

**singapore
biennale
2025**

**pure
intention**



ARTIST FOLIO

(For Educators)

Angelica Mesiti

SECONDARY:

Environment

Visual Arts

Performance Arts

THE ARTIST

- Angelica Mesiti, a multidisciplinary Australian artist based in Paris, has long been fascinated by performance, both as a mode of storytelling and a means to express social ideas in physical form.
- Her video works reveal how culture is manifested through non-linguistic forms of communication, particularly through vocabularies of sound and gesture.
- Using the visual language of film to present detailed studies of human subjects in heightened states of reverie or reflection, Mesiti's works employ a rich aesthetic treatment to uncover the transformative potential of all human beings, valuing ambiguity and indeterminacy as qualities in themselves.
- Recent exhibitions include *The Rites of When*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (2024); *The Musical Brain*, Highline Art, New York (2021); *Angelica Mesiti: Mother Tongue*, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāma-ki (2020); Busan Biennale 2020; and *ASSEMBLY*, Australian Pavilion at the 58th Venice Biennale (2019).

THE ARTWORK



Installation view of Angelica Mesiti's *Future Perfect Continuous* (2022), as part of Singapore Biennale 2025: *pure intention*. Image courtesy of Singapore Art Museum.

Future Perfect Continuous
2022

Single-channel HD video (black-and-white, surround sound) 8 min 8 sec

Courtesy of the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

- Artist Angelica Mesiti's interest lies beyond spoken language and verbal communication.
- Her artwork *Future Perfect Continuous* is based on a classroom game usually taught as a community-building or warm-up exercise for drama.
- The title of the artwork *Future Perfect Continuous* suggests an ongoing action that will continue to a specific time in the future. By emphasising the length or duration of an activity or event, i.e. its continuity, it prompts a sense of anticipation.

THE ARTWORK

- This video, filmed in black and white, shows a diverse group of performers collectively performing gestures that involves clicking, snapping of the fingers, rubbing and clapping hands. These simple actions, when repeated and multiplied, playfully mimic the sound of a rainstorm.
- Situated at a construction site, the camera seamlessly pans around to guide the audience's view to the eleven performers' eye contact and hand gestures. Using a shallow depth of field, the hands and faces are brought sharply into focus while blurring other visual distractions.
- The sound, heard before one sees the visuals, starts as a gentle drizzle, gradually changing as the gestures switch. As the performers unify their gestures, the sound builds in intensity. As the sound reaches a crescendo likened to a torrential downpour, the sense of anticipation heightens together with trepidation. While the storm recedes and fades away, our experience of the artwork shifts from encountering a weather phenomenon to focusing on a moment of togetherness among the performers. What the performers are engaging in is also an exercise in deep listening as they respond intently to one another through sight and sound, attuned to the environment.
- Collectively is a recurrent theme in several of Mesiti's works. Through rhythmic gestures and collective performance, *Future Perfect Continuous* is created through collective agency impossible to do on one's own. This reflects the power of synchronised action and shared experience.

THE ARTWORK

- Nature as a metaphor is also an interesting element in this artwork. Rainstorms are among the most unpredictable natural occurrences due to the chaotic nature of the atmosphere. By calling upon or recalling this phenomenon, the work is a poetic remembrance of the wonders of nature, a reference to the beauty and hopefulness of collective action, but also an allusion to the turbulences and uncertainties of the future.
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DID YOU KNOW?

- Mesiti was trained in both classical ballet and contemporary dance and practised for 10 years before turning to performance art practices in art school.
- One of her influences is the two languages spoken at her home when she was young: English and Italian. Common in intergenerational families where proficiencies in the language differ, her grandfather spoke Italian, but she was not good at it, hence, she relied on gestures, eye contact and facial expressions to communicate.

ACTIVITIES AND QUESTIONS

PRE-VISIT:

“Pass the Clap” is a warm-up activity in the form of synchronised clapping, usually done in drama. This activity serves to improve focus, teamwork and collaboration as it requires:

- Awareness
 - Concentration
 - Coordination
 - Shared focus
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- Instruct students to stand in a circle and divide them into pairs.
 - In each pair, allocate a role to each person. One will be P1 and the other will be P2.
 - Inform them that they will be passing a clap around the circle, but it will go around the circle as a pair of students clapping at the same time.
 - P1 starts the game by making eye contact with P2 and both will clap their hands together.
 - P2 will turn to P1 of the next pair and both will clap. P1 of the next pair will make eye contact with P2 in the same pair and clap together, and this continues.
 - The key to success in this game is eye contact and watching each other's hands in the beginning.
 - Students will be advised to slow down at the start and once the game is going smoothly, when a rhythm is established. They may start accelerating gradually or introduce new gestures, such as reverse clap. When a pair claps twice, the direction of the clap reverses.

ACTIVITIES AND QUESTIONS

DURING YOUR VISIT:

- Why does the artist work in black and white? How does this choice affect the performance?
- Does the use of eye contact, sound and gestures communicate feelings better than spoken language?
- How does the transformation of individual gestures like clapping and slapping, into a unified, convincing sound of a rainstorm illustrate the possibility and limits of collective agency?

**Suggested responses should include: collectivity or collective experiences, structures/planned vs spontaneity/unpredictability.*

POST VISIT:

Students will perform what they experienced at Future Perfect Continuous from memory. This activity is performed collaboratively and requires students to improvise if they cannot recall.

Students will be divided into groups of ten. The group will be instructed to use gestures to replicate the sound of a rainstorm in Singapore.

The activity will start with five students, and once the group is comfortable in the delivery of the rainstorm, they must add more participants to the group. They can choose to add one at a time or five more as long as they eventually reach the maximum of 10.

Educators may use the following questions as a reflective exercise:

- Was it difficult to mimic a rainstorm? How do synchronicity and randomness affect the outcome?
- Does an increase in the number of participants make the task easier or more difficult? Explain.

FIND OUT MORE:

ARTIST

- Mesiti, Angelica. “Angelica Mesiti”. Accessed October 21, 2025. <https://www.angelicamesiti.com/>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Arter. “Angelica Mesiti: Gelecek Zamanın Süregelen Hikâyesi üzerine | on Future Perfect Continuous.” Video. *YouTube*, April 30, 2025. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3bJMCpLabU>.
- Anna Schwartz Gallery. “Angelica Mesiti: Future Perfect Continuous.” Anna Schwartz Gallery. Accessed July 30, 2025. <https://annaschwartzgallery.com/exhibition/future-perfect-continuous>.
- Arts Ministries. “Theater Games | Focus | Pass the Clap.” YouTube video, 1:45. September 25, 2018. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Egee4Atnysk>.

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