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# ANGELICA MESITI



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### **BIOGRAPHIE**

Angelica Mesiti est née à Sydney, Australie en 1976, elle habite et travaille actuellement à Paris, France.

Angelica Mesiti a longtemps été fascinée par la performance, comme un mode de narration et un moyen d'exprimer des idées sociales sous une forme physique. Au cours des dernières années, elle a réalisé des vidéos qui révèlent comment la culture se manifeste à travers des formes non linguistiques de communication et plus précisément à travers un vocabulaire sonore et gestuel. Tout en empruntant des archétypes et des formes stylistiques au cinéma, l'artiste utilise le langage visuel du film pour présenter des études détaillées de sujet humain en phase de rêverie ou de réflexion. Le travail d'Angélica Mesiti échappe à la réalité. Elle utilise de riche traitement esthétique pour découvrir les potentielles transformations des êtres humains, évaluant la qualité de l'ambiguïté et d'indétermination de ses propres droits.

Le travail de Angelica Mesiti a fait l'objet d'expositions personnelles de qualité en institution la plus récente datant de 2019, *Quand faire c'est dire*, au Palais de Tokyo, Paris. Elle a aussi participé à de nombreuses expositions de groupes notamment au Centre Pompidou, Paris; Barbican, London; Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal, Canada; Gallery of Modern Art, Sydney; Reina Sofia, Madrid; Carriageworks, Sydney; The Jewish Museum, New York; Institut d'art contemporain, Villeurbanne/Lyon; Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin; Loop Gallery, Seoul; Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane; Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne; Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography; Para/site Artspace, Hong-Kong. Ses œuvres ont également été montrées dans le cadre de nombreuses biennales, notamment lors de la 58e Biennale de Venise, cur. Juliana Engberg, mais aussi lors de la 13e Biennale d'Istanbul, Turquie, cur. Fulya Erdemci; 2e Aichi Triennale Nagoya Japan cur. Taro Igarashi; 5e Triennale d'Auckland, Nouvelle-Zélande, cur. Hou Hanru; 11e Sharjah Biennale, Emirat Arabes unis, cur. Yuko Hasegawa; 1ère Biennale de Kochin-Mizuris, Kochi, Inde.



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### ANGELICA MESITI

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

### **EDUCATION**

Masters of Fine Art, College of Fine Arts, UNSW, Australia Bachelor of Fine Arts with Honours, College of Fine Arts, UNSW, Australia

### **SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

- 2023 Tanks Artists Commission. Sydney Modern Project, Art Gallery or New South Wales, AU
- 2021 Over the Air and Underground, Talbot Rice Gallery, University of Edinburg Scotland ASSEMBLY, National Gallery of Australia
  - A Hundred Years: Australian War Memorial Commission Over the Air and Underground, Galerie Allen, Paris, France
- 2020 ASSEMBLY, Arnolfini, Bristol, UK
- 2019 58th Venice Biennale, cur. Juliana Engberg, Australian Pavillion, Venice, Italy Quand faire c'est dire / When Doing is Saying, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France Mother Tongue, Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand
- 2018 Relay League, Art Sonje Centre, Seoul, South Korea
  - Citizens Band, University Art Gallery, Sewanee / University of Southern Tennessee, USA Proto Cinema: Relay League, Tbilisi Kunsthalle, Tbilisi, Georgia
- 2017 Mother Tongue, Aarhus 2017, European Capital of Culture commission, Aarhus, Denmark Angelica Mesiti: Polyphonies, Basis Frankfurt, Germany
  - Relay League, Griffith University Museum, Melbourne, Australia
  - Angelica Mesiti: Five works, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia Relay League, Artspace Sydney, Australia
- 2015 The Colour of Saying, Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney, Australia
  - The Colour of Saying, Lilith Performance Studio, Malmö, Sweden
  - An Ocean of Air, Galerie Allen, Paris, France
  - Angelica Mesiti: The Calling, Walter Phillips Gallery, The Banff Centre, Banff, Canada
  - Angelica Mesiti: Citizens Band, Nikolaj Kunsthal, Copenhagen, Danemark
- 2014 Angelica Mesiti: Citizens Band, Williams College Museum of Art, Massachusetts, USA Angelica Mesiti: Citizens Band, Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal, Canada
  - The Calling, Ian Potter moving image commission, ACMI Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia
- 2012 Rapture (silent anthem) Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia
- The Line of Lode and Death of Charlie Day, 24HR Art Northern Territory Centre for Contemporary Art, Parap, Australia The Begin-Again, C3West Project Commission Par The Museum of Contemporary Art Sydney and Hurstville City Council, Sydney, Australia
- 2010 Rapture (silent anthem), Centre for Contemporary Photography (projection window), Melbourne, Australia Natural History, Gallery 9, Sydney, Australia
- Heritage Park, Heritage Week Film Commission, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Campbelltown, Australia
- The Line of Lode and Death of Charlie Day, Dubbo Regional Gallery, Dubbo, Australia
- The Line of Lode and Death of Charlie Day, Broken Hill Regional Gallery, Broken Hill, Australia
- 2003 The Rockets Red Glare, Mori Gallery, Sydney, Australia

### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- The recent, Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh, Scotland The Part In The Story Where Our Accumulating Dust Becomes A Mountain, Seoul Museum of Art, Seoul South Korea
- 2022 INTERSTICES: TURNS #3, Galerie Allen, Paris, FR aller contre le vente, FRAC Franche-Comté, Besançon, FR
- The Musical Brain, Highline Art, New York
- 2020 Books at an Exhibition. An Exhibition in Ten Chapters, Busan Biennale, South Korea Force of Listening, Art Maebashi, Japan

The Blue Peal Of Bells, Museum of Contemporary Art Busan, Korea

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The Future of Silence: When your tongue vanishes, Nam Juin Paik Art Center, Seoul, South Korea

Points of Light, MAC Montreal, Montreal, Canada

2019 Autralia. Antipodean Stories, PAC Milano, Milan, Italy

Time Cubism, Gwangju Museum of Art, Gwangju, South Korea

Here We Meet, Kadist San Francisco

2018 Moving Stones, Kadist, Paris, France

Balance of Non-Sculpting, Changwon International Sculpture Biennale, Korea

Dark MoFo Festival, Hobart Australia

Here We Meet, The Galaxy Museum of Contemporary Art, Chongqing, China

Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art: Divided Worlds, Samstag Museum, Adelaide, Australia

DO DISTURB, Festival of Live Art, with Uriel Barthélémi, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France

2017 Sugar Spin: You, Me, Art and Everything, QAGOMA, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia

Moving Histories: Future Projections, dLux, Australia

ART-O-RAMA, Galerie Allen, Marseille, France

Playlist, cur. Fabien Danesi, Ange Leccia Art Cetnre, Oletta, Corsica

The Score, cur. Jacqueline Doughty, Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne, Australia

Aarhus 2017, European Captial of Culture, Commission project, Denmark

Point Triple de la Matière, Fondation Fiminco, Romainville, France

Rock the Kasbah, Institut des Cultures d'Islam, Paris, France

2016 Telling Tales, Cur. Rachel Kent, Museum of Contemporary Art Sydney, Australia

LOVE...more than a four letter word, Caboolture Regional Art Gallery, Queensland, Australia

Static & Silence, The Lock-Up Galery, Newcastle, NSW, Australia

Chantiers d'Europe, festival Par Théâtre de la Ville de Paris, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France

Invention, Memory and Places, Musee de la Chartreuse, Duai, France

Spirit Your Mind, Cur. Isabelle Kowal, Marie Maertens & Anissa Touati, Chalet Society

2015 Station to Station: Project Par Doug Aitken, Barbican Gallery, London, UK

24 Frames Per Second, Carriageworks, Sydney, Australia

Tu dois changer ta vie!, Lille 3000: Rennaissance, Tri Postal, Lille, France

Nuit Blanche, Paris, France

Cosmic Love Wanderlust: The Imperial Slacks Project, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney College of the Arts gallery, Australia People Like Us, UNSW Galleries, Sydney, Australia

2014 The Immigration Songs: Angelica Mesiti and Malik Nejmi, MAXXI, Rome, Italy

Open Museum/Open City, MAXXI, Rome, Italy

Sights and Sounds: Global Film and Video, The Jewish Museum, New York, USA

No Sound is Innocent, Marabouparken Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden

You Imagine What You Desire, 19th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

The Australian Club, Melbourne, Australia

Transcendence: Nell, Angelica Mesiti, Aura Satz, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, Australia

IMPACT, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia

2013 Everyday Magic, Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia

Turns - Possibilities of Performance, Galerie Allen, Paris, France

Mom, am I Barbarian?, 13th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul, Turkey

Seven Points (part two), Embassy of Australia, United States of America, Washington DC, USA

Buyuhyn-wana: The transformative persona, Lismore Regional Gallery, Australia

Awakening Where are We Standing? Earth, Memory and Resurrection, Aichi Triennial, Nagoya, Japan

If you were to live here... The 5th Auckland Triennial, Auckland, New Zealand

Guirguis New Art Prize 2013, University of Ballarat Post Office Gallery, Art Gallery, Ballarat, Australia

Rendez-vous 13, Institut d'art contemporainVilleurbanne/Rhône-Alpes, Lyon, France

Sharjah Biennale 11, Cur. Yuko Hasegawa, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

We Used to Talk About Love, Balnaves Contemporary Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, Australia

The space between us: Anne Landa Award for video and new media 2013, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney, Australia

Seven Points (part one), Embassy of Australia Gallery, Washington DC, USa

2012 1st Kochi-Mizuris Biennale, Kerala, India

Montevideo Biennial: El Gran Sur, cur. Alfons Hug, Montevideo, Uruguay

Tarra Warra Biennial: Sonic Spheres, cur Victoria Lynn, Tarra Warra Museum of Art, Tarra Warra, Australia

NEW12, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, , Australia

Volume One: MCA Collection (permanent display), Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, Australia

2011 17th International Contemporary Art Festival SESC Videobrasil: Southern Panoramas, Sao Paulo, Brazil

London Australia Film Festival (Artists Film program) The Barbican Art Centre, London, UK

Videonale 13: Festival for Contemporary Video Art, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn, Germany

South Par Southeast; Recent Video from Australia and New Zealand, 3rd Yebisu International Festival for Art and Alternative-

Visions, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Tokyo, Japan

Selectively Revealed, Aram Art Gallery, Goyang, Seoul, Korea

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2010 Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin/Madrid, Centre Pompidou (Paris, France) Auditorium of the Ministerio de Cultura (Madrid, Spain), Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin, Germany)

No Soul For Sale, Tate Modern, London, UK

Move on Asia, Loop Gallery Seoul Korea, LABoral, Gijon, Spain

Experimenta Utopia Now; Biennale of Media Art, Federation Square Melbourne, Carriageworks Sydney, Museum of Old and New Art Tasmania

Nightshifters; Liveworks Festival, Performance Space Carriageworks ,Sydney, Australia

Hardbodies, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre, Gymea, Australia

Time and Space, Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Arts Centre, Gymea, Australia

2009 58th Blake Prize (winner), NAS Gallery, Sydney, Australia

Helen Lempriere Travelling Art Scholarship: Finalist Exhibition, Artspace, Sydneyy, Australia

VAD International Video and Digital Arts Festival, Girona, Spain

Souvenirs from Earth, TV Channel for Contemporary Art, Germany and France

Les Recontres International Berlin/Madrid, Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin, Germany), Reina Sofia National Museum (Madrid, Spain)

Loop 09, Video Art festival, Barcelona, Spain

Event; New Moving Image Works, Artspace, Sydney, Australia

Australia? Mildura Arts Centre, Mildura, Australia

dTour/08 -09, d.Lux media Arts Regional touring exhibition

2008 Les Rencontres Internationales, Ecole Des Beaux Arts, Paris, France

National Film and Sound Archive's Big Screen 08. Broken Hill Regional Gallery, Broken Hill, Australia

Loop 08, Video Art festival, Barcelona, Spain

Face to Face, Australian regional touring exhibition

2007 Five x Five, Ivan Dogherty Gallery, Sydney, Australia

2006 Game On, Next Wave Festival, Melbourne, Australia

Play: Portraiture and Performance in Recent Video Art from Australia and New Zealand, Adam Art Gallery New Zealand and Perth Institute of Contemporary Art

