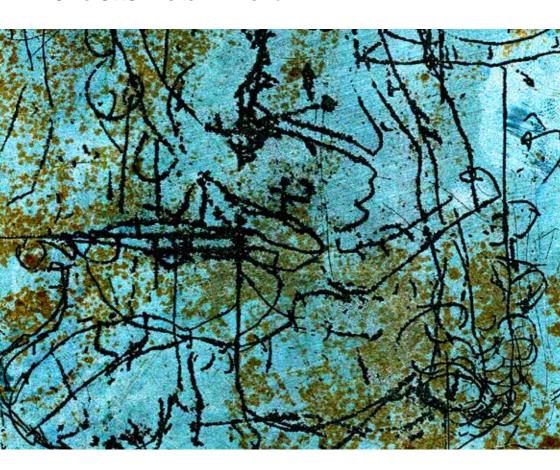
Research Degree Programme

Newsletter Autumn 2016





Manchester School of Art has a lively postgraduate research community based in the new (from September 2016) Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

There are about a hundred students studying for the MA by Research, MPhil and PhD. They come from varied professional, academic, artistic and personal backgrounds, and include artists, designers, makers, architects, theorists, curators and historians. They carry out their research through a mixture of theoretical, empirical and, for some, practice-based enquiry.

Many undertake additional activities that enhance this work. You can read here about some of the activities that students have been conducting over the last couple of years. They include exhibitions, workshops, conferences, publications, a fellowship and courses.

If you are a student we hope this will inspire you to carry out your own additional activities.

For more information about research degrees at Manchester School of Art contact

Dr Myna Trustram (m.trustram@mmu.ac.uk)

And visit the postgraduate research community on line at: http://news.miriadonline.info/

Contents and Contributors

All contributors are PhD students, or have recently completed a research degree, at Manchester School of Art

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Islamic and Celtic geometry Lesley Halliwell

When I began my practice based PhD two years ago I anticipated that it would involve a great deal of reading and writing alongside the making of new artworks. What I hadn't fully appreciated at this early stage were the broader opportunities for research that come with being part of an academic institution.

My PhD explores the depth of surface of the pictorial plane focusing on the interplay between the outer public layer of an artwork (surface) and its inward facing components (structure). With an interest in geometry and patterns emanating from different cultural traditions, I was delighted to receive funding from the Student Development Fund (North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership) that enabled me to undertake three research courses during the year.

First I spent a week at the Istanbul Design Centre (www.artofislamicpattern.com) where the principles of Islamic geometric drawing and biomorphic (freehand) design were taught whilst we were surrounded by some of the most celebrated examples of Ottoman architecture.

The Old Ways (2016). Pencil, gouache, correction fluid and gold leaf on cardboard Photo credit: Lesley Halliwell

This was followed by two further courses at the Prince's School of Traditional Arts in London. (www.psta.org.uk). The first, Celtic Pattern: Geometry and the Imagination, offered an interesting comparison to the Islamic geometry. Despite commonalities, the Celts encouraged a greater degree of improvisation and autonomy with the introduction of obstacles, blocks, tilted spirals and freehand improvisation into their designs. The focus shifted from the geometry to surface finish with the final course: Medieval Manuscript Illumination. Up until this point I had what one might call a 'd.i.y.' approach to gilding in my practice, so it was a fantastic opportunity to learn traditional methods of making and applying mordants, shell gold, gesso and transfer and loose leaf gilding techniques.

As well as developing practical skills, the research courses initiated a dialogue between my 'habitual' drawing practice and traditional, formalized processes of pattern generation and geometry. The studio practice is already developing in ways I could not have predicted earlier in the year.



Photo credit: Lesley Halliwell

At the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte Tilo Reifenstein

Earlier this year (2016), I completed a three-and-a-half-month Franz Roh Fellowship in Modern and Contemporary Art at the Zentralinstitut für Kunstgeschichte in Munich. The newly established but now annual fellowship is co-hosted by this extramural institute and the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU). Apart from the hitherto (for me) unfamiliar pleasure of being 'paid' to be a researcher, this opportunity also facilitated a research trip to Ghent and Hamburg to interview Michaël Borremans and to attend the opening of a large Raymond Pettibon retrospective. Both artists' work significantly informs my PhD.

It has been a privilege to be based in an institution that houses an incredible wealth of art historical research material (over 500,000 volumes, about 1200 current periodicals and plenty of rarissima, as well as a graphzine collection) and thus to be able to chase up almost every footnote immediately and have access to precious artists' books.

