

“Supporting Arts and Enterprise Skills in Communities through Creative Engagement with the Local Area”

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Abstract: The project proposes a framework and methodology of artistic and creative social intervention that empowers and supports engagement with communities of young people affected by change in their local environment. This is a UK Arts and Humanities Research Council funded Knowledge Transfer Fellowship aimed at building new and innovative models of creative community engagement and collaboration. The project supports active citizenship among young people by facilitating social capacity building through enterprise structures and transferring the creative lead in socially responsive arts projects to those in need of empowerment. The initial action research project is utilising an arts and enterprise participation model to create self-branded commodities that will give a role to young people within a wider, community driven, gun crime reduction and social cohesion programme. The model seeks to sustain the commitment of those participating by focussing on metrics and benchmarks that young people in the project can own and influence. The blend of creative agendas and enterprise goals provides a breadth of purpose and opportunity, linking outputs to specific environmental and social impacts. The project evidences the role and function of arts media in multi-strand learning and participation projects. The approach is evolving through experiential processes and action based learning for transferable life skills; mostly centred on School and other formal educational settings the project provides a methodology emphatic of team and collaborative process, individual responsibility and creativity. The process develops ownership and shared responsibility in relation to community initiatives; fostering fresh creativity and a diversity of approach in the exploration of social, environmental and change related issues arising from economic disadvantage. The transfer process is targeting a toolkit relating to multi-agency project working, creative research, enterprise simulation and applied social arts practices.

Keywords: Art and Design, Enterprise Cells, Innovation and Empowerment, Action Learning Project based Learning, Kinaesthetic Learning, Social Regeneration



Project

THE CURRENT KNOWLEDGE Transfer Fellowship project referenced in this paper proposes the transfer of a framework and methodology of artistic and creative social intervention that supports engagement with and empowers communities of young people affected by change in their local environment. Knowledge Transfer, used in this context, enables community organisations and agents for social capacity building to hand the creative lead in socially inclusive arts projects to groups and individuals at the margins of consultation. From the experience of previous and related initiatives it is clear that the combination of arts and enterprise sustains the commitment of those included and provides metrics and benchmarks that the young people can control and own. The blend of creative agendas and enterprise goals gives opportunities for linking outputs to the specific environmental and social context.

Throughout our practice related to the research theme, we have maintained that one privilege of the arts practitioner in this relationship is to work with the unknown despite the context of outcome driven economic and social goals and regeneration metrics. By this we mean that it is centrally important to the integrity of the research that the arts input is not service led but conducted in the spirit of what Beuys referred to as ‘Social Sculpture’; inquisitive and interactive aesthetic systems and problematising gestures that, none the less, react and respond to extraneous stimuli and offer the prospect of an evolutionary and empowering social connectivity.

“Every human being is an artist, a freedom being, called to participate in transforming and reshaping the conditions, thinking and structures that shape and inform our lives”¹

Started in 2009 and continuing through 2011, the current practice research projects referenced here, specifically what we have titled ‘Guns to Goods’ and the subsidiary ‘Wearpeace’ project,

¹ Joseph Beuys. Quoted at: <http://www.social-sculpture.org/>

build on earlier pilot studies that explored the process of arts intervention in schools based enterprise projects. The proposed methodology or model of practice looks at combining multi-agency sources of influence to facilitate collaborative practice with young people or other learning communities. Typical to the scenario under scrutiny is the presence of a recognisable negative impact or deficit from social and economic conditions of direct relevance to the participant group. It can be said that the target groups are subject to factors that would indicate multiple deprivation or disadvantage relative to average norms in the larger society. The arts intervention highlighted here leads to a reappraisal of the social and geo-specific site and to the recognition of opportunities for direct action and enterprise that have the potential for remoulding and reshaping the prevailing social balance in favour of the participant group. Artists, educationalists, civil and municipal entities provide the relevant partnership and support to facilitate the evolution and growth of agency and enterprise. The basic aspiration is a shared concept, a fresh vision and not necessarily the completion of a new thing or a new and sustainable business; that would be exceeding expectations at this stage of our research development.

