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# Exploring Creative Pedagogies for Creative Learning Ecologies

 **creative academic magazine**

Issue Number 7D July-September 2017

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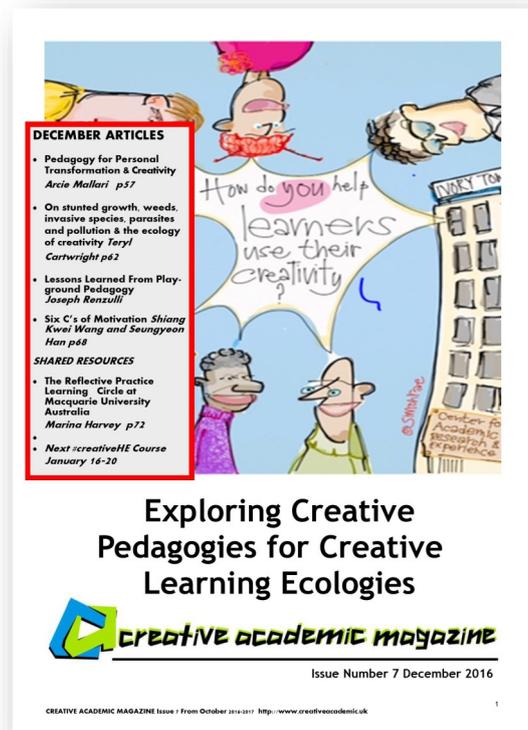
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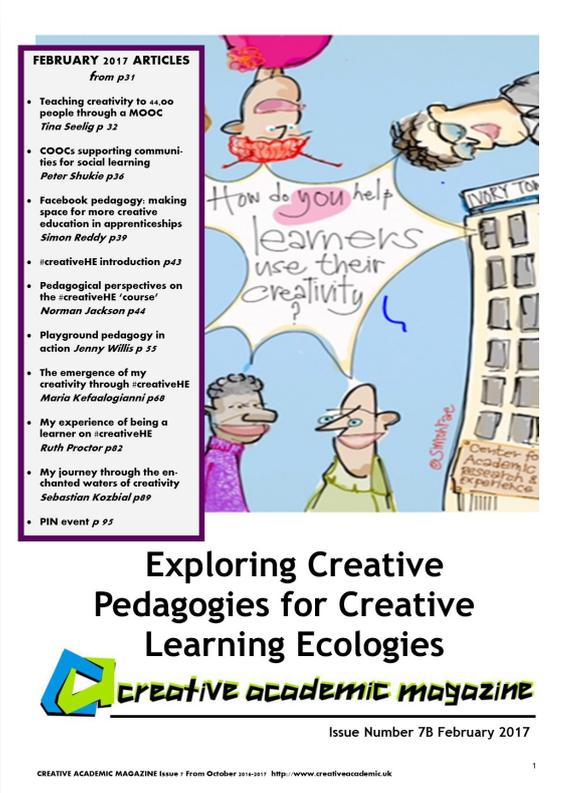
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Issue Number 7B February 2017

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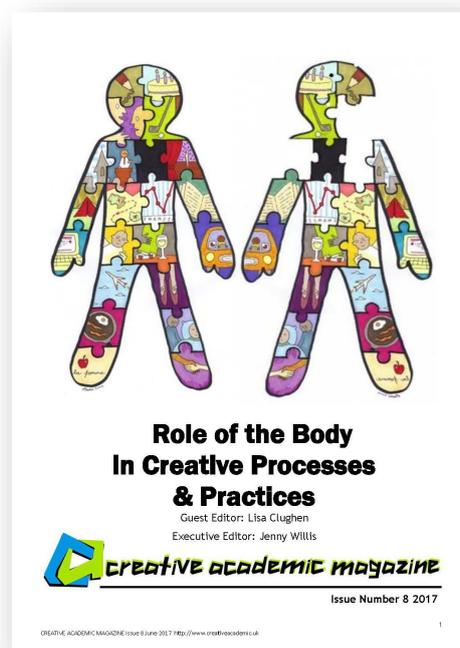
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Sketching at Surprise View, Derbyshire Peak District,  
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# **CAM 7D**

## **July – September 2017**

# Creative Pedagogies for Creative Learning Ecologies

## Commissioning Editor's Introduction CAM7D

CAM7 is our first attempt to create an 'emergent magazine'. By this I mean we are not finding, editing and organising all the content before the magazine is published, rather we launched the magazine in October 2016 in the hope and belief that every month to September 2017 we will be able to update the magazine with one or more articles relevant to the topic we are addressing namely how higher education teachers develop ecologies for learning within which students' creativity can flourish. So far, in issues 7A, 7B & 7C we have published over 300 pages of content.

We believe that if you create the affordance for people who care about and are interested in something, stuff will happen - ideas will emerge as conversations take place and people share their understandings and practices. Through our *Creative Pedagogies for Creative Learning Ecologies project* we are trying to foster and facilitate new conversations about the importance of creativity in higher education teaching, learning and students' development and achievements. We are trying to bring together and connect educational practitioners and researchers, educational development teams, networks, communities, universities and colleges who share this interest and concern for students' and teachers' creative development, through a partly planned / partly emergent programme of activities. *And we are trying to connect the pedagogies of individual higher education teachers to the unique ecologies they create in which their students' creativity can flourish.*

We believe in collaboration and cooperation and we welcome the involvement of our readers in developing and creating this magazine. We believe in collegiality, openness and sharing and the knowledge we develop will be treated as open learning/ open educational resources. The ecology we are creating to explore these ideas is open to new ideas and to people and institutions who want to contribute. We are particularly keen to connect researchers to practitioners so that educational practice can be informed by evidence from research in this area. We are also keen to engage with the enormous range of learning contexts within higher education institutions in which students are encouraged to use their creativity. If you would like to share your own thinking and practices by writing an article for the magazine please do contact me.



