

AD



DOMINIC WILCOX IN CONVERSATION

DOGS, TEXTILES AND THE ART OF UNDOING

DRAWING WITH VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS

THE POWER OF ART TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

The National Society
for Education in Art
and Design magazine
Summer 2017, Issue 19
£5.00

nsead

SUMMER SCHOOL 2017

24–28 JULY 2017
10.30–17.00

Schools can support young people to consider who they are and what they can become.

Join artists Travis Alabanza and Linda Stupart in an active, participatory and practical course exploring ideas around bodies, genders and queer identities.

Immerse yourself in a week of making, talking and looking to imagine exciting ways of supporting learning in the classroom.

FIND OUT MORE
tate.org.uk/learn
020 7887 8888 (option 3)



Editorial

If you have a child repeatedly coming uninvited into your classroom or art room, Graham Hooper's article 'You're a lifesaver' (page 10) may resonate. Art and design spaces frequently become unique environments for troubled pupils, a special and safe place where ideas can be tried out or issues worked through. This *AD* considers how our subject can, for some young people, change the course of their learning and lives.

Lisa Harker, chief executive of The Art Room, a charity aimed at 5–16 year olds experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties, reports an escalation in many critical mental health problems amongst their referrals. This includes self-harm, eating disorders, anxiety and depression. On page 6, she shares how The Art Room's nine 'studios', their methodology, and its connections between art and therapy in mainstream settings, has helped stop such problems from escalating.

In Sarah Meader's 'Lessons in mindfulness' (page 16), the art teacher describes her response to a burgeoning pile of assessments. Ripping up the

rulebook, she instead instilled an atmosphere of wellbeing through 'mindless doodling', which was then incorporated into her curriculum. Dr Claire Penketh (page 12) also asks if aspects of curriculum and assessment act as institutional barriers to participation. She argues that there can be significant 'gains' for the subject 'where the experiences and contributions of disabled people are more fully recognised'.

Finally, a big thank you Dominic Wilcox, artist, designer and inventor, and to Dr Rachel Payne who, in conversation on page 2, examine Dominic's own learning journey. He explains what inspired him to create Little Inventors, a new initiative which aims to help children better understand what design is and its positive impact on our lives.

Sophie Leach, Editor, *AD*
Twitter: @nsead_sophie

Please send article proposals and submissions to sophieleach@nsead.org

Contents

Regulars

Poster

Watch Sculpture:
Unrequited Handshake
Dominic Wilcox

02

Interview

Dominic Wilcox in conversation with Dr Rachel Payne

10

Comment

You're a lifesaver
Graham Hooper

30

Artist-teacher profile

Nicola Smith

33

News

Features

06

The power of art to improve children's mental health

Lisa Harker

12

Disability gains for art education

Dr Claire Penketh

14

A vision for drawing

Nicola Currie

16

Lessons in mindfulness

Sarah Meader

18

Art education post-16, what's the point?

Hannah Day

22

The fall and rise of A-level History of Art

Trevor Horsewood

24

Dogs and the art of undoing

Caroline Whelan

26

Plots, Players and Pigments: Celebrating Shakespeare through multisensory art

Dr Melissa Westbrook

28

Primary ideas for art and maths

Karen Palmer

32

Developing My Museum

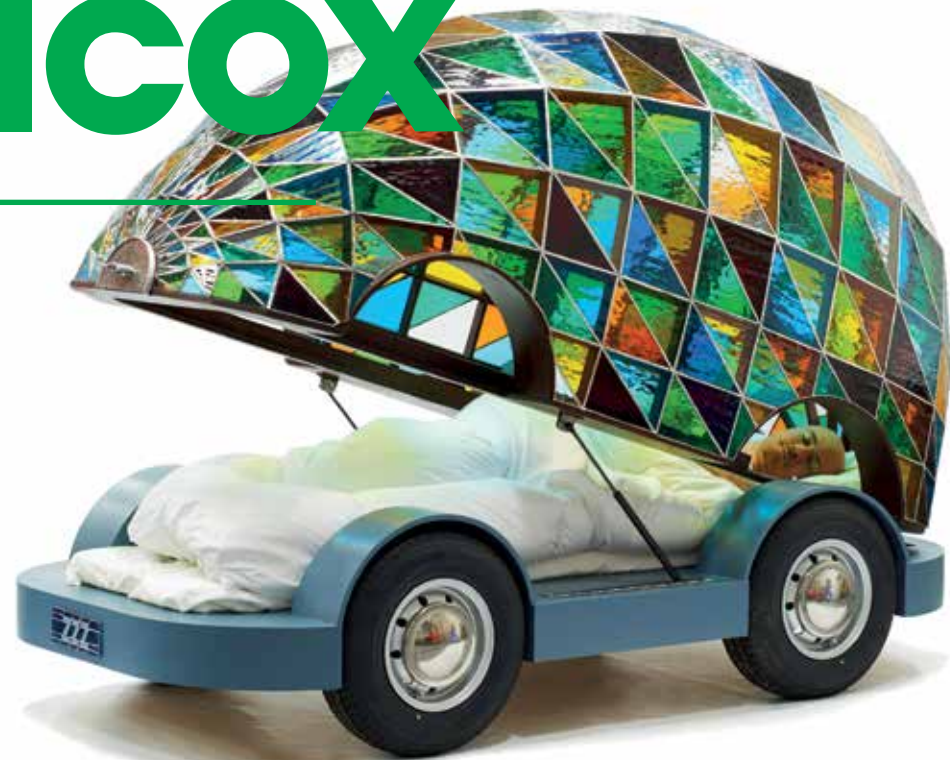
Nicola McCaffrey



Cover image
Art textiles
Heath Park School

Please note: While every effort is made to check websites mentioned in *AD*, some may contain images unsuitable for young children. Please check any references prior to use in the classroom. Authors' views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the NSEAD. Copyright © 2017 NSEAD. All rights reserved. With the exception of fair dealing for the purposes of research or private study, or criticism or review, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission in writing from the copyright holder. Subscribers to *AD* may make photocopies for teaching purposes free of charge provided such copies are not resold. Editor: Sophie Leach: sophieleach@nsead.org Design: Steers McGillan Eves t: 01225 465546 w: steersmcgillaneves.co.uk Advertising: info@nsead.org Publisher: National Society for Education in Art & Design, 3 Mason's Wharf, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 9FY t: 01225 810134 f: 01225 812730 w: nsead.org e: info@nsead.org

Dominic Wilcox



In his own words designer and inventor **Dominic Wilcox** works 'between the worlds of art, design, craft and technology' to create innovative and thought-provoking objects. Here in conversation with **Dr Rachel Payne**, senior lecturer in visual culture and arts-based pedagogy at Oxford Brookes University, he explains his motivations, inspirations and influences

Rachel Payne: I've been looking through your website and I'm struck by how exciting and unconstrained your work is; it has a subversive and rebellious nature which is so refreshing. Have you been inventing since you were a child?

Dominic Wilcox: I don't think I was outwardly any more creative than the typical child. I made model airplanes and hung them from my bedroom ceiling, and I painted fantasy lead figures, but nothing particularly inventive. I don't think you would have thought I would definitely become a person working in creativity as an adult.

It wasn't until I left school and started an art and design foundation course at Sunderland University that I discovered I had an ability to come up with inventive ideas.

A teacher called Charlie Holmes was an artist and a tutor on the course. He showed us a book of unusual inventions, and everyday objects with a twist. He then challenged us to come up with our own ideas and I found I could do it and enjoyed doing it. I've been doing it ever since. So it really is an example of how some people can have untapped potential, lying dormant, until someone shows what is possible, and then challenges that person to try it.

You have an undergraduate degree from Edinburgh College of Art and a masters from the Royal College of Art. How did your higher education after your foundation course impact on your career? What aspects of university life did you particularly enjoy?

I did a visual communication degree at Edinburgh College of Art that was very much idea-based rather than skill-focused. At that point I was just going in the general direction of being creative, without a plan for where I would end up. During the course I could see a pattern in my work, in that I communicated my ideas through conceptually twisting normal, everyday objects or mundane life. I still don't think I had found a clear path, and though my work was full of ideas, I wasn't very careful about the final presentation. The three-year course suited me. It was very experimental and open to students trying things out. There were end of year reviews but I don't remember ever being stressed about anything other than the end of course degree show. Of



Family Poncho



Far left Stained Glass Driverless Sleeper Car of the Future © Sylvain Deleu

Top left Dominic Wilcox
Left Watch Sculpture: Unrequited Handshake © Joe McGorty photography

Left bottom No Place Like Home GPS shoes © Joe McGorty photography

Above Dominic's drawings

All images unless otherwise stated are © Dominic Wilcox

'My first object drawing that I remember was a bed with a mattress cut in the shape of a sleeping person. The idea is that you only need that part of the bed when asleep. I had a sense for the absurd yet logical, and I could express it through drawings'

course, the experience of living away from home and in beautiful Edinburgh was great. I think I learned just as much about myself and the world from simply leaving home and living elsewhere.

I was then offered the chance to do a one-year post-graduate course in the same department. They said it was up to me what I did, so I decided to make some of my unusual invention drawings into real 3D objects. These included a bed that had a mattress in the shape of a person (me) in the foetal position. A *Spill Table* where a glass of water had spilled but the tabletop had expanded below it in the shape of the spill.

And who, apart from Charlie Holmes, have been your major influences?

In terms of influences other than those mentioned, probably Ron Arad who is a famous artist, designer and architect. He led the design products course at the RCA that I was on in 2000. Like many people who get to the top of their profession, he was extremely confident, decisive and without fear. He was very much in tune with his instincts and direct in his feedback to students. This experience of being around

An invention by: Wendy Ridley
 Age: 9 Date: 6.11.15
 The name of my invention is: Family Scooter



This invention is a family scooter. It works by all the body family push and it rides. It would be great for a big family.



Above Family Scooter
By Wendy, age 9

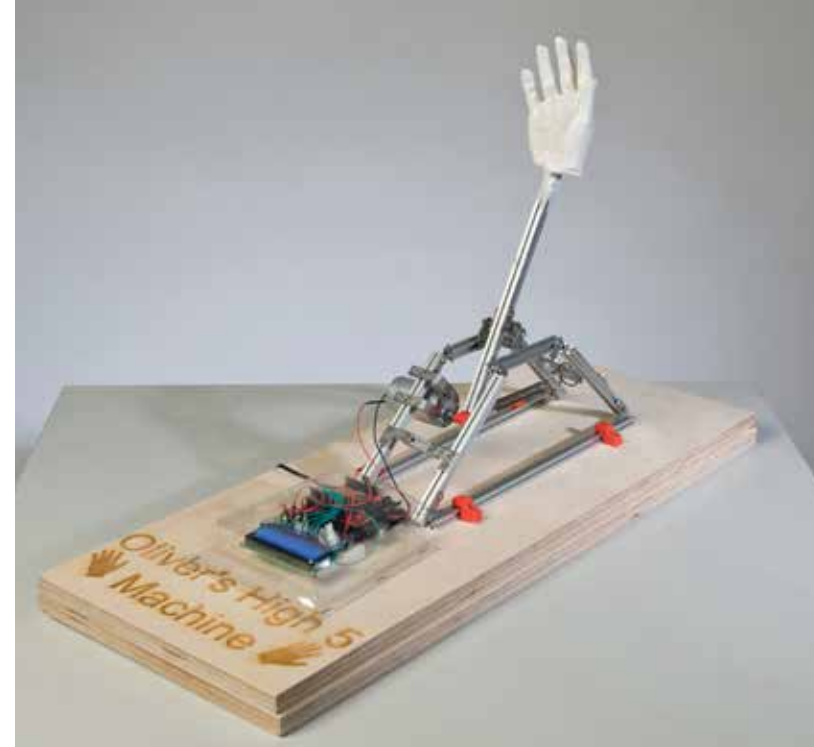
Ron, even only briefly, tends to rub off on you. It opens up your horizons and ambitions by seeing someone with a 'just do it' mentality. It's a bit like living in a small town and then meeting someone who has travelled the world and is telling you about all the things he has seen and done on his travels. You start to think that anything is possible.

What was the first thing you invented?

My first object drawing that I remember was the bed with a mattress cut in the shape of a sleeping person. The idea is that you only need that part of the bed when asleep. I had a sense for the absurd yet logical, and I could express it through drawings.

To what extent did your family life influence your creating processes?

