
Invisible Networks: on making *Respect*

Pip Stafford

*in*the**making**

About the artwork

Title: *Avatar (Selfie)*

Date: 2015

Media: Super 8 film,
digital animation, audio

Duration: 3:02 mins

Avatar (Selfie) is a combined animated digital and analogue artwork created by the 6 young artists who participated in the 2015 *Make Your Mark* TMAG program. Under Pip's guidance, the group began by creating simple digital stop motion animations using hand-drawn and collaged imagery,

smart-phone apps and digital cameras. They then moved onto creating Super 8 film with hand-animated frames achieved through a process of drawing and scratching.

Responding to the theme of 'Respect', the group explored ideas about social media and the way people treat each other online and in the real world.

The resulting installation explores the concept of a profile picture or avatar with each participant creating images that represent two different aspects of their identity.

About the artist

Pip Stafford is a Hobart-based media artist whose work ranges across installation, sound, performance, sculpture and online projects. She uses electromagnetic media and a host of different materials to explore ideas about untapped systems of communication and invisible networks. For the 2015 *Make your Mark* program, Pip guided participants in experimenting with Super 8 film and digital animation to make *Avatar (Selfie)*.

Pip: "My art practice tends to be a series of problem-solving activities and things tend to be a little bit fragile... there's often those moments...when things might not quite work... and that's the stuff I'm interested in."



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Student response



1. Inspiration and key ideas – making connections

Pip's work explores ideas about networks and the untapped or invisible realms of communication systems.

- How does *Avatar (Selfie)* explore ideas about communication? Why is the concept of the avatar or profile picture useful in exploring these ideas?
- What are the key ideas you explore in your work? What concepts do you find most interesting and why?

2. Development – processing ideas and concepts

Pip suggests that experimenting with materials and making mistakes can help you find new ways of approaching your ideas.

- Describe the processes and materials the group experiment with to develop *Avatar (Selfie)*.
- How do you experiment with materials in your art-making? Do you stick to one material or medium, or combine different ones? How does this help you to develop your ideas?

3. Research – reading, looking, thinking

Pip conducts online research to learn about other people's work and develop new techniques such as building crystal radios.

- The *Make Your Mark* participants learn stop motion animation techniques via a mobile phone app – how does this help them to develop *Avatar (Selfie)*?
- What online or other modes of research have helped you to learn new techniques?

4. Making – experimenting and problem-solving

Pip says making art is 'a conversation between concept, materials and the context'.

- What do you think she means by this? How might this relate to the processes involved in making *Avatar (Selfie)*?
- Describe how Pip's idea might relate to your own work.

5. Refining your work – exhibiting and reflecting

Pip custom-made reels for the Super 8 version of *Avatar (Selfie)*, but ultimately they didn't work in the gallery installation.

- What problems did Pip encounter and how did she resolve them? What were some of the differences between the installed version and the digitised version?
- Are there any risks for you in exhibiting your work? What are these and what can you do to manage them?

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