

Lachlan Marley,
Luce Nguyễn-Hunt
and Maki Morita

Labour Lexica

Curated by
Ada Coxall, Coral Guan
and Sebastian Kainey

The artists and curators behind *Labour Lexica* wish to acknowledge that this exhibition was developed on Wurundjeri land and staged on the lands of the Bunurong Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin nation, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

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The curators would like to thank the artists for their time, energy and labour—without you this exhibition would not be possible. Our thanks to Karl Halliday, Linden Projects Space Coordinator, whose patience and expertise was incredibly valued throughout the process of staging this exhibition.

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Linden Projects Space

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Published by the curators

Designed by Sebastian Kainey

Labour Lexica is a group exegesis on labour. Drawn together under the themes of work, precarity and language, artists Lachlan Marley, Luce Nguyễn-Hunt and Maki Morita respond to their perceptions and experiences of work as expressed through bodily, lexical and material conditions. *Labour Lexica* veers away from solution-oriented inquiry, employing both irreverence and sincerity to conduct a series of refusals and reversals.

work

noun

1. an activity, such as a job, that a person uses physical or mental effort to do, usually for money

labour

noun

1. practical work, especially when it involves hard physical effort
2. workers, especially people who do practical work with their hands

lexica

noun

1. the vocabularies of a language, an individual speaker or group of speakers, or a subject



Lachlan Marley, *Untitled Burnt Painting 01-04* and *I bid you stand*, 2022. Installation view at Linden Projects Space. Photo by Sebastian Kainey.

Rest, Recuperation, Respite and the Problem of Fatigue

Sebastian Kainey

Creative labour is precarious labour. With a constant stream of people pouring out of university fine arts and art history degrees wanting to make art and be involved in arts work, there is a sense of competitiveness in the air. Arts work has made me a workaholic, where days and weeks become packed with various paid and unpaid occupations. Artists and arts workers alike are prepared to work for little or no remuneration, and hold two, three or four simultaneous jobs—the potential for a cyclical kind of exhaustion and fatigue looms. I wonder if cultural industries such as the visual arts truly fits within our contemporary capitalist society. The sector is under-funded, under-represented, and is under-appreciated for its contributions to critical thought and knowledge, and its ability to unpick the intricacies of everyday life. Indeed, creative labour is caught in an awkward position within contemporary society. As we learn through the work of Lachlan Marley, despite these tensions we must not become complacent. It is almost impossible for creative work, or in fact any work, to exist outside of the clutches of capitalism,

however, through critical engagement with the conditions in which labouring bodies exist, we can flip the contested spaces of labour, work, leisure, and fatigue.

Lachlan Marley's practice is multi-disciplinary and probing. Working interchangeably within the realm of sculpture, painting, and installation, the works presented in this exhibition are a layered inquiry into labour and language. Central to Marley's practice is an exploratory manipulation of material that presents juxtapositions through combining formal art materials with those familiar and found in his workplace as a concreter. This unique blend of materials and an inquisitive approach to art making disrupts preconceived notions of labour, fatigue, and leisure, and challenges our relationship to these concepts.

It was hard to know where to begin describing Marley's offerings in this show; there are many access points from which to consider his work. The first objects that caught my eye, while visiting Marley's studio at VCA's Southbank Campus, were the small metallic 'letters' that peer out of the ripped openings of *Untitled Burnt Painting 01-04*. These small silver sculptural shapes are crafted using the construction material Chemset, normally used as an industrial concrete glue to create sturdy anchor points in structures. Marley creates these 'letters' through a process of free-form drawing with the concrete adhesive, seeking to find an impression of a lexical form, stripping the formal material from its intended use. Just before the Chemset hardens, a swift application of tin foil transforms the utilitarian material into an object that resembles experiments in aluminium casting. The result is a suggestion of a letter, a specious form, and a new alphabet to describe the language of work, labour, and fatigue.

