**RMIT DESIGN HUB**

**PROGRAM** » NATHAN GRAY**:** WORK WITH ME HERE

# NATHAN GRAY WORK WITH ME HERE

**RMIT**
UNIVERSITY

+300 word introductory essay (Design Hub to supply)

*Work With Me Here* extends upon Nathan Gray's *Works<30s* – a series of videos lasting less than thirty seconds. At RMIT Design Hub, Gray occupies the main Project Room 1 as a live studio where new works in the series are generated on-site in conversation with other practitioners and the public. In the adjoining Project Room 2 the complete body of *Works<30s* is presented collectively for the first time.

*Work With Me Here* is an invitation to rediscover the social body around making. Here, Gray aims to change the studio from an isolated workplace and make it over as a space open to other inhabitants, exchange and encounter. Proposing conversation as the method, Gray puts the following question to his collaborators as a starting point for new works: "What is possible in less than 30 seconds?"

For this exhibition, Design Hub extends upon a commitment to embed an experimental approach to exhibition design from the very beginning of the curatorial process. Here, we commissioned Melbourne-based studio SIBLING to create a complete spatial experience. The open studio in Project Room 1 has been conceived as a *tabula rasa*. It comprises a collection of 'zones' – Noticeboard, Quarantine, Rejuvenation and Stage – each representing a phase in the creative process. The design takes its cue from the iconography of the 'placeholder' – the blank In-Design template, the Photoshop canvas, the bluish tinge of a projector with no input, the cinematic green screen.

During the exhibition Gray will be in residence, working and administering an intense program of public, talk-show-style conversations, actions, lectures and performances, as well as a special program of events curated in collaboration with sonic art organisation Liquid Architecture.

*Work With Me Here* engages with researchers and practitioners from a range of disciplines including experimental architecture, design, fashion, music, dance, contemporary art and performance. The audience is integral to this process of exchange and visitors can drop-in, watch a performance, ask questions, participate in works-in-progress or simply observe and hang out in the netted structure of the aptly named Rejuvenation zone.

Kate Rhodes, Fleur Watson, Nella Themelios
Curators
RMIT Design Hub

+Artist biography and credits (Nathan to supply)

**Artist Statement**

**Nathan Gray's practice** attempts to integrate his background in improvised music and politics into an art that explores how to cope with the world's restrictions while pushing at it's boundaries. Unfolding from a series of succinct studio and on-site experiments his work approaches the object as a score for action. Aiming to improvise with the given, the found and the pre-made he uses brevity, precision and humour as strategies to open possibilities in restricted material circumstances.

**At the centre of his current practice** is the *Works<30s* series. This is an on-going, diaristic series of short videos that document simple actions and allow them to exist as discrete, singular events. The series imposes a simple constraint on its subject matter (a 30 second time limit) but rather than restricting the outcome this constraint stimulates a variety of effects on the content, structure and narrative of the works. These works are used as sketches for larger sculptural or film works or presented independently.

**Nathan Gray** was the winner of both the 2014 Substation Contemporary Art Prize and People's Choice Awards as well as the 2014 VCA Andrew Rodgers Award. His work was shown at the 19th Biennale of Sydney and the 2012 Tarrawarra Biennale. His work *Score for Dance* has been shown at Open Archive in 2011 and ACCA in 2014 and he has had numerous solo shows including *Things That Fit Together*, 2014 at Utopian Slumps, *Theorist Training Camp*, 2012 at Westspace and *ACTS*, 2012 at Utopian Slumps. He curated the exhibition *The Object as Score* which was based on his Masters thesis completed in 2014.

