

Creative Cultures



Practice
Research
Exhibition

24 May 2023 | 2-4pm

Institute for Creative Cultures building,
Parkside, Coventry CV1 2NE

Coventry
University 

Creative Cultures Practice Research

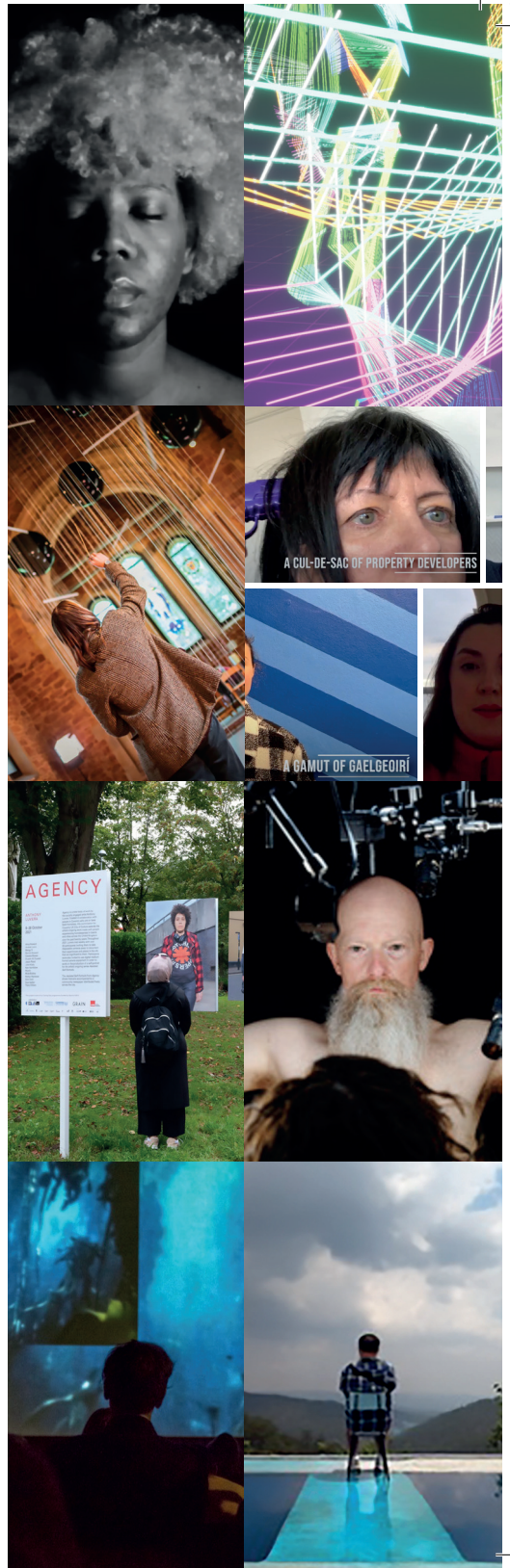
Since emerging in the UK university context in the early 1990s, practice research has expanded the horizons of knowledge production. It has also challenged institutional hierarchies and generated innovative impact at the intersection between academic disciplines and publics. The Institute for Creative Cultures (ICC) hosts world-class practice researchers in arts and humanities from the Centre for Arts, Memory and Communities (CAMC), Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRE) and Centre for Postdigital Cultures (CPC). The ICC provides a unique context for further expanding the impact of practice research by specifically exploring its transdisciplinary potential across Coventry University's wider research environment.

In January 2022, the ICC established the Practice Research Working Group (PRWG). The group aims to expand practice research across the institute, strengthen our transdisciplinary research approach and advocate for a new research paradigm locally, nationally and internationally. The PRWG's work focuses on three main interest areas: PGR training and resources, ICC leadership in practice research and effective advocacy.

The Creative Cultures Practice Research Exhibition has been planned as a key initiative to stimulate cross-disciplinary exchange and collaboration with other research fields at Coventry University.

