

Who Speaks? Authorship, Authority, and Authenticity

27-29 July 2026, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts Singapore

Arts & Design Practice Research Exchange (ADPRex) X Asia Pacific Artistic Research Network (APARN)

Encountering an artwork, the question of ‘who speaks’ and whose perspective and viewpoint we are receiving underscores our interaction with what we see, hear, and feel about a piece. As makers, who we are, our embodied experiences, and unique viewpoint shapes what we make and how we make it. These ideas were famously explored by Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault whose theories have been central to debates on authorship, authority, and authenticity for the last five decades; troubling the idea of the author as a stable entity, instead suggesting that meaning is made — at least in part — by the reader, viewer, or audience. Collaborative and improvisatory practices further blur authorship in the studio or rehearsal room, raising questions about responsibility, visibility, and even ownership.

Today, we must also add a posthuman layer in considering authorship, aware of the technological assemblages that increasingly author things for and with us. AI is used ubiquitously in everyday life and increasingly in artmaking. Coupled with such advances are ecological concerns about the interconnectedness of human life, technology, and our impact on the world. We invite presenters to consider their authorship using new technologies, the decentring of human authorship, the agency of non-human actants, and whether in these cases we can say that our actions are our own? Or do we need to rethink what we mean when we ask *who* speaks?

Contemporary concerns about identity and positionality mean that *who* speaks (and who listens) requires careful attention. These questions are not new. As Gayatri Spivak and Sneja Gunew identified in 1990, ‘the whole notion of authenticity’, who speaks and who listens is complex (59). Gunew urges us to consider ‘what is left out, what is covered over’, whose ideas are privileged or not and ‘what questions can’t be asked?’ (61). These remain important questions in artmaking. Authorship can also be blurred in embodied forms of knowledge passed down through teacher-student lineages in Southeast Asian practices. This is complicated by histories of appropriation — not only in Asia but worldwide — in the copyrighting of folk music, dance steps, and Indigenous art forms. For example, Dylan Robinson discusses how ‘Indigenous performers and artists have been structurally accommodated in ways that “fit” them into classical composition and performance systems’. He sees ‘settler colonialism as a state of perception’ building on Patrick Wolfe’s understanding of ‘settler colonialism as a “structure” rather than an “event” of invasion’ relocating these structures from ‘the outside world to an internal location constituted through subjectivity itself’ (10). Who gets to speak for and in the place of traditional embodied knowledges remains a complex and relevant concern.

Therefore, this year as ADPRex and APARN come together to explore how artistic research and practice research can explore important issues, we hope that presenters will unpack the question of *who* speaks, *how* they speak through their artistic and practice research, and why these voices must be heard. We invite presenters to consider how authorship is shaped and

articulated in their work using new (and old) technologies, how these approaches trouble the authority and agency of authorship, and what authenticity looks like in the digital age? We ask what stories can you share from histories of collaborative authorship and work created through improvisatory practices? How can we define whose voice is heard in traditional forms and practices re-explored in contemporary work? How do these different strands of authorship come together, and how can ownership, authority, and authorship be understood in these practices?

We hope that those who use artistic and practice research will consider how their voice as an artist shapes their research and how these two entities — that at times may seem almost in conflict — can come together to give insights into the world we live in today.

Suggested topics include but are not limited to:

- The relationship between artmaking and the artist, and how artists speak in and through their work.
- Intentional and unintentional expression: the relationship between the artist, art, and spectator.
- Embodied authorship: different ways to speak with the body that may or may not use words.
- The artist's voice as a tool: hearing, singing, breathing, and speaking.
- Digital authorship and authority. Authorship and GenAI: how artists are using it, how it impacts creativity, is it a productive resource or a threat?
- Authorship as a practice of care.
- Authentic authorship: what is left out? What is covered over? Whose ideas are privileged or not? What questions can't be asked?'
- The generational collaborative authorship of embodied artistic practices.
- How copyright and intellectual property shape authorship.
- Collaborative authorship, authorship using improvisation, devising methodologies etc.

Submission Guidelines

We invite presentations that respond to any aspect of this call — collaborative presentations, formal papers, creative interventions, performances, or video essays. Please note that video essays will be displayed on an interactive TV screen throughout the conference but will not be part of a panel. Performance presentations will be in a theatre, but there is no technical support available beyond basic lighting and sound. Each presentation should be no longer than 20 minutes.

Please submit an abstract of no more than 250 words and a short biography of no more than 100 words [here](#) by 11.59pm **1 March 2026**, Singapore time. (You will need to create an Oxford Abstracts account to submit your abstract).

Proposals will be selected by a committee of peers based on their originality, clarity, relevance to the conference theme, and potential to contribute to a stimulating and diverse intellectual exchange. Acceptances will be notified by **1 April 2026**.

ADPRex X APARN2026 is free to attend. Unfortunately, we cannot offer travel bursaries. Registration will open in 2026 [here](#).

Publication options

All ADPRex X APARN2026 presenters will have the opportunity to publish their presentation in the [APARN channel](#) in the Journal for Artistic Research (these are editorially reviewed but not peer reviewed). Academic papers from the event may also be reworked and submitted for potential publication in an issue of the [Journal of Artistic Research \(JAR\)](#).

Join the Asia Pacific Artistic Research Network Special Interest Group

We invite interested artistic researchers working in or from the Asia Pacific region to join the APARN Special Interest Group. To join, please subscribe to APARN's Google Group at <https://groups.google.com/g/ap-arn>

Questions? Please contact the team at: adprex@nafa.edu.sg

References

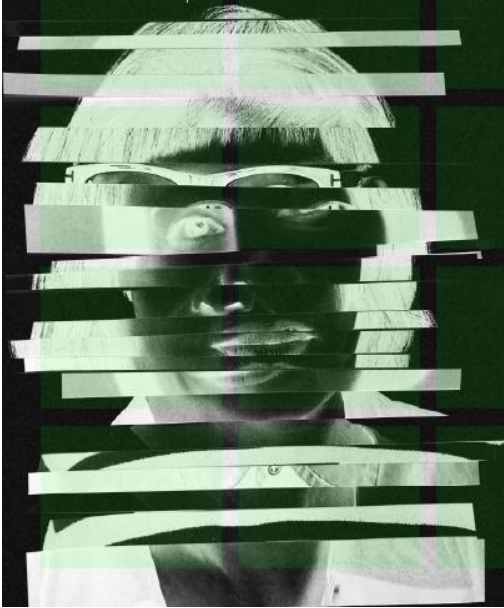
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