PG 3

EDITORIAL NOTE

Borrowing the word 'ground' from the title as a thematic starting point PG3 relaunches *Play Ground* magazine, and invites consideration on ideas of position and relationality, space and place, and staging and representation. We explore the connotations of 'ground' as concept or method in artists' practice and within curatorial approaches to programming for students and teachers in an international art museum.

Sharing the thinking, ideas and questions coming from the Schools and Teachers team and programme at Tate Modern and Tate Britain, *Play Ground* magazine follows the life of an idea as it develops, noticing what exists beside, before and after the programme. It becomes a platform for the Schools and Teachers team to mark out our collective ground and play with ideas; where do we speak from and who are we addressing? What underpins what we do? What territory do we work within, what do we reach out towards?

Through a range of material from images to essays we present and collate the peripheral responses, provisional thinking or integral encounters to come out of teachers' courses and events, our personal and programmatic research and conversations with artists and teachers.

This issue includes a meditation on looking, an exploration of how to get on with art, an essay on flirtation and a rumination on allowing, holding and hosting. We hope *Play Ground* provides a space for you to bring your own particular territories to the content, to nourish your ideas and connect with your thinking.

ALB-UM² AS ARTISTS' PRACTICE AS FLIRTATION AFTER ADAM PHILIPS

AMY MCKELVIE

(What kind of fuck ending was that?), the self-accusatory last line of Prince's lyrics to 'Rock Hard in a Funky Place' comes from his 1987 *Black Album.* The album was withdrawn by the artist a week before its release and reprinted by Warner Bros in 1994.

Last October the artist-led space, Five Years, held *Album²*, the second iteration of the 2010 group show in homage to Prince's *Black Album.* The exhibition draws on Prince's teasing movement between public and private, inviting the contributing artists to display the 'more intimate, uncertain space of their studios'.[1] The artists were encouraged to test out ideas they might not normally release into the public space of the gallery, to exhibit something that might work beside their usual practice. Three years on the artists reinterpret and reconsider that initial invitation; when is an art work finished? What is the life of the art object? I want to use the premise of the exhibition to discuss artists' practice as a form of flirtation, a way of doing things which ultimately opens up possibilities by continually deferring the sense of an ending. The art works in the show illustrate something about the nature of art practice in society as a proposition to the audience, an uncertain attempt at dialogue with others which might make room for other ways of doing, being, knowing.

Flirtation describes a way of relating to another person, idea or activity. Concerned more with wanting rather than having, it is a relationship based on experimentation, desire and pleasure. Often maligned or trivialised, at best flirting might be seen as playful, at worst dangerous. The exciting (and risky) thing about flirting is that we are not entirely

1
Leanne Turvey, 2013, *Album²* blog: http://albumthree.wordpress.com/

sure what's real; do they really want me? Do I want them? How serious is this? How far will it go? Flirting is pleasurable because we don't know where it's going to end; when we flirt we try something out, we test the boundaries, we play out possible outcomes. Etymologically, flirtation has its origins in the notion of movement[2] and I am interested in the dynamic involved in flirtation which seems to blur the boundaries between the serious and the non-serious, appearances and reality, commitment and non-commitment.

Working as I do with artists in a learning context in a public art gallery, I feel that there is something about contemporary artists' practice that could be described as flirtatious. Writing here on the *Album²* show at Five Years I'm testing out this proposition to articulate what I feel artists' practice might do or prompt for an audience. It might seem deliberately provocative to talk about flirting in relation to my experience of working with artists on a programme for schools and teachers, but what I want to put forward is a suggestion as to what artists might offer us as an alternative to the privileging of commitment, our tendency as a society, and particularly in formal education, to worship certainty, to focus on the end point, rather than keeping our options open and relishing the joyful and messy process of working though possibilities. What does being uncertain or not knowing allow for? As the psychologist Adam Phillips asks in his essay *On Flirtation*, to which this meditation owes its beginnings, 'what does commitment leave out of the picture that we might want?'[3]

The brackets in Prince's closing line to 'Rock Hard in a Funky Place' suggest something of the tentative side step, the 'thinking beside' enacted by the *Album²* exhibition. Operating alongside the more serious main point, the contents of brackets serve to qualify, support or deviate from the agreed purpose of the narrative. Doubling his voice, Prince points to his failure to produce a 'proper' ending while also implying that there may be several kinds of possible endings to choose from. Prince's withdrawal of the *Black Album* suggests a lack of commitment to the speech act of the record. Prince offers something up, cultivates a possibility, which he doesn't commit to. He puts it out there only to take it back. There is something flirtatious about the dynamic between showing and withholding enacted by the *Black Album.* The erotic, provocative lyrics are flippant and serious, transgressive and vulnerable. For me this movement between positions, the emphasis on the process and the proliferation of endings, inspired by Prince's music, and held and explored in the *Album²* show, is a celebration of artist practice as an act of flirtation.

The curatorial arrangement and aesthetic of the exhibition creates an atmosphere of the experimental or provisional, of a work in progress.

2
Flirtatiousness n. flirty adj. Origin C16 [orig. in sense 'give someone a sharp blow'; the elements *-fl* and *-irt* both suggesting sudden movement; cf. Flick, *Oxford Dictionary*, tenth edition, 1999.

3
Adam Phillips, 'On Flirtation: An Introduction' in *On Flirtation*, Faber and Faber, 1995, xvii.

The one wall along which all the works are displayed is clad in a softly textured light-green board which reminds me of school rough work books. This and the handwritten interpretative labels, provoke a sense of working out, jotting down, collecting and collating ideas that may or may not be realised, revised, undone, disregarded, re-written. The language of the provisional also draws from contributing artist Maria Zahle's use of masking tape in her framed collages, which appears to tack the rough cut shapes in place. There is a lack of permanence to the arrangement of the paper, a suggestion that what we're seeing is the process, a stage in the work's development where things have the potential to move. Masking tape reappears to hang both Anna Lucas's and Louisa Martin's photographs in the show. There is no final pinning down or fixing in place. The exhibition remains uncommitted in some sense.

In his introductory essay to his book *On Flirtation* Adam Philips writes:

> *The fact that people tend to flirt only with serious things – madness, disaster, other people – and the fact that flirting is a pleasure, makes it a relationship, a way of doing things worth considering. But our preference for progress narratives can make flirtation acceptable only as a means to a predictable end; flirting is fine, but to be a flirt is not (it is one of the many curious and telling things about flirtation, that despite the impossibility of flirting by yourself, flirts are traditionally considered to be women). Flirts are dangerous because they have a different way of believing in the Real Thing. And by 'believing in' I mean 'behaving as if it exists'. Critics of flirtation tend to assume there is a self which is not by definition elusive.*[4]

4
Ibid., xvii.

Firstly, it is intriguing to note Phillips's acknowledgement of the alignment between femininity and flirtation in this passage. All the exhibiting artists, Jo Addison, Anna Lucas, Louisa Martin, Melanie Stidolph, Alice Walton and Maria Zahle and the show's curator, Leanne Turvey, are all women. I am not suggesting that the flirtatious practice of artists is tied to being female but that the 'curious and telling thing' about the association between flirting and femininity might be concerned with the notion of difference or otherness. Flirts capitalise on a tacit acknowledgement of the multiplicity of identity by mining the slippage between what I want, how I appear and how I act. In flirting with you I am only behaving like we are *lovers*, we are collaboratively creating a reality that does not yet exist, imagining a possibility while behaving as if it is 'the real thing'. The giddy exhilaration of flirting is in our understanding of the fragility of that reality. It is interesting to consider *Album²*'s homage to Prince here; the artist is notoriously playful in the construction of his own gender and sexuality, performing

multiple versions of a self which is always in flux. I want to suggest there might be something about flirtation that is in and of itself 'othering', caught in an ever unfulfilled moment of desire, the act of flirting holds a space of uncertainty around who I am, how I appear and what I want in relation to an 'other'.

Looking at Jo Addison's work in *Album²*, *Two Holes One Two*, instinctively I felt that I was being invited to look through the two round holes positioned at eye level to some scene 'for my eyes only'. My voyeuristic desire to see and in a sense 'own' the artwork was thwarted when I realised that the holes only framed my view of the wall behind. The eye-holes were looking at me. Suddenly I felt my relationship with the object transformed, the object and I were being positioned in relation to each other. The act of looking entered me into a relationship I hadn't bargained on, I was suddenly implicated in the encounter. As the spectator my experience of the work was not one of objective detachment but of a mutually affecting relationship. The 'end point' of the work was not contained within the object, its meaning there for the taking, but lay in the endless possibilities of my own relationship to it.

Art practice might be productively characterised as an evolving flirtatious conversation between artist, object and audience held in the moment of encounter. Flirtation operates in and of the moment, deliciously and continuously stalling a final conclusion. The ambiguity of Anna Lucas's photograph *Light Leak-Baboushka,* captures and creates a moment of suspended promise or despair. We don't know which way things are going to go. There is the language of the fairy story within the frozen narrative of the photograph; caught in the twilight of an urban scene a figure marches towards a small boy venturing down a turn in the road into which our view is obscured. Armed with a broken stick the boy bravely crusades into darkness seemingly oblivious to his pursuer. He appears both courageous and vulnerable in the same instance. The shadows behind the figure of the boy take on a monstrous quality in the half light. The following male is simultaneously sinister and protective, is he coming to the rescue or aggressively pursuing the boy? The sense of an ending is forever deferred, we are held in this continual moment of not knowing in a story created by and through the artificial reality of the camera.

