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# **Anthology**

Project Art Works  
1997–2012



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Edited by Kate Adams and Phyllida Shaw

projectart works

For Jonathan David Westlake Cole  
1962–2007



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## Foreword

Charlotte Moore

When my son Sam was ten and a pupil in the Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Unit at Torfield School in Hastings, he had a stroke of luck. Project Art Works set up its geodesic dome in the school playground. The dome was both a portable studio and a lovely space to explore in its own right. Sam spent the blazing days of the summer holidays there, cheerfully immersed to the armpits in bright, blue paint. This was our first contact with Project Art Works. Ten years on, the role it plays in the wellbeing of our family is great, and growing.

Sam is now a member of the Tuesday Studio Group. Week by week, his confidence and sociability grow; he becomes more responsive to the world around him. The fact that he produces striking visual images is almost a side product. His involvement with Project Art Works has increased his enjoyment of life at many levels and the whole family feels the benefit. On Monday nights I remind Sam that he has art tomorrow and am rewarded with the throaty chuckle he reserves for really good news.

Sam's older brother George, also autistic, has attended Project Art Works' summer workshops for several years. From infancy, George has been preoccupied with colour. His emotional response to colour is so intense as to be, at times, overwhelming. At first, at Project Art Works, he stuck to blue and grey, fearing to unleash the power of pink, his true love. The late Jon Cole, working alongside as George created one of his huge, bold abstracts, gently persuaded him to allow pink in. The Project Art Works artists specialise in this kind of tactful guidance. George trusted Jon enough to venture into pink and ever since he has allowed himself to explore the entire spectrum of colour.

If, for George, art is all about colour, for Sam it's all about the process. Sam enjoys the physicality of the materials. He loves to squidge, to scour, to tear. Huge, muscular effort goes into all his productions and at the PAW studio there's space for energy of this kind. For both boys, the finished product is far less important than the act of making. Everyone at Project Art Works understands this outlook. "Art" is on offer at all the various establishments where people with special needs are educated or entertained, but often it doesn't stretch beyond the manufacture of Easter bonnets or Mothers Day cards. Such creations are, of course, fine as far as they go, but the vision of Project Art Works goes a whole lot further.



With them, my sons have the privilege of working alongside gifted artists who persist without imposing, who know how to push just far enough to glimpse unexpected horizons. They are given access to materials of a quality and on a scale that couldn't be managed in any other setting. The workshops are structured, but never dogmatic; art is a journey that is free to meander, not a set of rules leading to a display of preconceived images. Each session is an education in tolerance and co-operation. Sam, like other participants, is autistically aloof and says little, but at Project Art Works he learns to take turns, share equipment, even to enjoy working collaboratively with others.

But what makes Project Art Works truly special is that the privilege works both ways. People with special needs experience the world in ways that are vibrant and original, and the artists are alive to this. Working collaboratively is eye-opening for all. This is beautifully illustrated by the *In Transit* films, made by the Project Art Works and associate artists. Sam was the subject of one of these observational studies. The result is both a tool for educating those who wish to work with Sam and others like him and a moving work of art in its own right.

Project Art Works is all about potential. It is a forum in which human creativity is respected and celebrated, and its continuing development will be an enthralling process.

Charlotte Moore is a writer. *George And Sam*, her book about family life with autism, is published by Penguin

# Introduction

## Kate Adams

*From the fact that people are very different it follows that, if we treat them equally, the result must be inequality in their actual position, and that the only way to place them in an equal position would be to treat them differently.*  
Sandel, Michael J (ed), 2007, *Justice*.  
Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc.

This anthology is a survey of ideas about art, process, collaboration and difference. It provides a celebratory revelation of the vitality and spirit of the children, young people, adults, families, artists, partners and collaborators who have been central to the development of Project Art Works over the past fifteen years. It includes a chronology of projects, reproductions of artworks, documentary material and written pieces by members of the Project Art Works team and by guest contributors about the human, social and cultural content and context of our work.

Project Art Works is an artist-led company. The people who have shaped the organisation share a purpose, which is not to do 'good works' but to pursue a vital enquiry: to find out what someone is capable of and to explore with them the possibilities of art through collaborations that foster choice, subjective preference, intuition and non-verbal interaction. This is infinitely interesting territory. It holds our attention and propels us continually to shape new approaches to art and collaboration.

Within the sphere of complex intellectual disability – which can include physical, sensory, cognitive and certainly communication impairment – little is known about how not knowing or understanding what things are, the property and/or materiality of the world, affect our perception and consciousness. We try to explore this difference through art. In *Strange World, Strange People, Strange Self* (page 212), Paul Shephard resists the temptation to categorise, while considering these other ways of being in and seeing the world.

Many of the people involved in Project Art Works' activities live in the moment. What can be grasped most clearly is the present. In an open studio setting, this focus of interest and time translates into a vitality of mark, colour, composition and choice that occasionally coalesce into exceptional images, although this may be incidental rather than intentional. More often than not, the art lies in the quality of engagement, the happening, the process and the moment. This is why documentary records of actions and workshops are by far the largest element of Project Art Works' archive. These show where the art happens, the moment by moment exchange between artists and individuals, the trace of an encounter. This aspect of collaboration and agency is explored by Laura McLean-Ferris in *A Wandering Line* (page 209).

Over the past two years, we have completed the digitisation of our archive of text, still images and hundreds of hours of video. Here, for the first time, we have been able to cross-reference projects through video stills, Polaroids, digital photographs and transparencies. We have looked for balance in the selection of images, choosing between those that are a record of experience or a happening – the forensic aftermath of a creative exchange (*Untitled 2002*, Laura X, 2002, page 203); others that have been created through a careful process of collaboration and exchange of decisions and choices (*Horses and Stripes*, Michael Bounds, 2011, page 165); and transcriptions of the world and ideas that have a strong and individual language, such as those of Michelle Roberts (page 117); or Eden Kötting's (*Musical Instruments*, 2011, page 191).

Video and sound works are a significant and indispensable aspect of our work. *Sensory Soundings* (2009) poses questions about how we see the world and reveals the tenderness, awareness and sensitivities of people through shared events and observations. The series of *In Transit* films (2010-13) are individual and revealing portraits. *Had a good day?* (2011), directed and edited by Tim Corrigan and the Tuesday Studios artists, explores the immense significance of others in the lives of people with complex needs. This area of our practice and its ethical propositions are the subject of *The art of not knowing*, by Pratap Rughani (page 204).

Project Art Works' programmes touch on ethical issues in many ways and we work closely with people and those who support them to establish ways of determining and monitoring assent, consent and dissent. Consent, involvement, visibility and participation, for people who have severe intellectual impairment, is a continually evolving enquiry and remains an open area of research in our practice.

Our work in visual art embraces socially inclusive projects and models that respond to the day-to-day realities of people who need strong advocacy in order to live as fully as possible in the world. Social care is a complex area of responsibility and human rights. The statutory systems that facilitate people's access to support are continually shifting. However, in recent years, there have been radical and positive changes to the possibilities of person-centred approaches, as outlined by Jill Bradshaw in *Social care: shifts, changes and impact on people with complex needs* (page 12), but there remain inconsistencies and difficulties in implementing policies for systemic change. Joint working with families, support workers and statutory and independent care agencies has become a fundamental part of Project Art Works' practice over the years and we are grateful for these partnerships and the way they have facilitated a more integrated way of working.

A beautiful strand of recognition and connection links the people, actions and aims of the enterprise described in these pages. Each contributor, collaborator and participant is part of an evolving community that considers and embraces the human, artistic and experiential concerns of our work. This anthology is a gift to them and, we hope, an inspiration to others we have yet to meet.

Kate Adams is an artist and Director of Project Art Works. She co-founded the organisation in 1997 with painter Jonathan Cole. In 2012 Kate was awarded an MBE for her work in art and disability

# Social care: shifts, changes and impact on people with complex needs

Jill Bradshaw

Significant changes to services for people with intellectual disabilities have taken place over the past forty years, starting with the 1971 White Paper, *Better Services for the Mentally Handicapped*.<sup>1</sup> This proposed to move people with intellectual disabilities from large institutions to services in the community. The tendency then was to look at people with intellectual disabilities as a homogenous group. This changed with the 1989 White Paper *Caring for People: Community Care in the Next Decade and Beyond*<sup>2</sup> which emphasised the individual needs of people with intellectual disabilities and introduced the concept of care management. The quality of care provided in community settings is generally of a higher standard than that found in institutions, and in the UK there is now a wide acceptance of the need to support people with intellectual disabilities to live in the community.<sup>3</sup> More recently, there has been a move towards 'supported living'<sup>4</sup> in which individuals choose where and with whom they live, with support from advocates and outside agencies to help them to do so.

**Community living and quality of life outcomes**  
Despite the many positive changes, simply moving people from large institutions to smaller-scale, community-based care has not necessarily improved the quality of life of all people with intellectual disabilities.<sup>5</sup> It is of course possible to transfer many of the negative features of institutional living to life in a community house: rigid routines; lack of choice; little opportunity to participate

in activities both in and out of the home; no control over where you live or with whom; limited contact with the wider community, and so on. It becomes institutional living on a much smaller scale. Although it was envisaged that people living in the community would use ordinary services, in reality, most people with intellectual disabilities face barriers to accessing services.<sup>6</sup> In particular, people with complex needs are likely to need ongoing, skilled support to enable them to obtain and maintain a good quality of life and to participate in their community.<sup>7</sup>

**Personalisation**  
According to the Social Care Institute for Excellence,<sup>8</sup> 'personalisation means starting with the person as an individual with strengths, preferences and aspirations and putting them at the centre of the process of identifying their needs and making choices about how and when they are supported to live their lives'. People should feel able to make decisions based on their needs and aspirations and should not be constrained by the services currently on offer. Historically, adult care services have looked at the services available and tried to match them to what an individual might need. With this

approach, aspirations were necessarily capped by the services available.  
Personalised approaches have been around for many years, in a variety of different forms and increased personalisation can be seen in the ways that services have been planned and paid for. Goal plans were introduced in the 1970s and replaced by individualised service plans and individualised programme plans in the 1980s. These have more recently been replaced by person-centred plans (PCP).<sup>9</sup>  
The 2001 White Paper *Valuing People*<sup>10</sup> had person-centred planning at its core and it was seen as central to delivering the four key principles of rights, independence, choice and inclusion. PCP is a collection of approaches and techniques, tailored to the circumstances of each individual, with regard to assessing needs and outlining possible courses of action. It differs from previous approaches (such as individual service plans and case management) in three ways:  
• it focuses on the aspirations of people with learning disabilities, as expressed by the people themselves, or their advocates;  
• it sees a person's family and wider social network as an important resource;  
• it emphasises the support that is needed in order to achieve these goals.<sup>11</sup>  
**Issues with the implementation of person-centred planning**  
There have been a number of issues with the implementation of this approach. An evaluation funded by the Department of Health<sup>12</sup> found that having a PCP was associated with having an increased choice, number and variety of activities. However, this positive outcome was also true of previous, less personalised approaches, such as those used in earlier forms of planning. Having a PCP was not found to have an impact on aspects of a person's life such as employment, physical activity or medication.

1 Department of Health and Social Security (1971) *Better Services for the Mentally Handicapped* (Cm 4483). London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.  
2 Mansell, J. and Ericsson, K. (1989) *Deinstitutionalization and Community Living: Intellectual Disability Services in Britain, Scandinavia and the USA*. London: Chapman and Hall.  
3 Department of Health. (1989) *Caring for People: Community Care in the Next Decade and Beyond* (Cm 849). London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

4 Mansell, J. and Beadle-Brown, J. (2010) 'Deinstitutionalisation and community living: position statement of the Comparative Policy and Practice Special Interest Research Group of the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities', *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 54 (2), 104-112.  
5 Stevens, A. (2004) 'Closer to home: a critique of British government policy towards accommodating learning disabled people in their own homes', *Critical Social Policy*, 24(2), 233-254.

6 Mansell, J. (1994) 'Specialized Group Homes for Persons with Severe or Profound Mental Retardation and Serious Problem Behaviour in England', *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 15(5), 371-388.  
7 Szivos, S. (1991) 'Consciousness-raising: an attempt to redress the more repressive aspects of normalisation, but not its more positive ones', *Clinical Psychology Forum*(33), 28-31.

