

# Drawn to Dialogue

## Nouns and Verbs

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This visual essay captures some of the processes at work when voices come together and are held in dialogue about contemporary art.

When a group of adults with communication difficulties took part in workshops at Tate Modern we asked ourselves: How does looking at art help with communication? The voices we listened to were those of people with aphasia (a speech and language problem following a stroke) and people with mental health-related problems.

*'It's the space that's alarming...peel away the space and maybe I'd remember.'* *'Feeling so naked only with your voice...art materials give confidence.'* *'We are changing our minds. We are changing ourselves.'* *'Art de-frags my brain, like a computer rearranging the files into different places.'*

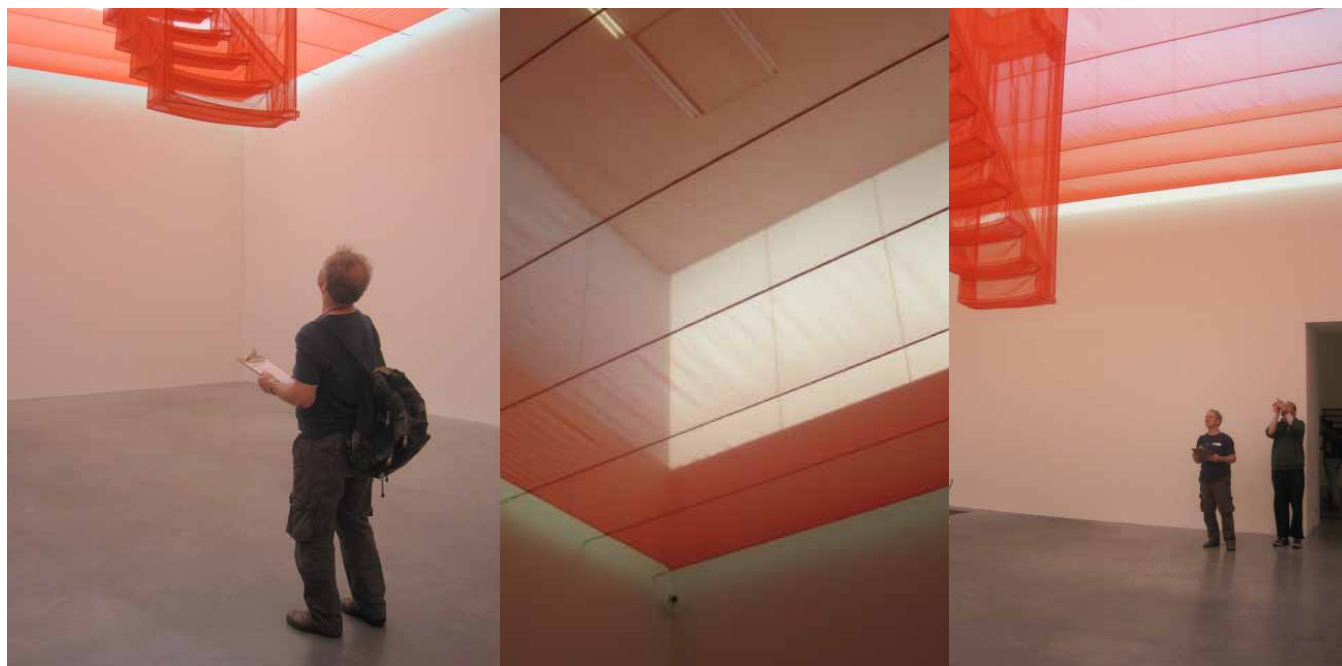
This essay re-enacts the jumps and gaps in communication heard along the way, the non-linear thinking and the visual-verbal mix of naming and doing.

