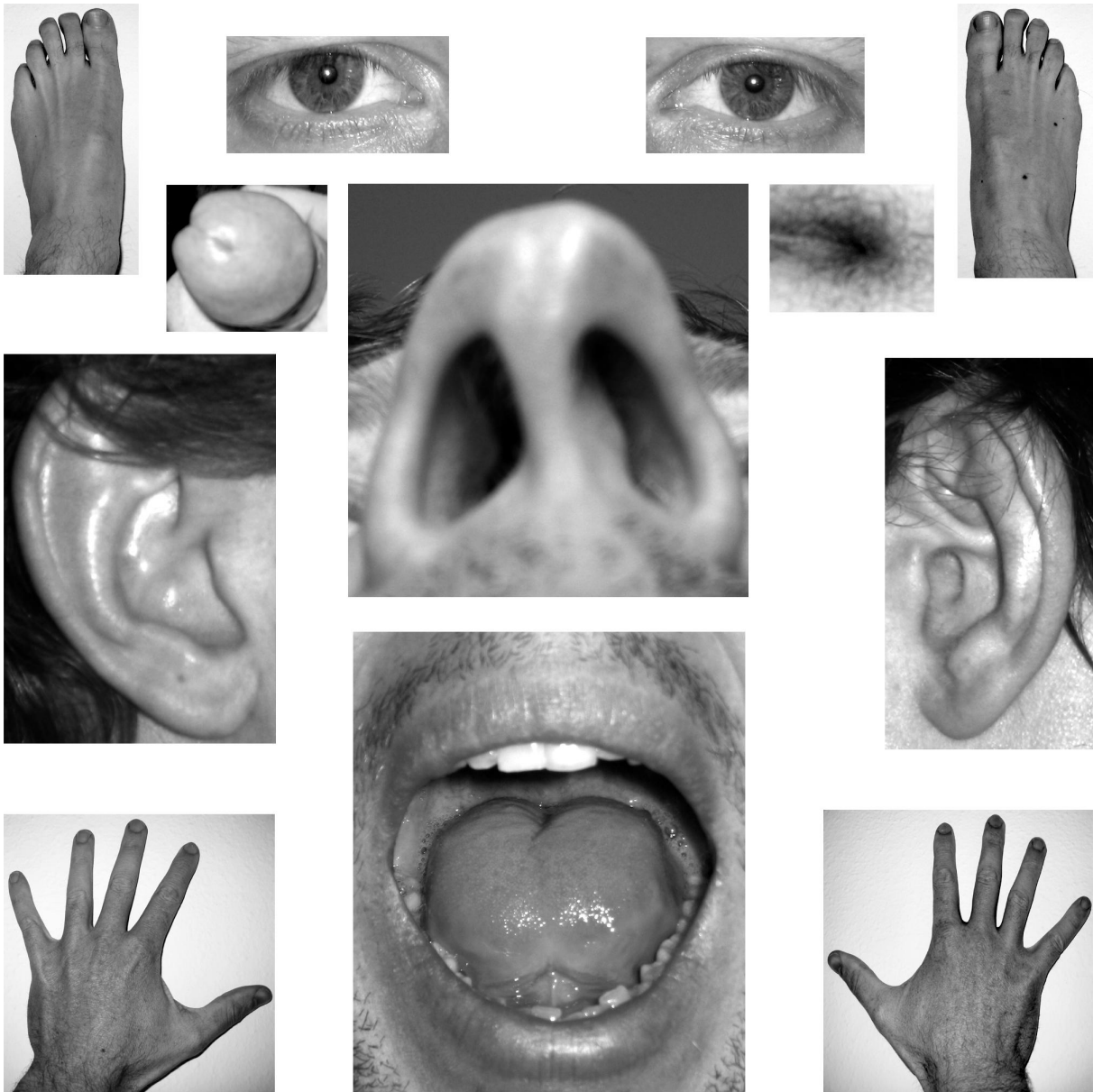


OUT



All images courtesy of the artist's body
Photographs by Jamie Coate and Christopher Howlett

INOUT

A SEMIOTIC “ANALYSIS”: SOUND & TEXT EXERCISES

One of the triggers for the work INOUT was a “Four Corners” documentary on an exclusive Christian fundamentalist sect called the Brethren which was recently televised on the Australian ABC channel.

This world-wide sect has come to recent media attention due to its hypocritical philosophy of shunning contact with the outside world. Yet, who also invest hundreds of thousands of dollars into right-wing political campaigns that seek to undermine political messages expressed by environmental organisations and that financially support governments of moral principal throughout the globe.

There was a scene in the documentary that caught my attention; it occurred when the reporter was filming the Brethren’s church from across the road. Two teenage boys from the congregation came over and started to verbally threaten him and his camera crew over recording their place of worship. Rather than directing their threats against the reporter’s equipment by literally placing their hand over the eye of the camera, they instead directed their threats towards the reporter’s personal belief system.

One of the boys kept repeating to the reporter, “Do you believe in God Cunt, well do ya?”, “Do you believe in God Cunt, well do ya?”. After harassing him, they then both ran away like small children without the reporter ever answering their sexist, transcendental questions.

At the same time, I had also been researching outdated free word association tests of the 1950’s – 70’s which were of interest to me because they were looking at verbal codes of communication and were also examining how certain words and their associations gather high or low frequency in different cultures. The harassing questions repeated by the young brethren boys stuck in my mind and became part of the reason for the direction the work took in the recent installation.

In my recent show INOUT I was trying to make work about non-conscious associations that perniciously effect our everyday behaviour and attitudes. In preparing for the show I wanted to locate the work around a word that could be used and thought about in many different ways. The word for the show had to also literally describe both mental and bodily processes that are creatively combined to give us the capacity to use language. And since in the West, language is taught and operates on a binary level, it therefore had to also engage with this hierarchical semiotic structure.

I wanted to use the art in the show to enable the viewer to literally read between the lines of what is being asked, what is being said and how one is responding using tonal variation in their speech. So it was not only about the questions being asked, what was said, or who responded to what word, but it was also about using variation and inflection in speech intonation to describe the “*analysis*” going on in the work.

The show wasn’t just about constructing a single hypothesis or analysing the individual participants answers in relation to negative stereotypes or value, but looking at the site of **conversion** between multiple processes, between image and text, concept and structure, communication and meaning, brother and sister, and where the sites for information in and information out are located on the body?