



School: Bath School of Art

Researcher: Jenny Dunseath, Reader in Fine Art

Project Title: *Elbow*

UOA: 32: Art and Design: History, Practice and Theory

Research Timeline

Date	Rationale of research activities and decisions undertaken
April 2015:	<p>Arts Council Residency and Exhibition at C&C gallery London.</p> <p>The C&C gallery invited artists to be part of a residency programme to work collaboratively in the gallery space for the duration of August, culminating in an exhibition in September-October 2015.</p> <p>The artists included invited artists Ian Dawson, John Greenwood, Claude Heath, Nicola Thomas, Louisa Minkin, Jenny Dunseath, and two artists from an open call submission: Mhairi Vari and Michael Colegate. It involved Archaeologists from the University of Southampton and workshops blind consultant John Dickinson-Lilley.</p> <p>The residency looked for artists who were interested in extending the relationship between artistic production and an audience and who were willing to work openly in a collaborative environment. The C&C Gallery regularly attracts 1,000 people a week to its partner café and restaurant, enabling the potential for interaction with a large audience.</p> <p>Open call submission link: http://ccgallery.co.uk/working-with-us-2/</p> <p>Residency information:</p> <p>When conceiving of the residency there was a sense that a broad thematic might be useful, that an imposition would restrain and liberate in unexpected ways. The premise doesn't necessarily need to be considered directly and shouldn't inhibit the potential for experimentation.</p> <p>In <i>Memoirs For the Blind</i>, Jacques Derrida describes drawing as an act of blindness – rooted as it is in both memory and anticipation, taking the action of seeing and replacing it with that of mediation. Marks of a drawing have multiple characters: lines on a page as well as indicators of contour; lacking a "pure" identity they obscure the visual experience.</p>

But what of the expanded field of drawing, drawing is not just a mark on a paper- it is a sound in space, an action within a time and place, a rich and complex mapping process- involving sculptural and performative activities. In Derrida's thesis, the depiction of a blind person is a multiple statement of blindness and sight in itself, how then could the extended activities of drawing be used to depict the blind? And how do these then become statements of and about blindness and sight? What new information would they illicit? What positions could they expose?

Working alongside a roster of other artists, the residency sought to be a lively experimental environment to consider the notions set out above in both a creative and practical way.

August 2015: 6-week Residency:

Over the summer the innovative residency programme, transformed the gallery space into a dynamic studio environment in order to respond to ideas surrounding the condition of blindness.

During this time eight artists variously came and went, engaging with a whole repertoire of processes, from casting, painting, drawing, filming, 3D photo-scanning to laser scanning and sound experiments, leaving a variety of traces of their activities. Much of the work, arrived at through a collaborative approach sought to obliquely cast a shadow across the subject, remaining open towards the process of making, and ways of making. Throughout the residency the space was completely open to the public. People of all ages and demographic would witness and engage in the space. Some just looked, others asked questions, whilst others physically joined in and would come back to see the changing landscape of the residency. The initial weeks saw a sensitivity and adaptability; people worked tentatively together attempting to respond and interact with each other's work. Mid way through, notions of authorship were blurred as original starting points were erased. Egos were challenged. As the weeks went on, attempts were made to take ownership of works with the knowledge that they could be undone at any time. This proved to be a surprising liberation in the creative process. Ian Dawson likened the collaborative methodology to how 'jazz musicians improvise together.' Each artist brought their own specialist knowledge but worked together to respond, interject and adapt responsively in order to make work together.

Residency Blog: <http://candcredidency.blogspot.com/?view=flipcard>

Dunseath's contribution asked specific questions pertaining to the nature of mediation, re-mediation, authorship and originality in the creative act. She was interested in questioning what precisely are authors, co-authors, and new authors of art, and what are the consequences of breaking such theoretical notions down?

Working under the remit of the residency's focus on Blindness, Dunseath started with an interest in Elkin's 'Object stares back' where seeing is undependable, inconsistent and caught up in the threads of the unconscious and this began her process of exploring inconsistent form. Dunseath became interested in how the collaborative process echoed with learning new skills and questioning what you think you know. She concluded the collaborative process was akin to Huberman's 'Naïve Set

Theory' where withdrawal and deliberate vagueness stopped the easy flow of information, and actively encouraged incomprehension through ambiguity. She was less interested in confronting neo-liberalism than finding new ways of looking and opening up space in a discursive way; a desire to examine accepted conventions and simply ask 'why do we do it like that?' Dunseath's methodology led to the production of floor-to-ceiling columns and laser-scanned imagery whilst simultaneously responding to the other artists' engagement. Linked to the theme of blindness, the work had to be negotiated and choreographed by senses other than sight to produce a new, improvisational way of creating.

**Friday 7th
August:**

Talk by blind consultant John Dickinson-Lilley to the artists and gallery staff

A talk by blind Consultant John Dickinson-Lilley (Great Britain's leading male visually impaired ski racer) discussed the various ways those with visual impairments 'see' the world; using echo location to understand and 'read' an object, as well as tactile identification, audio description and memory mapping to locate self in space.

Audio link: <https://soundcloud.com/ntpresents/sets/john-dickinson-lilley-talk>

**Saturday 8th
August:**

'Living with Sight Loss' workshop by John Dickinson-Lilley with the artists and gallery staff

During the workshop the artists wore blind glasses and stumbled rather pathetically around the gallery and the local high street, feeling unsure, insecure and inept, grounded only by the feeling of the floor beneath ones feet and ones fingers upon a companions elbow. They worked with a Guide Dog, and began to learn about how to use a stick to navigate the world. They experienced eating and communicating without the senses they normally rely on.