**How does art help us communicate?  
What happens inside a dialogue about contemporary art? What  
does dialogue produce?**

**experiencing  
captivation  
connecting  
communication**

**experiencing  
connection  
captivating  
communication**

# experiencing



Do Ho Suh, Staircase III, 2009

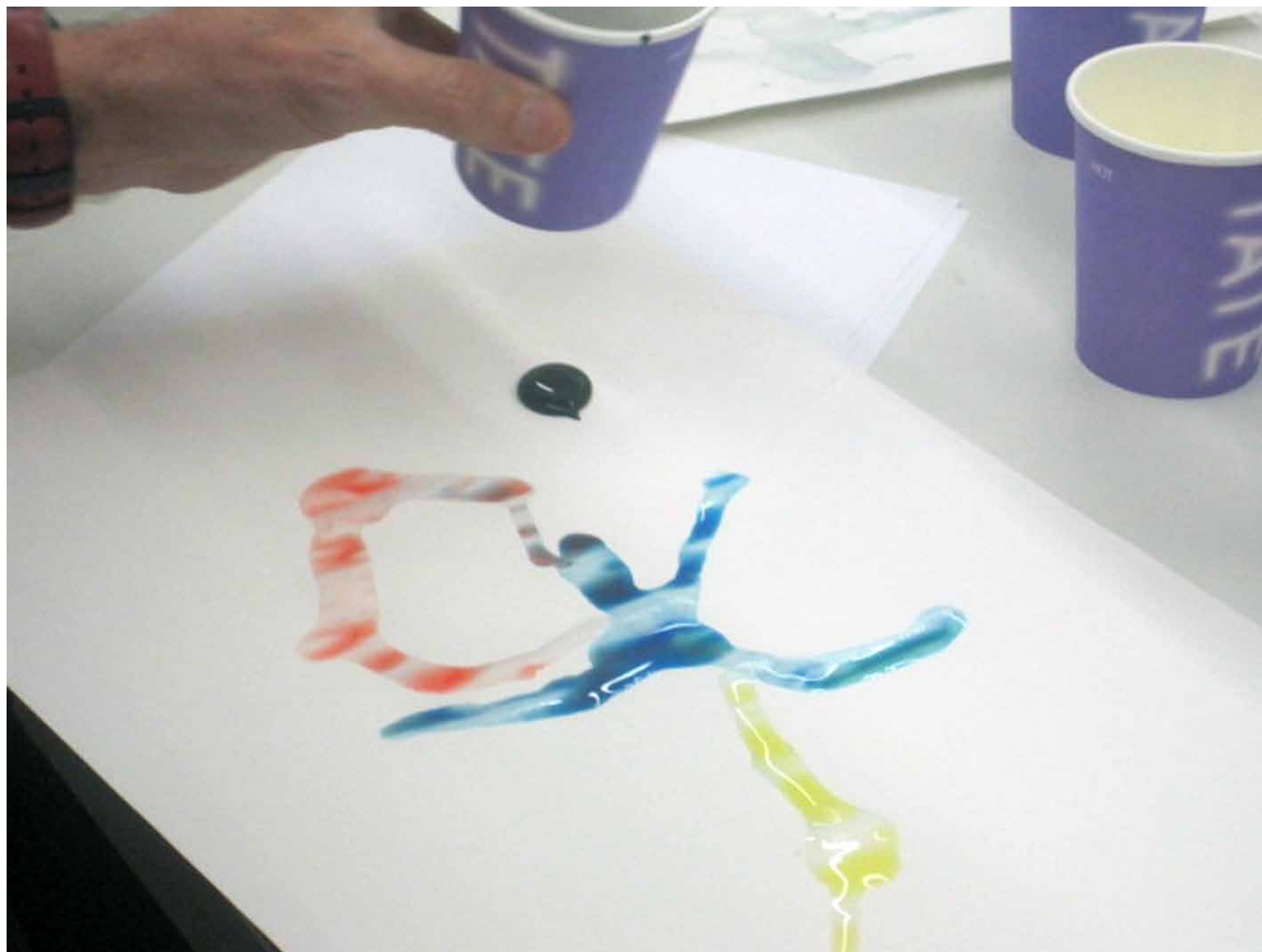
# capturing



# captivating

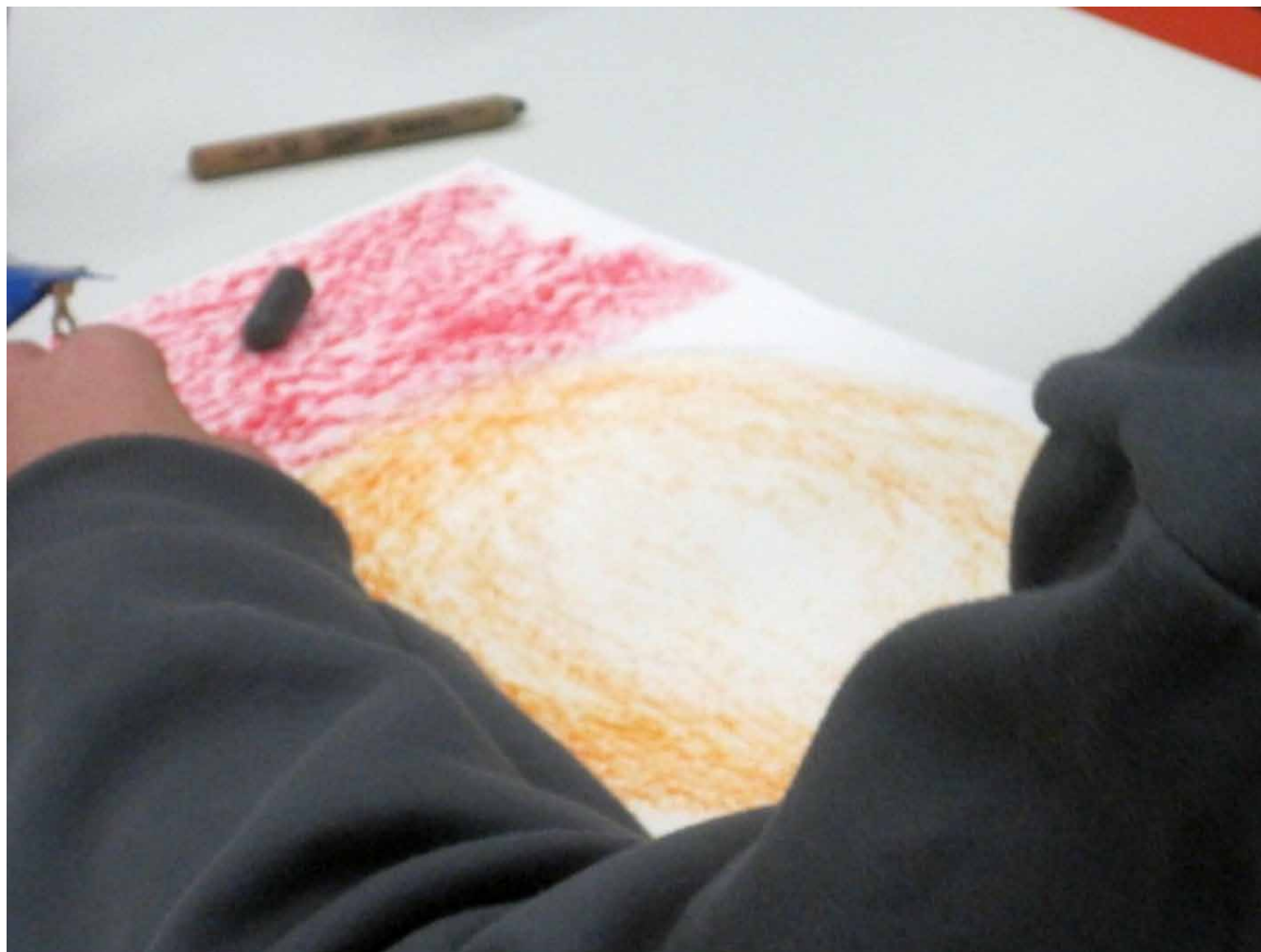


# connecting

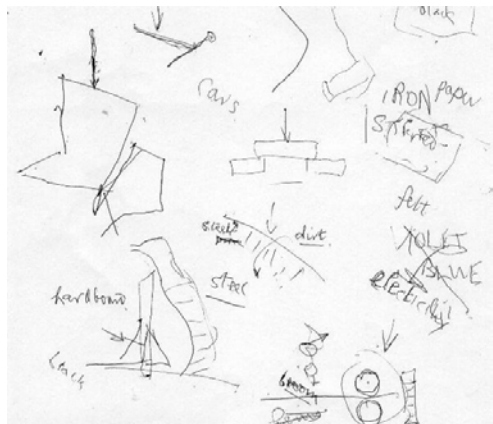




# connection



# communicating



responding

gesturing

marking

touching

drawing

writing

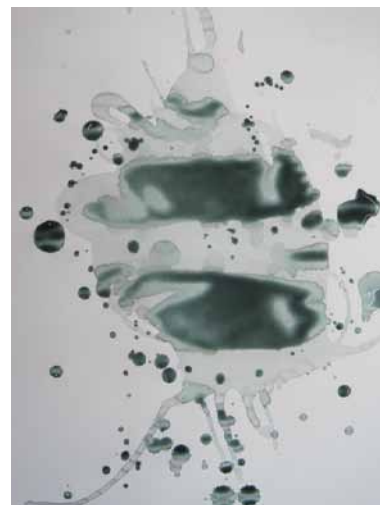
signing

translating

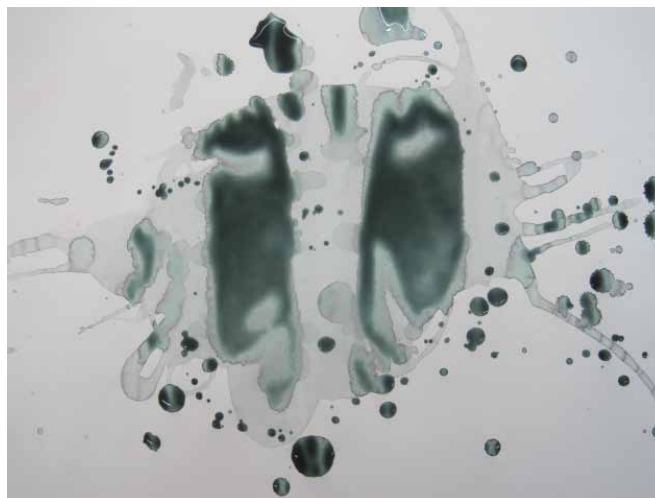
listening

talking

looking



# communication



*'The artwork is a bridge, however  
tenuous, between one mind and another. A bridge  
from artist to audience and a bridge linking  
individuals one to another.'* 1

Michèle Fuirer and Sheila Grandison jointly planned and delivered the Drawn to Dialogue workshops as part of Tate Modern's Community Learning programme, bringing together two groups of participants from separate projects. It took place over three weeks and used both studio space and gallery space to discuss works by Do Ho Suh, Abraham Cruzvillegas and Claude Monet. The work was devised as a collaboration and an ongoing enquiry into the nature of conversation in the gallery as a distinct form of action, interaction and attention.

### Notes

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1 K.F. McCarthy, E. Heneghan Ondaatje, L. Zakaras & A. Brooks (2004), *Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate About the Benefits of the Arts*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation

**[www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND\\_MG218.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND_MG218.pdf)**

We would like to thank: Alan, Christine, Elaine, Gerald, Peter, Steve, Jess, Carmen and Connect UK

### Images

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All photographs Michèle Fuirer, unless otherwise stated.