8 Bigby, C., Clement, T., Mansell, J., Beadle-Brown, J. (2009) 'It's pretty hard with our ones, they can't talk, the more able bodied can participate: Staff attitudes about the applicability of disability policies to people with severe and profound intellectual disabilities' *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 54, 4, 363-376.  
9 Social Care Institute for Excellence (2010) *Personalisation: A Rough Guide*. London: SCIE www.scie.org.uk/publications/reports/report20.pdf

10 O'Brien, C. L., & O'Brien, J. (2000) 'The Origins of Person-centred Planning: A Community of Practice Perspective'. In S. Holburn & P. Vietze (Eds.), *Person-centred planning: research, practice, and future directions*. Baltimore: Paul H Brookes.  
11 Department of Health. (2001) *Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century*. London: The Stationery Office (Cm 5086) [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_4009153](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PolicyAndGuidance/DH_4009153)

12 Mansell, J. & Beadle-Brown, J. (2004) 'Person-centred planning or person-centred action? Policy and practice in intellectual disability services', *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 17, 1-9.  
13 Robertson, J., Emerson, E., Hutton, C., Elliott, R., McIntosh, B., Swift, P., et al. (2005) *The Impact of Person-centred Planning*. Lancaster: Institute for Health Research, Lancaster University. [http://www.lanc.ac.uk/staff/emerson/FASSWeb/Robertson\\_05\\_PCP\\_FinalReport.pdf](http://www.lanc.ac.uk/staff/emerson/FASSWeb/Robertson_05_PCP_FinalReport.pdf)



Surprisingly, having a PCP also made no difference to whether or not the individual had a more inclusive social network, despite the emphasis on circles of support. Having a PCP was associated with a negative impact on physical health, emotional and behavioural needs. As has been the case throughout the history of changes to services, inequalities exist, with people with more complex needs being less likely to have a PCP. Research frequently illustrates the lack of 'sufficiently skilled' assistance for this group, meaning that people do not receive the support necessary to achieve a good quality of life.<sup>14</sup> The barriers to the successful implementation of PCPs have been clearly described by Peter Kinsella.<sup>15</sup>

#### Personalisation of funding

The way in which services are funded has also changed. The system has become increasingly personalised, with 'dowry' payments being replaced by case managers with budgets and more recently by direct payments. Previous approaches paid the service providers. The direct payments system gives the money to the individual, who buys in the service he or she needs, selecting and combining components in flexible ways that better meet their needs.<sup>16</sup> Although the take-up of this system by people with learning disabilities has not been as high as anticipated, it has been rising faster than with any other group.<sup>16</sup>

The barriers to the implementation of direct payments include a lack of flexibility and creativity around service provision and concerns about the extent to which people are able to consent to and be expected to manage direct payments. These barriers have affected people with severe intellectual disabilities in particular<sup>16,17</sup> and this has resulted in the development of self-directed support – a combination of person-centred planning and individual financing within a single process (<http://www.in-control.org.uk/>).

If people with intellectual disabilities and complex needs are to experience improvements in their quality of life,<sup>18,19</sup> person-centred action is needed, as well as planning. People need direct, practical support to participate in meaningful activities and relationships. Only then can they be supported to make choices and have greater control over their lives.<sup>19</sup>

## From theory to practice – a postscript

Alison Dignace

Services for people who have intellectual disabilities should be tailored to their individual needs, circumstances and wants, but there remain serious difficulties in terms of translating administrative processes and plans into action. Eight years after its publication, a cross-governmental, strategic review concluded that the principles at the heart of *Valuing People*, person-centred planning, advocacy and direct payments, had made an impact on relatively few people. In particular, there remain major obstacles to the implementation of policies for adults with profound intellectual disabilities and multiple impairments.

People who have complex needs require high levels of support from others in order to live full and inclusive lives. It is through the quality of human interaction and relationships that policies can be fully realised, so that individuals can be helped to make choices and shape their own lives.

Person-centred approaches such as intensive interaction, person-centred, active support, total communication and positive behaviour support all improve people's lives. These can be summarised as follows.

**Intensive interaction** is an intuitive, responsive and interactive approach to communication that can provide the means for an individual to enjoy being expressive and feeling connected.

**Person-centred, active support** provides the right amount and quality of help to enable successful participation in meaningful activities and relationships, promoting independence and real social inclusion.

**Total communication** involves the use of signs, symbols, pictures, photographs, film and objects to improve communication and understanding.

**Positive behaviour support** is a way of working with people who present behaviours that challenge. It involves ongoing, careful and empathetic assessments of behaviours, the evaluation and removal of possible triggers and the facilitation of new skills.

While there is evidence to suggest that these practice-based approaches can transform and greatly improve quality of life, they are still not yet widely understood or implemented. As day centres are replaced with community-based activities, families supporting adults with complex needs are often extremely anxious about how they might manage alternative provisions and receive inconsistent advice and support from social care professionals and agencies.

This anthology provides rich and vital evidence that, through joined-up approaches to provision and the right relationships, opportunities and advocacy, people with even the most profound difficulties can be fully involved in the cultural life of their communities.

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Dr Jill Bradshaw is a researcher, writer and Honorary Lecturer at the Tizard Centre, at the University of Kent at Canterbury. The Centre is one of the UK's leading academic groups working in learning disability and community care

14 Kinsella, P. (2000) *What are the barriers in relation to person-centred planning?* <http://www.paradigm-uk.org/Resources/5/foz/joseph%20Rowntree%20Foundation%20PCP%20Article.pdf>

15 Beadle-Brown, J. (2002) 'Direct Payments for People with Severe Learning Disabilities: A Service Case Study and Implications for Policy', *Tizard Learning Disability Review*, 7(4), 8-15.

16 Department of Health (2004) *Direct choices: what councils need to make direct payments happen for people with learning disabilities*. London: Department of Health. [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_408103](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_408103)

17 Beadle-Brown, J. (2005) 'Person-centred Planning and Direct Payments: opening doors for people with learning disabilities.' In P. Cambridge & S. Carnaby (Eds.), *Person-centred planning and care management for people with learning disabilities* (pp. 172-182). London: Jessica Kingsley

18 Holman, A. (2002) 'Direct payments: Commentary and review', *Tizard Learning Disability Review*, 7(4), 17-20. See also [www.mencap.org.uk/jah/about-learning-disability/information-professionals/personalisation/legislation-research-and-good-practice](http://www.mencap.org.uk/jah/about-learning-disability/information-professionals/personalisation/legislation-research-and-good-practice)

## Chronology



This is a chronology of key events in the life of Project Art Works. It includes the people, projects, pictures, places and partners that have shaped us as an organisation and reflects the enormous changes, since the mid 1990s, in ideas about social care policy and practice and in funders' willingness to invest in more inclusive approaches to creativity.

Little of our work would have happened without the intelligent and considered support of Arts Council England, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the Monument Trust, the Henry Smith Charity, the LankellyChase Foundation, the Camelot Foundation, the Equitable Charitable Trust, Three Guineas Trust and many other funders.

Whilst sharing a studio space in Hastings, artists Jonathan Cole and Kate Adams began a conversation about how to enable young people, even those with the most complex needs, to make art on their own terms, within their own, individual sphere of ability. This was a simple proposition but illusive as a motive for making art in collaboration with others. It aimed at a kind of record of engagement through mark making, rather than a way of intentionally making art and yet many of the images made have huge vitality, power and aesthetic balance.

In 1996, in Project Paul, we tested the idea during two ten-day residencies in schools for children with severe learning difficulties (SLD): Glyne Gap SLD School in Bexhill-on-Sea and Hazel Court SLD School in Eastbourne. Both were supported by South East Arts' Artists and Craftspeople in Schools Scheme.



1997

We set up an unincorporated association and called it [Project] Art Works.

The work from the 1996 residencies was exhibited at the De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea in an exhibition titled *Art Works*.

These early creative encounters began a process of collaborative working that continues to be developed through all our programmes – placing art, children, young people and adults and the people and systems that support them at the centre of creative endeavour.

#### Summer Workshops

Our first Summer Workshops took place in studios at Hastings College of Arts & Technology, now Sussex Coast College. They offer creative activities that provide relief and support for children with disabilities and their parents, siblings and carers during August, when schools are closed and there is minimal respite care available. The first workshops were funded by the Camelot Foundation.

We raise funds to run them every summer and have attracted more families each year.



1998

#### Downs View Residency

Commissioned by Downs View SLD School, Brighton, to run five days of workshops involving all 86 pupils. Each child had specific and often profoundly different needs.

We ran a pre-workshop presentation for staff and at the end of the project, installed the work the children had made in a specially designed construction, in the school hall.



1999

#### April

Commissioned by East Sussex SLD School Consortium to deliver a conference, training and workshop day to school staff on working with art and severe learning disability.

We were commissioned by SCOPE to run a day of art workshops for young people with special needs, their families and carers.

#### Summer Workshops exhibition

In November we took over an empty shop in Hastings and created a public exhibition of the work made in three years of Summer Workshops alongside documentary photographs of the workshops.

Funded by the Magdalen and Lasher Charitable Trust and Hastings Borough Council.

#### Outside space at Hazel Court SLD School

Commissioned by Hazel Court SLD School to run workshops with pupils whose classrooms opened on to outside spaces. The spaces needed a makeover. We used colour, light and bold pattern. The pupils took part in the process and their visual and sensory needs informed the re-design of the spaces.



2000

#### Project Art Works registered as a charity

**Project Craig** began as a series of art workshops for children, young people and their carers in London and the South East. Video footage of the workshops was edited in consultation with the participating groups and the resulting films were shown on Imagebox, in public spaces, in the participants' own communities.

Imagebox was a large, cuboid lightbox designed and built by us in association with Urban Projects. It used mirrors and four data projectors to show films on all four sides. Through these public installations we hoped to communicate something about the humanity and lives of people who have profound impairments.

Imagebox was installed in the Brighton Pavilion Gardens, as part of Brighton Festival 2000, at the Millennium Dome in Greenwich and at Woolwich Town Hall in London.

The participants in this project were pupils and staff from Downs View SLD School in Brighton and Ickburgh SLD School in Hackney, and adults and staff from Woolwich Dockyard Day Centre, supported by Friends in Greenwich and Greenwich Mencap.

Funded by the Millennium Festival Fund.



2000-03

#### Project India

Project India was a visual art and education project developed in partnership with the newly built, co-located Hazel Court Secondary (SLD) School and The Causeway School. It provided a rare opportunity to work with pupils of secondary school age on regular, inclusive, creative activities, over three years and to help them to make lasting developments beyond the scope of one-off workshops and short-term projects.

The project was named after a Hazel Court pupil called India O'Sullivan who, as a young adult, continues to work with us on a regular basis.

Between September 2000 and July 2003, we ran workshops on one or two days each week in what became known as the Project India Room. The work developed an emphasis on the balanced combination of digital media, painting and drawing and the creation of different environments through construction, video projection and the control and manipulation of light. This benefited all participants, especially the Hazel Court pupils, who required high levels of support and a particular kind of space, in order to engage on their own terms.

Funded by Arts Council England's Regional Arts Lottery Programme.



**2001** Published a catalogue of work from **Project Craig**

#### Project India Year 2

##### Nine Acre School

Over five days in June we ran workshops at Nine Acre SLD School in Charlton, London, to make art to be hung in a new school building, which was due to open that autumn. The project was commissioned by the school and involved all 50 pupils.

##### Splash workshops

Splash was a government-funded programme to provide young people, in areas of high crime and those at risk of offending, with diversionary activities during the summer holidays. Our project, commissioned by Hastings and Rother Youth Development Service and Hastings Borough Council Arts Development, involved eight young people. We ran six three-hour workshop sessions, at Hollington Community Centre in St Leonards, in painting, photography, digital imaging and film and video, digital animation and installation. The films were shown on Imagebox on Hastings Pier.



##### AKA2 workshops and exhibition

In November, we ran a series of three one-day workshops with adults with learning disabilities, using the facilities of the art department at Hastings College of Arts & Technology and showed the resulting work at the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill-on-Sea. Through this project we met Fred Mazzio, who became a regular participant in the Project Art Works Open Studios programme, from 2005. (See also Fort Brockhurst 2009.)

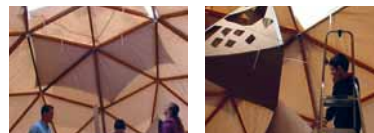


#### Project India Year 3

##### Torfield School Summer Project and the dome

For this project, we researched flexible construction systems and ordered, from Australia, a geodesic dome made from cedar components. This wonderful structure was to become our mobile workshop space. Working with children with autism, their families and carers, we spent a week building a series of temporary, cardboard constructions within the dome.