2005 O.K Video Festival, National Gallery of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia

2004 Video Spell 4: Cartographies, The Performance Space, Sydney, Australia

Work Rest Play (Escape), Imperial Slacks Collective, Artspace, Sydney, Australia

720 x 576 Ate, Phatspace, Sydney, Australia

2003 Sidney Kahn Summer Institute, The Kitchen, New York, USA

2002 Desk Job, Mori Gallery, Sydney, Australia

Video, Film, Sound, Scott Donovan Gallery, Sydney, Australia

Broken Hotel, Tour dLux, Broken Hill, Australia

Projekt Issue 2, Kings ARI Melbourne, Australia

Positive Overkill, Imperial Slacks Gallery, Surry Hills, Australia

### PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Adachi Outdoor Sculpture Collection, Japan

Artbank, Australia

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth

Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Melbourne

Benala Art Gallery, Victoria

Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio

Columbia University, New York City

Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio

Cororcan Gallery of Art, Washington D.C

Detroit Institute of Art, Michigan

Deutsche Bank

Fond Regional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC) Franche-Comté (France)

Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria

Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne

MAC Montreal, Canada

Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney

National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Newcastle Art Gallery, NSW, Australia

QAGOMA, Brisbane

TarraWarra Art Museum, Healesville, Victoria

The Art Institute of Chicago, USA

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City Tokyo Metropolitan Art Space Western Plains Cultural Centre, NSW Private Collections

### PRIZES / GRANTS / RESIDENCIES

2019 Winner of the 2019 Advance Award for the Arts

Residency with Centre Nationale de la Danse (CND), Pantin, France Shortlisted for the 9th edition of the Meurice Prize for contemporary art

2013 Anne Landa Award for Video and New Media Arts

The Ian Potter Moving Image Commission

2011 AFTRS Creative Fellowship Award Arts NSW Quick Response Project Funding

2010 Sydney Underground Film Festival (Jury Award)

2009 58th Blake Prize for Religious and Spiritual Art

Australia Council for the Arts, new work grant

Cité International des Arts residency (University of New South Wales studio)

Ian Potter Foundation Travel Grant

2008 Nava Marketing Scheme Grant

2007-09 University Post Graduate Scholarship, UNSW

2002 RUN\_WAY Young and Emerging Artists Initiative, Australia Council

### SELECTED PRESS

2019 Dee Jeferson, "Australian pavilion at Venice Biennale will house poetic of pluralist, democratic society", ABC News, March

Celine Garcia-Carré, "Portrait", L'Oeil, Mai 2019

Jean-Marie Wynants, "Angelica Mesiti, au-delà des mots", Le Soir, Avril 2019

Maxime Der Nahabédian, "Angelica Mesiti, Quand faire c'est dire", Say Who, Février 2019

Guillaume Benoit, "Angelica Mesiti - Palais de Tokyo", Slash, March 2019

Linda Morris, "Visual artist Angelica Mesiti puts unity into art for her Venice debut", The Age, March 2019

Andrew Bock, "Angelica Mesiti finds poetry in motion pictures for Venice Biennale", The Sydney Morning Herald, Mai

Diane Nazaroff "UNSW alumna's Venice Biennale entry examines the collective power of « the people »", UNSW Sydney Newsroom, 2019

Hettie Judah, "Meet the women taking center stage at the Venice Biennale in 2019", Vogue Australia, Mai 2019 "Quand faire c'est dire", Parisart, Mars 2019

Roxana Azimi, "La Biennale de Venise, un accélérateur de cote pour les artistes", Le Monde, Mai 2019

2018 Alexie Glass-Kantor and Haeju Kim, "Angelica Mesiti in Conversation", Ocula, 1 Février 2018 Coly Delistraty, "Emerging artists to watch this year", Modern Painter Magazine, Janvier-Février 2018 Tom Jeffreys, "How we speak", Frieze #192, Janvier-Février 2018

2017 Claudia Arozqueta, "Angelica Mesiti: ArtSpace, Sydney," Critic's Pick in Artforum, Juin 2017

Craig Judd, "Review- Angelica Mesiti: Relay League," Artlink, 22 Juin 2017

Christopher Allen, "Angelica Mesiti: message received at Anna Schwartz and Artspace galleries," The Australian, 17 Juin 2017 Steve Dow, "Angelica Mesiti communicates via multiple sense in Relay League," Art Guide Australia, 18 Mai 2017 Emerald Dunn Frost, "Hand-Drawn Review: Relay League at ArtSpace," FBI Radio, 16 Mai 2017

Katya Wachtel, "Angelica Mesiti in Paris," Vault Australasian Art & Culture, Mai 2017

Lauren Carroll Harris, "Angelica Mesiti recodes video art," Real Time Arts #138, Avril - Mai 2017 Emmanuelle Jardonnet, "Nos cinq choix culturels pour le week-end," Le Monde, 17 March 2017

2016 "Six artistes sélectionnés pour le Prix Meurice," Le Quotidien de L'Art #1093, 24 Juin 2016, p. 7

2015 Judicaël Lavrador, "Tu dois changer ta vie!" Beaux Arts Magazine, Octobre 2015.

Toni Ross, "Review: Angelica Mesiti, Anna Schwartz Gallery Sydney", Artforum, Vol 54, no.1, Septembre 2015, pp 405. Maryse Morin, "Angelica Mesiti, Citizens Band...Le sens de ce qui circule entre nous", ETC Media, Revue D'Arts Mediatiques. 15 Février - 15 Juin 2015. pp 62-63.

Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore, "Angelica Mesiti: the artist who records a choir in song without a single sound" The Guardian, Friday 8 Mai 2015. http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/Mai/08/angelica-mesiti-artist-interview-sydney Nicholas Forrest, Why Angelica Mesiti's "Colour of Saying" Will Stop You Dead, BlouinArtinfo 19th Mai, 2015 Andrew Taylor "Angelica Mesiti explores silence in new video work at Anna Schwartz Gallery" The Sydney Morning Herald, Avril 14th 2015

Christopher Allen, REVIEW: Carriageworks, Sydney: 24 Frames per Second,

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2014 Christopher Allen, "Lend Angelica Mesiti your ears", The Australian, 17th Mai 2014, pp.10-11.

Robert Nelson, "Calling attention to ancient languages: The Calling Par Angelica Mesiti", The Age, 12 Février 2014. http://www.theage.com.au/entertainment/art-and-design/angelica-mesiti-hearkens-to-whistling-language-in-the-calling-at-acmi-20140211-32fv0.html

2013 Fabrice Bousteau Offensive Indienne, Beaux Arts Magazine; fev2013, Issue 344, p22

Columbus, Nicki (Ed), Re:Emerge, Towards a new cultural cartography, Sharjah Biennial 11 exhibition catalogue, (Sharjah: Sharjah Art Foundation, 2013)

Jacqueline Millner, "<< The more global one is, the more local one desires to become>> Angelica Mesiti: Being World", Contemporary Art + Culture Broadsheet, Issue 42.2, 2013, pp.104-107

Dan Rule, 'Fragments of Cinema Angelica Mesiti's Poetic Video Works Embrace and Subvert the Cinematic Device' Vault, Issue 3, Avril

Rosa Gubay, 'Art R&R: The 5th Auckland Triennial', Gather & Hunter

Nicholas Forrest, 'Is Angelica Mesiti Australia's Most Popular Contemporary Artist?', Blouin ArtInfo, Avril 10

Audrey Hoffer, 'Australian Embassy Aims to Dispel Down Under Cliches', The Washington Diplomat, Avril 1

Christopher Allen, 'Wide of the Heart', The Weekend Australian Review, Février 23

Hou Hanru, Christina Barton, Pascal Beausse, Felicity Fenner (et al), If you were to live here... The 5th Auckland Triennial, ex cat., Auckland Art Gallery, 2013

Jacqueline Millner 'Angelica Mesiti', 5th Auckland Triennial: If you were to live here...catalogue essay, pg,126,127, Michael Fitzgerald, "Angelica Mesiti: Prepared Piano for Movers (Haussmann), Photofile, Vol 93, Spring/Summer, 2013-14, pp. 40-47

Juliana Engberg, 'It's a long way to the top' Art & Australia, Vol. 50/4 2013 pg.620-627

Jacqueline Millner, "Angelica Mesiti", Rendez-vous 13, ex. cat., Institut d'art contemporian, Villeurbanne, 2013

RoParn Davidson, 'Citizens Band' The Space Between Us: The Anne Landa award for video and new media art 2013, Art Gallery of NSW. Catalogue essay e-publication

Jamal Mecklai, 'Joy and hope in Cochin' The Business Standard, Avril 30, 2013 http://

www.businessstandard.com/article/opinion/joy-and-hope-in-kochi-113040400532\_1.html

Joel Mu, 'Angelica Mesiti' We used to talk about love, Balnaves contemporary: photomedia. Art Gallery of NSW catalogue essay pg58-65. Published Par The Art Gallery of NSW 2013

RoParn Davidson, "Citizens Band", Exhibition catalogue essay. The Space Between Us; Anne Landa Award for New Media Art, Art Gallery of NSW, 2012.

2012 Juliana Engberg 'Rapture and Rupture: Angelica Mesiti's Citizens Band', NEW12 Catalogue essay, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne

Hayley Haynes, 'Angelica Mesiti's Citizens Band at NEW12, ACCA', Das Platform, 15 Mai,

http://www.dasplatforms.com/das\_five\_cent/angelica-mesiti's-citizens-band-at-new12-acca/

Brook Turner, 'New Artists Get into the Swim', The Financial Review, 5-9 Avril, pp 70

Andrew Stevens, 'Bold new strokes', The Age, 17 March

Dan Rule, 'Immersive Sensory and Spatial Environments at NEW12', Broadsheet, Melbourne, 22 March

Minu Ittyipe, 'Portraits From the Kochi Biennale: Video Artist Angelica Mesiti', NYTimes.com Dec 17 2012

http://india.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/12/17/portraits-from-the-kochi-biennale-video-artist-angelica-mesiti/

Roxana Azimi, Une Biennale de sharjah tout en musicalité' Le Quotidien De L'Art, Numéro 344/22 Mars 2013. Pg 6

Victoria Lynne, 'Sensing Sound' Sonic Spheres: TarraWarra Biennial 2012, TarraWarra Museum of Art. Pg4-9. Published Par Tarrawarra Museum of Art 2012

Andrew Frost '50 things collectors need to know: Angelica Mesiti' Australian Art Collector, Issue 59 jan-Mar 2012. Pg 114

2011 Rachel Kent, Abigail Moncrief 'Angelica Mesiti: The Begin-Again', published Par C3West and The MCA Sydney, 2011 Daniel Mudie Cunningham, 'The Begin-Again', Runway, Issue 19: Life, Winter 2011, pp.

Jacqueline Millner, 'Decentralising Cultural Capital', Broadsheet, Vol. 40 No. 2, Juin 2011, p. 141

Virginia Baxter, 'Re-inventing the city: Hurstville, Singapore, Blacktown, Manila', RealTime, Volume 103, Juin-July 2011, pp. 2-3 Annalice Creighton, 'Angelica Mesiti: The Begin-Again', DAS 500, accessed 12 Mai, 2011, <a href="http://www.rococoproductions.com/500/500\_047.html">http://www.rococoproductions.com/500/500\_047.html</a>

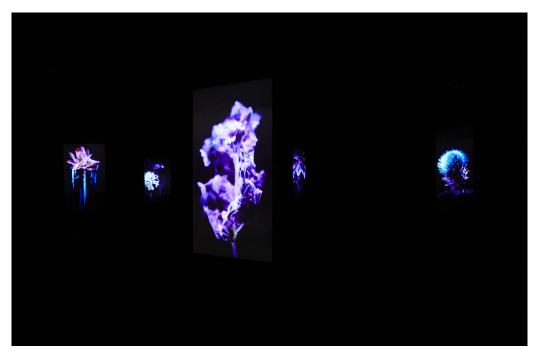
Steve Meacham, 'From drag king to Dragon town via Paris', Sydney Morning Herald, 29 March, 2011

2010 Angela Bennetts, 'Natural History', Runway, Issue 16: Disappearance, 2010, p.70-74

2009 Ashleigh Wilson, 'For winner Angelica Mesiti, the Blake Prize rocks', The Australian, 4 Septembre, 2009 Adam Fulton, 'How videos killed the painting stars at the Blake Prize', Sydney Morning Herald, 4 Septembre, 2009

2006 Aaron Kreisler, 'Faraway So Close,' Listener New Zealand, Jan 14th, p49

2001 Tanya Peterson, 'Serial 7's,' Eyeline Contemporary Visual Arts #47, summer 2001-2002





### ANGELICA MESITI

Vue d'exposition, Busan Biennale 2020, Books at an Exhibition. An Exhibition in Ten Chapters Commissaire d'exposition Jacob Fabricius Museum of Contemporary Art Busan, Yeongdo, Old Town in Busan City





