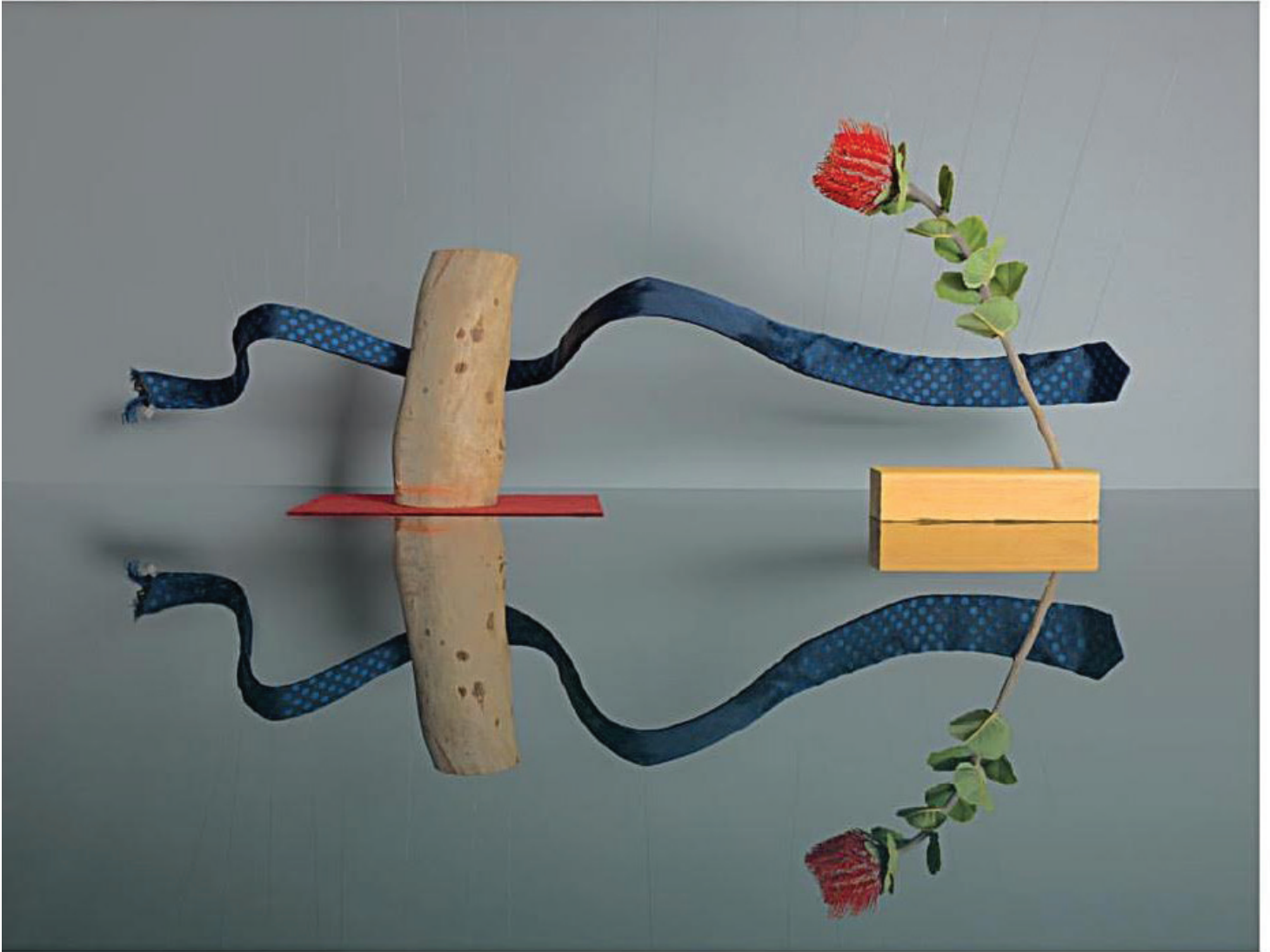


# NIKOS PANTAZOPOULOS



Nik Pantazopoulos, Props II, Inkjet print, 1500mm x 1000mm (2016). Image courtesy of the artist.

(Trying to explain Hal Fosters critique on the failure of minimalism to my brother with a blue Dior tie, fishing line a tree trunk a piece of maroon felt a yellow block of wood and a banksia coccinea whilst two boys were kissing on the news.)

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Contemporary Art on the Road is a unique program that provides access to artists and art experts from some of Melbourne's leading art institutions. This resource was created to introduce teachers to a range of hands-on, expertly designed strategies and resources for teaching contemporary art in their classroom.



## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Nik Pantazopoulos completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts Photography at the Victorian College of the Arts, Melbourne in 1998, Honours Sculpture RMIT, Masters of Fine Art at Goldsmiths University, London and a PhD in Art, Design and Architecture at Monash University in 2013. Pantazopoulos' practice is a study in the materiality of photography, sculpture and spatial practice. Recent projects include: *These Economies*, Sydney Contemporary, Sydney, 2015; *Boutique Politics*, Bus Projects, 2015, *Wearing*, Westspace, Melbourne, 2014; Australian Tapestry Workshop residency, 2014; *Fucking in Solidarity*, National Gallery of Victoria, Catalogue Essay, *When This you See Remember Me*, David McDiarmid Retrospective, 2014; *The Spirit and Spark of David McDiarmid Symposium*, National Gallery of Victoria, 2014; *The Purple Onion*, TCB art inc, 2014; *Re-building*, The Substation, 2014; *Private View and Occasional Performance*, Dudspace, 2014; *Decisions*, RMIT Project Space, 2013; *Dark Rooms* RMIT Project Space, 2013; *Octopus 10*, Gertrude Contemporary, 2010 and *A Monument to toilets; An Exhibition and Procession*, White Cubicle Toilet Gallery, London, 2010. *toilets; An Exhibition and Procession*, White Cubicle Toilet Gallery, London, 2010.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

"My practice is based in post-conceptual photography and post-minimalism, which articulates itself through the materiality of photography, sculpture and spatial practice. Over the past couple of years I have been working with the personal and political in conjunction with exploring the sculptural and spatial parameters to expand the photographic frame."

Artist website: <http://www.nikpantaz.com/>

## WORKSHOP SUMMARY

This project aims to develop student ideas and understanding about how contemporary issues are expressed in art. Through investigation students are encouraged to discover and understand how social issues can become a platform for research and investigation of art themes.

The overarching aim to this workshop will be for students to make an assemblage / still life photograph that responds to the word Queer (LGBTIQA+). The response could be abstract and use figurative titles or an artist statement to inscribe meaning to the process.

Students will gather and source objects and materials to create art installations that strategically engage with their understanding of Queer. The materials and objects used can be found or specifically made for the purposes of the project.

This activity will develop student's knowledge about the ways in which art can shape understanding about social issues, particularly Queer and gender diverse issues (LGBTIQ+).

Students are expected to create photographic works using available material and space, which will encourage them to experiment and take risks using a variety of mediums and materials. Students will discard their assemblages and rely on the photographic image and a short text as the final work.

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## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Students will develop still life/ assemblages through critical and creative thinking about what an assemblage or a still life could be.
- Students are challenged to explore how art can communicate ideas through discussion about contemporary issues - particularly issues concerning LBGTIQ+ or queerness - that will lead to creative thinking and making.
- Students will learn to develop big ideas as they reflect on and interpret contemporary issues and identities.
- Students will analyse and discuss how art can shape peoples understanding of contemporary social issues and queerness.

The activity aims to:

- Expand students knowledge on still life photography and contemporary installation practices.
  - Teach students how to develop a project that is reliant on the photographic image as evidence and document as an artwork.
  - Teach students how to make a fine art photograph using limited resources.
  - Teach students how to set up basic professional lights and utilise natural light for photography.
  - Teach students how to respond to space and create art installations strategically.
  - Provide students with the confidence to describe and explain their chosen social issue and discuss how their artwork relates to it.
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## LEARNING ACTIVITY

### DISCUSSION

Looking at the list of references provided, discuss the ways in which artists have engaged with social issues in their art making?

Discuss how space and placement is interpreted in Nik Pantazopoulos still life / assemblages. How does he communicate and enhance meaning for his work?

How do artists relate their personal experiences and knowledge to their art?

How do artists contribute to awareness and understanding of social and political issues through art making?

How do artists develop ideas and understanding about society and culture through art?

### CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

Students are to develop ideas for a still life, mis-en-scene, and tableau vivants thinking about available materials & space. Students will design and illustrate their ideas to develop concepts into a final artwork relating this to research discussed.

### MATERIALS

Modeling light kit	Computer & Photoshop
Lighting Gels	Paper
Camera	Pen
Tripod	
Projector	

### PRODUCTION

Students will make a structure, a set, or a still life out of a collection of sourced objects or purposely made objects. The objects will be brought into the studio or classroom to form an assemblage / still life.

Using either daylight or tungsten light students will make a photograph. This assemblage will be photographed from various angles close up and wide shots under suitable lighting conditions that you will explore.

Once the composition is documented the assemblage / still life is discarded.

### PRESENTATION

Students will present 5 photographs (digital or analogue) to the class with one artist statement that encapsulates the work. Students will also devise a different name and support statement for each image.

