

Parallel Sessions

The programme of Parallel Sessions is organised based on common interest themes where possible. Please note that while we will make every effort to adhere to the stated groupings and schedule, some minor adjustments may occur.

Parallel Session 1 | Thursday 6 November, 11:05 – 12:35 GMT

Room 1: Fairclough | Forrest | Grant

Room 2: Ahupa | Jarman | Patience

Room 3: Cocchiarella | Smith (T.)

Room 4: Graham | Robb | Svingen-Austestad

Room 5: Luo | Marshall | McCaffrey

Room 6: Jeanes | Kesdi | Smith (L. A.)

Room 7: Cai | Kyeremeh | MacLellan

Room 8: Heaton | Longmore | Stillman

Parallel Session 2 | Thursday 6 November, 13:05 – 14:45 GMT

Room 1: Lim | Shields | Zhang

Room 2: Ho | Hong | Lee

Room 3: Macdonald | Rowles | Shah

Room 4: Cogorno, Galliani & Gandolfo | Stabler | Wylie

Room 5: Iakovdiou | McKay | Wu

Room 6: Agusita | Ewis | Mamakos

Parallel Session 3 | Saturday 8 November, 10:50 – 12:50 GMT

Room 1: Andrew | Gaston | Sutton | Wood

Room 2: Harker | Keane | Osborne | Scahill

Room 3: Dubé-Rushby | Hepple | Matthews

Room 4: Forde | Nic An Bhreithiúnaigh | Sim, Aziz & Brant

Room 5: Jeong | Parker Moon | Ward (J.) | Ward (J.)

Room 6: Ali | Gibbons | Kinsella | Maier

Room 7: Hindle | Machado | Paige | Quaife & Hughes

Parallel Session 4 | Saturday 8 November, 13:40 – 15:10 GMT

Room 1: Abdellaoui | Kerguelén Román | Robinson

Room 2: Barchana-Lorand | Vignesh | Walton

Room 3: Ahmed & Trowell | Ampofo | Morais

Room 4: Bodkin & Coles | Ward (L.) & Miles | Wright

Room 5: Cairns | Clark, Houselander & Andrews | Whitaker

Room 6: Dowling, Peters & Davis

Room 7: Fennell, Hare, Mawle & Andernach | Pierce | Sykes

Studio: Art in Motion (AIM) - Collaboration, Creativity, and Inclusion

Rooms | UWE Bristol & Arnolfini

Room 1 | 3AF008, 3rd Floor

Room 2 | 3AF009, 3rd Floor

Room 3 | 3AF010, 3rd Floor

Room 4 | 3AF013, 3rd Floor

Room 5 | 4AF012, 4th Floor

Room 6 | 4AF013, 4th Floor

Room 7 | 4AF014, 4th Floor

Members of the iJADE team and UWE student ambassadors will be available on Saturday to help direct you to break out rooms.

Thursday 6 November, 11:05 – 12:35 GMT

Room 1

Art as a Leveller: Exploring the Ecologies of Competition in Arts Education

Ellis Fairclough

Liverpool Hope University

This research critically explores the ecologies of competition with the Art and Design classroom. Our research with teachers of Art at Primary and Secondary schools, engaging with the Art-Bytes programme, demonstrates how the ecology of competition produces interconnected effects that extend far beyond the event itself.

Teachers discussed how, for students, competing built confidence, artistic identity and raised aspirations. The nature of the Art-Bytes competition, which is a national digital art competition for Year 5 & Year 9 pupils acts as a leveller, creating an inclusive ecology where all participants can feel valued as artists regardless of background or prior attainment.

We explore how, at the level of school culture, the ecology of competition raises the profile of the arts and positions the subject as integral to leadership priorities. Celebration events, exhibitions and authentic partnerships with cultural organisations expand cultural capital, drawing families and communities together in collective pride.

However, whilst competition can catalyse positive outcomes, it is not unproblematic. By situating artistic value within the framework of selection and reward, competition both legitimises and contests the status of art in schools.

In this way, our research with Art-Bytes demonstrates how competition operates ecologically: at once empowering students, teachers and communities, whilst also highlighting tensions in how the arts are positioned within education.

Intent: Advocacy & Artivism Competition: Empowering Change for student Transformation in HE

Jason Forrest

University of the Arts London (UAL)

“INTENT” is a student-led competition that aims to inspire transformative change in higher education by empowering students as advocates for social justice. It is anchored in the belief that creative expression and critical advocacy are essential for addressing urgent issues such as climate change, racial equity, and social justice at the University of the Arts London (UAL). This initiative invites second- and third-year undergraduate and postgraduate students from Camberwell, Chelsea, and Wimbledon colleges (CCW) to reflect on their past or present work related to activism – a blend of art and activism – alongside themes of belonging, community, identity, and lived experiences.

Specific categories focusing on decarbonisation and decolonisation encourage students to engage thoughtfully with these critical topics. By amplifying student voices and encouraging them to challenge inequities, “INTENT” enhances employability in creative industries while asserting that transformation starts with intention. The initiative supports socially aware, purpose-driven projects that foster creative expression and personal growth. Additionally, by incorporating ecological perspectives into the curriculum, “INTENT” seeks to redefine knowledge hierarchies, promoting an actionable vision for change in today’s complex socio-political landscape

Teaching Pre-service Art Teachers to Transgress: Agency, Authenticity, and Identity in the Art Classroom

Will Grant

University of the West of England (UWE)

Transgression can be argued a central interest of contemporary arts practice. It is also an activity required of critical pedagogues in the context of the neoliberal classroom. In this paper I recount, with reference to research conducted with pre-service art teachers, how notions of transgression surface during the identity development of new entrants to the profession. I note that enthusiasm among pre-service art teachers to practice and promote transgressive behaviours as authentic artistic activity, for creative and/or critical ends, is significantly impacted by both the

conformative expectations of English initial teacher education (ITE) and the accountability requirements of the neoliberal classroom. Simultaneously, I provide qualitative evidence of pre-service art teachers demonstrating the transformative optimism to persist in transgressive activity they know inherent to sustaining their artistic identities and/or educational ideals. In conclusion, I offer some suggestions on how ITE might be reimagined as the locus to puncture established boundaries of contemporary school art in England and disrupt reproductive practices, through amplification of pre-service art teachers' transgressive tendencies.

Room 2

Circular Communities: Reimagining Waste Through Play, Storytelling and Collective Wisdom

Winifred Ahupa

University of the Arts London (UAL)

Circular Communities reimagines the circular economy through storytelling, co-creation, and material-led inquiry. Rooted in the belief that thriving begins with listening and learning from lived experience, the project brings together community members across five continents through workshops, creative play, and storytelling. At its core, it explores how art and design education can respond to the climate crisis not just through innovation, but by surfacing cultural memory, everyday repair practices, and ancestral knowledge.

This project centres the Global South's contribution to circular practices often overlooked in mainstream design discourse. Using tools such as serious games, storytelling, and co-designed outcomes, Circular Communities invites participants to reflect on what they keep, why they keep it, and how material memory can spark systems change.

My work explores how curiosity and creativity can enable communities and classrooms to not only survive but thrive. It challenges the perception of circularity as a technical or elite endeavour, positioning it instead as a joyful, inclusive, and relational practice. Circular Communities fosters a sense of agency, belonging, and hope.

This presentation shares insights into how design education can nurture pluriversal

futures that honour multiple ways of knowing and open space for communities to imagine, create, and thrive together.

Diploma in Professional Studies, Regenerative Art Education

Samantha Jarman *with Chole Swords Cherry & Naz Tekay*

University of the Arts London (UAL)

This paper demonstrates how the Diploma in Professional Studies (DPS) at the University of Arts London (UAL), Camberwell, Chelsea and Wimbledon (CCW), has piloted a programme of hybrid placement and enterprise learning, that enhances student personal and professional development. Through ecological thinking and regenerative education, the programme fosters futures thinking and enhances knowledge of the systemic relationship between, and impact of, local and global creative business on the environment.

The CCW DPS provides one year of experiential learning that sits between Year 2 and 3 of BA courses in Fine Art, Design and Performance. Students are able to position theoretical course content in relation to professional practice, demonstrating inclusive and responsible approaches, through critical thinking, active learning and experiential learning. The programme supports enterprising project development and intervention through advocacy and activism.

The ethos is to provide transformative DPS placement and enterprise education and offer an ethical framework in which to learn; encouraging students to understand positionality, question existing practices within industry, and to seek out and better understand those companies that strive towards ethical, circular, regenerative practices. Students develop an understanding of the professional role they can play using creativity to address issues of social, racial and climate injustice.

Creative Grounds: Art and Design Curriculum for Sustainable Futures

Henrietta Patience

Goldsmiths, University of London

In response to the UK Department for Education's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy (2022), UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development Goals (ESD), and the Design Council's Design for Planet Blueprint (2021). This paper considers secondary school art and design curriculum through an ecological lens, positioning art and design as a powerful tool for students to develop knowledge, skills and

agency to navigate their future, make informed decisions and contribute to sustainability. Drawing on Donna Haraway's notion of 'staying with the trouble,' students are invited to engage creatively with the more-than-human world to nurture care and co-existence. Integrating principles of biomimicry, to observe, learn from, and design in dialogue with natural systems, placing nature as co-educator and creative catalyst. School grounds become spaces of transformation, where creativity, criticality, and care coalesce in the imagining of sustainable futures.

Room 3

Fostering a culture of compassionate pedagogy through participatory and inclusive teaching methodologies

Emma Cocchiarella

Manchester Metropolitan University

Through fostering a culture of compassionate pedagogy, we promote the value of empathic approaches to design through human-centred sustainable practices in higher education. This abstract draws on teaching practice which encourages and ignites empathic approaches to design discourse through collaborative, inclusive and experiential learning.

Adopting a dialogic design thinking approach to projects which explore participatory, sensory and inclusive design methodologies, first-hand research is drawn from a recent project working collaboratively with the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB). The project considers approaches to learning through lived and shared experiences, enabling human-centric accessible design innovation in real-world scenarios and exploring concepts relating to the 'way we live with others in mind', addressing how design has the capability to impact, enrich and empower other people's lives.

Through tactile exploration, creative briefs enable us to examine our connection to and fluency within textile practice. Connectivity with tacit modes of learning encourages engagement and critical discourse around the discipline, promoting belonging, inclusivity, equity and empathy through learning, in turn, empowering learners to establish personal values for practice and ways of developing emotional intelligence through active listening and reflection, inspiring a generation of responsible global citizens.

Embracing neurodiversity in the university by cultivating neurodivergent-affirming art pedagogies

Timothy Smith

University of the Arts Helsinki

A multiply neurodivergent researcher presents study findings that explore the artmaking processes and practices of neurodivergent-identifying students enrolled in four European university art programs. The findings reveal common threads in the ways neurodivergent university art students encounter various experiences such as smoothness/success, difficulties/failures, habit/routine, and change in their processes and practices. The findings also points to further investigation into ways in which artistic thinking and artistic engagement might be deeply entwined with the lived experience of neurodivergence.

This presentation is directly relevant to the conference theme of 'Ecologies' through its affirmation of the potential for the lived experiences of neurodivergent students to enliven and enrich a creative diversity of ways of being, doing, making, and expressing through their artistic processes and practices within higher art education. In sharing the study's findings, this presentation will illuminate the ways that university art pedagogy can be reimaged to further sustain and buoy this (neuro)diversity while cultivating greater strategies for equity and accessibility. Finally, this presentation will underscore neurodivergent-affirming art pedagogies as pathways for students, faculty, and administration to think and act in ways that bolster the flourishing of neurodivergent lived experiences rather than to inhibit them by reinforcing neuro-normative pedagogies.

Room 4

Speculative Sketching as Artist-Teacher Practice: Serial Drawing Methodology in the UAE Studio

Joe Graham

American University of Sharjah

This paper examines how Graham Harman's Object-Oriented Ontology (OOO) can be combined with serially developed drawing to facilitate artist-teacher practice within

the pedagogical context of the UAE. Emerging from the author's own drawing research, and applied to first-year design students who arrive with little to no exposure to either drawing or philosophy, the practice operates as sustenance in several ways. Producing a series of observational drawings of houseplants increases students' ability to carefully engage their immediate environment, whilst simultaneously introducing them to OOO's philosophical claim that objects possess 'real' i.e. intrinsic qualities that cannot be directly perceived, only indirectly intuited (Graham 2023; Harman 2020). From a drawing research perspective, the same methodology then serves to query aspects of Harman's realist metaphysics through the drawings students produce, generating novel insights while sustaining the work as OOO-informed pedagogy (Lysgaard & Bengtsson 2020; Nijenhuis et al. 2025). Rather than separating philosophical inquiry from drawing pedagogy or privileging research over teaching, the practice constitutes a gathering wherein artist, researcher and teacher identities combine (Jagodziniski & Wallin 2013; Dahl-Tallgren 2023). The studio thus becomes a site where neither drawing nor philosophy dominate, generating instead a pedagogical space within which the idea of thinking-through-drawing becomes viable and accessible.