Background Information

This research is undertaken by artist practitioners and academics based at the University of Salford through collaboration on case study scenarios with active partners in the third and public sector in the Salford and Manchester conurbation. The initial project and concepts have materialised through close consort with the charity CARISMA (Campaign Alliance for Renewal in the South Manchester Area), The Greater Manchester Police and, in a parallel project, with Albion High School in Salford and Salford City Council.

Paul Haywood, Sam Ingleson and others have collaborated on Social Arts Intervention projects in the public realm through a small number of commissions since 1999. The patrons and originators of these commissions have been public agencies concerned with environmental renewal and economic regeneration. As such, the client relation has been primarily focussed on perceived problems that, by inference, require resolution. A common precept of this type of commissioning is a dedication to public participation leading to consultative value and the notion of a socially responsive art action and inclusive process.

“Art, in the sense of writing, designing, performing and drawing, can also reflect what is meaningful to people about a place. But the contribution of art and artists is more than merely placing a piece of public art in front of a building, or staging a performance in a public space. This is narrow thinking. When Artists are engaged in placemaking the way they think and address issues can fundamentally affect the outcome, by broadening the scope of what is conceivable, and by helping professionals and communities to unlock their creativity and find better ways of expressing themselves.”²

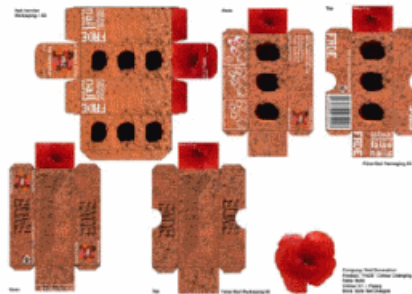
In 2005, the Salford Innovation Park and Salford city Council commissioned researchers and recent graduates from the School of Art and Design at the University of Salford to investigate the urban territory surrounding the new Park with the goal of compiling a visual and media catalogue and exhibition of interpretation materials and public liaison consultation.

² CABE (Commission for Art in the Built Environment) from ‘Artists and Places: Engaging Creative Minds in Regeneration. Published on-line in 2005. Available at: <http://www.cabe.org.uk/files/artists-and-places.pdf>

There was an understanding that architects, planners, social and economic development professionals might use this as a resource or as a stimulant for further community liaison practice. One specific aspect of the work was a collection of colours abstracted from the local and traditional building materials of the area (‘Salford Red’ by Haywood and Kennedy). The architects Faulkner Brown wove the colours into the design of the main hub building on the site, completing an integrated public art work that wrapped around the building and within its interior spaces in 2007.

In the event the public partnership supporting the local regeneration programme collapsed and stalled and the cost consultants for the project failed to continue any of the neighbourhood liaison work that had been originally suggested. Consequently, most of the inevitable negative impacts from redevelopments on the immediate community was largely unchecked and unobserved. Dissatisfied by the process, Ingleson and Haywood approached the local School and a group of 14 year old pupils, asking for help in exploiting concepts for further action that might be stimulated by the ‘Salford Red’ colour range. REDGENERATION was an Art and Enterprise partnership between the School of Art and Design at the University of Salford and Albion High School in Salford. Between 2006 and 2008 this project evolved into an enterprise initiative and extended curriculum project that affected new qualifications for the pupils involved and brought about product concepts that related directly to the location and ‘living’ networks around the School and the Innovation Park. If further set in motion an approach to enterprise action in schools in the wider region. The origins of the concept were embedded within Fine Art practices and the projects utilised artists and their habits of enquiry and observation to foster and stimulate innovation and risk in the conceptualisation of enterprise and learning.

The Albion High School, ‘REDGENERATION project sought to design, commission and bring to market Salford branded products, based on the colour range that reflected the identity of the local area. Known collectively as FADE products, the range included; coloured false nails, nail varnish and shoelaces and utilised cutting edge photo-chromatic chemical engineering provided by James Robinson PLC. In the two years of the project, REDGENERATION managed to proto-type, amongst other things, an urban range of nail varnish that was invisible out of Ultra-Violet light and ‘Salford Red’ when worn outdoors.