### ANGELICA MESITI

Vue d'exposition *Quand faire c'est dire*, 2019, Palais de Tokyo, Paris Commissaire d'exposition Daria De Beauvais Courtoisie de l'artiste et de la Galerie Allen, Paris Photo: Aurélien Mole

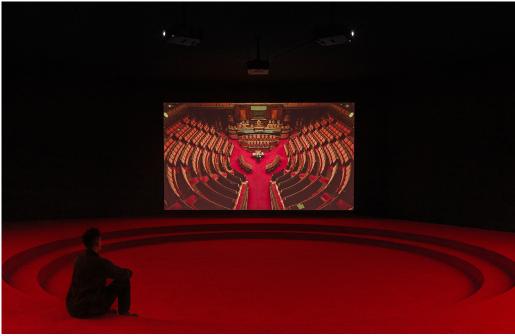




### ANGELICA MESITI

Vue d'exposition *Quand faire c'est dire*, 2019, Palais de Tokyo, Paris Commissaire d'exposition Daria De Beauvais Courtoisie de l'artiste et de la Galerie Allen, Paris Photo: Aurélien Mole





### ANGELICA MESITI

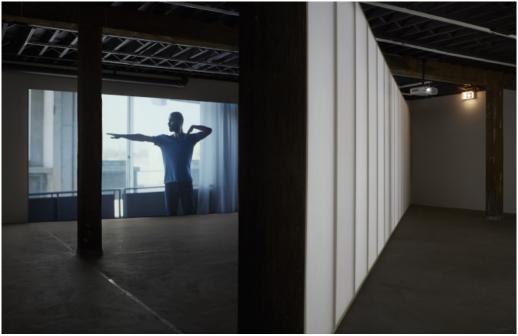
ASSEMBLY, 2019 - La Biennale di Venezia

3 cannaux installation vidéo dans un amphithéâtre architectural, HD projections vidéo, couleur, six-cannaux son 25 min

Dimensions variables

Courtoisie de l'artiste et de la Galerie Allen, Paris Commission par the Australia Council for the Arts à l'occasion de la 58ème International Art Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia





### ANGELICA MESITI

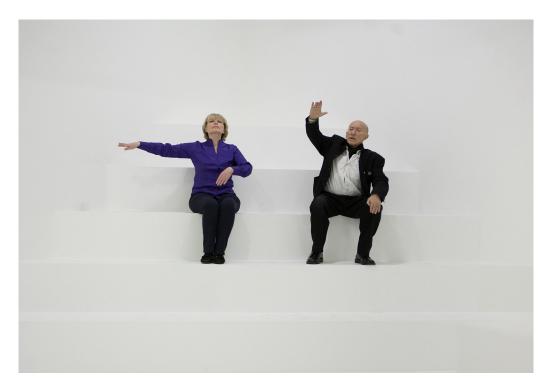
Relay League, 2017 Vidéo numerique haute définition triple cannaux, son 23 mins 42 secs Video still / Vue d'exposition, Artspace, Sydney, Australia





### ANGELICA MESITI

Nakh Removed, 2015 Vidéo, sans son 9 mins Production still. Photo: Pierre Jouvion Commission par Carriageworks dans le cadre du projet 24 Frames Per Second





### ANGELICA MESITI

The Colour of Saying, 2015
Haut: performance. Photo: Lilith Performance Studio
Bas: 3 cannaux haute définition vidéo numerique, son. 25 mins.
Vue d'exposition Anna Schwartz Gallery Sydney. Photo: Glen Thompson.

La performance a été créée en collaboration et produit par Lilith Performance Studio, Malmö, Suède 2015.





### ANGELICA MESITI

Citizens Band, 2012 4 channel vidéo installation, HD vidéo, 16:9, PAL, son surround 21 mins 25 secs

Haut: Production still. Photo: Bonnie Elliott Bas: Vue d'exposition. NEW12, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne.

Commission par the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne. Assisté par the Australian Government à travers the Australian Council.

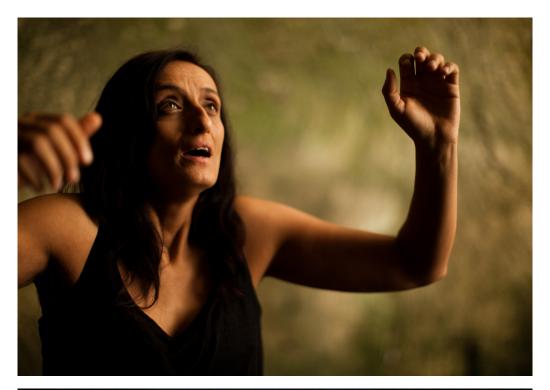




### ANGELICA MESITI

The Calling, 2013-2014 3 channel vidéo installation, video numérique, son 35 mins 36 secs Haut: video still Bas: Vue d'exposition Australian Centre for Moving Image

Commission par the Ian Potter Moving Image Commission, presentée par ACMI





### ANGELICA MESITI

In the Ear of the Tyrant, 2014

Multi-channel haute definition vidéo installation, son surround

5 mins 10 secs

Haut: Production still. . Photo: Sebastian Kriete

Bas: Vue d'exposition. 19th Biennale of Sydney, Art Gallery of NSW. Photo: Sebastian Kriete.

Commission par the 19th Biennale of Sydney, financé par The Australia Council for the Arts and Craft.





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*In the Mouth of the Tyrant*, 2015 Vidéo, 16:9, haute definition, couleur, sans son 9 mins Video still.

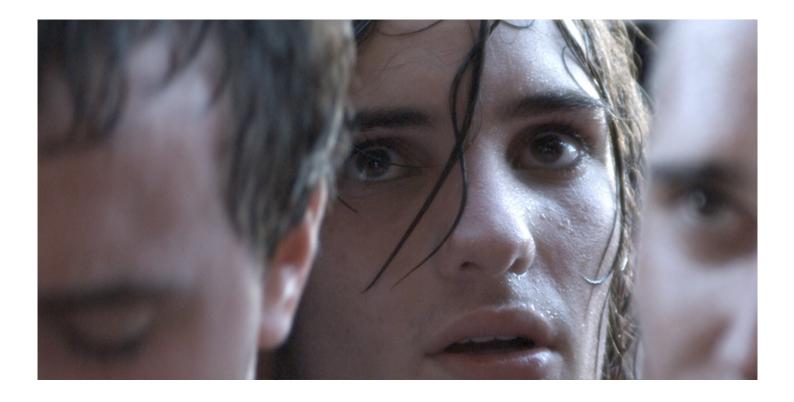




### ANGELICA MESITI

The Begin Again, 2011
4 vidéos monocanal, vidéo haute définition, son stéréo et installation et performance en direct Vue d'expositions
Photo: Jamie North

Commission par C3 Westpour le Museum of Contemporary Art Sydney et le Hurstville City Council



# PRESSE





12 EMERGING ARTISTS TO WATCH THIS YEAR An exhibition view of 'Relay League,' 2017, a video by Angelica Mestil, at Artspace is Sydney, Australia



## ANGELICA MESITI





MODERN PAINTERS MAGAZINE é 2018

"Emerging Artists to Watch This Year" Par Cody Delistraty





## How We Speak

ANGELICA MESITI's films explore the myriad ways humans communicate by TOM JEFFREYS

TERE IS MORE TO LANGUAGE than speech and writing, or the artist Angeliea Westif, communication is always seribed physically — by a living body or by the form of mark or the echo of a sound — and it is always reaching yould tiself. Across firm and installation, the artist asks 10 bear witness as a rare language becomes a tourist arction, a distress signal becomes a dance or movement is called in shorthand by bodies no longer habe oper drone of the state of

emergence of new digital technologies. Belay League sees this coded message translated first into music, then into dance. A series of hanging sculptures renders literal this process of hecoming artefact.

Reday League was filmed in the Paris suburb of Pantin. It opens on an urban rooftop, a place from which messages are broadeast. Against the hum of traffic, we watch and listen as jaza drummer Uriel Barthelemi taps out a semi-improvised drum piece, conceived, at Mestil's instigation, in response to that funal Morse code message. It starts with the general partial partial problem place does the starts with the general partial partial problem places and problem to the urgency of its rhythms.

The central seven is perhaps the most intriguing. Two young dancers, a man and a woman, sit close together on the floor. One. Studir Bunuddee, has limited vision and is guided by the other. Emilia Wibron Vesterlund, with her hands as a be whispers to him in Swedish — now quietly, now all title louder. The two are close friends and have developed this system so that Runuddee might 'see' performances. Mesiti tells me that they have never thought of what they do as a language. The scene is extraordinarily intimate and powerfult hodily and beautiful, close but not sexual. Yet, it is also a seen from which we are partially excluded if this is a language, then it is one that relies on the physical proximity and bodily self-knowledge of the experienced dancer. It is also underpinned by a mystery. It is not until the third and last film that we find out what the pair are responding to.

This final reveal is not only one of narrative but also of environment. Separating each film, and guiding the visitor's movement through the gallery, is a series of screens



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"How We Speak" Par Tom Jeffries



made from transparent polyurethane. The flickering light of each film leads viewers from one space to the next. Mestit cites the French word porous—a route or journey-describing the experience as lantern-esque. In the final film, its revealed that Vesterlund and Bunudde are reacting to another dancer. Filipe Lourenço, whose own light-limbed, circling movements are a response to Barthélemis percussion. Vesterbund and Bunudde are also shown responding in context to Barthélemi in real time: Mestit describes it as a 'real, actual translation'. The result is a range of transformations: from language to code to music and dance. What is lost is a specific. knowable meaning. But much stands to be gained: richness of sound and movement, complex human embodiments stemming from the most minimal of codes.

\*\*Reby League markine tean by contrast, take generations to occur of its own accord. In \*\*The Calling (so; p.)\*, and are also accorded to the contrast that is the separation is not court of its own accord. In \*\*The Calling (so; p.)\*, and callier three-channel video in stallation. Mestit provides a multi-layered document of the changing status of another specialist means of communication: whistiling. Some remote rural communities — including the village of Kuskoy in northern Turkey. La Gomera in the Canary Islands and the Greek island of Evia—utilize a highly specialized form of whistiling to communicate with precision across distances. In this quiet, heautiful film, a woman on a tea plantation whistle to a honounce the arrival of the tea truck: aman pauses from chopping kindling to whistle to his wife to come in for lunch.

a rea plantation winties to announce the arrival of the tea truck; a man pauses from chopping kindling to whistle to his wife to come in for lunch.

Whistling may still be used in daily life but it is fast be-coming a relic. Wind turbines, pylons and electricity cables show us the wider context of modernity's encroachment

upon ancient agrarian lifestyles. The Calling includes scene [here is a parallel here with Mesiti's own childhood as of children learning to whistle in school and locals enter aughter of Italian-speaking parents living in Sydney, taining tourists in a restaurant. The old ways are dying snow based in Paris, where she has become familiar only to be resurrected as a kind of performance. I wante the sense of living as an outsider—linguistically at to document the life cycle of the language, 'says Mesit,' This comes through strongly in works such as Gitzens 'from a useful everyday tool to something maintained as '(co22), a film portrait of singers and musicians perkind of artefact, characteristic of community identity, bing alone a Cameroonian water drummer in a Paris most performed element of the culture.

Mesti mentions that the whisting system (which, lis sane and an Algerian singer on the Paris metro. None Morse code, is not strictly a language), has been includes performers lives in the place where they were born. OI NESCOS list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. What ad, their music acts as a form of cultural memento. kind of change happens when that takes place? 'she asks d by Waves (2o17)—'titled after the Latin motto of the I reminds men of certain 19th century et thoughest, "A sient, lingering close-up of the Yawses but attempting to save 'indigenous oral cultures by fixing the case of the place where the words of an artist giving a face-to-face interview seen al. 's famous monument at the centre of the Place the words of an artist giving a face-to-face interview seen al. 's famous monument at the centre of the Place objective the part of the place where the million people galarhed in but something is taken away in the process. A languase wof unity after the Chaffe Hebdo massacre in 2015—becomes like an artefact in a museum, "say Mesti". Jestis is most overly political work to date let let leates the latting the place of the place where two million people galarhed in but something is taken a marked in the me

(2015), a group of women from the Algeria-Tunisia border perform a ritualistic 'hair dance'. Both works are portraits of the psychological states of their subjects, based solely on their faces and bodies. Both are tightly cropped, with no sense of wider place. Both are also silent.