Phones, bridges, constellations: exploring a philosophical approach to art education for pupils in primary schools

Anna Robb

University of Dundee

We are currently in a period of time where arts education in schools across the United Kingdom is fighting for its relevancy in the world today (Robb, 2021, 2023; Robb, Jindal-Snape & Levy, 2021). This paper reflects on work undertaken by an interdisciplinary team of university researchers from across art education and philosophy working together with a cluster of primary and secondary schools in a Scottish city since 2018, exploring technology in everyday lives using art education and philosophical approaches.

The aim of the paper is to consider how a philosophical approach can inform art education in primary schools to support children and young people as they explore their relationship with the world around them, developing critical and creative responses. Biesta's (2022) idea of 'world-centredness' and Greene's (1995) focus on imagination underpin the reflections with consideration given to how the theory can be embedded in teachers' practice and pedagogy.

The paper will argue that the combination of art education and philosophy creates unique interdisciplinary spaces in classrooms, supporting children, young people and teachers to explore their relationships with the world around them and create a dialogue with the world in a relevant and meaningful way.

The post-place and a planetary pedagogy for the arts

Anna Svingen-Austestad

University of Bergen

What is a place? And what happens when a place is lost? How can art and design education accommodate for such experiences? The performance lecture traces a young boy's play and visits to a small shrubland in a local neighborhood in Norway, and the advent of its disappearance. Narrated by fragments of moving images and sound from a mobile phone, the presentation makes visible and hearable a post-place, voiced along the lines of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of existential Territories and the ritornello. An existential Territory is an inhabited space – a home, a home that can reappear in manners similar to the small returns of a musical refrain, what Deleuze and Guattari terms the ritornello. While place holds significance in site-specific and context sensitive approaches towards art and design education, the post-place draws attention to the virtual, its entanglement with materiality and how the virtual plays a role in displacements and absences of places. The presentation will address how becoming sensitive to ritornellos and ritornellisations can hold significance in an ecology for a planetary pedagogy of art and design.

Room 5

Posthuman Ecologies of Creativity: Rethinking Human–AI Collaboration in Visual Arts Education

Luna Ning Luo

The Education University of Hong Kong

This paper explores the ecological dimensions of human–AI collaboration in visual arts education, reframing creativity as a posthuman assemblage of human and nonhuman agents. Building on empirical studies with undergraduate and preservice

teachers in Hong Kong and mainland China, the research examines how students engage with generative AI image tools to articulate emotion, challenge stereotypes, and experiment with artistic expression. Rather than treating AI as a mere instrument, I conceptualise it as a co-actor that reconfigures classroom ecologies, reshaping relations between students, teachers, media, and cultural practices.

Ecological thinking provides a lens for understanding these shifting relations. The art classroom emerges as a fragile yet generative habitat where pedagogical choices, technological affordances, and students' lived experiences intersect. By situating AI within wider educational and policy contexts, I address both opportunities (expanded creative exploration, accessibility of art-making) and risks (bias, authorship, ethical uncertainty).

The paper argues that embracing posthuman ecologies of creativity enables more inclusive and sustainable futures for art education. It invites educators and policymakers to move beyond instrumental or oppositional framings of AI, and instead to cultivate rich, relational habitats where human creativity can thrive in posthuman futures.

Resisting the ecological harms of Generative AI begins in the art classroom

Madison Marshall

Artist

While Generative AI is being hailed as 'progress' and schools are feeling pressure to adjust to it, educators can still push back, particularly through the arts. GenAI is harming ecologies as large as the natural world and as small as interpersonal connections, and its successful plagiarism tools have resulted in artists and students being the first victims of this technology. This means the way we teach students about art is now more important than ever. Through my own work as an artist, and the academic resources I gathered while researching my anti-AI zine, I argue that we can combat the negative impact of AI on students through encouraging engagement with 'low' forms of art-making such as zines and other tactile mediums. Giving students opportunities to freely express themselves without expectations around polished end-products can shift their focus away from quick fixes, and help them find joy in the slow, messy, and playful forms of art-making. Art can foster all the qualities that AI is actively hampering, such as curiosity, connection, patience, resourcefulness, originality, and community. The art classroom is the perfect

environment to protect students' creativity, and combat the convenience-culture of AI that is worsening crises around the world.

Visual Literacy in the Art Classroom and beyond

Nicola McCaffrey

Kender Primary School

In 1962, Marshall McLuhan observed that electric technology was restructuring and reshaping patterns of social interdependence and every aspect of personal life- today this even more prescient with continued rapid technological developments. As Eisner states: humans don't come into the world with minds they come in with brains. Minds are the products of their environments. Today's children are constantly bombarded with images due to the increasing primacy of screens. This cognitive 'overload' has potentially led to less engagement with individual images. Through research I have begun to examine visual literacy in the primary classroom, developing a critical discussion of various schemes used practically in an art classroom in South London, where such schemes are often inaccessible due to children's socio-economic status and early language exposure. I have developed my own scheme making a considerable shift in their understanding of images through a slowing of looking.

Teaching children to look is critical to their development and this use of looking will sharpen observation, analysis and communication skills. It will improve their sense of critical engagement as they navigate images in their everyday lives. This will link to an exploration of the interplay between students lived experience and contemporary art practices.

Room 6

Social ecosystems and employment: orientating students from low socio-economic backgrounds towards the creative and cultural industries

Julia Jeanes

Institute of Education, UCL

The creative and cultural sectors mainly consist of graduate entry professions (Sutton Trust, 2024), making it challenging for young people from low socio-economic backgrounds studying pre-degree art education to access meaningful employment within them.

Drawing from Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), this paper articulates the findings of one strand of the East London Innovation Through Partnership project. The research aimed to expand employment opportunities and progression routes for students in East London, as well as contributing to the transformation of local communities. Our methodology included case studies of collaborations between two college art departments and ten employers in the creative and cultural industries. Led by colleges, these were supported by broader networks with organisations such as the Frieze, Creative Skill Set and Design and Art Direction (D&AD). To enrich staff understanding of contemporary art practice and support curriculum renewal, teaching staff undertook work-shadowing placements in companies.

The project's central premise was that sustainable transformation depends on the co-production of employment opportunities by diverse social partners, each bringing their specialist expertise. It highlighted the importance of recognising the interdependence between art education providers, industry stakeholders and local government, and of creating the conditions necessary for meaningful progression.

Learning across Ecologies: Participation, Play, and Inclusion in Design Education

Hatice Server Kesdi

Eskişehir Osmangazi University

This study investigates the ecologies of design education through a participatory

design project with preschool children in a third-year industrial design studio. Focused on designing interactive play spaces, the project allowed design students to explore real-life ecologies while children actively participated as co-creators and primary users of the play environments. Recognizing preschool children as a distinct user group with unique abilities and communication modes, the project unfolded in three stages, bridging the children's ecology and the studio ecology. First, students visited the preschool to engage with the children, observe their social and play ecology, and build initial connections. Second, they returned with open-ended participation kits to enable the children to express their interests, imagine new scenarios, and co-create play spaces. Third, after prototyping, children were invited to the university to experience their contributions, play with the outcomes, and explore the university as a new ecology. The project also offered valuable learning for students, connecting their studio ecology with the preschool classroom and providing insights into pedagogy, learning environment, and social interaction. Overall, this study shows how ecological thinking in design education can support diversity, mutual learning, and inclusive creative practices, linking children's imaginative practices with students' reflective learning to generate richer, sustainable experiences.

Fermentation Intelligences: Contaminating, Kin-Making, and Ecological Entanglements

Lleah Amy Smith

Monash University | Govett Brewster Art Gallery

In response to growing calls for ecological and relational pedagogies in art and design education, this paper asks: 'How might fermentation intelligences reshape how we think, relate, and live in an entangled world?' Grounded in the Asia Pacific and framed through fermentology – a leaky and situated methodology emerging from my PhD research (Smith, 2024) – this contribution explores fermentation as both material practice and speculative method for kin-making, contamination, and productive agitation.

Drawing from my lively project 'Thinking Bodies.Fermenting Worlds' (Govett Brewster, 2025), this paper reflects on two key sessions: Contamination (with salty jars) and Interspecies Kinship (with honey). These encounters stage jars as thinking partners, microbes as teachers, and matter as co-composers of relational learning. Based on reflective documentation, participant observation, artworks, and session recordings, the paper argues that contamination, when positioned as a generative

force (Katz, 2003, 2020; Van Groll & Kummen, 2021) enables porous pedagogical transformation. Kinship (Haraway, 2016) emerges as both concept and condition, deepening our capacity to learn with, rather than about.

Drawing on Fournier's (2020) framing of fermentation as a 'vibrant paradox' and the practices of the Rice Brewing Sisters Club, this paper positions fermentation intelligences as active forces for agitating and reshaping how we learn within entangled, relational ecologies.

Room 7

Exploring Tradition and Cultural Ecology: The Roles, Practices, and Challenges of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Ecological Art Education

Min Cami Cai

The Education University of Hong Kong

With the growing emphasis on sustainability, ecological art education (eco-art education) has received increasing attention worldwide, aiming to cultivate students' environmental responsibility, critical thinking, and creative engagement with ecological issues. Meanwhile, the preservation of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), which embodies traditional ecological knowledge and links the relationship between culture and the environment, has been increasingly recognized for maintaining cultural diversity and strengthening community identity in rapidly changing societies. However, research on integrating ICH resources into ecological art education remains limited. In view of the above, this study aims to explore the integration of ICH resources into eco-art education and examines the roles and educational value of ICH in eco-art education from the perspective of cultural ecology theory. It also discusses current integration practices and challenges encountered. The findings are expected to enhance the overall understanding of ICH and eco-art education. This integration offers both theoretical and practical insights for promoting the sustainability of traditional cultural resources in eco-art education through artistic practice, environmental experiences, and critical reflection.

Correlation between Learning Environment, Creative Perception, Creativity and Teaching of Creative Arts in Ghanaian Basic Schools

Fred Kyeremeh

St. Ambrose College of Education

The teaching of creative arts in Ghanaian basic schools is hindered by weak learning environments, inconsistent creative perceptions, and limited creativity. The study examined correlations between ecological factors: learning environment, creative perception, and creativity in the teaching of creative arts within Berekum Municipality.

The study employed a quantitative correlational survey design with 252 respondents. A structured questionnaire based on four psychometric scales was used to collect data: the Support of Creativity in Learning Environment (SCALE), the Short Scale of Creative Self (SSCS), the Creative Mindset Scale (CMS), and the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES). Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and a correlation heat map to visualize patterns, trends, and possible outliers beyond numerical matrices. Results revealed statistically significant positive correlations among all variables ($p < .001$). The strongest correlation was between creativity and creative perception ($r = 0.487$), followed by creativity and teaching effectiveness ($r = 0.468$), while the least was between learning environment and teaching of creative arts ($r = 0.311$). The study recommended an integrated approach to strengthen ecologies of creative arts education through supportive environments, improved perceptions, and creativity as essential for effective teaching, with implications for professional development, curriculum planning, and education policy.

Re-Framing Art School for All

Tamar MacLellan

Coventry University

As the Course Director of a Post Graduate Certificate in Academic Professional Practice (PGCAPP) at a UK University, I support new educators who have moved into education from positions in research, industry or academic roles in other countries. Working with these colleagues, I have observed an interest in learning about teaching aligned to the requirements of individual roles and the claim that 'for many newcomers to the profession teaching can be overwhelming and bewildering'

(O'Leary, 2020, p.107) very much resonates. Drawing upon my lived experiences as artist-teacher, I advocate for art school ways of working to support these colleagues make sense of pedagogy, and form their 'own personal frameworks of understanding' (O'Leary, 2020, p.107).

