



Creativity in the Making

#creativeHE conversation

Curated by Norman Jackson & Jenny Willis

Image credit: <https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/build-a-spacecraft/en/>



Issue Number 12B 2018

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#creativeHE conversation



Anyone who has curated a Google conversation will understand what I mean when I say it is a Herculean task: apart from the very nature of conversations, in which strands are woven, paused and then resumed, the non-linear way that Google records contributions makes it difficult to follow them (even when tagged, as in this instance with the label 'Making'). But it is perhaps this self-same difficulty that renders the curation so rewarding. Each time you log on, you find something new, not least because the order is constantly changing.

#CAM 12B is inevitably an artefact in its own right, not merely the transfer of an emergent on-line conversation to a static medium. For it draws on interpretation; decisions have to be made: Which illustrations to include/exclude? How to distinguish between initial posts and responses? Should every word be reproduced, including social niceties? Where to stop, when the conversation continues even as we go to press in mid-September?

I have tried to rationalise the messy reality that was our rich exchange, separating posts by day/theme. Italics are used to show responses to a stimulus post. It felt only right, since he launched the conversation, to end with Norman's reflections in week 3. As always, I would encourage readers to dip into the conversation for themselves in order to appreciate the sense of co-creation and individual joy in producing illustrations from painting, to pottery, poetry, music, theoretical conceptualisations, videos and more. You might even feel moved to join the ongoing discussion!

Thank you to all who took part - I hope this edition of CAM does you justice!

Jenny Willis
Executive Editor

Creativity in the Making #creativeHE conversation ***Led and facilitated by Norman Jackson & John Rae*** **March 06-26 2018**

Introduction

A great big warm welcome to everyone who wants to be part of this hands-on conversation on **Creativity in the Making**

It's a 'hands on' conversation because over the next two weeks we commit, individually or in partnership to using our hands to:

- 1) Make an artefact/object in response to any life context or situation (feel free to make more than one type of artefact if it appeals to you)
- 2) Record our process of thinking and making paying attention to the particular things that influenced our making and our artefact
- 3) Create a map of our process and a story that reveals how your creativity featured in your process of making
- 4) Share our creations and insights on creativity gained through making with other participants in the [#creativeHE](#) forum

We will begin our process with an introductory exploration of the idea of making artefacts, and share ideas on how we might think about the process of making.

OVERVIEW OF PROCESS

The process is in three parts. During the first 4 days (March 6-9) we will explore the idea of making and share experiences and perspectives on making artefacts. We will also share some narratives to illustrate the types of stories we are hoping to create at the end of the process.

We encourage you to begin making your artefact(s) at any point but the middle 6 days (March 10-15) is set aside for making and recording the process and creating narratives.

During the last 5 days (March 16-20) we will share our artefacts and our narratives in the creativeHE virtual gallery (just use the GALLERY tag when posting and attach an image or video of your artefact)

The posting of artefacts and narratives will provide a great opportunity for discussion about the way creativity features in processes of making.

Please tag your posts with **MAKING** so we can more easily collate them.

When we come to share the artefacts we have made please tag your post with **GALLERY**

Notes

1 Creative Academic and #creativeHE are exploring the idea of creativity in practice
<http://www.creativeacademic.uk/creativity-in-practice.html>

2 'Artefact' is a term that is used to refer to items created or resulting from human action and activity as well as a central concept in the study of practice. Practice is often seen as the production of artefacts (Díaz-Kommonen et al 2004). The artefacts we produce might be artistic works, crafts, something from the digital world, a song, poem or story, a dance, a diagram or indeed anything that the maker is inspired to create grown from the circumstances of your life (eg family, work, home, landscape, hobbies etc..)

3 We will consider making to be a process of material thinking – 'an intellectual adventure' (Carter, 2004, p. XI), where invention 'is located neither after nor before the process but in the performance itself' (Carter, 2007, p. 19). Our challenge, then, will be to think of our artefacts less as products of creativity and more as a means for accessing and using creativity. The 'artistic or aesthetic quality' of the artefacts we make, will be a secondary consideration and our primary concern will be the process of making and the insights we gain into how our creativity features in the process of making.

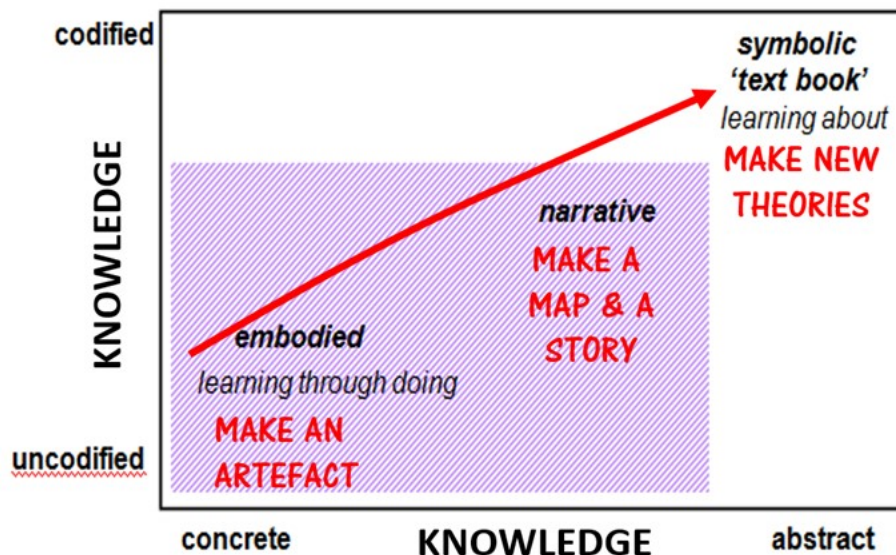
4 We will consider making as a process of connecting (Gauntlet 2011)

'Making is connecting because you have to connect things together (materials, ideas, or both) to make something new; Making is connecting because acts of creativity usually involve, at some point, a social dimension and connect us with other people; And making is connecting because through making things and sharing them in the world, we increase our engagement and connection with our social and physical environments.' (Gauntlet 2011:2)

Making embodied learning visible

We are trying to convert personal tacit and embodied knowledge gained through the experience of making something into stories (narratives) that convey meanings and from a collection of narratives derive more general principles and theories about processes of making and how creativity features in them. Maurice Boisot (1998) provides a useful conceptual aid for viewing this process.

Figure 1 Conceptual framework for viewing knowledge. Adapted from Boisot (1998)



Using the two-by-two matrix of codified/abstract and uncodified/ concrete knowledges he shows schematically the relationship between the knowledge that is embodied in everyday thinking and practices - our personalised working knowledge that we use to deal with situations - and more abstract/symbolic and codified knowledge such as that which we find in books, reports and working papers.

Our personal embodied knowledge, and the embodied knowledge of other people, mainly populates the shaded area. It is created or co-created with others through participation in the things we do and the extraction of meaning through our reflections on the situations we have encountered. It includes knowledge that we have gained from codified sources and from every other source (including what we have sensed and felt).

Narrative or storytelling provides a communication medium, often rich in metaphor, that links these two domains the embodied and codified knowledge domains. Bauman (1986) argues that oral narrative is constitutive of social life itself.

When one looks at the social practices by which social life is accomplished one finds - with surprising frequency - people telling stories to each other, as a means of giving cognitive and emotional coherence to experience; constructing and negotiating social identity; investing the experiential landscape with moral significance in a way that can be brought to bear on human behaviour; generating, interpreting and transforming the work experience; and a host of other reasons. Narrative here is not merely the reflection of human culture, or the external charter of social institutions, or the cognitive arena for sorting out the logic of cultural codes, but is constitutive of social life in the act of story telling (Bauman 1986:113-14).

We might also add the idea of maps to the area of narratives, especially if they are annotated or animated as they also tell a story of process.

Sources

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- Carter, P. (2007). Interest: The ethics of invention. In E. Barrett & B. Bolt (Eds.), Practice as research: Approaches to creative arts enquiry (pp. 15-25). London: I. B. Tauris.
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- Gauntlet, D. (2011) Making is Connecting, The social meaning of creativity, from DIY and knitting to YouTube and Web 2.0. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011, 232 pages

Day 1 of 'Creativity in the making'

JOHN RAE (moderator)

Here we are at Day 1 of 'Creativity in the making', and thanks very much to all who have expressed an interest in – even excitement about – this conversation. But how to think about making? Tim Ingold's ideas are a good place to start:

'We are accustomed to think of **making as a project**. This is to start with an idea in mind, of what we want to achieve, and with a supply of the raw material needed to achieve it. And it is to finish at the moment when the material has taken on the intended form. At this point, we say, we have produced an artefact. A nodule of stone has become an axe, a lump of clay a pot, molten metal a sword. Axe, pot and sword are instances of what scholars call material culture, a phrase that perfectly captures this theory of making as the unification of stuff supplied by nature with the conceptual representations of a received cultural tradition.

I want to think of **making....as a process of growth**. This is to place the maker from the outset as a participant in amongst a world of active materials [John and Norman: We would include events, situations and circumstances as materials]. These materials are what he has to work with, and in the process of making he 'joins forces' with them, bringing them together or splitting them apart, synthesising and distilling, in anticipation of what might emerge. The maker's ambitions, in this understanding, are altogether more humble than those implied by the hylomorphic model. Far from standing aloof, imposing his designs on a world that is ready and waiting to receive them, the most he can do is to intervene in worldly processes that are already going on, and which give rise to the forms of the living world that we see all around us - in plants and animals, in waves of water, snow and sand, in rocks and clouds - adding his own impetus to the forces and energies in play.



Suffice it to say ... that even if the maker has a form in mind, it is not this form that creates the work. It is the engagement with materials. And it is therefore to this engagement that we must attend if we are to understand how things are made. Time and again, scholars have written as though to have a design for a thing, you already have the thing itself ... If everything about a form is prefigured in the design, then why bother to make it at all? But makers know better ...'

Drawing on Timothy Ingold's two ways of thinking about making, please share an experience of making an artefact and offer your perspective on the relevance of these ideas

John and Norman

Reference

Ingold, T. (2013). *Making: Anthropology, archaeology, art and architecture*. Routledge, p. 20-22.

[Chrissi Nerantzi](#) Hello +[John Rae](#) and +[Norman Jackson](#) This will be a fascinating few weeks and I can see we have already touched the dilemma (is it a dilemma?) between product and process? I have explored this in my thesis in relation to collaborative learning. Now we are exploring it in the context of creativity. Will be fascinating to see what we will discover. Thanks again for facilitating these important discussions. C

NORMAN JACKSON moderator

DAY 1 Applying Tim Ingold's ideas on making

It strikes me that life is a constant stream of activities that involve us in making and remaking. From the moment we wake up till the moment we fall asleep we are makers and re-makers. Some of these acts of making are so mundane and routine that we don't even see them as maker activity (like remaking our bed or making a cup of tea) they are just part of the necessary tasks of life. But other activities assume great significance and involve us in much meaningful physical, intellectual and emotional effort over a long period of time.



Drawing on Tim Ingold's ideas we might distinguish between the multitude of making daily activities which we might categorise as 'making as a project' or 'making as growth'. Or is it quite so simple?

In our first narrative to stimulate your thinking we draw upon the very simple daily act of making a bowl of porridge to illuminate how Tim Ingold's ideas might be applied to the artefacts we make.

I am very grateful to my brother in law, Chris Tomlinson, for providing such a wonderful story which you can find on our resources page.

A LIFE OF MAKING & REMAKING

an opportunity for creative self-expression (see article in CAM12A)

Narrative 1: Making Porridge: Turning a daily habit into

Post script - since interviewing Chris I visited him and recorded him making porridge..

https://www.youtube.com/edit?o=U&video_id=ytFtrgZT9qU

Mar Kri This is a fascinating story about the use of porridge!!!!it made my day! It made me think of how many windows are in our daily lives which may go missed from serving as opportunities to shape the way we live as act in the world .. what struck me in the author s story is his sense of commitment ; and re birth of ideas on designs despite it being a strictly speaking routine exercise ; I got a sense that the process is also therapeutic to the author in some way ? as it involves "being seen and praised, encouraged , motivated "

On a personal level, it inspired me to think how I could consciously bring more imagination during the "dressing my toddler time " in the mornings (which can be stressful sometimes!!) ..thanks for inspiration!

Debbie Baff What a beautifully inventive way of expressing creativity ! Porridge Art :) Who knew ? I really enjoyed reading this and seeing each of the individual pictures and hearing about the stories behind them but when I saw the curated image of all of the bowls of porridge together that just blew me away ! I also loved this quotation from the interview "Nice to be able to put a little something into people's lives" ... it reminded me of how we sometimes made pictures with our childrens food when they were little - now they have grown up a bit we havent really made the effort but seeing this post has inspired me to revisit our efforts ! I will try and get some piccies ! □

Norman Jackson Moderator Wonderful appreciations +**Mar Kri** & +**Debbie Baff**.. like you I was inspired when I cam across Chris' porridge story. Its seems to get close to the heart of what being creative means. Also I love the way you have both bounced off the story and seen the possibilities for turning everyday uncreative acts into an opportunity for creative self-expression. Like the lady who cleaned our room on holiday with her towel designs.. As Chris puts so well.. a person's creativity puts a smile on our face.

Jennifer Willis I am resisting the temptation to say that Chris' porridge has given me a lot of 'food for thought'! It has certainly impressed me and made me wonder once more about the question of spontaneous creation or creation on demand. It seems Chris has perhaps prodded me towards a greater appreciation of the latter.

I've always felt rather uncomfortable about the role of poet laureate, for example, where poetry is expected, indeed, a prerequisite of, the role holder, resulting in what some may feel is less worthy work. I suppose this is reflected in my personal lack of creativity in coming up with a theme, but, if given a theme, being able to write around it - I rate this as having less creativity because it was not all my own concept.

Chris, however, has run with a brief and demonstrated just how creative he can be, not just once, but indefinitely. I have a question, though: is the potential of porridge (in this case) finite, or will there come a time when he can no longer face the thought of decorating another bowl? Or perhaps move on from a bowl to another container? Or from porridge to another substance? I guess the answer lies in his own need to create: if it is fundamental to his being he will go on, whatever the form or medium, but if it is externally driven, it will rely on his viewers'/readers' expectations....

Simon Rae Two things came to mind reading Chris' fabulous porridge exploits... firstly I was reminded of Kurt Schwitters and his use of porridge (mentioned in the catalogue/book to his retrospective at the Tate Britain <http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/blogs/schwitters-britain-schwitters-and-sculpture-porridge-not-plaster>) - necessity is the mother of invention they say...

... and secondly, the breakfast-time aspect of producing food art. There was a brief time when my 3 little ones were all at the same Primary School. One was at one end of a long corridor-like school in the rising 5s, another in the middle rooms and the eldest was in the final year room at the other end of the corridor.

I would get up and do breakfast etc, and make them each a lunch. The usual fare: a sandwich; a Penguin biscuit, carrot sticks and a bit of fruit. Often this would be a banana. I discovered that I could easily write their name on the yellow skin of the banana with a biro ... this developed into doing a drawing or design or message "C'est ne pas une banane" or joke ... my favourite was a short story written across the 3 bananas with instructions to seek out the sibling with the next part of the story!

I had fun doing it ... but at the time my little ones didn't mention it and it was never documented. Then a couple of years ago my now 30-year old (from the middle rooms of the corridor) sent me link to some artist who drew and pricked wonderful pictures on bananas and took pictures of them reminding me of the time I used to do it (when I did it smartphones were a thing of the SF imagination unfortunately) and the youngest mentioned the practice lovingly.

I like to think that a small measure of yellow, curved-shaped lunacy will have rubbed off on them.

[Schwitters in Britain: Schwitters and sculpture: porridge, not plaster | Tate](#)
tate.org.uk

[Paula Nottingham](#) Late now but reading about Chris' porridge exploits - there does seem to be a joy of invention that makes it look easy. I turned to Dewey "Works of art often present to us an air of spontaneity, a lyric quality, as if they were the unpremeditated song of a bird" (1934).

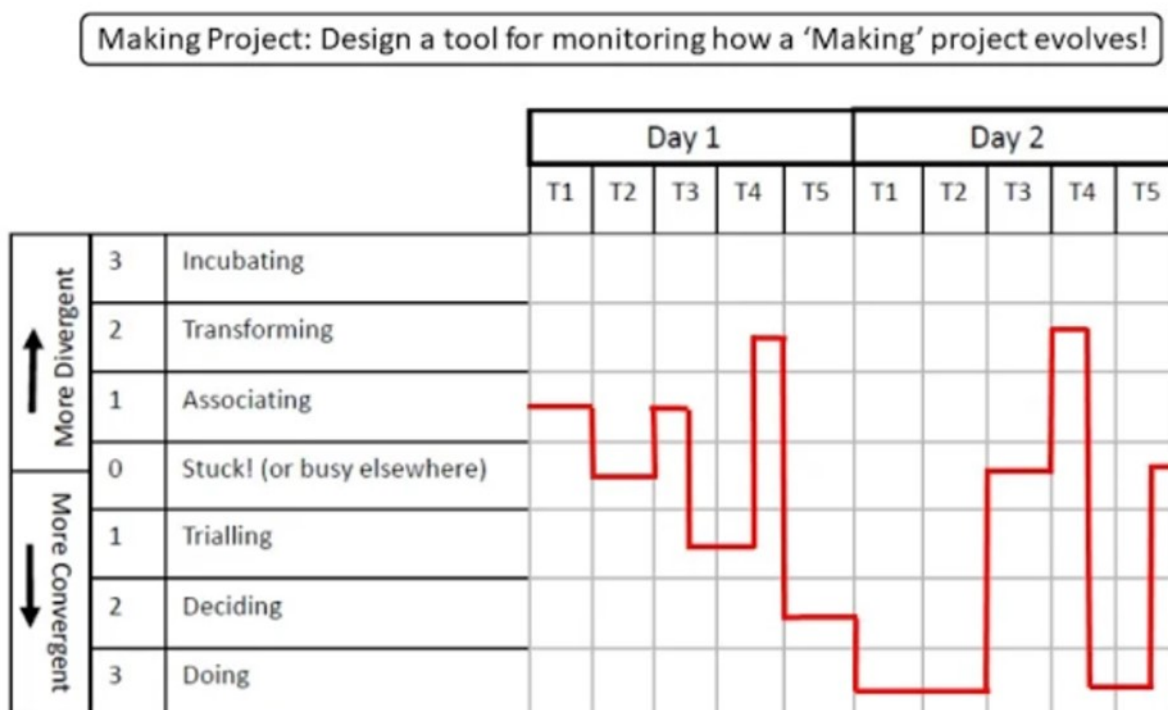
KEVIN BYRON Making a Creative Sparkline!

Sparklines are simple graphs that are used to visually illustrate data. As part of the Making project I thought I would first design a tool to monitor how my thoughts and actions changed over time (eg shifting from idea generation to trying out an idea) when I made something new.

When it didn't turn out to be as easy as I'd first thought, I decided to use the part-designed sparkline to monitor how I was designing the thing itself (with the hope that it wouldn't lead to an infinite regression and disappear into a singularity). The result is that I shall now focus on the actual project I had in mind, and forget about trying to simplify creativity!

K.Byron Mar'18

A Creative Sparkline!



T1,2 etc are arbitrary periods of time during a single day assigned to the making project.

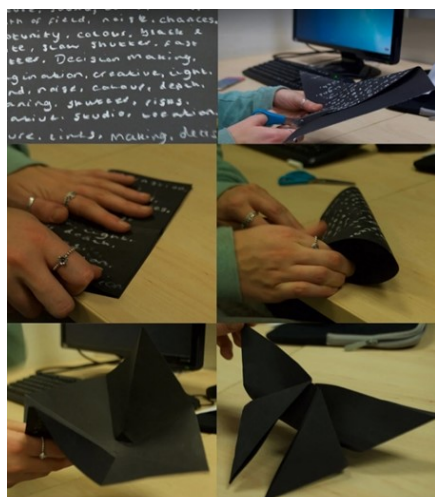
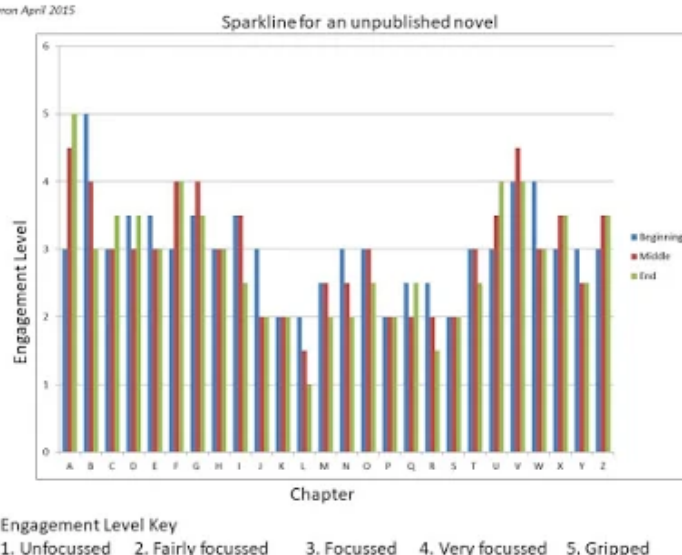
Current Status: Needs a re-design!

[Rebecca Thomas](#) I love the title 'Creative Sparkline' staff often talk to me about the importance of inspiration, and creative 'sparks' and feel that students need to understand these aspects of creativity.

[Kevin Byron](#) + [Rebecca Thomas](#) in 2015, a friend asked me to review a book she wanted to publish, and I decided to use a Sparkline to illustrate my level of emotional engagement for each of the 26 chapters. The result is shown below:

[John Rae](#) Moderator I also like the term 'Sparkline' and cannot wait to see what evolves + [Kevin Byron](#). Funny how making so often does not go to plan, that it takes its own course. This came up in one or two other posts yesterday too.

K. Byron April 2015



REBECCA THOMAS

We produced a set of cards for the Creative Arts school at the University of Hertfordshire with themes such as Making, Exploring, Playing, and Building Confidence-we asked the students to consider these terms as a critical exercise and produce their own cards.

[Chrissi Nerantzi](#) Owner Hi + [Rebecca Thomas](#) what a wonderful idea and such a lovely way to engage them in deep reflection through making. Did you take pictures of all the cards created? What did you notice? Was there anything that stood about the approach they used? What was generated?

[Rebecca Thomas](#) Thank you for your positive comments and questions. I take pictures of everything, I would like to create a Creative Learning archive. I

noticed that the students using these prompt cards were aware of how they learn in their discipline and were having more of a dialogue with each other. The cards worked well as a tool for idea development.

The students worked collectively to develop an understanding of learning processes and make these explicit to were able to share with others. It was fun to watch students' act out various actions from individual cards. The students could explain their own learning to students in other disciplines and rated their own learning on the course higher than previous years. They began to understand learning as a process rather than factual and procedural knowledge. Students in their visual diaries worked through their process of learning. One of the students created his own book about learning.

I'm collecting examples of cards used in Higher Education, do you know of any?
Best wishes, Rebecca

REBECCA MORLEY

Struggling with a long term condition that can at times affect my physical ability to do things, a few weeks ago I found myself feeling quite low. A good friend and colleague suggest that I do something at my own pace, something that can be picked up and put down which wouldn't exert me physically. She lent me a pair of knitting needles and spent the evening teaching me how to cast on. Not only was a reconnecting with my own creativity and ability to do something, but I spent the evening chatting and laughing with a good friend whilst applying myself to the knitting.

Without noticing, the creation began to grow and by this point I was still unsure of what it might actually be. Rather than give too much time focusing on what the end product might look like, I instead embraced the not knowing, all the time connecting. At times, with my inexperience, I might drop stitches, get knotted etc but I continued despite this. Upon completing this - which turned into a snood/scarf type thing, I shared my creation with my grandmother.

Again, here another connection took place. Suffering with dementia, my granny was suddenly able to reconnect with her experiences of knitting and suddenly I remembered a moment at the age of about four when she taught me to knit a scarf for one of my dolls. She too remembered this and suddenly, fond memories came flooding back and I was filled with such a sense of joy and I know she was too.

She was able to recommend, advise and practically show me how I might 'better improve' an equal tension, drop less stitches and create a 'more finished' product. This to me was not important, but this time for real connection was and so I sat with her as she began to demonstrate. I am now in the process of returning this time with a gift made out of that very wool.

Joy Whitton Wow. This was such a wonderful story! (And I love the earthy colours in your knitting!) I was really interested in the way the material activity mediated your renewed connection to your grandmother. And they enabled a renewed connection to yourself judging from the joy you felt when the memories came flooding back. Of course, that is obvious that that will happen and yet not so obvious in another way.

Sandra Sinfield Oh my lord - what a wonderful set of experiences! thank you for sharing +**Rebecca Morley**. I want to think about this a lot more...

Rebecca Morley Thank you to both of you for taking the time to read about my experience - yes lots of connections to think about!

magicalmarta What a beautiful story about the power of creativity to connect people as well as 'things' The connection stimulated and the conversations that followed were truly gifts to both you and your grandmother. Thank you for sharing that deeply meaningful gift with all of us!

Rebecca Morley Many thanks - yes such a wonderful gift!

Simon Rae thank you ... a lovely weaving together of themes. I'm starting to realise how unsung knitting as a creative activity is. Worse, it's often used to denigrate or marginalise people. I regret that I can't knit, I did try once but couldn't get my fingers around even the simplest pattern. But I was once a programmer - FORTRAN, Basic, Prolog etc, and my parsing skills are sometimes called upon to unravel the logic of my partner's knitting patterns. And I've come to appreciate the wonderful patterns that can be generated from the two basic elements of k1 and p1.

A recent thread on Twitter pointed to a long history of knitting (<https://twitter.com/laurenclarkrad/status/949311002373312512>) and a blog from the V&A describes knitted items from Egypt that date from the 3rd to 5th century AD, 12th century knitting from North Africa and discusses The Cappers Act of 1571 in England that stated that every person above the age of six years (with some exemptions) should wear a knitted cap (<https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/the-history-of-hand-knitting>). The V&A also has a collection of knitting patterns including some from the 1940s (<https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/1940s-knitting-patterns>).

Knitting seems to be a skill that seems to be largely communal or family based, passed on over a coffee or from mother to daughter (more often than not?). A group making experience that nowadays is/can be an expensive hobby/pastime and rather different from years gone by when it was a necessity. Is there a difference between **Making for Pleasure** and **Making for Need**? I really do think that knitting should be on the school curriculum ▢

John Rae I love the warm colors and the texture! Thank you for sharing this +**Rebecca Morley** and the story

Norman Jackson this is such a lovely story +**Rebecca Morley** and shows in a very human way how acts of personal creativity enable us to connect in unanticipated and deeply meaningful ways. Thanks for sharing

PAULA NOTTINGHAM Making a blog

The making experience that I would like to share is a tutor learning blog, now archived. I did the blog over the course of about eight years for a professional practice programme in the arts. So, a moving image of the course with words pictures, audio-visual - a constant for a long time. It consisted of some explanations, linking ideas and people, some personal observations and a means to share amongst the group. I am no longer involved in the course but the blog remains up for others <http://paulanottingham.blogspot.com>. Originally the tutors and gurus on the course embedded the idea of a public blog after a few experiments with private online sites. I had worked online with courses before - but never in the public eye - and it was a bit like jumping off an airplane without a parachute. I remember 8 years ago making a start - my photo on the blog is of a much younger person. My colleague had introduced the ideas of connectivity e.g. Siemens, but I also had to research student blogs and sought out ways to approach getting 'out there' e.g. seeing Martin Weller speak about being a digital scholar gave me some points for practice and using Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner's learning landscape. I am a very private person so I had to evolve into the role of a 'blogger'. I would often ask my daughters to read over a blog and had to work on creating messages that resonated - avoiding a tendency to be over prescriptive. The blog is connected to the conversations going on. The other day an image came up of the action plan I had



created with a colleague in the shape of an arrow popped up on my uni FaceBook - and it made my day that something had survived and was still helping others learn - a simple visual that spoke to someone else had survived on the web! What I have learned in doing this artefact/process is how to jump off the airplane - to be brave - to admit not knowing. I miss the constancy of posting to the blog and I would still add an image or 2 if I got the chance - never say never. Visiting David Gauntlett's own site <http://davidgauntlett.com/blog/> and thinking about my own process of developing I now also know I have to get back out there and have been dormant too long! This workshop is helping to do that...

