

NOW

In Action, Inaction
Dara Gill

In Action, Inaction

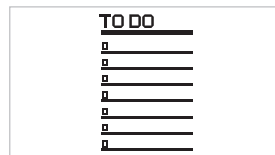
The Big Picture, The Test, The Tool.



*NOW Counter (Current Birthrate/Deathrate
Four Births Per Second, Two Deaths Per Second) 2011*
High-Definition Video, LCD Television with Media Player, Perspex
480x330mm each



Untitled (Survey with stones) 2011
Stones, Rope, Timber, Clipboards, Paper, Survey from Found Book.
Dimensions Variable.



To Do List 2011
50 Page custom designed notepad, offset printed. Edition of 250.
105 x 148mm each

Inaction.

With each flash, 'the big picture' seems unstoppable. The ghost of each *NOW* leaves its impression, eventually carving itself into the surface. In this form, it is quantitative and inescapable.

Its consequences are far too big to imagine accurately, so we stare and become lamed with each flicker. This constriction makes us dizzy and when we stop spinning, we are disorientated.

But we move on.

In action, inaction.

We test ourselves. We move rocks, we work hard and our toil is visible. Like the first, it is all quantitative and inescapable.

We, to varying degrees, reflect on our direction and ask the 'tough questions' in order to move forward—sometimes we get bored and skip some questions. We take advice; spoken, written or from the heavens. We tend to then 'put it off' or procrastinate. Sometimes it just stops there, maybe moving the odd rock now and then.

But this does not satisfy.

In action.

A tool. A functional, simple and useful tool. A tool that seems apt for the occasion. Like the two before it, it is all quantitative and inescapable.

It was created to be bold so it could be seen from across a room - to never blend in, to stand out. It wishes to command your attention. It has potential, the *possibility of possibility*.

We all should own one. Please take one with you.

Nothing/Everything

Glenn Barkley

I remember the first time I saw a work of Dara Gill. It was at the University of Wollongong and Dara was a student there. The work was *Untitled ('When I grow up I want to be' Survey)* (2006) a compelling video work asking students in the accommodation he was living in at the time, what they thought they might like to be when they grew up.

It's a tricky question. To a university student, nearing graduation, the terror is starting to mount up. They realise what they might have wanted to be is not possible, perhaps due to some failing of theirs – too much partying, not committed enough, maybe just not that interested. Removed from the nest the anxiety of the rest of your life is now starting to hang like a stone around their necks dragging them down to the bottom of a river.

Time to reassess those goals! When someone sticks a camera in your face and straight out asks you what your going to do with the rest of your life do you play it straight? Or try and make light of it? An approach which comes across as akin to laughing in the face of death.

The anxiety at the heart of this project is the arc along which Gills work has moved since then – combined with an interest in the failures of the modern world. The English writer G.K. Chesterton said: *When men chose not to believe in God, they do no thereafter believe in nothing, they then become capable of believing in everything.* Exercise has become one of our God replacement therapies, alongside things like the internet. So to an obsession with the anxieties of life – being fit and healthy, eating well, living stress free, a blind faith in science.

In this new body of work Gill returns again to his personal, and now universal, anxieties. In *Untitled (Survey with stones) 2011* he has created a survey from the book *Stress Control: How to cope with anxiety* by Vernon Coleman, which very much concentrates on YOU as a person, how YOU feel. Gill asks the viewers to use their answers to undertake a simple action, dropping stones into two circles marked by handmade signs indicating 'yes' and 'no' creating, one hopes, random and artful piles.

Alongside this, the work *NOW Counter (Current Birthrate/Deathrate - Four Births Per Second, Two Deaths Per Second) 2011* features two video screens flash *NOW* over and over to the current worldwide birth and death rates – the intention being that over time the words will be burnt into the very screens themselves – as time races on and narrows the gap, between births in particular, the flashings moves into a continual blur. It's *NOW* forever – he who is not busy being born, is busy dying.

I remember that Dara told me that in 2050 the world population would reach 10 billion people and the worlds resources would be at an end. Civilization, as we know it, would begin to collapse. Luckily he has provided a To Do list, a sick black joke within the malaise of the installation – delay “extinction anxiety” in handy notebook form!

So many things to do in the run up to the end of days!

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Cover Image: NOW Counter (Current Birthrate/Deathrate
Four Births Per Second, Two Deaths Per Second) [Still] 2011

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