Marley then utilises a flame to burn the untreated canvas shell of the four paintings. This distinct look creates inherent structural flaws in the material, uncovering a set of vulnerabilities. Putting this new language of labour to work using the sharp edges of the Chemset letters, Marley scratches at the heavily burned areas, breaking through the canvas, and



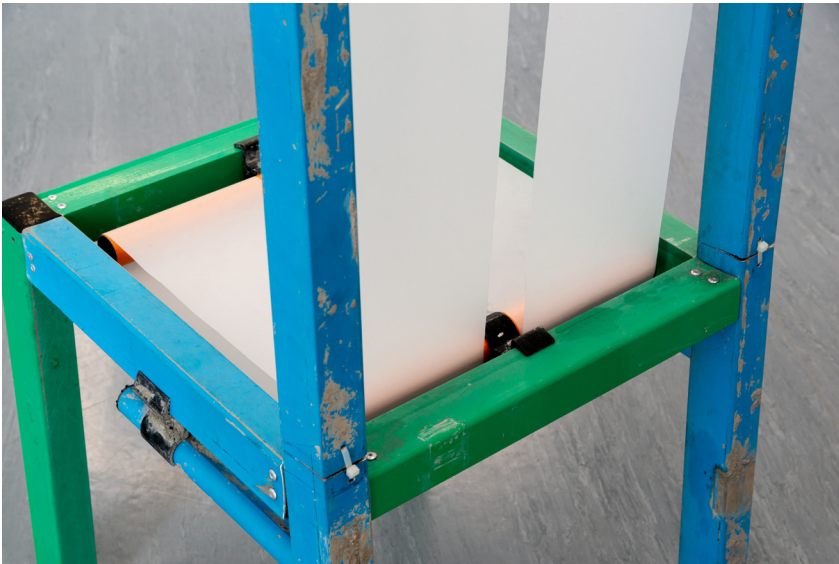
Lachlan Marley, *Untitled Burnt Painting 02*, 2022. Photo by Sebastian Kainey.

blurring the formal qualities of painting and sculpture. Beneath the scarred and cut up canvas, representations of Irish Lore and Greek Myth about fire and the construction of objects harnessing this element are revealed. The letter sculptures used to pierce the first layer of canvas are then stuffed into newly created openings, loading up the paintings with the weight of these shiny letters of labour.

From this series of loaded paintings, Marley leaps into the visual language of rest and respite and its relationship to the worker's body. For Marley, work, labour, and art making within the contemporary capitalist condition are intrinsically linked. These ideas are inseparable from each other, suggesting it is near impossible to make art now and not become tangled in the mess of capital in contemporary life. By not simply succumbing to this condition and becoming yet another product of it, Marley uses his position to reinterpret familiar objects and materials to form contrasts and clashes of the uncanny. With the capitalist

cog of the worker's body in mind, Marley interrogates the precariousness of rest in the humble chair.

As an everyday object, the chair has long represented rest, respite, and recuperation from labour. In *I bid you stand*, a chair is constructed from dissecting and reassembling three screeds, a familiar tool and essential to the work of a concreter. A screed is a long, machined metal piece of equipment that is used to flatten and smooth poured concrete. The seat and back of Marley's chair is lined with architectural tracing paper, and although tensioned, the chair is at odds with its intended function and is made with a fatal flaw: the chair will not hold the weight of those seeking rest and respite. The futility of the object is made clear, just as the right to rest is rejected. Fastened with rivets, the chair appears off-kilter and is rendered redundant.



Lachlan Marley, *I bid you stand* (Detail), 2022. Photo by Sebastian Kainey.

Rest, and respite from the relentless conditions of factory work has always hindered productivity. The problem of a worker naturally succumbing to fatigue has plagued the mission of industrialisation since the early twentieth century. Under capitalism, the problem of worker fatigue needed to be solved; fatigue needed to be eradicated and expelled from the workers' condition to increase productivity and profit. In 1904, the German physiologist Wilhelm Weichardt attempted to do just that. Weichardt devised a vaccine of sorts, after a series of experimental tests on lab rats, and was convinced he had a concoction that would reduce human fatigue and allow workers to engage in production for longer periods of time without the need to rest. With industrialisation beginning to take off and global tension brewing, this was an early hope that fatigue in humans would be eradicated and workers would be able to work for longer periods of time without rest or respite. Upon further independent review of Weichardt's proposed solution to fatigue, it was discovered that the vaccine was no more productive than the short-term effects of cocaine, caffeine, or even sugar. The trouble of the worker's body and fatigue continued, and no solution was found.

