

## ANNE KAY

**M**Y OWN CONNECTION WITH ARIS BEGAN WHEN I LEFT ART school in 1993 and started a group called Cross Art. It was made up of twelve graduating art students and we met monthly to show slides of recent work in order to get critical feedback. The group ran for several years and while we were too polite to be really useful to each other with our critiques, it did provide an incredibly important source of peer support. The contact with other artists mitigated the feelings of isolation that come about through working on your own. This was particularly important when there was little interest from others outside the group, either in the art world or in the broader community.

From 1993 to 2000, I was peripherally engaged with a number of artist-run galleries, either exhibiting in them or socialising at their openings. In 2000, Elvis Richardson invited me to join an artists' group she was starting. She was keen to use a shop front in Chippendale as a gallery. She wanted to run it for six months as a project space, after which the group would shift to other kinds of art activities. We called ourselves Elastic. The members of the group included: Lisa Andrew, Jay Balbi, DeeJ Fabyc, Sarah Goffman, Mark Hislop, Andrew Hurlle, Leah Mcleod, Elvis Richardson and myself. We each programmed a three-week period so there was no need to seek out exhibition proposals – an attempt to avoid the bureaucracy of frequent meetings etc. The group continued on for several years with different members. Subsequent projects included a number of exhibitions at other galleries, the publication of an artists' book *Elastic Printed Project* and a website *Elastic Online Project*.

In 2006, I was involved in running another space called Loose Projects, a one-room gallery on Day Street in Sydney. A space became available when a commercial gallery closed its doors. Mark Titmarsh, one of the artists who had exhibited with that gallery, saw this as an opportunity to open an artist-run space. The rent was affordable and there was an existing audience for the gallery. He invited a number of artists to be involved, some of whom had also exhibited at the commercial gallery: David Haines, Philipa Veitch, Carla Cescon, Lisa Kelly, Jane Polkinghorne, Alex Gawronski, Bronia Iwanczak, Ryszard Dabek and myself. The large number of artists helped to make the rent affordable. Like Elastic, we each had a period of time we programmed. People exhibited their own work or hosted the work of other artists or group exhibitions. I was interested in generating discussion around the art so I also ran a series of artists' talks called *Loose Talk*.

Currently, I'm in a group called The Free Association. Formed in 2008, the group is made up of artists, curators, and writers. We hold regular feedback sessions which draw on the model developed by CLUBSproject in Melbourne. In their model, the artist is present, but instead of speaking about their work, they listen to the group members who discuss their experiences and interpretations of the work. The Free Association's core members are: Michaela Gleave, Kathryn Gray, Biljana Jancic, Anneke Jaspers, Lisa Kelly, Camille Serisier and myself.

Anne Kay  
*CBD in Four Voices*, 2010  
Video still – Sophie Coombs, David M Thomas, Justene Williams, Tony Schwensen Duration: 42 minutes  
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