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Creative Pedagogies & Learning Ecologies Project

<http://www.creativeacademic.uk/2016-17-programme.html>

July 2017

# Live Projects-An inspirational model: The Student Perspective

Prue Chiles and Jeremy Till



*Prue is Prof of Architectural Design Research at the University of Newcastle. Prior to this she was Head of the School of Architecture at the University of Sheffield. 'My work seeks to strengthen connections between people and design and on the reciprocal relationships between people, place, teaching, creativity and architectural design'.*



*Jeremy is an Architect, writer and educator and Head of Central Saint Martins and Pro Vice-Chancellor of University of the Arts London. Prior to this position he was Dean of Architecture and the Built Environment at the University of Westminster and Head of Architecture at the University of Sheffield.*

*This article was written while both authors were working in the School of Architecture at the University of Sheffield.*

## Introduction

The 'Live Projects' programme at Sheffield, is now an established and core part of the MArch (RIBA Part 2) course in the School of Architecture at the University of Sheffield. This case study is concerned with this experience and the comments and perceptions from the students participating. The live projects involve students working in groups with community, regional or national organisations. The projects have to be 'live' (i.e. a real client with a real problem) and are done in real time, with a defined end result - often a report or presentation to the client group. In many cases the results of the live project have been enacted or else led to further research or consultancy. Live projects reject the separation between real and theoretical, practice and education and allow the student to be creative within constraints. The case study is accompanied by annotated examples of live projects over the past six years.

**"Through the live project architectural education is once again an inspirational model on which other forms of education may draw."**  
Rachel Sara

American Artist Kyong Park's Detroit House, which was rebuilt in Sheffield City Centre by nine students, to highlight the plight of post-industrial cities. The students negotiated with Sheffield City Council for all permissions and Health and Safety approval and re-constructed the house with no drawings or other construction professionals to help.



## What is special about the live projects at Sheffield?

We have built up a reflective and research led critique of the live projects with various publications and a website [[www.liveprojects.org](http://www.liveprojects.org)]. Also, a PhD by Rachel Sara in 2004 entitled *Between studio and Street* examined the role of the live project in Architectural Education. Supervised by Jeremy Till, Rachel's PhD highlights the value in finding a place for learning that is both part of the academy and outside.

Live projects are happening in most schools now, but they vary enormously from place to place. Perhaps what is unique at Sheffield is the extent to which they are student managed and led. The client contact and the management of the project is almost all done by the group participating in the project. Also ground-breaking we believe, is the level of formal skills teaching and support that goes with the live project programme. Student comments support the approach we are taking. They are enthusiastic to learn the core professional skills of team management and communication and are increasingly interested in participatory consultation techniques. Students feel this helps their confidence and ultimately their creativity. We have completed over 50 live projects to date, establishing an enormous archive of fresh ideas and useful work.

In 2002 we set up the Bureau of Design Research (BDR) - a project office and research consultancy, in the School of Architecture. This was primarily as a result of clients wishing to continue with live projects. The BDR now has a portfolio of over 30 completed projects prioritising community visioning and school design. The BDR also archives all the live projects and has a distant mentoring role, as well as participating in the live project programme. We are working on the possibilities for a closer supporting structure to enable live projects to continue throughout the year and to allow individual students to pursue live project interests in their own projects. We are also developing a resource and 'survival pack' for the successful live project.

The live project Website can be accessed at <http://www.liveprojects.org> where you can find out more about all the live projects.

Home.  
**About Live Projects.**  
 Client guide.  
 Student guide.  
 Recognition.  
 Live Works.

Get involved.

Live Project Enquiries  
 School of Architecture  
 The University of Sheffield  
 Arts Tower  
 Western Bank  
 Sheffield S10 2TN

+44 (0)114 222 0399  
[liveprojects@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:liveprojects@sheffield.ac.uk)

Browse projects.

Select Category

To search, type and hit enter



A bench and play area was created for Ballifield Primary School, to address playground problems, after a series of consultation events with pupils and staff.

**Why the live projects are useful and relevant?**

Students are very supportive of the live project programme and clearly find them useful and relevant. This year, when asked, the following key reasons were cited:

1. The timing is good, perfect for students just returning from a year or more in practice. There is an interesting balance between practice and education which encourages the student to position themselves politically. They have to re-assess the relationship between client, business and community in the context of the university rather than from an office perspective.
2. There are clear social benefits. They are ideal group projects that are contained time wise and need a group to succeed. They are particularly important for new students who can quickly get to know and work with established Sheffield students.
3. Perception of the projects. Students enjoy working collaboratively and not competitively for a change: this is backed up by research in Rachel's thesis.

4. Students are empowered by the positive feedback from the clients. Institutional and professional clients have commented that they had no idea how strategic students of Architecture can be and what a wide group of skills they have.
5. Students find, in job interviews after they have completed their diploma, that prospective employers are very impressed by the live projects and the output from these. They are also highly regarded by our external examiners.
6. Students enjoy developing their communication skills and see this as a very positive part of the process.
7. Fundamentally it makes the student's architectural education more relevant. The active hands on work is popular - not all like the actual building - as this is hard physical work but a core are really enthusiastic about this and find it enormously rewarding, putting in long hours and developing other carpentry and practical building skills.
8. Finally there are moral and ethical issues in the work, that cannot be ignored.

For the School of Architecture and the university generally live projects have enormous benefits. They tell the city and the community what students are up to and what the study of architecture involves; the general public are often completely mystified by what an architect does! They also give something back to the city and the community.



Students from Sheffield and Trondheim worked together in both Sheffield and South Norway to design and build new informal public spaces in two public parks

### Teaching Approach/Methods

The live projects are logistically quite complex: in particular setting them up and briefing the clients. However, we have found that once they have started they generally generate a momentum, which gets over the short-term problems. It is also easy for the students to waste time at the beginning of the projects whilst meetings are being set up, so direction and support is needed here. Staff at the School of Architecture in Sheffield are now experienced in running these projects.

Tutoring is done in groups and is very much led by the students who use their tutors as consultants and mentors rather than as figures of authority. This is an important revision of normal power relations and leads to a much more committed student group. Tutors are put in a different and

sometimes difficult role of stand-in for the client rather than tutor. From a tutor's point of view the live projects offer many skills that can be gained elsewhere, but core skills of organisation, team working and working to a tight timescale are perhaps some of the key ones. These, we felt, have to be taught like everything else. So the live projects are supported by communication and brief building workshops, attached to the management module, as well as seminars on consultation and creative participatory techniques. Community consultation is a burgeoning profession in its own right; the line we take is firmly that of art and creative practices encouraging a visual, fun and experimental approach.

Students learn about the role of the client - and begin to understand the complexity of the multi-headed client - stakeholder mapping suddenly becomes relevant and is included in a workshop when the teams have all met their clients. Further group work in the workshops also brings out an understanding of what role each individual has in a team. An exercise which is always positively received is that of the Chinese whispers - illustrating how little we listen and how important positive listening skills are. Three years ago with university funding, we made a film with a professional team, interviewing clients and well-known architects on communicating with each other at various stages of a project. It is a revealing portrait of how architects need to learn to communicate better with non-architectural audiences and forms a back drop to the workshops.