In the utopian industrialised world humans would be one and the same as machines and completely embedded in the assembly line of production. Simone Weil observed the poor conditions factory workers were subjected to in her 1946 essay *Factory Work*. As research for this essay, Weil abandoned her work as an academic and journalist for almost two years in the early 1930s to take up the work of a common factory worker. Based in the Paris Renault car manufacturing plant, Weil observed and documented life as a factory worker, concluding that factories are 'festered-grounds of evil', citing that common factory workers were subject to a refusal of all humanistic consideration. Within the factory walls the meaning of time was lost and authoritarian managerial conditions meant workers were

stripped of any sense of themselves and left as an extension of the industrial machinery and production lines they supported.

Marley not only challenges this notion of the worker as a cog in the capitalist machine he also wrangles the problem of the limits of the worker's body. Identified at the turn of the twentieth century, the problem of the fatigued worker body persists in contemporary hyper-automated sites of product distribution, which continue to position the worker body as the kink in the chain of production.

Here, two absolutes are at odds and there will always be tension between production line distribution, capital gain, and workers' wellbeing. Through formal investigations, turning common and art materials on their head, forming objects anew, Marley asks us to reconsider our position. Marley presents two highly resolved works in this exhibition where the reference to the worker's body and the precarity of rest is at the foreground. Although distinct, the two offerings, *Burnt Paintings 01-04* and *I bid you stand*, represent materiality and signifiers torn from their original utility. Marley uses materials meant for building in an incongruous way to challenge the perceived notion of the original form. Further, these combined works disturb and frustrate our preconceived idea of what painting and sculpture can be. What is the promise of these objects as artworks; in Marley's hands, the use materials has been challenged and so too has our relationship to them. Marley presents a new and confronting understanding of what labour, leisure, and fatigue can mean.

Everlasting Nail: Visual Lexicons of Queer Irreverence

Coral Guan

Here: a nocturnal space. Bodies frenetic, overflowing, pouring into each other. It's Chen Wei on amphetamines, tempered by itty bitty Barragan baby tees, bodies dripping in Eckhaus Latta, Sschafer, Ottolinger. Bleached brows, kiss curls. We have cakewalk meets catwalk meets rapid pace digital dissemination. DJ as pastor, rave beat as sermon, bodies thronged in synchronised sway as sensuous hymn. The queer club is kinesis, and we've crossed oceans for its pleasures.

It's in this liquid thrum that we situate this interpretive text—exhibition ephemera that hopes to become documentation, that hopes to inhabit memory archive.

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For *Labour Lexica*, Luce Nguyễn-Hunt has created the work *Everlasting Nail*: ten 925 sterling silver nail rings, designed and cast from wax models that they have shaped by hand. The ring component is intended to encircle the fingertip, with the silver nail (each of varying designs) resting on top of the wearer's natural nail. Nguyễn-Hunt has used the lost wax casting method, with the assistance of Vietnamese-owned HS Castings on Collins Street

who have cast the rings from Nguyễn-Hunt's models. In this process, the wax model melts away once a temporary mould is created, meaning these nail rings are all one-off creations.

Much has been written and discussed about the possibility of queer spaces that exist outside of the libidinal trance state of the nightclub. The genesis of this work is incontrovertibly, however, in the queer club. In the set of ten nail rings, there are two ket keys—one shaped for the pinky, with a divot on the underside which the artist has cheekily dubbed the 'k-hole'. Another nail ring with protruding clips is intended to hold a cigarette, or a joint if so desired. This elegant durry holder comes with an accompanying ashtray ring. Recalling friendship jewellery, two other rings form a broken heart duo. Functionally futile but funny nonetheless, the second pinky ring is a nail with a tiny keyhole. The remaining three nail rings are the first three that the artist ever made: an undulating wave, a long nail spiralling into a lethally sharp point, and a tiny broken heart on the end of a nail. In the exhibition space, the artist has installed the nail rings in a metal cage atop a black plinth, hanging individual rings by fishing wire from a chain strung across the top of the cage.