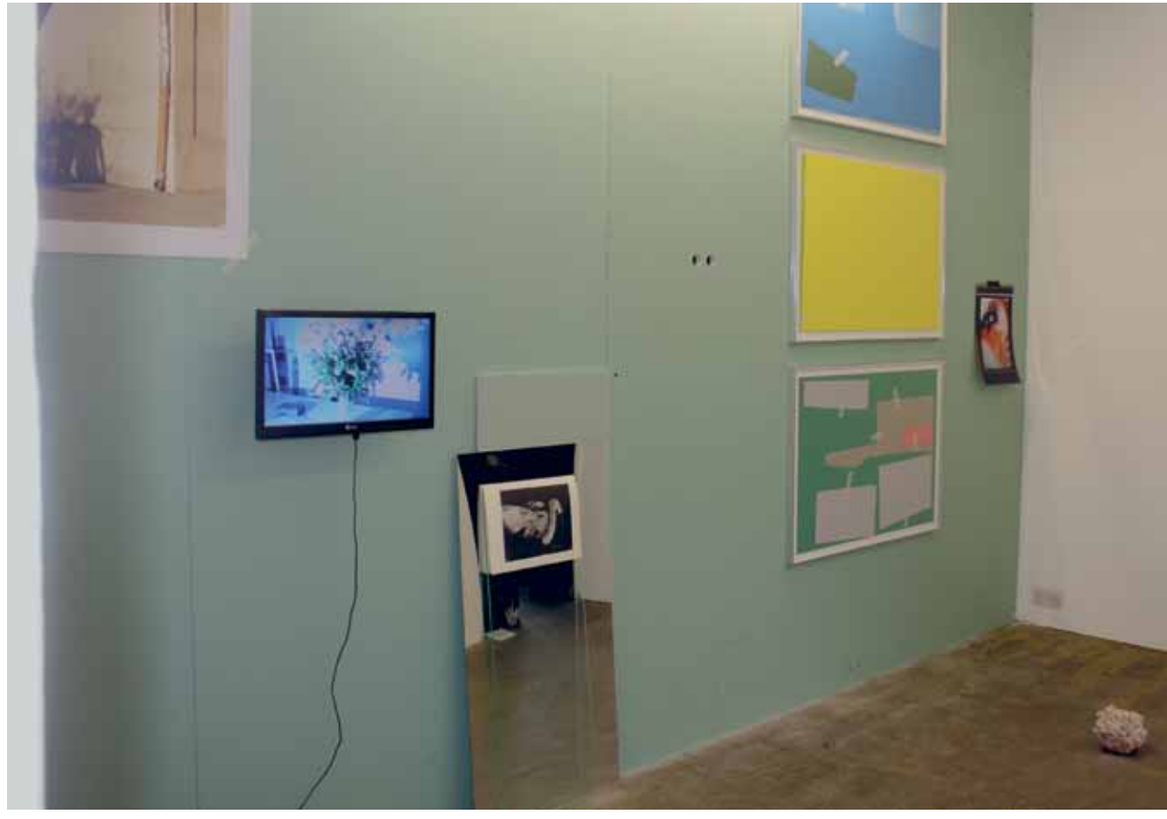
The film and photographic practices of Anna Lucas and Melanie Stidolph explore the camera's ability to hide and reveal, to focus in on our expectations, to tell the narrative of the now, where before and after are forever promised and withheld. Both artists play with the simultaneous engagement and detachment of the camera; is what we're seeing the 'Real Thing'? There is a calculated production of ambiguity

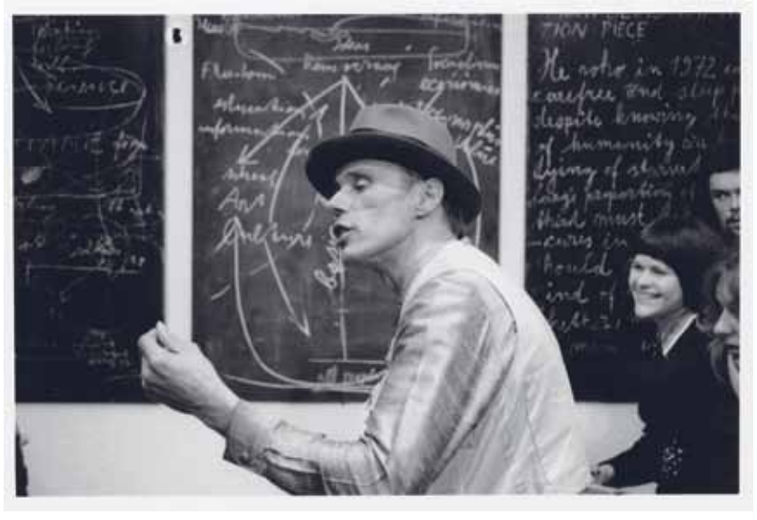
which characterises the flirtatious act. In Stidolph's video, *Estate*, the image is triggered by sound, when the noise reaches a certain volume the camera begins filming to reveal the inside of a domestic flat. We see this scene in snatches accompanied by a crescendo of sound from a hidden outside world where men talk and laugh in the street. For long stretches we are left with a blank screen and the far-off resonance of these male voices. There is a contingent uncertainty to Stidolph's video set in place by the technological trigger. When and why the scene is randomly revealed to us is initially unclear. When it becomes apparent, the performative gesture of the camera's reaction to sound feels instinctive, almost bodily, while also carefully constructed. This blurring of artifice and contingency, intent and chance, and the exploitation of the idea of surprise, feels flirtatious.

Like serial flirts the artists in the show create a sustained and playful uneasiness in relation to representation; compelling us to question what is real. Alice Walton's installation gives us a tantalising glimpse into a world that never fully reveals itself. She layers mirror and glass directly on the floor distorting our view of the surroundings, throwing our thwarted gaze back on to a partial image of ourselves. A found black and white page fold, cropped to focus on the details of hands, echoes our own limited perspective; we can only see our feet in the mirror. There is a sense of the impossibility of ever fully knowing ourselves and our motivations. The beauty of her flirtation with the audience is not as a means to a known end, an opportunity to reveal the 'true' buried meaning, but to cultivate a sense of pleasure in not knowing.

The artists in the *Album²* show point to the elusive nature of the 'Real Thing', the impossibility of capturing any complete, coherent reality that is not constructed through our own contingent and subjective experience. Returning to the curatorial question at the heart of the show – what is the life of an art object? – *Album²* seems to suggest that the life of the artwork is defined by and dependent on its relationship to the viewer. The show foregrounds the role of the audience in creating meaning and values the endless uncertainty around interpretation this provokes. For me what is compelling about the idea of artists' practice as a form of flirtation is that it demonstrates something of what might be productive or important about knowingly staying with uncertainty. Phillips argues that 'flirtation does not make a virtue of instability, but a pleasure. It eroticizes the contingency of our lives by turning doubt – or ambiguity – into suspense'.[5] The value of contemporary artists' practice might be in the way it asks us to bring ourselves, our own ideas and experiences to the moment of engagement, to question what we think we know and want for ourselves and others and to remain alert to, and hopeful for, alternative possibilities.

5
Ibid., xxiii.





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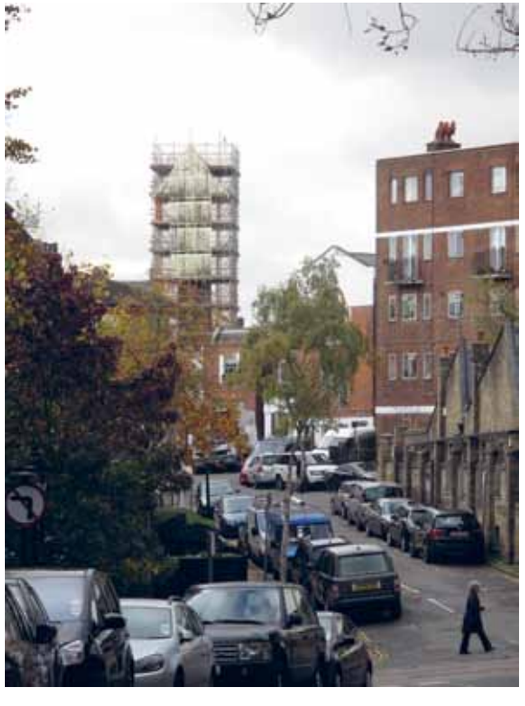

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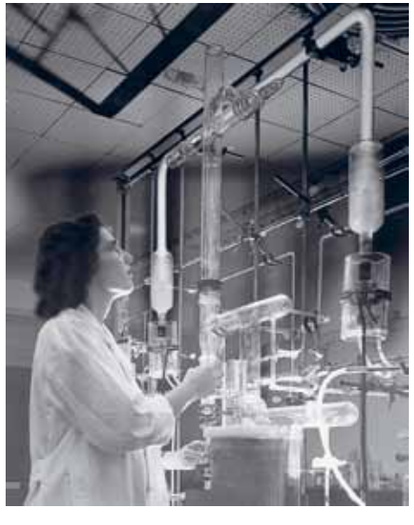


IMAGES SHARED BY THE ARTISTS WORKING ON THE SCHOOLS WORKSHOP PROGRAMME, BASED ON THE INVITATION TO 'BRING IN 1 IMAGE THAT TELLS US SOMETHING ABOUT WHY YOU ARE INTERESTED IN WORKING IN A LEARNING CONTEXT.[48.2]

1 JOSEPH NOONAN-GANLEY

2 LUCY JOYCE

3 EMMA MCGARRY

4 ROSANNA MCLAUGHLIN

5 EVAN IFEKOYA

6 HAROLD DEN BREEJAN

4

5

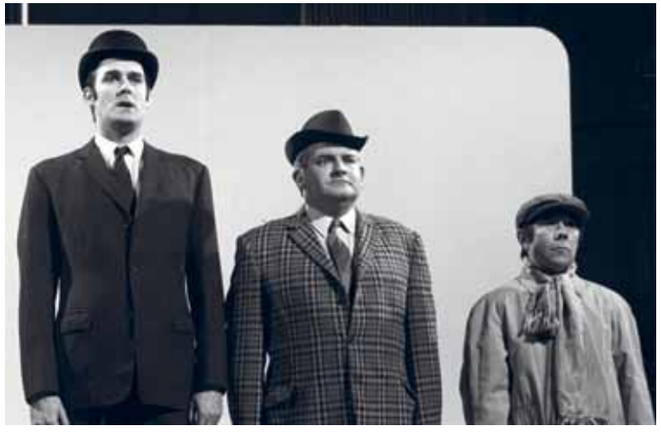
JOB HUNTING

chorus:
Did you know that you're 40% more likely to get that job if you've got a British surname?
Tests have shown, based on fact, I for one am living proof of that.
X2

bridge:
Ifekoya, Adebutu, just a name, what's it to you?
Smith is fine, Johnson too.
Singh and Hussein, that just won't do.

CHORUS

6



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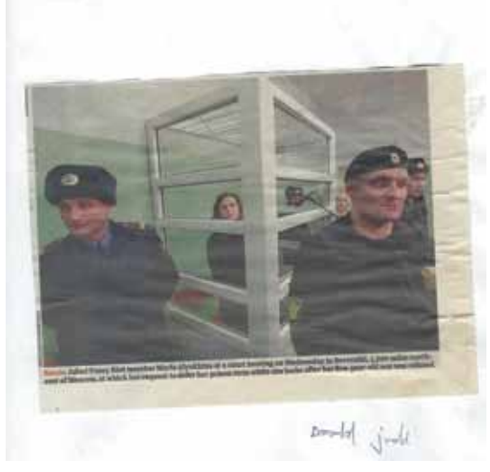

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7 ELAINE RENYOLDS

8 EOGHAN RYAN

9 KATHARINE TOLLADAY

10 KATRIONA BEALES

9

10

“Beside is an interesting preposition because there’s nothing very dualistic about it; a number of elements may lie alongside one another, though not an infinity of them. Beside permits a spatial antagonism about several of the linear logics that enforce dualistic thinking: noncontradiction or the law of the excluded middle, causes versus effect or subject versus object. Its interest does not, however, depend on a fantasy of metonymically egalitarian or even pacific relations, as any child knows who’s shared a bed with siblings. Beside comprises a wide range of desiring, identifying, representing, repelling, paralleling, differentiating, rivaling, leaning, twisting, mimicking, withdrawing, attracting, aggressing, warping, and other relations.”