John Rae Thank you very much for posting your story and ideas +[Paula Nottingham](#). When I read your post I found myself nodding. I agree, making does require bravery - making a first mark on paper, committing to a design for a frame for a work bench, knowing that if that is messed up then the end product will likely fail (a current project of mine), showing what has been made, even to loved ones (I think +[Norman Jackson](#) referred to that too)! The list goes on and on. Good for you Paula - looking forward to an update!

HALEH MORAVEI

My creation today was a "brain" boosting banana & chia seed loaf. I hate food waste and I had some really ripe "brown" bananas. Becoming better at cooking nutritious food is my lifelong journey. From the first time I learnt how to boil eggs to the day I pulled off a community feast of healthy food for 1500 people at Manchester's Winter Festival and beyond, I am always learning to hone techniques, tweak flavors and textures, introduce novel ingredients, and rise to the next level of my "kitchen domination".

In short, the better I get at creation, the bigger the challenges that I seek.

As Picasso once said first act of creation is destruction... the bananas are not really destroyed but reformed into a delicious healthy snack.



Rebecca Thomas I'm very interested in the idea of making as a process of growth. As an artist I have constructed self through making work, making and thinking enables the work-it's an essential part of practice. My general approach to the making is instinctive and the physical act of making can sometimes be performative. As an educator, encourage others to make things.

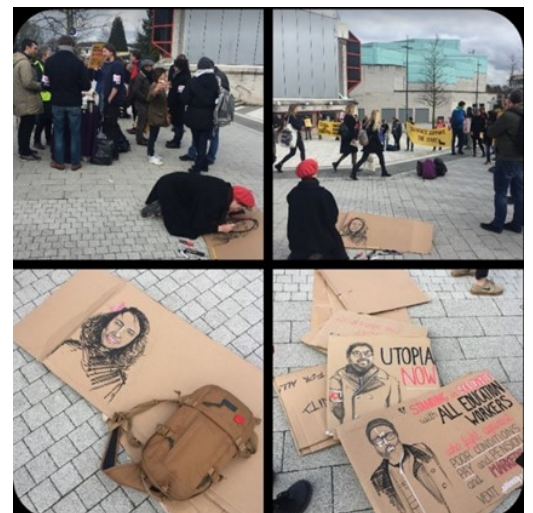
rklaw99 Definitely a process of growth, in my experience - as a not particularly creative person. Every time I've made something, no matter how modest, I feel somehow "more".

John Rae I'm with you, +rklaw99, making is growth in many different ways. I read David Gauntlett's book 'Making is connecting' a while back and one thing that resonated and stays with me is his definition of creativity - that creativity 'invokes a feeling of joy'.

WILL HAYWOOD

Day 1 of [#CreativeHE](#) and Day 7 of the [#UCUstrike](#) and I enjoyed seeing a great example of creativity and making on the picket line.

John Rae: Just read your post and I'd agree. This making connected the materials with the people present, the social and political messages, and with a current event in the community/across the county. Hopefully the making went on to connect with the people passing by who saw/read the placards.



[Norman Jackson](#): Great illustration + [Will Haywood](#) and of how context and purpose influence what is to be connected. Also your arrangement - the way you have composed and repurposed the images using this technology to connect to this conversation with other people - adds yet another dimension to the idea that making is connecting.

[Will Haywood](#): Thanks + [Norman Jackson](#) for pointing that out, my curation of the images as making completely slipped me by.

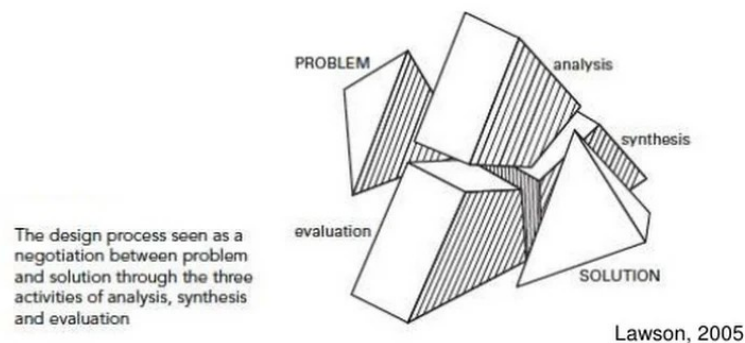
PAUL KLEIMAN Some thoughts on making.

I trained as a designer, and I suppose I've always regarded making as a form of process as much as a means of getting - eventually and hopefully - to a product. I was always amused by the countless diagrams of the 'design process' which, usually, consisted of a neat set of linear steps. Just follow the steps and bingo! For me, and many designers, it's a far messier, negotiated iterative process; one that was captured by the work of Lawson.

I'll follow this with an example of my own making that pretty well follows these ideas.

Problem-finding

Designers 'play around with ideas to get more understanding about the problem rather than focus on just finding a solution.' Maher & Poon, 1996



[Chrissi Nerantzi](#) Owner+1 Thank you for sharing + [Paul Kleiman](#) your story. Problem finding so so important. Far too often we assume what the problem is and zoom into problem solving without actually seeing the problem (s). How can we build this more into the learning process?

[Paula Nottingham](#) Leavy talks about trans-disciplinary problem-centred issues - ones that relate to culture and society to develop the bigger picture. I am looking over some validation materials this evening of the new QAA subject benchmark for Art and Design and am taken at how it has changed from the day I taught in the arts. There is much more about the bigger picture. Will have to go find Lawson now - like the idea of messy for making something this week!

[John Rae](#) Moderator Yes, thanks for sharing + [Paul Kleiman](#) and that's an interesting question, + [Chrissi Nerantzi](#). I wonder if the notion of 'play' is important in all this (noting that Maher and Poon use that term). Reflecting on my own teaching practices, I am now wondering if I could do more in creating spaces for play.

DAY 2 MAKING IS CONNECTING John Rae

Thank you everyone for all of your very interesting and most helpful postings - there is a lot of making going on - everywhere actually - and there's also a lot of thinking and talking about making.

I think that Ingold was an appropriate starting point no doubt and it will good to keep those ideas in mind. Of course, there are many other lenses through which we can think about making. Let's now look at some ideas from David Gauntlett (2011, p. 2). At the start of his book, 'Making is Connecting', he offers three propositions:

'Making is connecting because you have to connect things together (materials, ideas, or both) to make something new'.

'Making is connecting because acts of creativity usually involve, at some point, a social dimension and connect us with other people'.

'And making is connecting because through making things and sharing them in the world, we increase our engagement and connection with our social and physical environments'.

Gauntlett adds: 'Of course, there will be objections and exceptions to each of these, which we may consider along the way. But that's my basic set of propositions.'

Source

Gauntlett, D. (2011) Making is Connecting, The social meaning of creativity, from DIY and knitting to YouTube and Web 2.0. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011, 232 pages

Drawing on the idea that making is connecting please share an experience of making an artefact and offer your perspectives on the relevance of the idea.

NORMAN JACKSON Narrative of Making is Connecting

Today's 'making is connecting' theme is so simple yet so profound when we start thinking about things we make or remake. We only have to read Chris Tomlinson's story (narrative 1) to see a good example of how unique individuals bring certain materials together and connect them in particular ways to their ideas and feelings, beliefs and values, and the materials (events and situations and relationships) that constitute their lives. In this way they create artefacts that have meaning to themselves and to others. In creating these meanings, a humble bowl of porridge is transformed into a device for mediation (eg a means of engaging people cognitively and emotionally).

I wanted to provide an illustration to show that making is connecting from my own life so I have constructed a narrative around a picture I made. I welcome further perspectives and also your own examples of making as a process of connecting and combining the materials of our lives.



Narrative 2 Making a Painting
<http://www.creativeacademic.uk/creativehe.html>

John Rae Moderator I really appreciate the warmth of your painting +Norman Jackson and thank you for sharing the story that lies behind it. It all links beautifully with David Gauntlett's ideas - the way ideas, imagination, emotions, experiences and materials interact in particular ways to produce something new.

PAUL KLEIMAN Day 2 'Making is connecting'

I have, for a few years now, been involved not so much in 'making' something but in constructing something...or, perhaps more properly, re-constructing something. That 'something' happens to be a detailed picture of my late mother's life, particularly her early life from childhood to when she got married and I came along.

I have lots of material to play with, as my mother carefully documented virtually her entire life through diaries, journals, letters, photos, documents etc., which all started when she was c. 14 years old and only ended on the day she went into hospital two weeks before she died aged 86.

There's her war diaries and letters - she lived in London docklands during the blitz. There's her often very funny observations, usually in letters, of the inner workings of the British film industry in the mid-late 1940s where she worked as a 'continuity girl' with some well-known directors and producers. There's her 'political stuff' as she was a member of the Communist Party.

A natural archivist, I've always thought that her ideal job would have been as an archivist in a major museum, when we cleared her apartment we found everything neatly arranged and labelled in various folders and boxes as if she intended someone to read them. I know that in the months and years after my father died, she went through it all - and there's a hell of a lot of it - often making little notes on post-it notes which she'd attach to a page in a diary or on a letter.

I tend to see it all as a massive, complex jigsaw in which many of pieces themselves are not yet defined or are themselves made up of several bits of information gleaned from a sentence in a letter here, a diary entry there, the back of postcard etc.

I am making several things:

- a (currently private) website where I can place items into some semblance of order;
- the picture in my head of her life
- many interesting connections both within the material and beyond.

The last of those, in regard to today's theme, has perhaps been the most interesting. I am reminded, in a pedagogical frame of mind, of Bigg's SOLO Taxonomy, moving from a starting point (Unistructural) where all the bits of information are unconnected to a point where not only does it start to fit together but it starts to take on a life of its own, extending into all sorts of interesting and connected areas (Extended Abstract). I have discovered so much through making and, importantly, following the connections.

A couple of examples of connection:

One of the many photos is of my mother in the centre of a 'team photo' of the entire crew of the 1947 film 'Broken Journey'. The Observer newspaper runs a regular 'Family Snaps' item and I sent it in along with the story behind it as far as I knew it. They printed it, and a while later I received an email from a woman who'd seen the photo and who's grandfather was one of the electricians in the photo.

Occasionally I post interesting and relevant 'snippets' on social media. One, about the film industry, was picked up by the BBC's The Film Programme on Radio 4. That turned into a major segment in one of their programmes when they came up to my home and we went through my mother's film related diaries and letters. Preparing for that programme meant going through all the material and drawing out a reasonably coherent narrative. That programme led to an approach from and a meeting with the BFI, which resulted in an agreement to donate all the film related documents to the National Film Archive. My mother would have been pleased!

[Jennifer Willis](#) What a wonderful tribute to your mother + [Paul Kleiman](#) and a great example of how unanticipated connections can emerge.

When my mother died 14 years ago, I began researching our family history and engaged my (now 92 year old) father, finally printing and binding the work for us and our descendants. I unearthed some unexpected skeletons, which led me into extensive social and historical research in the late 19th century and WWI, from Canada, to Scotland, India and France.

I continue to talk a lot with my father about his own life and career in the RAF. As a retired regular officer, he still receives the RAF News. He happened to mention to me before Christmas that he'd seen an advertisement placed by a documentary maker who has been compiling personal accounts of servicemen/-women and their families to create an archive. I promptly bought 2 copies of his film on Habbaniya and Amman (where we lived in the early-mid 1950s) and emailed the maker to register my interest in taking part.

This unexpected link opened up a new dimension for my father and me to work on. Tod (the film-maker) was very interested and we await a date for him to meet with my father and film his recollections and memorabilia. Thanks to his appreciation of the rich but untapped archive of military history, we as ordinary individuals are able to gain recognition of the importance of our loved ones' contributions to today's nation, help them record this for posterity and feel valued.

Once again, I can see the validity of Gauntlett's model of the process of creating.

[Norman Jackson](#) Wonderful stories +[Paul Kleiman](#) and +[Jennifer Willis](#). They highlight the value of such deep and meaningful sharing of personal histories and experiences in this forum and who knows what other connections will emerge. Perhaps its the age we eventually reach but I also, a few years ago, tried to connect up the dots of my own family histories and preserve what I discovered in a book for my children. It is a humbling experience to think we have been given life and the ability to think and feel such things thanks to generations of individuals who never knew us. And its a sobering thought that our very existence is just a matter of chance - if the bullet that hit my grandfather in WWI had been a few inches to the left neither my dad or me would have been.

[Paula Nottingham](#) Enjoyed this post - very valuable to have added this story to others.

[Mar Kri](#) Wonderful and moving stories here y all!! how wonderful t have so much material to play with +[Paul Kleiman](#) you re offering great honour to your mother and a great gift to generations to come in your family !!

This discussion has re ignited my passion to start collating more information for my own family histories ...being far away from home makes this harder and the urge becomes stronger too as time passes..and I am increasingly aware of our impermanence in the world ..,since teenagehood I wanted to interview my grandparents but never got around to doing that ; and I carry huge regret for that ;

I have however started recording conversations with my parents about aspects of their lives ... which have deeper realisations ,in particular about the parenting they received and how this has shaped them to be who they are as people and parents themselves .. humbling!

It made me think that making (connections) is a longer path of a wider making (meaning) process ,and we can take a creative advantage of the opportunities our lives bring to connect the dots to reach to that meaning ; so although my project I half or not even half started am already in a process of making and connecting as it has helped me connect deeper with them ; and has allowed an opportunity for them to share things and experiences they never had before .

Thanks for sharing

[John Rae](#) Moderator What wonderful stories! Thank you. This notion of making is connecting' is really coming to life.

MAGICAL MARTA

I very much agree making is a key aspect of the lived experience of creativity and that making is connecting. Today I took a walk with the intention to mindfully notice what I might encounter. My eyes were soon drawn to a fallen flower and the idea of 'impermanence' came into my mind. I wondered if impermanence might be part of creativity as it is with life itself. These words were captured in that instant using my phone's voice recorder: "When I think of impermanence and creativity my mind goes to the brilliant idea that comes to us in a moment we are not prepared to capture it in writing or some other way. We turn our head or just blink and it is gone. Or is it? Is it in some 'holding area' waiting for another 'trigger'? Or will it appear again at another time when we recognize it and connect it in a way that makes the idea real?"



When I returned home I opened my journal and added the now wilting flower to an image I had glued in earlier to be the base of a new collage. The next page of the journal was full of my writings but I felt inspired to cover most of the words with pre-cut collage images I had collected for future projects. I combined them in a way I found pleasing and took a photograph without gluing the pieces in place. I named this 'living collage' "Ode to Impermanence." When I took my journal outdoors to take a photo I started thinking about ways I might build on the collage and make it multi-dimensional. I imagined repurposing a wire clothes hanger to form an armature. This image shows step one of my creation. It illustrates the organic nature of creative process in humans. The process involves movement, combining, doing, and undoing in ways that are pleasing to the creator. The act of walking in nature and creating collages is the process that

informs and inspires my creative actions (and creativity research).

I appreciate this opportunity to share my experience and be part of this discussion so near and dear to my personal passion of reimagining the way the lived experience of human creativity is defined, inspired, and developed as we move forward in the 21st century.

With joy,
Marta Davidovich Ockuly

[Sandra Sinfield](#) Moderator Thank you for sharing, +[magicalmarta](#) I am inspired by your thoughts on impermanence - but also by the joy of being able to share these moments... It is very healing somehow.

[magicalmarta](#) +[Sandra Sinfield](#) Thank you for your kind comment Sandra. This post was a leap of my intuition to share. Impermanence is a word I do not remember writing about - ever. It is interesting for me to look back and read it myself.

NORMAN JACKSON -

I came across this imaginative use of my towels this morning... looking forward to our forthcoming hands on conversation.

Q What interesting things that others have been made have you come across recently?

[kevin byron](#) Today I fudged on my reading skills, and as we know errors can stimulate new thinking. I mis-read this as 'Flavours', and spent the rest of the walk home trying to imagine what they would be!



[Norman Jackson](#) haha.. perhaps you should go back +[kevin byron](#) to find out how these wedding flavours are made

[Jennifer Willis](#) +[kevin byron](#) Did you misread or did the confectioner misspell? I dread to think what wedding favours might be!!! Too much at this early time of day.

[kevin byron](#) +[Jennifer Willis](#) I mis-read, and if I had seen that it said 'Favours' I would have been equally puzzled. However when I looked it up I discovered 'favours' (boxes of chocolates, small gifts etc) are now part of the increasingly complex arrangements leading up to a wedding! I don't know what the equivalent would be if it ended up in a divorce, but nowadays there's probably some wedding cake still left over!

[Sandra Sinfield](#) Moderator My friend crocheted a snow flake and a skull for me - which I used to decorate the 'christmas tree' that we made out of already lopped off branches found in the churchyard...

[Simon Rae](#) All gone now ... and seasonally transitory ... but seeing some of the snow sculptures that people have made these last few days always brings a smile ...

[Jennifer Willis](#)+ Brings a new meaning to 'foot fall'!!

[Chrissi Nerantzi](#) Owner +[Norman Jackson](#) These reminded me of a mini cruise we went on last year with my dad and mum... On the boat each day, they were folding the towels into different animals. So playful and always puts a smile on a face.

JOY WHITTON Making

For many years I have been a member of a group who meet regularly on a voluntary basis to 'move' or dance, listening, not to music, but to the inner impulses to move that may arise naturally. Eyes are closed to help this inner listening. I think of this as allowing my body to take the lead for what I need to do, instead of the usual pattern of events when it moves to my drum: cycling me to work, making my breakfast, taking me up stairs, sewing a button back on, etc - you get my drift. For a short time (about 25 minutes), I do my best to 'listen' to this body of mine, and to give rein to what movement it may require. Inside myself I watch, or 'witness', what results, and how I feel and think about it, ideally without censoring or judging or inhibiting what movements arise. This is not so easy and takes practice. It also involves trust in the others who do it too because as you may imagine, it is exposing! Often we laugh together at what a stranger would think if they stumbled into the room. The rules of the game are a form of discipline which provide the structure that helps the process of listening to inner impulses and of trusting the process. For example, half the people in the room 'move', while the other half sit at the side of the room 'witnessing' the movers; then we switch roles. You need to look after yourself as a mover - if you fling your arms around for example, you open your eyes to watch where the others and the walls are, in space. It is not the witnesses' job to jump up and prevent you hurting yourself. You don't cease to take responsibility for yourself, in other words. There is a story of a professional dancer who for many months of being a mover in this process, lay still, as this was the expression (for her it was an experience) that arose from her deep listening.

Over the years, you come to notice the different levels that an impulse to move can come from. Often people will begin with rhythmic movements or circles: we often think this helps us get into the frame of mind. Sometimes strong images arise and drive the movement, sometimes it seems that the body has stiffnesses or pain and needs to work to ease them; sometimes emotions drive the trajectory of the movement; sometimes emotions arise as a result of following what seems to want to be done; sometimes it is difficult to tell what drives it, so you just watch using your inner eye. Often people arrive exhausted by the working day, but surprise themselves with the energy they find moving them. I remember the first time someone new in the group made oral sounds - I realised that I had considered the mouth not as a part of the body moving; but I also noticed how I resented the intrusiveness of the sounds which seemed, I thought, to want to dominate the room. So that observation becomes the content for self-reflection.

I am not sure if this experience conforms very much to what 'Creativity in the Making' may mean, because it produces no product, or artefact, but it does produce an experience of interaction with others and yourself. Continuing practice of this discipline over the years in our 'authentic movement' group (as it is known) has forged in me a greater proclivity to reflect, to shift my perspective, to be flexible - in the sense that I am aware of who I am and what I feel but I can be moved and influenced by others - and a much wider acceptance of others' difference. This is very much learning and growth in Norman Jackson's sense - and something I've found has helped me in a whole range of areas in life.

[magicalmarta](#) I appreciate this sharing Joy! Organic, intuitive movement stimulates creativity for me. All creativity requires movement. For me - movement evokes process and pleasure and helps amplify intuition. There must be a lot of trust to move with inner music alone with eyes closed. But I love the idea of a sound-free environment for moving. To step into 'process' this way allows us to leave our cares behind and be in the moment. When I dance or walk in silence ideas often flow to me. Is that your experience as well?

[John Rae](#) Moderator Thank you very much +[Joy Whitton](#). Maybe no artefact but I would think that you nevertheless are making and doing so in way that is similar to how +[Norman Jackson](#) described how he made his painting. It sounds to me like in authentic movement you connect motivations, ideas, possibly imagination, and no doubt emotions, draw on experiences and reflections and link in many other elements of the physical and affective domains to produce something new. That seems to be what Norman did also. I guess you produce or 'make' something new each time. How interesting.

[Joy Whitton](#) +[magicalmarta](#) Yes, absolutely, it is exactly like that. And very special to share it with others.

[John Rae](#) Moderator And thank you so much for sharing in the way that you did +[magicalmarta](#)

[Norman Jackson](#) Thanks +[Joy Whitton](#) I agree with +[John Rae](#) and the experience you shared is certainly the product of a process of making. I guess the question is, can an experience be an artefact? Regardless of whether it is or it isn't your tangible description of your experience is an artefact and if you were to record your thoughts as you had them on film or audio that would be an artefact. Perhaps learning and the personal growth with which it is associated is an artefact of experience? Unavailable to others until you represent it in some way.

Your textual artefact forms a nice link to our topic today on intellectual adventures. Your description extends the idea of **adventures in the making** to reveal the importance of the ways we harness all our senses to make sense of complex processes and experiences of making, in the physical/tactile and emotional spaces we create in order to make.

On the question of whether an experience can be an artefact, the text of an undated keynote presentation by Mark Federman offers some insights here.

"The cultural artefacts that emerge from our culture are ephemeral in nature - they exist precisely in the present, and can only be experienced, creating a narrative by which we are telling our stories to ourselves..... If artefacts comprise the vocabulary of cultural expression, from where do we draw to create the lexicon of ephemeral artefacts? In an interview given in 1965, Marshall McLuhan observed:

"If we have used the arts at their very best as a means of heightening our awareness of the otherwise unconscious environment, then turning a whole skill to the making of the environment itself into a work of art, namely, of transcendent awareness, would seem to be the logic of this form. ... The possibility of using the total environment as a work of art, as an artefact, is a quite startling and perhaps exhilarating image but it seems to be forced upon us. The need to become completely autonomous and aware of the consequences of everything we're doing before the consequences occur is where we're heading."

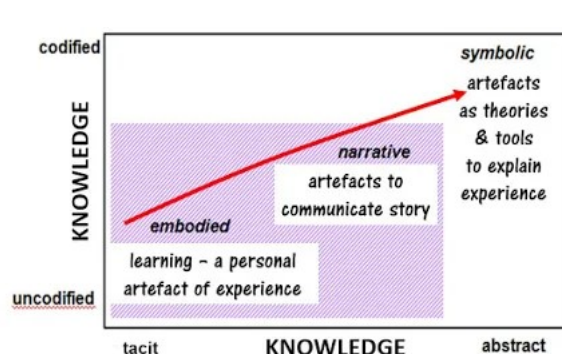
Our cultural lexicon then, as McLuhan suggests, is the total environment - the all encompassing set of complex, interacting, dynamic processes in which we participate. Our total environment is the ultimate artefact of experience in ever-present presence"

Federman, M. (undated) The Ephemeral Artefact Visions of cultural experience Available on-line at: <http://individual.utoronto.ca/markfederman/EphemeralArtefact.pdf>

[magicalmarta](#) I believe experience is a concrete artifact of engagement in creative process because it informs future actions. We are the sum total of all our experiences. The richer the experiences, the richer our imagination grows. Connections between memories and our present moment lived experience provide the fertile soil for sowing seeds of possibility.

[Norman Jackson](#) + [Joy Whitton](#) and + [Jennifer Willis](#) I'm thinking again, as I so often do, of the learning adventures (not just intellectual but profoundly, physical, psychological and emotional) that our students embarked on of their own volition when they engaged with our lifewide learning award at the University of Surrey. And how they made an artefact in the form of a scrapbook to not only record their story for themselves in a creative way, but to facilitate the telling of their story to us in order to share their experiences and how they had changed.

The making of the scrapbook and the telling of their story was an integral part of their adventure. The award was superfluous it was the fact that we valued and validated what and how they had achieved their development that mattered to them.



I guess the point I'm making + [magicalmarta](#) is that if the learning gained from an experience is an artefact of that experience then it remains tacit and hidden unless it can be revealed through the telling of a story or the creation of another tangible artefact. I have remade Boisot's knowledge matrix to illustrate (the diagram is a symbolic artefact). Physical/tangible artefacts make an individual's learning accessible to others.

[magicalmarta](#) I absolutely agree. It all depends on context. Every day, having an embodied experience of engaging in person-centered creative process, I very often reflect in my journal and feel inspired to piece together collages that reflect my insights.

My last comment was not meant to invalidate physical artifacts - but to share my valuing of the non-concrete's role in what emerges in physical form. In the past several years of my doctoral journey I have filled twenty 200-page journals documenting my ideas, insights, learnings, and creations. Creators leave evidence of their process in many forms. My 4,000 pages of data capture the visible and invisible aspects of my lived experience of creativity. From this data is the source of an imagination infused and phenomenon based definition of creativity as well as a comprehensive corpus of lived-experience creativity terms which I have yet to find in the literature. Thank you for this conversation and process. It feels very rich and important to me! I also appreciate the knowledge matrix you shared Norman Jackson.

[Norman Jackson](#) thanks + [magicalmarta](#) I feel humbled 4000pages capturing your lived experiences sounds like a unique archive.. I am sure we have much to learn from you. Thanks for joining this conversation...

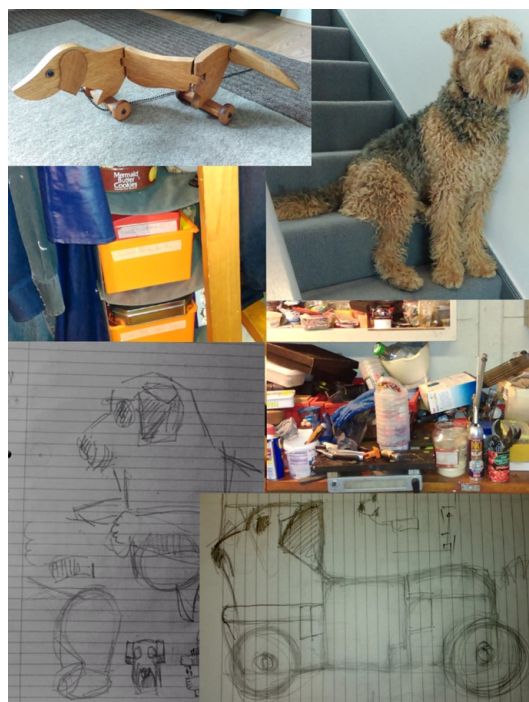
[magicalmarta](#) How very kind of you + [Norman Jackson](#). I greatly value your work and perspectives related to creativity. Creativity researchers in America avoid the word imagination at all costs. It was a breath of fresh air discovering "Developing Creativity in Higher Education: An Imaginative Curriculum" early in my journey. My research is peppered with references to your work. Thank you for creating this space to connect and share varied perspectives.

