

# ADSR Zine

## 009



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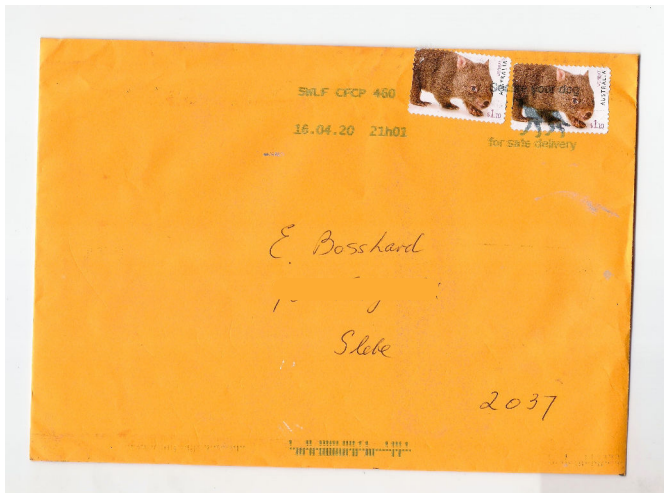
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## Survivor

by Aline Lyons

I am a 94 year old female resident of NSW Blue Mountains. This area hosts many artists with Norman Lindsay's home/garden/works at Faulconbridge being outstanding. There are galleries large and small, painters, photographers, sculptors who add to the cultural carpet of musicians and writers such as those who reside from time to time at

Varuna, Elinor North cottage at Leura.

We have museums, musical and drama societies as well as all projecting cultural delights with the background of mountains, valleys, lakes and gorges. I love living here with birds, animals and vegetation so diverse, changing with the seasons, always surprising.

My family now extended from none children to a bevy of grandchildren, in-laws, and great-grandchildren have made my life happy.



I see them as often as I can but I live (with some family) in a space where I now have leisure to pursue my interests. After 30 years of teaching, I shall love exploring ideas in literature, drama, languages and music. So I came to find art's No Training, no teaching, though valued exposures from time to time - and place to place - NG4A Conferences to move them at the Louvre, or frescoes in the Sistine Chapel.

I began sketching just for fun, or to share with grand children. I found a love in attempting to capture the wing of a bird, the vein of a leaf, the colour of a morning sky.

So it grew to leave me to painting and continually trying to express feelings, generate optimism as I see that so much of this in nature. Drawn to the Franciscan philosophy I also see spiritual dimensions.

The media I use vary from coloured pens, oil pastels, acrylics, watercolour paints.

I have so much to learn and do not feel old age prescribes this! I need to develop skills, ~~rather~~ widen horizons, visit more galleries!

So I've shared these thoughts with you, the talented subscribers to the journal, with best wishes -

Alaine Lyons



Dear Elia, I call the enclosed  
"Survivor". It is my capture of  
a leaf found on the Road in  
Sages Street - a leaf bruised by  
the wheels of traffic, picked up  
and then dropped by a bird,  
rescued by me for my leaf box  
collection and inspiration. A true  
~~survivor~~ survivor and a reminder  
that autumn hides the secret  
growth of spring beneath its sombre  
colours and trembling leaves.  
Not was the inspiration. The medium  
was simple coloured pencils.

Love, Sarg xx







Leaves of  
Pambula

12/05



Look in Nature  
the skeleton  
of a leaf

How  
from Sun.



# RE:SOUNDING - MYTHOLOGY OF A DRUM

James Nguyen & Victoria Pham



Hà Nội - An archival photograph by Charles Peyrin of our fictional character Jean-Phillipe, 1920s-30s.<sup>7</sup>

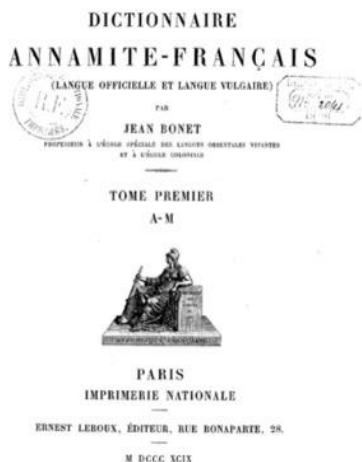
On a quiet evening in 1938, Jean-Philippe arrived in the capital of Vietnam, Hà Nội. Losing his rubber plantation to bankruptcy and all his earnings vapourised, J-P needed to prove that he wouldn't be swallowed up by the Far East. Hearing whispers from the hills of mystical, ancient instruments, birthed from red-clay from the rainy season past, his head was drenched with dreams of gold, gems and the fragrance of highland opium.

The photos he had seen from Le Ministère de Colonies vision of the Indo-Chine materialised right before his eyes, stepping off the wharf, the streets suddenly bustled with small people topped in primitive conical hats<sup>3</sup>. The damp smell of dirt roads, stirred into bone broth. Jean-Philippe roamed the streets for a week. Seeing a parade of women like trinkets. But all the time, he became obsessed with the lure of more ancient treasures. Buried deep in the hillside. No one in the markets could point to him anything substantial, nothing big.

Then one afternoon, in a cafe behind Đường Hai Bà Trưng, intriguing whispers were murmured.

"Ils ont creusé. Ils ont trouvé du bronze. De grandes choses en bronze à l'extérieur de la ville. Quelque part au nord."

大南國音字彙解大法圖音



Cover of a bi-lingual  
French Dictionary,  
outlining French as *Langue  
Officielle* and Vietnamese  
as *Langue Vulgaire*.<sup>2</sup>

[They are digging. They found bronze. Big bronze  
things outside the city. Somewhere North.]

Hovering whispers, J-P followed. Heading north,  
beyond the realm of ancient city walls, he  
managed to catch some locals who he could slowly  
and loudly spell-out the *Langue Vulgaire*<sup>2</sup>, the  
few slurred words of Annamese he had picked up  
running the plantation. But slowly and surely,  
on freshly cleared farmlands there was the  
clatter of locals, and a clanging of metal.  
Beside the tree stumps and trampled dirt was a  
pile of turquoise bronze. Remnants of bronze  
drums ... just remnants. Nothing whole. Nothing  
big.

### French Classification and "Discovery"

In the realm of Western discovery, there was the tendency for colonial administrators to claim knowledge of local customs, or knowledge about significant historical sites and artefacts as their own scientific invention. The so-called "Angkor Wat Discovery" in 1860 by French naturalist Henri Mouhot highlights this phenomenon. It is as if the locals, who indeed brought the travellers to these archaeological sites, were unaware of its magnificent presence within their own cultural and historical lives. Lost cities such as these were never lost if one were to simply consult the cultural memories of the people who are living among their own inheritance. In the realm of Vietnam and French Indo-China, objects such as these Đông Sơn Drums were subject to a similar form of "discovery"<sup>4</sup> and subsequent scientific "analysis."

Now in the 21st century, we encounter and "study" many of these sound-producing artefacts as silent and buried deep in the store-rooms and display-cabinets of colonial museums such as Gillet Collection in Paris.





Northern Village - An archival photograph by Charles Peyrin of our fictional character Jean-Phillipe, 1920s-30s.<sup>7</sup>

J-P squatted in frustration, white linen was not to touch red dirt. Yet amidst his frustration, emerged a reality - look at these locals rejoicing at nothing but broken metal. A silhouette of their former glory. But with this silhouette, glory could be restored ... Voila, an idea struck!

A few months later, fresh new whispers appeared. Lots of bronze, and lots of unusually whole artefacts. Ancient drums, once so revered, started to be discovered all across the Northern hillsides. Word spread that the Đông Sơn Drums had finally returned.

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### **The Antiquities Market and the Black Market**

The antiquities markets are a commodities and financial exchange of not only cultural objects, but an open market of scams and legitimised looting. Dubiously acquired, these objects undergo a process of cultural and financial cleansings. Scrubbed of their "blackness" they enter collections and integrated into consigned provenance, continuously cycled through the auction market, institutional exhibitions, catalogues and publications.

This process of transfer from "black" to display legitimises these objects for the purpose of voyeurism and myth-telling in museums and gallery collections, divorced from the physical and cultural knowledge traditions from where they originated. Orientalising<sup>8</sup> these materials,

they are stripped of cultural context and imagination. Instead, these multi-use objects are rendered silent or stored and patronisingly consigned to "mystic," superstitious, and reproductive purposes.

Objects such as the Đông Sơn Drum of Vietnam have been dispersed across the globe in this network of legitimised trade, ending up in collections in France, Europe, North America, and even Australia. Our pursuit of once again listening to their voice, or bronze call, brings into question their journey from Vietnam into the glass cabinets of major museums.

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Commuting the streets of Hà Nội in a Cyclo - An archival photograph by Charles Peyrin of our fictional character Jean-Phillipe, 1920s-30s.<sup>7</sup>

Jean-Phillipe's fortune had turned. With his team of craftsmen and artisans, his drums ... ahem ... the ancient treasures of Vietnam's past, these "ancient" bronze drums had come back into a global imagination. Slowly but surely his "discoveries" began to flood local and distant markets. More and more, collectors from France hungrily devoured these ancient instruments as did the museums of Paris. Although it was the year of the Earth Tiger, emerging from the mud, J-P's new-found discoveries gave him his Golden Pig.

Slowly, and all too soon, the tide turned. Just over the horizon, the drums, evoking their ancient function to announce and warn neighbouring villages of war, their "discovery" heralded another cataclysmic war, a global war. The incoming new year engulfed J-P and his compatriots in a flurry of chaos. Fleeing and deserting the Far East to the advancing Japanese Army, leaving behind his hoard of his drums. In the wake of his sudden notoriety and absence, the drums once again slipped into obscurity.

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### **Missing provenance and authorial claim**

By divorcing people from their traditions, and separating cultural artefacts from local knowledge, these objects are held in epistemic ransom. Severed and detached from their origins, their value becomes



contingent with european “discovery” and interest<sup>4</sup>. How can we narrate provenance to objects that predated the hard borders of colonial conquest? What of the trade and production of these drums as technological innovations, of their time? Utilised and forming cultural relevance and iconographies outside of Vietnam in Southern China, Thailand, Burma, the Philippines, and across Indonesia, even as far as Bali?