Funded by Torfield School, the Magdalen and Lasher Charity & Community Chest, Hastings and The Woodward Charitable Trust.



##### Outline Feasibility Study 1

By now we were looking for a permanent home with a workshop and commissioned Adams and Sutherland Architects to undertake a scoping study on the conversion of the Old Pumping Station in Hastings.





2003



#### Project Domain

This was a year-long project that grew out of brainstorming sessions about our ideal way of working. We took the dome to three schools every term for a year, creating an impressive temporary art space in the school grounds. The dome came and went each term, tracking the seasons and providing pupils with a magical, nomadic sense of freedom. The schools were Torfield School, in Hastings, Downs View SLD School, in Brighton and Ickburgh SLD School, in Hackney. Funded by Arts Council England, South East and the schools.



2004

Project Art Works adopted its current name and became a company limited by guarantee, with charitable status.

#### Crawley Special Schools

Commissioned by West Sussex County Council to make permanent installations of art and signage for the new Manor Green College building. Using the dome as our workshop, we worked with pupils to design and make tiles for welcome signage and the new hydrotherapy pool. The tiles were made using sensory processes, with pupils, for tactile mapping of the pool area.

#### Hazel Court Further Education Unit - Home

Commissioned to work with Hazel Court's post-16 students in their new premises at Eastbourne College. We collaborated with students to fill box constructions using talismanic objects to which many of the non-verbal students had a particular attachment.

#### Summer Workshops

For young people with autism.

#### Project India

Exhibition at Hastings Museum & Art Gallery.



2005

#### A new base

In September we moved into a vacant road arch in Braybrooke Terrace in Hastings and began the process of converting it into an office and studio/workshop spaces.

#### Personal Profile Project – the pilot

At the end of their school careers, young people with complex needs move from children's to adult services. The Personal Profile Project (of which this was the two-year pilot phase) was designed to help young people at this point of transition to communicate their individuality to people in adult services they would not have met before.

We wanted to provide a creative framework in which artists could collaborate with, observe and record young people going about their daily lives. This would illuminate the subtle, 'inconspicuous signifiers' in the communication and lives of the young people and use this evidence to complement the transition process and the more one-dimensional, paper-based assessments of need used by adult services.

The project was documented in our publication, *Art in Transition*. Funded by the Camelot Foundation, East Sussex Learning Disability Development Fund and Arts Council England, South East.

#### Autism, Animation and Film

This was a nine-month, film-making project with young adults with autism, conceived by us and involving nine young adults supported by the Sussex Autistic Community Trust (now Autism Sussex).

The art works, photography and film from this project record participants' opinions and interactions with the studio environment, as well as off-site filming and documentation. Lively and funny, the films chart a changing and creative approach to the use of the studio space as a 'canvas' for actions and happenings.

Funded by the Equitable Charitable Trust and Three Guineas Trust.



#### In The Frame

As part of Mencap's national conference on learning disability at Tate Modern we were commissioned to support the selection of 80 works, by 65 artists with intellectual disability, submitted in response to a national call-out and to prepare and install them for a one-day exhibition at Tate Modern. We were also contracted to run a communication workshop for delegates in the foyer on Level 1 and to create an installation of sound and film, in the dome outside the gallery.

#### Access To Art II

Between September and December, in partnership with Brighton University, we piloted a 12-week course for ten students on the Arts Foundation Degree at Hastings College of Arts & Technology, working alongside eight people with severe intellectual disabilities. The course took place in our new studio in Braybrooke Terrace.

Funded by Brighton and Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange Fund and East Sussex Learning Disability Development Fund.



2006

#### Open Studios

The Open Studios project built on Access to Art II. Over 36 weeks it provided an opportunity for artists, non-disabled students and people from different adult social care settings to work together in our studio.

The workshops became a mini foundation course, introducing different materials, media and processes. The project focussed on developing self-determination, choice and independence through creative processes.

Funded by East Sussex Learning Disability Development Fund.



#### Summer Workshops Walking the Line

This project was commissioned by Creative Partnerships, in collaboration with Saxon Mount Special School in Hastings. We ran a series of ten workshops for ten classes during the spring term. These were followed by a major on-site collaboration with the staff and pupils during the hottest week of the year, to make a huge, landscape drawing over their school grounds.

We erected the dome, flew a camera from a 'blimp' (a mini airship) and filmed the gradual evolution of the drawing. Pushing a mechanical, pressurized, line-marker, the students enjoyed making the decisions involved in 'taking a line for a walk', snaking back and forth over the grounds. *Walking the Line* is a bird's eye view film that traces the making of the drawing as it transformed the external spaces of the school. It was shortlisted for Jerwood Drawing Prize 2007.



#### Feasibility Study 2 for the Art Works Centre

Our interest in space and its impact on creativity had been tested and developed through projects such as Domain, Walking the Line and other smaller-scale investigations that took place weekly at our studios and workshops. With funding from South East Economic Development Agency (SEEDA) and Sea Space, the economic development company for Hastings and Bexhill, we took the opportunity to revisit the possibility of new, purpose-built premises and commissioned Ash Sakula to produce a full feasibility study for an inclusive arts centre.

Through accessible consultations with a wide range of stakeholders that included new, experiential, non-verbal approaches to understanding how people experience space and what they need and want, the study produced a brief for a new centre and explored two possible sites. It also included a business and fundraising plan.

The contributors to the study were:  
Architects, Ash Sakula  
Impact analysis, Business of Culture  
Social care consultant, Clare Davis  
Access consultant, Emma McMullan

2007

#### Summer workshops

Funded by BBC Children in Need. In November, the summer workshops featured on BBC Television's Children in Need appeal.

Open Studios – continuation







2008

#### Open Studios

Open Studios were extended from two days to three per week and developed new ways of working alongside support teams and adults who have profound and multiple impairments.

#### Summer Workshops

##### Personal Profile Project

Twelve films made during the two-year project were shown at the De La Warr Pavilion in October.



2009

April – We were commissioned by Fabrica, a contemporary art space in Brighton, to run encounter workshops and training with artists and Fabrica staff.

#### Tuesday Studios

A year of interactive studio workshops involving direct and inclusive collaborations with a wide range of adults who have complex needs, support workers, families, carers and independent care agencies. The workshops began a process of practice-based monitoring of response and decision making that was further developed in the next phase of the project from 2010.

Funded by East Sussex Learning Disability Development Fund



#### Mentoring Studios

Artist mentoring methodology is well established in contemporary practice. We instigated the first year of an ongoing and specific model of professional development for a small group of people with whom we have worked for several years and who have shown potential for greater independence as artists.

This programme is very successful and forms one of the key in-house projects at the Project Art Works studio. Central to the conceptual framework of the Mentoring Studios is the idea of choice – choice of canvas size and proportion, colours, subject, approach and levels of support. The studio artists are supported through individual mentoring sessions with a painter and workshop artist. Their work is exhibited and promoted through the Project Art Works on-line gallery.

Funded by East Sussex Learning Disability Development Fund and Hastings Borough Council.

#### Sensory Soundings

Creative Landscapes was an English Heritage project that explores accessible approaches to heritage sites. We were commissioned to facilitate and record a raw, experiential investigation of Fort Brockhurst in Gosport with our Tuesday Studios group. The group comprises nine individuals who are highly sensitive to the sounds, temperatures, surfaces and general phenomenology of spaces that are new to them.

We recorded the visit in different ways including through sound and video recordings, photography and drawing. The 'art' in this project was the investigation itself, and the recorded footage provided valuable, empirical records of what took place. It also allowed us to view, consider, empathise with and try

to understand how people found the space and experience. The films made from this project have been shown in different venues, including English Heritage Open Days 2009 at Fort Brockhurst, Up Stream, Seafrost Brighton in May 2011 and States and Spaces, MK Gallery, Milton Keynes, 2012.

#### Shot by the Sea Film Festival

Shot by the Sea film festival, in Hastings invited us to be guest curator of its public projection spaces. We curated a number of installations over three town centre venues under the title *Air to Earth*. The works featured were *Red Balloon* by Project Art Works, *IVUL, the Installation* by Andrew Kötting, *Backwoods* by Jim Roseveare and *Ah Liberty!* by Ben Rivers.

We were interested in how this project would illuminate the way in which collaborative and participatory processes can intersect with contemporary art (and its theoretical underpinning) and the otherwise inaccessible interior worlds of people who have severe intellectual impairments.

Funded by Arts Council England, South East, Hastings Borough Council and Meanwhile Spaces.



2010

#### Tuesday Research Studios

Tuesday Studios is an experimental, investigative research space. Participants are aged between 20 and 75 and have the opportunity to attend 36 workshop days per year. In 2010, in the course of 36 weeks, we collaborated on radically new, responsive, learning experiences with six individuals and their support teams.

A new departure was the introduction of a light-touch process of tracking change in participants during the year. We teamed up with the Challenging Needs Service, a nationally respected provision run through the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

Funded by the Big Lottery Fund – Reaching Communities.



#### Non-verbal Seminar Events

Over a period of six months, we organised three non-verbal seminars supported by the Turning Point South East network (TPSE). This was part of a larger programme of work to strengthen visual arts in the South East of England. A primary purpose of the project was to harness our expertise and particular approach to inclusive arts practice, to ignite a discourse on the involvement of people who have severe neurological and communication impairment in visual art activity that finds its way into mainstream programming and that is of exceptional quality in its concept, aesthetic and production.

A key aim of the seminars was to help mainstream arts organisations to explore this area of work and to think about how inclusive practice could be embedded in their work. It was important for the scope and reach of the events that they were not limited to education or 'outreach' specialists. Participants also included artists, filmmakers, curators, producers and directors of arts organisations.



The events took place at Modern Art Oxford (in July), the De La Warr Pavilion (in September) and Project Art Works (in November).



#### If a picture's worth a thousand words

Mentoring Studios Exhibition at Hastings Arts Forum, St Leonards-on-Sea.

#### In Transit

The Personal Profile pilot provided evidence that the presence of art and a more intense observation and recording can make a positive impact on assumptions about person-centred planning and the potential of young people with complex needs. Collaboration creates a climate of possibilities and encourages a greater investment in a young person by family members, professionals and peers.

In Transit is the next stage of this work. It builds on the films made during the pilot and promotes new ways of collaborating with the statutory transition services.

We were awarded a grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation's social justice programme and East Sussex County Council's children and adult services to make 36 more films with young people in transition over three years to 2013.

#### Archive

With the support of the Monument Trust, we commissioned an archivist to work with us to create a comprehensive archive of our work over two years to 2012. This anthology is one of the results.



2011-12

**February – March** Mentoring Studios artists featured in a group exhibition at Shape Gallery, London.

#### Heroes, Dreams and Visions

Mentoring Studios Exhibition at Hastings Arts Forum, St Leonards-on-Sea and the new Stade Hall, Hastings.

#### Collaboration – Project Art Works and MK Gallery, Milton Keynes

This was a 15-month collaboration with MK Gallery, developing practice-led investigations of built space and perceptual impairment. Through a series of events, the project promoted greater understanding of complex needs, inclusive working and the development of lasting partnerships between the gallery and social care providers in Milton Keynes.

The work culminated, in December, in our first major survey exhibition, *States and Spaces*, which offered insights into our particular ways of experiencing different urban spaces.

Funded by Arts Council England, South East, Turning Point South East and MK Community Foundation. (More images overleaf)





#### Person-centred Planning

This is an 18-month pilot project developing new and creative ways of supporting person-centred planning, in partnership with the new East Sussex Transition team.

Project Art Works is supporting young people aged 16-19 and their families to work with a member of the East Sussex County Council transition team. Together they will consider the young person's life now and in the future, what they want to do with their time, what needs they have, what they like doing and what kinds of people they want around them. Using a variety of media and approaches, each small team will find a way to inspire, inform and to shape a plan for the future that is aspirational and unconstrained by preconceptions about what services may exist for them.

Commissioned by East Sussex County Council Transition services.

#### Jerwood Survey

The Jerwood survey in February provided an opportunity to explore the new, as yet 'uninhabited' Jerwood Gallery in Hastings, in a way that provided poetic and intimate insights into its spaces.

We recorded an investigation of the building by our Tuesday Studios group, all of whom are highly sensitive to the qualities of built space.

The investigation took place over one day and was recorded through sound and video and presented as a surround sound installation at Jerwood Gallery, in 2012-13.