FADE Product Range and Packaging, RedGENERATION and Albion High School

The pupils at Albion quickly formed the concept of an enterprise entity with the projected goal of generating surplus that they could then direct for charitable giving, thereby taking control over patronage and philanthropy as the ultimate empowerment. They had a central

purpose that bound them as a group and helped them to relate their activities to their families and wider friendship groups; that was that the area was changing rapidly through urban renewal planning and their activities found a voice within that process. Their ambitious goals were eventually constrained by time and the complexity of the task. Full production and commercialisation remained beyond the reach of the project. However, the group stayed together for 2 years and, in that time, exhibited their 'art' twice in public galleries and presented the whole project at the International Sociology Conference on Discourses, Power and Resistance in 2007. For the researchers and artists involved, the achievements of the young people in the project excited the possibility for the application of similar processes in comparable contexts. Current funding from the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council is enabling the team to test and refine a model or method of practice for transfer to public and third sector partners.



Year 11 Pupils Presenting REDGENERATION Products at an International Conference

Local, Social Context and Campaign Themes (*CARISMA Partnership*)

The Knowledge Transfer Fellowship referenced in this paper commenced in 2009 with a project designed in consort with CARISMA (Community Alliance for Renewal, Inner South Manchester Area).³ Importantly, this has contrasted from any of our previous projects in so far as there is a pre-existing business goal that belongs to the Social Enterprise partner and that they represent both the stakeholder community and the public agent. The approach we have previously adopted for our research has merged a Public or Social Arts agenda with action enterprise education; this forms the basis for a method of Creative Community Engagement that finds currency with public funding for the arts and with publicly financed micro-regional regeneration and renewal.

³ <http://www.carisma.me.uk>

*The role of the arts is to improve consultation and communication with residents, a role that can be vitally important during times of major change and regeneration... Equally evident are the more personal and social impacts of these art projects, the ways in which they have transformed individual lives, helped bind communities more closely together and created a sense of pride and identity.*⁴

There is a sense of programme or timeline rather than a dependence on completion to prove value or impact. In this regard, the context provided by CARISMA does not deviate from current practices in arts commissioning, however, the notion of the public realm is less tangible as it is defined by principle and politics and by social enterprise rather than physical entities or places.

With reference to the research and practice methodology relevant under discussion, the normal approach to initiating engagement would typically involve an investigative and open creative enquiry concerned with the local environmental or social context. What invokes that process is effectively a proposed intervention or set of desired outcomes that, in themselves, may not be formal. The case studies under development and trial for this Knowledge Transfer Fellowship are informed by political contexts that have found voice (or opposition) from within the communities affected rather than the normal source of patronage affecting public commissioning. In each instance the role of the artist was originally perceived as facilitating a predicted outcome or set of outcomes that have been conceived in response to local conditions. If the artist in role is to properly form influence and creative scope within the social network belonging to the initiative then it is essential that the outcomes proposed may alter during or as a result of the process of creative research and observation. One purpose of the process is to attract consultative dialogue between people and parties involved (stakeholders and activists) and to archive (store) creative and reflective responses to landscapes, sites or experience and from there produce both artworks and (more likely) proposals for enterprise action relevant to the location of the work. It is very likely that many of the outcomes will take the form of shared narratives and baseline concepts in the initial stages of the project and an important element of risk comes from the fact that things may not progress (in actual space) from that concept space.

What we seek to address in working within the current ‘Guns to Goods’ partnership with CARISMA and the regional Police is that the formal commission brief and imposed expectation of a public art output might be replaced by a shared idealistic principle; in this instance, one that is very easy to agree with but one that has suspended the creative risk that open research and enquiry would normally tender and replaced it with a much more speculative contention that is most commonly associated with free enterprise processes; that of failure.

CARISMA are a community based charity focused on a fractured neighbourhood; their mission is to promote peace, tolerance and community cohesion in areas of South Manchester affected by violent crime. Having identified potential barriers through the assessment of earlier initiatives, the REDGENERATION⁵ concept was rolled out to other Schools and locations and to the civic partnership engaged with CARISMA in their social cohesion and gun crime reduction initiatives. As our project and practice based research continues we are

⁴ Peter Hewitt, Arts Council England. 2008

⁵ REDGENERATION was the name given to an Arts and Enterprise in Schools initiative that ran with Albion High School and the researchers at the University of Salford between 2006 and 2008. The project is outlined later in this paper.