With the power of hindsight, a secondary issue arises. The post-colonial national boundaries of the 21st century cannot apply to the past. In the case of the Đông Sơn Drums, its history belongs to the Bronze Age of South-East Asia. Perhaps this instrument, now revered as a national symbol of the innovation and ingenuity of Ancient Vietnam, belongs to a wider community of tribes and communities that comprised territories different from the border of modern Vietnam, encompassing the imagination of the diasporic refugees and colonial expats who fled South-East Asia through multiple waves of conflicts and dispersals?

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**A Đông Sơn Drum (2000BC - 1000BCE). This particular drum is the key artefact of the re:sounding project. Photo: James Nguyen, 2019.**

The Đông Sơn Drums that J-P abruptly left behind, spread across the country and infiltrated the black market. Over the decades, they again are being rediscovered and continuously traded. However, what continues to be mystifying is how J-P managed to “discover” so many whole and intact drums over such a short period of time? Could his team of primitive villagers even have the knowledge of their ancestors to invent, cast and age so many

replicas in such a short period of time to fill the collections of these museums?

Perhaps what is kept and retained in these museum cabinets is not the genius of ancient and lost peoples, but actually our fictional story of the deep fake, of the skill of local farmers in recreating ancient artefacts to sell to a rubber-plantation owner for the global antiques market and museum collections. Perhaps the difficulty with provenance around these artefacts is not only due to the rarity of ancient bronzes, but the surviving legacy of Jean-Phillipe's forgeries.

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### **Repatriation and its controversies**

With the collections of Đông Sơn Drums fragmented and lost to collectors across the globe, eerily similar to the dispersal of the Vietnamese people following the fall of Điện Biên Phủ and Saigòn, the complexity of repatriation emerges. With such significant cultural artefacts, access is essential to the maintenance of cultural knowledge.

However, with a community divided politically through the lingering resentments of separation and wars, ultimately, where, and to whom do these drums actually belong? To repatriate them to the 21st century Vietnam would for many in the exiled diaspora, be returning these objects to the stewardship of people they do not trust. Yet, the colonial institutions that continue to hold these objects in the west are equally dubious in their stewardship and care. The modern political animosity that continues to divide and plague these artefacts further complicates their narrative and the politics of their repatriation. The return of these objects is profoundly contested.

Can we, by listening and recording these objects from far-flung places, reclaim the identity of these instruments? Can we democratise the Đông Sơn Drum by activating its sound, rather than keeping it silent and rarefied? By sharing these recordings, can we reach across these impossible separations and estrangements? As a first step, we aim to return the sound from these objects to communities and nations who have profound cultural kinship to these objects. These activities are a transnational catalyst for producing collective knowledge during times of continued historical, cultural and physical separation. From these initial exchanges, we will share new music by these contemporary musicians, opening up our archive of recordings and extending access to audiences who are interested in the stories and sonic potential of these instruments.



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- <sup>2</sup> Bonet, Jean. 1899-1900. *Dictionnaire annamite-français: (langue officielle et langue vulgaire)*. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, E. Leroux. Image copyright Bibliothèque Nationale de France.
- <sup>3</sup> Bourke, Paul. 1883. Ha Noi. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (2015), pp. 26-28. 38-39, 45-46: Magellan & Cie.
- <sup>4</sup> Coxall, Helen. 2000. 'WHOSE STORY IS IT ANYWAY?' *LANGUAGE AND MUSEUMS*, *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, No. 12, MEG Conference 1999: Glimpses of Africa Museums, scholarship and popular culture, The Horniman Museum, London (May 2000), pp. 87-100: Museum Ethnographers Group
- <sup>5</sup> Marrone, James V. 'Quantifying the Supply Chain for Near Eastern Antiquities in Times of War and Conflict'. *Journal Of Cultural Heritage* 33 (2018), pp. 278-84.
- <sup>6</sup> Mouhout, Henri. 1863. "Voyages dans les royaumes de Siam de Cambodge, de Laos et autres parties générales de l'Info-Chine," *Le Tour du Monde*, no. 2, pp. 219-352.
- <sup>7</sup> Peyrin, C. Archival photos of IndoChina from 1920-1930.
- <sup>8</sup> Said, Edward. 1979. *Orientalism*. Vol. First Vintage books edition. New York: Vintage.
- <sup>9</sup> Valverde, Kieu-Linh Caroline. *Transnationalizing Viet Nam: Community, Culture, and Politics in the Diaspora*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013, pp.4

Please note: Jean-Philippe is a fictional character.



The **RE:SOUNDING Project** is a collaboration between James Nguyen and Victoria Pham. It proposes an active platform for engaging with artefacts, particular musical instruments and sound-producing objects from the past. RE:SOUNDING Project explores the notion of repatriation through sound. The multiform story-telling project, including commissions for new music composed for a Đông Sơn Drum, from Australian and international South-East Asian musicians, Rấn Cặp Đuôi (Vietnam), Bagus Mazasupa (Indonesia) and Victoria Pham (Australia), with interactive, sonic investigations into colonisation and repatriation. RE:SOUNDING will launch as part of the 2020 BLEED Festival: ArtsHouse Melbourne and Campbelltown Arts Centre.

<https://dongsonarchive.com/>

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We would like to acknowledge the elders and ancestors of the Nation, the traditional custodians of this land that was stolen and never ceded. We have arrived from other places to live and work on this, their land, and to share this story today. We would also like to extend our acknowledgement to the First Peoples of Canada, and to First Nation communities throughout Vietnam, the Indo-Asia pacific, the Americas and the world throughout.

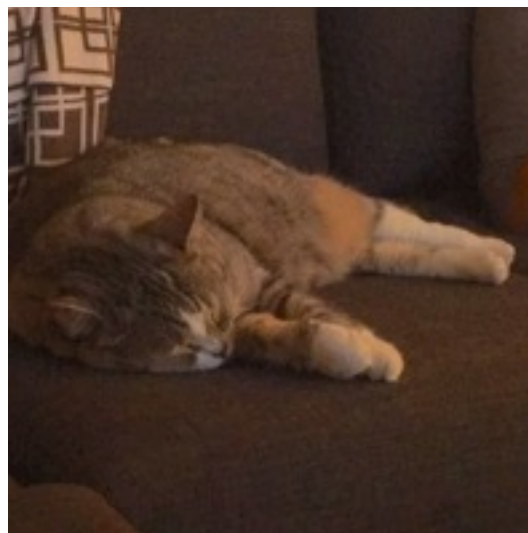
Chúng tôi trân thành cảm ơn người Wurundjeri và người Boon Wurrung, và các tổ tiên của đất nước Kulin của người ấy. Trên mảnh đất này bị người khác lấy đi, mà không phải nhường, chung tôi tại đây đã đến sống, làm việc, và hôm nay chúng tôi đến từ nơi khác, để chia sẻ những câu chuyện này.

# Unison and Noise in Multi-Disciplinary Art

Liam Mulligan, for ADSR Zine July 2020

<https://www.liamvmulligan.com/>

For the last three years I have developed a strong interest into the relationship between art forms in multidisciplinary art. Specifically, I have wondered how gestures in one art form can be imitated in another, and how gestures in multidisciplinary art can work independently as well as together. In 2019, I wrote an Honours Thesis titled 'Counterpoint Between Different Mediums' which investigated this multi-art co-existence, using audiovisual art as my primary example. Most musical concepts such as pitch and timbre do not exist across the two mediums. However, a commonality between the two mediums is rhythm, which proved that there could be a contrapuntal relationship that existed over time. Through further research into cross sensory correspondences<sup>1</sup>, I noticed that another non-teleological form of counterpoint exists, being the counterpoint being between gestures that use pitch/brightness. For example, if I had a visual of a cat sleeping in a low, warm light, a corresponding or 'unison' audio accompaniment would be still, droning strings. However, if the cat awakens and begins to chase a fly as the musical drone continues, there would be a sense of independence between the two lines.



*(Imagine a warm drone under this)*

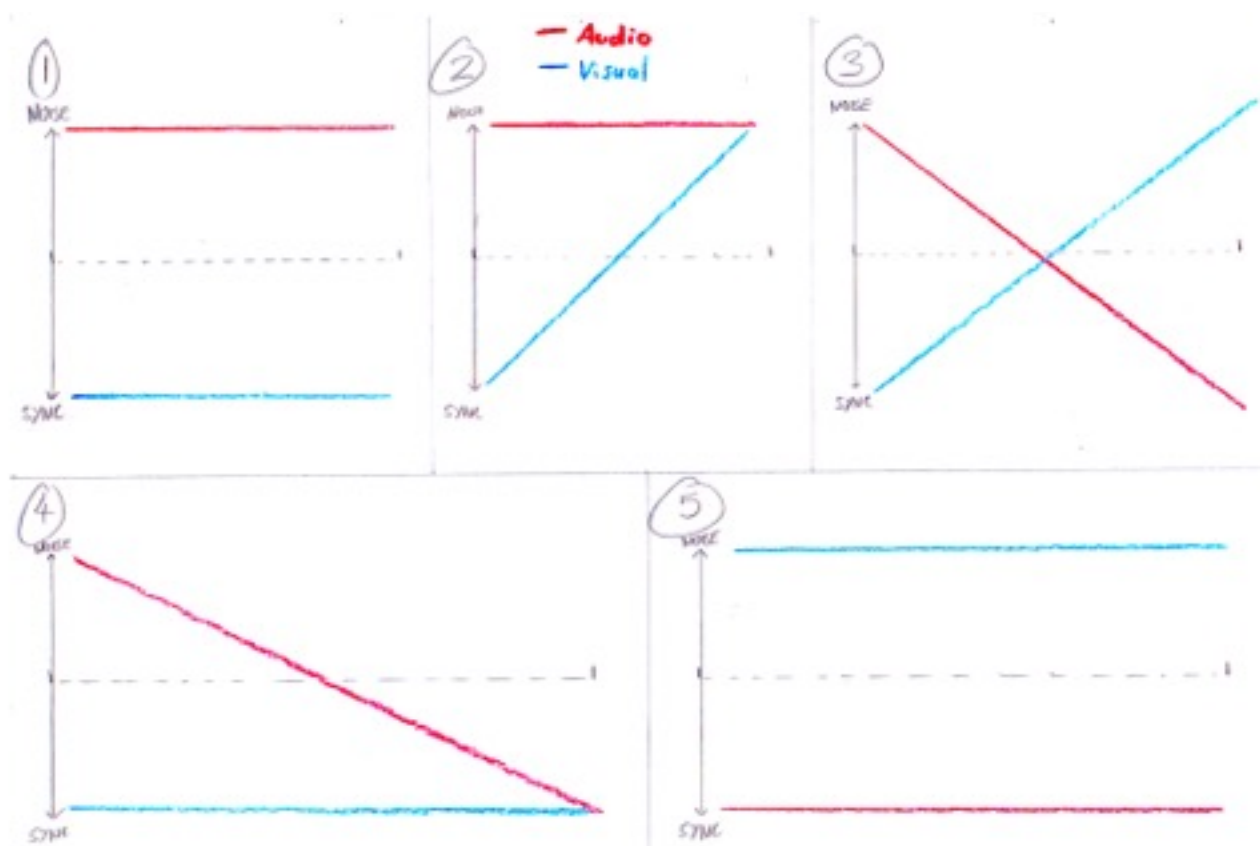
A chapter of my Thesis consisted of composing audiovisual works that explore counterpoint between the two mediums. One of these works is a five-movement piece named *Crossover*. The work uses a self-made scale (N2U scale) between 'unison' (being the rhythmic and non-teleological unity between a medium and its other) and 'noise' (where a medium completely ignores its other) and maps the journeys of the two mediums through each movement. This was so I could map each medium's reliance/independence in comparison to the other throughout the work and investigate the results. This article will showcase my findings in this piece.