Above and left:  
*States and Spaces*.  
A Survey by Project Art Works, MK Gallery,  
9 December 2011 – 8 January 2012

## Insideout Art

### Andrew Kötting

*All human beings carry about a set of words which they employ to justify their actions, their beliefs and their lives. These are the words in which we formulate praise of our friends and contempt for our enemies, our long-term projects, our deepest self-doubts and our highest hopes. They are the words in which we tell, sometimes prospectively and sometimes retrospectively, the story of our lives. I shall call these words a person's "final vocabulary."*  
Richard Rorty, Contingency, irony and solidarity (1989)

Be suspicious.  
There are no truths.  
Be contingent.  
There are only approximations.  
And if it's not one thing then it's probably another.  
*We're not, we are and then we're not.*  
Much of what we have to say is pointless.  
Much of what we do is meaningless.  
But nevertheless we try to make meaningful  
that which is meaningless.  
This is what we do.  
This is our *final vocabulary*.  
This is what Richard Rorty taught me.  
(And to be faithful to the hilarity.)

When the self-doubt looms, when the  
*what's the point* comes knocking and it's a  
Wednesday, I pop down to the old road arch.  
She makes me.  
This is where my daughter Eden shares a studio.  
A forum for creative and dynamic exchange.  
A generator for encounter and relationships.  
A place to learn to care.  
(And eat biscuits).  
A place which is care full and ever receptive to  
the contingent.  
*You can't have everything your own way.*  
This is a place where you get a keen awareness  
of the emotional and psychological impact of  
human sensibility.  
You get to be reminded.  
There are too many things we so often forget.  
It helps me to refocus.

Project Art Works is the perfect example of how  
collaborative practice works in a dual fashion  
to shared advantage.  
Two-way traffic.  
It is vital that the outcomes of practice find  
diverse homes and critical reception in all  
areas of contemporary culture. And not just  
within the context of Disabled Arts.  
It is pivotal to the creative act and its purpose.  
There is a contract.

And something new is happening down there.  
'Outsider Art' (*unsullied*), is being made within  
the confines of a caring environment. It is  
being supported by practitioners familiar  
with the manufacture of contemporary art,  
or 'Insider Art' (*sullied*), and together they are  
begetting 'Insideout Art'.

This is new territory.  
The place rumbles with relationships.  
A locus and conglomeration for incongruous  
thoughts and outcomes.  
It is alive with happening.  
And however singular the atmosphere might at  
first appear, the making of art is inherently  
collective, from the funding to the making,  
through to the audience and then back  
into the archiving. All work is the result of  
a meeting of minds. Relationships are the  
making evident of this process. They build  
a stronger foundation for experimentation,  
expand the shared knowledge base, and  
provide a space for creative learning. In  
many ways, it offers a model similar to that  
of the most aspirant universities. But this  
is an engagement with the marginalia, the  
uncooked and variant culture.

My own work draws heavily upon  
autobiography, its psyche and its geography.  
Plottings and mullings.  
Cerebral comings and goings.  
I try to position myself in it.  
I try to find myself.  
But I'm often barking up the wrong tree.  
Endurance and patience have become my  
compass.  
Things that don't come naturally.  
The interior psychology versus the external  
landscape.  
The inscape versus the vista.  
The conundrum that is the art nexus versus  
the rest of us.

And Eden has informed my life priorities.  
There is the *stuff* I made before her and the work  
I have made after her.  
Her remarkable presence in my life has focused,  
grounded and profoundly 'confirmed'  
my work in ways that I am constantly  
discovering and appreciating.  
And she has found a home at Project Art Works.  
A place of *Settledown* and *Kindred Spirits*.  
Morphic resonance.  
Friendship and purpose.  
And the organisation has become part of our  
final vocabulary.  
A part of me.

## Polaroids

This selection of Polaroids is drawn from a collection of over 4,000 now in the archive. They were taken by participants, artists and collaborators during projects and workshops over twelve years.

The magical nature of watching, as an image appears and the mechanics, sound and action of the camera always generate excitement. We have used Polaroid film as a structural tool for deepening engagement in the creative process.





















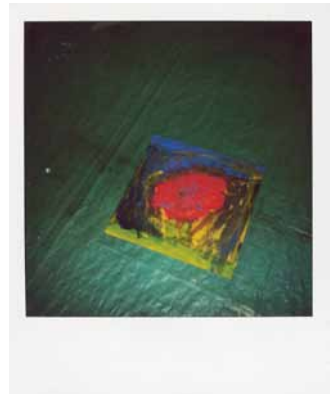








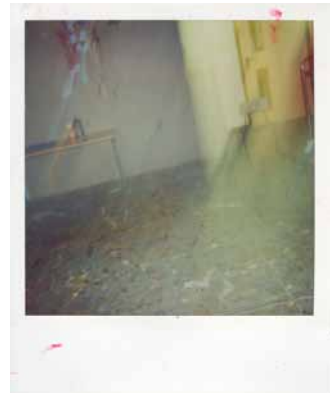




















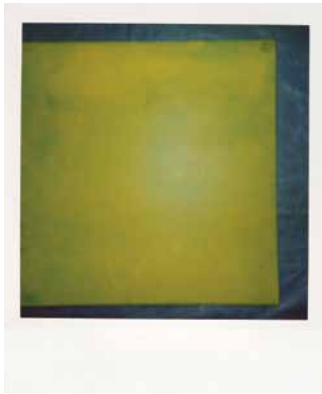
























## Artists' Pieces

Here we present a selection of work by three of our regular studio artists – Albert Geere, Michelle Roberts and Jonathan Rogers – and pieces by Annis Joslin and Fox Hawkins, Sarah Broome, Clare Maynard and Matthew Boyd-Gravell, that describe the collaborative process.

Albert Geere

Albert Geere House No 1 2009  
Acrylic on canvas 71 x 102 cm





Albert Geere House No.3 2011  
Acrylic on Canvas 50 x 40 cm



Albert Geere House No.4 2011  
Acrylic on canvas 80 x 60 cm



Albert Geere House No. 2 2011  
Acrylic on canvas 50 x 40 cm



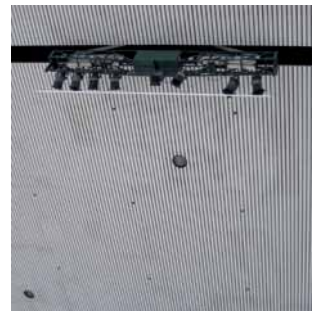
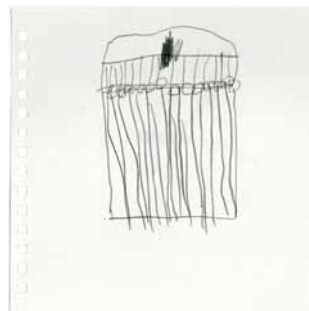
Albert Geere House No. 3 2012  
Acrylic on canvas 51 x 41 cm

**Walking not talking**  
**Annis Joslin and**  
**Fox Hawkins**

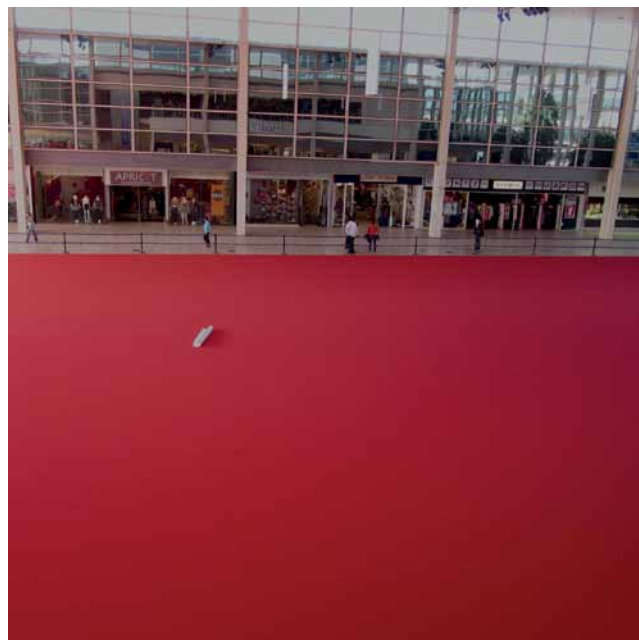
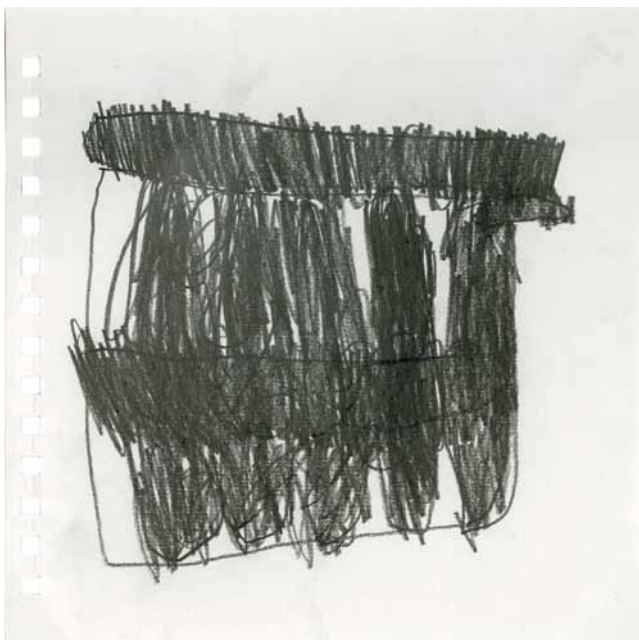
WE BEGAN AS A GROUP, DRIFTING TOWARDS THE SHOPPING CENTRE ACROSS FROM THE GALLERY. We soon splintered off into smaller groups and pairs. Fox and I walked together. We planned to explore the shopping centre in the morning and return to the Cathedral of Trees in the afternoon. I decided not to talk too much but explained we had a notebook, a graphite pencil and a camera and we could stop whenever he felt like it, perhaps just to look or maybe to draw.

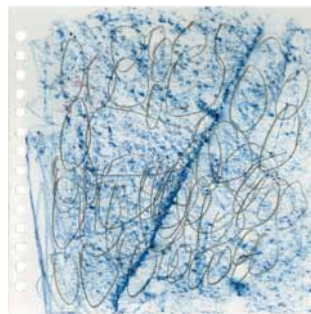
Fox paused, so we sat on a bench. I passed him the sketchbook and he began to draw the tiles on the wall in front of us. I took a photo of what I thought he had drawn and showed it to him. This simple/spontaneous act became the process of our collaboration from then on and into the afternoon at the Cathedral of Trees, walking not talking, pausing, drawing, photographing. Sometimes Fox would press the button to take the photo, sometimes not. Walking not talking, but maybe intuiting, allowed for reflection and spontaneous creativity and Fox's drawings reveal this rich mix.

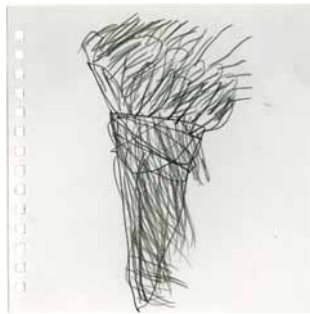
*Drawings by Fox Hawkins  
Photographs by Annis Joslin*











Michelle Roberts



Michelle Roberts *Birds* 2007  
Acrylic on canvas 167 x 167 cm



Michelle Roberts Hastings 2009  
Acrylic on canvas 122 x 122 cm  
opposite  
Michelle Roberts Untitled [Town] 2010  
Acrylic on canvas 122 x 153 cm







<previous [left]  
 Michelle Roberts *Sea Life* 2010  
 Acrylic on canvas 122 x 153 cm  
 <previous [right]  
 Michelle Roberts *Spanish Holiday* 2010  
 Acrylic on canvas 122 x 153 cm



Michelle Roberts *Mouse For Your House* 2011  
 Acrylic on canvas 122 x 122 cm

**Shared Space I**  
**Sarah Broome and**  
**Clare Maynard**

YOU SIT TOGETHER. TIM IS ON YOUR LEFT, PROPPING UP A LARGE, RECTANGULAR CANVAS IN FRONT OF YOU. The light from a projection moves across it. The canvas already has paint marks where you have dabbed pink and purple paint together. There are drawn marks, in green and black and some words: HEAD, HAND and CLARE.

The room is filled with different noises; some bangs and taps, some voices speaking and making sounds. Tim holds a pot of paint upside down at the top of the canvas. You scream as he squeezes out a blob of red. The paint slowly starts to run down. You watch the paint as he says something to you. You softly wail and reach out with your paintbrush to stroke the stream of red downwards. You move your brush away and watch.

