



LEFT: Sasha GRBICH with Heidi Angove, *Very Local Radio*, 2014-15, still image from live performance. Photo by Zihan Loo. Courtesy the artist.
 RIGHT: Julian DAY, *White Noise*, 2016, installation view, *NEW16*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art. Photo by Matthew Stanton. Courtesy the artist.

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2018 Samstag Scholarships announced

The University of South Australia is delighted to announce the **2018 Anne & Gordon Samstag International Visual Arts Scholarships**. The two recipients of the prestigious scholarships are **Sasha Grbich**, from South Australia, and **Julian Day**, from New South Wales.

The Scholarships provide each artist with a twelve-month living allowance of US \$48,000 (United States dollars), as well as travel expenses and the cost of institutional study fees at a leading international art school of their choice.

Sasha Grbich is an artist working in the forms of sculpture, installation, sound and video. An avid collector of strange ‘things’, found footage, sounds and stories, she is fascinated by the ways art interacts with everyday life. Grbich creates experiences that explore how art performs with audience and in local environments. A graduate of Adelaide Central School of Art (2003), Grbich lectures at the School in Video and Performance, Installation, and coordinates the Bachelor of Visual Arts Degree and Honours degrees. In 2015 she completed postgraduate research at University of South Australia, examining the operation of art making practice as a series of ‘performative encounters’.

“[Sasha Grbich’s] socially engaged practice is deeply attuned to the subtle rhythms and background hums of the real world,” says Adelaide based artist, writer and curator Andrew Purvis. “Through live art actions, relational situations and video documentation, Grbich employs a process of sensitive and attentive listening to open up a space in which difficult or seemingly impossible conversations can occur.”

“Grbich’s works are often iterative; once she has established a process, she revisits that method in new spaces or with different participants. This approach gives precedence to the contributions made by her subjects, allowing us to hear the distinct modulations of different communities or environments.”

Julian Day is an artist, composer, writer and broadcaster whose work treats sound as a vital means of examining the world. He looks to sound’s deeply relational and territorial properties as a series of tensions between abstract and political forces. This plays out in site-responsive performances, installation, video and text. Day holds a Master of Fine Arts at Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney (2015) and a Bachelor of Music (Hons), Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Griffith University, Brisbane (2001).

“My work deploys sound’s material properties—its promiscuous spread, its relational intimacy—to reveal and examine hidden or overt power relations,” Day explains.

“In a world where art is a commodity that is protected and preserved by public institutions and the private market, sound provides an interesting avenue for alternative modes of engagement,” says arts writer Jenna McKenzie.

“Day uses sound to dissolve the usual boundaries of property and personal space. He experiments with the perimeters of a self-referential system through inversion, inclusion and disruption, and, in doing so, presents a collaborative, more equitable way of approaching art.”

Erica Green, Director of the University’s Anne & Gordon Samstag Museum of Art, which administers the scholarships program, says that the Samstag Scholarships program—now in their twenty-sixth year—can celebrate the awarding of no fewer than 140 scholarships, their total value exceeding ten million American dollars. “It is truly a wonderful benefaction and holds with it a history of achievement. Gordon Samstag’s remarkable in perpetuity bequest has now provided unprecedented opportunities for Australian artists to develop their practice at a pivotal moment in their career”.

Most importantly, she observes the 2017 scholars, “Jacqueline Felstead and Zoe Kirkwood, who are now just commencing their study respectively at the Royal College of Art and Glasgow School of Art in the United Kingdom, have exciting and enviable experiences ahead of them, studying overseas and supported by their well-funded Samstag Scholarship”.

The selection committee for the 2018 Samstag Scholarships comprised Simon Biggs (Professor of Art, Director: South Australian School of Art, University of South Australia), Christian Lock (Lecturer: Painting, School of Art, Architecture and Design, University of South Australia) and Angela Valamanesh, internationally exhibited artist and a celebrated former recipient of a Samstag Scholarship in 1996. Said Professor Biggs: “The quality of applicants for the 2018 Samstag Scholarships was high but there were two that were especially strong. Julian Day impressed with his experimental works that explore the space between visual and sonic art, musical sculptures that are almost surreal in their combination of elements and their odd logic; and Sasha Grbich, as an artist working with installation, performance, sound and video, whose work engages with the everyday, bringing together the quotidian as an expanded assemblage of small and large scale things and events of the world around us.”

The University of South Australia has commissioned two Adelaide-based writers to introduce the practices of our 2018 Samstag Scholars; artist, writer and curator Andrew Purvis on Sasha Grbich and arts writer Jenna McKenzie on Julian Day. Both pieces of writing are available on the Samstag Scholarships website along with images of both artists’ work.

Samstag Scholarships are awarded by the University of South Australia on behalf of the Trustee of the estate of Gordon Samstag, the celebrated American artist who taught at the South Australian School of Art in the 1960s.

The University of South Australia warmly congratulates Sasha Grbich and Julian Day, and looks forward to following their careers!

For further information contact

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