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<sup>1</sup> Cross Sensory Correspondences are subconscious assumptions your brain makes to fill in sensory information you don't physically have access to. For example, hearing a high pitched sound correlates to a brighter visual, and feeling sandpaper would correspond to hearing a more harsh timbre.



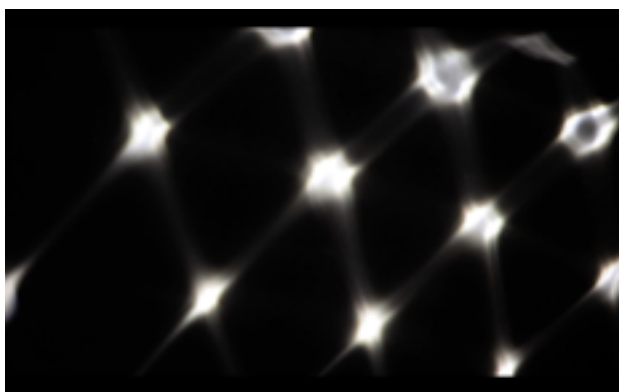
The five movements were mapped out below, each movement going for exactly one minute each:



*n.b. 'sync' is referred to as 'unison' in this paper.*

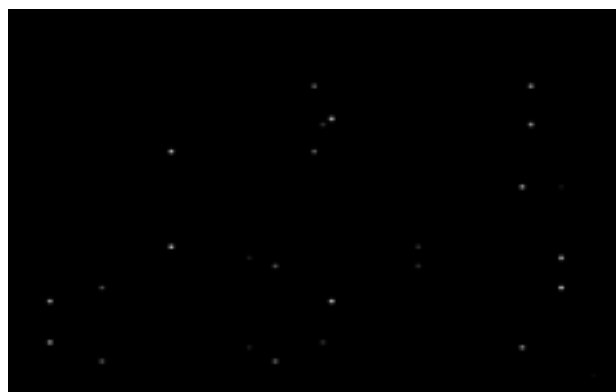
### **Movements 1 and 5 - Parallel but Opposing**

These pieces were written to examine what would occur if one line was completely independent on another line that had complete unpredictability. When composing these works, I created the 'unison' line last as it would intentionally synchronise with its other. Naturally, this would mean that the works were both unison in rhythm and gesture.



*Screenshot from mvt 1, uNOISEon.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdlN5mc9VF0>



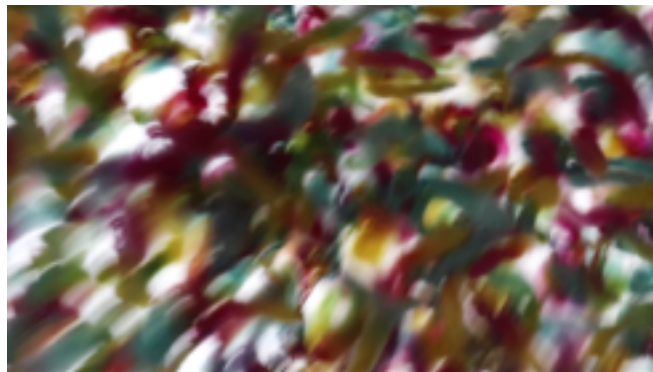
*Screenshot from mvt 5, UNoISeON.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxMQgs2JIb0>

## **Movements 2 and 4 - Opposing to Colliding**

The creation of these works was to examine what would occur if one line remained completely unison noisy while the other line started on the opposing side but would gradually shift from one side of the N2U scale to the other. The most interesting results came from the centre of each work.

In movement 2, the audio line begins and stays on the noise side of the N2U scale, whereas the visual line begins entirely synchronous and gradually moves to noise. As evident in movements 1 and 5, the art forms being on complete ends of the N2U scale ultimately ends in a unison audiovisual work. However, in the centre the work, the first instances of counterpoint are noticed. The visuals begin to shift at different times to the audio and a sense of independence is noticed in both mediums. The visuals play off the audio, sometimes synchronising and sometimes independently shifting until the end, where the visual begins to entirely ignore the audio. This creates a new type of unison where both lines are ignoring each other - layering noise on noise ultimately just creates noise.



*Screenshot from mvt 2, Colliding.*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xo\\_F3Exuklk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xo_F3Exuklk)

In movement 4, the stationary line, being the visuals, was entirely synchronous to the audio. Similar to the visual's role in movement 2, the audio's line began on the opposite side of the N2U scale and gradually shifted to match the visuals. The contrasting result to the second movement was that, throughout the whole work, there was still a rhythmic and gestural unison. Comparing this work to the first and fifth movements, it can be said that having one art form completely on the unison side of the N2U scale does not lend to counterpoint, as it will inevitably synchronise with its other, even if it is on the opposite side of the scale.



*Screenshot from mvt 4, Gnidilloc.*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUTo7\\_HWS2s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUTo7_HWS2s)

### **Movement 3 - The Crossover**

This movement was made to investigate what would occur if the two lines were to move from one side of the N2U scale to the other where each line would start on opposing sides. The results from this is quite similar to what occurred in movement two, where unison occurred in the beginning and end, but there was a sense audio independence in the centre of the work. However, another noticeable find was that, even though counterpoint was evident in the middle of the work, the gestures in both art forms remained unison through the works entirety. This may be due to the contrasting movement of the two art forms on the N2U scale, or due to the fact that they're both moving simultaneously - it could even be because the source material that had similar gestures initially.



*Screenshot from mvt 3, The Crossover*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auWdZtkIS4M>

### **Conclusion**

When I wrote these miniatures, I expected there to be more instances of counterpoint than the middle of two movements. However, it does show us a lot about the balance of noise and unison that is required to create an effective contrapuntal relationship. If one art form is completely on the unison side of the N2U scale, unison will inevitably occur. Additionally, if both art forms are on the noise side of the N2U scale, then there will also be a unison of ignorance. Therefore, to have two lines that are dedicated to creating counterpoint, they cannot be on either extremes of the N2U scale otherwise the dependent and independent traits commonly noticed in the layers of musical counterpoint do not exist. Ultimately, for there to be counterpoint, there has to be aspects of 'unison' and 'noise' in both lines.



## Meeting Points: Experimental Series in Perth

By Eduardo Cossio

In this article I discuss a few experimental music series that have become a fixture of the Perth music scene in recent years. It is by no means an exhaustive document, but rather a jotting down of names and projects that have brought visibility to the local scene in and around Western Australia. While the motivations and modus operandi of series like Outcome Unknown, Tone List, and NoizeMaschin!! are not dissimilar; their distinct identities augment each other's work in the Perth music community.

To many people outside Western Australia, however, the state's exploratory scene is associated with Tura New Music; an organization that for the last 33 years has supported new music through concerts, residencies, and workshops. At the end of 2013, musician Josten Myburgh took over Tura New Music's grassroots program which included the *iMprov Workshop* series and their concomitant concerts.

*iMprov Workshop* featured local and visiting artists sharing aspects of their practice through participatory activities. A variety of approaches were presented. Perth composer Lindsay Vickery's discussion of non-linear performance strategies focused on *Cobra*; a game-piece by John Zorn where performers assume belligerent roles to compete against each other in cutting, fast, at times goofy manner. *Cobra's* embrace of musical quotation and pastiche brought a semblance of familiarity to players then unaccustomed to so-called non-idiomatic improvisation.

Taiwan-based vocalist Alice Hui-Sheng Chang, by contrast, led a vocal workshop focused on attentive listening and body awareness. Her workshop culminated in an ensemble performance at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts. In it, participants walked around the space emitting vocal sounds while following a text score that prompted a variety of interactions across the gallery.

These are but two examples of how the *iMprov* program fostered exchange with local and visiting artists from different backgrounds. The safe environment of the workshops did much to enable the individual practice of its participants.

The *iMprov* concert series in a way succeeded Tura New Music's long-running *Club Zoo* (1999-2016) in presenting experimental music concerts in a pub environment. The *iMprov* concerts were hosted on a monthly basis at the 459 Bar in North Perth between 2016 and 2018. One interesting aspect of Myburgh's curation were the one-off collaborative sets featured at each concert. Among the ad-hoc performances was an improvising string quartet made up of Tristen Parr, Gabbi Fusco, Joshua Cusack, and Aaron Wyatt; and the vocal duet of Lana Rothnie with Priscilla Gardner. From an audience perspective, these sets were a chance of seeing artists from contrasting musical backgrounds rise-up to the challenge of the live performance.



