



Image: Unseen Untouchable (2019) courtesy of Manish Harijan

The Artist's Journey 3 Improfessional Practices

Thursday 13 & Friday 14 February 2020

Being an artist can take you to places you never thought were possible, but the paths are unclear and the maps complicated.

Last year the people who we travel with joined us; journeys are enhanced by the people we meet on route, the friends who accompany us and the support of the places we go to.

This year we will not be travelling far but visiting the fringes shedding light on the practices, interests and groups that operate at the edges or outside of the 'professional' and formal structures or economies.

The Artist's Journey is getting longer (we are adding another day) we are pleased to expand our growing partnerships and broaden our conversations during continuing political change and uncertainty. This year, Sheffield Hallam University will continue partnerships with YVAN and Bloc Projects and welcome the National Association of Fine Art Educators, Mansions of the Future and the Sheffield Creative Guild.

#TheArtistsJourney

Thursday, 13 February 2020

While 'professionalisation' suggests the positive, necessary steps to becoming an artist, there are 'improfessional' practices that exist at an off-kilter relation to this imperative. Outside of the professional / unprofessional binary, what else do artists do, feel, or think as they build their portfolio, write their grants, or get on with these obvious tasks? And as both a direct or dissonant response to our art-making lives, what modalities of survival and thriving do we develop? How do we – or don't we – maintain the balance, health, and motivation necessary to keep going as supposed art professionals?

The presentations will explore these questions in two thematically-based sessions: improfessional organising (morning) and improfessional trajectories (afternoon). The morning session will focus on ways of organising, with contributions from institutional as well as artist-led perspectives. The afternoon session will turn to the different pathways that artists have made for themselves.

Schedule

9:30 – 10:00 Registration (09:30 – 10:00)

10:00 – 10:15 Welcome and introduction

Morning session: Improfessional organising

10:15 – 11:45 -- Presentations from Eelyn Lee (filmmaker and convener of Social Art Network), Symrun Chatha (musician and co-founder of Café Redhaus) and Anna Santomauro (Programme Curator, Arts Catalyst). Panel discussion chaired by Sarah Villeneuve (artist, Material Voice collective)

11:45 – 12:00 -- Break

12:00 – 13:00 -- Artist talk by Tram Nguyen (Assistant Curator, Tate and part of Asia-Art-Activism) with response and discussion chaired by Sam Vardy / Paula McCloskey (artists, researchers, and co-founders of ; a place, of their own)

13:00 – 14:00 -- Lunch and refreshment will be provided by SHU to all speakers and delegates, free of charge

Afternoon session: Improfessional trajectories

14:00 – 15:30 -- Presentations from Zoyander Street (artist, researcher and critic), Manish Harijan (artist) and Lady Kitt (artist, researcher and drag king). Panel discussion chaired by Dan Russell (artist and committee member of The NewBridge Project)

15:30 – 15:45 -- Break

15:45 – 16:45 -- Artists in conversation: Natalie Zervou-Kerruish (artist and educator) and Renata Minoldo (artist and educator)

Evening drinks hosted by the Sheffield Creative Guild

17:00 – 22:00 -- Sheffield Creative Guild host #get_outthere at Sidney and Matilda

Join Sheffield Creative Guild and Sheffield Hallam University at Sidney & Matilda for an informal event at which you'll have the opportunity to chat to a variety of small creative business owners and freelancers. Meet illustrators, independent book sellers, digital artists and graphic designers and take part in a craft workshop run by our friends at Girl Gang. The workshop and stalls will run from 5pm – 7.30pm after which attendees will be welcome to stay on to mingle to their hearts' content (or until 10pm). The evening will include a techno performance by Epiplode, a live coding collaboration between artists Heavy Lifting and Yaxu.