**THE TOASTS:
A CELEBRATION OF WORKING
IN ARTS EDUCATION.**

Here’s to:

Unexpected outcomes
Not being able to do maths
Using your body
Cooperative learning
Chaos
Failure
Accessibility
Making it up as you go along
Space for letting go of control
Getting to know the students better than other teachers
Working with creative people
Taking a different journey to get to a place of value
Smudges
Enjoying the creative process
Judgement
Freedom
Making stuff
Bravery
Having fun along the way
Creative industries
Cross curricular opportunities
Thinking through making
Interdisciplinary practices
Problem solving
Partnerships
Communication
Inspiration
Fear
Personal expression
Collaboration
Questioning everything
Developing your own practice
Taking risks
Time for reflecting on how we can do better next time
Play

**THE ROASTS:
FRUSTRATIONS AT WORKING
IN ARTS EDUCATION.**

Down with:

Drawing shells
A restrictive curriculum
Irrelevant input from external sources
Archaic attitudes (external)
Fear of taking risks
Restrictions on teachers
Confusion at criteria
Not recognising the context within art practices at schools
Gove
Devaluing art (EBac)
Assessment vocabulary criteria
Utilising art to support the teaching of other subjects
Teaching craft as art
The superficiality of assessment criteria
Crushed coke cans and peppers
Management
Performance related pay
Ego
Selfishness
Conflict
Not being allowed to visit galleries

An action is begun before knowing what it might enable. A conversation is initiated in the absence of intention; attention given to the pauses and durations breathed between the words.

Emma Cocker, *Tactics For Not Knowing: Preparing For the Unexpected*

I particularly like the way the mundane becomes special as soon as you pay attention to it; […] I particularly like the way the shapes of things shift when you look hard at them.

Susan Hiller, *The Provisional Texture of Reality: On Andrei Tarkovsky*

Practitioners who follow the flow are, in effect, itinerants, wayfarers, whose task it is to enter the world's becoming and bend it to an evolving purpose. Theirs is an intuition in action.

Tim Ingold,
Making

Whether we understand an artwork or not, what helps it succeed is the persistence with which it makes us curious.

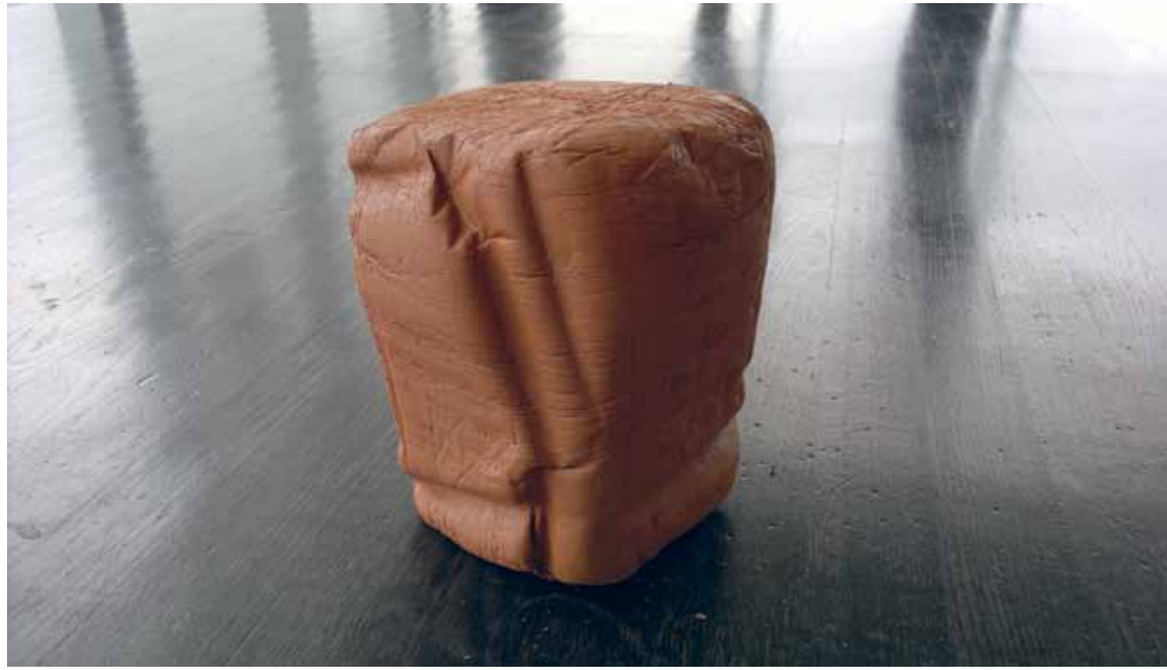
Anthony Huberman,
I (not love) information

It's actually where things get lost through misremembering, or they get drawn badly, and begin to change of their own accord – that's where something starts to happen and I really encourage that.

Unidentified Foreign Objects,
Phyllida Barlow in conversation
with Elizabeth Fisher

Intuition is the ability to acquire knowledge without inference or the use of reason.[1] The word intuition comes from Latin verb *intueri* which is usually translated as to look inside or to *contemplate*.[2] Contemplation means "to admire something and think about it." The word *contemplation* comes from the Latin word *contemplatio*. Its root is also that of the Latin word *templum*, a piece of GROUND consecrated for the taking of auspices, or a building for worship, derived either from Proto-Indo-European base *tem- "to cut", and so a "place reserved or cut out" or from the Proto-Indo-European base *temp- "to stretch", and thus referring to a cleared space in front of an altar.[1] Take care. Curiosity (from Latin *curiosus* "careful, *diligent*, curious," akin to *cura* "care") is a quality related to inquisitive thinking such as exploration, investigation, and learning, evident by observation in human and many animal species.[1][2] The term can also be used to denote the behavior itself being caused by the emotion of curiosity. As this emotion represents a thirst for knowledge, **curiosity** is a major driving force behind scientific research and other disciplines of human study. Learning is the act of acquiring new, or modifying and reinforcing, existing knowledge, behaviors, skills, values, or preferences and may involve synthesizing different types of information. The ability to learn is possessed by humans, animals and some machines. Progress over time tends to follow (the cut) learning curves. Learning is not compulsory; it is contextual. It does not happen all at once, but builds upon and is shaped by what we already know. To that end, learning may be viewed as a process, rather than a collection of factual and procedural knowledge. Learning produces changes in the organism and the changes produced are relatively permanent.[1] Wander.

48.5



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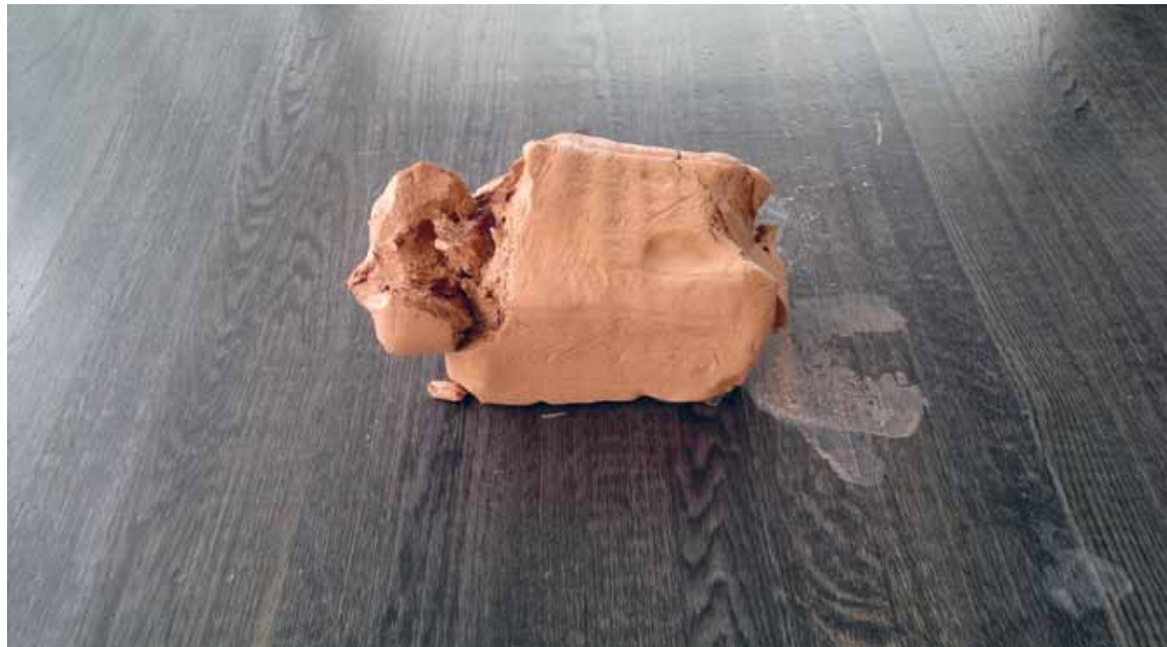


IT'S MELTING, IT'S HAPPENING:

EASTER SCHOOL 2014 FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ARTIST AND TEACHER

CHLOE COOPER AND CHARLOTTE KNOX-WILLIAMS

Following this year's Easter School for teachers at Tate Britain, participating teacher Charlotte Knox-Williams initiated an ongoing conversation with artist *Chloe Cooper*, who had devised and delivered the school. The exchange began when Charlotte shared her personal notes on her experience of the three-day course to which Chloe felt compelled to respond. Their thoughts became a shared document of their learning as they questioned and reflected on each other's account of the school.

In this section of their written dialogue they recount how it felt to both lead and participate in the first activity of the school where the group introduced themselves to each other. Gradually widening the pool of people they were encountering, the participants made connections in pairs, then smaller groups and eventually as a whole group by physically drawing lines of connection between them with wool.

The ensuing conversation between Chloe and Charlotte prompted them to consider ideas of failure in relation to teaching and learning; what

do you do when things don't work, does it matter and how should you respond? Coming from their particular perspectives of artist/workshop-leader and teacher/participant within the school their collaborative, and sometimes contradictory, narrative explores the tensions, differences and overlaps between the roles of teacher and student, performer and spectator.

It was much easier to introduce myself to one other person, with explicit instructions. It was harder to make connections between the rest of the half of the group, and even harder to make sense of how to unite these two halves together at the end. There was much confusion about the thread and its function, and I felt that possibilities for its function were lost through the presence of these unclear guidelines.

It was going well. Each person had made a non-superficial connection (as I saw it from outside) with another person. But this wasn't enough. They then needed to introduce themselves to more people but not to the whole group because that would perhaps be too many people at once. So I asked them to introduce themselves to a few more people according to where they had stuck their sheet on the wall. These people could make up an entity that could introduce themselves to the other but instead of in a circle where they're on show, maybe they could be in a group. This meant that some people were hidden behind each other and they couldn't hear each other. Next time I'd ask them to form a shape where they could all see and hear. This might involve the tallest people at the back and the shortest in the front, like a school photo. In a moment of excitement I asked people to walk along one of the lines of connection but this meant that they were in the wrong place and so the wool couldn't do what I'd planned and it felt like a mistake. I was unsure whether to ask them to walk back to where they started or to ask them to make it mean something as the way I'd tried had failed. Was this self-sabotage? Am I so uncomfortable leading a group of adults that I put in bits that aren't clear or don't work to ask them to take charge?