My parents are highly influential on my work; my father is very outgoing, a great enthusiast for children having fun and experiencing as many things as possible. I would follow him around lots of the time. I was a shy child, quite the opposite of my dad in many ways, except I picked up a lot of his playfully provocative nature; he liked to say funny things



'Without creativity then we simply have a list of information floating in our heads without the skills to use that knowledge to solve problems and create new things'

to bored shop assistants or people standing nearby just to surprise them, or make them laugh or take their thoughts away from the everyday for a moment. As a little boy I would hide when he did it because I wanted to pass by unnoticed, but I saw how people enjoyed it. My dad is quite a driven person; self-employed but also involved in coaching young athletes. He took me to the local athletes club when I was 11 and got involved himself, helping out. Now 30 years later he still coaches. I nominated him to carry the Olympic flame and he was accepted, so that was a proud day, particularly as he has coached all his time without payment or reward other than seeing his athletes do well.

My mother is very much the opposite of my dad in personality terms. She is not the extrovert that my dad is, but is a great observer and listener of people, always thinking the best in people. My parents have always been supportive in what I wanted to do, even when they didn't initially understand what type of creative path I was going down. I think my personality is a mix of my mother's thoughtful, observing nature and my dad's sense of playful provocation.

I find your description of your parents evocative, and those different – yet complementary – attributes definitely come through in your creative practice. For example, *Stained Glass Driverless Sleeper Car* has both a fun, playful component and a more thoughtful nod towards future technologies and sustainable travel. Which piece of work or project best represents the two parental attributes you describe?

My father would probably be represented by the *Smoothie Making Football*. It was an idea that came out of a quick project I did to make something creative every day for



30 days in a row. The idea being that you put fruit inside a waterproof camping bag that fits inside a football. You kick the football around and then pour out the contents for a healthy and delicious drink. My dad played lots of sport and his sense of humour and sense for the absurd probably can be found in that idea somewhere.

The work that represents my mother's observational side is possibly the *Luxury Skimming Stone*. I collected 20 skimming stones on a shoreline and then covered them in gold leaf and made leather belt pouches so you can carry it around until the perfect moment. It was a project about value, and what is valuable. We know there is monetary value but even more than that are things like time, or anticipation. I wrote a short story about a person who had carried their stone for 22 years, two months and one day, and then suddenly found themselves in front of the perfect lake for skimming stones. Was now the time? Will it skim or just plop into the water?

The observing of the everyday and turning that into something valuable in all senses is something I probably picked up from my mother.

Which piece of work is your favourite, and why?

I don't think I have a favourite work, as they are all quite diverse, so it's difficult to compare. I'm excited about my project called Little Inventors where we ask primary children to think up invention ideas and then ask skilled makers to make the most ingenious ideas into real things for exhibition. It seems to be very popular and we are just starting to roll it out now into schools around the world: littleinventors.org.

Is the Little Inventors project a conscious decision to encourage active participation in art and design in the classroom? If not, how did Little Inventors come about?

The Little Inventors project developed out of a commission I received from The Cultural Spring in my hometown Sunderland. It has received so much interest around the world that it became an obvious next step to turn it into an ongoing project so that others can take part. We are simply taking children's ideas seriously and seeing where it goes.

Art and design enables new connections between all the pieces of knowledge and experience we have. It should be at the centre of children's education. Without creativity then we simply have a list of information floating in our heads without the skills to use that knowledge to solve problems and create new things.

The Little Inventors project comes at a time when our subject is struggling for recognition in the school curriculum in both primary and secondary education, and fewer boys are opting to take visual arts qualifications than girls in secondary school. How do you feel about that?

It's disappointing that boys are not taking up visual arts qualifications in high numbers. It's also true that girls seem to not follow engineering careers in the same numbers as boys. I hope that Little Inventors will encourage both genders to find their passion within the broad arena of 'inventing'. It is a place where art and science meet and ideas grow.

How important do you think access to the visual arts and design is for children?

I think it's so important for children to have access to the visual arts for many reasons. Taking part in the visual arts is great for our emotional wellbeing, because we can express our inner thoughts and share them with others in ways that words can sometimes struggle to do. There are also many practical benefits in everyday life. For example, being able to communicate your ideas visually in a drawing is a very useful skill to have. I've been in enough meetings to know that a sketch can sometimes be far more affective in clear communication than an hour of spoken words.

Design informs everything in our lives, from the clothes we wear and the objects we use, to the buildings we work within and the services we rely on. Everything is designed nowadays. It's so important that children understand what design is and how it can transform lives. I think there is a lack of understanding publicly of how influential design has become on everyone's life and how good design can improve things dramatically. It's about making things work well and making life better. ■

Above left Handy Hi-Five Machine by Oliver, age 6

Above Dominic with a primary class

The power of art to improve children's mental health

With many children missing out on crucial mental health support, The Art Room's chief executive Lisa Harker explains how the charities' nine studios are using art to help vulnerable children manage anxiety, grow in confidence and develop the social skills they need to thrive in life

A seven-year-old girl approaches The Art Room, anxiety etched across her face. As she reaches the threshold, a practitioner extends a hand to greet her – the first of many steps intended to make the girl feel at ease. She's encouraged to sit down in the sofa area with six of her peers who are also attending The Art Room for the first time.

Once everyone is seated and settled, one of the practitioners welcomes each child by name and introduces the theme for the day's session. He picks up a storybook and as he reads he pauses at every page to explore an idea or spark discussion. One by one the attention of each member of the group is piqued and they begin to find their voice, expressing their views and feelings. The group then moves to a dining table where toast, fruit and juice is shared – an exercise in cooperation, as well as nourishment – before the children don shirts and aprons to start their art work. The little girl is now quietly smiling as she picks up a brush ready to start creating.

That the process of art making has therapeutic benefits is hardly news; its value has been recognised for centuries. What The Art Room does, however, is integrate this philosophy into mainstream education settings.

The charity was established 15 years ago by an inspiring pioneer, Juli Beattie OBE. Working with vulnerable children over many years, she observed how art could transform children's confidence and self-belief. The charity started out as a small project with children sitting around a kitchen table in Juli's home. Now The Art Room is working with over 500 children a week across 40 schools in Oxfordshire, London and Edinburgh.

The charity operates out of nine Art Room 'studios', each located in either a primary or secondary school. As well as providing sessions for students at the host school, the studios are also open to other schools nearby.

Each studio is carefully designed and kitted out. On entering you immediately notice how inspiring and joyful it feels. There are colourful pictures everywhere, paint-splattered tablecloths, jars of jewel-like beads and buttons, and numerous shades of acrylic paint to spark a child's imagination. It's carefully designed so children feel safe in the space. The sofa area is comfortable and cosy, art materials can be easily accessed, and children are free to experiment with paints without fear of making a mess.

During sessions, art is used as a vehicle for therapeutic work and an opportunity for self-expression. Each art project involves transforming an everyday object, such as a chair, box or lampshade, into a work of art that

can be taken home by a child as a permanent reminder of their achievement. The process of making these works of art gives each child an opportunity to explore their identity, feelings and creativity, while also facilitating subtle therapeutic work throughout the session. On top of this, turning a mundane item into a breathtaking piece of art is a perfect metaphor for the transformation children can experience during their time with The Art Room.

A typical first project will involve transforming a plain wooden clock face into a self-portrait. Later, a clock mechanism is added so children can take home a fully functioning clock. The end product is valued but the process itself matters even more. As they design and paint the clock face each child starts to open up about him or herself, enabling the Art Room practitioners to begin the process of structuring the support each child needs to build their confidence, self-expression and social skills.

The children who attend The Art Room are referred by their school because of a concern about their emotional wellbeing or behaviour, which in turn is affecting their ability to learn. Typically a child might be socially withdrawn and finding it difficult to participate, or they might be 'acting out' and disrupting life in the classroom. Their behaviour may be the consequence of turmoil in their lives, bereavement, family difficulties, or because they have a learning disability. Whatever the root causes of their behaviour and emotional turmoil, time in The Art Room enables children to build on their current interests, skills and knowledge.



'At a time when there is almost daily national handwringing about the state of children's mental health in the UK, the contribution of The Art Room and similar organisations is more vital than ever'



Each session lasts around two hours and children attend once a week during school hours. Most take part for at least a term and sometimes longer. Over several weeks, sometimes months, children become less anxious and more self-assured and socially competent. Each child's progress is carefully tracked and shared with their school as part of an ongoing dialogue to share insights.

This close relationship with the school is vital, not only for The Art Room to understand the needs of each individual child, but also to make sure the positive impact of The Art Room endures when children return to classroom. It is also the reason The Art Room invests in training other people in its practice, whether that's teachers, teaching assistants or other professionals. A partnership with Bath Spa University has led to the development of a Postgraduate Certificate in Art Room practice and a range of training courses to suit busy professionals who want to gain the practical skills they need to help children with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The impact of The Art Room is carefully measured. Before each child begins attending The Art Room, they are assessed using a well-regarded screening tool – the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. The assessment is then repeated when they finish. The tool provides an indication of a child's level of difficulty in terms of their behaviour, tendency

'It is estimated that one in ten children have a diagnosable mental health disorder – an average of three in every classroom'

towards hyperactivity, ability to form positive relationships with their peers, consideration to others and their overall emotional wellbeing. The latest data shows that 65 per cent of all children who attend (and 73 per cent of those who present with severe problems) see an improvement in one or more of these characteristics during their time with The Art Room.

At a time when there is almost daily national handwringing about the state of children's mental health in the UK, the contribution of The Art Room and similar organisations is more vital than ever. It is estimated that one in ten children have a diagnosable mental health disorder – an average of three in every classroom. In the past decade we have seen an escalation in many critical problems, such as self-harm, eating disorders, anxiety and depression.

That this is damaging to our society hardly needs stating, but the far-reaching consequences are still poorly recognised. Children with poor mental wellbeing find it harder to learn, to



develop healthily (physically as well as mentally), and to form relationships.

And since 75 per cent of mental ill health begins before a person is 18 years old, improving mental wellbeing in childhood is essential if we want to improve mental health in society as a whole.

Despite the obvious imperative to act, the services that are expected to respond are meanwhile struggling to meet rising demand. Children's mental health services are turning away almost one in four of the children referred to them by teachers and GPs. Even when a child is accepted into a service, they face a wide variation in waiting times and have only a limited chance of receiving anything more than very short-term support.

Meanwhile The Art Room offers an effective and cost-effective approach, working with schools to identify children who could benefit from the project and acting swiftly to stop problems from escalating. When children join The Art Room, 64 per cent qualify for referral to children's mental health services. By the time children leave The Art Room this has been reduced to 25 per cent – a drop of 61 per cent.

It's wonderful to see it in action. As each Art Room session draws to a close the children return to the sofa area in order to reflect on their own and others' work. It is an opportunity for them to contemplate what they have achieved as individuals and as a group, marking every step of their Art Room journey. This time also helps

them acknowledge the steps they have made as individuals; their concentration, perseverance, willingness to show kindness to others and so on. These conversations reinforce the sense that each child is valued for who they are.

It is this connection between art and therapy that is embodied in work of The Art Room. In his BBC Reith Lecture, Grayson Perry reflected on his first-hand experience of witnessing Art Room practice: 'I loved The Art Room because it seemed to formalise my own take on the relationship of therapy and art.' It is a relationship that is often recognised in the art world, and now The Art Room is helping others to see its value too. ■

*lisa.harker@theartroom.org.uk
theartroom.org*

PG Cert in Applied Art Room Practice

An opportunity to understand and apply aspects of our unique methodology in your own professional practice. Applications open for September 2017, please contact training@theartroom.org.uk for further information.

You're a lifesaver

With the reported rise in teenage mental health issues and self-confidence among young people at its lowest levels in a decade, Graham Hooper, photography teacher at Peter Symonds College in Winchester, looks at how these problems can be uniquely addressed through art education

I am not an art therapist. Beyond what was covered on my PGCE, and since then on any professional development courses, I have received no formal training in dealing with teenage mental health issues. If my 20 years experience of being a personal tutor is any indication, cases are increasing in number and severity. In my pastoral role I've supported students suffering mild anxiety about exams at one extreme, and attempted suicide at the other – and that's not good. Research carried out by The Prince's Trust earlier this year, and reported on the BBC, found young people 'feared for their future', with their self-confidence at its lowest levels in nearly a decade.

My job, aside from my pastoral role, is to help 16 to 19 year olds get the best grades they can in A-level art. If educational results count for anything my hope is that high marks might mean a future for them that is a happy one. I want them

to achieve and succeed as students, but as human beings too. I feel strongly that art and design education can offer something beyond academic attainment – something special and unique.

