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MA 3D Design

Learning Record

Stage One

20.05.2010

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Abstract

Alternative Party, Helsinki, October 2009

Marking the Territory, Manchester, April 2010

This Belongs To,
Public Participation Project

In November 2008, under the name Glittermouse, I began using multimedia to visually explore the urban landscape. Taking the form of live installations at club nights, these used digital projections to create an environmental response to urban spaces. Stage One realised a three dimensional development of this work, focusing on public space and issues of ownership. Research carried out alongside this has indicated that environmental interactivity promotes positive relationships with city spaces and there have been subsequent developments toward audience participation. In continuation of these concepts, I am planning to include responsive technologies in the production of objects or environments. These will be designed to allow users to interact with public spaces in a playful way while also encouraging engagement with the issue of public ownership. These developments will form the main practical focus of Stage Two.

"Space is a doubt: I have constantly to mark it, to designate it.
It's never mine, never given to me, I have to conquer it." Georges Perec

"Graffiti is an act, an action. The outcome does not matter" Espo

Methodology

Personal Practice

- Starting Point

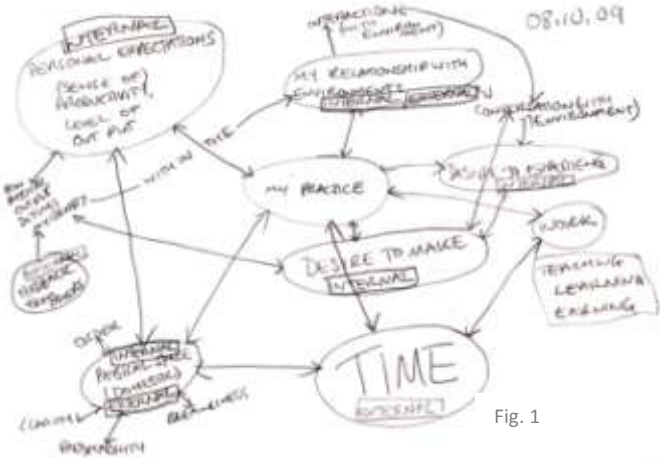


Fig. 1

Development of a reflective practice capable of generating work of consistent quality and theoretical integrity was the main aim of Stage One. Initial proposals consisted of vague ideas defined by loose areas and it was a priority to distil some focus by 'drilling down' into the heart of these subconsciously generated notions. As a lecturer I have long promoted mind mapping to record and focus thinking and it was with a sense of familiarity that I received this suggestion during the first Methodology lecture by John Hyatt. An initial approach to this technique (Fig. 1) introspectively plotted elements impacting upon practice to visualise the current position in order to better plan mechanisms of progress.

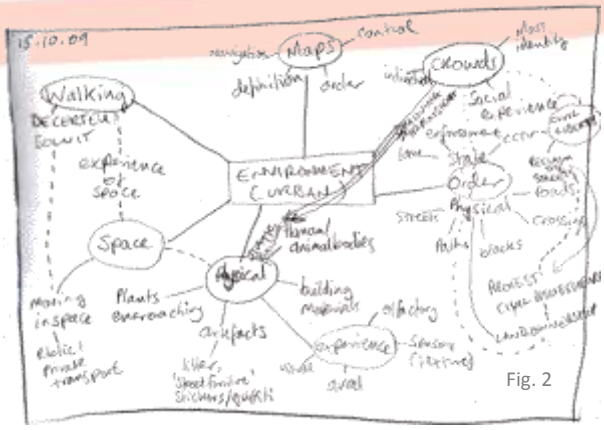


Fig. 2

The following week Barbara Rawlings gave practical considerations in an overview of the research process. This raised further issues; the need to identify questions driving the work forward followed by the locations and methods of research which would steer and focus the inquiries into them. A second mind map (Fig. 2) visualised areas of interest and an upcoming exhibition opportunity in Helsinki offered a substantial source of research. Investigations at this event include a self questionnaire (Fig. 3 - based on Rawling's technique of self interview), a visitor survey (Fig. 4) and a final evaluation on practical outcomes with photographic and video documentary. Analysis of findings from these was summarised in a piece of reflective writing published at www.glittermouse.co.uk and though only subtly influential on outcomes, this constituted the first real investigation into themes and processes. The development of a three stranded methodology, constituting a reflection on physical outcomes, investigation into wider contexts (in this case, public opinion) and a questioning of the purpose and theory of the work then developed. This was identified to relate to Bloom's system of Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Domains. It is generally accepted that effective learning bridges these and an experimental approach to methodology deliberately aimed to utilise this model, especially with regard to moving toward 'Higher Order' thinking of the Cognitive Domain including Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation.

QUESTIONS FOR DURATION OF INSTALLATION AT ALTERNATIVE PARTY

THURSDAY 22.10.09

Why are you making this?

What most interested you most about the physicality of this work today?

What most interested you about the conceptual aspects of this work today?

What do you feel was the most successful thing about this work today?

What do you feel was the least successful thing about this work today?

What was the most interesting piece of feedback you got today?

What are you going to differently tomorrow/next time?