“The aim is to introduce colleagues from other research institutes and centres across the University to practice research in the arts. It plans to do so by sharing diverse work such as virtual reality, participatory methods, socially engaged art, installation, music, and curatorial practices. The exhibition features practice research projects by José Dias (CAMC), Ruth Gibson, Petra Johnson, Lily Hayward-Smith, Karen Wood, Louisa Petts, Vipavinee Artpradid (all from C-DARE), Mel Jordan (CPC), Anthony Luvera (CAMC), Teoma Naccarato & John MacCallum (C-DARE), Carolina Rito (CAMC) and Kevin Walker (CPC).”

Carolina Rito and Scott deLahunta.
PRWG Chairs





Practice Research Exhibition



AmplifyHer: voicing the experiences of women musicians in São Paulo

2021

**José Dias, Rogério Costa,
Kirsty Fairclough, Haftor Medbøe,
Ana Fridman, Lilian Campesato,
Tide Borges, Marina Mapurunga,
Paulo Assis, Lígia Xavier, Matias
José Ribeiro, Valeria Gospodinova**

AmplifyHer: Voicing the experience of women musicians in Brazil. It was a pilot study designed to assess the most pressing challenges faced by female musicians in Brazil, namely those related to the lack of media exposure and poor access to job opportunities, income and financing. This was a research project funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), involving researchers from Manchester Metropolitan University, University of São Paulo and Edinburgh Napier University, from Musicology, Ethnomusicology, Gender Studies, Film Studies, Sound Studies, and Sociology.

The study ran from March to July 2021, and involved 12 female musicians from São Paulo who represent the broader Brazilian reality. Six of the 12 participants are white and six are black. Six in 12 belong to the age group from 20 to 39 years old (New Talent – NT); three belong to the age group of 40 to 55 years (Established Artists – EA) and three belong to the age group of 55 and above (Senior Artists – SA). Data in this report were obtained from three focus groups (four participants each) and individual interviews. The methodology followed two types of triangulations, according to Denzin (1978), with the data being analysed individually and crossed by three researchers, and three types of data were obtained: focus group, direct observation, and interview. In this way, quantitative and qualitative data were obtained.



Screenshot from "Paola Ribeiro" (AmplifyHer EPK 2022)

All participants received training on self-promotion from music industry professionals and produced individual Electronic Press Kits (EPK) in 2022 to showcase their talent, profile, and views as women in music.

In this CAMC Practice Research showcase, you can see a collection of these 12 five-minute EPK. An industry report was also produced and distributed to the Brazilian media, and as a result, our researchers and participants have been interviewed for Brazilian and international media outlets.

Expanded Fields

2019

**Ruth Gibson, Jenny Roche,
Mel Mercier, Bruno Martelli,
Kévin Coquelard, Henri Montes
and Ursula Robb.**

AmplifyHer: Voicing the experience of Expanded Fields invites audience with a piece of choreography, to encounter the inner worlds, sounds and sensations that dancers experience in the performance of a moment of dance. Behind this work lies a deep curiosity about how to convey the complexity of a dancing moment and to allow the feeling states and images that are experienced by dancers to be perceived by an audience.

How do we create an encounter that makes us aware of our capacity to experience the world through all of our senses and to transmit these sensations between each other when we share a performance experience? It's something ineffable, intuited and yet familiar—our ability to connect with each other on different levels at once. Film, sound installation and virtual reality spaces alongside episodic live performance illuminate the 'expanded fields' emanating from this dancing moment, inviting the viewer into an intimate perspective on the complexities of individual and shared experiences of dancing together.



Expanded Fields. Photo by Maurice Gunning



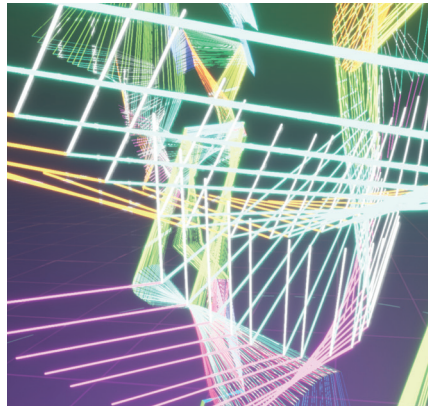
Expanded Fields. Photo by Maurice Gunning



Expanded Fields. Dancer Avatars



Expanded Fields. Dancer Avatars



Expanded Fields. Dancer Avatars

The micro-phenomenological interview was used in the studio to mine the dancers' feelings and thoughts in the moment of making solos in the form of voice recordings, diaries and drawings. The verbs Push Jolt Rebound were choreographic starting points for trios and solos. The creative team worked with live performance, film, motion capture data and sound recordings of the dancers to produce an installation that enabled the audience to enter this intimate perspective on what it means to dance a piece of choreography.