Similarly focused in \*Bic Dalaur Saying (2015), one part of which shows a seatch pair of retired dancers enacting a space deaux from Tchaikowsky's ballet Suen Luke (6755—60) using only their hands and upper bodies. Flutterings of the fingers translate certain movements that they are no longer able to perform: the fingers of the woman's right hand brush across those of her left as the strings strike up. It's incesplicably hear threaking.

Such tender moments lie at the least of Mestil's work.

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\*\*Fü dois choisir tavie b commence en effet par laisser le hasard influer sur la vie du spectateur.

Si vous vivez en couple, il ya de fortes chances que vous empruntiez un chemin autre que cedui de votre partenaire. Une manière pour le commissaire de vous installer dans une bulle afin que vous vous confrontaite à vous-même. Mais, rassurez-vous, s'il y a trois parcours différents, matérialisés par des lignes de couleur au sol, deux d'entre eux finissent par se rejoindre. Ce moment de bascule, la où les deux lignes se retrouvent et où le spectateur passe un cap, correspond à l'installation du Chinois Xu Bing. Espece d'aduptation de l'allégorie de la caverne de Platon, celle-ci se présente d'abord comme un merveilleux paysage traditionnel chinois, montagneux et vaporeux. Mais dès qu'on contourne cette toile de pro-Mais dès qu'on contourne cette toile de projection, le subterfuge apparaît : le motif est en

UNE TRAVERSÉE DE L'ART CONTEMPORAIN
Als sous-sol, le troisième parcours vous dit d'ailleurs traverser des sœuvres qui métamorphosent
l'horizon bouché de cet espace sombre. Une
installation vidéo de Giovanni Ozzola crée
l'illusion que les portes d'un garage s'ouvrent sur
le ciel mageux d'un désert de sable ou sur un
coucher de soleil marin. S'ensuit un long tunnel
où l'artiste JR raconte la vie de migrants débarqués à Ellis Island, face à la statue de la Liberté
à New York. Habitué des fresques photographiques géantes, JR puise cette fois dans les
archives de l'histoire, pour peupler les lieux de
dizaines de silhouettes de migrants, nomades

conjuguer le titre de l'exposition à la première personne du pluriel, passer du «tu» au «nous».



L'installation invite le spectateur à effleurer son proper reflet et, simultanément à faire basculer le miroir. Entre apparation et disparition de soi, entre ce qui'on voit et ce qui se révêle n'être que du vent, l'ouvre réactualise en quelque sorte l'allégorie de la caverne de Platon. 2007, bois, miroir, 217 x 148 x 120 cm.





À VOIR

### DE RIO À SÉOUL, LILLE AU DIAPASON DE VILLES EN PLEINE RENAISSANCE

DE RIO A SEOUL, ILLLE AU DIAPASON DE VILLES EN PLEINE RENAISSANCE

Arenissance-, c'est une myriade de manifestations qui ne se limitent pas aux deux expositions du l'îposal, -îlu dois changer ta vie let -\$Goul, vila, viu le - line p. 1001; Douerture se fait en farfaire au rythme des percussions des écoles de samha de filo, une des
cing gandes villes présentées à Ille, retenues pourc que, sans se rissoude à la torie économique et sociale qu'elles on traversée, cos
colis-mondes metternit en cauve toute l'énegle dont elles signesent, et plus entone, pour s'en sontr. Parm elles, Détoriet de sont braversée, cos
colis-mondes metternit en cauve toute l'énegle dont elles signesent, et plus entone, pour s'en sontr. Parm elles, Détoriet de sons l'ésiles
inventeurs, dès les années 1990, d'une techno industréele investissent la Gare Saint-Sauveur, tands qu'Endnéone noible à la Masion l'élémentaitée de se designes. Au musée de l'Hospoic Contraise, l'occasion est aussi déforte de découvrir la soche
artistique de Phronn Penh, particulièrement soucieuse de réévaluer les années 1970 canobisgennes et celles de la période coloniale.
La tald de Villement-d'Acqué décline, Liu e-them général en tiront tel fil de la perception et la comissance que l'être humanin a de
lui-même et du monde- à traves une exposition d'une soivantaine d'artistes contemporains. Illie3000 version 2015-1016, d'est encore
Michel Condry et aou-clusine de films annateurs- implantée de Roduzuk jusqu'à la mi-novembre, «Tection» ou les innovations dans le
domaine du textile à l'usage des artistes au musée d'Histoire naturelle de Lille., Plus mille autres raisons de se réjouir des temps à venir.

"Tu dois changer ta vie!" Tripostal · avenue Willy Brandt 59000 Lille · 03 20 14 47 60 À LIRE

«Renalssance» du 26 septembre au 17 janvier www.renaissance-lille.com

Tu dois changer ta vie par Peter Sloterdijk · éd. Fayard coll. Pluriel · 672 p. · 12 €

74 Beaux Arts

BEAUX ARTS MAGAZINE Octobre 2015

"Tu dois changer ta vie!" Par Judicaël Lavrador



contoured by the tops of high-rise buildings as he looked up from various street intersections in Hong Kong and New York. He employed color filters to produce monochromatic images, so that the sky, a tinted, empty space, becomes in each picture a play on perspective and urban experience. The shapes of these enclosed skylines were later appropriated by the artist and his longtime collaborator Sara Wong to form cookie cutters, and in the work Making City Cookies, 1999, the duo distributed the sky-shaped biscuits to gallery visitors. The project marked a pivotal point in the development of Leung's practice, as he began experimenting with the ways in which images might be transposed onto latent interfaces capable of generating social relations and narratives. In what seemed like a missed opportunity to capture the work's full potential of social engagement, the Shenzhen presentation, instead of including baked goods being served up, featured City Cookie of Shanghai, 2000-video documentation of Wong eating the treats, along with a display of the custom-made molds.

Also on view were the results of Leung's forays into research-based work, which remain deeply grounded in photography. In these efforts, images function as blueprints and points of departure. "Domestica Invisible," 2004–2007, a series of photographs taken during visits to the homes of some eighty strangers and friends in Hong Kong; Sapporo, Japan; Canberra, Australia; and Plymouth, UK, probes the relationship between bodies and domestic environments in these space-strapped cities. Residing in these images of interior nooks and crannies and anonymous personal effects are uncanny stories that inhabit an inbetween space of familiarity and opacity.

Two conversations recorded during these meetings are featured in Leung's series "Jonathan & Muragishi," 2005–13, which commemorates the artist's late friends the American art writer Jonathan Napack and the Japanese artist Hiroaki Muragishi. Translated, respectively, into Mandarin and English, and dubbed, respectively, by American and Japanese speakers with similar accents, Napack's and Hiroaki's personal anecdotes play from two sound sculptures crafted from items found in their individual homes. In spite of the complex lengths to which Leung went in an effort to recast the voices of the protagonists, his apparent closeness with his subjects brings forth an intimacy not made palpable in "Domestica Invisible." As Leung continues his itinerant search for maneuvering room within Hong Kong's physical and political architectures, it may in fact be his own thoughtful endeavors, and their unforeseen effects, that will pry open cracks where his home city's alternative realities can settle.

-Christina Li

### SYDNEY

### Angelica Mesiti

ANNA SCHWARTZ GALLERY

The chilly elegance of Angelica Mesiti's *The Colour of Saying* (all works 2015) confirms a marked evolution from her formative years in the Sydney art scene of the 2000s. For much of that decade, Mesiti was one of the Kingpins, a four-woman troupe known for its hilarious, high-camp parodies, live and filmed, of heavy-metal, rap, and hip-hop music videos. These works combined low production values, popular-cultural references, and a hyperactive performance aesthetic. Mesiti's recent solo efforts seem a world away from these delirious assaults on taste.

The Colour of Saying is a three-part video installation derived from a live performance the artist arranged at Lilith Performance Studio, in Malmö, Sweden, in March 2015. A blinding white space formed the setting of three separate performances of gestural communication: sign language, hand clapping, and a ballet, of sorts. The only props were a

music stand and an outsize white step-structure used as a stage by the performers. With a team of cinematic specialists, Mesiti translated the live acts into a high-definition digital-video suite, whose total duration is twenty-five minutes.

In the gallery, the separate performances unfolded consecutively on a trio of large, double-sided screens staggered at ground level. *The Silent Choir* shows nine Swedish high-school students, in training to be



sign-language interpreters, signing Ralph Vaughan Williams's choral composition Serenade to Music (1938). A gliding camera amplifies the facial expressions and concentrated gazes of the students, along with the rhythmic rise and fall of their hands. All is hushed, except for sounds such as the rustling of clothing and the occasional meeting of lips as choir members silently mouth lyrics.

Seconds after the choir departs the stage, the same pristine white space reappears on the screen assigned to Clapping Music. The vacant setting is punctuated by the entrance of percussionists Viktor Feuk and Tomas Erlandsson, who enact a syncopated, phase-shifting, clapping routine that echoed throughout the gallery space. Inspired by a 1972 work of the same name by Minimalist-music luminary Steve Reich, Clapping Music deploys human hands as percussive instruments. And as in all of the videos, the performers are configured not so much as psychological presences but as darker-hued bodily forms that delineate space within the white field.

In contrast to the sonic dynamism of the clappers, Swan Song, the third component of the installation, frames low-intensity physical activity. Dressed in smart daywear, veteran ballet dancers Jette Nejman and Rolf Hepp sit side by side on the step sculpture. Although they are equipped with earphones transmitting music from Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake (1875-76), we don't actually hear it until the closing moments of the video. The silence draws our attention to the stiff grace of the dancers' upper-body movements as they perform a hand-marked pas de deux without ever touching. Hand marking is a system of gestural shorthand dancers use to rehearse the shape, tempo, emotion, and spatial dynamics of dance phrases while conserving energy. In recalling the placement of ordinary body movements in formal settings by the pioneers of Minimalist dance, Mesiti has transformed a behind-thescenes activity into a performance stripped of expressive hyperbole or bodily athleticism. This is indeed a swan song of classical ballet as it is normally staged.

The Colour of Saying reimagines the ascetic bliss of a Minimalist aesthetic. This suite of austerely beautiful, meticulously designed video performances is an accomplished addition to Mesiti's ongoing exploration of embodied ways of communicating.

-Toni Ross

SEPTEMBER 2015 405

The Colour of Saying 2015, three-channel

ARTFORUM Septembre 2015



## theguardian

# Angelica Mesiti: the artist who records a choir in song without a single sound

Language marks humans out from the rest of the animal kingdom - but so does the way we use our hands. In her latest work, the Australian artist shows why

### Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore

Friday 8 May 2015 14.37 AEST

In Angelica Mesiti's latest video work a Swedish choir performs Ralph Vaughan Williams' Serenade to Music on a blinding white stage. But there is no sound.

The choir perform silently using nothing but their hands - they sing in sign language. Based on The Merchant of Venice, Vaughan Williams's work sees two characters contemplate the melodies of the planets, a tune inaudible to humans, under the shade of the moon.

The Silent Choir is a voiceless lament, Mesiti's meditation on what it feels like to be shut out - of music and the heavens. "It's about the impossibility of hearing the music of the spheres," says the artist over coffee at the Anna Schwartz Gallery in Sydney where her exhibition The Colour of Saying is now showing. "I thought that would be interesting to explore through a silent language."

Viewers are forced to confront the experience of living in a noiseless world. Colour is derived not from the setting – resplendent in bright white – but from the choir's rich (distinctly physical) human interactions. The Parisian-based Australian artist wants her audience to ask: what other ways, aside from spoken language, do we have to express ourselves?

Mesiti was inspired when she came across some students in a Paris metro station talking in sign language. "They were all gesticulating wildly, these really normal teenagers dressed in fat sneakers and backwards caps," recalls the artist. "I was taken by how expressive their conversation was and how loud it was."

Language marks humans out from the rest of the animal kingdom but so does the unique way we use our fingers and thumbs. Here in this video, hands stand in for speaking. With scant sound, the viewer starts to notice other things: dark nail polish on the fingers of the conductor, the sweep of eyeliner on a "singer", a subtle nod of the head, a widening of the eyes.

Three large screens rotate three separate videos. As The Silent Choir fades, Clapping Music - featuring a couple of percussionists smacking their palms together in an escalating beat - begins. Swan Song, the final piece, sees two elderly ballet dancers pirouette a pas de deux with only their hands.

THE GUARDIAN 8 Mai 2015

"Angelica Mesiti: the artist who records a choir in song without a single sound" Par Clarissa Sebag-Montefiore

## theguardian

All three elements of the exhibition were originally done as a two-hour performance piece in the Swedish city of Malmö. The atmosphere was one of heightened hush and Mesiti felt it important to punctuate that pressure by leading audiences back from "the world of silence ... into the world of sound".