This paper aims to share outputs from the first two years of part time PhD study examining the transformative role of art school pedagogies with new educators in higher education. Key themes being researched are:

- Studios of Practice in which time and space is afforded to learning from and with each other.
 - Sketchbook Thinking to individually explore and document the development of ideas.
 - Critique Presentations to select, share and discuss work in progress with tutors and peers.
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Room 8

To belong and grow: Unearthing, embedding and nurturing hidden voices in cognitive art education ecology

Rebecca Heaton

Royal College of Art

Inclusive pedagogies that foster belonging, nurture growth and strive for transformation (UNESCO, 2024) are increasingly being offered and accepted as entities in art education ecology. However, doing justice to this offer and ensuring that hidden voices, often of the underrepresented, are heard is a complex endeavor.

This presentation exemplifies, as nurture, the voices and projects of M-Level creative education students who are, often unknowingly, contributing to unearthing, embedding and nurturing hidden voices in the cognitive art education ecology of an elite art school. The voices and projects shared help demonstrate belonging, the value of and need for inclusive pedagogies to unearth and facilitate belonging and the relevance and positioning of voices as belonging, and for growth in cognitive art education ecology. What constitutes cognitive art education ecology will be unpicked and ideas presented and exemplified for how to access and support hidden voices to thrive in the complex ecology of cognitively rich art education offers.

Studio as a Safe Space

Jessica Longmore

University of Staffordshire

The studio; a potentially rich creative ecology, a vital haven amidst a wider national and international environment of tension and hostility; but how do we nurture this ecology when the needs of our students are more diverse than ever. This paper explores the concept of the art studio as a 'safe space' within university education, drawing on art practice, pedagogic experience, and student collaboration. It examines the tensions between comfort and challenge, protection and provocation, and the different ways students engage with their creative environments. Using practice-based inquiry and reflective documentation, the author argues that the studio is not simply a neutral site for production, but a conceptual, psychological, and social structure shaped by the identities and needs of those who use it. The paper considers the pedagogical implications of designing studios that are both inclusive and demanding, and concludes by outlining ways in which art education can better support risk-taking within a safe enough space.

Climate Unity Project: Activism

Jayne Stillman

HIAS (Children's Services)

This is the fifth year of the Climate Unity Project. It enables young people to voice their thinking about climate change, what matters to them and within their own communities through Activism.

For 2025 we are working in partnership with the Winchester Gallery to create a collective exhibition that uses creativity to explore the environmental change and what young people and communities would like to see in their local area, whether that is more recycling or a wildlife garden in their street or school. Their work will be exhibited alongside artists who are making work about climate.

The exhibition opens in summer 2025 and will feature two dimensional artworks, some of which will be used to create outdoor banners at the Winchester School of Art. A three-dimensional display of globes will create a collaborative sculpture installation inside the gallery space. Artwork will use sustainable and repurposed materials where possible. This brings all the voices together and communicates the

artists' thinking with text and QR codes.

Climate Unity has featured five projects since 2020. Approximately 50,000 children and young people, community groups and artists have participated in the opportunity for Artivism. We have collated ideas and thinking about climate change.

Thursday 6 November, 13:05 – 14:45 GMT

Room 1

The Art of Listening and Visualising: Combining Soundscapes and Visual Art for Environmental Awareness in Education

Kyungeun Lim

Kennesaw State University

This presentation will explore how visual art and soundscape can be integrated into arts integration pedagogical approaches to enhance students' understanding of their environments and surroundings. A soundscape is the collection of sounds from specific locations, environments, or situations, encompassing biological, geophysical, and human-generated sounds (Pijanowski et al., 2011; Farina, 2014). Researchers have utilized soundscapes to study ecological relationships and nature-human interactions (Pijanowski et al., 2011), design urban and rural acoustic environments (Farina & Pieretti, 2012) and create engaging learning environments that enhance student engagement through auditory experiences (Hytönen-Ng et al., 2022).

Soundscapes have been applied in artistic contexts to design immersive game environments (Hytönen-Ng et al., 2022) and visitor-friendly museum spaces that foster interactive experiences (Rudi, 2021). Building on these applications, this presentation will introduce projects from an art teacher preparation program where students created visual cultural soundscape maps. These maps reflect students' cultures, lives, and environments by collecting or creating sounds and visual objects. Through these projects, students discussed the interplay between soundscapes and visual art as tools for exploring personal and cultural identities.

Intertidal Zones as Creative Ecosystem: Connecting Artistic Inquiry and Marine Science

Alison Shields

University of Victoria

In this presentation I will share an arts-based exploration of the intertidal zones

surrounding my home on Vancouver Island in the Pacific Northwest. An intertidal zone, the area where the ocean meets the land is, by definition, in a constant state of change. As the tides move in and recede daily, the ecosystem continuously transforms as new stimuli are washed in and out, prompting constant motion. Tide pools are thus mini worlds, rhythmically changing throughout the days. I similarly view a painting as an ever-changing ecosystem, each layer responding to new elements while always evolving in relation to what came before. This inquiry began as I watched the seaweed moving around me in the local waters. It developed into daily drawing at local beaches and finally generated multi-layered paintings that, like the ebb and flow of the tides reflect a constantly changing ecosystem. I connected with local marine biologists and performed artist residencies at Bamfield Marine Science Centre and Friday Harbor Laboratories, thus expanding my artistic ecosystem through developing transdisciplinary connections through daily drawing with students, faculty and researchers. Through this work, I ask how artmaking may foster ecological awareness, connection and understanding, and propose that artist residencies have the potential to be sites of transdisciplinary, inquiry-driven, emergent and responsive pedagogy.

Walking with Bird-Public Art in the Art Education Context

Mengkai Zhang

University of Victoria

This a/r/tographic inquiry explores how walking with bird-public art- moments where birds interact with public sculptures- can open up sensorial relationships between self and environment. Drawing on six renderings of a/r/tography and neo-phenomenology, the author reflects on embodied encounters with more-than-human beings, such as seagulls and ravens, in Vancouver. Birds become metaphors of freedom and transformation, while public art functions as a symbol of the environments we inhabit, leave, and return to. Through iterative walking, photographing, storytelling, and art-making, the inquiry reveals how meaning is not fixed, but emerges within ongoing relationships. By walking with, rather than past, these encounters, the author engages in a living curriculum that emphasizes adaptation, migration, and the pedagogy of co-becoming. This visual and theoretical inquiry invites us to reconsider how birds, public art, and humans co-create our ways of being in the world.

Room 2

Paper Ecologies: Reimagining Teaching, Learning, and Nature

Tsai-Hsuan Ho

University College London (UCL)

This presentation explores how practice-based research can foster ecological awareness and sustainable thinking in contemporary art education. Building on Gibson's (2018) idea that art can reintroduce us to the natural world, the study examines the relationship between art, ecology, and pedagogy through posthuman and new materialist perspectives. Centring on handmade paper created from vegetable and fruit skins and receipts, it repositions paper, often undervalued in the art classroom, as an active participant with ecological and pedagogical agency. Reflections from the making process reveal how cycles of decay and renewal in material transformation can mirror ecological systems, opening up reflections on themes rarely addressed in education, such as ageing, death, and the ephemeral. The research invites a reimagining of the art classroom as an ecological cycle of teaching and learning, where teachers and students, alongside non-humans and materials, engage in an interactive process without hierarchy.

Ecological Learning Through Materials: Natural Observation, Transformation, and Narrative in Early Design Education

Sunki Hong

Carnegie Mellon University

This case study presents a foundational design project in which first-year design students explore spatial concepts through diverse material practices. Beginning with close observation of natural forms, students translate their perceptual encounters into drawings, carvings, castings, and finally, video making, working with materials such as foam, silicone, and gypsum plaster. The studio cultivates an evolving ecology of learning that values process, iteration, and sensory experience.

Rather than emphasizing technical mastery or polished outcomes, the course invites students to engage physically and reflectively with materials. Through making, they investigate design elements such as line, plane, and volume and explore design

principles, including unity, repetition, rhythm, and movement. Each stage becomes a site for experimentation where students respond to material resistance, navigate uncertainty, and shape perceptual understanding through tactile inquiry.

Learning unfolds through cycles of trial, failure, and revision, supporting an ecological approach that foregrounds responsiveness over resolution. This pedagogy positions the studio as a habitat for relational learning where tool, hand, surface, and idea are interconnected. The final phase, video taking, encourages students to compose narrative responses that incorporate form, light, movement, and atmosphere, thereby expanding their understanding through time-based, multimodal media.

Openness as Ecology

Seung-Ho Lee

Virginia Commonwealth University

This interior design pedagogy views the studio as openness, an indeterminate ecology that revalues marginalized notions of difference and uncertainty in industry-centered interior design education today as productive provocations for creating valuable narratives, relations, and identities. Openness represents an evolving culture that is an affective milieu of difference, generating settings where individual subjectivity and collaborative culture complement rather than compete with each other. Beyond outcome-driven educational methods, this pedagogy explores how speculative and embodied engagements can impact generating authentic voices in the studio.

In the realm of openness, the boundaries between differences are always shifting, revealing a genuine state of totality in which nothing is predetermined but rather rhizomatic. The studio becomes a place of exchange of ideas and processes through improvisatory responses that reverberate the irreproducible value of the discipline. The studio cultivates a self-motivated mindset through exploring the concept of making as a playful tool to emancipate students from institutional constraints. Students experience the potentials of the informal, inexact, and open-ended nature of self-reflective exploration, revealing how making enhances understanding of the values of both concepts of becoming and multiplicity toward endlessly evolving authentic individuation as interiorization within constantly emerging cultural shifts.

Room 3

Reframing Design Ecologies in Art & Design Education

Iain Macdonald

Maynooth University

Design is ubiquitous, shaping every aspect of human life, yet within school curricula it remains misunderstood and undervalued. This paper argues for a reframing of design's place within the ecology of Art & Design education, where behaviours, pedagogies, and policy intersect with systemic challenges of funding, expertise, and technological disruption. At a time when natural and social systems face unprecedented peril, design education holds critical potential to address climate justice, civic equity, and sustainable futures. Despite the UK Design Council reporting that 1 in 20 work in the design economy, skill shortages persist in circular and low-carbon design, while GCSE enrolments in Design & Technology and Art & Design continue to decline. Paradoxically, higher education offers a proliferation of sustainability-focused design courses, and many of those students increasingly choose to apply human-centred design to improve lives. This paper explores how these tensions shape the ecology of design education, where art and technology converge in applied practice. It asks: how can we teach the human skills necessary to navigate generative AI and other posthuman technologies while sustaining disciplinary traditions? By adopting ecological thinking, the paper proposes inclusive, adaptive models for art in design education that respond to planetary and societal urgencies.

Ecologies of the BA Fine Art curriculum

Sarah Rowles

University of the Arts Helsinki

Most BA Fine Art courses in England aim to prepare students with the knowledge and skills that they will need if they wish to become professional contemporary artists. However, not all final year students will pursue careers as artists, even if this had been their aspiration when starting the course. Drawing on findings from my 2024 doctoral thesis (discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10197601/), this presentation will discuss how the ecologies of the BA Fine Art curriculum might encourage or

dissuade students from pursuing a career as a professional artist and how we might design inclusive curricular that give all students that wish to a chance at pursuing this goal.

Equality, inclusion, and diversity in urban art education

Zartasha Shah

University of Houston

The essential parts of the lived experiences of learners can support equality, inclusion, and diversity in urban art education. A learner's immersion should be reflected through involvement, learning, and interactions to inform about them. The impacts of teaching should help learners in collaboration, innovation, and application through critical race theory and ethnography. According to Welton et al. (2023), 'CRT originated in the 1970s from critical legal studies as a response to the reversal, and in many respects outright halt, of much of the progress made during the 1960s Civil Rights era' (p. 4). A comprehensive environment of the classes should support integrity. The environment of education should support learners' identity, individuality, and physical interactions to impact on the learners.

The research aims to support the process of implementation to mobilize the moves to clarify the learnings for the conceptual interpretations, and the diverse climate should be able to support multiculturalism for the use of solid, ethical, and empirical evidence in education. The investigation will inform about the learners through critical approaches, semi-structured open-ended questions, transcribed and coded interviews of participants, and the analysis of them.

Room 4

Cultivating Affects: Reimagining Pedagogical Ecologies through Artistic Creation

Ursula Cogorno, Franco Galliani & Flavia Gandolfo

Pontifical Catholic University of Peru

This presentation explores Cultivating Affects, an art-education initiative developed at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP), which interweaves ecological

thinking, artistic practice, and critical pedagogy within a public exhibition and educational program. Rooted in Latin American traditions of socially engaged art and the ethics of care, the project activates sculpture not only as a medium of formal exploration but as a site of ecological encounter, civic reflection, and affective transformation.