[Norman Jackson](#) thanks + [magicalmarta](#) your feedback gives me great pleasure. You are in for a treat tomorrow when + [Joy Whitton](#) will open up the idea of imagination in what for me are new and imaginative ways

SIMON RAE Making as a project and a process Making - as Project,

a gradual gelling of various factors, resources, images and needs: a new grandson, a grage full of bits including wood from a recently dismantled ercol-type settee, several wheels from old GCSE Design & Technology projects, dog and toy dog ... and a need to make a Christmas present.

Making - as a Process, sketching out some designs around the resources. That turning on the piece of wood from the bottom of the settee, if I turn it up that way could be the nose...those runners from an old bookcase could turn that way and be feet...that leg from another settee could be the tail. Flexible joints like the old toy dog, with metal rods as hinges. Wheels from a robot car. Wood carved successfully with the blade of a garden multi-tool that sharpened up very well and an old metal scalpel that's been in my box for years. Basic design stayed the same over several weeks of making, the details changed according to how things worked!



It turned out quite well. I was pleased! And my grandson pulls it around very successfully with a lead sewn from a conference bag shoulder strap and a kitten collar from the local animal charity shop.

[John Rae](#) Moderator What a beautiful thing you have made + [Simon Rae](#). I feel reluctant to say too much more, preferring to leave that for others - for me, the images alone tell a wonderful story.

[Joy Whitton](#) What a lovey design! Does the dog clank as it goes along? - so is sound a consideration of the design?

[Simon Rae](#) I should have added a key to the photomontage in my post...
Top left is a lovely antique toy articulated dog belonging to a friend
Top right is Percy, a big Airedale family dog that lives with my grandson
These two were the inspiration for what I wanted to make.

Middle left & middle right are views of the back of the garage
My working environment.

Bottom left and bottom right are pages from my design/sketch pad
Only 2 pages from a whole series of scribbles where I tried to work out the implications of different options or failures or successes as I made.

...unfortunately no picture of my finished pull-along dog

which doesn't make a sound + [Joy Whitton](#), but does wiggle as it walks (probably due to off-centre drilling of the axle holes) ...

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator I love it + [Simon Rae](#) and I would like 2 please for my granddaughters.. what a lovely illustration of connecting up the materials of life to fashion through a unique design and build process an artefact that has much meaning and value..

JENNIFER (JENNY) WILLIS MAKING Day 2

Whenever we have been on holiday, I create a commemorative album using photos, shells, pressed flowers, seeds - anything that has been gathered during our stay. Last year offered a special occasion, though, as we celebrated my husband's 60th birthday and brought together his family from across the globe.

We gathered in Penang, then some of us continued the celebrations in Kuala Lumpur. This was our chosen venue because Malaysia is readily accessible for all members of a Tamil family who have been physically torn apart by ethnic violence, but remain defiantly close. So it was that we assembled from the UK, Canada, Australia, Sri Lanka and Malaysia, ostensibly to commemorate reaching a 60 year milestone, but more profoundly to demonstrate the tight family bonds through sharing this event.

This was a particularly poignant event as it marked the first time 'my sister' and her daughter had left home in Canada since the tragic death of her husband six years ago. We were also meeting, for the first time, a grand-niece who had been born since we were last in the country. We had invited a close Indian friend from London who had once worked with my husband and with whom we have travelled extensively, to join us.

This, then, was the context of my 2017 holiday album. It had to be even better than usual to do justice to the special occasion. It required tactful assessment of which photos and other materials were appropriate: future generations of readers might not appreciate some images, and I had to ensure that everyone was included fairly. Before I could do any of this, I had to find a suitable album. Again, it had to be special but not flashy (my husband doesn't do bling!). I was fortunate in finding an elegant red velvet album, with tissue separating each page - perfect for my project.

Now, my purpose, the context and the affordance of creating a memento for both us and future relatives was coming together with the resources I had gathered myself and exchanged with other members of the family. The past work and reflection were coming together in the present act of creating the artefact. The physical and electronic resources were dependent on my own imagination and motivation to fashion the album. The spaces in which it was made were essentially my study and what I have called in the diagram my 'head spaces': the hours of decision-making, reflection, imagining. As this was to be a special album, and given the large quantity of printing involved, this time I sent my images for external printing, a novel experience which introduced me to a service I had never before used. It also extended the web of relationships to include anonymous printers and the intermediary staff at Tesco's from whom I collected my photos.

The processes of decision-making, inserting, captioning and consulting my husband continued as the album took shape. Then came that of sharing the finished item with family and friends at home, and over such platforms as WhatsApp with the families who had returned to their distant continents. The album does not get filed in some dusty place, but joins the ranks of its predecessors, available for being dipped into whenever the mood strikes, seamlessly linking the past, present and future.

Let me return now to the theme of connecting and David Gauntlett. Clearly, the whole purpose of this album was to connect myself to my memories and past interactions, but also to connect each of us who participated in the events. I hope there will be a future dimension for younger members of the family to look back and reflect with their children and grandchildren, keeping alive those who may no longer be here in person.

At the end of the short video, Gauntlett summarises the creative process as pleasure, being alive and recognition. Undoubtedly, the act of making my album brought pleasure to me and is the source of others' enjoyment. A concrete artefact fixes events and feelings, allowing us to keep them alive, which is bound up in a spiral of recognition of value and need for recognition of value. And perhaps this is, for me, the recurrent theme over the last two days: without motivation, a desire of some sort, there would be no creativity.



CREATING A COMMEMORATIVE ALBUM

[Norman Jackson](#) *Lovely story +Jennifer Willis showing how our families inspire us to make cultural artefacts that have value across the generations and across time, and how these artefacts connect and strengthen family relationships grounded in shared histories, values and experiences. Your story also introduces the idea of ecologies for making and connecting which we will talk more about in the coming days.*

[Rebecca Thomas](#) *+Norman Jackson I agree these are moving stories. I was thinking about how we record things. Making can be about collecting visual and referential material, taking notes and making sketches, collecting data, in a variety of forms. Visual research is exciting and the different ways it can be carried out. It seems important to keep a visual diary and look at different examples of these. As we gather material we think about a wide range of issues: who is in the picture?*

A book to share in which we collect and collate a wide range of material photographs, drawings, diagrams, leaflets, postcards and other ephemera. The visual diary is a continuing process of inquiry, and can build up over time into a catalogue of own or collective research.

[Simon Rae](#) *A lovely post +Jennifer Willis about a lovely artifact, grounded in so much family and community... you are so lucky to have access to so much. I'm always a bit jealous of people who have managed to keep all their family history...we moved house so often, and my Dad was not one for carting stuff from place to place, that I'd be hard pressed to find even a photo of all the places I've lived :- (old stuff is so useful as a memory-aid for recalling past events.*

[Jennifer Willis](#) *Thank you +Simon Rae. We, too, moved house constantly (29 times between 1950 and 1973), but my parents used mementos and nick-nacks to create a sense of continuity. Most service quarters were identical, so they could re-create home wherever we were. I learnt shortly before my mother's death something I had never appreciated as a child: my parents spent all night unpacking on the day we moved in to our latest home, so that by the time we children got up in the morning, home would be re-established.*

Yes, we are fortunate to have photos etc. of our past. My husband is a Tamil and they lost everything of this sort in the ethnic riots in Sri Lanka, so I understand how you must feel. I think it will be harder to leave no footprint for today's younger people.

DAY 3 INTELLECTUAL ADVENTURES OF MAKING John Rae

The notion of thinking 'materially' is reflected in the title of a wonderful book by Paul Carter called 'Material thinking: The theory and practice of creative research'. Carter writes about the 'intellectual adventure peculiar to the making process' (Carter, 2004, p. XI), which is similar to a term Cameron Tonkinwise (2008) used: 'makingly knowing'. So, here we are making or ready to start making – going on an adventure about material thinking and knowing. The nice thing about this, of course, is that we are doing it together so we might imagine that our knowing will be expanded as we share our perspectives with each other.

A narrative that Norman and I posted to Resources is my attempt to illustrate material thinking. Sorting through my electronic files of text and images over the past few years I identified a painting, or perhaps it would more appropriately be called a 'sketch', that I completed a few years ago. It is an exploration of Carter's notion of 'material thinking' and an attempt to better understand creativity:

http://www.creativeacademic.uk/uploads/1/3/5/4/13542890/material_thinking_john_rae.pdf

I hope that you find this narrative of use, and that you also get a chance to get to another narrative by Camilla Groth, 'Thinking through our hands'. Camilla explores the role of body in sense making with materials. This narrative was posted in relation to an earlier [#creativeHE](#) conversation and its return here seems timely indeed.

John Rae Thanks for the questions + Rebecca Thomas. Yes, I do lose myself. In fact, if I feel lost I get a sense that I am on the right track and maybe that is because I feel that the materials (getting back to material thinking) are somehow taking over. Many, many times my making has failed and I suspect that part of the reason for this is that I don't get lost enough. I am just coming out of a period where I have really struggled with my art-making and I think that is because, again, I haven't become lost in the process (or practice), most likely because I have had to produce against timelines, meet expectations of other people and so forth.

I know that I am being productive in making when I am lost but still able to hold memories of conversations, mental images, etc. that I am using to drive my art-making. It seems to be a matter of balance and that probably relates back to what Ingold was saying. Maybe there is a tension between wanting to have the artefact made and 'becoming', as art-maker, in that space.

One thing that helps me with all this, almost as a starting point, is that I never believe that there is a single, correct answer/response/mark, shape. Some may use the term 'postmodernism' in that context.

Funny, I have been described as peripatetic, but in a completely different way. I'll have to wonder how that may fit my art-making. In terms of your question about bodily response - absolutely!

Rebecca Thomas Thanks for your conversation. I think the term 'becoming' is interesting as it seems linked up to self-identity and time. As artists we often have to let go/almost transcend to get some work done - all the best, Rebecca

DAY 3 What kind of MAKING do we do in this forum? And what types of artefacts do we create? Norman Jackson

Prompted by John's imaginative idea of *making as an adventure* I would like to think that [#creativeHE](#) sustains an environment for intellectual and emotional adventure. But I would be really interested in the views of people who participate in our conversations or who participate by reading the posts..

Marx Wartofsky (1979) proposed a three-level hierarchy of primary, secondary, and tertiary artefacts.

Primary artefacts are artificial entities created by humans, such as axes and clubs, and which allow them to alter directly the nature of their environment. *Is this platform a tool with potential to directly alter our environment?*

Secondary artefacts consist of representations of primary artefacts and of the modes of action using them. Examples of second-level artefacts are pictures, representations and the different modes of action that enable humans to transmit skill and information and to reflect upon their activities. *Do the pictures, visualisations and representations we share, and the practices we describe in our writings and stories relate to these sorts of artefacts?*

Tertiary artefacts consist of a class of artefacts that can come to constitute a relatively autonomous "world" in which the rules, conventions, and outcomes no longer appear directly practical in nature. Put another way they help us perceive a different reality.. They can also act as agents of change for current practice. Examples of third-level artefacts are works of art, myth, worldview and theoretical models. *Do we see examples of such theoretical, conceptual, artistic, poetic.... artefacts being shared or emerging through the conversations we have and perhaps in the way we curate what we have learnt through Creative Academic Magazine?*

All perspectives welcome

Wartofsky, M. (1979) "Perception, Representation, and the Forms of Action: Towards an Historical Epistemology," in Models: Representation in Scientific Understanding Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing, 206p

[Paul Kleiman](#) Hello +[Norman Jackson](#), I'm trying to work out why I instinctively reject or feel definitely uncomfortable with Wartofsky's categories. Perhaps it's my natural resistance to hierarchical categorisation - though I'm also guilty of it in my research and work.

Sticking, however, with Wartofsky's three categories, it occurs to me that there are artefacts that cross and transcend those boundaries. I'm thinking particularly of the visual arts where, for example, a humble primary artefact such as a brick becomes - in the hands of Carl André - a tertiary artefact.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator that's a good point +[Paul Kleiman](#) one man's axe is another's conceptual tool or a work of art. But does that invalidate the idea of categories? Surely that connects us to the affordance perceived by the user of the artefact? All artefacts have possibilities for action but those possibilities are what users perceive.

[Jennifer Willis](#) +[Norman Jackson](#) I share Paul's discomfort, and have a simplistic view of the difference: does it not come down to the affordance, not of the user, but of the creator? In other words, to take the example of an article in CAM, is the objective to proselytise a certain point (tertiary) rather than simply to open up reflection (secondary)?

[Norman Jackson](#) ModeratorHi +[Jennifer Willis](#) ... it depends on how the article is written and what its purpose is but then the user also has a purpose and they can decide for themselves regardless of the intention of the maker.

So taking the axe which I haven't made.. I can certainly use it as it was intended eg chop some wood but I might find other uses for it when the need arises, that's where our imagination comes in handy.

I don't think we should get too hung up about categorising artefacts. They only have value we want to use them to illustrate something. I have drawn on them to extend my painting article to try to link to tomorrow's post by Joy Whitton when she introduces imagination into the discussion.

[Paula Nottingham](#) Sorry catching up with the conversation - useful but agree might be difficult to apply directly - I have started on line which in many ways is the 2nd category - but why is it not also the third category if the ideas are to think about practice and engage with a community of practice with ideas - where does a multi-modal view or virtual version of the world?

REBECCA THOMAS Curious boxes -day 3

This discussion is very interesting as I'm beginning to connect the work I do as an educator, academic developer and art practitioner. My own art practice echoes aspects of materiality and the phenomenological. I use textual material directly into the artwork itself. I'm finding that language is becoming more of a material thing for me. Last week I was keen for staff to make things, so I set them a task of making a curious box. Bringing a few of my interests together I'm going to make a curious box out of collage today for this discussion.

[Sandra Sinfield](#) Moderator+1 i really like the idea of making the dream boxes... I would like to build that in a PGCert activity for our staff here - what are their dreams for themselves - their practice - their students?
I also like the idea of their making 3D students out of recyclables - and slowly giving those artefacts characteristics, personality traits, study traits. In the process would they see university a bit more from their students' eyes?



[Paul Kleiman](#)+1 I use image-making and object-making a lot in my work. To repeat the old cliché: a picture (or artefact) is worth a thousand words.

Running a mini-conference on employability I asked participants to make something they would give to students as they graduated. One group made the 'Hamper of Employability' with a compass (to help with directions), binoculars (to zoom in and focus), a safety blanket, a mask (to adopt different personas/faces depending on circumstances), mobile phone (communication), chocolate (don't forget to treat yourself sometimes),

mirror (to make sure you not only look the part but also are able to take an honest look at yourself...etc.

Another group presented an empty box, with a label on the lid saying "Is it OK to be an Artist? Toolkit" i.e. you have skills etc....but you need to create your own toolkit.

[Jennifer Willis](#) + [Rebecca Thomas](#) Can you tell us a bit more about how you use your boxes? Do the students have to present them? Are they static or do you come back to them again in the future?

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Hi + [Rebecca Thomas](#) you prompted me to think about the way I keep adapting (remaking) some illustrations drawn by artist Kiboko Hacyon to create a new artefact to help explain (mediate) ideas. Here are the remakes I have made during this week as new subjects have been introduced. Looking forward to seeing your curious box.

[Rebecca Thomas](#) +1 + [Jennifer Willis](#) I have been working on a project- Inside the Box, Outside the Box which involves participants in making small objects out of found materials. We consider creativity and curiosity as learning strategies, and think about - and engage in - play - all so as to get to grips with how a non-utilitarian method can generate useful, applicable ideas for learning and teaching.

I wanted to create a number of small boxed-objects that will act as starting points for the exercise and discussion, and textual clues in the form of associated labels will be supplied to direct attention to the different attributes of specific academic disciplines.

I worked with PHD students who are beginning to teach to make these boxes. We used small cardboard boxes and painted them. The idea of colour is good. The discussions that came up was the Monetary Value of Creativity, art as a gift. One student wanted to paint yellow poison and fun together as a tension. The black box-the secret box, the maroon with three colours is a game. I decided that simple coloured boxes might be more useful for display.

[Rebecca Thomas](#) + [Norman Jackson](#) Your illustrations communicate so much. You are able to visually communicate complex ideas. I find that with a painting background I struggle to be direct with my image making.

[Rebecca Thomas](#) + [Paul Kleiman](#) it's such a nice gift to be given a toolkit

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator thank you + [Rebecca Thomas](#) I think we have to thank each other... tools have to be crafted from experiences and insights and sharing stuff as we are doing in this community enables us all to extend our understandings and imaginings so that we can visualise and create tools .. making and sharing stories and other artefacts is a very social and human activity we are engaged in

"The possibilities that exist between two people, or among a group of people, are a kind of alchemy. They are the most interesting thing in life" Adrienne Rich 'What Truth Really Means and the Alchemy of Human Possibility'



REBECCA THOMAS

I documented a collaged curiosity box that I made today. I thought about what I do when I make and assemble-bringing together various images into something coherent. There are no rules as to how to proceed. It's playful, as opposed to narrowly defined - good things can come about through a loosening of inhibitions. How might the edges of the different parts be aligned and made to work coherently?

Collage-using newspapers and other provided materials as your raw materials devise ways to make a picture. Here are some possible approaches:

- Using text and image - recombine images to make new images, mix up letters and words to make new words, new phrases

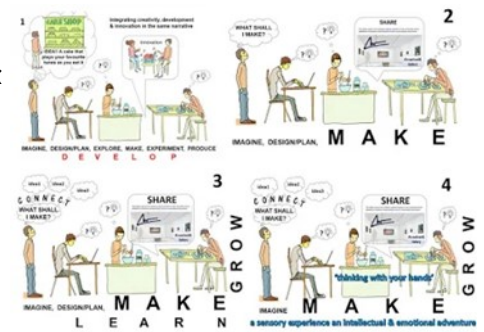
- Thinking about textures and shapes (tearing paper, screwing it up, etc.)

I found images in magazines while thinking of the term 'curious'.

These are the things that I find curious today:-

some people and unidentifiable objects and foods. I can be curious about crime scenes and some tattoos, the blurring of boundaries can be curious.

[John Rae](#) Thank you + [Rebecca Thomas](#). I like 'recombine images to make new images' - it made me think about recombining ideas to make new ones.



JENNIFER WILLIS Day 3: Intellectual adventures in making

I have to confess, I am in very unfamiliar territory here. I am not an artist, and my own creativity recedes into a minuscule 'c' when compared with the wonderful examples we are seeing in this conversation. Nor am I familiar with the literature cited, so I will have to leave it to others to make any links with my account.

I wanted to pick up the notion of knowingly making - or, more appropriately, making unknowingly. In order to have a real experience of creating an artefact during this event, I invited a small group of children to make a promotional leaflet for the learning centre where I teach part-time and they come for additional lessons. Their parents are pushing them to be high achievers, and my colleague whose business it is does not like anything extraneous to be introduced into the classroom! This places serious constraints on what I felt we could reasonably do together.

So, as we had gathered well in advance of the lesson, I felt justified in using the time to float my idea. The group concerned are in year 6, and have just learnt which secondary schools they will be moving to in September. All of them are bilingual, most have English as a second language, their mother tongues including Korean, Bulgarian, Cantonese and Tamil. They are mostly motivated and able, but one is lacking self-confidence and of lower ability.

I put it to them that this was an invitation, they didn't have to join in, and it would require doing things as extra homework. To my delight, they were interested, wanted to know more about Creative Academic, and were keen to participate. My bland idea of a promotional leaflet was quickly transformed by them into a living creation. First, one asked if we could divide the hour as we often do, and spend half the time on planning. Given their enthusiasm and the direct use of English skills entailed, I agreed. Over the next half hour, each had selected a theme they would be responsible for (in several cases, two!); one was busy planning an interview with my colleague on why she had set up the learning centre, her values and experience; another had taken charge of illustrations but would write a story and a poem; yet another was designing a set of questions for a survey of our students. The less able boy had settled on a poster and wanted to take photos of our logo to help with his design.

The reason I am recounting this is that it demonstrates how, in the space of half an hour, a simple idea had been transformed beyond what any of us could have imagined. They have two weeks to complete the task, and at this stage I cannot predict what we will produce. They know that I am interested in HOW they create and it provides a great forum for teaching them research and analytical skills in order to optimise their creations. We see, too, the power of collaboration to push boundaries into much more imaginative areas than I had proposed.

I will keep you advised of progress. I might even ask some of them to write an 11 year-old's account of the creative process.

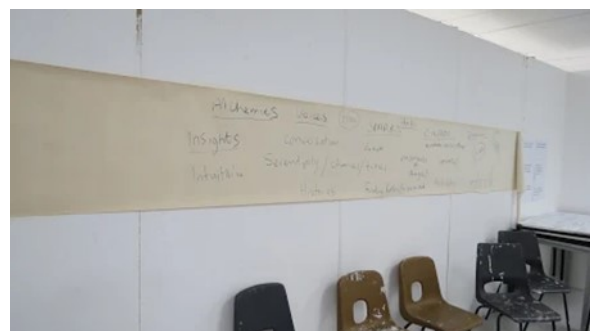
[Rebecca Thomas](#) *This is really interesting, I wonder how much of creativity is related to bringing an aliveness, a kind of spark to something.*

[Jennifer Willis](#)+1 Thank you +[Rebecca Thomas](#). Your kind words sparked this image! Do you think there is inherent creativity just awaiting the right encounter for it to come to life?

[Sandra Sinfield](#) Moderator Wow +[Jennifer Willis](#)! I love the idea that you wanted to take Creative Academic to your primary context... But then - Wow. Is it not wonderful when the pupils/students/participants just run away with the ideas. I am really looking forward to seeing what they make - and how they reflect on the processes...

[Jennifer Willis](#) Thanks +[Sandra Sinfield](#). I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised by their creative response, given how imaginative their writing can be.

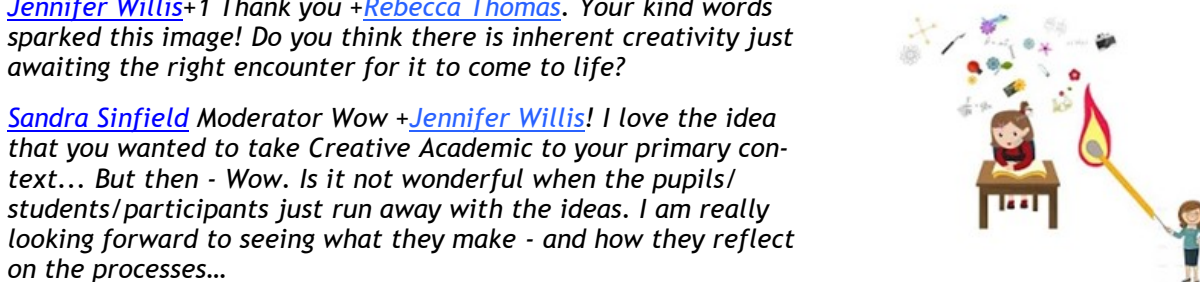
You might be interested by another strand of our discussion of Creative Academic. When I suggested that we become less willing to show our creativity as we get older, there was a nodding of heads. Even by the age of 11 they felt they were unable to be as spontaneous as when younger. One even gave me an example of how her father rebuked her for not be sufficiently grown up!



Another question then: are we socialised out of small creativity? Is it like play, associated with childhood and less academically valid?

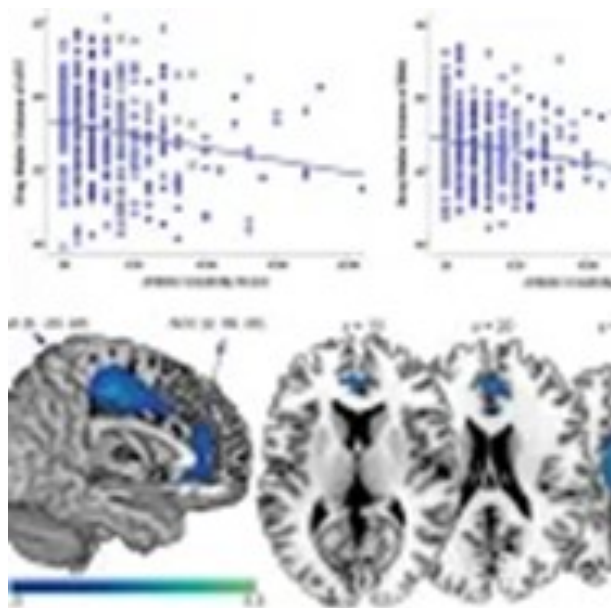
[Rebecca Thomas](#) +[Jennifer Willis](#) That's a great illustration! after I asked people what energised them? and 'spark' came up I wanted to explore further.

Neurological studies show that the brain's limbic reward system indicates that a chemical change occurs (a spark) when we become curious, leading to greater brain activity. (Kidd and Hayden 2015).



[Jennifer Willis](#) Thanks again +[Rebecca Thomas](#). You've set me off on a new path of enquiry. Here's another related article, which indicates differences according to age (see one of my other posts of today).

If it all comes down to chemicals, does this change our role as teachers? Maybe not - I still believe motivation (built on relationships) is fundamental.



[Different brain structures associated with artistic and scientific creativity: a voxel-based morphometry study | Scientific Reports nature.com](#)

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator A mesmerising story +[Jennifer Willis](#) and I can't wait for the next installment.. Which reminds me I must tune in to the BBC radio4 psychological thriller play I am following this week - starts at 2pm!

[Jennifer Willis](#) Everyone might also find Mary Beard's Civilisation at 2100, BBC2, tonight of interest. According to the blurb, she is examining Man's need to create art.

[John Rae](#) Moderator Thanks for your story, Jennifer - I like that term 'making unknowing'. It makes me think about artefacts, ideas and creativity emerging - different form being pre-configured.

[Rebecca Thomas](#) +[Jennifer Willis](#) It's useful to see the article about brain structures-thank you. I agree with you that motivational drivers are very important. Last year I

switched my job from being a creative arts educator to supporting new staff with their teaching, mainly in health and science. I have been writing about whether it's possible to create an environment that raises curiosity.