That release came from the percussion of the second video, influenced by Steve Reich's seminal 1972 composition, Clapping Music, which used the human body as an instrument. Low frequency sounds are more easily perceived by the deaf, who can often feel sound waves physically penetrate their bodies even if they can't hear them. She noticed that hearing-impaired audience members jumped when the clapping suddenly erupted.

The 38-year-old Sydneysider is fast is becoming a video artist to watch. Of Italian origin, she now lives in Paris with her artist husband close to the Charlie Hebdo offices. Mesiti remembers the heavily armed gendarmerie around her neighbourhood on the day of the murders but also the sense of solidarity: "I feel like we saw a lot of kindness. After that violent act, there was this feeling on the nights that followed of this gentleness in the street"

In June, Mesiti will show a work at Carriageworks in its group show 24 Frames Per Second about North Africans living in Paris. The piece explores the erotic nature of hair (particularly revealing in cultures which champion the veil) and the Berber tradition of using hair to enter a trance-like state in ceremonial wedding dances.

She is noted for her anthropological approach, using cinema to explore language, voice, and culture. For her last work, The Calling, she travelled to remote parts of Turkey, Greece, and the Canary Islands to document an ancient form of whistling language. Developed as a way to communicate across vast valleys and sky-high mountains, modernity has taken its toll. The Calling is a chronology of one language's reduction from everyday use to tourist attraction and cultural artefact.

Swan Song, by contrast, shows a technique still employed daily by ballet dancers. The two veteran dancers - 70-year-old Jette Nejman and 84-year-old Rolf Hepp - perform a Swan Lake duet using the choreographic shortcut- mapping out moves with their hands not feet - dancers use to conserve energy and learn a piece without straining their bodies.

The pair are listening to Tchaikovsky's majestic score on earphones, so initially they appear to be swaying in silence. Hepp almost pants as he prepares a phantom lift with just his arms, his legs and body still. The piece – at times beautiful, at others desperately sad – taps into the ballerina's flawed pursuit of perfection that gives way to ageing bodies.

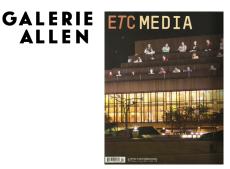
Mesiti found it difficult to find a female former dancer willing to take part; most were too self-conscious about being long past their prime. "It's a really complex thing to get older as a ballet dancer," she sighs. But the show, seen in another way, was a chance for Nejman and Hepp to dance once more, "another chapter for their performing live".

At the gallery, our talk draws to a close with fading claps echoing around the room. Then Mesiti remembers one more thing. In Malmö, a blind dancer stopped next to the live performance of Swan Song, transfixed. Mesiti watched as a sighted friend took his hand to mirror the ballet dancers' movements.

"For me that was such a memorable moment," says the artist. "I was watching someone who has found a way to describe what he is not seeing through a physical action. It looked like they were dancing."

The Colour of Saying is at Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney until 13 June. 24 Frames a Second is at Carriageworks, Sydney from 18 June to 2 August

## **ALLEN**



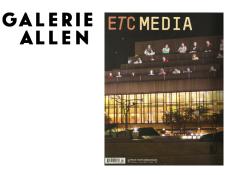
## Angelica Mesiti, Citizens Band... Le sens de ce qui circule entre nous



Entre les 19 juin et 7 septembre derniers, le Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal présentait la première exposition individuelle en Amérique du Nord de l'artiste australienne Angelica Mesiti, dont l'installation immersive Citizens Band. L'œuvre figurait parallèlement à l'exposition La beauté du geste, laquelle soulignait les 50 ans d'existence du Musée tout en mettant en valeur cinquante dons de collectionneurs et d'artistes dans un geste formel de réciprocité initié par John Zeppetelli, directeur général et conservateur en chef du Musée. L'œuvre Citizens Band était placée à l'une des deux portes d'entrée de l'exposition, un contexte fort approprié pour cette première nord-américaine qui offre une mise en lumière hautement sensorielle de ce qui circule entre nous1. Citizens Band, d'Angelica Mesiti, s'est démarquée à l'international et a valu à l'artiste entre autres récompenses, le Prix Anne Landa 2013. Formellement, c'est en pénétrant une salle tamisée que l'on découvre l'installation vidéo haute définition à quatre canaux. L'espace carré que forment les quatre écrans du dispositif incite le visiteur à prendre place en son centre. Selon le cartel, l'œuvre diffuse quatre vidéos montrant chacune un musicien professionnel exilé de sa terre natale, mais rattaché à celleci par sa musique. Le récit à géographie variable de chaque protagoniste illustre de manière sensible leur attachement profond à leur culture, leurs traditions et

leur histoire, le tout participant à la (re)construction identitaire de chacun en terre d'accueil. Seulement, pour peu que l'on prolonge son passage au cœur du dispositif, la proposition se déploie de façon inattendue. Pour débuter, le visiteur doit effectuer une première migration en pénétrant l'espace immersif qu'est Citizens Band. Il doit d'abord permettre à sa vue de s'ajuster à la salle tamisée, puis se tracer un chemin parmi les corps-visiteurs étendus ça et là et faisant face à l'écran qui est actif. À titre de premier mouvement, une femme à la peau noire joue des percussions avec pour unique instrument la surface de l'eau. Le cartel nous apprend qu'il s'agit de la Camerounaise Géraldine Zongo. Elle apparaît seule dans une piscine publique d'un arrondissement du nord de Paris pratiquant l'Akutuk, une technique traditionnelle de percussion aquatique qui lui fut enseignée par sa grand-mère et qui est normalement exécutée en polyphonie par des groupes de femmes de son village natal, afin de célébrer l'importance et la puissance vivifiante de la rivière. À peine avons-nous rejoint Zango dans le plaisir contagieux qu'elle témoigne par le biais de sa gestuelle improbable que l'écran s'éteint. Le second écran émet son signal. Chacun des visiteurs effectue une rapide rotation vers la droite afin de faire face à celui-ci. Nouveau plan large sur un homme quasi aveugle d'origine arabe qui s'accompagne d'un vieux Casio SA-75 dans le métro de Paris. Émouvant isolement porté par son chant raï dont le lyrisme échappe visiblement aux passagers du wagon. Quand l'écran passe au silence cette fois, un sentiment de perte m'étreint. Comme par anticipation, chacun effectue une nouvelle rotation vers la droite pour faire face au prochain écran. J'observe discrètement l'assemblage rotatif qui se forme par le biais des corps qui s'accumulent au cœur du dispositif. Je remarque que la distance de (re)présentation entre l'artiste, l'œuvre et son public se fait de plus en plus relative. À ce point de confluence, il résulte de nos révolutions sur nous-mêmes une sorte de danse impromptue qui évolue en temps réel, voire même une médiation de nos regards subjectifs migrant d'est en ouest. Une pensée éclair pour Pina Bausch me traverse. Cette dernière travaillait à partir du corps de ses danseurs plutôt qu'à partir de formes à (re)produire. Le cours de mes pensées est interrompu par le troisième écran qui s'illumine. Même rotation, même plan large, suivi de la cadence : plan de rapprochement, plan de rapprochement, plan de rapprochement. Un homme d'apparence asiatique est assis à un carrefour devant une vitrine. Entre ses jambes est posé un morin khuur (viole à tête de cheval), instrument à cordes traditionnel de la culture nomade mongole et désigné chef-d'œuvre du Patrimoine oral et immatériel de l'humanité par l'UNESCO. Nous

## **ALLEN**





suivons la suite de glissandos que forme son archet quand, en un balancement du corps, il prend son souffle et entame un chant diaphonique. Il s'agit de Bukhchuluun Ganburged, originaire de Mongolie où il était professeur d'université. Le cartel nous apprend que devant l'impossibilité de trouver du travail à son arrivée en Australie, ce dernier s'est mis à exécuter des chants de gorge au coin des rues de Sydney. L'écran s'éteint sur cette prodigieuse polyphonie.Quatrième et ultime écran. Dans sa voiture immobilisée en retrait, un homme à la peau noire siffle sur un fond de ville animée. Le son qu'il émet rappelle à s'y méprendre le chant d'un oiseau. Sa tête bat la mesure avec de petits balancements, son bras droit est au repos, posé contre la portière où ses doigts rythment une cadence. Il s'agit d'Asim Goreshi, multi-instrumentiste professionnel et chauffeur de taxi à Brisbane. On le surnomme aussi le taxi siffleur. Le cartel nous apprend que siffler le relie avec les grands siffleurs de son Soudan d'origine où, en l'absence d'instrument durant la période laborieuse des récoltes, les gens sifflent à partir de mélodies folkloriques. L'écran s'éteint sur cette dernière phénoménologie du corps-instrument. Au moment où nous nous apprêtons à reprendre le cycle du début, permutation inattendue! Les quatre écrans s'illuminent à l'unisson et émettent de concert une ronde tous azimuts dont la partition puise

parcimonieusement parmi les échantillons sonores de chacun des tableaux précédents. À ce moment précis, le Citizens Band... radio forme un chœur dont chaque canal sollicite notre attention, s'agite à contresens comme pour (re)brasser les cartes avant de reprendre le ieu du destin.

Sous le doigté tout en retenue d'Angelica Mesiti, l'acte de performance transporte. L'espace entre soi et l'Autre devient véhicule expérientiel, les protagonistes émetteurs-récepteurs et le dispositif : espace hétérotopique<sup>2</sup>. Les disciplines qu'elle engage ne sont pas sans rappeler la notion d'œuvre d'art totale3. Par ailleurs, l'artiste décrit comme readymade la matière à partir de laquelle elle procède. Il y circule ce qui s'apparente au langage invisible du don où l'acte de réception, tel un saut mystérieux hors du déterminisme<sup>4</sup>, se doit de continuer à circuler<sup>5</sup>. Comme le suggère Jacqueline Millner, plutôt que de nous apparaître appauvrie, la richesse du monde s'offre comme multiple et nous engage dans un acte de rapprochement où l'artiste semble interroger le monde contemporain par le biais de la transmission : « In the age of globalization, how do we retain agency? How do we practice integrity<sup>6</sup> ». Comme si Angelica Mesiti<sup>7</sup> posait la question: « In today's world, where can transcendance be found » ? Murray Schafer répondrait très certainement par the tuning of the world  $^{\! 8}.$  Il y cite par ailleurs Walt Whitman:

Now I will do nothing but listen..

I hear all sounds running together, combined, fused or following,

Sounds of the city and sounds out of the city, sounds

of the day and night...

Maryse Morin

Issue des champs de la musique, des arts médiatiques ainsi que de l'anthropologie, **Maryse Morin** écrit depuis l'interstice entre l'art et l'anthropologie, et notamment les sensorystudies.org. Site web : MaryseMorin.ca

- 1 Jacques T. Godbout, Ce qui circule entre nous, Seuil, 2009, p. 15-16.
- 2 Michel Foucault, Le corps utopique, Les hétérotopies, Lignes, 2009.

  3 Dans le sens wagnerien du terme.

  4 Jacques T. Godbout, *Le langage du don*, Éditions Fides,
- 1996
- 5 Marcel Mauss, Essai sur le don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques, Presses Universitaires de France, 2007.
  6 Jacqueline Millner, « The more global one is, the more lo-
- cal one desires to become », in Angelica Mesiti, *Being World. Contemporary Visual Art + Culture: Broadsheet*, 42.2, 2013, p. 104-107.
  7 Il vaut la peine de souligner qu'Angelica Mesiti est Austra-
- raut is peine de Souigner qu'Angelica Mesir les Austra-lienne de deuxième génération et que ses parents ont émigré de l'Italie vers l'Australie. Elle partage actuelle-ment sa vie entre Paris et Sydney. Murray Schafer, *The Tuning of the World*, New York, Knopf, 1977, p. 3.

