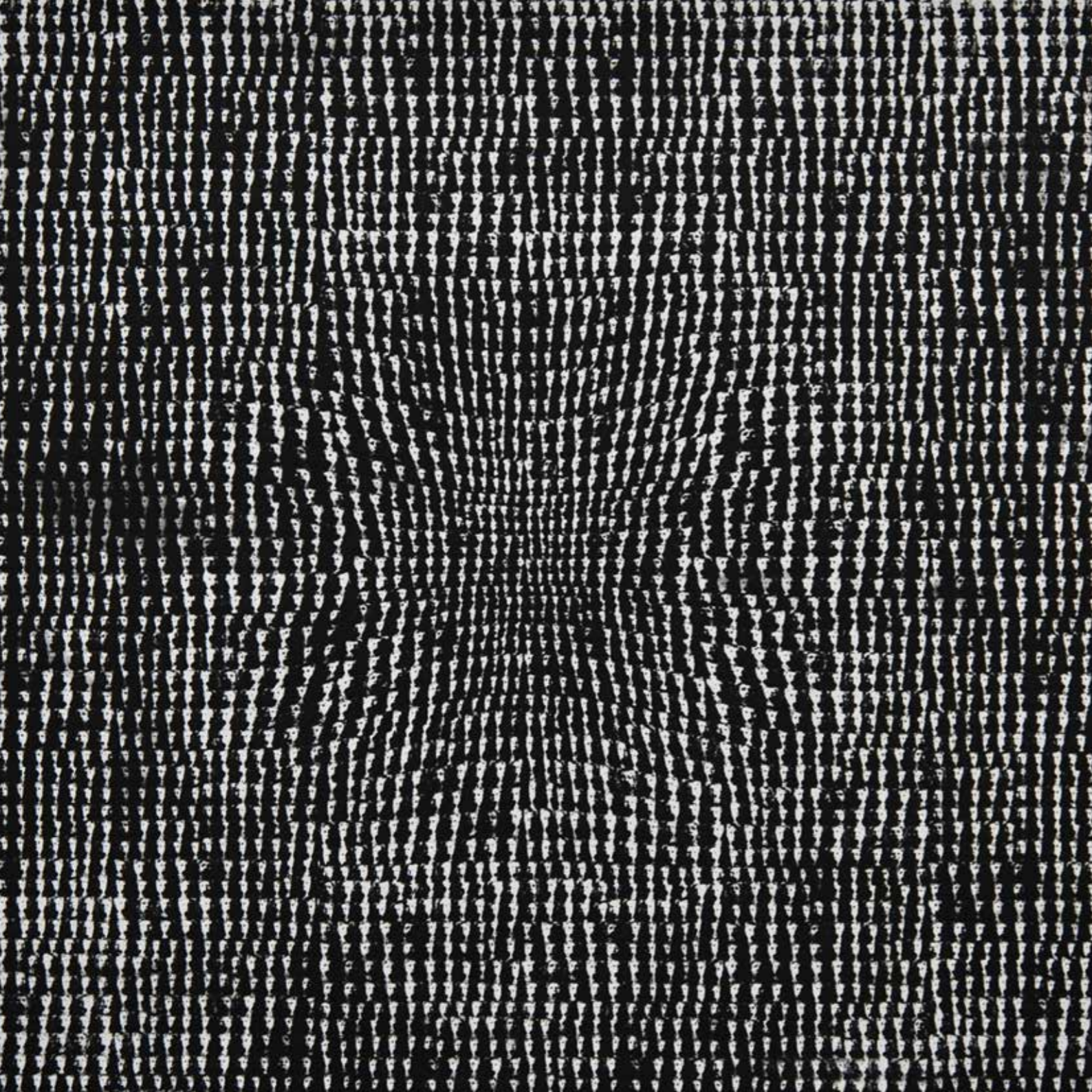




ECHO / ALEKSANDRA ANTIC

JULY 3 - AUGUST 25 / 2013



## FOREWORD

STEVE SAFFELL

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
COUNTRY ARTS SA

Every artist speaks through their work. At Country Arts SA we understand art is often used as a means of communicating across different times, personalities and cultural boundaries.

In 2011, we launched the inaugural Breaking Ground award in conjunction with the Adelaide Festival Centre's Artspace Gallery.

Breaking Ground gives a practicing contemporary artist from regional South Australia the opportunity to develop a body of work for exhibition at the Artspace Gallery along with funds for an exclusive mentorship opportunity.

This year we celebrate Aleksandra Antic, the second Breaking Ground Award recipient. The Auburn based, Belgrade born artist's exhibition comprises of drawings, prints and installations.