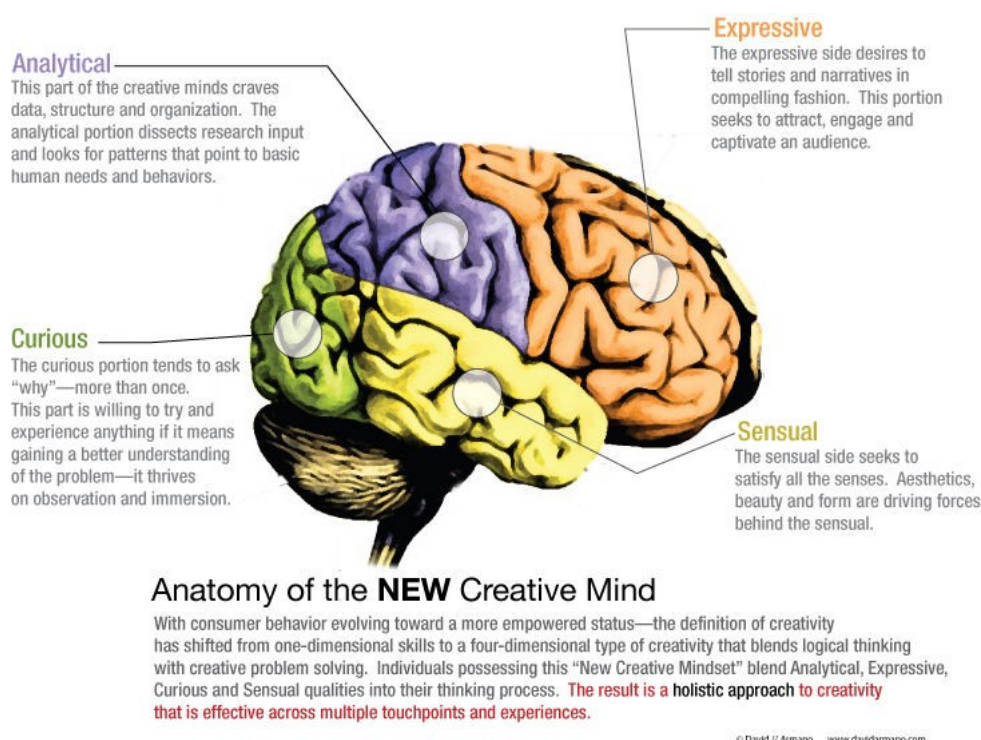


Image source: <http://luckywabbit.com/steam/creativity-and-the-brain/>

DAY 4 Making artefacts to perform a mediating role John Rae

It's Day 4 of our conversation and the comments and shared experiences are coming thick and fast. A big thank you to all of you who have contributed so far - the stories of your experiences are inspiring.

The object of our open learning project is the making of artefacts (considered broadly) which have particular meaning to the makers. When a person makes an artefact it acquires for them certain meanings – meanings that may or may not be shared with other people who interact with the artefact. For example, specialist artefacts used in a professional field will hold meaning for other practitioners in the field but not for people who have no knowledge of the practices in the field. Such artefacts with shared cultural meaning perform a mediating role - they act as 'a go between', facilitating interaction between a subject and the object. **The point of a mediating artefact is that it can stimulate someone else to not only to think and act but to think and act creatively.** In this way, what we make can influence the creativity of others.

Mediating objects can be simplistically defined as things - tools and artefacts - that allow us to do things, to perform actions, undertake activities (Irvine-Smith 2013). Mediating artefacts are used all the time in work and educational settings as a means of sharing information or explaining complex ideas. For example, texts, documents and stories perform an important mediating role in many environments.

The narratives of making we have posted so far show the ways in which artefacts have performed a mediating role. To support today's inquiry I have provided a narrative to illustrate how I use artistic artefacts in the context of my own research practices.

http://www.creativeacademic.uk/uploads/1/3/5/4/13542890/making_to_mediate.pdf

We welcome any examples of artefacts that you have made that perform a mediating role in your field of practice? And what was creative about their making or their use?

Source

Sally Irvine-Smith (2016) From Object to Mediator: The Agency of Documents
Proceedings from the Document Academy University of Akron Press Managed

<http://ideaexchange.uakron.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1027&context=docam>

[John Rae](#) Norman and I would love to hear if you have any experiences you can share of making an artefact explicitly to perform a mediating role?

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Another great spur to our thinking + [John Rae](#) Your narrative tells a great story of how we might use artefacts to stimulate deeper understanding in ourselves and others.

While you have used artistic artefacts to mediate learning between two people I guess there are lots of other types of artefact we might use.

It strikes me that this whole platform and the individual posts we make might be considered as a 1:many mediating artefact as we conduct our conversations.

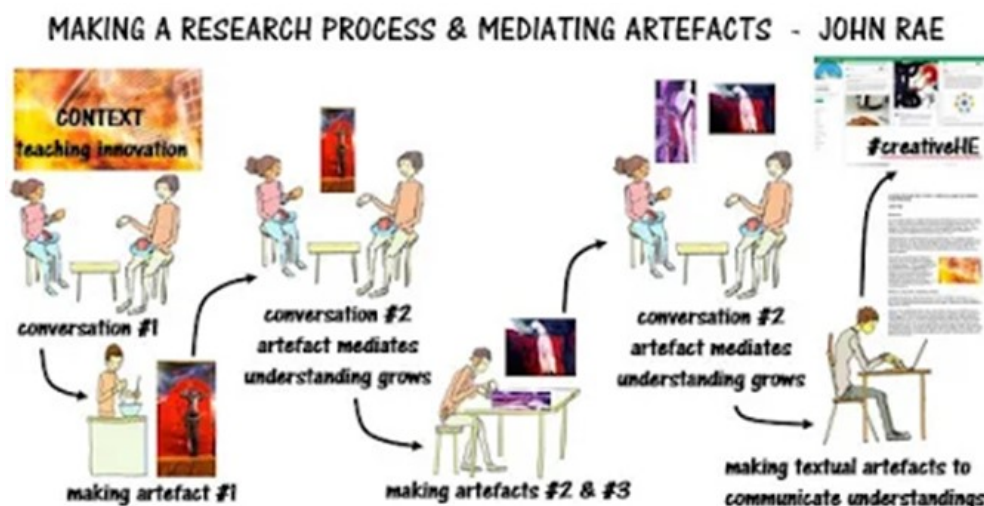
[Jennifer Willis](#) Thank you + [John Rae](#). I found your journey with Alana quite fascinating. It was like an inverted Rorschach exchange! Here, the therapist doesn't just listen and prompt but actually interprets.

I was also awakened to my own preference for the third image, reflecting my need for neatness, which of course was completely divergent from Alana's emotions at the time.

[Paula Nottingham](#) Very useful explanation of your experience and communication here with bringing out innovative practice - and using artefacts to mediate the understanding well explained - the production of the artefact interpreted meaning as did the discussion of your artefacts - so cycles akin to action research research with rather than on.

[John Rae](#) Moderator Thank you + [Paula Nottingham](#). I have been thinking about that too, that is, art-making in that sort of context as action research. That's a nice way to put it too - working with not on.

[John Rae](#) Moderator I prefer that one too + [Jennifer Willis](#) and probably for the same reason! I get a different response from artefacts that are balanced that I do from this that are not.



JENNIFER WILLIS Day 4: Artefacts for a mediating role

I found today's task very difficult because I am not an artist, and although I create verbally and intellectually, this is hard to capture. So, I have fallen back on one example, which illustrates what I said in another post about my interpretation of 'tertiary' artefacts.

I work a lot with my husband on his teaching resources for fellow doctors. He is a psychiatrist, so most of this material relates to different aspects of mental illness, including the stigma they may carry.

Mindfulness has become commonly seen as a panacea for mental illnesses, when in reality, it is inappropriate for many serious conditions. In a presentation we created last year, my husband coined the phrase 'Kentucky Fried Buddhism' to illustrate the way in which mindfulness has commodified from a serious religious practice. Inevitably, this gave rise to the image I produced.



To return to the nature of artefacts, this image may be viewed as a secondary product, but we used it with a tertiary intention: to shock people into recognising that Buddhist practices have been purloined and popularised mindlessly! The shock is hidden behind humour, but as we know, many a true word is spoken in jest!

[Norman Jackson](#) Thanks +[Jennifer Willis](#) your post reminded me of the mediating artefacts we call adverts and other marketing devices used to sell products services and experiences. There is no denying that some of these devices are highly creative in their conception and execution. I am thinking of the many Guinness adverts I've seen

I wondered how this translated into the artefacts we create to 'sell' what we do and whether this idea of selling and persuading is a major driver for creativity in the making of artefacts.

[Jennifer Willis](#) I agree +[Norman Jackson](#) that there are some highly creative adverts. For me, the Vorsprung durch Technik ones stand out.

To answer your question, I may sound cynical, but advertising is a business. If it isn't effective (i.e. sells the goods) the creator is out of a job! I guess this focuses the mind!

Yet again, we come back to issues of motivation: extrinsic? Intrinsic? Art for art's sake or art as a commodity?

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Yes but +[Jennifer Willis](#) just because you work in advertising doesn't mean that you don't have intrinsic motivation to do amazingly creative things..

I know that this conversation is emphasising the making of artistic artefacts but we need to get away from thinking that creativity in making is restricted to the arts. I am hoping that we can move the conversation into other domains.

[Jennifer Willis](#)+1 Good point +[Norman Jackson](#). Thinking of widening the discussion, I am about to go to teach and I am constantly reflecting on how to get the children interested. In other words, I am trying to be creative in how I teach. In the case of today's children, it very much relies on knowing them as individuals and building on things that I know they can relate to. Off now!

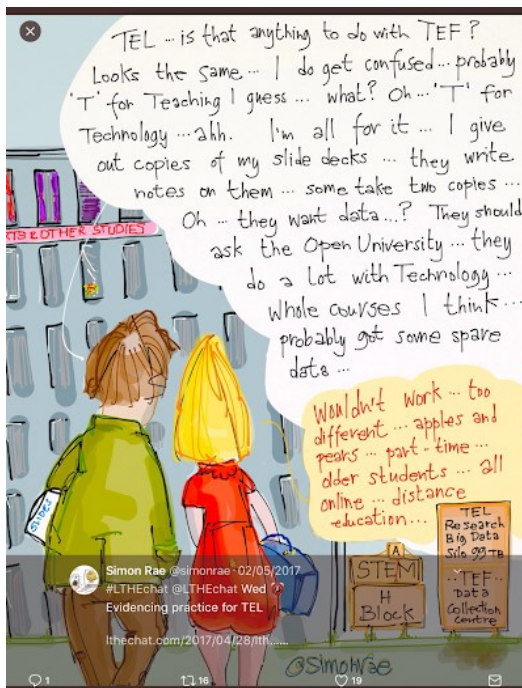
SIMON RAE DAY 4 Making artefacts to perform a mediating role...

It took me a while to sort out what this Day 4 topic meant for me, plus a smashing day out in London for Mother's Day, so this is a wee bit out of sequence...

Applications on personal digital devices and on the internet have afforded people the freedom to publish what they want (within reason), in my case it has been the Bamboo Paper app on an iPad and Twitter. I can tweet out doodles at will.

I like the free version of Bamboo Paper... it only allows a fairly restricted pallet of colours and a limited range of brush and pen widths - which saves a lot of fiddling about to choose one from 100s like some payed-for apps allow. And I've evolved into a fairly stingy git after years of minding the pennies to bring up a family!

I latched onto the Twitter-based LTHeChats on Wednesday evenings a few years back as a way of keeping current with what's being discussed in higher education, it's like being a member of the staff common-room without all the responsibilities of marking and administration etc. I developed a habit of doing a cartoon doodle offering a prospective on the next week's topic which served as an advert for the chat. Over a couple of years I developed several characters who had views on the topic - actually my views, but disguised by being voiced by a cartoon - comment without responsibility! Towards the end I had settled on a couple of templates which I could re-colour and recaption at speed with a small space to pass some topical comment.



I got a buzz from inputting some comment into the weekly chat in this way, but after the 100th chat I called it a day, it was taking quite a chunk of time out of my weekends coming up with a suitable (i.e. slightly challenging, inoffensive, slightly off-the-wall) comment and there are other fish to fry! The images are four from my 'old lag / new face' format ...

Norman Jackson You are absolutely spot on +**Simon Rae** Your illustrations are powerful mediators.. the combination of pictures and words... combining humour and messages for a particular audience add colour and perspective to whatever is being discussed. Your artwork is a good example of making is connecting in all sorts of ways and it seems to embody Ricoeur's ideas of the use of reproductive and productive imagination.

Jennifer Willis What a great start to the day +**Simon Rae**! Thank you for these great examples, that really hit home in a deceptively simple way. Two observations:

1. the eternal quest for novelty just keeps bringing round past ideas, sometimes without change, sometimes building in some idealised concept of its earlier period- this works for fashion, educational practice, political ideologies etc. Discuss!

2. I was interested in why you stopped the weekly chat. Having just spent some sleepless hours reflecting on this whole project and what to write next, I thoroughly appreciate how compulsive the process of creativity become. We can sustain such obsessive attention to a project for just so long, but then the demands of other parts of our life intervene. Perhaps I am working towards some environmental conclusion that if one dimension becomes imbalanced, the whole ecology is undermined ... This is reminiscent of my conceptualisation of mental illness that I produced some years ago for a mental health charity I work with. I am sure this could be adapted +**Norman Jackson**.

Simon Rae +**Jennifer Willis** - in a way your first observation ties in with the second. I think one reasons for stopping was that new topics kept coming up for discussion that I had already been through (albeit with slightly different terminology) at some point since I started in IT in HE some 40 odd years ago. I was finding it a bit difficult not to draw out my frustrations that we seem to have learned so little from our history. Two steps forward and one step back is OK, but one step forward and two steps back is not OK.

But as soon as I've written that, I begin to doubt it ... after all, every new intake (of students or staff) will hit the same issues for their first time. It would be a shame to spoil their discoveries by saying "I told you so!"

I think I just got a bit jaded with it, and the 100th chat seemed a good time to stop. And in a sense I had proved to myself that I could do it. So now I'm looking for a new project ... ☺

Norman Jackson Moderator Hi +**Simon Rae** you are absolutely right that each generation has to invent it's own solutions. While the issues might be similar the contexts change.

As for a new project you are very welcome to illustrate the cover of the 'Creativity in the Making' issue of Creative Magazine which we will put together after this conversation with any narratives that are produced.

Thanks for your great contributions to this conversation.

IDENTITY & STIGMATISATION



Image 1. An integrated, non-stigmatised identity
Dimensions e.g. race, religion, sex, sexuality, age, mental and physical capital.



Image 2. Disrupted, stigmatised identity
when one dimension is dominant as a result of social, personal perception or expectation of others.
Any dimension(s) could be disrupted. Red is used to reflect the danger/persecution, caused/experienced.

Source: <http://www.careil.org/>



no2stigma.weebly.com

REBECCA THOMAS A mediating role?

I have been encouraging staff and students to collaborate in making objects, I think I'm activity mediating. I have attached 3 images of objects we made collaboratively. I lead our staff development day last summer and brought together academics and administrative staff to create together. We made a collaged twitter bird. We worked as a group referring to Tweeting as communicating. The collage is part of an approach to creativity in learning which emphasises the handmade as a complementary way of working to digital/technological approaches to education.

The 1st twitter bird's purpose was to instigate conversations about organisational change and the general education and welfare of staff.

Three more collages were produced over a few months. The project involved a wide range of individuals and skills and generate discussion around a broad range of related topics.



[Norman Jackson](#)+[Rebecca Thomas](#) love the image of your colleagues co-creating the visual artefact. I guess a collaborative work in progress like this one is an artefact that is mediating as it is being constructed.

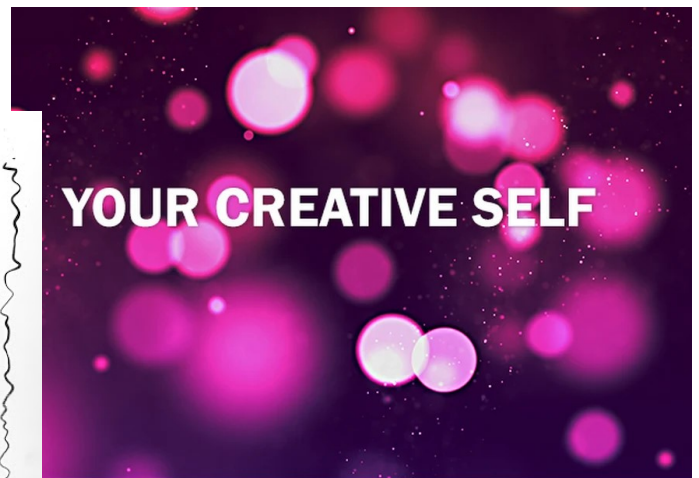
PAULA NOTTINGHAM Day 4 rebound

- inspired by the stories and the mapping - I don't think I quite have my own space sorted yet - but as a gesture to the workshop - and linked to Paul's twitter as a artefact with a mediating role - I started a new blog to that is about practice as knowledge - and somewhat replaces an older blog I kept that was more related to tutoring - and this one is more related to exchange and mapping innovative thinking for those who use workplace practice within their educational outputs. I definitely got lost last night just looking at Dewey and Russell bu hey ho. The new blog is <https://paulanottinghampracticeknowledge.blogspot.co.uk> I hope that it will be something can communicate with research colleagues who are using practice-based and creative knowledges as ways of working - but might need what I have needed - a space to develop a sense of knowing and a place to share connections. I think the mapping of the process needed to be a part of future development - theorising developments also makes the practice more critically relevant. Gauntlett's video is definitely inspiring. If this new blog does not connect with others - it will not have been useful - but John has convinced me to be adventurous and I hope that it is. In the past the blog that I did had limitations - but it also had traffic because it was a part of a higher education course - I am however thinking of those on our own transdisciplinary DProf programme and my colleagues in higher education. It is a gamble but I will keep referring to Norman's Making a Painting 2.0 and see where it leads.

Paula Nottingham - Practice Knowledge
paulanottinghampracticeknowledge.blogspot.be



The flow of research—casting moving conveying



[John Rae](#) just had a quick look + [Paula Nottingham](#). How exciting - good luck with your adventure!

[Mar Kri](#) great start + [Paula Nottingham](#), you reminded me to continue mine and take the risk to make mine public...one day...! :)

I find that my writing is by default very intimate and personal, am a keen processor of life events , and their impact on my emotional wellbeing, sense of self , ...so it feels a bit more risky to make it public, albeit it is heartwarming to see that willingness to be vulnerable and expose more and more.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator this sounds like a really interesting and worthwhile project + [Paula Nottingham](#) I love the openness of your blog and your spirit of making something that will last well beyond this event and provide a permanent legacy of your evolving thinking.

Given your recent post on Dewey I wondered whether you would like to take a look at this article which contains within it Dewey's understandings of a creative process. It's relevant to our current making activity.

Creativity as action: findings from five creative domains Vlad Glaveanu et al (2013)
[ncbi.nlm.nih.gov - Creativity as action: findings from five creative domains](https://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4044441/)

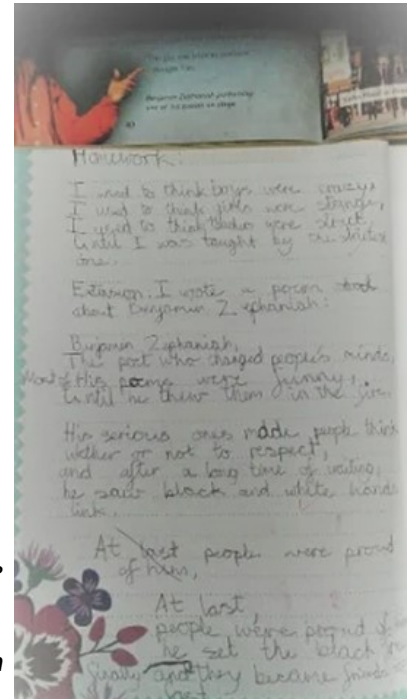
[Jennifer Willis](#) + [Norman Jackson](#) I wanted to share an example of how we can see the move from creation to criticality developing.

The image shows a 10-year old's response to Benjamin Zephaniah's poetry. The homework task was to write a poem inspired by him. She has gone on (spontaneously) to begin to analyse her creative process and demonstrate insight into the sources of his creation. It's wonderful to capture such moments of maturation.

[John Rae](#) Moderator I would also like to offer an example. First, thanks for such an interesting narrative, Joy - it resonated.

My example relates to liminality and how I have tried to engage with that. As has been discussed, liminality fits in with creativity and imagination, and I have found the concept relevant to my research and in particular to reflexivity also.

As a PhD candidate working in qualitative and arts-based methods, I wanted to explore reflexivity - my relation to the project that I was working on. I made a portrait to help me do this and what follows is how I reported it all in the literature. The portrait that emerged suggested a contradiction, and this became apparent early in the process of painting. The subject thrusts himself forward with a degree of confidence, yet his left arm and hand are offering a level of resistance, perhaps even diverting the viewer's gaze'. I thought of this image in Derrida's terms, as a model, because that helped me make sense of these aspects of the picture. I ended up drawing the conclusion that this counterpoint of 'here' and 'there' can be interpreted as a transitioning, moving between spaces, becoming, or indeed liminality. What seemed obvious to me at the time was that liminality described my positioning somewhere between me as a new academic (PhD candidate) who was researching health services, and me as a former health worker - I belonged to both those worlds. I then discovered that Garsten (1999) wrote 'as a consequence of being betwixt and between more regular positions, reflexivity is enhanced'. All this makes me think that liminality is important, especially for those of us interested in creativity, for imagination, reflexivity and I guess lots of other ways.



[magicalmarta](#) + [Norman Jackson](#) I really appreciated your Making a Painting 2.0 perspective on imagination. Your comment: "you can't connect things without perception and imagination (ability to connect things mentally) since seeing that something has the possibility for connection in the first place" (pg. 4) really struck a cord for me. It validates the idea imagination is an essential component of creativity. I associate imagination with the ability to see "what is not yet."

This leads me to a question about the definition of creativity you attribute to Dellas & Gaier (1970). I read it the first time in your "Imagining a different world" chapter (Jackson, 2006, p. 8). At that time I searched for and read Dellas & Gaier's article multiple times, but could find no mention of a creativity definition on their part. It seems synchronicity has visited us both, because reading your most recent version of that definition in "Making a Painting 2.0" (pg.6) inspired me to take another look at Dellas & Gaier's piece. Again, I could find no definition of creativity or interest on their part in defining the construct.

Dellas & Gaier (1970) explicitly mention intuitiveness as "a hallmark of the creative person" and further remark: "He [the creative person] appears to have an immediate apprehension of what is and what can be; and rather than accepting what is presented to his senses at face value, he searches for deeper meanings and eventualities" (p. 68). This implies imagination but may also relate to intuition. In the end - my REAL question is: may I attribute the following definition to you?

"creativity is the desire and ability to use imagination, insight, intellect [reasoning], feeling and emotion to move an idea from one state to an alternative, previously unexplored state" (Jackson, 2018). I believe you made the connections to put this definition of creativity together in a genuinely original way. At this point in history I feel it would be a very important addition to the literature. How might this happen?

[Jennifer Willis](#) I was interested in your discussion + [John Rae](#) of being betwixt and between, and the creativity that can come out of such dislocation. Do you think that this is why creativity is often resisted/feared? It no longer fits with the established norms, and hence is regarded with suspicion or even rejected. I am thinking especially of the health sector in the UK (don't now what it's like in Australia): whilst Trusts may pay lip service to innovation and creativity, when it comes to putting this into practice, there is immense grass roots resistance, and this is often resolved by getting rid of the very members of staff who could move things forward.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator + [magicalmarta](#) What a dilemma to come back to. I am really sorry if I have misattributed the quote, I have used it many times since 2006.. I don't have access to the article and I trust your close reading so I need to track down the source. I certainly would not claim to have formulated it. Thanks for drawing my attention to the error and let me do a bit of work to see if I can find the source. I am wondering whether it was another article they wrote.

[magicalmarta](#) + [Norman Jackson](#) I'm happy to send you a PDF of the article cited. I just need an email address for you to receive the attachment. I am absolutely sure you put together their ideas in a way I could not.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator thanks + [magicalmarta](#) well you are surer than I am! this email address will find me lifewider1@gmail.com

[John Rae](#) Moderator + [Jennifer Willis](#) thanks for the question. To be honest I have never thought about liminality being a barrier, but perhaps it is. What I have thought, especially regarding health services, is that a significant barrier is the requirement for safety - mainly clinical safety - and consequently the need for standardisation in health services. Across the world, the rate of adverse events is far too high and given what is at stake (people's lives), one can hardly be critical of efforts to take a rational, evidence-based, risk-averse approach.

I think that innovation is considered to be a little different. You do see that term used in policy documents, etc - perhaps innovation is associated more with shiny, sharp things or something like that but it certainly seems to be more palatable. Having said that, health services abound with creativity - new models of care, and so forth. I should also add that the procedure-driven approach to health care can also act as a facilitator of creativity if you think of the productive tension that can arise when, say, fresh ideas come up against the procedures - that tension can create an environment of something new and workable to emerge.

[Jennifer Willis](#) Thanks for your response + [John Rae](#). I fully understand the risk aspect and need for policies, but are there some areas where you cannot be too dogmatic? I am thinking of psychiatry, which is both a science and an art, and sometimes the doctor must take risks in the interest of his patient. The dilemma then potentially becomes weighing the organisation against the patient's and doctor's willingness to exceed the boundaries.

I can also appreciate productive tension, but once again, if this is in a culture that is resistant to change and the creators have inferior power, many good ideas and practices can be stifled.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Hi + [magicalmarta](#) I managed to find an email address for Professor Gaier so hopefully the matter can be resolved

[magicalmarta](#) + [Norman Jackson](#) That's great! I am excited to be able to use and cite their definition.

Dellas, M., & Gaier, E. L. (1970). Identification of creativity: The individual. *Psychological Bulletin*, 73(1), 55-73.

[John Rae](#) Moderator You have me scratching my head + [Jennifer Willis](#) because there are probably a few different ways to think about this. My earlier response came from an organisational perspective, that is, related to organisational creativity. However, maybe I should be thinking - in terms of this discussion - about individual creativity and team creativity.

I noticed postings by others about taking risk and how that works in some circumstances and not others. I would agree with that. As you point out, there are some contexts in which it would be acceptable to take risk - in the name of patient centered care, etc. Contexts also vary in terms of how our colleagues respond to potential risk, how failure is accepted, and so forth. One factor that comes to mind is psychological safety which has been positively related to creativity. There are other variables too, like time constraints. I think that there is quite a bit of literature from the social psychology perspective that helps to explain why creativity emerges in some contexts, and how it might be facilitated.

I would like to offer a different perspective because I was interested in your comments about clinical situations and decision-making. The notion of phronesis or practical wisdom can be handy here. When Ajit Nayak described creativity as a practice, rather than a process, he referred to a 'feel for the game', which I take as something like phronesis, so there is a link between phronesis and creativity. Another interesting link is with practice theory - Green identifies phronesis (among other things) as being fundamental to one's practice. So I suspect that there is something worth perusing here. In case you have not seen it, an edition that deals with phronesis in practice is 'Phronesis as professional knowledge: Practical wisdom in the professions' by Elizabeth Anne Kinsella and Alan Pitman (2012).

Thinking about mental health, I dug up a transcript of an interview I did a few years ago (and have permission to reproduce) - it represents an exploration of creativity in community-based mental health. Here is one comment the team leader made regarding creativity and management: Be aware of the risks and wherever possible, contingencies for how you might manage that when you get there but don't stop the journey because you going to see that into the future. ... They're thinking "Okay can see what we've got to do, we can see the risk, we've got the resources, are we right, are we able to do this?" I sense practical wisdom in those words.

NORMAN JACKSON DAY 5 HOW DOES IMAGINATION FEATURE IN MAKING & CREATING?