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Why Angelica Mesiti's "Colour of Saying" Will Stop You Dead | BLOUIN ARTINFO

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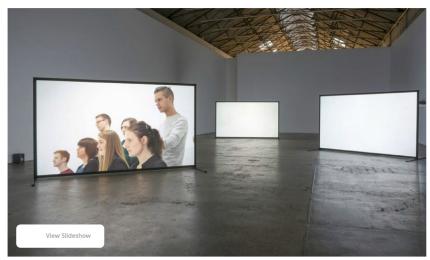
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### Why Angelica Mesiti's "Colour of Saying" Will Stop You Dead









Angelica Mesiti's "The Colour of Saying" (Anna Schwartz)

How much do we really know about human interaction and expression? Although we probably know as much as there is to know about verbal expression in the form of language, what about the many forms of non-verbal expression? Sydney and Paris based video and performance artist Angelic Mesiti's new multi-channel video work "The Colour of Saying," currently on show at Sydney's Anna Schwartz Gallery until June 13, explores the role and significance of non-verbal interactions while at the same time questions how much we encode and decode of what we express through these non-verbal interactions. And it does all this within a multidimensional framework that  $activates \ the \ gallery \ space \ by \ connecting \ it \ the \ design \ of \ the \ stages \ in \ the \ videos, \ enlists \ the \ viewers \ as \ participants \ by \ leading \ them$  $through \ the \ space, and \ establishes \ the \ inactive \ stages \ as \ minimal ist \ abstract \ graphic \ scenes. \ It's \ an \ amazing \ work \ that \ transcends \ time,$ space, and dimension, and in doing so challenges the boundaries of the medium of video.

http://au.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1149327/why-angelica-mesitis-colour-of-saying-will-stop-you-dead#

BLOUINARTINFO 19 Mai, 2015

"Why Angelica Mesiti's "Colour of Saying" Will Stop You Dead" Par Nicholas Forrest



### 5/19/2015 Why Angelica Mesiti's "Colour of Saying" Will Stop You Dead | BLOUIN ARTINFO

"The Colour of Saying" is an interpretation of a live performance that was originally conceived for the Lilith Performance Studio in Malmo, Sweden as a live performance featuring collaborations with a sign language choir, musicians, and dancers. At Anna Schwartz Gallery the work is presented on three double-sided, free-standing screens, which show each of the three videos sequentially, leading viewers from one to another as each performance is screened. One screen shows a silent performance by a sign language choir who sign the choral piece "Serenade To Music" by Ralph Vaughan Williams. On another screen two older ballet dancers use only their hands to "dance" a pas de deux from "Swan Lake," again in silence until near the end. Rupturing the relative silence of the other two performances is a clapping performance by two percussionists.



The basis of the work is what Mesiti describes as "the nature of silence, imagined sound, and unheard songs." Venturing beyond the functionality of human communication, Mesiti exposes, celebrates, and explores the creativity and artistry of human interaction, and in the process initiates an experience that is so unfamiliar that it's almost unexplainable. In fact the experience is so unique that it has the power to stop viewers in their



tracks and command their complete attention. But as well as being an unusual experience, it's also a deeply satisfying one, perhaps because it seems to enact an engagement with the senses on a subconscious level and an activation of the periphery of perception. If you were to imagine human beings' perception of communication as an incomplete picture puzzle, this work has the effect of adding pieces to the puzzle and adding clarity to the picture of human interaction.

"The Colour of Saying" continues Mesiti's ongoing exploration of non-verbal communication, adapted methods of expression, and the diversity of human interaction. The catalyst for the performance was a group of deaf high school students that she encountered at an interchange train station in Paris. According to Mesiti, the typical teenagers were having a conversation in sign language that she says was "gesturally expressive." It was the expressive nature of the conversation that caught her attention and inspired the performance that led to the creation of the video work. Mesiti says that she has wanted to work with sign language for quite a while. "After I did "The Calling' last year which focused on whistled language, this felt like a connection or a progression of thinking about other forms of embodied practice," she says.

Fulfilling Mesiti's desire to work with sign language, the first screen in the space shows the performance by the sign language choir which comprises a group of students who are learning to become sign language interpreters. With this performance Mesiti engages with the senses of sight and sound in a way that challenges the viewer to question how they interact with other people and also how they use and engage the senses of sight and sound, both individually and combined. Although the work is essentially silent (except for the faint sound of rustling clothes), you still feel compelled to stop and listen, to focus your senses and "hear" the work even though there is no sound. Some of the performers appear to be mouthing words as they are directed by the choir leader, which creates the illusion that they are to be able to hear the music, even though they are not listening to anything. It is even possible to imagine the music that the choir is "singing" from the rhythm and movement of their hands as well as the swaying of their bodies. Mesiti explains that the periods of swaying indicate a musical interlude when there are not lyrics to sign. "The swaying is a nice natural reaction to how you interpret the periods when there is nothing to sign so that your body is still responding and explaining that there is music," says Mesiti. "They came up with that because the orchestration is quite sparse. They just naturally started swaying in the music sections."

After the silence of the sign language choir, the sharp noise of the clapping performance is quite startling and rather unnerving. The captivating sound of the primitive, minimalist performance penetrates the gallery space, exposing and emphasizing the effectiveness of the human body as an instrument of expression while also heightening the senses and anchoring the work in the present reality.

http://au.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/1149327/why-angelica-mesitis-colour-of-saying-will-stop-you-dead#

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"Why Angelica Mesiti's "Colour of Saying" Will Stop You Dead" Par Nicholas Forrest



### 5/19/2015 Why Angelica Mesiti's "Colour of Saying" Will Stop You Dead | BLOUIN ARTINFO

According to Mesiti, one of the reasons that she wanted to work with clapping is that for the hearing impaired percussion is the most perceptible part of music because of the way that vibrations reach the body. "As the sound waves enter the body of vibrations that is translated into rhythm by the body," she explains. "I wanted a point where the silence was ruptured by a very loud sound, but at the same time I wanted to maintain the focus on hand gestures. I wanted to basically be able to produce music in a really modest way without introducing any instruments," she adds.

The transition to the ballet performance reveals two veteran ballet dancers, Rolf Hepp and Jette Nejman (83 and 70 respectively) sitting down on the stage. Through these two older dancers, Mesiti celebrates the elegance, grace, and artistry of human interaction as well as the wisdom, beauty, and experience of age. As the performance begins, Hepp and Nejman Swan Lake begin "dancing" a pas de deux, but only using their hands and while remaining seated. This shorthand choreographic language, which is known as "hand marking," is used by dancers when they are injured or trying to conserve energy as a way of memorizing the choreography without having to perform the dance with their entire body. "We translated the choreography of the into the hand marking language for these mature dancers whose bodies are no longer trained up or have the capacity to perform the choreography in its original form, Mesiti explains. "It is a reimagining of the choreography that is adapted to their bodies in the stage that they are in right now. In a sense they are still performing Swan Lake but in a different way." The performance remains silent until near the end when the music that the dancers are listening to is revealed to the viewer.

One of the most interesting elements of "The Colour of Saying" is the aesthetics of the performance spaces and the way they appear on the screens, both during and after each performance. "Although this is a three dimensional space that has a practical purpose as a stage and seating, I liked that the image on the screen was almost bare, imperceptible, and graphic like an abstract image that holds the screen on its own," Mesiti explains. After each of the performances, when the participants leave the space, the image of the space remains on the screen, but it doesn't remain the same. In the absence of the shadows created by the performance, the space takes on the appearance of a minimalist abstract picture. When the performers return they activate the space, transforming it from an abstract to a figurative scene. The change in each space from occupied to vacant and vice versa is so drastic that it seems as though it is an entirely different space.

Reflecting on the development of "The Colour of Saying," Mesiti identifies a moment from one of the performances in Sweden as being particularly memorable. "I had a blind dancer come to one of the performances," she recalls. "It was quite astounding the way he experienced the performance. His friend, who was also a dancer, took his hand and moved it in the air to trace what the dancers were doing as a way of illustrating to him what was happening – what the action was that was taking place. What he was doing felt like a gestural thing that blended in with the rest of the performance." This experience testifies to Mesiti's talent for expressing her intentions, ideas, and concepts with authority, elegance, and clarity. It is with imaginative and experimental works such as "The Colour of Saying" that Mesiti established her international reputation, and through which she continues to justify her status as one of the most innovative and exciting video artists working today.

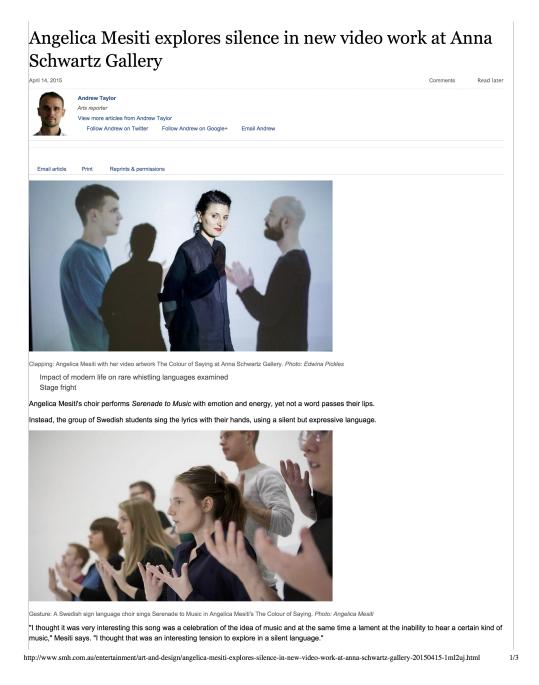
Angelica Mesiti's "The Colour of Saying" is at Anna Schwartz Gallery in Sydney until June 13, 2015

See video documentation of the performance in Sweden below

BLOUINARTINFO 19 Mai, 2015



## The Sydney Morning Herald



THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD 14 Avril 2015

"Angelica Mesiti explores silence in new video work at Anna Schwartz Gallery" Par Andrew Taylor

## The Sydney Morning Herald

5/19/2015

Angelica Mesiti explores silence in new video work at Anna Schwartz Gallery

The sign language choir is one of three acts in Mesiti's latest video work The Colour of Saying, which will be exhibited at Anna Schwartz Gallery from

Later, an elderly man and woman, both former dancers, perform a pas de deux from the ballet Swan Lake, without music, using only their hands.

Mesiti says the duo use a form of choreographic shorthand to act out the piece – a common method employed by dancers to conserve energy and avoid injury.

"In the sign language choir and the dancers it's accessing these alternative methods of imparting an idea but within a body [where] the normal method is not possible," she says.

The third part of Mesiti's exploration of gestural language is anything but quiet as two young men create a percussive racket by clapping their hands.

The Colour of Saying arose out of a commission from the Lilith Performance Studio, based in the Swedish city of Malmo, to create a live performance that explored how people speak and convey meaning with their hands.

One of Australia's most acclaimed video artists, Mesiti says the work relates to her previous work The Calling, which featured whistled language.

"It feels like I'm still working within the realm of performance and embodied performance," she says. "And working with people whose activities might not be considered performance in a traditional sense but framing it and staging it within a context that lets us think about it as performance."

Mesiti's In the Ear of the Tyrant, featuring a woman singing a traditional mourning song in a Sicilian cave, was shown at last year's Biennale of Sydney, while her Citizens Band won the Art Gallery of NSW's Anne Landa Award in 2013.

That video also won the praise of the Herald's art critic John McDonald - no fan of video art.

"Her 21-minute video, Citizens Band, is a cut above everything else in the show," he wrote. "It owes much of its appeal to a very simple structure that features four unusual musical performances, one after another, in the manner of an intimate concert."

Mesiti, who splits her time between Paris and Sydney, edits each work but engages a cinematographer to shoot footage. Her videos are technically

It like the way the language of cinema is very easily and clearly understood by everyone," she says. "You don't need any kind art education to understand the syntax and grammar of cinema.

"I kind of like this language is so familiar and perhaps allows access into the work in a very simple way."

Mesiti's upcoming projects include a work for Carriageworks' 24 Frames Per Second that depicts a French-Algerian dancer performing a dance involving her hair and another work for Doug Aitken's Station to Station: A 30 Day Happening at London's Barbican in June.

Mesiti says the dancer shows the erotic and sensual nature of hair, particularly in cultures where a veil is worn.

"I couldn't help seeing how this north African dance has echoes in Beyonce video clips," she says.

Angelica Mesiti's The Colour of Saying is at Anna Schwartz Gallery from April 17 to June 13.



Shorthand: Mesiti's The Colour of Saying also features two dancers performing Swan Lake. Photo: Angelica

THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD 14 Avril 2015

"Angelica Mesiti explores silence in new video work at Anna Schwartz Gallery" Par Andrew Taylor

## THE **AUSTRALIAN**





WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN

THE AUSTRALIAN 17 Mai 2014

"Lend Mesiti in your ears" Par Christopher Allen





### POETRY AND MUSIC **GIVE US THE** PARADOXICAL SENSE THAT TIME HAS STOPPED

noise, although Mesiti's soundscapes become fascinating in their own right. Later in Euboea we see people communicating over the competing noises of wind farms and car engines.