aware of a space for education and experiential learning sitting just outside of the physical environment of the school and distinct from the educational infrastructure that normally progresses students towards qualifications as an end goal. We are further conscious of both positive and negative impacts on creative dynamics posed by the existence of a potential to address very specific needs and concerns that form part of a communities identity. The current project work with the community partnership in South Manchester is seeking to confront the growth of gun culture in the area. For that aspiration to succeed, multi-agency co-ordination, media facing public relations and managing advance funding streams will all have to be mastered. The initiative is progressing rapidly and is benefitting from broad support; the concept and the narrative are both easily understood and popular. Our current problem is in maintaining the speculative and creative space (opportunities) necessary to progress beyond the initial concept and transcend the normal parameters and achievements of enterprise education and disrupt the balance of expectations within the social landscape sufficiently so that we can access deeper levels of experience and expression; so that we do not loose the cultural opportunities that arise from art as an activity distinct from enterprise. Already, the *Guns to Goods* project in South Manchester looks likely to grow and succeed as social enterprise, with or without the onward influence of artists. Effectively, the artists function and specific role in driving a new project has been satisfied (therefore resolved) by the inception of the idea and the process of growth at the early interface of the project. The challenge for us as both artists and researchers, is to maintain our stake in a project that can make a significant and positive contribution to neighbourhoods and networks but can also satisfy our creative aspirations as participants. In this setting our partners, CARISMA, are extremely experienced, professional and effective in what they, as an organization, have always sought to achieve. Less certain, though worth testing, is the sense that artists can perform well in a contributory role in enterprise or politics and, at the same time, extend the creative value, energy and reach of the unfolding narrative.

Art, Enterprise and Activism: Guns to Goods (WEARPEACE)



Grinding Hand Held Firearms for Decommissioning, tp Prepare for Transfer to the Foundry

The 'Guns to Goods' programme started as a fresh initiative in 2008 when CARISMA, University of Salford artist researchers and the Greater Manchester Police, resolved to collaborate a community impact project that would recycle gun metal taken from the police armoury into new forms of positive value. The aim was to harness and develop a campaign culture, with affected communities, aiming to remove firearms and replica guns from circulation and reduce the incidence of gun related crime. This ongoing research project engages with young people within the Manchester Metropolitan area, who are at greatest risk of becoming involved in gang and gun culture as victims, witnesses and/or offenders. The project has developed a working partnership between the University of Salford, CARISMA (Community Alliance for Renewal, Inner South Manchester Area), the Greater Manchester Police and the Safer Schools Partnership in south Manchester. South Manchester has been blighted by gun crime with a number of high profile incidents over the last few years that have impacted on the young people of the area. Gun crime is strongly linked to the gang culture affecting parts of the City. This is, in turn, linked to a whole range of other crimes that involve young people. The 'Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime' 2004 and the report 'Hoodie to Goodie', Victim Support 2007, provide evidence of a genuine causal link between victimisation and offending in young people, running in both directions. Simply put being a victim at 12 is a significant indicator of offending by 15; in very basic terms, a self-seeding demand side economy. CARISMA and other charities based in inner urban Manchester are working to counter street violence and insecurity and build social cohesion.

*In 2006/2007 Greater Manchester saw a 9% increase in incidents from 110 in 2005/2006 to 120 incidents. Six of the discharges resulted in a fatality, including the death of Jessie James. Jessie's death reflects our greatest concern; the increased victimisation of young people in the community by those involved in firearms criminality.*⁶

There is a pressing need to develop alternatives to a gun and gang culture now existing in parts of South Manchester, in common with similar urban and inner city contexts. This project is designed to help local schools, third sector organisations and individuals to run additional activities that engage young people to develop skills and interests that can promote opportunities and choices for direct action. The long term goal of the project is to roll out the similar initiatives to all districts of the region, specifically those where violent and weapons based crime represent a serious issue for communities engaged in the project.

⁶ Erinna Bell, MBE, Chair of CARISMA, 2008.



Pouring Molten Gun Metal into the Green Sand Moulds

Effectively, the project promotes a growing resistance and negativity towards gun culture by developing positive solutions for the recycling of gun metal into usable and symbolic commodities. The project is developing a number of concepts for manufacturing and commercial products that can be marketed to prospective buyers as a stand against gun crime. After decommissioning, the guns provide raw material for manufacturing processes, either by furnace smelting into molten metal or vaporisation into metal powder.