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www.nthn.gy

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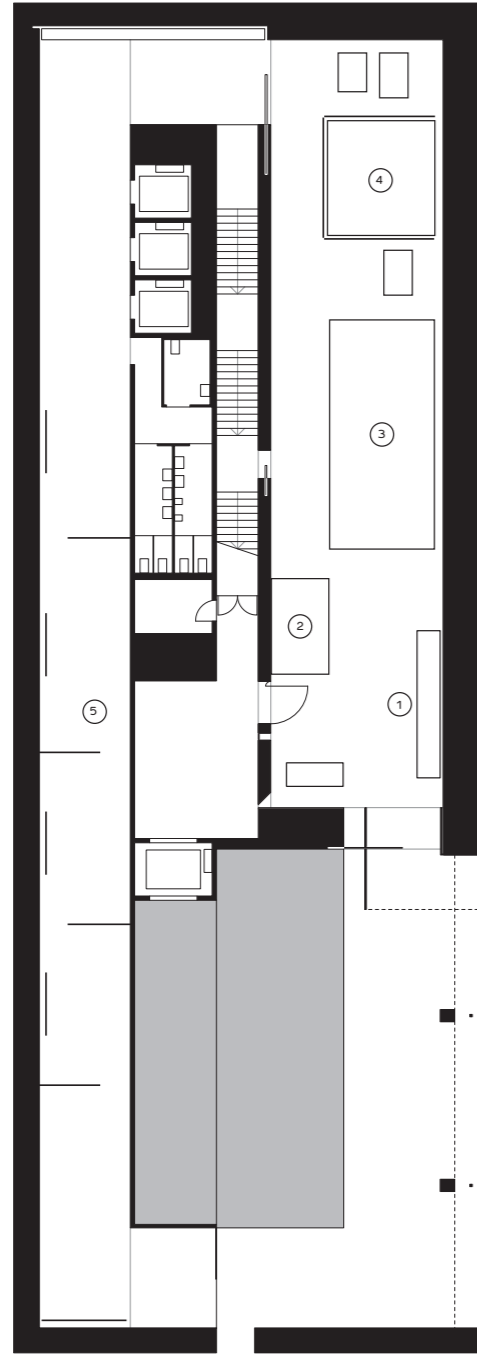
1 Noticeboard

2 Quarantine

3 Rejuvenation

4 Stage

5 *Works<30s* 1-44

RMIT DESIGN HUB

*Nathan Gray: Work With Me Here*

Plan: Project Rooms 1 & 2 (not to scale)

**PROJECT ROOMS 1 & 2** » 4 SEPTEMBER – 3 OCTOBER 2015

PS: BODY COPY
+Program Events (Nathan To supply)

CS: BODY COPY - HEADING
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**The Moment of Death**
**3pm, Saturday 5 September**
**with Lou Hubbard**

**A series of processes** occur at the very end of life - organs shut down, blood ceases to flow - but finally everyone dies of the same thing, lack of oxygen to the brain. The brain itself shuts down in stages one region at a time and then whatever one may believe there is a threshold that is crossed where something living becomes inanimate. Lou Hubbard's obsession is the most morbid one, an obsession with death. It permeates her work, which is counter-intuitively energising and affirmative. Lou was Nathan's Masters supervisor for the last two years. Coming together again for a discussion that takes death as it's starting point, they begin at the end, at the final moment of transformation, the moment when people become objects.

**Lou Hubbard** makes assemblage sculptures, videos and room-scape installations. In her work objects are tried and tested, subjected to acts of duress and domestic furnishings are collapsed into sculptural collages suggesting compression and intimacy. Her show *Dead Still Standing* was the first to occupy the entire site at West Space Melbourne. Lou has completed residencies at Citeˊ Internationale des Arts in Paris and Barcelona and the international artists' residency AIR, Antwerp Belgium. She is Head of Photography at the Victorian College of the Arts.

**Is It My Voice?**
**3pm, Thursday 10 September**
**with Caitlin Franzmann**

**Annoyance** at contemporary speaking habits have recently formed the basis of a reaction against listening to the voices of young women – literally. This phenomenon has formed the impetus for Caitlin Franzmann's workshops for Liquid Architecture 2015 and in turn the basis for this conversation. What happens to communication when the voice itself is deemed to be offensive, regardless of its content? Franzmann and Gray will talk about diction, self-conciously fousing on their own voices, using speech to analyze speech and collapsing the conversation in on itself in a series of recursive loops.

**Caitlin Franzmann** is interested in the affective potential of architecture, art and technology. She uses light, sound and constructed spaces-within-spaces to encourage slowness, curiosity and social interaction. Her projects are participatory and intimate in nature, inviting touch, sonic interaction, open dialogue and energy exchange. Her work is an invitation to oscillate between interior and exterior space, the concrete and cosmic. Caitlin is a co-director of feminist collective LEVEL ARI, has completed residencies in Istanbul and Yogyakarta and exhibited at the NGV as part of the instrument builders project and the MCA as part of Primavera 2014.

www.caitlinfranzmann.com

**Decolonising Gestures for Shared Futures**
**3pm, Saturday 12 September**
**with Léuli Eshraghi**

**The task of decolonising** and dehomogenising culture requires deep and long-term engagements, by large numbers of people. So what place (if any) might strategies of brevity and precision have in this important task?