This post is made by Joy Whitton

It has been really interesting to see the narratives that have been shared in this conversation, many of which have stimulated my imagination. But the question we should be asking in this conversation is, how does imagination feature in making and creating?

The French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur, is illuminating on the issue of how it is that imagination makes connections and how criticality seems to be dynamically integrated into the imaginative process rather being set apart linearly.

In three essays, 'Imagination in discourse and in action' (1991), 'The function of fiction in shaping reality' (Valdes, 1991) and 'Metaphorical process as cognition, imagination, and feeling' (1978), and in a book, *The rule of metaphor* (1975/2003), Ricoeur argues that our imagination recruits cultural tools inherent in language, specifically narrative, metaphor and models, to generate new meanings.

In metaphors, Ricoeur argues, the imagination accomplishes the mental leap that combines heterogeneous ideas or domains of experience, and in doing so, tells us something new about their referents. Metaphors act as filters, suppressing some details and emphasizing others, organizing our view of the similar. In this way, they are not merely rhetorical ornaments but have genuine cognitive import (Ricoeur, 1975/2003).

Likewise, narratives configure heterogeneous elements such as circumstances, characters, episodes and changes of fortune. Just as metaphors are not simply substitutions of nouns for other unexpected nouns, but affect a displacement of an overall meaning, so narrative synthesises a configuration from a simple succession of events. By means of emplotment, goals, causes, and chance are brought together from a viewpoint that makes them able to be followed in the sense we mean when we say we follow the story. By making the appropriate connections we shape them into a meaningful, organic whole in our mind.

A great illustration of the innovation of meaning made possible through narrative is in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (1987). In the book Seth, a former slave, murders her two children who are being retaken by slavers. Through the delineation of circumstances and events that lead up to the act, it becomes possible for the reader to re-conceive what, at face value, is a shocking and repellent act, as one underpinned by love, freedom, refusal and pain. The example also illustrates the way narrative can distinguish between complex notions, such as motivation from cause.

Another interesting point that I think he makes involves liminality. The slight state of non-involvement or detachment from action, the hiatus or momentary suspension of belief that is part of play, seems to be essential for the imaginative process, even while its final purpose may be to produce something - a novel, painting, dance, invention or effective action in the world. Northrop Frye argues similarly, in an ethics context, when he says,

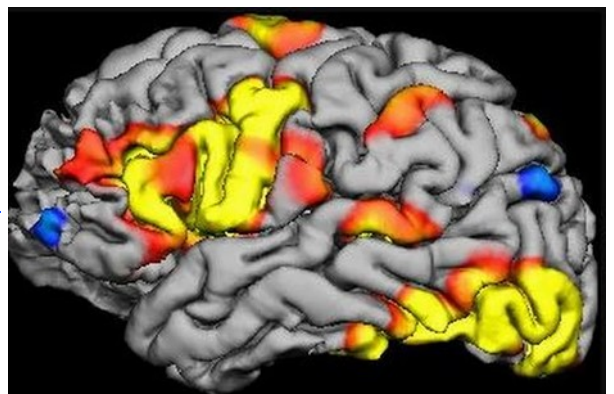
In the imagination our own beliefs are also only possibilities, but we can also see the possibilities in the beliefs of others. . . . [W]hat produces the tolerance is the power of detachment in the imagination, where things are removed just out of reach of belief and action (1963, p. 32, quoted in Egan, 1997, p. 16).

Q What do you think? How is imagination related to criticality? How is it involved in your making? Do you find a certain liminality necessary to your discoveries as you create? What are the insights you experience as you move through a creative process?

In the narrative that accompanies today's food for thought, Norman Jackson has extended his *Painting a Picture* story to show how Paul Ricoeur's ideas might be used to understand the role of imagination in the process of making and the production of artefacts

Painting a Picture 2.0 (includes role of imagination in making artefacts)

http://www.creativeacademic.uk/uploads/1/3/5/4/13542890/making_a_painting_2.0.pdf



JENNIFER WILLIS DAY 5 Imagination and making

Before I make my own response to today's task, a quote from one of my personal heroes, Joseph Campbell, speaking in 1984, and unwittingly inspiring George Lucas' Star Wars:



"[...] Outer space is within inasmuch as the laws of space are within us; outer and inner space are the same. We know, furthermore, that we have actually been born from space," Campbell told audiences in San Francisco. He continued to describe the "wonderland of myth," where an almost circular path of inspiration moves between that which we see and that which we imagine. "From the outer world the senses carry images to mind, which do not become myth, however, until they're transformed by fusion with accordant insights, awakened as imagination from the inner world of the body."

JENNIFER WILLIS DAY 5 MAKING AND IMAGINATION

Joy Whitton's post for Day 5 talks about metaphors and language. It includes two ideas that caught my interest:
- metaphors represent 'the hiatus, or momentary suspension of belief'

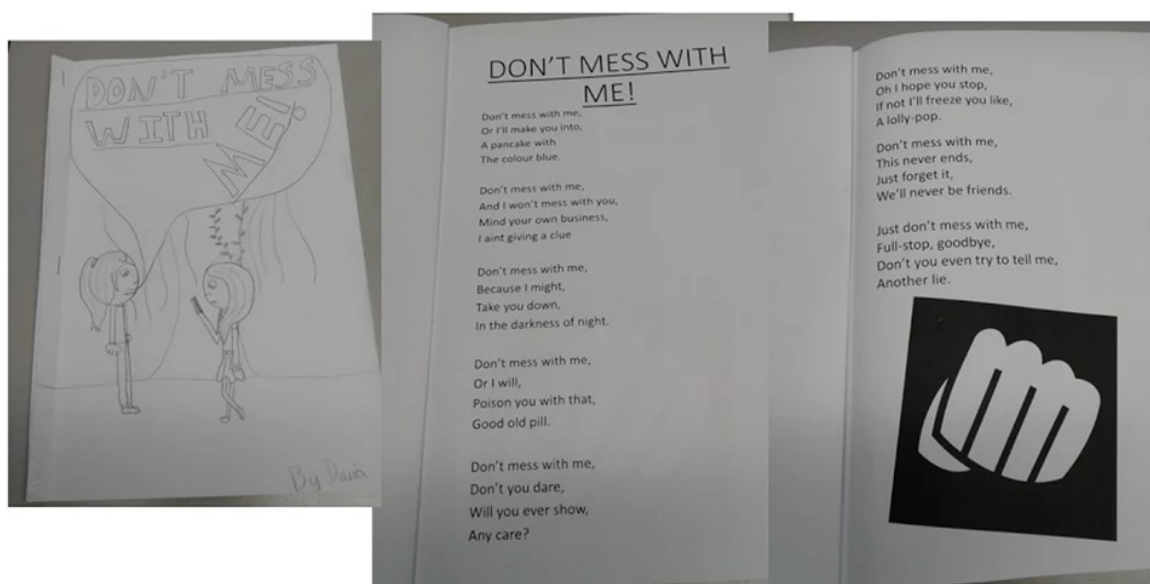
In metaphors, Ricoeur argues, the imagination accomplishes the mental leap that combines heterogeneous ideas or domains of experience, and in doing so, tells us something new about their referents. Metaphors act as filters, suppressing some details and emphasizing others, organizing our view of the similar. In this way, they are not merely rhetorical ornaments but have genuine cognitive import (Ricoeur, 1975/2003).

I turn again to a piece of writing by a pupil, another 10 year old, whose first language is Bulgarian (not that you would ever know English is her second language). She chose to write about bullying, and formulated her work into an illustrated leaflet. The cover drawing is a concrete representation of the situation she is imagining: two teenage girls, one with a mobile phone, verbally disputing. I guess we could call this page a reproductive artefact, in which she draws on her experiences, connects them and synthesises an image.

But when we open the leaflet, the poem goes beyond this and is surely now in the realms of productive artefact. Her imagination has taken her into that liminal zone: who could have envisaged making 'a pancake with the colour blue'? What does this symbolise for her? It is intriguing and makes us think more about her poem.

The poem is actually a narrative, written in the first person but using language typical of the character she has created, a street-wise Londoner ('I ain't...', 'take you down'). She drops clues as to how the dispute began when, in the final line, she refers to 'another lie'. It is skilfully crafted, the hypnotic repetition of 'don't mess with me' oozing confidence. Then suddenly, we are implicitly reminded to the writer's young age and daily associations: she warns her adversary that she will freeze her 'like a lollipop'.

I use this illustration as an example of the process of creation, and the role imagination has played in going beyond representation to production of something new, beautiful and haunting. The poem isn't over once it has been read: it continues to provoke questions. This is what makes it, for me, a very special artefact.



[Joy Whitton](#) Such an great example, Jennifer, and you've used Ricouer so aptly to explore the shift between re-productive to productive imagination! For the reader the poem continues to provide that liminal zone that the poem allowed the poet to enter, for the free play of reflection and imagination about talking back.
i loved her last stanza and the drawing.

[Jennifer Willis](#) Thank you +[Joy Whitton](#), I am glad I have understood Ricouer correctly!
I also like the last stanza, and didn't say anything about the accompanying image. It's a great metaphor for the impact of Daria's words.

As the week has progressed, I have been wondering increasingly about creativity at different stages of our lives. Because I am currently working with younger children than I had before, I am struck by their boundless creativity. Do you have a view on the nature of our imagination and creativity as we grow older? Whilst we may increase our toolbox of skills, do we lose the ability to step into the liminal zone? (If that term is not a tautology!)

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Thats a great illustration and a great question +[Jennifer Willis](#) I think we might shy away from risk as we get older and stick to comfort zones which are less likely to contain those liminal spaces that are so necessary for creative transformation. It will be very interesting to see what others think.

[Rebecca Thomas](#) When I'm making I'm aware that it's an in-between space, as the ideas start in the imagination and they become an actual thing, this is a very fluid process.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Perhaps +[Rebecca Thomas](#) we need our imaginations more in the liminal spaces because things are so uncertain or unknown. ie we need imagination to help us progress from a lower to more advanced level.

[Rebecca Thomas](#) +[Norman Jackson](#) I haven't really thought about liminal spaces in relation to making, I thought about the term when reading Glynis Cousin on threshold concepts (liminal -a corridor, no man's land)
I suppose (accepting Liminality for an Art student was regarded the most important part of learning, prominent in Art practice)

[Joy Whitton](#)+1 I find I am MORE inclined to take some risks as I have got older. I realise that I only have one life-time! And should use it, frankly, to try to make the world a better place for others. I also have found I'm more inclined to challenge orthodoxies. Maybe that comes with more confidence, I'm not sure. But I also think it depends on what it is I'm doing - situation/context, so what I've just said above doesn't always apply. Some things remain as hard as ever!

NORMAN JACKSON

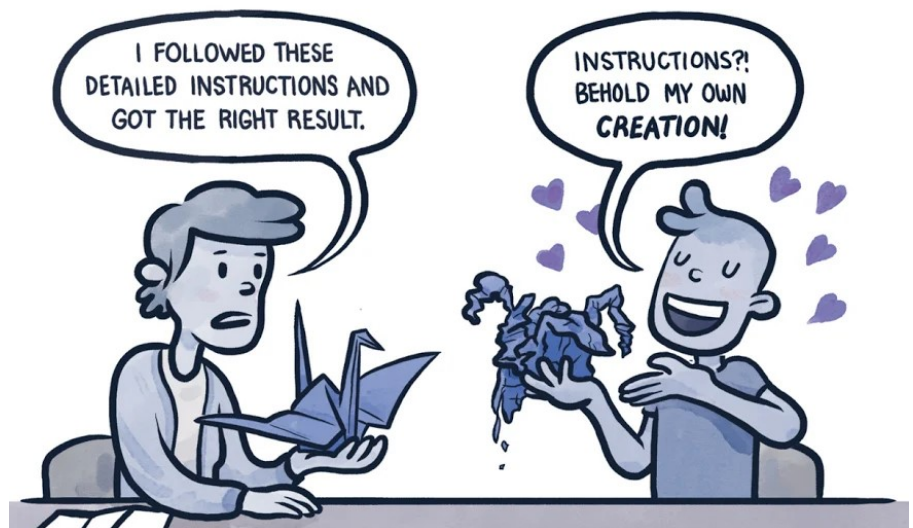
The IKEA effect: we love whatever we [MAKE]

Thanks to +Russ Law for drawing my attention to psychologist Dan Aierly's work summarised in a TED blog post.

"IKEA came up with a brilliantly diabolical idea: the company would offer boxes of furniture parts and make customers assemble the items by themselves, with only the help of their bitterly impossible-to-understand instructions. I like the clean, simple design of IKEA furniture, but long ago, I found that assembling a piece – in my case, a chest of drawers for my kids' toys—demanded a surprising amount of time and effort. I still remember how confused I was. Some parts seemed to be missing; I put some things together the wrong way more than once.

I can't say that I enjoyed the process. But when I finally finished building, I experienced a somewhat odd and unexpected sense of satisfaction. Over the years, I've noticed that I look at that chest more often, and more fondly, than any other piece of furniture in my house. My colleagues – Michael Norton, a professor at Harvard Business School, and Daniel Mochon, a professor at Tulane University – and I have described the general over-fondness we have for stuff we've made ourselves as the IKEA effect."

BLOG POST <https://ideas.ted.com/why-were-so-attached-to-our-own-creations-even-when-theyre-ugly/>



[Simon Rae](#) This raised some interesting points for me +[Norman Jackson](#)...

Firstly I have to say that (in my opinion) IKEA instructions, together with Lego kit instructions, are among the finest examples of language-independent instructions that it has been my privilege to follow! Our house is full of correctly built IKEA chests, boxes, chairs and kitchen cabinets ... and I have a box in the garage full of spare bits that come in the boxes in case you choose 'option B' 😊 . My partner will attest that I have never once lost my temper when putting something together -) (honestly!) ...

Secondly (and a bit more seriously) ... on following instructions correctly - or not. I'm thinking music here, following a score (instructions). One player - a brain player - does it rigorously and correctly - technically perfect, and together with other members of the quartet/orchestra creates a magical performance that delights the audience. A great 'member', but possibly a boring soloist? Another player - a heart player - plays creatively with feeling, but not always technically correct. Depending on how loud they play, they could disrupt the performance. Not a great 'member', but possibly a great soloist.

Relating this back to the two origamists (?) shown in the cartoon ... one looks like a 'brain' folder, the other a 'heart' folder ... but I would have drawn the cartoon with both of them smiling and exuding love and hearts for their creation.

And thinking back to my days of producing short online courses on topics like 'working collaboratively' and 'teamwork' ... one of the things that has to be got right in the group mix is to have 'brain' people and 'heart' people ... and someone who can co-ordinate their inputs!

[John Rae Moderator](#) In support of people like me who like to ignore flat pack instructions, new things must not only be adopted locally (bought and constructed with fidelity), but adapted locally (Berwick, 2003, p. 1971) (constructed according to need, experience, time availability, motivation, etc.) ... and adaptation requires creativity. Lessons for innovation and change generally perhaps?

[Norman Jackson Moderator](#) How right you are +[Simon Rae](#) with your analogy. But to put a nuance on it sometimes we are not very happy when we have had a go at making something and it hasn't turned out the way we had hoped it would. And its that dissatisfaction that makes us try again or try a different approach. Dissatisfaction is a powerful motivator.

[Chrissi Nerantzi](#) Owner Mmm instructions. I really struggle with following instructions when they come as a recipe or to put something together or make something. The other day I found some visual instructions to make a fabric rose but go frustrated as none of it made sense... unfortunately.

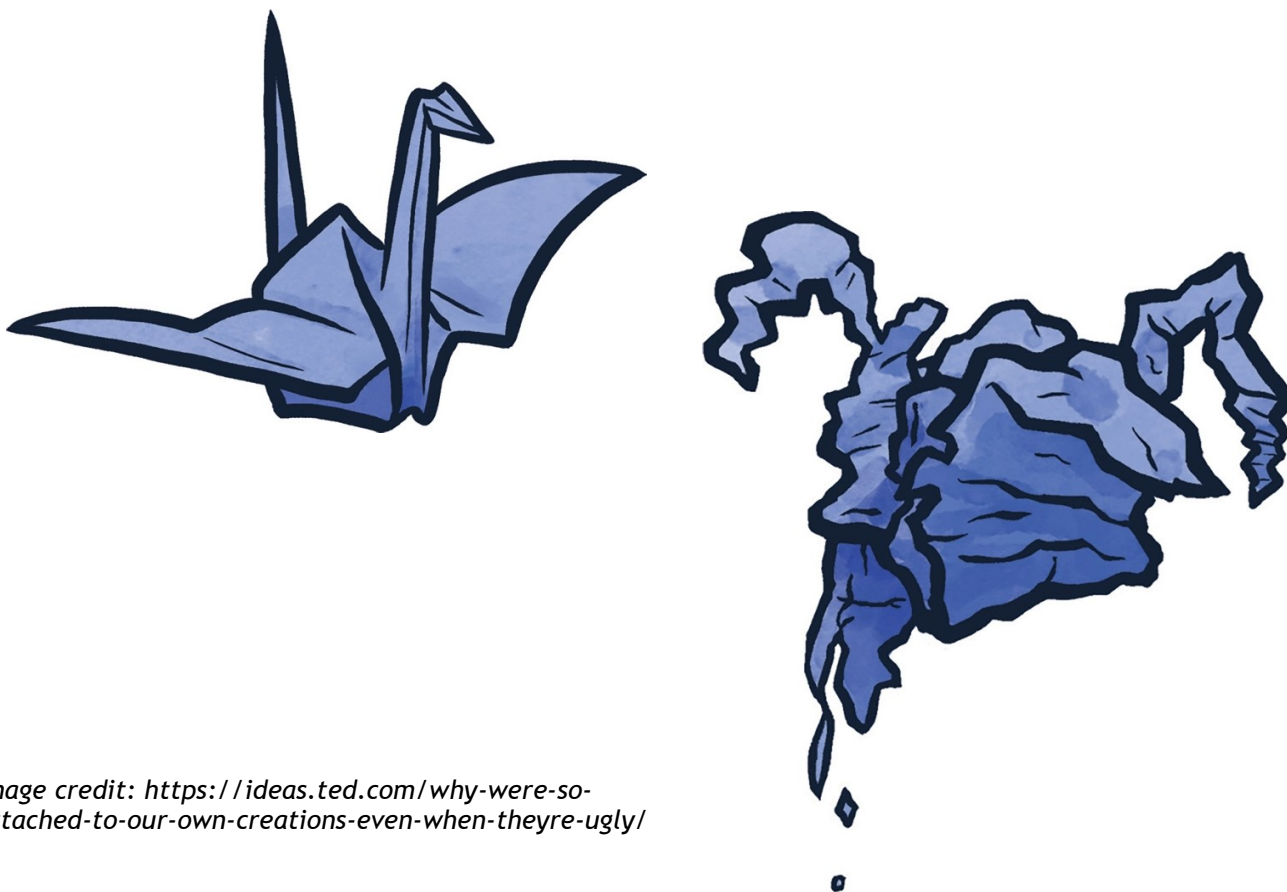


Image credit: <https://ideas.ted.com/why-were-so-attached-to-our-own-creations-even-when-theyre-ugly/>

NORMAN JACKSON DAY 6 PRAGMATIC IMAGINATION

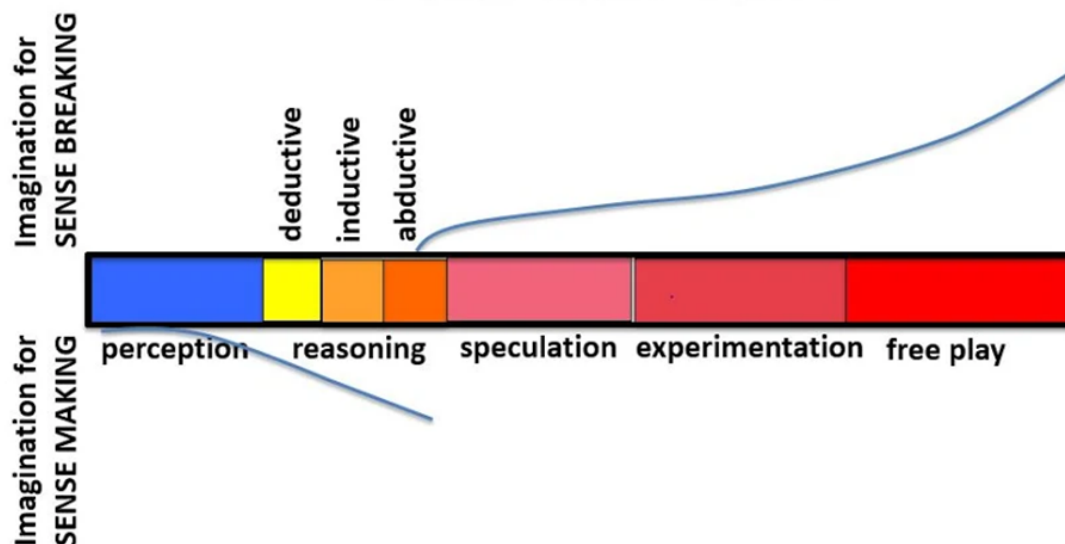
It's been very interesting to see how Paul Ricoeur's ideas have been used to interpret examples of the use of imagination. One of the points that Joy makes in her forthcoming book 'Fostering Imagination in Higher Education' is that imagination is under theorised, particular in ways that might help us understand how it features in learning, problem solving and practice situations. The idea of pragmatic imagination being developed by Ann Pendleton-Jullian & John Seely Brown is one way of theorising imagination that has a lot of potential to be applied.

The idea is underpinned by six principles

- 1 Imagination serves diverse cognitive processes as an entire spectrum of activity (see diagram)
- 2 The imagination both resolves and widens the gap between what is unfamiliar - new/novel/strange - and what is known. This gap increases along the spectrum from left to right. Within the range of abductive reasoning, there is a shift from using the imagination for sense-making to sense-breaking, where one first widens the gap and then resolves it with the imagination.
- 3 The Pragmatic Imagination pro-actively imagines the actual in light of meaningful purposeful possibilities. It sees opportunity in everything.
- 4 The Pragmatic Imagination sees thought and action as indivisible and reciprocal. Therefore, it is part of all cognitive activity that serves thought and action for anticipating, and thought and action for follow-through.
- 5 The imagination must be instrumentalized to turn ideas into action - the entire spectrum of the imagination. And the generative/poietic/sometimes-disruptive side of the spectrum is especially critical in a world that requires radically new visions and actions.
- 6 Because the imagination is not under conscious control, we need to understand, find, and design ways to set it in motion and scaffold it for play and purpose.

The video provides another perspective <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0BoDmpYD-U>

'Cognitive Continuum' Ann Pendleton-Jullian & John Seeley Brown (2016) **'Pragmatic Imagination' p68-9**



It would be interesting to see if this way of thinking about imagination can be applied to the narratives of making to help understanding of how creativity features in the process

JENNIFER WILLIS DAY 6: Pragmatic Imagination

This theme was at first uncomfortable - what did it actually mean? Despite Norman's helpful summary, it felt alien and I didn't think I could add anything meaningful to the conversation. So, I read on and watched more videos until clarity began to emerge. I realised the term was, in fact, just another way of describing what has always been my educational philosophy. This process was, itself, an example of pragmatic imagination: my curiosity was set in motion by the task, this led to a period of inquiry for me to scaffold ideas, then resulted in my action to produce a piece of writing, which will hopefully set the cycle in motion again if others choose to respond.

Reassurance came first from references to Dewey and group interaction: here, I was on familiar ground. The next step was, which experience should I explore? I have the privilege of 'teaching' small groups and, as I have described in previous [#creativeHE](#) conversations, whilst English language may be the starting point, there is no limit to the domains we meander into. In January 2018, I wrote (and illustrated on this site):

My zone of learning is what I have termed the 'dynamic curriculum': it is the unpredictable learning that takes place when the curriculum is used imaginatively to stimulate learners' questioning.

Unwittingly, I had used a term which is arguably the territory of pragmatic imagination. So how does it work? Let me take another example, a one-hour English lesson from last week, for year 6 children. We are using readers, and the children were able to select which one we began a week or two ago. They chose True Tales of Scientists, a nicely balanced work which examines the lives and work of 2 men and 2 women, from different eras and locations, who have contributed much to science.

The first chapter is about Alhazen, a scientist who pioneered scientific experiment at the turn of the 10th century. The children read aloud in turn, we discuss the content of what they read and the use of language, and I devise worksheets that build in other subjects e.g. here, the Islamic caliphate, Greek philosophers, astronomy etc. What is not fascinating, though, is that unpredictable zone where individual imaginations are caught up in their own thread of the story to ask questions.

This particular story has seen discussion of the role of women in different periods and today, in other cultures, coincidental but pertinent to last week's celebration of (some) women gaining suffrage in Britain. Being a culturally diverse group, the children's views can reveal unexpected prejudices, which their peers challenge. Questions of power and its abuse were provoked by the 'Mad Caliph' and this was an opportunity to venture into the sensitive zone of mental illness. One person focused on experimentation, and asked why rats are used by scientists. There followed discussion of incubation periods in such animals and man, then of ethical issues surrounding experimentation; less serious, owning pets and responsibilities.

Now, my colleague who owns the school and is conditioned by her Korean roots, would describe all of this as 'outside things' which have no place in the classroom. I argue that such opportunities are essential for children to use their imagination and learn from everything they encounter. I have shared a couple of examples of their poems. These have resulted from the instrumentalisation of their imaginations. I did not tell them what to write nor how to present their creation, the fact that they went that extra mile and produced an artefact both visually and cognitively, is a reflection of their individual desire to use their creativity.

I attach a few more examples - in the case of the poems, the writers have illustrated their words. The third image is of a 6 year old who had just explained to me how the universe was formed, building the image on the board as he talked. This was another 'outside thing' but I am pleased to have preserved its creativity on film. It was a spin-off conversation about an adventure story he had written. Each episode emerged weekly, but he had it planned from start to finish in his thoughts. I leave it to you to decide if it was right to let him express this!

PS Another question: the children see me creating for them. Does this have any impact on their own creativity?

Reference

True Tales of Scientists (2014). Eds Boulter, C., Jordin, P., Muller, A. and Tate, R. CGP, Newcastle upon Tyne



[Norman Jackson](#) As always +[Jennifer Willis](#) lovely illustrations drawn from your own life and circumstances. You make a very good point about the process of teaching as an important way in which children's imaginations are stimulated..not as a single moment but as a connected unfolding set of moments within a process that also draws upon perception and reasoning... and gives them the space and encouragement to then do something with what they imagined. I wonder if +[Gillian Judson](#) would like to connect us to her imaginative education.

[magicalmarta](#)+1 I appreciated your sharing as well +[Jennifer Willis](#). Your question about children seeing you creating with them and if it has an impact on their creativity sparked my interest. In my work - classrooms become 'Creative Learning Communities' where all present - teacher and students are co-creators. This creates a safer environment for creating. Some students are more visual learners and benefit from seeing at least one possible way of stepping into the creative process. If the educator encourages imagination and self-expression from the beginning the students will feel increasingly confident taking creative leaps.