The other reason for this system that becomes increasingly apparent — more in the Greek episode than the Turkish — is the need to communicate across distances. This is not a means for city people to chat to each other, but for peasants to get messages across the considerable space that may separate one side of a valley from the other, for example, in the kind of environment in which they work and spend their lives. And of course, as Mesiti's work makes very clear, distance is compounded by the competing noises already mentioned.

Under these circumstances, whistling carries much further than speech, and with minimal distortion of the message. And what is remarkable is how effectively that message can be transmitted. In the section already mentioned, in which the miller calls to the boy, we may suspect that the whistle is little more than

a signal that he is expecting and whose sense is conventional. Later, in an episode in which a Greek shepherd whistles to his flock, the range of signals understood by the animals is obviously very limited. It recalls, incidentally, what could be one of the first cases of whistling language recorded in literature, when the Helenistic poet Theoritus has a goatherd call "sitta" to the animals, an onomatopoeia which may stand for a whistled warning.

But there is no doubt the whistling languages Mesiti documents are capable of detailed semantic content—as we see in another episode already mentioned, where a man gives detailed instructions to another to buy some animal feed for him in town and bring it back to his house. In these exchanges, subtitles allow us to read what is going on, and also make it clear that the whistling is not strictly a language in itself but rather a way of encoding a natural language as whistled sounds.

It is in the Canary Islands that we see what may be the future for this strange and no doubt very ancient tradition: evolving into a tourist attraction—the announcement on the ferry is given in Spanish and then whistled, and waiters in a restaurant do demonstrations for tourists—it is also being taught in schools, when of course in past centuries it would have been learnt solely by practice within the community. Its fate is emblematic of much traditional culture today, preserved partly because cultural authenticity is a tourist drawcard and partly from a love of tradition, a sense of memory, and a clining to identity in an increasingly homogenised world.



THE AUSTRALIAN 17 Mai 2014

"Lend Mesiti in your ears" Par Christopher Allen



### THE AGE

## Angelica Mesiti hearkens to whistling language in The Calling at ACMI

Robert Nelson Published: February 12, 2014 - 3:00AM

The Calling
Angelica Mesiti
Australian Centre For The Moving Image
Federation Square Until July 13

Nestled in the hilly regions of north-eastern Turkey lies the remote mountain community of Kuskoy, known as the "village of the birds". This evocative epithet owes its image not to any avian wildlife but to the humans who sound like birds when they whistle to one another across the valleys.

Angelica Mesiti takes us to the rugged terrain with beautiful cinematography and recording. We witness the conversations, subtitled in Turkish and translated into English. The piercing tones of the whistling penetrate the air for large distances and connect the people with prime fidelity.

Mesiti's focus is divided between the fine whistling of the farmers and their geographical circumstances, their work, the way that they harvest tea or figs or sharpen a hatchet to chop wood. It's a largely pre-industrial community, where you milk goats by hand and live by the seasons.

Lyrical and expansive, the work isn't conceived as anthropology but centres poetically on the mystery of language and its development in a bed of metaphor, close to the earth and other creatures.

In her three-channel video, Mesiti visits two other magical places where whistled language persists against the onslaught of globalisation. They're regions where your iPhone would be out of range but also where the locals would consider SMS a redundancy. They whistle and get replies faster than you can type.

It's a language beyond earshot, a way of transforming the spoken tongue so that it goes much further than voice. We make language through a fine combination of sounds from our vocal cords and quiet forms of conditioning them through consonants. This delicate mixture doesn't travel well. Whistling, on the other hand, consists of potent tones that rise and fall with inflections of pitch and length.

Theoretically infinite, the whistling system can translate any complicated pattern that arises in spoken language.

Mesiti first takes us to the Greek island of Evia, where windmills now generate electricity from the formidable ocean blast but farming holds out upon challenging terrain. As an ironic backdrop, the infrastructure of windfarms symbolises the growth of industry and screen media - that potent instrument of globalisation and marketing culture - which threatens to obliterate local traditions such as whistled language.

Passing over the vast rooftop landscape of dense Istanbul, where whistled language also survives, the trilogy concludes in the Canary Islands, where the Spanish language (phonologically similar to Greek) is also whistled. We witness a government program designed to educate young people in the technique, to keep it alive against the same globalisation that kills indigenous languages in Australia.

Whistling isn't a language in its own right but depends upon the conventional pronunciation of words. As an expressive graft of an established language, however, the whistling eerily reveals how close we are to other creatures who communicate by moans or barks or yaps or shrill trilling registers.

It redoubles your wonder about what they share with us, what fabulous intelligence they can convey, as when they

navigate thousands of kilometres to identify their point of departure with perfect accuracy. Because her work is also emphatically visual, Mesiti invites us to have a special sympathy with a life close to the land and to other animals. In one sense, it's primitive, but in the sense that language itself is primitive: actually, it's the most sophisticated thing that we have.

Artists have long relished this paradox, that the greatest magic inheres in the simplest intelligence.

THE AGE 12 Février 2014

"Angelica Mesiti hearkens to whistling language in The Calling at ACMI" Par Robert Nelson

# the music of language

### REBECCA COATES

There's a moment in Angelica Mesiti's four channel video installation Citizens Band (2012) when you can almost watch audience members become seduced. The figure of the blind accordionist playing and singing in the Paris Metro is hauntingly beautiful, and the two other male musicians are meditatively poetic as, in moody hues, they respectively play a Chinese cello and whistle. But it is the combination of colour, movement and musical sound created by the young African woman, as she drums the water surface standing waist deep in the shallow end of a Parisian pool, which really brings the viewer to a halt. I've watched this process now a number of times: at the work's premiere as part of NEW12 at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art; as the winner of the Art Gallery of New South Wales' 2013 Anne Landa Award for video and new media: and most recently as part of the 13th Istanbul Biennial, Mom am I Barbarian? (2013). As this list attests, the work has attracted widespread interest locally and internationally.

What is it about Mesiti's immersive. cinematic-quality installations that captivates audiences, collectors and curators? Mesiti suggests she wanted to explore the cultural histories carried by and expressed through music in Citizens Band (2012). This work does just that, but there is clearly more that tantalises audiences to stay much longer than the standard exhibition stop before a video work - typically two to three minutes unless there's good seating and their legs are tired. Even in video-laden biennial contexts, viewers consistently stayed for more than the full cycle. In Citizens Band, Mesiti captures the heightened states of rapture and performance of these everyday musicians. Arguably, her work enables audiences to share this internalised state—as if the musical rhythms pass into and via their own physical bodies, and the audiences become part of the visceral experience of making a musically transcendent sound.

Mesiti consistently explores the emotional and physical states of transformative sound and rapture. Rapture (silent anthem) (2009), a high definition video of approximately ten minutes, captures close-up details of exquisite youthe' faces and expressions. We are unclear what has generated this state. It could be a religious experience—Christian youths attracted to the gospel of a charismatic preacher—or more possibly, celebrity and musical cult idolatry at a rock concert. All that is missing is the accompanying sound: instead, the massed voices surging in an ecstasy of transformative sounds must be conjured in each viewer's head, as each scripts his or her own soundtrack.

Presented at the 2014 Biennale of

Sydney: You Imagine What you Desire, Mesiti's recent video installation, In the Ear of the Tyrant (2013-14), again explored the transformative power of the human voice. It was inspired by songs of lamentation from southern Italy and the women whom a community traditionally employed to sing songs of mourning for the death of one of their own. It has a particular resonance for the artist, whose own origins hark from the Italian South. Mesiti re-interprets the grieving ritual in collaboration with the Italian vocalist Enza Pagliara. The performance is filmed in the flawless acoustics of an ancient limestone cave—known as the Ear of Dionysius-near the Sicilian city of Syracuse. A series of highly charged and emotive closeups and panoramas of the singer in this extraordinary, natural cathedral-like space lured many in the audience into a reverential swoon. In its use of musical traditions and the power of the human voice, it was reminiscent of Iranian artist Shirin Neshat's cinematic video installations some fifteen years earlier, shown to critical acclaim at the Venice Biennale. Turbulent (1998), Neshat's two-screen video installation contrasting the voices and performances of male and female Iranian singers became a powerful musical metaphor for gender and cultural

difference examined through the traditions of ancient Persian music and poetry. The viewer became an active part of the experience located between opposite screens featuring the two singers as they sang the public and private songs of a musical tradition in a fundamentalist State. In the Ear of the Tyrant did not actively co-opt viewers in the same way. Instead, audience members were spectators to a highly charged drama played beneath a geological proscenium arch. The video work's pathos was a little like a bel canto vibrato: without a very deft touch, it can be light on subtlety and appear overblown.

The Calling (2014), Mesiti's most recent video installation, sees her returning to a quieter, more measured and nuanced exploration of cultural histories expressed in musical form. It reflects on a globalised world encroaching on ancient traditions and linguistic customs. Its subject is the whistling languages of three cultures, Kuskoy (Turkey), Antia (Greece) and La Gomera (the Canary Islands). It examines the ongoing survival and usage of these ancient traditions of language and sound in the face of globalisation, technological progress and enviror mental flux. Interest in the whistling language developed from Mesiti's earlier work Citizens Band, in which one of the four featured musicians whistled as his instrument of choice. Whereas that work was about music making, and the way that music transcends cultural difference and specificity of race, *The Calling* is about broadly dispersed languages sharing a feature now almost lost.

Popular in linguistic research in the 1960s, the study of whistling languages and other less common forms of communication now seems to be relegated to an obscure cultural rarity—occasionally profiled on National Geographic's Discovery Channel on cable TV, programmed late at night. As a form of communication, however, it captures our imagination. It's at odds with

CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ART+CULTURE BROADSHEET MAGAZINE

"The Music of Language" Par Rebecca Coates

## **C A C S A**

### THE MUSIC OF LANGUAGE



our technologically assisted channels that keep us all tied to our electronic devices, and eternally linked. Mesiti's poetic video reveals this disparity. As indigenous languages disappear and many others are anglicised through neologisms, capturing the essence of a language—quite possibly without notation or written form—from a visual art perspective rather than an anthropological position seems timely.

Above and opposite:
Angelica Mesiti
The Calling (video stills), 2013-14
Photos courtesy the artist
and Anna Schwarzz Gallery, Melbourne and Sydney

Mesiti's The Calling is the inaugural Ian Potter Moving Image Commission, a collaboration between The Ian Potter Cultural Trust and the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI). The commission aims to allow a mid-career artist to produce an ambitious new work, which demonstrates a major development or shift in their practice. Mesit talks about the impact of this commission on her working methodology in her interview with Amita Kirpalani for the exhibition room brochure. She notes that it allowed her to slow down her working process, developing the work over a full year. She was able to take an observational approach when visiting the

locations and communities for the first time, slowly developing an understanding of how the language was used in its specific cultural and geographic terrain. Filming and performances on a second visit were thus less formal than in many of Mesiti's earlier works. Feedback from the communities was integral to the process, and this ensured that the filming of everyday actions and activities, though scripted, appeared natural and unstaged.

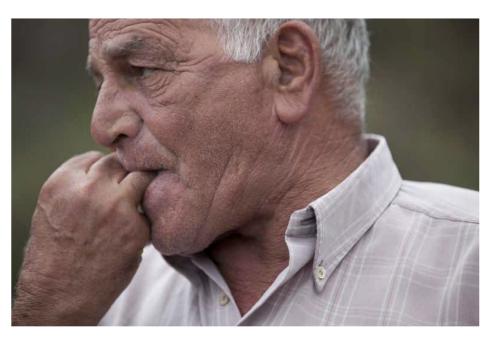
In each of these locations, the whistling language is used for different purposes and captured in different ways. The film starts in Istanbul, a city that straddles East and West, with swallows swooping over

CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ART+CULTURE BROADSHEET MAGAZINE 2014

"The Music of Language" Par Rebecca Coates

## $\mathbf{C} \mathbf{A} \mathbf{C} \mathbf{S} \mathbf{A}$

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rooftops as a lone figure is silhouetted against an pink-hued sky. The sounds of traffic, call to prayer, and birdcalls create a muted music of everyday noise. On moving to Kuskoy, a remote mountain village in Turkey's mountainous parts, the camera lingers on the sur-suration of water over pebbles, or the threshing of corn from a pre-industrial past. We see the women picking tea tips, gathering them into coloured, cloth-bound bundles, and waiting for the truck to arrive to take away this seasonal crop. These people are not trained actors: they go about their daily life. Whistling in this context is used as a language to alert those in the fields to everyday events—to come in for lunch, or that the truck has arrived. The language is active, and continues to be passed down from one generation to the next. In the Greek island of Antia, however, the whistling language has all but disappeared. The population is aging.

younger generations have disappeared to capital cities, and global industries and new technologies have arrived. Electricity pylons contrast with goats, as we are alerted to their movements via the gentle ringing of their bells, or the sound of a bell tolling from an Orthodox church. The slow whomp-whomp of a wind-farm's turning blades contrasts with the quiet sounds and rocky terrain of the once aericultural community.

agricultural community.