Luce Nguyễn-Hunt, *Everlasting Nail* (Set 1, Set 2), 2022.
Photo courtesy the artist.

Characteristic of Nguyễn-Hunt's work is an irreverence born out of love. Their work makes no room for any authority or institutional power that does not serve First Nations, diasporic, or LGBTQIA+ communities. Instead, they reserve their respect for those that they believe have earned it, often queer or ancestral elders and leaders, whose existence is resistance. House mothers in the ballroom scene, cultural knowledge holders in a given space, as examples. On their thinking for their wider art practice, Nguyễn-Hunt has cited the influence of artists and academics such as Bhenji Ra, Brian Fuata, Yuki Kihara, Ocean Vuong, Félix González-Torres, Hana Pera Aoake, Léuli and Nadeem Eshrāghi, Luka Leleiga Lim-Bunnin, Coco Solid, and more.

To see *Everlasting Nail* as lexical, it is important to understand that a central question at the fore of Nguyễn-Hunt's practice is the navigation of non- and partial language knowledge, as a culturally hybrid diasporic individual. Generally given over to a lens-based practice, Nguyễn-Hunt's foray into precious metal casting is new for the interdisciplinary Vietnamese, Sāmoan and Rarotongan artist. Despite this, their interest in visual languages as a means to dissect and communicate non-linguistic experiences persists in this work. To whom are they communicating here, however? As queer signifiers, these nails are part of a subcultural visual lexicon, a tongue-in-cheek wink to queer club family (and perhaps queer frenemies) in the fray.

Early in the project, I recall Nguyễn-Hunt and I sharing photos of, as my friend Jess calls them, 'horny nails'. Also sometimes considered the 'lesbian nails' on a manicured hand, they are the index and middle fingers that are left short on a set of otherwise long manicured fingernails. Code-switching and covert sartorial signals have been mainstays of various queer cultures through history, as a means of ensuring safety while fostering belonging and connection. From the handkerchief code, to earring placements, to nail lengths, undercuts, nose rings, thumb rings, the way one cuffs one's pants—the list of queer signals is non-exhaustive. In recent years, a mainstream resurgence of

wearing a large number of silver rings and industrial chains has become part of the queer aesthetic through overspill of underground BDSM culture and a general return of subcultural late twentieth century club aesthetics, though of course not exclusive to queer people.



Luce Nguyễn-Hunt, *Everlasting Nail* (Poster 2), 2022. Photo courtesy the artist.

In *Everlasting Nail*, Nguyễn-Hunt frames the nail rings as queer signifiers that can be removed or reapplied. In doing so, the artist explores codeswitching and the politics of refusing to explicate and share certain knowledges with those not proximate to one's own communities. This opens up discussion around protecting and gatekeeping a community, and whether these actions are one and the same. In writing this text, the dilemma around what to divulge is present. Here, I pause to acknowledge that while Nguyễn-Hunt and I have many shared experiences

of queerness, they also have different experiences of queerness (inflected by cultural identity, family, subculture and generation) than I do. When I speak about their work, I can only, as filmmaker Trinh T. Minh-ha terms it, ‘speak nearby’.

