

# Eric Demetriou



Eric Demetriou, *Sanaterrarium*, 2017, installation view at Gertrude Glasshouse

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.

Contemporary Art on the Road is funded by the Department of Education and Training Victoria (DET) through the Strategic Partnerships Program (SPP) and partnered with the following organisations:

MUMIA

**sam.**  
Shepparton Art Museum



**GERTRUDE  
CONTEMPORARY**

 VICTORIAN CURRICULUM  
AND ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY

**VICTORIA**  
State  
Government

Education  
and Training

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.

## About the Artist

Eric Demetriou is a Melbourne based artist working with sound, performance and sculpture. He completed a Masters of Fine Art at the Victorian College of the Arts in 2013, and was a Gertrude Studio artist in residence between 2015-17. Demetriou is represented by Lindberg Galleries, Melbourne, and has exhibited and performed extensively across Australia. Demetriou was the recipient of the John Fries Award 2016, The Linden Contemporary Art Prize 2014, Fiona Myer Travelling Scholarship 2013, and Nellie Castan Contemporary Art Award 2013.

Recent solo exhibitions include: *Sanaterrarium: performance art festival for frogs and crickets*, Gertrude Glasshouse, 2017; *An Afternoon with Herb Jercher*, Lindberg Galleries, 2016; *Four minutes and thirty-three seconds in cat years*, TCB Art inc, 2015; and *Flee Flu*, West Space, 2014.

Demetriou frequently collaborates with sound artist and whip cracker Herbert Jercher and is an active member of Melbourne performance art groups The Band Presents (TBP) and Germlock.

## Artist Statement

*“ Recently my studio focus has been geared towards collaborative practice and performance based outcomes. By applying an open interpretation to the term composition exciting permissions are granted within the politics of experimental art and music. By working collaboratively with artists, performers or multi-disciplined professionals a mutual goal is established and sometimes completed. ”*

Artist website: [ericdemetriou.com](http://ericdemetriou.com)

Gallery representation: <http://lindbergcontemporary.com.au/eric-demetriou/>

Youtube Channel : <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDfROjtAiOnKTbrbY4R03Vw>

# Workshop Summary

To begin, Demetriou will trace the history of sound and performance art. Demetriou will showcase his use of unconventional materials or ready-made objects as means of producing a sound-based kinetic sculptures. The etymology of the word 'noise' is with the Latin 'nausea' and has associations with obstruction and interruption. Demetriou's body of work that investigates the application of noise, and research focuses on connotations of noise being an undesired excess material, with a political economy that anticipates a reception of hostility.

Participants will be engaged predominantly in conversation in the first half of the workshop. In this time ideas will be exchanged and a general overview of experimental music, composition, and performance will be looked at as a group.

During this time the group will decide what kind of album they would like to produce, and how they will go about making it. By breaking down terms associated with documenting action, the intention is to direct thinking toward the inherent freedoms of composition.

The second half of the workshop will be the recording phase.

As a group participants will write, record, produce and release a short-run record using easily accessible equipment and only *start - stop* recording, with no overdubs and no tricky edits. A key outcome in this project is to do away with preconceived ideas of the relationship between the music industry and record production. With this, the treatment of producing a record aims to act as a form of time-capsule, compiling data and action from one moment in time and transcribing it to a recitable object.

There are endless possibilities as to how this could be determined as a group, but the chief motivation is to work conceptually and expediently. In this project there is no preference for high fidelity recordings or musical ability.

Participants will be responsible for producing every aspect of the album democratically. Once the medium is determined - the duration of the album (in seconds) will be divided by the amount of participants.

When cut at 33 rpm a 12" record holds about 22 minutes of audio per side. In this instance 44 minutes can be divided by the amount of participants -  $44 \text{ mins} = 2640 \text{ seconds}$ . If there are 30 participants,  $2640 / 30 = 88 \text{ seconds}$ . In this instance participants will have 88 seconds each of recording time.

With this nomination of time - participants now have the option to either produce a solo piece (88 seconds) or to collaborate with others thereby extending the duration time (88 seconds x group members). A group of two (88 x 2) 176 seconds, a group of three (88 x 3) 264 seconds, a group of four (88 x 4) 352 seconds etc.

Zoom recorders, microphones and computers can be shared, 1 per group of approximately 4 students. Each group should produce a digital file that can be transformed into a short-run vinyl.

---

## Materials List

### Key Tools:

These are your recording tools

Speakers

Zoom Recorder/s

Computer/s

Microphone/s

Garageband (or similar software)

### Example Tools:

Use whatever instruments you can easily access

Tambourine

Keyboard

Maracas

Cymbal

Found-objects

Drums

Guitar

Castanets

Xylophone

# Goals and Objectives

- Students will learn about the relationship between art history, performance and sound art and methods used.
- Students will develop a short vinyl that links conceptual ideas and expressions to outcomes that they've developed.
- Students are challenged to think critically and creatively about the objects and instruments used, sounds created, and compositions they develop.

