



Open
College
of the Arts

Formative feedback

Student name	Gesa Helms	Student number	492645
Course/Unit	Creative Arts Level 3 Body of Work	Assignment number	3
Type of tutorial	(video)		

Normally to be written by the student, and endorsed by the tutor with **additions/amendments in red**.

Overall Comments *General overview of the students progress and key points covered, to be written by the tutor approx 150 words*

We had a full discussion on your body of work and how your research interrelates with your creative practice. I was pleased to hear you articulating clearly about your intentions for your work and your questioning of the modality for the animating principles that hold your creative work together. We came up with some unexpected thinking on where your process of making needs to go and what your practice should lean on in terms of existing ideas and practitioners that have interrelated processes, such as those coming from the Fluxus movement that I will mention below. You have now set yourself up for a strong second half of this course where you should expect to apply your process of making to your series of enquiries.

Summary of tutorial discussion (student)

We begin with a discussion of progress and trajectory to date and I update briefly on the previous Res tutorial (2, November) and my frustrations with distance, isolation and course materials (notably: Research module) and how I worked through these by making work and testing trajectories around drawing/contact in a practical research setting. In this, we raise distance learning as modality (what it brings, what its tensions are), and I am raising it here as part of the past weeks' work also has

returned distance learning as medium/ modality for the project itself. We also discuss Geography as my academic home discipline and how I am finding insights and originality as to some of the project's questions with regards to my earlier practice. This has been a focus throughout, or rather: a productive tension: how to make work that articulates a creative practice which builds on such earlier experiences (without merely folding back into a social science research practice).

That Research articulates in its handbook effectively a social science dissertation project has helped to push me towards investigating research as practice and I find that I am in a productive process of making such research as practice. [During the tutorial this seemed to hover somewhat: I come away thinking of the dangers of merely employing creative methods for a social science project; much later I realise that this tension is productive and at the heart of what I am exploring as expanded field of drawing and a creative practice therein.]

There are four main fields of discussion for this tutorial:

- What and who can I lean on for making work, i.e.: what is a productive context?
- What constitutes the work/ practice?
- What is the framework, or, as I name it as 'animating principle' that underpins and organises the work. Doug moves to call it cosmology.
- What relationship am I forming with the viewer/ audience?

What and who can I lean on for making work?

This is raised early when I mention the discussion with Rachel and what it has steered me towards and allowed me to discuss. We return to it at various points throughout (see below).

[Now, when typing these notes, I also realise the relevance of that question for the actual body of work: leaning as spatial relationship, as fluff-making, as contact/ touch.]

What constitutes the work/practice?

Doug usefully returns to me his thoughts on the material that I have sent to him (several sketchbooks): While I am generating these enquiries, I am becoming the generator of lint, almost tumble-drier like: the work becomes the fluff that is turned out; the things tumble out of my enquiries.

I am intrigued by this description of process and ask: you mean I am like a drawing machine? Doug replies: no, it's not a mechanical, cold or absent process: it is in fact quite crucial that it is you who is doing it, the work is neither cold nor distanced but intimate.

We spend some time drawing out this process/ practice. Doug proposes the sense of a vessel, I mention the animating principle to hold things together. This term, animating principle, has to this point had been my thought for the container, framing

of the whole work, now it becomes clearer that it is the practice itself, it is fed through myself in this process of making.

I ask something like: does it work? What should I eject, what to focus on? His reply is helpful: it would be difficult to say which of these strands are redundant, don't work.

He, himself, has a sense where he would take it but is hesitant to steer me at this point as it would be his ideas and practice. Instead, and this is confirming my own sense of the process: what it will become comes out of the process of making.

Towards the end of the tutorial (chronologically after the following sections), we return to the practice of making more fluff, of pulling the fluff out of the sketchbooks.

Here, Doug names Fluxus as obvious, if however not so far referenced influence, namely, Nam June Paik and Joseph Beuys: or familiarity and strangeness; interdisciplinarity) and crucially: for rawness of work: how to take what I have, found and to put into the space in a matter of fact manner.

[this is feedback I am excited to hear: I felt my intend for out-there performance had failed, that it was a bit meek, safe; that the rawness/ directness instead resides elsewhere in the work is re-assuring and important to hear]

As central focus, this would mean: where do the actions and objects and encounters want to lead you?