Biographies

Symrun Chatha is a Sheffield-based musician currently signed to the London label "TT" who released their last work *Care Work* (2019). They are active within political organising and is also a co-founder of Café+ Red Haus Books and Plush Media. They are a Leeds Beckett and Goldsmiths alumni where they studied English Literature (BA) and Popular Music Research (MA) respectively. [[website](#)]

Manish Harijan is an interdisciplinary artist based in Sheffield. Originally from Nepal, Manish graduated in 2019 from Sheffield Hallam University and received the Dianne Wilcocks Lifelong Learning Award. His work is exhibited nationally and internationally, including: Nepal Now in Welt Museum Vienna (2019), Cancelled Art Project, World Statelessness Conference, Den Hague Netherlands (2019), India Art Fair, New Delhi (2016), Artquick, October Gallery London (2015), Utopia CKU, Copenhagen (2013), Roof of the World, ROSL Gallery, London (2013). [Instagram: manish_harijan_]

Lady Kitt is a socially engaged maker, researcher and drag-king based in the UK. Their project have taken place all over the world. They use paper-cutting, performance and research to create objects, interactions, events. Their work is driven by an insatiable

curiosity to explore, share & (gently) encourage the social functions of stuff that gets called art. Things that have happened as part of Kitt's work include: super-sized origami, policy changes & creation of an international feminist art magazine for and by children. [www.ladykitt.com]

Clee Claire Lee is an artist working with sculpture, multimedia installation, and live art. She uses these different forms to explore the concept of liminality and threshold, the synergy of the senses, and to invite the audience into the space between certainty and doubt. She has an affinity with wire, which she welds or weaves into routes and voids. Steel is usually associated with heavy industry, but becomes weightless, organic and ethereal. The addition of light and sound creates immersive environments of bodies within bodies and disembodied, transient beings. [www.claireleeartist.com | www.materialvoice.com]

Eelyn Lee is an award-winning artist and filmmaker who has exhibited across UK including Barbican, Tate Modern, National Portrait Gallery and Whitechapel Gallery as well as internationally in Paris, Berlin, Bogotá and Toronto. Eelyn's socially engaged practice combines collective research, devised theatre, screen writing and filmmaking to create frameworks for ensembles of collaborators to work together. In 2016 she co-founded Social Art Network, a UK based community of artists committed to building agency in the field of art and social practice. [www.eelynlee.com]

Renata Minoldo is an Argentinian artist and educator based in London. She has a BA in Fashion Design and Studied Fine Arts at Universidad Nacional de Rosario. She is part of the 2018 School of the Damned cohort, a self organised post graduate programme for artists living in UK. She has participated on some artists residencies internationally including Banff Centre of the Arts and Merz Barn and will be going to Canada in July to do the Bonnie Mc Kreye residency. Her practice explores the physical, spiritual and emotional body through sculpture, installation and intuitive-led experiences with people, including workshops, residencies and retreats. Her practice flows from the tactile to the subtle experience, aiming to bring emotional states into a physical dimension by creating objects and environments for self discovery, pleasure and healing. [www.renataminoldo.com]

Trâm Nguyễn was born in Hanoi, Vietnam. They are a programmer, researcher, curator currently working as part of Public Programmes at Tate and teaching at the University of Arts London. They hold a BA in Photographic Arts from the University of Westminster and MA in Contemporary Art from Sotheby's Institute of Art London with a thesis focusing on the role of religion and language in colonial histories through the work of Danh Võ. Their research and curatorial interests are primarily concerned with the decolonisation of education, representation of queer identities as well as overarching themes surrounding the Vietnamese diaspora. [www.asia-art-activism.net]

Dan Russell is an artist who does stuff with people. He doesn't have a specific medium but has worked on projects that span visual and performance art, architecture, graphic design, self-publishing, writing, illustration, music, education and artist development. His favoured approach to working is in an open, process-led and longer-term way. His favourite topics are bringing people together, developing ideas together and dealing with the future. He is in charge of artist development at the NewBridge Project. [www.thenewbridgeproject.com]

Anna Santomauro joined Arts Catalyst in May 2017 as Programme Curator. She is curator, educator and researcher in micropolitics and socially engaged art.

