

Erasing All Excess
to Bring Art Back to Earth

Agatha Gothe-Snape

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Agatha Gothe-Snape
Born 1980
in Sydney, Australia.
Lives in Sydney, Australia

- 2006 Founded Wrong Solo, collaborative performance group with Brian Fuata
- 2011 Featured solo exhibition at Anna Scharitz Gallery, Sydney and joined "Power to the People" at Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne
- 2012 Included in the group show at Queensland Art Gallery
- 2013 Appeared in the group exhibition at Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne
- 2014 Participated in the Berlin Biennale

Agatha Gothe-Snape works in materially reductive ways, which is to say that her installations contain the bare minimum of elements required to muster a set of ideas. Call it an economy of means. But her work is never dry, and frequently betrays an empathetic humour. Moreover, it offers some fascinating considerations on the nature of art, particularly the tendency of its limits to coincide uncomfortably—though not unproductively—with the stakes invested in it.

Late sculpture and heavy reading (2013) and *A Planet with Two Suns* (2012–13) oppose the intensity and bombast with which opinions about art can be held against its frequently modest material reality, represented by a simple formalist sculpture in the former, an array of two-colour flags and innocent chatter in the latter. These stakes in *Late sculpture and heavy reading* are represented by a transcribed account

of a violent confrontation between two artists at a party in 1992; for *A Planet with Two Suns* it is the late critic Robert Hughes's pious dismissal of all things avant-garde.

Every artist remembered (2009/2011), Gothe-Snape works with a series of invited collaborating artists to recall, on an alternating basis, as the names of as many artists as possible during a two-hour workshop. The objects that result from each engagement are large sheets of paper on which the handwritten names form synaptic constellations, reflections on the contingency of memory, and the unexpected relationships that can be created through conversation. Gothe-Snape reminds us that art is nothing more or less than a human project, and takes solace and joy from this ineluctable truth. ☺

By Reuben Keehan

A Planet with Two Suns, 2013, performance documentation, by Agatha Gothe-Snape and Susan Gibb, as part of "WorkOut: 7 Days of Experimental Performance," at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, Sydney, 2013. Courtesy: the artist and The Commercial Gallery, Sydney