[Gillian Judson](#) Hi +[Jennifer Willis](#) I love the meandering metaphor here--because I also feel that imagination-focused practices really allow that co-meandering into possibilities (aka learning, teaching). The thing about imagination is that with emotion engaged we all walk. We have our fuel. I love the book selection for the Year 6 students--that "Humanization of Meaning" is a powerful cognitive tool. I try to convince my students that all knowledge is human knowledge. All knowledge can (and should) be experienced on the shared plane of human emotions, passions, hopes, and fears. this is where narrative minds meet. Those tales of scientists do just that--they create that meaningful story-bed for students own imaginative and emotional associations. Here's a clip from our Tips For Imaginative Educator Series--all different ways of meandering (and the more they are employed with the students the better! ALL students--adults alike!) educationthatinspires.ca - [Tips For Imaginative Educators #10: Humanize](#)
[Tips For Imaginative Educators #10: Humanize](#)
educationthatinspires.ca

REBECCA THOMAS Guerrilla Twitter Bird

At the moment the Higher Education UK strikes are important to me. Much of my work is not made in a studio; it is made in the landscape so today I decided to take an empty Twitter Bird outline out to the picket line. As an educator I have carried out work with groups as a kind of partnership.



[John Rae](#): What a brilliant idea +[Rebecca Thomas](#)

[Mar Kri](#): Fab!!!!!!

NORMAN JACKSON DAY 7 ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MAKING & CREATIVITY IN MAKING

In this final contribution to the introductory part of our creativity in the making conversation, I want to connect some of the previous ideas we have considered within an ecological framework (1), believing that learning, practice and creativity are all ecological in nature. By that I mean contextual and situation, relational and the result of our interactions with our environment and the people in it.

Every organism inhabits an environment: the organism shapes its environment and the environment shapes the organism. So it helps to think of an indivisible totality of 'organism plus environment' - best seen as an ongoing process of growth and development (2). From an environmental perspective it does not make sense to talk about the environment in which we are learning (or making and creating) without reference to ourselves as the organism that is perceiving and interacting with the environment we inhabit in order to learn, make and create.

Applying the idea of ecology to learning, practice and achievement, including our creative achievements, is an attempt to view a person, their purposes, ambitions, goals, interests, needs and circumstances, and the social, physical and psychological relationships with the world they inhabit, as inseparable and interdependent. The idea of ecology encourages us to think more holistically and more dynamically about the way we inhabit and relate to our world. It encourages us to think in a more holistic way about our life: how we connect up the moments in our lives to form experiences and achievements that mean something to us.

These ideas are consistent with Carl Rogers (3) concept of the creative process - 'the emergence in action of a novel relational product growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, or circumstances of their life'. This is a really good definition to work with in our conversation about creativity in the making.

To illustrate these ideas I have prepared a narrative which describes the way a geologist makes a geological map using an ecological framework as a heuristic to indicate the relationships and interactions that take place to show how domain specific artefacts are made, and how creativity might feature in the process of making.



Making a Geological Map through an Ecology of Practice

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

Q In your own narratives of making, do the ideas of an ecology of practice and Rogers ecological concept of creativity make sense to you?

Sources

- 1) Jackson N J (2016) Exploring Learning Ecologies
- 2) Ingold, T. (2000) Hunting and gathering as ways of perceiving the environment. The Perception of the Environment. Essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill Routledge
- 3 Rogers, C.R., (1960) On becoming a person. Boston: Houghton Mifflin

[magicalmarta](#) I really appreciate your introduction of ecological perspectives related to making and creativity. In my lived experience of being a creator, I see everything as connected. In a collage I created several years ago, I expressed my view that "Creativity is a 1000+ piece puzzle...as complex and evolving as nature." I added John Muir's quote: "When one tugs at a single thing in nature...one finds it attached to the rest of the world." Overlapping circles for press, person, process, potential, and play point to the areas I consider most important for assessment. I see nature and creativity as dynamic - always growing and changing - and encompassing the seen as well as the unseen. Current perspectives tend to limit creativity to something visible and/or measurable. My understanding of creativity is that it is an inside out experience. The collage I created for this 'making' discussion speaks to that understanding.



[magicalmarta](#) I've made the collage below for this discussion. It involved doing an intuitive search for images by quickly skimming through magazines. No set agenda, simply wondering.

In all - three images called to me. When I moved them around on a black backing board, they came together in a way that filled me with joy. They also activated my imagination and started telling me a story...

I believe humans are cosmic and earthbound. For me, a door is a metaphor for unlocking creativity through the imagination. Our human creative potential lives behind that door. The door is not locked, but a person who wants to access it must step into the process by opening the door. The images on either side represent darkness and light, masculine and feminine, giving and receiving. When I pasted the images into place, I was filled with a 'knowing' the collage had many stories to tell. Right now I am starting to feel more elements will be added. This collage represents step one of a work in progress. In the words of Natalie Rogers: "We do not become creative by thinking about it. We reawaken our creativity by engaging in the process of creativity" (1993, p. 95). In this case - the process continues!



Rogers, N. (1993). *The creative connection*. Palo Alto, CA: Science & Behavior Books.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator thanks + [magicalmarta](#) I love the John Muir quote it captures very well this ecological idea that everything is directly or indirectly connected and the jigsaw puzzle analogy I can certainly relate to when working with the problems that nature presents. Also like the way you describe the coming together of your second collage and the idea of 'just do it' behind it. I believe that we can turn almost any experience into an opportunity to just do it.. even if in only a very small and seemingly insignificant way.

JENNIFER WILLIS DAY 7: Ecological perspectives on making

I will come back to the creative project itself tomorrow, but I wanted to take up the ecological issue I raised earlier today: what happens to the ecology if any one or more of the components breaks down or becomes disproportionately demanding?

The attached image is the next stage of the project I began last week, creating a promotional leaflet for the learning centre where I teach a few hours a week. I have used Norman's model and inserted a verbal description of each contributor to this ecology, then used a visual image as a shorthand for the nature of the element. Images of the children are permitted.

Today was my next lesson with the children concerned, and I was slightly anxious that they might not have done what they had undertaken as their individual contributions, and that the whole ecology would collapse. I need not have worried: they were all there early and proudly displayed their work so far. That element of the ecology was doing fine, but a serious threat to the project came from spaces and relationships.

First, my colleague reneged on her agreement to be interviewed. I improvised and got the interviewer to use me, instead. She could add my colleague's interview next week, if she was willing to participate then. Next, the educational value of what I was doing with the group was called into question. Part-way through my class, my colleague intervened and instructed the children that they had to focus on their pending examinations, not on our project. Whilst the first obstacle was no more than a minor storm, this second potentially had a tsunami effect on the ecology we had co-created.

Fortunately, the strong relationships I have with the children and their understanding of the skills they were learning or practising prevailed. I have written previously of my own professional confidence in doing what I believe is educationally valid. Ignoring my colleague, once the door had closed on her, we continued our various tasks. Our project's ecology had had to adapt to changing conditions e.g. I was relying now more on the children's commitment to working at home in order to achieve their tasks, and I in turn was taking on some of the elements that limited resources imposed e.g. access to IT, but it was still intact.

The point I am trying to consider is how creativity is inter-dependent with its environment, and how climatic changes may threaten it. Self-evident, perhaps...



Norman Jackson Hi + **Jennifer Willis** the short answer is that we have to adapt to changing circumstances. If we don't, or we can't, then we cannot continue with the project as originally conceived. Perhaps we have to completely change the ecology in order to work with the constraints.

Ecologies are dynamic entities and yes.. what you describe is very typical of the organisational environment in which there is a conflict between the interests and priorities of managers and the interests and priorities we might be promoting. I can think of a number of examples in my own life.

I like the way you are illustrating the ecology. The images populate it with people and spaces and doings and make it live.

Paul Kleiman+1 As Norman points out, 'ecologies are dynamic entities'. One way of looking at them is as complex adaptive systems, constantly shifting and adapting to changing conditions both inside the ecological system itself and outside in the external environment. Such complex adaptive systems have particular characteristics, summarised in the image below...and produced with a regard to learning environments.

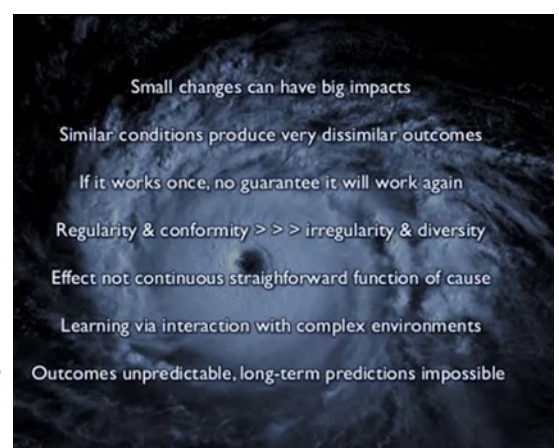
But I want to focus on the 'what happens if one element breaks down?' question that +**Jennifer Willis** introduces in her post

Complex adaptive systems, such as a learning/teaching situation, are like eco-systems. Such systems are adaptive in that they are self-evolving, agile and, importantly, inherently unpredictable.

Importantly, the evolution of a complex adaptive system is fostered by disequilibrium and feedback (Jennifer's 'what happens if...?').

Equilibrium is a condition in which all acting influences are cancelled by others, resulting in a stable, balanced, or unchanging system i.e. a system in stasis. This might lead one to believe that disequilibrium is a negative attribute. However, as Margaret Wheatley points out, "the search for organizational equilibrium is a sure path to institutional death, a road to zero trafficked by fearful people" (Wheatley 2006, p.76), and that to stay viable, open systems need to keep themselves off-balance, maintaining themselves in a state of non-equilibrium. A successful complex adaptive system frequently creates or deliberately seeks out feedback and information in the form of perturbances or disturbances that might threaten its stability and knock it off balance, thus producing the disequilibrium that is necessary for growth.....or creativity.

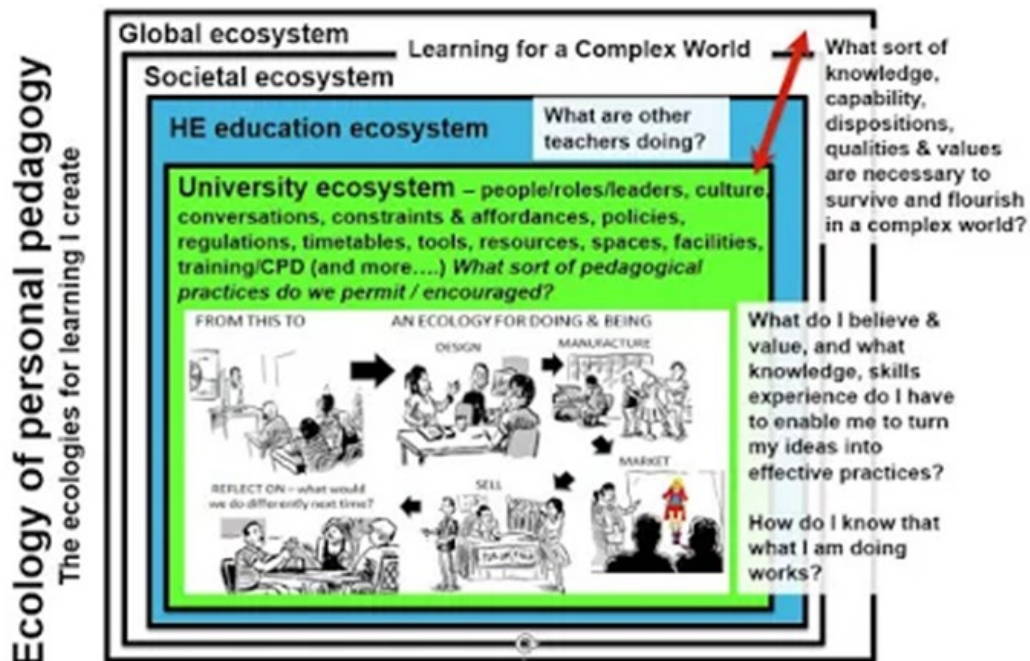
(Wheatley, M. 2006 Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World)



[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Hi +[Paul Kleiman](#) you are quite right to point out the relationship between ecologies and complex adaptive systems but I think we need to make the distinction and connection between the ecologies for learning, making, creating made by individuals, and the ecosocial systems within which they operate (the complex adaptive system).

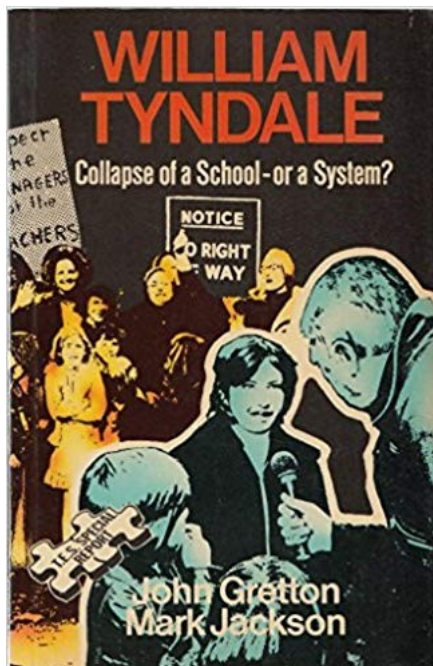
A complex adaptive system (CAS) is defined as “a group of semi-autonomous agents who interact in interdependent ways to produce system-wide patterns, such that those patterns then influence behavior of the agents.” (Dooley, 1996)

In Jenny's case, acting as a semi- autonomous agent, she co-created a learning ecology with her students to achieve particular creative outcomes but this was challenged by the ecosocial system (the manager) she was working in.

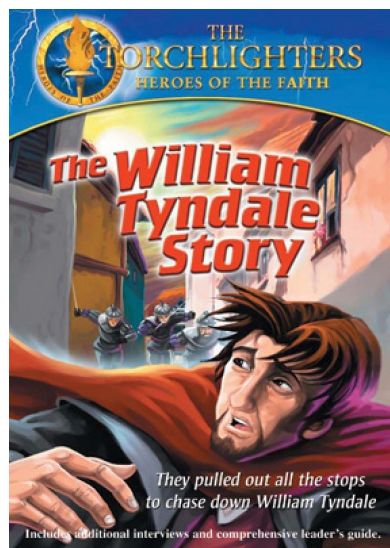


[Jennifer Willis](#) Thanks +[Paul Kleiman](#) and +[Norman Jackson](#). I was conscious of moving into systems theory territory so like Norman's illustration that pulls us back to pedagogy.

Sadly, the reality is that creativity often has to fight the status quo and what interests me is the tipping point for the ecology to collapse. This is all deja vue, of course. Those of us who were teaching in the '70s will recall the case of William Tyndale School in London where experiments with the primary curriculum were too much for the management and parents.



I have experienced the converse, too. As deputy head of a comprehensive school in the wake of the 1988 Education Reform Act, I had to push through many changes that members of staff resisted. I had the authority to do so, but winning hearts and minds is a different matter!



[Joy Whitton](#) This whole thread makes for fascinating reading, Jennifer. I can't help thinking of the children's perspective. It seems to me that children have particular needs for some cohesion in the environment in order for their creativity to flourish (but maybe this is true for everyone). If there is too much conflict evident and the between the eco-system and the individual learning ecology, it disrupts the mood and disperses the focus.

WEEK 2 JOHN RAE THE MAKING STAGE OF THIS CONVERSATION

With our initial discussion about making drawing to a close, we enter the actual making stage. Thank you to everyone who has contributed thus far - we have quite a lot of material accumulated to ponder as we start (or continue) making.

I think that we have established that, here, the term 'making' is used in the broadest sense and refers the use of any 'materials' at all - wood, words, paint, paper, elements of the digital world, and so forth. All these can be considered from an ecological perspective and Norman will make a posting about that shortly. Hopefully we have also established that in making we are looking beyond standard understandings of 'quality'.

Don't forget to make progress postings about your making work so that we get a beautiful unfolding of artefacts and thinking and a lively discussion about both ... and then the display of artefacts at our gallery space!

The next stage of our conversation is not restricted to those who have already contributed and new participants would be most welcome!

NORMAN JACKSON MARCH 13 LET'S MAKE IT

A great big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the conversation during the past week. We have given a good airing to a number of perspectives on making and how creativity might be involved and we can draw on these perspectives in the next stage of our process.

The emphasis now is on 'doing'. Over the next few days John and I hope you will have a go at making something that has meaning to you in your own life and circumstances and document the process of making.. its in this process of making that your story of your creativity will lie.

We are using the idea of making in the broadest sense in any materials/mediums that appeal to you. You can work with materials that are familiar or try using stuff that you have never used before.

Don't forget to make progress postings about your making work so that we get a beautiful unfolding story of the formation of ideas and artefacts and a lively discussion about both.

We will begin the exhibition of artefacts, and the syntheses of their making, in our virtual gallery on March 16

We would like to stress that this stage of our conversation is not restricted to those who have already contributed and new participants are most welcome! You can find a short guide to the whole process here

http://www.creativeacademic.uk/uploads/1/3/5/4/13542890/creativity_in_the_making.pdf

Norman & John

PS - the title for this post came from Mr Maker'. A wonderful kids TV programme in which Mr Maker shows you how to make things. He has done a wonderful job in inspiring my 5 year old grandsons.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MeIClf0CCWc>

[Paul Kleiman](#) Would love to join in, but the only thing I'm making this week is a long car journey to Cornwall!!

[Paul Kleiman](#) ...and I should have added that I am hoping to avoid 'creative' drivers!

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator+1thats a real pity +[Paul Kleiman](#) you contribute so much to these conversations... if you are on the beach... how about a few sand castles??



NORMAN JACKSON My Making Project

Creativity often involves us 'seeing the extraordinary in the ordinary'. I take for granted that we have the ability and freedom to see the extraordinary in anything. I particularly like the way artist David Hockney expresses this idea in terms of searching for the poetry in something, while Hans Zimmer - the composer of numerous movie scores, expresses the same idea as searching for the story in something.

I particularly wanted to my making project to involve me in my environment and it just so happens that this week, after many weeks of delay, our old fence is being taken down and a new one constructed. Apart from helping to shift the wood, dig up roots on the fence-line and keep the two fence makers topped up with tea, I am not directly involved in the making of the fence. This event is certainly part of the current circumstances of my life and involves my environment, so I decided to use the opportunity to make my artefact by finding the stories in this example of making.

Mar kri +Norman Jackson are you going to re-build the fence ? :) , it s lovely to know its part of your surroundings too, i wonder if that ll influence the process of re-awakening it's stories... as there must be emotional connection there..i look forward to hearing them..

i like the idea of seeing the extraordinary , am always looking for a story ...sometimes too i get side tracked and "forget" this beautiful philosophy and outlook of life sooo easily done! and i do think its like a muscle we need to keep exercising, or more like a door or a fence in that regard where we can consciously step in and out of that way of seeing , moment by moment...a small example is i used our pram's burst tyre , instead of binning it, i used some old colourful tapes i had when i used to make hula hoops, and we decorated it with my toddler, it offered us a new game for a couple of hours ,and connecting time, which would otherwise not been there had i not asked the question "what else can I ..." or " what if ..."

Wendy Taleo+1

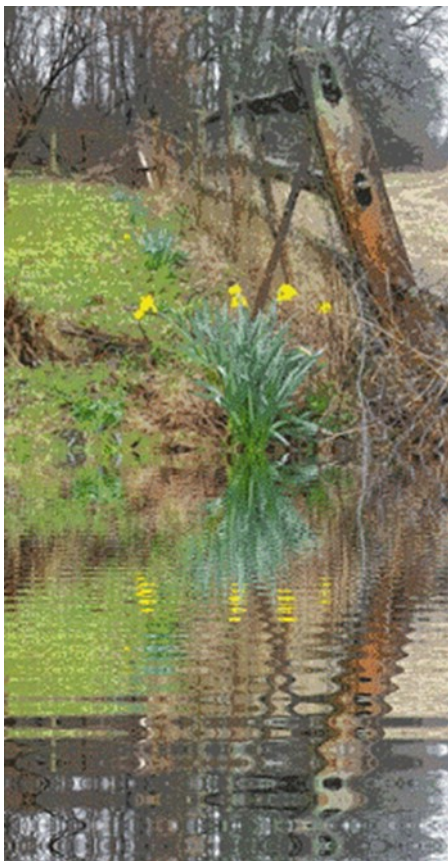
*The daffodils push
their yellow heads
hoping to be saved
from the impending demolition.
they will gladly support
the new proposed fence
boundary making
sunshine gathering
daffodils.*

Norman Jackson Moderator thank you for your encouragement +*Mar Kri* and +*Wendy Taleo*. You are right +*Mar Kri* to find the extraordinary in the ordinary is about really appreciating what you can see and experience and asking questions like what else? and what more? and what if? Your story provides an excellent example of how this is done.

I quite agree +Wendy Taleo that there is something natural and metaphorical about the daffadols managing to survive the tangled weeds on the fence. While the fence is no more the daffs will still be there in years to come - although they have been a casualty in the process of destruction.

I used this <http://www.snapstouch.com/Painting.aspx> paint app to make a picture from the photo





[Wendy Taleo](#) + [Norman Jackson](#) I added a pond to the end of your garden.

[John Rae](#) Just wanted to say how much I like the image of the older fence + [Norman Jackson](#) - there is often beauty in the unpolished, practicalities aside. I was thinking this when making a new work bench at home. I didn't necessarily take this photograph to share but it seems appropriate now. I took it because I like to see what lies behind the finished product - the work, raw materials, the thinking, problems and solutions, etc. I thought this too when I saw + [Mar Kri](#)'s strikethrough. [And like the poetry too + [Wendy Taleo](#)!]

[Wendy Taleo](#) + [John Rae](#) Totally appropriate to share this pic. Surely our 'journey' in the making is the majority of our effort and energy.

[John Rae](#) Moderator +1 Thanks and agree + [Wendy Taleo](#), and if all goes well the bench will be finished tonight!

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator love the imagination + [Wendy Taleo](#) now all we need now are a few ducks..... what did you use to create the water effect?



CHRISSI NERANTZI

Hello everybody, I have been quiet and away from the online activities but not disengaged. In the contrary, the little book making project with Gail has occupied me for days now. I am updating my original post, see <https://chrissinerantzi.wordpress.com/2018/02/19/getting-ready-for-our-next-creativehe-conversation/> where you can see the booklet emerging already... we still have work to do, but I have enjoyed this collaboration so far and it is fruitful.

[Chrissi Nerantzi](#) BTW this image "make stuff" broke... and then broke again before going into the oven... But we saved it and I will stitch it back together and keep it.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator A nice emergent story + [Chrissi Nerantzi](#) and a wonderful way to collaborate. Can't wait to see how you weave the story and illustrations. I thin the significance of weaving as a means of connecting has become more important as this conversation has gone on.

[Chrissi Nerantzi](#) Owner thank you Norman. You are right it is about weaving so that we can create an organic match. We will keep sharing. I have also written 3 new stories so far since the beginning of this conversation ;)

[John Rae](#) Moderator 'Weaving' sounds like a very useful metaphor here!

I don't mind the broken bit actually :) - tells a story too.



JOHN RAE

I sometimes find it hard to start making. What I do is to grab a pencil, crayon or whatever happens to be lying around and 'take a line for a walk', or in this case glide my paintbrush across the paper. I am not concerned with likeness, beauty, meaning, or anything really. Perhaps the only thing that I have in mind is balance - the marks that I make must feel 'settled' on the page. Of course, the lines seldom do. So I make a correction with another mark. That mark may be just what I was hoping for, but that is unlikely. The marks and material that I am working with will want me to make yet another mark, and then more. I am no longer thinking about making from the outside, I am working from within, a much better place to be.

A moment of uncertainty grows and becomes uncomfortable, urging me to do more – broader strokes, physicality, a moment of letting go with a splash of water, enjoying the waves crossing the paper as I hold it vertical, playing with tiny streams of diluted paint. Loving the pattern. The materials let me think these marks come from my hand but I suspect they emerge of their own accord. I certainly won't control them.

Standing back, I immediately see what I have done has not entirely worked. But I am drawn to a small section, enjoying it and trying to understand it, wanting to preserve it and even reproduce it.

I like working with wax and clay – it's the same process really. Maybe writing is too.

You may recall an image from an earlier conversation – a sculpture (<https://tinyurl.com/ybd3uqem>). Some symbols represent connecting so I am reminded of David Gauntlett. I have this in mind as I paint but a clear image has not yet declared itself. It may be some time before it does.

I will make other postings as this making project unfolds.

[Joy Whitton](#) I loved how well you articulate this process of unfolding to the possibilities and constraints in the materials and the task.

I do like that line - taking a line for a walk.

[John Rae](#) Moderator Thanks + [Joy Whitton](#). I should attribute that to the Australian artist, Peter Griffin. Did his course a decade ago and it still informs what I do.

[Mar Kri](#) lovely story + [John Rae](#) , joy to read, ...I JUST discovered my new passion : CLAY! snapshot of my artefacts to come soon

[John Rae](#) Moderator Cannot wait to see it + [Mar Kri](#)! Clay is a great medium!

[John Rae](#) Moderator I am starting to like the way my painting is coming on in terms of balance and color (for some reason I find it hard not to include red - and especially pink - in my paintings!).

As I paint I try to hold in mind an image of a community care service that I have been working with. I was impressed with the way they set up a three-way partnership to provide social connection for people who are older or have a disability. They are hard to see but there are remnants of three circles embedded in the painting.

The painting is far from finished at this stage ...

[John Rae](#) Moderator It won't be all that obvious but here is the the next stage of my painting - still playing with the idea of collaboration by including representations of people, etc. I am NOT HAPPY with it but include it here because I want to illustrate the path I have taken, right or wrong.

I have reflected a lot, waiting patiently for a solution for my painting. I will post the final piece to our gallery space shortly.

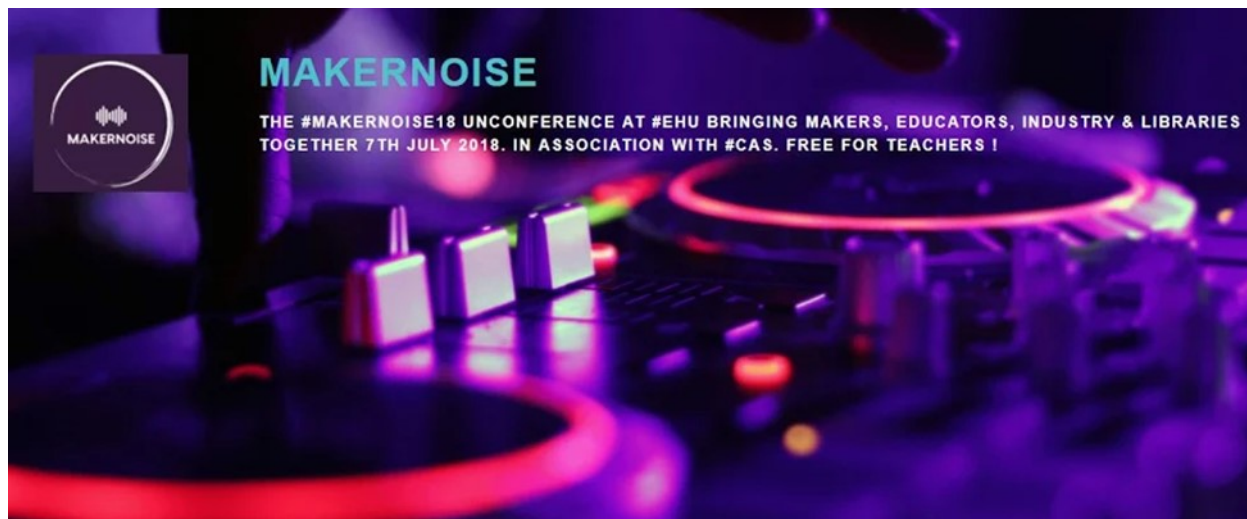


[Sandra Sinfield](#) I love that black and white and grey image - the way your paint does move and slash and slice - but holds a beauty. I find your work very moving - very beautiful.