Tim moves the canvas closer and you reach out again, making a higher pitched wail, and make a small stroke. You pull your brush back and scream loudly. Tim reaches up to the top of the canvas with another pot of paint. He squeezes out a new colour – blue. You watch it running, faster down the canvas this time. You softly wail.

You reach out to make a swift stroke downwards with your paintbrush. Tim points at the trickle of paint towards the bottom of the canvas. You scream. You both watch together.

He points out another mark on the canvas and says something to you. You scream, opening your eyes wide. Tim takes his paintbrush and lightly taps on the canvas. You reach up with your brush, catching some of the light – and paint a brief stroke. You glance at Tim's marks and bring your brush over to tap seven times on the dripping paint. You remove your brush, screaming loudly. You watch Tim tapping on the wet paint. You scream. You keep watching, with your brush poised.

Five minutes later, you are holding the brush close to the canvas with your right hand. You rub your right eye with your other hand and move it across each cheek, down your chin and, with a slight waver, bring it to rest on your chest. You are quiet, pausing for a moment, looking at the canvas. A voice yells from somewhere else in the room and you press your brush to the canvas with a scream. Tim holds up a palette of pink paint. You load your brush, bring it back up to the canvas and with a scream, make a downward stroke. You reload the brush and stroke again, softly wailing. You reload and stroke a few more times, each time with a scream.

A few moments later, you are sitting alone with your canvas, propping it up with your left hand and painting with your right. Tim brings over another palette of colour and moves the canvas to one side. He shows you a choice of red or green. You look, scream and point to the green. Tim turns the canvas on its side and holds it for you. You take a new paintbrush, which you dip in the green and paint several downward strokes. You move the brush away and look at Tim. He speaks to you. You kick the bottom of the canvas away and hit him twice on the back with your left hand.

You load the brush, paint a couple more strokes and hit Tim on the back again. You scream and look at him. He speaks. You continue to paint. Tim turns the canvas again. You swap the green for the red.

opposite  
 Clare Maynard Untitled 2001  
 Acrylic on canvas 92 x 122 cm





**Shared Space II**  
Sarah Broome and  
Matthew Boyd-Gravell

YOU SIT ALONE, YOUR CHIN PROPPED IN YOUR HAND. You are leaning over, working on a small, square canvas, lying flat on a box. You look concentrated, absorbed, relaxed. The room is filled with noises; some bangs and taps, some voices speaking and making sounds.

The canvas you are working on already has brush marks: some red, black and yellow dabs, white and green shapes. Your small paintbrush is loaded with light blue.

You carefully place strokes of blue, one after the other, between a small area of green and black marks. Each stroke is short and delicate. You pause when there is a scream from the other side of the room, but your eyes stay fixed. You briefly remove your brush and then hover for a moment over the same mark. You gently place another few dabs before moving to another area.

You place more blue, in minute spots, barely touching the canvas. You sit up for a moment, straightening your back and looking at your marks from a distance. You lean back down, with your elbows propped on both knees.

You look down at your canvas, moving your head gently from side to side, as if scanning its surface. You return to the area of blue, hovering your paintbrush over the marks for a few seconds before placing it in an unpainted area. You dab over the earlier blue marks.

You sit back again, pausing momentarily to observe your work. You bend down, cupping the side of your face in your hand and hover over the blue. You adjust the angle of your head to move the shadow of your body, so you can see the blue in full light. You continue to fill the blue.



Matthew Boyd-Gravell *Untitled* 2011  
Acrylic on canvas 40 x 40 cm

Jonathan Rogers



Jonathan Rogers No 8. 2009  
Acrylic on canvas 50 x 70 cm



Jonathan Rogers No 29, 2011  
Acrylic on Canvas 122 x 92 cm



Jonathan Rogers No 24, 2011  
Acrylic on Canvas 122 x 92 cm



Jonathan Rogers No 7, 2009  
Acrylic on canvas 76 x 76 cm



Jonathan Rogers No 7, 2009  
Acrylic on canvas 100 x 76 cm

**Wet Paint**  
Tim Corrigan and  
Darryl Spencer

FOR DARRYL, PAINTING IS THE TRANSFERENCE OF PAINT. Choosing colours, squeezing the paint into a tray, mixing colours and applying them to the surface of a picture all seem equally fascinating. Throughout the process of painting, he will scrutinise, in detail, certain elements: the way two colours amalgamate in a tray or the consistency of paint at the end of his brush. He applies the paint to the picture surface in a familiar, repetitive movement, rapidly covering an area with colour until it is gone. He will then repeat this with a new colour, mixing the two together on the support, intently watching the way the painted mark holds the movement of his hand.

Darryl paints in an uninhibited manner, seemingly attaching little value to the image and happily obliterating previously worked areas of a picture. He chooses colour in an arbitrary fashion, interested in the contrast between any colours as a way of describing, better, the fluidity of the paint. For him, painting is an action not an object. It only exists while it's in a state of potential flux, each move or mark a response to the previous one. He appears to have little attachment to his work once it is dry. A painting isn't 'finished', as much as the action ceases.

Darryl is in his late twenties, non-verbal and autistic. He is very bright and accurate in his movement and most things he does quickly. He has always had an intense preoccupation with viscosity, so has an affinity for paint. He is a prolific mark-maker, whether spontaneously with his finger, in a pool of spilt tea, or painting in the studio. He has worked with Project Art Works for a long time and is currently part of the Tuesday Studios group, where we meet each week.

The Tuesday Studios are an exercise in compromise and negotiation and at times he may find the space busy and unpredictable. He is very sensitive to his environment and to noise and can be overwhelmed by anxiety but, generally, he feels confident here.

The studio set-up is crucial to a successful workshop. It has to be practical for the individual as well as, in some sense, inspirational. When creating Darryl's workspace, there are physical considerations. The arrangement of furniture and materials can provide a refuge point, as well as clear exits around his work. On the wall, a large and clearly demarcated support becomes an empty, boundless space. Lights and projectors can be used to increase the illusion of depth.

Darryl can find contact and connection with other people difficult. Even something as simple as asking him to pass a paintbrush to a colleague can be a daunting test of nerve. With time, though, he has formed close bonds and is generous and affectionate. Sometimes, we work collaboratively on large paintings. Reflecting his innate appreciation that painting is flux, the works become conversations, each move a proposition or a joint objective. For example: we start side by side with the drama of priming a three-metre piece of white cartridge paper with black. I write his name in white. He draws his name as an exact reflection, and so on.

There is no ambition to gain insight into what Darryl is thinking or to work out *where he is*, but more to accept our difference and recognise what we share: a space, some time and an activity with which we are both familiar. Within that, there are possibilities for genuine connection; to startle, agree, conflict, inform and amuse.

The paintings that remain, despite Darryl's indifference, are wonderful in many ways. In a sense, they are a clear reflection of him, his mark, his speed, his agility. They are evidence of his ability to be engaged, committed and confident. Watching him work, it is tempting to sneak away a painting when it appears particularly beautiful, to preserve the intensity, colour or sophistication of the marks, but this would contradict his assertion that there is no past or future, that nothing is finished or forever. Here lies the chaos and it is delightful.



Darryl Spencer 2009. Video still



Darryl Spencer Coloured Swirls No.1 2009  
Acrylic on canvas 61 x 61 cm



Darryl Spencer Coloured Swirls No.2 2009  
Acrylic on Canvas 61 x 61 cm



Darryl Spencer Coloured Swirls No.3 2009  
Acrylic on canvas 61 x 61 cm

## A selection from the Archive



Unnamed *Untitled* 1996  
Etching, 30 x 30 cm





Heidi Burton *Untitled* 1996  
Etching, 30 x 30 cm

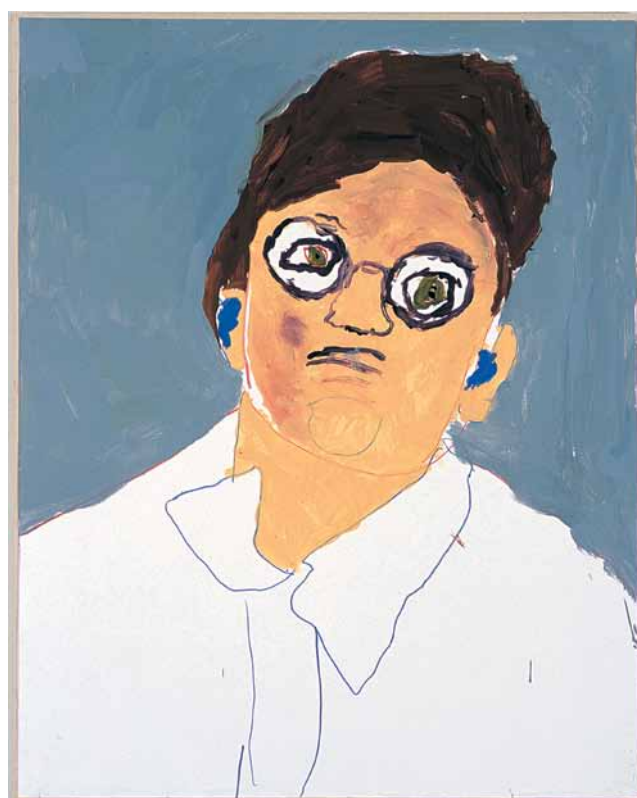


Jordan Zayed *Untitled* 1996  
Etching, 30 x 30 cm



Matthew W *Untitled* 2011  
Acrylic on canvas 40 x 40 cm

opposite»  
Abi Self Portrait 2003  
Acrylic on paper 80 x 120 cm





Cherry Lane *Warm* Painting 2011  
Acrylic on canvas 122 x 92 cm



Martin Sheridan & David Sherlock *Untitled* 2009  
Acrylic on canvas 100 x 100 cm



Suzi Wing *Untitled* 2005  
Acrylic and collage on canvas 360 x 151 cm



opposite >  
Tuesday Studios Zohra installation panel 2009  
Acrylic on paper 132 x 276 cm





Martin Sheridan *Untitled* 2011  
Acrylic on canvas 61 x 61 cm



DINNER  
HAT1



ART  
HAT2



HOME  
HAT3



9 11 12 30 3  
Home (Art) Dinner Art Home

©previous  
Sammy Brooks *Dinner, Art, Home* 2009  
Acrylic on canvas 216 x 151 cm



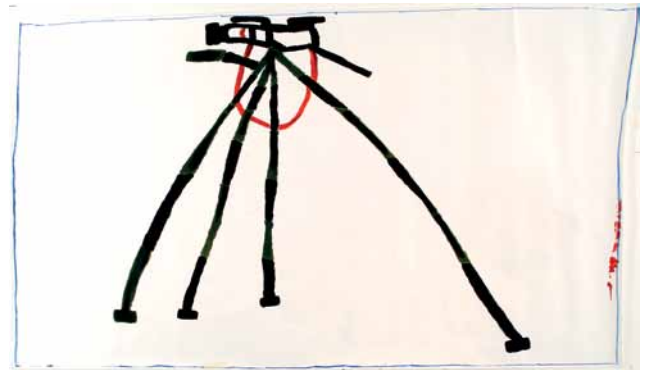
India O'Sullivan *Untitled* 2011  
Acrylic on canvas 92 x 61 cm