### Assessment

The live projects are assessed as group work according to a protocol that we have developed in the Faculty. We have suggested to students that they should, to a degree, be self-assessed, but they have been resistant to this idea because it might destroy the ethos of the projects in terms of collective work and identity. In addition, students reflect on their live projects in their written management studies. We established that the best tool to assess the projects is the presentation of the project at the end - this highlights how well the team have worked together, how successful the briefing process was and how the end result has been communicated back to the client. These are not critiques, but formal presentations run by the student body. Over the years there have been some fantastic presentations, well timed and professional. Again students are given pointers on good presentation techniques. However, all the pitfalls that architects fall into - being over complex with their visual imagery, talking to the screen etc. still occur!

We have variously tried to link the assessment of the live projects to a management module of the MArch course rather than the portfolio studio work, but have not found the perfect solution to date. We need to be able to provide formative assessment throughout the different stages of the project as well as at the final presentation stage - but then it is possible for tutors to fall back on the traditional, architectural assessment process.

Students perceive that there is a diminished focus on the critique, but sometimes tutors are seen to bring more traditional power relationships back in the review. This is seen as very negative and is really the only part of the whole live project process that has been criticised: so this is under review. We have had comments from students that occasionally tutors are trying to look clever and how irrelevant this is to the process here. We need to try and involve all participants in the evaluation process, giving value to the participants whilst reducing the power of the tutor over the student.

## **What specific lessons are learnt in the live project and how are these different from lessons learnt from other studio or management projects?**

Many of the lessons are the same or related to those in other studio projects. However the following points summarise some observations.

1. Students fill a unique mediating role that a professional would struggle to do - clients, particularly community clients, are often wary of professionals, local authority operatives, housing groups etc. and will open up and discuss ideas freely with students in an unthreatening environment. Many extra-ordinary and creative comments come out of community consultation events. These are always a revelation to the students.
2. The tutor student relationship is definitely altered - the tutor becoming more of a consultant or client substitute. This has ramifications - it can become problematic when they become more like the client than the client themselves, although in some projects this has been a positive change of roles for the outcome of the project!
3. The whole design and building process is constrained due to the timescales of the project, the luxury of the long-term studio project development is often not an option, so prevarication is not possible. For a number of students this is their most productive project.
4. There is an emphasis on project management skills which is not really dealt with in other projects.
5. There is the potential for the 1:1 exploration - to actually build. This requires a whole new set of skills and has many benefits. Building requires a different kind of organisation and is often where their project and time management skills fall down.
6. Some different presentation skills are required, students struggle to provide these sometimes but in many cases some really imaginative work is produced. The skill of producing the creative feasibility study, necessary for all architects, is one very tangible outcome of many of the projects.
7. Some of the live projects are based abroad; this offers new challenges not found in many studio projects. Communication is even more of a challenge and there are different structures and processes to learn from - or a different emphasis created by the client from a different culture. Lessons are also learned in the universal power of design.

## **What are the limits of Live Projects?**

One of the limiting factors is money. Often the client is at a pre-feasibility stage in their project with no money and only vague ideas about funding the project. They see using university students as a chance to gain from free work. We need to put some effort into persuading these clients to put some funding into the live projects to ease the process. Students sometimes end up spending a considerable amount of their own money on travel and disbursements. At the beginning of a project clients are often unaware of the value and quality of the work the students will produce and in some cases almost feel they are doing the university a favour with their time. It is afterwards they realise the power of the work they have, when it is too late. We need to brief clients better in this respect.

Live projects happen in other parts of the school - in particular first year where the experience is both parallel and different - but a lot shorter. In the diploma school, students spend the first six weeks of each year (i.e. approx one quarter of their course) working on live projects.

On a very practical logistical note, health and safety issues are becoming increasingly difficult to deal with. Allowing students to use power tools as part of their university course is a challenge and requires professional supervision.

Time constraints however are perhaps the biggest limiting factor to some projects, although others are almost too long. We have built up a portfolio of both challenging and ambitious live projects. All are different and all have enormous merits and some problems attached. Every year the limitation of the live projects lessen - and the possibilities grow. We are looking forward to the new projects this coming year.

### **Acknowledgement**

*We would like to thank Professor Chiles for giving permission to republish this article which was originally written for the Centre for Education in the Built Environment, Higher Education Academy.*

# Four Ways in which we Learn

Charles Jennings

Charles Jennings talks about the ways we learn:

- **Learning Through Experience:** we learn a huge amount through exposure to new and challenging experiences. 'Work that stretches' is often the best teacher any of us will ever have. Research tells us that immersive learning and learning in context provides the most memorable learning experiences. This is one reason for the increased interest and activity in experiential and social learning in the past few years. However, experiential learning is still often under-valued and under-exploited by learning professionals. As the late professor Allan Tough said 'most of the learning is under the waterline'.
- **Learning Through Practice:** we learn through creating opportunities to practise and improve. Without practice we can never hope to become high-performers. We can't for a minute imagine our great sportsmen and women rising to the top of their game without hours and hours of practice, even when they are world champions. What makes us think becoming high performers in our work is any different?
- **Learning Through Conversation:** we learn through our interactions and dialogue with others - through informal coaching and mentoring, and building social networks inside and outside work. Conversation is the 'lubrication' of learning and development. Jerome Bruner, the greatest educational psychologist of our era, once said 'our world is others'. We often forget this fundamental fact.
- **Learning Through Reflection:** Reflection is the 'glue' that we need to exploit the other forms of learning. Charles Handy, the management 'guru', writer and observer, points out that 'experience plus reflection is the learning that lasts'. We learn through taking the opportunity to reflect both in the workflow and away from our work. We can then plan further activities that will incorporate our learning and improve our performance further.



Tanmay Vora

Tanmay Vora turned this synthesis into the memorable infographic

The Power of Reflection in an Ever-Changing World <http://charles-jennings.blogspot.co.uk/2016/07/the-power-of-reflection-in-ever.html> Posted 28/07/16

Infographic <http://qaspire.com/2016/08/15/learning-experience-plus-reflection/>

# Fifteen Principles for Facilitating Creativity

**Michelle James**



*Michelle James has been pioneering Applied Creativity and Applied Improvisation in business in the Washington, DC area since 1994. She is CEO of The Center for Creative Emergence and founder of the Capitol Creativity Network - an Applied Creativity community hub since 2004 - and Quantum Leap Business Improv. Her mission is to integrate the worlds of creativity, service, meaning and commerce, and cultivate whole brain, whole-person engagement in the workplace.*

For the past several years, I've offered an annual creative facilitation program based on universal principles of creativity, education, research and application of creative processes in the workplace. Most significantly, they are based on lessons learned and insights gleaned from the trial and error of facilitating creative process with hundreds of individuals and organizations (an ongoing exploration, with each iteration I refine the program). It requires a different focus, skill set, way of being and "container creation" than facilitating analytical processes. Below are a few of the many principles and practices I've learned or discovered.