Can a workshop or lesson be both planned as a sequence of activities and events, and also be a genuinely collaborative enquiry? In what sense is a teacher or workshop leader a performer (and the participants or pupils the audience)? What implications for these formulations are presented by the idea not merely of audience participation but of a complete absence of division between one and the other – *spectators*? How might an institutional 'voice' – disembodied, impersonal, omnipotent – be similar to a 'teacher' or 'leader' voice? How might the institution conceal – individuality, heterogeneity and dissent? – What alternative modes of address emerge through this comparison?

Should you plan something completely new because this is what you feel may be right for this group (knowing that you can only speculate in your mind so far) or should you do something you've done before that might not be as right but will run more smoothly? Do you ask for a group of people to try to find something that may not be there? Does it matter when things don't work? Should you talk about it? Should you move on? Does self-criticality grind a workshop into the ground or liberate the participants? Should you expect empathy from a group of people who normally teach/lead groups when things don't work? How much can you expect people who are normally leaders to empathise with you when they are in the position of followers/learners/audience?

Participants are asked to draw out connections that reach across the whole group. They bend, draw, consult one another. Participants are asked to use black wool to make these same connections. They ask one another what is intended, they discuss and, after a time, link themselves with the thread. Participants are asked to lie flat on a number of blue foam mats that have been roughly joined together in a cluster to make an uneven surface. They comply. The text that they were given to read in advance is projected on the ceiling and they are directed to read it aloud, in unison. They do. *The lights are dimmed and the words are over our heads, floating, illuminated. Our voices chime sometimes in rhythm, slipping over and through one another. Murmuring syllables lapping around one another eddies of breath and sound that surround us, on our raft. Adrift.* Participants are directed to cut the string joining them, and to stand slowly. They are directed to disperse out into the gallery. They are asked to imagine the gallery as water, carrying nutrients and information to them.

ROSE FINN-KELCEY *THE RESTLESS IMAGE – A DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE FELT POSITION AND THE SEEN POSITION.* SELF PORTRAIT, 1975 48.7

[Transcription: A conversation between artist Harold Offeh and curator Adelaide Bannerman that took place in spring 2014]

HAROLD: I was invited by Leanne Turvey and Melanie Stidolph to run Summer School 2013. Leanne had been talking about the Summer School as a kind of forum, the idea that a group of teachers and artist educators would take part. Then thinking about their roles as artists and educators and creating a programme that was partly framed by the collection, and informed by the Meschac Gaba display, *Museum of Contemporary African Art*, but it being a platform for them to engage with other artists' practice.[1] I wanted the group to really think about and define their own practice in relation to their teaching and learning practice, and their art practice, and to explore whether those things intersected. All of these things felt like the questions that I was interested in anyway because I had been thinking about how I could reconcile similar roles and approaches that exist in my work. So having this week to do that felt like a good opportunity.

But also one of the starting points for me was this idea of Tate Learning framed as a kind of learning opportunity for the artists developing learning projects. So I was thinking, 'oh great this is an opportunity for me to learn some stuff!'

The Learning team had said, 'you can invite some people, or some artists and engage with other practices.' That was the really exciting thing – having this shared experience, a platform for shared learning.

You and I have had these conversations over the years and I thought this is a really good opportunity in terms of this amorphous thing, a week in the summer to do stuff. I thought maybe it was a good frame for some kind of conversation between us.

ADELAIDE: Certainly for me it was an interesting opportunity, particularly the learning contexts that we had to think about relating to interactions with artefacts, collections and architecture. The process of working with artists, interpreting their work, thinking about conversations to have, informs the experience and knowledge of a work, especially (re)enactments of performance or time-based works.

1
'Meschac Gaba: Museum of Contemporary African Art': July–22 September 2013. This work reflected on the nature of the museum itself, and consisted of a twelve-room installation – producing 'a museum within a museum'.

We've talked about embodied learning and research and those are performative aspects I choose to represent and foreground as a curator. That's where my thoughts lie, so a personal question was what information could be picked up through the week through other people; through practice or the positions people were coming from.

HAROLD: As the week developed I think for some people involved it was a very clearly defined experience in relation to their role as an educator, and they took away resources that they could then plant into a particular teaching environment. Whereas I think other people were negotiating this idea of art practice. Whether that was defined separately from their role as an educator or whether they were beginning to look at intersections between the two. There were these cross currents of conversations, but I think it seemed to me as the week went on the group was in this constant reflective process where they were engaging with other people's practices, and then looking at how that reflected back on what it is they did, and their understanding of it. For some of them it really started to open out, so maybe I think they had a greater level of understanding than some of them thought they would've had, I don't know; I felt like it gave some people permission to have a position on what it was they were engaging with. I'm interested in the idea of institutional ownership. So a lot of the initial experience was framed by, 'OK we're doing this summer school at Tate and Tate is this mammoth structure.'

ADELAIDE: Beast! (Laughter)

HAROLD: We're in the belly of the beast! I think a lot of the initial activities that Robinson Stirling did at the start of the Summer School around the gallery actually began to break that down.[2]

ADELAIDE: Yes, participants weren't gently eased into that first day which featured different modes of reconnaissance around works, inside the building and its exterior. That was a thread throughout the week, getting around the museum, letting people create their own trails, different levels of ownership of the space, physical and conceptual.

HAROLD: Robinson Stirling created a performance intervention. They asked people to pair up and agree to be blindfolded and then be led through the gallery spaces. It was interesting how members of the general public were responding to the things that were happening in the space. In a way this first session gave permission for the Summer School participants over the week to really – I hope – redefine their relationship with the institution and the idea of engaging with art.

2
Laura Robinson and Dr Liz Stirling run a collaborative arts practice, based in Leeds: http://robinsonstirling.blogspot.co.uk/ They devised and ran the first session of Summer School 2013.

It was also really interesting that Gaba's work was an institution within an institution. It takes on a parasitical model, this weird thing of this 'beast' institution swallowing the parasite, consuming it, but then this parasite is critiquing and feeding from the beast, the wider body of Tate.

ADELAIDE: Exactly. Taking the trip to Eduardo Padilha's home/Balin House Projects[3] it was about looking at the 'the beast' in relation to the community and that conversation was brought back and continued in Gaba's Library, amongst the general public visiting the space who could listen in to that extended exchange with Torange[4], Peter[5] and Eduardo.

HAROLD: [In the conversation] there was an idea of the performativity of education and pedagogy, and the idea of classroom spaces or the Summer School participants' working spaces as being curated spaces, or hosting spaces where they are bringing in people: a particular environment that they create and programme. I think that sort of language opened up a lot of things. There was a critique of what Eduardo was doing: that he has this benevolent hosting space, it is his house, it's a gallery, it's a residency space. Operating in this social context, a council estate, it has a relationship with the neighbours, and an art community but an international community. For some people on the Summer School it was really interesting to see Balin House as a kind of model, in a way that became – not necessarily a classroom – but a space that Eduardo invited people into.

ADELAIDE: What kind of impact do you think the visit might have had in terms of how the Summer School participants used the spaces back at Tate, or how they responded to the ensuing programme? Eduardo's proposal introduced the contexts of sociality and community as grounds for learning. I'm wondering if these contexts influenced the participants' relationships with each other during the week?

HAROLD: I think there were some people that felt uncomfortable, and brought up the C word: class. Balin House was perceived as maybe a middle class artist project, an intervention into a council estate, and a few people in particular were questioning whether it sat quite well, or whether it was a gentrifying force.

ADELAIDE: But what became middle class about it, the fact that Eduardo acquired the agency to buy it, and be able to change it and mould it to his specifications?

HAROLD: Yes I think partly that, but also the idea that it was being imposed in this area within that context.

3
Balin House Projects (BHP) is an artist-run, not-for-profit space, created by artist Eduardo Padilha: http://balinhouseprojects.wordpress.com/ The Summer School visited Balin House on the second day.

4
Torange Khonsari is a London-based architect and was commissioned by BHP to assist with the reconfiguration of Padilha's one bedroom flat/gallery. Khonsari is a member of publicworks – an art and architecture collective working to create public spaces: www.publicworksgroup.net

5
Peter Carl is a member of the Department of Architecture at the University of Cambridge and is the Director of Studies for Gonville and Caius College.

ADELAIDE: But it's his living space as well.

HAROLD: Yes, and I think for me that was what was responded to. You know in London it's often on the surface some locations might appear to be quite segregated, but there are all sorts of people that live in that kind of accommodation. And these sorts of different people, from different classes and different means will engage in that project. But anyway, I think the debate allowed people to join in the conversation, because there was a real discussion generated by their critique of what Eduardo was doing.

ADELAIDE: From a class perspective?

HAROLD: Yes I think that was an underlying thing.

ADELAIDE: But he's not necessarily marking the space out in an obvious way to say, 'look this is an art space', I mean aside from the window modification that could be used to present works from, on the outside you wouldn't see it any differently from somebody's place, their home.

HAROLD: But I guess there was a sense in which the idea of all the art world people coming in, and swilling white wine on the balcony in the context of people's homes. But then, as you said, it is Eduardo's home as well. And I think he has made efforts to embed himself in that community. I think the conversation allowed people some perspective. Then bringing that conversation back into the Gaba exhibition in the form of the round-table discussion allowed people to gestate some ideas, and see Eduardo's project as a particular kind of model.[6]

ADELAIDE: But I guess it reveals perceptions as to where art practice, or gathering to talk or engage with ideas about art, happens. I'm just wondering if this might be a barrier in terms of some of the group's feelings about where art is, where it can be shown, or how to experience it?

HAROLD: There were many people involved in the Summer School that were engaged and absorbed in contemporary practices, strategies and performance. But some people weren't familiar with the territory, and saw a lot of stuff that was presented to them that was quite new. Maybe it was a case for some of those involved of having to position themselves in relation to what was being presented. But for me that was why it was important that they had moments where they were able to articulate things through making, a space that wasn't completely about being forced into one mode of operating.

6
For the round-table discussion held in the Meschac Gaba display in the afternoon of the second day of the Summer School 2013.

One of the things I'm aware of, because it's a bit of a personal crusade, is this thing of demystifying what performance is. I think there are so many prejudices and insecurities that people project onto performance practice, and one of the things that I feel is really important is to open up the landscape. One of the exciting things for me is this notion of performance as this expanded territory that isn't being defined through a particular medium. It is just about thinking about actions and agency in relation to various contexts – so really thinking about forms of making. If you're making stuff there is this notion of performance embedded within that. I felt that was really important to say in the Summer School. I think often there's a barrier to people's understanding.

ADELAIDE: As to when the daily performance begins and ends? The experience changes from day to day or from the moment you start interacting with somebody it changes the conditions that you're working in to some extent. I know that for some people the week was about having 'that space to play'. It made me wonder about what conditions they might be working in, in classrooms and other formal learning spaces? How defined is everything being imparted to pupils/students? It sounded like, for some people, there didn't seem to be much room for expansion or interpretation. Some responded that they'd like to try out activities that would draw the students more into an exchange that allowed more room for context and personal experience in relation to their activity, to talk about the works they were making, rather than just having this point of exchange that was just about getting from one activity to the next.

