

# SUB12



**THE SUBSTATION**

CENTRE FOR ART & CULTURE

**23 AUG—16 SEPT**  
STEVEN ASQUITH  
SANJA PAHOKI  
SIMON PERICICH  
MASATO TAKASAKA

## **CURATOR'S FOREWORD**

**SUB12 is presented annually in partnership with Hobsons Bay City Council who established the project in 2009 as a major initiative to present contemporary art in Melbourne's West.**

Under brief 'Twelve Artists, Twelve Weeks, Twelve Ambitious New Works' I approached SUB12 as an evolutionary show that tracks current interesting movements in contemporary art practice. Over three months we experience the work of twelve leading contemporary artists in three exhibitions. This third installment features grand installations by Steven Asquith, Sanja Pahoki, Simon Pericich and Masato Takasaka that explore ideas of language, materiality and autobiography. Thank you to Steven, Sanja, Simon and Masato for a sensational final chapter!

**Jessica Bridgfoot**

Presenting Partner



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## STEVEN ASQUITH

### LIVES AND WORKS MELBOURNE

Asquith completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts at RMIT in 2000. Solo exhibitions include *Ghosts of the thrill*, Utopian Slumps, Melbourne, 2011; *Storm Concepts*, Utopian Slumps, Melbourne, 2010; *New Paintings*, Don't Come, Melbourne, 2009; *Steven Asquith*, The Ship Gallery, London, 2005; and *Experiencing Technical Difficulties*, RMIT First Site Gallery, Melbourne, 1999. Selected group exhibitions include *SUB12*, Substation, 2012; *Paul Guest Prize*, Bendigo Art Gallery, 2012; *Funeral Songs* curated by Daniel Mudie Cunningham, MONA, Hobart, 2012; *Substation Prize*, Substation, Melbourne, 2011; *Signal 8*, The Space, Cat St Gallery Hong Kong, 2011; *Detours through Abstraction*, Curated by Alex Baker Senior Curator of Contemporary Art, National Gallery of Victoria at ARTSPROJECTS, 2011; *Sydney Story Factory*, Syndicate, Sydney, 2011; *Artists for Kids Culture*, Brightspace, St. Kilda, Melbourne, 2011; *David Band Fundraiser*, Duetscher & Hackett, 2011; *Freehand: recent Australian drawing*, curated by Linda Michael, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2010-11; *Cut 'N' Paste*, Peleton, Sydney, 2007; *Pretty Little Things*, The Ship Gallery, London, 2003; *First Site*, Sahara, 1998. Asquith was a participant in an international exchange to New York in 2000 associated with the Exit Art space. He has lived and worked in New York and London including a position at Gagosian Gallery from 2001 to 2007. He established The Ship Gallery, an artist-run space in London with Dick Evans in 2003 and was one of the Founding Directors of Block Projects, Melbourne.

Installation image: *Violet Orchid Fallout Icon* 2012, Wallpaper + enamel paint; Image inset: installation of paintings, spray paint acrylic, acrylic ink and chrome on canvas, courtesy, Utopian Slumps, Melbourne





## **SANJA PAHOKI**

### **LIVES AND WORKS MELBOURNE**

Sanja Pahoki was born in Osijek, Croatia and migrated to Melbourne, Australia in the early 1970s. Sanja has a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Psychology and Philosophy. In 2000 Sanja graduated with a BFA (Honours) from the Victorian College of the Arts. In 2006, Sanja completed a MFA from the VCA and received an Australian Postgraduate Award during her candidacy. Her work has been exhibited both nationally (ACCA @ Mirka at Tolarno Hotel, Heidi Museum of Modern Art, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, Perth Institute of Contemporary Art, Plimsoll Gallery in Hobart, Australian Centre for Photography in Sydney, Queensland University of Technology and internationally (Japan, Shanghai, Vienna, Berlin, Paris and Rotterdam). Sanja was a committee member of Kings Artist Run Initiative and a studio artist at Gertrude Contemporary Artist Space. In 2008 Sanja attended a studio residency in Reykjavik, Iceland and in 2010 a 3-month OZCO residency in Helsinki. She works part-time as a lecturer in Photography at the VCA. Sanja Pahoki is represented by Sarah Scout, Melbourne.

