

ARTS HOUSE PRESENTS

A LOVER'S DISCOURSE

MALCOLM WHITTAKER



ARTS HOUSE

ARTS HOUSE
MEAT MARKET

FRIDAY 12
AUGUST, 2011

CAST AND CREATIVE

Malcolm Whittaker

malcolmwhittaker.com

a lover's discourse has been supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.

Image: Malcolm Whittaker

“To be loved is to be the object of concern. Our presence noted. Our identity understood. Our views are listened to. Our failings are treated with indulgence and our needs ministered to. In love we enjoy protection from the benevolent gaze of others.”

Alain de Botton, *Status Anxiety*

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 YOU & YOUR WORK

MALCOLM WHITTAKER

Malcolm Whittaker is a young man from Sydney who works as an interdisciplinary artist. He does this in solo pursuits, as a member of performance group Team MESS and in other collaborations with artists and non-artists. Each is a process of consistently struggling and toying within the conventions, rituals and spectacles of the everyday - seeking to close a critical distance between the work and the viewer in order to open up a shared space of experience, exchange and possibility. The material situations of these spaces range from theatre and gallery settings to site-specific and public interventions to performance lectures, telephone calls, letters in the mail and the borrowing of books from the library.

In 2010 Malcolm was supported by an Australia Council for the Arts ArtStart grant and personal highlights were presenting *Kansas*, with Georgie Meagher, at the ANTI Festival in Kuopio, Finland; *This Is It*, with Team MESS at the LiveWorks Festival at Performance Space, Sydney; and *Starfuckers* with his partner Laura Caesar at Merrigong Theatre Company, Wollongong. He recently held his first solo exhibition at Firstdraft Gallery, Sydney; was an external writer and performer for Sylvia Rimat's *I guess if the stage exploded* at the Spill Festival, London and Mayfest, Bristol and presented *This Is It* with Team MESS at the Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts. He is currently working on a new project with Team MESS as part of the Kickstart Initiative for the 2012 Next Wave festival, Melbourne.

DEAR AUDIENCE,

a lover's discourse is an international participatory art love project that was originally initiated in 2010. It began with a performance lecture and a call-out to people who were interested in writing love letters to strangers across the globe.

In 2011, thanks to the support of Arts House, the project has grown to encompass participants from Australia, England, Ireland, Finland, Germany, Canada and the USA.

Despite the love letters being fictional game-play the result has been one of uniting in strangely intimate exchanges.

The outcomes of these exchanges, or unrequited lack of outcome in some cases, are the focus of this evening's event. A sharing from some Melbourne-based participants and the opportunity for them to 'meet' their lovers online by way of anonymous random-stranger chat site Omegle. This extension of the project was devised as a way of sharing the project with a public, and was originally presented in November last year at the LiveWorks Festival at Performance Space, Sydney - in partnership with the You and Your Work Festival at the Arnolfini, Bristol.

The project continues to play itself in the personal time and space of the participants. It's about the thrill of receiving a personal hand-written letter in the mail from a stranger who somehow knows and loves you. It's about the place of language and intimacy in a culture caught up in compulsive modernity. It's about

our ever-evolving world and how the Earth can alternately feel too large and too small a place, and sometimes...just right.

Mute with the love of your presence.

Malcolm. x

THANK YOU

Special thanks to Melbourne-based participants involved in tonight's presentation: Sam Duncan, Skye Gellmann, Laura Hughes and Lara Thoms - along with Laura Caesar, Rosie Fisher, Sylvia Rimat and everyone at Arts House for all their ongoing support and assistance.

ARTS HOUSE

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Arts House is a City of Melbourne contemporary arts initiative. Each year Arts House presents a curated program of contemporary art featuring performances, exhibitions, live art, installations and cultural events.

Arts House operates as a multi-dimensional resource hub for artists: producing, programming, devising, supporting and funding. Work is presented across two sites: Arts House, North Melbourne Town Hall and Arts House, Meat Market.

Arts House values arts and culture that help create a world where people are actively engaged, aware and empowered to participate, politically and culturally, to make positive change.

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