Title:

Proximity: Reflections on how collective enquiry informs artistic pedagogy

Abstract:

Formed in 2019 during their doctoral studies, Proximity is a collective of six artists/researchers/educators who explore the social and spatial elements of practice-based research. In our pursuit of ‘convivial aesthetics’, we have challenged the idea of the ‘isolated’ researcher; provided a vital support network to one another during the pandemic; and have informed one another’s individual practices through a series of in-person residencies and weekly online activity.

We have identified several pertinent gaps in provision for artists who undertake PhD research, including practical considerations such as relevant support infrastructure, but also conceptual difficulties regarding how a methodology can be gleaned from a pre-existing artistic practice, and how practice-based research challenges the conventional PhD journey. In this paper, we will discuss how our collective mode has provided a responsive, adaptable, and necessary solution to these institutional gaps, demonstrating ground-up peer-led pedagogic innovation, leading to our current project producing a training package and anthology publication aimed at artists who embark on PhD research.

Key words: collective; peer-led; convivial aesthetics; practice-based methodology; PhD journey

Format: paper

Contributors:

* Anne-Marie Atkinson ([a.atkinson@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:a.atkinson@mmu.ac.uk)) - current PhD student, Postgraduate Arts and Humanities Centre (PAHC), Manchester Metropolitan University; and Lecturer, BA (hons) Fine Art, Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University.
* Dr Antony Hall ([a.hall@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:a.hall@mmu.ac.uk)) – Lecturer, BA (hons) Digital Arts, School of Digital Arts (SODA), Manchester Metropolitan University.
* Dr Rebecca Howard ([r.howard@derby.ac.uk](mailto:r.howard@derby.ac.uk)) – Derby Scholar; and Lecturer, BA (hons) Photography, School of Arts, University of Derby
* Dr Sarah-Joy Ford ([sarah\_joy\_ford@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sarah_joy_ford@hotmail.co.uk)) – independent researcher (previously Manchester Metropolitan University)
* Dr Jackie Haynes ([houseofhaynes@icloud.com](mailto:houseofhaynes@icloud.com)) – independent researcher (previously University of Cumbria)
* Ann Carragher – current PhD student, Postgraduate Arts and Humanities Centre (PAHC), Manchester Metropolitan University; Lecturer, BA (hons) Fine Art Professional Practice, Blackpool School of Art; and Associate Lecturer, MA Fine Art, Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University.