Images: *Nothing Something Something Somethink*, 2012, and *LOL Neon*, 2012, courtesy Sarah Scout Gallery, Melbourne.



**“Sometimes reality is too complex for oral communication. But legend embodies it in a form which enables it to spread all over the world” – Alphavile, *une étrange aventure de Lemmy Caution* (1965)**

I remember that hangman game. One player thinks of a word which is represented by a row of dashes. The other player tries to guess it by suggesting letters. For each incorrect guess an element of the hangman diagram is drawn either until the picture is complete or the word is guessed correctly. The game flashes in neon, lighting up Sanja Pahoki's darkened cavernous space. The word is not guessed and the stick figure man is condemned. But who would have guessed the word is LOL? Is the abbreviation for 'laugh out loud' allowed in this game? Well, yes. It's a word commonly used in textual/digital forms of communication such as Facebook and SMS, and now, since 2011 LOL is even included in the Oxford Dictionary. The dictionary's example of usage; *"I love how you said 'coffee is not my cup of tea'. LOL!"*.

**Snaja Pahoki's** minimalist neon-text lights up the corridor, the in-between space that I pass through as I move on to the next artist's work. Existential issues arise. Nothing is non-existence. Nothing is the absence of anything of significance. Nothing becomes something. But I don't know what that something is. Something becomes something when it mispronounced. The word remains comprehensible but enters a new space where things break apart a little. A feeling of darkness lingers after loosing the hangman game. I hope that something isn't anything I should be really concerned about.

For anyone who is familiar with **Masato Takasaka's** practice, his installation at SUB12 will be instantly recognisable. In his sculptural assemblages, Takasaka

reconfigures his own earlier artworks, opening up new directions and limitless possibilities for future arrangements, in what can be seen as one ongoing work; *Propositional Model for the Everything Always Already-made Wannabe Studio of the Masatoteatures Museum of Found Refractions 1994-2012*.

Takasaka revisits a large collection of objects, materials and parts kept in his studio. Through a self-referential process of selecting, piling, combining and arranging a new multi-faceted neo-formalist landscape takes shape. There are clear references to architecture, with structures and arrangements often mimicking urban forms. Familiar combinations surface as many elements can be seen reemerging from his previous exhibitions. But Takasaka's work takes on a distinctly new form each time it's re-constructed. Nothing is fixed. In this iteration the relationship between the idea of development or progress and mass culture becomes apparent. The take-away sushi trays piled on top of one another quite literally take the form of a multi-story car park. The packaging from Apple products conjure a brand at the forefront of new developments or ideas.

My eyes dart around the room, following the stripes and grid like patterns. Mass consumer items compete for my attention. Where to look first; at the two pipe-smoking mustached-men glistening on Suntory Boss Coffee cans, or at the hologram soccer-ball party-cups? For the viewer with a slightly longer attention span Takasaka's own drawings can be found scrunched or stuck to the side

of the wooden panels. In a consumer society which is constantly in a state of flux, Takasaka returns to what's already in storage as an antidote. In his words, "I like my old stuff better than your new stuff".

**Steven Asquith's** striking wall paper work dominates the gallery space and introduces us to a world where gesture and traditional mark-making are used to formulate a transcendent view of the contemporary landscape. Drawing inspiration from modernist ideas in abstraction and referencing a broader western history of painting, this work carries Asquith's unique visual language, however it represents a shift both in size and materials qualities for the artist. The paste-up covers the entire wall space, giving a unique monumental presence. The black and white printed paper provided a starting point for the work. The pink circles were painted on top by the artist in situ, drips allowed to flow freely down the paper; bringing him closer to street art where this level of immediacy is a requirement. But for Asquith engaging with the practice of street art is less important than the adoption of modern materials to traverse visual cultures.