The activity aims to:

- Expand students knowledge about art histories, concepts and techniques.
- Encourage imagination, enjoyment and a personal aesthetic through engagement with music making, discussing, interpreting and evaluating.
- Teach students to express themselves through sound and challenge ideas about institutionalised compositional or aesthetic conventions in music.
- Expand student's critical and creative thinking, using sound, performance, kinetic-sculpture and related theories.

---

## Learning Activity

### Discussion

- Discuss sound as an art form. Its influences and links to other art histories. Who are significant artists that use this method?
- Discuss early sound artists like Futurist Luigi Russolo. How is narrative created in their art. What sounds and objects have they used?
- Discuss how instruments and objects can be used in unconventional ways to produce sounds and music. How does Demetriou use ready-made objects in his practice?
- How can abstract things communicate meaning? Discuss how different sounds and techniques can act as sites for alternative meanings; for example certain notes together, reflect common ideas or can trigger memories.

### Concept Development

Students should begin by undertaking research and discussing the history of sound and performance art. Students should examine the history of the Italian Futurists, particularly Luigi Russolo, and subsequent exploration by the Dadaist and Surrealists. Building on the discussion and research undertaken students should generate ideas that will act as a catalyst for their experiments.

### Production

Students will begin by determining the medium/s and duration of their sound piece. Remember different size vinyl's hold different amounts of time - it is easiest to break up time allotted to students in number of seconds. For example: a 12 inch record holds about 22 minutes of audio per side. In this instance 44 minutes = 2640 seconds, 2640 seconds / 20 students = 132 seconds each.

They can work with easily accessible instruments, or work with found-objects to produce sounds. This could be a pot used as a drum, a water bottles used as maracas, or rubber-bands used as a guitar. Students can work alone or in groups to produce sounds. They are to use the zoom recorder, microphone and computer to capture the sounds they produce. Using Garageband or similar software to produce the file to be transcribed to vinyl. They must record their experiments using the start-stop method - they are not to use overdubs or tricky edits. There are endless possibilities!

Additional task - ask each student to produce a sculpture to complement their sound work and install them in a gallery setting.

# Links to Curriculum

## EXPLORE & EXPRESS

Levels F – 6

Investigate the ways in which Eric Demetriou explores ideas, techniques and materials in his artworks. How are these expressed?

Levels 7 – 10

Explore the practices of Eric Demetriou. Through discussion of Demetriou use of objects and instruments, how he expresses his ideas and develops a particular style with his work. Discuss his work in terms of the history that he reflects. Relate his work to the practices of other sound-artists from different times and cultures. From this discussion students should develop their own artistic practice through the use of inspiration, materials, techniques and processes to develop their own sound-works.

## VISUAL ARTS PRACTICE

Levels F – 6

Based on the artworks of Eric Demetriou, students explore materials, techniques and processes. They should identify and describe the use of these in the production of their artworks.

Levels 7 – 10

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

## PRESENT AND PERFORM

View an exhibition of Eric Demetriou's work. This could be an online exhibition or images of an exhibition in a commercial gallery or an example of Demetriou's 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 F – 6

Respond to Eric Demetriou's artwork by identifying and describing technique and ideas. Consider how and where he makes his work.

Level 7 – 10

Analyse and interpret Demetriou's 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 sound, performance or ready-made objects.

## Glossary

Experimental music - is a general label any music that pushes existing boundaries and genre definitions. It is radically opposed to, and questioning of, institutionalized compositional, performing, and aesthetic conventions in music

Kinetic sculptures - an artwork, made of any medium that contains movement, they either move naturally (wind) or are machine operated. It has its foundations in Dada and Surrealist art. Alexander Calder mobiles are key examples.

Musical composition - refers to an original piece of music, the structure of a musical piece, or the process of creating or writing a piece of music.

Performance art - a performance presented to an audience within a fine art context. It is a interdisciplinary medium and can be predetermined or spontaneous, scripted or abstract. Performances also often incorporates audience members. Marina Abramovic is a prominent figure in performance art.

Ready-made - ordinary, manufactured objects used and appropriated by artists. The term was first coined to refer to the work of Dada and Surrealist artist Marcel Duchamp. See *Fountain* (1917).

Recitable object - an object capable of being recited and repeated.

Short-run record - once off or limited production custom vinyl records.

Sound art - an artistic discipline where sound is used as primary medium, it is often interdisciplinary crossing into the fields of sculpture, installation and performance. early examples include Italian Futurist Luigi Russolo's *Intonarumori*. Subsequent experiments were undertaken by Dadaists and Surrealists.