*Symczyszcz/Jacobs at Outcome Unknown #3. Photo by Alexander Turner*

With the advent of Tone List, some of the energy present at concerts and workshops was harnessed into a focused curatorial approach. The record label was established by Dan O'Connor, Josten Myburgh, Jameson Feakes, and Lenny Jacobs in 2016. Annika Moses joined ranks three years later. The collective has been proactive in fostering exchange between Perth's diverse musical cultures while at the same time tapping into national and global networks. Tone List's flagship event, the *Audible Edge International Festival of Exploratory Sound*, has further advanced their omnivorous programming and cogent curatorial vision.

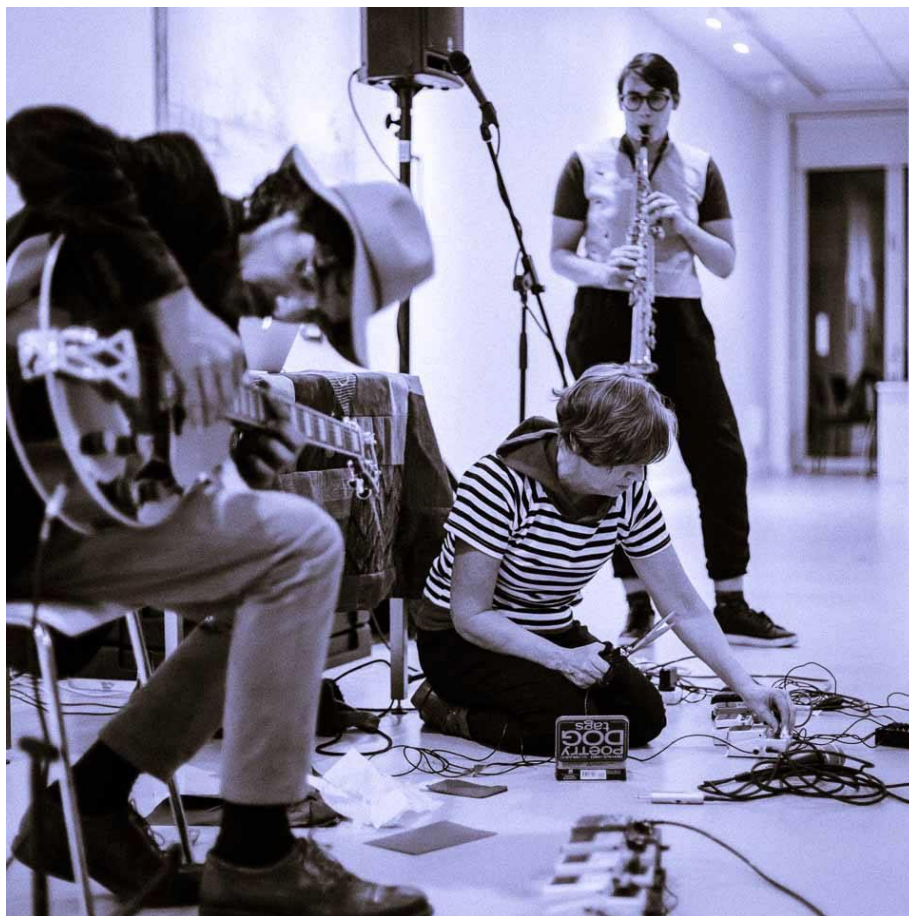
*EX* by Dan O'Connor was the label's first release. A solo set of trumpet improvisations constrained to breath-long phrases. O'Connor's wispy, dance-like streams of pitched air are delivered with assurance. Furthermore, his elegant execution of the album's concept inspired fellow musicians with a commitment to instrumental practice.

Another conceptual release followed suit in Jameson Feakes' *...Until...* a program of procedural and/or highly abstract guitar pieces that included works by the American Clarence Barlow, Wandelweiser member Eva-Maria Houben, and two works by local composers Josten Myburgh, and James Bradbury. Whereas O'Connor's *EX* asserts personal expression, *...Until...* heralds a more guarded, reticent approach. Feakes seems almost intent on erasing every trace of the sounds played. His sparse plucking and faint e-bow lines are etched against the monolithic backdrop of the compositions.

Although the label has amassed a large catalogue since its inception; these two releases crystallized some of the concerns present at the *iMprov* workshops.

NoizeMaschin!! is currently Perth's longest running night of experimental music. Established in 2013 by Sam Gilles and SkOt McDonald, it takes place at the Perth Artifactory; a hacker space host to a community of tinkerers, programmers, and designers. Under the motto '*don't think, make*' NoizeMaschin!! has always foregrounded immediacy and a DIY aesthetic.<sup>i</sup> The warehouse space of the Perth Artifactory adds whimsy to the night's proceedings. There are retro futuristic constructions hanging from high shelves or placed in between power tools. The fact that the Perth Artifactory is located within the industrial suburb of Osbourne Park allows for the loud volume levels proper to noise music. A typical NoizeMaschin!! night is a mix of geeky playfulness and excess, as seen in the stacks of amps performers wheel-in to the cramped stage.

Some of the artists associated with NoizeMaschin!! and The Perth Artifactory in general include Meg Travers, who has done extensive research on the Trautonium and built a prototype from scratch; Nathan Thompson, an artist drawing on science and research methodologies active in the modular synth community; and Jean-Michel Maujean, a composer researching bird song and alternative tuning systems.



*Eduardo Cossio, Furchick, and Zoe Kilbourn at Outcome Unknown #6. Photo by Laura Strøbech*

Outcome Unknown started out from a desire to keep the momentum of gigs and workshops happening around 2016. For the first two years, I hosted the concerts at Spectrum Project Space, an art gallery located within the Edith Cowan University campus in Mount Lawley. As a music composition student, I had then the benefit of booking the space for free. Having a regular slot in the gallery's program helped to establish a presence for the series. But if Outcome Unknown was to reach a broader audience it needed to move away from the academic setting. Since 2018, concerts have been held in the more centrally located venues of Paper Mountain (an Artist Run Initiative) and the North Perth Lesser Hall.

Perhaps the most important undertaking of the series has been the regional tours done in the South-West of Western Australia between 2018 and 2019. Touring experimental music in regional towns could be regarded as a Quixotic enterprise given the lack of exposure for it outside the city. Yet, I felt it important to create exchange opportunities for artists and audiences outside Perth. With a touring party consisting of Dan O'Connor, Annika Moses, Lenny Jacobs, and I; Outcome Unknown's regional concerts focused on local collaborations. Likewise, the free-improvisation workshops were open to everyone regardless of experience. A lecture on the work of WA composers was later added to subsequent tours.

Outcome Unknown events were especially well-received in Denmark, a coastal town 416km south of Perth. Denmark has a tight-knit community of artists that includes electronic musicians Jeremy Von Kobra and David McKenzie; vocalist-improviser Sara Turvey; programmers Campbell Creswick and Mark Cresp; and choreographer Narayani Lees.

A wealth of documentation was produced from the tours, including a set of thirteen interviews with regional artists being aired on Perth's community radio station RTRFM 92.1. Although still an emerging project, we found that the collaborative model pursued by Outcome Unknown in regional towns encouraged a sense of camaraderie and openness from all involved.

The projects I have described provide platform to a wide array of experimental music practices. More importantly, the collaborative networks forged have brought visibility to the Perth experimental scene, both within and outside Western Australia. Exchange between communities feels like an exciting prospect for a concert series, regardless of where it sits in the musical spectrum.

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<sup>i</sup> Gillies, S., & McDonald, S. (2016). Noizemaschin!!: A New Model of Live Performance in Perth, Western Australia from 2011 to the Present Day. *Sound Scripts*, 5(1). Retrieved from <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/soundscripts/vol5/iss1/12>



**Place is always moving, like a sleeping cat****Tristan Louth-Robins**

The earliest recollection that I have of sound and its unique presence is at the age of three or four, lying in bed at night and listening to the sound of waves crashing on the beach. This was in my hometown of Normanville, a small community situated on the coastline of the Fleurieu Peninsula. Our house was roughly a ten minute walk from the beach, so this sound of the ocean would arrive muffled, yet it would still *sound* like the ocean: a blend of rumbles and roars peeling through the air.

Thinking back on this memory over thirty years later, I've wondered about the passage of those sounds as they would have made their journey from the beach to my childhood bedroom. From the churning of the ocean, a periodic thump of waves, rolling over the dunes, becoming tangled and absorbed by vegetation, reflecting off roads and houses, before eventually penetrating the walls and windows of our house and reaching my young ears in the night.

Such a memory has remained a potent reminder of the ever-present nature of sound: that regardless of a perceived quietude, spaces are always suffused with waves and vibration.

From Normanville, some eighty kilometres north to my current home in Adelaide, this recollection of listening to the ocean at night and thinking about the ever-presence of sound would strike me as poignant during the first weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic, where an unprecedented atmosphere of quietude was coming into relief.

During the initial lockdown in South Australia, in the mornings I would go for a brief walk around my neighbourhood to ready myself for a new daily routine of working from home. Perhaps the most noticeable difference to my neighbourhood soundscape was how the steady thrum of morning rush hour traffic had diminished noticeably. Thousands of vehicles, usually producing dense clouds of coarse tones and resonances had been reduced to thin wisps, at times often blending with other sounds in the audible vicinity. In many instances, natural sounds would appear to co-mingle with human-made sounds in a state of dynamic equilibrium, sometimes blurring the distinction of what was natural and what was not.

Having lived in an urban environment for over twenty years, I struggled at first to apprehend what was occurring. Prolific science fiction writer JG Ballard's post-apocalyptic stories frequently depict environmental cataclysms, where the natural world reasserts itself, filling urban centres and cities with forbidding environments of flood, drought and dense jungles. Here in 2020, set against proclamations of doomsday and startling images of deserted cities, it appeared as though the sounds of nature were filling the spaces left unoccupied by human presence. I never imagined that quiet in the anthropocene could feel so apocalyptic.