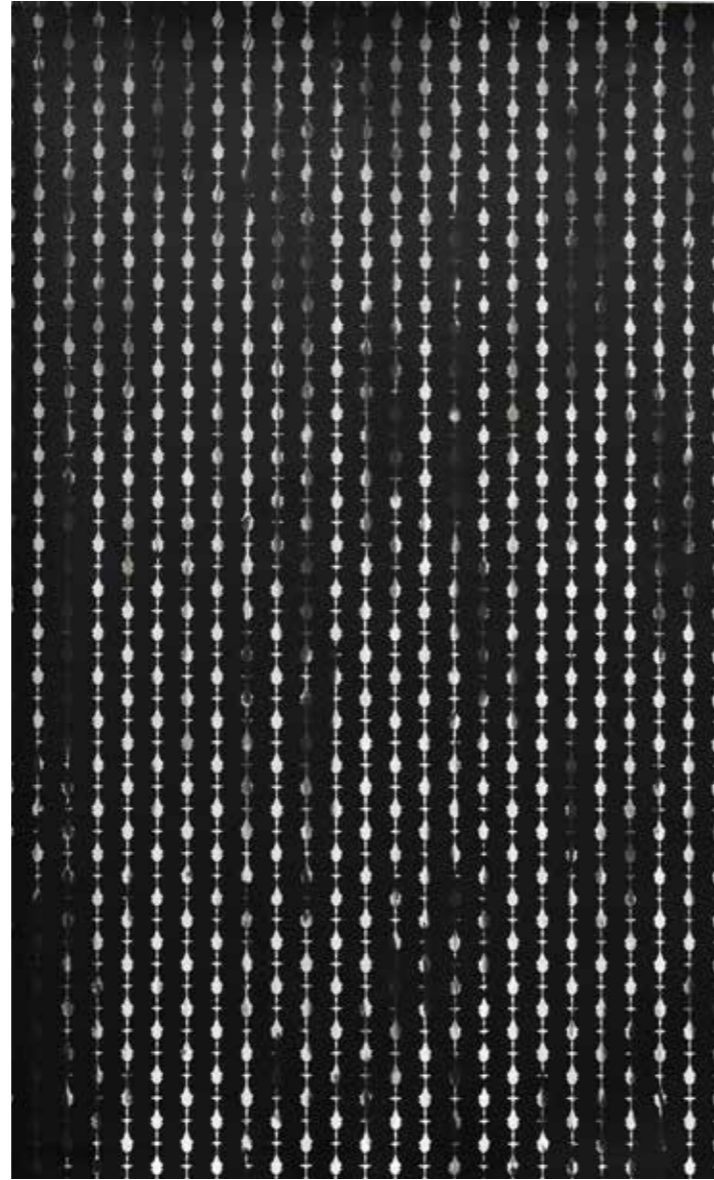
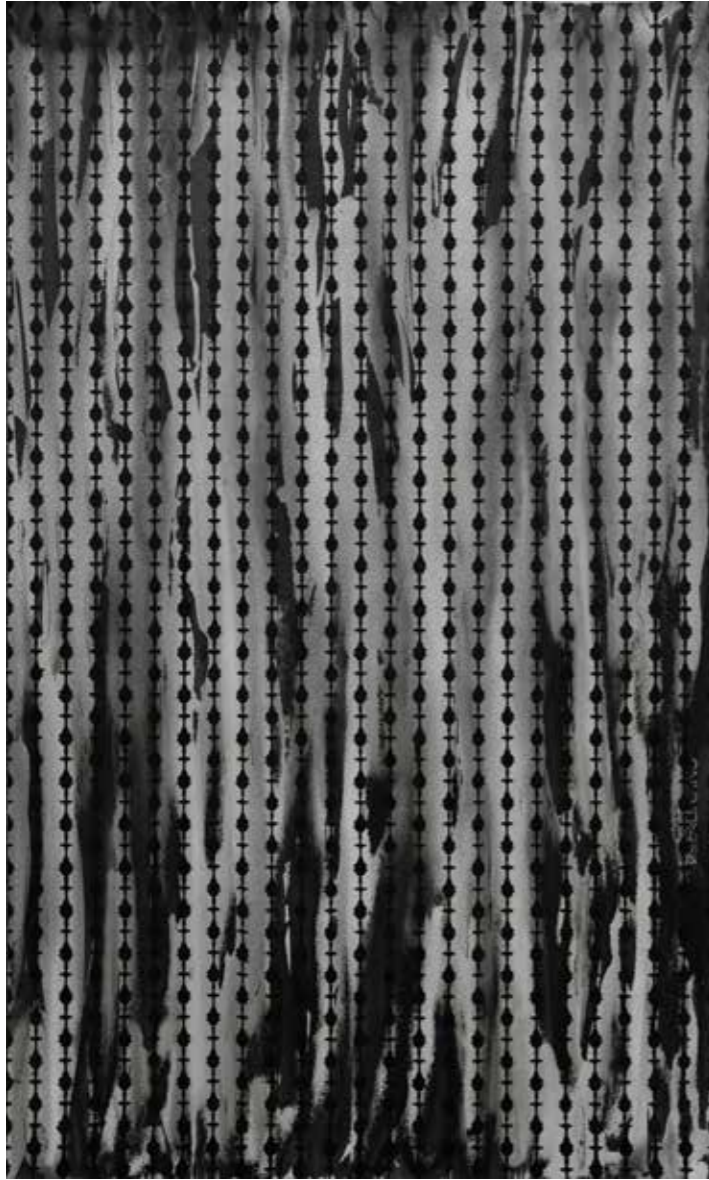
Aleksandra's work was deemed to have exceptional qualities of craftsmanship and her desire to connect with the viewer was regarded by our esteemed panel of visual arts professionals as something to be celebrated.