[John Rae](#) Moderator Many thanks + [Sandra Sinfield](#)

CAROLINE KEEP

Hi all, apologies it been so long since I have posted here. My move into secondary has been full on! So as some of you may know me & Mark Feltham set up Liverpool Makefest 4 years ago we are now talking to the National Libraries Taskforce to expand it to every library in the next weeks. I have set up the first School Makerspace in the UK embedding MakerEd into the National Curriculum. We also have launched the 1st Teacher conference on MakerEd at Edge Hill University 7th July. Hopefully, this will all feed into the excellent work you all do in HE! If you want to get involved please email me :) [#opensourcingeducation](#) 🤖



[John Rae](#) Thank you for sharing +[Caroline Keep](#). Do you know of similar things happening outside the UK?

[Caroline Keep](#) The USA has a massive maker community and Italy just committed to putting one in every school. We are bit behind I think

[John Rae](#) Moderator Thanks +[Caroline Keep](#)! Australia?

[Caroline Keep](#)
<http://www.makerspace.org.au>
makerspace.org.au - Home
makerspace.org.au

[Caroline Keep](#) I would encourage anyone else to do the same x set up in your libraries and then expand into your schools :)

[Caroline Keep](#) Our library taskforce in the uk is more than willing to talk to others x We will be recording the series from Liverpool library so I'll send it across x

[John Rae](#) Moderator Thanks!

REBECCA THOMAS Making the lighthouse

My physical surroundings/environment has changed recently. I moved and have a garage space, I had this fantasy about having a studio called the Lighthouse. One use was to return to my painting practice but also to create an opportunity for creative learning through sharing good practice. I hope that imaginative activities will take place in various forms of play, and the development of BLINK: Journal of the lighthouse.

Since engaging in our 'Making conversation I have made it happen.

I will share the images of doing it up and my first participant making a curiosity box.

[Norman Jackson](#) Well done +[Rebecca Thomas](#) we look forward to seeing the fruits of your hard work.

[John Rae](#) Moderator Yes, looking forward to seeing it too +[Rebecca Thomas](#). Sounds like one making event will lead to another, and another ...

REBECCA MORLEY

After a Skype call with Norman last week, he suggested that I write a short piece about the making of a draft piece of work I had started in relation to the idea of the ecology of practice model and how the company I work for might use this in distinguishing the difference between the services it offers. Norman suggested that this piece of work might be considered a mediating artefact.

Until this time I had never tried to work using the stages suggested in the ecology of practice model to think about the type of work we do. Firstly, Norman sent me an image to help me better understand this theory and I began to think about how this applies in our line of work. The importance of detail struck me and I realised that in beginning to map out my own thoughts in regards to the creative expressive well being work we do, as well as offering art therapy services. In order to better inform both staff and potential clients of the difference, it felt important to dig deeper in search of important details that distinguish the two. Firstly, this exercise confirmed for me the amount of overlaps that the two services might have and therefore highlighted the importance for distinction even further.

In conclusion I believe this exercise taught me two very important differences.

- 1) The theory that grounds each of these practices.
- 2) The intention / contract agreed at the start of the work with the client, managing expectations.

Although the original image of the geologist felt a world away from my own area of work - the idea of 'digging deeper' felt like an important one.

Focusing on the actual 'making', my thoughts were originally quite disorganised as I tried to copy the image. Instead I decided to work in a way that provided order as my brain whirled. In using the computer my making remained fluid as things were able to be chopped, changed, deleted, copied and pasted. The draft narrative helped me think about this mode of working and how it can be applied to different areas of work, even if presented differently.

In using this model I was able to capture and disseminate learning whilst thinking about how I might expand on and dig even deeper moving forward, applying to more specific client work.

This is very much a work in progress but I thought it important to share my thinking processes so far...

| | Purpose | Contexts | Affordances | Resources | Spaces | Relationships | Processes |
|--------------|--|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| CET only | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing communication skills Improving wellbeing and happiness Enhancing confidence and self-esteem Engaging in meaningful creative activity Increasing social skills Participating in intensive interaction Promoting identity and awareness in relation to self, others and the environment | <p>People who have progressed through education / college etc and are not perhaps in a position to move forward autonomously.</p> <p>People who are perhaps feeling stuck or unable to identify where their future lies.</p> <p>People who are trying to establish and maintain an identity & understand the implications of their disabilities and/or experiences.</p> <p>People who are isolated or experiencing stigma seeking a safe space to be themselves.</p> | <p>Possible interventions and therapeutic processes which include creative therapeutic tools such as storytelling, enactment, embodiment, movement, art-based expression, use of role play, metaphor and objects. In implementing a safe, confidential space (either group or 1-1), the actions become possible and therefore the process can develop.</p> <p>There is a difference in intention between CET & Therapy - this links to the</p> | <p>Reflective practice - reading, research, exploring case histories, to inform the planning, delivery, evaluation cycle and ensuring clients needs are met to the best of our abilities.</p> <p>Peer & supervisory support.</p> <p>Physical resources - art materials, dramatic texts, puppets, instruments, music etc.</p> <p>Therapists are likely to have a greater depth and breadth of</p> | <p>Physically & psychologically safe facilitation space for either groups or one to one sessions.</p> <p>Liminal space born out of creative possibilities, accessing sub & unconscious understanding & knowledge of self - engaging both left and right brain hemispheres through creative and verbal interactions.</p> <p>Safe supervisory space for facilitators enabling reflection on experiences and exploration of inter and</p> | <p>The client / facilitator therapeutic partnership - within CET the client may be used to working with a team of facilitators. Within the therapy session, clients will have one consistent staff member that usually delivers a consistent session time and day.</p> <p>Peer relationships between staff</p> <p>Peer relationships between clients in group settings</p> <p>Supervisory relationships</p> | <p>Using the process of artistic engagement to explore and develop healthy aspects of self, building efficacy for future life.</p> <p>Using the process of artistic engagement to</p> |
| Therapy only | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support in managing difficult transitions / change | <p>People who have experienced a trauma</p> | | | | | |

[Norman Jackson](#) Thank you + [Rebecca Morley](#) you have done us a great service by drawing attention to making artefacts to help us understand the complexity involved in our practices. As you mentioned you volunteered to collaborate with me to test and develop the idea of an ecology of practice tool and in the process of trying it out the ideas you developed through your own sense making, your own (novel) approach to mapping the dimensions of practice. In the process you developed a new cognitive tool which I think you say was partly co-created through conversations with a colleague.

[Rebecca Morley](#) + [Norman Jackson](#) Yes certainly, this process has now been discussed with a number of colleagues and continues to evolve and grow!

SANDRA SINFIELD

Making my Kentish bowl curation actually took place over many years - with many many walks on the beach - thinking - picking up - discarding...

Gradually finding myself with a pile of stones and shells and objects.

Liking some for their look - and some for their feel - the touch.

And then this project - and more walking - walking around with **making** in my head. Every moment alight with the thought of making...

The lists.

Would it be an engine room cut from paper - folded and glued - and made with +[Tom Burns](#)?

Would we make a student from recyclables - fashioned with plastic and string - with glue...
then that seemed wrong somehow - who were we to represent students?!
- but we could represent ourselves?

Rag doll? I've got an old pillow to disembowel.

Cardboard figure with cut out clothes (like you used to get in Bunty or Judy)?

I've got the empty cake box all ready to cut...

Then - that moment - the making moment - and somehow we were in a place with no glue - no glue!

Glue: More important now to me than paint.

And we had no paint.

So - putting together this bowl - at this time - that became the make.

It might not look like much - but - oh-

It was YEARS in the making:

The making

I walk often on the beach
the sea
the wet sand
allowing the walk
to create a meditative mood
An object or stone or shell catches my eye
- i might pick it up
If it looks as though it would feel well in the hand
- I might pick it up...
One year I mostly picked up stones with holes in them.
Another year I needed the yellow sunshine stones.
Some years I find myself rooting out the corroded metal
- the nails - the crumbling pipes
We were an airfield once
Sonar in the cliff
Crumpled with the bunker on the beach
The fossils.
All stone now.



[Mar Kri](#) You illustrate +[Sandra Sinfield](#) that it's not the actual by end product / outcome that matters but the process of making ,the journey that was followed!which to you clearly holds strong emotional and sentimental value, and meaning too.

*it strikes me that your objects although came from all sort of physical (and most likely emotional "directions" are now gathered ,contained in one place , a container ...is there something in the collecting and gathering / holding them in one place ?is your making complete ?or does it continue /have life ..beyond the bowl?
what are the messages you re taking from this process ?!*

*I had a little vision,wondering if these objects were to talk ,have a dialogue with each other ,what stories they d reveal about their life ,up to the moment of collection? But that s my flavour and process ,and not yours...
Thanks for sharing!*

Ps.i too am a collector of stones and pebbles ,which I love using in my practice and teaching

[Sandra Sinfield](#) Moderator + [Mar Kri](#) Funny you ask what they might say to each other - I once imagined a 'revision' animation - where all the items on my desk would do just that - as they thought about their learning...

Now that the objects are in the bowl in that way - they will stay that way for a while - I don't really imagine them conversing - but I find I am a bit of an animist - so I do imagine them taking comfort from being with each other...

And if the feeling of that changes - then I will probably re-arrange this - so that it feels somehow right for that time.

(And I must use more stones in my practice!)
thank you so much for your response!

[Wendy Taleo](#)+1

All stone now....
The colours held
a small reflection
of place
the years of
weather
now lost in the gentle
home
of the bowl.
[#poem](#) response.



[Mar Kri](#) [Sandra Sinfield](#) Moderator + [Wendy Taleo](#) Beautiful - can i edit slightly?

All stone now...
the colours
a small reflection
of place
the years of
weather
now held in the gentle
home
of the bowl.
[#poem](#) dialogue

[Wendy Taleo](#)+1 + [Sandra Sinfield](#) Edit, add to, mark up....yes, all of that.
thanks for The Bowl

[Simon Rae](#)+2 I loved your bowl when I saw it + [Sandra Sinfield](#), good enough to eat! I had fixed on the crab shell and assumed it was all edible...

Then I was entranced by the washed out colours...and I saw Kent and thought of Derek Jarman's garden, also in Kent.

[theguardian.com - Gardens: planting on the edge in Derek Jarman's garden | Life and style | The Guardian](#)

Creating something out of nothing should be so satisfying, an end in itself. Is it a trick that people have to learn, to be satisfied with nothing? One sometimes get the impression that people are only happy if it's cost a lot.

[Gardens: planting on the edge in Derek Jarman's garden | Life and style | The Guardian](#)
[theguardian.com](#)

[Wendy Taleo](#) + [Simon Rae](#) I think that the maker is always satisfied with the 'creating something from nothing'. However the economics always seems to come into play. I do a fair bit of crochet....mostly items to give away. However this year I'm thinking of selling some items and the 'price' is always tricky....does it just cover the raw material or my effort and how does effort=\$?

[Sandra Sinfield](#) Moderator + [Simon Rae](#) Yes, I love Jarman's garden as well - and find it funny that we've learned to love this strange flat rather inhospitable landscape... Our parents started bringing us to Leysdown because we had no garden in London - and now that I'm grizzled and ancient, I have a caravan of my own - and walk those beaches as often as i can. I take stones from here wherever I am and they evoke a peace. I think it's the peace of finding your place - your own 'home'.

SIMON RAE

Making - part of being human

Another drawing. I had rescued some daffodils from the garden that had been knocked down by the snow last week ... they weren't 'shop quality' but they still had that wonderful smell and yellow brightness that joys up any dark kitchen. By today though they were bound for the bin before I gave them a long enough reprieve to do this sketch. By accident, or some weird auto-aesthetic action response, I put the vase on the window sill to draw them, and the window frame formed a cross behind the dying flowers ... plus it's nearly Easter, all the symbolism one could ask for.



It's a motivation for making that many don't cite or admit to these days in the UK ... the notion of Making for Spiritual or Belief reasons. My apologies, I'm not wording this very well, I'm not used to thinking about such things – too much of a humanistic nature type, but my sense is that making these days is mostly driven either by commerce or by self and not, as in years gone by, to glorify a particular deity. Any talent for making that a person has is something they are born with and have developed rather than a god-given gift. Inspiration comes from hard work, perspiration and practice, or from a creative spark lit from within rather than by a god. A favourite quote from History of Art Criticism (Lionello Venturi, 1936) tells of William Henry Wackenroder who believed in the 1790s, that divine inspiration is identified with spontaneity of creation ... "If for a long time the artist cannot fix the imagination which a celestial ray of sun puts in his mind, there comes a moment in which without perceiving it he has achieved the work, and a clear splendour warns him of the miracle which has happened." These days we're not too hot on miracles!

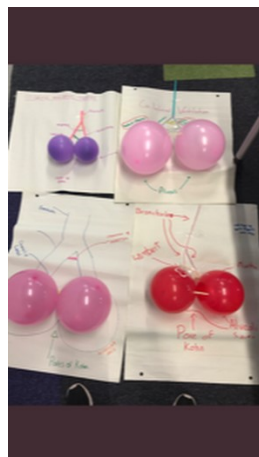
I'm slowly reading, object by object, A History of the World in 100 Objects by Neil MacGregor based on artefacts from the British Museum - a history of Making in a way. MacGregor doesn't talk about creativity very much, although a sense of people being creative underpins all that I've read so far. One of the experts quoted (Prof Steven Mithen) suggests that something happened in the human brain thousands of years ago that allowed creativity to emerge, and, coupled with changes in society (you know, progress up the layers of Maslow's triangle), "our ancestors had time to reflect and to create". These days we all have the security, a roof over the head and the surplus funds to afford making and creativity.

[Wendy Taleo](#) Although I would argue that even those that have limited security can be very creative. They use their available resources and intrinsic inspiration to make and give and share. I love 'making' with what I find or have around me. Re-purposing materials from nature and the not-so-natural creates boundaries that guide the resulting objects.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Thanks +[Simon Rae](#) for your story with a lot of symbolic meaning. I think that although we might not spell it out in spiritual terms, a lot of our creativity relates in some way to the deeper meanings of our existence. My own narrative about making was exactly this. I didn't set out to make something with this in mind... like you I discovered the metaphorical symbolic meanings as I engaged with the idea and the process of making. Perhaps that is how our meaning making mind works from obvious perceptual meanings to the deeper meanings of our existence and transience.



[Jennifer Willis](#) A quick comment as I head for Heathrow: how appropriate that the conversation has come full circle since day one, when we looked at recycling 'rubbish'. Love your image +[Simon Rae](#).



Left: Kate Grafton's use of common materials to teach physiotherapy

SIMON RAE

Week 2: Making for Wellbeing

My apologies to the moderators/organisers of this Making Project if I'm stretching the envelope a wee bit but I'm not currently in a position to make or build something so I'm just going to continue Making to maintain my Wellbeing.

As +[John Rae](#) says "... What I do is to grab a pencil, crayon or whatever happens to be lying around and 'take a line for a walk', ..." - although I do try to anticipate events. I have a collection of various size notebooks/sketchbooks and I usually pop a suitable size one in my pocket if I'm going out in case a 'scribble opportunity' should arise.

On Wednesday night such an opportunity arose. My partner sings in a couple of local choirs and supports others by attending their concerts which we did by going to Woburn Parish church for an evening of sacred and organ music. Sitting chilled out in a side pew I thought that the pipes of the organ would provide subject matter for an experiment - I had planned a drawing without lines, just using areas of shading to convey the image. And I found myself shading in time with the organ music.

Tuesday was slightly different ... regular attendance at a local art club in the Library, six of us meet and draw whatever the tutor sets up. The last session was life drawing with the daughter of a friend acting as the model. Informed by the Royal Academy who recently ran their first ever live-streamed life drawing class from inside the Royal Academy Schools with portrait artist Jonathan Yeo. You can still catch up on [#LifeDrawingLive](#) by watching the video on YouTube. The tutor broke the hour long session into 4 poses, two giving 2-3 minutes for a sketch and a last 25 minute one. The third was a special, she provided black paper and chalk!

My wellbeing is overflowing!

(I wasn't able to control the order the images loaded ... so it's:
organ, chalk, 25 min, first 2 min, second 2 min)

[Magicalmarta](#) Thank you so much for sharing your process and artifacts. Well-being is a hugely important aspect of human creativity. I love Alexander Lowen's observation: "The creative act may be defined as any form of expression that adds new pleasure and meaning to life" (1975, p. 33).

Lowen, A. (1975). *Pleasure: A creative approach to life*. NY: Penguin Books.

[Jennifer Willis](#) Cross-referencing with my reply to +[magicalmarta](#), +[Simon Rae](#) you might be interested in some of my work on wellbeing - webcast at the BMA with slides and my analysis of feedback.

Webcast library - British Medical Association
bma.public-i.tv

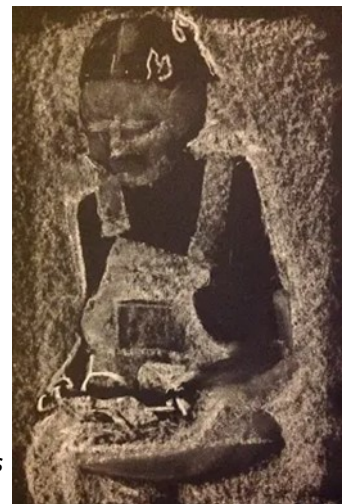
[Joy Whitton](#) Thank you so much for sharing. Your openness to the opportunities for drawing in the daily moment, I think is very imaginative. If we could all live more like that... (I will try..) I particularly loved the little girl drawings sitting down. It conjures her presence.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Thanks for sharing +[Simon Rae](#) you are well in tune with the idea the moderators had for making... it really can be any thing and you are making sketches that emerge from your everyday experiences and through their accumulation - making a sketch book. You may not wish to go further with your story but it would be nice if you could offer any perspectives on the relevance to your making of the ideas we discussed about making in the earlier part of our conversation (Day1-7)..

[John Rae](#) Moderator+1 Thank you very much +[Simon Rae](#) - what a lovely set of drawings. As +[Norman Jackson](#) said, it is exactly what we had hoped for.

Shading in time with music - who would have predicted that - a sensitive response to context and the affective elements present. So thanks for sharing.

I'm with +[Joy Whitton](#), the little girl is beautiful.



NORMAN JACKSON GREAT BRITISH CREATIVITY TEST

Chris Tomlinson's porridge making, not only provides the calories to keep him going until lunchtime, the creative act that it supports is good for his own mental health. It so happens that a survey has just been launched in the UK to look at the relationship between the everyday creative acts that people enjoy and their own mental wellbeing.

There are dozens of different ways to express yourself. Scientists believe that creative activities might help us stay healthier and happier too. Take our ten-minute test, and help scientists explore the connections between creativity and mental wellbeing.

<https://creativitytest.pilots.bbcconnectedstudio.co.uk/>



Jennifer Willis I agree +[magicalmarta](#), closed questions are inadequate for researching such areas as creativity and wellbeing.

I have been working on the latter for some years now, and use qualitative, open-ended questions. I have a considerable database as a result, and have used the same methodology with different cohorts. You can see both the questionnaire and the analysis of a recent cohort on my website no2stigma.weebly.com. Follow the links to Wellbeing.

magicalmarta +**Jennifer Willis** Hi Jennifer! Thank you so much for your comment and for sharing your research. Your questions are beautiful. I look forward to reading the analysis. Well-being and creativity are very interconnected.

Norman Jackson Moderator I agree with both of you +[magicalmarta](#) and +[Jennifer Willis](#). I thought the questionnaire omits so much that people might consider to be creative in their life, and core concepts like regulation of feelings are likely to be interpreted in different ways. The complete absence of any way of providing contextual feedback will limit the value of what is learnt. But I guess the researchers are only looking for simple answers to complex relationships.

Here is one format we use for gaining feedback on how academics/faculty understand creativity

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Preview/?sm=HBRRbyqMktXwKvROIapeCTYn35uhDT731IBbc39RzXLnPbFQXh_2FPqtvO5K3Njzd_2B

Chrissi Nerantzi Owner Thank you for sharing. I have done this too +[Norman Jackson](#) just now. Very interesting. Will keep the results.

Chrissi Nerantzi Owner Fascinating article! "Evidence is accumulating that our expressive creative activity, researched best so far with writing, can be, not only physically and psychologically healing, but can even boost our immune function! (Lepore and Smyth, 2002; Richards, 2007; Rogers, 2011)."

JENNIFER WILLIS End of week 2 Update

Making a promotional leaflet for our learning centre

Sadly, we have come to the end of the designated period for making our artefact, and I have to report that we are nowhere near finished. Our ecology has been severely damaged by unforeseen factors:

- Yesterday's class was severely depleted due to a school PGL trip to the Isle of Wight and hospitalisation of one of the children. For those not familiar with primary speak, PGL means Parents Get Lost, and is the term used for school trips away from the family!
- My own personal circumstances, which have diverted most of my time into preparing formal responses for our legal team.

The few children who attended yesterday's lesson had kept their word and produced their contributions to the project, but as it is a collaboration of micro-projects, we have not yet reached the point of collating these into the finished triptych. I shall post in the Gallery the images of each contribution to date.

Last week I tried to envisage the ecology for our project, and identified the point at which it was thrown off course as being at the individual making stage. This week's unexpected adversity also comes at this point, and has knocked us into another cycle before we can hope to complete the artefact. If this were an individual project reliant on one individual, it would have been easier to manage any disruption. Perhaps an obvious conclusion, but worth stating.

Whether the project is eventually completed comes down to motivation: that of the participants and especially of the co-ordinator (me). I have a lifelong dislike of leaving tasks unfinished, so I shall press on until we succeed. However, this brings me back to Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, something I often draw on. I personally am in a situation where professional survival is my current priority, which I equate with a basic human need. For the moment, all my energy is absorbed dealing with this, leaving no room for the higher expressive levels.

This leads me to another observation: I have often talked about how creativity comes out of suffering. I can now refine this. For the first two weeks of this project, I was emotionally dislocated because my husband was abroad. I was able to channel my discomfort into creative activities. Now, though, the nature of emotional upset is far more extreme and threatening, and leaves no room for creative expression. This is not to suggest that severe distress cannot be artistically creative: when at my lowest suicidal point, I was highly productive. Why the difference? Perhaps it is that then I had nothing to look forward to, whereas now, I am fighting injustice and wish to succeed.

What does this all have to do with Norman's ecological model? I hope it shows how fragile our ecologies are. If



we are able to adapt to the changing environmental conditions we can survive the disasters that befall us. We move on and not only create the opportunity for seeing through our project, but can also learn from the adversities to make us more resilient in the future. But then Darwin already knew this!

[Norman Jackson](#)

Although this set of circumstances are challenging to you + [Jennifer Willis](#) they do illustrate very well

how our will, imagination and capability are greatly affected by the environment. And why such character qualities of determination, adaptability and persistence are so necessary to survive the challenges and complexities that beset us and our plans. I know you have these characteristics so I know you will emerge the other side stronger and you will use the learning you gain through the experience.

[Joy Whitton](#) As usual, I found your contribution a rich reflection from which to gain a new perspective of my own. What a good idea to think of Maslow's hierarchy to understand this circumstance. Hence how valuable is your personal quality of persistence - so important to convert the creative impulse into something tangible. Also the quality of patience on occasions.

NORMAN JACKSON WORK IN PROGRESS

I am a great believer in applying complexity theory to life, we start off with a plan and then stuff happens that interferes with or changes the plan and we either adapt or go with the flow. +[Jennifer Willis](#) also talked about this in her post a few days ago.

I suppose if you choose an outdoor project, like I did, the weather intervenes. And if you involve other people, like I did, then they have plans that might not fit your own. And if you use a fair amount of technology, like I am doing, then things often go wrong (I lost my phone cable which meant I couldn't use it as my main recording device). And if we are embedded in family, (as I am) they have needs that may require you to change your plans. So all this is by way of explaining why my project - which I planned to finish in 3 days..is still somehow from being completed.. so best think of it, like life, as a work in progress. Hopefully, I can bring it to fruition over the weekend but what will be, will be.



[Paul Kleiman](#) Rules of Design No: 101

However long your experience tells you a job is going to take, multiply it by at least 3.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Yep +[Paul Kleiman](#) that will certainly apply in this case. Its a good job I only ever use rough plans. The other factor apart from stuff getting in the way, is loads of stuff that you never imagine emerges, and projects are also probably 3x larger than we imagined they would be at the start.. is that another design rule?

[Paul Kleiman](#) Anderson's Law often applies:

I have yet to see any problem, however complicated, which, when you look at it in the right way, did not become still more complicated.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Yes I like Anderson's law +[Paul Kleiman](#) it chimes with complex adaptive systems again so is very pertinent to the world of ecologies of practice

[Rebecca Thomas](#) +[Norman Jackson](#) it's interesting that your picture seems to be dissolving yet your illustrations of processes are about making things explicit

JENNIFER WILLIS Week 2: Making

A Promotional Leaflet for our Learning Centre

Yesterday I posted an updated image of how the ecology for this project came about, building on my post of 8 March which described the beginnings of the project. Now, I shall examine the creative processes that were unfolding.

I had left each participant with their individual contributions to work on; these included conducting a survey, preparing a set of interview questions, drawing a poster, writing a poem and story, and describing the subjects that can be studied in the learning centre. Once again, the children arrived early for our lesson and each one had spent time on their tasks. They were keen to share these and most wanted to have their photo taken displaying their work. They knew that I am interested in charting the creative process, and were confident that their parents would agree with their being snapped. These images play a dual role of validating their work and contributing to [#creativeHE](#).

Although I have shown this as one ecology, each person really deserves their individual micro-ecology, which is contributing to the whole. I therefore needed to spend time with each participant to review their work and discuss what the next stage should be e.g. would their work be word processed or kept in hand written form? How should we present the findings of the survey?

Ideally, we would have had the resources to enable me to show the surveyor (yesterday's image point 4) how to use Excel and then produce charts. Here, we had an ecological obstacle: the centre's computers do not have Excel. It was a learning opportunity missed for a very able lad, but another example for my colleague of 'outside things' that have no place in an English class. Instead, I showed him how to write an analysis, and offered to convert his findings to charts. I might bring in a laptop, though, to show him how! (Another ecological issue: my laptop was infected with a pornographic virus when I brought it in once, resulting in my having to have the whole disc wiped clean, costing me considerable financial and practical loss.)

Meanwhile, another participant was toying with how to present his images of the curriculum: should they be done as a PowerPoint or as hand-drawn posters? I preferred the former, but again, this depended on whether he could have access to his father's computer.

The girl who had enthusiastically planned an interview with my colleague encountered a different obstacle to her progressing: my colleague was no longer willing to be interviewed today, but would allow the child to interview her next Tuesday, before our lesson. To her credit, the child agreed, but was clearly disappointed. I suggested she interview me, instead. Now the creative process went further off-track!