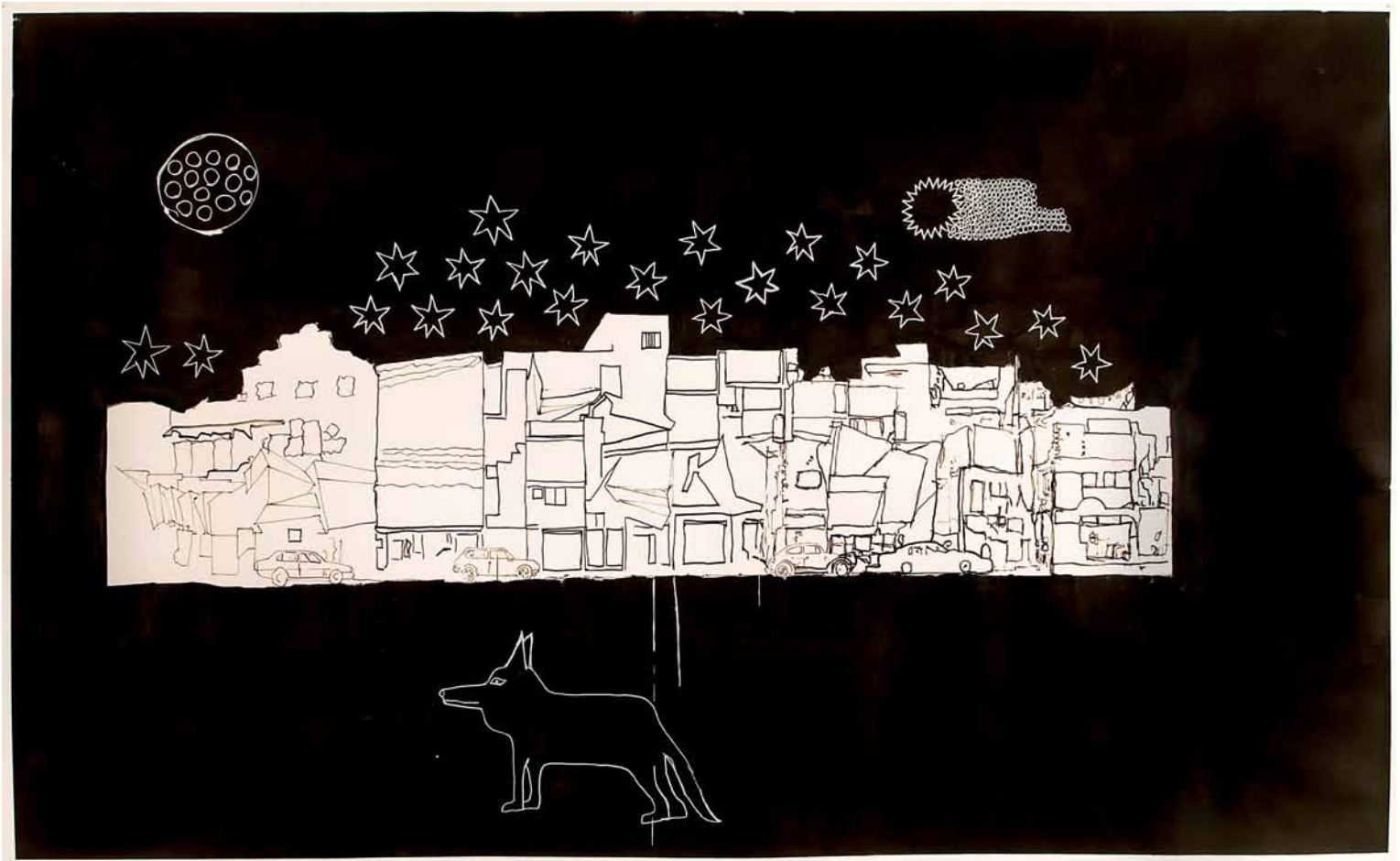
Michael Bounds *Untitled* 2011  
Collage 209 x 152 cm



Michael Bounds *Horses & stripes* 2011  
Acrylic on paper 152 x 152 cm



Petes Geoff Camera and Tripod 2005  
Acrylic on paper 200 x 151 cm



©previous  
Neville Jermyn Nighttime Dog 2008  
Acrylic on paper mounted on canvas 355 x 152 cm

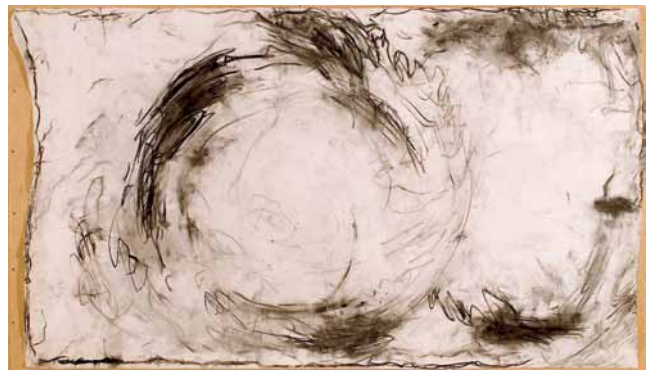


Paul Colley *Untitled* 2008  
Acrylic on canvas 185 x 166 cm



Paul Colley & Michael Bounds *Untitled* 2011  
Acrylic on canvas 102 x 102 cm





Toby Hewson *Untitled 1999*  
Charcoal on paper 276 x 351 cm

opposite >  
Fred Mazzeo Crane 5009  
Acrylic on canvas 120 x 152 cm





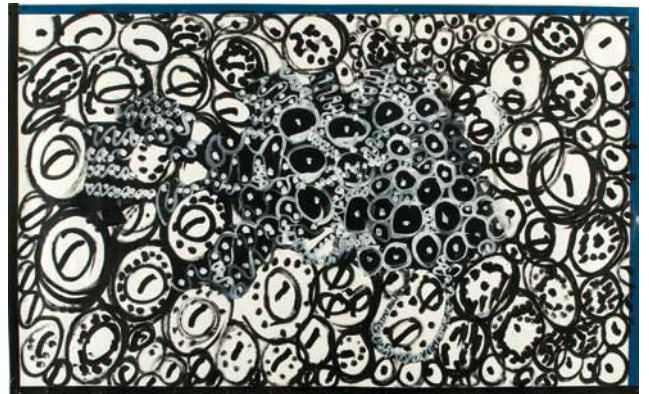
Darryl Spence *Portrait* 2010  
Acrylic on canvas 61 x 61 cm



Darryl Spencer *Untitled red and green* 2008  
Canvas on board 84 x 59 cm



Darryl Spencer *Untitled* 2009  
Acrylic on paper 200 x 151 cm

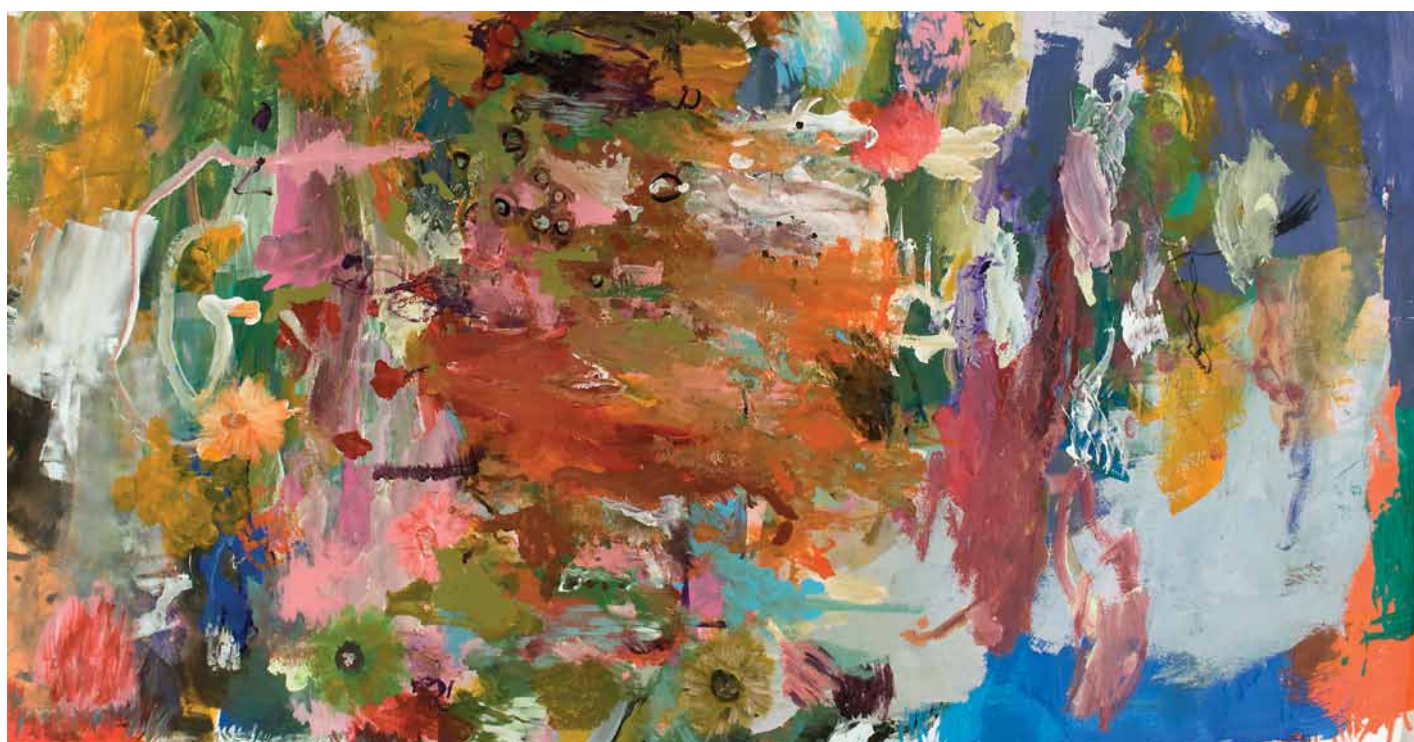


Darryl Spencer *Black* 2011  
Acrylic on paper 241 x 151 cm

opposite >  
Tuesday Studios collaboration Untitled 2008  
Charcoal on paper 129 x 151 cm







David Marriot *Untitled* 2000  
Acrylic on paper 220 x 151 cm



opposite >  
Eden Kötting *Musical Instruments* 2011  
Acrylic on canvas 40 x 50cm

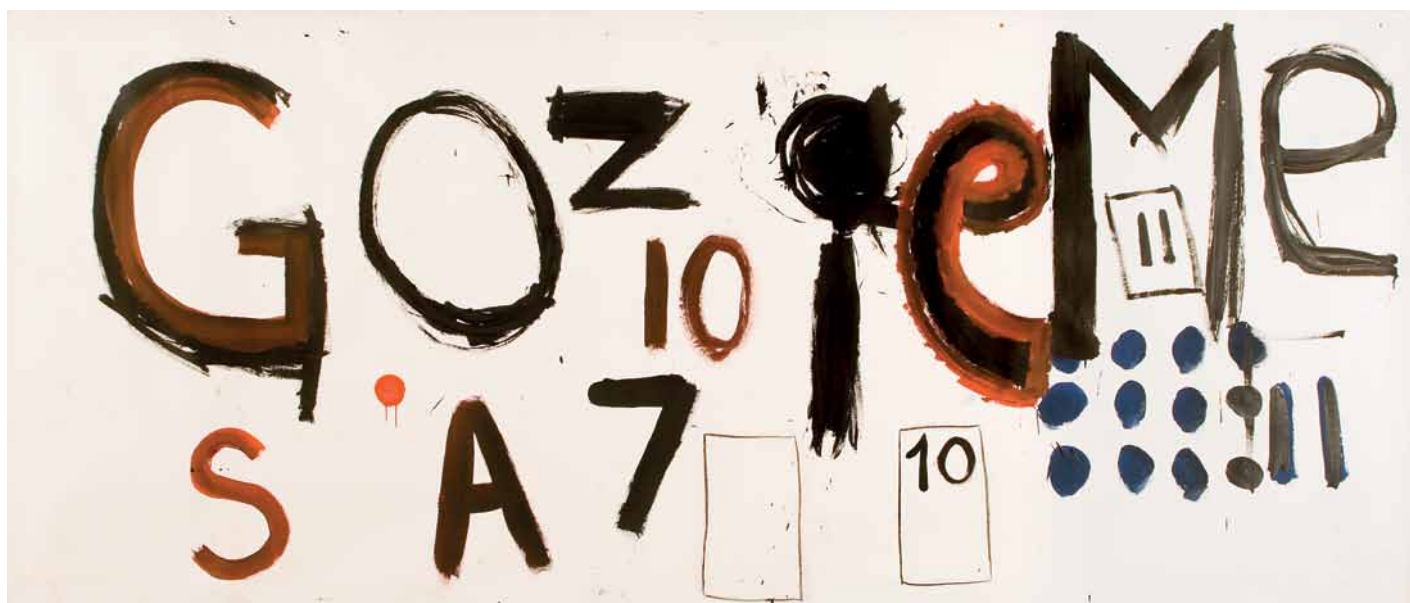




Charlotte Stephens & Paul Colley *Untitled* 2006  
Acrylic on canvas 180 x 182 cm



Jasmine Green *Untitled* 2011  
Chalk and acrylic on board 40 x 40 cm



Gosieme Gosieme 2000  
Acrylic on paper 367 x 150 cm



John Croft *Elvis* 2008  
Acrylic on canvas 150 x 150 cm

opposite >  
Louise Newam *Self portrait* 2008  
Acrylic on canvas 120 x 152 cm







Laura X *Untitled* 2002  
Acrylic on canvas 182 X 182cm

# The Art of Not Knowing

## Pratap Rughani

It's 1985. A small boy, Paul Colley, is held in the centre of the frame, his limbs repeatedly exercised by adults holding him prone on a table. His limbs are moved in quick rhythms to help him develop 'cross-patterning', a step in the healthy development of a child that most parents never need to know enough about to name.