Inspired by the ancient myth of Echo, this exhibition explores the boundaries of communication and its impact on the search for self-identity.

Aleksandra says her work allows for analogies with her migrant experience and the realisation that a foreign language will always have a new word, sentence or cultural concept which you feel is beyond your reach, but as humans we will always find a way to communicate our thoughts.

The figure of Echo strongly conceptualises the idea that our sense of self relies on acceptance from others. Our capacity to communicate plays the crucial role.

As Chief Executive Officer of Country Arts SA it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Breaking Ground exhibition for 2013, *Echo*.



## ECHO

OLGA SANKEY

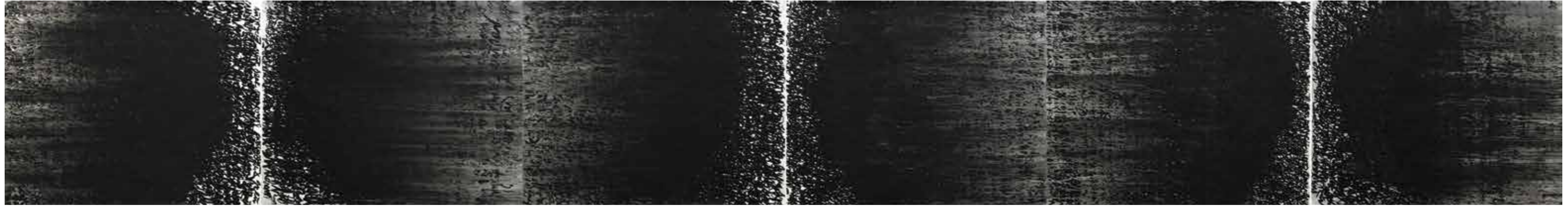
ARTIST, SENIOR LECTURER  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH  
AUSTRALIA

The real subjects of myths lie beyond story or narrative. A myth's 'story' is a way of communicating some deeper meaning such as questions about morality and living: how we should/can/cannot act in particular circumstances. The function of myth is as 'an invitation to the reader or viewer to interpret, that is, to construct meaning' and this 'is surely at the heart of myth's enduring appeal.'<sup>1</sup>

The classical myth of Echo and Narcissus was included in the Roman poet Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, completed in 8AD. In this version, the forest nymph Echo falls in love with the beautiful youth, Narcissus, desired by many yet impervious to their affections. Her attempts to declare her love are futile however as she has been punished by Juno and she is reduced to only being able to repeat the words of others. This inability to express herself and the

rejection by Narcissus leave her heartbroken and she eventually wastes away. When Nemesis, the goddess of revenge, hears of Echo's sad fate, she punishes Narcissus by luring him to a pool where he promptly falls in love with his own reflection and he too wastes away as the result of unrequited love. Ironically each character becomes locked into a reflective/repetitive cycle from which there is no escape and which eventually destroys them both. If Echo is denied self-identity through being unable to meaningfully communicate with others, then Narcissus is ultimately destroyed by his obsession with his own self.