Other thoughts:

Fig. 3

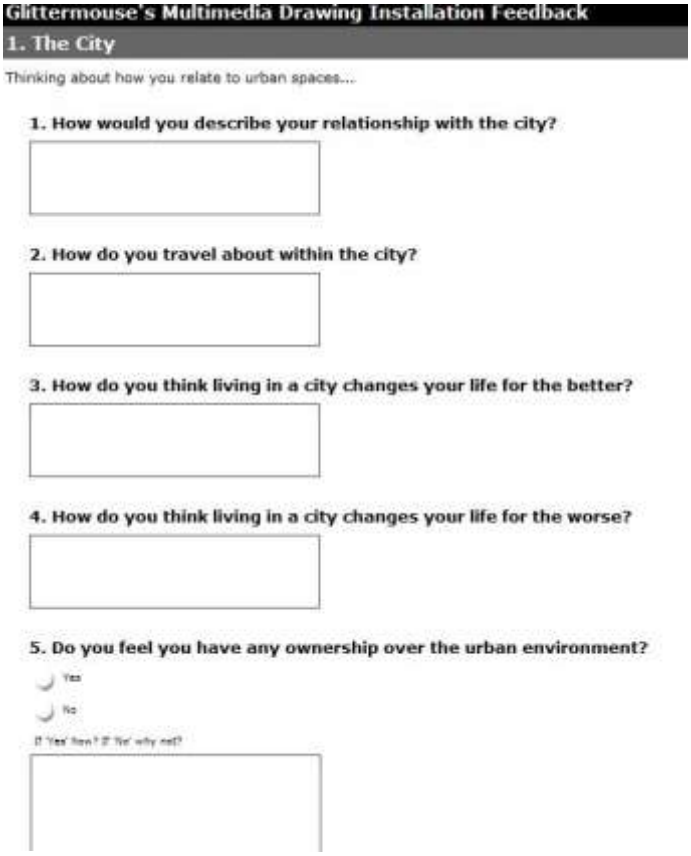
"Do you feel you have any ownership over the urban environment?"

"No, too many signs…e.g " do not do this or that..etc…. feel trapped…. cant walk here, or go in here….no parking, gates in constant use."

"No, Things change without my input!"

"In so far as that I like to be involved in my Neighbourhood and the decisions made by planning departments."

- Survey and Analysis


Glittermouse's Multimedia Drawing Installation Feedback

1. The City

Thinking about how you relate to urban spaces...

1. How would you describe your relationship with the city?

2. How do you travel about within the city?

3. How do you think living in a city changes your life for the better?

4. How do you think living in a city changes your life for the worse?

5. Do you feel you have any ownership over the urban environment?

Yes

No

If 'Yes' how? If 'No' why not?

Fig. 4

Though based on affective responses, analysis of the survey findings resides largely in the cognitive domain and it is these characteristics that form the thinking in this area. That the survey had been limited by a narrow bracket of respondents informed the decision to make use of a survey tool to gather feedback online (Fig. 4). Using the same questions, it was possible to obtain additional responses and conduct analysis with marginally less biased results. Though unlikely that the findings independently influenced the work, they provided an alternative perspective and supported decision making. The main outcome was development of the theory that a significant factor in individual positivity about urban habitation is found through a sense of control obtained via a tangible input to the environment. It continues that when this sense is either absent or imbalanced by an apparent lack of control, negativity becomes predominant. As well as relating to specific comments, this 'Theory of Control' is supported by the findings that the most frequently stated positive features of cities are those facilities with which individuals engage in a controlled, predictable and interactive fashion (e.g. cultural/social amenities) and that the most commonly identified negatives are those which directly stimulate a perceived lack thereof (e.g. crime, noise, overcrowding and alienation).

To further explore this theory, a second questionnaire was produced with more focused questions. Research into survey writing improved the clarity and neutrality of the questions and to solicit as many responses as possible the launch coincided with a rebuild of glittermouse.co.uk. Listed as a main feature, it encouraged visitors to explore the new site with purpose and the offer of a free digital print for the first ten respondents was apparently successful; though some people did choose to remain anonymous, all the prints were claimed and dispatched within a week of the site going live. Responses came from across the globe and numbered almost double the first survey. These new findings supported the position that interactions with the environment, either actively through involvement in planning, physicality and aesthetics or passively through participation in arts, community or social events, can in many cases generate a sense of control which often improves the relationship of an individual with their local area.

Can you give an example of what makes you feel most in control when in the urban environment?

"Being involved, albeit in a very minor way with, with local decision making at grass-roots level"

"Walking across a road irrespective of whether the green man is flashing or not"

"When I can participate in events or be part of some sort of organisation that organises events for the community."

- Physical Process

To explore relationships between digital and physical processes in achieving three-dimensionality, digital modelling techniques were identified as potential processes. *Cutting Edge – Lasers and Creativity Symposium* at Loughborough University gave insight into a range of practitioners currently working with these and discussed issues surrounding their use. Further investigation at the *Design and Technology with ICT Education Show* at the NEC Birmingham then confirmed laser-etching against CNC routing or rapid prototyping as most appropriate for reasons of cost, speed, scale and accessibility. Though these findings were cognitively managed through written reflections, the psychomotor domain was engaged in realising a series of practical tests and spatial trials (Figs. 5-8) which developed over a six month period. A parallel process to cognitive research methods, this development tangibly moved the work from 2D to 3D, realised at the Link Gallery in April 2010. Titled *Marking the Territory*, this installation fully utilised the gallery space with multiple projections on walls, floor and laser etched objects, visualising in the community a discussion of the theories drawn from public survey findings.