## **1. Set intention and embody purpose.**

Get clear on your intention - not only from a business perspective, (i.e., leave with a strategic plan), but also from the human element. Creative process in human beings is organic, and contains emotional energy. In fact, the more passion and inspiration, the deeper and more coherent the creativity that emerges. If you intend to support the growth, creativity and awareness of those you serve, you facilitate from a more meaningful place than if focused only on the business goal. If you take time, both in the program design and in the room when facilitating, to think about what is the service you are providing - the gift you are offering - it frees up your own creativity more to support that in your facilitation. Focusing solely on the task limits the creative potential. By genuinely focusing on what is yours to give, (not how you come across doing it), participants pick that up - either consciously or unconsciously - and are more receptive to trying new things with you. Creative facilitation adds some new "yes-and's" to what already works.

## **2. Focus on awareness in addition to what happens.**

Focusing on the awareness aspect allows it to be transformative. In all facilitation, the debrief can be one of the most powerful parts. It integrates the learnings and serves as a bridge to what's next. In debriefing creative process, focus on what was going on inside of the participants as well as what actually was created outside in the room. This leads to self-awareness, which increases the chances of continued creativity and co-creativity after the workshop, program, or process is over. The more aware participants become of what emerges within themselves as they create - both what was most alive as well as what was most challenging - the easier it is to continue to navigate and cultivate their creativity beyond the workshop setting.

## **3. Understand the normal resistance that occurs with navigating the unfamiliar.**

Resistance is a healthy, natural part of the creative process. It only becomes unhealthy when it is allowed to block the process (by overemphasizing it and spending too much time engaging it, or by not acknowledging it all and trying to barrel past it). Be prepared for resistance to show up. It's usually a result of fear of entering the new territory, and it can show up in a myriad of forms - deflection, sarcasm, distraction, disengagement or, most often and most subtly, talking about what is already known. It's not something to be pushed down or avoided, but rather something to be acknowledged and moved through if it shows up. Acknowledgment ahead of time gives it permission to follow its natural course when and if it emerges. It is the natural "contraction" to balance the creative expansion. You find this in all of nature's creativity. The flower feels the resistance of the bud most just before it blossoms.

## **4. "Fail" gracefully.**

Be comfortable with messing up. This is a great lesson from improv theater. Improvisers do not see mistakes as static failures. Instead, we see them as dynamic invitations to learn in real time and an opportunity to create something new. To authentically learn how to deepen your experience in facilitating a transformational creative process requires you to be the explorer as well. Unlike facilitation that relies on what is known, creativity depends on elements of the unknown. You can better facilitate that which you're willing to experience for yourself. Applied creativity has vulnerability attached to it as being experimental means being vulnerable. And, that means something you try may not work, or may work differently than you had anticipated. Go with it. Use that information as feedback to either refine for the future, or, in that moment, to take the group to another place. The facilitator's discomfort with the challenges of creativity can inhibit the group's creative process. (If you can take an improv class, do it! It's the quickest way I know to free yourself of the "the fear of failure" and develop a comfort with thinking on your feet.)

## 5. Adapt in real time.

There's always a dynamic balance between creating enough structure and releasing. If you as a facilitator need to control the process, do whatever you can on your free time to get comfortable with letting go, shifting gears, and modifying the agenda in real time. Use the real-time feedback loop: engage, get feedback, modify; engage, get feedback, modify, etc. It's an ongoing process, and like with all things, takes practice to embody. Do this enough and it becomes comfortable and easy...and alive! In fact, you will get to a point where it takes more energy to try to stick to the exact plans than to follow the creative aliveness of what is trying to emerge in the room. Be ready to adjust your "agenda" at any time for what is really going on in the room. Otherwise, you can get engagement, and even expanded perspectives, but generally no real novelty. Novelty contains an unpredictability within it, and to facilitate creative process means adapting to that unpredictability in real time. May as well have fun with it!

## 6. Work from your own creative edges, not your comfort zone.

This creates a palpable dynamic aliveness in the room. You are all in it together. This may seem antithetical to our "expertise" culture. The paradox is that you must still deeply know and understand what you are doing before you enter the room, but then once in the room, hold it loosely and respond in real time. Be in your own unknown - a co-discoverer instead of the expert on their creativity. Allow yourself to be surprised. Don't limit them, or yourself, by your creativity experience or pre-existing assumptions. While you are the one creating the container and holding the space, this role is balanced with your own openness to what emerges. Creative facilitation is an open system.

## 7. Respect creative style diversity.

To further expound on #6, one size, approach, method, technique, or even paradigm does not fit all. One creativity model definitely does not fit all. Understand that each person in that room is at a different comfort level, and will have a unique relationship with the creative process. Each carries unique and different stories of creativity in his or her consciousness. You give them tools and techniques as entry points, but be ready to let their creativity show you ways of creating that you can't imagine. This expands your own Creative Practices repertoire.



## 8. Understand patterns found in the creative process.

This allows you to facilitate during times of resistance. Another paradox: while each person has different creating styles and approaches that work for them, there are also re-occurring universal patterns that tend to emerge in a creative process. The deepest understanding comes from your own experimentation and learning, and will most likely be refined over time. Start with what you know, and open up to being "yes-anded" all the time. Look for patterns, not just techniques. Techniques only get you so far...patterns and principles allow you to create new techniques on an ongoing basis. Start where you are, be gentle with yourself as you learn, and learn from direct experience. Insights that emerge from experience and observation give you a real-time agility that book learning alone cannot offer.

## 9. Embrace dynamic balance.

Divergence and convergence. Left and right brain. Structure and flow. Reflection and action. That is one of the re-occurring themes in this post because it permeates all of creative process...and the complexity of being human. Creativity is filled with paradox. Setting up conditions for creativity is as well. Like with all natural systems, every situation, project, and group has a dynamic balance that will allow the most amount of creativity to emerge in that situation. Too rigid keeps the creativity bound; too loose, it gets unfocused. There is a balance between structure and flow. This is why whole brain practices are needed - the right brain to access new levels of ideas and information, and the left to discern and organize it.