**Léuli Eshraghi** is a Narrm/Melbourne-based artist, curator and PhD candidate at MADA. His practice is centred on indigeneity, language, body sovereignty, and queer possibility. Léuli holds qualifications in Indigenous Arts Management and Cultural Studies. He is the 2015 Gertrude Contemporary-Next Wave Emerging Curator, editor of the Contemporary Pacific Arts Festival's Oceania Now publication and was the Tautai Trust's 2015 Artist in Residence. His writing has been published in Overland, Artlink, #500words, Writing From Below, Open Engagement, and Stella Magazine.

www.leulieshraghi.com

**Enduration –**
**3pm, Thursday 17 September**
**with Frances Barrett**

**For Liquid Architecture 2015** Frances Barrett will be undertaking a 24-hr work called *Curator*, blinding herself and placing herself completely in the care of the festival's curators. For *Work With Me Here* Nathan and Frances will talk about the possibilities that limited time presents, how duration affects content and what we might become at least for a while, within controlled time-frames.

**Frances Barrett** is an artist, curator, and broadcaster whose work takes the form of body-based live actions, collaborative projects, and curatorial projects. She is currently Curator of Contemporary Performance at Campbelltown Arts Centre, host of FBI Radio arts show, Canvas, and member of art collaboration, Brown Council (with Kate Blackmore, Kelly Doley and Diana Smith).

www.francesbarrett.com

**PROGRAM** » NATHAN GRAY: WORK WITH ME HERE

+Program of Events (Nathan To supply)

**Concert**
**2pm, Saturday 19 September**
**with Jasmine Guffond**

**We Watch Back**
**3pm, Saturday 19 September**
**with Jasmine Guffond**

**Project Echelon,** a system for monitoring satellite communications was a little more than conspiracy theory in the sixties until it was finally revealed to be real by recent leaks by Edward Snowden. The new ways we imagine we are spied upon, are always a step behind the imaginations of the spies. And as the public increasingly falls under the gaze of an authoritarian elite, how is it objectified as the subject of this gaze?

**Jasmine Guffond** is a sound artist and electronic musician who relocated from Sydney, Australia to Berlin, Germany in 2004. Her recent projects are interventions that employ digital technologies, sonification and the aestheticisation of data as a means of fostering discussion around contemporary surveillance technologies. She has performed live internationally at music and electronic art festivals, exhibited sound installations and recorded music for CD and 12-inch vinyl releases with the Sigma Editions, Staubgold and Sonic Pieces labels.

www.jasminamaschina.com

**No Intermission (All Day Rave)**
**11 – 6pm, Thursday 24 September**
**with Helen Grogan**

**Since 2011** Nathan Gray and Helen Grogan have been having long conversations energised by a playful and continual testing and contesting of ideas. Interrupted only by everyday life commitments, these conversations have become an episodic discussion of reoccurring topics and concepts.  For *Work With Me Here* their conversation will take place for the entire gallery day - a very long episode in their ongoing exchange of ideas.

**Helen Grogan** uses sculptural, photographic, sonic and choreographic means to approach space as material. With a particular focus on framing what is already here and already happening, her works seek an embodied attention to the present and actual. In 2014-15 her work was exhibited at Australian Centre for Contemporary Art; National Gallery of Victoria (Melbourne Now); Liquid Architecture; Gertrude Contemporary; Slopes; VCA Margaret Lawrence Gallery; WestSpace; Alaska Projects; 2nd Tbilisi Triennial; Gertrude Glasshouse. Grogan initially studied Philosophy and Contemporary Dance before developing an expanded choreographic practice at SNDO, Amsterdam School for The Arts 2001-2005. Grogan is currently a studio artist at Gertrude Contemporary.

www.helengrogan.com

**Liquid Architecture Presents**

**smile and nod: affective listening**
**1 – 5pm, Saturday 26th of September**
**including but not limited to Brandon La Belle, Brian Fuata, Danni Zuvela, Jennifer Walshe, Joel Stern, Stephanie Hessler and Richard Dawson.**

*smile and nod* is a free-form conversation in lieu of a talks program with and between the artists, theorists, curators and audience participating in Liquid Architecture 2015. Part dinner party, part talk show *smile and nod* embraces distraction, cross talk and half, non and pretend listening as strategies for further creation.