Nguyễn-Hunt has said that queerness is what helped liberate them from their ‘cultural imprisonment’. What they mean by this is multi-faceted, but one element of their queer becoming has been the ability to locate themselves within ancestral practices of queerness and gender fluidity. The long history of fa’afafine in Sāmoan culture is one such example of the expanded possibilities of gender found in ancestral culture. Nguyễn-Hunt also cites Riley C. Snorton’s writing on ‘ungendering’ as influential to their thinking. A Black scholar, Snorton has written on how gender is read differently across racial groups and the possibilities that queer, mixed-race and culturally

EVERLASTING NAIL

Sterling silver nail rings



Short ... \$150
Long \$200
Sets \$300
First Nations & Trans POC pay what you can
[Minimum cost price + 20%]

Luce Nguyễn-Hunt, *Everlasting Nail* (Poster 1), 2022. Photo courtesy the artist.

hybrid beings can offer for the ‘transitive’ expression of gender. Imbued with multilayered references to queer culture, Nguyễn-Hunt sees *Everlasting Nail* as accessories of femininity that can be mixed and matched, put on or taken off. Lexically queer, these nail rings allow the wearer to enter a fluid space of gender expression.

Not one to resist the allure of the lens for long, Nguyễn-Hunt returns to their lens-based practice in two A1 prints accompanying the nails. The two digitally manipulated images of the artist and their partner wearing the rings are affixed to the wall behind the nails in the exhibition space. For me, these prints evoke the faded blue of hair salon posters in the inner west of Naarm. As a culturally hybrid diasporic queer person myself, I return regularly to Footscray, where I spent a great deal of my childhood and adolescence. This particular blue smacks of nostalgia and codeswitching: for me, my active slipping between working class and middle class, between immigrant and assimilated (as if there is a dichotomy).

These prints remind us, as well, that self-examination and self-broadcast are central tenets of Nguyễn-Hunt’s work, present in both their art practice and their online life. On their Instagram, in a stream of seemingly seamless content characteristic of Gen Z onlineness, Nguyễn-Hunt proves their expert ability to communicate through visual languages, nurturing both social and parasocial relationships with their friends and followers online. Their impressive onlineness echoes what Brad Troemel has termed ‘athletic aesthetics’, the transformation of ‘the notion of a “work” from a series of isolated projects to a constant broadcast of one’s artistic identity as a recognizable, unique brand’. An art world Jennifer Ringley (of JenniCam), the original lifecaster who broadcast by webcam every day from 1996-2003.

Queer clubs and parties, in Nguyễn-Hunt’s own words, are sites of ‘resistance and joy’. It is not difficult to envision *Everlasting Nail*, in all its lexical fluidity as a queer signifier, as part

of that space. But perhaps most truthful of all, is what Nguyễn-Hunt revealed in a recent interview for this project: ‘I just wanted to make something cunty.’

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Postface

Here: I offer my memory of the beginnings of Nguyễn-Hunt’s work, and its original links to labour.

Initially, with the working title *The Price I’ve Paid*, Nguyễn-Hunt pitched an installation work that would ‘explore the labour of quarrying inner turmoil within a creative practice’. It was to involve, potentially, ‘temporary body adornments [containing] inventories and invoices for personal costly burdens’. These adornments were to be, also potentially, temporary tattoos and acrylic nails.

Since that initial pitch in May 2021, Nguyễn-Hunt’s work has evolved beyond these initial ideas of emotional labour and mining one’s own traumas for artistic fodder. In part, this was a result of considering the disrespect present in claiming or infringing on the professional practice of nail technicians. Despite the twisted, goofy and anti-authoritative humour lacing their work, Nguyễn-Hunt thinks deeply about their unearned right to express things that don’t belong to them. They have spoken of not feeling like they have earned a voice or certain wisdoms. This same logic of not using what doesn’t belong to them was present when Nguyễn-Hunt declined an early version of promotional copy we shared with them for this exhibition, where the nail rings were linked to the expressive role of hands in voguing. While socially linked to the ballroom scene, Nguyễn-Hunt does not vogue, and did not feel comfortable drawing links to voguing in their work in this manner.

A few months ago, the working title for this artwork was *tough as nails*. This was in reference to, in the artist’s words,

‘those who are resilient in the face of hardship and harsh circumstances [...] migrant women, trans women of colour, queer people—outward expressions of a boundless, abundant and indefinable femininity.’ Since then, the work has developed further. *Everlasting Nail*, over the course of one and a half years since the initial pitch, has evolved from an interrogation of self-exploitation, to irreverent celebration.