<sup>1</sup> Wallace, I. and Hirsh, J. (eds) *Contemporary Art and Classical Myth*, Ashgate Pub. 2011, p5



The fact that 'echo', 'narcissism' and 'nemesis' have become a part of our vocabulary is a testament to the extent to which this myth is embedded in Western culture, and Echo and Narcissus have inspired figurative works by a number of celebrated painters in centuries past. Interestingly, with the advent of photography in the late 19th century, which in a sense liberated art from having to literally represent the 'real' world and its stories, the relationship between art and myth has gradually shifted from being largely pictorial and illustrative, to one which can focus more on the implicit meaning rather than on the explicit details of the story.

For Aleksandra Antic the figure of Echo stands for the idea that our sense of self relies on acceptance by others and that our capacity to communicate plays a crucial role in achieving this. Anyone who has found themselves being unable to communicate – perhaps when travelling in a foreign country – would also have experienced the initial frustration and eventual sense of isolation, even desolation, that such a situation can bring about.

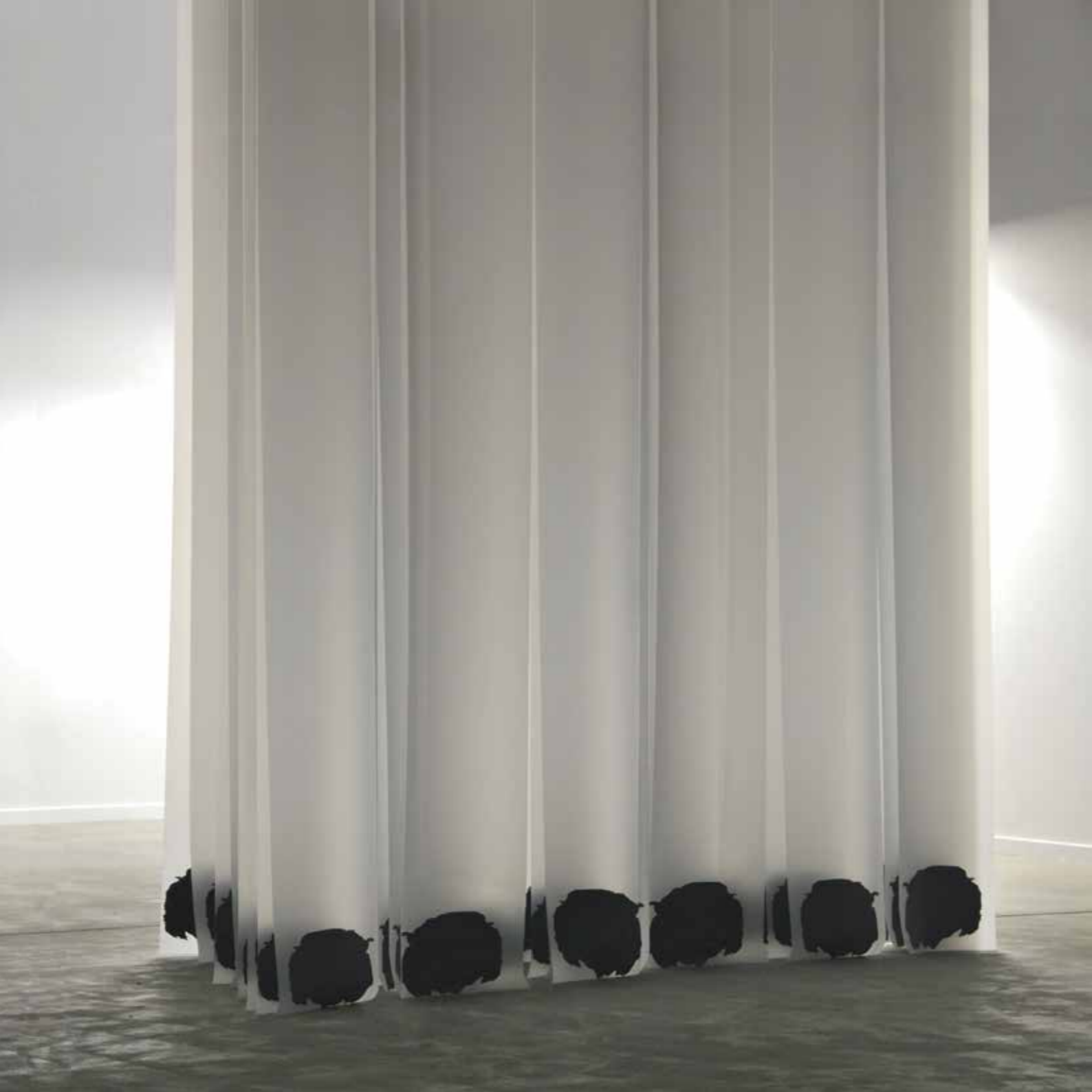
Antic says she was drawn to this myth as it offered an analogy with her own migrant experience. For her, the story in essence deals with the idea that our perception of reality and ourselves is always mediated, constructed and culturally contingent. Without language there is no interactive context in which to operate. Echo's absurd predicament leaves her uttering words and fragments of speech with no meaningful context, just sounds.