Partners:

This project is funded by the Irish Arts Council and supported by the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick, Centre for Dance Research, Coventry University, Limerick City Gallery of Art, Live Collision International Festival and Lightmoves Festival of Screendance.

The Shape of Sound

2021-22

Petra Johnson, Lily Hayward-Smith, Karen Wood, Louisa Petts, Vipavinee Artrapid

This project consists of installations, performances, and engagement workshops with different communities. The installation, 'The Shape of Sound', is an artist impression of the hair cells inside the cochlea of the inner ear. The hair cells are represented through suspended strands of delicate silk and wool threads.

The performance is an exploration of the installation through listening, movement and touch, highlighting the element of touch in the physical process of hearing a sound.

The dance artists practice a process of exploratory improvisation, where research is developed through moving and deep listening with the strands, interacting with light, darkness, shadows, and silence within space. We frame our project as practice research, utilising this process as a methodology to explore research questions through movement and public engagement. Please refer to the document 'Practice as Research in The Shape of Sound Project' for more details.



© The Shape of Sound Collective. Installation by Petra Johnson. Movement artists Lily-Hayward Smith and Louisa Petts. Photograph by ReelMasterProduction 2022. Consent has been sought from individuals in the photos.



© The Shape of Sound Collective. Installation by Petra Johnson. Participant Stefania Carp.
Photograph by ReelMasterProduction 2022. Consent has been sought from individuals in the photos.

In 2021, open rehearsals took place as part of the Being Human Festival Coventry Hub. Partnering with Historic Coventry Trust and Coventry University, the project became a site-specific installation in the Anglican Mortuary Chapel at London Road Cemetery in Coventry as part of Coventry Opens in May 2022. In Spring 2024, it will be installed at the Charterhouse in Coventry, inviting visitors to engage with a participatory movement-based exploration. Visitors can explore their bodily intelligence through sound and movement while simultaneously learning about the historic site.

The interdisciplinary work blends the fields of sonic, dance, heritage, and audience engagement research.

We are interested in potential collaborations with creative technologists and establishing relationships for long-term research.

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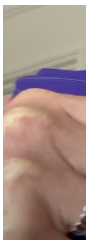
Art-Study-Action: Developing Methods of Opinion Formation with Cultural Organisations

2021-22

Mel Jordan and Andrew Hewitt

My research activity originates from my artistic practice. I work as part of the Partisan Social Club to develop participatory works and co-learning initiatives. We create temporary public spheres in the art gallery, which use the production of artworks to engage citizens. Membership, shared study, tagging and publishing together are used as methods to produce new values and opinions. (Jordan and Hewitt: 2020).

I am Co- Investigator on the Spatial Practices in Art and Architecture for Empathetic Exchange (SPACE), EU funded RISE Project.



Collective Nouns II (Reflections on Commoning),
Partisan Social Club, 2022

It is a research action that brings together cultural organisations and higher education institutes to explore how spatial practices effect public exchange and opinion formation in urban spaces. The aim is to understand the role that visual culture plays in promoting democratic ways of living together. Research questions addressed are, how do the pedagogic strategies employed by spatial practices effect and contribute to the transformation and construction of subjectivity? How can spatial practices impact upon cultural and social policy to promote inclusionary processes? The short film, Collective Nouns II (Reflections on Commoning), was produced while on a research secondment at Sirius as part of the SPACEX project.