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

Fig. 7

Fig. 8

- Written Reflections

If the psychomotor domain is addressed through making and the affective manifests in reflective dialogues often occurring informally throughout this process, writing may be seen as a cognitive mechanism by which the affective instinct is managed and analysed, be this via the generation of a simple mind map or an extended body of writing. Tim Parsons, in his recent delivery to the Contexts panel session, stated that the human brain can only hold seven thoughts at once. Writing both records and provides a space in which more complex thoughts might be refined and developed. If walking propels the body through space, writing moves the brain from one thought to the next, mapping ideas that may then be revisited and communicated to others. "To write" Perec observes, is "to try meticulously to retain something, to cause something to survive; to wrest a few precise scraps from the void as it grows, to leave somewhere a furrow, a trace, a mark or a few signs." Writing as a reflective tool has punctuated much of the Stage One practice, allowing many strands of research to be summarised in a common format and documenting both physical and conceptual progression.

- Development

The critically reflective practice necessarily identifies and responds to inefficiencies. Much of the research documentation verges on the descriptive and to develop an effective process, a higher degree of discrimination is needed when writing to facilitate more productive analysis. Many issues explained are inherent in the work and a more careful consideration of relevance will free up creative development and allow a more productive use of time. A wider range of research sources is also necessary to develop practice into Stage Two and further investigations will cognitively broaden the contexts of this work by considering issues around property led regeneration and urban planning. The psychomotor domain will be extended by research into interactivity through responsive and social technologies. With reference to Bloom's Taxonomy, it is recognised that following *analysis* of survey findings and the resulting *synthesis* of theory, *evaluation* and reflective scepticism will test the integrity and contextual value of these conclusions.

Mixed Group Project (Group C)

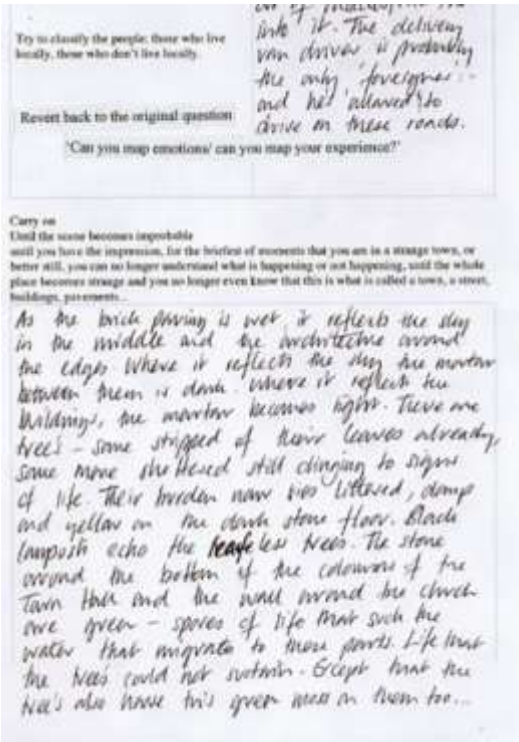
Fig. 9 (Left)

Documentation of a walk to Shambles Square considering the permanence of the surviving bombed letterbox and the transience of the relocated building (now the Oyster Bar).

Fig. 10 (Below)

Example of observational exercise developed from a passage in Species of Spaces (Perec G.) and completed by each member.

Working within a community of other practitioners is a reliable method of addressing affective needs and the Mixed Group Project *Drawing on the City* provided this opportunity. Group discussions initiated a series of investigative workshops in the areas of identified interest; the experiential and the transient (Figs. 9 – 12). Through these, the group explored individual identities and perceptions of locality and questioned how it might be possible to map the transience of experience. A dedicated blog was used to continue discussions and share research outside of meetings. A concept for a web-based local mapping utility was developed, proposed to work in a similar way to many existing social networking sites, featuring linked accounts and user uploaded content (Figs. 13 – 14). It was discussed that though social networking had broken down many barriers in global communication, the possibilities for local interaction remained relatively unexplored.



Personal preparatory research for Stage Two into location-based social networking has since found sites such as Foursquare, Gowalla and MyTown, which are remarkably similar to the site proposed by Group C at the MGP presentations. This clearly instigates criticism of the integrity of our research process; we did not know about them at the time. However, that these fairly new sites are rapidly gaining users possibly says more about the inherent utility of mobile networking technologies in the urban environment than it does about our failure to identify these during the project. Though a distinction was made between the group topic and personal practice there is unavoidable dialogue and the potential relevance to future themes of environmental interaction, as well as contradictory concerns relating to institutional impacts are clear.

Fig. 11

Group Memory Map 1 – individually 'remembered' maps, digitally overlaid.