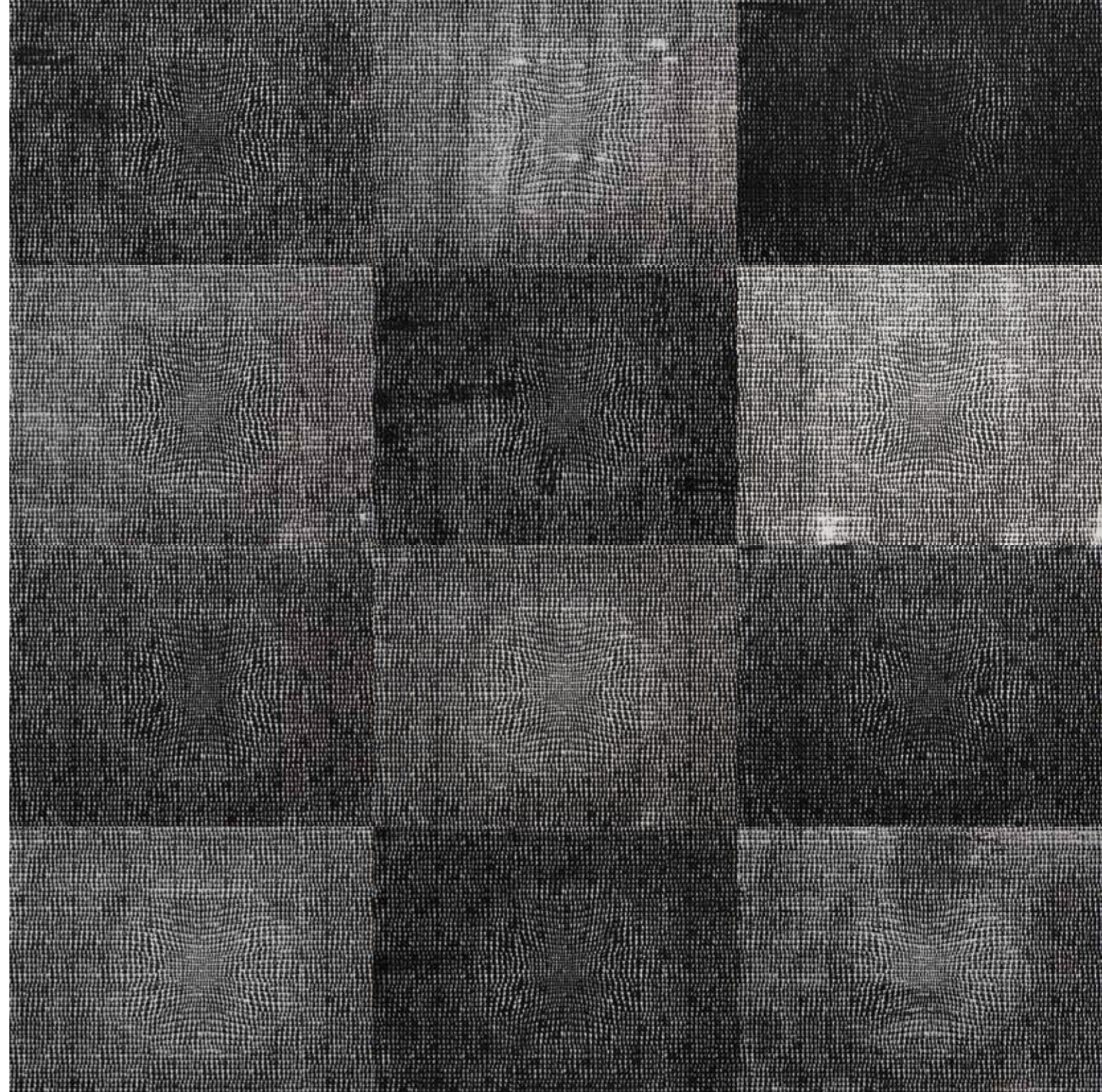
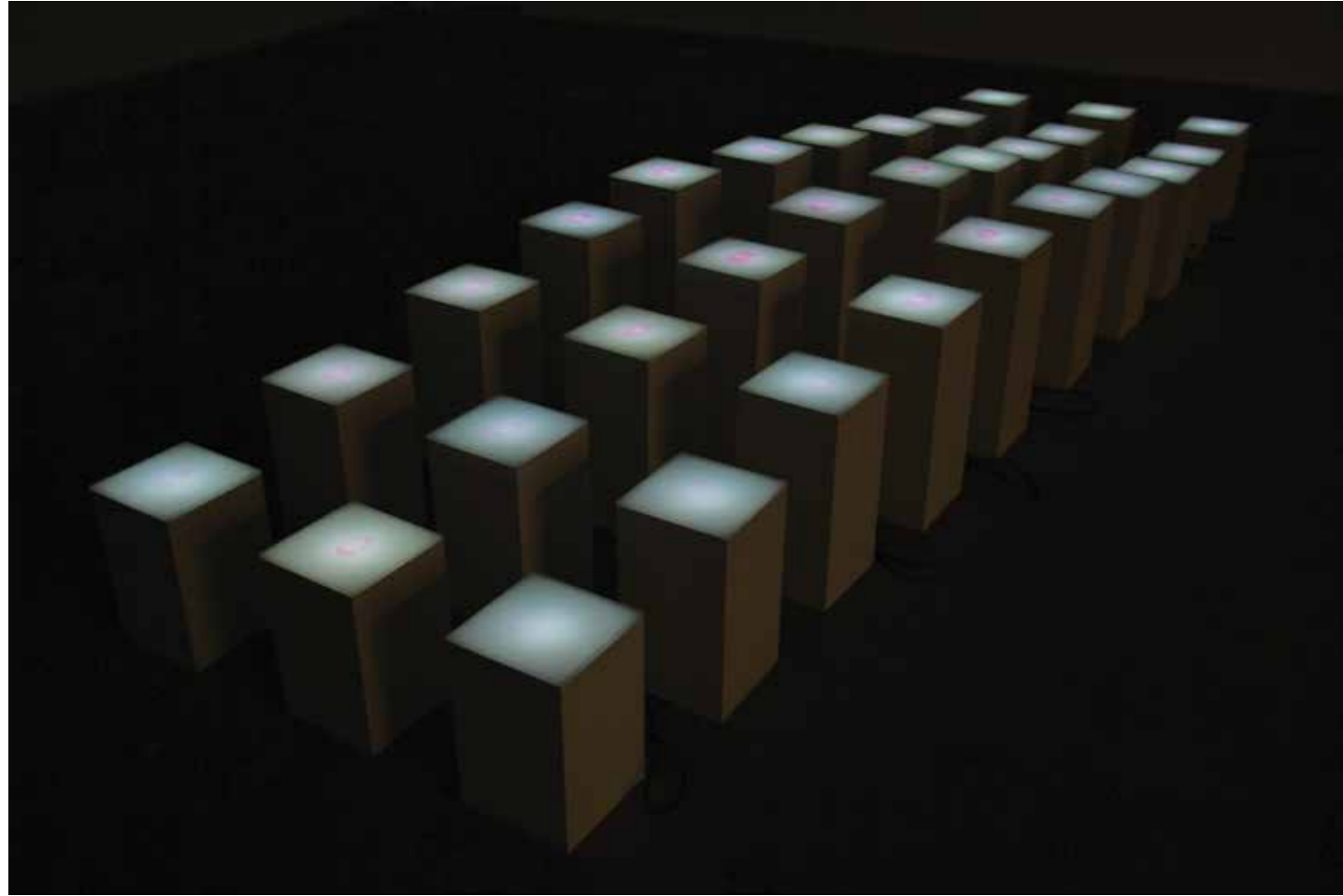
Printmaking is based on the principle of repetition using a matrix. The repeated images can be more or less exact replicas or a set of variations based on an original matrix. For Antic, use of the repeated image allows her to evoke the sense of rhythm and movement and to contrast it with the images and gestures that suggest silence and absence of immediately "readable" forms. The mouth, open as in mid-utterance, features throughout the exhibition. Silence there is, but not quietness.