I know that studying art, and teaching the subject now, has made me who I am. Designing and making certainly – that hands on, visceral relationship with materials and process – but also coming face-to-face with art in galleries and museums allows me to understand my place in the world, to see the humanity that is possible. Every year I come into contact with hundreds of young people and what is said and what is achieved within the department, I believe, has an impact that can be positive and meaningful. I know that art and design education is transformative.

As I see it, there are five distinct points of intervention where art and design can effect the lives of those we teach in positive ways that stimulate, inspire and enable:

The subject as key

I tell my students on day one that there is no textbook, no essays, no revision, and no sit-down written exam. Our subject is very different to most – it unlocks something. Students sense that very quickly, which can provide solace. Hampered by a level of literacy or numeracy, for instance, a pupil can achieve where otherwise they might not.

The subject is also special because I think it recognises and rewards humanity, frankly. The assessment criteria (and they seem standard across the levels, boards and disciplines) allude to all the skills we'd want in well-rounded human beings. We want adults in any walk of life to be focussed, investigative and well informed. Whatever the career, we'll need employers and employees who are discerning, observant and reflective. So when I'm asked the question, as I am at every open evening, what use studying art and design is in life or the workplace, I can answer with confidence and conviction.

The course as journey

The trajectory of an art project mirrors life generally, so they become metaphors for each other. There are ups and downs, dead ends and digressions. We have choices and make decisions; we meet obstacles and overcome them. It is a process of navigation, with the help of others. Interestingly, students can also come to the realisation that although the journey is a communal one (they're all in it together) it is ultimately a solo mission, even if there is a co-pilot in the early training flights.

The class as fellow travellers

As the teacher I won't travel for them but they need to know that I am there alongside them. Each step is their step, every pinnacle their achievement. Knowing that the route has been trodden by countless others before them can be a comfort. Understanding that others in the room are at various points on that same path is helpful too. They will empathise and can share perceptions that will be relevant.

'I know that studying art, and teaching the subject now, has made me who I am. Designing and making certainly – that hands on, visceral relationship with materials and process – but also coming face-to-face with art in galleries and museums allows me to understand my place in the world, to see the humanity that is possible'

The studio as sanctuary

The art department was a place when I was at college where I could always find people like me. However different I might have felt to others in my cohort – because of musical tastes or hair colour – in the art room we were somehow all on the same side. We understood each other. I was safe and free, and I could spend time productively in the company of sympathetic friends. That meant a lot to me, and I still have the feeling that I am a member of a secret club. When I meet art and design graduates in adulthood I can speak about things I know only they will really appreciate.

The teacher as butler

The good art teacher is in a position to support and challenge in just the right combination, to affirm the student's self-worth but also raise their aspirations. We can point out the trapdoors as well as the shortcuts. We prepare, introduce and facilitate.

So art and design education can provide a service for many that is precious and important, beyond the curriculum, even if it isn't in our job description. The students don't need to be on the brink of a breakdown to benefit either. It's preventative as much as curative.

Some of our students may become art teachers themselves in time, and that's a heart-warming thought. You can spot them; they're the ones who hang around in their lunch hour working away, the ones who never question the value or use of it all. ■

ghooper@psc.ac.uk

Cornelia Parker OBE RA, Patron of NSEAD



We are delighted to welcome Cornelia Parker as a patron of NSEAD

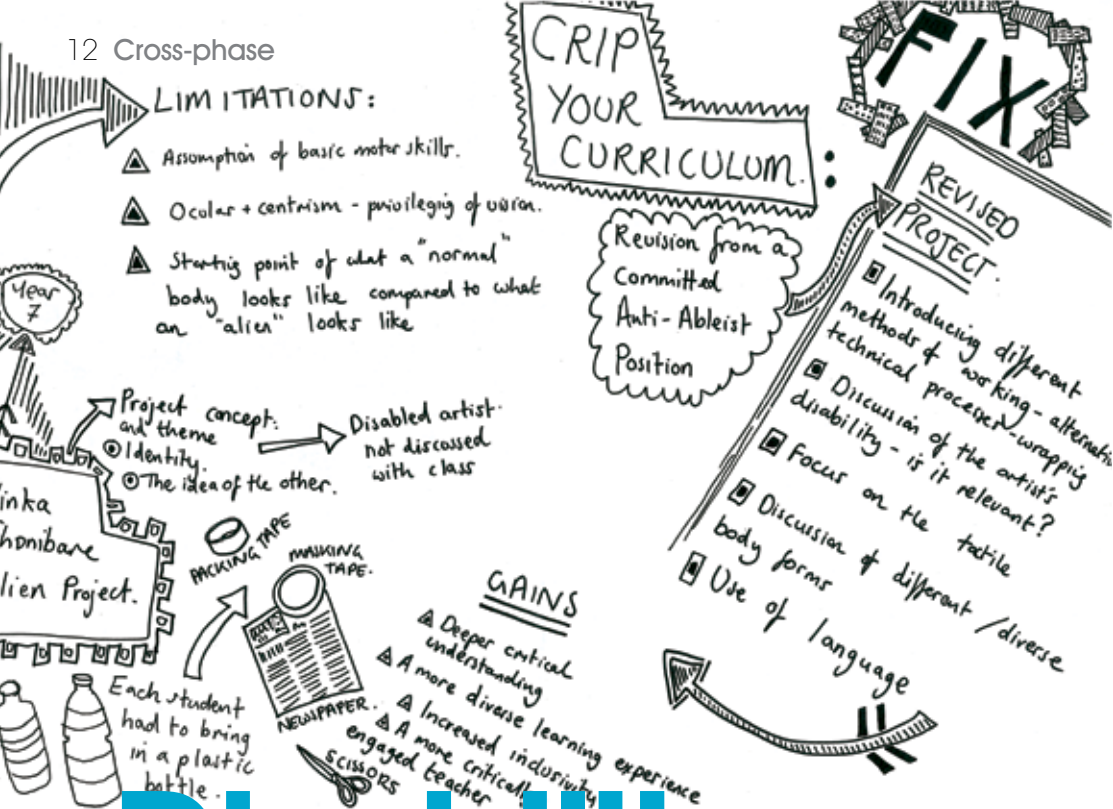
Cornelia Parker studied at Gloucester College of Art, Wolverhampton Polytechnic and Reading University. In 1997 she was shortlisted for the Turner Prize, and in 2010 she was appointed OBE and elected to the Royal Academy of Arts.

Her work includes large-scale installations such as *Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View*, 1991, for which a garden shed was blown up by the British Army. In 2016 she became the first British artist commissioned to create a large-scale, site-specific installation for the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Roof Garden. *Transitional Object (PsychoBarn)* was on view from May to October 2016.

In 2016, as part of her Hogarth Fellowship at the Foundling Museum, Cornelia Parker curated *FOUND* a group exhibition presenting works from over sixty artists, designers, writers and musicians who responded to the theme of 'found', reflecting on the Museum's heritage.

Cornelia shares our concerns about the challenges facing our subject and its practitioners. She is and will be an informed and passionate advocate for us all. We thank her for her interest and enthusiasm that she will give to our membership and beyond, and for her understanding of the challenges that we face.

We are very grateful to our new patron who has kindly agreed to give a keynote presentation at the NSEAD National Conference, Saturday 24 June 2017 and an interview in a forthcoming AD. ■



Disability gains for art education

With its capacity to promote creative responses to difference, and open up new ways of knowing and being, the inclusiveness of art education is something to be celebrated. Yet aspects of pedagogic practice, curriculum and assessments can operate as a barrier for disabled children and young people, argues Dr Claire Penketh, Head of Department for Disability and Education at Liverpool Hope University

As part of their daily classroom, studio or gallery practices, art teachers demonstrate their creative capacities to respond to and learn from diversity. Perhaps this comes from the arts' ability to generate and promote creative responses to difference, or from their distinctive place in the curriculum, encouraging pupils to work with material forms of learning, opening up new ways of knowing and being. Much has been written about the relationship between art education and its inclusive nature and I understand, largely through the testimonies of adults and young people, that the art room can bring something that differs significantly in form and nature to other educational experiences.

The inclusiveness of the subject and its teachers is something to celebrate.

In my role as Head of Department for Disability and Education at Liverpool Hope University, I promote the application of disability studies to education through a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. As a one-time art educator I am particularly interested in the application of disability studies to art education. The social model is central to our work and recognises that societal and institutional structures and processes can present barriers to participation. A social theory of disability recognises important distinctions between individual impairment and the social and cultural production of disability, asking us

'It would seem that any meeting between disability and art education must take place through this discourse of special education. However, there are significant gains for art education where the experiences and contributions of disabled people are more fully recognised and valued'

to question the distinctions made between able and disabled. Disability studies requires us to move beyond remedial, therapeutic notions of additional support to recognise the gains for art education by truly valuing *all* learners.

I am interested in exploring the inclusive dimensions of art education, but this demands an acknowledgement that some aspects of pedagogic practice, curriculum and assessments can operate as a barrier for disabled children and young people. Art education in compulsory education in England and Wales operates within a set of systems and practices that demand that the education of some children must be defined as special or additional. Although this might result in the identification of need and an appropriate allocation of resources, this so-called special designation of learners is recognised as problematic for its emphasis on deficit-based language used to define children and young people who appear to fail to meet educational norms. It would seem that any meeting between disability and art education must take place through this discourse of special education. However, there are significant gains for art education where the experiences and contributions of disabled people are more fully recognised and valued.

These ideas were explored in a recent workshop at the Institute of Education (UCL) with Lesley Burgess and her colleagues and students as part of the PGCE Art and Design. I am lucky to have had the opportunity to be an external examiner for a course that offers rich and valuable experiences for its students. My role here has enabled me to take theoretical ideas from 'desk-based' research, to an active and engaged population of emerging art teachers/practitioners. Opportunities to test the bridge between theory and practice are essential, and I always emerge invigorated and enthused by the

creative responses and intense questioning from these students. I am very grateful to Lesley Burgess and her team and students for their insights and participation in my workshop.

Putting Disability Studies to work

This workshop encouraged participants to explore barriers in art education by engaging with seemingly common-sense understandings of ability and their expression in art education. Disability studies scholar Lennard Davis' reminds us that any study or inquiry into disability must begin with our taken-for-granted understanding of ability and the implications of ableism. Ableism is described as a subtle set of preferences for so-called able-bodied/mindedness. An example of an ableist assumption might be that 'children see before they speak', the opening statement in the most recent Ofsted subject report on art and design education. Ableism renders difference as undesirable, reinforcing seeing, for example, as the ideal way of experiencing the world. The implication is that other forms of experience are less valuable.

How can we challenge deficit-based thinking about disability through art education?

Robert McRuer, author of *Crip Theory*², challenges us to revise taken-for-granted assumptions in systems and practices from a 'committed anti-ableist position'. This means recognising, working with and valuing alternative ways of being and doing. Interrogating art education from an anti-ableist perspective enables us to recognise pedagogic limitations and rethink practice in order to rediscover the meaning and purpose of our work. Examining the ways educational practices can prioritise and reinforce able-bodied/mindedness enables us to re-imagine and sustain art education by allowing it to be shaped and informed by previously excluded minds/bodies.

What did we do?

Students were asked to share a project they had designed or observed, developing a 'storyboard' to describe, and then revise, the project from an anti-ableist position. Following the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) students were encouraged to refer to the 'Broad Areas of Need' from the SEN Code of Practice but to also explore, Cognition, Sensory and Physical, Mental Health and Communication as areas for design rather than deficit. Students used these key headings to imagine a lesson that was enhanced by anticipating a greater range of cognition, communication forms, sensory capabilities and emotional responses.

In one example students described a lesson where pupils were asked to produce pencil drawings from photocopied images of London landmarks. The students critiqued the lesson, drawing attention to the need for long periods of concentration, the use of fine motor skills and an emphasis on vision. In their revised project they imagined pupils using their different shapes and sizes of bodies to shape architectural forms which could then be lit, and photographed or drawn. Students envisaged their pupils creating or responding to soundscapes or creating text pieces based on a favourite place. Their 'crippled curriculum' promoted a shift from an pendent drawn response to multisensory, interdependent and collaborative exchanges informed by responding to a more expansive understanding of sensory, physical, emotional and cognitive difference.

In a further example students described a 3D project where pupils developed alien bodies in response to work by Yinka Shonibare. Here the initial project explored identity and the idea of the other. Students recognised some limitations in the project in making assumptions about fine motor skills, prioritising the visual over tactile and their starting point, which compared a 'normal' body to the imagined alien being. They also noted that they were reluctant to discuss disability as an aspect of Shonibare's identity, although issues relating to race and post-colonialism were more fully explored with pupils.