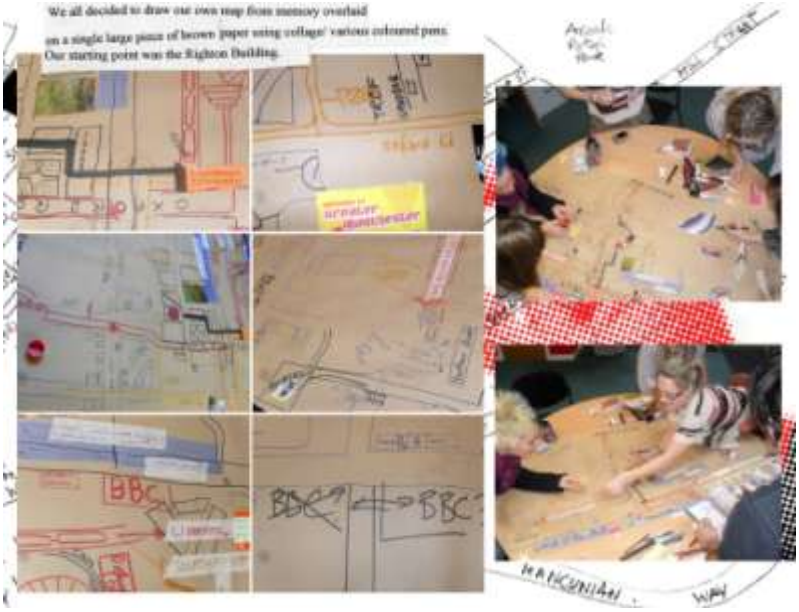


Fig. 12

Group Memory Map 2 – one large scale map drawn simultaneously by several group members from memory.

Fig. 13

Website Proposal – Homepage

Fig. 14

Website Proposal – Example Subpage

Fig. 9 – 14 are layouts used during the MGP presentations utilising extracts of text from the group minutes.

"The deepest problems of modern life derive from the claim of the individual to preserve the autonomy and individuality of his existence in the face of overwhelming social forces" Simmel, G.

Strategies of Thought

- **Rights of Way in Non-place**

According to naturalengland.org.uk, England has approximately 190,000 km of public rights of way. These provide *"many opportunities to enjoy the natural environment*." Walking in the countryside is an important element of our national identity and free passage to do this is defended vigorously; but what of walking in the city? Routes traditionally form by the 'path of least resistance'. We logically choose to go around mountains not over them, a trait exemplified in modern spaces by worn, muddy corners of grassy areas. Our spatial instinct does not recognise corners but is increasingly compromised by the modern urban environment.

Super-management of space has become the norm; we expect one way streets, anticipate being told to Keep Off The Grass. Many of these spatial directives stem from necessary planning and management of densely populated areas; we stand on the left, walk on the right, cross at the crossing, and wait for the green man whether in city or suburb, north or south, because they are convenient systems. When, however, does erosion of spatial determinism become symptomatic of alternative influences and when do these threaten not just human individuality, but character of place?

Marc Auge introduces the notion of non-place, writing *"If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, historical or concerned with identity will be a non-place."* He highlights the de-characterisation of places as a symptom of globalisation. Starbucks is found as quickly in Bangkok as in Brighton, Manchester Airport much like Madrid, Lidl stocks the same foods in Warrington and in Wiesbaden. In non-place the languages of space, the assumptions and demands of the user are the same. It is a characteristic of non-places, says Auge, *"that they are defined partly by ... their 'instructions for use', which may be prescriptive ('Take right-hand lane'), prohibitive ('No smoking') or informative ('You are now entering the Beaujolais region')."* These instructions define use of space and dictate the manner by which we compromise the personal to move through it. Auge States, *"The link between individuals and their surroundings in the space of non-place is established through the mediation of words, or even texts"* and notes that the proponents of these *"are not individuals but 'moral entities' or institutions".* These texts do not just prescribe our spatial operations, they remove the demand on us to communicate with each other. However, this

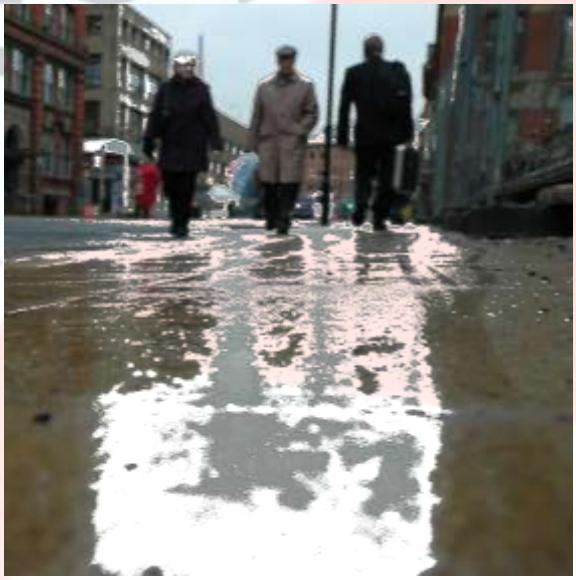
structuring of non-place is not a one-way process; it is a contractual obligation where despite an erosion of individuality the user surrenders the right to anonymity in order to pass through. *"The supermarket customer gives his identity when he pays by cheque or credit card; so does the autoroute driver who pays the toll with a card. In a way, the user of non-place is always required to prove his innocence... There will be no individualization (no right to anonymity) without identity checks."* states Auge. These issues have not only become the focus of political debate, they are becoming intrinsic within the everyday. How many Londoners now travel around their transport network by proving their rights to passage with a registered Oyster Card? Is non-place restricted by the boundaries of airports and hotels or is England's capital just one example of a place evolving into a city of non-place? This is not a recent threat, rather an evolving trend which has been highlighted by many subcultures that seek to preserve identity. William Upski Wimsatt discusses the politics behind the graffiti movement in the 1994 publication *Bomb the Suburbs,* predicting this urban erosion. *"Sidewalks, buses, trains, and other relics of public space will continue to disappear. The distinctiveness, character, and history of the landscape will be washed corporately clean. Security guards and alarm systems will protect almost everything (except for the lives of the poor). Downtowns will become malls."*