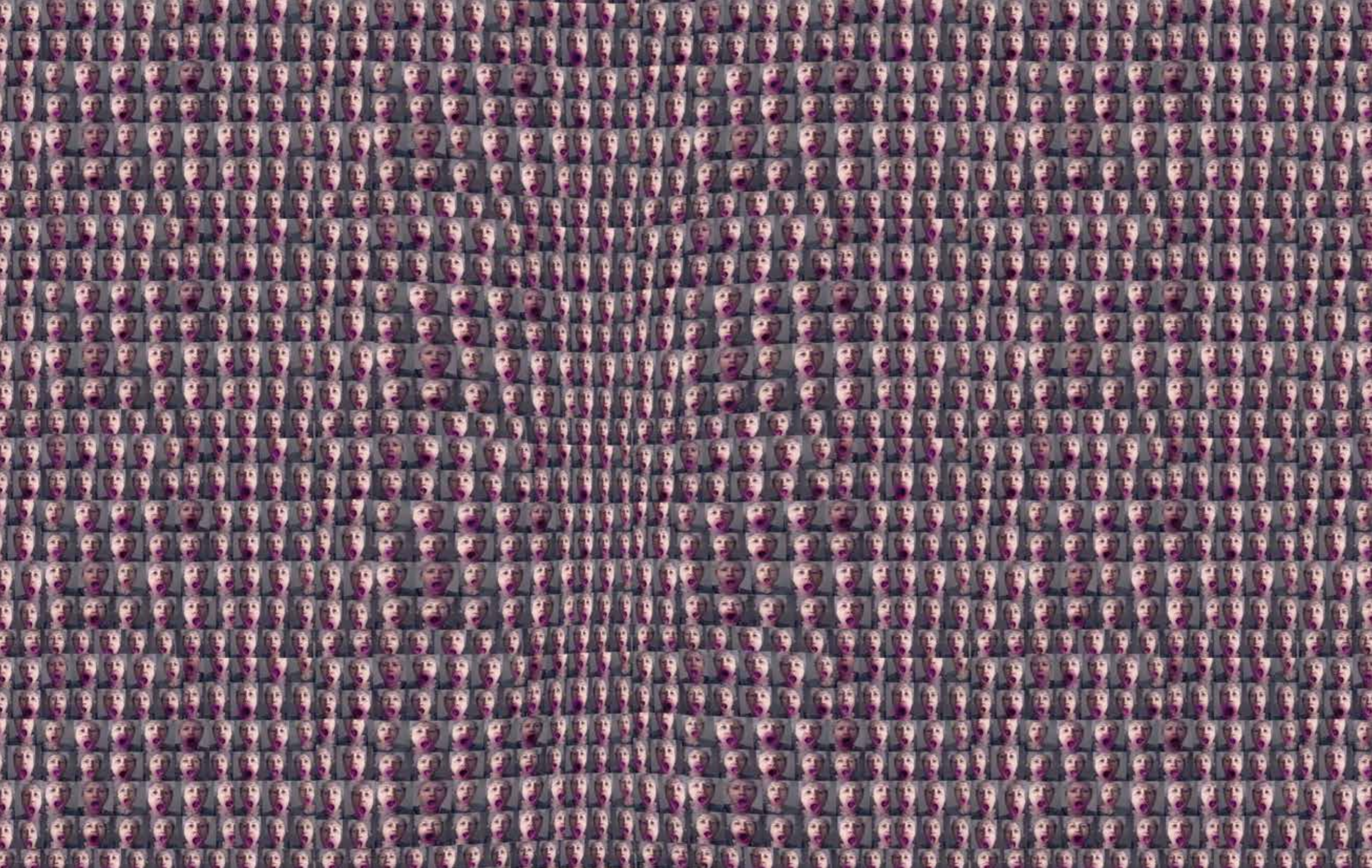
In *Aporos #2* (a Greek word meaning impassable and related to *aporia*, a state of perplexity), repeated images of the open-mouthed artist's head pulsate across the sheet of paper with an evocative power that echoes Munch's famous image of the scream. In another work, *Infinite Digression*, the artist's profile is repeated both horizontally and vertically and engages the viewer in the well-known perceptual phenomenon of the reversing figure ground (profile/vase). The resulting visual instability is as unsettling as the idea of only talking to oneself.

