

... doesn't it. I remember when we lived in
... W.A. I had a parcel from America. I remem
... excited about connecting with someone on
... other side of the world.
... really interesting to hear about the place you've
... travelled to and that you've settled in Ho
... long. 17 years is a long time
... really interested in your ideas about exploring
... relation in your work in relation to physicality.
... imagine making and processing your experience
... through painting that is both physical and
... emotional must have been a very powerful experi
... in space about finding 'new forms' to fit the
... ideas you want to explore. What ways do y
... que to do this? Even though I love paint on
... 's materiality and possible ways to evoke the
... several and contrary qualities we started us
... her materials. These new materials and wa
... using installation are opening up my practi
... allows wonder and surprise into the work
... ew ways. We been exploring using balloon
... tter and growing crystals so far. Photograp
... too plays an important role in my new wor
... like your list of artists. I first became aware
... Angela de La Cruz's work in London. I
... member reading an article from the paper

Happy to received your letter again. How your
... trips to Central Australia? I was busy on my MFA
... school work. And wait for your parcel. you said will
... and me some fabric for my project.
... How your work on your ~~project~~ You use plastic
... bags for your medium to work on your final work
... that great. About me? I still thinking my idea.
... saw that news before about the sand-blasting
... plans. That will be good information for me to
... develop my idea. I knew many brand they stop
... to used this kind of type to wash or paint the
... can. Sound good. But in my brain one document
... always in my mind. "My fancy high heels". This is a
... story behind the high-heeled shoes. That film choses
... the footprint of famous high-heeled shoes brands. from
... China to Russian border to the Manhattan. New York.
... from poor countryside to the bloody scene. where kill
... cows and take the skin. then to the fashion and luxu
... metropolitan. We can see the influence of Globalization
... on the world through pairs of high heels. This document
... you can see from extreme poverty to extreme wealth,
... we see the world is filled with a sign of the difference.
... the Global production line is a serial handcuts that across
... national borders. Class and gender. People always think fashion
... is a charming industry nevertheless. there is only 5%

For more information on Coalesce ARI please visit www.coalesceari.weebly.com/

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Associate Professor Kevin White, Acting MFA Program Coordinator Sally Mannall and RMIT Lecturer Rhett D'Costa for facilitating relationships between Hong Kong and Melbourne and providing continued support throughout this project.

Thank you to the staff and volunteers at RMIT Link Arts for supporting Coalesce ARI and all our associated projects and to all MFA teaching staff and students.

A special thanks to all the postmen who were involved in this project.



BUILDING 2 LEVEL 2, BOWEN STREET, MELBOURNE
Managed by the RMIT School of Art
COORDINATOR Stephen Gallagher **ADMINISTRATOR** Andrew Tetzlaff
INTERNS Amanda Airs & Adriane Hayward **GRAPHIC DESIGN** Gracia Haby & Louise Jennison
EMAIL schoolofartgalleries@rmit.edu.au **WEB** schoolofartgalleries.dsc.rmit.edu.au
TELEPHONE +61 3 9925 4971 **GALLERY OPENING HOURS** Monday – Friday 10.00am to 5.00pm



Penpals: Post-Conversation

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| ALIÇA BRYSON-HAYNES [AUS] | in correspondence with | APRIL CHALLIS [HK] |
| CLAIRE ROBERTSON [USA] | in correspondence with | MARGARET WONG [HK] |
| SHAE ROOKE [AUS] | in correspondence with | DAPHNE HO [HK] |
| LIZZY SAMPSON [AUS] | in correspondence with | GLORIA YIP [HK] |