In the revised project the group explored a greater range of technical processes, the tactile as well as visual nature of the project, use of language and an exploration of different bodies, as well as the inclusion of a discussion of the relevance of disability and identity to Shonibare's work. Students recognised that they could explore the relevance of disability with pupils rather than deciding on their behalf whether or not this was relevant. The revised project engaged with difference in questioning what was understood by normal, encouraging pupils to identify with bodies unlike their own.

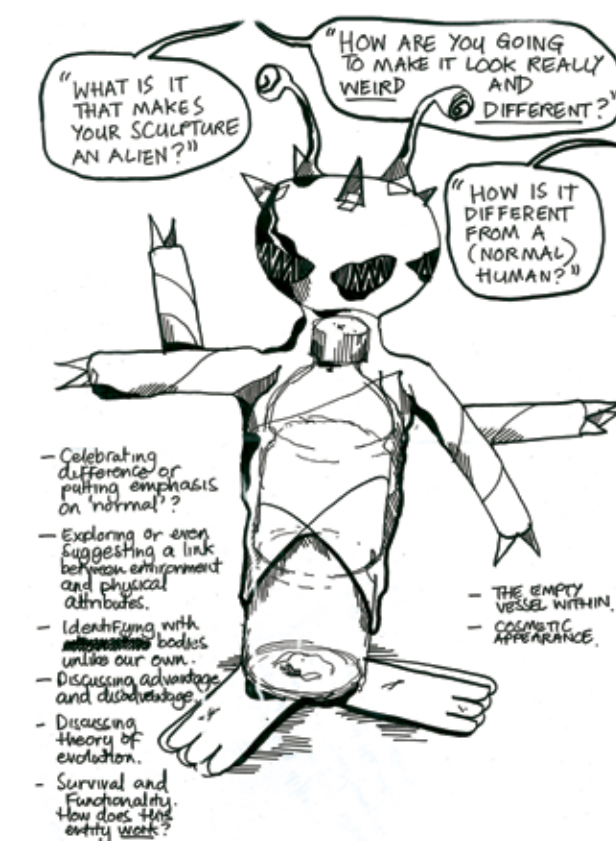
Imagining a greater range of bodies and minds enabled students to enhance their projects and question the underlying purpose of the activities they had originally planned. There are obvious limitations in this brief workshop, but there is a great deal of potential in encouraging art educators to bring disability into the art and design room. It is our role to enable pupils to develop their creative capacities with the hope of sustaining and imaging a better world. Acknowledging and valuing the contributions of disabled people can only benefit us in this endeavour. Bringing disability into curriculum and practice affords some real gains for art education.

'Once we recognise that human capacities vary greatly from one another and that those differences mark the dynamic essence of what it means to be human, cultures can begin to adapt to the value of individual differences rather than differentiate between the value of individuals' David Mitchell³. ■

Dr Claire Penketh is principal lecturer and head of department for Disability and Education at Liverpool Hope University. She is external examiner for the PGCE Art and Design course at the Institute of Education (UCL) and the MA Art Education and Art Education and Practice at Birmingham City University.

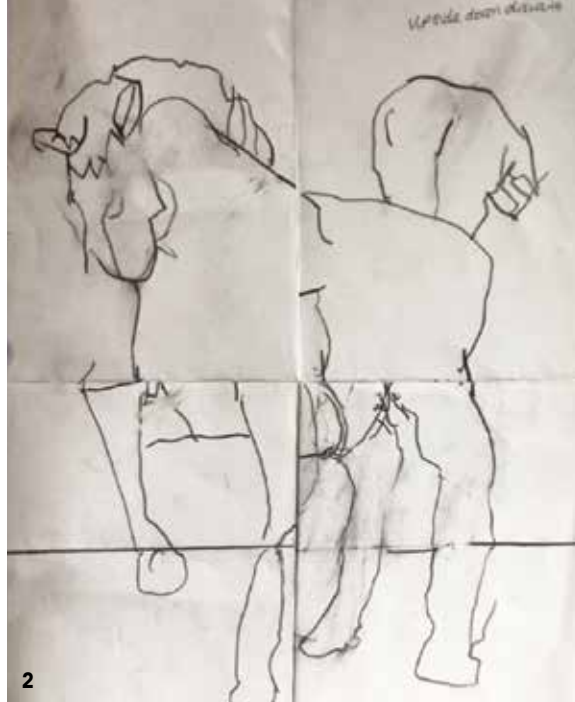
References

- ¹ Davis, L. (1995) *Enforcing Normalcy – Disability, Deafness and the Body*, London/New York: Verso
- ² McRuer, R. (2006) *Crip Theory – Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability*, New York University Press
- ³ Mitchell, D. in Stiker, H.-J. (1999) *A History of Disability*, University of Michigan Press



Left Identifying with bodies unlike our own

Above PGCE Storyboard engaging with ableism in art education



A vision for drawing

In order to teach drawing to blind and visually impaired students at New College Worcester, Nicola Currie, head of art and design, revisited American art educationalist Betty Edwards' structured approaches to drawing. Here, Nicola describes the varied processes used and vibrant results achieved

If drawing is a way of responding to the visual world, how can this be taught to children and young people who are blind and visually impaired? I wrestled with this question when I began work at New College Worcester, a secondary college for blind and visually impaired students. The challenge became more acute when the examination boards gave an increased prominence to drawing in the GCSE, AS and A-level specifications in art and design.

I need to say at the outset that this article is based on a Birmingham University research project about how to teach drawing to students with some sight. Teaching drawing to students with no sight, who rely on tactile stimuli, is the subject of another project.

My research project coincided with a group of 12 to 13-year-old students, who asked me to run a lunchtime art club to teach drawing skills. I agreed and hoped that the club might also give the students the confidence to experience and explore new ways of working in art. Having come from mainstream teaching I researched everything I could find on how to teach drawing in a visually impaired setting and found few resources.

I grew up in the 60s where the approach to drawing was to 'draw what you see'. This was not an approach that was particularly helpful in my current setting, where a student's sight might be fluctuating and where many students have not had experience of the incidental visual learning of a child with normal sight. In developing a programme of drawing for the drawing club I revisited the work of the American art educationalist, Betty Edwards. Edwards believes that drawing can be taught in the same way that musical scales are taught, and that this structured approach helps students properly express themselves. Her methods had worked for some students I had previously taught in mainstream education, and my eager drawing club were willing to give Edwards a try.

Before starting the club I interviewed each student about their art experience, their understanding of drawing and their preferred methods of drawing. I also checked their tonal vision, colour vision and the type of drawings/objects they were able to see.

The weekly drawing club of students with very different eye conditions began with an exercise in contour drawing. They also did a preliminary drawing to provide a baseline for assessment and evaluation, which involved drawing a self-portrait using a mirror. One student used his iPad so he could look at himself more closely and enlarge the image.

Each week a different way of drawing was taught. This loosely followed Edwards' structured teaching approach and included mirror drawing, upside down drawing, negative space drawing, tonal drawing and drawing emotions. Students also had the opportunity of working with a printmaker, Frans Wesselman, and learnt how to make a drypoint etching. The advantage of this type of drawing is that the students could feel the indentation of the line.

Our sources, illustrations and drawings were printed on paper or embossed onto paper (using a special embossing machine), so students could feel and handle the drawings. They selected their preferred drawing tool from a 4B pencil to a thick black felt pen. Three worked on white card with a black card underlay so they could see the corners of the white sheet. Apart from these modifications and a special workshop teaching students how to etch on plastic sheets, the teaching was very similar to teaching with a sighted group of students. Interestingly, so were the results.

Results

In their evaluations students spoke about how the specific drawing techniques had helped. All the students are registered blind. A student with photophobia (sensitivity to light) and nystagmus (uncontrolled movement of the eye) surprised himself with his practical outcomes, especially the negative space drawing (fig. 1) and the etching. He finds identifying the dark shapes easier.

A student with profound visual impairment reported that the grid method of drawing helped him the most. His upside-down drawing of a horse, where he gridded the drawing into quarters, demonstrates this (fig. 2).

Another student who reads 24–36 point text enjoyed learning how to shade and etch (fig. 3). A girl in the group used her newly taught etching skills to produce a Manga-inspired outcome on the press. Her reproduction of a Pablo Picasso drawing of Igor Stravinsky was also impressive (fig. 4). Another student etched a dynamic dog portrait (fig. 5).

The emotional and motivational aspects of the drawing course

In any research it is difficult to measure the emotional and motivational aspects of a piece of work, even though this was an important part of my research. A student's motivation for drawing can affect the way that the teaching is received in future years. The student evaluations made it clear that everyone had enjoyed the programme, wanted to continue the course and wanted to do the subject for GCSE. Without exception the students were keen to learn and got on with each exercise without distractions. One invited another member to join the group. Several took photographs of their drawings to send home.

The outreach potential

From this small pilot research group I recognised that adapting Edwards' method of teaching drawing was helpful.

For the students in this research group, their visual impairment did not define the content of the programme but it did inform its delivery. Because the students were able to choose the materials, focal length of objects and format for the exercises, the students themselves worked to overcome some of the visual challenges they face in drawing.

A comparison of the drawings done by the students in their initial assessment and in their later portfolio of work demonstrated a clear development and improvement of their

'Because the students were able to choose the materials, focal length of objects and format for the exercises, the students themselves worked to overcome some of the visual challenges they face in drawing'

skills. It was important that students recognised that different methods work for different people, and so I was offering a pick and mix selection of methods to explore.

The outreach potential of this research is clear. New College offers free training to teachers and learning support assistants working with children and young people with a visual impairment.

Edwards states that through drawing 'you will enhance your ability to think more creatively in other areas of your life'. This assertion points to the importance of drawing for the whole curriculum. At New College Worcester we believe that a vision for drawing enables students to explore the world around them, whatever their vision. It's worth remembering that Claude Monet's paintings of waterlilies, which are viewed as some of his finest pieces, were painted when he had advanced cataracts. ■

For details about the outreach programme at the college contact: JNormantonErry@ncw.co.uk

Reference

Betty Edwards, *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*, J.P. Tarcher, 1979



Lessons in mindfulness

Sarah Meader, teacher of art and design at St Aidan's Church of England High School, Harrogate, discovers how taking risks in class by encouraging 'mindless doodling' can create exciting and surprising results

What creates good mindfulness and an atmosphere of wellbeing? At home it is a comfortable environment with good music and a pad of paper with a pen. It's a simple way to manage my own wellbeing as a busy and tired art and design teacher.

At school, however, a sense of pressure and gloominess was emerging. Increasing moans about the number of assessments being set and the importance of hitting target grades filled the air. Sound familiar? But these were not teachers talking in our staffrooms, but the pupils, the same young people in whom we strive to promote a love of learning and provide a safe and stimulating learning environment.

And I too was feeling the pressure to complete a scheme of learning for year 8 (ages 12–13), assess it, feedback and begin the cycle again. It was time for a change.

The next, already planned, scheme of learning was scrapped. Instead, with the class, we discussed alternatives to improve

our mindfulness and our wellbeing. Much like myself and, I am sure many of you, pupils shared that music, background videos and mindless doodling often helps.

Initially this began as a one-off lesson, an hour to simply unwind and forget the assessments set for the week. We put on some pop music we could all sing along to, had a general chat about things we enjoy in our own time, as well as current news and events from around the world, and before we knew it our pages were full of exciting shapes and marks and, for some, wonderful creatures and characters.

By the end of the lesson the class reminded me of the very reason I had chosen to teach art, and I experienced the invaluable impact that art can have on our young people. By simply doodling away without set expectations or outcomes, singing along to music and having a good chinwag, the gloomy atmosphere had turned into a buzz of happy laughs and smiles.

Instead of planning a scheme of learning ahead of time, it was clear that the class should guide the next steps. Their desire and need for 'down time' was too prominent to ignore. As a teacher I often talk to pupils about taking risks in their own work, so it was time for me to lead by example. I took away the focus of learning specific techniques and skills, and the focus of a specific outcome, and focussed on promoting a safe atmosphere to investigate the ways in which pupils could step back and find calm. I wanted my pupils to engage in their own love of learning, and to identify areas of art and design that they enjoy as individuals.

The next lesson arrived and I had a group of beaming pupils standing at my door bombarding me with questions: 'Miss, are we doodling again today? Miss, can we listen to music again? Miss, can we watch some doodle videos that I found?' The enthusiasm was overwhelming.