**Some of the participants** include: **Brandon La Belle** an artist, writer and theorist who's work explores questions of social life and cultural agency, using sound, performance, text and sited constructions. **Brian Fuata** a Sydney based artist who uses text and performance as some of his mediums. **Danni Zuvela and Joel Stern** artistic directors of Liquid Architecture and **Stephanie Hessler** who is conducting a study on them as they work. **Jennifer Walshe i**s an Irish composer, vocalist and artist and **Richard Dawson** a folk musician from Newcastle upon Tyne, England.

www.liquidarchitecture.org.au

**PROJECT ROOMS 1& 2** » 4 SEPTEMBER – 3 OCTOBER 2015

+Program Of Events (Nathan To supply)

**Tweaks**
**3pm, Thursday 1 October**
**with Scott Mitchell**

**Both Nathan Gray and Scott Mitchell** share an interest in the small improvements that might be made to our material realm for practical purposes. Moving on from the questionable practicality of 'life hacks' what might the tweaks that best serve artistic practice look like?

**Scott Mitchell**'s research investigates the social nature of objects with specific focus on practices of amateur DIY construction. His research seeks to understand the significant role material processes play in forming communities and in developing shared meaning structures. In collaboration with Bianca Hester and Terri Bird as Open Spatial Workshop their research explores the forces that shape matter and matter's capacity to open onto incomprehensible registers of dimension and time.

www.openobject.org

**Consultant**
**(accompanying each conversation)**

**Consultant** is the house band of *Work With Me Here*, composer and performer of the theme tune. Provider of improvised hype and glitz to the occasion and introducing each participant by singing their artistic bio.

**Jonathan Michell** is an Australian songwriter and multi-instrumentalist known for his intricate, melodic and experimental pop music. He attended Monash University, completing a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in English Literature. In recent years he has been a key songwriter in the bands The Ancients and Mum Smokes, the latter touring Europe to play the All Tomorrow's Parties festival in the UK in 2007. He has released albums on the Chapter Music, Moteer (UK), Sensory Projects, Special Award and Night People (USA) labels.

www.soundcloud.com/consultantsounds

**Grand Final: Closing Concert**
**1 - 5pm, Saturday 3 October**
**with Abstract Mutation, Consultant, WyWy Brix, Nothingy, Waterfall Person, Wet Kiss & DJ Lisa Lerkenfeld**

**When beloved theorist** Franco Bifo Berardi identifies a reactivation of the social body in protest movements like Occupy and Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement he points to something that has been lost, something work and technology have largely taken away from us - the lost art of hanging out. After all, what would most of us replace capitalism and its relentless pressure to produce with other than the company of friends and family. For the last day of *Work With Me Here* you are invited to come and inhabit the space, get comfy, enjoy some wonderful company, listen to fine music and parictipate in a reawakening of the erotic body of the polis.

Dus et latur? **Abstract Mutation** New Zealand produces quirky ambient. Hilla sequiste ipsamus sectat. **Consultant** is Jonathan Michell of The Ancients and Moon Dice. Taestio eumque nus, officiate por sinulparum facerumet faccust ibustinci derfero cone mollaut este eturibus dolliat quuntium, tem. **Lisa Lerkenfeldt** artist, DJ, musician, location. Abora verfere, occus volore et elluptae pos poris erum et aceatia que vollaud andaesti qui cores militas? **Nothingy** is outboard outfit of artist. Nequam faccus. Ate sedisque sequisci officiistium et endi illupta con rehenie nderfere, quiam, iume voluptur? **Waterfall Person** is 1,000 keyboards and best enjoyed at water temperature. Quid quae. Nequuntem quae alitatio blabore volupta epudis aut qui suntius rese ne sus sunt. **Wet Kiss** 7/11 coffees and joy devision tote bags. Et alit dit andit autes estes ma non non cone porum dolene excerna turem. **Wywy Brix:** Transcendental Black Techno. Itas moluptatur aboritatur?