Workshop images: <http://ccgallery.co.uk/living-with-sight-loss-8th-august-2015/>

**22nd August
2015:**

3D Scanning Workshop with artists and archaeologists from University of Southampton

Andy Jones and Marta Diaz-Guardamino Archeologists from University of Southampton brought in their RTI scanning equipment to teach the artists how to use this high-tech equipment. Scanning techniques were applied to the residency space to map the new objects and art forms as a way to re-see and understand them. Discussions were had about the similarities between archaeological and contemporary art practice and the reciprocal relationship that existed between our attempts to understand the world.

**23rd August
2015:**

3D Scanning workshop for the public

A workshop exploring a range of 3d scanning technologies were run for the general public. In the session Ian Dawson introduced a range of scanning processes, including laser and photogrammetric scanning and an introduction to the software for the manipulation of the scanned data. 3D digital files were produced during this session and could be taken away for 3D printing. Adults and children, many of whom had never used this equipment or who were familiar with art, attended the session.

Workshop advert: <http://ccgallery.co.uk/residency-programme-2015/>

August 2015:

Workshop by artists and archeologists with C&C restaurant staff

The restaurant staff had a talk about the residency, and a workshop with the 3D scanning equipment, and they also experimented with the

	materials in the space. This enabled them to learn new skills, play with materials and processes they had never used before, and discuss ideas and the residency process with the artists.
5th September - 4th October 2015:	<p>Exhibition Private View: Friday 4th September 6.30-8.30pm</p> <p>Within the space; chalk lines, floor to ceiling columns and laser scanning targets have created an installation for measurement, where diverse material usage- including borax, expanding foam and cat litter humorously confound expectation.</p> <p>An interactive wall-based animation utilised the 3D scanning equipment methods and revealed the truly interactive nature of the residency. Tonnes of sand covered the gallery floor confounding expectation and submerged forms that were unearthed throughout the duration of the exhibition. Sounds emerged from various points around the space. The sounds were the sounds of objects and processes, reminding us of the history of their making. Materials were simultaneously recognisable and confusing.</p>
Friday 18th September:	<p>Panel discussion with the artists at C&C gallery café for the public</p> <p>The Artists spoke about their experience of the residency in a free and open-access panel discussion. There was reflection on the collaborative and spontaneous nature that the residency took on, and what this had meant for each artist, the gallery and its audience.</p>
September 2015:	<p>About Making event at Spike Island, Bristol</p> <p>Dunseath discussed her practice including reference to the residency and the collaborative nature of practice. This was a ticketed event open to the public and Spike Island members and associates.</p>
November 2015:	<p>Bath Spa University Research event: <i>Projects, Process and Audiences</i></p> <p>Chaired by Mike Tooby with Dr Robert Luzar, Jenny Dunseath and Keith Harrison. BSU staff, MA and PhD students discussed their current research projects discussing the way projects build the relationships between process, exhibition and presentation, and audience.</p>
June 2016	<p>Talk to Foundation students Yeovil College, Somerset</p> <p>Dunseath gave a talk about her practice and career development to Foundation students. It included important discussion about the nature of ownership and authorship within the artists' studio by referring to her qualitative research into studio assistants and practice-based research with the Elbow Residency.</p>
December 2018	<p>BSAD Research discussion</p> <p>During a research discussion, colleagues discussed the relationship of new technologies on contemporary art practice and ideas of physical and digital realities. N. Glen raised Geoffrey Mann, Shine "When scanning a metallic object, the laser beam is unable to distinguish between the surface and its reflection" Mann accepted the interpretation given by optical properties of the scanner as the reality. This applies to Elbow and the subsequent development of Dunseath's current work with Google Translate apps and mobile phones.</p>
October 2015 – March 2019	<p>Peer reviewed papers and publications</p> <p>Since 2015, the methodology of this project has been discussed by Dawson and Minkin at research groups at Central St Martins and University of Southampton. The methodology has featured in a number of</p>

Peer reviewed Journals as part of the discussion about the collaborative relationship between archaeology and fine art practice evidencing knowledge and technology transfer. Louisa Minkin has authored papers in Antiquity Issue 347 - October 2015, Journal of Visual Art Practice, Volume 15, 2016 - Issue 2-3, Archaeology and Assemblage Cambridge Archaeological Journal, Volume 27, Issue 1, January 2017.

Ian Dawson and Louisa Minkin along with the project's archaeologists are releasing a publication called *Making a Mark: Image and Process in Neolithic Britain and Ireland* by Andrew Meirion Jones, Marta Diaz Guardamino, Antonia Thomas, Ian Dawson, Louisa Minkin. Oxbow books March 31st 2019

Elbow Stats and Evidence:

The C&C gallery were awarded an Arts Council grant in 2015

Elbow involved 1 lead artist/curator, 5 invited artists, 2 artists applied, 2 interns, 1 blind consultant with 1 assistant, 1 gallery assistant, 2 gallery directors, 2 marketing staff, 400 participants by active involvement, 4230 live audience, 10,000 online, 2000 in writing. Audience feedback from the exhibition, residency, workshops and the Artists Talk are available on request.