Departing from an expanded understanding of the classroom as an open and interdependent ecology, the project was implemented across undergraduate sculpture courses and culminated in a public exhibition in alliance with the Municipality of San Isidro. Through the reuse of discarded materials, situated storytelling, and collaborative making, students critically engage with environmental degradation and social fragmentation, challenging dominant narratives of innovation that prioritize technological advancement over relational sensitivity.

Awarded for educational innovation in 2024 and 2025, this third iteration positions sustainable art education as a form of climate justice and curricular resistance. The presentation reflects on how collective making, embodied research, and pedagogies of slowness can cultivate more inclusive, sustainable, and affectively resonant futures in art and design education.

Urban environmental public art interventions with young people

Albert Stabler

Illinois State University

While working as a high school art teacher on the southeast side of Chicago, I worked on three monumental sculpture projects that focused on the local environment. One year my students and I made large inflatable models of native and invasive plants, which we installed on the front lawn of our school, inviting members of the school and the public to learn a little about these plants. The following year, another group of students collaborated on making large inflatable models of invasive and native animal species, and we also got funding to purchase a solar panel with which to charge the blowers that powered the sculptures. We took these to a local elementary school, and my students showed the sculptures and interacted with elementary school students in their playground. And as a third project, I worked with another artist, with a local organization, and with my students to create a monthlong mixed-media outdoor monument indicating and sharing information about a local toxic brownfield.

All of these projects were informed by research not only on local environmental

history but also on forms of ongoing environmental injustice. These projects emphasize the exciting and engaging nature of large-scale interactive temporary public installations as an environmental teaching strategy.

Curriculum as Ecology of Care

Marlene Wylie

Creative Passion in Action_Creative Education Consultancy

Canon Marlene Wylie's reflections on Holy Trinity C of E Primary School's Cultural Arts Week exemplify an ecological approach to art education by cultivating interconnectedness between creativity, identity, and justice. Rooted in the school's commitment to Global Citizenship and inspired advocacy for culturally responsive pedagogy, the week foregrounded the arts as a living ecology – where underrepresented voices, environmental activism, and spiritual values coalesce. Pupils engaged with artists and activists such as David Driskell, Kandi Mossett, and Catherine Coleman Flowers, exploring how art can speak across boundaries and challenge systemic inequities. These encounters fostered critical making, empathy, and collaborative inquiry, echoing the belief in curriculum as covenant and the principle of shared humanity. By linking visual expression with environmental and social justice, the project responds to the interplay between students' lived experience and contemporary art practices, demonstrating how art classrooms can nurture sustainable, inclusive futures. This Cultural Arts Week stands as a model of how primary education can resist ecological collapse – of culture, curriculum, and community – through joyful, justice-oriented learning. It invites us to reimagine the art classroom not as a siloed space but as a dynamic ecology of transformation, where every child is seen, heard, and empowered to create change.

Room 5

Learning into the unknown: how assessment practices in secondary art education might help assess the ability to negotiate not knowing

Eleftheria Iakovidou

University of Gloucestershire

The future is unknown. Not knowing can cause stress, yet it can also evoke feelings of hope and curiosity. Not knowing is a predicament in sustainability education, because it acknowledges the complex nature of sustainability issues.

Given this unknown future, it is inevitable that teaching and assessment regarding sustainability issues might entail a level of uncertainty. Learning for Sustainability (LfS) supports students to develop dispositions towards negotiating feelings of not-knowing, however, there is limited research around how these can be assessed in secondary education.

To address this gap, my PhD project explores whether assessment practices in art education might inform the assessment of secondary school students' ability to negotiate feelings of not knowing. Through a systematic literature review, I identified twelve similarities between LfS and art education, including not-knowing – embracing ambiguity and uncertainty, planning ahead – futures thinking and hope, experiential learning and engagement, and collaboration – co-creation (Iakovidou et al, 2024). As well as presenting these findings, I will discuss the findings from the interviews with art, science, geography, English and maths teachers, analysed through Constructivist Grounded Theory, on how assessment of students' ability to negotiate feelings of not-knowing is and could be assessed in secondary education in England.

Porous Bodies: Autoethnographic Ecologies of Clay, Care, and Coastal Place

Lyndsay McKay

University of Victoria

My presentation explores an interdisciplinary art practice rooted in ecological attunement, embodied research, and lived experience in healthcare. As a former nurse with over a decade in dementia and end-of-life care, I bring a biological and

sensorial sensitivity to my sculptural work, developed along the coastal landscapes of Vancouver Island, BC. Drawing on autoethnographic methods – archiving, journaling, photography, and sculpture – I examine how the human body, like the environment, is porous, adaptive, and shaped by time and memory.

My MFA thesis work *Spaces Between* (2023) involved casting sections of my body and infilling their internal surfaces with local clay and seaweed, blending anatomical presence with foraged matter. These sculptural forms act as both vessels and hosts-merging self and site, preservation and change. The work reflects a layered ecology of body, material, and memory, revealing how art practice can trace invisible connections between living systems.

This presentation contributes to iJADE's 'ecologies' theme by offering a perspective grounded in care-based knowledge, place-based materiality, and transdisciplinary inquiry. It invites discussion on how pedagogies of art-making – particularly those rooted in embodied and environmental engagement – can foster new understandings of interconnection, impermanence, and ecological thought.

From Recognition to Reflection: Research on jewellery design education based on the Signature Pedagogies theory

Mian Wu

Beijing Normal University

Drawing on Shulman's theory of Signature Pedagogies, this study employs a qualitative questionnaire survey to investigate the experiences of 51 jewellery design students from 19 Chinese institutions. By analyzing students' embodied learning narratives, it identifies key pedagogical characteristics in Chinese jewellery design education. The findings reveal that decentralized metal studios serve as primary learning spaces where teacher-student communities engage directly with materials through a 'demonstration-imitation-creation' structure grounded in 'thinking by doing.' Teaching occurs through iterative dialogue based on students' personal and emotional experiences, forming an 'action-reflection-reaction' cycle that cultivates design thinking. Beyond technical skill transmission, this process shapes students' professional dispositions – such as courage, material sensitivity, and patience – while fostering self-exploration.

Building on these insights, the study highlights how long-standing, often tacit pedagogical patterns influence design education and invites reflection on three key challenges: the gap between educational and professional contexts, the disruption

posed by digital technologies to traditional practices, and the irreplaceable value of open-ended, uncertain dialogue in teaching. These findings contribute new critical perspectives for advancing jewellery design pedagogy in the digital age.

Room 6

Art, Design and Media (ADM) teaching and learning: insights for developing creative higher education ecologies of practice

Emma Agusita

University of the West of England (UWE)

This paper explores opportunities and challenges for creative subject higher education practitioners in developing ecological practices. It reflects on contexts, spaces, and approaches that can open new possibilities for educational development. It also considers tensions between the imperatives of creative higher education and industry/economy, in preparing students for creative and cultural work.

It offers insights for education practitioners, through exploration of examples from across Art, Design and Media (ADM) higher education practice and research. This includes ecologies of practice that invite collaboration and co-design of learning and teaching with students, which connects with issues of culture and identity. It also draws on the author's pedagogic research and experience of using arts and culture-based approaches for creative media education in a School of Arts context and as part of sustainable development education. This work is underpinned by themes of social and environmental justice, advocacy and activism. For example, this includes undergraduate and post-graduate teaching of social-purpose campaigning.

The paper also discusses possibilities and issues for educational research in this area, particularly for those who have transitioned from working in non-academic arts practice contexts to teaching in higher education.

From Classroom to Festival: A Mixed-Methods Evaluation of Competition-Driven Art & Design Education

Nesma Ewis

Pearson

This paper presents a mixed-methods evaluation of a competition-driven pedagogy that integrates public festivals and contests into art and design courses. Grounded in constructivism, Kolb's experiential learning cycle, and situated cognition, the approach uses authentic briefs, iterative critique, transparent judging rubrics, and public showcasing to simulate professional production cycles. A comparative case study contrasts festival-integrated sections with traditional studio sections over one academic year across graphic design, illustration, and product/industrial design. Data sources include pre/post surveys (engagement, self-efficacy, feedback literacy), rubric-based portfolio assessments, external jury scores, observation field notes, reflection logs, and focus groups/interviews with students, instructors, and jurors. Outcomes examine learning (technical craft, risk-taking, problem framing), motivation and persistence, collaboration and feedback literacy, and professional readiness (client communication, time management, resilience). The contribution includes curriculum maps, assessment instruments, and an analysis plan with visualization specs (side-by-side matrices, learning-outcome heatmaps, festival timelines) to support replication. Anticipated implications for curriculum reform, faculty development, and academic-community partnerships are discussed, alongside limitations (self-report/selection bias; instructor enthusiasm effects) and a multi-site replication plan.

Pedagogy as Medium. WSA Painting Prize: A Case Study

Christina Mamakos

WSA

Public-facing exhibitions in higher educational contexts within the field(s) of contemporary art, curation or fine art pedagogy is a format and genre which brings to light some contentious subtleties within HE and Fine Art Practice.

Exhibitions and events resulting from awards not only provide opportunities for young artists, as well as pedagogical approaches to teaching and research, but they serve to some degree as the public face of the institution. This positions the

University Gallery Exhibitions in general, and Prize Exhibitions in particular, as a nexus between the vision and reputation of the institution, specific opportunities for young artists, research agendas, and pedagogical approaches.

Using as case study the WSA Painting Prize, this paper maps, analyses and discusses the role of a specific initiative and exhibition in terms of format, potential, and institutional agency, with reference to some relevant pedagogic literature as seen in relation to the wider field of contemporary art practice, exhibition practice, and curatorial praxis.

Saturday 8 November, 10:50 – 12:50 GMT

Room 1

Ecologies of art & design education: Establishing a baseline for Fashion & Textile sustainability content in the GCSE National Curriculum

Sonja Andrew

University of Leeds

Although 36.4% of UK 18 year-olds progressed into Higher Education in 2024 (commonslibrary.parliament.uk) and a small proportion of these will develop knowledge of fashion/textile circularity, an estimated 13.4% of UK 16-24 year-olds were not in education, employment or training in October-December 2024 (www.ons.gov.uk). Fundamental awareness of fashion/textile sustainability should therefore be embedded earlier in education. This paper discusses stages 1&2 of a case study to determine a baseline for fashion and textile sustainability content delivered within GCSEs in England. The research methodology incorporates three stages. 1) Review of GCSE 24/25 subject content documents via content analysis to determine where sustainable fashion and textile content is present within key stage four syllabi. 2) Thematic analysis of GCSE 24/25 subject content documents to identify future areas where fashion and textile sustainability content could be incorporated, determining if GCSE Art and Design is the most suitable curriculum to accommodate this. 3) Interviews with secondary school teachers to discuss the findings and understand why fashion and textile sustainability has limited presence in the GCSE national curriculum. This focuses on barriers, challenges, and opportunities to raise the baseline; for example, how sustainability principles demonstrated through study of other materials could include fashion and textile examples.

Reya: Reuse Yarn, placing design education at the center of industry-focused Research-Through-Design

Elizabeth Gaston

Northumbria University

To avert a global environmental crisis, we need new approaches to product development and an education system that supports innovation.

Knit is a valuable zero-waste manufacturing process, enabling the production of 2D and 3D forms with placed fabric functionality and used for innovation in architecture, medical textiles and bio-technologies. However, this soft engineering is not taught in depth outside of tertiary fashion/textiles education due to time/resource/skill limitations, creating gatekeepers of knowledge.

This investigation into design for sustainable knit manufacture places education at its core. A symbiotic relationship benefits secondary teachers, their students and design researchers. The team developed innovative low-tech, no-cost colouration effects, enabling manufacturers to produce new yarns from waste to reduce landfill. They worked with sixth-form students, key consumers, to extend the research and develop a communication tool to present to industry.

This was enabled by the co-development of an innovative knit teaching resource for and with A-Level teachers and students, using a mixed ecologies-thinking/knit-thinking/thinking-through-making approach. Introducing a rapid, low-technology, knit method enables its adoption without schools' financial or temporal investment. Teachers and students valued the involvement in sustainable design strategy research and the new fabrication techniques. The student and teacher guides are available as a printable PDF.