In 2011, Santomauro co-founded Vessel in Bari, Italy, a non-profit arts organisation dedicated to public programming in relation to contemporary social, political, and economic issues. In 2015-2016, Santomauro was ESP and Public Programmer at Eastside Projects (Birmingham). In 2018 she was Curator-in-Residence at Grand Union in Birmingham, where she co-curated the public programme *Voz Rara*. She is PhD candidate at the University of Wolverhampton (UK). [www.artscatalyst.org]

Zoyander Street is an artist, researcher, and critic. Their practice focuses on videogames, but also involves other forms of media art and (mis)uses of technology. They work with toxic garbage, be that through recycling old computers that were destined for landfill, or through recontextualising trauma in history and ethnography. [www.zoyander.cc]

Friday, 14 February 2020

The second day of The Artist's Journey is the result of a new partnership between Sheffield Hallam University and the National Association of Fine Art Educators (NAFAE). Today's presentations aim to shed light on the practices, interest and groups that operate at the fringes of or outside of the 'professional' and formal structures of art education. Art schools frequently facilitate or tolerate groups of students (and staff) that take it upon themselves to meet regularly to produce work or dialogue — to explore or talk about content or means of producing, to share opportunities, draw together, put on a show, develop performance, constructively criticise each other's work, etc. These groups are part of a long tradition of informal education practices that operate within and often beyond the art school. They are situated, at least partially, outside the art school and relate to a broader social and cultural community, often pointing to alternative economies and realities.

Indeed, should art schools and higher education develop strategies for identifying these groups and infrastructure for supporting them? If this is an outcome of the art school that promotes or produces alternative futures, does it also require an alternative relationship with the institution? Is there a danger that any formal directive to form or maintain these 'communities of practice' (Wenger and Snyder, 2000) might generate empty shells devoid of the members personal interest and passion, their characteristic defining feature?

Selected by committee at NAFAE, today's presentations will ask about different models of groups, and the strategies evolved within the group that structure members' interactions. What role can and should the art school play in identifying and maintaining relationships with emerging groups and networks of artists, producers or researchers? What are the

models for art schools taking responsibility for nurturing and incubating opportunities for younger artists, activists, designers, and curators?

Schedule

9:00 – 10:15 -- Registration

9:30 – 10:00 -- NFAFE AGM chaired by Paul Haywood and Linden Reilly

10:15 – 10:45 -- Introductions by Paul Haywood and Rose Butler

10:45 – 11:15 -- **Keynote talk** by Kerry Campbell, Artistic Director of Mansions of the Future, Lincoln

11:15 – 11:30 -- Break

11:30 – 12:00 -- "Approaching Affective Zero" Andrew Bracey

12:00 – 12:30 -- "Artivism and/as Communities of Practice: Precarious Workers Brigade (UK) and The Consortium for Postartistic Practices (Poland)" Dr Marsha Bradfield

12:30 – 14:00 -- Lunch break and zine workshop led by Womp Space's Hannah Lamb & Lucy Lound at Hygge Café

14:00 – 14:30 -- "Temporary Totalities: Reimagining the world through collective fictioning in a contemporary art practice" Lesley Guy [HPO Café] // "FLAG – A student art collective past, present and future" Katrine Hjelde [MA Studio]

14:30 – 15:00 -- "The S Project - a 'by proxy' proposition. (two women walking towards each other)" Gudrun Filipka (Arts Territory Exchange) **and Carley Butler** [HPO Café] // "Failing Positively: Cross disciplinary collaboration as an approach to creative freedom" **Caroline Wright** [MA Studio]

15:00 – 15:15 -- Break

15:15 – 15:45 -- "Routine, Regulation, Resistance: What do the behaviours of artists tell us?" Jo Addison and Natasha Kidd [HPO Café] // Les Monaghan workshop [MA Studio]

15:45 – Discussion

Abstracts



Approaching Affective Zero – Andrew Bracey (University of Lincoln / General Practice / Mansions of the Future)

General Practice [gP] is an artist collective living and working from Lincoln, UK. Promoting exchange with wider artist led initiatives nationally and internationally [gP] seeks to stimulate a critical discourse, and sustain an engaged visual arts culture in the city through the programming of exhibitions, events and workshops.