CURATED BY COALESCE ARI



TUESDAY 19 JUNE TO FRIDAY 29 JUNE 2012
OPENING WEDNESDAY 20 JUNE 5-7PM

... your mail yesterday as I was heading to my studio
... it was great to have your ideas to bounce off. The f
... I did was check the definition of WONDER.
... the same as you. pin it up as a reference.
... highlighted the words that describe my intentions, like
... no Johnsons adjectives. He decided wonder is my m
... l. Sensation and surprise came up in the definit
... lected puzzled, astonished, amazed and bewil
... leads to follow.
... Today for you is tomorrow for me
... Tomorrow for me is today for you
... Yesterday for you is today for me
... Today for me is yesterday for you
... the idea of the title reflecting location, giving
... a way into the work. My concern is less about
... cific location but more about how location is no
... nally political, controlled through instructions most
... with an either unnecessary, intransparent and complete
... required. The Hong Kong obsession with barriers an
... ners!! The result is a chaotic aesthetic (with wonder
... ed surprising delight to be discovered in the confusion) so
... the country I grew up in
... A rule breaking detective!! Two images, ok now
... send two too. I love the reversible image but using
... ctive skills I think the Savile Row cut is the principle in
... its such a great photo; I love the brown pin striped suit
... ft. I had a blue pin stripe tailored here in Hong Kon
... Answer let me fun things to be done now
... or politically - The Bastards, Abercrombie 5 Flou
... did the same in Hong Kong except no one protested
... t of the few gorgeous old buildings in central was the
... Shanghai Tang which is bits a chinese tailor and
... and made fitting store. A truly Hong Kong institut
... & bought out at least and forced Shanghai Tang o
... re space, which included a very old cast iron spiral
... the end of it.



■溫州動車事件的發生，不僅引發對中國鐵路建設投資安全及速度過快的質疑，也令中國鐵路相關股份及債券哀鴻遍野。(資料圖片)

Penpals: Post-conversation is an experimental, artistic collaboration, through hand-written correspondence by a group of Master of Fine Art students from the School of Art working from the twin locations of Melbourne and Hong Kong. Whilst they study the same program, they work in two quite distinct, cultural and geographic locations. Similarities and differences abound. As penpals, each pair of artists has sought to construct work, which both navigates and interprets this long distance relationship.

Prior to the ubiquitous use of email, social media sites and cheap travel, having a penpal was one of the few ways one might get a personal glimpse of a life lived somewhere entirely different from the place one normally called "home". It was a way to become familiar with the unfamiliar and perhaps also learn a foreign language or establish a friendship. Often it led to travel and precipitated major changes in people's lives. One such notable example is the renowned artist Yayoi Kusama. In the 1950's Kusama was writing and sending drawings to her penpal, the painter Georgia O'Keeffe in America. The relationship they forged is largely credited with providing the encouragement for Kusama to leave her native Japan and move to New York City in 1957, after which she became a leader of New York's avant-garde movement and rose to international fame.

Scottish-born Australian artist Peter Hill worked as a "mail artist" for many years during the 1980's. These postal projects revolved mainly around issues such as Nuclear Disarmament, Ecology and Gender issues as well as "open projects" which might cover anything from painting to conceptualism. They were very much

like "penpal" letters in that they united artists on different continents and forged life-long friendships and collaborations. Usually these projects worked on the idea of "no rejections, no returns" and the work was eventually gifted to a local university, art school or hospital. Very often a poster was produced after the event and on the back of it would be listed the names and addresses of all the participating artists from Berlin to Hong Kong. Suddenly you had penpals all over the planet. Hill also told me "When I was in my final year at art school near London I decided to write my exegesis on three contemporary artists. I thought I'd better write to ten artists around the world in the hope of getting three positive replies to my letters. To my surprise and delight seven of the artists replied with catalogues, slides and CVs. The art world is a very collegial place." Today social media has very much taken the place of pen-pal letters sent from a post-office. However, Hill told me "Although I have a web-site and use Facebook and email, I still get a thrill from placing a physical envelope into a postbox in Australia and knowing it will turn up inside someone's house in Shanghai, Glasgow or Paris a few days later. That is the joy of being, or having a pen-pal."

Penpals: Post-conversation continues this well established human desire to transcend the limitations of the familiar world and forge new connections limited only by the imagination and the simple act of writing a letter.

Associate Professor Kevin White
Deputy Head of International Development

We are largely a group of artists from the generation who grew up writing letters to penpals whom we never met, nor needed to. We made friends in faraway places: Finland, America, France and Hong Kong. We learnt about the world from the perspective of children overseas. Fast forward twenty-odd years and collaboration through letter writing presented continual surprises and challenges.

The very proposition of avoiding email as a form of communication was met with apprehension and this hesitation proved to be well founded, as emails crept in between the sending and receiving of postal letters. Other parameters for the project, such as a weight restriction of 500grams for final artworks and the number of letters exchanged, were also stretched to the limit.

Despite these constraints, the artists in this project have succeeded in establishing relationships with each other across oceans and borders. These handwritten letters have been carried, re-read, shared and studied, and concepts of growth, space, time and wonder have been discussed back and forth in considered responses over the past six months. We are excited to present our shared concepts and artworks in this exhibition and look forward to continuing the relationships and dialogues we have developed into the future.

Lizzy Sampson
Coalesce ARI

