

## 3SQUARE PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3SQUARE is a series of short-duration projects involving nine young and emerging artists whose practices demonstrate an interest in 'the performative'. The artists are invited to collaboratively generate spontaneous and improvisational acts resulting from a dialogue around 'putting the wrong foot forward'. Acts, gestures and processes that seek unstable movement such as balancing, tipping, teetering, stumbling or generally falling over will be conceived, developed and presented within a supportive environment. The project aims to establish meaningful working relationships for emerging artists within a specific professional context.

The series will take the form of three separate projects that reveal a conceptual thread throughout. Each project is steered by artists who are outside the emerging phase of their practice and are selected by Conical. The selected artists will then invite three emerging artists, of their choosing, to explore shared areas of research, making and presenting. An exhibition outcome is not a prerequisite but, if chosen, may result in an abutment of works or a single work. Outcomes and activities will take place at Conical.

Artists' roles within the project are largely determined by them, yet a questioning of received mentor/student and curator/artist roles is strongly encouraged. Participatory involvement (which may or may not take the form of collaboration) is a particular aim. The reference to four square (the ubiquitous game of eliminating your higher-ranking opponent) playfully acknowledges the 'rules of engagement' inherent in the relationships between emerging artists, their more experienced colleagues, the broader art community and a general audience. The subjective and transitory nature of these 'rules' will be evoked through the series.

Whilst the project aligns with Conical's broader curatorial interest in spatial, temporal and conceptual practice, 3SQUARE will involve a more performative, 'hit and run' approach. The critical examination of 'the action' in the age of the image is an aim. The series is seen as a counterpoint to Conical's 2010 core program which consists of longer duration projects, more established artists focusing on developing and presenting new work demonstrating a high level of resolve and finish. 3SQUARE, being scheduled during July/August, positions the project in the middle of the Conical calendar where it acts both as a fulcrum, and a disruption to the regular exhibition time frames and modes of presentation.

With an emphasis on the spontaneous act over the resolved exhibition, 3SQUARE is influenced by a prior Conical project entitled *Clearway* (2003/4) which programmed improvisational works or acts that inhabited Conical's stairwell area. *Clearway* often acted as a cheeky critique of the regular Gallery program.

The emerging artists/students involved will be undertaking undergraduate or post-graduate degrees at Monash, RMIT and VCA art schools in Melbourne. Conical's proposal intake does not generally accept undergraduate students and does not exhibit Masters presentations; therefore 3SQUARE presents an opportunity for young artists to challenge themselves outside of the educational institution within an organisation they would ordinarily not have exhibiting access to. In some cases the steering artist has a prior working relationship with the emerging artist as a studio tutor.