Mansions of the Future is an arts and cultural hub in Lincoln brought to life through a public programme of free talks, workshops, communal lunches and family activities, alongside national and international artistic commissions.

Artivism and/as Communities of Practice: Precarious Workers Brigade (UK) and The Consortium for Postartistic Practices (Poland) – Dr Marsha Bradfield (University of the Arts London)

Bridging art and activism, ‘artivism’ can galvanise art students, art educators and others who recognise the winner-takes-all economy of the commercial artworld as precluding the 99% from success in this scheme.

This presentation will begin with pitching artivism as an ‘alternative’ value system for cultural production dedicated to social change for the greater good. This understanding will prime consideration of two examples. The first is a UK-based group of precarious workers in culture and education. While the collective is currently on hiatus, its 2017 publication *Training for Exploitation? Politicising Employability and Reframing Education* is an invaluable resource for ‘teaching’ artivism. This activist-based community of practice (CoP) will be compared with another. The Consortium for Postartistic Practices is proliferating in Poland. This CoP’s activity includes but is not limited to anti-fascist struggle, which entails coordinating activity such as *Never Again: Art Against War and Fascism in the 20th and 21st Centuries* (MOMA, Warsaw, October 2019).

I will draw on these examples to consider tactics and strategies for art educators to support students in engaging in artivism. Central here is the role that CoPs play in organising artivism and vice versa, and the complex and often privileged role that educators assume in these matrixes, especially when they aspire to be flat hierarchies.

Exquisite Corpse / Care Dialogue – Lucy Lound and Hannah Lamb (Womp Space)

Womp co-founders Hannah Lamb and Lucy Lound will be hosting a collaborative zine workshop and shared dialogue discussing practices of care, do-it-yourself spaces and studio culture. Together we will share our own questions and experiences in the form of some super chill doodling, which will then be produced into a zine and redistributed.

Join them over our lunch break at the Hygge Café (*make sure you sign up at the registration desk!*) for some honest conversations. Lucy and Hannah will share their experiences in setting up Womp, their values and ethos of running the studio and will introduce Lucy's self-published zine series *Itchy Spaghetti*.

They will then go into an exquisite corpse activity in which each participant will ask a question and draw a body part, then pass around for the next person to answer the question, who will in turn pose a question of their own. We will end up with a series of mini dialogues. These will be scanned and printed in zine form on the day, which can then be given out to anyone who participated/anyone else who would like one.

Temporary Totalities: Reimagining the world through collective fictioning in a contemporary art practice – Lesley Guy, Northumbria University

With this paper I will present an introduction to the research I have begun that investigates the value of collective art making as a response to the enforced individualism and inability to affect change associated with neo-liberal conditioning. I ask: how can collaborative art practices and fictionalising modes such as storytelling, and game playing be used to create alternative realities? What roles do individuals play within collaboration and what are the tensions between the goal of collaborative practice to undo individualisation and the needs and 'hang ups' of individual artists? The research is informed by Donna Haraway's idea of symposium or making with as a response to the current crisis of the Capitalocene, and Felix Guattari's work on group therapy. I use the methodology of the collective practice, TOTALLER; an expansive, destructive-creative process that draws in mythologies, histories, anachronism, fantasies and play to activate new narratives and stimulate agency. Exploring the diversities and conflicts that occur when artists work together and the potentials of ignorance and incompetence to liberate. The presentation will focus on The Friends of TOTALLER, a group of artists in Newcastle, that experiment with a range of creative techniques and processes for opening up and making connections. I will talk about our attempts at making with which include: guided meditations, group making activities, quaker-style meetings, initiation and de-initiation rituals, choreographed and improvised performance, creative writing workshops, chanting, historical field trips and role play gaming. I will share what we have learned from working together so far. The presentation will include a short guided meditation/visualisation.