## 10. Allow for self-organization when facilitating a group project.

Inherent in the creative process is a self-organization found in all of nature. You see this all the time in improvised jazz or improv theater...something larger than the sum of the parts emerges and it is a coherent whole and unexpected. It is similar to the experience you have in those moments when everything just seems to effortlessly come together in a brilliant, yet totally unexpected, way. This possibility always exists in any group. One key is to not over-control the experience and allow enough space for the next level of creativity to emerge in the room. This takes some trust in the creative process itself...and practices recognizing, like in an improv performance, when you need to step up and lead, or step back and follow. Without question, groups have the capacity to self-organize around a creative task - a collective creative intelligence can take over that is larger than any one person's idea. You have nature on your side. We are natural meaning-makers, and creativity is naturally self-organizing. By balancing both directing and following in real time, you can more naturally move to higher levels of coherence, meaning, and sense. (All "a-ha's" are deeply grounded in common sense at their new level). We have simply been socialized, educated, and trained to over-plan. Instead, we can learn how to work with the natural creative process.

## 11. Seek to make it safe, not comfortable.

Safety will allow people to open up and move into unknown territory without the fear of criticism, failure. Too much stability, and nothing new emerges. Asking people to share what they already know is different than guiding them into their unknown. On the other side, without doing the “container creating” to make it safe, taking people in too deep too soon can throw them into chaos and they will shut down - and they lose trust in you. In either case, nothing new emerges. Find the balance of the Creative Zone - the place of creative potential between stability and chaos. Create a safe space and guide your participants into new territory, which can be uncomfortable. Discomfort is a normal part of the creative process. In fact, if everyone in the room is entirely comfortable the whole time, chances are you did more of an information gathering process than a creative one.

## 12. Fun is functional.

There is more research emerging all the time that shows how fun, play, and “lightening up” have a serious role to play in increasing creative thinking and establishing creative work culture - not just as an outlet to do on your free time, but as a driver to navigating change and working on serious challenges in work and life. It frees the brain to think more creatively, and frees the energy in the room for more effective and safe collaboration. In fact, I have not come across any research anywhere that points to not having fun and not being playful as a more effective way of living and creating. To facilitate creativity requires accessing and being comfortable with having fun yourself. And, knowing how to bring it in purposefully, and in a way it can be accepted (and not shut people down). It’s different for every group and every culture. Once you access your own “deep fun” self, you have more choice on what methods to use and how. As with all facilitation, know your audience.

## 13. Your inner stories directly impact the container you create for others.

Check out all the stories you carry around creativity, fun and play. Do you hold them as separate from a business bottom line? Most of us grew up with the programming that creativity is something you do on your free time after the “real work” is done. Facilitating applied creativity carries a new story - that it is an essential part of the real work. It is more than something fun to open up a group, but actually something to help transform individuals, groups, teams and organizations; create a thriving work culture, and feed the bottom line. Do you carry a story that creativity is for the domain of the arts...or do you know it to be present, in infinite abundance, for every person, group and system? What stories do you carry about yourself as a creator? In knowing yourself as a creator, and knowing that you are walking into a room filled with other creators (whether they are aware of it or not) allows you to help facilitate a new story for those in the room.

## 14. Diverge...and converge with discernment.

Facilitating transformational creativity requires your presence, adaptability, agile thinking...and discernment. Discernment keeps whatever emerges in the room focused on the objectives, relevant, and purposeful...not just random creative expression (unless that is your goal). This means having processes for convergence as well as divergence. Divergence explores, discovers, yes-and, and accepts to expand the playing field - the increase the field of potential from which to draw. Convergence discerns, focuses, fleshes out, uses what is relevant and leaves the rest. For a visual with more on Divergence and Convergence click here. As with each of these points, the dynamic balance is the key: expand, contract; explore, refine; value logic and intuition; planning and spontaneity. Most people naturally gravitate to more comfort with diverging or converging...find out which is your preference and practice giving more time and attention to the other.

## 15. Prepare yourself with pre-workshop creativity rituals.

Creativity, by its nature, contains a lot of energy and newness. Facilitating novelty is not “business as usual.” It’s about leading a group into the non-habitual. It requires being resilient, agile, compassionate and an “expedition guide.” Taking some time to do whatever you need to enter your own non-habitual state first can make a significant difference. One of the best ways to do that is by taking some alone time before the facilitation, to do pattern-breaking exercises to increase your own energy and become present, alert, and responsive. The more of the whole-brain - and whole-body! - you bring in, the better. Like an athlete who warms up by stretching muscles, you’re a creativity facilitator who warms up by stretching beyond your familiar patterns. Try different things, like moving in non-habitual ways around your living room before you leave your house. You’ll be alone, so the more “out there” you can be in the privacy of your own space, the better. Surprise yourself at how “out there” you can get! It will also help you be more comfortable when something “out there” emerges from a participant. Do it until you transform any negative self-judgment or evaluation you have into the joy of exploration. It will increase your energy and aliveness, and help you be more attentive and at ease with what shows up in the room. Creativity is messy. Non-judgment of self and others during the process is essential!

I have covered some of the basics here. They are meant to be a loose guide for your own exploration and refinement. My hope is that something in here gives you food for thought, inspiration or validation. Take what resonates and leave the rest.

### Acknowledgement

The article was originally posted at: <http://www.innovationmanagement.se/imtool-articles/15-foundations-for-facilitating-creativity-in-the-workplace/>

### Image credits

<http://www.filositerracina.gov.it/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/prog2.jpg>  
<http://blogs.ibo.org/sharingpyp/files/2015/12/creativity-quote2.jpg>

**“creativity is  
intelligence  
having FUN”**

- ALBERT EINSTEIN

'Creative Academic' was founded in January 2015 by two members of **Lifewide Education** - a not for profit, voluntary and community-based, social-educational enterprise. Our purpose is to champion creativity in all its manifestations in higher education in the UK and the wider world. Our ambition is to create and support a strong network and vibrant community of people who are interested in their own creativity and committed to enabling students' creative development.

Our goal is to become a global HUB for the production and curation of resources that are of value and relevance to educational practitioners and institutions. Our focus is primarily higher education but we are interested in connecting to and learning from all phases of education. Our aim is to influence thinking and practice and encourage educational professionals to share their practices that facilitate students' creative development in all disciplines and pedagogic contexts, and to connect researchers and their research to practitioners and their practice.

We value 'openness' and believe in open learning, open education and open resources and practices. Most of our resources are published under a creative commons licence. Membership is free and open to anyone who shares these interests and values.