Curatorial Work: 10,000 Hours of Admin

Coral Guan

In the interest of process documentation, I offer my memory of the beginnings of this curatorial project.

After seeing *Nomadland* and thinking a little about how the film subverts the Walden-esque dream of rest and respite from the harried demands of contemporary society, I raised this nascent (and clunky) idea of the ‘precarity of labour’ with my friends and co-curators Seb and Ada. We’d met at the University of Melbourne and at various points (and currently still for Seb and Ada) each of us had simultaneously held two, three, or four paid and unpaid arts jobs. Thoughts around work, class, fatigue, power relations and the precariat had been percolating in all of our minds for what seemed our whole lives.

We began gathering research materials, wanting to know if anyone anywhere offered a solution to this persistent fatigue of contemporary arts labour. Any takes aside from what we’d already empirically observed: that this industry runs partly on unpaid labour, and partly on the hope that public and private funding can be distributed to where it ‘should’ be (all too contingent on awareness raising in the attention economy).

We read (and admittedly didn’t read) many texts, skimming dense academic writing, spending time with poems,

artist statements, essay anthologies, metatexts, union brochures, exhibition reviews. With ease of reading in mind, a desire to evade impenetrability is why I've erred on the side of the conversational in my writing thus far. A particularly funny and illuminating find was *Putting Art to Work*, an information kit from 1986 describing ways that unions and art workers can work together. Produced for Australia Council, it was conceived by Deborah Mills (then coordinator of Australia Council's Art and Working Life Programme) and written by Fiona Moore (then Arts Officer of Victorian Trades Hall Council). It contains such gems as 'Like most Australians, some unionists will have pre-conceptions about artworkers as different and maybe a bit strange.' It is a very good brochure.

Seb, Ada and I met for a couple of hours weekly, sorting out admin, writing emails, checking in with the artists (and hopefully making their work easier), sharing new things we'd seen. We met with the artists in person every month or so, showed them the exhibition space, met at Lockie's studio at VCA. Central to our understanding of curatorial work is the process of getting to deeply understand an artist's work, helping organise assistance for the artist, helping to communicate and interpret the work to others, and documenting the work. Mostly, our time together was caught up in the administrative, and the curatorial thinking around the exhibition evolved as the artists' work changed—sometimes quite considerably—over the course of the year.

In the hundreds of emails and Instagram DMs exchanged throughout this project, I have often found myself falling into the easy vernacular of cheery corporate speak when communicating with the exhibiting artists and gallery coordinators. 'Looking forward to', 'if you feel comfy', 'hope you're going well'. In an industry where friendships and professional relationships overlap, where looming project deadlines bring anxiety to camaraderie, and where curatorial care culture asks us to care some more, my retreat into scripted

emotion is a relief. In doing so, I evade emotional burnout. The constant knot in my brain is left to hold still in its precarious state, as I resort to a logical and almost robotic assessment of appropriate social cues in daily life, but the easiness afforded by this method also ushers in its own anxiety. Have I been genuine enough? Have I been sufficiently sincere? Does everyone I have ever spoken to feel appropriately cared for?

We were working on a show about labour, but we were creating labour for both ourselves and the artists. Seb and Ada, especially, juggled three or more jobs each. It seemed laughable and such a delightfully apt symptom of our contemporary work culture that we willingly injected ourselves with undue and unpaid fatigue. As Seb says in his text in this catalogue, arts work has rendered him a workaholic. Ada's text offers a different perspective to my feelings on the language of professional emails.

Quite truthfully, as we say in our exhibition text, *Labour Lexica* veers away from solution-oriented inquiry, employing both irreverence and sincerity to conduct a series of refusals and reversals. I hope this is evident in Maki, Lockie and Luce's work.



Maki Morita, *dance piece*, 2022. Installation view at Linden Projects Space. Photo by Sebastian Kainey.

Dance and Drudgery

Ada Coxall

Dear [insert number, sorry, name here]

We hope this automated message reaches you at around 5:09pm.