The institute has a lively research atmosphere, with at least two public talks per week, many international scholars (the library is open to art history scholars and a number of foundations sent stipendees every year) and a strong publications record from the staff. LMU runs its own art history lectures, many of which are open to all.

The presentation of a public paper during the fellowship is one of the few formal duties of fellows and felt like a rather welcome opportunity to receive feedback on current work, especially because the in-house approach to art history and visual culture differs significantly from more Anglo-Saxon models.

If you're interested in doing some work in Bavaria, check out www.zikg.eu. The institute's opportunities are also regularly posted on HNet-Art History.



'Olydo Berlin 16': The Berlin Olympic Village Project David Gledhill

In September 2015, Deutsche KreditBank Stiftung and Palis Advisory GmbH, invited myself, Margaret Cahill, Peter Lewis and German artist Wolf Bertram Becker, to visit the 1936 Olympic Athlete Village, which lies thirty kilometres east of Berlin.

In 1934 work began to convert a former military base at Elstal Wüstermark for use in the Games. It is currently scheduled for redevelopment. Taken over by the Soviet military in 1945 and finally abandoned in 1992, the 325-acre site is largely in a state of disrepair. It features a fascinating blend of architectural and artistic remnants from both the Nazi and Communist phases of German history and represents a material index of shifting cultural and political ideologies. The shells of former Soviet housing blocks overlook a cultural centre complete with Nazi wall relief and Communist murals. an international dining hall or Speisehaus der Nationen, and a scattering of the original 'cottages' built for the national teams. A reconstruction of the four-times gold medalist Jesse Owens's bedroom draws infrequent guided tours. We were allowed to 'access all areas' and roam the site freely for three days of blistering late summer heat.

The project was timed to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the Berlin Olympics and the 2016 Rio Games. My work focuses on the fate of Wolfgang Fürstner, the Commander of the Village and the man responsible for overseeing its construction, and on the surviving buildings from the Soviet era. Fürstner was demoted in

accordance with the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 when it was discovered that his grandfather was Jewish. He shot himself at the site shortly after the close of the Games.

An exhibition of our work encompassing painting, printmaking, collage, video and 3D pieces opened at Deutsche Kreditbank's Berlin headquarters in July. It will transfer to the refurbished gymnasium at the Village itself on 11 September 2016.



David Gledhill, Olympic Village. Oil on canvas. Image credit: David Gledhill

Adopt[ed] Slideshow Sara Davies

The Manchester School of Art slide collection contains over 300,000 slides and has developed over many years, reflecting the teaching needs of the art school. In the spring of 2015 the Visual Resource Centre which housed the collection was under threat of closure and the collection was earmarked for disposal. Adopt a Slide and Adopt[ed] Slideshow were created to show the importance of the collection and to highlight students' and staff's attachment to it. Today the slides have a new place in the MMU Special Collections.

In July 2015 research students Sara Davies, Jan Fyfe and Liz Mitchell, together with Ashley van Dyck (a BA student) and Kristin Marshall (MA student), organised an event to enjoy, explore and celebrate the slides. In the MIRIAD Open Space we informally gathered with friends for a performative event with projections and stories. For one afternoon a dark room was filled with readings, moving bodies, old technologies and the sound of slide carousels moving images in and out of light.

The event was created to promote the blog-based participatory artwork called Adopt a Slide in which people are invited to write about and upload to a blog a slide of their choice from the slide collection. For the event a programme of readings from the blog was curated by Liz Mitchell and woven together with performances by William Card and Sara Davies. There was a hypnotic extravaganza of images and sound by DATAMOSH (Paul R Jones and Guy Mayman from Glyndwr University). Jan Fyfe worked on an artist book and there were artworks by Kristin Marshall and Ashley van Dyck.

It was our summer of slides. As students and researchers into the history, theory and practice of art and design, we saw this event as an opportunity to exhibit work in progress, test out new ideas and to play. We hoped to demonstrate the historic significance of the slide collection as a material archive and its importance for the history of art education, as well as to show how it can inspire creative practice.

You can still help by adopting your slide at https://pickaslide.wordpress.com

See the published article about Adopt a Slide, the Slide Collection and the Art School by Liz Mitchell at www.thedoublenegative.