Sound ecologist and scientist, Bernie Krause terms human-produced sounds as *anthropophonic*. In a pejorative sense, this is what could be commonly regarded as noise pollution. This collective mass of

sounds (vehicles, aircraft, machinery, crowds, etc.), consist of such acoustic complexity, intensity and omnipresence that they can, in turn potentially obscure, mask and cancel out other sounds. Those other sounds, which Krause regards as *biophonic* (non-human organisms, such as birdsong) and *geophonic* (the sound of wind and rain), in this scenario find themselves constantly disrupted or obliterated completely by the overwhelming presence of human activity. Within this context, I've often regarded noise pollution as an 'anthropophonic smog', an audible entity, much like the dirty industrial haze that visibly envelops urban districts.

So it was remarkable, then to apprehend such an unprecedented spectacle as this, as the *anthropophony* found itself attenuated and brought into a state of flux with the sounds of the *biophony* and *geophony*.

The sonic smog appeared to be clearing.

Within my immediate neighbourhood, it was as though invisible boundaries comprising sonic territories had been redrawn or erased altogether, where all sounds had a freedom to propagate, limited only by their relative wavelength and intensity. From my balcony looking out onto a landscape of ordered houses, the hush of quiet ambience would occasionally be punctuated: the twitter of birdsong, a dog barking from afar, the wind coursing through a tree with a rustle, the clatter of crockery, a cry of voices, a ball bouncing across the street, the slam of a screen door and a distant bell tolling.

Much like my recollection of listening to the ocean in the darkness as a child, I found myself here pondering this strange new world, with a heightened acuity and renewed sense of reverence for sound and the act of listening.

Further afield, others would remark on the extraordinary situation that had unfolded in cities across the world. And it wasn't just cities. Away from terrestrial spaces, skies emptied of the drone of aircraft, the aquatic clamour of sea traffic ceased, whilst seismologists were startled to observe a procession of discrete mini-earthquakes radiating below the surface of the Earth's crust; seismic vibrations which would have otherwise been acoustically obscured by the pronounced rumble of human activity. Additionally, within this atmosphere of global quietude, a rare exponent of collective humanity would also emerge in evenings and punctuate the air, as citizens would pay thanks to health workers by applauding, cheering, banging pots and pans from the porches and balconies of their homes.

Notwithstanding the upheaval, disruption and widespread tragedy brought about by the global pandemic, this universal reduction in human activity, along with instances of collective goodwill would lend themselves to a glut of Utopian ideals and blue-sky thinking. For a while there, we all believed the dolphins were returning to Venice. However, as I took the time to listen to my neighbourhood from the domestic hermitage of my balcony I would remind myself - and be reminded by others - that the situation wasn't this simple and that the quiet probably wouldn't last long.

During the first week of the lockdown my mum called from her current home, a few kilometres from my hometown of Normanville. As I enthused to her just how quiet the neighbourhood and city was,

she remarked that the situation was a little different down south. With thousands now afforded the flexibility of working from home, holiday houses across the Fleurieu Peninsula had found themselves filled in an instant by their city-based owners, as the roads across the region became clogged with vehicles. Acknowledging this, I corrected some of my earlier observations and concluded that the ‘anthropophonic smog’ hadn’t so much dissipated, as rather relocated somewhere else.

\* \* \*

A couple of years ago, I came across this quote by Japanese sound artist Toshiya Tsunoda:

‘Place is always moving, like a sleeping cat.’

Tsunoda’s practice specialises in closely observing discrete acoustic phenomena with microphone technology, often examining vibrative and electro-static phenomena in buildings, objects and dense mediums. His quote makes reference to the fact that although we perceive some things as empty, motionless or silent, these things - be they natural or human-made - are *always* moving, vibrating and pressing themselves out into the world.

It’s a striking thought, and it seems especially relevant during this period of pandemic stillness. More than anything else, this period has presented an opportunity for me to listen, appreciate and reflect on sound; an opportunity that might not have otherwise occurred during my lifetime. It has been quite remarkable.

But as I mentioned before, it won’t last for long. As I’m writing this, our cat has been sleeping on the couch peacefully. From a distance she looks like a lumpy motionless cushion. If I look closer though, I can see her breathing, as her body discretely rises and falls. Watching a sleeping cat can be quite calming, but given their preference for short naps, this moment of calm will be short and it’s likely that before too long she’ll rouse once again.



## On seeing *Camouflage*, then the Getty challenge – some thoughts on ‘nearly’ (or: precision, pandemic, playfulness)

### Precision

When Chinese performance artist and photographer Liu Bolin visited Victoria for the 2019 [Ballarat International Foto Biennale](#), promotional materials made much of the epithet ‘the invisible man’. At the Art Gallery of Ballarat the exhibition *Camouflage* offered a survey of Bolin’s photo-performances – from 2005 to a new work made in Melbourne, in 2019, for the Foto Biennale. Yet throughout my experience of the exhibition Bolin was never ‘invisible’: I remember being struck by the ways in which many works were fragile if not failed acts of camouflage.

Wasn’t that the point? For children and adults alike there was pleasure in noticing the artist’s skill in making himself (the standing form of his clothed and painted body, his highly composed presence-in-veneer) ‘nearly invisible’. The ‘nearly’ in this description is so important, and not only, of course, for reasons of entertainment. The ‘nearly’ points to the difference between an image capable of stirring questions about what each of us first sees – and the possibility of our habits of seeing being unsettled, at least. [Reviewing the exhibition for \*Overland\*](#) magazine, Claire Collie’s writing is freely personal where she acknowledges, ‘I can’t help thinking that [Bolin’s] work is more *spectre* than camouflage’. From there, she can argue persuasively that his work concerns ‘the ethics of seeing’ in contemporary Australian landscapes.

Myriad writers consider adverbs ill-advised. But ‘nearly’ is sometimes necessary for thinking about art; for understanding the appeal and agency of particular work. In the photos from Bolin’s ‘Hiding in the City’ series, ‘nearly’ is a matter of precision. Fastidiously painted ‘in’ to a scene, the artist is then photographed by means that don’t efface the subtle evidence – in light and shadow, paint textures, brushstrokes, and colour gradations – of his studied attendance and location.

### Pandemic

Since the World Health Organisation declared coronavirus COVID-19 a pandemic ([11 March 2020](#)), calamitous weeks have become months of shuttered art museums and galleries around the globe. As opportunities to take ‘virtual tours’ online have swiftly multiplied, so have [appraisal](#) and [disapproval](#) of these ‘museum from home’ programmes. Plenty of Bolin’s works from ‘Hiding in the City’ [can be viewed online](#) (they’ve long been collected there on his studio website). In that realm, however, dissociated from the viewers’ physical space, the relational dynamics of scale break down – the photos’ detail and material properties are flattened. They tend to resemble stock postcards, some seemingly watermarked with a figure of the artist in outline. My reflections on the value of ‘nearly’ to appreciating Bolin’s achievement predate the pandemic by six months: I had spent a long afternoon wandering busy galleries during a visit to Ballarat, at present an adventure impossible to repeat.

### Playfulness

In their dark niches and halls currently inaccessible to the public, the unique objects that are the artworks can’t closely participate, singly or together, in being turned towards, petitioned by a visitor who passes, sits, stands before them. Even so, fewer than ever, perhaps, remain entirely hidden in the world’s citadels of galleries, libraries, archives, and museums. And lately, clickable ‘collection highlights’ viewed on smartphone and laptop screens have been energising imaginations everywhere.

In the same week that the Ballarat Foto Biennale began curating an Instagram archive of the COVID-19 crisis – the [Mass Isolation Australia](#) project – the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles [summoned people to post photos of themselves recreating a favourite artwork](#) ‘with objects and people’ in their homes. Within days, ‘thousands and thousands’ of responses had been uploaded to social media: diptychs showing the item from the museum collection at left, or above, and the recreation at right, or below.

This format is premised on a comparative first-seeing, a looking back-and-forth between an image of ‘the original’ and the new, homemade photo-performance created during self-quarantine. Always intended as a likeness, every one of the portrayals can be described as ‘*nearly* a likeness’. Here, the ‘nearly’ marks an ecstatic thrift that tends to characterise the recreations. Rather than precision, ‘nearly’ is a matter of declared sufficiency, even outright playfulness, and wit.

People chose items from the Getty’s prehistoric arts, decorative arts, and manuscripts collections, as well as mostly [figurative paintings](#). The interplay between the halves of each diptych is endlessly fascinating, as we register the features of the museum work emphasised by the household collaborators. How quirky and unexpected! The contours of a sculpted Cycladic harp are given as the curved hose of a vacuum cleaner; a towel-shrouded woman with her pug render the intimate gestures of a thirteenth-century Madonna and child; delicate greenery festooning rocks at the Roman Forum is dramatised as a bonsai tree that dominates the scene’s lower right corner. The whole history of art might be domesticated by such brisk reinterpretations, enabled, filtered, multiplied by social media.

‘Nearly’ is required, too, whenever we recognise, in these photos, a literal continuity of appearances across time. Shawls and eyeglasses; books and potplants; ordinary washing, jugs, and loaves of bread; the slant of pale light through a closed window ... . There they are where people are at home, smartphone camera-ready, nearly mirrored: no doubt materially different, but functionally the same. As the late John Berger wrote for art museums at the beginning of this century, via News Feed updates ‘we come upon the visible of other periods and it offers us company. We feel less alone in face of what we ourselves see each day appearing and disappearing’.<sup>†</sup> Berger’s examples include ‘teeth, hands’, parts of the human body that bind his reflections to a mood of existential gravitas. Playfulness and wit aren’t far from this mood.

\* \* \*

Shutdown and containment measures have started to ease. Bolin’s ‘nearly invisible’ ghosting of city locations can take on freshly nuanced meanings, say, about resistance and resilience (our seeing of such deliberate, widely-known, ‘fine art’ images will continually change). Nonetheless, right now, when I recall his practice of imperfect self-camouflage, it relates to Berger’s observation about the broad solace of art as company. Surely those slivers of Bolin’s outline or painted disguise expose a desire to ‘feel less alone’ in his preoccupations. So they share something with the hashtagged photos made for the Getty challenge, something more urgent than procedures of dressing up for a photo-shoot in situ. Both projects affirm a human state of belonging to art in a volatile, often inhospitable world – a world that, still, nearly always affords visible proof of our interdependence.