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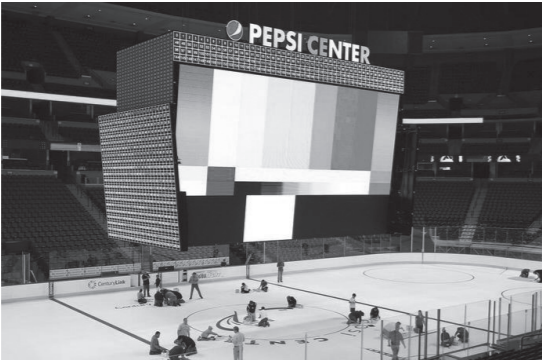master page

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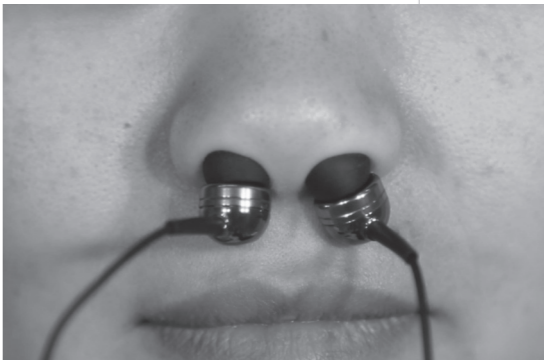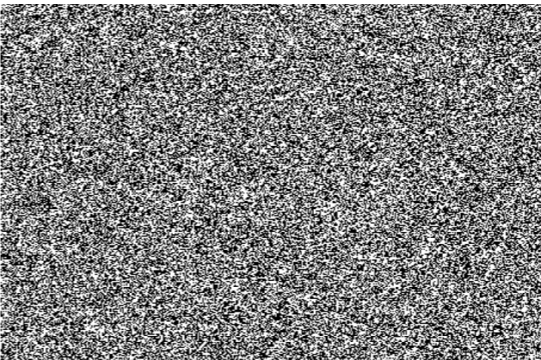Image caption image caption image
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**PROJECT ROOMS 1& 2** » 4 SEPTEMBER – 3 OCTOBER 2015

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+Acknowledgements (Design Hub to Supply)

**Nathan Gray: Work With Me Here at RMIT Design Hub**
4 September – 3 October, 2015

**Curated for RMIT Design Hub:** Kate Rhodes, Fleur Watson,
Nella Themelios.
**Exhibition and Graphic Design:** SIBLING.
**Creative Production:** Nella Themelios, Audrey Thom-
as-Hayes.
**Exhibition Technician:** Erik North.
**Exhibition Assistants:** Kate Riggs, Clare Wohlnick, Audrey
Thomas-Hayes.
**Technical Assistants:** Tim McLeod, Marcin Wojcik, Robert
Jordan, Gavin Bell, Sam Fagan.

**Nathan Gray: Work With Me Here** incorporates *smile and
nod: affective listening*, a program curated by Liquid Archi-
tecture and presented as part of Liquid Architecture 2015.

**Thank you:**
Nathan Gray, SIBLING, Joel Stern and Liquid Architecture,
Boom Studios, Professor Julian Goddard, Oxley Nets, Brad
Haylock, Stilcon Scaffolding and Design Hub Volunteers.

**The artist would like to acknowledge** the help and support
of ALL of the beautiful humans at RMIT Design Hub, Liquid
Architecture and SIBLING along with Annabelle Kingston,
Annie Wu, Brennan Oliver, Blake Tholen-Gray, Caitlin Franz-
mann, Charlie Sofo, Frances Barrett, James Grant, Jasmine
Guffond, Helen Grogan, Helen Hughes, Jonas Ropponen,
Jonathan Michell, Julie Burleigh, Léuli Eshraghi, Lisa Lerken-
feld, Lou Hubbard, Lynda Gray, Ryan Bennett, Scott Mitch-
ell, Tim Coster and Ziga Testen.