“Guns to Goods” and more lately “WEARPEACE” have involved working with campaign type activities, utilising visuals to unify protagonists and participants in an attempt to move visual messaging forward. As part of this campaign, young people from the Safer Schools partnership in Manchester, Moss Side were invited to create a range of clothing and accessories under the “Wearpeace” label to be sold commercially to promote a ‘save a life not take a life’ message. It is envisaged that all the clothes/accessories will contain a small quantity of decommissioned gun metal or ballistics – as designer tags or fashion details, to reinforce the message of every garment purchased will help to take another gun out of circulation. The long term aim is to establish a Community Interest Company with representatives from the local community, CARISMA and the University Project team on the board. The target of our endeavour is to evolve a company that can raise commercial benefit from a product range, once it has evolved beyond proto-typing and into production and distribution chains, with the intention of generating income to be put back into the community to fund gun crime reduction initiatives. This may be understood as the theory and goal behind this specific project, or it could be viewed as the collective narrative; the folklore or story. At the moment, it may not even be true as it may not succeed, but it is already impactful in that it has created a platform and belief that has both owners and an audience. This example is specific to the focussed needs of collaborative partners that already operate as social enterprises in the Inner South Manchester urban area and evidences how existing networks and partnerships can make use of creativity and design in their own processes to build larger and more invasive social campaign messages.



‘Wearpeace’ is one of the Brand Messages Devised through the ‘Guns to Goods’ Initiatives with CARISMA. The ‘Wearpeace’ logo Badge is made Entirely from Gun Metal taken from Gun Amnesties.

Engagement: Creative Space, Social Intervention

Whilst we recognise multiple discourses that have informed or influenced the currency of public policy and tactics relating to public art curatorship and management in the context of regeneration planning, we are mostly concerned about the viability of creative and art actions subject to metrics outside of their primary motivation. In other words, we are continuing to question whether art should be used for problem solving at all given that its processes tend towards divergent techniques of material, aesthetic (systems) and conceptual inquiry. Even where commissioning trends have moved away from basic inclusion and social participation models, there is then, an expectation that Art in the Public Realm has the capacity to brand or transform a given space into a meaningful and culturally active place with a specific set of qualities and sensorial readings that may be shared by different audiences. A recent briefing document prepared by Arts Council England for consultants asked to scope the potential for Art in the Public Realm investments at the new Media City UK development on Salford Quays stated that,

‘Arts Council England recognises the important role artists can have in making places that are enjoyable, stimulating, diverse and attractive. The contribution of artists, whether through the ‘process’ or ‘product’ can raise public awareness of and aspirations for public space, and can significantly enhance the creation of a sense of place.’⁷

⁷ Tanya Bryan, Arts Council England. 2009.

As experienced practitioners, we remain suspicious of even the notional gesture of pre-judging the context for a responsive art action; there is a commission because there is a perceived problem that art can address or there is a cultural investment because it will add social or aesthetic value to the environment. Neither stance can be guaranteed (nor realistically measured) and it is arguable that either undermines the very nature and, therefore, value of art (and enterprise) in a communicant (social) framework. There is also the possibility that ambitions of this nature are constraining and detract from the characteristics and typical values of art as a cultural praxis. Challenge, risk, diversification, entropy, subtlety and sensuousness are all, potentially, put asunder in a realm where the solution obscures tasks leading to discovery. As such, the ‘inclusion’ sought in collaborative processes is most likely to be reactive or correspondent in nature rather than leading or original.

In relation to Ingleson and Haywood’s collaborations that apply to this research project, the priority is not for the production of art works (or even proposals for artworks) that have the capacity to function as palliatives to identified and well-known problems associated with post-industrial urban spaces and social communities. Rather, there is an attempt to share an agenda that highlights a sense of a creative space – both in material form and narrative process – that will direct thinking and making towards positive outcomes.