I am also PI for a Research England funded project, Making Tools Together: Exploring new ways to understand arts social value (MORE). The objective is to apply the artistic practice of 'rewriting, recommoning and rehearsal' (Jordan and Hewitt: 2023) that I have trialled, in conjunction with small cultural organisations, to form part of their audience evaluation planning. I am working with three UK based cultural organisations; Coventry Biennial, Coventry Art Space and NN Contemporary Arts.

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AGENCY

2021-22

Anthony Luvera

Collaborators: Amy Howard, Arshak Lanin, Bengy S, Bernie Howard, Cecelia Stower, Dualeh Ali Dualeh, Jason Read, John Kiely, Ken Hornblow, Martin, Mick Bickley, Sue Sadler, Tracy Villiers

Agency is a practice research project created by Anthony Luvera in collaboration with people who have experienced homelessness in Coventry, commissioned by Coventry UK City of Culture. Through weekly group workshops and individual meetings, Luvera met with over 30 participants. He invited them to take disposable cameras away to document their experiences and places in the city that are significant to them. Participants were also invited to work with Luvera to use digital medium format camera equipment to work on the production of a self-portrait for the artist's ongoing series, Assisted Self-Portraits. Agency was first shown as part of the Home: Arts and Homelessness Festival held in October 2021, in an exhibition staged in the public realm on Warwick Row, Coventry, and published in community newspaper distributed freely across the city.



Installation of Agency by Anthony Luvera, Warwick Row, Coventry, Coventry UK City of Culture 2021, 8 – 28 October 2021



Agency has since been featured in numerous publications, journals, and reports, including the first ever report published by Amnesty International UK about homelessness in England, and in exhibitions held in Landksrona, Sweden and in Oslo, Norway. Luvera continues to work with participants to support their independent activities as the Agency Photography Group. The first Agency Photography Group exhibition, titled Constellations of HOME was held in the FAB Gallery at Warwick University in October 2022.

III: Once Returned / On being together in time

2022 – 23

**Teoma Naccarato
and John MacCallum**

The rhythm of our daily lives and relationships is inextricably entangled with ongoing scientific, artistic, and philosophical reincarnations of the “clock”. Importantly, tools for planning and tracking time are not only descriptive but prescriptive of human behaviors.

Design choices such as the discretisation of time into days, hours, minutes, and seconds provides a structure for managing and measuring behaviors over time — on the condition that the behavior being aligned to a clock may also be discretised. For example: one step, one gesture, one breath, one heartbeat.



III: Once Returned / Video Wall, Performance by Teoma Naccarato and John MacCallum / Video Still



III: Once Returned / Created and performed by Teoma Naccarato and John MacCallum / Photo by Gianmarco Bresadola,

In our collaborative practice-as-research, I examine timekeeping systems as a form of choreography. In a recent project called “III: Once Returned”, created and performed with composer/computer scientist John MacCallum, we scored our every action, down to each inhale and exhale, over the course of a continuous, 72-hour livestream performance. As we endured for three full days and nights, each attempting to correlate our temporality with the pre-composed metronome, we were also accompanied by a pig heart that decomposed slowly between us at its own pace. Throughout, we wore electrocardiograms (ECGs), from which heart rate data was used to inform the temporality of the music for the audience.

The multiple, irreconcilable temporal processes unfolding over the course of this extended-duration performance were tethered by our shared context and intention. Sustaining temporal alignments between the various performers – us, the heart, the metronome, the music, the streaming platform, the video software, etc. – required a continual negotiation of the boundaries of what it means to be together in time.

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Institution as Praxis - New Curatorial Directions for Collaborative Research

2017-Present

Carolina Rito

Institution as Praxis is a curatorial research project that uses curatorial programming (talks, workshops, performances, screenings, exhibitions) as a methodology to activate the research questions. From 2017-present, this curatorial research project explored the critical and investigative capabilities of public programming in contemporary art institutions and in contemporary curating. In other words, how are institutions of display generating new knowledge about the world in which we live? Through more than hundred initiatives such as series of public events, publications, and exhibitions this project created a new model for research-led curating for the cultural sector.

The research questions were:

- What are the research capacities of curatorial public programming in contemporary art institutions and in contemporary curating?
- How can a research-led curatorial programme in a contemporary art centre be developed?
- How can the cultural sector's curatorial practices inform and contribute to the debates in academic curatorial research?