It's not easy to watch this video document. Any parent would recognise the gaze of fear in moments when a scan or test might reveal something 'wrong' with their child's development. That kind of private fear dispels for most, but for children with severe neurological impairments, like Paul and the circle that supports them, a challenging journey, bridging a too-separate world is already underway.

Rather than accepting the limited medical or social response of the time, Paul's parents, artists Kate Adams and Tony Colley, took the unusual step of using video to help child development specialists understand him more fully. "We were recording to monitor change and also to give us a record," Adams says. "The goals were clear and progressive, like recording Paul's exercise routine - designed to head off scoliosis of his spine - to give him greater mobility as he grew up."

When, a few years later, she and the late Jon Cole set up Project Art Works to work with young people with complex needs, this intimate family experience inspired the company's use of video as a creative and documentary tool.

December 2011. Milton Keynes' MK Gallery. Twenty six years on and the small boy in the video is now a mobile man, with a strong screen presence, taking us on a journey. *The Not Knowing of Another* is a four-screen film installation, charting Paul's progress through an industrial building, over a railway bridge and out on to an expansive beach at sunset.

The small act of crossing a bridge or walking on a beach opens out into existential reflections on what it can mean to move, to negotiate a step, to come to the liminal space of the sea shore. To see. To respond. To imagine what another sees, beyond the routine of the 'neuro-typical'.

A young woman, perhaps seventeen, comes into the gallery with her younger brother and within a few seconds says, "That's disgusting." She leaves before I have a chance to talk with her, but soon returns with her mother, who says the same, only more forcefully. I ask them to talk with me about what they have seen. Their frustration and annoyance are clear. The mother speaks of how her disabled son is called names on the bus or street. "Putting someone up like that in a video is just exploiting him. It's wrong. People will just be laughing at him. How can his family let him do that?" We look back at the screens. There is a shot of Paul being gently guided over the bridge by Adams. He responds to the sound of a passing train. "There's Mum." I say. "She developed this journey to help understand and bring parts of Paul's life to people like me who don't know enough about it. It's making me stop and think and empathise and hopefully, learn. I'm not laughing at him. If I'm really awake, I think he might be teaching me."

Neither answered, but their discomfort was instructive. Even to show this work is painful for some - and sometimes from surprising quarters. Both mother and daughter insisted, "It's not art." The implication was that art could not include the image of people like their son and brother. Visibility to them meant the fear of derision and their attitude reflected a broader cultural exclusion.

Adams' video art intervenes here. It is inter-woven with her commitment to bringing an understanding of Paul's experience to audiences - at times, she says, even to "meld consciousness". Somewhere, competing with refusal and anxiety, is the golden thread of empathy. There is an invitation to see as another sees, to imagine, to look in a way that connects us, rather than reducing us to voyeurs.

Anyone navigating this area needs to be ready to meet fear and taboos, heightened emotion and the relief of seeing truths, long-suppressed, find expression. Why is it seemingly so difficult to see the person as more than the disability and to appreciate artwork which breathes in a place of our mutuality? Project Art Works lives this tension.

Its contribution is significant in developing social critique, but its unique and unfolding contribution to documentary and video art lie in another place: the conceptual strength of the process of collaboration. The video practice of Adams, Cole and Project Art Works' core artists - Tim Corrigan, Sarah Broome and Annis Joslin - has produced a body of different filmic styles. *Sensory Soundings* (2009) filmed by Ben Rivers and Corrigan, features the exploration of space in Fort Brockhurst by long-term studio collaborator, Fred Mazzi and others. Fred's somatic experience of the space and built environment - how it sounds, feels and looks - is punctuated by Corrigan gently holding his hand. But this is Fred's exploration, enabled rather than defined by Corrigan's (or Project Art Works') hands.

Nine other artists have made individual film portraits for *In Transit*, a Project Art Works' series about the transition from education to adult care. Eden Kötting is the subject of a reflective film study by Gideon Koppel, studded with long takes that give a sense of how Eden herself may experience the activity around her. Andrew Kötting's video portrait of Mark Fraser is music-led, with a jaunty style, far



Top: Tony Colley 1985 VHS video still



Above: Kate Adams *The Not Knowing of Another* 2008



from Koppel's proscenium frames, but shares the centrality of the experience of a person with complex needs. The *In Transit* films offer a richer insight into an individual's character and needs than a paper-based description. In shaping these portraits the artists balance the need for a documentary tool with a film artist's practice.

Some of the video work has evolved into joint projects with pairs of artists, one of whom has complex needs. Project Art Works configures a space where communication can unfold more vividly through live sound and video projections. Many people with severe neurological impairments are non-verbal. For some with restricted movement, the video image is an exciting revelation, giving a live expansion of any moment in the studio – allowing a person to have a more moment by moment, real-time extension of their experience, especially in the process of making art work.

Developing and understanding communication is a tender process on both sides – a process of listening, giving attention and learning to respond to what can be understood or intuited. As Paul Shephard says: "We talk of the predicament that society has in relating to special people but there's a counter-predicament in how special people experience society."

Documentation as a research tool remains central to Project Art Works' practice. Every Tuesday morning for a year, the team filmed participants with complex needs for ten minutes. They were filmed in the same order each week, whatever they were doing. The results of this partnership with the Hastings and Rother NHS Partnership Trust Challenging Needs Service and a clinical psychologist were then analysed to monitor any changes that individuals may experience over a year of participation in the workshops.

Several of Project Art Works' events and videos emerge from a determination to make collaboration meaningful and to feature the process of production as an experimental space for a new kind of visibility. In a recent seminar, a live video-link featured pairs of artists collaborating on new work – one artist with severe neurological impairments and one without. Seminar participants visited the Project Art Works studio and the process of collaboration was projected as a backdrop to discussions. The gallery was thus re-configured



MK Gallery collaboration 2011  
Video still

1 Presentation to seminar  
at MK Gallery *Extreme  
Insight into Built Space*,  
9 December 2011.

2 Q&A at Whitechapel  
Gallery, 8/3/12

**Fratap Rughani** is a  
documentary film  
director and producer  
and Course Director of the  
MA in Documentary Film  
at the London College  
of Communication,  
University of the Arts.

as a new site in which to showcase a process – a more ethical process in that the person with complex needs is newly and radically central.

Conceptually this work resonates with Phil Collins' Turner Prize exhibit *The Return of The Real* (2006). Collins showcased a video installation describing a critique of the exploitative pressures of 'reality TV', ending the show with a working TV research office, Shady Lane Productions. Project Art Works dares to conceive a yet more open space of production – at best even a redemptive space – where production ethics are foregrounded and discussed, including the honest challenges of how to work with consent when a contributor may not be capable of expressing consent in ways that are recognisable in the norms of documentary ethics.

The emphasis on collaboration and exploration takes us to a unique crossroads of artistic and documentary impulses. More than this, it helps imagine and then gesture towards a new crossroads of neurological diversity, a place that is hard to conceive in a mainstream culture that has yet to reflect substantially on the experience of severe neurological impairment and the art born of it.

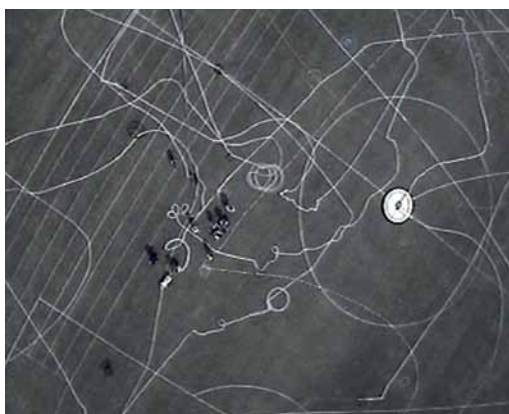
"This is not work of certainty," Adams says. "It is a work of doubt and the necessary honesty of self-questioning that allows self-doubt to have its proper place in the process of developing a way of working. What other way can there be but feeling one's way, frame by frame, discovering a response, paying very close attention to it, especially in our context when the individual would have to respond first in order to know how we are co-creating."

*The Not Knowing of Another* may suggest that 'the other' can never truly be deciphered, but the work also shows that it is possible to intimate another's point of view, approximate their responses, attempt temporary or contingent interpretations or simply let the camera roll. Through these films, mothers and fathers like Adams and Kötting find a way of gesturing life into a video art form. For Kötting, his daughter Eden is a key: "I work with Eden because I can't not work with Eden. Work before her feels very slight."

Adams' work likewise asks questions of us and what it means to relate to another: to see our humanity reflected in another.

It begs further questions: who is the artist here? How does art emerge through relationship? It pre-supposes an ethics of intention which is to be felt through research and in the work. Instead of seeking to define collaboration, Project Art Works' aspiration is to develop a methodology that can acknowledge the realm of 'not knowing'. It is a place where doubt and tentative, tender exploration unite people in an extended humanism – speaking a language of gesture, inference, intuition and feeling. Ultimately, it is beyond text, words and the sometime comfort that comes from an ability to draw down and define a specified meaning.

Project Art Works' videos are fresh and innovative and at times awkward and uncomfortable. Pioneering, conceptually and aesthetically strong, they maybe baffling or intriguing to many mainstream arts organisations. They do not fit neatly into traditions of video art, or even of Outsider Art but instead extend and challenge video language and ways of working – most strikingly in the radical insistence on the artistic value of expression of talented people, whatever their neurology. Their simple presence and assisted self-expression in many works, so clearly foregrounding and uniting ethics and aesthetics, invites the viewer to travel to a new place. "You have to fall in love to do this work," says Tim Corrigan. Looking at the best of it may make you love again.



*Walking the Line* 2006  
Video still

## A Wandering Line

Laura McLean Ferris

What's in between yes and no? When making decisions there are hundreds of possibilities, hundreds of nuances of which extreme affirmation or rejection are only the extreme poles. And when you are making decisions with someone else, things become even more complex. Who influences which elements of the decision-making process? Who really decides? With two people, this is complex, but with even five it becomes a matrix. What about at the levels of society? How do we really decide how we live as individuals and what influence do all of those others have on the way we live?

These are some of the fundamental questions that have been raised for me by studying the work of Project Art Works in terms of its practices as a group of artists working with people who have a variety of intellectual disabilities and complex needs. And for me these kinds of questions are most profoundly visualised in some of the group's works with the built environment and the negotiations of space.

Agency is one of the most interesting and crucial topics when it comes to art and politics and it is, aside from the life-changing and therapeutic work in which Project Art Works is involved, one of the most fundamental intellectual and ethical problems that is thrown into relief by the practice.

Issues around agency can be recognised in everything from the tiniest brush stroke or movement to the greatest issues of ethics and politics. All must answer the questions 'What shall I do?' 'What shall we do?' However, in the case of Project Art Works, it can be difficult sometimes to trace agency in even the tiniest

brush stroke, given that for some participants the process of making a painting is deeply collaborative and would not be possible without the assistance and decision-making processes of the artists who work with them.

In the case of the paintings produced in the studio, many of them are extremely beautiful or visually surprising or funny and possessed of unique qualities and vision, but it is very hard to generalise about the work, given that each of the artists and their works are so different, and that each has different needs and modes of expression.

In a powerful video, two young artists, Clare Maynard and Matthew Boyd-Gravell are working with others, in the same space, on a painting project. Clare makes a lot of noise as she works, crying out and shouting loudly. At the other end of the room is Matthew, painting very quietly, with immense concentration, using a soft shade of light blue. He seems to lift his brush off the canvas when the noise in the room becomes too loud and then takes to stroking the blue with his brush once more, as though he were softly brushing a doll's hair. One of the reasons this film is so moving and revealing is that it shows how tolerant the members of the group are of each other and how every event, every movement in the space, has the capacity to influence the work produced – noise, light, assistance, guidance, suggestion.

Another expression of this is *Walking the Line* (2006), a film recently shown in *States and Spaces* (2011), the exhibition of work by Project Art Works at MK Gallery. Using field markers (like the ones used to mark out football pitches)

and coloured discs, a group of pupils from Saxon Mount School made a large-scale drawing of their movements around a field. In a sense, this squiggling, wavering, white line, with its u-turns and doublings-back is the antithesis of the neatly drawn football pitch or tennis court, and yet it is related, because of the way the lines describe and express the parameters and rules of the work.