The exhibition consists of drawings, prints and installation works. Works that are structured more formally are offset by others that are gestural and suggestive of a frantic clawing of empty space. The use of dense, layered blacks and diffuse, transparent film, together with controlled lighting, evoke the near darkness of the forest. The installation *Gasp*, consisting of thirty eerily glowing columns of varying heights, contributes to creating a dark, suffocating atmosphere. Lost in the woods.

The artist has used scale and repetition to create an immersive environment which evokes the disturbing world of Echo and invites the viewer to consider contemporary challenges of connecting with others and with oneself...with others and with oneself... and with oneself.







## LIST OF IMAGES

- Cover **Resounding**, (detail), Ink on paper, 660 x 90 cm
- 2 **Aporos # 2 (White Noise)** (detail), Screenprint on paper, 220 x 195 cm
- 4 **Infinite Digression**, mixed media on paper, 100 x 60 cm each
- 6 / 7 **Resounding**, Ink on paper, 660 x 90 cm
- 8 **Lapse**, Screenprint on drafting film, 320 x 240 x 80 cm approx
- 9 **Untitled**, Ink on paper, 230 x 75 cm
- 10 **Gasp**, Lipstick, drafting film, perspex, mdf, led lights, 30 pieces, dimensions variable
- 11 **Aporos # 2 (White Noise)**, Screenprint on paper, 220 x 195 cm
- 12 **Aporos #1**, Digital projection, dimensions variable

All works from 2013

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### MAJOR PRESENTING PARTNERS



### THANK YOU

#### COUNTRY ARTS SA

Chief Executive Officer, Steve Saffell  
Manager Artform Development, Craig Harrison  
Visual Arts Coordinator, Anna Goodhind

#### ADELAIDE FESTIVAL CENTRE

Adelaide Festival Centre Trustees  
Chief Executive Officer & Artistic Director, Douglas Gautier  
Management & Staff  
Visual Arts Curator Creative Programs, Charissa Davies  
Visual Arts Curator Creative Programs, Maggie Fletcher

#### THE ARTIST WOULD LIKE TO THANK

The artist would like to thank Helen Fuller for her invaluable insights and creative support throughout this project and Olga Sankey for essay and so much more beyond words. Thank you Anna, Katinka, Craig, Beth, Helene and Steve from Country Arts SA and Charissa and Maggie from Artspace gallery for all the hard work, good will and the logistical support in making the most of this invaluable opportunity.

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Catalogue design, Beth Wuttke  
Photography courtesy of the artist

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The Country Arts SA Visual Artist Professional Development Award provides a practicing contemporary visual artist from country South Australia the opportunity to develop a body of work for exhibition in a major gallery space in metropolitan Adelaide and receive a mentorship opportunity to further their career.

## ALEKSANDRA ANTIC / CV

Born in Belgrade, Serbia  
Lives and works in Auburn, SA

#### EDUCATION

- 1992 Diploma in Textile Design, Belgrade School for Industrial Design and Technology, Serbia
- 1997 Bachelor of Visual Arts, Belgrade University of Arts, Serbia
- 2008 Bachelor of Education, University of South Australia
- 2012 Bachelor of Visual Arts Honours (First Class), South Australian School of Arts, University of South Australia
- 2013 Masters by Research (Visual Arts) candidate, South Australian School of Arts, University of South Australia

#### SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2013 A short History of Decay, Nexus Multicultural Art Centre, Adelaide (forthcoming)
- 2013 Echo, Artspace Gallery, Adelaide Festival Centre
- 2012 Sootheest Sleep, Artlab, Adelaide
- 2011 Playhouse, Prospect Gallery, Adelaide
- 2010 Glade, Red Opus Art Space, Adelaide
- 2009 Meander, Red Opus Art Space, Adelaide
- 2004 Dithyramb, Cultural Centre "Kragujevac", Serbia

#### SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2013 Helpmann Academy Graduate Exhibition, Torrens Parade Drill Hall, Adelaide, SA
- 2012 Hunt, SASA Gallery, Adelaide
- 2012 Limestone Coast Art Prize, Keith, SA
- 2011 Sublimation, Worth Gallery at Fisher Jeffries, Adelaide
- 2011 Wish List, Craftsouth, Adelaide
- 2010 Blake Prize Director's Cut Exhibition
- 2010 SALA exhibition, Red Opus Art Space, Adelaide
- 2007 Iconographica, Nexus Multicultural Art Centre, SA
- 1999 Annual ULUPUDS exhibition, Cvjeta Zuzoric Art Pavilion, Belgrade, Serbia
- 1998 Belgrade Biennial of drawings and small sculptures, Cvjeta Zuzoric Art Pavilion, Serbia
- 1997 International Graphic art Biennial, Cluj, Romania
- 1997 Biennial of Yugoslavian drawings, Belgrade Cultural Centre, Serbia
- 1997 International Biennial of Graphic Art, Sunce Gallery, Leskovac, Serbia
- 1997 Ex Libris International Exhibition, Rijeka, Croatia
- 1996 International Biennial of small format art, Gornji Milanovac, Serbia

#### COLLECTIONS

Private collections in South Australia, New South Wells, Greece, Finland and Serbia.

Full CV available on request



ΕΙΡΗΝΗ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΑΚΕΛΑ \ ΟΗΣΕ

ΙΟΥΛ 3 - ΑΥΓΟΥΣΤ 22 \ 2013