FLAG – A student art collective past, present and future – Katrine Hjelde (Chelsea College of Art)

As part of my PhD research, I instigated a collective called FLAG in 2010, a student led investigation of the 'educational turn' in the art world. For the initial event, through an exhibition, a symposium and publications, students, staff and invited speakers generatively 'returned' to ideas of pedagogy as art within the art educational institution. This came out the Education turn (Rogoff) which was gaining momentum in the art world at this time. For this project, BA, MA and Research students worked together around shared interests and concerns relating to art and pedagogy. FLAG was an attempt to explore and fuse pedagogic scholarly research and contemporary art practice. I was interested in further developing ideas around student-centred teaching within learning environments by creating reflexive art projects that that could be used towards facilitating exchange, learning and development, drawing on performativity, collaboration and which considered art education as a socially engaged practice.

From a one off even FLAG developed into an ongoing project and collective which worked in partnership with other institutions, including the one where it had first developed – University of the Arts, London. We were included in events and symposia at places like Tate Britain, Royal College of Art and The Showroom Gallery. We also travelled abroad – taking part in a symposium at Hordland art centre in Bergen and contributing to the Paradox Fine Art conferences in Poznan and Granada. With the group I received post-doc AHRC funding (UK Arts and Humanities Research Council) to further explore the intersection between art pedagogy in the art school and in the art world. We also authored a paper for the Journal of Higher Education in Art, Design and Education and over time developed some baking skills through what we called our 'cake methodology': an attempt to always bring or otherwise provide home make cake for our events or to events where we were guests.

Now 20 years after our first symposium and exhibition in 2010, it seem timely to reflect back on this project in relation to the NFAE conference theme and on the changing climate for these extracurricular activities in the art school. A current concern is that projects like these, outside the structure and curriculum, can be seen to support only already strong self-selecting students. How can these projects or the spirit of these projects move to the centre of the student experience – for all students? This presentation will be by myself and by one of the BA students involved at the time, Isabelle Gressel - in conversation. Isabelle graduated in 2012 and is an artist who works in different capacities in the art school, as well as beyond, and she was active within FLAG on and off during its key years.

The S Project - a 'by proxy' proposition (Two women walking towards each other) – Gudrun Filipka (Arts Territory Exchange) and Carly Butler

'S' is a collaborative project between Gudrun Filipka and the Canadian artist Carly Butler and involves a combination of real and virtual walking, various documented mapping processes and various print and photographic works - we would like to propose a paper expanding some of the themes present in our project focussed around what we see as a

carving out of our own literal and metaphorical pathways at a time when we are limited by our role as parents of young children and are removed from the structures (urban and academic) which had previously nourished our artistic practice.

Failing Positively: Cross disciplinary collaboration as an approach to creative freedom – Dr Carla Rees and Caroline Wright (Open College of the Arts)

The Open College of the Arts is an open-access distance-learning HE institution. Students work independently from home under the guidance of specialist tutors.

In the Fine Art degree programme, students develop ambitious work in a wide range of media. However, Music students tend to have a more traditional, risk averse approach, often feeling a need to perfect work before releasing for feedback. This context established an opportunity for the two departments to work together to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, developing a space for ex-curricular creative practice with a focus on process over outcome. The informal, experimental space redefined failure and success and allowed students the chance to learn vital collaboration skills as well as developing experimental approaches through exposure to each other's disciplines. We collaborated alongside students, devising our own creative output to promote a non-hierarchical learning journey.

After a six-month online process, students presented their work face-to-face in London in July 2019. We will outline the findings of the project, including discussion of problems faced, exploring both process and outcomes. We will present examples of student work, and our own work devised as part of the project, as well as outlining areas for future exploration.

Routine, Regulation, Resistance: What do the behaviours of artists tell us? – Jo Addison and Natasha Kidd

Inventory of Behaviours invites artists to consider their rituals and habits to devise an instruction enabling someone else to enact them. This paper explores these preparations, patterns and procrastinations, drawing on data gathered from recent performance events, where the behaviours are enacted by visitors and scrutinised by interdisciplinary specialists. We attempt to understand what bearing these activities, which surround 'production', might have on the way we understand creativity. Crying, sleeping, staring, running would appear to be strategies, conscious or not, which have become integral to the itineraries of artists; necessary, even fundamental patterns of experience. So, can they be considered as work?

