

# 2Q18

## *Things Are Not What They Seem*

2Q18 is a one-night-only event of performances, interactive art, and installations that respond to themes in Haruki Murakami's epic novel *1Q84*.

The idea for 2Q18 came about after the two members of The Wandering Room, David Creed and Angela Rossitto walked across the overpass that links the Arts Centre and Testing Grounds. We were reminded of a scene in the first chapter of Murakami's novel *1Q84*.

While taking a taxi on her way to an important meeting, Aomame, a character in the novel, becomes stuck in a traffic jam on the Metropolitan Expressway in Tokyo. Her taxi driver advises that she can still get to her meeting on time if she takes an emergency staircase. He suggests that if she climbs down to street level she can take a train and continue on to her meeting. However, he warns her that after climbing down the emergency stairs that things may appear different to how they appeared before.

"And also," the driver said, facing the mirror, "please remember: things are not what they seem."

*Things are not what they seem*, Aomame repeated mentally. "What do you mean by that?" she asked with knitted brows. The driver chose his words carefully: "It's just that you're about to do something *out of the ordinary*. Am I right? People do not ordinarily climb down the emergency stairs of the Metropolitan Expressway in the middle of the day – especially women."

"I suppose you're right."

"Right. And after you do something like that, the everyday *look* of things might seem to change a little. Things may look *different* to you than they did before. I've had that experience myself. But don't let appearances fool you. There's always only one reality."

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Aomame notices in the weeks following her climb down the emergency staircase that things do appear to have changed – for example, there are now two moons in the sky.

*1Q84 – that's what I'll call this new world*, Aomame decided.

*Q is for "question mark." A world that bears a question.*

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Testing Grounds reminded us of the area under the expressway, down the emergency stairs in *1Q84*. It is on a lower level and is hidden from the busy Princess Bridge thoroughfare connecting St Kilda Road and Swanston Street. Looming over it is the gigantic spire of the Arts Centre, some newspaper offices, and the nearby casino. It feels like a parallel world. Even its street address of '1 City Road' sounds strangely enigmatic.

The intention with this event is to bring together artists and works that in some way question reality.

**ALREY BATOL**'s work *Mausoleum* hints at the absurdity of the domestic and the tyranny of obsolete things.

**COURTNEY COOMBS**' *Full Moon* takes both her residency project *Conversing About The Other* as well as the book *1Q84* as the starting points for text-based sculptural works that comment on ways of being in this world.

**XANTHE DOBBIE**'s *Circle Jerk* explores post-screen reality and the perpetually unattainable search for online gratification.

In **WESLEY DOWLING**'s projection work *Paradox*, the human hand functions as a link to another world and indicates that things are not what they seem.

**HALF ASIAN** (David Creed and Akiko Yamasaki) will be serenading with songs inspired by the novel *1Q84*.

**CERI HANN**'s work, *King of Denial*, repurposes the façade of a casino betting machine behind which he presents himself as a dialogical oracle, offering a chance to question accepted facts and explore the ensuing friction.

**RUTH MCCONCHIE** presents archival material from a fictional cult based on the octopus.

**DHANA MERRITT** has created her own blend of tea inspired by the novel *1Q84* called *4321Q*. It will be available at the book club.

**ANGELA ROSSITTO**'s video installation, *Smithereens*, sees a recognisable scene slowly morph into something that is unfamiliar.

**SHA SARWARI**'s work reflects on the realities one encounters in Australia after journeying from abroad as a refugee.

**KARL SHOOBRIDGE** will be presenting singular casts of mass produced packaging. He will also be fashioning a situation that challenges notions of power.

**TRIO OF DIPS** (Sian Williams, Lene Sunter, Si Ma Va) have designed a taster for the reader on the go; a booklet which expands upon a very descriptive but unimportant passage in the book.

Over the five-hour duration of the event **THE WANDERING ROOM** will be hosting a *1Q84* book club.

David Creed and Angela Rossitto