In the Canary Islands, the language has been resurrected. Again, Mesiti focuses on small details that are easily overlooked — the tracery of a spider-web woven between cactus spikes, as if loats gently in the breeze. A grandfather whistles across a crevases to his grandson on the side of a road, who responds in words. The whistling language, for this younger generation, is now part of a school curriculum that differentiates their culture from other parts

of the globe. Government support via education programs ensures that the language does not completely disappear. Instead, it becomes a product of the economics of conservation and tourism, a curiosity or sideshow for hungry visitors searching for something unusual, artisan and 'new'.

Mesiti's video installations may have explored notions of transcendence and the performativity of musical language in its various forms. The very success of *The Calling* lies both in its exploration of language, music and different cultures and the everyday, and once again, in what Mesiti leaves unsaid.

Note
Angelica Mesiti interview with Charlotte Day, curator
Anne Landa Award for video and new media 2013, AGNSW,
http://www.artgailery.nsw.gov.au/channel/clip/480/

CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ART+CULTURE BROADSHEET MAGAZINE 2014

"The Music of Language" Par Rebecca Coates

### VAULT



# FRAGMENTS

### ANGELICA MESITI'S POETIC VIDEO **WORKS EMBRACE AND SUBVERT** THE CINEMATIC DEVICE

isn't one for narrative.
"You know what?" she grins. "I often
get really bored in films because I really
don't care about the plot." A pause.
"I don't know if you've seen The Master,
P.T. Anderson's recent film with Joaquin
Phoenix and Philis Seymour Hoffman,
but it was criticised because it didn't
go anywhere and I just loved it for
that reason.

"It just generated a world and an atmosphere and you understood the logic."

It may seem a curious assertion for It may seem a curious assertion for someone whose works oclosely resembles the stylistic cues and archetypes of the cinematic form, but the 36-year-old's output - including her acclaimed four-channell work, *CitZens Band*, which proved the highlight of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art's (ACCA) NEWT2 exhibition - retracts and repositions film's defining signposts and devices as much as it embraces them.

embraces them.

"I feel very comfortable with the medium and feel very comfortable as a visual artist coming at the medium from somewhere with slightly different intentions," offers Mesiti, who spends most of the year in Paris, where she lives with her partner. "I like the fact that there's this craft that has these rules and conventions that apply to it, which I feel that I understand and can bend a little bit."

little bit."

It's a sentiment that resonates throughout today's conversation, which plays out 10 flors above Sydney's CBD in a friend's temporary apartment, which has become something of a transitory studio for Mesit while home in Sydney after being awarded the \$100,000 inaugural lan Potter Foundation Moving Image Commission developed in conjunction with the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMIS). Her research-based practice esposses cincema's visual language, all the while eschewing its want for linearity. "I'm deavn in image-making and

escnewing its want for linearity.
"I'm drawn to image-making and
documentation more than these
conventional narrative structures," she
says. "I'm interested in exploring other
ways of viewers interacting with moving
image work, rather than just he passive
involvement of the cineme."

In many ways, Mesiti's position should come as little surprise. Her wider body of work has nimbly diverged across film, notions of performance and personal

It's like an admission of guilt, complete with coy smile and whispered cadence, a good hour into our conversation. Nonetheless, it articulates the aesthetic and philosophical positioning of Angelica Hestifs distinctly cinematic and practice in the most pragmatic matter-of-fact sit distinctly cinematic and practice in the most pragmatic matter-of-fact terms. Put simply, she isn't one for narrative she isn't one for narrative with the form of practice in the most pragmatic matter-of-fact terms. Put simply, she isn't one for narrative she isn't one for narrative she isn't one for narrative. The properties of the propert

and languages of documentary, cinema and contemporary art.

Her background echoes such a varied approach. Growing up in Sydney, she longed to become a professional dancer throughout her teens and was awarded a scholarship to study contemporary dance at London's prestigious Laban Centre on graduating high school. But it wasn't to be, with the gruelling experience proving to Mesiti that she wasn't "obsessed enough" to become a dancer." I was also really interested in going to university and visual art was the other areal iwas drawn to, she recalls." It fell like a much broader world than the world of dance at that time for me."

She continued to work with different elements of the statement of the properties of the properties of the statement of the properties. The experiment of their properties of the properties

She continued to work with different She continued to work with different elements of performance whilst studying at Sydney's College of Fine Arts (COFA), collaborating with a Butch choreographer and developing various works. "If eal like I've really had a long relationship with performance," she says. "I've always been interested in that form of expression in some way."

form of expression in some way."

It was while at COFA that Mesit fell in with a group of artists who would go on to found the now infamous live-in warehouse and artist-run initiative imperial Slacks in Surry Hills. Aside from she and her Kingpins collaborators, the likes of Shaun Olekwell. Seen of Shaun Olekwell. Seen of Shaun Olekwell. Seen of Shaun Cleakwell. Seen o

terms of an odd kind of "skill-sharing".

"I was up there onstage in the gold bikin," she laughs, referring to their 2004 work Mensclub Versus Remix, in which Mesti and Act all the work of the share o

maybe it's a bit more peripheral or something."
It's an idea that manifests in Citizens Bant to summing effect. Comprising four inward-facing screens arranged in square formation, the piece captures the musical performances of four immigrant protagonists, which prove strikingly unconventional in the context of their adopted homelands. While vision-impaired Algerian songwriter Mohammad Lamourie performs on the Paris metro with his cheap, hapshazerdily paped-together keyboard, Cameroonian Geraldine Zongo uses a Paris public pool unleash a barrage of water percussion. The piece also works its way to Australia, capturing Mongolian throat singer Bukhtchuluun Gamburged playing a traditional stringed instrument aum. Sydney and Sudanese taxi driver Asim Gersehi whisting a startilingly tender and complex melody in the front seat of his Brisbane cab.

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VAULT MAGAZINE Avril 2013

"Fragments of cinema" Par Dan Rule

### VAULT





rtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney

The work, which found its genesis when Mesiti witnessed Lamourie busking on her metro carriage as she travelled home one day, strikes a rere balance between intimacy and compelity – a humanist cinematic mode and an evocative subtlety – that tips it over the "kinfle-edge" and into the realm of contemporary art, rather than a more sentimental fillinic mode. The personal intensity of the performances and cultural specificity of their cadences teases out the disparity of cultural tradition and contemporary unbreval, joy and tragedy echoing with them. "I really wanted to explore musics as this "I really wanted to explore musics as this "And for Mesiti, he widely recognised vernacular and the widely recognised vernacular and the substances are the substances and the substances are the substances and the substances are the su

upheaval, joy and tragedy echoing with them.

"really wanted to explore musics as this incredible way of translating or retaining cultural connections," says Mesiti.

Nonetheless, the work exists well outside of the narrative impulse. "I don't feel like I'm a storyteller," she says. "When I think about my work and what I'm interested in doing, it's generating an accumulative meaning, rather than this idea of a linear building up of logic.

'(don't hink we think in that way so much

or a linear building up of logic.

"I don't think we think in that way so much anymore, we don't live in a linear kind of world. We're receiving information in so much more of a collaged kind of way. I kind of makes more sense that fillmaking is changing to reflect that too."

The lan Potter Foundation recommendation

The Ian Potter Foundation commission, which will be presented at ACMI in 2014, gestures toward some similar formal and thematic modes.

or contemporary lite."

And for Mesiti, the widely recognised vernacular of cinema is the most effective platform from which to communicate such ideas, narrative or no. "Cinema offers a language that is incredibly familiar to a very broad audience and it's immediately understandable, and I think that that's a really rich place to communicate from," she pauses, considering the statement for a moment.

I feal like annea.

Angelica Mesiti's work shows as part of We used to talk about love – Balnaves contemporary; photomedia at the Art Gallery of New South Wales until April 21.
Angelica Mesiti is represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery, Sydney.

VAULT MAGAZINE Avril 2013

"Fragments of cinema" Par Dan Rule



**BIENNALE SHARJAH** 

LE QUOTIDIEN DE L'ART / NUMÉRO 344 / VENDREDI 22 MARS 2013



### Une Biennale de Sharjah tout en musicalité

PAR ROXANA AZIMI

Si la dernière édition de la Biennale de Sharjah en 2011, aux Émirats arabes unis, a pu sembler confuse voire creuse, plombée de surcroît par une navrante affaire de censure ayant précipité la démission de l'ancien directeur artistique Jack Persekian, le nouveau cru baptisé « Re:emerge Towards a Cultural Cartography » offre une partition autrement plus maîtrisée, mais aussi plus roborative dans un dédale de vieilles maisons, d'une banque désaffectée et de cinq white cubes fraîchement construits. En apparence, la curatrice japonaise Yuko Hasegawa semble déminer toute controverse en s'appuyant sur le motif de la cour intérieure, récurrent dans l'architecture islamique. Les installations en extérieur de SANAA, Superflex ou Ernesto Neto sont d'ailleurs des plus inoffensives. Ne vous y méprenez pas. Malgré cette entrée en matière très soft, la commissaire offre un discours tendu autour des questions d'identité, d'hybridation et de familiarité. C'est une savante bande son qui apparaît au final comme le fil rouge reliant tous les territoires convoqués. La musique actionne notre mémoire dans la grande installation sonore  $\textit{Peace is not what you believe} \ \text{du groupe marocain Kamarstudios},$ où des sons à la fois familiers et distants bourdonnent dans nos oreilles, nous mettant presque en condition pour le reste du voyage. Car c'est bien d'un périple qu'il s'agit avec le triptyque vidéo Session de Nevin Aladag, tourné à Sharjah et dans ses environs. Sable, vent et végétations participent d'une étrange polyphonie en activant des instruments à percussion indien, africain ou arabe. L'idée d'hybridation est poussée à son extrême dans une autre vidéo de cette artiste, Famille Tezcan, où les membres d'une famille allemande d'origine turque improvisent des chorégraphies mêlant danse traditionnelle orientale et hip hop américain. La métaphore se file dans l'installation vidéo Citizens Band d'Angelica Mesiti, où exil et immigration font muter les musiques traditionnelles. La question du déplacement revêt une dimension autrement plus tragique dans le travail du Libanais Marwan Rechmaoui. Celuici a reproduit des cartes réalisées par les habitants de cinq camps palestiniens au Liban. On y lit la topographie des camps, mais aussi les goûts personnels des réfugiés habituellement traités en masse abstraite et silencieuse. Le film Dilbar d'Apichatpong Weerasethakul et Chai Siri prend aussi le parti pris si ce n'est de l'évasion, du moins du rêve avec le portrait d'un immigré bangladeshi avant œuvré à la construction des nouveaux espaces de la Sharjah Art Foundation. Les hallucinations contaminent peu à peu sa vie comateuse régie entre le campdortoir et le chantier.

La translation se solde par une inversion de contexte dans Dictums, relique d'une performance réalisée par Wael Shawky lors du vernissage. L'artiste égyptien avait convié 32 chanteurs



Sara Rahbar, Texas Flower Flag #22, 2008. Photo: D. R.

et musiciens pakistanais à interpréter sur le mode d'un chant soufi des fragments d'anciennes conférences de presse de la Biennale de Sharjah. Le jargon de l'art contemporain serait-il soluble dans un chant urdu ? Sans doute pour les visiteurs qui en ignorent le livret et qui s'abandonnent délicieusement à la mélopée! L'effet d'entraînement connaît ses limites. Le passage d'une rive à l'autre en petit bateau à moteur pour goûter une glace au sel ou au poivre, proposé par l'artiste japonais Shimabuku, nous laisse de marbre. Cette excursion est-elle censée favoriser une porosité avec les usagers réguliers de ces embarcations ? Si tel est le but, le résultat est raté, car autochtones et art setters se jaugent avec une certaine gêne. Étanches les uns aux autres, les premiers restent des inconnus, les seconds des intrus. De cette plate expérience qui ne parvient ni à déclencher une connivence avec la population locale ni à offrir une saine distance avec l'art au profit du quotidien, il ne reste au final que le ronronnement du moteur. Le son, encore et toujours.

11<sup>E</sup> BIENNALE DE SHARJAH, jusqu'au 13 mai, différents lieux, Sharjah, www.sharjahart.org

LE QUOTIDIEN DE L'ART March 2013

"Une biennale de Sharjah toute en musicalité" Par Roxana Aximi

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