**Cynthia Troup**  
Lauriston Victoria, 15 June 2020

<sup>†</sup> John Berger, ‘Steps Towards a Small Theory of the Visible’, in his collection *The Shape of a Pocket* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2001), p. 21.

# Our Imagined Future 1.0

Vincent Giles

## Introduction

*Artists on strike: government concerned about economic impact.*

*Brand new creatives superunion to bargain for improved conditions for artists.*

These two statements are *imaginary* headlines from the future. It is important, as this essay will show, to imagine our collective future; to imagine the world we want to live and work in. The advent of Covid19 in Australia (and worldwide), and the consequent loss of income for many, many individuals, closure of businesses, and damage to (with potential closure of) established artistic institutions such as Carriageworks, shines a rather bright light on our present situation in the arts, and more broadly. This lockdown and restriction of livelihood has shone a light on our collective lack of imagined future, as is shown through the discourse both at the personal level and the public or published level.

In response to the outcry by artistic practitioners and members of various institutions to the Covid19-based economic crisis of 2020, this essay offers a personal response to that outcry. While there are some sources to more rigorous academic output, this is not that nor will it attempt to be. It is a response (however privileged) to the Covid19 situation, and it is meant not as a critique, or a complaint, or a “fuck you” to my comrades in the arts. Rather, it is intended as a musing on what may be required to genuinely change anything of our current (and previous and future) situation(s) and to give some context to these ideas as they have been meandering about in my head for at least a couple of years. It will then propose some radical actions that may be needed to insulate artists and arts workers in the future, and contends that imagining futures is – in the present moment – of the utmost importance.

For the publication context of this essay, I will focus on the arts, and specifically music, as much as I can. I wish to add a number of caveats now, and beg forgiveness from anybody who may feel that I am being dismissive or not recognising the difficulties of not only this present time, but of working in the arts in a general sense.

## The Echochamber

As things started to go into lockdown with venues closing, livelihoods in question, and slow responses by governments that considered martyring people to the economy, the discourse around the poor treatment of, or lack of concern for, the arts and arts workers increased - as one would expect. As much as social media, it is nonetheless a platform through which people seem to feel heard, at least to



their friends, family, and colleagues. There were understandable posts being made, or shared, by people who were (and still are) rightly scared about the state of the arts, and the aforementioned government's seeming lack of interest in supporting artists (or arts institutes). There were articles written by affected, or concerned artists and arts workers in various publications (including many large-reach ones), and these were (again rightly) shared by concerned or affected comrades via social media.

It has been fairly well documented that social media (and particularly Facebook) has a tendency to act as an echochamber, limiting perspectives and isolating individuals within them<sup>1</sup>. Rightly so, many posts and articles point out the incredible contribution the arts make to the Australian economy, as if to say "but government this is what you want! You love the economy!" which may be true, or it may not, I'm not sure we'll ever know. However, it struck me, at least within my echochamber, that much of these posts and articles were basically directed back into the people about whom they are written: the artists and arts workers. I saw not a single person share an article in defence of the arts who did not have a vested interest in the arts, which is not to say that this did not happen, of course. Similarly, the articles I saw being shared (and came across myself through various online sources, such as ArtsHub and The Guardian) were written by people invested in the arts. I am certain that this was in part the echochamber that is my social media, but it got me thinking about the present situation in a way that I hadn't before, and which consolidated some other ideas that have been floating in my mind for a while now, which I will go into in the next section. But to close this off, if the echochamber effect is happening, and I suspect it is at least to some degree, then a lot of this discourse is flying around artists and arts organisations and not into the broader public. I appreciate that people that aren't in the arts were and are equally affected by Covid19 and likely, and rightly, had other things on their minds, but before Covid19 there still seems to be a strong echochamber effect in place and I have to wonder where the vested interest in the arts in the non-arts community is? I don't have an answer to this question, as it is generally outside of my experience as an artist.

## Public Interest and the Abusive Employer

This discourse seems to be directed internally: artists telling other artists (and arts workers) about the problems of the arts sector, lack of public support, and government funding cuts. What I never saw, neither in the posts, nor in the articles, was a call to action: collectivisation and taking control of our own livelihoods together, not as competitive individuals. For those of us lucky enough to be self-sustaining without support from the government: great, I hope that this does not ring true for you. For everybody, in any vocation (and I include my comrades in the sciences and other research areas here) that is beholden to competitive funding, it should be no surprise that the current Morrison government do not show any particular concern for artists or the arts as this is hardly new territory for these policy-makers. Funding cuts to the arts have been happening, on average, for a while now (although 2017-18 seem to show a blip in this downward trend and there is data missing from when Abbott cut funds to the Australian Bureau of Statistics), trending down for at least the last decade, which includes both ALP and LNP governments.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://theconversation.com/the-problem-of-living-inside-echo-chambers-110486>

<sup>2</sup> <https://theconversation.com/federal-arts-funding-in-australia-is-falling-and-local-governments-are-picking-up-the-slack-124160>

I have been thinking about whether us artists, and the institutions we're sometimes part of, have begun to see ourselves as *employed* by the government's funding processes. When that money does not come through, we become functionally unemployed. We are not only the proletariat working for the bourgeoisie, we are the precariat; our employment has no guarantees and can disappear very rapidly if our elusive employer decides that there is financial scarcity. Different artists have different levels of precariousness, with people (like me) being in the privileged position of holding academic employment, while others are independently wealthy (the bourgeois), and all manner of variations from that to hand-to-mouth existence. With the exception of the independently wealthy, when scarcity is decided, the abusive employer makes all employees redundant, and makes them re-apply for less jobs. When actions like this happen in an employer/employee relationship there tends to be at least a sense of generalised solidarity with the people affected, such as in the Covid19 situation. Of course, the neoliberal who believes in the free market of capital (labour) would suggest that the affected simply sell their labour to a better, less abusive employer.

## Neoliberalism and the Hauntological Loop

But what good would that achieve? In this market-dominated economic framework, it is not those whose labour supports the economy who have control of their lives, it is those who accumulate the capital (labour) and abuse the power imbalance who control the lives of the labour force. This is not a free market. All people, not only artists, are affected by this type of oppression, and while it is one layer of oppression in a highly oppressive society, and I do not want to diminish the experiences of people affected by colonialism, that is not the focus of this essay. Neoliberalism permits the commodification/marketisation of everything: that includes disruptive efforts. Not everybody has access to the "market". We are stuck in a hauntological loop where we can't imagine a future without (neoliberal) capitalism, we can't imagine a future without our abusive employer, and we can't imagine a future in which we have collective solidarity. Hauntology can be described as a situation in which the future disappears, and in an attempt to imagine the future we turn to the past.<sup>3</sup> An example that the YouTube video essayist Cuck Philosophy gives where science fiction narratives have lost their capacity to imagine a future, and instead turn to past imaginings of the future for ideas. When stuck in this hauntological loop, imagining something genuinely new becomes impossible, because the only resources we have to fuel the imagination are the past.<sup>4</sup> This becomes mere nostalgia: remembering "better days", when the future was imaginable, and this is what we see now with Covid19 as the catalyst for contemplating the downward trend in public funding: we have nostalgia for former years when funding was plentiful, conveniently forgetting that lots of people missed out then, just as now, that it was always precarious, and that the employer was always the power-holder who could abuse that power. This is a loop without solidarity, where each individual, or even each small collective, is competitive with everyone else for the scraps of funding (let's call it wages) from our employer. We are repeatedly made redundant, repeatedly made to reapply for less jobs, and are repeatedly unable to imagine a future in which this is not the way. The hauntological loop traps us into thinking we are imagining a future, when really, we are just bringing the past back to haunt us. We must reclaim our future.

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<sup>3</sup> Fisher, Mark. "What Is Hauntology?" *Film Quarterly* 66, no. 1 (2012): 16-24. Accessed May 24, 2020. doi:10.1525/fq.2012.66.1.16.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSvUqhZcbVg>

# Radical Action

I propose that if we, as artists, really want to improve things for ourselves, we need some genuine action. We need to make some sacrifices. And we need to do it together, collectively. Not the kind of “in it together” rhetoric that surrounds Covid19; not the kind of “we’re all doing it tough” and “everyone needs to make some sacrifice for the common good”, but genuine community solidarity. We need to, collectively and in solidarity with each other, restrict access for the *general public* to what we do. We need to do this with the backing of an Australia-wide (possibly Australia and New Zealand) that can back our actions and provide help for those in need, to those affected by the action.

Imagine this: to get our demands met, we begin striking at the heart of the economic value that the arts, collectively, bring to the country. We strike at the heart of the *value* that the general public purportedly place upon what we do. We strike.

## Stage One

- We strike. Every Friday. We take away *all* public art-based experiences, from the whole country (hell, at this point I’d be happy if it were localised to one city, but I’d like to imagine a future that is more collective than that). All galleries are closed. There is no live music (be it DJs or bands or classical ensembles or whatever). There are no book shops. No libraries. Nothing. Every Friday for six weeks until our demands are met and the conditions and precariousness improved *for all*. When that is not met (and it won’t be), we;
- We strike. Every Friday and every Saturday for six weeks, until our demands are met. At this point, the economic impact should be starting to be felt, both by us and the institutions, and by the government, and by the general population who are suddenly deprived of weekend activities. When our demands are not met, then;
- We strike. Every Friday and every Saturday and every Sunday for six weeks, until our demands are met *for all*. And then, we move on to stage two.

## Stage Two

In this stage we start to strike on all the adjacent activities: teaching, workshops, community service, while maintaining the strikes on public access over weekends. These actions would have a very severe impact on the livelihoods of everybody involved, and for it to work, it needs to be in complete solidarity with support from an institute like a union. People need to have their basic needs met. And, when the government does not agree to our demands, we need to build the infrastructure ourselves. At the very least, this might get some public solidarity where Stage One fails to do so. This may seem counterintuitive, as there is the risk that by withdrawing too far we may indeed disappear, especially if the demands are not met and these actions yield no change (as is likely).