‘A ny sense of arts production should, therefore, be re-defined as a process that might remain in the reflexive domain - as an anxious and highly speculative set of aspirations or possibilities, or maybe lead to the re-configuration of conceptual positions, or, and most excitingly, as the manipulation and magical juxtaposition of materials and making processes that lead to the creation of art.’⁸

Applied to the contemporary conditions and requirements of public realm and arts in regeneration commissioning the inference is that social interactivity is the core enterprise and goal and that the roles covered by the artists might assist that enterprise or stimulate networking and social connection. It might be that the suggestion of a Creative Moment, or the expectation of Art as a shared cultural experience, is understood as essential to the aspiration of a shared vision and sustainable community cohesion around the changes scheduled or intended for an area/environment. Methods may typically, though not exclusively, be tied to arts practices and contemporary arts in the public realm planning and development but those methods appear to be better digested when presented as enterprise or collective action. What we currently observe is that no matter how ambitious and elusive the goals might become, the core motive of all practitioners and partners involved in the process remains the process and discovery of new creativity and opportunity rather than its realisation.

Social Enterprise Activism can be a medium of artistic creation within which shared identities are recognisable because of common experiences. In our practice we are constructing a means of expanding on artistic considerations connected to form and aesthetics in social landscape representation to inform collective action; echoing notions of social constructivist education (engagement) but also requiring all active participants to recognise a shared concept or value. The challenge is how to harness or even step outside the mechanisms which interpellate and regulate a community’s representations, recognisable identities and values, in

⁸ Tim Dunbar, Exhibition statement, ‘FN3’. Arup Gallery, Manchester. 2006.

order to achieve alternative emancipatory forms of social enterprise, educational process and political action (art).

Observations about Art as an Engagement Tool

In *Uneasy Alliances: Art as Observation, Site, and Social Innovation* Kochhar-Lindgren, K. (2008) coins the term ‘revelatory turbulence,’ which he describes as ‘a widening of perceptual fields, and the value of actively engaging in experiences where the subject/object relations are variable, and the recalibration of what we call ‘observation.’ He suggests that in the “context of art work itself, artists have often talked about making as a method of research. This thinking at the microcosmic level (which) keeps us awake and actively listening to the new in a series of ‘ephemeral performances’”.⁹

Throughout his paper Kochhar-Lindgren examines how different types of work could impact on institutional frameworks through emerging conversations with the ‘creative industries’ and more hybrid approaches to transdisciplinary project design, as participants, consider how to make the work ‘count.’ As a result of this growing trend, he asserts, artistic, pedagogical and research practices need to become increasingly mobile, creative, and responsive to diverse communities. Remapping art as research across the university, community, business and politics can then lead to new models for innovation and learning.

As artists and researchers working through our themes for understanding and transferring models of practice that position the arts within regeneration and social inclusion processes we are concerned that the specific qualities of art as a making process should be preserved. We are concerned with a direct engagement with images and objects, informed by our received and embedded knowledge of visual constructs that rely on the elemental properties of the artefact or other output and that might be described as instinctive sensitivities towards balance, harmony, perception and repulsion.

“Don’t think but look”¹⁰

One aspect of our research is intended to rehearse, reiterate and test aspects of analysis based on the observation of formal content and structure and democratise those processes or their outcome to excite other possibilities and different engagements.

“We need to rescue the question of subjectivity from banal biography, from therapeutic narrative (in search of ‘role models’ and ‘self-esteem’) and from predefined positions (‘speaking as a’), and rediscover the innocence of not knowing what we might yet become.”¹¹

⁹ Kochhar-Lindgren, K. (2008) *Uneasy Alliances: Art as Observation, Site, and Social Innovation. Working Papers in Art and Design 5* website accessed 15/7/10 from http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/artdes_research/papers/wpades/vol5/kkl-full.html ISSN 1466-4917

¹⁰ Ludwig Wittgenstein, quoted in *Philosophical Investigations (PI)*, 1953, G.E.M. Anscombe and R. Rhees (eds.), G.E.M. Anscombe (trans.), Oxford: Blackwell. pg66.