As a class we began to explore the value of doodling, discussing how it can help each of us in different ways. For some

it meant quiet-down time, for others it was a way of expressing things that are difficult to do so verbally, and for some it was simply a fun way of exploring art to suit their personalities.

Pupils were encouraged to consider a range of backgrounds and surfaces, such as spraying inks, splatting paint, marbling, dyeing fabric and more. There was little emphasis on learning the 'correct processes'; I simply wanted them to enjoy playing with new materials. Each pupil explored a range of different doodle artists: Jon Burgerman, Kerby Rosanes, Pic Candle and Zentangles, who could help if pupils found it difficult to put pen to page. Each individual produced exciting, imaginative and personal responses.

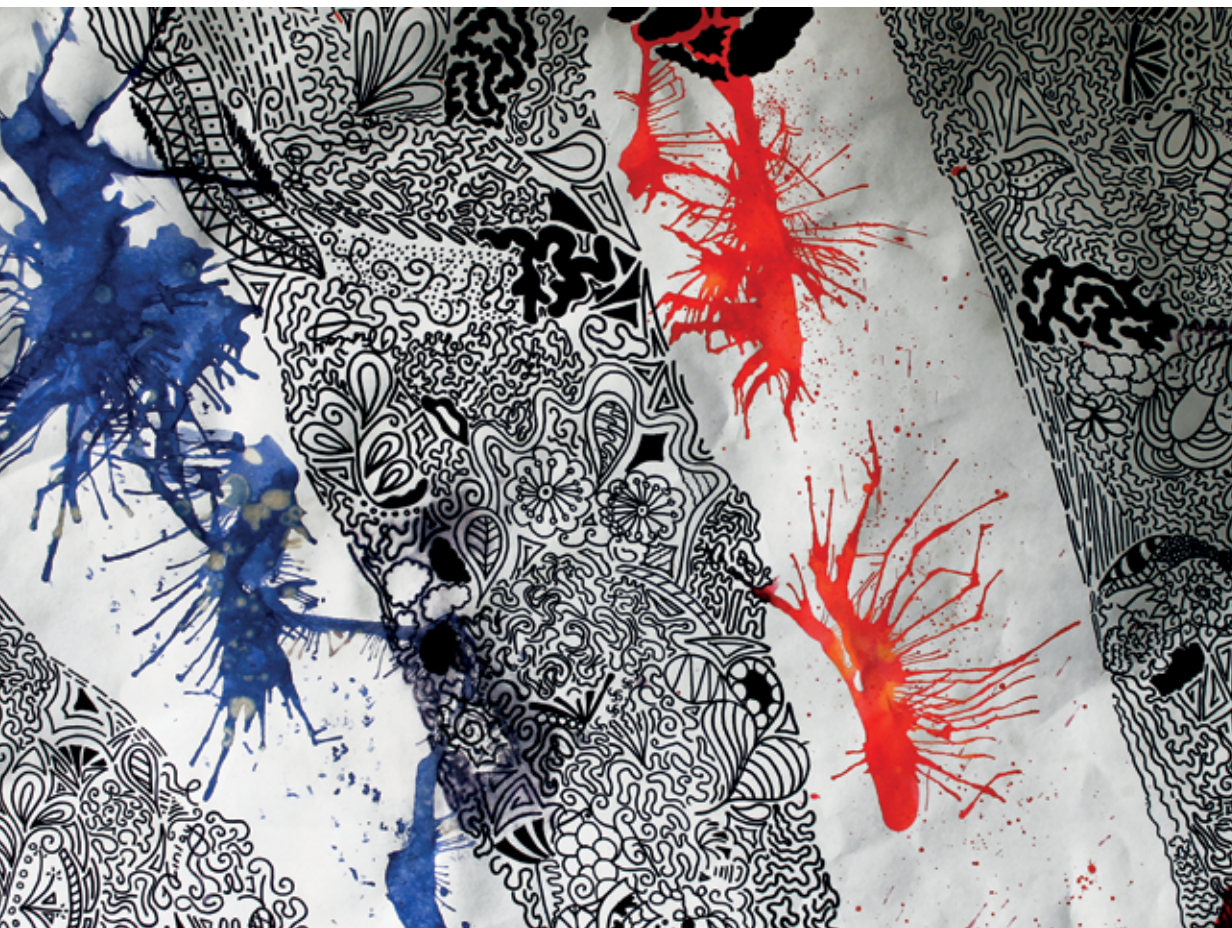
A lasting highlight was the moment a young pupil approached me with the first smile he had worn in my classroom all year. It was a smile that confirmed my risks were successful. This young man had spent every art lesson

'For some it meant quiet-down time, for others it was a way of expressing things that are difficult to do so verbally, and for some it was simply a fun way of exploring art to suit their personalities'

previously stating 'I'm no good at art, there's no point, I can't draw', and now here he was, bouncing across the classroom, artwork clutched in his hands expressing how proud he was what he had created - he actually wanted take his work home! I am lucky enough that he agreed to let me borrow it for my display for a little longer. That even bigger grin is the very reason that doodling should be encouraged more frequently.

The power of the doodle should not be overlooked. ■

s.hurdle@staidans.co.uk





‘An exhibition becomes, rather than an end point, an opportunity to present our current findings, much like a scientist taking stock of their discoveries before deciding where those discoveries should lead next’

Hannah Day, head of visual arts, media and film at Ludlow College sixth-form college, examines how art and design specialists in the world of the Ebacc and the push for STEM subjects can convince new students that the specialism is relevant, useful and worthwhile

Like many in the world of post-16 education the last few years have seen me re-examining the question of my subjects relevance, particularly to a cohort who, while considering their degree and careers options, will only be taking three or four subjects.

The English Baccalaureate (Ebacc), disregarding any form of arts subject in its five pillars, and the push for STEM subjects, has led to a narrative of the arts being irrelevant to a student's core knowledge, a luxury or an add on. How then do we as subject specialists ensure that we can convince those coming to us that what we offer is, in fact, the polar opposite; that it is relevant, useful and worthwhile?

The most common argument is to reference the UK's creative industries and their huge contribution to the national purse. This is indeed an important argument and one that we should continue to make, but I have concerns about it being our first and, at times, only argument. Unintentionally we turn art and design education into a form of training, and while it is important lifeblood for the UK's creative industries, training is a by-product rather than the sole purpose. It also suggests that art subjects are only there for people interested in creative careers. The result is that we miss out on many

potential students and narrow the stream of people who have experience of art and design in education. Surely one of the most effective ways of putting arts subjects back on the national agenda is to ensure that the policy makers, business leaders and innovators of tomorrow study art and design and learn first hand its importance.

With all of this in mind I am going to use this space to do two things. Present a set of arguments for studying art and design and share a change to our first year programmes that has seen a significant impact on retention and rates of student satisfaction.

We create philosophers

On Karawa, the conceptual artist, paints the date, completing each work in a day. If he runs out of time he discards it. The result are many pieces, white paint on a flat black ground, simply stating a date, which once painted is an artefact of that day, a statement of On Karawa's existence. As you look at the work you can't help but wonder what you were doing on that very day; in some cases you may not have even been alive. Here you are faced with a work that reminds you, by the very nature of the six digits it holds, that you exist now but once did not and that one day you will not again.

Here is the art A-levels first powerful component, the ability to enable a student to start to understand themselves and their existence. Some of the most powerful and exciting works produced at post-16 come from students exploring issues relating to themselves and their family. The home, relationships, illness and ageing, physical and emotional health, are all subjects being explored up and down the country by young people, not yet out of their teens. Here is a subject that gives them freedom to carve out their own projects, their own curriculum, based on what is relevant and important to them.

Left and below
Emily Hodges and Beth Morgan response to the work of David Bailey and Irving Penn

Art education post-16, what's the point?





Left
Henry McNab, an experimental and personal response to the initial brief

We create researchers

To accompany his 2010 exhibition at the Tate Britain Chris Ofili gave several interviews. In one he talked about the process of making, stating that 'The studio is a laboratory, not a factory. An exhibition is the results of your experiments, but the process is never ending. So an exhibition is not a conclusion.' Within this idea an exhibition becomes, rather than an end point, an opportunity to present our current findings, much like a scientist taking stock of their discoveries before deciding where those discoveries should lead next. It becomes a pause in the process, releasing the 'final work' from bearing all the responsibility of value judgment.

This is much the same for assessing A-level submissions with the 'sketchbook' work, or the process, generating 75 per cent of the final grade at AS and 80 per cent at A-level under the new specification. This balancing of value within a student's submission suggests that our current way of teaching and assessing art is in line with the notion of research through creating.

Whether a student chooses to explore the practical, that of how media, colour, composition and the other formal elements interact, or an exploration of an idea as suggested above, this preliminary work offers students the opportunity to learn and embed the discipline of experimentation and delaying conclusions until a number of avenues are explored. Students are able to, through their own enquiry, decide the best route for their work. If we can empower our students to take charge of the discovery stages then we give them questioning and critical tools, which allow them to forge their own informed viewpoints both in and beyond the art studio.

'Here is a subject that gives them freedom to carve out their own projects, their own curriculum, based on what is relevant and important to them'

We create leaders

For many years I worked with a teacher who, when not wishing to enroll a student onto her course, would suggest art – after all her subject was content heavy. This phrase used to irritate me as the suggestion was quite obvious. However I now embrace this accolade. In fact art subjects are not content light they are content empty.

Our students need to demonstrate their ability across four assessment objectives. They do not have to study the Impressionists or Modernism, or answer questions on Pablo Picasso or Tracy Emin. They have to identify a theme and related artists, designers and makers from which they select media and produce imagery. They have to demonstrate a developing understanding and craftsmanship in all of these, and do so in a logical and coherent way. They must lead and drive their projects, determining what is right each and every week, and conclude it all within a time frame.

This set of requirements should not be underestimated. While frameworks and good practice can be shared, students bear a high level of responsibility for the success of their enquiries. While common themes are responded to, the very best work comes from students clear on their point of interest and able to manage their developing work.

And so...

Next time we are faced with doubt or questions over our subject we must remember that we produce art students as well as philosophers, researchers and leaders. Our students have great responsibility over their education, they are skilled in informed decision-making and are disciplined as they revisit and refine work. Surely any subject would be proud of that.

The first project

Now we have the war cry, we need the students. It was clear that at Ludlow College, after our 2014–15 recruitment, that several years of declining art numbers would not turn around on their own. We revisited every aspect of our provision leading to some significant changes, and this year we have seen a 20 per cent increase in numbers across the department despite a fall in the local demographic.

There are two ways to increase numbers, through recruitment and retention. Recruitment is often tied up with college-wide initiatives and so harder to effect. However, with our early retention in need of improvement the initial sessions were reviewed. The objective was to create a short three-week project that aided the students' transition from school to college, made them familiar with key elements of the art and design department, and lead to a completed piece of work they could be proud of. We first trialled this in Photography. With the biggest decrease in numbers we felt it had the most chance of regaining ground.

Students were introduced to the work of David Bailey and Irving Penn. Using costumes, both the colleges and their own, they recreated some of the iconic images. Students were then shown a few effective editing processes on Photoshop to bring out the detail and tonal range of their work, thus allowing them to become familiar with what for some is a daunting program. Students were then sent back to the shooting phase to create work that echoed rather than imitated the source material.



This is where the work diverged, allowing for a more personal take. Each student selected a collection of images to frame, which were then curated and hung in the college's gallery.

This project has been run for three years now and since its introduction we have minimal students leaving Photography. The few who have gone are usually those who choose to leave education completely, and many who start in Photography then inquire about joining one of our other art pathways. Displaying the work in frames and producing simple exhibition invites gives the students a genuine sense of excitement and achievement, marking their arrival at college.