I ask in the end specifically about feedback on the folding of radiator and bannister into the book pages. Doug asks: yes, but what do you lose in this process? What is no longer there and absent? Can you investigate that and what does it mean for the work you are left with.

What is the animating principle?

Again, I mention the Res 2 tutorial and Rachel's sense of satellite objects of work that circle the dissertation itself. This quickly, in my head?, becomes a mobile, animated by breath, touch, movement.

I mention the dream as providing the spatial sense of connections and movements that led me to the staircase and how I have begun to consider it, the dream, as the animating principle.

Here, Doug mentions Hilary Lloyd and Sadie Coles Gallery to look at.

AP: to spend 3-4 weeks to reflect and note down the findings and the research process to date to form Res Part 3; using this process to refine and focus on findings and next steps of making BoW as to where I am now.

Bringing the elements together and finding a vessel concerns the sense of matter of factness and action that underpins the work (and made him suggest the above artists). This process then can make the core of the work very clear and exposes the ideas of touch, near-space, intimacy in the work clearly.

What is the relationship to the viewer/audience?

Are they part of the act of making, are they standing outside, do they encounter it later?

I talk about the ideas for showing this work in a site, as a physical thing, as installation (not necessary a gallery), and mention the idea that the staircase may even work.

Doug invites me to begin to fantasise of how such ambitious site could work for this work and how I could begin to work into this as relationship to the viewer/audience; to give the work space to breathe and to play with possible forms.

I mention how the encounters within the work are forms of contact, have a participant, an other already and we return to the idea of the mobile as form for these encounters of actions, drawings, photographs, texts and folding, interweaving and forming a cosmology.

Doug mentions that 'there are mobiles and mobiles': this may not look like a mobile but what principles of a mobile are relevant and what does the work relate to?

Summary of Project Proposal (amended in the light of the tutorial) (student)

To include stages and timescales

No overall changes.

The timeline is amended to submit BoW and Research for the November 2020 assessment; with a view of progressing Res 3 (until close to submission) before BoW 4, with view of the latter submitted in April, the dissertation draft, Res 4, thereafter.

Critical Reflection (space to critically reflect on the work across both units) (student)

-- we did discuss this throughout and I have noted the points in the discussion section above.

At this point, about half-way stage, I feel the two parts are well integrated and I have a sense of what belongs in which part and how to interweave them.

There are some interesting points emerging here as to Research as practice, I will keep an eye on these (but also realise that some of the deeper discussions around these issues exceed the frame of the BA (Hon) level).

I am excited how the satellite objects of the Research find an expression as a mobile for BoW, there is potentially something really interesting happening here, methodologically but also in terms of artistic practice, and it returns to my earlier interests around interdisciplinarity.

Any other notes (student)

We discuss starting SYP in Spring with a view to have the public part of that module in autumn, with view to submit for March 2021 assessment, and 2021 graduation.

Suggested reading/viewing (tutor)

I have made a number of suggestions that extend from our thoughts on a spatial arrangement/mobile/cosmology/cosmogony. Have a look at these and see if any resonate for you to lean on. In particular, Fluxus artists sow a path where the process of making and linking to an interdisciplinary approach resonates with your creative voice.

- Hilary Lloyd, currently on show at Sadie Coles HQ, London, I believe will resonate with you, <https://www.sadiecoles.com/artists/26-hilary-lloyd/>
- Have a look at “Fluxus The Practice of Non-Duality’ as an overall guide for Fluxus and Nam June Paik, available to download from the UCA library. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucreative-ebooks/detail.action?docID=1696763#>
- Pipilotti Rist, I thought of her because of the way she is interested with a ‘touch’ connection with the world through body and video, bit leftfield but thought you maybe interested <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJUHOArAdY0> I might also mention Sarah Sze here as well as a contemporary artist who has a more literal translation of the cosmology/assemblage but again good to glance at.

Key points for the next part (tutor)

- Accumulate your work through your process of making, perhaps moving away from the books to a cosmogony of stuff that will become the mobile (form) structure of the work.
- Synthesise your methodology through your research, do allow yourself this space to refine this aspect which will help to free you up as you create work.
- Consider your connection with the viewer/reader/listener where are you leading them, at what point do things become too open or too opaque through your engagement, test this through your practice.

Tutor name	Doug Burton
Date	23/12/19
Next assignment due	End of March mid April 2020