**www.nthn.gy**

**RMIT Design Hub**

**Opening hours:**
Tuesday–Friday, 11am–6pm
Saturday, 12pm–5pm

Closed Sunday, Monday and Public Holidays

Admission is free

**RMIT Design Archives:**
By Appointment
The RMIT Design Archives is located on the western side of
the forecourt.
Contact the Archives to make an appointment to view the
collection: rmitdesignarchives@rmit.edu.au

**Location:**
Corner Victoria and Swanston Streets, Carlton, 3053
hello.designhub@rmit.edu.au
www.designhub.rmit.edu.au

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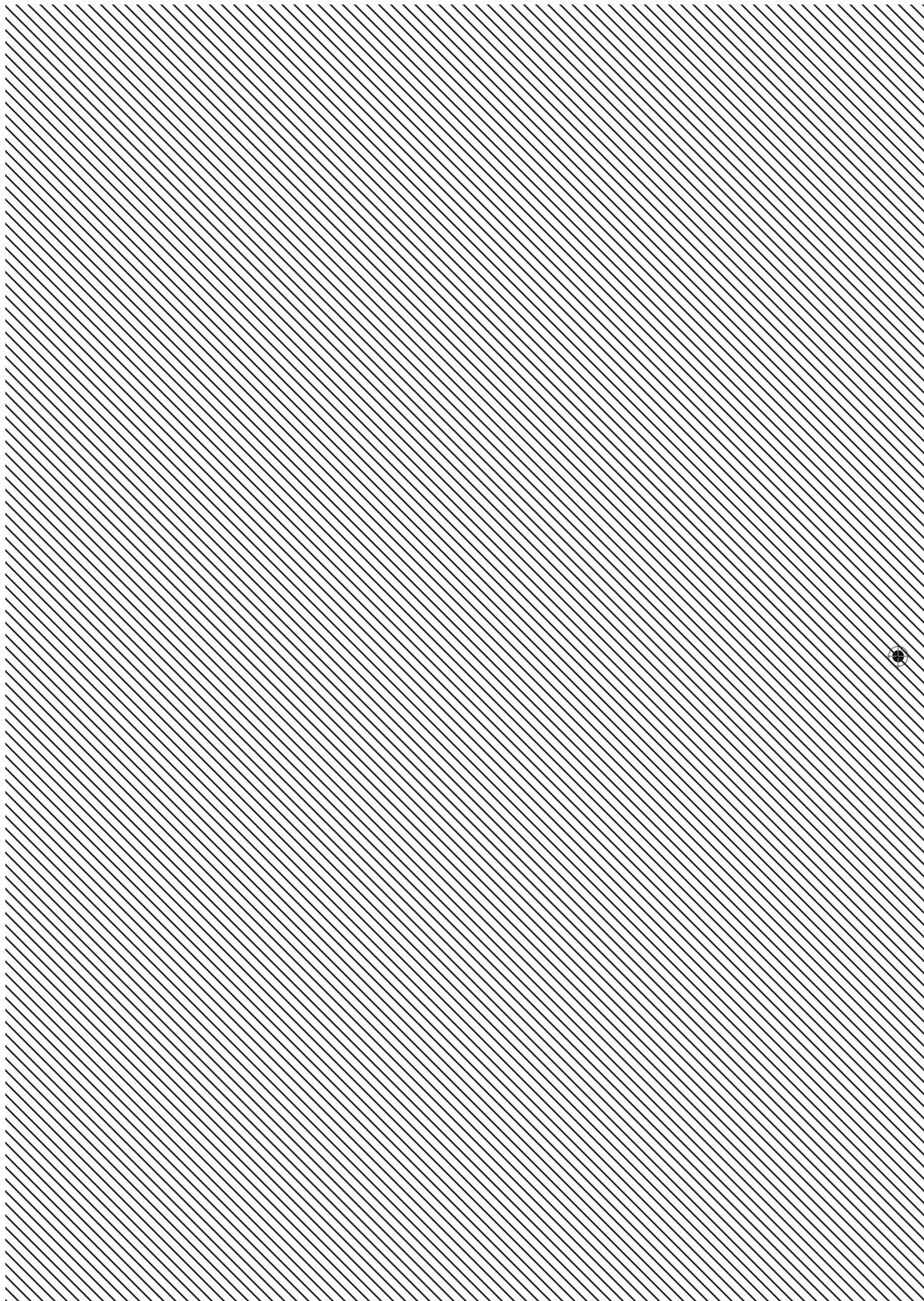
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