes more manageable when broken down into: 1. The individual, 2. The environment, 3. Interface between the two.*

Creative space is an immersive environment.

Creative space allows for multiple work types to be done, whether a collaborative project or an individual task.

Creative space is a strategy.

Creative space is an asset and can be used to market your work ethic.

Creative space puts workers into the highly sought-after "flow" state, improving output.**

Creative space makes workers happy and more likely to stay working with you.

Creative space is an individualised approach to the work space.

Creative space comprises a multiplicity of work and break out spaces.

Creative space is constructed with casual, open-plan layouts.

Creative space is an open or immense space that inspires mystery and curiosity.

Creative space allows casual run-ins between workers that can spark creative ideas.

Creative space is designed.

Creative space keeps things exciting.



China Masks**Scotty So**

China Masks is a project that reflects Scotty So's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic and SARS crisis in Hong Kong, 2003, through the materiality of porcelain. To him, wearing masks was just a normal measure to prevent spreading sickness to others during the 2003 SARS crisis—but during the current pandemic, there is such a huge debate around, and fear of the *mask*. Somehow, masks have become a symbol of fear and Asian hype, as if they are some kind of mysterious Asian medicine. This was reflected by the many racial assaults towards the Asian community who were wearing the masks at the beginning of the pandemic. Through this project, Scotty So plays with the similarity in the colours of surgical and N95 masks with a hospital-blue Chinese print fabric he found. From this, he made a Cheongsam with the matching set of gloves, a hat, and a facemask, using that fabric to create an irony of the stereotype of the facemask as an Asian myth, by turning the facemask into an extreme campiness.



Wearing a mask was just an Asian hype, No.01

Hospital Blue Cheongsam, Gloves, Mask, Hat

Digital Photography, Self Portrait. 2020

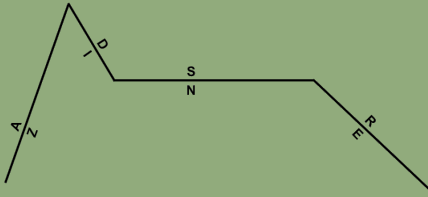


Wearing a mask was just an Asian hype, No.02
Hospital Blue Cheongsam, Gloves, Mask, Hat
Digital Photography, Self Portrait. 2020



Wearing a mask was just an Asian hype, No.03

Hospital Blue Cheongsam, Gloves, Mask, Hat
Digital Photography, Self Portrait. 2020



ADSR Zine

[attack, decay, sustain, release]

ADSR Zine is an online platform established in November 2018 by Elia Bosshard, James Hazel and Sonya Holowell. It is a bi-monthly publication that features writing from contributors who are, or who work with contemporary practising artists. We value the process of reflection, translation, interpretation, critical response and active engagement with Australian art and performance.

We believe that the artist is not only an expert in their field, but offers an important voice beyond the scope of their primary discipline. Artists are welcomed to move beyond this scope to embrace naivety, presenting the sweep, the details, or a combination of both.

As a magazine with a strong interdisciplinary focus, the online format allows for the delivery of written, sonic and visual resources to present, support and facilitate discourse between practising artists.

WHAT WE DO

ADSR Zine offers a 3-part conceptual scaffold that is designed to evoke experimental and non-formalist approaches to responsive writing and media within a contemporary arts and performance context.

OUR POINT OF DEPARTURE

ADSR Zine is a platform for discourse that encourages experimental approaches to discussing visual, performative and sound art. Functioning from an 'art begets art' premise, we offer contributors significant creative license.

We are influenced by the wave of 70's and 80's experimental music and art publications (NMA, Sounds Australia) which were platforms for creative and innovative solutions to writing and conceptualising experimental work.

TEAM

Editors = James Hazel, Sonya Holowell, Elia Bosshard

Website = Elia Bosshard

Cover Art = Nadia Odum

SUPPORTED BY



