

# NAFAE

## ***Fine Art education as a site of social and political resistance, initiative and engagement***

### **COURTING RESISTANCE**

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*I live yet do not live in me,  
Am waiting as my life goes by,  
And die because I do not die*

- San Juan de la Cruz

*FAUST. What is your name?*

*MEPHISTOPHELES. The question is absurd,  
Surely, in one who seeks to know  
The inmost essence, not the outward show,  
And has such deep contempt for the mere word*

*FAUST. Ah, with such a gentleman as you  
The name often conveys the essence too,  
Clearly enough, we say Lord of the Flies  
Destroyer, Liar - each most fittingly applies.  
Well then, who are you?*

- Goethe, *Faust*

This co-authored paper will address the forms of personal and even absurd resistance with which those working in fine art education might engage in order, not so much to make sense of the current climate, but to work through and fruitfully survive it. Key to this will be an understanding and elaboration of resistance as a visceral and almost erotic quality, sublimated within a sometimes necessary acquiescence or strategic restraint.

*Courting Resistance* will draw on the artistic method of autobiographical over-identification as a drive that seeks to find meaning in the circumstantial. The poetry of San Juan de la Cruz and the story of Faust, as the specific namesakes of the authors, both artists and writers working in fine art education, will be discussed in relation to the lure of identification, the desire for the Other, the attempt to become oneself, and the impossibility of achieving formal recognition for who we think we are, and who we think we ought to be. Resistance here takes the form of personal protest, as a battle of internal forces that both shape and are shaped by learning, identification and the acquisition and integration of knowledge.