Becoming through Repurposing

Emma Sutton

Rainham Mark Grammar School

An exploration surrounding the simultaneous nature of collaborative meaning making, whilst embracing risk and challenge, when working with and through repurposed media and materials and the remnants of ideas and perceived norms. Interesting ecological nuances emerge from the habitat of the art and design learning environment.

This paper will delve into the co-construction, shared understanding and the sense of agency nurtured through the active deconstruction of physical materials, whilst challenging ideals in relation to students' understanding of drawing, mark-making and the process of creating, alongside teachers cultivating risk in embracing alternative approaches to pedagogy and practice. Through the act of repurposing materials, media and found objects which may otherwise be deemed throw away, we can be prompted to reflect and critically engage with our thoughts and ideas, mirroring this open-minded approach.

Findings have evolved through a qualitative lens, with a/r/tography as the predominant research methodology, acknowledging identities of artist, researcher and teacher. Ecologies are dynamic and ever-changing, adapting to a myriad of influencing factors, as teachers and learners, we too are interconnected, shaped by our context and environment and it is in the collaborative making, creating, noticing, living inquiry, discovering and negotiating meaning, we become through repurposing.

Exploring (Eco) Material-Led Pedagogy in an Art & Design Curriculum Intervention

Clemency Wood

University of Cambridge

This paper presents findings from a curriculum intervention exploring (eco) material-led pedagogy in Art & Design education. Conducted for a PhD research project in a state school in East Anglia, part of the intervention encouraged Year 9 students to forage natural elements and recycled paper to make non-representational sculptures inspired by the practices of the contemporary artist Olivia Bax. With attention on sustainability and cost-effectiveness, this introduced diverse materials atypical in conventional 'school art'.

Integrating eco-materials crucially addresses material responsibility, a concern amplified in the move towards process-oriented art education where a student outcome is less central; the research shows a focus on material-led process is more likely to generate waste. Central to artistic learning, embracing failure was enabled by the use of unpredictable eco-materials (snapping sticks, cracking leaves). Students also showed high levels of engagement and suggested they felt less alienated from the making process given their role in sourcing the materials.

Crucially, the project did not aim to overtly use art as a conduit for environmental

lessons or burden students as 'eco-heroes'. Instead, the purposeful, indirect integration of sustainable materials allowed contemporary art practice to remain central, broadening material consciousness within art education without didactic environmental messaging.

Room 2

New Perspectives on Artist-led Ecologies in British Art and Design Education during the 1950s and 1960s: A case study on the Maurice de Sausmarez archive, University of Leeds

Kerry Harker

University of Leeds

The paper will propose new perspectives on artist-led ecologies in art and design education of the 1950s-60s in Britain as they can be surfaced from the archive of artist, writer and educator Maurice de Sausmarez (1915 – 1969). As Bridget Riley Art Foundation Fellow, I am the first researcher to be embedded in the archive which was acquired by the University of Leeds in 2019 and now publicly available for the first time in over 50 years. The paper argues that de Saumsarez's deep commitment to nurturing relationships and ecologies across the messy frontiers of geographies (London and the regions, Europe and Britain) artforms (art, literature, music) and social status (from working-class artists to directors of major public institutions) is a defining feature of his significant career as an educator at the major London art colleges and in Yorkshire. Specifically, the paper will shed new light on de Sausmarez's role in the development of 'Basic Design' pedagogy in Britain as a critical figure within the artist-led ecologies of thought and practice where it was debated and advanced among contemporaries including Richard Hamilton, Tom Hudson, Victor Pasmore, Elma Thubron and Harry Thubron.

Ecological perspectives on Irish arts education policy

Eileen Keane

Marino Institute of Education

National policy movements are influenced by a myriad of factors. Adopting ecological perspectives entails examining the social, material and affective

dimensions of policy enactments. This paper presents policy developments in the last decade that have shaped Irish arts education with a particular focus on spatial discourses.

Educational practitioners implement wide and varied theoretical and conceptual approaches when thinking about their practice. The aim of this paper is to examine how policy supports speculative thinking and speculative pedagogies which are useful for generating new possibilities in educational contexts.

This paper discusses the politics of visibility and invisibility distinguishing how power and 'forces of art' operate in differing ways intersecting with spatial discourses generated by policy orientations (Atkinson, 2022; Rancière, 1991). This work examines how policy enables arts based approaches and thinking with place that can disruptive normative flows and hegemonic theorising. Speculative pedagogies are negotiated and understood within specific temporal and spatial realities (Garcia & Mirra, 2023). Recognising the potential of speculative pedagogies can help consider new possibilities and embrace new pathways for practice. This can shed light on pedagogical futures and practices yet-to-come.

Primary Art Education in England: Theory, Practice, and Provision

Claire Osborne

University of the West of England (UWE)

This paper concerns primary art education in England and builds on my recent doctoral studies which focused on the importance of art knowledge for teaching within a broad and rich school curriculum. Moreover, my research considers how the acquisition of teacher knowledge and skills may affect art planning in schools. Concurrently, issues around the way in which government policy has impacted on arts provision over recent years has been a key concern which underscores my research concerns, with time, access to resources, support for teachers, and funding identified as recurring themes affecting both children's and teacher's access to art at primary level and beyond.

My research study findings provided an opportunity to reflect on the ecology of art in primary education and how senior leadership teams and subject leads with substantive knowledge and skills in art can play a significant role in ensuring that the arts, especially, seeing art, making art, and knowing about a diverse range of visual artworks and artists, are prioritised within a child's primary education. The development of the whole child is a core tenet which underpins my research

concerns as is both children's and teachers' access to art and cultural knowledge as a matter of social equity.

Ecologies of Resistance: Parental Power, Curricular Gatekeeping

Tina Scahill

University of Winchester

I am to explore the ecology of power that shapes creative subject choice in English secondary schools, focusing on the familial and institutional forces that restrict artistic development at a pivotal stage, Year 10. Drawing on Freudian theories of parental introjection and contemporary research on parental influence, it examines how children internalise value systems that privilege academic utility over creative exploration. Alongside this, the paper critiques school timetabling structures that marginalise the arts, clustering them into inaccessible pockets that render free choice illusory. These intertwined ecologies; familial, institutional, pedagogical, constitute a system that silences the creative agency of young people.

Positioning art and design education as an ecology of resistance, the paper advocates for creative curricula that are rhizomatic, inclusive, and socially engaged. It argues that creativity should not be reserved for the privileged few who can navigate the constraints of both home and school, but must be structurally protected and pedagogically valued. By foregrounding examples of 'artivism' and youth voice, this research challenges current curricular models and calls for a reimagining of creative education as a force for individual and societal transformation.

Room 3

Disrupting Curriculum with Liveness: A student-centred methodology

Laurence Dubé-Rushby

AUB

In this paper, I present my PhD research study, which brings live art into secondary education – a disruptive, improvisatory, and responsive practice that contrasts with institutional pedagogy. It builds on a radical constructivist educational theory

(Glaserfeld, 1996), which embraces disruption, discomfort, and conflict as dialogic knowledge production (Piaget, 1970; Schrag, 2015). Through action research, it has examined and tested how pedagogical elements of live art can contribute to young people's development. It proposed to reconfigure disruption as a pedagogical tool that respects the political, ethical, and social underpinning of artistic responses by students, challenging notions of best practice in art education (Atkinson, 2018) towards new ecologies of becoming (Chappell, 2022). I present DARE (Disruptive, Artistic, Reflexive, Exploration), a live art methodology that emerged as a research outcome. Students' responses show how an embodied, material, and conversational practice mobilises agency in teaching and learning. Findings reveal how live art makes visible affective elements, including emotions, vulnerability, resistance, and unpredictability, that the current education system tends to eradicate. When enacted and embraced as learning, these can transform curriculum design towards considering creative modes of being that support responsibility, self-construct, and agency for learning to be-in-the-world (Biesta, 2022).

Practising in the not-known: An exploration of an emerging pedagogy of care

Dulcie Hepple

Graveney School

I developed my own research methodologies by unlearning dominant academic frameworks that shaped my teaching. Influenced by Ingold's (2018) view of research as 'a way of living curiously,' I engaged in embodied exploration through walking, investigating relationships between human and non-human elements. By relaxing my prior knowledge and embracing the 'not-known' (Atkinson, 2015), I created a participatory, arts-based pedagogical project grounded in 'material thinking' (Bolt, 2006). This involved collaborative engagements between learners and teachers.

Using sensory experiences – touch, vision, smell, and sound – I explored how 'intra-actions' (Barad, 2007) shaped my understanding. Inspired by Page's (2018) 'material pedagogy,' and Bolt's and Carter's concepts of material thinking, I gathered matter – earth, objects, sounds, and scents into concealed tin cans. These materials catalyzed the participatory workshops, which rejected pre-determined curricula in favor of 'knowing-in-being' (Ingold, 2018).

The project targeted sixth-form students unfamiliar with its content. Workshops were held in a traditional art classroom, challenging typical assumptions about

teaching and learning spaces. I aimed to observe how students responded to an unfamiliar pedagogical method within a familiar environment. This non-prescriptive, care-focused approach (Atkinson, 2015; 2022) enabled genuine learning experiences, where both teacher and learner could emerge through shared exploration.

Ecologies in Practice: Moving between 'Art' and 'Design' to Envision Schools of the Future

Miranda Matthews

Goldsmiths, University of London

Beginning Art and Design teachers are entering school spaces that are increasingly in need of strategic interventions to enable ecological sustainability. Initial Teacher Trainees are also called upon to develop resourcefulness, to move between their disciplinary understandings of what art, craft and design can be – to diversify their subject knowledges. Beginning teachers also often have visionary expectations for what Art and Design education, and associated learning spaces, could become.

In this presentation I will discuss Ecologies in Practice 'designing school spaces for the future' workshops that I have developed with PGCE Art and Design students since 2021. Currently I am collaborating with the British Ecological Society to extend the reach of these workshops into public domains. Students challenge restrictive school planning policies, to centralise ecological initiatives and to focus on inclusive and emancipatory learning ethos. Their training spaces are informed by Centre for Arts and Learning Ecologies in Practice research, that makes international connections with artists, theorists and educators who are all making creative interventions to raise awareness of climate change and the Earth crisis. Discussing, drawing and modelling visionary school spaces enables open, imaginative conversations about how the expertise of artists, craftspeople and designers can find interdisciplinary meeting places.

Room 4

New Visions – Reimagining Arts Education

Elaine Forde

Metropolitan Arts Centre (MAC)

New Visions – Reimagining Arts Education is a three-year initiative led by the MAC Belfast that builds a living ecology of creative learning between artists, teachers, students, and communities. Inspired by bell hooks' vision of the classroom as a communal space, New Visions repositions art education as a form of social practice- where creativity becomes a collective act of making, questioning, and imagining together.

At its heart are six ArtistTeacher Fellowships, supporting teachers from comprehensive schools to centre their own artistic practice which inspires their teaching. With access to MAC studios, curatorial mentorship, and bespoke learning support, ArtistTeachers explore how art-making and pedagogy can intertwine to empower pupils as collaborators.

This ecology extends through MAC Schools in Residence, where school days are relocated to the MAC's vibrant artistic environment, and MAC Satellites in Schools, where ArtistTeachers, pupils, and commissioned artists co-curate creative and discursive spaces within their own schools.

By embedding social practice at every level, New Visions dissolves hierarchies between artist, teacher, and learner – fostering shared authorship, agency, and care. The project culminates in a Co-designed Participatory Exhibition at the MAC, showcasing how collective creativity can transform classrooms, challenge systems, and imagine new possibilities for arts education in Northern Ireland.

Teacher Communities as Ecological Networks: Sustaining Arts Educators Through Shared Practice

Ruth Nic An Bhreithiúnaigh

Marino Institute of Education

This paper presentation reports on a systematic literature review of 35 international empirical studies on teacher communities (TCs) which supported primary, post-primary teachers and early years educators in the delivery of arts education in the

years 2010 – 2025. The methodology draws from the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA). Findings were thematically analyzed using a narrative method and revealed many types of TCs for arts educators.

These TCs, which can act as ecological systems, support educators to collaborate and co-develop practice in visual arts, music, drama, dance, integrated arts or arts integration. In response to ecological challenges such as isolation, it can be argued that TCs promote educators' autonomy in arts professional learning (PL) when leadership and policy fail to provide adequate professional development (PD) opportunities. This review also includes online TCs where social media platforms in posthuman contexts shape how educators collaborate and engage in shared learning. Conditions under which PL outcomes are likely to be achieved also feature. This paper draws on the themes of transformation and sustainability from Emma Talbot's work as arts TCs act as rich habitats for transformative artistic education, sustaining educators' PL beyond once off courses, workshops or webinars across international contexts.