Thank you for contacting us recently about [insert item here]. Your [query/concern/emotion/helplessness/desperation/sense of dread] is very important to us.

While we have some time as the bureaucratic cogs have spanner upon spanner thrown into them, why not spend some of this time checking in. This may be a message that is sent to every one of our valued customers, but we want you to feel this is aimed directly at you, for you.

We don't just hope this message finds you, we hope that it finds you well. Are you well? Are you really? As we ask that you do not respond to this email directly (as this would be futile, you will merely be sent the same message again, which will seem to you passive aggressive), we will provide some possible replies below that may satisfy, or not.

If you are well, we are happy for you. Or rather perhaps, suspicious.

If you are not well, we are sorry to hear that. Sorry to hear it, but not at all surprised.

If you are neither well nor not, we congratulate you on being in the best state you can be to survive the status quo. Disengaged, emotionless, neutral.

We wish you a lovely weekend, though we know the week has just begun.

Mild regards,
[insert name]

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Thinking through Maki Morita's *dance piece*, I could not help but think of a very particular type of performance that comes across in work/professional emails. The style seems both natural and entirely not so. Interactions that sit in this practical medium, fixing issues, or perhaps pointing out more issues to be fixed later.

Yet this pragmatic, blunt style to ask questions or provide answers in a workplace and professional context is regardless mixed with a required type of personability. An almost formulaic imperative of civility, a veneer for the dry and blunt tip-tapping of the work rhythm. This is of course not reserved for the online, on-screen communication that transpires between work colleagues or interactions premised on 'professionalism'. Perhaps though I personally find I become aware of the formula as it plays out in an email chain, of my own performance of the structure. Saying 'I hope you are well' or 'have a lovely weekend' within the context of an email seem like those necessary bookends that... what? Break through the drudgery? Show 'care' in commerce? I can't read them as this though, and instead see them as another facet of the bureaucratic performance, a mere call and echo, (I hope you are well, I am well thank you).



This survey was proudly brought to you by the Bureau of Emotive Statistics.

Maki Morita, Bureau of Emotive Statistics logo, 2022.
Courtesy the artist.

This type of language, this way of communicating, can feel vapid and ultimately apathetic, yet we play along regardless. We make those motions. Perhaps because we feel there needs to be at least some ‘human’ within the slog of work commentary and motion. Yet the context they are in, the work email, diffuses and clouds something fully emotive.

Maki Morita’s work *dance piece* takes another format immediately recognisable to anyone who has ever used a service, bought something from a company or perhaps been asked to provide other forms of feedback. The survey form. Always laden with language bent to garner useful information for a particular purpose. You check boxes, slide a bar or provide a curt response. Experience and opinion is boiled down to a series of ‘highly likely’s’ and ‘not likely’s’, the form reduces and alienates. Morita’s work though posits an experiment, a movement provocation, to puncture through that detachment, twisting the logic of the survey format to disturb the layer of bureaucratic dust. This dust is quite literally shaken off in our bodily reactions to the form’s curious set of instructions. The form slides out of the screen onto the floor and walls of the gallery, becoming spatial. Your body moves in direct response to the questions and prompts the survey creates.

Bodily autonomy is suspended, if only for a moment, as you follow the weird and playful logic of this form. As you move, you dance, as you dance, you become a performer. In these motions, your attention is brought to the way we all dance to a tune, in many of our interactions with systems whose structures require regimented, often repetitive, movements and thought. While we may be used to this way of being and acting in the day- to-day social and formal way we live our lives, a feeling of disquiet can creep in. In this busy, productivity-oriented world of ours, the peculiarity—even the dull hilarity—of it all is only just under all that surface, sometimes it takes a bit of play to scratch and reveal.



Maki Morita, Bureau of Emotive Statistics logo and Certificate of Completion, 2022. Installation view at Linden Projects Space. Photo by Sebastian Kainey.

dance piece wriggles and squirms within its format, asking questions that provoke emotional check-ins and seeking a degree of trust and commitment for something that is ultimately a useless (or use-averse) exercise. The questions have no purpose outside of the moment they make you move in answer. You receive a certificate of completion that does nothing but attest to the un-certifiability—and un-productivity—of the form and the actions you had taken during those 5 precious minutes.