Wimsatt refers to America but his statement is easily applied to the UK. At the time of writing in 1994, three years before the dawn of New Labour, the machinations of this trend had already begun. The Thatcherite economic concept of 'Trickle-down' theorised that wealth attracted to an area by corporate means would find its way to the deprived locality. The way was opened for businesses and property developers who were encouraged to 'regenerate' brownfield sites (a subtle yet important change from the term 'redevelop'). Though as a nation we seem keen to forget Thatcher's government, its influence continues to resonate around us. During New Labour government, many of the 1980s relaxations on planning permissions were reversed in recognition of the damage out of town complexes were causing to the British high street. Bluewater, Lakeside, The Trafford Centre; shopping malls. Non-places. Anna Minton discusses this in *Ground Control* (2009) stating *"To find a way around the planning restrictions, shopping centres have moved wholesale into the centre of cities."* She describes a visit to Westfield London in Shepherds Bush noting *"little to distinguish this place from any other or to remind me that I was in west London"... An example of a space which cannot be defined as relational, historical or concerned with identity.* Minton observes *"the creation of open-air property complexes which also own and control the streets, squares and open spaces of the city"* are increasingly common. But what of the Public Right of Way? What of the statement at naturalengland.org that "The permanence of a ProW is guided by the principle "once a highway, always a highway"? Minton also questions this and relates an explanation from a planning lawyer; "Estates are able to abolish traditional rights of way through a process known as 'stopping up orders'. This changes the legal basis of public highways ... making them public no longer."

The panoptic view from our historic desire to rise above the city is recognised by De Certeau as an illusion like any other in which it is not directly experienced. Maps, photographs, film and references to what De Certeau names the 'Concept-city' form an attempt to pin down a non-existent truth. An ideal; rising above the city orders and sterilises it. Shirley Kressel, in the essay Privatizing the Public Realm observes a trend in urban planning which capitalises on this in the truest sense of the word. "Visitors enter the new

NikeTown in Boston, located on a very busy pedestrian street, by car or through a lobby from which they are swept by escalator upward, away from the public streets to the more exclusive environment above." A temporary dislocation, a suspension of De Certeau's question "Must one finally fall back into the dark space where crowds move back and forth...?" Back down to the places where ones presence is not justified by purchases, but where uncomfortable questions of the street such as class, crime and a myriad of the uncontrolled threaten to unveil the "gigantic rhetoric of excess."

- **"Ordinary Practitioners of the City"**



"Urban public space is at the heart of city and town life. It is the essence of public freedom: a place to rally, to protest, to sit and contemplate, to smoke or talk or watch the stars. No matter what happens in the shops and cafes, the offices and houses, the existence of public space means there is always somewhere to go to express yourself or simply to escape."