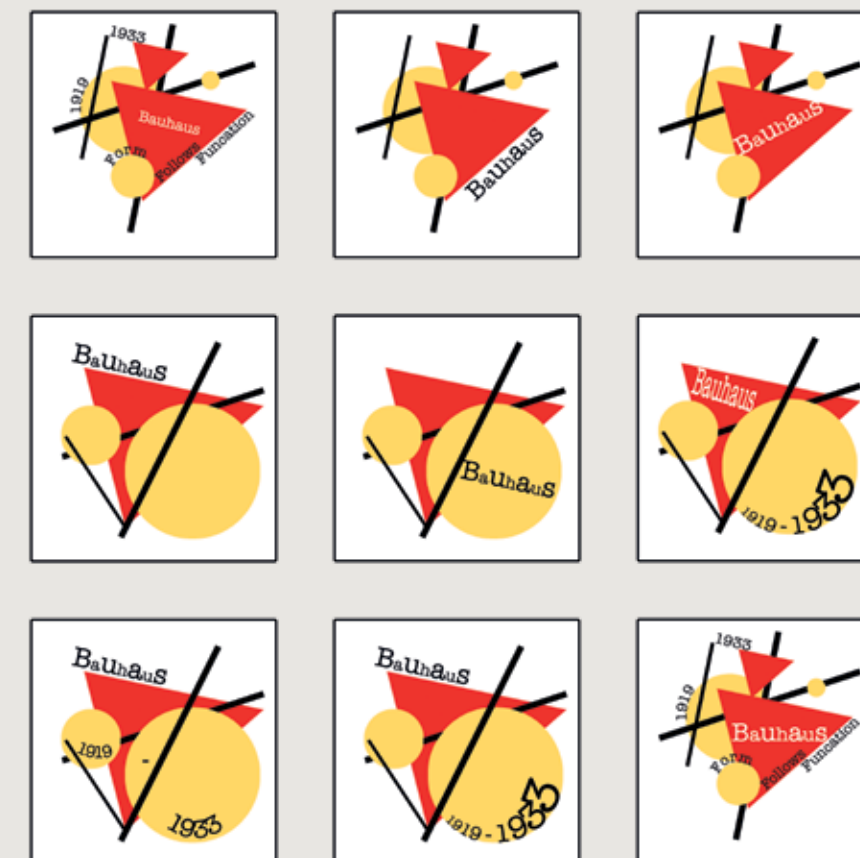
With the success of this project we have looked to introduce similar approaches across all pathways. Within graphics we have a simple Bauhaus project that covers research into the movement, the introduction of the Principles of Design and a collection of worksheets that guide students through the basics of Photoshop and that leads to a final set of postage stamp designs. The work is clearly guided and aimed to give students a quick outcome to be proud of. This early sense of achievement is key to engagement, to hooking them, while embedding the expectations of a longer project.

Weekly targets and expectations should not be lowered; these projects are not a soft start but a supported one. Expectations being high from the start are essential to ensure students are not surprised by the reality of A-levels but instead excited by the possibilities.

With the mini intro project now a feature in all our pathways, our early retention is excellent. While it is one initiative in many, it has been instrumental in shaping a modern, relevant department for our students from the moment they arrive. ■

dayh@hlcollege.ac.uk

[instagram.com/ludlowcollege_art](https://www.instagram.com/ludlowcollege_art)



Below

Alice Garner, responses to the Bauhaus graphics brief

The fall and rise of A-level History of Art

Trevor Horsewood, campaigns manager at the Association for Art History, explains why the potential loss of GCE A and AS-levels in History of Art mattered, and how the subject offers students a chance to engage with the world through a lens of art, culture and creative practice

As the lead body for art history in the United Kingdom, the Association for Art History (AAH) plays a key role in championing both the professional practice and public understanding of the subject. As an organisation we aim to represent and support both the subject and those involved in its delivery, and for many years have had an active teacher group and extended network of teaching professionals across subjects and UK regions.

The announcement back in October 2016 by the exam board AQA of their intention to discontinue GCE A and AS-level in History of Art was incredibly worrying. So for us the statement from Pearson Education at the end of the year regarding the development of a new GCE History of Art specification marked a significant – and welcome – occasion for art history in education.

Pearson's statement regarding the new specification – which should be available for teaching from September 2017 – serves as an important milestone in ensuring that young people will continue to have the opportunity to learn about art history through a formal, accredited level 3 qualification. As a qualification the A-level has a long and important history,

recognised by parents, teachers and universities as a benchmark qualification. Like many others we believe that the A-level is a keystone of post-16 education, particularly so for young people wishing to study and engage with art history and visual culture at under-graduate level and beyond.

This may go some way to explaining why the announcements regarding the possible discontinuation of GCE History of Art triggered such unprecedented support for our subject, within and beyond education; a level of media coverage, political engagement and public petitioning which has scarcely – if ever – been witnessed for art history.

We estimate that over 25,000 people signed petitions to save the subject. National and international publications and websites were still covering the news two months after it first broke. Over 200 leading academics, museum directors and cultural leaders from the UK and around the world lobbied for its reinstatement. The qualification's importance – along with the impact and consequences of its loss – was even highlighted as part of a House of Lords debate on ensuring exam boards continue to offer creative subjects at A-level.

As an organisation we believe – along with many colleagues and stakeholders across the creative and education sectors – that this level of support shows the continued importance and relevance of the subject. The new GCE specification enables us to champion the study of art history as an important opportunity for learning and insight.

The continued offer of a GCE, alongside the Cambridge Pre-U certificate, Extended Project Qualifications (EPQs) and other subject opportunities means that art history education will remain a vibrant field of study, and offers students the chance to engage with

the world through a lens of art, culture and creative practice.

'First they came for art history...' was a phrase that we had heard many, many times by the close of 2016. So why did the threat of losing the A-level matter? At its simplest level, the decision to withdraw History of Art at A-level would have marked a considerable loss to young people's access to – and understanding of – a range of different cultures, artefacts and ideas.

But in addition to this loss to learners, and to arts and cultural education, the A-level occupies an important symbolic space within the school system that is fundamental in developing awareness of art history, and by extension the arts, culture and the humanities, at undergraduate level and beyond.

The potential impact to the creative and cultural industries into which the higher education sector feeds should not be underestimated, and against the backdrop of Brexit these impacts become further compounded.

What next for art history in education? Our efforts to save the A-level were strongly backed by artists, museum directors and senior academics, as well as art historians and teachers across the country. Colleagues at NSEAD, Engage and other cultural education bodies

have been amazing in terms of their support, all of which means that we moved into 2017 talking about a new era for art history in education.

The signposting of educational opportunities such as A-level history of art to students, who may never have considered it as an option, continues to form a central part of our ongoing campaign work. But we also need to look at two other pressing issues for art history in education:

- The number of secondary schools that offer art history as a formal qualification and/or support its teaching in other curriculum areas, and the size of student cohort and trends in take-up of the subject over recent years.
- Parallel challenges in the higher education sector, correlations between undergraduate applications and employability, and important agendas relating to socio-economic status, ethnicity and other participation and equalities issues.

As part of this work we aim to build meaningful, long-term strategic relationships with colleagues in both formal and informal education, such as teachers, lecturers, arts bodies, galleries and museums, policy-makers and advocacy bodies.

We have already developed relationships with higher education institutions in some areas,

'So why did the threat of losing the A-level matter? At its simplest level, the decision to withdraw History of Art at A-level would have marked a considerable loss to young people's access to – and understanding of – a range of different cultures, artefacts and ideas'



years we also want encourage students to consider art history as a study option by introducing them to the field earlier in their secondary school journey and across a range of different subjects.

We are confident that recent events signal the start of a new era for the study of global art history and visual culture in the UK; an era typified by a more inclusive and diverse approach to the subject, reaching out to schools and learners in new ways and in new places.

The new specification will allow us to build upon the successes of the previous A-level, whilst developing new approaches to understanding art history and visual cultures, and discovering new abilities, skills and modes of inquiry.

We believe that those studying or learning about art history have a unique opportunity to engage with and to think differently about the world around them, understanding its histories, cultures and societies through arts, objects and materials. Through this, students can gain valuable and sought-after research and analytical skills that will help in a range of future careers within and outside the arts.

As we work towards securing the future of the subject, our collaborations with partners and teachers across many other sectors and subjects remain vital to guaranteeing the long-term prosperity of cultural education within the UK.

Get involved

We want to strengthen the networks we're building around the country. Find out more about these on the thinkingaboutart.org.uk website on the networks page. We would also love to talk with anyone who is working in any of these target areas, or indeed anyone who is interested in art history, visual culture and thinking about art! ■

If you're interested in finding out more about how your school can get involved or to suggest resources and links that you think we should know about, please drop us a line at: education@aaah.org.uk

If you're on twitter you can follow us via @AAHeducation and sign up for the latest art history and education news at: thinkingaboutart.org.uk

with the aim of developing 12 new art history in education networks between 2017 and 2019. Over the next two years the campaign will work with higher education and museum and gallery partners around the country to support schools in their art history work, as well as looking at other interdisciplinary and cross-curriculum opportunities at both GCSE and GCE AS and A-level.

Our new website *Thinking About Art*, along with our textbook of the same name, provides a framework for our formal education work, acting as a subset of an overarching 'art history for all' campaign ambition. The website thinkingaboutart.org.uk is designed to encourage people to think differently about art history and provide a range of teaching and learning resources suitable for key stages 3, 4 and 5 (ages 11–18). We're working with teachers and subject specialists such as gallery educators to develop and share exemplar resources, showcasing new material in partnership with colleagues from universities and galleries across the UK. We're also hoping to develop our international networks to bring in different resources and critical approaches, all of which helps encourage us to think and see differently.

Longer term we hope to develop new projects within primary settings, but in the next two

Dogs and the art of undoing

Caroline Whelan, faculty leader for creative and performing arts, took inspiration from her rescue dog in order to present students with an art textiles project that would defy the stereotype of the subject. Here, she describes the process

'We're 'doing' fruit'. This description of a project not only fills me with dread, but also worries me. What are we doing? More importantly what are 'we' learning? Are we not experimenting, investigating, creating, designing, exploring, crafting and, most importantly, promoting the ability to take risks?

I lead a large department in Heath Park School, Wolverhampton, where we strive to offer the broadest, highest quality art and design curriculum we can achieve. The senior leadership in the school are very supportive of all the creative subjects and I am given the freedom to offer the curriculum that is most appropriate to the students. Staff have a diverse range of specialisms, and current courses available cover the whole range of disciplines from unendorsed art and design, to photography and art textiles.

As a specialist in art textiles, I am regularly trying to give the students an exciting experience accessible to all. Although we still have classes of just girls, and there can be the stereotypical view that the subject is about sitting at a sewing machine making clothes, it's safe to say that this does not occur in our department.

I last inherited a class at the turn of the academic year; a mixed-ability group aged 14–15, some of whom were expecting to start making garments. This is a constant battle, trying to explain that art textiles isn't about making clothes. I have this conversation many times at options evening, yet still the question is always raised: 'When are we making clothes?'

'As wire mesh was formed into initial crude shapes, the students developed a great deal of resilience and injuries were kept to a minimum, apart from scratched hands and the accompanying 'major' blood loss!'

To try and steer them away from this obsession I was really keen to give them a project they could all get their teeth into and enable them to experience the subject in a way that they previously hadn't. This meant working in three-dimensions.

The inspiration for the project – and I have to give credit here – is to my rescue Staffie, Joseph, who we acquired from a stray dogs' home in Shropshire. Seeing the range of abandoned dogs behind bars, all with a different character and all with a different background, is heart breaking. But an idea was born.

The project began with students researching animal charities, which led to them exploring a range of two-dimensional media. They investigated form, colour and shape, and began developing a familiarity with different types of dogs and their unique characteristics. Artist

research was important, as this would allow them to visualise what was ahead. I showed them the work of Barbara Franc and Will Kurtz amongst others.

We needed to see how ideas could evolve from two to three dimensions, and this was the biggest challenge. As wire mesh was formed into initial crude shapes, the students developed a great deal of resilience and injuries were kept to a minimum, apart from scratched hands and the accompanying 'major' blood loss! Admittedly during these lessons I did consider abandoning the whole idea, as students struggled with proportion and joining the mesh, and some were looking like they were ready to give up as their hands became sore from bending and shaping. This was soon forgotten as time went on, progress was made and somewhat crude mesh heads were covered with papier-mâché. Slowly but surely the dogs were taking shape.

Weekends during this time were spent visiting charity shops, collecting anything that looked like it could be useful; wool, string, mop heads, leather handbags for noses, fur trim from hoods, hats and old dog collars. The quality of the resources also had a huge impact on the work, and each week the students spent time selecting from the range of fabrics and odd and sods my partner and I had spent Saturday searching for. Mop heads were dismantled, leather bags were pulled apart, and hoods cut up.

Students were investing time considering what would work, what needed dying and what texture coat would their individual dog have. This led to each dog developing a unique

character, which revealed a bit more of itself each week. The quality and cost of resources in school catalogues has always frustrated me and by contrast I have always enjoyed seeking out 'stuff'. Encouraging students to go out and source also led to greater engagement in the project and a greater sense of ownership. Sourcing should be part of the creative journey.

There can be some reluctance from students to produce work which takes time to refine and evolve, and this comes from an aversion to making mistakes. As a subject, art and design is in a privileged position where we can encourage experimentation and risk-taking without students being afraid of failure. And getting students to invest time and effort is important throughout the creative learning experience.