Creative Break Time: Fostering habitats of radical, pedagogical rest

Nicky Sim, Lora Aziz & Lottie Brant

University of the West of England (UWE)

Themes of crisis, depletion and sustainability intrinsically link the ecologies of the schooling system, with those of the natural world. Teacher stress and burnout, on top of limited resources and time, increase the isolation of schools from their local creative ecosystems. Is it possible to imagine a different, more hopeful way of being and doing together, that is rooted in deep connection, care and pedagogical rest?

This talk introduces Creative Break Time – a three-year project based in Southend organised by Metal, Focal Point Gallery and The Other MA (TOMA) in collaboration with four schools. Resourcing schools to offer teachers creative break time for multiple days within the teaching term, this project connects teachers with artists to embark on a series of co-authored residencies around the Essex coast.

Adopting the monastic tradition of spending time together in simple surroundings, in nature, and in alternative spaces in the locality, the project encourages “deep hanging out” and “slow practice” to “radically liberate teachers” from usual systems and responsibilities with time to pause and breathe. Our research explores what it means to create these temporary habitats of creative, place-based rest in the face of chronic sector challenges and both artist and teacher fatigue.

Room 5

The Practice of Art Education as a mediating Role between Humans and Digital Technology: Ecological Models for Creative Coexistence with AI and Digital Media

Okhee Jeong

Jeonju National University of Education

In the post-human era, artificial intelligence and digital media increasingly participate in creative and emotional domains once considered uniquely human. With the rise of the Internet of Things (IoT) and avatar technologies, the integration of humans and machines is breaking traditional boundaries of time, space, and agency. This transformation calls for a reimagining of art education – not as a space for merely teaching digital tools, but as a dynamic site for co-creation between humans and non-human agents. This study explores how digital technology, when recognized as an autonomous participant, reshapes the epistemology of art education and its role in fostering creativity, empathy, and ethical awareness. Drawing from experiential practices across school levels (primary to secondary school), the research proposes an ecosystemic model of art education that responds to the intercyclical relationships among humans, technology, and civilization. Through classroom-based narratives, the study presents concrete pedagogical strategies for enabling collaborative, reflective, and emotionally resonant interactions with AI. Ultimately, this research envisions a new paradigm in art education- one that embraces technological co-agency, supports student agency, and prepares learners to critically and empathetically engage with the evolving landscape of post-human culture.

Vibrant Things: Reimagining Non-Human Agency in the Creative Digital Classroom

Zoe Parker Moon

Manchester Metropolitan University

This practice-led research in higher education explores non-human agency as a framework for reimagining creative teaching and learning in art and media

classrooms. Drawing on Jane Bennett's notion of vibrant matter, the approach invites students to observe and document everyday objects as active participants in the creative process. Through playful acts such as photographing paperclips or folding paper into swans, the classroom becomes a place where human-centred hierarchies of making are disrupted. Iterative and practice-led activities encourage students to see materials as vibrant things transformed through acts of photographing, filming, or digitising. This sustained observation cultivates an embodied awareness of the vital force of objects and begins to dissolve the perceived chasm between 'being' and 'thing'. The incorporation of play as a methodology invites experimentation and prioritises experiential learning over technical prowess. Reusing and recontextualising objects across sessions (where possible) allows students to see the change (or not) in the objects, fostering an ecological awareness. By combining Bennett's material vitalism with playful pedagogies, this teaching activity celebrates experimentation beyond formal assessment and re-shapes shared understandings of objects and their agency.

Bennett, J. (2010) *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Duke University Press

Henricks, T. (2015) *Play and the Human Condition*. University of Illinois Press

PLOT

Jonathan Ward

University of the West of England (UWE)

PLOT is a RIS funded practical research project (entering its second year) involving the commissioning of 20 screen-printed artists' books using 4 previously designed commercial die-cut formas. 20 Fine Artists, Illustrators, Architects, Authors, Poets, Cartographers, Designers and Musicians are invited to explore their individual take on the theme of PLOT. Participants include early and late career practitioners, students past and present, alongside industry sponsors.

Each reuse and redefinition of the formas, via individual interpretation of the central theme, fosters a reflective cycle, investigating the book form as both autonomous entity and related collection. The chance connections within the set of 20 books spark further consideration of the creative ecology when limited by form and production but unrestricted in content.

The sets are boxed with an accompanying publication including 7 commissioned written works reflecting on the same theme. These in turn are offered to two young artists as inspiration for two of the artists' books in the set. A cycle connecting all elements of the project.

A programme of exhibitions and events, alongside the placement of the boxed sets in global special collections, aims the project squarely at dissemination to and education of as wide an audience as possible.

[instagram.com/plot_artistsbook/](https://www.instagram.com/plot_artistsbook/) for more information.

BLOK

Jonathan Ward

University of the West of England (UWE)

BLOK is an artists' book created by Jonathan Ward and Jackson Street. It is a boxed set of 64 laser cut interlocking tiles illuminated on each side by fragments of imagery from both artists. Selecting tiles and slotting them together forms a visual narrative, meanwhile an unintentional narrative is formed on the opposing side.

BLOK aims to assist in shifting creative impasses through visual play and chance encounter. The twist in this instance is that each tile is enhanced via Augmented Reality and offers the viewer sound and/or vision in the form of recordings and animations when held in front of a smartphone.

BLOK has been prototyped and presented in its final completed form at PAGES 2023 and 2025 in Leeds City Art Gallery and the Brotherton Library. Feedback from these audiences indicated its potential as an educational tool for diverse ages and abilities. As a result, BLOK now includes a set of blank tiles, pencils, rubbers and a notepad for recording and developing ideas.

BLOK is an invitation to play, a visual stimulation and source of ideas for professional, student and teacher. At its heart is a desire to investigate narrative structures and generate individual ecologies of creative thinking.

Room 6

Room 13 Hareclive: Discovering Ecologies and Wild Spaces – University of Bristol Wild Spaces Commission (mid way point)

Shani Ali

Room 13 Hareclive

Room 13 Hareclive is an independent artists' studio co-run by children since 2003, in a community where many children face extreme disadvantage and inequalities. Earlier this year, our studio was commissioned by the University of Bristol to create a series of temporary artworks that investigate the natural ecologies around the site of the new Temple Quarter Enterprise Campus.

This presentation by co-founder/artist educator Shani Ali will give an outline of the Room 13 approach towards the commission and the way the studio community has become focused on the importance of river ecologies across Bristol, and also how they connect different places, people and communities.

Beginning with expeditions, a research group of 15 young artists aged 8 – 24 explored the River Avon, discovering new ways of experiencing the natural environment on Dundry Slopes, on the Avon and beside the Severn Estuary. Throughout, they captured what they saw and felt in drawings, notes and films. From there, we shared findings with Room 13 artists of all ages and SEND groups aged 6 to 11. Together, we arrived at a set of thinking points – River Unknown, River Alive and River as Home – which will form the way forward with our commission.

The Art Workshop: Planting the seeds for a Collective Success

Sue Gibbons

Malmesbury School

The Art Workshop can be transformational for the whole school community. This space to make art together takes away the drive for control or for hierarchical assessment, opening up opportunities to build a thriving creative community that is both ambitious and fully inclusive. The workshop model plants the seeds to activate a legacy where collective success can interconnect, strengthen and grow. It is a joyful and unifying place where the diverse needs of all learners can be met. As I balance my roles of committed but frustrated teacher, entrepreneurial artist and curious

researcher, I seek to disrupt the normal classroom order, sparking roots to nurture a success that can futureproof education for my students. I will present my ongoing research around my workshop model that is structured to be delicately balanced but powerful and accessible to all.

Exploring Affective, Material and Embodied Creativities in the Primary Classroom

Victoria Kinsella

Birmingham City University

This paper discusses findings from the West Midlands Creativity Collaboratives (2021 – 2024), which explored creative pedagogies in primary schools through partnerships with creative practitioners. The first phase developed a creativity toolkit emphasising affective, material and embodied practices (Kinsella, 2024). With renewed funding for 2024 – 2026, the project shifts focus to teacher development and the application of these practices in classrooms without embedded creative partners.

During the initial phase, making and material intra-action were central, teachers and children engaged with objects, textures, spaces, and processes that disrupted dominant pedagogical norms. These practices foregrounded the sensory, spatial, and relational dimensions of creativity, positioning materials not as passive resources but as active agents in co-constructing learning. In these moments, these material pedagogies opened up alternative ecologies of attention, imagination, and response.

As the project moves forward, we consider how these entangled, material-led pedagogies are interpreted and sustained by teachers within the realities of curriculum, assessment, and accountability. We explore what forms of relation emerge when materials are treated as co-creators of learning, and how teachers come to recognise and give value to these practices, making space for creativity not at the margins, but as central to the purpose and practice of primary education.

Hope in an Art School

Simone Maier

London Metropolitan University / City Lit

My presentation, Hope in an Art School, explores how post-critical pedagogy can revitalise artistic education by fostering practices of care, collaboration, and critical

hope. Through reflective inquiry, I trace how hope functions as a sustaining force within the fragile ecology of a marketised art school - animating resistance to neoliberal logics, precarious labour, and institutional erosion. I position the art classroom as a “rich habitat” where embodied, dialogic, and material practices nurture both pedagogical renewal and a resilient community of learners. My teaching practice - centred on sketchbook work, expanded drawing, and collaborative making - enacts a post-critical ecology that values affirmation over critique, and belonging over competition. In mapping shifts from critical to post-critical approaches, this work contributes to understanding how artist-teacher practices can seed future-facing, inclusive educational ecologies rooted in sustenance, solidarity, and joy.

Room 7

Learning ‘stickiness’ and ‘slipperiness’: Centring value, trust and relationships in jewellery education

Sian Hindle

Birmingham City University

Birmingham’s Jewellery Quarter (JQ) is an industrial cluster dominated by the jewellery trade, but shared by other creative enterprises; as HS2 fuels development elsewhere, the JQ is increasingly the place where people learn to be artists, creatives and makers. The jewellery trade has long supply chains, and the high value of precious materials means that trust is vital. Personal recommendation is key, and it is important that students develop the skills to be able to engage with industry professionals in a way that allows learners to develop and thrive.

Birmingham City University’s School of Jewellery is the largest of its kind in Europe and, as a result, a site of specialism/resources. However, its size mitigates against an ecological approach, as students expect their needs to be served on site and the porous membranes between the institution and its context become silted up. In June 2025, Birmingham was awarded World Craft City status in recognition of the rich, interconnected networks of businesses that form the jewellery and allied trades within the Jewellery Quarter. Ecological thinking is embedded into the jewellery trade because of its inherent need for trust, and the School is responding with a renewed investment in communication and relationship development within the cluster.

renewed investment in communication and relationship development within the cluster.

Entanglements between Art, Design and Architecture: New Ecologies to 'Bring Children and Young People into Dialogue with the World' (Biesta, 2020)

Tatiana Machado

CLE

The proposed paper explores the potential of entanglements between Art, Design and Architecture to disturb the tendency towards professionalisation and skills-based approaches as well as the increasing emphasis on the production of measurable outcomes in art educational programmes (within which architecture and design are included) offered to upper primary and lower secondary schools in England.

Supported by Gert Biesta's definition of the three functions that 'good education' fulfils – 'qualification, socialisation, and subjectification', his ideas of 'interruption', 'suspension' and 'sustenance', as well as Pascal Gielen's notion of 'lessons in disproportion', the research discusses ways of fostering new teaching-learning approaches that aim at the formation of children as citizens of this world (Masschelein and Simons, 2013): opening them up to their surroundings and promoting processes through which they iterate to inquire, explore and discover new possibilities of thinking and acting.

By transforming the classroom ecology through architectural provocations – interrupting students' usual ways of seeing and being in space –, embodied experiences and art-and-design-based exercises, I explore ways of fostering pupils to encounter their surroundings and sustain a process of engagement and inquiry where the development of skills and competences is driven by interactions with the built environment.

Fine Art learning as catharsis?

Steven Paige

University of the West of England (UWE)

In considering a critical Fine Art practice as a triangulation, after Robin Nelson,

between artist, context and production, I will discuss how it is impossible to separate the hyper connected context we now operate within. As a fine art educator, I endeavour to highlight the contexts within which students work, buoying them towards their developing practice and professional networks. On one hand this is an opportunity for an artist to reflect and challenge the current social and environmental paradigms, where a creative process is brought to bear to make a kind of sense of the world.