Rather than disappearing, maybe we focus inwards, on our communities, in solidarity with one another. We work together, with and for each other. Not for the market, not for the government, and not for the people who abandon us.

# Imagining Our Future

I propose these things, but I'm not entirely convinced that we, collectively or individually, know what we actually want. While it has been gratifying to see artists adapting to the circumstances of social distancing, these are responses that buy into the current situation, and while certainly some community is built around these events, this is not a collective imagining of a new future. We're stuck in a hauntological loop of neoliberalism, and we can't imagine a collective future because we can't imagine a world without capitalism in its current form. We can't imagine a world in which we, as artists, and the institutes that we're part of, are not beholden to market-driven ideology and are instead in solidarity with one another, for our community and the larger community, and genuinely working together in a new framework where we control our own livelihoods. And we can't imagine a world in which they, the people that aren't part of what we do, are in solidarity with us.

[Visionary fiction] reminds us to be utterly unrealistic in our organizing, because it is only through imagining the so-called impossible that we can begin to concretely build it. When we free our imaginations, we question everything. We recognize none of this is fixed ... To paraphrase Arundhati Roy, other worlds are not only possible, but are on their way—and we can already hear them breathing.

- Walidah Imarisha<sup>5</sup>

There is no easy way forward, but I am optimistic that through genuine discourse and sharing of creative work, which Covid19 has made more inclusive somewhat ironically through social distancing, we may be able to imagine a future. We need to be able to define, first, how we want that future to be, and then we can start imagining something that is not stuck in a nostalgic feedback loop with the past. Once we can imagine it, then, as the quote above points out, we can start to build it. One way of beginning to free our imaginations from the hauntological loop is to imagine news headlines from the future we want, such as those at the beginning of this essay. If we can imagine short headlines, then perhaps we can imagine the detail that those headlines relate to.

*Last government arts grant given as nation-wide artist supercollective takes on administration of regular artist salaries.*

And relatedly:

*Supported by artist supercollective salaries, artists take accessibility to new levels through virtual galleries and live streaming, providing free access to many.*

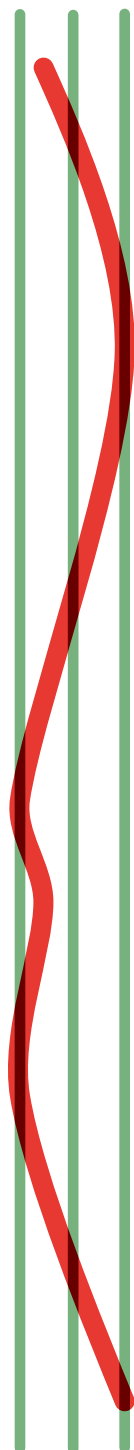
While this has focused on the arts and artists, I want a future of total liberation *for all people*. I hope that perhaps as artists we can collectively work on imagining a future, not just for ourselves, but for everybody.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bitchmedia.org/article/rewriting-the-future-prison-abolition-science-fiction>

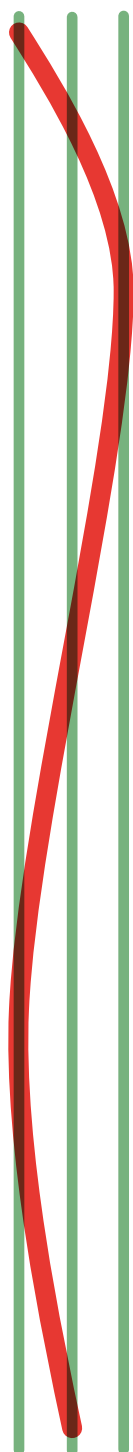


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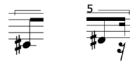
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## **TIMES of COVIDITY**

**FOUND THREE MINUTES APART ON EARLY MORNING SELF-DISTANCING WALK**

**POSITIVE & NEGATIVE**  
**(...OR IS IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND...)**



**AND NOW FOR SOMETHING MORE CHEERFUL,**  
**DISCOVERED ON SAME SELF-DISTANCING WALK AROUND THE BLOCK**

**A RECYCLING-BIN TAKING ITS PET PAPER BAG FOR A SOCIAL-DISTANCING WALK**







**MEANWHILE THE EXTRAORDINARY ILLAWARRA FLAME TREE IS MINDING ITS OWN BUSINESS**

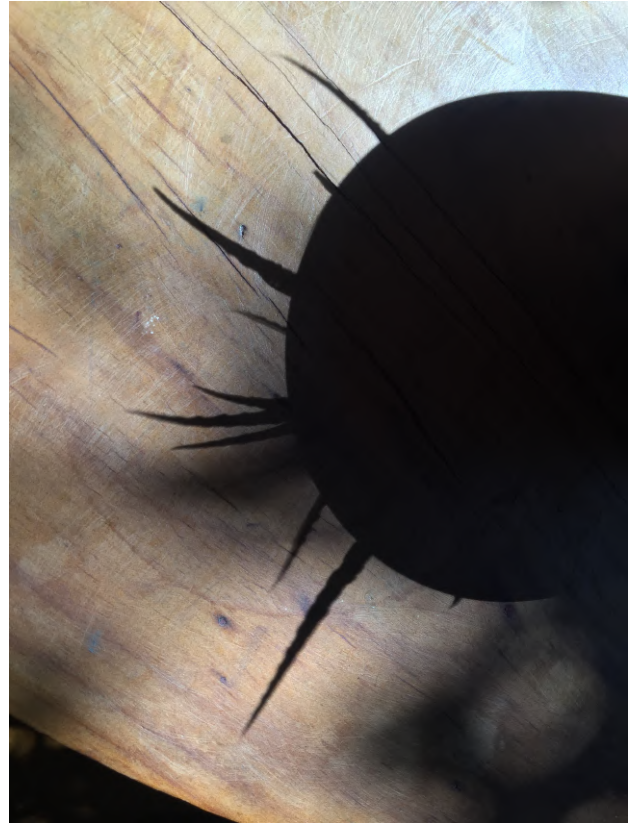






**scribbling away**





Ooops, A SECOND spike... ?



... AND ANOTHER ONE

Anca Frankenhaeuser  
March - May 2020







the difficulty of wedging  
strange unresolved discord  
some simulacrum of form

a string twisted around my fingers  
dehydrating sinew in my hands  
definitive and sweeping slash follows

before I fall  
my ceramic body fractures  
withstanding maximum transverse

a procedure akin to  
dispersing water more uniformly  
equilibrant modulus of rupture

for some ground to stand on  
for some semblance of integrity  
to find lightness and space

the tangle tangle  
carbonising my skin  
cause transgressed the tightness

prints impressed crazed  
punctuated by iron flecks  
dna in rhythmic procession

paths walked far enough apart  
to not interest or locate each other  
while wondering and dreaming

the shrill is watching  
weighing on you  
and I wonder

words which aren't meant to  
frighten you  
cut through you  
do

I'm not touching the words  
each comma and dash and dot  
sing synthesis

banishing green bulbs  
taking flight shaking the light  
harbouring the remnants of rehearsal

the incomplete and fractured  
the walk through the orchard  
how brilliant and fantastic

the ravel that follows  
here might in the fall  
here might in the fall

but sometimes not  
impolite elasticity  
failed intimacy cocoon

the looseness held me  
just long enough  
for the ground to return

do I live here anymore?  
Its body my own  
is this my foot

is this my finger?



Allan Rand

Title: *untitled (sitting)*

Materials: Ballpoint pen, felt-tip pen, on paper

Size: 35 x 43,3 cm (framed 58,8 x 66,3 cm)

Year: 2011

Exhibition: Allan Rand - "Serendipitous Sojourns"