HAROLD: Yes, I think for some people it was a real concern maybe in terms of their daily activity or practice. I mean they were coming from different places, some people were teaching at primary level and some at secondary level, some at state schools some at private schools. But certainly the idea of play, you're right, of play and reflection, a sort of structured unstructured space that allows for some open-endedness – that felt like it might be a luxury. I guess I've got an experience of this from teaching on a BA Fine Art course at Leeds Met University.[7] I work with young people that have been through a particular system that feels quite narrow and channelled, and about these very small points of assessment and targets and benchmarking. There is a real process of unlearning that they go through when they come to university, as lots of them have this baggage of operating in a certain way that's quite didactic, in terms of, 'OK, I've got to learn this, I've got to get through this to get that and that.' There's no sense in which there's an overarching picture, so the biggest challenge that I encounter is that

7
http://courses.leedsmet.ac.uk/fineart Harold Offeh is Senior Associate Lecturer of Fine Art at Leeds Metropolitan University.

they're entering into a process that is quite open after being in a really narrow and channelled one. They now have to float in this ocean.

ADELAIDE: So they're floundering.

HAROLD: They say, 'what do I do? Tell me what to do. Is it good?' and I say 'well you're going to have to negotiate that for yourself'.

ADELAIDE: Yes it's a form of self-assessment, and it's not always about somebody else's opinion.

HAROLD: It's like teaching self-learning. I'm teaching them to learn for themselves, which is actually really hard; some of them really struggle. Some of them get upset because it feels like you're not giving. You have to explain that this is just a different way of learning. You're actually learning but at this level, in a sense, you're learning to learn for yourself, and you're having to establish what it is you want to learn, and ultimately it is going to be empowering. So I think – and maybe this is going off on a tangent – that there is a connection between these constrained learning environments and how they may affect people's experience of art anyway. Often there's this sense in which people compartmentalise things, so their experience of a work is either 'I get it' or 'I don't get it'. So the art work is something which is imbued with this knowledge and your job is to open it up and extract that knowledge and either you fail or succeed. Rather than it's just this thing which operates and your experience of it will allow you to engage with it on different levels. On a formal aesthetic level, or if there is a particular experience that has been had or a trigger for a particular memory or…

ADELAIDE: …you find the work suddenly becomes applicable to completely different thoughts that you might have?

HAROLD: Yes and to use structuralist models of open and closed texts, this is one of the ideas that I'm really interested in. The Summer School participants were constantly experiencing things, like going into Gaba's work but not having a formal lecture, going around and looking at wall text. But actually they were experiencing it directly. So already they have a kind of 'in' through that experience of it, and their understanding is through a shared conversation. It isn't filtered through who is Gaba? What is his biography? What did he mean?

ADELAIDE: It wasn't a didactic process. I think people freed up towards the end of the week. I could see that in the way

in which they started to respond to the materials that were open for them to use, and suddenly sparking off certain ideas they might want to explore. Aside from what I saw on site during that week, I haven't really seen any more of their responses, what are you aware of?

HAROLD: Not really beyond the final sessions and maybe a few things that were posted through the evaluation process. It might be good to speak to the group now in terms of reflecting back on the Summer School six months afterwards. It would be good to see how the conversations filtered back, whether things have been taken up and been incorporated into new approaches. But towards the end of the Summer School week there were these extraordinary moments that opened up a space, such as some of the things that Sonia Boyce[8] generated and her notion of sharing her practice, and with Larry Achiampong's[9] session, where I think people were talking about their experiences through music. Some really extraordinary moments. People talking about very emotional things like bereavement. It opened up a deep emotional space. I was really surprised at that and I wonder whether it was down to an accumulation of time spent together. What struck me was that for some people this week opened up deep layers, and they were able to share that. I was blown away at how the week resonated with them. It is interesting the question of how people have taken these things on, or that awful word 'legacy' – I'm so tired of that word! – over a period of time, how they've made sense of everything; and echoes of things.

ADELAIDE: You work as an educator as well, what did you take away from that week? There was this question of asking participants to reflect upon their thoughts at the beginning and how they may have changed across the week. In terms of your own experience would you be able to answer that if that was a question put to you?

HAROLD: Yes, I guess at the beginning of the week I was very conscious of the role of hosting and thinking of the responsibility of that position, and really thinking about what my role might be in terms of managing or facilitating people's experience of it. So I was just really aware of the different roles that I might have to inhabit to allow other people to engage in the stuff.

ADELAIDE: I was interested at the beginning in how as host you could experience different levels of immersal in the programme; step back at moments in order to be able to structure the experience as a host, looking after people, but also thinking about your own learning requirements. That's quite challenging to manage I think.

8
Sonia Boyce is Professor of Fine Art at Middlesex University London, and is a painter and multi-media artist, with a particular interest in art as a social practice.
9
Larry Achiampong in conversation with *Awesome Tapes From Africa* founder Brian Shimkovitz who created Shimkovitz – as part of Tate Summer School, 2 August 2013.

HAROLD: Yes it is, but I think it worked because we devolved that responsibility a little bit in terms of the day sessions, although there was still an overarching hosting of it. With Eduardo's day he invited other people, so it devolved that responsibility again a little bit and it allowed me to come back into it and experience it because it was like, 'OK we're now going into Eduardo's space.' So I think that structure allowed me to go in and out. I got more comfortable with that. At the beginning of the week I was more conscious of it, but as the week went on and it seemed that people were OK and there hadn't been this mass exodus. It's that anxiety of hosting something isn't it, like if you're cooking something are people going to like the food? But people seemed to be responding to stuff and I was able to relax a bit more, enjoy it and be in it more. Towards the end of the week through Sonia's session, because she was so on it and particularly with Larry's session, when everyone was emotionally sharing, it was like 'woah' this was taking on its own life force in terms of where it was going. And then some more spontaneous things with the William Pope.L crawl and how that came out, again a moment. Your word 'moment' is really important: things that emerge.[10]

ADELAIDE: Tell me about that because I would've liked to have been present for that. We covered Adrian Piper's *Funk Lessons*, Pope.L's crawls, Erwin Wurm's *One Minute Sculptures*, discussing and experiencing those pieces, what those moments were about. We didn't do any dancing!

HAROLD: We didn't!

ADELAIDE: *Funk Lessons* was brought up as an example of wanting to delve into somebody's work first hand, and then leading to William Pope.L and wondering how that crawl actually feels, because those works are not difficult to relate to or require a special set up in any kind of way; anybody can recreate those works at any given moment. When we initially proposed it people weren't so sure about the crawl at first, but you did it that same afternoon or the next day?

HAROLD: I think it was the next day.

ADELAIDE: So it had some time as a proposal to filter through?

HAROLD: Yes, but I mean we'd talked about it and showed it and people were a little bit like, 'er what is this?' But when it came to the moment and we had all the boiler suits I think there was a thrill. Partly it was the transgression of it, like it was a collective thing that we'd all be doing it. And it felt a bit naughty, like the idea of crawling around at the Tate. I saw a few people's expressions and they were like, 'um is this going to work?' but they were OK.

10
William Pope.L is a performance artist who's piece *The Great White Way: 22 miles, 5 years, 1 street (2002–ongoing)*, involved him crawling 22 miles of sidewalk in Manhattan, USA. The performance took nine years to complete. The Summer School participants recreated William Pope.L's crawl on the last day of the school.

ADELAIDE: Returning to experience infantile behavior.

HAROLD: Yes, and we talked about that, that idea of the baby crawl and the dynamics of that a little bit and people went with it. But it was very much a kind of 'moment'. The experience of it was really great because it opened up people to the dynamics of it, because to do Pope.L's crawl is bloody hard, just the action and motion he uses.

ADELAIDE: You must have been hurting afterwards!

HAROLD: Yes!

ADELAIDE: It's quite a powerful and informative moment, to actually physically inhabit someone else's piece of work, and movements, and adapt them in some way. I think it changes you in some respect.

HAROLD: My technique was more upper body so I was just dragging and using my arms where I should have used my legs a bit more. But again it's that learning thing of really thinking about that movement and the whole thing of your perspective and the position that you see things. The dynamics of him doing that on Broadway, in Manhattan, and what he must have seen; the idea of the territory, exploring the territory and geography.

ADELAIDE: Exposure as well, it's creating a trail of the environment from a certain perspective. That exposure makes him visible as his response to the homeless inhabiting the streets and being ignored, and how their invisibility becomes apparent in the everyday scheme of things.

HAROLD: Yes, and I think it was good just sharing that experience. That idea of the experiential embodied learning, beyond the parameters of the piece, thinking about the wider cultural social context of that. People really got that. It was good that they had seen him talking about that work [on YouTube] and he really talks about it in a great way. I think the way he articulates it is really good and it opens up the work.

ADELAIDE: Exactly, because he's done the work as a solo performer and as a collaborative work with others, so I was quite interested in those different conditions. What does it mean to do that piece as a collective body, making that kind of statement? I wish I had been there! I'll have to do my own crawl! (Laughter). This is another aspect of learning, you have these intentions and then you have to negotiate how you fulfil them. There's intuition also, and I guess why I felt comfortable with how we outlined the week is because I'm not

the kind of person who can learn by rote and move confidently from one stage to the next. I think my own individual way of learning is associative and a protracted process in connecting dots together. Thinking about my curatorial intentions, I'd find it difficult not to set up a context where I'm actually speaking with practitioners on a longer-term basis to feel like we're doing something together. The discussion is central to those relationships and in fact it's not always about an outcome, it's about developing a rapport with the person or representative of the work through related activity.

HAROLD: It's interesting you talk about curating in that way, because often that interpersonal connection, the conversation, is often the thing that is the least materially manifest within curatorial practice. So often there is clear academic discourse that is foregrounded, and an outcome in terms of the exhibition, the event or the publication. But actually that negotiation, the conversations of conversation, the emails, the lunches, the coffee chats – that is never really that manifest. But for me anyway it is often where things are incubated or developed.

ADELAIDE: Exactly, and I don't think enough room is made for that information unless it's condensed into an adjunct programme. I think with performance-based work there's more potential, more flexibility as a curator to allow that research-based activity/process to come to the fore to outlay the different contexts behind a work. I don't get this 'presenting the object', I find that very difficult that kind of curatorial practice. I'm not personally interested in that mode of working.

HAROLD: I think in the conversations that we've had, it's a kind of very open-ended process and there's a sense in which there's a genuine dialogue, and often curatorially there's a very clear agenda in that we're making an outcome like, 'I have an understanding of your work so we are trying to…' Often I've had these experiences where the curator is often like a gatekeeper and they're like, 'your work is part of this narrative or this discourse, and I'm taking this and putting it into this', and it's all framed by that, as opposed to maybe two people coming at something, and trying to negotiate something.

ADELAIDE: Yes because sometimes those works are written into narratives to prove or qualify a certain line of research. Curating is commonly perceived to be a cerebral, academic pursuit, but it could also be an embodied meandering interpretation, or series of interpretations that don't always clarify themselves in one moment.