Hanging upstairs is a series of four new paintings. Repeating patterns of raindrops and Posca rings are disrupted by sprayed swirls of colour. Circles of paint are permitted to drip unreservedly. But now, almost like pairs of eyes, they look out from a background transformed by culture – one of smart phones and Smart cars. With titles such as *Lazer Caged Pets* and *Dub-fighter* these works are a playful reflection on the current technological and socio-political climate.

Looking into the dark room containing **Simon Pericich's** work, I knew it was going to take some courage on my part to go inside. The foreboding music and complete darkness I was confronted with made me feel like I was entering a dystopic parallel-universe from which I might never return. Alone, sitting on a couch that was far from comfortable, my eyes slowly adjusted and fixed upon an alien like figure encased in resin, with mist escaping out below. This figure, complete with human hair and glitter powder is actually a cast of the artists whole body made from latex, and then encased in resin to preserve it for eternity. Often surprisingly humorous, Pericich's work is an all too dark glimpse at a society where our own narcissistic capitalist pursuits are at the disservice of the environment. It's like a premonition for a future that exists not too far in the distance. But there is still hope.

While radically diverse, the work of these four artists gives us something to hold onto amongst all the chaos. Nothing Something Something Somethink. At least we've got somethink.

**Alison Lasek 2012**





## **SIMON PERICICH**

### **LIVES AND WORKS MELBOURNE**

Simon Pericich received a Bachelor of Fine Art (sculpture) from the Curtin University in 2002 and an Honours in Fine Arts in 2004 from the Slade School of Fine Art, London on a prestigious Samstag scholarship. He completed a Masters of Visual Art at the Victoria College of the Arts in 2006. Following his studies, he completed residencies at Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces, as well as internationally in Tokyo, Berlin, Glasgow, Singapore and Manilla. Simon has exhibited in a truck load of local and international shows and has been the recipient of a number of awards, including a Qantas Travelling Scholarship. Simon's practice has been showcased in Art Collector Australia magazine and on the ABC's Sunday Arts Program. He is currently the Curator at First Site Gallery, RMIT.

Image: *You Have Been Me* 2011 72kg of clear resin cast into a convex ellipse, black dye, graphite powder, mirror foil, human hair, latex, glitter powder, aluminum, water atomizer, gloss paint.



## MASATO TAKASAKA LIVES AND WORKS MELBOURNE

Masato Takasaka completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) at the Victorian College of the Arts in 1999 and is currently a PhD candidate at Monash University. Takasaka was a Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces studio resident in 2002 and in 2009 Takasaka was awarded the Australian Postgraduate Award *ALMOST EVERYTHING ALL AT ONCE, TWICE, THREE TIMES (In Four Parts...)*, Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne 2012, *Post-Structural Jam (Shut Up! We know you can play!...)*, Metro Arts, Brisbane 2010 and Y3K Gallery, Melbourne 2009; *From the edge of insanity*, SNO Contemporary Art Projects, Sydney, 2008. Recent group exhibitions include *NETWORKS (cells and silos)*, Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne, 2011; *New Psychedelia*, The University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane, 2011; *Post-logical Form*, Contemporary Art Centre of South Australia, Adelaide, 2011; *READY OR NOT IT'S 2010*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California, 2010; *Cubism and Australian Art*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2010. As part of the artists' group Inverted Topology he was included in *+ Plus Factors*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 2006; at SNO, Sydney, 2007; and *Minus Space* at PS1 Contemporary Art Centre, New York, 2009.

Images: *Propositional Model for the Everything Always Already-made Wannabe Studio of the Masatotectures Museum of Found Refractions 1994-2012 instigating the (r)eternal return to productopia-sub12 remix* 2012, mixed media, of found objects



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Exhibition installation  
photography by Andrew Curtis

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SIMON PERICICH  
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