This is not to undermine that an art practice can also be, as Alan Kaprow describes, 'art like art', an expression of the artists' desires and compulsion, created through subjective expression. Neither approach is exclusive or a binary, and a learner's experience is made of many moral, ethical and pragmatic dilemmas that any creative needs to manage to responsibly operate in a connected 'always on world'. I discuss how I encourage a 360 degree productive ecology, without proclamation, integrated into an inclusive curriculum, ideally without closing or paralysing the student's creative process.

Roger Ackling and the Ideal Moment: Reimagining Art School Pedagogy with Ecological Perception and Enactive Practice

Magnus Quaife & Dean Hughes

The Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki & Birmingham City University

One of the things that is often not discussed in relation to landscape is that the outside world is, in some ways, an outer reflection of an inner state... When the two come together, it seems like an ideal moment.' (Ackling:1994)

This statement aligns with ecological thinking and enactivism (Varela, 1991) by inviting us to consider perception as a process of active participation – a relational field in which environment and consciousness co-emerge.

Roger Ackling did not depict landscape; but collaborated with it. He burned marks into driftwood using a magnifying lens, these were not imposed upon nature but co-produced through time, weather, light, and embodied attentiveness. His pedagogy discouraged dominating materials and fast outcomes; instead encouraging receptivity and attentiveness. He urged students to 'step to one side,' to listen, and allow the work to emerge through its conditions rather than against them. Hence modelling an ethos of ethical and aesthetic co-creation.

We argue Ackling's art and pedagogy offer compelling alternatives. Both call for a

reorientation: not toward transcendence of the world, but toward deeper participation in it. This can help us rethink our relations to both environmental and pedagogical ecologies, challenging art schools to move beyond product-driven models toward pedagogies grounded in attunement, reciprocity, and co-becoming with place.

Saturday 8 November, 13:40 – 15:10 GMT

Room 1

Collaborative Making: Building Creative Community in the Art Classroom

Ruth Abdellaoui

University of the West of England

Collaborative art making offers fertile ground for cognitive, social and emotional development. Through shared creative processes, students build on one another's skills and insights, negotiate meaning and articulate visual ideas- deepening conceptual understanding, enhancing technical ability and strengthening higher-order thinking.

This presentation explores how collective making can enhance learning, foster inclusivity and support wellbeing within art education, while cultivating a creative community that extends beyond the classroom into the wider locality. Drawing on experience from community-based projects developed outside formal education – including an intergenerational Art Playground, a mental health exhibition and a large-scale butterfly mural made from recycled materials – alongside a classroom-tested collaborative mark-making activity, it demonstrates how shared creative practice cultivates confidence, reflective awareness and empathy.

Participants will gain practical ideas for embedding collaboration into their teaching to promote shared learning, experimentation and mutual support. By embracing collaborative making in the art classroom to enhance individual learning, we can nurture resilient, connected and intellectually engaged learners – young people equipped to think collectively, adapt imaginatively and respond creatively to the complex challenges of our times.

The Hidden Journey: Collective and Decentralised Studio Practices in Design Innovation Education

Alejandra Kerguelén Román

The Glasgow School of Art

I designed a decentralised and collaborative learning experience focused on the development of soft skills for Design Innovation in Higher Education. Based on my research, soft skills are implicit and embedded in the Hidden Curriculum, meaning they are not always visible or accessible to all learners. Yet they are crucial for creating adaptive learners who can thrive in a rapidly changing world.

My proposal centres on a learning experience that runs parallel and complementary to the curriculum; but student-led, to reinforce and highlight learners' agency throughout their own journeys. As well as to encourage the exploration of the unique and creative voices of designers. A crucial aspect for sustaining initiative and motivation is the presence of a community – an ecology of peers who can learn, reflect, and grow together.

I approached my research through bell hooks' engaged pedagogy and Ezio Manzini's Design for Social Innovation theory. Manzini understands collaborative organisations as living entities whose life depends on the quality of their enabling ecosystem. As a design innovator, I created an experience that nurtures such ecosystems, enabling autonomous and connected initiatives. This decentralised learning experience supports students in explicitly recognising and progressing their soft skills through creative tools and practices, giving them full agency in shaping their learning process within Higher Education.

The Art of a Co-constructive Process Towards Meaning Making and Ecological Sensitivity

Eloise Robinson

Little Jungle School of Early Childhood

This paper will explore how a class of 2 – 3 year old children co-constructed learning with adults to understand and re-interpret spiderwebs in a year-long project.

Through inspiration from the Reggio Emilia Approach and developing our own ways of working, this paper will explore how we formed a learning group of children and

adults that had the space and time to think alongside doing, in a deeply reflective and dialogical environment. It will outline our ways of working, the thinking of the children and the many visual languages that we provided that enabled the children to think, represent and discover new meanings as a group.

Using the children's innate empathy with the natural world and focussing on a particular object of knowledge supported the children's desire to research, connect and create together as a group. The spiderweb became a metaphor for the project on multiple forms of connection which began with physical connections within spaces but was led by the children into exploring emotional connections and relationships.

Through examples of ways of working, systems and tools that supported this and the creations of the children, this paper will highlight how to build and extend co-construction within an ecologically rich and creative environment.

Room 2

Meeting the New (Old) Ecological Challenges for Art Education

Dorit Barchana-Lorand

Kibbutzim College

A fundamental ecological principle requires that we waste not and that we settle for only what we need to survive. Reflecting on the history of aesthetics, this requirement seems to conflict with art education. Plato holds that art creates useless artifacts and is thus wasteful (Nehamas, Fine). Moreover, Plato argues that art forms attachment to trivial aspects of phenomena, thus leading to unecological greedy accumulation (Puthiyedath and Thoyakkat). Both accusations seem to reverberate later with Kant and Dewey. Kant's key notion of the disinterestedness of the judgment of taste indicates that our aesthetic engagements serve no utility (e.g., Reiter and Geiger, Kertz-Welzel). Similarly, Dewey's notion of recognition versus perception holds aesthetic experience as a state of superfluity in which we engage with objects beyond the purpose they serve (see Stroud, Shusterman).

However, we can interpret this tenet of aesthetics as one leading not only to unsustainable living of hoarding and wastefulness, but also to the ability to cherish things in our environment as they are – as they stand without being utilized by us.

Thus, beauty-appreciation can serve the preservation of natural environment, and art education may cultivate ecological thought.

An Integrated Theoretical Framework: The Intersections between Visual Art Practice, Artistic Imagination, and Well-being and their Implications for Art Education Environments

Varsha Vignesh

National Institute of Education Singapore

This integrative review is conducted at the intersection of expressive art therapy and visual art education research, where existing literature documents the positive impact that both art making and active imagination have on well-being independently. It is well established that the processes involved in the creation of art bring about significant positive changes in mental health, while numerous studies similarly highlight the links between imagination and well-being. Thus, this review addresses a critical gap in literature where imagination studies and arts-based research have developed in parallel without sufficient integration. It aimed to answer the following research question: How do visual arts practice and artistic imagination contribute to human flourishing within the context of visual arts engagement? The proposed Integrated Theoretical Framework for Visual Arts, Artistic Imagination, and Well-Being comprises five core dimensions: (1) Artistic Imagination Processes; (2) Aesthetic Experience Dimension; (3) Psychological Well-Being Outcomes; (4) Social-Eudaimonic Well-Being; and (5) Creative Process Mechanisms. This review bridges psychological and artistic perspectives on imagination. It offers structured approaches for building holistic environments that promote health through the arts, integrating contemporary neuroscience with traditional psychological theories, and recognizing contextual factors that moderate arts-wellbeing relationships.

Against Materialism in Art and Design Education

Neil Walton

Goldsmiths, University of London

In recent years various kinds of new materialism have gained prominence as ways of understanding both art and learning (Bennett 2010; Coole and Frost 2010; Atkinson 2018; Wild 2022). These theoretical approaches – which pull together older materialisms with disparate strands of poststructuralism, particle physics and

ecological politics – have shaped some of the most compelling current writing in the field and have become a familiar part of art education discourse. They claim to offer new progressive pedagogies by challenging traditional hierarchies between human and non-human agency and by dissolving the boundary between normativity and nature.

In this paper, I take issue with these claims at a theoretical level, and I also suggest how new materialisms risk reinforcing the reductive naturalism characteristic of cognitive neuroscience, a model already mandated by the Department for Education in England. Against these materialisms, I advocate a position on art education that is grounded in reason and normativity. Drawing on Robert Brandom's inferentialism, I show how this can be a pragmatic and material-sensitive approach that avoids a retreat into Cartesian intellectualism.

Room 3

Ecology and whiteness: Art and Design Education in The Emergency

Tanveer Ahmed & Jane Trowell

Central St Martins, UAL & Independant scholar

We are in time of increasing racism, anti-migrant violence, and denial of climate change. How might an environmental justice orientated art and design education help all students build community around an understanding that European colonialism and imperialism was essentially about economic exploitation and white dominance, and is a cause of our present-day global crises?

Decolonial feminist Francoise Vergès calls for addressing a 'history of the environment that includes slavery, colonialism, imperialism and racial capitalism, from the standpoint of those who were made into 'cheap objects of commerce' (Verges 2017, p.73). Boaventura de Sousa Santos urges us to pluriversal 'ecologies of knowledges' (Santos 2014, p.viii). Former NSEAD President Marlene Wylie calls this time 'a perfect storm' and asks 'How to balance the need to act... with the vital need for deep critical reflection on ourselves and our environments?' (Wylie 2023).

In this session, two art and design educators converse across their different positionalities as Brown and white, Muslim and secular backgrounds, fashion and fine art education. They dialogue on the inseparability of ecology from social justice,

how educators' behaviours, pedagogies and curricula can challenge extractivist histories and ontologies; how these can play out in the art and design classroom.

Fragile Ecologies: Fabulation, Prison Education, and the Futures of Art Pedagogy

Nana Ampofo

University College London (UCL)

This paper explores the fragile ecologies of art education through my experience teaching in U.S. prison classrooms, with reflections into adult and community contexts. Prisons expose the limits of government policy, where education is underfunded, access restricted, and human connection deliberately fractured. Yet within these environments, art making becomes a vital ecology of survival. Working with incarcerated students, I have seen how photographs, collage, and speculative practices act as living archives: fragile yet powerful sites of memory, identity, and resilience. Students reassemble fragments – family photographs, letters, and scraps of paper – into spaces of belonging and possibility, resisting systemic erasure through creativity.

I frame these practices through fabulation: the imaginative reworking of absence and silence into futures of dignity. Drawing on Afrofuturist pedagogy and the work of Saidiya Hartman, Gilles Deleuze, and Christina Sharpe, I argue that prison classrooms function as habitats of possibility, where imagination resists erasure and nurtures civic equity.

The lessons from these carceral ecologies resonate beyond the prison. In adult and community education, similar collaborative processes allow learners excluded from formal schooling to reclaim agency. By positioning these classrooms as interconnected ecologies, I propose art education as a site of resilience, inclusion, and sustainable pedagogy, cultivating futures under structural precarity.

The Missing Building: Ecologies of learning and practice, care and belonging

Neuza Morais

University of Chester

This paper explores The Missing Building, an international participatory and speculative design project that investigates how learning, making and belonging

co-exist across education, architecture and care. Building on the idea of ecologies of learning and practice (Barnett and Jackson, 2019), it sees learning as relational and interconnected, emerging through people, places and environments rather than confined to classrooms.

Drawing on critical and engaged pedagogy (hooks) and feminist spatial theory, the study invites communities across five cities: Beira, MZ; Cambridge, CA; Sardoal, PT; Rotterdam, NL, and Chester, UK; to imagine and model a 'Missing Building' a space they believe its missing in their city. Each act of making becomes a form of storytelling, expressing what is absent yet needed: safety, connection, dialogue, and hope.

As a migrant educator and artist, I reflect on how teaching and designing with care can resist systems that reward detachment and control. The paper argues that participatory and speculative design can cultivate ecologies of hope, where learning grows through relationship, imagination, and shared responsibility.

Room 4

InSEA: an ecology of global art educators

Patsey Bodkin & Susan M Coles

International Society for Education through Art (InSEA)

What does it mean to be part of a truly global ecology of art education? The International Society for Education through Art (InSEA) has existed for over seventy years, but its role today is more urgent than ever. In a world of political instability, climate crisis, and rapidly advancing technologies, how can art educators sustain dialogue across borders, cultures, and languages?