“Blackness is just a level
to talk about otherness,
to talk about difference,
to talk about what makes
us different, but also the
way difference can sometimes
bring you together.”

SONS OF BIT-CHES

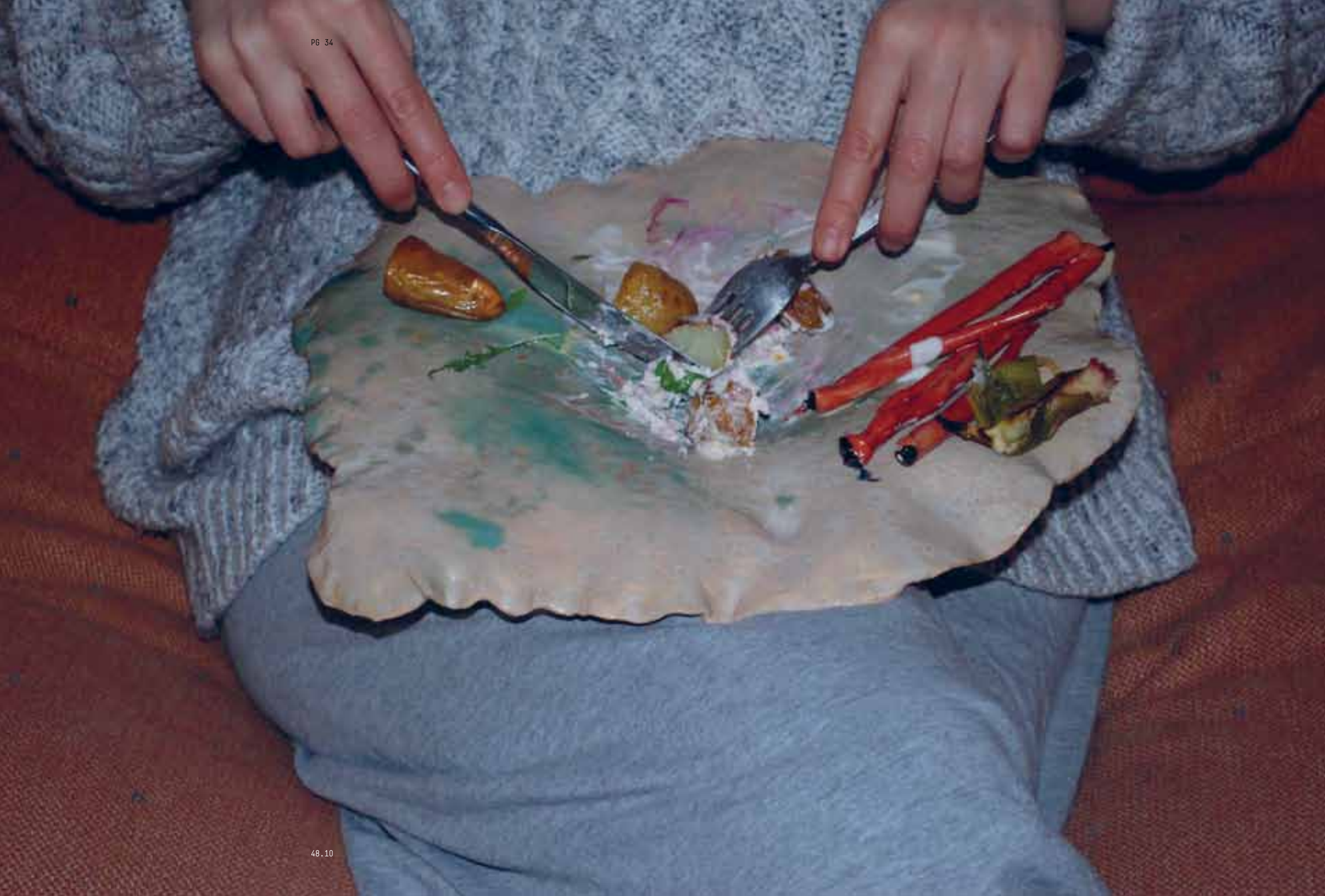
ROSANNA MCLAUGHLIN

Melissa and I moved in to our flat in Balfron Tower, a Brutalist high-rise estate in Tower Hamlets, in the winter of 2011. We knew from the beginning that we were going to use the flat as both a home and a gallery, and over the space of a year and a half we held nine exhibitions, inviting artists to negotiate and re-imagine its interior.

The photograph accompanying this text was taken for the show Real Texture, an exhibition by Jackson Sprague and Jesse Wine, which we staged in early 2013. For the show, Jesse and Jackson produced a series of objects in ceramic and plaster for us to live with. These works were delivered to the flat in batches a month or so prior to the exhibition opening to visitors, with no instructions for what to do with them other than to integrate them somehow in to our domestic life. Certain works seemed to resist being utilised, as if it would be an affront to their dignity, and were left to behave like stand alone sculptures. Others were more pliant, and for the duration of their stay became umbrella stands, bed side tables, laundry baskets or crockery. I took this particular photograph one evening, while Melissa was eating her dinner from one of Jesse's plates.

In many ways, this image sums up the proximity in which we lived with artworks during the shows. For a few months we became a part of each other's lives, and became intimately acquainted with each other's characters. We shared the personal and the banal: we saw each other first thing in the morning and last thing at night, when we were dressing and undressing, when the rubbish was being taken out, while frozen pizzas were cooked at midnight. When the shows were over, and the works moved on to different galleries and different homes, I felt we parted with the tacit understanding that we had somehow left our mark upon each other. In addition to the odd chipped plate here and there, I like to think that a memory of time spent in the flat remains with the works like a barely perceptible patina, formed in the reaction when our two worlds – the world of the work and our corporeal, domestic world – made contact. And for us human inhabitants, we have been marked by the rare and unusual pleasure of knowing what it feels like to inhabit, if only for a little while, the private life of an artwork.

As part of the workshops I have been running for Tate Modern's Art School programme, I have been showing primary school groups images of the various exhibitions we staged at the flat. The photograph of Melissa eating from Jesse's plate is usually met with audible groans of disbelief. One group of five year olds descended into mass hysteria when I showed them an image of our living room, stripped bare of furniture for an early show (between giggles: 'Where do you sit?' 'Where's your TV?'), and halfway through another workshop, an eight-year-old girl turned around to me and said 'not being rude, yeah, but now I actually know where you live'. The implication, that I had rather carelessly left myself open to the whims of her criminal character, was funny, and also telling. For the little girl in the high-viz tabard and pop socks, sat cross legged in front of me, was surely not going to hunt me down and rob me. I think that one thing these responses articulate, what they share in common, is surprise; surprise at seeing something so familiar, the home and its contents, re-imagined in a different role. Moments of seeing something new or differently, of realising there is more to understand, are crucial in my own work;



they are what drives me to continue learning and producing. These moments of surprise, where either the visiting group or I become aware of a different view, are valuable, for they come with the possibility of extended horizons.

The artworks in the Tate's collection have rarely been produced with kids in mind, not to mention the particular conditions of being a Tate exhibit, and this is something I have thought about a lot during my time on the workshop programme. Every morning at ten o'clock, thousands of visitors flood through Tate Modern's doors with camera phones, sketch books and audio guides at the ready, while the long-term residents of the collection – the big-hitting artworks of the C20th – hold fast in the various galleries. Some appear more comfortable than others with bearing the force of this tide. The long-suffering Giacometti sculpture Man Pointing – a wan figure with a hand outstretched towards some unattainable salvation – seems positively at home awash in the trials and tribulations of life in the world's busiest art gallery. Others, I imagine, are less well-disposed to the conditions. How must Rothko's Seagram murals – those vast, sombre meditations, those dwellers in darkened rooms – feel as they are snapped at by myriad cameras? I imagine these works as a kind of morbid, dystopian Queen's Guard, standing stoically on duty as they are prodded at and photographed by noisy tourists, as groups of school children flood in, while all the while a perfect storm of ire whips frenetically beneath their surface.

How can one find a way of making the collection relevant to a young audience, without dismissing the nature of the works themselves? For even without figurative depictions of nudity (heavens above!) or violence, artworks can be uncomfortable, dark, difficult things, of which Rothko's Seagram murals are a prime example. The paintings, of which there are forty (seven of these are on show at Tate Modern), were commissioned by Joseph Seagram in 1958 for the opening of *The Four Seasons* restaurant in New York. During their production Rothko was positively bilious, famously saying 'I hope to paint something that will ruin the appetite of every son of a bitch who ever eats in that room', and make the diners 'feel as if they are trapped in a room where all the doors and windows are bricked up, so that all they can do is head butt their heads forever against the wall.'[1] The paintings, shall we say, had both a difficult birth and a troubled upbringing – perhaps unsurprisingly, they never ended up on the restaurant walls – and over fifty years on, their demons are still palpable.

The quandary of how to make such adult works relevant to a young audience is, I think, more often than not something of a red herring. Artworks have complex personalities: they relate differently according to circumstance and company. Everybody brings their own perspective, their own lens formed by personal experience, through which they bring an artwork into focus. While some people, myself included, feel the claustrophobic effects of the Seagram murals, other visitors happily meditate amongst them. These multitudinous perspectives give artworks depth of character: they are what bring them to life. I think it's less a question of which work is appropriate for whom, and more a question of responding to the personality of a work, and discovering how you get on with it: acknowledging its presence, being aware of its character and desires, while at the same time acknowledging your own presence and feelings.

1
James E. B. Breslin, *Mark Rothko: A Biography*, University of Chicago Press, 1998

My art teacher at secondary school was a tall, goateed bear of a man. He was a formidable force when he wanted to be, but mostly I remember him for his generosity. He told me a story once (to which memory may have added glitter) about a trip he had taken across America, in a soft-top car, with a group of drag queens dressed as nuns. He had a tape player in his classroom which we could use during lunch and after school, and a cupboard filled with his own collection of exhibition catalogues and monographs, which he would let us read and sometimes take home. I always enjoyed art at school, but I hated working on sketch books; my ideas rarely developed according to the delicate hand and logical chronology befitting an A-grade student. It was never really the work that I produced that captured my imagination, but rather the snippets of adventure, in books, stories and conversations. For it was these moments that led to an understanding that artworks are the result of lives lived; an understanding that art is not only about the production of artworks, but about creating the right conditions in which one is able to be productive.

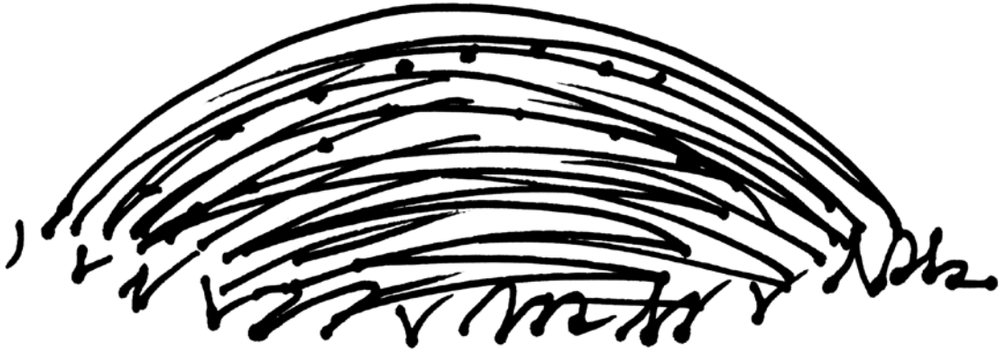
It's easy to overlook in a gallery like Tate that art is not only about artworks, but about lives too. It's about conversations, encounters, ways of seeing and being in the world. We all live with artworks one way or another, whether it's a poster on a bedroom wall, a calendar in the kitchen, or a child's painting stuck on the door of a fridge. The difference with the shows we staged in our flat is that we changed the focus, bringing what is usually in the background into the foreground. In a sense, this is one of the great freedoms that art affords its practitioners: an opportunity to live a life in which you get to choose what is significant, an opportunity to construct your own lens.