The dogs were created, collars were selected, eye colours chosen, and names were considered; Bailey, Diana, some still undecided. The students developed a fondness for their textile dogs and feedback has been extremely positive, from their peers but also from other teachers. They even got a session in the photography studio.

I think I have achieved what I set out to do. There seems to be better engagement with the subject, a better understanding of what art textiles are all about, and the outcomes have promoted resilience, independence and resourcefulness. I say to my students when they demonstrate a fear of failure: 'What's the worst thing that can happen?' Undo the 'doing' and enjoy the creative journey. ■

caroline.whelan@heathpark.net



Plots, Players and Pigments: Celebrating Shakespeare through multisensory art

Marking the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare, the Thereby Hangs A Tale exhibition explored the Bard's continuing influence on contemporary culture and art making. Dr Melissa Westbrook, curator and multisensory art educator, describes how students created miniatures using sensory elements to add layers of meaning

The *Thereby Hangs A Tale* exhibition marked the four hundredth anniversary of William Shakespeare's death by exploring his continuing influence on contemporary culture and art making. Championing creative diversity and the idea that art of all ages inspires us, this exhibition at the Museum of Oxford showcased works from 19 UK and international artists, alongside multisensory miniatures from 39 pupils (ages 10 to 18) from Oxford High Junior School and The Cherwell School. *Thereby Hangs A Tale* presented William Shakespeare, but not as you know him.

The young artists' pieces were integral to *Thereby Hangs A Tale* because they attested to the Bard's enduring influence. Their multisensory nature, moreover, enabled pupils to create a unique and highly personal interpretation of Shakespeare and his plots and players. This article outlines the workshops in which they were made and illustrates how smell, taste and sound can be used as artistic tools to add layers of meaning.

The Thereby Hangs a Tale sessions sought to create a bridge between the Tudor and today's world by structuring the classes around two historically rooted activities. The first was a series of drama games devised and facilitated by drama specialist Samantha King. To test their knowledge of Shakespeare, students threw a ball to each other and were asked to name a character from his plays when they caught it. They were then asked to walk around the room assuming the gait and posture of various Shakespearean figures. This exercise created a connection between artist and subject. It provided a working knowledge of different

character types and gave insight into the gestures and postures that characterise them.

Paint making and portraits provided the second opportunity for students to connect with the Tudor world and 16th and 17th-century art making. I began by giving students information on the typical colours of the Tudor palette, explaining the need to replace lead white and vermilion with synthetic substitutes due to their toxicity. Students then attired themselves with surgical masks and plastic gloves and prepared to make paint. Seated on either end of a large glass grinding plate, pairs of students used pigment, cold-pressed linseed oil, palette knives and a muller to create a colour for the class to later use.

‘These multisensory backgrounds created a unique relationship between artist and audience’

Students quickly realised that creating vibrant colours with a smooth consistency from raw materials was an art in itself, and that the bright yellows, oranges and blue-greens, which are popular today, were not easily achievable using historical methods and materials. To emphasise the precious nature of certain pigments in Tudor times, pupils were given a very small amount of synthetic vermilion and smalt, and larger quantities of lamp black, synthetic lead white, burnt umber, green earth and four ochres sourced from the Clearwell Caves in the Forest of Dean. Here, it is worth mentioning that my rationing of smalt wasn't strictly historically accurate because this pigment was cheap and



‘The young artists' pieces were integral to *Thereby Hangs A Tale* because they attested to the Bard's enduring influence. Their multisensory nature, moreover, enabled pupils to create a unique and highly personal interpretation of Shakespeare and his plots and players’

freely available in the 16th and 17th centuries. However, I felt that distributing smalt in this way did help to create an authentic art-making experience. Today this pigment is very expensive to buy and difficult to find, much like ultramarine in Tudor Times.

Having painted their self-portraits on miniature canvases, the students were asked to create a sensory background for their portrait to accompany their work. This exercise was a contemporary nod to the historical practice of using the background, together with foreground props, to contextualise the sitter and to convey social, economic and religious status and personality traits. Each student was given access to an extensive kit of sensory building blocks consisting of:

- 20 individual speakers with unique sounds. The sounds included waves, children playing, a crackling fire, car traffic, a storm and dance music.
- 11 glass bottles containing different synthetic and natural fragrances. The bottles contained a wide variety of smells from curry, dirt and motor oil, to lavender and coffee.
- 11 individual tastes. These included Christmas pudding, fresh mint and Jelly Belly's beer, as well as grass, marshmallow and toothpaste Jelly Beans.

Participants had been asked about allergies – and any foods they avoided for religious or ethical reasons – prior to the workshop. The ‘tastes’ used during the session were based on this information.

Workshop participants were then asked to combine these sensory building blocks by

layering different sounds, smells and tastes to contextualise their character or highlight aspects of their personality. So, for example, by coupling the sound of waves and children playing, pupils could show that their character was at the beach. Adding the smell of sunscreen and the taste of strawberry ice cream could evoke a hot, sunny day.

Many students paired their works with smells, sounds and tastes they liked. Clara's piece, for example, was accompanied by dance music and toothpaste Jelly Beans, thus immortalising her love of boogying and minty freshness. Chloe's choice was also personal in nature. She adopted disco music, beer Jelly Beans and the smell of motor oil, because when blended together they reminded her of her father.

Maya used the beer Jelly Beans to make a different kind of statement. She layered smells, sounds and taste to evoke a physical environment. When coupled with the smell of fir and the noise of an owl hooting, the sweets, she said, helped to recreate a party in the forest at night.

Woodlands proved to be a popular setting in both workshops. It was interesting to see how students combined different sensory tools to evoke the same location. Alex, for example, accompanied his Oberon-inspired portrait with the sound of a crackling fire, the smell of dirt and the taste of mint.

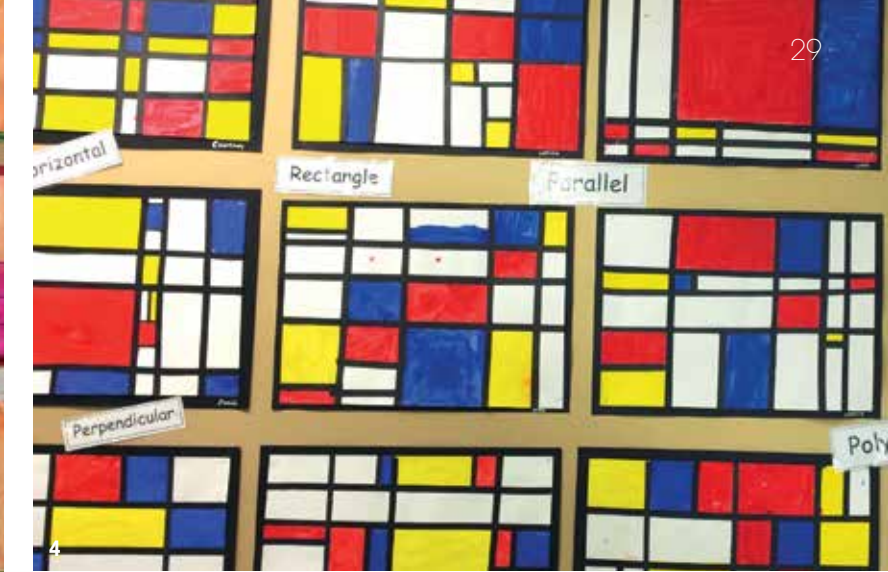
These multisensory backgrounds created a unique relationship between artist and audience, adding layers of meaning to the students' portraits. However, they also added great complexity to the curation of the exhibition because the display of this type of art pitted artistic intention against total sensory overload! To address this I created two distinct displays.



The first enabled audiences to actively engage with multisensory art. Maya and Claudia's works were placed on a separate table with two speakers, two scent bottles and two Jelly Bean dispensers, with instructions encouraging viewers to look at the pieces whilst smelling, tasting and hearing the sensory background. The second area displayed the other miniatures in long rows. Portraits were then grouped by smell and placed near one of three speakers playing sounds of dance music, a crackling fire and waves. This arrangement ensured that every work was accompanied by at least one of the young artists' sensory choices and could be enjoyed individually without sensory overload.

Thereby Hangs a Tale set out to explore Shakespeare's impact on contemporary culture through art making. Participants in these workshops used historical and contemporary tools and practice. The mixed pigments and the cornucopia of sensory options led to engagement with Shakespeare and the production of innovative, high-quality pieces. ■

neo.outsider.art@gmail.com
shakespeare2016.literarty.net



Primary ideas for art and maths

Karen Palmer, art and design specialist teacher at Wycliffe Primary in Shipley, used artists' work to explore how art can be inspired by maths. An exhibition showing progression across the school was one result. Here, she explains the process

As a primary art and design specialist, I work with 11 classes and 330 children in Wycliffe Primary School, Shipley. Our 'inspirational maths week' was an opportunity to explore how artists use maths to create art. With every class involved, our dining room exhibition became a helpful way of showing progression through both maths and art, from the youngest to the oldest students in the school.

For each project and year group we researched the work of a specific artist. Starting with Reception (ages 4–5), we looked at Leo Lionni's *Pezzettino*, which means 'little piece' in Italian. The picture book uses shapes to create very simple characters. After reading the story, talking about all the characters within it, and using little pieces of squared paper arranged on paper they had painted for a background, pupils

created their own characters and told little stories about them.

With year 1 (ages 5–6) I talked about Wassily Kandinsky and his painting *Squares* with concentric circles, and then the students watched my video demonstration of the making process.

With a square of paper each, which they folded in half and then into quarters to get four smaller squares, they then filled the squares with concentric circles. They used paint and thought carefully about which colours to use. By arranging the paintings together we created one big picture.

Year 2 (ages 6–7) focused on the artist Paul Klee and his painting *Castle and Sun*. After looking at the picture and discussing what they could see, their challenge was to work in teams to create castles using 3D shapes. This was an opportunity to discuss the names and properties of shapes, and to create a 3D castle combining shapes and forms.

Each child then used a simple set of shape templates: a square, a large rectangle, a thin rectangle, an arch, a semi-circle, a triangle and a circle. They used these to create a castle picture. Year 3 (ages 7–8) researched the artist Piet Mondrian. Working in teams, each group responded to sets of questions relating to the artist's work. The questions included:

- What do you see when you look at this painting?
- How would you describe the colours used?
- What shapes and shapes can you see?
- How do you think the artist was feeling when he painted this. How does it make you feel?
- Do you like it? Why?

We discussed their responses and after looking at more examples of Mondrian's work we also considered the influences he has had on popular culture.

With year 4 (ages 8–9) we focused on Robert Indiana's number paintings. The project began by placing a selection of his pictures and prompt questions on each table. Individuals recorded their responses before sharing their ideas with the group. Next we compared both Charles Demuth's *I Saw the Figure 5 in Gold* and Robert Indiana's painting of the figure five, displaying reproductions side by side. This was a good opportunity to see how artists are influenced by other artists.

Our research continued with the identification of patterns and connections in Indiana's work. For example, in his *Four* painting the artist used four different colours. The class went on to design their own number paintings with these connections in mind.

Year 5 (ages 9–10) looked at the artist Sonia Delaunay. Again, we started by looking at examples



'With every class involved, our dining room exhibition became a helpful way of showing progression through both maths and art, from the youngest to the oldest students in the school'

of her work. We went on to use compasses; a challenge for some, but they all got the hang of it by the end of the two-hour lesson. This lesson engaged everyone, including the boys who were just as excited to complete their projects as the girls.

Year 6 (ages 10–11) researched Bridget Riley's Op Art. Again, prompt questions and a mini-Riley image were presented for each student to record their responses. This resulted in everyone recording some really interesting ideas and observations.

This was also another project that engaged the boys. Although some of them found the measuring and detailed compass work challenging, they all persevered and succeeded in creating an Op Art inspired image. ■

h.c.t@hotmail.co.uk



For many of the projects and lessons I use the demonstration videos uploaded on my Karen Palmer YouTube channel: <http://bit.ly/2kjDkg2>. Videos can be a great aid to learning. Classes are able to see everything on our large screen and if I am teaching the same lesson to more than one class, which is often the case, I will show the films back to back or repeat the films anytime during the lesson. Some children watch their own and other classes videos at home – they've even made the work set for other year groups in their own time.