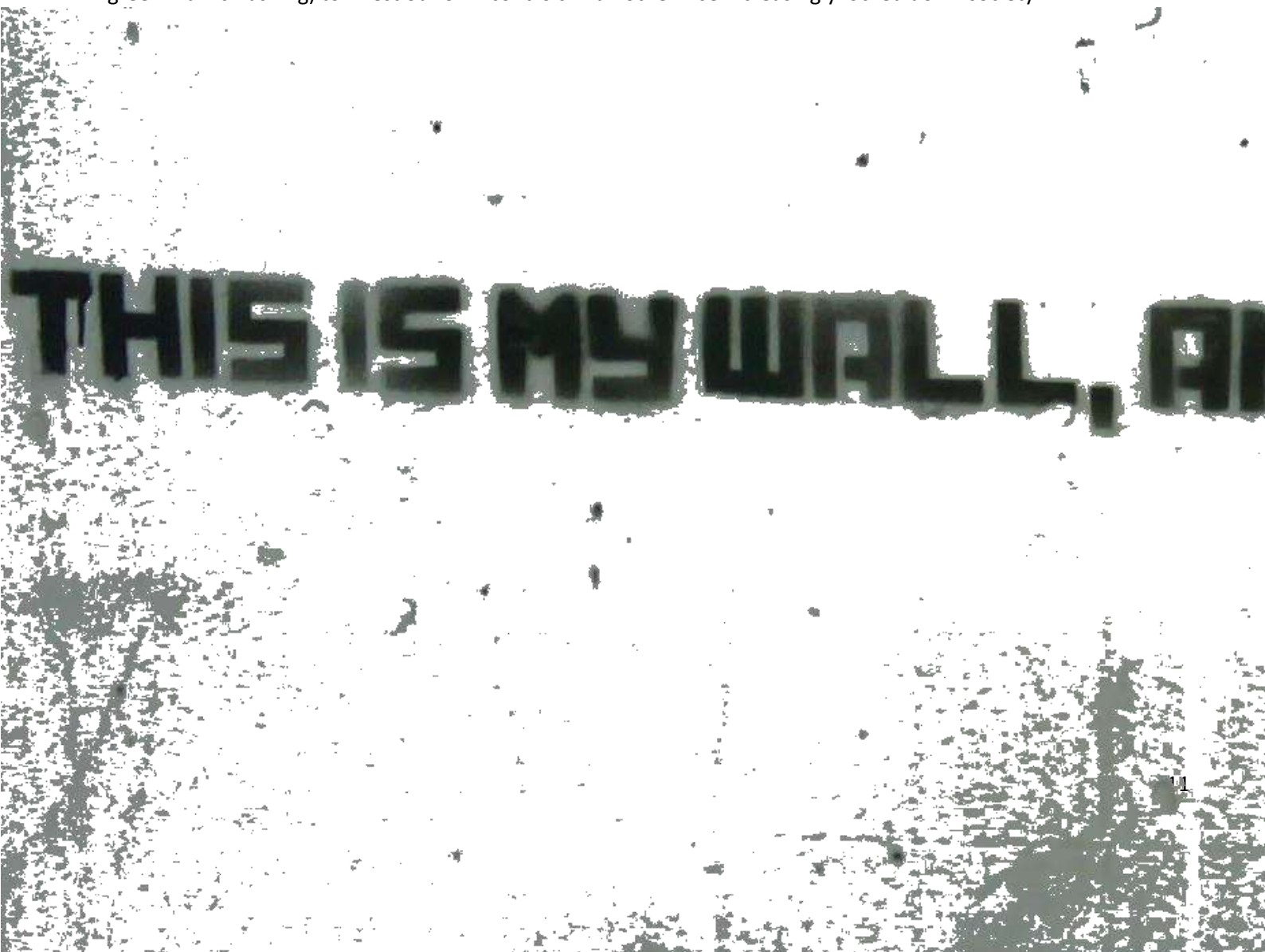
A comforting statement by Paul Kingsnorth in the article *Cities for Sale,* published in The Guardian in March 2008. It is both observation and ideology but where is the user of these spaces given form? When is the '*the ordinary practitioner of the city*' removed from 'the masses'? Michel De Certeau prefaces his text *The Practice of Everyday Life* with a dedication to 'the man on the street', outlining its concern with the view point of 'the user'. De Certeau generalises, but acknowledges the assumption that the individual is passive. Georg Simmel describes this urban passivity as the condition of becoming blasé in reaction to *"intensification of nervous stimulation* which results *from the swift and uninterrupted change of outer and inner stimuli ... The metropolitan type of man - which, of course, exists in a thousand individual variants - develops an organ protecting him against the threatening currents and discrepancies of his external environment which would uproot him*." Individuals become blasé to survive an overwhelming environment but it seems this quality is exploited by the corporations discussed by Minton and Kingsnorth to take possession of our spaces. So what? We've always had and will continue to need shops and markets. What impact does this spatial trend have on the individual? The difference between 'public' and private' hardly needs stating but the distinction between 'public' and 'public access' is not necessarily so manifest. The closure of a public street, reopened as an arcade or shopping mall, may seem a positive impact of public-private partnerships, creative regeneration in an unstable economy, but where is Kingsnorth's purpose? These are not places to sit and contemplate, to smoke, talk or watch the stars and they are certainly not places to express yourself. The personal use of public space for self-realisation does not apply here; personality is irrelevant to the institution and this is a backdrop for only that which does not seek expression outside the boundaries prescribed by it.

- **Modern Spatial Identities - Urban Space and Cybernon-place**

"Over the past several decades our culture has created entirely new dimensions of place that are densely inhabited, and yet, as chaotic as Houston or any favela – cyberplaces in cyberspace" writes Bice C. Wilson under the title *The Urban Design of Cyberspace: Our Newest Public Right of Way* on the blogspot of a breakout group of

the Fiberfete 2010 conference on networking technologies. Spending increasing time online, we are rapidly finding new methods of digital placemaking. It has changed our physical space and our use of it. Friends on a night out break the conversation to microblog on mobiles; airlines run marketing campaigns based on the observation that increasing numbers make web based video calls rather than travel. But these trends also impact upon our spatial practices more subtly. In a digital age, identity is a contentious political debate; compulsory ID cards, fraud, biometric passports, national databases, internet privacy. Identity does more than distinguish one individual from another; it allows us to access places, facilitates possession, and has now become a commodity. Online we are reduced to units of market data, commercial information paradoxically disconnected from names and faces (as we are assured in the privacy policies), attached only to spending patterns. In a political climate where issues of identity are bargained over in parliament, they are being quietly taken from us. De Certeau cites Foucalt's analysis of the structures of power recognising *"mechanisms and technical procedures, "minor instrumentalities" capable merely by their organization of "details," of transforming a human multiplicity into a "disciplinary" society".* Knowledge is power.

Social networking sites become such mechanisms. We are freely given a virtual 'place' where we define ourselves with photos, favourite quotes, selected information. We become our own avatar, an edited copy where even our transgressions are modified before publication. In return, we share information that builds a different profile; browsing history, age group, favourite sites, products, brands. A picture of where and what we can be most easily persuaded to buy. So what remains of our identities? Where does the personal exist? We are projected back into the physicalisation of the same capitalism, wandering the concrete, tangible streets, with the pigeons and the discarded McDonald's wrappers; a new twist on De Certeau's "immense social experience of lacking a place." The username, the graffiti tag, our only remaining device with which to momentarily mark ourselves apart before we sink back into the faceless mass, left only with impotent acts of spatial disobedience (crossing, perhaps, when the green man is flashing) to wrest our own controls in an otherwise increasingly locked down society.