To the present, this multi-component project has delivered:

1. a three-year series of curated public events;
2. the publication of an edited book, *Institution as Praxis – New Curatorial Directions for Collaborative Research*;
3. the publication of one book chapter in the edited book *Institution as Praxis – New Curatorial Directions for Collaborative Research*;
4. and the publication of “Advisory Document on Collaborative Research” for the AHRC Midlands4Cities Consortium and Arts Council England.

Institution as Praxis was developed in partnership with Nottingham Contemporary (contemporary art centre in Nottingham, UK) and two higher education institutions, Nottingham Trent University and University of Nottingham. The partnership between the cultural and HE sectors at Nottingham Contemporary offered the curatorial conditions for an experimental curatorial approach located at the intersections between two paradigms of knowledge production: the academic and the curatorial/artistic.

Partners:
Nottingham Contemporary
University of Nottingham
Nottingham Trent University

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‘Phoenix’s Last Song’, Dorine Van Meel and Jules Sturm in conversation, ‘The Unexpected Beautiful Phrase’ at Nottingham Contemporary, 2019.
Photograph by Samuel Kirby



‘The Unexpected Beautiful Phrase’ at Nottingham Contemporary, 2019.
Photograph by Samuel Kirby



‘Serpent Rain’, a film by Denise Ferreira da Silva and Arjuna Neuman, ‘The Unexpected Beautiful Phrase’ at Nottingham Contemporary, 2019.
Photograph by Samuel Kirby

Nine Earths

2021-23

Kevin Walker with D-Fuse

Nine Earths, produced by artist collective D-Fuse, explores climate change and consumption through the daily lives of average people (primarily aged 16-34) in various countries around the world. The title refers to countries using up to nine Earths' worth of resources each year. We commission artists and filmmakers in each country to film a day in the life of one person, then compile the footage into films and immersive installations.

Associate Professor Kevin Walker of Coventry's Centre for Postdigital Cultures engages in visual ethnography using the film footage, to address the following questions:

- What can video collected by artists and young people in different countries tell us about global consumption?
- How feasible and suitable is remote ethnography for illuminating specific local contexts and making cross-cultural comparisons about consumption practices in relation to climate change?



Still from Nine Earths footage in Vietnam.

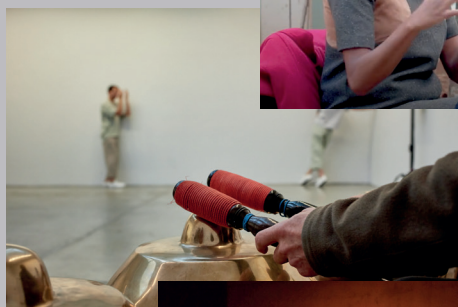


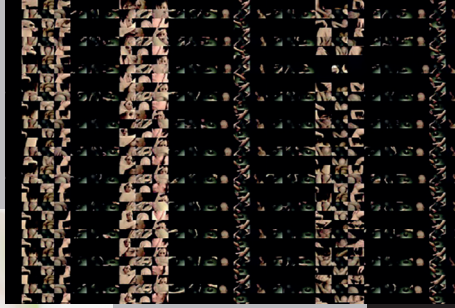
Still from Nine Earths footage in Jamaica.

These questions are addressed by analysing the footage against themes developed with climate scientists, through the ethnographic practice of 'thick description', not seeking to produce an authoritative, objective account but embracing what Marisol de la Cadena calls 'not knowing' (2021). The footage is then edited into films like the one shown here – more art film than documentary.

Nine Earths exposes power relations between the participants and the local infrastructures and global industries that constrain and shape their actions. We found participants to be keenly aware of these connections between the local and global. Cultures can no longer be studied in isolation. The act of editing footage into stories is unavoidably subjective, and there is a degree of stage direction in much of the footage. But we found that we cannot make judgements about individual people or places.

W: <http://nine-earths.net>





The Creative Cultures Practice Research Exhibition aims to foster cross-disciplinary exchange and collaboration with other research fields at Coventry University.