An event to promote the participatory artwork, Adopt a Slide



Left: Performance Datamosh Photo credit: Derek Trillo

Right: Detail 1 Projected Voices

Bottom:

Performance Rehearsal with Bergman

Photo credit: Derek Trillo





Disruptions & Other Landscapes Alistair Macdonald

Taking the Scottish island of Rum as my subject, I have drawn upon the different forms of discourse which relate to the island - memoir, travelogue, letters, advertisements, poems, scientific reports and legal documents. Disrupting footage of the island with fragments of text and vice-versa, I created for MMU's Grosvenor Gallery a series of video pieces that presented the history of the island as a series of disruptions and the landscape as the place where power, discourse and bodies intertwine.

Landscape is never other. Frequently, it is the place where power is exercised over physical space and the bodies which inhabit it. Our different ways of understanding the landscape

authorise, justify, explain and describe different interventions into space and bodies, interventions which disrupt both.

But landscape is also for play, and for those who prefer their scenery un-theorised, the exhibition also featured dancing trees, a boat trip, and a river streaming through the gallery.

www.alistairimacdonald.com

Alistair Macdonald's solo exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery, 19-21 April 2016



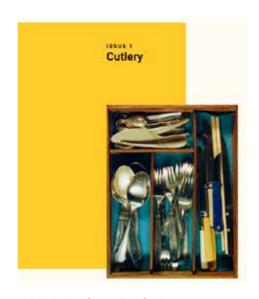
Image credit: Alistair Macdonald

FEAST Laura Mansfield

I am working on the publication project FEAST. FEAST began as a series of printed publications exploring the use of food as a subject and material in artists' works, films and in literature. Having produced three printed publications on the themes of Indulgence, Digestion and Waste, I teamed up with MMU Lecturer Elisa Oliver to develop the project.

With funding from Leeds Beckett University and Arts Council England, we re-launched FEAST as an online journal that now includes academic essays. There is a board of peer reviewers that includes Rosemary Shirley (MMU), Rachel Rich (Leeds Beckett). Bryce Evans (Liverpool Hope University), Will Carr, (Deputy Director of the Anthony Burgess Foundation), artist and writer Kit Poulson and Producer Kaye Winward. The online content is formed through an open call for submissions alongside commissioned artists' works. The online version of the journal takes the theme of Setting the Table. The first edition responds to Cutlery - exploring the tools and utensils of eating and their alternative uses, from drug paraphernalia to musical instruments. The journal will be released twice a year.

We have developed a series of events that extend the themes of the publication. From April to July 2016 we worked with Special Collections at MMU to host a series of artists' and academic responses to the Home Studies Collection. This consists of over 700 recipe books, household manuals, national food surveys and commercial catalogues relating to the preparation, serving and eating of food. The responses will each take FEAST's overarching theme of Setting the Table as a framework to develop new writings, artworks and discussions.



Julia Winckler Cutlery Tray Stories 2001.

We have also developed projects with the International Anthony Burgess Foundation, Manchester. The exhibition The Devil's Supper at the Burgess Foundation draws together recipes and references to food in the life and work of the author. Born and raised in Lancashire, Burgess wrote passionately about the traditional cuisine of his youth. The exhibition brings together writings, recipes, and interviews from the Foundation's archives with a selection of cookery books and serving ware from the Home Studies Collection.

I have received AHRC funding for an engagement project titled Eating History. Centred on the Home Studies Collection, the project joins the historical material with contemporary voices, developing conversations around popular recipes, ingredients and methods of food preparation that are in continued use today. I am looking for people who would like to view the collection and discuss some recipes.

If you would like to find out more about Eating History or FEAST please email me:

lauramansf@gmail.com

Intermissions: The Commercial Portraits of Edward Chambré-Hardman Keith W Roberts

Edward Chambré-Hardman (1898-1988) was a Liverpool photographer, best known for his portrayals of landscapes and cityscapes. This exhibition focused upon the commercial portraiture that can be found in Hardman's archive which is housed at Liverpool Central Library.

Research for this project began with the digitisation of eleven studio registers detailing Hardman's sitters from 1923 to 1963. The registers contain the names and titles of Hardman's clients, many of whom were Liverpool servicemen and women that he photographed during 1939-1945, at his studio on Bold Street. The process of digitising the studio registers was an opportunity to search the archive in a unique way, thus enabling chronological portraits of individual sitters to be found within the 120.000 large format negatives stored in the collection. The exhibition presents individual sitters as portrait pairings seen for the first time together, having previously been separated for the past seventy years in the storage tins within the archive.. The title of the exhibition, 'Intermission', relates to this gap in time that exists between each portrait.