Within the job-aholic culture that late-capitalism concocts, frustration, fatigue and a feeling of constant stagnation are strong tastes in the mouth, like an instant coffee in the staff room. Maki Morita's *dance piece* recognises the forms (in both its meanings) our bodies and minds are forced into in the bureaucratic slog. Morita's work takes the regimented form and twists, if not to offer respite, then to at least show your own performance, and perhaps to hint at your own agency.

Biographies

Lachlan Marley's multi-disciplinary approach is informed by a curiosity about materials of practicality and what they represent now compared to what they could represent. His installations reveal a poetic appreciation of space and surface, drawing from the narratives in Irish lore and Greek myth and a playful approach to making. Marley is interested in suspending the constructive trajectory of the pre-supposed narrative embodied in the tools of language and material which are used to build our everyday. Marley explores unmaking as a means of making, through the use of tools, glues, metals, concrete composites, structural timber, and fire. By doing so, he attempts to disrupt chosen mediums by questioning linguistic and utilitarian functions.

Luce Nguyễn-Hunt is an emerging Vietnamese, Sāmoan and Rarotongan artist currently based in Naarm. Their research-based practice documents an evolving cultural gender-sexuality divergence through digitally manipulated moving image and photography installations. Using poetry, text and sound as an embodiment of cultural memory, they are interested in dissecting non-linguistic experiences in the face of non- or partial language knowledge.

In 2021, Nguyễn-Hunt co-founded ANTHEM ARI, an artist-run initiative dedicated to celebrating the practices of First Nations, diasporic, and LGBTQIA+ identifying creatives of colour in Australia. Given the precarity of the arts industry, they have traversed a number of professional roles as a curator, artsworker and installations technician. Viewed as an extension of their arts practice, their curatorial work hopes to champion emerging creatives who are becoming leaders and active voices, to share their stories and encourage us to share ours.

Maki Morita is a writer and performance-maker living and working on unceded Wurundjeri country.

Maki is currently remounting her play *Trash Pop Butterflies, Dance Dance Paradise* (reading at fortyfivedownstairs, live season TBA in 2023). She is a 2022 Wheeler Centre Playwright Hot Desk Fellow and has participated in Express Media's Toolkits: Fiction program. Recent or forthcoming panels, readings and workshops include those at National Young Writers Festival, Feminist Book Week, Yardstick and The Wheeler Centre.

In 2020, Maki graduated with a Master of Theatre (Writing) from the Victorian College of the Arts, where she was awarded the Portland House Theatre Outreach scholarship. She was fortunate to receive the 2022 George Fairfax Memorial Award, which allowed her to travel to New York and receive mentorship from experimental playwright Sibyl Kempson—founder of 7 Daughters of Eve Thtr & Perf. Co.

Ada Coxall is an arts worker based in Naarm. She completed a Master of Art Curatorship at the University of Melbourne, having completed a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and English Literature prior. She has a background in theatre, and has worked with institutions and initiatives such as Ian Potter Museum, Arts Centre, Gertrude Street Projection Festival, Next Wave, Sustainable Living Festival, Brunswick Mechanics Institute and George Paton Gallery.

Coral Guan is an arts worker based in Naarm, completing a Master of Art Curatorship at the University of Melbourne. They have worked with the National Gallery of Victoria, Buxton Contemporary, the Museum of Chinese Australian History, Channels Festival and many other arts organisations.

Sebastian Kainey is an arts worker based in Naarm. Sebastian holds a Master of Art Curatorship at the University of Melbourne, and in 2015, completed a Bachelor of Arts (Photography) degree at RMIT. With a passion for contemporary art and supporting emerging artists, Sebastian has worked with numerous art spaces, including: Incinerator Gallery, Bus Projects, Blindside Gallery, MILK Gallery, La Trobe Art Institute, and Music Archive of Monash University.