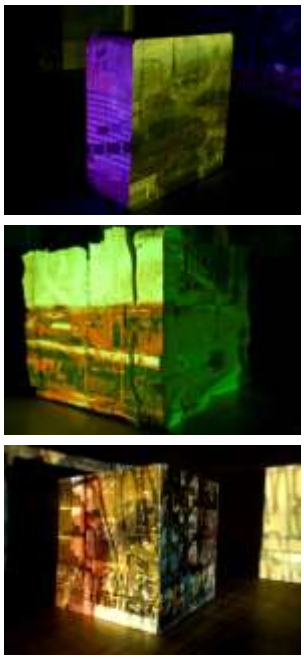


Practice Summary

In December 2008 I moved from London to Manchester, reducing FE teaching hours in order to re-engage with my practice, making a choice between pursuing wider professional ideals or prioritising an educational career. In Manchester, I engaged openly with the new environment, communities and social groups, indiscriminately seeking creative opportunities. The resulting output was fractured; I sold hand painted glass at craft fairs and shops, contributed illustrations to various publications, entered work in digital competitions and began developing live drawing installations at club nights. Following moderate success, I began to feel dissatisfied, sensing a need to move my practice forward. I enrolled on the MA in 3D Design to support this aim, expecting my practice to be crafts based with a reference to digital processes, drawing on the urban environment.

Alternative Party: Art and Technology Exhibition, Helsinki, October 2010

Initial priorities included developing a more focused, critically reflective practice and the opportunity to realise an installation at *Alternative Party: Art and Technology Exhibition* in Helsinki, provided a starting point. The event was the first opportunity to work at such a large scale over an extended period. Accessing a wider European audience through visitors and interviews (broadcast online and on local radio), success was judged through positive audience feedback. A survey was also used to widen context and develop a theory that those with a tangible input to their environment identified a sense of control that improved their relationship with it. This, backed by other audience comments suggested inclusion of interactivity in future work. Reflection on the event resulted in proposals for inclusion of multiple projections with the intention of developing three-dimensional elements, aiming to better explore spatial concerns and relate more closely to environmental experiences. Developments began by using multiple digital projections on to plaster objects. These trials produced successful photographic images, which both explored the physicality of dual projection and gave an indication of where the work might be heading. It became clear that plaster would be inappropriate due to fragility and weight; it would not be practical to work at a large scale and transportation would prove difficult. Laser etching onto MDF was became a preferred method and additional projections included slides, contrasting still with moving image. This quality further discussed a theme of the permanent and transitory and referenced issues raised in the Strategies of Thought lectures relating to place and space. Further supporting the expansion of concept, the writings of De Certeau, Auge and Perec became informative to the outcomes. Following a second survey that supported and expanded upon the established 'Theory of Control', it became clear that development of interaction was desirable.



3D Tests from top: plaster block, plaster cast, laser etching.

Attempts to encourage public involvement in issues of ownership and place did not only provide opportunities for further research but began exploring ways to achieve interactivity. An invitation to run a glass-painting workshop at an environmental event allowed work with a community group. To preserve relevance to the event, a session was devised in which participants worked with their own photos of favourite landmarks in their area to produce a 'local souvenir' on reused glass. Though the workshop was not heavily subscribed, concerns that participants would be reluctant to work with the content were unfounded. A wide age range contributed to the diversity of outcomes and discussions generated and though the long term impact cannot be

assessed, the session successfully engaged participants. This practically supported the move to a focus on interaction though it is noted that a more appropriate process would be preferable.

Local Souvenirs - Workshop Outcomes from Chorlton' Big Green Festival 2010

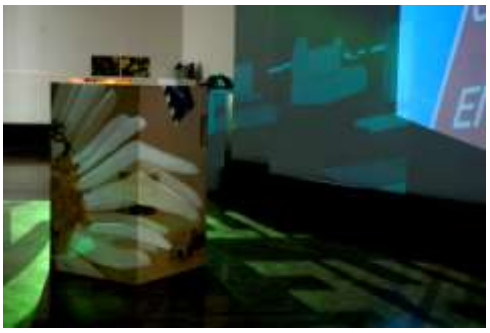
This Belongs To is a long term project aiming to encourage participants to interact directly with city spaces. Given a simple sheet of laser cut card, users identify themselves on an acetate panel and utilise natural light to temporarily claim places. A web based project, participants are requested to photograph and upload their interventions to glittermouse.co.uk. Initial reflections note that though there has been a high degree of enthusiasm there have been few contributions so far. It may be however, that this kind of project takes time to build; *There is Beauty in The City* is a similar project where members of the public are asked to submit photographs of a magnet in an urban 'beauty spot'. This project has been running for two years and has received funding allowing modest national promotion, but according to administrators, it has attracted no more than 40 contributors. Despite this, it is becoming well known and presents a second show of contributions in August.

This Belongs To – Web Page (left) and Public Interventions (below)

A three dimensional installation was achieved publicly for the first time at Norvun Sunday, a monthly arts event, at The Roadhouse in May 2010. The installation used two slide and one digital projector to introduce images to the surface of an object built from laser etched panels. More discrimination in selecting images focused on visual interventions in the environment as used to define space. This included references to non-place (Auge, 1984) and subversions such as graffiti. Film of the Mancunian Way shot from the 13th floor contrasted environmental detail with visual generalisation and additionally referenced Auge's discussions of place and space after De Certeau. Positive audience feedback confirmed this a successful development of the 2D installation at the same event in June 2009.