The public presentation of the paired portraits has shifted their status from being anonymous and hidden items within the archive, to being named and on public display. There is also a shift away from the original functions of these portraits which was initially of a commercial nature for Hardman and a personal or private nature for his client. For the purposes of the exhibition they became material for public display.

Reviews and associated articles about the exhibition can be found here:

www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/whats-on/ arts-culture-news/new-chambr-hardmanexhibition-liverpool-10601182

www.thedoublenegative.co.uk/2016/01/ intermissions-20th-century-liverpool-viaedward-chambre-hardman/

photomediationsmachine.net/2016/02/01/ therethen-herenow/

I also showed my work at the Liverpool Biennial Fringe opening event in July 2016. This consisted of back-projected portraits onto the windows above Matta's International Foods shop on Bold Street in Liverpool, which was where Hardman's original studio was based between 1923-1949 and subsequently where many of these portraits would have been taken.

Lastly, a project to install eighty large-scale portraits in Liverpool City Centre (Newington) for one year has been proposed and is still awaiting approval. This is due for installation in November 2016.

An exhibition at Liverpool Central Library, Hornby Rooms, 15 December 2015 – 29 January 2016





Above Newington Hardman Image credit: Keith W. Roberts

Top Right zz intermission 01 Image credit: Keith W Roberts

Bottom Right zz intermission 03 Image credit: Keith W Roberts



Woman's Outlook: Rip, Mark, Stick, Multi-Vocal Image Making Jo Darnley and Gemma Meek

We are embarking on a collaborative project to explore the connections between our two research practices.

Jo Darnley's research into Woman's Outlook magazine (1919 - 67) maps the complexity of gender ideology in the interwar co-operative movement. The magazine was published by the National Co-operative Publishing Society (est. 1871) and was edited by Annie Bamford - Tomlinson from 1919 - 1933, Woman's Outlook presents a window into the co-operative woman's everyday lived experience and the co-operative movement's visual and material culture. Jo is investigating ways to introduce new contemporary audiences to the National Co-operative Archive located in Manchester. At the Co-operative Education Conference in April 2016, Jo participated in a multi-disciplinary panel of researchers. She discussed her role as a researcher who is newly associated with the Cooperative College.

Gemma Meek's work investigates the creation of book art as a socially engaged practice. This involves research into the creation of books in an artistic manner with social groups outside of artistic roles (homeless groups, communities of place, mental health participants).

Our shared research interests have led to the development of a collaborative workshop that encourages participants to select, map and transform imagery from Woman's Outlook onto a collage page. Each participant's page is drawn together into the space of a book to encourage new multi-vocal readings. This workshop travelled to the Nordic Summer University in Riga, Latvia, as a method of exploring research communities and transforming gendered imagery.

Our shared interests were stimulated by participation in the 'Artful Prose' workshops delivered by Amanda Ravetz and Myna Trustram from the School of Art. This was a series of four workshops that explored the connections between writing, the visual and making, by means of drawing, artists' books and bodily movement. This varied from making collaborative artists' books to carrying a chair on our backs!

We have also taken the magazine and the workshop to conferences in Leeds, Budapest and Portugal. If you are interested in participating in research that aims to explore new ways to open up the National Co-operative Archive in Manchester, contact:

joanne.darnley@stu.mmu.ac.uk.

Right

Woman's Outlook front cover. First edition, November 1919

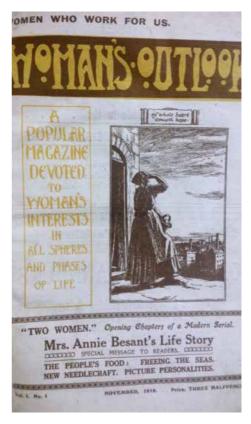
Image credit: Image reproduced by kind courtesy of National Co-operative Archive, Manchester

Bottom

Workshop at the University of Leeds: Feminist Readings 2: Theory, Practice and Politics of

Reading Today. April 2016 Image credit: Jo Darnley





The Materiality of Nothing Gary Spicer

My research starts with the questions, why do I keep returning to sites of Holocaust memory and how can drawing be used as a tool to excavate a past personally unlived? I have recently been to a conference which chimed with these questions' intention of probing the unknown and the seemingly immaterial. The Materiality of Nothing symposium at LICA extended conversations initiated at their 2015 Dark Matters conference. How we encounter the immaterial and how this might be negotiated in practice were analysed from an artistic perspective as well as scientific.