Our activities involve exploration and research for better understandings and for improved educational practices, in particular we explore:

- 1) Creativity as a concept and perceptions and narratives of our own creativity in different contexts
- 2) The creativity of teachers and other professionals who support students' development
- 3) The creativity of students and how their creative development is encouraged and facilitated by teachers and other professionals who contribute to their learning and development
- 4) The creativity of universities - the ways in which institutions encourage, support and recognise the creativity and creative development of students and staff.

We undertake research, scholarship, publication and dissemination of information relating to creativity and creativity in learning & education

We support the development of higher education professionals by:

- contributing to CPD programmes of education professionals
- leading and facilitating on-line conversations via the #creativeHE Google+ community forum
- preparing and publishing magazines that encourage the sharing of educational practices encouraging academics to publish articles on their teaching
- organising and contributing to our events

## Our Team

Our team of ten volunteers act as champions, brokers and facilitators to engage and work with the global community. During 2016-17 our team expanded to ten with new members Simon Rae who helps with illustrations, Lisa Clughen, who guest edited CAM8, Maria Kefalogianni, Teryl Cartwright and Rebecca Jackson who are regular contributors to the magazines and #creativeHE conversations, and Gillian Judson who Co-Directs the Imaginative Education Research Group at Simon Fraser University in Canada.



Prof Norman Jackson  
Founder & Co-Leader  
Commissioning Editor



Chrissi Nerantzi  
Co-Founder & Co-Leader  
Academic Developer



Prof Paul Kefalogianni  
Designer



Dr Jenny Willis,  
Magazine Executive  
Editor & Researcher



Lisa Clughen  
HE teacher &  
researcher



Maria Kefalogianni,  
HE teacher, researcher  
& prof. therapist



Simon Rae  
Magazine illustrator



Dr Gillian Judson  
Director Imaginative  
Education & HE teacher  
researcher



Teryl Cartwright  
Freelance writer,  
online course  
developer & facilitator



Rebecca Jackson  
HE researcher &  
teacher

# Review of Activities August 2016 - 17

The main activities undertaken during this period were:

1 **Ongoing support (see below) for our community of interest.** There are 550 subscribers an increase of nearly 200 in the last 12 months. We use Mail Chimp to manage our mail list and communicate with our subscribers. People can join and leave the mail list at any time. Our aim is to be an international HUB for creative thinking, research and resources. The majority of subscribers are from the UK but our membership includes representatives from: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada, China, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Ireland, Korea, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Netherlands, Peru, South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland, Taiwan, Tanzania, and the USA.



2. **Maintaining the website and blog <http://www.creativeacademic.uk/>** The website has been regularly updated.

3 **Maintaining a presence on the twitter @academiccreator** twitter platform. We currently have 559 followers. Twitter has proved useful in finding people to contribute to our magazine and also in the promotion of activities relating to our magazine, blogs and surveys. During the year we facilitated one #LTHEchat.

4 **Support for three Google+ community forums.**

#creativeHE (see below) <https://plus.google.com/communities/110898703741307769041> 589 members

Our Creative Life <https://plus.google.com/communities/106367720977059375674> 86 members

Creative Academic <https://plus.google.com/communities/113507315355647483022> 56 members

5 **Creative Academic Magazine.**

CAM6 'Exploring Creative Ecologies' August 2016

CAM7 'Creative Pedagogies for Creative Learning Ecologies' - 10 monthly issues

CAM8 Role of the Body in Creative Processes & Practices

The magazine page on our website has received **7000 page loads** for the 8 issues of the magazine we have produced which shows that there is interest in the contributions we are making. We are averaging about 2000 page loads a year. We also share our magazines via academia.edu

6 **We have a successful partnership with Chrissi Nerantzi owner of the #creativeHE open learning and education platform** .The site currently has 588 members (240 more than last year). During the year we hosted and facilitated two courses (led by CN) and three discursive events (led by NJ and LC)

**Table 1 #creative courses and conversations**

30th October - 4th November 2016	#creativeHE conversation <b><u>Exploring creative pedagogies and learning ecologies</u></b>	Assets curated Creative Academic Magazine CAM7A November 2016
16th - 20th Jan 2017	#creativeHE open course linked to MMU module	Complete #creativeHE course, curated in Creative Academic Magazine CAM6
27th -31st March 2017	#creativeHE open conversation <b>'Exploring Personal Pedagogies'</b> our contribution to Open Education Week between April 15-21 2017	Assets significantly curated in Creative Academic Magazine CAM7C March 2017
15th -21st April 2017	#creativeHE open conversation <b>'Exploring the Role of the Body in the Process of Creation'</b> our contribution to World Creativity and Innovation Week between	Assets partly curated in Creative Academic Magazine CAM8 June 2017
May 22-26 2017	#creativeHE Creativity in HE open learning course	

## 7 Contributions to World Creativity & Innovation Week April 15-21 2017 <http://wciw.org/>

WCIW encourages people to use their creativity to make the world a better and more interesting place and to make their own place in the world better and more interesting. Creative Academic participated in this global event in 2017 by hosting an open conversation 'Exploring the Role of the Body in the Process of Creation', publishing a magazine on the same theme and publishing via Twitter our 101 ideas - a project led by CN and EH. We were considered the top engaged partner by Marcia Segal (founder of WCIW) for many weeks in the run up to WCIW.

## 8 101 creative ideas campaign

<https://101creativeideas.wordpress.com/>

During the year Ellie Hannan and Chrissi Nerantzi led and facilitated a successful #101creativeideas Open Education Resource project to gather and share novel ideas around learning and teaching that foster and nurture imagination, curiosity and creativity in higher education. Nearly 50 ideas have been gathered to date from practitioners. All creative ideas are being made available under a specific [Creative Commons license](#) so that others can easily use and develop them in their own practice with staff and/or students. #101creativeideas collection 2017 will consist of the 101 most novel creative ideas selected by a panel of educators and students. In the countdown to WCIW an idea was posted every day on twitter.



## 9 Creative Pedagogies for Creative Learning Ecologies Project

- Creation of a network of interest (89 people)
- Exploration of ideas and sharing through Creative Academic Magazine (CAM7 - over 300 pages of content between Oct16 and July17)
- Facilitation of 3 #creativeHE conversations
- Contribution to online TLC seminar and facilitation of #LTHEchat
- Contributions to professional development events in five HE institutions
- Production of 9 monthly newsletters to disseminate activities
- Development of the concept of personal pedagogy

We undertook a survey of HE practitioners currently 110 respondents on the factors that influence the pedagogical thinking and practices of HE teachers. The survey is still open and an interim report of the results was produced by Dr Jenny Willis and published in CAM7. About 20% of the respondents indicated that they would like to contribute further to the project and these people will be invited to participate in phase two of the project in the coming year.