Les Monaghan Workshop

[info to come from Linden and Silvie, TBC]

Key addresses

Main venue:

Sheffield Institute of Arts
Fitzalan Square
Sheffield S1 2AY

Places to eat within a short walk:

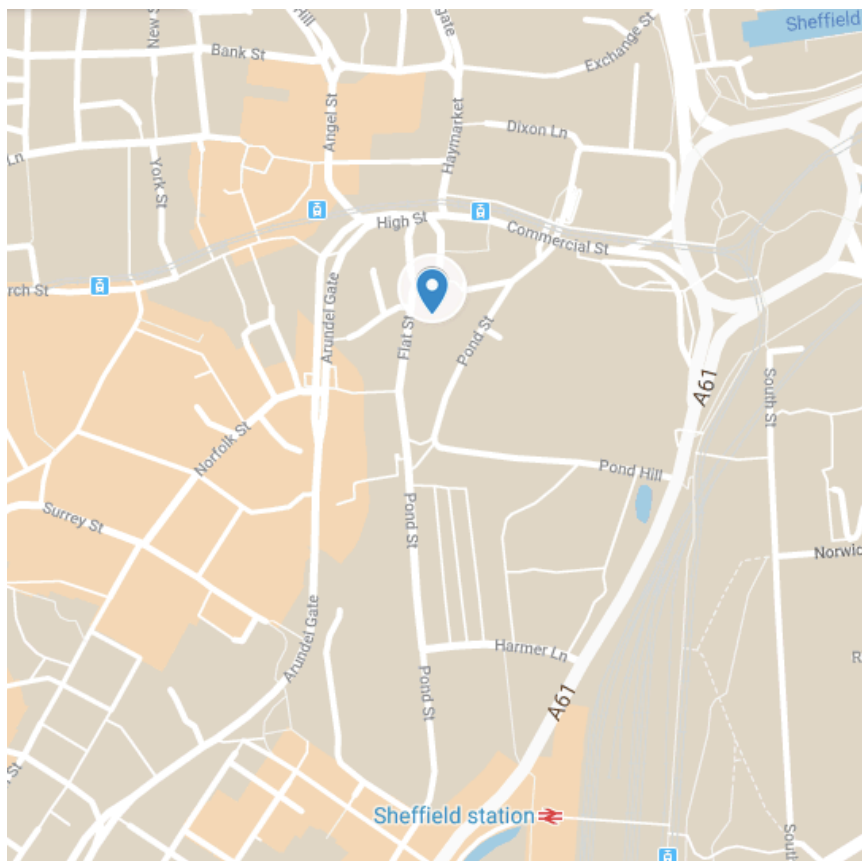
Kommune
[a food court featuring different stalls]
Castle House
Angel St
Sheffield S3 8LS

Kollective Kitchen @ Site
Gallery
[fresh salads, sandwiches, hot food]
1 Brown St
Sheffield S1 2BS

Blue Moon Café
[vegetarian food]
2 St James' St
Sheffield S1 2EW

*Hygge Café
[hot and cold sandwiches]
14 Fitzalan Square
Sheffield S1 2AZ

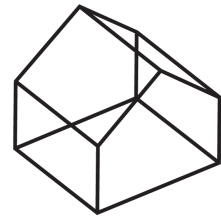
*Hygge Café are hosting a lunchtime chat and zine workshop with Womp Space co-founders and artists Lucy Lound & Hannah Lamb. In order to keep with the 30-person capacity, please sign up at the registration desk. Thank you!



Map showing the venue

This conference was made possible with the generous support of:

**Sheffield
Hallam
University**



Bloc
Projects

National Association
NAFAE for
Fine Art
Education

*mansion
of the future*

Y **V** Yorkshire & Humber
Contemporary
A **N** Visual Arts Network

S **C** SHEFFIELD
CREATIVE
G GUILD