Filmed from a blimp high above the field, one can see each small decision, each this way and that, each exertion of pressure or improvisation from within the group, as it happens. The field markers are a very direct expression of marginality itself – the space between the yes and the no – and the marks that set out the rules for playing a game. Improvising on rules is part of the work and this opens up a kind of radical openness of potentiality.

This radical openness can be seen in many of Project Art Works' projects. As part of its 2011 residency in Milton Keynes, a group of young people with autism spent a day moving through urban and park spaces and as far as possible, they left the rules for what might be seen, done and heard up for negotiation. Whilst a route was suggested by the artists, it was essentially up to the participants to choose what to focus on, or for the artists to notice that something was particularly capturing their attention.

A prime example of this practice is a set of works called *Walking Not Talking* (2011) produced by Fox Hawkins from Walnuts School and artist Annis Joslin, who accompanied him on a walk. Whenever Fox began to draw in his notebook, Joslin took a photograph of what he had drawn and the results were displayed together. Rather than draw a bush, Fox would try to draw every leaf he could see. The advertising imagery of the shopping centre was either depicted as though it was part of the landscape or not seen at all. Recordings were made at the Cathedral of Trees, a landmark in Milton Keynes, based on the dimensions of Norwich Cathedral. On this journey of states and spaces the world was completely open to being transformed.

Project Art Works has drawn on Joseph Beuys' conception that everyone can participate creatively in reshaping society and that everyone is an artist. The 'radical openness' of the work also reminds me of Marcel Duchamp. Works such as *Sensory Soundings* (2009), a series of videos in which individuals find their way around the fort, drawing attention to different parts of the building, based on their interests – calling out to feel the echo, or concentrating on tapping the windows, for example – reveal the ready-made work that is in the world and that is pointed out or drawn attention to by the participants. Because of the sensitivities to agency and the decision-making processes that inform every creative work that is made by the group, it both reveals the Duchampian creative act and yet casts it in a light that is undecidable.

We cannot tell whose work it is exactly and where the collaboration ends. As Duchamp pointed out, you choose the ready-made, but the ready-made chooses you. The revelation of watching this kind of undecidability produced and created, however, is a prerequisite for a kind of openness that is radical indeed.



*Walking the Line* 2006  
Photographs: Bob Mazzer

Laura McLean-Ferris is an art writer, art critic for *The Independent* and *ArtReview's* editor at large.

## Strange World, Strange People, Strange Self

Paul Shephard

### Strange World

How often have you looked at a baby and marvelled at the directness of its gaze? It is a clear and honest look that must, it seems, be linked with its helplessness and innocence, and with the trust it has no choice but to give you.

Now think about it again: a child is not innocent, but ignorant. It may start from zero knowledge, but it's busy from its first breath with learning to model itself as part of the real world. Every minute, it sticks a little more substance to its amature of experience as it makes its journey through the valley of the shadow, leaving childish things behind. The actual world gets left behind in the process. The horizon that describes the spherical earth, the gravity that binds us to it and the line of evolutionary mutations that gave us form become part of the background, overlaid by the complex of culture that we call the real world.

The child learns how to measure everything and to prise apart the elements. Eventually its freedom is eclipsed by its knowledge. Maintaining the lamps that eliminate the shadows from the valley becomes a full-time occupation, and because it knows how to act, it has no choice but to act. Because it has a choice, it has no choice but to choose.

Here is a different child. This one, against the grain, has grown up innocent, in and out of the shadow; he sees a fresh world both strange and beautiful every time he turns his head. It is not the real world he sees but the actual world. It is wonderful, awesome. Every time is the first time. Today, visiting earth, he is struck by the horizon and its almost imperceptible curve. He

is walking on a surface so riven by strangeness that he has to take great care where he places his feet, and the fierce light in the sky, much too bright to look at, seems to be millions of miles away. This strangeness clicks in and out of being beautiful every time he turns his head; strange, beautiful, strange beautiful. The beauty ebbs and flows like waves, or like swooning. It makes him unsteady. He loses touch with the edge of his body and he has to stamp his feet and shake his wrists to find it again.

### Strange People

Why does the number 16 bus go the same way every day? Is it magic? No – it's because the driver signed a contract. Why do children go to school? Because it's not just a good idea – it's the law. What is money? A promise to pay. Why do you need a passport? To prove you are who you say you are. This myriad of petty contracts is how the real world works. But besides these enforceable arrangements there is a galaxy of more subtle socialisms, from small talk to rhetoric, that describe the boundaries of our lives.

We are human, but we live bound by social arrangements of varying intensity, as do the other primates. Take, for example, the Anubis baboons, whose adult males have huge manes of thick hair and canine teeth, like swords. They live in big packs – not like wolves, in dozens, but in troops of several hundred. The hierarchies in these packs, these tribes, are delineated as strictly as if Dickens had written them. The alpha male is literally the father of the tribe, as they used to say of Scottish clan chiefs,

Paul Shephard is writer, lecturer and architect



Darryl Spencer *Moon* 2011  
Acrylic on canvas  
91 x 150 cm



Kate Adams Sun 2008  
Video still

because he has first choice of all the females. The baboon's change of government is rougher than ours, but it retains a metaphorical value for what we do. It arrives in the shape of two young males with brand new manes and useful muscles who gang up together to overcome the leader. There is a big scuffle that kicks up the dust and gets the rest of the tribe hooting and jumping, but before too long they have him on the ground. He retires immediately and goes to sit in a tree while the two depositors beta-and-gamma the daylights out of each other until there is only one left standing.

The elaborate gamut of snarling and grimacing that accompanies this revolution is like a parody of the facial expression exercises given to special needs children as part of their instruction in the ways of the real world. They have to be taught how to read faces because of their apparent difficulty with social communication; but to be fully integrated you need the flared nostril and the bared teeth, the quizzical smile and the raised eyebrow, the ambiguous frown and the crocodile tears, not just happy face, sad face, angry face, frightened face.

It is not a light task, this kind of social-adaptive teaching. Once taken on, the world reveals layers of complication so deep that everything presents itself as a potential problem with a potential solution. An ordinary child will spend a few years asking basic questions, following each answer with a further why, until the tautologies of its tribe are revealed: it is so because we believe it to be so. That is the foundation of the real world. But the special need in question here is having to live without that basis. The trust in enquiry, in science and philosophy and their related experiments, needs to be replaced with something else.

#### Strange Self

If science and philosophy are too enmeshed in tribal value, what about art? The image-conscious world is a modern thing, but not a

new thing. The acceleration in digital processing of images may have taken us by surprise and rendered the world of representation a complex, economico-philosophic proposition, full of the furore of real world territories, but still, art survives. In the cave painting days it was the main subject, both technology and magic too, but now we know so much about everything the mimesis of the actual world that art is can take its place alongside science and philosophy as a kind of equal but different enquiry. In this picture, the actual world is the more-than-real place that frames not just human life but all of life, and the perception of another world beyond the real is the subject of art's enquiry. Perception of form and engagement with material are the stuff of it. When taken like this, suddenly the critiques disappear and become appreciations. Discrimination disappears and becomes judgement. And most of all, the strange self appears and makes its mark.

The great featherweight Gertrude Stein had amongst her writings this simple *bon mot*: 'There is knowing, and there is what you know'. Her mission had been the disarming of prejudice, and her 'knowing what you know' is part of a modern and non-utilitarian understanding of democracy in which the individual is more important than the majority. You don't cut off their heads for the sake of difference. You have their heads examined. And how strange it is in there! Difference turns out not to be revolutionary nor radical even, but strange. And through this door the art of self expression walks in and plays its part.

Self expression does not mean meaningless, does not mean uncommunicative, does not even mean non-representational. The forms of the actual world are made by gravitational compressions of elemental chemistries, by atmospheric action spurred by the sun and moon and by mutations of the biomass. It is some combination of these fundamentals that you see every time you open your eyes, however stirred together by five billion years of the solar

system's passage and however complexified and over-coded they have been by our crazy, baboon-like human history.

To see these great simplicities for what they are sounds like it could be a lifetime's work. But maybe it's not the seeing itself but the breaking through to the strangeness of yourself that is the job at hand.

Because of the role of chance in the coming into being of the world, because of the serial coincidences of the condensing nebula, the particular coalitions of space rocks making the planet, its distance from the sun, the embedded chemistries in the atmosphere, the still as yet unknown origins of the biomass and the mutations that have led it to its current configuration; because of this massive weight of contingency, we can say that form, in detail, is arbitrary. So, in detail, is the human brain. The lines leading to the present moment may be qualified by their origins, and that is the prevailing explanation for the differences, and the similarities, between the baboons and the humans.

But in the present moment itself, anything might happen. Every time a life is conceived there is a shuffling of the pack of genes that might lead anywhere. It may be a threat to our sense of communities – the tribes, the packs – to say such a thing, but under this interpretation of the world, everyone and everything is strange. In some sense, we are all on the margin.



## Acknowledgements

The work outlined in this publication is the result of the consideration, skill and generosity of many individuals and organisations. We thank all the artists, trustees, participants and their families and support workers, funders, arts and social care professionals and associates who have wholeheartedly embraced the ethos of our collective work. In recent years, we have lost some of our closest collaborators and friends and are taking this opportunity to remember and acknowledge our co-founder Jonathan Cole, artists Angela Biltcliffe and Len Shelley, trustee and mentor Deborah Rawson and studio artists Fred Mazzio and Sammy Brookes.

Project Art Works' connections and networks of support have evolved over a long time. Many of our current participants, supporters, trustees and artists have been associated with us for many years. We acknowledge all our long-term collaborators and thank them for their trust and tenacity. In particular, we thank Marion Purdey, mother of Edward, trustee, advisor, valued friend and Chair of our Board from 2003 to 2011; Angela Lane, mother of Cherry, trustee and vocal and inspirational supporter; artist and film maker Tim Corrigan, who has been central to the development of our practice over the past decade and who brings instinctive vitality and rigorous artistic judgement to all that he does; George Adams, trustee, advisor and model maker; and head teachers Peter Gordon and John Hassell, whose trust and advocacy encouraged us in early projects.

We thank Nick Candler, our current Chair, for his dynamic and generous stewardship; our other current trustees, Verity Slater, Philip Cole and Clare Whistler; Charlie Stephens, advisor to the board and an artist on the mentoring studios programme; and former trustees Annette Barton, Anthea Barton, Angela Kingston, Catherine Harvey, Shirley Franklin, Graham Lee, Lorna Thursfield, Deborah Rawson, Ruth Gordon and Sean Pettit.

We are very grateful to the many support workers we encounter, who embody dedication and an inspiring capacity to enable people who have high support needs to access creative opportunities.

We thank our current artists, Annis Joslin, Rachel Hine, Tim Corrigan, Leila McMillan, Tony Colley, Paul Lucas and Sara Dare for their immense hard work and commitment and the others who join us intermittently, including Kenton Lowe, Nikki Thompson, Sharon Haward, Marley Cole, Ruby Colley and Sineid Codd. We thank studios participants, past and present, including Charlotte Stephens, Eden Kötting, John Croft, Jonathan Rogers, Michelle Roberts, Albert Geere, Neville Jermyn, Sam Smith, Darryl Spencer, Louise Newam, David Marriott, Paul Colley, India O'Sullivan and Martin Sheriden.

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## Funders

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Arts Council England has supported us financially and strategically. It has advocated for the organisation and responded positively to our bids for funding to support running costs, programmes and projects.

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We have an evolving partnership with and funding from Hastings Borough Council and look forward to future collaboration and exchange linked to cultural opportunities in the town.

Since 2008, Project Art Works has led a number of programme initiatives through Turning Point South East (TPSE), including collaborations with the directors and education specialists of 'mainstream' galleries and a series of inclusive, non-verbal seminars and events that brought together artists and arts and social care professionals. In 2011-12, we worked with MK Gallery on a substantial project of workshops and a retrospective exhibition. We thank Anthony Spira, director of MK Gallery and Emma Fry, head of education, for the inspiration and energy they brought to bear on the project and to TPSE and its coordinator, Amanda King, for their support of this work in the South East and beyond.

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## The Anthology

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*Art serves to establish community. It links us with others, and with the things around us, in a shared vision and effort. My concern is never art, but always what art can be used for.*

Richter, Gerhard (1995)  
Notes, 1962, *The Daily Practice of Painting: Writings 1962-1993*.  
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Neville Jermyn *Hippopotamus* 2009  
Crayons on paper 60 x 45 cm