## Goals for 2017/18

- **Sustain and build on our achievements** including:
- Continue to serve and grow our community
- Publish at least 2 issues of Creative Academic Magazine each exploring a new theme
- Encourage/facilitate discussion and enquiry through surveys using our Survey Monkey website
- Maintain and develop our presence through social media (Google+, Facebook, Linked in, Academic.edu, Twitter, other)
- Contribute to the CPD activities of teachers in universities in UK & overseas
- Provide opportunities for members of our community in at least one face to face event
- Research & development priorities - Continue exploration of important themes relating to creativity in higher education - eg disciplinary perspectives on creativity, teaching practices that encourage students to use their creativity and learning ecologies that enable creativity to flourish, personal pedagogies and the use of imagination in higher education.
- Publish a book based on the research we have undertaken.
- Contribute to World Creativity and Innovation Week April 2018
- Develop a meaningful and productive relationship with the 'Imaginative Education Research Group'

***AND adapt to changing circumstances and make the most of new opportunities as they emerge***

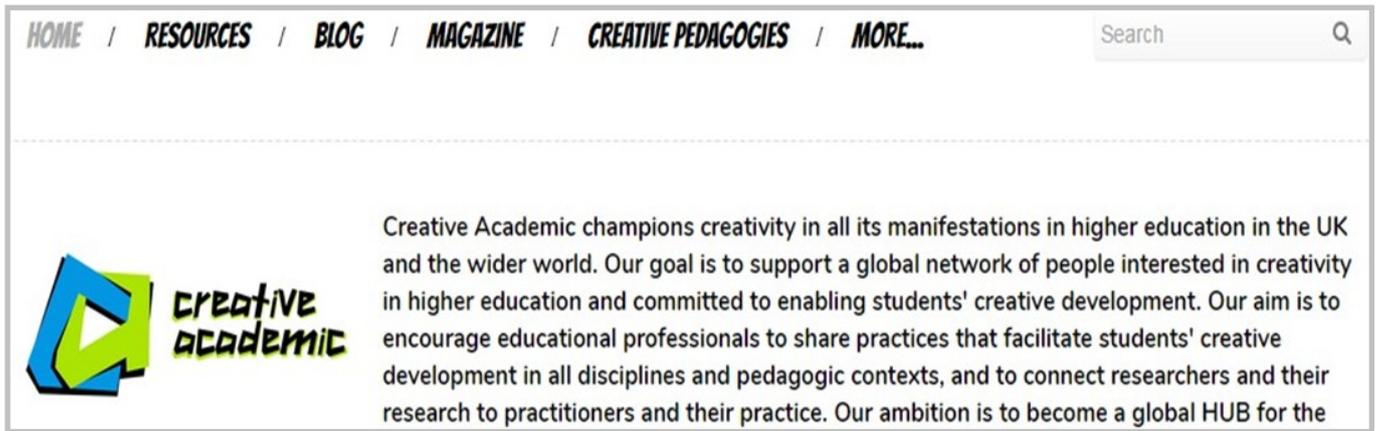
## Rough Plan July 2017-July 2018

*We value open learning & educational practices, we work for our community, we adapt to changing circumstances and we are open to new ideas and possibilities*

July	Prepare Annual Review & Work Plan	MAGAZINES	RESEARCH	SURVEYS
August 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin research on 'Disciplinary Perspectives on Creativity' project to feed into posts on #CreativeAcademic &amp; #creativeHE Forums &amp; Creative Academic Magazine (CAM9)</li> </ul>	<b>CAM#9</b> Disciplinary perspectives on Creativity	<i>'How Does Personal Pedagogy Influence the Ecologies Teachers Create for Students to use their ' Creativity?'</i>	Surveys on what creativity means in different disciplinary contexts. We might usefully include questions on imagination linked to our project with Imaginative Education.
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication final issue in CAM7</li> </ul>	<b>CAM#10</b> 'Exploring the Meanings & Practices of Imagination in Education' Guest Editor Dr Gillian Judson	Invitation to all those who completed the personal pedagogies survey and offered to prepare a narrative. The aim is to produce a book.	
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>#creativeHE &amp; #creativeacademic conversation 'Disciplinary Perspectives on Creativity'</li> </ul>			
November				
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colloquium for participants in research project <i>'How Does Personal Pedagogy Influence the Ecologies Teachers Create for Students to use their ' Creativity?'</i></li> </ul>			
January 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>#creative Creativity Course 22-26th January Lead facilitator Chrissi Nerantzi</li> <li>Publication CAM#9 'Disciplinary Perspectives on Creativity'</li> </ul>			
Feb/March	Preparation of CAM10 'The role of imagination in education'			
April <i>World Creativity &amp; Innovation Week April 15-21</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>#LTHEchat Twitter conversation 'Using Imagination in Education'</li> <li>#creative Creativity Course Lead facilitator Dr Gillian Judson</li> </ul>			
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication CAM#10 'The Role of Imagination in Higher Education Meanings, Ideas &amp; Practices' Lead facilitator Dr Gillian Judson Guest Editor Dr Gillian Judson</li> </ul>			
June-August				
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication of Book <i>'How Does Personal Pedagogy Influence the Ecologies Teachers Create for Students to use their ' Creativity?'</i></li> </ul>			