Anna Lovatt began the conference with a detailed and insightful analysis of Richard Tuttle and the Void of Lessness. Tuttle, an American post-minimalist artist known for his small, subtle, intimate works has described his work as an attempt to 'create something that begins at ground zero or is connected with ground zero'. The theme of 'shimmer' was introduced and became a leitmotif for the day

Liz de Freitas' paper (read in her absence by an adroit Charlie Gere) took us into the realm of 'speculative mathematics'. She argued that philosophy should have invested more in the speculative materialism of science rather than focusing on the transcendental and the elusive. This was dense and challenging stuff. Further contributions speculated on theory and its role in explaining and predicting, and offered thoughts on the contingency of art and how through physics we can detect the invisible world. A presentation on the geo-philosophical notion of 'the shape of the air' by Bronislaw Szerszynski explored the idea of correlationism and how we relate to objects.

Charlie Gere began his paper with a description of a recent visit to a Japanese garden in Eskdale and to Sellafield, the nuclear fuel reprocessing site. Gere traversed art, language and culture to consider how that which is beyond signification, be it beauty or horror, can be effectively defined and articulated. He used the examples of Auschwitz and Hiroshima to suggest that language is doomed to fail in the face of such phenomena.

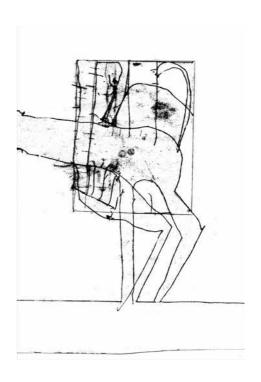
Rebecca Fortnum's paper, Apophasis and Art, was an investigation into language, image making, reading and looking and what cannot be said. She related this, via her own practice, to the tradition of painting and to discourses of silence and so returned the discussion to the realm of creative art practice.

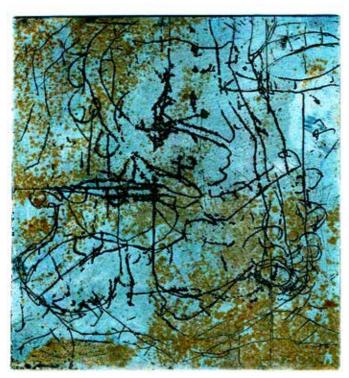
The symposium concluded with a discussion sparked by objects and drawings brought by delegates (including myself) that were examples of things used to 'think with'. They included journals, sketchbooks and three-dimensional pieces that facilitated the investigation of ideas about the unseen or the manifestation of nothing.

Above Gary Spicer, Birken Deer, 2015. Monoprint

Below Gary Spicer, Blue 2016. Etching/Digital

Lancaster Institute of Contemporary Arts (LICA) 14 July 2016





Weaving the Plant Filigree Lin Charlston

'The locus of agency is always a human-non-human working group'

Jane Bennett, Vibrant Matter:
A Political Ecology of Things (2010)

My practice-based research develops the 'multimodal book' as a means of investigating and disclosing people-plant relationships. In particular, I am exploring the possibility of 'plant agency' in these relationships.

During 2015 I undertook a series of psychogeographical 'dérives' around the School of Art to discover how plants are experienced in everyday life, in the streets and public spaces. I found many inspiring projects designed to introduce plants into the city and to educate and empower people to live more sustainable lives. However, I was confronted by an increasing occupation of space by large-scale building projects and almost total commodification of plants and plant products. People in the streets seemed too absorbed with mobile phones to notice signs of imperilled plants.

While digital media can portray nature in multiple ways, I argue that the virtual mode disrupts semiotic bonds found in living systems and cannot replace direct experience. I aim to encourage intellectual and emotional engagement with plants through direct encounters with accessible nature. During 2015 I negotiated the use of an overgrown site in Whitworth Park as a temporary exhibition space and platform for participatory engagement with plants through direct physical contact.

The aim of the workshop, Weaving the Plant Filigree at 'Wildspace' in Whitworth Park, was to explore the sense of identity attained by spontaneous activities with plants. In this creative investigation of plant agency, I envisaged meaningful encounters and imaginative collaborations between humans and plants in the spirit of Bruno Latour. In Politics of Nature (2004), Latour describes a 'non-hierarchical collective' for inclusive decision-making in which the agency of non-human participants is recognised.

A Workshop in Whitworth Park, Manchester, 5 July 2016.



As a small step in this direction, I invited participants to allow the plants and surroundings to influence their decisions as they worked with living and decaying plant material. An impromptu exhibition of plant-led artefacts materialised from an hour of focused contact with the plants. Elements of ritual, pattern making, shelter, play, adornment and display emerged, and a sense of respect, care, renewal and wonder permeated our activities.