Drawing a line, a journey of discovery



1



2

With the aim of questioning the prevalence of observational drawing in secondary art education, Nicola Smith, head of art and design at St Helen's School, London, set out to explore the concept and definitions of the medium. Here, she explains

Drawing is at the core of my pedagogy and formed the starting point for my practice research when completing an art and design in education masters at the Institute of Education. The belief that students' understanding of drawing is embedded in drawing from observation led me to explore the concept that drawing is also more than this. I wanted to acknowledge traditional practice while applying emphasis to a conceptual approach, capturing what Marshall Downs describes as a 'direct and physical process', whilst testing my own limits when drawing.

The basis for many definitions of drawing begins with 'line'. In his *Pedagogical Sketchbook* (1925), Paul Klee perceives drawing as 'an active line on a walk, moving freely, without a goal. A walk for a walk's sake'. I consolidated definitions of an active line and set about producing a series of drawings that had no reference to observation or skill (figs. 1 and 2).

The movement of the transport I was using dictated the line drawings I created. I had in mind the essence of 'automatic drawing' that the Surrealists were credited with establishing. In my attempts to research the dominance of observation in secondary school drawing, my practice developed what Evan Alphen refers to as 'free rein to the hand'².



3

To expand my research I posed the question: 'If the surface for a drawing provides the space to draw on, how can this space be utilised to create a new learning experience for secondary students?'

Elizabeth Murton writes that: 'Space is thought of as active and constantly changing'³. This concept of space led me to consider how I might explore the lines I had created during my journeys. I wanted to give these lines a presence that went beyond the constraints of a two-dimensional surface, and I began to free the lines from the surface by cutting them out. This process transformed a scribble into something that, at least momentarily, appeared precious and crafted (fig. 3).

The lack of a drawn line on a surface seems to challenge how lines are traditionally used in drawing. The line is only noticeable in its absence or its position in space. This paradox offers opportunities to question how we 'traditionally' view line, and contemplation of this cutout method could, in turn, provide the freedom to develop transformative pedagogies.

My research began with the movement of the train, and gesture continued to play an integral part, whether drawing or cutting. It is the gesture captured by each work that increases its presence; a presence created by the maker leaving their gestural trace. The materiality of each work cannot be ignored when discussing gesture. The chosen material to work with changes the gesture and therefore can influence how the work is read. A cutout created using paper has a different presence to one conceived using felt or carpet (figs. 4–6).



4

'Teachers need to engage with students to begin to 'un-work' the limits which more traditional drawing practice can impose on 'encounters of learning''

My investigation led to a consideration of the relationship between concept and gesture (making). Through making I have discovered that these two elements co-exist in my practice. This development led me to consider the prevalence of skill being favoured over concept in secondary education. I believe that this predilection needs to be analysed so that transformative knowledge can be generated through the relinquishing of control that teaching a set of skills demands. By encouraging an interaction between concept and gesture, transformation could be instigated.

I began my practice research with the aim to explore drawing and question the prevalence of, and for some the reliance on, observational drawing in secondary art education. In *School Art Education: Mourning the Past and Opening a Future* (JADE, 2006) Dennis Atkinson examines the spaces and contexts that will promote 'encounters of learning'. If pedagogies are reliant on the transference and development of skill, then learning such encounters are less likely. Through studio practice I have tried to envisage a way that students can experience such encounters, whilst still exploring formal elements and skills.

Students who are receiving instruction through a 'transmission model' of teaching, which places emphasis on skills, may have less opportunity to establish a more personal way of working. As a teacher I believe that it is our role to engage, inspire and encourage innate inventiveness with the aim to offer true 'encounters of learning'. Ideas, experimentation and the enquiry of students needs to be

supported and expanded, not dictated with a fixed end point in mind. Teachers need to engage with students to begin to 'un-work' the limits which more traditional drawing practice can impose on 'encounters of learning'.

These are all worthy sentiments, but engaging with an altered way of working that challenges habitual practices is not an easy route to travel. To question the conventions of school drawing I had to hold a mirror up to my own expectations as a teacher. In secondary school teaching there appears to be a pressure to produce a final response that is developed through preparation studies, which invariably begins with observational drawing. The drawing I created by travelling on various modes of transport challenged this approach, whilst the resulting cutouts were grounded in a highly crafted approach.

My making journey highlighted the importance of not discounting traditional approaches over more conceptual interpretations. The work I completed in the studio cemented this belief, and on reflection I could see that through practice I was acknowledging traditional processes, materials and techniques whilst trying to push through the boundaries that tradition can generate. When this realisation is translated back into the classroom, it appears that a way forward does not need to discount all preceding practice in an attempt to instigate the 'encounters of learning' which Atkinson champions. These 'encounters of learning' might just as easily develop from a re-imagined practice. ■



5



6

- 1 *Train drawing*, 2014
- 2 *Underground Drawing*, 2014
- 3 *Paper Cutout*, 2014
- 4 *Felt Cutout*, 2014
- 5 *Yellow Felt Cutout*, 2014
- 6 *Carpet Cutout*, 2014

References

- 1 Downs, Marshall. Sawdon, Selby and Tormey (2007) *Drawing Now: Between the Lines of Contemporary Art*, I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd
- 2 Alphen, van E. (2012) *Looking at Drawing: Theoretical Distinctions and Their Usefulness* in Garner, S. (ed) *Writing on Drawing: Essays on Drawing Practice and Research*, Intellect Books
- 3 Murton, E. (2007) *What is drawing for? Drawing is for exploring, TRACEY, What is Drawing For?* [Online], lboro.ac.uk/microsites/sota/tracey/journal/widf/murton.html

Developing My Museum

In order to encourage and expose her pupils to community art projects, Nicola McCaffrey, art and design teacher at Kender Primary School, south London, arranged a visit to the local Peckham Multi-story Car Park. Here she explains why

As part of my motivation to expose and encourage the pupils at Kender Primary School to access community art projects, I arranged for our year 5 cohort (ages 9–10) to visit the exhibition *Agora* by British artist Richard Wentworth at the local Peckham Multi-storey Car Park. The car park is part of the Bold Tendencies project, a not-for-profit commissioning organisation, founded in 2007, which transformed a disused multi-storey car park into a space where a summer programme of visual art, architecture, music, theatre, film, and literature can be held.

On the rooftop of the car park, artist, curator and teacher Richard Wentworth had created a meandering design in aluminium paint. He lists the rapidly changing sky, the airlines zipping by,

and the puddles that had gathered during his first visit to the space as playing a part in his decision to make this flat work for a sculpture commission – one of his largest to date. The work is titled *Agora* after the Ancient Greek word for an open assembly space.

But this was no ordinary visit to an exhibit. Here, we were to meet Richard Wentworth himself and experience his work alongside him.

That particular morning he had participated with artists Ai Weiwei and Anish Kapoor on a walk in ‘sympathy, empathy and solidarity’ with the hundreds of thousands of refugees ‘walking across the world’ to highlight the need and to urge governments to do more to deal with the Syrian migration crisis. Setting off from the Royal Academy of Arts on the seven-mile route through London, past Downing Street to Stratford in East London, and by the 2012 Olympic Park, participants carried blankets to represent the plight of refugees fleeing violence.

The children were full of questions. Is it a car park? Is it a gallery? Why doesn't it look like art galleries I have seen on school trips? Who made this? Who put that there? The children were very excited to meet him face to face following his walk and asked what he was carrying (a blanket wrapped around his neck). As he explained what it was, the group began to explore and think

about the concept of home and what it meant to them. The children discussed what makes a home.

As a result of this visit, and the discussion and ideas generated by the children, we were asked to participate in Bold Tendencies' new project My Museum.

My Museum asks children to use objects to tell their own stories, representing who they are and how they relate to their community. The curation was led by year 5 (ages 9–10). Objects were sourced from Bellenden Primary School, and individual works were created at Peckham Park Academy in collaboration with commissioned artists, and also chosen from a term-long project organised by Dulwich Hamlet Junior School.

The theme ‘Home and Away’ drew inspiration from Richard Wentworth's *Agora*, from year 5's discussion with the artist, and from *åyr*, an art collective based in London whose work focuses on contemporary forms of domesticity. Their 2015 installation *Aspects of Change* transformed the space of the car park through a series of interventions that use both language and changes to domesticity in interior public spaces. As well as curating the exhibition, year 5 designed the My Museum logo together with the typeface to reflect the artworks. This was developed in a series of workshops at the school, led by BBH ZAG designer Josie Evans.

Year 5's and my involvement in this project represented an opportunity for more challenging and relevant ideas outside the classroom. The

‘The My Museum element provided understanding of the workings and development of a gallery space, providing a high level of engagement and organisation with a strong emphasis on contextual sources’



My Museum element provided understanding of the workings and development of a gallery space, providing a high level of engagement and organisation with a strong emphasis on contextual sources. It allowed pupils to take risks and even fail, modify or rethink their intentions, both for their artworks and exhibition curation.

The project helped our children to think like artists, designers and curators and build more diverse outcomes. It equipped them to confidently articulate and evaluate their opinions about different aspects of the process. Their strong views on art encouraged students to make decisions and create a uniquely curated gallery space. They considered their role in society, learning about culture and heritage and their community.

From the outset My Museum challenged their assumptions of what a museum is, providing a significant platform for discussion, dialogue and debate. Their exhibition reflected a diversity of ideas and range of voices; their collaborations created a space for further reflection and differing perspectives. Throughout the project their confidence grew with many making short speeches at the opening of My Museum. ■

nicolamccaffrey2@gmail.com



Notice of the annual general meeting

All members are invited to attend the 129th AGM of NSEAD held as part of our national conference in Durham. The AGM will be on Saturday 24 June 2017 at 1.30pm, at Durham Sixth Form Centre.

An AGM agenda and the Annual Report and audited accounts 2015–16 are available on the NSEAD website, or by request from the NSEAD office.

NSEAD Elections 2017

Ged Gast, who served as President of the Society during 2015–16, currently serves as Immediate Past President on the Council, the Finances and General Purposes Committee and NSEAD Forum, ending his tenure on 31 December 2017.

Consequently, nominations are sought for a member of the Society to serve as President Elect during 2018, President during 2019–2020 and Immediate Past President until 31 December 2021.

Individuals nominated to serve as President of the Society normally will be serving members of Council, or will have completed a term as a member of Council.

The role of the President is to chair the Council, the Finances and General Purposes Committee and NSEAD Forum. The President may also represent the Society alongside or in lieu of the General Secretary. The President is supported by two Vice Presidents and the Honorary Treasurer.

The President Elect is nominated and elected by members of the Society by a postal ballot. For an informal discussion about the role of President, please email leslybutterworth@nsead.org. The deadline for receipt of nominations is Friday 8 September 2017. Nomination forms are available from leslybutterworth@nsead.org

NSEAD Council

A reminder that we have vacancies for members wishing to serve on Council. The deadline for receipt of nominations is Friday 8 September 2017. Nomination forms are available from leslybutterworth@nsead.org

NSEAD National Conference 2017

Establishing excellence through learning and teaching in art, craft and design education

Friday 23 Saturday 24 June 2017
Durham Sixth Form Centre

Join us for the NSEAD national conference and AGM in Durham

The conference will define and celebrate excellence in our subject across all phases and will be of relevance to teachers and educators of art, craft and design working in primary, secondary and further education, museum and gallery educators and initial teacher trainers and trainees.

Artist and NSEAD patron Cornelia Parker OBE RA, and president of NSEAD, Dr Peter Gregory, principal lecturer, Christ Church Canterbury University will be giving keynote presentations.

Visit: nsead.org/cpd/conferences.aspx

Notice of the Annual General Meeting

Members are invited to attend the 129th AGM of NSEAD held as part of our national conference in Durham
An AGM agenda and the Annual Report 2015–16 is available at www.nsead.org

nsead

ISSN 2046-3138 19
9 772046 313000

Institute of Education



UCL

Working in education...looking to broaden your career options?

MA Art & Design in Education

The MA provides a unique platform from which to explore and debate contemporary issues in art, design and education. It combines academic study with art practice and professional educational practice as a means to better understand learning and conduct research.

It can be taken on a part-time or full-time basis and attracts a diverse cohort of students, from artists working in informal educational sites such as galleries and museums to art educators working in primary, secondary, further and higher education. The programme team collaborate closely with a wide range of cultural institutions and many of our alumni are now at the leading edge of national and international developments in art, design, and gallery education.

Modules include: alternative models for art education, material and virtual culture, responsive museums, learning and teaching in art and design, contemporary art and artists in education.

For further information visit:

MA Art & Design website: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/courses/graduate-taught/art-design-education-ma>

Programme email: j.borradalle@ucl.ac.uk