Do the Seagram murals have a softer side, or will they always be moody sons of bitches? Personally, I'm not convinced that they've reformed. But it's as much about the child standing in front of the paintings as it is about the paintings themselves. Between them, they can figure it out.

STICKINESS

Every Saturday morning when my brother and I were growing up, we'd go to the newsagents to each buy a shiny pack of stickers for our collections. For me it was Top of the Pops and for him it was the Premier League. He was more dedicated than me and would always stick them in the matching album, whilst I often found places like my desk, my door, my bunk bed, my books, my clothes and occasionally my body to house them. Their stickiness marked my habitat, leaving grey smudges where they had fallen off, slowly peeled away or been replaced; only a few ever remained clinging to where they had been originally stuck.

[Ideas are sticky]



In the context of your practice how do you look at something in order to find something out?

ANNA LUCAS

I would have liked to have offered a more raw and direct visual response, rather than text, as it is precisely the visual means of observing in order to find something that I find so compelling.

In answer to the question, unless I am trying to fix a washing machine (which I've never had to do in the context of my practice) I will use a camera.

Ideally this camera will shoot moving image, and it's better if I'm also recording sound.

There is a certain amount of learning that happens just through the viewfinder, in the act of looking itself. So taking still photographs can work too. I was taught to look at each corner of the frame when taking a photo, and it's true it forces you to notice the edges more carefully, and doing that heightens my awareness. What's in the frame, what's not? So what or where should I move to see better, more, or less? A slight shift can change the context of an image so significantly, creating a new context and potential set of understandings.

With analogue photography, the act of looking through the viewfinder also requires not being able to see the rest of the space. One eye pressed tight to the camera, the other closed, so the world I see is only the framed one. In this

way I can detach from my surroundings and concentrate only on what is in front of me.

The glass of the lens or viewfinder with its own grain, scratches and colour tint add an additional detachment from the surroundings which help narrow the focus on the specific thing I am looking at. With 16mm film, if the eye is not pressed fully against the viewfinder, the film will fog. So although this would not affect my looking (and experiencing) in the moment, it would stop me having the opportunity to re-look at the thing I have filmed in the future. And the re-looking, through editing, is also a very important part of finding something out.

Digital viewfinders work too, of course, but because I can see them in the context of the space I am photographing, my looking is very different: more scattered and distracted, more casual, less scrutinizing, and with more awareness of my own physical presence in the space. I am less invisible and more approachable to others when I'm not so physically attached to the camera.

If I am using a 16mm film camera the purr or hum of the mechanism itself and the knowledge of its 25 single frames being pulled through the camera per second creates a kind of pressure and rhythm that heightens the looking, and simultaneous questioning, in the moment. So for each frame pulled through I feel as though I'm asking another question – what is happening here, how do I feel, who is this for, what will they see, what can I see, what does that mean? These questions result in responses; to move the camera, to come closer, wider, higher, lower, to look from another position. These responses in turn pose further questions; what are the politics of filming this? Is it ethically or morally acceptable to film this? What is a respectful distance? Am I disrupting what is happening? Is it an acceptable intervention? Is it too beautiful, too boring? What is missing? What is going to happen next? What do I want to see, and what do I want to show someone else? What else do I need? Where next? When shall I stop looking through the camera and look 'with my own eyes'? Filming with the idea of constructing something, and with a sense of other people's point of view, also heightens what I am looking at for myself.

If I am also recording sound, the pace of viewing changes. Listening along with looking, I watch for longer, and of course there is a lot of information within the sounds. I think that even if I am not recording, and looking at a still image, my looking comes also with listening. They co-exist and mutually inform.

It is this simultaneous detachment and heightened awareness that comes from using the camera that is what makes it such a useful tool for looking in a more enquiring way. There are moments, without the camera in which this also happens, but they are usually more serendipitous, and relate to the light changing or finding myself in a scenario that feels cinematic.

'My mental model adjusts to accommodate my perceptions, leading me to change my photographic decisions. This modeling adjustment alters in turn, my perceptions, and so on. It is a dynamic, self-modifying process. Its a complex, ongoing, spontaneous, interaction of understanding, imagination and intention.'[1] 48.12

1
Stephen Shore,
The Nature of Photographs: A Primer, Phaidon Press, 2007.

an ~~Artwork~~ artwork

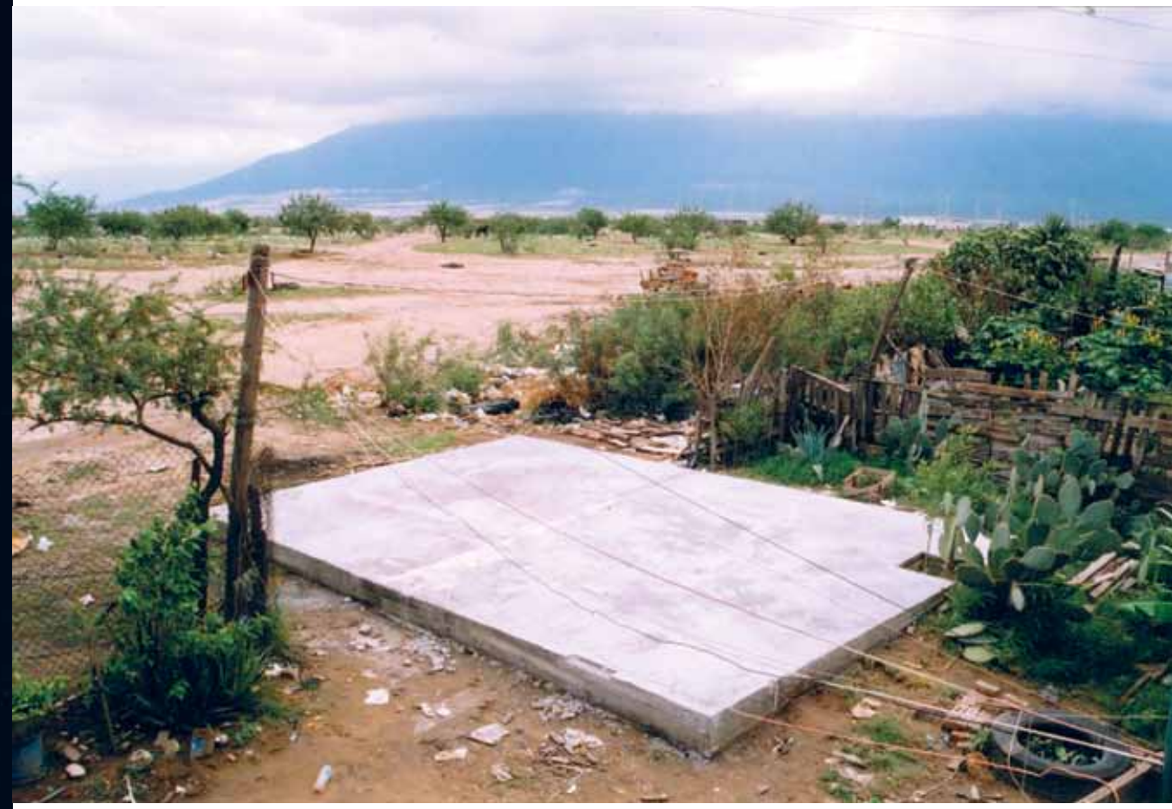
a description of his multiple provenances should make his outline less definite. The question 'what is Oscar' should be made impossible to answer without describing everything he is, has come from and could be in the future.

oscar is
outcast
untouchable
regected
a rogue - dihonest, untrustworthy, likeable and attractive

This work exists in a broader project around the figure of Oscar the grouch. If Oscar is taken seriously as an outsider, antagonist, cynic or punk) then any re-presentation of his figure must be as contradictory, matted and fuzzy as he is. Through this over-identification with his claims, I produce him differently.

-described through a constellation of wrong versions.
-described through a motley of wrong versions
-a 'rat king' of metonyms, connected through knotted tails. (other names or other uses for names, verbs used as nouns etc.)
-pied
-a motley crew of out of tune voices (the figure of a motley crew in fiction is a ragtag, unorganised group of misfits. They overcome adversity through a combination of specific abilities and a fluidity of thought and action afforded by their anarchic structure. They are usually outgunned and outnumbered by a much more organised, uniform and militant adversary. eg. mighty ducks, the sandlot, karate kid, rebel alliance(humans, ewoks, wokies, gungans) vs. stormtroopers in star wars.) a motley was the name for the origion dress of the court jester.

'During the reign of Elizabeth I, motley served the important purpose of keeping the fool outside the social hierarchy and therefore not subject to class distinction. Since the fool was outside the dress laws (sumptuary law), the fool was able to speak more freely.' wikipedia



"For me, what makes Sandback's work so moving is not that he did so much with so little, but that he did so little… By removing himself to the extent that he does, he makes a place for me. It is a place of affective possibility created by work that doesn't ask me to feel, and so, I think, allows me to feel, and to be alone, in the presence of this art that's so quiet and still, and makes too little in the way of demands."

I WANTED THE BEST FOR YOU

MELANIE STIDOLPH

I wanted the best for you. We arranged it so that you knew we were there for you. We trusted you, right from the off. Do you need anything? Are you ok? Who was that? How were they? I'll hold this, I'll wait until you're back, no, it's ok, I've got it. You go. Do you need a hand with that? Ok, I'll ask, I think we can fix it. No, go ahead, I'll sort it out. How was it? I heard there were some problems? What did you do today? What did you learn? What did you offer them? Oh, God, I know, I couldn't believe it when that happened, sorry, we'll get on to that, we'll chat with them.

Where's that? No, that's great, I'll come. Where does it come from, is it part of a bigger idea? Who are you showing with? Wow, that is amazing! Yeah, I could see, but I didn't know why. No, I get it now, the inside and the out, the coffee cup and the toaster in the café. Did you draw this? Did they let you go there? Was that ok? The kids seemed to love it. How did you remember all their names? They really talked with you. So how is it working? We want you to feel trusted, do you? How does it feel there – who are you being when you're there? How are you being when you're there? Can you fake it?

I just can't do it right now, I'm really busy, I do get it, and we want to support you it's just today is so busy and I don't have time to think it through. I don't want to be in the position of only allowing, of being the one who can say yes or no, I want to understand, and I don't have time to do that with you. I'm sorry.