Valeria Vargas, Education for Sustainable
Development Co-ordinator at MMU, deepened
our experience of the symbolic meanings which
forge links between human and non-human
communities by introducing the Colombian bag
'Mochila Arhuaca' which has special cultural
significance. Valeria's research focus is indigenous
thinking in her home country of Colombia, and
ethical and ecological issues related to cultural
shifts and well-being.

The workshop finale was an impromptu 'happening' that arose from sharing stories about our memories of childhood games with plants. In place of a 'logocentric' plenary we created a noisy, non-verbal rhapsody by blowing energetically across blades of grass.

Watch out for further activities at Wildspace in Whitworth Park. If you have suggestions for temporary exhibitions, or collaborations please contact me at lin.charlston@stu.mmu.ac.uk

Whitworth 1

Image credit: Toby Davies

Conferments

Many congratulations to these students who have recently been awarded a research degree.

Hannah Allan, PhD

The Archival Context of Contemporary Practice: How Might Temporal Artistic Process Function as Trace Within the Archive?

Roaa Assas, PhD

Designing an e-Philanthropic network in Saudi Arabia

Susan Atkin, PhD

Loose Fit? The impact of Manchester's music scene on youth fashion

Jenny Baines, PhD

Repeat Frame: Duration as evident in physical qualities of film material and mechanism

Susanna Blatherwick, MPhil

Archaeology of the House - Site - Object - Context. Interpreting a Collection: A Study of the Life and Work of Robert Louis Blatherwick (1920-1993)

Joff Bradley, PhD

Zerrissenheit and Schizoanalysis: Philosophy, Pedagogy and Media Ecology in the Japanese Context

Paulette Brien, MPhil

A consideration of the role and function of the curator in shifting the focus of the contemporary art-fair

Eunice Chan, PhD

The Relaxation Effect of Nature Images and Coloured Light on Healthy People and Hospital Patients in China

Philip Cowan, PhD

Persistence of Vision: Film Authorship and the Role of the Cinematographer (with a Case Study of Gregg Toland)

Paul Cureton, PhD

Drawing in Landscape Architecture: fieldwork, poetics, methods, translation and representation

Timothy Daly, PhD

To develop the authored photography documentary book as a primary form

Sara Kristina Davies, MA

Memories of Home in the Scandinavian Diaspora

Réa De Matas, Phd

Sensuous Festival: What can the Experiential Reveal About the Role of Difference in Carnival

Robert Gaunt, MA

Arthur Dooley: His Place in Post-War British Art History

Maud Goldberg, MA

Spacial Practice Between Installation Art and Architecture

Leanne Green, PhD

Advertising War: Pictorial Publicity, 1914 – 1918

Anne Harrison, MA

Dissecting the Site: Place, Space and Memory at the Old Manchester Royal Infirmary

David Jackson, PhD

Digital Games as Collaborative Story-Writing Platforms

David Jones, PhD by Pub

Raku firing narratives: the embodiment of rupture in the personal and the historical

Sarbjit Kaur, MA

A Poetic and Sculptural Negotiation of Growing Up as a Punjabi Sikh British Woman Encountering Male Bias

Alice Kettle, PhD

Creating a Space of Enchantment: Thread as a Narrator of the Feminine

Jennifer Lock, MA

We are all animals: Visualising a common language for humans and other animals

Christoph Loos, PhD

The Palace at 3 a.m. (Ordo Inversus)A Woodcut (Re-)Invention in Resonance with Merleau-Ponty's "Chiasma"

Laura Mansfield, PhD

The Island as a model for the interpretation and development of site-based exhibitions of contemporary art.

Amber Roberts, PhD

The symbolic landscape of the industrial form.

Martin Smith, MA

Independent or Indie? Creative autonomy and models of video game production

Ashley Spurr, MA

Digital Design for an Ageing Society

Matthew Steele, MA

The Making of Manchester's Technical Colleges (1954-1964)

Lewis Sykes, PhD

The Augmented Tonoscope: Towards a Deeper Understanding of the Interplay Between Sound and Image in Visual Music

Joseph Travis, MA

Devising an E-Learning Model for the Teaching of Traditional Crafts Such as Ceramics

Vincent Walsh, PhD

Developing a Whole System Approach to Urban Farming in an Area of High Deprivation

Simon Woolham, PhD

In Search of the Shortcuts: Walking and Narrative in Physical, Virtual and Psychological Space