02/12/2017 – 24/02/2018, Galerie Nagel Draxler,

Reisebüroalerie, Cologne, Germany

Collection: Danish Arts Foundation

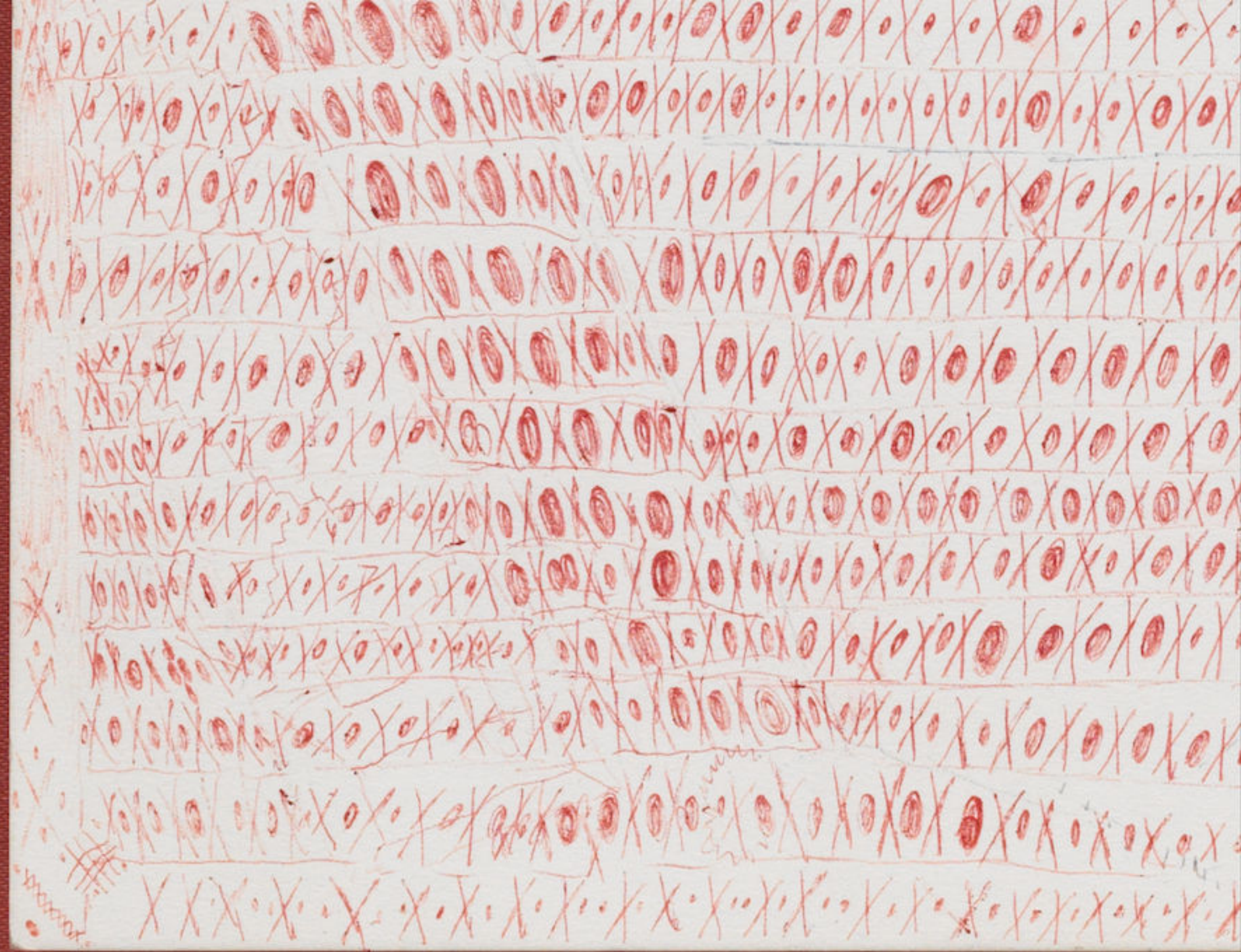
Photo: Achim Kukulies, Düsseldorf









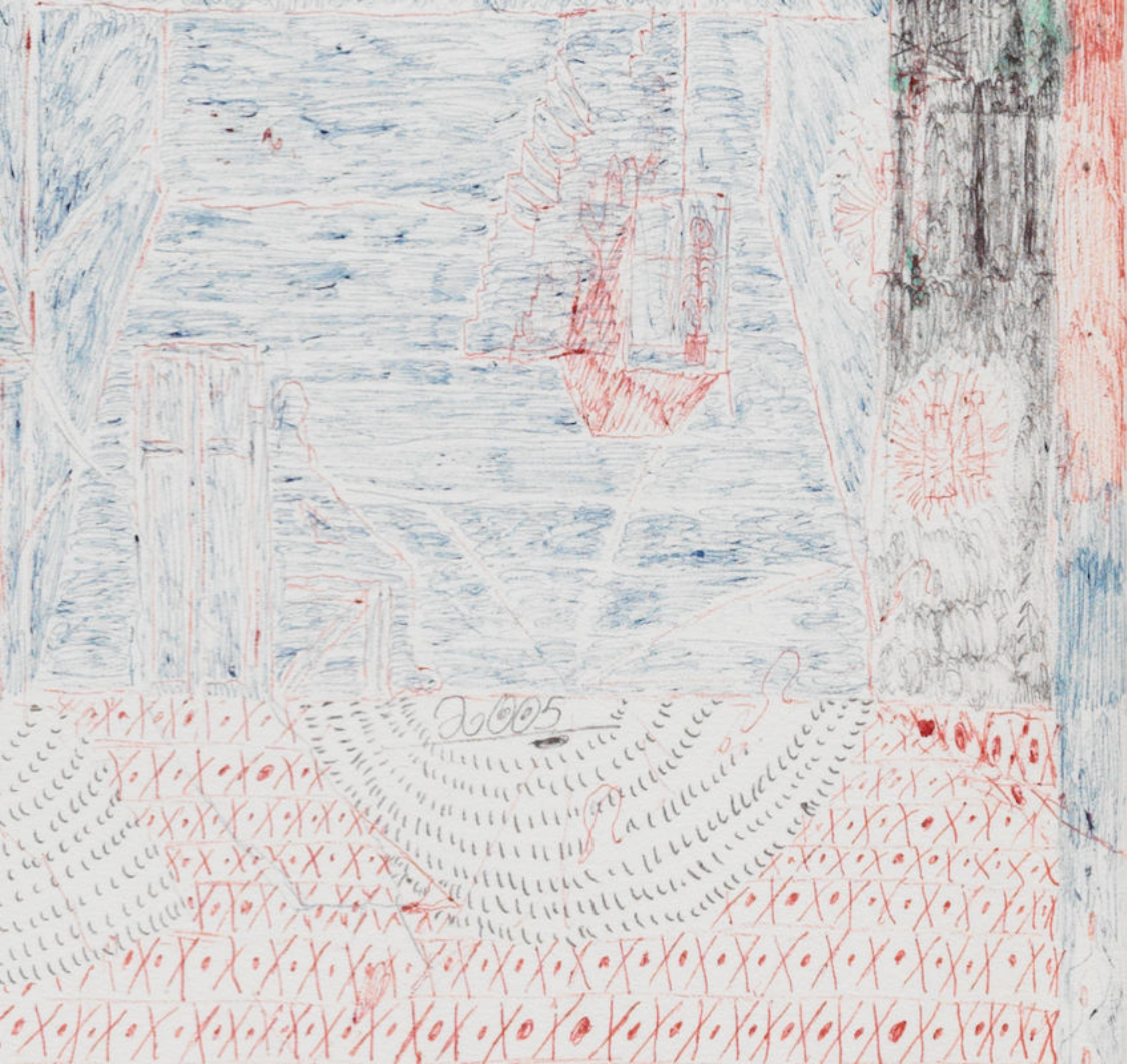




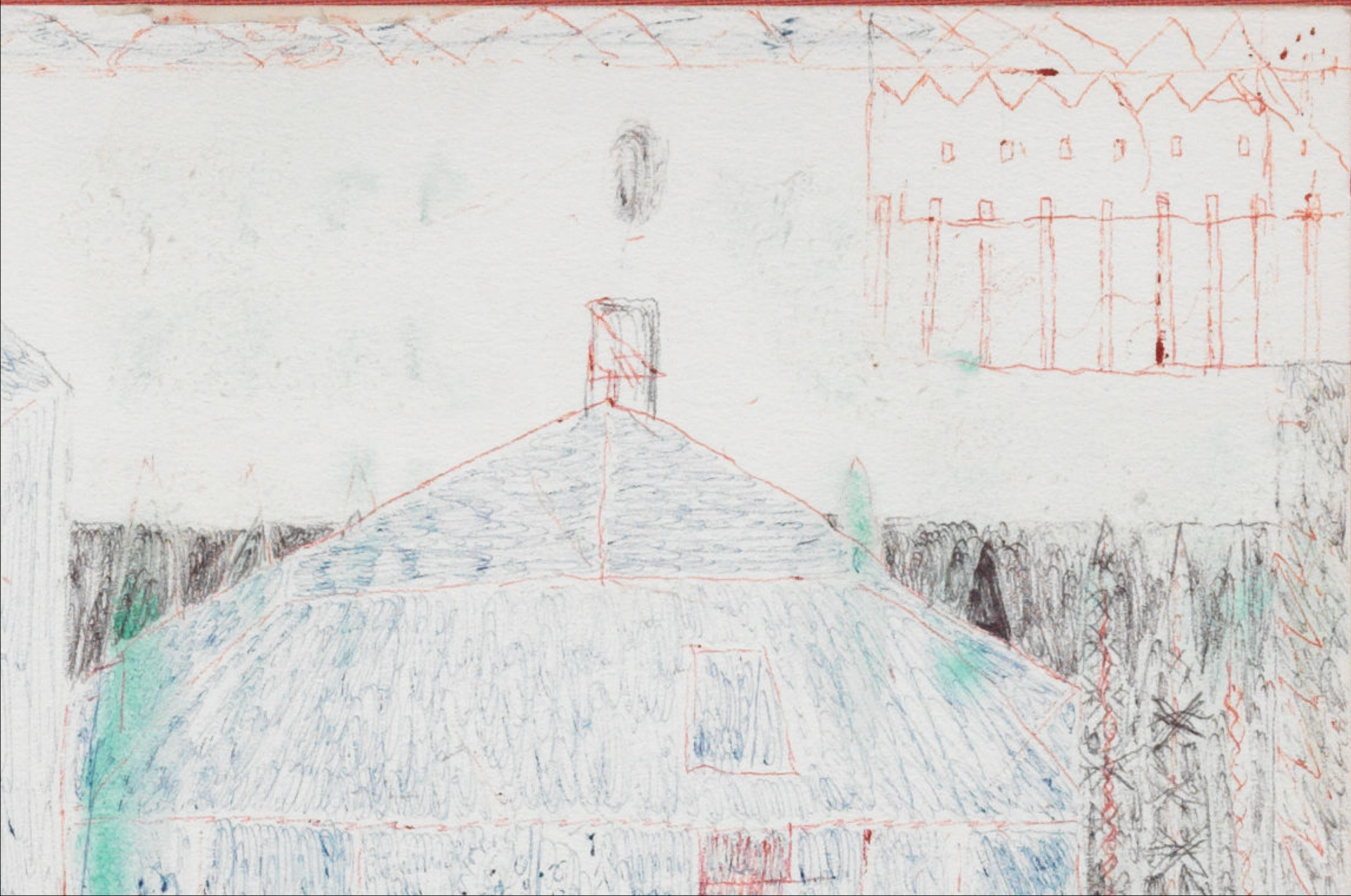


Handwritten text in red ink, organized into horizontal rows. The text appears to be a form of shorthand or a highly stylized script, consisting of numerous small, repetitive characters and symbols. The rows are densely packed, covering the lower two-thirds of the page. Some rows include larger, more distinct characters or symbols, possibly acting as section markers or initials. The handwriting is consistent throughout, suggesting a single scribe.



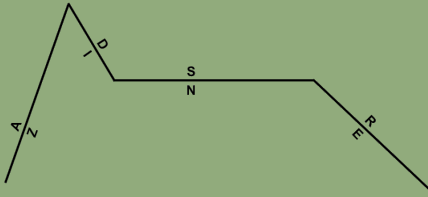








**A POLEMICAL 30-PART V-LETTER TO, FROM, & ABOUT  
PRE(CARE)IOUSNESS: 1.04.2020 - 20.6.2020**  
Ongoing correspondence from [me]  
[click envelope to open]



## 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