¹¹ John Rajchman John Rajchman is a philosopher working in the areas of art history, architecture, and continental philosophy. John Rajchman is Associate Professor and Director of Modern Art M.A. Programs in the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University. Click the link for more information., “Postmodernism in a Nominalist nom-i-nal-ism n. Philosophy The doctrine holding that abstract concepts, general terms, or universals have no independent existence but exist only as names. Click the link for more information. Frame,” *Flash Art International* no. 137, November-December 1987. Reprinted in *Philosophical Events: Essays of the ‘80s*, New York New York, state, United States New York, Middle Atlantic state of the United States. It is bordered by Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and the Atlantic Ocean (E), New Jersey and Pennsylvania (S), Lakes Erie and Ontario and the Canadian province of Click the link for more information. and Oxford: Columbia University Press

In relation to our current research and referencing a number of projects undertaken over the past 10 years it appears that, as artists, we are grappling with a specific anxiety, born of experience from working with the arts in regeneration as a contest between creative intent, commodification and professional re-interpretation. There is a very specific danger in relying on the arts or arts practice in terms of prescription or resolution, that potentially damages the transcendent qualities of essentially poetic media and processes that are enriched by the immediacy of their experience and the richness on their ambiguity. In relation to the process of commissioned (targeted) community engagement, the shared intention (public partners and University researchers) is to emphasise and embed inclusion practices in the decision making process, highlighting solutions and sustainable community cohesion. The danger is that what might evolve verges on public relations as opposed to creative process or art. As our practices with socio-geographic sculpture and creative enterprise activism progress, we are acutely aware of a duality that reaches into the very soul of the cultural contract that allows for some to call themselves and behave as artists and others to act as audience or consumer. Instinctually, as experienced artists, our current anxieties are based on an aversion to good (controlled) behaviour; to the idea of a convergent and complimentary cultural practice that seeks harmony with allied traditions and concedes to the politics of social patronage that frame professionally led regeneration, urban planning and renewal. Conversely, the disruptive and divergent thinking associated with the non-aligned art agenda or creative ingredient in participative and inclusive action is increasingly acknowledged as a key investment in effective engagement practices; presumably leading to social good. If we want to remain distant from the predesigned intent or prescription of our endeavours, if we want to resist predictability and usefulness for the sake of a dynamic and energised creativity, then we are left in the position of antagonist, rather than protagonist.

Columbia University Press is an academic press based in New York City and affiliated with Columbia University. It is currently directed by James D. Jordan (2004-present) and publishes titles in the humanities and sciences, including the fields of literary and cultural studies, Click the link for more information., 1991, pp. 118-125.

About the Authors

Prof. Paul Haywood

Following over 20 years of collaborations and partnerships with artists working on social intervention projects, regeneration initiatives and urban renewal programmes, Haywoods current obsessions are focussed on the arts as a stimulus for collective enterprise and creative social action. Recently, he has developed a modest profile working with governmental bodies, advising and supporting creative community engagement and policy formulation related to inclusive planning processes. As a practitioner and academic researcher his work is designed to cut across discipline fields and engage with a broad spectrum of interest and motivation as a means of generating new enterprise (collective activity) from creative sources. He has worked on a range of outputs from architectural commissions for integrated public art schemes to research with methods of landscape painting to create routes to new social networking. He is currently Principal Investigator on a three year AHRC Knowledge Transfer Fellowship looking at methods of creative engagement and enterprise innovation in community activism; the project is focussed on two initiatives in Salford and the North West that directly confront issues of inclusion and cohesion within specific neighbourhoods. In parallel to these practices, he continues to make and exhibit in the field of contemporary painting and installation.

Sam Ingleson

Sam Ingleson's art practice is centered in social engagement and participatory performances. The most recent project was the creation of a Board Game for Artists and the subsequent performance of that game, to an invited audience. Her artwork is concerned with the dialogues and exchanges that occur between participants when asked to follow a series of rules they have no prior knowledge of and how these actions can be captured. It is a form of socially interactive sculpture that deals with shared spaces and actions. Sam Ingleson's role within the university is to work with the wider community such as schools, to develop innovative projects and new ways of working. She works as part of a team that delivers widening Participation with fellow artist Jo Clements. Together they run a Community Interest Company, Artists and Education that, amongst other things, provides training for both artists and teachers in order to create more sustainable arts projects in schools. Her core research themes are the exploration of creative space and engagement in the formation of artistic strategies that include makers and performers. Most of these are targeted at recognizable participatory groups, though an equal number establish a dynamic intellectual and collaborative environment where almost anything can happen, including new product design.

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