

Conference Themes

Magic [mess and misery]

Elation, the high, the adrenaline rush, when it works: but does the high also hide doubt, mess and misery, discarded hope, compromise, failed judgements, difficult decisions, gloom and rejection? Negativity within the creative process? Where's the evidence? Is it all anecdotal? What are the implications for the ways we look at process, if making art is fragile, uncomfortable, never quite good enough?



Making trouble

Whatever happened to radicalism – and the avant-garde? Is the “cutting-edge” still sharp enough? Art practice as resistance, interrogation, trouble-making, subversion. Artwork on the margins – or in the spaces-between.



Collaborations

Art practices and collectivity, shared authorship, sampling, revision, appropriations: whose work is it, anyway?



Confessional

What do we choose to withhold about how work is made? Are we always ‘making do’ (and getting away with it)? Ethics, scruples, impropriety, misappropriation, bad taste and borrowing: can we be persuaded to confess?

Toolbox / box of tricks / tricks of the trade

What's in the artist's toolbox? Props? Favourite objects? Mnemonics? Where is the toolbox kept? (It might be in someone's head, or in a designated space, for example...) Is ‘setting out the tools,’ a starting-point for process and a part of an artist's professional discipline?



Porosity

Is the artwork a sponge, a window, or a doorway? What can we see through it? What's in it, and how does it present/represent identity/ies? How do artists deal with questions of identity, intertextuality, interculturalism, integrity and interpretation, through their work – and at what cost?



Deadline / lifeline / timeline

What are the trajectories of creative practice? Proposal, getting out of depth, breakthrough, elation, U-turn, ‘we've started so we'll finish’. When should we start looking back – the retrospective – rather than forward, to ‘making new work’?