Students are encouraged to develop a rich source of didactic material that encapsulates their making process and refines their concepts. (Blog or digital media can be used for this support material i.e Instagram)

### REFERENCES

Ellad Lassry , Cindy Sherman, Fischli & Weiss, Jacky Redgate, Thomas Demand, Wolfgang Tillmans, Thomass Ruff, Thomas Demand, Iza Genzken, Lydia Wegner, Marion Drew, Joel Peter Witken, Robert Mapplethorpe, Erin Sherriff, Christopher Williams, Barbera Kasten

## LINKS TO CURRICULUM - VISUAL ARTS

### EXPLORE & EXPRESS

Levels 7 – 10

Explore the practices of Nik Pantazopoulos. Through a discussion of Pantazopoulos thoughts on spatial awareness and identity, how he expresses his ideas and develops a particular style with his work. Discuss his work in terms of the themes that he expresses. Relate the work to the practices of other photographers from different times and cultures.

From this discussion students develop their own artistic practice through the use of inspiration, materials, techniques and processes to develop their own artworks.

### VISUAL ARTS PRACTICE

Levels 7 – 10

Think about the intentions that Pantazopoulos has when he commences making his work. Discuss his artistic practice. Research a range of photographers work, similar to that of Pantazopoulos as a starting point, explore materials, techniques, visual conventions and processes to develop an individual artistic intention.

### PRESENT AND PERFORM

View an exhibition of Nik Pantazopoulos' work. This could be an online exhibition or images of an exhibition in a commercial gallery or an example of Pantazopoulos' work in a group show in a public gallery. The students then plan their own exhibition of their artworks. They should consider the audience of the artworks and how they wish the audience to interpret the artwork.

### RESPOND AND INTERPRET

Level 7 – 10

Analyse and interpret Pantazopoulos' artworks discussing ideas and viewpoints. Compare his work with works by other contemporary artists to identify characteristics and features of the works. Students can focus on other works that embody 'mis-en-scene' or works of a similar genre.

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## LINKS TO CURRICULUM - MEDIA ARTS

### EXPLORE & EXPRESS

Levels 7 – 10

View Pantazopoulos' work discussing the social values and construction of story using images and media conventions of structure, intent, setting, point of view and genre. Experiment with the organisation of ideas about social values and plan a series of images that provides a viewpoint on social values and identity.

Discuss representation in Pantazopoulos' work and research the representation of ideas in a series of photographic works.

### MEDIA ARTS PRACTICE

Level 7 - 10

Consider production skills such as camera operation (shutter speed, lighting, composition, camera angle, framing and depth of field) in planning a series of photographic works. Students should also develop an understanding of programs such as Photoshop and After Effects in the planning of their images.

Document the planning, development and refinement of the production in a visual diary discussing audience, intention, and synopsis and storyboarding. Post production can include screen shots with documented annotations.

## PRESENT & PERFORM

Level 7 - 10

Review an exhibition of Pantazopoulos' work considering the audience and institutional context. Students can then plan an exhibition of their own work in different contexts; for example online or in a specific location.

Students review the curatorial considerations in exhibiting Pantazopoulos' work and consider the ethical and regulatory considerations they would have to consider when exhibiting their works.

## RESPOND & INTERPRET

Level 7 - 10

Analyse the technical and symbolic elements used by Pantazopoulos in his work and the influence of genre, story, values and viewpoints on his work by audiences.

Compare the work of Pantazopoulos to other photographers exploring the ideas and viewpoints expressed by photographers.

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## ETHICAL UNDERSTANDING

Level 7 - 10

Understanding Concepts:

Explore the extent of ethical obligation and the implications for thinking about consequences and duties in decision-making and action

Investigate criteria for determining the relative importance of matters of ethical concern

Explore the contested meaning of concepts including freedom, justice, and rights and responsibilities, and the extent they are and should be valued by different individuals and groups

Discuss the role of context and experience in ethical decision-making and actions

## GLOSSARY

**Abstract art:** is art that does not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of a visual reality but instead use shapes, colours, forms and gestural marks to achieve its ideas and effect.

**Installation:** an installation is a form of artwork or art display that is site-specific. Installation art is often of an ephemeral nature and frequently employs non-traditional materials.

**Identity politics:** a tendency for people of a particular religion, race, social background, etc., to form exclusive political alliances, moving away from traditional broad-based party politics.

**LBGTQI+:** abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex. An umbrella term that is used to refer to the community as a whole.

**Post-minimalism:** refers to contemporary artforms such as Body art, Performance, Process art, Site-Specific art, and aspects of Conceptual art.

**Post-conceptual:** is theory of practice that builds on the legacy of conceptual art in contemporary art, where the concept(s) or idea(s) involved in the work takes some precedence over traditional aesthetic and material concerns.

Contemporary Art on the Road is an initiative developed by Gertrude Contemporary and in partnership with Monash University Museum of Art, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and three regional Victorian galleries: Latrobe Regional Gallery, Horsham Regional Art Gallery and Shepparton Art Museum.