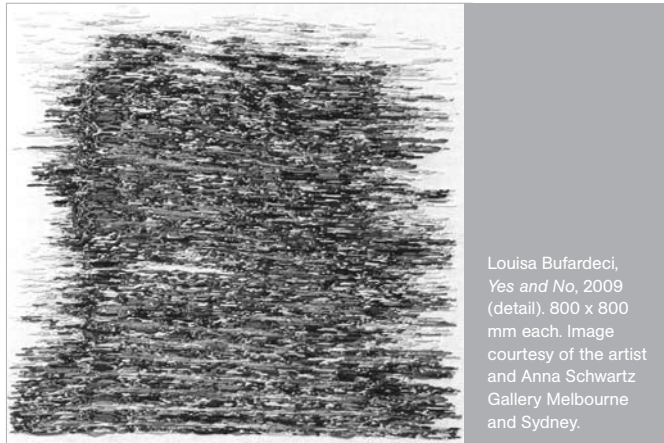


# Artist Profile

## Louisa Bufardeci



Louisa Bufardeci,  
*Yes and No*, 2009  
(detail), 800 x 800  
mm each. Image  
courtesy of the artist  
and Anna Schwartz  
Gallery Melbourne  
and Sydney.

### A practice of collecting

I've been trying to think of a metaphor that will best create a snapshot of my practice. "Dredging" came to mind at first, but the image of a hulking ship on the surface of an ocean didn't quite fit. So far, the closest I feel I have come is with the act of collecting seashells, something I might enjoy one day when I have buckets of time. The idea of this practice of collecting involves the discerning selection of objects with specific properties, their collation then their rearranging and display. It's difficult to find a way of describing the act of sifting through a culture rich in concepts and ideas.

Still, there are times when my cardigan pockets are weighed down to the ground with these shells. Ideas, information, materials and projects reach to the ground and drag me around. At other times my pockets are very light and contain barely a tissue. Then I feel irrelevant and lost. Lately I've been filling my pockets with ideas from technology and physics. I used to fill them with information in the form of data and statistics about local social realities that I gathered from various organisations. In 2001 I exhibited *Cold Storage* at the Anna Schwartz Gallery. It was a large installation piece of over 1000 large boxes and reflected on the act of collecting undocumented refugees in detention centres. In 2000 I made *The art of good reasoning*, a piece that questioned the practice of mandatory sentencing. *Counterplay* (2000) looked at the stolen generation. *Another rounding of facts* (1999) used statistics about deaths in custody, and *World Listing* (2000) looked at the application of ethnic labels in particular statistical sets.

Those shells were like Pacific Tritons or Imperial Volutes, thick and heavy. The data and statistics that informed them were overwhelming and often depressing. I sought lighter shells to collect: fun ones with kooky shapes like the Murex Alabaster or the Strombus Canarium. Continuing to use statistics, I ventured into map making; collecting data about countries and applying that information to resize and reposition the impression of the world. *Ground Plan* (2003), *Governing Values* (2004), *Landscapes* (2004) and *Recent Plans for the Equal Distribution of Equality* (2008) are examples of works in that collection.

As I said, lately I've been filling my pockets with ideas from technology and physics. Since 2006 I've looked at the physics of sound and how best to visualise specific kinds of sound. Visualisations of sound are handy for illustrating short periods of time. With *Starter Pistols* (2005), I used sound waves to illustrate the millisecond of a gun shot. And then in *3 captured telephone conversations - all one minute long* (2006) and *Every second is like, forever, and every year is like 11.3 centimetres* (2007) I used sound waves to illustrate snippets of

conversations and anti-war speeches. With *Yes and No* (2009) I used the spectrogram as an alternate form of sound representation to represent those words spoken at the most crucial and most banal moments of our lives. Each of these projects involved research into sound representation and was created using time consuming needlepoint techniques. Some of these projects were produced using generous funding from either Arts Victoria or the Australia Council. It's difficult to put so much time into the research and production of works like this without the help of external funding.

Having a baby last year meant emptying my pockets and hanging up my cardigan for a while but now it's on again and the pockets are filling up with other ideas of time and space. I was fascinated to learn recently that there are probably ten dimensions of space and only one dimension of time. This fact is a large but light and elegant shell in my pocket these days, perhaps a Wavy Spindle. I am working on a series of flags for the fourth dimension. Three dimensional and contorted, the flags are made of gridded fabric and snaps. String theory is also there in my pocket, as are mesh networks, nets and relay technologies. I also hope to work on a collaborative project that attempts to map sound; a project that will collate a number of my old shells into something altogether new and exciting.

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Louisa Bufardeci is represented by Anna Schwartz Gallery Melbourne.

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