# More from Creative Academic

<http://www.creativeacademic.uk/>



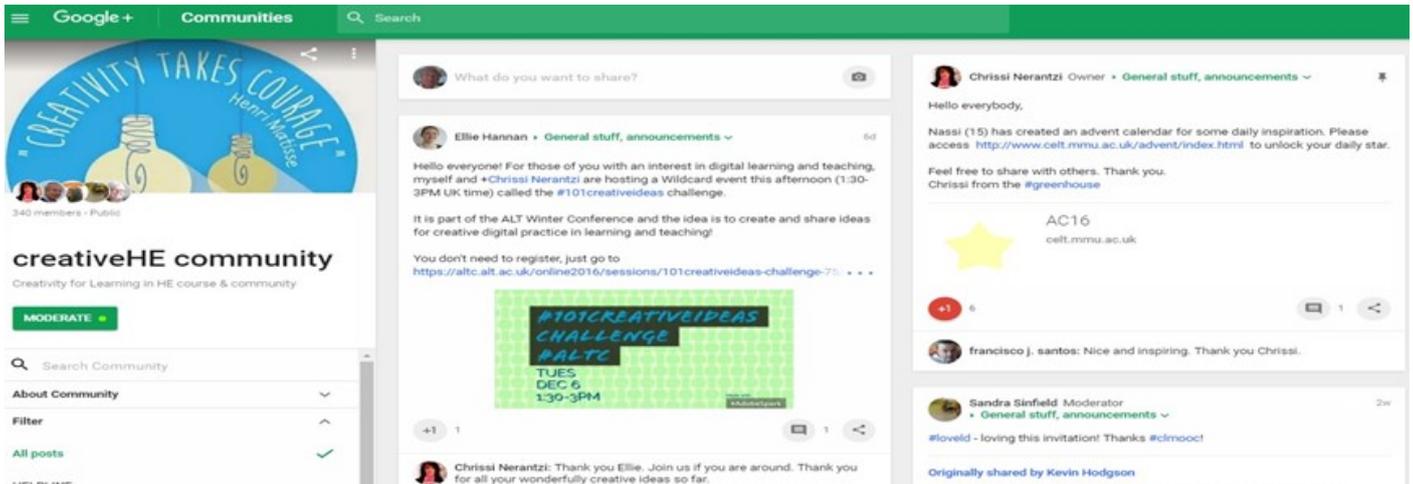
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 **CREATIVE ACADEMIC**

Creative Academic champions creativity in all its manifestations in higher education in the UK and the wider world. Our goal is to support a global network of people interested in creativity in higher education and committed to enabling students' creative development. Our aim is to encourage educational professionals to share practices that facilitate students' creative development in all disciplines and pedagogic contexts, and to connect researchers and their research to practitioners and their practice. Our ambition is to become a global HUB for the

## Google+ Discussion Forums

<https://plus.google.com/communities/110898703741307769041>



Google+ Communities Search

**creativeHE community**  
Creativity for Learning in HE course & community  
340 members - Public

What do you want to share?

Elleie Hannan - General stuff, announcements - 5d

Hello everyone! For those of you with an interest in digital learning and teaching, myself and +Chrissi Nerantzi are hosting a Wildcard event this afternoon (1.30-3PM UK time) called the #101creativeideas challenge.

It is part of the ALT Winter Conference and the idea is to create and share ideas for creative digital practice in learning and teaching!

You don't need to register, just go to <https://altc.alt.ac.uk/online2016/sessions/101creativeideas-challenge-75>



Chrissi Nerantzi: Thank you Elleie. Join us if you are around. Thank you for all your wonderfully creative ideas so far.

Chrissi Nerantzi Owner - General stuff, announcements - 5d

Hello everybody,

Nassi (15) has created an advent calendar for some daily inspiration. Please access <http://www.celt.mmu.ac.uk/advent/index.html> to unlock your daily star.

Feel free to share with others. Thank you. Chrissi from the #greenhouse

AC16  
celt.mmu.ac.uk

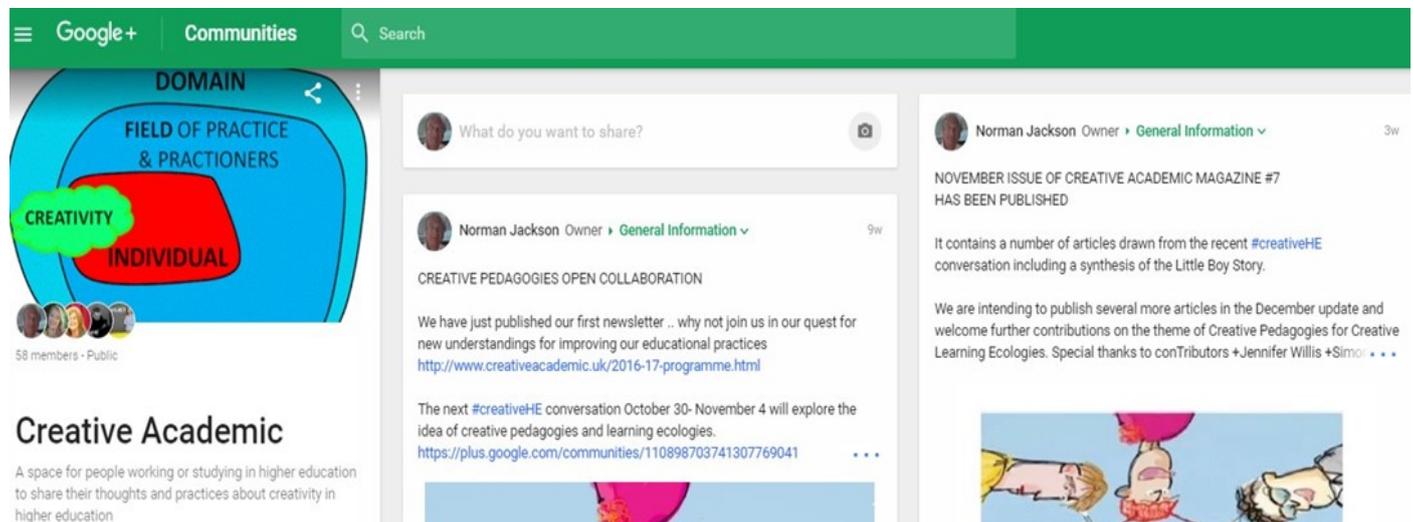
francisco j. santos: Nice and inspiring. Thank you Chrissi.

Sandra Sinfield Moderator - General stuff, announcements - 2w

#loved - loving this invitation! Thanks #clmooct

Originally shared by Kevin Hodgson

<https://plus.google.com/communities/113507315355647483022>



Google+ Communities Search

**Creative Academic**  
A space for people working or studying in higher education to share their thoughts and practices about creativity in higher education  
58 members - Public

What do you want to share?

Norman Jackson Owner - General Information - 9w

NOVEMBER ISSUE OF CREATIVE ACADEMIC MAGAZINE #7 HAS BEEN PUBLISHED

It contains a number of articles drawn from the recent #creativeHE conversation including a synthesis of the Little Boy Story.

We are intending to publish several more articles in the December update and welcome further contributions on the theme of Creative Pedagogies for Creative Learning Ecologies. Special thanks to contributors +Jennifer Willis +Simone...

CREATIVE PEDAGOGIES OPEN COLLABORATION

We have just published our first newsletter .. why not join us in our quest for new understandings for improving our educational practices <http://www.creativeacademic.uk/2016-17-programme.html>

The next #creativeHE conversation October 30- November 4 will explore the idea of creative pedagogies and learning ecologies. <https://plus.google.com/communities/110898703741307769041>