I'm not sure. Just don't tell me you've done it. I guess there will always be a push against, that's natural we don't always want to be the ones granting permission – I'm hoping that there is something different in allowing. Yes, I know,

it becomes a position, it's perceived as that – you want to know the edges of it – but we don't want you to be able to feel the edges, just the space in the middle. And maybe those edges change because of how we work together, but that's for us. But I can see how you'd want to question, to push, to reveal. We hope we offer an open space, but it is always constricted, and expands to allow the transgressions, so they no longer become transgressions. It is always us that sets the allowing, but I want it to be them – that the allowing is from a relationship with themselves, not the museum.

What is it possible to allow in this controlled space, in this highly populated, busy and commanding space? How do we make a space for us and what would we fill it with? It's the cracks that matter, the spaces that the structure allows, because then it's just the art and us and we're really talking. I feel alone in the galleries, but not in the building. I feel the freedom then and the support after.

Hi, I work with the artists. You had some questions? We might not use the same structure, this can be a different space for the kids, a different kind of allowing, we need your help, you know them, but you can trust us. Hi, what are you doing? What is this? I'm sorry I'm in the way! Have you been here before? Are you ok? What's your favourite thing? You don't like art? What do you like? Football. Great, you know we had a football match in the Turbine Hall the other day. Yeah, we used jumpers for goal posts and everyone ran around. No, we can't do that, no, its not allowed, because everyone gets worried, because the work costs a lot of money and can be easily damaged, no, that's ok, leave it now, what are you doing? What are they doing? Let's listen to the artist.

END MATTERS

48.1
Album^2, Five Years, 2013,
www.fiveyears.org.uk
Image © Melanie Stidolph.

48.2
Joseph Noonan-Ganley
Joseph Beuys, Joseph Beuys's Action Piece, 26 February 1972: presented as part of seven exhibitions held at Tate Gallery 24 February–23 March 1972. © Tate, London 2014. © DACS 2014.

Lucy Joyce
Lucy Joyce, *Always Look Up*, 2011, site-specific installation on scaffold tower in situ for three days, London. © Lucy Joyce.

Emma McGarry
Atomic Laboratory Experiment on Atomic Materials. Courtesy of Paul Riedel / NASA.

Rosanna Mclaughlin
Melissa Eating Off Jesse's Plate, 2013, originally printed as part of a publication produced for the exhibition Real Texture, by Melissa Hobbs, Rosanna Mclaughlin, Jackson Sprague and Jesse Wine, Hobbs Mclaughlin 2013, image courtesy Melissa Hobbs and Rosanna Mclaughlin.

Evan Ifekoya.
Evan Ifekoya *Job Hunting*, 2012, song lyrics excerpt, © Evan Ifekoya.

Harold den Breejan
Frost on Sunday', TV, *The Class Sketch,* with John Cleese, Ronnie Barker and Ronnie Corbett. © ITV / Rex Features.

Elaine Reynolds
Mike Lilly, *Stripers Gone Wild*, 2011, photograph. © Lilly Photography.

Eoghan Ryan
newspaper clipping_06/01/1 (ongoing series). Courtesy of the artist. © SERGEI KARPUKHIN/ Reuters/Corbis.

Katherine Tolladay
Loops; Katharine Tolladay, Fiona Chambers and Michael Grime, image courtesy of Pippa Gatty.

Katriona Beales
Katriona Beales, *me@me*, 2013, video still 2 min. 43. © Katriona Beales.

The schools workshop invites students to learn with and from art through being in conversation with each other, artists and artworks within the particular context of the public art gallery.

48.3
Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, Durham and London 2003, Duke University Press.

48.4
Common Projects are a group of 18 teachers from primary, secondary and SEN schools who are working with the Tate Schools and Teachers team to develop a collaborative community of shared practice and an ongoing dialogue around art and education. In their first session together they proposed toasts to what they valued and found frustrating about working in art education.

48.5
Edited excerpts from Wikipedia.

48.6
Images are stills taken of a joint intervention by artists Anna Lucas and Jo Addison into the final session of the In Site of Learning (ISOL) research week, 2013. The lumps of clay were a provocation and invitation and came out of a desire to maintain a particular set of mobile positions as artists within the research project. ISOL is an ongoing research project into teacher learning at Tate, involving the Schools and Teachers team, artists, teachers and Professor Pat Thomson from Nottingham University. Image © Anna Lucas, 2013.

48.7
Rose Finn-Kelcey, *The Restless Image – A Discrepancy Between the Felt Position and the Seen Position*, self-portrait, 1975. © Rose Finn-Kelcey, courtesy of the artist.

48.8
Documentation of Crawl Performance, Summer School 2013. Image © Tate , after William Pope. L's *The Great White Way: 22 miles, 5 years, 1 street (2002–ongoing),* performed during Summer School Tate Modern.

48.9
William Pope. L, *What Follows*, University of Colorado, 2012, http://youtube/e-7KNINpA6W.

Suggested further reading on William Pope. L: Ain't No Such Thing As Superman, *Frieze*, Issue 83, May 2004.

48.10
Melissa Eating Off Jesse's Plate 2013, originally printed as part of a publication produced for the exhibition Real Texture, by Melissa Hobbs, Rosanna Mclaughlin, Jackson Sprague and Jesse Wine, Hobbs Mclaughlin 2013. Image courtesy Melissa Hobbs and Rosanna Mclaughlin.

48.11
From the very beginning, developing this edition of *Play Ground* around the theme of 'ground', I had the baseball mound from Snoopy in my head. It stuck around and I kept thinking we have to have it, it seems to represent something important. We had been discussing the idea of our own particular piece of ground in the programme, and I had always imagined mine as a small sandy mound surrounded by floor space. But in the strip the mound is a shared space. Often you see all the characters assembled on top of it, positioned with their backs to each other and facing out into the field. Often they are discussing something. At least that is how I remember it. But I am not sure I was thinking about this when I was thinking about the mound from the Snoopy cartoon strip. I think I was just thinking about the mound, on its own, out there in the field. Quite visually. A hump. When you see it, if you were to find yourself in front of it in its field, you would want to walk onto it.

Leanne Turvey, Convenor, Schools and Teachers. Image © Shining Studio.

48.12
The question asked here was asked of all the artists and teachers taking part in *In Site of Learning* (ISOL), the ongoing research project into teacher learning at Tate, involving the Schools and Teachers team, artists, teachers and Professor Pat Thomson from Nottingham University. This text is Anna's response.

48.13
Sam Keogh, research notes for the developments of Mop, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, 2013. Image © Lucy Dawkins, Tate Photography.

48.14
The Mexican collective Tercerunquinto built a 50 square metre concrete platform where members of a community on the outskirts of Monterrey were invited to use it as they wished. Over a period of three years, activities such as parties, sports tournaments, and political and religious meetings were held, changing the space into a forum or plaza.

Tercerunquinto, *Public Sculpture in the Urban Periphery of Monterrey*, 2003–2006. © Tercerunquinto, courtesy of the artists.

On display, 27 January–13 May 2012, No Lone Zone, Project Space, Tate Modern.

48.15
Andrea Fraser 'Why Does Fred Sandback's Work Make Me Cry?' *Grey Room 22*, Winter 2005, pp. 30–47.

48.16
Shaun Doyle, *Now That You're Gone*, 2013, limited edition fanzine 1/50, for visiting school groups. Image © Tate Photography.

PLAY GROUND 3 CONTRIBUTORS LIST

ADELAIDE BANNERMAN is a curator, living and working in London. She is currently the Archive Project Coordinator of The Missing Chapter research project at Autograph ABP. Her personal research interests are focused on privileging the performance gestures and engagements of live and visual performance art, citing individual and group autonomic practices. She was joint curator of the Schools and Teachers Summer School, 2013 with Harold Offeh.

CHLOE COOPER is an artist based in London, working with people in particular places to propose something quite improbable. These propositions take the form of talks, workshops and instructional videos and are combined with her participation in critical forms of art education in museums, galleries and schools. In 2012–13 Chloe led schools workshops at Tate Britain and Tate Modern, she is currently working with Tate's teachers group, Common Projects.

SHAUN DOYLE is an artist, working collaboratively with Mally Mallinson, their practice deals directly with political, social and historical issues by utilising an eclectic mix of cultural references. Their work has been shown in major galleries including Tate Britain, Rude Britannia, 2010, and The Whitechapel Gallery, The Whitechapel Open, 2012. Shaun previously worked with the Schools and Teachers team on the schools workshops programme 2012–13.

ELIZABETH GRAHAM is currently studying on the MA Critical Studies/Art & Learning programme at the Sandberg Institute in Amsterdam. She also teaches at the Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam. She was previously Assistant Curator for Schools and Teachers programme across Tate Modern and Tate Britain, 2012–14.

CHARLOTTE KNOX-WILLIAMS is an artist, researcher, teacher and SENCo at Portland Place School in London. She has recently collaborated with architect Amy Butt for a project at Chelsea School of Art and will begin working with the Institute of Education in October this year as a Post Doctoral Research Scholar.

SAM KEOGH is an artist living and working London. Recent solo exhibitions include Mop, Kerlin Gallery, Dublin (September 2013) and Terrestris, Project Arts Centre, Dublin (July 2012). Sam previously worked with Schools and Teachers on the schools workshops programme during 2012–13.

ANNA LUCAS is an artist filmmaker based in London. She has made work for numerous galleries, screenings and film festivals and has been Henry Moore Fellow at Spike Island and Wellcome Trust Fellow at Oxford University. Her work explores the camera as a research tool and the simultaneous engagement and detachment that occurs in the moment of looking through a lens. Anna was lead artist for Autumn School, 2013 and is part of the Schools and Teachers long-term artists R&D project.

ROSANNA MCLAUGHLIN is an artist, writer and curator who lives and works in London. Between 2011 and 2013, she ran Hobbs Mclaughlin gallery with her partner in the flat they share in Balfron Tower, a Brutalist tower block in Tower Hamlets. She previously worked with Schools and Teachers on the schools workshops programme during 2013–14.

AMY MCKELVIE is Curator for Schools and Teachers programme across Tate Modern and Tate Britain. She is interested in the role of affect in art and learning, as part of her MA in Contemporary Art Theory at Goldsmith she looked at the productivity of embarrassment as a response to performance art.

HAROLD OFFEH is an artist, he lives in Cambridge and works in London and Leeds where he is a senior lecturer in Fine Art at Leeds Beckett University. He works in a range of media including performance, installation, video and photography. He has shown widely both in the UK and internationally. His involvement in the Schools and Teachers programme includes Live Art Salon, 2013 and the joint curation of Summer School, 2013 with Adelaide Bannerman.

MELANIE STIDOLPH is Curator of Art School schools workshop programme at Tate Modern. She is an artist and Senior Lecturer in Photography on the BA (Hons) at Arts University Bournemouth.

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PG 3 EDITORIAL TEAM:
The Schools and Teachers team, Tate London, Learning, in particular: Effie Coe, Elizabeth Graham, Amy Mckelvie, Melanie Stidolph, Leanne Turvey, Alice Walton.

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