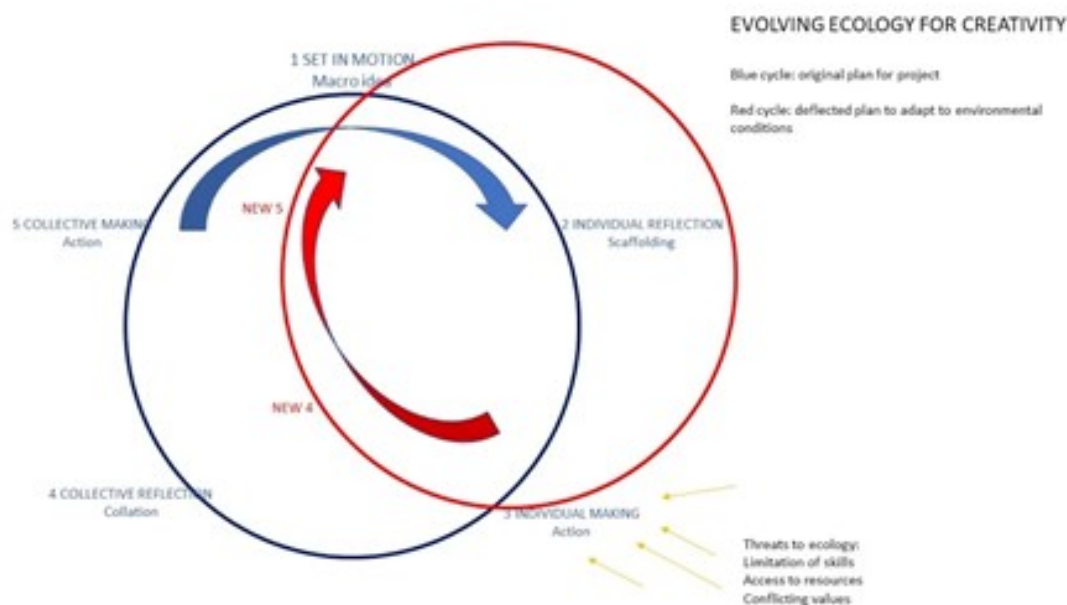
As I was being interviewed, the other children were listening and kept interrupting with questions triggered by our conversation. It was another of those dynamic curriculum moments I have spoken about. We couldn't have predicted their questions and, although they interrupted the flow of the interview, I wanted them to be seen as valid.

By now, contributions were evolving to the point of thinking ahead to how everything should be put together. One of the group took a new page of her book and instantly began sketching as she spoke. Her idea was 3 A3 sheets of paper, which would be joined to form a triptic- I was impressed that she knew paper sizes (yesterday's image point 7). Each section would be dedicated to a theme: survey and interview; poems and stories; photographs of them with the work. We consulted the others: unanimous agreement to the plan.

It was time to move on to the 'proper' lesson, so homework is to complete their contributions ready for assembly next week.

What can we learn from this small project of creating an artefact? We have clearly gone through the processes of reflecting, drawing on individual strengths and interests, then planning and making each element and are now thinking ahead to synthesising everything to form the artefact. We have been knocked off our original course by constraints on the resources we have for realising our aims, and most seriously, by conflicting values with the wider ecological system within which my classes take place.

I have been trying to visualise this graphically, and have easily identified the point at which adaptation has been necessary. Today's image is my early attempt to represent the process. The red circle represents our expected process of creation from setting in motion an idea, through inquiry into action. We see the destabilisation at point 3, which knocks us off course, but not so severely that the project dies. Instead, the blue cycle gives way to the red one, where we have revised points 4 and 5. Whether they, in turn, will be destabilised remains to be seen. Any suggestions on how to represent this process more clearly are very welcome.



[Rebecca Thomas](#): *I'm enjoying the circular motion of this-a contemporary Jungian Mandala?*

NORMAN JACKSON MAKING CULTURAL ARTEFACTS - HAPPY NEW YEAR

I would like to wish you all a happy (Persian) New Year called Norooz, which has been celebrated for over 3000 years in central Asia. We have just celebrated Norooz as my wife is Persian. Cultural tradition requires the making of a Haft-Seen table top (Persian: هفت‌سین, the seven seen's) an arrangement of seven symbolic items all starting with the letter Seen (letter) (fa) (ف) in the Persian alphabet, all of which represent important concepts in Persian culture connecting back to the Zoroastrian religion.

The elements in Haft Seen represent life-rebirth, health, happiness, prosperity, joy, patience and beauty. Typical items include

1. Sabzeh (سبزه) – wheat, barley, mung bean or lentil sprouts growing in a dish.
2. Samanu (سمنو) – sweet pudding made from wheat germ.
3. Senjed (سنجد) – dried Persian olive.
4. Seer (سیر) – garlic.
5. Seeb (سیب) – apple.
6. Somāq (سماق) – sumac.
7. Serkeh (سرکه) – vinegar.

Other items can include

- A holy book, usually Qur'an or Avesta
- Divan-e Hafez, or The Shahnameh; Iranian poetry books
- a mirror with two candles
- a goldfish in a glass bowl
- a lamp
- painted eggs
- a bowl of water
- hyacinth flower
- Confectioneries



The Haft Seen table is a wonderful example of the 'making of cultural artefacts within a tradition to communicate values and beliefs passed down through the millennia. Here is our haft seen table.

Please share your cultural traditions that involve making with symbolic meaning

[Jennifer Willis](#) Happy New Year, +[Norman Jackson!](#)

These beautiful artefacts reminded me of what happens in the Hindu faith. I attach a brief video showing the 31st day celebration after death.

As you can see, the priest comes to the home. He immediately crafts a Ganeish out of dough, and forms the other items required. This ceremony was in Canada, following the untimely death of our cousin in 2012. The eldest son leads proceedings with the priest. You see our cousin breaking the coconut.



Like your Persian festival, food plays a big part. This ceremony marks the end of a period of mourning when no food can be cooked in the home of the deceased. Throughout the month, friends and relatives bring every meal to the home. After this ceremony, the women all cook a big meal in the home and share with the friends and family.

You can see that music and chanting are also part of the rituals, and the photographs of the deceased and his parents and decorated with flowers, then a plate of food is left for the deceased person. What also reverberates with me is how the young children are at ease and join in with this - our nieces were very young at the time, but show none of the fear of death that we find in our society.

If you are interested in the rituals, you can find more at <http://mailerindia.com/hindu/veda/index.php?death>

[Norman Jackson](#) Thanks for sharing this Hindu custom + [Jennifer Willis](#) It's easy to see how some of the most powerful cultural traditions and the symbolism in the making relate to birth/renewal, marriage and death. Customs relating to death, burial, mourning and the celebration of ancestors are particularly significant in most societies.

[Paul Kleiman](#)+1 Thank you + [Norman Jackson](#), and fascinating, especially as this time next week Jews around the world will be celebrating Pesach/Passover - which celebrates the Exodus from Egypt - and holding or attending a Seder, which is just full of symbols and symbolism around food.

At the centre of the table is the Seder plate (the plate is often a symbolic work of art in its own right - just google 'seder plate'). It contains - though traditions vary the following:

Maror (Bitter herbs) - usually raw horseradish and another vegetable usually lettuce - to symbolise the suffering of the Israelites in Egypt "they made our lives bitter with hard labour".

Haroset - a sweet mixture of fruits, nuts and wine to represent the mortar the Israelites used. There is a small amount on the Seder plate, but often - as in our family - a much larger amount is made to be eaten either at the meal or during the week of the festival.

Zero'ah - A burnt bone, to symbolise the Paschal offering/sacrifice.

Karpas - a vegetable or herb representing hope and renewal. It is dipped in salt water (representing tears and suffering) before eating.

Beitzah - a roasted hard-boiled egg. It is not eaten, but represents sacrifice and mourning. Traditionally, eggs are served to mourners after a funeral.

The preparation and making is very important. In our family there is a particular recipe for the Haroset which has been passed down through generations. Our daughter, who lives 300 miles away, makes it her special and much loved duty to make the Haroset as soon as she arrives.

The Seder service and meal, and the whole festival, is full of other food symbols:

We are supposed to eat leaning on cushions to represent freedom from slavery.

We are required to drink four full glasses of wine, again to represent freedom.

We banish all bread and anything that contains yeast and that rises, and we eat flat Matzot, unleavened bread, to represent the fact that during the Exodus from Egypt the Israelites had to flee so quickly there was not "time for the bread to rise".

(I don't have a photo of our own Seder plate, but it looks very much like this)



[Norman Jackson](#) Thanks + [Paul Kleiman](#) for the really enlightening cultural traditions relating to the Jewish festival of Passover and the symbolic use of certain foods. I am struck by the similarities with the Persian tradition, I guess these traditions, or at least the ideas underpinning them, arose about the same time in the middle east and central Asia. You make the very important point that family traditions handed down from generation to generation sit within and are shaped by the broader cultural tradition which is in turn connected to significant events in history. It's a fascinating dimension of making.

Beautifully decorated plates and table cloths are also a feature of Persian culture.

[Sandra Sinfield](#) Moderator Thank you all for sharing... I am struck by the similarities too. I was raised a catholic and share symbols with the cultures mentioned - and the more pagan - the death of the fisher king - re-birth - the symbol of the eggs.

[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator+2 I guess a lot of what we think of as modern cultural rituals originated in pagan times + [Sandra Sinfield](#) I am thinking of the making in decorating a Christmas tree for example. I think the druids decorated oak trees. There are of course a lot of symbolic cultural artefacts in most religions.

NORMAN JACKSON

Making new things by remixing older things Kirby Ferguson
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zd-dqUuvLk4>

[Simon Rae](#) Thanks for putting this up +Norman Jackson. When this 'remix' thread started I thought that I might post about the Grey Album at some point, then I listened to Kirby and heard that he referenced it as well...



I first came across the Grey Album, I think, through my eldest who was DJing while studying at Imperial College ... 'here Dad, you'll like this' pressing a bootleg CD of the album into my hand ... and I did. And I was so taken by it and what I thought were the ramifications for such remixing that I referred to it in a paper that I wrote in 2004 about student's use of IT (Where, When and How do University Students acquire their ICT Skills? - <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.11120/ital.2005.04010004>):

"Veen (2003) alerts us to the coming 'net generation' - homo zappiens - grown up using three devices from earliest childhood: the TV remote control, the PC mouse and the mobile cell phone. Their natural skills for scanning, multi tasking, processing discontinued information and working non-linearly may colour their expectations of media components designed by previous generations.

Ben Greenman (2004) reports on one use of these new ICT tools that has enabled new ways of responding to 'old' material - ways that might fall outside of current assessment and plagiarism conventions but that will need to be assimilated into academia. How will the culture and ethos of downloading and sharing files together with the easy facilities offered by cut&paste tools prosper in the stricter culture surrounding academic copyright and plagiarism? There is now an urgent need to question how easily these informally learned ICT skills can transfer from the entertainment / social setting to an educational setting. How can the instinctive ICT skills developed in a lifetime of zapping, scanning and texting contribute to, or be acknowledged in, a teaching and learning context?"

Looking back on it, I'm not sure that my concerns were shared by many, and I suspect that they have largely been subsumed in the decade since. However, although my concern then was with student's use of IT, I sense that it transfers quite easily onto the development/encouragement of creativity.

There's more information about the Grey Album on Wikipedia (https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Grey_Album) and, if you want to hear it, there's a copy at archive.org - DJ Danger Mouse - The Grey Album . I still enjoy it!

References (Both now suffering from link rot unfortunately - one just can't trust the Internet can one ☹)

Greenman, B. (2004) The Mouse That Remixed - The Grey Album, The New Yorker, CondéNet, http://www.newyorker.com/talk/content/040209ta_talk_greenman, (Accessed on: 18 November 2004).

Veen, W. (2003) A new force for change: Homo Zappiens, The Learning Citizen, 7, pp 5-7, (available as pdf from: <http://www.learningcitizen.net/newsletter.shtml>, (Accessed on: 27 August 2004)



[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Great link +[Simon Rae](#) I spent half an hour looking on youtube but discovered only odd tracks and a lot of deleted stuff.. Not sure its my taste in music but it grew on me and certainly demonstrates remix and mash-ups. I wonder whether music as a medium lends itself to mash-ups.. When rehearsing we will often come across chord sequences for a song that have been used in another songs..

I thought there was some interesting perspectives in this review of the album <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhQKdTh8f6k&index=3&list=PLc5NyYi5wMNnfq1xL1pizQLPRa7D8FdHi>



I found a simple introduction into how mash ups are made at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FzlvBxX7gYE> I often wondered how they were made but never took the trouble to find out where the source materials came from.

[Simon Rae](#) Not a lot to say about this other than I think it fits in with all we have been talking about with respect to Making ...

https://aeon.co/videos/art-that-makes-meaning-from-whats-been-discarded-and-music-from-the-sounds-of-loneliness?utm_source=Aeon+Newsletter&utm_campaign=8063c93bb4-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_03_19&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_411a82e59d-8063c93bb4-69085917

more information about Lenny is here:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lonnie_Holley



PAUL KLEIMAN

Making a Seder

Colleagues may remember that during our Making week I posted, following Norman's post about the Iranian festival of Nowruz, about the Jewish festival of Pesach/Passover and the symbolic significance of the Seder meal and the Seder plate. To illustrate it I used a photo from the web which was similar to what we do.

Well, tonight is the first night of Pesach, and we are just about to 'make our Seder' which - interestingly is the phrase we use. Here is a photo of our actual table just before we start, with the Seder plate that I inherited from my parents, and the silver kiddish cup (for wine) that my father used.



[Norman Jackson](#) Moderator Thanks for sharing +[Paul Kleiman](#) and for sharing the meanings and significance in an earlier post.

NORMAN JACKSON

REFLECTIONS ON CREATIVITY IN MAKING

In this final stage of our conversation about creativity in making, we encourage you to share your reflections and any insights you have gained from the conversation and how your own creativity featured in any making you have undertaken.

Image data to wisdom <http://www.topicscape.com/mindmaps/4>



Nicholas Bowskill Love the Zone of Possibility/Potential etc. I'm sorry to have missed this round due to bereavement but hope to join you all in the next one. Its always friendly, interesting and enjoyable. You can see that from the process and the outcomes. Its also a Zone of Refreshment.

Norman Jackson Moderator Thanks +**Nicholas Bowskill** very sorry to hear about your bereavement. Please join us as and when you are able.

Paul Thomas I think it is really important to start wherever you can, and give the process permission to take you in new, unexpected directions. I see a lot of people who won't engage until they have arrived at what they think is the 'correct' starting point and then feel a need to rigidly control where it goes to. So they never really find the creative space because they are too busy trying to control the process.

Joy Whitton+1 I've been distracted by work and the need to make an index for a book I'm publishing. I don't think making an index involves any imagination that I am aware of, although it does create something. It's kind of tired me out actually. But alongside all of this activity, I have been really inspired by Chris' porridge making video in the first week. It's been the energising influence! It really started me off thinking in a direction I am not sure will bear any fruit - the associations are probably crazy or non events, but I'm following it along anyway, to see where it will lead, because I, at least, can't work it out in advance.

Watching Chris' porridge making and its wonderful symbolism, inspired me to read a book I started and didn't finish a few years ago - Mauss's *The Gift*. It's anthropology and is about strange and surprisingly different meanings and practices of gift giving in the Pacific, north America and Europe. Related to this is that I'm also making a list of all the things I can think of that, if given to someone else, you don't end up with less of. For example, if i tell you a story, or give you a hug, or a smile, or if I teach you to ride a bike (or any skill really) I am not depleted in any way. I don't have any less of that thing than before I gave it to you. I think in a nutshell, it is what the loaves and fishes parable is all about. It's the opposite of the principle of entropy in a thermodynamic system, and has something of emergence or even of increase in it.

It will probably develop into a poem.

Norman Jackson Moderator Wonderful insights +**Joy Whitton** I look forward to the poem and who knows perhaps a song? I will pass your reflections to Chris who I know will be inspired by the idea.

CHRISSI NERANTZI My reflections

Making is at the heart of what we do and who we are, often we forget this.

When +[Norman Jackson](#) suggested a dedicated conversation with +John Rae around making and the role it plays in creativity, I was excited and started thinking about stuff I could make. I did think about “making as a project” as defined by Tim Ingold as a concept that was introduced during the online conversations, but I could also see that through this making projects I would hopefully gain a little bit of growth too. There is of course no guarantee for this from the outset but the process of making and reflecting on this helps us identify where we are on this journey and if we are growing, even if it is a tiny bit at the time.

It was almost as if the conversation gave me the permission to make stuff. So I did. More than usual. Colleagues participating online will have seen very little of these activities as they were not all shared through the online community. Due to circumstances and preference, I seem to have adopted what I called in my thesis selective participation... (I had explored this in the context of collaborative open learning) for me, like for my study participants, it was an informed choice and should not be interpreted that I was less engaged or disengaged with the theme under exploration even if it may appear this way to some. We often expect individuals to fully engage online but actually there is a whole world outside the digital that is exciting and stimulates all our senses and creates opportunities for creative expression, making and sharing. We can also look at my reality from an ecological perspective. The seeds for my making activities and reflections on these were triggered by the online discussions but they didn't stay online. Norman at some point said.. “what we see online is only the tip of the iceberg” and he is right. If we would live our lives exclusively online that would be very sad... Norman also mentioned that we inhabit spaces and we are aware where we are and what we do in these. My presence was much more invisible to others online as I felt that the ecological system of my making creations was primarily offline with some, however extensions into the online world.

Pottery making

So what did I do during these last few weeks? I guess, I was pragmatic and spotted little every day opportunities. Was this the application of what was discussed online “pragmatic imagination”? The truth is that I spent some time with pottery thinking about my last summers with my sister and somehow I realised that while I have constantly new ideas popping into my head, I also enjoy small repetitive and easy creative tasks such as making little poppy heads out of clay. Many of them. Who says routine has no place in being creative? We are all creatures of habit. Can some of these be creative habits? Playing with clay also reminded me of the process of creativity and the frustrations we feel when something just doesn't work, and we become somehow impatient with ourselves. I can see now that the pottery making activities brought memories back and helped me connect with my dear sister who is for many years now too far away and we spent far too little time together. I was perhaps expressing how much I miss her and found the medium of pottery as a way to connect with her through making. Would David Gauntlett recognise his idea of making is connecting through these activities and thoughts I shared here?

As mentioned near the beginning, I couldn't stop myself and used these last few weeks to progress some of my ideas that bring me joy and help me connect with others. The more I think about it, the more I realise that making for me, is probably more about finding ways to connect with others through making and much less the product or output. This is an interesting discovery I am making now while writing this and perhaps explains also why I love making pedagogical creations that I have shared with many others. It is the human connection that I seek through these.

Thank you John and Norman for creating these wonderful making explorations for all of us. Reading my reflections I can see the value making has for our emotional wellbeing and the role it plays in connecting with others. I am looking forward to catching up with the conversations online and make more discoveries.
Chrissi

[Norman Jackson](#) Thank you for your reflections +[Chrissi Nerantzi](#) and making these great connections to the conversation... I like the way you have brought out what we do online is generally only the tip of the iceberg... in fact its the bit that's about sharing and broadcasting our creations and in our case our sense making then interacting with whatever feedback emerges..... take for example Chris' porridge making which is easy to quantify.. It takes him 20mins to make and 20 seconds to post.

I like the idea of how making can trigger memories that have very little to do with the object being made... yet these memories can then influence what we make and the feelings we have when we make it.. We (people) have such a complex relationship with our existence and the world we inhabit. Perhaps the only surprising thing about creativity is that it surprises us when it happens!

[Mar Kri](#) +[Chrissi Nerantzi](#) Lovely to hear you found a medium to express your nostalgia of your dear sister ...and oh how I resonate with this.

[John Rae](#) Moderator Thank you for sharing that with us +[Chrissi Nerantzi](#). Very beautiful!



Reflections....and shadows.

I posted this literal reflection at the end/continuation of my collaboration with +[John Rae](#). When I contemplate this image, the aspect that I like most is the blurring of the colours and words into a moving 'otherness'. In this collaboration, John was in his studio and I was in my digital studio and we passed the work backwards and forwards across the kilometers (2,572 as the car drives) in lightening, digital speed.

In reflection, I can now merge the work with my own experience and learn from that. When I say 'learn' it means that I don't have to repeat that exercise, I'm now prepared to move forward, try something else to build on that. Something new can emerge from that work, like the swirling waters. It also reminds me of a time when I swam in the section of the river that met the sea. Swirling fresh and salt water caused currents and temperatures to wrap my body. A totally different experience to swimming in either the river or the sea. Reflection can be a stick in the sand....saying that is that and then move on, or it can be the blending and merging of the experience into something new.



A mirror reflection (like Norman's image) attempts to accurately represent what is put before it. This is not the learning reflection I am thinking about. Just repeating the exact 'thing' that took place is maybe the first step of reflection. Then to add the 'so what' aspect. What did it mean to me? What has changed? What step can I take? These are the questions I ask myself in reflection. In the image Norman provided there is the alluring shadow that sits below the mirror. This shadow is a different shape and colour to the original sculpture but is clearly part of the picture. Perhaps this shadow is the 'perfect' reflection. Adding light, blurring lines, changing angles, another aspect is moved into the arena.

Wendy Taleo Norman provides this link <https://theartstack.com/artist/george-segal/standing-woman-looking> as reference for his image.

Yin Kreher⁺¹ + Wendy Taleo nice work,
Wendy.

Wendy Taleo + Yin Kreher Hi Yin, What are you working on (art-wise) these days?

Yin Kreher + Wendy Taleo sadly, I haven't been painting or doing much art because work is taking up a lot of time. need to strike a balance

Norman Jackson Moderator Thanks
+ Wendy Taleo its an interesting and
imaginative composition and your ani-
mation certainly gives it life. Are you
able to share how it came about? Its
making and your undergoing.

NORMAN JACKSON REFLECTIONS ON THE COMPLEXITY OF MAKING

One of the great mediators of my thinking about personal creativity (and now making) is Carl Rogers concept of the creative process is, *'the emergence in action of a novel relational product growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, or circumstances of their life'*. It captures in a neat and concise way my experiences of making and how creativity features in it.

In the light of this conversation I can play with the ideas and relate them to 'making'. For example making is 'a process of imagining and connecting and combining particular things to create a relational product grown out of my uniqueness as an individual on the one hand, and the circumstances and materials of my life'.

While all the narratives of making shared in the conversation can be related to this concept of making, in reading the narratives of making I am struck by the relationship between the complexity of something that is being made and the complexity of the process through which making occurs. For example, +[Simon Rae](#) lovely story of sitting in a church and sketching what he sees and feels, describes a particular set of circumstances and materials and an act that is contained within a short period of time in an environment that is more or less stable. No one interferes with his sketching and his product emerges quickly.

On the other hand, contrast this situation with +[Jennifer Willis](#) description of trying to work collaboratively with her students to make a promotional leaflet - a narrative that is still unfolding more than three weeks after she started. As Jenny shows and we discussed in the conversation complexity cannot be controlled it must be worked with, responded and adapted to. When more than one person is involved in making we bring into the process multiple uniquenesses, multiple circumstances, materials and events in multiple lives and these become involved and entangled in a merry dance that move backwards and forwards towards a shared goal.

A few weeks ago I invited a fellow member of my band to be involved in this process and we decided that we would collaborate to make a song. Apart from agreeing we would try to do this nothing else was planned at the start. Now 3 weeks later we can look back on our messy process and appreciate how we achieved this goal. It fits well the idea that making our song is 'the emergence in action of novel relational products growing out of our uniqueness on the one hand, and the materials, events, and circumstances of our lives'.

<http://www.normanjackson.co.uk/musical2.html>



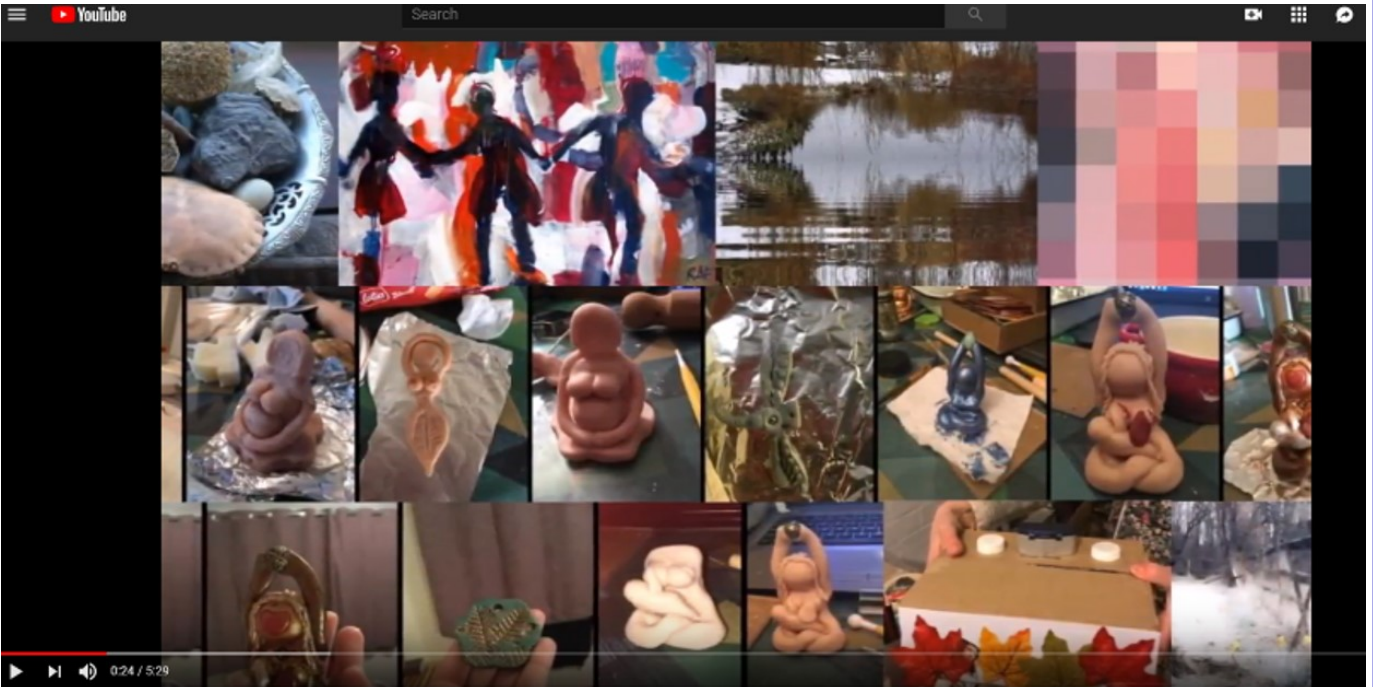
The conversation continues at [#creativeHE.conversation](#)

Exhibition of Artefacts

You can view the artefacts we made in our [Google+ Gallery](#)

<https://plus.google.com/communities/110898703741307769041/stream/8828605f-f716-4f17-bac9-2938ff03746c?hl=en>

and via this YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1RgO1ist5U&t=24s>



Creativity for Learning



The next [#creativeHE](#) course will start on the 10th of October at Manchester Metropolitan University. You are all warmly invited to join us here. And if you are in another institution and would like to bring in a group of academics who teach in your institution and co-facilitate the online dimension of the course in term 1 please get in touch here so that we can organise this. We are open to your suggestions.

For course info please see http://www.celt.mmu.ac.uk/cpd/accredited/unit_details.php?unit_id=93

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