This presentation argues that InSEA is not just an organisation, but a living ecology: interdependent, diverse, and adaptive. We will reflect on how recent initiatives – webinars, publications, and congresses – demonstrate the power of collective knowledge, and how global connections can resist isolationist or instrumental views of education.

We will also invite critical reflection: Who is included in this ecology, and who remains at its margins? How can a global network avoid reproducing hierarchies while amplifying voices often unheard?

The discussion will open space for participants to imagine new ways of belonging to, and reshaping, this ecology. InSEA's future depends not only on sustaining connections but also on daring to reimagine what international collaboration in art education can mean.

Drawing is Totally Awesome: Embedding drawing back into the Art School curriculum – a case study

Lucy Ward & Rachael Miles

University of the West of England (UWE)

This presentation will describe the process of re/embedding drawing into the art school curriculum during a curriculum review in the School of Arts at UWE, Bristol. Starting with, why here? why now? and why bother? the presentation will follow the process and the challenges of designing drawing into all students' experience of art school.

The opportunity for this initiative came with a whole-School curriculum review and a vision to place drawing at the core of all programmes, from Fine Art and Photography, to Graphics and Fashion, to Filmmaking and Drama. Drawing has long been a specialist subject in the School of Arts at UWE, and this expertise is being channelled into developing ways of teaching and learning drawing that are useful to all students in building their creative practice, whatever their discipline.

The process and strategies used to integrate drawing into all programmes at all levels will be outlined and discussed. Methods of communication and engagement will be presented.

This presentation will consider some of the challenges: resistance to change, the politics and history of drawing teaching at (this) art school, the range and breadth of disciplines, the numbers and types of students.

The presentation will document the outcomes and achievements so far and evaluate progress made. It will identify next steps for improvements and additions to this project, looking inward and also outward to what other institutions are doing.

The liminal spaces mixed heritage artists hold: how artmaking can be used as a tool for identity exploration through formative teenage years

Daisy Wright

University of the West of England (UWE)

Late last year, I completed my MA thesis which investigated the connection between identity and artmaking, as an outlet for personal exploration into identity crises and questioning within the mixed heritage Afro-Caribbean community. This work was inspired by both my own experiences going through identity questioning as a child and through observations of mixed heritage students I have taught over the years in local multicultural Bristol schools. The research I would like to present at the conference is based on my introspective investigation and conversations within this community which I undertook in order to help students in my classroom more effectively who were going through this phase of identity questioning.

My intention for the conference is to introduce my research. Although conducted on adults, I want to highlight how their lived experiences in childhood has impacted their image of identity into adulthood and how they used artmaking as an outlet for identity questioning and forming as well as questioning that may be this process needs to be addressed earlier in their lives through the support of their schools and teachers within the art classroom.

Room 5

Practices of Sustenance: Artist-Teachers and the Quiet Ecologies of Adult Community Learning

Abbie Cairns

SCL Essex / WEA / UCC

This presentation explores the concept of 'sustenance' in artist-teacher practice, positioning it as an ecological act of care, maintenance, and resilience within adult community learning. In spaces often characterised by precarity – short-term contracts, limited resources, and shifting policy priorities – artist-teachers cultivate

practices that sustain both themselves and their learners. These practices are quiet, relational, and deeply embedded in local contexts.

Drawing on my experiences as an artist-teacher in adult education and collaborative research with peers, I map the hidden labour of sustaining creative practice: the informal mentoring, the acts of emotional holding, the adaptation of materials and methods, and the ongoing negotiation of identity within institutional constraints. I consider how creative pedagogies rooted in slowness, attentiveness, and mutual nourishment can be understood as ecological interventions in themselves – fostering environments where learners, ideas, and connections grow over time.

Through examples of interdisciplinary and socially engaged projects, this presentation highlights how sustenance is not only a survival strategy but a generative force. It opens up possibilities for rethinking sustainability beyond environmental metaphors – toward sustaining communities, creative energy, and inclusive pedagogical ecologies in times of systemic challenge.

Fold, staple, rebel: Navigating arts-based methodologies in the Professional Doctorate in Education (EdD)

Timothy Clark, Ronnie Houselander & Jane Andrews

University of the West of England (UWE)

Despite growing interest in the value of arts-based research for educational inquiry, there is scope for further investigation of its application in practice-based research on the professional doctorate in education (EdD) pathway. This is significant, because professional doctorates exist within a complex ecology, with students and supervisors tasked with navigating an entanglement of expectations at both the macro (disciplinary, institutional, organisational) and micro (stakeholders, communities of practice) levels, potentially creating significant methodological tensions.

Focusing on an EdD study titled ‘All bugs are insects but not all insects are bugs’, which employs zines as a tool to explore the motivations and experiences of artist-teachers in Further Education colleges, through dialogue and zines we explore our experiences, positioning the EdD researcher and supervisory team as co-learners navigating the complex eco-system through the course of the project. We seek to outline the importance of protecting creativity in practice-based doctoral research in education, highlighting the affordances of arts-based methods to enhance reflexivity, relationality and accessibility. Alongside this we offer caution on the importance of

prioritising a focus on coherence and authenticity by embracing the professional and disciplinary expertise of the researcher, whilst fostering capacity to articulate and justify decision-making in relation to potentially competing expectations.

Ecologies of Care in Art and Design Education: A Life Studio for Learning and Thriving

Pamela Whitaker

Belfast School of Art, Ulster University

An ecology of care in art and design education is an environment which bestows a comfort zone, or public homeplace, as both a site specific installation and relational practice. It is also linked to ecologies of care in learners' home studios, which are nurturing environments composed of possessions as collections, which curate a narrative landscape and pride of place. In this presentation ecologies of care will be promoted as an art and design method of teaching, both at university and at home. An ecology of care is a restorative space for social communication, focus and psychological composure. Adaptable learning environments, facilitating multi-sensory learning, offer the potential for flourishing. An ecology of care is a gathering point for rejuvenation, focus, and psychological composure. Neuroscience informed higher education research supports the significance of co-designed (collaboratively curated) learning environments to promote learner relaxation, relatedness and conviviality. These are attributes of not only active learning, but cognitive processing recognising the significance of each learner's identity and style of learning. The ecology of care ethos encourages belonging and mattering, two key attributes flourishing in higher education within public and domestic learning environments which support both student experience and artistry.

Room 6

Habitats for Play, Curiosity and Material Exploration

Fiona Dowling, Morwenna Peters & Rachel Davis

University of the West of England (UWE)

In a time of growing financial pressures, time constraints and reduced staffing across universities in the UK, the danger of losing space for play and exploration within

teaching and learning environments requires us to take action.

Play contributes to an improved sense of wellbeing by reducing the pressure to produce outcomes, and building confidence to try things out and see what happens. The ability to take risks, and embrace and learn from failure, is a key element of innovation and creativity.

Alongside this, we recognise a need for students to better develop their understanding of materials and their origins, properties and environmental impact, to empower them to make more critically informed, sustainable material choices within their projects.

Collectively, we model and advocate for collaborative and interdisciplinary working practices across technical, library and academic departments. This expansive approach invites multiple perspectives and shared knowledge, building rich habitats in the arts education context.

Together, we have developed resources and pedagogies that prioritise play and cultivate curiosity and critical thinking. We invite our peers from all disciplines to participate and test out a selection of our tools and activities, designed to support this playful approach to learning, making and building materials literacy.

Please note: this is a 90-minute workshop session.

Room 7

Designing with Purpose: Developing Research Ecologies in Product Design Education

Jac Fennell, Jo Hare, Richard Mawle & Marc Andernach

University of the West of England (UWE)

As global challenges intensify, it becomes vital product design education empowers students to engage critically with the world around them. This presentation showcases the development of a classroom ecology that places research, inquiry and real-world relevance at its core. Students move beyond solving pre-framed problems, instead learning to ask meaningful questions about the values, needs and experiences that shape everyday life and possible futures.

By asking 'what matters in the world around them', students lead a research event

where they collaboratively design and test questions with the wider university community. Offering space to investigate themes, such as wellbeing, environment and community, through collective reflection. Over two years, this evolving approach gathered insights from more than 1,000 people; directly enriching and shaping over 100 final-year undergraduate projects by grounding their design thinking in real-world experiences.

Within this ecology, research becomes a dynamic and participatory practice. Ethics, methods and proposal writing equips students with tools to conduct responsible impactful work, skills relevant to both academic and professional futures. Our findings reflect on how reframing the product design classroom as a site of inquiry and collaboration helps students see themselves not just as makers of things, but as thoughtful, responsive agents of change.

Exploring Invisibility and the performative, sensorial, and embodied nature of landscape, space and time within art practice research and the wider context of Further Education

Juliet Pierce

Institute of Education, UCL & Southbank Technical College

This paper explores themes of invisibility within art practice and teaching within further education (FE). It considers how resistance to the performative, measured and task-based nature of the neoliberal education institution alongside a different awareness of temporality might be found within art education.

Two distinct voices are used to follow two different threads throughout. These are woven together and provide a flow and narrative sense of the two separate spaces: Practice-based research (drawing, photography and film) is written as it occurred in chronological time, in a pale grey font. This is a poetic reflection recurring throughout the dissertation as a way of demonstrating time, space and immersion in landscape, water, and the imagination. Black text is used to explore the context of art education within FE. Deleuze and Guattari's theories of deterritorialization, reterritorialization and lines of flight are used to frame discussions, which might be found in art education as resistance and new becomings (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013).

Expanding Blended Curation as an Asset for Social and Environmental Sustainability

Janine Sykes

University of Huddersfield & Kirklees Museums and Galleries

This paper connects with 'Ecologies' through an assemblage of activities and concepts criss-crossing curation, art (workshop) pedagogy, communication, and regenerative economic theory.

The purpose is to evaluate the practice of Blended Curation, in its ability to enable art to be an asset for social and environmental sustainability.

Blended Curation uses the theoretical logic of Kate Raworth's Doughnut Economics (2017) the blueprint for a regenerative economy – wherein generous exchanges provide social and ecological gifts. A mixed-method of curation process and discourse analysis explores the question, can participatory techniques within Blended Curation, increase access to culture and knowledge about recycling and biodiversity?

This practice-research involves two (UK based) art exhibitions: The Cultures of Climate Art Trail (29 May – 19 July 25) and Helen Thomas No patch of green too small (1 – 20 Aug 25). Both addressed climate issues through programmed activities (talks, walks, workshops, and art trails) with culturally diverse and intergenerational community groups: Saturday Art Club (13 – 16yrs), Postgraduate students, The Friday Wanderers and We In Front.

The activities resulted in knowledge exchanges, polyvocal interpretation and co-created visual displays, which evidence high-quality curation and art pedagogy – deserving expansion?

Studio

Art in Motion (AIM): Collaboration, Creativity, and Inclusion

Join Art in Motion (AIM) for a session exploring our collaborative approach to working with learning-disabled and neurodivergent artists. AIM provides opportunities for individuals to develop their art practice, learn new skills, broaden their experience, and showcase their work through exhibitions and events.

During the session, you'll hear from AIM Director Colin Higginson and meet some of the AIM artists, who will share their experiences and discuss their artistic journeys. You'll also have the chance to view examples of their work.

AIM has recently become Creatives in Residence at Arnolfini, deepening an ongoing partnership built on a shared belief that the arts should reflect the richness and complexity of all communities.

The session will include:

- An introduction to AIM with examples of work from recent projects and exhibitions
- A discussion and Q&A with AIM artists
- Opportunities to view examples of their current artwork

You can also visit Gallery 5 (second floor) to see *Echoes*, an exhibition curated by AIM in collaboration with the Arnolfini. This exhibition brings together works from the Jerwood Collection alongside new pieces created by AIM artists in direct response to the collection, exploring personal and collective connections through art.

Please note: this is a 30-minute presentation which will take place at the start of the session.

About AIM

Art in Motion (AIM) is a Bristol-based not-for-profit arts organisation that collaborates with learning-disabled and neurodivergent artists to create and exhibit artwork. AIM provides opportunities for artists facing disabling barriers to develop and sustain their practice, gain new skills, and engage with a wider creative community.

AIM champions inclusivity, creativity, and equality, working in partnership with other organisations to expand access to the arts and challenge traditional ideas about who gets to be an artist. At its core, AIM is committed to breaking down physical, social, and institutional barriers to participation in the arts.