Norvun Sunday, The Roadhouse, Manchester, 2010

Marking the Territory at the Link Gallery in April was a spatial realisation of developments since October. The installation combined audio samples and environmental texts; introducing images with ten digital and analogue projectors into an environment containing laser etched objects. Feedback from visitors demonstrated that the issues were successfully communicated and interaction with projections using *This Belongs To* again underlined the potential for public interaction. Considered research into ways of achieving this along with functionality and purpose in order to encourage that engagement will now be conducted. Both conceptual and practice based development may be improved through a more structured approach to research as well as the generation and management of ideas. These developmental plans are outlined in the Learning Agreement. Additionally, the installation provided valuable opportunities to build a higher quality of portfolio content. Frequent submissions to various arts opportunities have not been successful and it is recognised that developing professional practice and transferrable skills will improve employability.



"Some really interesting concepts and ideas. Particularly interested in the empowerment aspect." Phil Northall, Creative Industries Networking Group

"It made me think about what is around me." Student Visitor

"The ideas around place making and sense of ownership came through really well" Janey Riley, Manchester Creative Collective

"Very sophisticated and accomplished articulation of the aesthetic of urban space." Installation Visitor

Evidence of Practice

Contents

- **Alternative Party:** Photos, Survey Feedback, Reflective Questionnaire, radio interview, Documentary Video, Reflection
- **3D Development:**
  Phase 1 Photos, Reflective Text and Appendices, Reflection on Survey Results
  Phase 2 Photos, Video of Multiple Projection Trials, Reflective Text and Appendix
- **This Belongs To:** Photos, Web Screenshots
- **Community Workshop:** Photos, Feedback Forms, Reflection
- **Norvun Sunday:** Photos, Documentary Video, Reflection
- **Marking the Territory:** Promotional Material, Photos, Info Booklet, Documentary Video, Visitor Feedback, Reflection
- **Course Documents:** Learning Record Document, Tutorial Records

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Throughout Stage One, my practice has explored the urban environment spatially, aesthetically and conceptually, drawing on direct experience, the views of others and a range of writings to expand personal understanding and the parameters of the work. Despite the public exhibitions of these outcomes, this body of work has been (as defined by the title of the latest installation) merely 'marking the territory'; the ideas and concepts relating to the future of the work have moved on further than it has yet been possible to realise physically. This underlines the reflective nature of the practice, the dialogue between making and thinking; the practice has been the development as well as the outcome. The processes by which the outcomes have been achieved are structured, self critical and increasingly discriminatory and it is proposed to continue developing this methodology to stretch both the practice and work. It is important to note that to achieve a meaningful development, unknown quantities must be embraced and that there is a significant, yet calculated level of risk taking proposed for Stage Two.

Reflection on various research outcomes during Stage One has continuously pointed to the inclusion of interactive elements. This will continue to question and explore the theory that a sense of control generated by a tangible input to the environment will in many cases improve the relationship between the individual and the urban environment in which they live. I will investigate technologies which allow an element of interaction with a view to developing objects or environments which encourage a physical dialogue with the urban environment and engage users with concepts relating to public ownership.

Two major areas implied in this work of which I have little or no experience both require full exploration before it will be possible to define, let alone realise outcomes. It is therefore expected that Stage Two will be research based, culminating in the design of an interactive object or environment for assessment in October 2010. It has also been identified that a revision of process relating to the generation, management and evaluation of ideas is necessary. This will continue to use Bloom's Taxonomy and the related Learning Domains as a model, but revise the methods contained within it. It is recognised that there is a dialogue between these domains; however the broad division of these follows:

Cognitive Domain:

- The socio-political and economic history of urban planning, within which these issues situate themselves will become a backdrop of research against which I will inform the work. I expect to read further into these issues and produce reflective writing summarising this. Indicative texts include *Ground Control* by Anna Minton and *Real England* by Paul Kingsnorth.
- Further primary source research into public issues may be beneficial and interviewing techniques may build upon the research achieved through surveying. Interviews with members of the public and/or professionals in related areas will allow a dialogue not achieved through surveys and may be one method to test the integrity of the theories developed.

Psychomotor Domain:

- Technical investigations into digital/electronic methods of interaction will form a physical series of tests and trials through which it will be possible to develop an understanding of potential applications. Initial investigations into interactive technologies will begin on the 21st and 22nd of May at a workshop on Arduino run by Tinker.it! at Space Studios in London. Arduino is an electronics prototyping platform intended for creating interactive objects or environments. It uses simple programming and a variety of environmental sensors to control actuators.

Affective Domain:

- A new approach to ideas generation and management in the model used by digital training company Hyper Island will be utilised in structuring Stage Two. Simple techniques such as divorcing the creative from the analytical during ideas generation stages and facilitating serendipity will be investigated to improve creativity in the design process.
- Evaluation of outcomes and reflection at relevant stages of the process will be more focused and discriminating. Stage One written reflection was exhaustive and time consuming with a disproportionate impact on development. Stage Two will aim to streamline this process and reduce yet enhance reflective writings, working much along the lines that 'Less is More'.
- Continued exhibition of work in progress will where practical, facilitate feedback and as much of the focus will be audience interaction, will play an important role in the evaluation and development of outcomes.

These investigations, evidenced through a series of physical trials with interactive technologies and supported by focused and relevant reflective writing will be recorded online at glittermouse.co.uk. They will form an important element of portfolio and professional development which will improve employability and hopefully generate higher success rates in applications to various events. It is hoped that the development described above, along with a continued awareness of contemporary concerns within the field will open potential dialogues with other practitioners and lead to a range of future opportunities in which to display and further develop practice within the creative communities.

Anne-Elizabeth Orton (Student)..... Date.....

Ian Roberts (Tutor)..... Date.....